

## **KALBAURGI The Cradle of South India Muslim Architecture**

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### **Introduction:**

Kalburgi or earlier known as Gulburga located in Karnataka state was the capital of Bahamani dynasty, first Muslim dynasty of south India they are considered as founders of Islamic culture in South India which paved a way to new culture in South India.

Before we know about the Bahamani rule a brief history of Muslim rule in India is to be understood.

Islam culture entered India from 8<sup>th</sup> century after coming of Arabs later Muhammad Ghazi and Mahammad Ghori, invasions the turk influence was felt, the II Battle of Train 1192AD laid the foundation to the Muslim rule in India. The first Muslim dynasty established in India was Mamaluk (Slave Dynasty) in 1206 AD founded by QutubuddinAibak, which marks the beginning of Muslim rule in India. The Muslim rule is broadly classified in three parts namely.

- a. Delhi Sultans (1206-1526AD)
- b. Mughals(1526-1707 and 1707-1857AD)
- c. Provincial dynasties (14<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century)

### **Establishment of Bahamani dynasty:**

The distingeration of Tughlaq empire in 14<sup>th</sup> century led to establishment of Bahamani dynasty in South. The Deccan governor of Muhammad-bin-Tughluq Hasan Gangu established the independent dynasty at Gulbarga which came to be called as Bahamani dynasty Which falls under the category of provincial Muslim dynasties of India.

The Bahamani's ruled from 1347 to 1526 AD. The period of Bahamani's marks the growth of Islamic Culture in South India. The Bahamani Sultan like Muhammad Shah I, Taj-uddin Firoz, Ahamdshah and Muhammad shah III rule witnessed the growth in every cultural field. The Bahamani's introduced Islamic

religion, customs, festivals, dress, administration, painting, music and architecture in South India which interluded with existing culture of South India.

However, the first Muslim monument of south was the mosque built at Rameshwaram in 1311AD by Malik Kafur Commander of Allauddin Khilji. But a systematic architecture school started under Bahamani's called as Indo Islamic or Indo Saracenic or Deccan Islamic school of architecture. Gulbarga is considered as cradle of Islamic architecture in South India. The Bahamani's were regarded as makers of Islamic architecture in South India.

### **Features of Islamic Architecture.**

1. Construction of Domes on monument.
2. Entrance in shape of Arch.
3. High platform.
4. Minars.
5. Gardens in front of monuments
6. Engraving kuran verses in calligraphy writing.
7. Granite stones used for construction.
8. Mosques Mausoleum, forts and cities were constructed
9. Construction was carried at capital cities.

### **Art centers of Islamic architecture in South India.**

The medieval Indian history of South India saw the rule of many Muslim dynasties in South, Like Bahamani, Adil Shahi, Nizamshahi, Barid Shahi, Imad Shahi and Qutub Shahi, who built many monuments during their tenure. In South India Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh have the Muslim monuments, the art centers like Gulbarga, Bidar, Ahmadabad, Daulatabad, Berar, Golkonda, Hyderabad which stands as a testimony for growth of Islamic architecture in South India.

Gulbarga is called the cradle of Islamic architecture of south India. The rule of Bahamani 1347 to 1526 AD witnessed the construction activities at Gulbarga and Bidar Gulbarga was the capital of Bahamani from 1347 to 1424 and 1482 to 1526AD. The first phase of Bahamani rule witnessed the construction activities at Gulbarga.

Gulbarga located in northern Karnataka today called as Kalburgi (also called as Ahasanabad) was ruled by Hindu dynasties like Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas of Kaliyanandseunas (Yadavas), later it was occupied by Tughlaq ruler Muhammad-

bin-Tughlaq of north in 14<sup>th</sup> century which led to emergence of Islamic culture at Gulbarga. In 1347AD Alauddin Hasan Bahaman shah (Hasan Gangu) founded Bahamani dynasty with Gulbarga as capital. The place marks the union of Hindu and Islamic culture.

Gulbarga was the earliest Islamic architecture center of South India hence called the “cradle”.

### **The Islamic monuments of Gulbarga**

**Fort of Gulbarga** :The fort is located in the city of Gulbarga. The fort was built by Hasan Gangu and later expanded after he became sultan and founded the dynasty of Bahamani. The fort is spread in an area of 57 acres, double fortified with 15 towers mounted with 26 guns measuring 8 meters each. Within the fort many structures are built. the main purpose of the construction the defense of the capital.



**Jama Masjid**:The fort of Gulbarga has the famous Jama Masjid built by Mahammad Shah I in 1368 to commemorate the establishment of dynasty and success of Islam.

The mosque is built on the lines of great mosque of Cordoba (Spain). The structure has 5 large domes (one large in center and other four at corners and 75 small domes with 250 arches inside. The mosque measures 216 feet in length and 176 feet in breadth built by the Persian architect Rafi. It is rare example of an Indian mosque without a courtyard as the entire structure is covered with roof. The construction had started under Alauddin Bahman Shah completed under

Muhammad Shah I as mentioned in an inscription in fort dated 1367-



68.

**Shah Bazar Mosque:** Mahammad Shah I built the Shah Bazar Mosque located in the city of Gulbarga to mark his victory over Kanyanayak, the ruler of Telangana, who also presented the Sultan the Takat-e-Firoza (Turquoise Throne) and the Fort of Golconda.



**Haft Gumbad (or SaatGumbad):** The complex comprised of 7 tombs of Bahamani Sultans, important among them are Mujahid Shah, Daud Shah, Ghiyath-ud-din Shah, Shams-ud-din Shah, Firoz Shah, and two unidentified tombs. The tomb of Taj-ud-Firoz has artistic floral design, calligraphy carvings, and he was the greatest Sultan.



**Khwaja Banda Nawaz Darga:** (the tomb of Khwaja Gesu Daraz) The founder of Sufi movement in South India, popularly called Khwaja Banda Nawaz, a sacred place visited by all religious people.

He belonged to Chisti order and preached tolerance and harmony of religions. Every year the urs is held in Gulbarga which attracts lakhs of people. The monument is also known for paintings of Bahamani period.



**Tomb of Alauddin Bahaman Shah** the founder of the dynasty.:



**Tomb of Muhammad Shah I** the disciplined Sultan is simple structure located at Gulbarga.



**Shor Masjid:** located in the city also belongs to Bahamani period.



**Decline:** From 1424 the Bahamani Capital was transferred to Bidar and architecture activities shifted from Gulbarga to Bidar.

Thus Gulbarga became the birth place of Islamic architecture in South India. Later the places like Bidar, Bijapur, Ahamadnagar, Golconda emerged as popular Islamic Centres in South India.

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