



# PM Modi Celebrates Bundelkhand's Kalinjar Fort

## Why in News?

In the 124th edition of his [Mann Ki Baat](#) address, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** highlighted the historical importance of **Bundelkhand's Kalinjar Forts**, calling them symbols of **cultural pride** and **resilience**.

- The Prime Minister urged citizens to explore these forts to connect with India's rich past and help boost tourism in the Bundelkhand region.

## Key Points

- **Kalinjar Fort:** Bundelkhand's [Kalinjar Fort](#) is located in Tarahati, Banda district, Uttar Pradesh. The Fort is a historical monument perched **atop a hill in the Vindhya Range**.
  - It holds great cultural and historical value, combining features of both **giri durga** (hill fort) and **vana durga** (jungle fort).
- **Architecture:**
  - The fort features **seven gateways** (e.g., Alamgiri Gate, Ganesh Gate) and significant structures like **Neelkanth Temple** and **Qanati Mosque**.
  - It has [Bundela architecture](#) with **palaces, temples, and water tanks**.
  - Famous structures include the **Neelkanth Temple** with its massive Kal Bhairav sculpture, **Rani Mahal**, **Venkat Bihari Mahal**, and **Sher Shah's Tomb (his mortal remains were later brought to Sasaram, Bihar)**.
- **Defensive Strength:** The fort's **45-meter-high ramparts** made it virtually impregnable, surviving artillery attacks such as **cannonballs** that bounced off its walls.

## Historical Legacy of Kalinjar Fort

- The fort has been associated with various dynasties such as the **Guptas, Gurjara-Pratiharas, Chandelas, and Mughals**.
  - **Mahmud of Ghazni (A.D. 1023):** Mahmud of Ghazni attempted to **Siege Kalinjar** but failed to breach its defenses. After an unsuccessful siege, the **Chandela Raja Ganda Deva** offered **peace** by presenting complimentary verses, and the fort was eventually **surrendered** without a complete conquest.
  - **Qutubuddin Aibek (Early 13th century):** After the rise of the **Delhi Sultanate**, **Qutubuddin Aibek**, a general of **Muhammad Ghori**, captured Kalinjar Fort, marking a significant shift in its control to Muslim rulers.
  - **Sher Shah Suri (1545):** **Sher Shah Suri died** in an accidental gunpowder explosion **during the siege of Kalinjar fort** on 13th May 1545.
  - **Mughals (1569):** Kalinjar was captured by the **Mughals** under **Akbar** in 1569 after Sher Shah's death. **Raja Birbal (one of Akbar's Navratnas)**, was granted the fort as a **jagir**.
  - **British (1812-1817):** The **British** took control of Kalinjar after it was surrendered by the local ruler **Daryau Singh** in 1812 following a siege by **Colonel Martindell**.
    - In the **1857 Uprising**, the fort's strong defenses were instrumental in withstanding the revolt, but it was eventually dismantled in 1866.

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