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## Art and Architecture of Hyderabad Karnataka Regions: Special Reference to Bidar Monuments

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

Bidar is a hill-top city situated on the deccan plateau, in the north-eastern part of Karnataka state in India. It is the headquarters of the Bidar District which shares its border with Maharashtra and Telanngana. It is a rapidly urbanizing city which comes under Bidar Metropolitan area. The city is well known for its many places of architectural, historical and religious importance.

Bidar city is known for its Bidri handicraft products, and its rich history. Bidar is also considered one of the holiest place for Sikh pilgrimage. Unlike other places in the region, Bidar is the coldest and wettest place in north Karnataka. For the year 2009-10, Bidar was ranked 22nd among the cleanest cities in India and 5th cleanest in Karnataka. Passes through Bidar and the whole city are integrated with 4 lane road.

Ancient Karez system in the city has been recently discovered. The Karez (Qanat) is an underground network of aqueducts for water supply. The Bidar Karez, built in the 15th century, is more than 3 km (1.9 mi) long with 21 air vents. Underground canals, built to connect underground water streams, were meant to provide drinking water to civilian settlements and the garrison inside the Bidar fort. This was necessary in a city where the soil was rocky and drilling wells was difficult.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BIDAR

The history of the present fort at Bidar is attributed to the Sultan Ala-ud-Dina Brahman Shha the first sultan of the Bahmani dynasty to 1427 when he shifted his capital from Gulbarga to Bidar since it had better climatic conditions and was also a fertile and fruit bearing land. Earliest recorded history of its existence as a small and strong fort is also traced to Prince Ulugh Khan in 1322, where after it came under the reign of the Tughlaq dynasty.

With the establishment of the Bahmani dynasty (1347), Bidar was occupied by Sultan Ala-Ud-Din Bahman Shah Bahmani. During the rule of Ahmad Shah I (1422–1486), Bidar was made the capital city of Bahamani Kindom. The old Fort was rebuilt and beautiful madras a, mosques, palaces and gardens were raised. Mahmud Gawan who became the Prime Minister in 1466 was a notable figure in the history of Bidar. Bidar remained under the barid shahi dynasty until Aurangzeb came to Bidar after his father and Emperor Shah Jahan appointed him the Prince of Deccan. He wrested the Bidar Fort from the Adil Shahis after a 21-day war in 1656. With this, Bidar became a part of the Mughal dynasty for the second time.

In the fifteenth century the capital of the Bahmani sultanate was moved from Gulbarga toa Bidar The new capital, Bidar, was at a much higher level (about 3,000 feet) than Gulbarga and had a better climate in the rainy season, but it was also nearly 100 miles further to the northeast and thus much closer to Warangal. Bidar soon was as impressive a capital as Gulbarga had been. Afanasy Nikitin, a Russian traveller who spent four years in the sultanate from 1470 to 1474, left us a report which is one of the most important European accounts of life in medieval India. He highlighted the great contrast between the enormous wealth of the nobility and the grinding poverty of the rural population.

The most important personality of this Bidar period of the Bahmani sultanate was Mahmud Gawan, who served several sultans as prime minister and general from 1461 to 1481. He reconquered Goa, which had been captured by the rulers of Vijayanagar. The sultanate then extended from coast to coast. Gawan also introduced remarkable administrative reforms and controlled many districts directly. State finance was thus very much improved. But his competent organisation ended with his execution, ordered by the sultan as the result of a court intrigue. After realising his mistake the sultan drank himself to death within the year, thus marking the beginning of the end of the Bahmani sultanate.

After Gawan's death the various factions at the sultan's court started a struggle for power that was to end only with the dynasty itself: indigenous Muslim courtiers and generals were ranged against the 'aliens' – Arabs, Turks and Persians. The last sultan, Mahmud Shah (1482–1518) no longer had any authority and presided over the dissolution of his realm. Sri Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagar defeated the last remnant of Bahmani power. The governors of the four most important provinces declared their independence from the Bahmani ruler one after another: Bijapur (1489), Ahmadnagar and Berar (1491), Bidar (1492) and Golconda (1512). Although the Bahmani sultans lived on in Bidar until 1527, they were mere puppets in the hands of the real rulers of Bidar, the Barid Shahis, who used them so as to put pressure on the other usurpers of Bahmani rule.

In 1724, Bidar became a part of the Asaf Jahi Kingdom of the Nizams. It was annexed by the Bijapur

Sultanate in 1619–20 but the Mughal viceroy of Aurangzeb took it in 1657 and thus became a part the Mughal Empire in 1686.[19] Third son of Asaf jah 1 (Nizam 1) Mir Sa'id Muhammad Khan, Salabat Jang ruled from Bidar fort during 1751 to 1762, till his Brother Mir Nizam Ali Khan Asaf Jah III Imprisoned him in this fort, and was killed in Bidar fort on 16 September 1763. Mohammedabad old name of Bidar is also on his name.

The WMF in its current watch site for "the historic city of Bidar" says "challenges to the site include a lack of integrated conservation and maintenance, environmental pollution, and the construction of new developments and roadways that encroach on the historic fabric. Current land use regulations also threaten the economic livelihood of many of the city's residents, and it is hoped that revised, context-specific planning policies would both protect Bidar's historic assets while also supporting the future of its local population. It is hoped that Watch-listing will spur documentation and analysis of the city's conditions, followed by policy development and applied conservation interventions that will reveal and maintain Bidar's rich heritage, as well as support a robust and sustainable tourist industry.

#### **ART AND ARTICHETURE OF BIDAR MONUMENTS:**

#### Mahmud Gawan Madrasa:

Mahmud Gawan had seen the greatest architectural marvels in the form of Madrasas all around the world in places like Khorasan and Samarqand. A Madrasa is an educational institution for Islamic studies. So he set out to construct something similar. Mahmud Gawan was very rich due to the international trade he carried out during his time at the court and used that to fund the construction of this Madrasa at Bidar.

The Madrasa had an imposing three-story building with 100 feet tall minarets in four corners (when built) of which only 1 minaret remains. There were thirty-six rooms for students and six suites for the teaching staff. Boarding and lodging was free for travelers acting almost like a Sarai (resting place). It had a matchless library of three thousand volumes. The Madrasa was supposed to attract the most eminent theologians, philosophers and scientists from all around the world, but due to the long distance of traveling not many actually ended up coming here.

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scientists from all around the world, but due to the long distance of traveling not many actually ended up coming here.

#### **Bidar Fort**

Bidar city was distinctly planned and built. The main citadel complex housed the royal places. Mahals and Mosque. Adjoining to this on the southern side, the city was built for the people. Both the citadel complex and city had separate forts for protection the plan of the Bidar city fortification is pentagonal. There are five gateways for entry into the city fort. It is main citadel complex fort which is stronger. It is built on the brink of the plateau. Engineers and architecture of various countries were employed on its design and construction.

#### 1) Rangeen Mahal:

Rangeen Mahal, situated in the fort, near Gumbad Darwaza, is unique because of its decoration with colored tiles and other art work. Wood carving done there is not only precious but also unique. The walls of Mahal are adorned with mother-of-pearl of the finest quality in laid in jet-black stone. Floral patterns and calligraphic text are also depicted here. Stone carving, stucco art are other attractions of this monument. It was rebuilt during Barid Shahi period. The design of this monument represents the blend of the both Hindu and Muslim architecture. There are rooms in the basement of the Rangin Mahal.

**2)** Tarkash Mahal is said to have been built for Turkish wife of the sultan. From the remains of the decorative work found in the ornamentation of the walls, it can be said that the Mahal was build or extended by the Barid Shahi Sultans who had kept large harem with ladies from different nationalities. The rooms were decorated with stucco work.

**3**) **Gagan Mahal** was originally built by the Bahamani kings and some alterations and additions were made by the Barid Shahi rulers. It has two courts. The outer court was used by the male staff and guards. The inner court also, there are rooms on either side of the covered passage for the accommodation of the guards. The main building of the palace was for the use of the sultan and his harem.

**4) Takht Mahal**, The Royal Palace, was built by Ahemd shah. It was the royal residence. The place was fully decorated with colored titles and stone carvings part of which can be seen even today. It had two side royal pavilions with lofty arches and a spacious hall at the back of which was the sultan's room. The building had stately dimensions and exquisite surface decoration. The coronations of several Bahamanis and Barid Shahi sultans were held there. From the royal pavilion which is situated behind throne palace one can view the valley

and low land below.

**5)** Chaubara is a tall tower, facing in four directions. This is an old cylindrical tower of 22 meters; height is situated in the centre of Bidar town. It was used as a watchtower, commanding a fine view of the entire plateau from the top. A winding staircase of eight steps leads to the top of the tower.

6) Solah Khamba Mosque (Solah Sutoon Ki Masjid) was built by Qubil Sultani between 1423 and 1424. The mosque derives its name from the 16 pillars that are lined in the front of the structure. Popularly known as the Zanana Masjid, this mosque is about 90 metres long and 24 metres wide. Behind the southern wall of this mosque, there is a large well. Characterised by columns, arches and domes, this mosque is one of the largest in India.

7) **Papnash Shiva Temple**, According to local legend, this temple and idol was installed by Lord Rama on his way back to Ayodhya from Lanka. The original temple was lost and at the ruins of the ancient temple, a new one was later built. This temple is located in a beautiful valley. There is a large pond at the foot of the temple which is constantly fed by a natural spring.

#### CONCLUSION

Bidar has a number of historical monuments dating back to 15th century. These monuments reflect the glory of the Bahamani rulers. The main tourist attraction of Bidar is the Fort, which was built by Ahmad Shah in 1430. The Rangin Mahal, Solah Kambh Masjid, Gagan Mahal, Diwan-e-Am, Royal Pavilion, Tarkash Mahal are other important places to be seen within the fort. Tombs of Bahmani Rulers, Tombs of the Barid Shahis, Madrassa of Mahmud Gawan, Chaubara, Guru Nank Basavakalyan, Humnabad, Narasimha Jharniand papnash temple are the other attractions in Bidar.



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