

Architecture of Fatehpur Sikri

Fatehpur Sikri is a town in the [Agra District](#) of [Uttar Pradesh](#), [India](#). The city itself was founded as the capital of [Mughal Empire](#) in 1571 by [Emperor Akbar](#), serving this role from 1571 to 1585, when Akbar abandoned it due to a campaign in [Punjab](#) and was later completely abandoned in 1610.

The name of the city is derived from the village called *Sikri* which occupied the spot before. An [Archaeological Survey of India](#) (ASI) excavation from 1999-2000 indicated that there was a habitation, temples and commercial centres here before Akbar built his capital.

The [khanqah](#) of [Sheikh Salim](#) existed earlier at this place. Akbar's son [Jahangir](#) was born at the village of Sikri in 1569 and that year Akbar began construction of a religious compound to commemorate the Sheikh who had predicted the birth. After Jahangir's second birthday, he began the construction of a walled city and imperial palace here. The city came to be known as *Fatehpur Sikri*, the "City of Victory", after Akbar's [victorious Gujarat campaign in 1573](#).

After occupying [Agra](#) in 1803, the English established an administrative center here and it remained so until 1850. In 1815, the [Marquess of Hastings](#) ordered repairment of monuments at Sikri.

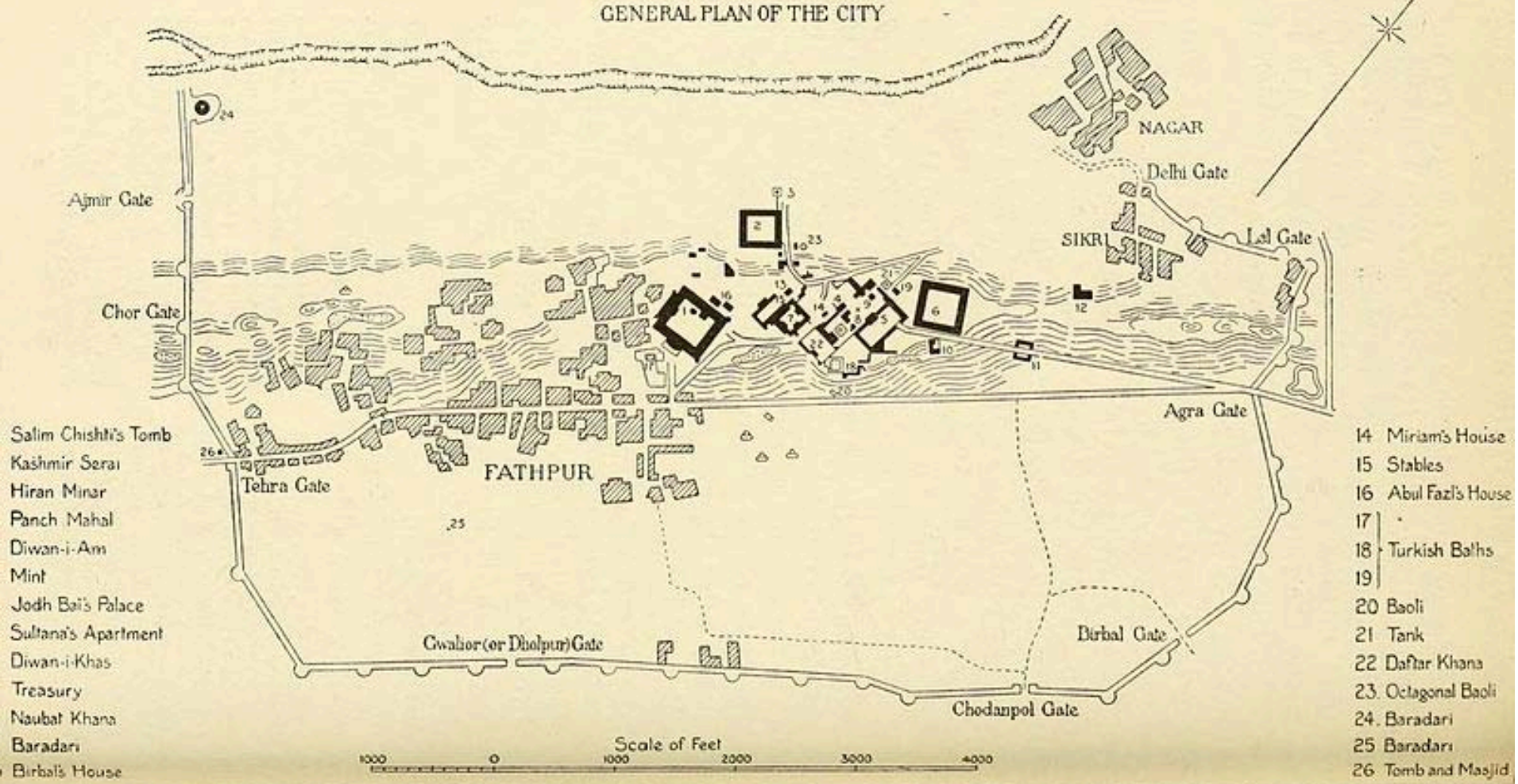
Fatehpur Sikri sits on rocky ridge, 3 kilometres (1.9 mi) in length and 1 km (0.62 mi) wide and palace city is surrounded by a 6 km (3.7 mi) wall on three sides with the fourth bordered by a lake. The city is generally organized around this 40 m high ridge, and falls roughly into the shape of a rhombus. The general layout of the ground structures, especially the "continuous and compact pattern of gardens and services and facilities" that characterized the city leads urban archaeologists to conclude that Fatehpur Sikri was built primarily to afford leisure and luxury to its famous residents.

The dynastic architecture of Fatehpur Sikri was modelled on [Timurid forms and styles](#). The city was built massively and preferably with red sandstone. Gujarati influences are also seen in its architectural vocabulary and decor of the palaces of Fatehpur Sikri. The city's architecture reflects both the Hindu and Muslim form of domestic architecture popular in India at the time. The remarkable preservation of these original spaces allows modern archaeologists to reconstruct scenes of Mughal court life, and to better understand the hierarchy of the city's royal and noble residents.

It is accessed through gates along the 5 miles (8.0 km) long fort wall, namely, Delhi Gate, the Lal Gate, the Agra Gate and Birbal's Gate, Chandanpal Gate, The Gwalior Gate, the Tehra Gate, the Chor Gate and the Ajmeri Gate. The palace contains summer palace and winter palace for queen Jodha.

FATHPUR-SIKRI

GENERAL PLAN OF THE CITY



- Salim Chishli's Tomb
- Kashmir Serai
- Hiran Minar
- Panch Mahal
- Diwan-i-Am
- Mint
- Jodh Bai's Palace
- Sultana's Apartment
- Diwan-i-Khas
- Treasury
- Naubat Khana
- Baradari
- Birbal's House

- 14 Miriam's House
- 15 Stables
- 16 Abul Fazi's House
- 17
- 18 Turkish Baths
- 19
- 20 Baoli
- 21 Tank
- 22 Daftar Khana
- 23 Octagonal Baoli
- 24 Baradari
- 25 Baradari
- 26 Tomb and Masjid

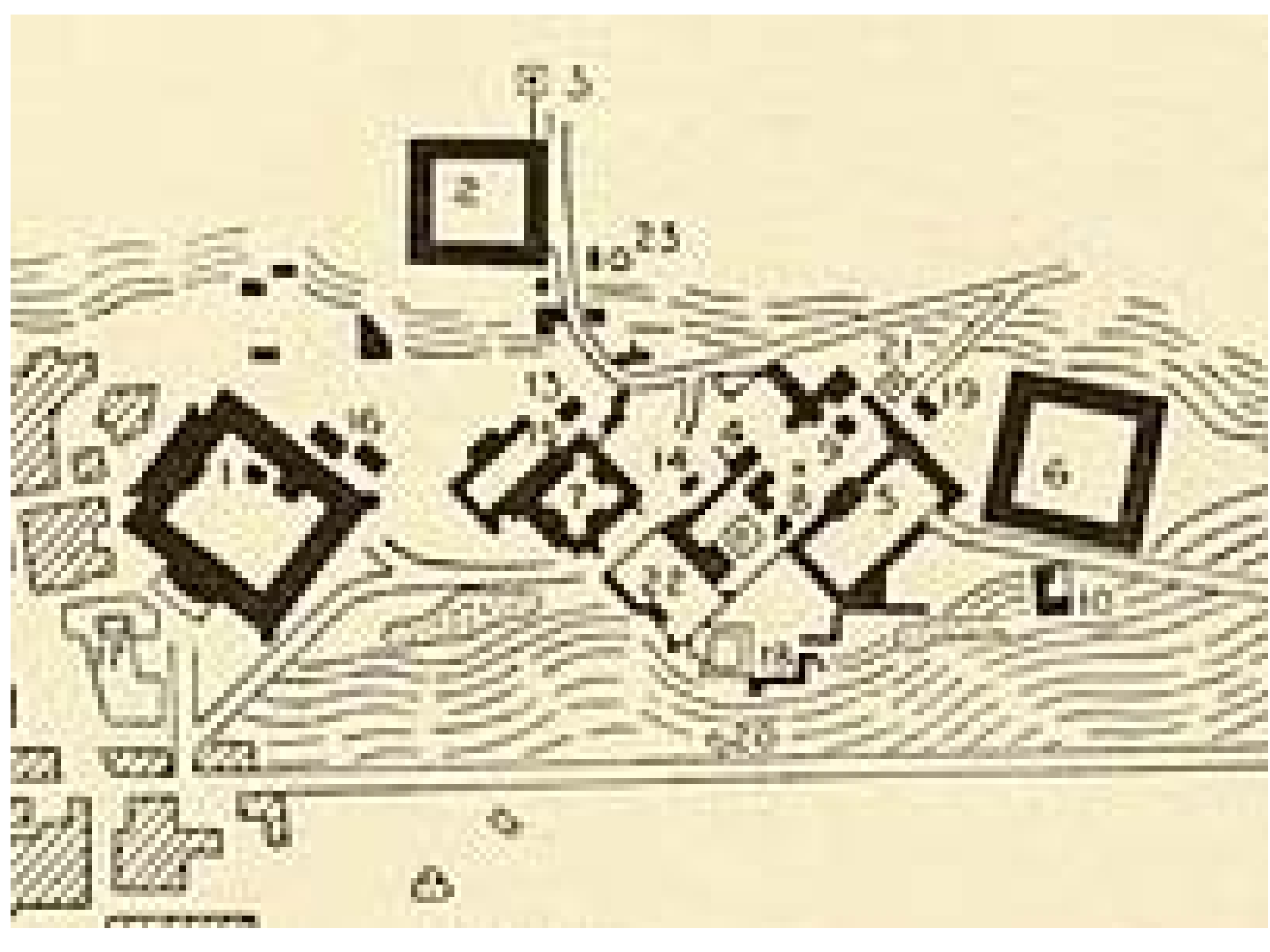






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Buland Darwaza:

Set into the south wall of congregational mosque, the Buland Darwaza at Fatehpur Sikri is 55 metres (180 ft) high, from the outside, gradually making a transition to a human scale in the inside. The gate was added around five years after the completion of the mosque c. 1576-1577 as a victory arch, to commemorate [Akbar](#)'s successful Gujarat campaign. It carries two inscriptions in the archway, one of which reads: "Isa, Son of Mariam said: The world is a bridge, pass over it, but build no houses on it. He who hopes for an hour may hope for eternity. The world endures but an hour. Spend it in prayer, for the rest is unseen".

The central portico comprises three arched entrances, with the largest one, in the centre, is known locally as the Horseshoe Gate, after the custom of nailing horseshoes to its large wooden doors for luck. Outside the giant steps of the Buland Darwaza to the left is a deep well.



Jama Masjid:

It is a [Jama Mosque](#) meaning the congregational mosque and was perhaps one of the first buildings to be constructed in the complex, as its epigraph gives [AH](#) 979 (A.D. 1571-72) as the date of its completion, with a massive entrance to the courtyard, the Buland-Darwaza added some five years later. It was built in the manner of Indian mosques, with iwans around a central courtyard. A distinguishing feature is the row of [chhatri](#) over the sanctuary. There are three [mihrabs](#) in each of the seven bays, while the large central mihrab is covered by a dome, it is decorated with white marble [inlay](#), in geometric patterns.



Tomb of Salim Chishti:

A white marble encased tomb of the [Sufi](#) saint, [Salim Chisti](#) (1478–1572), within the Jama Masjid's [sahn](#), courtyard. The single-storey structure is built around a central square chamber, within which is the grave of the saint, under an ornate wooden canopy encrusted with [mother-of-pearl](#) mosaic. Surrounding it is a covered passageway for [circumambulation](#), with carved [Jalis](#), stone pierced screens all around with intricate geometric design and an entrance to the south. The tomb is influenced by earlier mausolea of the early 15th century [Gujarat Sultanate](#) period. Other striking features of the tomb are white marble serpentine [brackets](#), which support sloping [eaves](#) around the [parapet](#).

On the left of the tomb, to the east, stands a red sandstone tomb of [Islam Khan I](#), son of Shaikh Badruddin Chisti and grandson of Shaikh Salim Chishti, who became a general in the Mughal army in the reign of [Jahangir](#). The tomb is topped by a dome and thirty-six small domed [chattris](#) and contains a number of graves, some unnamed, all male descendants of Shaikh Salim Chisti







Diwan-i-Aam

Diwan-i-Aam or Hall of Public Audience, is a building typology found in many cities where the ruler meets the general public. In this case, it is a pavilion-like multi-bayed rectangular structure fronting a large open space. South west of the Diwan-i-Am and next to the Turkic Sultana's House stand Turkic Baths.



Diwan-I-Am, Fatehpur Sikri

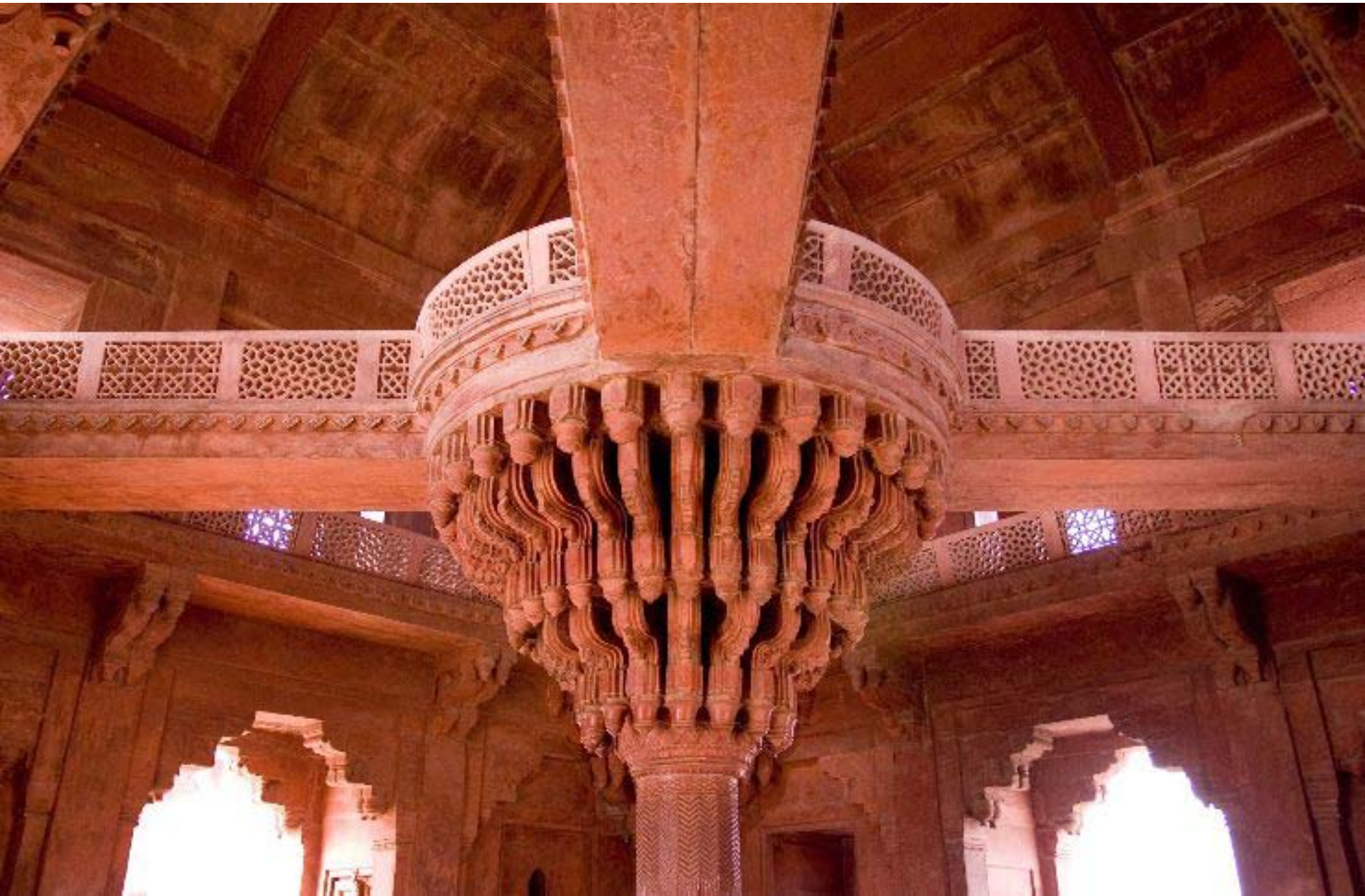


Diwan-i-Khas



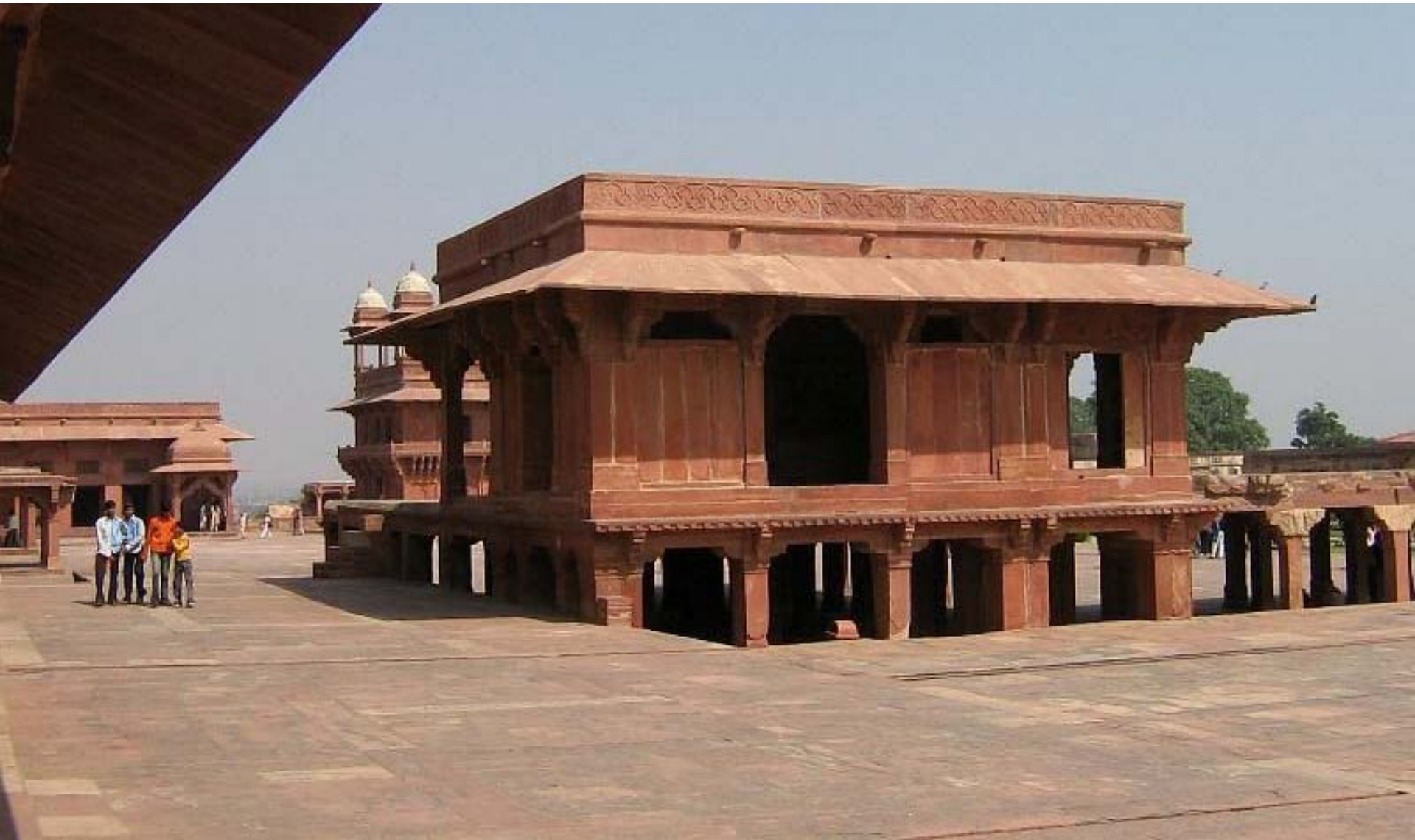
Diwan-i-Khas or Hall of Private Audience, is a plain square building with four *chhatris* on the roof. However it is famous for its central pillar, which has a square base and an octagonal shaft, both carved with bands of geometric and floral designs, further its thirty-six serpentine brackets support a circular platform for Akbar, which is connected to each corner of the building on the first floor, by four stone walkways. It is here that Akbar had representatives of different religions discuss their faiths and gave private audience.

Panch Mahal

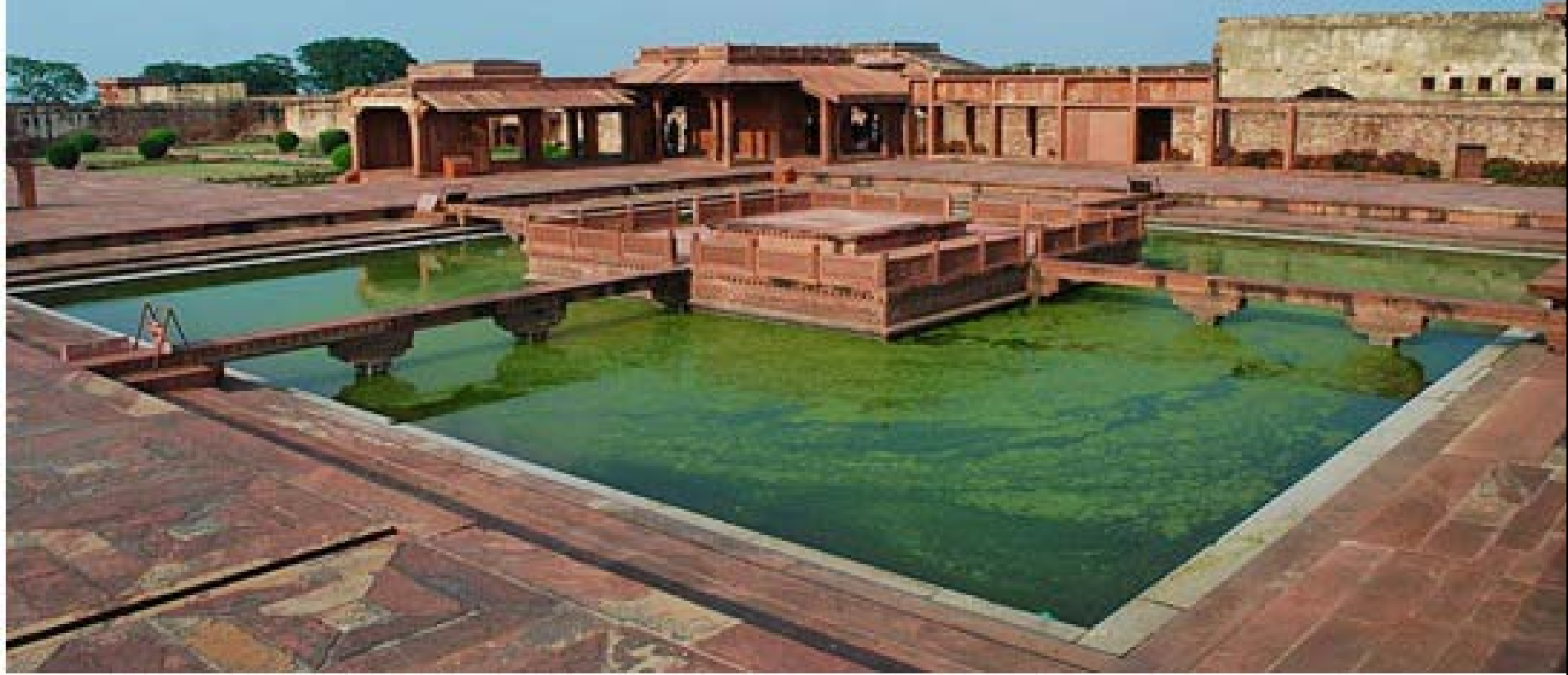


Ibadat Khana

(House of Worship) was a meeting house built in 1575 CE by the Mughal Emperor Akbar, where the foundations of a new Syncretistic faith, Din-e-Ilahi were laid by Akbar.



Anup Talao



Anup Talao was built by Raja Anup Singh Sikarwar. An ornamental pool with a central platform and four bridges leading up to it. Some of the important buildings of the royal enclave are surrounded by it including, *Khwabgah* (House of Dreams) Akbar's residence, *Panch Mahal*, a five-storey palace, *Diwan-i-Khas* (Hall of Private Audience), *Ankh Michauli* and the Astrologer's Seat, in the south-west corner of the Pachisi Court.

[Mariam-uz-Zamani's Palace](#): The building of Akbar's Rajput wives, including [Mariam-uz-Zamani](#), shows Gujarati influence and is built around a courtyard, with special care being taken to ensure privacy.



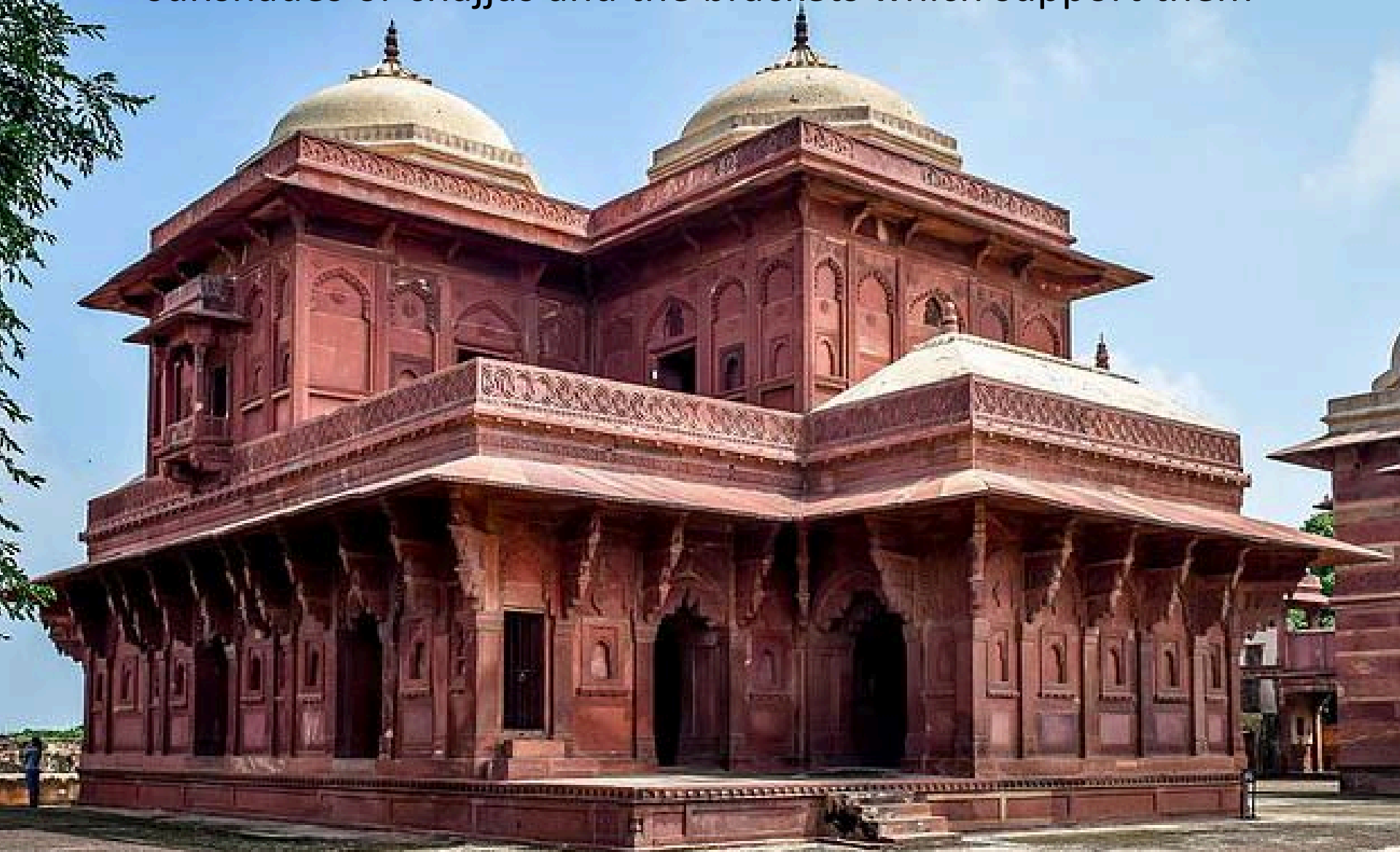
Naubat Khana: Also known as Naggar Khana meaning a *drum house*, where musician used drums to announce the arrival of the Emperor. It is situated ahead of the *Hathi Pol Gate* or the Elephant Gate, the south entrance to the complex, suggesting that it was the imperial entrance.



[Panch Mahal](#): A five-storied palatial structure, with the tiers gradually diminishing in size, till the final one, which is a single large-domed [chhatri](#). Originally pierced stone screens faced the facade and probably sub-divided the interior as well, suggesting it was built for the ladies of the court. The floors are supported by intricately carved columns on each level, totalling to 176 columns in all



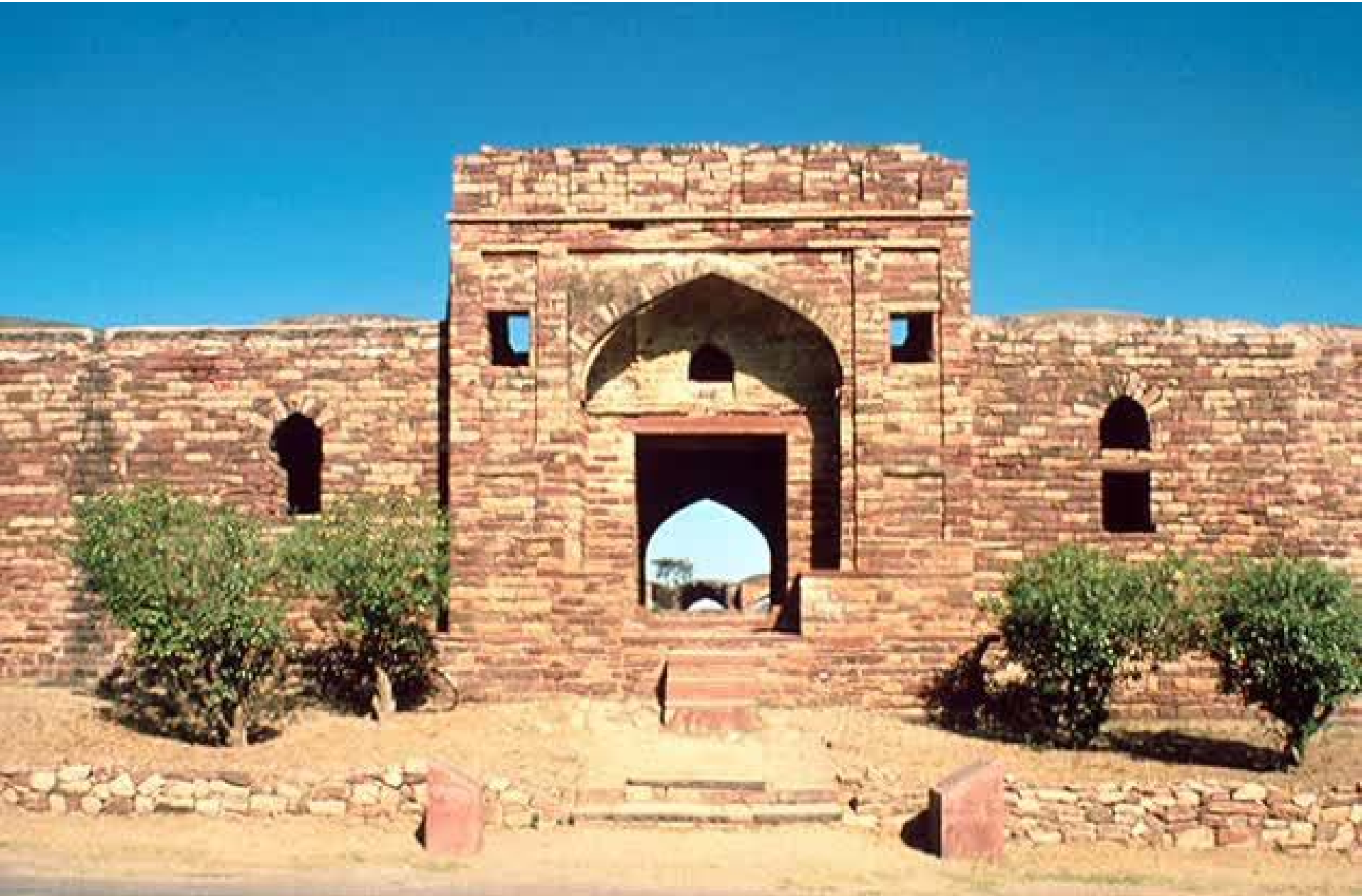
Birbal's House: The house of Akbar's favourite minister, who was a Hindu. Notable features of the building are the horizontal sloping sunshades or chajjas and the brackets which support them



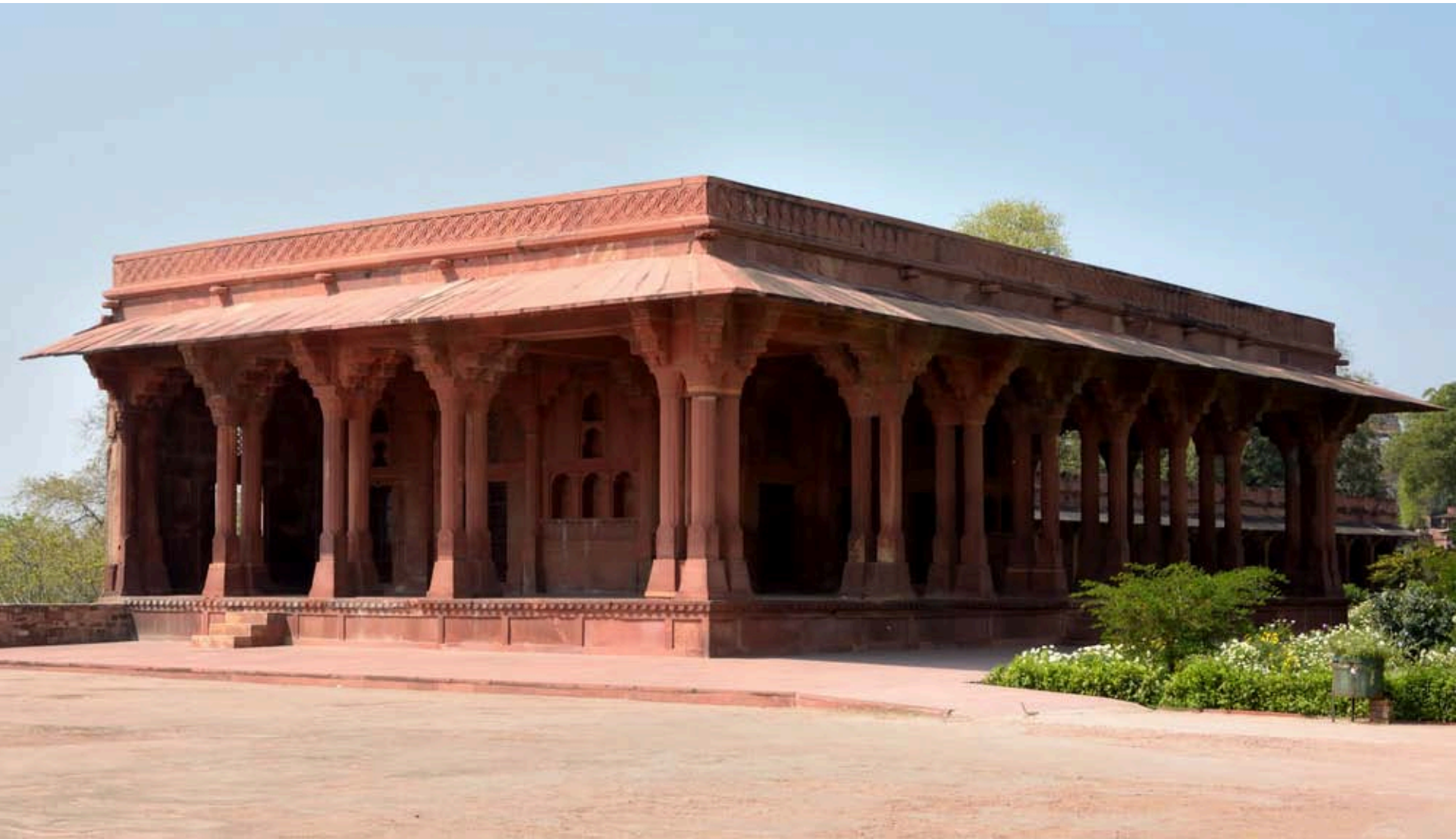


[Hiran Minar](#): The Hiran Minar, or Elephant Tower, is a circular tower covered with stone projections in the form of elephant tusks. Traditionally it was thought to have been erected as a memorial to the Emperor Akbar's favourite elephant. However, it was probably a used as a starting point for subsequent mile posts.

Mint or Tankshal



DAFTAR KHANA FATEHPUR SIKRI



HAMMAM

