Masroor Rock-Cut Temple: Himachal's Monolithic Temple Complex

Study/source reference: identity of the Masroor Temple: official account of the Kangra district portal - historical study reference
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Art and culture: ancient temple architecture and the rock-cut tradition

Study Reference:

According to the official portal of the Kangra district administration, the Masroor Rock-Cut Temple complex is an 8th-century Nagara-style temple group located in the Beas river region of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh, made by carving a single rock.

According to the portal, the complex's construction remained incomplete and it was possibly damaged by earthquakes. Its study-documentation is associated with the works of Shuttleworth (1913) and Hargreaves (ASI, 1915) in the early twentieth century.

Outline of the Masroor Temple Complex
Period: 8th century; rock-cut Nagara-style complex

Site: Kangra (Himachal); Beas river region

Speciality: monolithic carving; shikharas and a sacred water tank

The monolithic claim is based on the official portal

Architectural Identity:

According to the official account, the complex is of the Nagara style and is monolithic - that is, carved from a single mass of rock. The portal mentions the shikharas, the sacred water tank and the mandala layout on a square grid.

From the exam angle: the combination of "Nagara style" + "rock-cut" is Masroor's distinct identity; the portal describes it as a form of north Indian Nagara architecture.

Concept from the Exam Angle:

According to the portal, the temples face the Dhauladhar mountain range in the north-east. The complex is associated with the Shaiva, Vaishnava, Devi and Saura traditions.

Keep the register clear: the dating "8th century" and the construction method "monolithic" are both claims of the official portal; attribution to any specific dynasty is not treated as source-supported here.

Prelims: Practice Questions

Question 1. The Masroor Rock-Cut Temple complex is located in which state/district?

(a) Himachal Pradesh, Kangra

(b) Uttarakhand, Almora

(c) Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu

(d) Punjab, Hoshiarpur

See answer and reason
Answer: (a). Kangra portal: the Masroor Temple is in Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh.

Question 2. Consider the pairs given below about the Masroor Temple:

Pair 1: Period - 8th century

Pair 2: Style - Nagara

Pair 3: Method - monolithic carving

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) All three

(d) None

See answer and reason
Answer: (c). Kangra portal: all three pairs are correct.

Question 3. Consider the following statements:

Statement-I: The Masroor complex is a Nagara-style temple group made by carving a single rock.

Statement-II: The construction of the Masroor complex was fully completed.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) Statement-I is correct, but Statement-II is not correct

(b) Statement-I is not correct, but Statement-II is correct

(c) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct

(d) Neither Statement-I nor Statement-II is correct

See answer and reason
Answer: (a). Statement-I is correct; Statement-II is wrong - the complex remained incomplete.

Source:

Kangra district portal: official account of the Masroor Temple