SAMPLE

The Dark Mysteries of Bhangarh Fort

India's Most Haunted: The Cursed Fort That the Government Closed After Dark

Aiden Nightfall

Free sample: Introduction & Chapter 1

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The Dark Mysteries

This free sample contains the Introduction and Chapter 1. The complete book contains the full contents above.

Introduction

In the Aravalli Hills of Rajasthan, about 50 kilometers from the nearest city, stand the ruins of a fort that the Indian government has officially declared off-limits after sunset. A signboard at the entrance, posted by the Archaeological Survey of India, reads: "Entering the borders of Bhangarh before sunrise and after sunset is strictly prohibited." It is one of the only places in India — or anywhere in the world — where a government has formally prohibited after-dark access to an archaeological site, not for security or conservation reasons, but because of what people have experienced there.

Bhangarh Fort was built in 1573 by Raja Bhagwant Das, a ruler of the

Kachwaha dynasty. For a century, it was a prosperous town. Then, according to legend, it was cursed. The fort and the village surrounding it were abandoned, and they have remained abandoned for nearly 400 years. The ruins are extensive — temples, palaces, bazaars, and gateways, all in varying states of collapse, all empty. There is no settlement within two kilometers of the fort. The nearest village, Gola ka Baas, sits at a cautious distance.

What makes Bhangarh different from other haunted places is the official dimension. This is not a place where ghost stories circulate informally — it is a place where a national government agency has acknowledged that something unusual enough warrants a formal restriction. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) does not post warnings at every old ruin in the country. At Bhangarh, it does.

This book investigates what witnesses have actually reported at Bhangarh Fort, what historical records document about its rise and fall, and what science and scholarship can explain. It separates the genuine mysteries — and there are genuine mysteries — from the hoaxes, the exaggerations, and the internet fabrications. It is honest about what remains unknown, because at Bhangarh, as at the best haunted places, the line between the explained and the unexplained is not as clear as anyone would like.

Chapter 1: What Happened Here?

Bhangarh Fort sits in a valley in the Aravalli Hills, in the Alwar district of Rajasthan, approximately 50 kilometers from the city of Alwar and 235 kilometers from Delhi. The fort is bounded by hills on three sides and opens to a valley on the fourth. The location was chosen for its natural defenses and its access to a water source — a stream that runs through the valley during the monsoon and feeds a series of step-wells (baolis) within the fort complex.

The fort complex is substantial. The outer walls enclose an area of approximately 1.5 square kilometers, containing the remains of the main palace, several Hindu temples (including a notable temple to Lord Shiva and another to Hanuman), a bazaar area, residential quarters, and gateways. The structures are built of local stone — a pale yellow sandstone common to Rajasthani architecture. Many of the buildings are in an advanced state of ruin: roofs have collapsed, walls have crumbled, and vegetation grows from cracks in the masonry. But the scale of the complex is still evident — this was once a substantial town, not a remote outpost.

The isolation of Bhangarh is one of its most striking features. Despite being a protected archaeological site with historical significance, it is not surrounded by the dense settlement that typically accompanies Indian heritage sites. The approach road passes through fields and scrubland. There is no town adjacent to the fort walls. The nearest settlement, Gola ka Baas, is about 2 kilometers away. This isolation is not coincidental — the local population has maintained a distance from the fort for generations, and the reasons for that distance are woven into the fabric of the haunting.

The stories of Bhangarh's haunting are rooted in two separate curse legends, both dating to the 17th century. The first involves Guru Balu Nath, a sadhu (holy man) who is said to have meditated at the site where the fort was built. According to the legend, Raja Bhagwant Das obtained Balu Nath's permission to build the fort on one condition: that the fort's shadows would never fall on the sadhu's meditation spot. The king agreed, and the fort was built. But as the town grew and buildings rose higher, the shadow of the fort eventually reached the sadhu's ashram. The curse was triggered. Balu Nath declared that the fort would be destroyed and the town abandoned. And so it was — according to the legend.

The second, more famous curse involves a magician named Singhiya (also spelled Singhiya or Singhiya Nath) who fell in love with Princess Ratnavati, the beautiful daughter of the fort's ruler. According to the legend, Singhiya was skilled in black magic and attempted to bewitch the princess by casting a spell

on a bottle of perfume (or hair oil, depending on the version) that he intended for her to use. The princess, however, was suspicious and threw the bottle against a rock. The bottle's magic rebounded onto Singhiya, killing him. With his dying breath, Singhiya cursed the fort and all who lived in it, declaring that no one would ever live there again.

Both legends end the same way: Bhangarh was abandoned and has remained abandoned. The village surrounding the fort was depopulated, and no one has lived within the fort walls for nearly four centuries. The legends are oral traditions, passed down through generations of local villagers, and they have been documented by folklorists and journalists. There are no contemporary written records from the 17th century that confirm either story.

For most of its history, Bhangarh was a local legend known primarily to the people of the Alwar region. That changed in the early 2000s, when the site began attracting attention from Indian paranormal investigators. The Indian Paranormal Society (IPS), founded by Gaurav Tiwari, conducted investigations at Bhangarh and published accounts of anomalous readings and personal experiences. These accounts were picked up by Indian media — the Times of India, Hindustan Times, and eventually international outlets — and the fort's reputation grew.

The ASI signboard at the entrance, which prohibits after-dark entry, has become one of the most photographed warning signs in India. Its existence is itself a form of testimony: the ASI does not post such warnings at every archaeological site. The signboard has been in place for decades, and while the ASI does not explicitly attribute the restriction to paranormal activity, the restriction is widely understood by visitors and locals as an acknowledgment that something unusual happens at Bhangarh after dark.

Social media accelerated the spread. YouTube channels dedicated to paranormal investigation have visited Bhangarh, producing video content that ranges from serious investigation to sensational clickbait. Bollywood has shown interest — the fort was reportedly considered as a filming location for horror films, though the ASI has restricted commercial filming. The result is that Bhangarh is now one of India's most famous tourist destinations for those interested in the paranormal, drawing thousands of visitors during authorized hours even as it remains empty and forbidden after sunset.

Witness Account A tourist from Delhi, writing on a travel forum in 2019, described his experience: "We went in the morning, about 10am. The place is beautiful in daylight — old temples, stone paths, monkeys on the walls. But there is a feeling. I cannot explain it. When you walk through the bazaar area, the shops have no roofs, no doors, but you can see where they were. And it

feels like the people just left. Not decades ago — like yesterday. I did not want to stay. I wanted to leave before sunset, even though I don't believe in ghosts."

Key Takeaways - Bhangarh Fort, built in 1573, was once a prosperous town in Rajasthan before it was abandoned and never reoccupied. - Two curse legends explain the abandonment: Guru Balu Nath's shadow curse and the magician Singhiya's dying curse on Princess Ratnavati. - The ASI signboard prohibiting after-dark entry is one of the few government-issued paranormal-related restrictions at any archaeological site in the world.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Aiden Nightfall writes at the intersection of horror, mystery, and history. His Dark Mysteries series investigates supernatural folklore across cultures -- from the water spirits of Morocco to the haunted fortresses of Eastern Europe -- asking not whether the stories are true, but why they persist.

Each book combines archival research, on-the-ground reporting, and psychological analysis to separate the myth from the mechanism without losing the atmosphere that makes the stories worth telling. His editorial standard is historical accuracy: dates verified, sources cross-referenced, nothing embellished.

He writes in the hours after midnight, when the research feels closer.