

## **Continuing with the Past: The Living Megalithic Traditions of the Nath Cult in Shankargarh, Uttar Pradesh**

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### **Abstract**

The North-Eastern Vindhya is one of the important regions for archaeological vestiges. Material remains reported in this area confirmed the presence of humans since prehistoric times. During the protohistoric period, the area is dotted with megalithic burial cemetery sites indicating a favorable place for those. Numerous burial cemetery sites and types of megaliths suggest the presence of an ancient tradition and customs related to mortuary practices. Due to lack of comprehensive research, several facts remain unanswered in relation to the burial traditions and customs of ancient human beings. In order to understand the beliefs and traditions related to the megalithic burials, it may be pertinent to study the modern population that follows the analogous practice. A few indigenous folks who practice burying the deceased produce socio-religious features which are probably linked to the ancient megalithic tradition. One such indigenous community is 'Nath', commonly known as Jogi or Saperas, who follows the burying process of death disposal. The paper highlights the beliefs and rituals about the memorial stones and the process of their erection in modern times.

*Key words:* Vindhyas; Megaliths; Tribes; Nath; Living Burials; Customs.