

### Explanation of some important terms

1. **Chauchala:** *Chauchala* were four-roofed structures where the four triangular curved roofs met at the top. The *chauchala* style led to the evolution of a unique Bengali architectural style in medieval times which was adopted outside Bengal as well.
2. **Dochala:** This is an architectural style which is associated with the temples built in Bengal during the medieval period. Since this style was adopted from the double- roofed and four- roofed structures of the thatched huts, this came to be known as *dochala* and *chauchala*. These temples were used to be usually built on square platform. The interior of the temple is devoid of any decoration whereas the outer walls have paintings, ornamental tiles or terracotta tablets. The temples built at Bhishnupur exhibit fine examples of this style of temple architecture. The style also incorporated elements of the dome and multilobe arch of Islamic architecture.
3. **Vihara:** The term refers to primarily the place of residence of the Buddhist monks which came into being from the time of the Buddha himself. Initially these residences were constructed of bamboo and reed in the form of hearths in any natural park offered to the Buddha by any of his wealthy followers to rest and preach his teachings to the people of the locality during the four months of the rainy seasons. After his demise, such viharas began to assume more permanent character. By the time of Ashoka viharas either constructed with bricks or hewn out of rocks could be found in most parts of India. Generally, a typical Buddhist Vihara was consisted of a series of individual cells enclosing a courtyard (open space), which served congregational purposes. The cells on the other hand allowed the monks secure spaces for regular practices of meditation. By the beginning of the Christian era, when the Buddha began to be worshipped in the form of images the viharas also tended to become the places of worship. The walls of the caves in the viharas were painted with the figures of Buddha, Bodhisattavas and scenes from the Buddhas life. In viharas belonging to the Mahayana sect one could also find sculptures of Buddha installed for worship. Many of these viharas were built on the famous trade routes of the time like the *uttarapatha* and *dakshinapatha* as well as the silk route. Some of the finest extant (existing) examples of such viharas in present day India are found at Ajanta on the Western ghats in the state of Maharashtra, the Udaygiri and Khandagiri hills of Bhubaneswar in the state of Orissa, Nalanda in Bihar and Nagarjunikonda in the newly created state of Seemandhra.

**Source:** NCERT (2017) *Dictionary of History for School Children (Trilingual)*, National Council of Educational Research & Training, New Delhi.