



BIRD EYE VIEW OF FORTS IN HYDERABAD KARNATAKA REGION

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INTRODUCTION

The study of forts constitutes an important chapter in the history of India. Karnataka as well as Indian forts are not only living witness to some of the great dynasties and great battles but are part of folklore. They throw welcome light on the reconstruction of our history and heritage. These forts lie scattered in different regions of our country, yet share common legends of bravery and patriotism, intrigue and intrepidity, and are mute interlocutors of events that have shaped our history.

Hyderabad Karnataka region which is the area selected for the present research. The Hyderabad Karnataka region is the name given to the area. This was part of erstwhile Hyderabad province before the formation of new state. At the time The Hyderabad Karnataka include the district of Bider,Gulbarga and Raicur. Also this is my research area.

Hyderabad Karnataka region which is associated with history since ancient period is surrounded with historical monuments such as temples, mosques, citadels, palas and forts. Some of the famous forts of this area are discussed below.

*FORTS IN BIDER DISTRICT

Bidar Fort

Bidar Fort was constructed in AD 1425-1432 by Sultan Ahmad Shah. It was considered one of the most formidable forts of India. Engineers and architects of various countries were employed for its design and construction. Built of large blocks of black stone, this impressive fort stands out in striking contrast to the rich red

terrain of the area. It is surrounded by a 5.5 km long defense wall, some features of which were destroyed in the invasion of AD 1452, and rebuilt during the period of Shamsuddin Muhammad III. Following the introduction of gun powder, extensive improvements including mounting of guns, were made by Ali Barid Shah. One of the huge guns here

Is 4.72 m. long and 63.5 cm. across the muzzle and has 48.26 cm bore. The Solah Khamba mosque, the Mahals (Palaces), secular structures, baths, kitchens and pleasure pavilions are notable structures inside the fort.

Basavakalyan fort

Basavakalyan fort, earlier known as Kalyana fort, is located in Bidar district in the Indian state of Karnataka. Its historic importance is dated to the 10th century. The capital of Chalukyas was also shifted from Manyaketa to Kalyana in the 10th century. The fort, integral to the Basavakalyana town, is also famous as Karmabhoomi of Basavanna (founder of Virashaiva community) and hundreds of other Sharanas (saints of Virashaiva community). The fort is strategically built as a defense structure in a camouflaged setting, which is not discernible till the enemy is at close quarters of the fort. This gives advantage for the defence forces holed up in the fort to repulse enemy attacks. This strategy of locating the fort in naturally camouflaged locations was popular in the forts built in the Deccan.

Mayurkhandi Fort

The first Rashtrakuta capital, Mayurkhandi, was in Bidar district. The regal capital was later moved to Manyaketa in present day Gulbarga district by Amoghavarsha I. It was a well-planned city near Bhalki Taluka 40 kilometers from Bidar city, India. Now it is in ruins. Thick forest has grown now completely hiding the ruins in undergrowth. It is said that still there are descendents of the royal family, when the princes or governors of Rajshttrakutha administration were use to rule, long after the transfer of capital. After the fall of kingdom 1050 CE, they were living under oppression and persecutions from the succeeding kingdoms. There are families still residing in Bidar with the surname Rajshttrakutha now in short as Rajs.

Bhalki fort

Bhalki fort Located in the old Bhalki town, it hosts a variety of buildings, and this fort is locally known as the 'Gadi' people are neglected as well as there is no awareness among the people. It is neglected from people and ASI. Other forts in Bider district like Bhatambra fort at Bhalki, Anukuni fort in Humanabad taluk and Humanabad fort at Veerabadreshvar temple etc.

*FORTS IN GULBARGA DISTRICT

Gulbarga Fort

The Gulbarga Fort located in Gulbarga City in the Gulbarga district of North Karnataka, India was originally built by 1347 by AI-ud-din Bahmani of the Bahmani Dynasty after he cut off his ties with the Delhi Sultanate; Islamic monuments such as mosques, palaces, tombs, and other structures were also built later within the refurbished fort.

Firozabad fort

Firoz Shah Bahamani (1397-1422) built a capital on the Bank of Bhima river on lines similar to Akabar's Fathepur Sikri. He built beautiful Palace, Fort, Mosque and gateways and called it Firozabad (34 km South of Gulbarga). The ruins at Firozabad speak volumes about the beginning of Indo-Islamic style of construction. Though the Bahamanis capital was supposed to be shifted to Firozabad for strategic reasons but it could not become the capital and instead the capital was shifted to Bidar by Ahmed Shah I after 1424. Flooding in Bhima was also said to have influenced the decision

Malakhed fort

Malakhed fort is a place of historical importance situated 12 km west of Sedam the Taluk headquarters, and 40 km south-east of Gulbarga, on the left bank of Kagina river, a tributary of the Bhima river. Malkhed today has the remains of a fort with four entrances and 52 bastions.

Other forts in Gulbarga district like, Sannatti fort in Chittapur taluk, Sedam fort Sedam taluk, Ijeri fort in Jewargi taluk, Chinnmalli fort in Afzelpur taluk, Walakunda fort in Gulbarga taluk.

*FORTS IN YADGIRI DISTRICT

Yadagiri fort

Yadagiri fort is a District and Sub-Divisional headquarters with Railway facility and it is situated 80 km south-east of Gulbarga, the District headquarters, 570 km north of Bangalore and two km away from the river Bhima. Mentioned as 'Etagiri' in ancient inscriptions, it was for some time the capital during the reign-period of the Chalukyas of Kalyana. The fort of three rounds located on the hill to the east of the town was a construction of the period of the Chalukyas of Kalyana, which was strengthened by the Yadavas, and to which considerable additions were made under the Bahamanis, Adilshahis and Nizams.

Shahapur fort

The Shahapur fort is believed by some to be the one constructed by emperor Sagara. Located on the hill at Shahapur, this fort of Sagaragadu was probably constructed during the Kalyana Chalukya period, later on further strengthened under the rule of Adil Shahi kings. It seems to have suffered an attack of the Mughals also. During the time of the Nayakas of Surapura, two more rows of fortification were added and gateways built. Thus expanded from time to time for about 800 years, this is a hill fort having eight fortification walls standing at a height of 600 feet from the ground level and it has the credit of being the longest fort in the whole District.

Shorapur fort

Shorapur is a place of historical importance and a Taluk headquarters, the Palegar families that raised their head after the fall of Vijayanagara, the Nayakas of Surapura belonging to the Gosala-vamsa who ruled from 1636 to 1858 were important. They had at the beginning Vaganageri as the capital and later on shifted over to Surapura. Surapura, located on a hill in a hilly forested area, belonged in the past to Sagara-nadu and it flourished as the capital under the Nayakas. The fort, bastions, gateways, palace, temple of Gopalaswamy, Ashur Khana, mosque, Dargah, bazaar, Taylor's Bungalow, (today's Munsif Court building) etc. are noteworthy structures in Surapur that pertain to the time of the Nayakas of Surapura.

Vanadurga fort

Vanadurga is a place of historical importance situated 24 km south-west of Shahapur, the Taluk headquarters, and 12 km south of Gogi. This possesses a fort of the period of the Nayakas of Surapur and obtains its name 'Vanadurga' owing to it being surrounded by forest. On the principal gateway of the fort there is a Sanskrit inscription in Devanagari script inscribed in five lines on either side. Raja Piddanayaka proceeded to construct the 'Vanadurga' at the request of his queen Venkammamba. This fort occupies an area of 250 metres east-west and 200 metres north-south and consists of four impressive bastions at the four corners. Though the fort has large gateways, the high semi-circular walls appearing suddenly put the enemies to confusion. Located in a strategically significant place, the fort has a deep moat around and it provided protection to the Nayakas of Surapur from the north. In the fort may be seen the remains of the residences for the officers and guards and a sweet water well, an Anjaneya temple and a few smaller structures in a relatively well preserved condition.

Waganageri fort

Wagangeri is a place of historical importance six km west of Surapur, the Taluk headquarters. Having been an important place under the chiefs of Surapur (1636-1858), the village possesses strong fortifications. It is opined

that at the beginning it was the capital of the Nayakas of Surapur and the fort here was constructed by Gaddi Pidyenayaka, the first chief of the Surapur Chieftaincy. The inner courtyard of the fort is about 18 acres in area. The fort is on a hill about 250 feet high and its principal entranceway is nine feet wide and 11 feet high.

***FORTS IN RAICHUR DISTRICT**

Raichur Fort

The hill fort of Raichur, which was of great importance in the past, is surrounded on three sides by a double row of massive but low circuit walls. The inner wall, which is constructed of huge blocks of well-dressed and nicely fitted stones without the aid of any cementing material. According to a long Kannada inscription dated A.D. 1294 on a slab in the western inner wall. The outer wall, which is built of comparatively rough stone masonry, is, on the other hand, the work of the Muslims. The outer fortifications contain five gateways: the Mecca Darwaza on the west, the Naurangi Darwaza on the north, the Kati Darwaza on the east, and the Khandak Darwaza on the south and the Doddi Darwaza on the south-east. The inner wall has two gateways: the Sailani Darwaza on the west and the Sikandari Darwaza on the east.

Jaladurga Fort

Jaladurga is a fortified village in Raichur district in the Indian state of Karnataka about 20 km northeast of Lingsugur town. The Adil Shahi Kings of Bijapur built the fort. Meadows Taylor has given a fine description of this fort in his book, "Noble Queen" (1874) The Krishna River cascades down here and is known as the Jaladurga Falls. This is one of the famous tourist destinations in this region. It has natural beauty with thrilling views.

Mudgal Fort

Mudgal is a panchayat town in Lingsugur taluk, Raichur district in the Indian state of Karnataka. Mudgal is about 10 miles south-west of Lingsugur. Mudgal is a historical place that has several inscriptions belonging to the Seuna Yadavas of Devagiri. The most important place of interest at Mudgal is the fort. In the construction of the fort at Mudgal, advantage was taken of a hillock on the top of which were built houses of the royalty and a wall with bastions. The outer fortifications of Mudgal cover an area of half a square mile. The outer fort has a wide moat, which is filled with water. The width of the moat varies, being as much as 50 yards at several places. Behind the moat, there is a scarp with a row of bastions and after that, a narrow covered passage and adjoining it the counter scarp with very massive bastions. From the arrangement of the existing fort, it is apparent that the fort was rebuilt after the inventions of guns. The courses of masonry at several places are of Hindu style, but the arch-shaped parapet is of Muslim design. The moat and the row of bastions together offer a pleasing view.

*FORTS IN KOPPAL DISTRICT

Koppal fort

Koppal fort is an important object of historical interest at Koppal. It is not known definitely by whom it was built. But it was acquired by Tippu Sultan in 1786 AD from a Paleyagar and rebuilt into one of the strongest forts with the help of French engineers. In May 1790, it was besieged by the forces of the British and the Nizam. Sir John Malcolm, who participated in this siege, has described it as without exception the strongest place. The fortifications consists of two forts, The upper fort is situated on a lofty and almost isolated summit in a gorge on the eastern side of a cluster of rocky hills which occupy an area of several square miles. The fort is about 400 feet above the plains.

Anegundi fort

Anegundi fort is in Gangavathi Taluk and is one of the most ancient places in the district, meaning in Kannada "elephant pit" said to have been the place where the elephants of the Vijayanagara kings were kept, is situated on the left bank of the river Tungabhadra, just opposite the ruined capital of the Vijayanagara empire. Anegundi has been identified with a part of Kishkindha, the kingdom of Vali and Sugreva of the Ramayana. Both Hampi and Anegundi were destroyed by the confederacy of Muslim kings after the great battle of RakshasaTangadgi in 1565. Tippu Sultan sacked the town of Anegundi in 1776.

As there are no of forts scattered in the Koppal district other forts in Koppal district like Kanakagiri ,Emmigudda, Katapur, Hanumasgar, Chalakeri, Yalburga,Kuknoor,Mudhol,Chikmageri and Kumbnal are Etc.

Above informed forts comes under backword area called Hyderbad Karnataka in this area some forts in good condition some forts neglected people and department of tourism there is no awareness among the people preservation and conservation of the historical forts and mounoments.

State of forts today, although no Indian forts were destroyed by sudden disasters, thereare several which were abandoned due to the ambitions of theirrulers and have consequently deteriorated over time. Very fewcastles have survived unchanged since the early Middle Ages or evensince the 14th-15th centuries: most of those built in the 10th-15thcenturies were later rebuilt and altered. Castles were still used asliving quarters until the 19th-20th centuries, and so were continuallymodified. Even now, some of them are private property.

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