



# KNOW YOUR CITY:CHHINDWARA

## About City:

**Chhindwara** is a city in India and a Municipal Corporation in Chhindwara district in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. The city is the administrative headquarters of Chhindwara District. Chhindwara is reachable by rail or road from adjacent cities Betul, Jabalpur and Nagpur. The nearest airport is in Nagpur (130 km); however there is a small airport located in the city which is not serviceable for passenger planes.

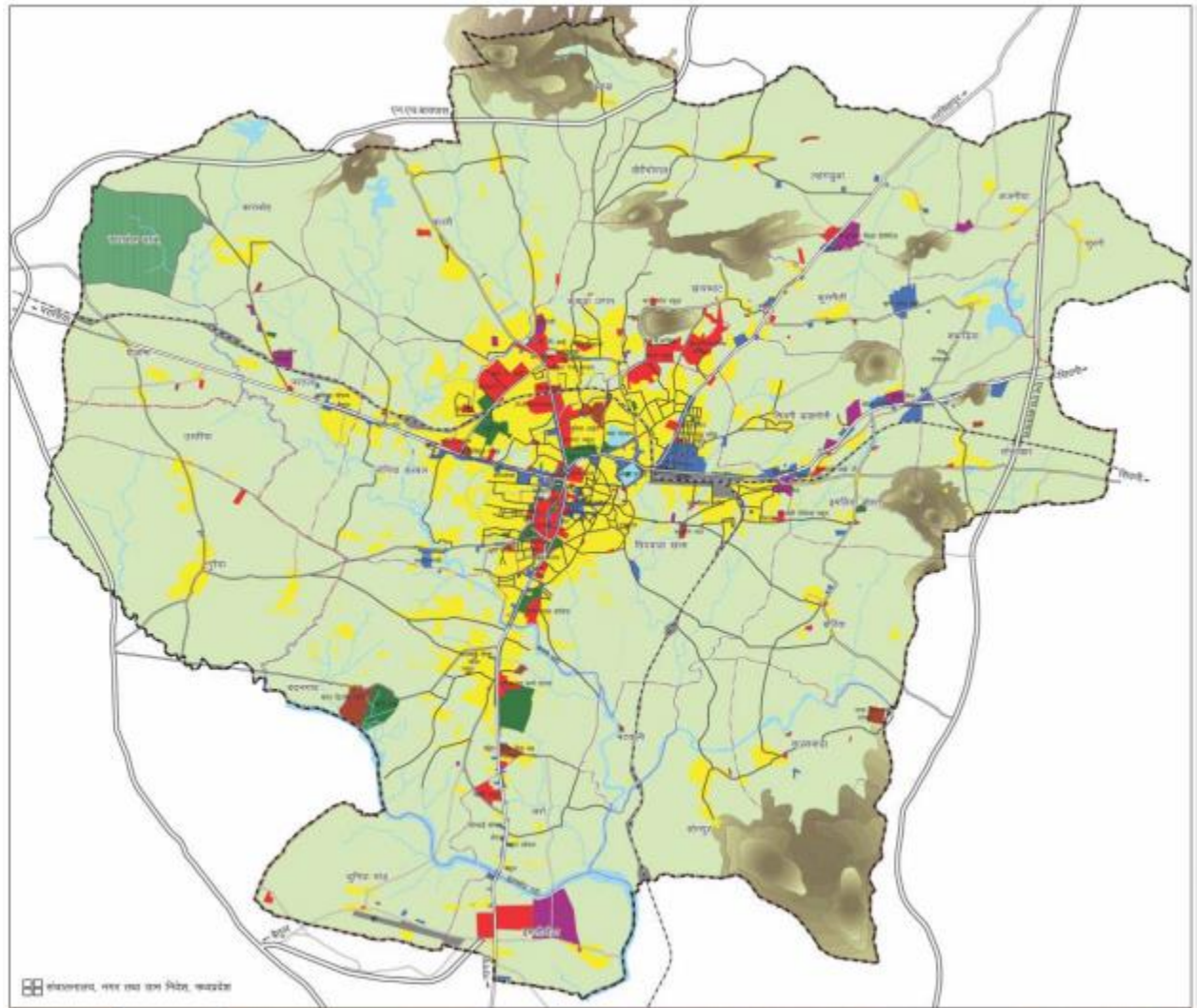
## History:

It was believed that Chhindwara District was full of "Chhind" trees (wild date palms) many years ago, and the place was called "Chhind"-"Wada" (wada means place). Another story says that due to the population of lions (called "sinh" in Hindi), it was considered equivalent to entering the lions' den to enter this district. Hence, it was called "Sinh Dwara" (meaning "through the entrance of the lion"). In course of time, it became "Chhindwara".

The Gole Gunj market of the city, with its two large gateways (known today as Kamania Gate), was built by Captain Montgomery, who administrated the district as a regent of Richard Jenkins (1818–1830). The municipality of Chhindwara was founded in 1867.

## Geography:

Chhindwara is one of the largest cities in the Satpura range and the largest district in terms of area in Madhya Pradesh. It is on a plateau, surrounded by lush green fields, rivers and by dense forest with diverse flora and fauna. The town is built around the Bodri Stream, a tributary with the Kulbehra River<sup>[2]</sup> & is the origin source of Pech River which flows across Pech National Park which includes Pech Tiger Reserve, which is one of the reserve for the Tiger Project of India.



## Culture:

Chhindwara District has a majority of tribal population. The tribal communities include the Gond, Pardhan, Bharia, Korku. Hindi, Gondi, Urdu, Korku, Musai etc. so many languages/dialects are in use in the

district. The majority of the tribal people speak in Gondi and Hindi mixed with Marathi.

Among the most celebrated cultural functions/festivals in the district are Pola, Bhujalia, Meghnath, Akhadi, Harijyoti etc. The 'Gotmar Mela' of Pandhurna is a unique and world-renowned fair. On Shivrathri day 'Mahadev Mela' is celebrated each year on "chourgadh".

Chhindwara is the home of many famous temples and mosques. Many festivals and dances are celebrated in Chhindwara and nearby villages. Sela dance, Gedi dance, Nagpanchmi dance to name a few. Famous festivals in nearby villages include Chouth ka dangal and panchmi ka mela.



### **Tourist Attraction:**

The main tourist attractions in and around Chhindwara include:

- **Deogarh Fort:** This famous historical fort is 24 miles (39 km) south of Chhindwara beyond Mohkhed. It is built on a hill which is fortified by a deep valley clothed with dense reserve forest. The fort is approachable up to its foot by motor road. The nature is beautiful here. Deogarh Fort was built by King Jatav of Gond. It was the capital of Gondwana dynasty until the 18th century. The architecture is somewhat similar to that of Mughal. There are a big fort palace and beautiful buildings. It is believed

that there was a secret underground passage connecting Devgarh to Nagpur. Here is a tank called "motitaka" and there is famous saying that the water in this tank never finishes. At present, Deogarh village is a small inhabitant's area. The ruins at this place speak of its past glory.

- **Patalkot**, in the hilly block 'Tamia' of Chhindwara District, has acquired great importance because of its geographical and scenic beauty. Patalkot is a lovely landscape located at a depth of 1200–1500 feet in a valley. Because of the great depth, this place is christened as 'Patalkot' (patal means very deep, in Sanskrit). When one looks down from the top of the valley, the place looks like a horseshoe in shape. Earlier, people believed it as the entrance to 'Patal'. There is one more belief that after worshipping 'Lord Shiva' Prince Meghnath had gone to Patal-lok through this place only. People say that this place was ruled by kings in 18th and 19th centuries and that there was a long tunnel connecting this place to 'Pachmarhi' in Hoshangabad District. Because of the inaccessibility of this area, the tribals of this region were totally cut off from the civilized world. But, with the constant efforts being made by the government, tribals of this area started tasting the advantages of adopting civilized life. 'Patalkot' is attracting many tourists because of its geographical location, scenic beauty, culture of the people who live here, and the immense and rare herbal wealth. Deepak Acharya has done exceptionally good work in the field of herbal medicines and tribal life of Patalkot.
- **Tamia Hills** are around 45 km from Chhindwara. The steep hills, dense forests, and big winding ghats have all combined to make Tamia a beauty spot and a tourist place. A PWD rest house is picturesquely situated on a steep hill commanding an extensive view of the deep forests and mountainous ranges of Satpura notably Mahadeo and Chaura Pahad in the background. The view from the rest house is noted for its constantly shifting natural scenery which is inspiring to visitors. The government postal bungalow in Tamia is a pleasant place as it is in hilly range at 3,765 feet (1,148 m) height above Mean Sea Level surrounded by dense forest. The sunrise and sunset scenes give a breath taking experience to the visitors. About 1.5 km from this bungalow there is a cave where in the holy 'Shivling' (the deity of Lord Shiva) of 'Chota Mahadev' exists. Just beside the cave is a small water fall. Both of these provide a feast to the eyes of the visitors.
- **Gotmar Mela of Pandhurna**: 98 km from Chhindwara, in the headquarters of Pandhurna tahsil, a unique fair (mela in Hindi) by name 'Gotmar Mela' is celebrated every year on the second day to



'Bhadrapad' New Moon day on the banks of the river Jam. A long tree is erected in the middle of the river with a flag at its very top. The residents of the villages Savargaon and Pandhurna gather on either bank and start pelting stones ('got') at the persons of the opposite village who try to cross into the mid of the river and remove the flag on top of the tree trunk. The village whose resident succeeds in removing the flag is considered victorious. The whole activity happens amidst the chanting of the sacred name of 'Maa' Durgaji. Several people have been wounded in this celebration and the district administration made elaborate arrangements for the smooth conduct of this rare fair. People have been left dead or injured, so the festival has now been banned. Administration is now fail to stop the activity.<sup>[14]</sup>

- The **Tribal Museum** started in Chhindwara on 20 April 1954 and acquired 'State Museum' status in 1975. On 8 September 1997 the Tribal Museum's name was changed to "Shri Badal Bhoi State Tribal Museum". This museum is maintained by a Museum In-charge Officer with the help of artists and peons. It comprises 14 rooms, 3 galleries and two open galleries. It depicts the tribal cultures of 45 (approx.) tribal communities living in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh states. It is the oldest and the biggest tribal museum in Madhya Pradesh. It is a treasure house, storing antique and rare collections of items related to the tribal living in the district. One can find items related to the houses, clothes, ornaments, arms, agriculture tools, art, music, dance, celebrations, the deities worshiped by them, religious activities, herbal collections, and so on. The museum throws light on the rich traditions and ancient cultures of the tribal communities. It has depicted the family living styles of the ground and Baiga, the principal tribes living in the district. Also it has shown how the Agria tribes mould iron and shows Patalkots Deha agricultural systems. These exhibits attract the tourists. The museum is a one-stop collection-cum-information centre on the tribes of this district.
- **Shashti Mata Mandir** is located at Kapurda, almost 45 km north of Chhindwara. This temple is very old and famous for its cultural influence on the region. It attracts a number of tourists almost every day, but Tuesday is considered to be the best day for worship. It is believed that if Shrashti Mata is invoked with faith, she dispels disease. Some visitors come for the mundan ceremony (the first hair cutting ceremony) of their children and offer their crop of hair at the altar of goddess. Among other visitors, married couples come to invoke the blessings of the goddess for a happy married life. This temple was built by late B.L. Shrivastava in

1939. At present the temple management is taken care of by his sons L.L. Shrivastava and S.S. Shrivastava and well supported by all villagers but specially Mishra family has huge impact on that and managed all events, functions with them. The temple can be reached by local buses or taxis from Chhindwara.

- **Waterfalls of Kukdi-khapa and Lilahi** : The picturesque location of Kukdi khapa waterfall is found along the Chhindwara to Nagpur narrow gauge railway line, between the stations of Umaranala and Ramakona. The waterfall is situated in the panoramic 'Sillevani' mountain range. The height of this fall is approximately 60 feet (18 m). The location is more beautiful and picturesque immediately after a spell of good rains. While travelling in the train along the narrow gauge railway toward Nagpur one can see this beautiful picnic spot. The Lilahi [DHANORA]waterfall is located in the downstream of the District's second biggest river, 'Kanha'. This fall is situated on the route from Mohkhed to Pandhurna via Devgarh. It is close to the 'Narayan Ghat,' near dhanora village on the Kanhaan river. The lovely sight of the waterfall surrounded by mountain rocks and colorful nature is indeed a feast to the visitor. The waterfall will have a sufficient flow of water from July to January.
- **Anhoni** village is near Mahuljhir Police Station and at a distance of 2 miles (3.2 km) from the village Jhirpa on Chhindwara-Piparia road. A hill stream with hot and boiling sulphur springs flows near the village. These springs, at a further distance, assume the form of a nullah (short stream). The water is believed to be beneficial for skin diseases and for certain impurities of the blood.
- **Neelkanthi**: Some ruins of a temple can be seen by the side of Siphna stream which flows at some distance of Neelkanthi, a village which is 14 miles (23 km) south-east of Chhindwara town. The entrance gate to the main temple is said to date back between 7th and 10th century. It is believed that at one time an area of 264 x 132 sq ft (12.3 m<sup>2</sup>) inside the gate was surrounded by a rampart. The stone slabs of the gate are fastened together with iron hooks. An illegible inscription can be found on one of the stone pillars of the temple. There is a reference to Raja Krishna III of Rashtrakut kingdom. The design of the gate is in Bahmanic style.
- **Hinglag Mata Mandir**, at Ambada (Mohan Colliery, Muari road) almost 40 km (by the Parasia road) south of Chhindwara is one of the notable temples in Chhindwara. It attracts a number of tourists almost every

day, but Tuesday and Saturday are considered to be the best days for worship.

- **Ram Mandir**, a Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Ram, located at the heart of the city, is considered the oldest temple of the city. It was constructed with the old beam and bracket system. In front of Ram mandir there is Badi Mata Mandir, dedicated to goddess Durga.
- **Jama Masjid** is located at Gole Ganj area, almost at the centre of Chhindwara. It is considered as a historical place because it was constructed by famous freedom fighters, the Shaukat Ali Brothers. The Masjid is decorated by Arabic calligraphy, in Mughal and Turkish style
- **Simariya Kalan**- 101 feet Statue of Hanuman built by former union minister and current MLA of Chhindwara Shri Kamal Nath. This temple complex is spread over five acres of land. The temple complex is situated in such a way that it seems like the statue of Lord Hanuman is giving blessings to the devotees. Simariya Kalan village belongs to Mohkhed subdistrict of Chhindwara district of Madhya Pradesh state of India.
- **Sahaja Yoga**:Thousands of followers of Sahaja Yoga [1] come every year to Chhindwara to visit the birthplace of H.H.Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, founder of Sahaja Yoga. She was born on 21 March 1923 to a Christian family in Chhindwara, India (<http://www.chhindwara.org>). Her parents were Prasad Salve and Cornelia Salve, direct descendants of the royal Shalivahana dynasty. Seeing the beauty of this child who was born with a spotless brilliance, they called her Nirmala, which means 'Immaculate'. Later on, she came to be known by the multitudes by the name of H.H.Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – the revered Mother – who was born with her complete Self Realization and knew from a very young age that she had a unique gift which had to be made available to all mankind.<sup>[15]</sup> Her parents played a key role in India's Liberation Movement from under British rule. Her father, a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, was a member of the Constituent Assembly of India and helped write free India's first constitution. He was a renowned scholar, master of 14 languages, and translated the Koran into Marathi. Her mother was the first woman in India to receive an Honors Degree in Mathematics.