

## A TERRACOTTA TEMPLE IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

A Jain temple is an isle of quiet in a bustling suburb

# Stones of the Earth



A stillness descends as you find your way through the expansive grounds of the Dadabadi Jain Sevashram towards the Terracotta Temple. Only a stone's throw from the other, more popular, Karwan Jain Temple in Gudimalkapur near Mehdiapatnam, the Dadabadi Jain Temple is a beauty of dulcet contrasts and a true oasis of peace in the otherwise crowded and narrow lanes of Karwan. Built of terracotta and marble, this 200-year-old Shwetambar Jain temple is a unique structure.

You cannot help but admire the beauty of the rather unusual combination of the brick red of the terracotta and the pristine white of the Rajasthani marble. Not to mention the intricate patterns carved into them. Despite the busy surroundings, the tranquility remains undisturbed – neither by the pigeons flocking to the basins of birdseed kept out for them – nor by the steady trickle of regulars who come by everyday from all parts of the city to go about their solitary sojourn of faith and prayer.

Past all this, as you enter the main sanctum sanctorum, the smile on Dada Shri Jin Kushal Suri's idol, to whom this temple is dedicated, only adds to the mood. You don't have to be a Jain to experience a sense of calm here in this picturesque temple. Besides the Dadabadi shrine and terracotta temple, you will also find an old step-well now in disuse, a conspicuously bright and new playground, and a multi-tiered marble fountain amidst all the lush foliage on the grounds. There is also an old people's home and a wedding hall for Jains here. ■

### DON'T MISS:

Sundays and full moon days, if you want to attend a ritualistic Jain prayer.

### HANDY TIP:

Though not mandatory, it is recommended that one wears white when visiting the Dadabadi Jain Temple as it is part of the Shwetambar Jain sect.

### GETTING THERE:

Head towards to the Gudimalkapur Park from Mehdiapatnam. The temple is inside the Dadabadi Jain Sevasharam complex opposite the Sarada Nagar Community Hall, a little beyond the Gudimalkapur Park.

TEXT AND PHOTOS: NEEHARIKA SATYAVADA