



The **Puthia Temple Complex** consists of a cluster of notable old Hindu temples in Puthia Upazila, Rajshahi District, Bangladesh. Located 23 km to the east of Rajshahi city, it has the largest number of historic temples in Bangladesh.<sup>[1]</sup> The temples were built by Hindu Zamindars Rajas of the Puthia Raj family who were noted philanthropists of Rajshahi. The temples have been built in terracotta in a variety of styles combining the typical Jor-bangla architecture with other influences. The Rajbari or Palace of the Raja of Puthia and the Dol Mancha are part of the complex.<sup>[2]</sup> The temples are laid out around a lake with a sprawling lawn.<sup>[3]</sup>

The Puthia Raj family was established by a holy man named Bhatsacharya, who lived in the 16th century. Raja Man Singh, governor of the Mughal emperor Akbar, confiscated the Jagir of the refractory pathan jagirdar of Rajshahi named Lashker Khan and

bestowed the Zamindary on the saintly Bhatsacharya for his learning, but he declined. However, his son Pitambar was granted the Lashkarpur estate permanently. On his death, his son Nilambar received the title of Raja from Emperor Jahangir. The Puthia Royal Family estate was the second largest zamindary and the wealthiest in British Bengal. After India's partition, the then Pakistani government abolished the zamindary system and confiscated all Hindu properties. The Royal Family migrated to India shortly afterwards.



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The Shiva Temple at Puthia over the Shiv Sagar lake. The Roth temple is on the left.

#### Attractions:

Puthia Temple complex, splendor and rich history full of myths and legends, located only 23 km to the east of Rajshahi city comprise of a collection of distinguished old Hindhu temples in Puthia Upazila under

Rajshahi District in Bangladesh. Puthia is called a village of the temple and unlike another part of Bangladesh.

All the temples are well maintained and there are nearly fourteen ancient Hindu temples of different architectural styles founded by the lords of this palace in different times of their decree over the north-western part of Bangladesh since 17th century. The temples have been built using terracottas in a variety of styles merging the typical Jor-Bangla architecture with other influences and it is covered with white plaster the towers above, surrounded by a lake with an extensive lawn, and bazaars.

### **Bhubaneshwar Shiva temple**



This was built in 1823 and the gigantic Shiva Temple you will see on the entrance to the Puthia Village, overlooking a pond and it is the biggest Shiva Temple in the subcontinent. It is a true specimen of the Pancha-Ratna (five-spire) Hindu style common in northern India.



But unfortunately, many of the stone carvings and sculptures were spoiled during the 1971 Liberation War. A giant black-stone phallic representation of Shiva is set inside. At present-day many Hindu devotees come here to offer puja early in the morning and in the evening.

### **Pancha Ratna Govinda Temple**



Located inside the palace, built between 1823 and 1895 by one of the maharanis of the Puthia estate, the Govinda Temple is the most startling monument in Puthia village, It is square in shape with elaborate terracotta designs elaborating the surface and most of the terracotta panels illustrate scenes from the love affair between Radha and Krishna as told in the Hindu epics. A Krishna shrine and is visited by many of the local Hindu populations in the present day.

## Jagannath Temple



The Jagannath Temple, also known as the Roth Temple is devoted to the Hindu God name Jagannath, a form of Krishna. The size of this temple is only 5m x 5m and It is one of the fine examples of Bengali architecture terracotta's reliefs.



## Chota Anhik Mandir



Small in size and located near the Pancharatna Govinda Temple, Chota Anhik Mandir is one of the temples in the perimeter of Puthia Temple Complex.

## Chauchala Chhota Govinda Mandir



It is believed that, this was built between 1790 to 1800. The southern frontage of Chauchala Chhota Govinda Mandir is extensively decorated with terracotta plaques which describe a chapter in the epic Ramayana legend, Radha-Krishna classic stories, floral designs and geometric art and scenes of the civic life of that period.



## Bara Anhik Mandir



Bara Anhik Mandir, stands on the west side of the complex and faces east, architecturally exceptional, was built by the king of Puthia and the only other of the known existence of this type of structure being Rajaram Mandir in Faridpur District.

How to go:

This is very easy to visit the Puthia(পুঠিয়া) from Rajshahi town. There is a bus stand near the railway station. You can use the local bus from there for Puthia(পুঠিয়া). Its around 20 taka per person. You have to get down from the bus at Puthia Bazar(পুঠিয়া বাজার). From Puthia Bazar(পুঠিয়া বাজার), its 4 taka van fare to reach at the main premise. It is approximately 27.3 km away from the main Rajshahi town. After heading to Rajshahi you may take buses or CNG auto rickshaw to reach there. For directions from Rajshahi to Puthia.