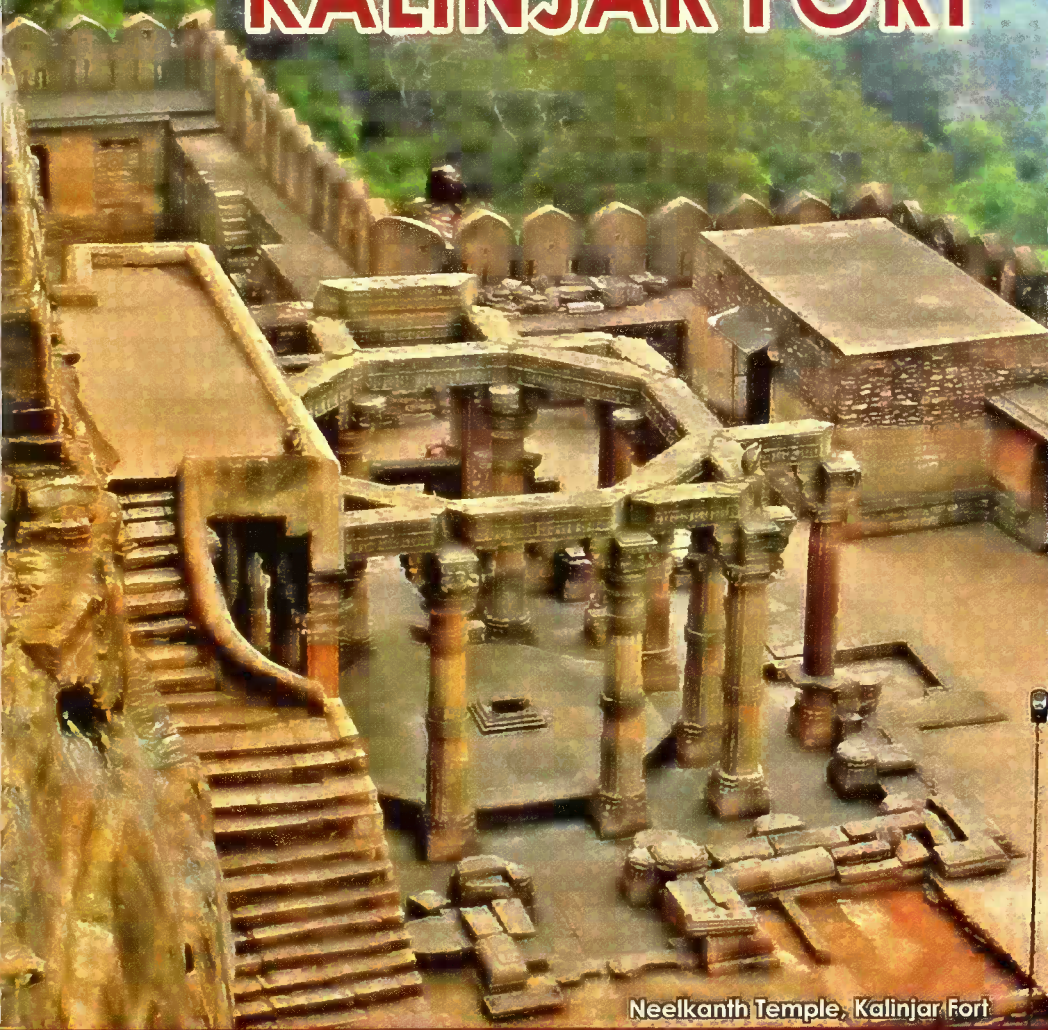


KALINJAR FORT



Neelkanth Temple, Kalinjar Fort

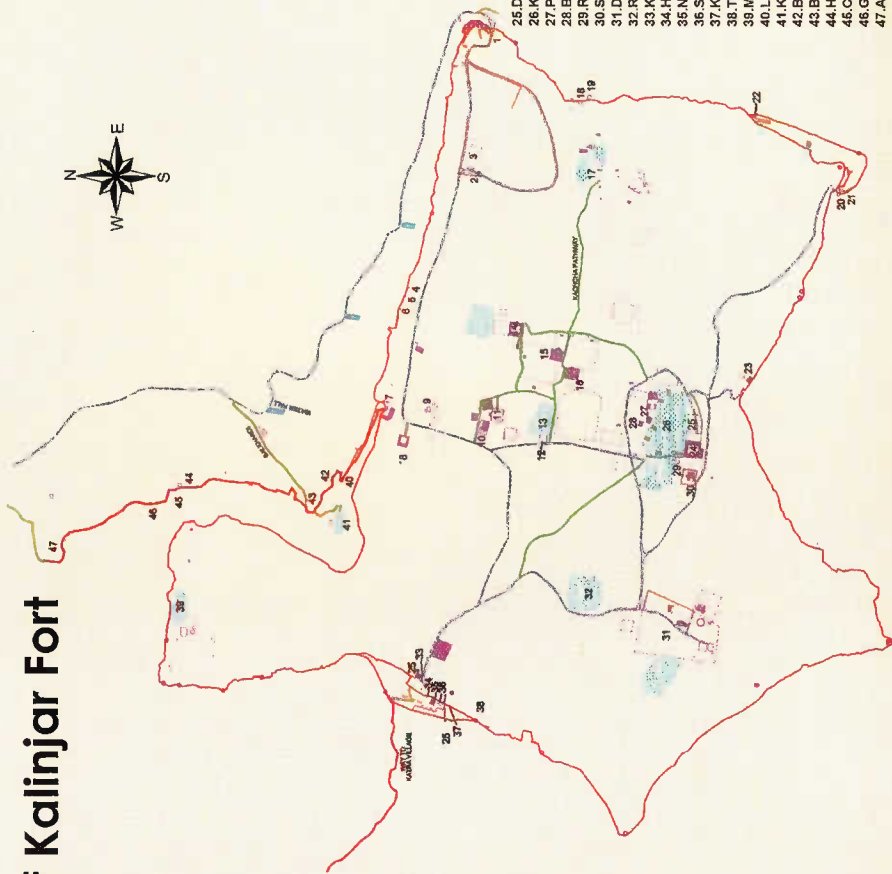


प्रत्नकीर्तिमपावृणु

Archaeological Survey of India

Lucknow Circle, Lucknow

Site Plan of Kalinjar Fort



PLACES OF INTEREST

1. MAIN GATE
2. TICKET COUNTER
3. PARKING
4. PATAL GANGA
5. SITA KUND
6. SITA SEJ
7. BADA DARWAZA (7TH DARWAZA)
8. CHAUBE MAHAL
9. MEDIEVAL TOMB AND GRAVES
10. VENKAT BIHARI TEMPLE
11. RANI MAHAL TEMPLE
12. MOSQUE
13. SANICHARI TALAB
14. RANG MAHAL
16. JAKHIRA MAHAL
16. MOTI MAHAL
17. BUDDHA-BUDDHI TALAB
18. SIDDH KI GUPHA
19. BHAGWAN SEJ
20. PANNA GATE
21. RAWA GATE
22. MANDUK BHARAV
23. MRIG DHARA
24. AMAN SINGH MAHAL

25. DRINKING WATER
26. KOTI-TIRTHA TANK
27. PATHAR MAHAL
28. BARADARI
29. RAM JANKI TEMPLE
30. SCULPTURE SHED
31. DAK BANGLA
32. RAM KATORA TALAB
33. KATRA GATE/MILKANTH GATE
34. HANUMAN MANDIR
35. MILKANTH TEMPLE
36. SIVARGA ROHAN KUND
37. KAL BHARAV
38. TOILET
39. MADAR TALAB
40. LAL DARWAZA (6TH DARWAZA)
41. KHAMBHORAN TALAB
42. BALKHANDI DARWAZA (5TH DARWAZA)
43. BUDHBHADRA DARWAZA (4TH DARWAZA)
44. HANUMAN DARWAZA
46. CHANDIKA DARWAZA (3RD DARWAZA)
46. GANESH DARWAZA (2ND DARWAZA)
47. ALAM DARWAZA (1ST DARWAZA)

KALINJAR FORT

Located in the picturesque Vindhyan ranges, Kalinjar Fort (Lat. 25°00N Long. 80°29'E) is one of the strongest forts in India. Being famous as a place of austerities (*tapasthan*) related to lord Siva, this place came to be known as Kalanjar or Kalinjar.

Apart from pre-historic tools, various epigraphical and sculptural remains of Gupta period to the early medieval period have been recovered from the fort. In 1023 CE, when it was invaded by Mahmud of Gazni, it was under Vidyadhara, one of the most powerful



Kalinjar Fort, Banda

kings of Chandela dynasty. It was taken over by Qutb-ud-din Aibak in 1202 CE and Sher Shah Suri in 1545 CE respectively who died in an accident during the siege. After Surs, it came under the control of the Mughals and Bundellas. Further, it was occupied by the British in 1812 CE.

The fort is approached from village side through seven gates namely-Alam Darwaza, Ganesh Darwaza, Chandi or Chauburji Darwaza, Budh-Bhadra Darwaza, Hanuman Darwaza, Lal Darwaza and Bada Darwaza. Numerous structures, temples, mosques, palaces and tanks, are scattered throughout the fortified area which date from Gupta period to the British period. The important structures include-Neelakanth Temple, Sita Sej, Patal Ganga, Manduka Bhairava, Koti-firth, Buddha-Buddhi Tank, Pandu Kund, Shanichari

Kund, Ram Katora, Mrigdhara, Aman Singh Mahal, Moti Mahal, Rang Mahal, Rani Mahal and Venkat Bihari temple, etc. Various sculptures and inscriptions are kept in safe custody in Aman Singh Palace which are witness of glorious past of the fort.

Fortification Wall and Entrance Gate

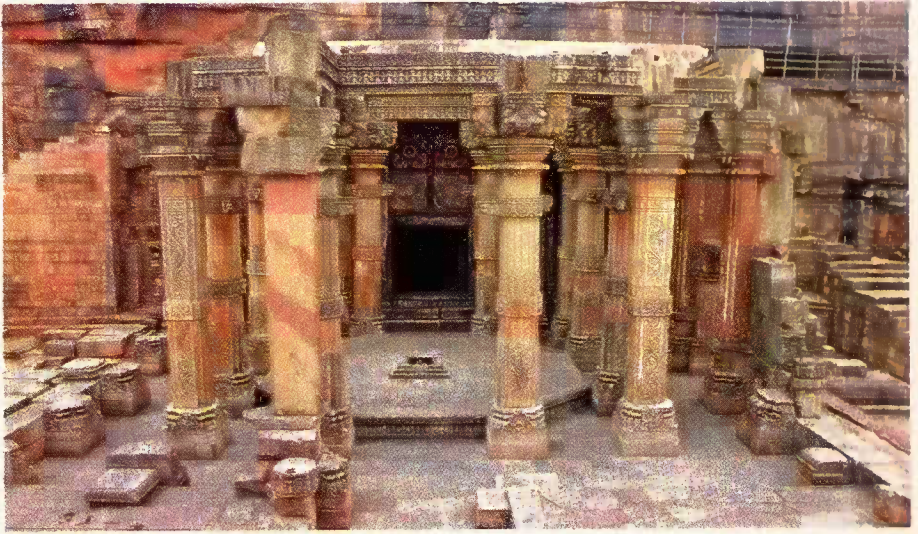
The fortification wall made of sandstone and 5.7 km in circumference is 4 to 8 m wide and 5 to 12 m. high pierced by two entrances. The principal gate is on the north side towards the town, and the other at the south-east angle leading towards Panna, hence called the Panna gate, now closed. The principal entrance is guarded by seven splendid gates, named as Alam Darwaza, Ganesh Darwaza, Chandi Darwaza, Budhbhadra Darwaza, Hanuman Darwaza, Lal Darwaza, Bara Darwaza respectively. This seventh and uppermost gate is called Bara Darwaza, or the "Main Gate" which is a fine representative of Mughal architecture.



Bara Darwaza

Neelkanth Temple

The Neelkanth temple is a small cave with the remains of a fine *mandapa*, or hall in front. On the jambs of the door, there are figures of Siva and Parvati flanked by Ganga and Yamuna. A small passage runs towards the *garbhgriha*. The cave contains an



Neelkanth Temple

Ek mukhi Siva-linga about 1.35 m high known as Nilkanth Mahadeo. The side of the cave is relieved by several pilasters, on which, are figures of sages and devotees. There are several inscriptions on the pillars and walls of which an inscription of Chandela ruler Madan Verma of 12th century is very significant. Stylistically, sanctum is assignable to Gupta period and the *mandapa* to Chandella period.

Besides, there is a rock-cut tank on the top left side of the temple. The image of standing Kala-Bhairava (Gajantaka Siva), 7.3m high, is one of the major attractions here.



Rock-cut Ekmukhi Siva-Linga



Venkat-Bihari Temple

Venkat- Bihari Temple

This east-facing temple was built on the north-west direction of the Rani Mahal. There is a sanctum-sanctorum and the rectangular *mandapa* in front of the temple. Above the sanctum, there is an attractive dome which stands on the octagonal podium. Small coloumend *chhatris* adore the roof top. The entire structure of the temple is an outstanding example of Bundela architecture. Styistically, it can be assigned to 17-18th century.

Rani Mahal

This Bundela style rectangular palace with double-storeyed entrance is famous for its huge size and height. There are two grand entrances in the east and north directions respectively. There is an open courtyard in the palace which is connected to the coloumned corridor from the four sides. Beautiful types of geometrical and floral designs are engraved on



Rani Mahal

corridors of courtyard, utilizing the lime plaster, which shows the speciality of Bundela architecture. The interior portions of the place, especially the pillars, are adorned with the stucco work.

Koti-firth Tank

There are many small and large reservoirs in Kalinjar Fort most of which are rock-cut. The Koti-firth, a large tank, artificially formed in the rocky surface of the hill, is one of the important attractions. There were several temples around the tank; some of them are now only in ruins. The walls of the tank were profusely decorated with sculptures which were lime-plastered in later



Koti-firth Tank

times. It is popular that various diseases are cured after taking bath in the tank.

Besides this reservoir, there are some other big reservoirs like Buddha-Buddhi *talab*, Shanichari *talab*, Ram Katora *talab*, Sita Kund and Patal Ganga. Just above the *garbhgriha*, on left side of Nilkantha temple, there is a deep *kund* or rock-cut reservoir called Swargarohana.



Mrigdharma

Mrigdharma

The Mrigdharma, or "Antelope's Spring", is named after deers carved nearby. It is a source point of water where water is constantly trickling down from a hole in the side of the chamber, and appears to percolate from the Koti-tirth, on the high ground above. The structure with domed roof constructed on it in 17th-18th century. Nearby are engraved small inscriptions in the Gupta Brahmi script which were got inscribed by the pilgrims. According to an interesting legend, sage Kushik was furious with his seven son's behaviour and cursed them. The engraved *mrigas* carved this place are compared to his sons.



Patthar Mahal Masjid

Patthar Mahal Masjid

Located on the northern side of the Koti-tirth, this mosque is known as Patthar Mahal. Islam Shah, the son of Sher Shah, in 1545 CE, constructed this building in memory of Kalinjar victory, and his coronation. The Patthar Mahal mosque was constructed by utilizing the architectural members from Koti-tirth. The remains used in the construction of the mosque are datable to Gupta, Pratihara and Chandela periods. A large number of inscriptional records have been recovered from the mosque in which, four are in *Devnagari* and one is in Persian script. The most important Sanskrit inscription engraved is of Pratap Rudradeva of Vikram Samvat 1543 (1483 CE). In addition to these inscriptions, the records of the names and dates of the arrival of pilgrims are also engraved.

Raja Aman Singh Palace

This double-storied rectangular building built of undressed stones, is the palace of Raja Aman Singh. In the eastern portion, there is courtyard; eastern and southern portions of the Mahal have



Raja Aman Singh Palace

rooms, while in northern side, the remains of two-storeyed corridor hall still exist. The eastern and western parts of the palace are connected by a corridor with an entrance gateway. While entering in the palace, there is spacious courtyard having corridor on three sides. The palace is lime-plastered and is decorated with beautiful floral and geometrical designs. The back portion of the fort is double-storeyed. Presently, rooms on the second floor are damaged. Small turrets were constructed around the roof, of which, only one is left.



Chaubey Mahal

Chaubey Mahal

Rectangular on plan and east-facing, this palace is constructed of undressed as well as yellowish sand stone. Its exterior and interior walls are lime-plastered, while on the northern and eastern side, this palace is much damaged. The entrance of this double-storeyed structure is plain but attractive. Inside the gate, there is open verandah and colonnaded corridors like Rani Mahal which opens in a rectangular room from inside. This monument is slightly smaller than other palaces. Stylistically, it may be dated to the 18th century.

Rang Mahal

Famous as Rang Mahal, this palace is one of the most important buildings in Kalinjar Fort. Probably due to paintings some of which are still visible, it was named as Rang Mahal. East-facing this palace opens in a courtyard through a portal. The courtyard is flanked by verandahs and colonnaded corridors from

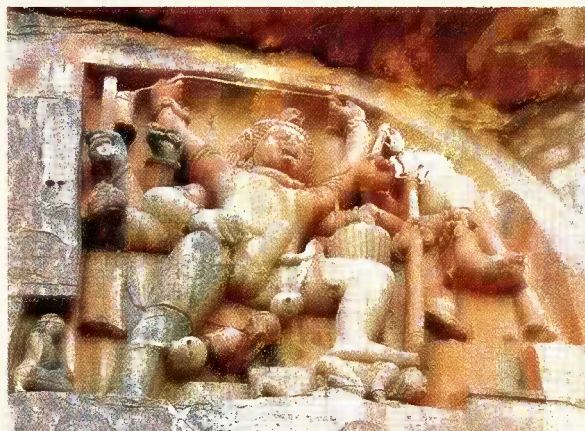


Rang Mahal

three directions. The courtyard also consists of a fountain in the middle. This palace resembles the 'Sabistan-i-Iqbal' at Fatehpur Sikri and Jahangiri Mahal at Orchha in many ways. Stylistically, it is assignable to the Mughal Period (16-17th Cent.).

Moti Mahal

This Bundela style rectangular palace, popular as Moti Mahal, is built by random rubble masonry and lime-plastered. There is a three-storied temple in the center of the palace which is partially intact. *Garbhagriha* of this east-facing temple has a *pradakhshinapath* which opens in the courtyard of the palace. At present there is no image in the *garbhagriha*. Stylistically, it may be assigned to the eighteenth century.



Manduk Bhairav (Gajantaka Siva)

A part from innumerable big and small structures, the beautiful sculptures collected from various parts of the fort are stored in Aman Singh Mahal Palace being one of the main attractions for the visitors.



Kal Bhairav



प्रत्नकीर्तिमपावृणु

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2019