

## Art and Culture of Chanderi Region

Karan<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Suresh Chandra<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Vir Narayan<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>Research Scholar, History, Vikrant University, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

<sup>2</sup>Professor, School of social science and History Studies, Vikrant University, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

<sup>3</sup>Professor, Dean of School of legal studies studies, Vikrant University, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

E-mail: [karanbatham279@gmail.com](mailto:karanbatham279@gmail.com), [dr.virnarayan1981@gmail.com](mailto:dr.virnarayan1981@gmail.com), [karanbatham7377@gmail.com](mailto:karanbatham7377@gmail.com)

**\*Corresponding author:** Karan

Research Scholar, History, Vikrant University, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

E-mail: [karanbatham279@gmail.com](mailto:karanbatham279@gmail.com)

---

### ABSTRACT

The various countries and regions of the world, many great cultures have developed. Many of these either became extinct or were replaced by other cultures. However, Indian culture has always possessed the quality of tolerance. Despite some major changes and upheavals, a thread of continuity can be observed in the stream of Indian history from its inception to the present day. Chanderi's history is one such example; it is not a straight line, but a complex tapestry woven from the influences of various dynasties and cultures. From ancient scriptures to modern archaeological evidence, the story of this town reflects India's journey in civilization, art, and culture.

On one hand, the town of Chanderi is uniquely recognized not just within the state but across the entire country for its historical, archaeological, cultural, artistic, and religious significance. On the other hand, this town has carved out a distinct identity globally for its artistic and attractive handloom-produced **Chanderi sarees**, scarves, and other textile products.

How To Cite This Article: Karan, Chandra S, Narayan V. Art And Culture Of Chanderi Region. Int J Drug Deliv Technol. 2026;16(25s):958-960. Doi: 10.25258/ijddt.16.25s.111

---

### Introduction

Chandery city is considered one of the most important cities in India because it connects Bundelkhand and Malwa. It is currently a tehsil of Ashoknagar district. And its importance also lies in the fact that many films have been shot here. It is about 250 km from Gwalior and 40 to 45 km from Lalitpur. When we know its special history then we are proud of it because the cloth made here has been world famous and this world famous cloth has presented our Indian culture to everyone in the world. Many literary figures have commented on this and it has also been described in literature from Britain, Indonesia, and other countries. For this reason, Chandery is famous all over the world as well as in the film industry of India. The cloth produced here is much finer than that of the Sarbal. This textile industry is also protected by the Government of India, yet its entrepreneurship is not increasing because of its popularity. So it is growing, but the youth are not joining the textile industry here. To make the involvement of youth possible, the Government of India will have to encourage and motivate them.

### Chandery Textiles: A Divine Symbol of Indian Heritage

The art of Chandery textiles is a divine symbol of the Indian handloom tradition that has become the identity of the historic city of Chandery in Madhya Pradesh. Chandery, situated in the Ashoknagar district of Madhya Pradesh, is a historical town located on the borders of Malwa and Bundelkhand. This town is known not only for its magnificent forts, ancient monuments, and Jain temples, but also for its globally famous sarees. It has also earned prestige as the '**City of Weavers**'. Chandery

silk fabric is the most famous among handloom communities due to its **fine weave, remarkable transparency, and exquisite work in artistic designs**.

According to an unpublished article, a manuscript was received in 1857 AD from Siemen Digby, authored by R.C. Sterndale, who was the chief officer of the military battalion in Chandery at that time. Sterndale writes: "Very fine muslins are made in Chandery. The fine muslins of Chandery are much favored by the women of the royal families of South and North India." Even when the quality of muslin fabric began to decline elsewhere, clothing was still produced in Chandery, with a pair sometimes fetching a price between ₹800 and ₹1,000.

### Renown of Chandery Textiles at Home and Abroad

This fabric was very popular both nationally and internationally. The popularity of this muslin fabric in the British markets was so dominant that Daniel Defoe, in his weekly article, complained that Indian cloth (especially muslin and chintz) had infiltrated every house in Britain. His original statement in English was: "It crept into our houses, our closets, and bed-chambers; curtains, cushions, chairs, and at last beds themselves were nothing but calicoes or Indian stuffs."

Defoe further stated that Indian cloth was so cheap and beautiful that everyone in Britain, from the rich women to the poor, was wearing it.

### Main Types and Structure of Chandery Fabrics

Chandery fabric is primarily prepared from a blend of three types of yarn:

**Pure Silk:** Most in demand due to its fine weave and spectacular luster.

\*Author for Correspondence: [karanbatham279@gmail.com](mailto:karanbatham279@gmail.com)

**Chandery Cotton:** Prepared from high-quality cotton yarn, which is light and comfortable.

**Silk-Cotton Blend:** In this blend, silk is usually used in the warp (formerly Japanese silk) and cotton yarn in the weft. In the 1970s, weavers enhanced the fabric's strength by blending cotton and silk, which boosted its popularity significantly.

**Warp and Weft:** In traditional Chandery fabric, the warp is silk and the weft is extremely fine cotton. This hybrid weave gives it both the luster of silk and the comfort and strength of cotton. The history of Chandery textile art is deeply connected to Indian culture and tradition, evolving over centuries through royal patronage and competitive innovation.

Type of Fabric	Raw Material	Distinctive Quality	Historical/Modern Context
Pure Silk	Pure Silk Filament	High luster, excellent transparency	Favorite of royal families, still highest in demand today.
Chandery Cotton	High-Count Cotton, later Mill-spun Cotton	Comfortable, durable	Result of competition with Dhaka Muslin.
Silk-Cotton Blend	Silk (Warp) + Cotton (Weft)	Balance of strength and luster, lightness	Adopted in the 1970s to increase the durability of the weave.
Pat Silk Fabric	Pat Silk	Soft, comfortable to wear, more expensive than spun silk	Growing demand currently, a new market trend.

### The Golden Age of Chandery's Architecture

With the rise of the Malwa Sultanate in the 15th century, Chandery entered the golden age of its architecture. The Sultans of Malwa, especially **Mahmud Khilji**, made Chandery the center of their ambitions. They constructed palaces, mosques, sarais (inns), and baolis (stepwells) here, elevating Chandery to the stature of **Mandu** (the capital of Malwa). Grand structures like the **Koshak Mahal** bear witness to this era.

**Main Gate (Khooni Darwaza):** Known for its massive size and defensive design.

**Hawa Paur:** A small but beautiful gateway inside the fort, showcasing architectural intricacies.

**Kirtidurg (Chandery Fort):** Contains remains of several ancient structures, reminiscent of its early Pratihara and Rajput periods.

**Naokhanda Mahal:** Located within the fort complex, its name comes from its nine-story structure. Although mostly in ruins now, its grandeur and geometric carvings are still visible.

**Koshak Mahal:** Built by the Malwa Sultan Mahmud Shah Khilji in the 15th century. It is made up of four separate and symmetrical rectangular pavilions, each with its own entrance. Its architectural style clearly bears the imprint of Indo-Islamic and Malwa Sultanate influence.

**Jama Masjid:** The largest mosque in Chandery, its architecture is influenced by the Lodhi period. Its most notable features are its tall, domed arches and spacious courtyard.

**Jain Temples:** Several ancient Jain temples and sculptures exist around Chandery, especially in Thubon and Atishay Kshetra, indicating the significant presence of Jainism in the region.

**Baiju Baoli:** Not just a water source, its architecture is also artistic, featuring a beautiful combination of stairs, arches, and chhatris (pavilions).

**Kati Ghati:** Technically not a baoli, but a massive natural gateway cut out of a single rock, which was an important route to reach the fort.

### Folk Culture and Major Dances of Chandery

Folk culture is always born on the earth, sprouts from the soil, and is created by humanity; it is not an external object but depends on the inner feeling of the heart. Folk culture originates from the inspiration of the heart, with no rule or command over it. Whatever incident happens in a person's life is reflected in the form of folk culture, such as:

**Bundelkhandi Folk Songs:** As Chandery is part of the Bundelkhand region, folk songs like **Alha** (heroic ballads) and **Faag** (Holi songs) are prevalent here.

**Badhai Dance:** The Badhai dance of the Chandery region is a dance tradition that has been going on since ancient times. This dance is performed on auspicious occasions, such as the birth of a son or a son's wedding. The Badhai dance is performed by both men and women.

**Saira Dance:** Saira dance is performed on a large scale in the historical city of Chandery and its surrounding areas. The Saira dance is performed with the arrival of the rainy season, when dark clouds gather in the sky and the earth wears a green garment.

**Dhimariyai Dance:** The Dhimariyai dance is also very famous in the Chandery region. This is a caste-specific dance, often performed by the **Dhimar** community, whose main occupation has been fishing. Scholars suggest that when people from the Dhimar community returned home tired in the evening, they would sing and dance to relieve their fatigue.

**Jain Culture:** Since Chandery has been an important center of Jainism (especially the nearby Thubon), Jain festivals like **Paryushan Parva** are celebrated here with great devotion and enthusiasm.

**Fairs:** The organization of religious fairs is an integral part of the culture here, where people come from far and wide for pilgrimage and trade.

**Religious Harmony:** The co-existence of festivals from the Hindu, Muslim, and Jain communities reflects Chandery's Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb (syncretic culture), where everyone participates in each other's celebrations.

### Extensiveness of Sculpture in Chandery

The main center for the preservation and study of Chanderi's sculptural heritage is the **Chandery Archaeological Museum**, managed by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). This museum was established in 1999. It houses many broken sculptures related to the art of sculpture. The archaeological remains from Chanderi's former site, **Budhi Chandery**, are the biggest evidence of the unprecedented rise of Jain art in the region. The remains of 61 Jain temples (including sculptures) found from the ruins here are preserved in the Chandery Museum. The finding of this vast number not only shows the influence of Jainism in that period but also highlights the widespread extent of the subsequent idol destruction (murti-bhanjan).

The Chandery Museum has a separate gallery dedicated to Jainism, where idols related to the 24 Tirthankaras, retrieved from archaeological excavations, are safely kept.

#### **Unique Shivlingas**

There are three unique Shivlingas in the premises of Jogeshwari Mata. One of them is a **Chaturmukha Shivling** (four-faced), on which four faces of Lord Shiva are carved. On the entire surface of the other two Shivlingas, **1100 miniature Shivlingas** have been carved. This intricacy demonstrates the inclusion of miniature art in Shiva iconography and the depth of the Sahastralinga tradition.

#### **Vaishnava Sculpture and Religious Synthesis**

A standing **Chaturbhuj** (four-armed) idol of Vishnu displayed in the Chandery Archaeological Museum is an excellent example of Vaishnava art.

**Depiction of Dashavatara:** The idol is adorned with a panel depicting the **Dashavataras** (ten incarnations) of Vishnu. This clearly indicates the growing popularity of Avataravada and the theoretical expansion of Vaishnava Dharma around the 11th century.

**Religious Coordination (Harmony):** The most notable aspect of this iconography is religious harmony. Although Vishnu is the central deity, besides his vahana (vehicle) Garuda, Brahma-Saraswati (on the upper right side) and Shiva-Parvati (on the upper left side) are also shown as auxiliary deities in this particular idol's upper sections. This depiction illustrates the policy of establishing harmony between various sectors by the contemporary Central Indian rulers, where the Vaishnava deity was given the primary place, but the Shiva and Brahmanical deities were also included in the hierarchy.

#### **Conclusion**

Weaving is done in almost every house in Chandery] requiring exceptional skill- While historically practiced by Muslim and Koli communities] people of all castes

are now involved- However] the youth joining this craft today are not receiving full benefits] as most profits go to middlemen and traders- If this continues] the "warp and weft" of Chandery's global identity may vanish- The administration must create a special system for weavers—not just for traders- Using modern technology] every garment should carry the details of the artisan who made it- This would provide the youth with a sense of pride and a direct connection to the consumer] ensuring that this beautiful art form flourishes for generations to come |

#### **References**

1. Chandery Ka Rajneetik Evam Sanskritik Itihas - Arpita Tiwari (16-October-2015), Pages: 42, 43, 36, 38.
2. Chandery Rajya Ki Mudra Pranali Aur Vidhi Vyavastha: Ek Aitihasik Adhyayan Solahvi Sadi Se Unnisvi Sadi Tak - Ahirwar, Rajkumar (26-April-2023), Page: 30.
3. Chandery Ke Sadi Bunkar: Ek Samajik Vaigyanik Adhyayan - Saraff, Abhilasha (5-April-2016), Page: 22.
4. Chandery Museum, Chandery.
5. Chandery Itihas Aur Virasat - Muzaffar Ahmad Ansari, Pages: 60, 62.
6. Chandery History Heritage & Culture - Muzaffar Ansari, Pages: 33, 52, 70.