

# Modhera sun temple

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**In news**– The Union Home Minister has recently announced that Ahmedabad Railway Station at Kalupur in Ahmedabad City will be developed on the theme of Modhera Sun Temple in the next five years.

## About Modhera Sun Temple

- Modhera Sun Temple is located at **Modhera village of Mehsana district, Gujarat, India.**
- **Modhera finds a mention in the ancient scriptures like Skanda Purana and Brahma Purana.**
- The old texts also refer to Modhera and its surrounding areas as Dharmaranya or the forest of righteousness.
- It is **situated on the bank of the river Pushpavati.**
- It was **built after 1026-27 CE during the reign of Bhima I of the Chalukya dynasty.**
- The place was later known as **Sita ni Chauri and Ramkund locally.**
- No worship is offered now and the temple is the **Monument of National Importance and is maintained by the Archeological Survey of India.**
- **The temple is built on 23.6° latitude (approximately near the Tropic of Cancer).**
- Earlier, during 1024–1025, **Mahmud of Ghazni had invaded Bhima's kingdom**, and a force of around 20,000 soldiers had unsuccessfully tried to check his advance at Modhera.
- **Historian A. K. Majumdar** theorizes that the Sun Temple might have been built to commemorate this defense.
- On a block in western wall of cella, there is an inscription **“Vikram Samvat 1083”** upside down carelessly incised in Devnagari script which corresponds to 1026-1027 CE.
- The Tourism Corporation of Gujarat organises an annual

three-day dance festival known as **'Uttarardha Mahotsav' at the temple during the third week of January, following the festival of Uttarayan.**

- In 2014, Modhera Sun Temple entered the list of **UNESCO World Heritage Sites.**

### **Temple structure-**

- The **temple complex is built in Māru-Gurjara style (Chalukya style).**
- The temple complex has **three axially aligned components-**
  1. The shrine proper (*garbhagriha*) in a hall (*gudhamandapa*),
  2. The outer or assembly hall (*sabhamandapa* or *rangamandapa*).
  3. A sacred reservoir (*kunda*)
- The reservoir has steps to reach the bottom and numerous small shrines. *Kunda* is known as Ramakunda or Suryakunda. The **stepwell** on the west of *Kunda* has one entrance and two pavilion-towers and is moderately ornamented.
- The ***Garbhagriha* or sanctum sanctorum is designed in a way that the first rays of rising sun lit up the image of Surya during solar equinox days** and on summer solstice day, the sun shines directly above the temple at noon casting no shadow.
- **The walls have 12 niches showing the different aspects of Surya in each month.** Other figures include eight Dikpals, Vishwakarma, Varuna, Agni, Ganesha, Saraswati.

### **Bhima I of the Chalukya dynasty-**

- He was a Chaulukya king who ruled parts of present-day Gujarat, India.
- Bhima's father Nagaraja was a son of the Chalukya king Chamunda-raj.

- The early years of his reign saw an **invasion from the Ghaznavid ruler Mahmud**, who sacked the Somnath temple.
- Bhima left his capital and took shelter in Kanthkot during this invasion, but after Mahmud's departure, he recovered his power and retained his ancestral territories.
- He crushed a rebellion by his vassals at Arbuda, and unsuccessfully tried to invade the Naddula Chahamana kingdom.
- Towards the end of his reign, he **formed an alliance with the Kalachuri king Lakshmi-Karna**, and played an important role in the downfall of the Paramara king Bhoja.
- The **earliest of the Dilwara Temples and the Modhera Sun Temple were built during Bhima's reign.**
- **The construction of Rani ki vav is attributed to his queen Udayamati.** (Rani Ki Vav or Queen's Stepwell' is a [stepwell](#) situated in the town of [Patan](#) in [Gujarat](#), on the banks of [Saraswati river](#). It has been listed as one of UNESCO's [World Heritage Sites](#) since 2014. It is one of the largest examples of [its kind](#) and designed as an inverted temple highlighting the sanctity of water, the stepwell is divided into seven levels of stairs with more than 500 principal sculptures and over a thousand minor ones combining religious, mythological and secular imagery)

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