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The Lingaraja temple, the largest temple in Bhubaneswar. It is regarded as one of the best archaeological monument of the east reflecting Kalinga type of architect. The temple was built by the kings of Somavamsi Dynasty in the 11th century.

The central deity of the temple, Lingaraja, is worshipped both as Shiva and Vishnu (hari hara). Lingaraja, means the king of Lingam, the iconic form of Shiva. Shiva is commonly referred to as Tribhuvaneshwara the master of three worlds:- heaven, earth, and hell.

The temple has been described as “One of the finest examples of purely Hindu Temple in India” by noted critic and historian James Fergusson.

According to tradition, Lord Shiva and Maa Parvati after their marriage came to Varanasi. But with the passage of time, Varanasi became over populated. So Lord Shiva chose this location in Ekamrakshetra(Bhubaneswar) for meditation in disguise.

Maa Parvati came to know about this place from Brahma and came to Ekamra-Kshetra to search for Lord Shiva. There she noticed cows going under a huge mango tree and automatically milking a place. She understood that Lord Shiva is there.

So she took care of the cows as a milkmaid in a place today known as Gopaluni Temple, which is inside the Lingaraj Temple Complex.

The place from which the cows were coming is known as Gosahasreswara or Gosagaresvar and now there is a temple called the Gosagaresvar Temple.

Maa Parvati was noticed by the 2 demons Kirti and Vasa,who wanted to marry her. They were killed by Maa Parvati by pressing them into ground with her feet. That place became famous as Devi Padahara.

Pic-Devi Padahara Tank with 108 miniature Shiva Temples around it

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During the fight with 2 demons she lost her two ear-rings. The earrings were discovered when Lord Shiva struck his trident on the earth near Kapila-kunda. She offered the rings to Lord Kapileswar and the tank from where the earrings were recovered is known Manikarneswara kunda.

(Near the Manikarnika Tank is Kapileswara Temple. ■■)

After defeating the demons Maa Parvati became tired and took rest at a place called Bhabani Shankar Temple. ■■

Maa Parvati felt thirsty and to quench her thirst lord Siva struck his trident at a place, out of which a spring came out. The water was then sanctified by the waters of all rivers, streams and ultimately took the shape of a large water body. Which is today known as Bindusagar.

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