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Mahakaleshwar Temple

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Why is in news? Ujjain: PM Modi to inaugurate first phase of Shri Mahakaleshwar Temple Extension project

Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga is a **Hind temple dedicated to Shiva**.

It is **one of the twelve Jyotirlingas**, shrines which are said to be the most sacred abodes of Shiva.

It is located in the **ancient city of Ujjain** in the state of Madhya Pradesh, India.

The temple is situated on the **side of the holy river Shipra**.

The presiding deity, **Shiva in the lingam form is believed to be Swayambhu**, deriving currents of power (Shakti) from within itself as against the other images and lingams that are ritually established and invested with mantra-shakti.

The idol of Mahakaleshwar is known to be **dakshinamukhi**, which means that it is facing the south.

This is a **unique feature**, upheld by the **tantric shivnetra tradition to be found only in Mahakaleshwar** among the 12 Jyotirlingas.

The temple complex was **destroyed by Sultan Shams-ud-din Iltutmish** during his raid of Ujjain in **1234-1235**.

The Jyotirlinga was dismantled and believed to be thrown into a nearby '**Kotiteerth Kunda**' (a pond neighbouring the temple) with the **Jaladhari** (a structure supporting the Lingam) stolen during the invasion.

The **present structure was built by the Maratha general Ranoji Shinde in 1734 CE** after Baji Rao I appointed him to collect taxes in malwa region.

Further developments and management was done by **other members of shinde dynasty**, including Mahadji Shinde (1730–12 February 1794) and Daulat Rao Shinde's wife Baiza Bai (1827–1863).

During the **reign of Jayajirao Shinde** (until 1886), major programs of the then Gwalior State used to be held at this temple.

The Maratha Empire regime was established in Ujjain in the **4th decade of the 18th century**.

The administration of Ujjain was **assigned by Peshwa Bajirao-I** to his faithful commander Ranoji Shinde, the Diwan of Ranoji was Sukhatanakar Ramchandra Baba Shenavi who was very wealthy he decided to invest his wealth for religious purposes.

In this connection, he **re-built the Mahakaleshwar Temple** during the 4th-5th decades of the 18th century.

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