

## Paonta Sahib :

Paonta Sahib is situated on the bank of the river Yamuna. There is a Gurudwara dedicated to the tenth sikh guru, Gobind Sigh, who spent five years here. It is a bustling town. The story goes that the place aquired its name after the Guru has lost an ornament that he wore on his foot, known as Paonta. The second in the triangle is Paonta Sahib, a city sacred to the memory of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs. Paonta to Renuka is one arm of the triangle. The road passes through Sataun and follows the Giri River along the beautiful scenery. Situated on the Yamuna River, Paonta Sahib is a bustling township with growing industries. It is one of the important places for the Sikhs. It retains tangible memories of Guru Gobind Singh in the form of his weapons and a majestic Gurudwara. It recalls his presence even in the name of the city which is derived from Paonta meaning "foot", either because he set foot on this place or, according to an alternate story, he lost an ornament which he wore on his foot called "Paonta" while bathing in the Yamuna river.

Legend surrounds the ruins of the old capital of the Raja. Sirmouri Tal, not very far from Paonta Sahib was destroyed by the curse of a court dancer when the Raja went back on an oath to give half of this kingdom in case she crossed a narrow gorge on a rope. This, she did but the wily Raja the offered her the entire kingdom if she could dance her way back. She started back but as she was half way across, he cut the rope hurling the helpless girl into the stream. Floods followed which swept away the city, the Raja and the royal house, as a result of dancer's curse. Vishawkarma temple and few other Hindu temples are also located in Paonta Sahib. The water of river Yamuna is being dammed down stream of Paonta which will soon have a water reservoir where water sports will be organised.

## Paonta Sahib : General Information

**Altitude :** 350 meters

**Headquarter :** Nahan ( altitude 933 meters )

**Location :** in district Sirmaur

**Access by Air :** The nearest airport in Himachal is Jubbarhatti 145 km.

**Access by Rail :** Nearest broad guage line is Yamunanagar 56 km.

**Access by Road :** Almost each and every part of the state is linked by roads.

**Distance :** Nahan 45 km., Shimla to Paonta Sahib 258 km., Chandigarh to Paonta Sahib 132 km.

## Famous Places around Paonta Sahib

**Gurudwara :-** It has been built on the bank of the river Yamuna on the spot where Guru Govind Singh dismounted from his horse after arriving at Paonta, the shrine is an architecture marvel.

**Museum :-** It is located in Paonta Sahib. The museum contains an interesting collection of the personal weapons of Guru Govind Singh.

**Memorial of Rishi Kalpi:-** It has been built in the memory of Rishi Kalpi who was brought to Paonta by Guru Govind Singh.

**Quila Lohgarh :- ( 25 km. )** It was the capital of Baba Banda Bahadur Bairagi and the place from where he started the Khalsa coin.

**Sahstra Dhara :-** At this place there is a confluence of river Yamuna and Tong ( Tamsa ). This is a beautiful place and a paradise for tourists. Nearby is village Kalsi ( now in Uttar Pradesh ) 25 km. from Paonta, which was the old capital of Sirmaur. At this place there is 'Ashokan Rock Edict' which is worth a visit. The Ashoka pillar which stood here was removed to Delhi by one of the Muslim Rulers of the Sultanat period.

**Khodri Dak Pathar :-** It is a beautiful picnic spot just 25 km. from Paonta. There is a beautiful park, a swimming pool and a tourist Bungalow. At this place the torrential river Yamuna has been tamed into an artificial lake by constructing a barrage. From here one can get a fantastic view of the lake and the park nearby. While going from Paonta to Khodri one will be delighted to have the canal side drive. Chhibran power house is an unique sight to see as the entire structure has been built underground.

**Kafota :-** Situated at an elevation of 1,804 metres and 42 km. from Paonta on Jagadhari - Narkanda road is village Kafota which has a salubrious climate and holds potential for picnic. There is a PWD Rest House for comfortable stay. 18 kms. from Paonta Sahib is Rajban Cement Factory. A few kms. from Rajban is Kamrau, the biggest village of Sirmaur district known for rich lime stone quarries. At this place there is a Tilordhar Tibetan Colony with its Buddisht monastery, but the most beautiful one is at Purnwala on way to Bhajain. The Tibetan presence here has resulted in beautiful Tibetan artifacts especially carpets being manufactured for marketing.

**Old Temples :-** Other places of interest around Paonta Sahib are the Patanjali Jyotirlinga Temple, said to have been worshipped by Maharishi Patanjali, a disciple of Maharishi Vyas-the author of epic Mahbharat. Shiva temple at Shivpuri (8 kms.), Bhadarkali temple and Tirgarhi gurudwars at Bhagani and Gangvaha Tirth across the Yamuna where Gangaji crossed over the Yamuna bank to please Rishi Gautam, the husband of the legendary Sati Ahilya. On The Himachal side of the Yamuna Bank near Gangavaha Tirth is Rampur Ghat, which legend associates with the crossing of river Yamuna by Lord Ram on a boat.

**Dei-Ka-Mandir :-** At Paonta Sahib, to the right of Yamuna bridge, stands the Dei-Ka-Mandir, constructed about a century ago by the sister of the then Raja of Sirmaur to propitiate Lord Ram, the family deity of the Suryavanshi Sirmauri Rulers.