

Hanuman-dhoka Durbar Square

World Heritage Site Monument Zone



Kathmandu Metropolitan City
My Legacy, My Pride, My Kathmandu

Most of the cultural centres of Nepal are concentrated around the Kathmandu valley; among those cultural sites, the important one is the *Hanuman-dhoka Durbar Square*. Located at the heart of ancient city Kathmandu, it is a complex of beautiful temples and shrines, both Hindu and Buddhist. Most of them are built in the pagoda style embellished with intricately carved exteriors, built between 12th and 18th centuries. The Durbar Square, with its old temples, palaces, epitomizes the religious and cultural life of the people. It is here that kings of Nepal are crowned and their coronations solemnized. Until the early 20th century the Durbar Square was the King's residence. It is a living open museum of Nepal.

The name *Hanuman-dhoka Durbar* came from the statue of Hanuman established by King Pratap Malla at the entrance of the royal palace in 1672 A.D. The nine-storeyed residence built by King Prithvi Narayan Shah in 1770, is called *Basantapur Durbar*. The whole complex is also known as *Kathmandu Durbar Square*. The palace complex was originally founded during the Lichchhavi period, but as it stands today most of it was constructed by King Pratap Malla in 17th century. The palace was renovated many times in later years. The architectural remains and art objects within the palace complex now existing are from Malla, Shah and Rana periods of Nepal.

The Durbar Square area is actually made up of two sub-areas. The outer complex is renowned for numerous interesting temples as Kumari Ghar, Kasthmandap, Shiv-Parbati Temple, Jagannath Temple, Big Bell etc., while the inner complex comprises the old palace area, Hanuman-dhoka and its courtyards as Nasal Chowk, Mul Chowk, Sundari Chowk, Lohan Chowk, Mohan Chowk, Basantapur Durbar and others. There are many temples in the inner complex also, most notable being the Taleju Temple dedicated to female royal deity. The area includes ten courtyards these days, but prior the great earthquake of 1934, the area was expanded upto New Road Gate including thirty five courtyards.

The Hanuman-dhoka Royal Palace is included in the Protected Monument Zone along with other private buildings. The site is enlisted in the World Heritage Site of UNESCO along with other six monument zones of the Kathmandu Valley in October 1979.

Besides the magnificent temples and shrines, other interesting aspects are various festivals, cultural activities and traditions people are following from centuries, which are presented in the Durbar Square. The major festivals include Indrajatra, Dashain, Gaaijatra, Machchhindra-nath jatra etc. These are the occasion when the people from all over the city gather here to mark their centuries old tradition. All the carvings and architecture in this area are exceptionally fine which make the architecture in this *Hanuman-dhoka Durbar Square* among the most important sights for travellers to see.

The mystical charm of the Durbar Square allures the visitors to spend hours wondering around the area. Among dozens of temples, some of the must see sites are:

Mahendreswor Temple (1)

This temple dates back 1562, during Mahendra Malla's reign. This temple lies at the extreme north of the Durbar Square and is dedicated to Shiva. Inside there is a *Linga* and small image of Shiva's Bull *Nandi* fronts the temple. This is one of the famous temples of the valley.



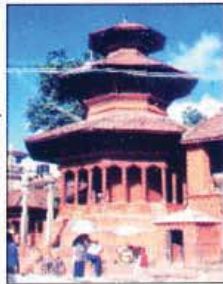
Taleju Temple (38)



Built in 1564 by King Mahendra Malla, this is the royal deity of Malla kings. The temple stands 36.6 metres high, resting on a twelve stage plinth. Its three roofs soar above the rest of the Hanuman-dhoka complex, and until very recent times, it was considered very inauspicious to build a house higher than this temple. At the eighth stage of the plinth, the step broadens out into a platform with twelve miniature temples. This ultra-sacrosanct temple is opened only once a year during Dashain for the people.

Chyasin Dega (7)

The temple of Vansagopal (which means Krishna in the act of playing the flute) was built in 1649 by Pratap Malla in memory of his two dead queens. It is architecturally interesting because of its octagonal plan. Along with deity Krishna, Rukmini & Satyabhama are inshrined. Renovated in 1967.



Basantapur Durbar (43)



Basantapur Durbar also called *Nau-talle Durbar* was built by King Prithvi Narayan Shah in 1770. This dominant nine-storeyed Basantapur Durbar (Kathmandu Tower) was built along with three other towers named after three other ancient cities of the valley the Kirtipur tower, the Bhaktapur tower and the Lalitpur tower.

Tago Gān (Big bell) (10)

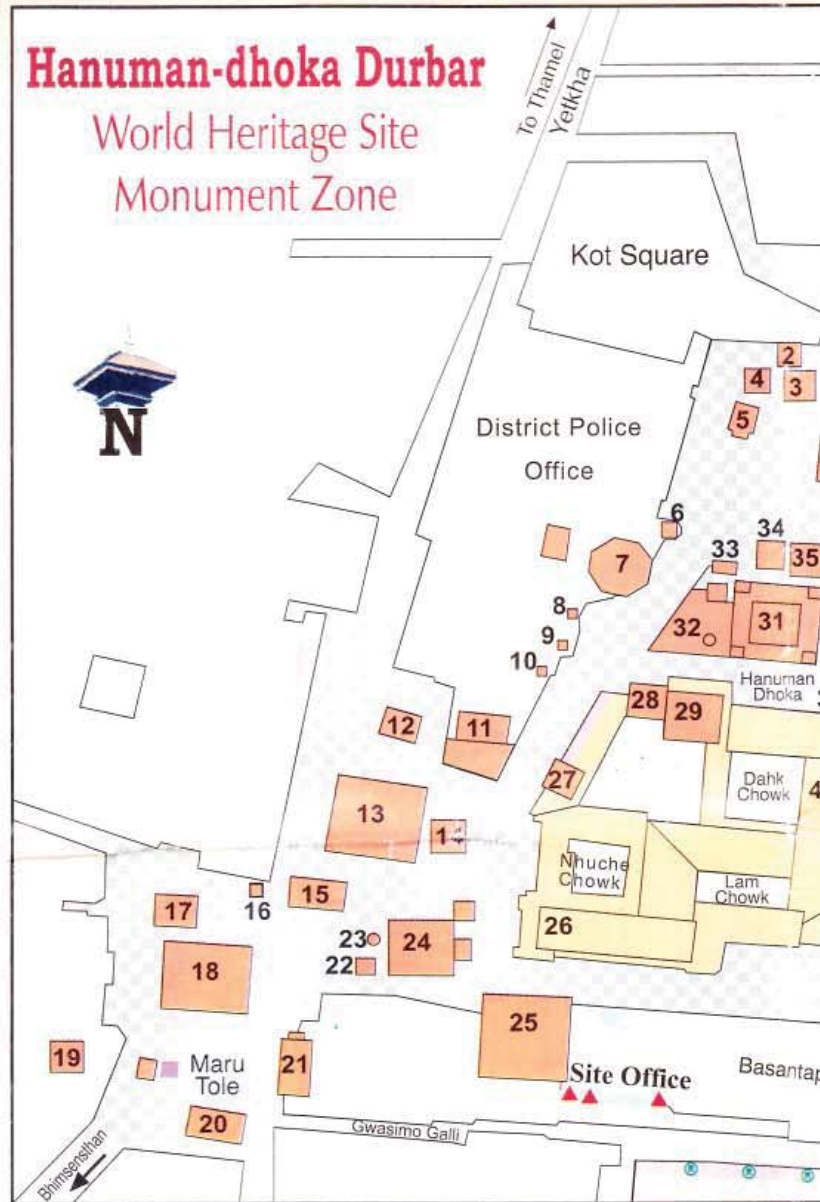
This big bell is supported by two stone pillars and has a tiled roof. King Rana Bahadur Shah and his queen Raj Rajeswori built it in 1797. The bell is rung only when worship is being offered in Degutaleju.



Kal Bhairav (33)

This huge stone image of Bhairav represents deity Shiva in his destructive manifestation. It is undated, but was set in its present

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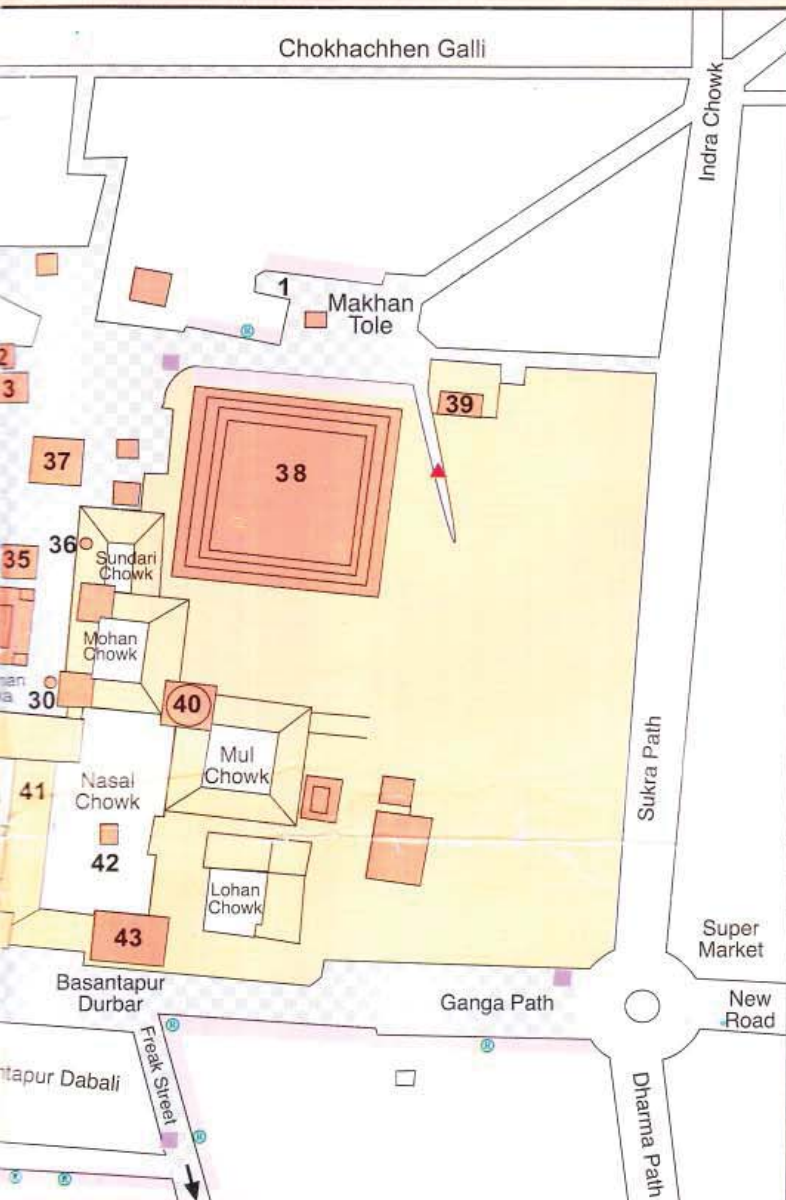
location by King Pratap Malla after it was found in a field north of the city. This is the most famous Bhairav and it was used by the government as a place for people to swear the truth.



Hanuman Statue (30)



The kneeling figure of Hanuman, the Hindu God who is always depicted in the form of monkey, sits on a tall stone pedestal. It was consecrated by Pratap Malla in 1672 AD. To the right of this image is the golden main door of the Hanuman Dhoka Palace, guarded by a pair of stone lions.



1. Mahendreshwor Temple
2. Shiva Temple
3. Mahavishnu Temple
4. Nil Barahi Temple
5. Kotilingeshwor Mahadev Temple
6. Great Drums
7. Chyasin Dega
8. Saraswati Temple
9. Vishnu Temple
10. Big bell
11. Shiva Parvati Temple
12. Narayan Temple
13. Maju Dega
14. Kamdev Temple
15. Laxmi Narayan Temple
16. Ashok Vinayak Temple
17. Bisweshwor Mahadev
18. Kasthamandap
19. Gaa Kuti Mahadev
20. Silyan Sattal
21. Dhansa
22. Bimaleshwor Temple
23. Garud Statue
24. Trailokya Mohan Narayan Temple
25. Kumari-ghar
26. Gaddi Baithak
27. Bhagwati Temple
28. Swet Bhairav
29. Degutalle Temple
30. Hanuman Statue
31. Jagannath Temple
32. King Pratap Malla's Column
33. Kal Bhairav
34. Indrapur Temple
35. Vishnu Temple
36. Stone Inscription
37. Kakeshwor Temple
38. Taleju Temple
39. Tarani Devi Temple
40. Pancha Mukhi Hanuman Temple
41. Tribhuvan Museum
42. Coronation Plateform
43. Basantapur Durbar

- Ticket Counter
- Tourist Toilet
- Handicraft shop
- Restaurant
- Stone Paved Area
- Old Palace Area

Shiva-Parvati Temple (11)



This little uncommon shrine is built on a three step brick platform. The two wooden figure, Mahadev and Parvati, looking from the open central window on the first floor constructed during the reign of King Rana Bahadur Shah.

Maju Dega (13)



Built in late seventeenth century this temple is most impressive one in the storeyed style. Its nine step brick base gives it the size which dominates the skyline of the square. The wooden doorway, pillars, windows and struts are all beautifully carved. There are images of Hindu deities both inside and outside the shrine.

Jagannath Temple (31)

This temple is the oldest structure of the square and is noted for the erotic carvings on its roof struts. The image of Jagannath situated inside temple dates back to 1563 during the rule of Mahendra Malla. The temple has a three-tired platform and two storeys.



Degutalle Temple (29)

This temple forms part of the old palace complex dominating the view of Palace Square. The enshrined deity is mystic goddess of Tantric origin and was a family divinity of the Malla Kings. The temple is built over the second storey and has a restricted access only from the palace.



Ashok Vinayak (16)

Locally called Maru Ganesh is one of the four most important Ganesh shrines of the valley. It is worshiped both by Hindus and Buddhists. The construction date of this temple is not recorded, but its gilded roof was added in the 19th century. The unique feature of this shrine is that it has no finial.

Kasthamandap (18)

Known locally as Maru Sattal, this huge open temple was believed to be built by a single tree. This three storeyed building has an open ground floor, underlining its original purpose as public building. The central image



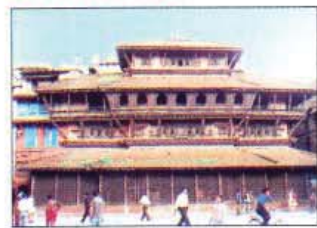
in Kasthamandap is of Gorakhnath and at each of the four corners is an image of Ganesh. Constructed in 12th century and renovated many times and recently.

Silyan Sattal (20)

This large house is located south of Kasthamandap. According to legend it was built with the wood left over from the construction of Kasthamandap. This three storeyed building enhouses a small temple of Harikrishna, used primarily for singing *bhajans*. Renovated in 1934.



Dhansa (21)



Also called Kabindrapur is built by Pratap Malla in 1673 to start a new masked dance of Narasimha, an incarnation of Vishnu. This multi storeyed building serves as shrine as well as *guthi* house and enhouses a number of seventeenth century Hindu sculptures. Renovated at 1934.

Trilokya Mohan Narayan (24)

Built in 1690 by Queen Mother, Riddhi Laxmi, this temple stands on five-stage plinth and has three roofs. The roof struts are carved with different images, while the temple as a whole is dedicated to Vishnu. There is a large kneeling image of Garud in the western side. The temple is connected with Indraajatra festival, during which large crowd come to see the ten incarnations of Vishnu, which are enacted on its pedestal. Also called *Das-abatar mandir*.



Kumari-ghar (25)



Built in 1757 by King Jaya Prakash Malla, *Kumari ghar* is the home of the 'Kumari' or living goddess who is considered to be an incarnation of the goddess Taleju. The *Kumari ghar* is a three storeyed quadrangle lavishly decorated with fine woodcarving. It is the third storey of the building that is especially attractive with its fine bay windows, in which the Kumari

appears form time to time in the company of her guardian priestess to see and be seen by her admirers.

Gaddi Baithak (26)

The eastern side of the palace is closed off by this white neoclassical building. This imported European style building was built as a part of the palace by Chandra Shamsher in 1908 A.D. during the reign of Prithvi Bir Bikram Shah.



Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) office is committed to make Kathmandu a truly unique World Heritage City. For this KMC has adopted following strategy.

- ❖ To contribute to the conservation of Kathmandu's built & living heritages.
- ❖ To make tourism an incentive for conservation and maximize tourist stay.

For the effective and sustainable conservation activities; KMC has been taking tourist service charge from the visitors coming to this *Hanuman-dhoka Durbar Square Area*. The revenue so collected is being utilized for the conservation, restoration of monument and for tourism promotion.

Notice for visitors

The tourist service charge, once paid could be valid for the length of the visa, ticket is valid for the issue date only. If your stay is more than one day, please contact our site office with your PP size photo and passport to make visitor pass.

Your visit, be it a prolonged or a brief one, we hope, would be a memorable one.

Thank you for your visit.

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