Conclusion
CONCLUSION

In the foregoing study an attempt has been made to trace the tradition of the building construction in Bundelkhand established by the Chandelas and followed by the Bundelas. Though the Chandelas earned a great reputation in the political as well as in the cultural field in early medieval India but their beginning was quite humble. They started their political career in about A.D. 830 under the suzerainty of the Pratiharas, and possessed small principality situated around Khajuraho. The area was under the control of Nanuka, the first ancestor of the clan. Later on his successors, each in his turn, enlarged the ancestral territory. It was during the time of Yasho Varman son of Harsh Deva the territorial expansion took place the most and his military actions established the power of the Chandela state on a firm footing so henceforth it was virtually independent.

After conquering a vast territories Yasho Varman consolidated his political power. These victories brought enormous wealth with which he embarked upon to initiate new victories in the field of the construction sector. It is believed that the buildings in Khajuraho were constructed during his time. Thus by erecting the Laxman temple he laid down the tradition of the construction of buildings in the region.

His son Dhanga (c. 950-1008) went ahead in both the fields, that is, in conquering new territories and in the construction sector. He started the work of beautifying Khajuraho. The temples Visvanath and Parsvanath among others came into existence during his reign. Besides, the most imposing temples were built by him namely, the Kandariya, the Devi Jagdamba, Chitragupta, the Vamana and others.

The Chandela rule went on under numerous rulers. Prominent among them were Vidhyadhar (c.1017-1029), Vijayapala (c. 1030-1050), Kirti Varman (c.1060-1100), Madan Varman (c.1129-1167) and Yasho Varman. Even after, the rule of the Chandela dynasty continued till 1545 when its last ruler was killed at Kalinjar by Sher Shah.

Each ruler contributed enormously in the field of the construction sector. During their long years of rule forts, palaces, dams, tanks and stepwells were constructed. They mainly concentrated on three kinds of edifices: one, temples two, forts and the third, water harvesting structures. Large number of religious shrines came into existence during their reign at Khajuraho, Mahoba, Kalinjar, Ajaigarh and many others. The fortresses were built at strategic points which guaranteed peace in rural as well as in urban areas.
Prominent among them are Barigarh, Kalinjara, Ajaigarh, Maniyagarh, Marpha, Maudha, Garha and Mahijar.

This part of the kingdom was much less fertile than the region between the Ganges and the Jamuna. In accordance with the tradition of the Chandela rulers supervised the irrigation of their and water supply to the urban population. Hence wells, tanks and artificial lakes were built of various sizes. All sorts of tanks were dug out and constructed by kings, queens and nobles. Through these means the dependence of the peasants entirely on rainfall was reduced.

The Bundelas emerged and established their political dominance over Garh Kundar in 1257 and remained there until 1531. Then they shifted to Orchha and established capital there by Rudra Pratap in the same year. In fact, the emergence coincides with the foundation of the capital at Orchha. Their territorial base was enlarged under Bharati Chand and Madhukar Shah (1554-92). He was clever and diplomatic, therefore accepted the Mughal suzerainty in 1577. This policy was continued under his son Ram Shah.

The cordiality with the Mughals proved beneficial to the Bundela state especially to the newly established capital Orchha. The peace prevailed in the state and the work of building construction was progressed at fast pace. Large number of edifices such as the forts, palaces, temples came into existence. The gardens were laid out in different parts of the capital town Orchha by Madhukar Shah. A new structure – the funeral memorial (chhatri) was erected at Orchha by him.

The real revolution in the field of construction sector came with the accession of Bir Singh Dev at Orchha in 1605. The throne of Orchha came in his possession as a result of his friendship with the Mughal emperor Jahangir. The accession of Jahangir in 1605 completely changed the fortunes of the Bundela chief. He was given entire Bundelkhand. The attending of the investiture ceremony of Bir Singh dev by Jahangir not only clarified the occasion but enhanced the political stature and prestige of the Bundela chief.

It is said that the foundation of the Jahangir Mahal was laid down on the occasion of the visit of the Mughal emperor. The initiation in the construction sector further enlarged the work and progressed at fast track. He was a prolific and the greatest builder in the rank of the Bundela rulers. He is said to have started construction of 52 buildings
on the occasion of his 52nd birthday. He erected both religious as well as secular edifices which included forts, palaces, gardens, temples, cenotaph and the water harvesting structures such as dams, tanks, stepwells and wells. After his demise, his grandson Sujan Singh (1653-72) constructed a tank known as the Sujan Sagar in village Arjar. Besides, his queen Brijkumari laid out a garden spreaded in 10 kms. Apart from the cenotaphs no construction work of significance was carried out. After that the building activities were started at Panna and surrounding areas under the leadership of Maharaja Chhatrasal.

Variety of edifices were erected by both the Chandelas and the Bundelas in the areas under their control. The objective of my study has been to trace and document the efforts of the rulers of both the dynasties in the area of building construction and water harvesting and conservation of rain and sub-soil water as well as to make comparison between the Chandela and the buildings built during the time of the Bundelas.

Besides adorning the capital and other royal seats with a variety of monuments and water structures the Chandelas built edifices in rural areas too. We can conclude without any hesitation that the number of edifices left by the Chandelas to the posterity are larger than the monuments left by the Bundelas.

The buildings of the Chandelas belonged to the pre-Turkish period therefore the building technology too was associated to the contemporary period. Through the construction of varieties of buildings the indigenous building and hydraulic technology developed stage by stage. As experience, in the construction field expanded, the buildings too got more refinement. During this period the buildings were constructed on the 'column and beam' principal. In this form beams of stone were supported horizontally by two vertical columns. Another device is employed to remove the deficiency of this form of construction known as the corbel. The temples of the Chandela period were built mostly on the column and beam device. Though I have hinted at the method or form of the construction of the buildings in the Chandela period but it is beyond the purview of my thesis.

The changes in the building construction came with the advent of the Turks in India. New forms arch and vault/dome were introduced in construction. Lime mortar as a cementing material was introduced in building sector. The use of bricks in the construction was increased manyfold and started to match construction in stone.
Intimate and cordial relations with the Mughals encouraged the Bundelas to adopt the new forms of building construction. The arch forms the dominant feature of the Bundela architecture. Lime mortar as a cementing material was a new introduction.

In the field of water harvesting, conservation and management both the Chandelas and the Bundelas played an outstanding role. This was necessitated by the hilly and rocky geographical conditions. The rulers of both the dynasties gave a befitting answer to the geography by creating variety of water bodies such as dams, tanks, stepwells and wells. The former built innumerable water monuments. Prominent among them are Kirat Sagar, Rahila Sagar, Vijay Sagar, Madan Sagar and Kalyan Sagar at Mahoba.

Four points emerge from the study of these Chandela water bodies one, massive earthen embankment two, stone pitching of the embankment mostly on both the sides and sometimes only on the inner side. Three, use of equal dimensions stones i.e., 2 ft x 2 ft x 1 ft and last, higher breadth than height.

Our field study shows that these water structures are still intact only stone pitching is dislocated but the earthen embankment is standing like rock. On the basis of my study a tentative conclusion may be drawn. Admixing of stone dust and gypsum perhaps made it possible. To reach on sound conclusion a detailed technical study of these structures is necessary so as to understand the reasons for the longevity of these water monuments.

The construction of hydraulic works continued under the Bundelas. The dams and tanks built during this period were larger in size particularly in height. It is evident that the size of the dam increased as the experience of the engineers enlarged.

Two distinct technical advances were made in the long turn over the Chandela structures: one, widespread use of lime mortar, two, replacement of rubble laterite material by the dressed stones. However, the Bundela hydraulic structures are advanced technologically but far behind in numerical strength than the Chandelas.

Moreover, the Bundelas were far ahead of the Chandelas in the field gardens. They laid out well planned gardens with a series of fountains connected with water tank. Another buildings which made the panorama of the capital magnificent were the havelis or the kothis of the nobles. These brick and stone structures had no counterpart in the Chandela period. However, these buildings made Bundelkhand to shine in the construction sector.