YOJANA

SPECIAL ISSUE

JUNE 2024 A DEVELOPMENT MONTHLY

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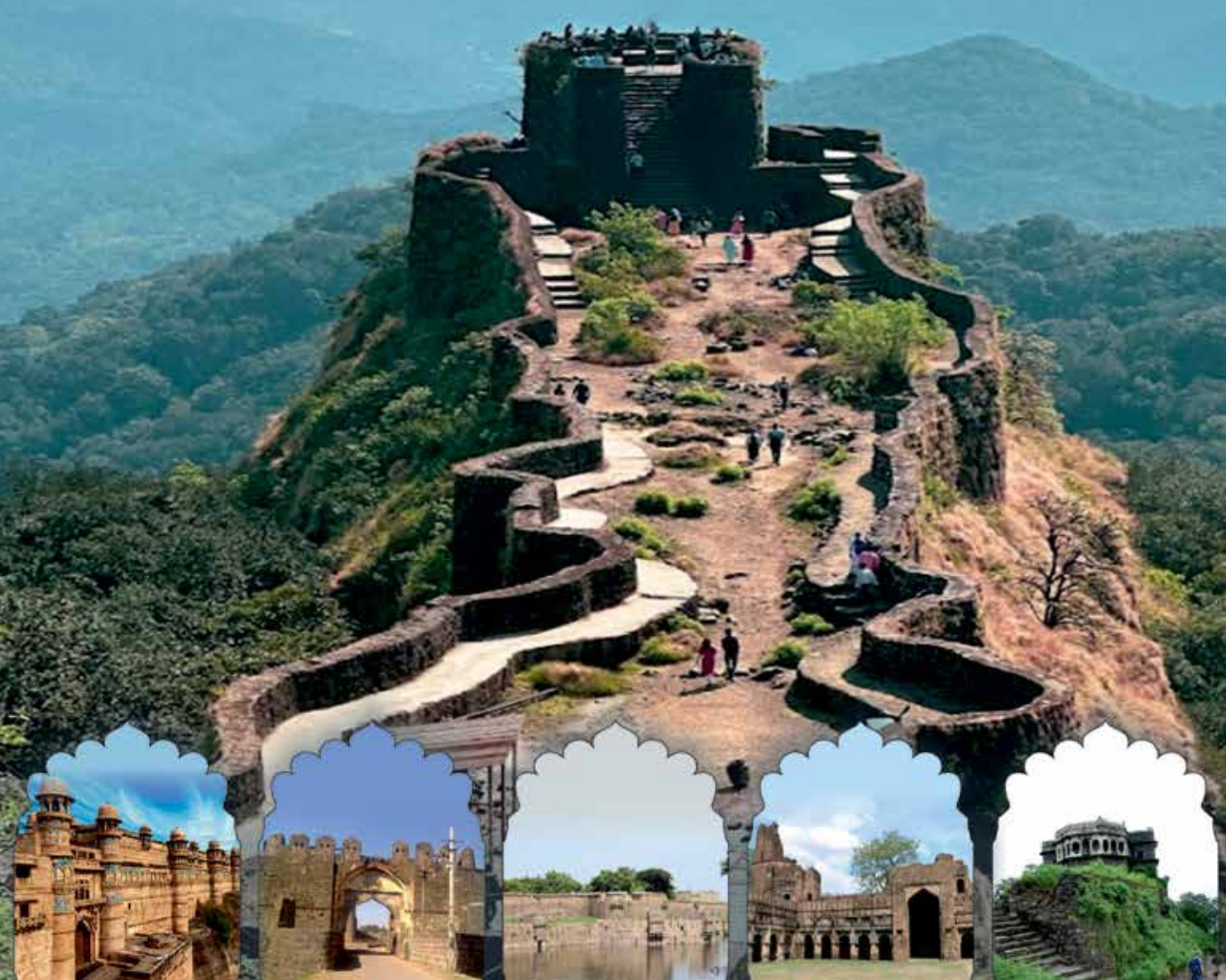

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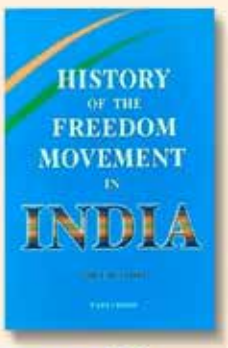

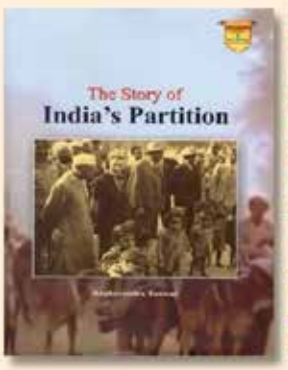

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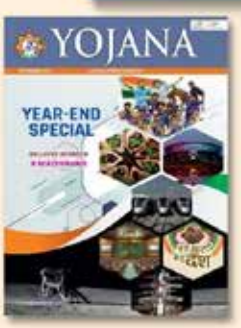

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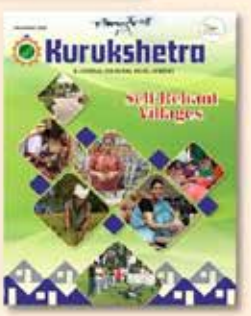

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YOJANA
Since 1957 A DEVELOPMENT MONTHLY

Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides.
Rig Veda

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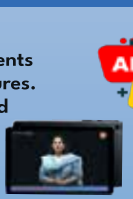

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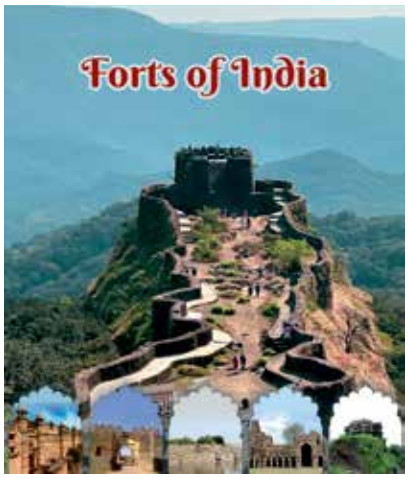
Walls of Grandeur



In the vast expanse of India's historical landscape, there exist monuments and fortresses that stand as silent sentinels, guarding tales of valour, culture, and conquest. These landmarks, scattered across the length and breadth of the country, serve as portals to the past, offering us glimpses into the rich tapestry of our heritage.

The architectural brilliance of Indian forts is a testament to the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the builders of yore. These structures, often perched atop hills, nestled in forests, or strategically positioned along trade routes, were meticulously designed to serve both defensive and administrative purposes. The diversity in construction materials and techniques used in these forts—from the robust stone walls of Rajasthan to the intricate mud fortifications in the Deccan plateau—reflects the adaptability and resourcefulness of ancient Indian engineers.

Spanning millennia, these structures not only served defensive purposes but also reflected the socio-political setting of various dynasties and cultures that ruled over the Indian subcontinent. The use of locally available materials, such as granite in South India and sandstone in the North, highlights a keen understanding of regional geology and climate. The Harappan civilisation, for instance, demonstrated early examples of fortification with their use of mud bricks and complex drainage systems, indicating a sophisticated approach to urban planning and defence.

Forts have been essential to safeguarding communities, resources, and trade routes, showcasing India's enduring legacy of fortification engineering. The Maratha forts, such as Raigad and Shivneri, exhibit a unique blend of ruggedness and strategic brilliance, often built on precipitous cliffs that made them nearly impregnable. These forts not only served as military strongholds but also as administrative centres that facilitated the effective governance of vast territories.

As one goes through these massive monuments, they cover diverse architectural styles, construction techniques, and strategic considerations, underscoring the significance of forts as integral elements of India's built heritage. Forts, like the Red Fort in Delhi and Agra Fort, are prime examples of grandiose architecture combining military functionality with aesthetic beauty. Their thick walls, lofty bastions, and majestic gates adorned with intricate carvings and inlays are a marvel of engineering prowess.

By exploring the architectural insights and historical significance of these forts, we not only honour the past but also illuminate the pathways to preserving this invaluable heritage. These fortresses, with their stories etched in every stone and bastion, continue to inspire awe and respect, reminding us of the rich and resilient spirit that defines our cultural landscape.

In this edition of Yojana, we pay homage to India's rich cultural heritage, from the ancient forts of Delhi to the coastal bastions of Kasaragod and the rugged ramparts of Golconda. Through these pages, we invite you to embark on a journey through time and explore the stories and legends that have shaped our collective identity. This issue endeavours to offer discerning insights from subject matter experts, erudite scholars, and accomplished specialists, fostering a deeper understanding to facilitate readers in making well-informed analyses. We delve into the strategic genius behind these fortifications, the artistic sensibilities that adorned them, and the cultural narratives that they embody, underscoring their relevance and significance in contemporary times. Join us as we celebrate the legacy of our forebears and reaffirm our commitment to preserving our heritage for generations to come. ❑

Gwalior Fort

Role of Forts in Indian History

DR RIMA HOOJA | The author is an archaeologist, historian and writer; She holds a PhD from Cambridge University; Director Emeritus, Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, Jaipur; Visiting Faculty, School of Planning & Architecture, Delhi & President, ICOMOS India. Email: rimahooja@yahoo.com

The term 'fort' is usually considered to mean a strong protective building or a place with a wall, wooden palisade, or fence that is often further protected by a moat, deep ditch, or further lines of fortified walls, guarded by warriors. The location of these adds to the defensive features used by a town, city, or capital of a kingdom, as well as the general terrain—i.e., the overall cultural and military landscape of a kingdom. Over the centuries, India has witnessed the existence of numerous full-fledged forts, surrounded by ancillary forts and chains of minor forts, fortified posts, or defensive garrison points across the subcontinent.

From prehistoric times, humans have created or innovated natural and artificially built ways of protecting themselves, their homes, habitations, resources, livestock, wealth, water supply, routes, and communities. One of the ways to provide such protection has been by using thorny branches, fences, bamboo, hardened mud, bricks, mud and stone, stone and mortar walls, and, of course, fortifications. The emergence of urban settlements, mainly agriculture-based socio-economic-political units and kingdoms, has, therefore, often been accompanied by fortifications and fortified architectural features.

These have ranged from actual forts to protective lines of city walls and included guarded gates, watchtowers, bastions, and a range of other fortifications.

Forts, fortifications, and palaces are one of the most abundant typologies in India's built heritage. The fortifications range from various historic periods constructed by different dynasties through centuries. Most of these show the spread of Sultanate and Mughal Imperial rule, the Maratha kingdom, along with regional dynasties Rajput, Sikhs, Kakatiyas, Bahmani, Qutb Shahis, or even the Ahom dynasty in the Assam region. The coastal region of India also has some Portuguese and British-era fortifications.

Three major methods were used for early fortifications and protected citadels, or even simple habitation sites in the Indian (and global) context. One was the creation of earthen ramparts using the soil dug out of adjoining protective dry moats or ditches that flanked areas needing protection. Another way was to make large and tall protective ramparts using rubble and earth, with additional earth on the outer side. Yet, a third was building forts and fortifications from stone and masonry. This third method became the basis of the majority of India's forts in the historical period. Hill passes leading to forts were often fortified using roughly thrown-together walls of local rocks, as was the case with Rajgriha, the capital of the kingdom of Magadha in the 4th century BCE.

The term fort is usually considered to mean a strong protective building or a place with a wall, wooden palisade, or fence that is often further protected by a moat, deep ditch, or further lines of fortified walls, guarded by warriors. The location of these adds to the defensive features used by a town, city, or capital of a kingdom, as well as the general terrain—i.e., the overall cultural and military landscape of a kingdom.

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The earliest archaeological evidence comes from the over 1,050 known sites and settlements of the Proto-Historic Harappan Culture, broadly dating between c. 3000 and c. 1500 BCE. (Over 416 sites are in Pakistan, and over 625 sites are in India.) About 100 sites have been excavated. Major urban sites include Lothal, Rakhigarhi, Dholavira, Kalibangan, Harappa, Banawali, Mitathal, Surkotda, Mohenjodaro, Kot Diji, Ganeriwala, and Kuntasi. At almost all of the larger sites, baked brick and unbaked mud bricks were used for gates, bastions, and citadels with protected entrances. The internal rammed earth platforms, houses, streets, and

structures were protected by city walls. Larger sites had a citadel area with protective walls (though no citadel was reported from Chanudaro). At Harappa, the citadel was surrounded by a large brick wall. Dholavira in the Rann of Kutch was fortified with an imposing wall made of stone rubble set in mud mortar. Such a massive fortification wall and the remains of stone pillars in the citadel are not seen at other Harappan sites.

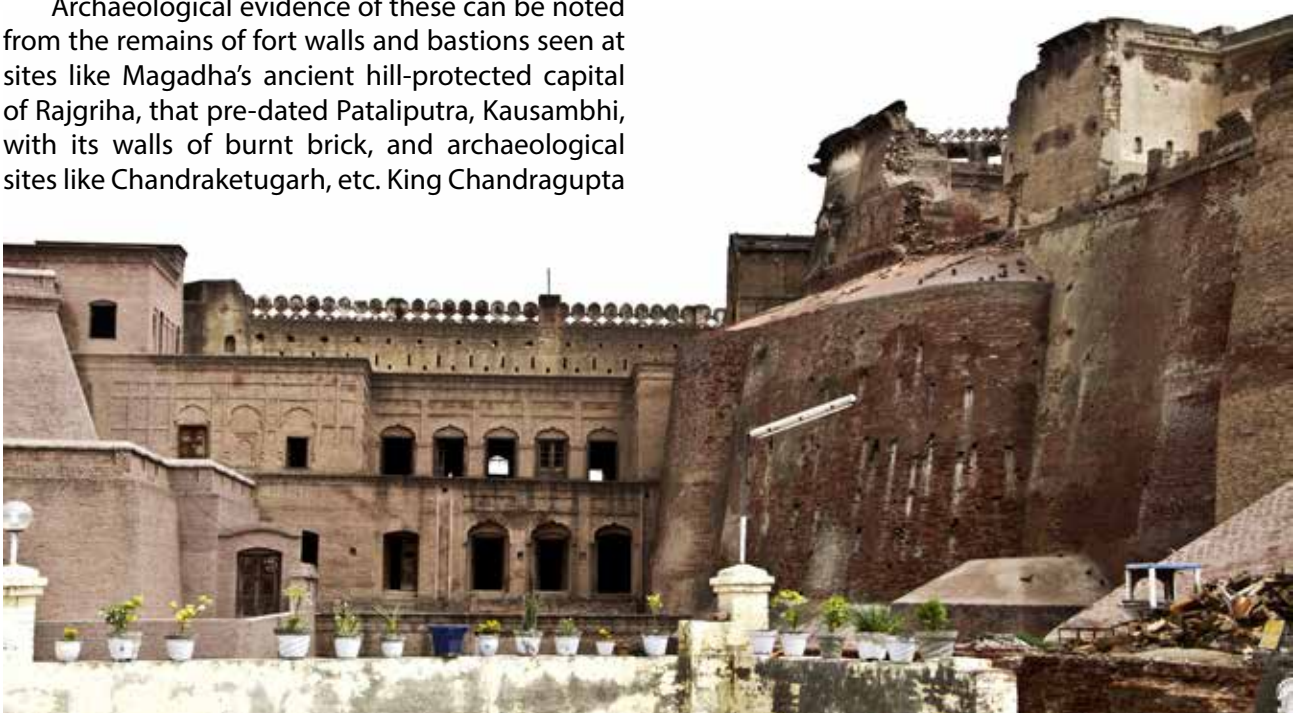
Fortified settlements, or urban centres and cities of a different sort came up across India by the 4th century BCE. Such fortified cities include sites mentioned as the capitals of the 'Solasa Maha-Janapadas' (or Sixteen Great Kingdoms and Republics) like Pataliputra, Kosambi, Ujjain (Ujjayani), Kashi, Mathura, Takshashila (Taxila), etc. The Ganga-Yamuna doab area, in particular, saw a number of urban settlements extending from present-day Mathura (on the Yamuna River) to present-day Patna (on the Ganga River). Similar fortified cities extended further northwards to ancient Purushpura (Peshawar), Gandhara, Taxila, etc. along what came to be called India's 'Uttara-Patha' (or route connecting the north with other directions). Another series of fortified cities came up along India's 'Dakshina-Patha' or the route connecting the south to the north, west, and east, including sites like Ujjain (on the Narmada) towards the Deccan.

Archaeological evidence of these can be noted from the remains of fort walls and bastions seen at sites like Magadha's ancient hill-protected capital of Rajgriha, that pre-dated Pataliputra, Kausambhi, with its walls of burnt brick, and archaeological sites like Chandraketugarh, etc. King Chandragupta Maurya's c. 321 BCE Magadhan capital of Pataliputra was described by Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador from Selecus Nikator, as protected by a ditch with wooden walls. The fortified citadel had 570 towers and 54 gates with colonnaded halls.

Yet other now-destroyed forts, like Tanot in Rajasthan, or along the Punjab Salt Ranges in the north-west of the Indian subcontinent, and the Indian Desert (often a chain in the line of defence from attacks from Central Asia and areas to India's west and north-west), probably date from around 600 CE onwards.

It is important to note that well into the 7th century CE, evidence points to the Indian subcontinent having fortified citadels and cities, or lines of fortification garrison encampments, or a semi-fortified landscape, rather than the type of hill-top, or hill-slope, fortresses or castles now associated by most people as an 'Indian Fort'. The Mauryan, Gupta, Pratihara, Vakataka, Cholas, Pandya, etc. dynasties' cultural landscapes had more fortified cities than the massive defensive forts that came up from about the 8th century onwards in the Punjab, Sindh, Rajasthan, etc. areas, and that took on a new form from c. 10th to the 17th centuries.

Thus, the present type of large forts like Chittorgarh, Ranthambore, Kumbhalgarh, Gagron, Amber, Jaisalmer (all now inscribed as UNESCO



World Heritage Sites), Jodhpur Gwalior, Attock, Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Golconda, Bijapur, Raigad, Rajgad, Sindhudurg, Vijaydurg, Gingee, etc. instantly identifiable as 'forts', often located on hilltops (though not necessarily), and not as fortified cities, in the minds of the wider populace, date from around the 7th-8th centuries CE onwards, whereas fortified settlements and cities have existed from earlier times and continued to do so in later centuries also. This applies even to forts built atop older settlements.

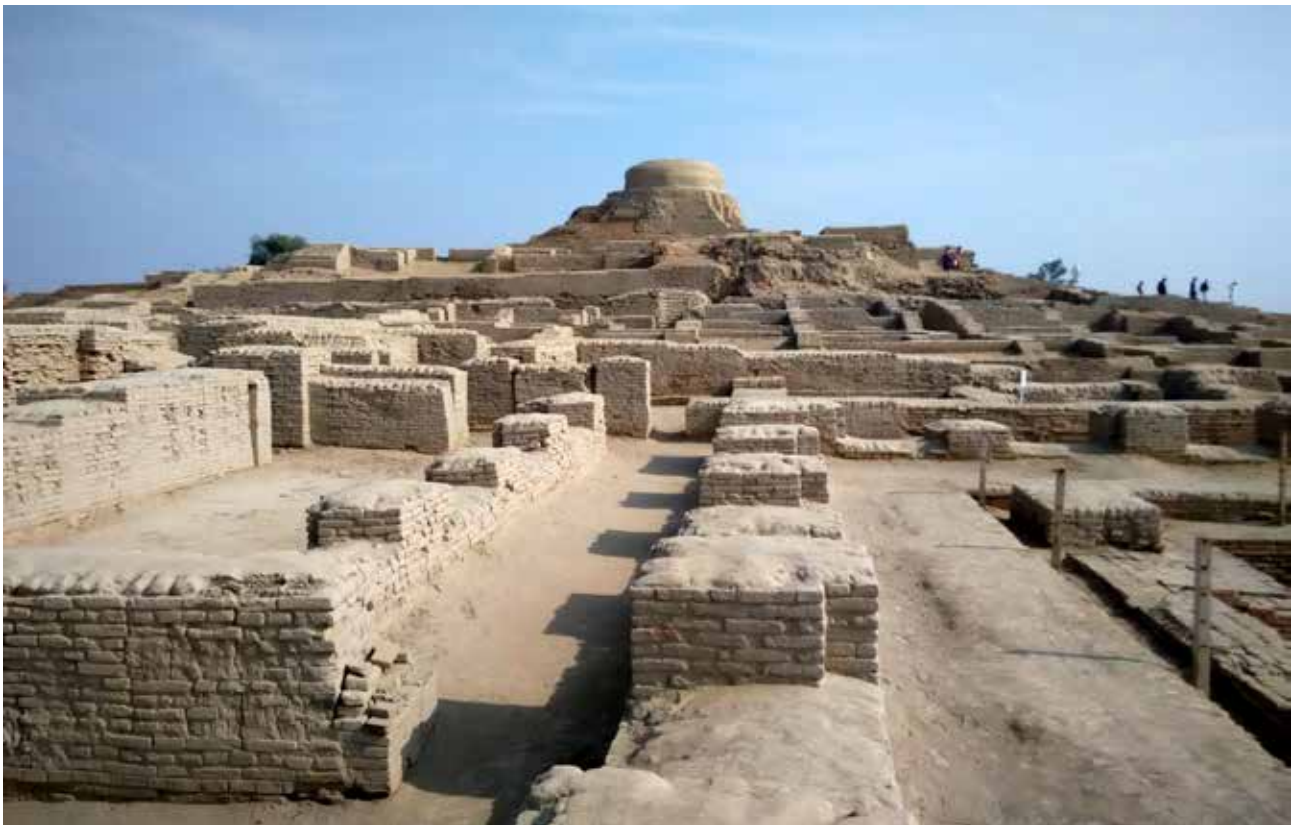
In all of these, the local geography has played an important role in the placement of forts and related lines of defence and defence features. At present, there are nearly 7,000 formally documented and listed forts of note across the Indian Subcontinent, and many smaller structures that can be called ancillary and defensive fortifications. Only 1,064 forts and fortifications are protected.

Literary and historical references, archaeological, architectural, and art examples provide knowledge about various city walls and fortifications across India. Texts (or *shilpa-shastras*) on architecture like the *Mansar*, *Maymtam*, *Shilpa-Ratna*, *Samarangana Sutradhara*, etc., composed in different time periods and in different geographical regions, provide references to forts and fortifications, along with mentions of the building materials to be used and the selection of locales for erecting forts. There were (and continue to be) many sub-styles and sub-traditions, of course, and more than one template or design theme was used for fort construction. In addition, details on sculpted Buddhist reliefs at Sanchi or paintings at Ajanta indicate that early fortified sites in India possessed sloping enclosing walls, gates, crenellations, and embrasures.

Kautilya's 3rd century text, '*Arthashastra*' refers to six major types of forts differentiated by their major modes of defence. These are described as follows:

1. **Jal-Durga,** or Water Fort, often with the following sub-types:
   a. *Antardvipa-Durga* (island fortress): surrounded by natural (sea or river) water bodies (like Murud-Janjira).
   b. *Sthala-Durga* (plain fortress): surrounded by artificial moats or irrigated by a river (like Gagron, Deeg, Lohagarh, and Shergarh—all in Rajasthan).
2. **Dhanvana,** or **Maru-Durga** or Desert Fort, surrounded by an arid area of at least 5 *yojanas* (73 km), like Jaisalmer, Lodrava, and Bhatner (Hanumangarh).
3. **Giri-Durga,** or Hill Fort, with the following sub-types:
   a. *Prantara-Durga*: Located on a flat hill summit (like Chittorgarh, Gwalior).
   b. *Giri-parshva-Durga*: The fortifications and civilian structures extend down to the hill slope, not just the summit (like Bundi's Taragarh and Ajmer's Taragarh forts).
   c. *Guha-Durga*: Located in a valley surrounded by hills, where the outposts and the signal towers are located.
4. **Vana-Durga** (Forest Fort): Surrounded by a dense forest over a distance of at least 4 *koshas* (14.6 km), like Ranthambore, with the following sub-types:
   a. *Khanjana-Durga* is built on a marsh and surrounded by thorny forests.
   b. *Sthambha-Durga*, built in the forest among tall trees, lacks sufficient water sources.
5. **Mahi-Durga** (Earthen Fort), with the following sub-types:
   a. *Mrid-Durga*: surrounded by earthen walls.
   b. *Parigha-Durga*: Surrounded by earthen walls as well as stone or brick walls. The walls are at least 5.4 m high, and their width is half of their height, the smallest of which is 2.7 m wide.
   c. *Panka-Durga*: Surrounded by marshy land or quicksand.
6. **Nri-Durga** (Human Fort), as exemplified by forts like Nagaur, which were defended by experienced warriors and were often part of a city fortress with a large permanent garrison.

Specific political conditions led to specific defensive architectural structures, many of which came to be built on top of hills or peaks, guarding passes, river routes, ford-crossings, and the like. Some of the smaller forts also served as watchtowers. These subsidiary forts were strategically placed to guard the routes going towards the capital, major urban centres, or places that controlled trade and travel routes, or guarded the hinterland. In a similar



manner, the use of cannons impacted the design of forts.

From the c. 10th-11th centuries on, the capital of kingdoms began to take the form of a defensive fort rather than a fortified city settlement. Alongside this, fortified citadels developed around which the cities and towns developed, as exemplified at Delhi, Agra, Lahore, Orchha, and Pune. One of the oldest surviving forts in India lies beneath the Qila Mubarak part of Bhatinda fort, with origins dating back to c. 100 CE. The fort at Kangra also has a long history, (with later overlays and built-in layers).

Typical Rajput and Jat and other north Indian forts include Chittorgarh, Kumbhalgarh, Ranthambore, Gagron, Jaisalmer, Amber, Jodhpur Mehrangarh, Bikaner Junagarh, Bundi Taragarh, and Ajmer Taragarh, Gwalior (Rajput period, also Malwa Sultanate period).

Of the Sultanate Forts, the Deccan Region forts at Daulatabad in Ahmadnagar, Gulbarga (14th century), Bidar and Bijapur (15th century), and Golconda (16th century) are significant examples of Islamic sultanate forts.

The introduction of artillery in the 16th century led to several changes to the construction and design of forts, similar to those happening in European forts, where the advent of gunpowder and cannons led to thicker walls, further pushing out of bastions, etc. The construction of a citadel in the centre and putting in more area between the citadel and the walls were characteristic of Golconda and Berar forts. Gates in Indian forts were often high and wide to allow elephants to pass. Often, they had rows of sharp, stout iron spikes to dissuade an attacking army from using elephants to break down the gates. The walls of the forts were often higher from the outside than the inside, as the forts made use of the natural rock formations on hills. This not only gave the illusion of greater height but also led to the lower walls of the fort being entirely made up of natural rock, providing almost a perfect defence against the use of a battering ram or war elephants to tear down the walls.

Noteworthy also are Mughal forts like the Agra Fort made of red sandstone, whose 2.5 km long enclosure walls protect the imperial city of Mughal rulers. Within it are Jahangir Palace and Khas Mahal, built by Shah Jahan; audience halls, such as the Diwan-i-Khas; and two mosques; and the Delhi Red Fort. The innovative planning arrangements

and architectural style of building components and garden design developed in the Red Fort strongly influenced later buildings and gardens across the subcontinent. The Red Fort Complex also reflects the phase of British military occupation, introducing new buildings and functions from the earlier Mughal region.

There is also a rich heritage of Maratha military land forts and sea forts. In addition, the forts associated with Sikh history include Qila Mubarak Patiala (a fort with bastions, palaces, and a fortification wall). From eastern India, the Ahom (Eastern) Hill Forts, and from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, the coastal and land forts have their own stylistic importance. Of the European and Colonial Forts, those at Diu, Surat, Daman, Bassein, Bombay, Goa, Hughli, Chinsura, Fort William, Chandranagar, Serampore, Visakhapatnam, Masulipatam are fine examples of India's fortified heritage.

It may be emphasised here that European contact with the Portuguese, the British East India Company, or the French, Dutch, or Danish had an impact on forts. Such a process had also happened with the contact with Turkish, Afghan, and later Mughal soldiers and their generals.

Many fort parapets have a range of merlon types and firing loopholes. Typical Indian merlons were semicircular and pointed at the top, although they were sometimes fake: the parapet may be solid and the merlons shown in relief on the outside (as at Chittorgarh). Loopholes were made both in the merlons themselves and under the crenels. They could either look forward (to command distant approaches) or downward (to command the foot of the wall). Sometimes a merlon was pierced with two or three loopholes, but more often, one loophole was divided into two or three slits by horizontal or vertical partitions.

The British established trading posts along the coast and put up protective forts at each post, as in the Fort at Mumbai, Kolkata's Fort William, Chennai's Fort St George, etc. The vulnerability of these earlier forts, hostilities with the French, and the growing might of the Company resulted in stronger and more complex designs for the second round of construction, with the design of Fort St George reflecting the influences of the French engineer Vauban. However, by this period, fewer Indian forts were being erected in northern India.

India has continued to have many fortified cities like Orchha, Amber, etc. from the early historical period onwards, as well as walled sacred enclosures within cities (like at Trivandrum, Puri, Kanchipuram, etc.). Similarly, there are numerous pre-modern period cities with protective enclosing walls and gates, as exemplified by different capital cities like Agra, Delhi, Ahmedabad (another World Heritage Site), and Jaipur. In addition to these, there have also been several hundred forts.

All in all, India has a rich and variegated history when it comes to its forts and fortified heritage, of which we are justly proud. ❑

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YE-2658/2024

Defence Architecture of Forts of Andhra Pradesh & Telangana

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The earliest references to forts and fortified towns occur in the accounts of Megasthenes, followed by Pliny, who mentions that there were 30 walled towns and numerous villages in Andhra Desa (comprising modern Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and parts of Maharashtra). This period has witnessed the emergence of new forts, including local administrative defences, in both Andhra and Telangana States. All these forts, once centres of power, polity, and might, engulfed in the annals of time, yet they remain a source of information about those bygone societies.

The term 'fort' generally denotes a 'stronghold providing protection and security to the inhabitants'. In Sanskrit, a fort is called '*Durga,*' meaning hard to approach or accessible. In Telugu, it is called '*Kota*' while it is called '*Kote*' in Kannada and '*Kottai*' in Tamil. The antiquity of fortifications in our country dates back to the Indus Valley civilisation, where lower citadels and upper citadels embarked on massive defence ramparts in the excavations. During the period of *Janapadas,* though cities were not much in existence, the literature refers to *Puras (Ujjain, Dwaraka,* and *Indraprastha)* protected by ramparts or walls made of massive earth or mud. In *Kautilya saptangas (*seven constituent elements of the state), Durga occupies 4th place. As time passed, massive mud ramps marked by moats were constructed around the settlements, towns, and cities during early historic times (3rd century BC to 3rd century AD). The earliest references to forts and fortified towns occur in the accounts of Megasthenes, followed by Pliny, who mentions that there were 30 walled towns and numerous villages in *Andhra Desa* (comprising modern Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and parts of Maharashtra). Notable amongst them are Dhanyakataka (Dharanikota), Dhantapura, Satanikota from AP, Peddabankuru, Dhulikatta, Kotilingala, and Kondapur, which were excavated and evidence of defence ramparts found and reported. Later on, during the medieval period (11th to 17th CAD), the defence architecture played a prominent role in the polity of kingdoms and empires in the form of multiple fortifications, strong defence bastions, deep moats with bastions marked by parapet walls, and extensions of gateways. This period has witnessed the emergence of new forts, including local administrative defences, in both Andhra and Telangana states. During this period, the use of stone replaced earlier mud and brick in the construction of forts and fortresses for the need of enhanced security for the capitals, rulers, and subjects, along with state assets, from external attacks. As per the archaeological remains, there

Gandikota Fort

may be 160 forts or fortified villages and towns, big and small, reported from both States. Their distribution patterns show that Coastal Andhra has 73, Rayalaseema has 50, and Telangana has 37. Among them, about 50 forts (AP and TS) are considered significant by virtue of their state of preservation. Further, based on their location, these forts were traditionally classified as *Sthala, Giri, Jala, and Vana Durgas*.

Though both the Telugu states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are dotted with a good number of historical forts like Kondapalli, Kondaveedu, Bellamkonda (Palnadu district), Nagarjunakonda (Palnadu), Vinukonda (Palnadu), Addanki (Bapatla), Udayagiri (Nellore), Adoni (Kurnool), Gooty (Gutti) Fort (Ananatapuramu), Madakasira (Sri Sataya Sai), Punukonda (Sri Satya Sai), Ratnagiri (Sri Satya Sai), Raya Durgam fort (Anantapuramu), Upper and Lower forts of Chandragiri (Tirupati dist.), Gurramkonda fort (Annamayya), Gandikota fort (YSR Kadapa dist.), and Siddavattam (YSR Kadapa) in Andhra Pradesh. Nirmal fort (Adilabad), Bodhan Fort (Nizamabad dist.), Kaulas Fort (Kamareddy dist.), Kammam Fort, Jagityal Fort, Elgandal (Karimnagar), Ramgiri Fort (Peddapalli), Medak fort (Medak), Bhongir (Yadaddri Bhuvanagiri), Kolikonda (Mehboobnagar), Devarakonda fort (Nalgonda), Panagal (Vanaparthy), Warangal (Warangal), Rachkonda (Yadadri Bhuvanagiri), and Golconda Fort (Hyderabad) in the state of Telangana State are significant both from historical and architectural perspective, and some of them were historically interconnected. While the forts in Rayalaseema were invariably associated with Kakatiyas, local chieftains, Vijayanagara empire, Qutb Shahis, and Marathas, the forts in Telangana were primely associated with Kakatiya, Qutb Shahi, and Nizam dynasties. In order to highlight the defence architecture of these empires and kingdoms, selected forts are briefed here.

Kondapalli Fort (16° 37′ 29″ N; 80° 31′ 4″ E), is located in NTR district of AP. This fort of sizable extent is built on the hills of eastern ghats, accessed through two entry gates known as Durga Darwaza and Golconda Darwaza, the remnants include a palace complex built in Indo-Saracenic style. Initially, during the 12th century, Kondapalli was part of Western Chalukyan territories and subsequently a place of frequent struggles between Reddy-Velama rulers of Kondaveedu; it was for some time under Gajapati's Vijayanagara kingdoms and in the early 1530s, it became a strategic coastal fort of Qutb Shahi rulers.

Hill Fort Gooty

Kondaveedu and Addanki Forts (16° 15′ 16″ N; 80° 15 ‘50″ E) in Bapatla and Palnadu districts of AP were initially served as headquarters of the Reddy kingdom during the early 15th-century, and its founder was a subordinate of Kaktiyas of Warangal. At first, the Reddy kings started their independent rule with Addanki as their capital and later shifted to Kondaveedu Fort, while Beellam Konda Fort served as their subordinate entity. During the 16th-century, these forts became a bone of contention between the Gajapatis, Vijayanagara, and Bahamani powers; later, Qutb Shahi joined. Kondaveedu Fort was subjugated to Qutb Shahi rule (1637 and ‘79 AD) followed by the Mughals (1687 AD), the French (1752 AD), the Nizams and finally the British (1788 AD). The fort was provided with a double layer of defence fortification called *Puttakota,* stone defence ramparts at its foothill and *Khila,* which is extensive and marked by high raised security towers, battlements, and ramparts, making it one of inaccessible forts of that period.

Warangal Torana Complex

Udayagiri Fort (14° 51′ 55″ N; 79° 16′ 31″ E) is located in PSR Nellore district of AP, a strategically built hill fort. it was initially under Vijayanagara rule, briefly held by Gajapatis. Krishnadeva Raya re-annexed it to Vijayanagara empire in 1513 AD Udayagiri, the fort, controlled the eastern frontier of the Vijayanagara empire. This fort was a bone of contention among the Vijayanagar, Bahamanis of Gulbarga, and Gajapatis of Odisha. In all, there were 13 fortresses, eight on the hill and five below, which contained bastions, gateways, water reservoirs, granaries, and watch towers. The remains of the fort include palaces, temples, and tombs. Amongst them, the Krishna temple was of historical significance, as Krishnadeva Raya carried the Balakrishna idol to Hampi and reinstalled it in the temple in 1515 AD In the latter part of the 16th-century, it came under the control of Qutb Shahi and in 1839 AD, the East India Company accessioned it.

Gooty Fort (15° 06′ 53″ N; 77° 38‘ 40″ E) is located in the Anantapuramu district of AP. It is the largest fortification, measuring covering 11 km in circumference, has seven fortifications, one within another, and the outermost defence stone wall covers two hills, ensuring formidable defence. There are 14 gateways in total, flanked by watch towers on either side leading to the fort located about 224 m above sea level. A marked feature of its defence is wide battlements inside ramparts provided by a continuous parapet wall. The summit of the citadel has a granary, powder magazine, store rooms, and magazines. Inscriptions of Kalyana Chalukyans dated from the late quarter of the 10th-century to the early 12th-century were found here, and one of them mentions the Chola attack that was repulsed back. Gooty attained status of *Rajya* or province under the Vijayanagara monarchs. After the fall of Vijayanagra in 1665 AD, it faced attacks from the Adil Shahis of Bijapur and Qutb Shahis of Golconda armies. By the end of the 17th-century it was annexed to the Qutb Shahi kingdom by the Mughals. In 1754, Morari Rao, a Maratha chief, occupied the fort. During his 20 year rule, the fort underwent repairs. In 1776, Haider Ali took control of Gooty fort and in 1799 AD it was annexed to the East India Company.

Penugonda Fort (14° 05′ 12″ N; 77° 34′ 58″ E) is located in the Satya Sai district of AP. It has seven massive fortifications, a moat, four gateways, number of temples, wells, watch towers, and granary at the summit. The architecture of bastions is similar to that at Hampi and Chandragiri forts. The earliest reference to this fort dates to the 14th-century AD During the 15th and

Warangal Northern Fortification

mid-16th centuries, Penugonda witnessed many upsurges and fights for its control by different chiefs. The historical significance of this fort was that it became the capital of the IV dynasty of Vijayanagara kings after the fall of Vijayanagara in the Tallikota War in 1565 AD Penugonda witnessed multiple attacks by Adil Shahi and Qutb Shahi commanders, which were repelled. In 1653, it was taken over by Bijapur; later, Morari Rao occupied it. Like Gooty, Penugonda also went into control of Haider Ali in 1776 AD and East India Company took it in 1799 AD.

Chandragiri Fort (13˚ 34′ 58″ N; 79˚ 18′ 20″ E) is located in Tirupati district of Andhra Pradesh. The fort is spread about a mile in circumference and covers an area of 26 acres. It consists of a lower fort covering the plain area and an upper fort on the hill on the northern side. Except for strong stone ramparts and the remains of Vishnu temple and Krishna temple, no significant structures were intact on the upper fort. The lower fort contains three-story Rani Mahal and Raja Mahal and a couple of temples. The long outer wall marked by rectangular bastions enclosing the lower fort and moat is worth noting. During the late 16th-century, the capital of Vijayanagara was shifted from Penukonda to Chandragiri.

Gandikota Fort (14˚ 48′ 54″ N; 78˚ 17′ 10″ E) is located in the YSR Kadapa district of AP. 'Gandikota' means 'gorge and fort' in Telugu is an impregnable fort, marked by a deep gorge with the river Pennar flowing on its north and western sides, respectively. It has three massive stone fortifications marked by a series of bastions, a moat, and two gateways encompass an area of roughly 5 miles in circumference. The main entrance is similar to the main entrance of Golconda Fort marked by a cyclopean wall. It has access from the western side of the river through steps. The structural remains in the fort include a magazine, jail, granary, Rang Mahal, and mini Charminar, Jama Masjid, Madhavaraya temple, Ranganayakula temple, and Raghunatha temple, all dating to the Vijayanagara and Qutb Shahis periods. It has many wells, water reservoirs, and underground water channels. The known antiquity of the fort dates back to late 13th-century. After the Vijayanagara and Qutb Shahi dynasties, the Nizam ceded it to the East India Company under a treaty in 1800 AD.

Warangal Fort, (17˚ 57' 21" N; 79˚ 36' 50" E) located in the Warangal district of Telangana, stands testimony to the glorious Kakatiya legacy. It was referred to in epigraphs and literature as *Orugallu, Orumgallu,* and *Ekasilanagara* rose to prominence after shifting capital from Hanamkonda and became the capital of the Kakatiya kingdom during the Ganapatideva Maharajas regime (1199-1261 AD). As the seat

of royal power, it played a significant role in *Andhra Desa* especially in the rise and fall of many dynasties in South India, the development of literature, art and architecture, and especially the defence architecture. The fortification of Warangal Fort has a diameter of 7.5 km. There were two concentric circular defence fortifications and two moats. The innermost is made of massive granite stone blocks and is 1.2 km diameter, surrounded by a moat with four gateways at the four cardinal points. The second one is 2.4 km in diameter and is an earthen mud fortification, with a moat also provided by four gateways on four sides. The inner stone fortification with 45 bastions was strengthened during the Rudrama Devi regime (1262-1289 AD). The unique feature of the stone fortification is that it has rows of steps running all along its interior to access the ramparts at any time. One high, raised security tower was built atop Ekasila Hill. The fort encloses several remarkable archaeological relics, like many temples, secular structures, shrines, water tanks, and reservoirs. The remains of the Swayambhu temple complex and the execution of four *toranas,* or gateways, exhibit exceptional engineering and architectural eminence from the Kakatiyas period. After the fall of the Kakatiya Empire (1323 AD) the fort was ruled by several governors, local chieftains, Bahamanis, Qutb Shahis, and Nizams.

Bhongir Fort (17° 30′ 56″ N; 78° 53′ 33″ E) located in the Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district of Telangana, was initially under the Kakatiya supremacy. Once it was devastated by Allauddin Khilji in 1355 AD and during the Velama kings, it became an administrative division on par with Warangal and Rachakonda forts. In 1433, Ahmed Shah Bahamani gifted Bhongir as a *jagir* to one of his governors. It was one of the earliest forts in Telangana, controlled by the Qutb Shahis. Bhongir played an important role in the succession struggle between Daulat Quli and Ibrahim Qutb Shah (4th Sultan). The Bhongir Fort is a typical *Giridurgam* that stands on an isolated, steep hill about 500 feet high from ground level and has one mile circumference. It consists of lower and upper forts marked by steep slopes all around. The inner walls represent the varying architectural traits of Kakatiyas and Qutb Shahis. The approach to the top is through three entrances leading to the summit which contains a *baradari* with three halls and arched openings on all sides. The traces of stucco decorative elements in the form of cut plaster and niche decoration indicate Qutb Shahi style, after Qutb Shahis finally took control of the Nizams.

Koilkonda Fort (16° 44′ 54″ N; 77° 47′ 33″ E) is located in the Mahbubnagar district of Telangana, due to its geographical location served as border fort between the Vijayanagara and Qutb Shahi kingdoms. It was for a brief period under the control of Bijapur forces but was regained by Sultan forces. This fort was again figured out during the reign of Abdulla Qutb Shah. The fort is located on a hill covered by ravines on the western side, and a defence wall encircles the hill with curtains and bastions. The arched gateways are decorated. In all, there are 4 gateways. The house of the commander, a number of other apartments, magazines, granary, and an Idgah were important structural remains of this fort.

The Elgandal Fort (18° 25′ 15″ N; 79° 02′ 27″ E) is located in the Karimnagar district of Telangana. The fort was also known as Veligundala was said to be built during Kakatiyas and served as one of the strong hods during Musunuri Nayakas rule. Later, it served as one of the important subordinate power centres in Qutb Shahi rule and was made into a *circar* with 21 paraganas during Abdul Hasan Qutb Shah. Fell into control of Mughals afterwards the Nizams had the control of this fort. Rashtrakuta period, was in the control of Kalyana Chalukyas, later Kakatiyas, Musunuri Nayakas, Bahamanis, Qutb Shahis, and Nizams. The Kaulas Fort is relatively built at a higher level. It spreads to about 400 acres with fortifications and a number of bastions. The architectural style of fort gates and bastions indicates total Qutb Shahi influence, and some of them bear striking features of Golconda-Nayaquila bastions. Other important structural remains include a temple and *Darga* datable to the early and late medieval periods.

All these forts, once centres of power, polity, and might, engulfed in the annals of time, yet they remain a source of information about those bygone societies. ❑

(PS: Due to space constraints, of the many forts in AP and Telangana, only a few selected forts were dealt with here.)

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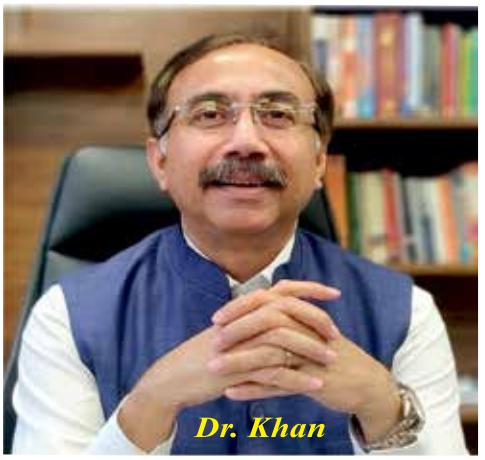

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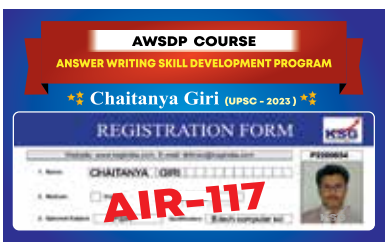

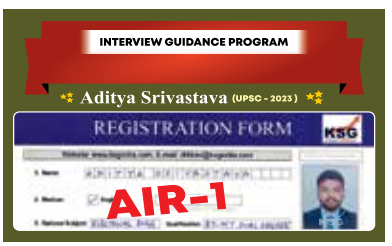

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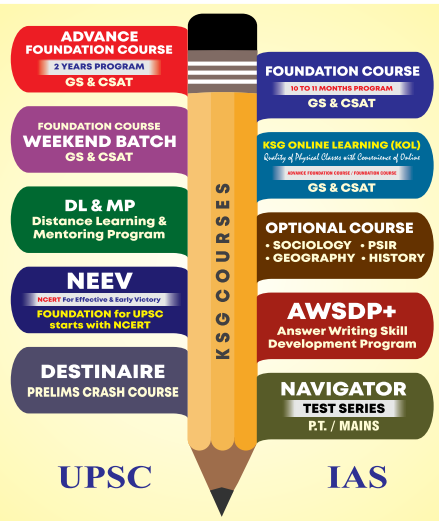

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YE-2676/2024

Golconda Fort

The Impenetrable Fortress

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The Telugu word 'Golla Konda,' which means a shepherd's hill, is where Golconda gets its name. The fort was first ruled by the Kakatiyas, but in 1363 AD, it was taken over by the Bahamanis. Sultan Quli, who founded the Qutb Shah Kingdom in 1518 AD, made it the capital following their overthrow.

Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah was a pioneer of Deccani literature as well as a great patron of Telugu literature. He established Hyderabad and constructed the Charminar. The final Sultan, Abul Hasan Tana Shah, supported a type of dance-drama that later gained popularity as Kuchipudi. The Kingdom was annexed by Aurangzeb in 1687, and Asif Jah, who declared independence in 1713, was named Nizam-ul-Mulk by him. The Nizams, who succeeded him, ruled Hyderabad until 17 September 1948.

The colossal fortress, featuring a moat-protected three-tiered fortification and eight entrance gates, held a noteworthy position during the medieval Deccan. Along with its unbreakable citadel, the Golconda Fort is distinguished by its well-planned township, mosques, magazines, granaries, armouries, and, most importantly, a spotless water supply system. Balahissar, Clapping Portico, Mortuary Bath, Silai Khana, Nagina Bagh, Taramati Mosque, Guard Lines, Akkanna-Madanna Offices, Ramdas Jail, Durbar Hall, Amber Khana, Ibrahim Mosque, and Baradari on the summit are a few of the significant Golconda structures.

History of Koh-e-Noor Diamond

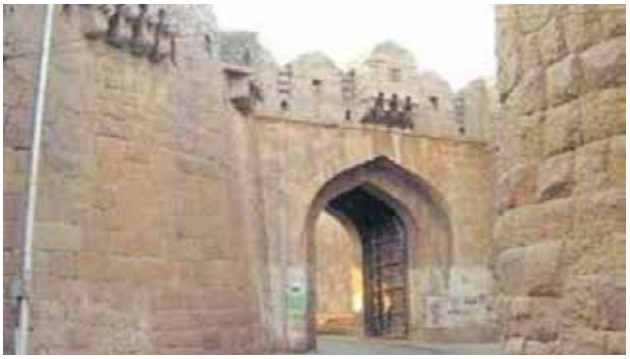
The Koh-e-Noor diamond was discovered in Kollor, close to the Krishna River, during the reign of Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah. The weight of diamond is 360 carts. Golconda gained notoriety for its diamond market.

The Layout of Golconda Fort

The Golconda rampart is made of stones and is incredibly sturdy. Its circumference measures roughly five miles. There are 48 tunnels, 52 windows, and nine doors in the fort. Every turret is equipped with cannons. Around this inside-built rampart is a Pacca ranch, and a bit further to the southeast is another trench with a torrent.

The Gates of Golconda Fort

There are nine gates or doorways : (1) Fateh Darwaza, (2) Moti Darwaza, (3) Darwaza of the new fort, (4) Jamali Darwaza, (5) Banjari Darwaza, (6) Patancheru Darwaza, (7) Makkai Darwaza, (8) Bodli Darwaza, and (9) Bahmani Darwaza.



Fateh Darwaza

Fateh Darwaza

To the east of the fort is this double gate, which was opened by Abdullah Khan Panni in 1687 AD to allow the Aurangzeb army to enter.

The Turrets of the Fort

There are 87 turrets and pails. Through the five miles of the rampart, there are 48 turrets, of which Petla Burj, Mosa Burj, and Majnoon Burj are famous.

Katora House

This is the fort's cistern, which is 200 yards long, the same width, and 5 yards deep. The kings and others used to enjoy boating excursions in this cistern, which was being filled in from the waters of Durg Tank. If you make a noise at the western gate, the voice will echo three times.

The Dhaan Kotha, or the godown of grains

It was a place where grains used to be stored. The godown was being filled during wartime so that there was no need to import food supplies.

Jama-e-Masjid

This mosque was founded by Sultan Quli Qutb Shah I, who began construction on it in 1518 AD, and is located inside the fort across from the Bala Hisar gate on the eastern side. This mosque's gate is inscribed with historical information in Arabic.

Masjid-e-Mulla Khiali

This mosque is situated within the new fort. It was constructed by Mulla Khiali, who was a poet laureate.

Construction of Bala Hisar

Bala Hisar is situated atop hills, with a circumference of roughly 1.5 miles. Qutb Shahi Palace, Durbar-e-Aam (General Assembly), Durbar-e-Khas (Special Assembly), Diwan-e-Aam, and Diwan-e-Khas are among the structures located here, where special gatherings are taking place. The stock room of the arm ammunition armoury, the mosque, the temple, the water reservoir, the park, the cistern over the roof, and the prison where Ramdas was imprisoned are all located nearby. There are two passageways that lead to the Bala Hisar Darbar-e-Aam: one on the right side and one on the left that leads to the Royal Place.

Curtain Wall

There is a curtain wall opposite the Bala Hisar gate. During times of war, the enemy's movements were tracked and observed from behind this wall.

The Gate of Bala Hisar

Even the roof of the Bala Hisar gate, behind the turret, once had a garrison of soldiers. The army's entry into the Bala Hisar curtain wall premises could be observed and monitored during the conflict.

The Pouring of Hot Oil or Lead

There is a hole in the middle of the other portion of the arch of the gate of Bala Hisar. In the event of his enemy waiting for his elephants to dash against the gate, hot oil or melted lead used to be poured on them.

Jama-e-Masjid

Gate of Bala Hisar

The Royal Mortuary Bath

Ramdas Prison

Acoustics

If you clap your hand within the gate of Bala Hisar, standing opposite the steps, under the middle arch, you will hear a vibration of sound that starts from the highest portion of the Bala Hisar. The sound comes from vibration through this arch.

The Mortuary Bath

The mortuary bath, which was constructed in the Turkish and Persian bath styles, was used to ceremoniously bathe the departed members of the Royal Family. The bath was constructed with hot and cold-water cisterns that were supplied by a system of hidden terracotta conduits that were mortared with lime to guarantee a steady supply of water. The path that takes you to the right as you enter Bala Hisar's gated bathing area has pucca cisterns and earthen water pipes that are filled with Durg tank (Durgam Cheruvu) water. The royal family's baths were provided with hot water heated by special methods beneath the cisterns, and they were then transported from the northern gate to Qutb Shah's tombs for interment.

Nagina Bagh

The Nagina Bagh, a pleasure garden to the right of the main entrance, gets its name from the garden where the harem's elite women used to buy jewels on special occasions. Its square design is broken up into four sections by paved walkways that most likely converge at a central fountain.

The Canal of the Durg Tank (Durgam Cheruvu)

A canal emerges from beneath the steps at a considerable distance from this well. Five miles from the fort, in the Durg Tank, is where this canal was excavated. This canal served as the irrigation system for the entire fort's gardening, and each location had its own setup for cultivation and gardening.

Storage of Rain Water

There are two storage areas along the path that leads to the steps; one is on the left, and the other is on the right. The parks were being irrigated by the reservoir.

Ramdas Prison

It is a rectangular structure that is well-built and has a single north entrance. During the reign of Abul Hasan Qutub (Tanah Shah), 1672–1787 AD, this building—which had originally been intended to serve as a storehouse—was transformed into a prison. Ramdas is the alias of Kancherla Gopanna. During Abul Hasan Tana Shah's reign, he served as Bhadrachalam's tahsildar. He was Minister Madanna's nephew. He was the one who established Bhadrachalam's Ram Mandir. On the upper pial, where he was worshipped in ceration, one can find idols made by Ramdas of Hanuman, Navagrah, and Ram Lakshman in this jail.

Jagadamba Mahakali Temple

This temple, dedicated to Durga Devi or Jagadamba Mahakali, was built during the reigns

Temple of Jagadamba Mahakali

Armoury or Aslah Khana

of King Abul Hasan Tana Shah, Ministers Akkanna and Madanna, and thousands of pilgrims from Hyderabad travel there to celebrate the Bonalu festival every Ashadam month.

Baradari, or General Assembly (Darbar Hall)

Perched atop the outcrop, this double-story building features an audience hall and open terraces on the upper levels. The audience halls are located in the lower two stories, which are referred to as Diwani-i-Khas and Diwan-i-Aam. The Qutb Shahi kings convene their General Assembly. This building has an underground tunnel that leads to the Gosha Mahal. A royal seat overlooking a panoramic landscape for approximately thirty miles is located on the highest roof of Bara Dari, which is 2000 feet above sea level and 400 feet high.

Water Arrangement Towards the Steps Leading to the Palaces

A path leads eastward from the base of the Bala Hisar to Qutb Shahi's palaces, where five cisterns that hold water up to 300 feet in height are located. Water was supplied to all the palaces from the highest cistern, which was filled with water using a pealing wheel. Water from the Durg Tank used to be poured into the Durbar-e-Khas cistern first, then through its wheel into the Diwan-e-Khas cistern, the Diwan-e-Aam cistern, the Palace of Taramati, and the Palace of Premavati cisterns.

Armoury, or Aslah Khana

Asla Khana is a three-story structure with varying-sized closed and open arches on each level.

Baradari or Darbar Hall

Royal Palaces (Zanana)

Royal Palaces

Each tier of the structure has seven arches, and two miniature closed arcade pieces per tier are visible on either side. It is among the most striking structures inside the fort and can be stylistically dated to the latter half of the 16th century. The building was once an arms depot, as evidenced by the sizeable collection of antique fire arms kept there.

Royal Palaces

The surrounding buildings are a portion of the main palaces that the Qutb Shahi kings built at various times according to their needs. These consist of audience halls, zanana mosques, royal palaces, fountains, tanks, etc. These exquisite examples of Qutb Shahi architecture feature unique elements such as stucco decorations resembling flowers and shell pieces, as well as veneers of glazed basalt stone.

Taramati Mosque

Taramati Mosque

One of the most exquisite buildings in Golconda Fort is the Taramati Mosque, which is housed within the palace complex and has three arches. It features a small platform six feet wide, supported by nine lovely arches, and steps that lead to the roof through the two side minarets. ❑

(Photographs Courtesy: Dr Shivanand Yalala)

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Clock Tower of Bhadra Fort

Forts of Gujarat
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Gujarat, a land steeped in history and culture, is adorned with magnificent forts that stand as timeless monuments to the region's rich heritage. From the rugged hills of Junagadh to the serene shores of Diu, each fort narrates a saga of valour, conquest, resilience, and architectural brilliance. In this article, we embark on a journey to unravel the secrets of Gujarat's most prominent forts, delving into their historical significance, cultural importance, architectural splendour, and ongoing preservation efforts.

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Uparkot Fort, Junagadh

Uparkot Fort, located in the heart of Junagadh, is a treasure trove of ancient history believed to have been built in 319 BC by the Mauryan emperor Chandragupta. Carved out of the rocky terrain, this fort served as a stronghold for various dynasties, including the Mauryas, Guptas, and Chudasamas. Its strategic location atop a steep hill provided natural defences against invasions, making it an impregnable fortress. It's been besieged 16 times, and legend has it that the fort once withstood a 12-year siege.

The fort stands as a testimony to Junagadh's glorious past; within its embrace lie architectural gems like a magnificent former mosque, a set of millennia-old Buddhist caves, and two fine step-wells. Both step-wells are cut from solid rock. The circular, 41 metres deep Adi Kadi Vav was cut in the

Adi-Kadi-Vav-Uparkot Fort

15th century during the times of the Chudasama rulers and named after two slave girls who used to fetch water from it. Navghan Kuvo, 52 metres deep and designed to help withstand sieges, is almost 1000 years old, and its magnificent staircase spirals around the well shaft. Their presence reminds us of the engineering brilliance of past civilisations and the importance of sustainable water management practices.

The military might be another facet of Uparkot Fort's story. Standing sentinel on the ramparts of Uparkot Fort, the Nilam and Mani cannons are more than just impressive artillery pieces. Their names, Nilam and Mani, translate to 'Sapphire' and 'Pearl,' respectively, hinting at their preciousness and the importance they held in defending the fort. These cannons are colossal. Their size alone commands respect. Nilam cannon was brought from Diu, where it was left by the Ottoman admiral Suleiman Pasha following their defeat in the siege of Diu in 1538 while assisting the Gujarat Sultanate against their struggle with the Portuguese.

Preservation Efforts: In 1893-94, Haridas Viharidas, the Dewan of Junagadh State, restored the fort. In July 2020, the Government of Gujarat initiated the restoration of the fort and the structures inside it, focusing on the ancient step-wells, gateways, and fortifications. Community engagement initiatives are also being implemented to foster a sense of ownership and encourage local participation in preservation efforts.

Legend: The Chudasamas ruled over nearby Vanasthali, and, during those times, a woodcutter discovered a stone wall and a gate. A sadhu who was meditating nearby said that it was Juna, or old, and the woodcutter reported his discovery to the Chudasama ruler, who cleared the area and uncovered the fort. The later Chudasama ruler Navaghana restored the fort and shifted his capital from Vanasthali to Junagadh. So the place became known as 'Junagadh'.

Buddhist Cave, Uparkot Fort

Uparkot Fort

Pavagadh Champaner Fort

Pavagadh Champaner Fort, situated atop a volcanic hill near the town of Champaner, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that stands as a testament to the cultural diversity and architectural brilliance of medieval Gujarat. This magnificent fortress, built over centuries, bears witness to the confluence of diverse influences and the ingenuity of its builders, making it a cherished landmark in Gujarat.

Historically, the Pavagadh Champaner Fort holds immense significance as a strategic stronghold and a centre of power for various dynasties that ruled the region. Its origin dates back to the 8th century, when it served as a fortified outpost for the Chavda dynasty. Subsequently, it came under the control of the Solanki Rajputs (Chalukyas of Gujarat), followed by the Khichi Chauhans and the Gujarat Sultanate. The fort reached its zenith during the reign of Sultan Mahmud Begada in the 15th century, who extensively fortified the hill and constructed palaces, mosques, and other structures that turned Champaner into a splendid new capital. But its glory was brief: when it was captured by Mughal Emperor Humayun in 1535, the Gujarat capital reverted to Ahmedabad, and Champaner fell into ruin.

Culturally, the Pavagadh Champaner Fort is a testament to the region's syncretic heritage, blending Hindu, Jain, and Islamic influences in its architecture and design. Hindu and Jain temples coexist peacefully with mosques and tombs, reflecting the harmonious blend of religions that has thrived in the region for centuries. One can find the majestic Kalika Mata Temple, a revered Hindu pilgrimage site, nestled within the fort walls. The imposing Jami Masjid, built by Mahmud Begada of the Gujarat Sultanate, showcases intricate Islamic geometric patterns and calligraphy. This cultural confluence is further enriched by the presence of Jain temples with their characteristic spires and detailed carvings.

Architecturally, the Pavagadh Champaner Fort is a marvel of engineering and craftsmanship. The stepped citadel, strategically positioned atop the hill, offers breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding plains**.** The fortifications start on the Mauliya plateau, which is situated on the hill and ends on the plains. Step-wells, like the intricately designed step-well within the fort, served not just as a source of water but also as cool sanctuaries during the scorching summers. The architectural styles range from the Rajput influences of the Chalukyas to the Islamic grandeur of the Sultans and the Mughal flourishes, creating a visually stunning and historically significant ensemble.

In July 2004, UNESCO inscribed the Pavagadh Champaner Archaeological Park on the World Heritage List with the justification of its 'joint significance as a living Hindu pilgrimage centre, its cluster of Jain temples, its remarkable preserved medieval urban fabric, its exquisite sandstone-carved mosques and tombs, and its intangible heritage values.'

Pavagadh Champaner Fort

Entry Gate of Diu Fort

Diu Fort

Diu Fort, situated on the serene island of Diu off the coast of Gujarat, is a testament to the region's rich historical, cultural, and architectural heritage. Today, it is a landmark of Diu and one of the Seven Wonders of Portuguese Origin in the World.

From a historical viewpoint, the fort was a product of a strategic alliance between Bahadur Shah, the Sultan of Gujarat, and the Portuguese against the Mughals, built in the year 1535 by D Nuno da Cunha and rebuilt in the year 1546 by D Joao de Castro. It served as a strategic military outpost for over four centuries. The fort's formidable walls, bastions, and cannons bear silent witness to battles fought against rival European powers and local rulers. The Portuguese influence is evident in the fort's layout itself, designed according to Renaissance military principles.

Culturally, Diu Fort reflects a fascinating confluence of influences. After India's independence in 1947, the fort gracefully transitioned from a symbol of colonial rule to a national monument. Today, it houses a museum showcasing artefacts that tell the story of Diu's inhabitants, from the Portuguese to the local Damania community. Within the fort's walls lies the intricately carved St. Paul's Church**,** a testament to the Portuguese legacy, now coexisting peacefully with the nearby mosques frequented by the local population. This harmonious blend of cultures is what makes Diu Fort truly unique.

Architecturally, Diu Fort is a masterpiece crafted from warm red sandstone. The fort's imposing entrance gate, the Porta da Barra, sets the tone for the experience with its intricate carvings and imposing presence. Inside, a network of

Sea View of Diu Fort

Internal view of Diu Fort

courtyards, barracks, and administrative buildings unfolds, each showcasing the architectural prowess of the Portuguese. One can't miss the lighthouse, a crucial navigational aid for centuries, and the three churches—St. Paul's, St. Thomas, and the Chapel of Our Lady of Rosary—each with its own distinct architectural style, reflecting the evolution of Portuguese church design during their rule.

In 1960, there were only 350 Portuguese soldiers garrisoned in the fort. 'Operation Vijay' was launched by India on 19 December 1961, to end Portuguese colonial rule in Goa, Daman, and Diu. After Diu had fallen, the Martyrs Memorial was erected close to the Collectorate office in Diu to commemorate the Indian soldiers who were killed in the capture of Diu.

Bhujiya Fort

The historic Bhujiya Fort is located on the top of Bhujiya Hill on the outskirts of the town of Bhuj in the district of Kutch. Bhujiya is named after Bhujang, a snake. It was believed that the Snake God, who provided protection, was worshipped by the people. Construction began in 1715 under Rao Godji I, the ruler of the Kutch Kingdom. Its strategic location atop the hill provided a clear advantage point, allowing defenders to spot approaching enemies and formulate strategies. Over the next two decades, the fort's construction flourished under Rao Godji's son, Deshalji I.

Architecturally, the Bhujiya Fort is a marvel of military engineering and architectural brilliance. Built primarily from red sandstone, the fort's imposing walls snake around the contours of the hill and cover around 6.5 square kilometres of area, maximising its defensive potential. Seven heavily decorated gateways, each with a unique name and purpose, provide controlled access to the fort's various sections. Inside, a network of courtyards, barracks, and ammunition stores unfolds, offering a glimpse into the daily lives of the soldiers stationed there. Bhujiya Fort stood strong during six major battles fought between 1700 and 1800 AD, successfully repelling attacks from Muslim raiders from Sindh and the Mughal rulers of Gujarat. This legacy of defence makes Bhujiya Fort a cornerstone of Kutch's military history and a symbol of Kutchi identity, serving as a repository of local folklore, rituals, and traditions that have been passed down through generations.

Legend: The first major battle at Bhujiya Fort was fought during the early part of the reign of Deshalji I, when Sher Buland Khan, who was Mughal Viceroy of Gujarat at that time, invaded Kutch. The army of Kutch was in a precarious condition, when a group of Naga Bawas got the gate of Bhujiya Fort opened on pretext of visiting Nag temple for worship and then joined in the fray against Sher Buland Khan's army. Since that day Naga Bawa and their leader have had a place of importance in a procession held on Nag Panchami.

Bhujang Naga Temple, Bhujiya Fort

Cannon at Uparkot Fort

Bhadra Fort

Bhadra Fort is situated in the walled city area of Ahmedabad. It was built by Ahmad Shah I in 1411. The fort adopted the name Bhadra after a temple of Bhadra Kali, a form of Laxmi, which was established during Maratha rule. The fort was also called Aark Fort centuries ago. Bhadra Fort stands as a symbol of Ahmedabad's foundation and the rise of the Gujarat Sultanate. The British captured the fort in 1817 and used it as a prison until independence. It was renovated in 2014 by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation and the Archaeological Survey of India as a cultural centre for the city so that people could get a glimpse of history.

Culturally, Bhadra Fort reflects the synthesis of diverse architectural styles and cultural influences that define Ahmedabad's identity. Within its precincts lie hidden gems of cultural heritage, including the Bhadra Kali Temple and the Jama

Teen Darwaza

Teen Darwaza

Masjid. The fort's cultural significance lies in its role as a symbol of religious tolerance and coexistence, where Hindu and Islamic traditions harmoniously coalesce.

Architecturally, Bhadra Fort is a masterpiece of Indo-Islamic architecture. It had a fortified city wall with 14 towers, eight gates, and two large openings. On the eastern side, there is a triple gateway known as Teen Darwaza, which was formerly an entrance to the royal square, Maidan-Shah. The road beyond Teen Darwaza leads to Manek Chowk, a mercantile square. On the south side of the road, there is a congregational mosque known as Jama Masjid.

Clock Tower: The Bhadra Fort tower clock was brought from London in 1849 at a cost of Rs 8000 and installed here at a cost of Rs 2430 in 1878 by the British East India Company. At night, it was illuminated from behind by a kerosene lamp, which was replaced by an electric light in 1915—Ahmedabad's first electrical connection.

The forts of Gujarat serve as living testaments to the region's rich and diverse heritage, reflecting the influences of various dynasties and cultures that have shaped its history. These forts not only served as military strongholds but also as centres of political, economic, and cultural activity, fostering trade, commerce, and intellectual exchange. They bear witness to the syncretic blend of Hindu, Islamic, and European influences that characterise Gujarat's cultural landscape, exemplified in the architectural styles, religious traditions, and culinary delights of the region. ❑

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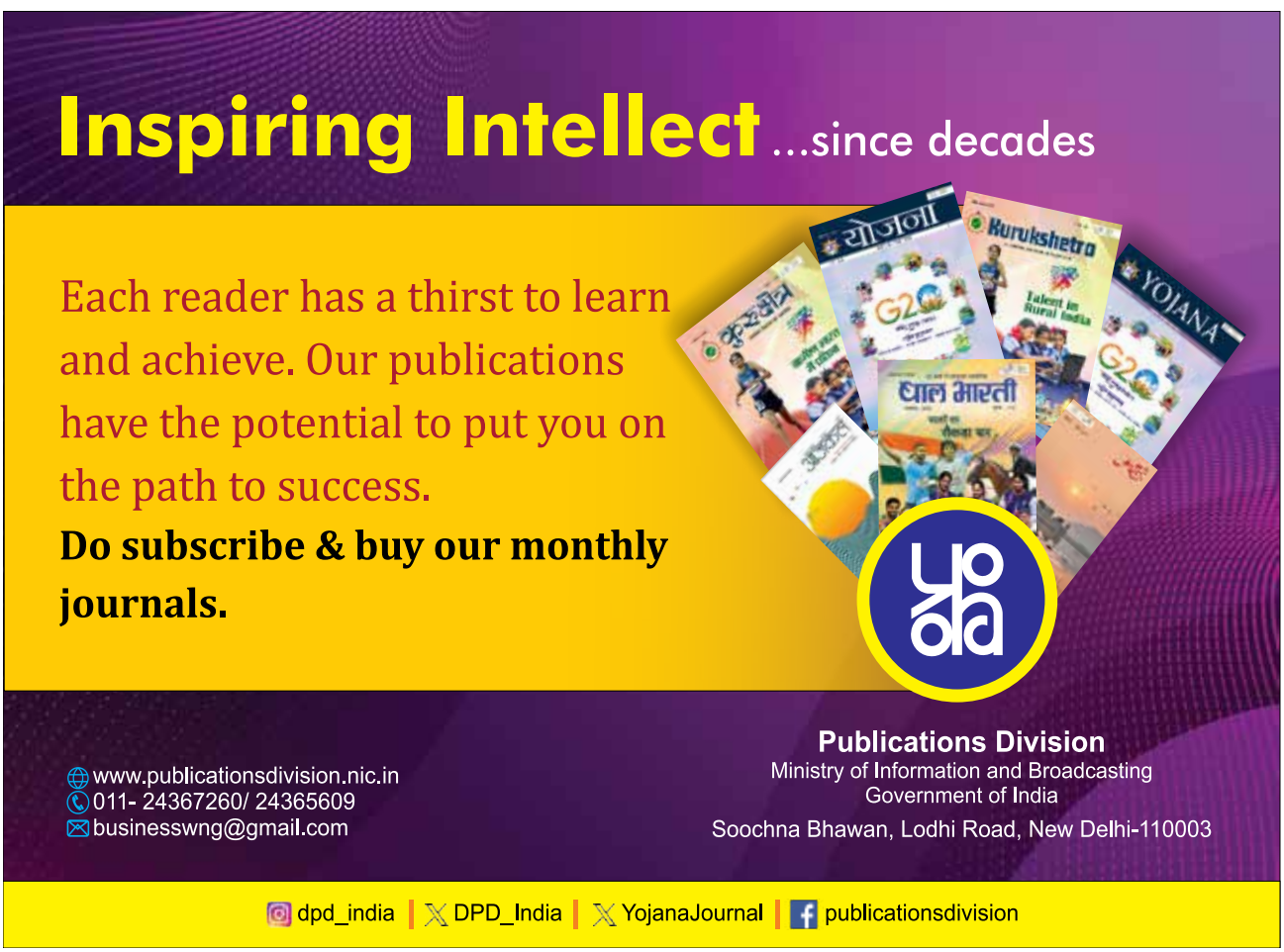

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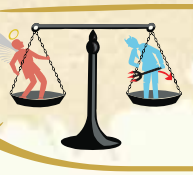

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Forts in Delhi

The earliest fort in Delhi can be dated to the 11th century, when the Tomar ruler Anangpal built the fort called Lal Kot. Later, the fort was extended by Prithviraj Chauhan by throwing up massive ramparts around it, and this enlarged city is known as Qila Rai Pithora, the first of the so-called Seven Cities of Delhi. The Red Fort blends Mughal, Persian, Timurid, and Hindu styles seamlessly. Every year, on India's Independence Day, the Prime Minister hoists the national flag at the Red Fort, continuing a tradition that symbolises the country's sovereignty and unity.

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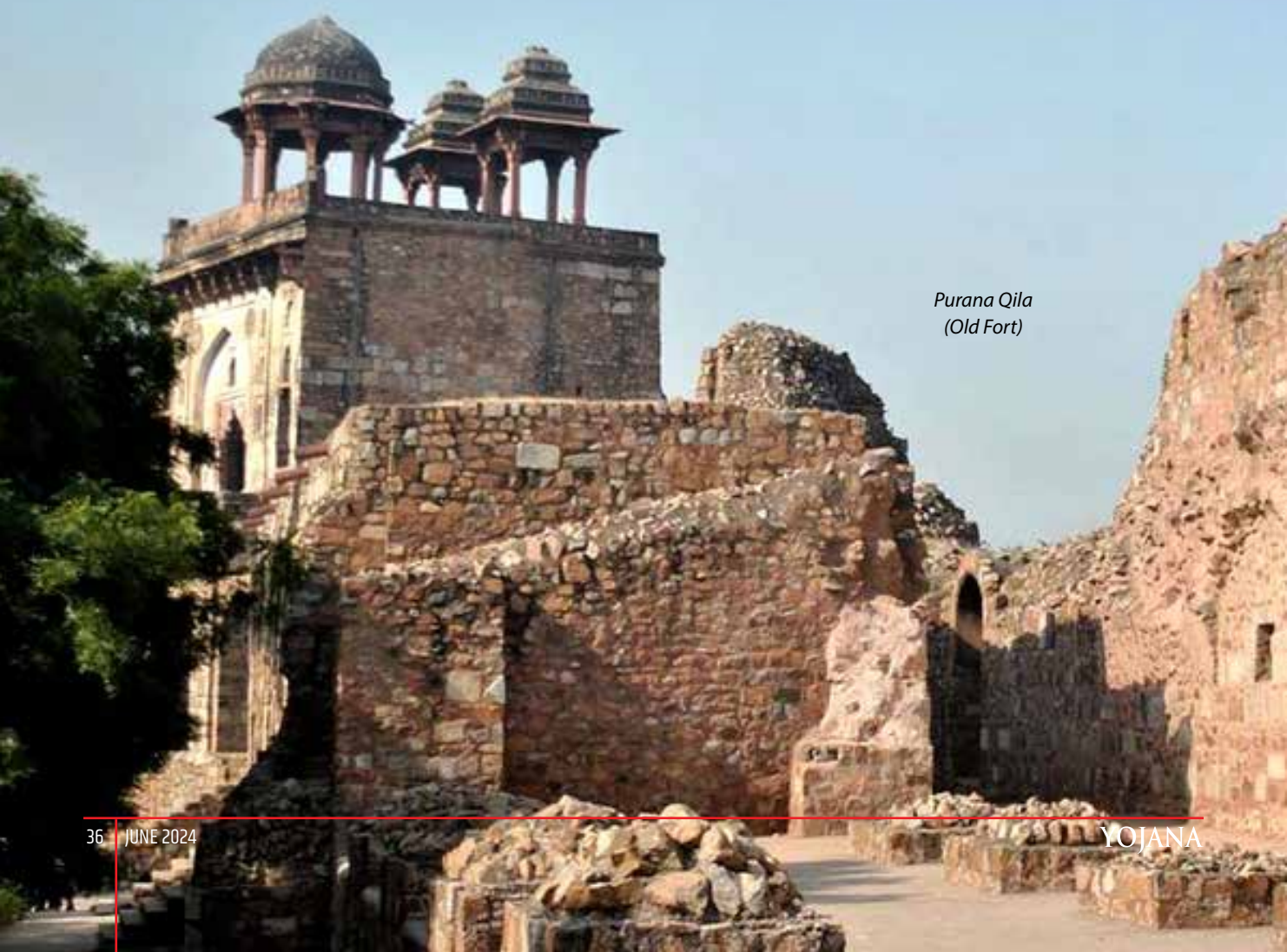

Purana Qila (Old Fort)

Like an old book that holds between its pages forgotten photographs or folded notes —the memoirs of our lives gone by— Delhi too holds in the maze of its landscape the forts that stand witnesses to the city's life that once was. These forts are speaking monuments that narrate their annals to anyone who cares to listen.

Visiting these forts in Delhi is akin to dusting an old book and flipping its pages to find those embedded time-worn photographs and handwritten notes that bring alive the past.

Delhi is said to comprise 7-11 cities, based on the accounts of different historians. The ancient history of Delhi can be traced to the legend of Mahabharat, where the Pandavas built the famed Indraprastha on the western bank of the river Yamuna. Some believe that the city existed at the Purana Qila (Old Fort) site in Delhi, and recent and ongoing excavations may shed light on it.

The earliest fort in Delhi can be dated to the 11th century, when the Tomar ruler Anangpal built the fort called Lal Kot. Later, the fort was extended by Prithviraj Chauhan by throwing up massive ramparts around it, and this enlarged city is known as Qila Rai Pithora, the first of the so-called Seven Cities of Delhi. The ramparts of this fort are 5 to 6 m in thickness, and their extant height goes as high as 18 m. In some places, a moat runs on its outer sides. According to Timur, the rubble-built ramparts were pierced by 13 gates, out of which Hauz Rani, Barka, and Badaun gates are still extant. Ibn Batuta probably describes the Badaun gate as the main entrance to the city.

Prithviraj is said to have lost it soon after to the invading forces of Muhammad of Ghor in 1192 CE. The Ghurid commander Aibek, who was left in charge of the dominions in India, developed the existing fort and built the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque and the Qutub Minar within its premises. The fort is now survived by its stone-built ramparts, a moat, which is apparent only in very few places, and semi-circular bastions. Its remains can be seen in the present Saket, Mehrauli, Kishangarh, and Vasant Kunj areas.

Many forts were built during the Delhi Sultanate, which also introduced the Indo-Islamic architectural style in India. A notable fort of the time was built in the 14th century by Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq. The fort was part of a new city built in Delhi by the Tughlaqs called Tughlaqabad. It was essentially built to serve a dual purpose: to resist the threat of Mongol attacks and to serve as the capital of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq.

A part of the third city of Delhi called Tughlaqabad, which stretches across 6.5 km, was built in 1321 AD. Tughlaqabad consists of remarkable, massive stone fortifications that surround the irregular ground plan of the city. The sloping rubble-filled city walls, a typical feature of monuments of the Tughlaq dynasty, are between 10 and 15 metres high, topped by battlemented parapets, and strengthened by circular bastions of up to two stories in height. The city is supposed to once have had as many as 52 gates, of which only 13 remain today. The fortified city contained seven rainwater tanks. South of Tughlaqabad was a vast artificial water reservoir within the fortified outpost of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq's Tomb. This well-preserved mausoleum remains connected to the fort by an elevated causeway that still stands today. However, the fort was shortly abandoned in 1327.

The fort, which is seeped in myths and legends, was abandoned shortly after 1327 AD, with the fort being termed 'cursed'. Legend has it that a tiff occurred between Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq and Sufi Saint Nizamuddin Auliya during the construction of this fort, and the enraged saint cursed the city of Tughlaqabad, saying "Ya rahe ujjar ya base Gujjar," which translates to "it will remain desolate or be occupied by herdsmen." Another legend about Auliya says that when Ghiyas-ud-din was on his Bengal campaign, he learned that the workers had defied his orders and were working on the Sufi saint's water tank. The ruler became so angry that he vowed to punish the saint on his return. On hearing this, Auliya let out a curse: "Hunuz Dilli dur ast" (*Dilli abhi dur hai*). On his return, a pavilion erected to honour Ghiyas-ud-din's success in the campaign collapsed, causing his death and that of his younger son. He could never make it to Delhi.

Another fort in the same vicinity is Adilabad Fort, built in 1327–28 AD, soon after the death of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq, by his son Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq, allegedly as a symbol of his might and power. Perched over a hillock, the fort seems to be an extension of the Tughlaqabad Fort, built in the same period with a similar style and materials used in construction.

The Mughals were next to follow, and two forts in particular continued to charm the visitors.

The first one, Qila-e-Kohna, popularly called Purana Qila, was built in the 1530s. The site, however, does have a history that makes it truly old and also historically and culturally of great significance. As mentioned earlier, some believe that it was the site of Indraprastha, the legendary capital of the Pandavas. Excavations have revealed definite settlements dating from the 4th-3rd centuries BC and some pottery fragments that might date from as far back as 1000 BC. The visible built structures are from Mughal emperor Humayun's city of Dinpanah (`asylum of the faith'), constructed between 1530 and 1538. Sher Shah, who ousted Humayun from the throne in 1540, demolished the city of Dinpanah and, on the same site, raised this citadel. It is irregular oblong on plan with bastions on corners and three gates, opening on the north, south, and west. The city built by Sher Shah is named Sher Garh. It is believed that Sher Shah left Purana Qila incomplete, and Humayun completed it.

Bada Darwaza, the `large gate', is currently the only entrance to the fort. This gate is a triple-storeyed structure tucked between two massive, curving bastions made of rubble masonry and primarily dressed with deep red sandstone, relieved

Red Fort

by inlays of white and greyish-black marble. There is another gate in the north, called Talaaqi Darwaza, or 'forbidden gate.' The name Talaaqi is an intriguing one and has several interesting stories attached to it. One of the legends narrates the story of a queen who vowed to keep the gate closed till her husband returned victorious from battle. The king, however, was killed, and the gate is said to have remained shut ever since. In the south, there is Humayun Darwaza.

The fort is dotted with many significant structures. A mosque, Qal'a-i-Kuhna Masjid, was built by Sher Shah in 1541 AD. Its prayer hall is rectangular, pierced by five horseshoe-shaped arches in the front. The central arch, higher than the others and framed within the projection, is flanked by narrow fluted pilasters. It is beautifully embellished with bands of calligraphy of verses from the Quran. The architectural and symbolic focal points of the mosque are the *Mihrabs* that face west and indicate the direction of the prayer. This mosque occupies an important position in the development of Mughal mosque architecture. The mosque presents a harmonious blend of Islamic architecture and indigenous Hindu stylistic motifs such as the *Kalash* and the lotus. It points to the syncretic outlook of its builders that led to the evolution of a composite culture.

Another important structure inside the Purana Qila is the Sher Mandal. It is a double-storeyed octagonal tower of red sandstone relieved by marble, surmounted by an octagonal pavilion, or chhatri. On the second storey, the central chamber is cruciform, with recesses on its four sides. The purpose of the building is not certain but was probably used by Humayun as his library, of which he fell as he rushed in response to the Muazzin's call for prayer and ultimately died. Other notable structures are the baoli, or stepwell, and the hammam, or bathhouse.

Two other outlying structures that are often perceived as part of the Purana Qila are the Lal Darwaza and the Khairul Manazil. Lal Darwaza is an imposing gateway built of red sandstone and grey quartzite believed to be the southern entry to the city of Sher Garh. The Khairul Manazil was

commissioned by Maham Anga, Akbar's wet nurse, around 1561-62 to house a mosque and madrassa. The structure, though fairly simple, still speaks of the power and influence that Maham Anga held in Akbar's life.

After the shifting of the Mughal capital to Agra, the fort was abandoned, and it came to be occupied by a rural population and the village of 'Inderpat', recalling the ancient site of the Mahabharat. The village was relocated after the British started building the modern capital of Delhi.

The fate of the modern city of Delhi is not only historically and metaphorically but also physically aligned with the Purana Qila. Sir Edwin Lutyens, who built the modern imperial capital of Delhi for the British, is said to have aligned the central vista, now called the Kartavya Path, with the Humayun Darwaza of the Purana Qila.

The second Mughal fort in Delhi we cover is the Red Fort. Commissioned by Emperor Shah Jahan in 1638 as the palace fort of Shahjahanabad, the new capital city, and designed by architect Ustad Ahmad Lahauri, the Red Fort served as the main residence of the Mughal emperors for nearly 200 years. The red sandstone fort was built on the banks of Yamuna and took approximately nine years to construct (1639-1648). The Red Fort is constructed adjacent to an earlier structure named Salimgarh Fort, which was constructed during the reign of Islam Shah Suri in 1546. The fort is known for its architecture, featuring intricate carvings, elegant domes, and sprawling gardens.

Red Fort

The Red Fort blends Mughal, Persian, Timurid, and Hindu styles seamlessly. Replete with beautiful pavilions connected through *Nahr-e-Behist* (water channels) and structures such as the Diwan-i-Aam (Hall of Public Audience), Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience), Rang Mahal, and the Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque), it gives a glimpse of a bygone era. Every year, on India's Independence Day, the Prime Minister hoists the national flag at the Red Fort, continuing a tradition that symbolises the country's sovereignty and unity.

Its rampart walls, covering a perimeter of 2.41 km and rising to a height of 33.5 m on the town side and 18 m along the river, are outlined by a moat that originally connected with the river. The palace lies along the eastern side of the fort, while two imposing three-story main gateways flanked by semi-octagonal towers and consisting of several apartments are located in the centre of the western and southern sides and are known as the Lahori and Delhi Gates, respectively. The main entrance to the fort lies through the Lahori Gate, and the palaces are reached through a roofed passage, flanked by arcaded apartments called Chhatta Chowk and now used as shops.

The monument was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2007 because of its outstanding universal value as per the guidelines of UNESCO. ❑

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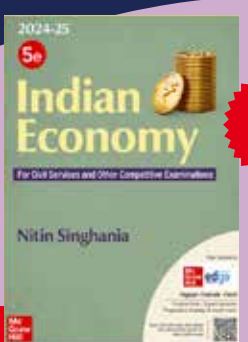

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Bekal: A Fusion of Culture and History Echoing Through Time

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In the northernmost reaches of Kerala, where the Arabian Sea whispers secrets to the shore, lies Kasaragod, a vibrant district brimming with cultural and linguistic diversity. Often called the 'Land of Seven Languages,' Kasaragod boasts a unique heritage reflected in its people's use of over ten languages, including Malayalam, Tulu, Kannada, Konkani, Urdu, Marathi, and the fascinating scriptless language Byari.

Standing sentinel amidst this dynamic medley is Bekal Fort, a majestic structure resonating with stories of a dramatic past. Weathered by time and the relentless Arabian Sea, this imposing fort has served as a silent observer of history. Let's embark on a journey through Bekal Fort's history, uncovering its architectural marvels, and delve into the captivating charm of Kasaragod.

A Fort Steeped in History

Bekal's story unfolds like a captivating chapter in a history book. Once part of the powerful Mahodayapuram kingdom, the fort transformed into a crucial port town under the rule of Kolathunadu in the 12th century. Recognising its strategic and economic potential, the Keladi Nayakas (Ikkeri Nayakas) conquered the region in the 16th century.

The Nayakas' reign marked a pivotal moment. They constructed the formidable Bekal Fort, not only to defend against outside attacks but also to aid their own campaigns in Malabar. Hiriya Venkatappa initiated the construction of the fort, which was completed during the period of Sivappa Nayak. This era also saw the rise of Chandragiri Fort, another testament to the Nayak dynasty, standing proudly nearby.

The fight for control continued as the Kolathiris challenged the Nayak dominance. This conflict finally ended with the rise of Haider Ali, who brought Bekal under the Mysore Sultanate. The fort then became a vital military outpost for Tipu Sultan's Malabar campaign. Archaeological finds like coins and artefacts serve as reminders of the Mysore Sultans' strong presence here.

From British Rule to Modern Times

With Tipu Sultan's fall in 1799, the fort transitioned into the hands of the British East India Company. During this period, Bekal served as the headquarters of the newly formed Bekal Taluk. However, the political and economic significance of the fort and its port gradually declined. Following India's independence, Bekal became part of Kerala in 1956. Still, the northern part of Kasaragod is known as Tulunadu.

Today, the majestic Bekal Fort stands under the watchful care of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Its weathered walls and intricate architecture transport visitors back in time. The strategic observation tower offers panoramic vistas of the

surrounding landscape, while the cleverly designed defence holes speak volumes about the region's military advancements.

Beyond History: A Blend of Beauty and Culture

Spanning roughly 40 acres, Bekal Fort is constructed from laterite stone, a material abundantly found in the Kasaragod District. Bekal Fort's charm extends far beyond its historical significance. The fort seamlessly blends with the surrounding landscape, offering breathtaking views of the Arabian Sea and captivating sunsets. This unique tapestry of history and nature makes Bekal Fort a captivating destination for everyone.

A visit to Bekal Fort wouldn't be complete without experiencing the religious harmony that prevailed in the land. At the entrance of the fort stands the Mukhyaprana Temple (Hanuman Temple), and an ancient mosque resides nearby. These places of worship serve as testaments to the region's tolerance and peaceful coexistence of religions.

Kasaragod's cuisine and food culture are heavily influenced by South Karnataka, offering a unique blend of flavours distinct from the rest of Kerala.

Planning Your Trip to Kasaragod's Land of Forts

Kasaragod, also known as the 'land of forts,' boasts Bekal Fort as the largest. History buffs can explore other forts in the region, including Chandragiri Fort, Hosdurg Fort, Povval Fort, Kumbala Fort, Kundamkuzhi Fort, and Bendadukka Fort.

The nearest airport to Bekal Fort is Mangalore Airport. For trains, Bekal Fort station is the closest option.

A Journey through Time

A visit to Bekal Fort is more than just a historical journey; it's an immersion into the rich cultural and linguistic tapestry that defines Kasaragod. Let this be your guide to experiencing the captivating beauty and heritage of this unique destination. ❑

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Ramya Rangaswamy
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My name is Khushhali Solanki (AIR61,CSE2023). I have studied from pavan sir on unacademy, and read his notes 2 times which were very helpful in revision and foundation building. I also joined his test series, and the discussions helped in better analysis of the question and understanding the requirements properly. I want to express my gratitude to pavan sir for helping me 'through' this exam.

Khushhali Solanki
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RAVI MEENA IAS

I am Ravi Meena, AIR 625, CSE 2023 and got 286 Marks(145+141) in Public Administration. I was enrolled in classroom programme of Public Administration, the understanding I developed here and notes dictated by Pavan Sir helped me in decoding the demand of questions, interlinking various units of syllabus and writing effective answer. Thank You to the Sir & whole team of Institute.

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Danish Ali	273	134	139
Dhruv Sapra	273	131	142
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Vellore Fort
The Great Garrison of South India

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The Vellore Fort, 'the iron throne of South India', was considered the golden seat of the Pallavas, Cholas, Marathas, Bijapur Sultans, and Arcot Nawab dynasties. The fort city of Vellore is an archaic district with a rich historical past showcased in every aspect and is one of the most prominent tourist destinations in southern India. Vellore Fort is located 139 km from Chennai and 166 km north of Puducherry.

The Vellore fort is one of the classical examples of medieval architecture in Tamil Nadu. The Vellore Fort is a 16th-century fortress built by the Vijayanagar Empire that served as its headquarters for many decades. The fort was built by Chinna Bommi Nayak and Timma Nayak, subordinate chieftains under Emperor Sadasiva Raya of the Vijayanagar Empire, in 1556 AD The fort gained strategic prominence following the reestablishment of Vijayanagar rule with Chandragiri as their fourth capital after the battle of Talikotta. The Aravidu Dynasty, which held the title of Rayas in the 17th-century resided in this fort, using it as a military base in the war of Toppur in the 1620s.

The Rayas had long-running battles with their longtime rivals, the Turko-Persian Bijapur Sultans, and with their subordinates in the Nayaks of Madurai and the Gingee over non-remittance of annual tributes. In the 1640s, during the reign of Sriranga Raya III, the fort was briefly captured by the Bijapur army but was eventually recaptured with the help of the Nayaks of Tanjore. During Sriranga Raya's reign in 1614 AD, a coup broke out within the royal family, and the reigning Emperor Sriranga Raya and his royal family were murdered by the rival factions of the royal family, with the younger son, Rama Deva Raya, smuggled out of the fort by supporting factions of the Emperor. These events led to the Battle of Toppur in 1616 AD.

In 1639 AD, Francis Day of the East India Company obtained a small strip of land on the Coramandel Coast from the Nayaks of the Vellore–Chandragiri regions for trading based in present-day Chennai. In 1650, Sriranga Raya allied with the Mysore and Tanjore Nayaks and marched south to attack Gingee and Madurai. His first stop was the capture of Gingee fort, but Thirumalai Nayak of Madurai responded by requesting the Sultan of Bijapur to attack Vellore from the north to divert Sri Ranga's attention. The Bijapur Sultan dispatched a large army and captured Vellore Fort. After that, the Vellore and Gingee forts ended up in the hands of the Sultan. It marked the end of the last direct line of the Vijayanagar Empire.

In 1676 AD, the Mavalas under the Great Maratha King Shivaji captured Tanjore first and appointed Ekaji, the brother of Shivaji, as its ruler. Later, he captured Gingee Fort in 1677 AD, but left the task of attacking Vellore to his subordinates. In 1678 AD, after a prolonged siege, Vellore passed into the hands of Marathas.

Under the Mughals (1707-1760 AD)

In 1707 AD, the year that the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb died, the Delhi army under Daud Khan captured Vellore Fort after defeating the Marathas. The struggle for the Delhi throne empowered the Deccan Muslim governors to declare independence. In 1710, the recently established Nawab of Arcot under Sadat Ulla Khan followed suit. Dost Ali, the later's successor in 1733, gifted the Vellore Fort to one of his sons-in-law.

Under Control of the English (1799-1947 AD)

Following the decline of the Madurai Nayaks and coinciding with the emergence of the British on the Madras coast, conflict developed between the Nawab and his sons-in-law. The Nawab was supported by the British and rival claimants by the French, resulting in the Carnatic wars. The British East India Company took possession of Vellore Fort with relative ease and used the fort as a major garrison until Indian Independence in 1947. In 1780, the Vellore Fort was designed by Haider Ali during the Second-Anglo Mysore War, but the British garrison held out for over two years before the siege was lifted.

Vellore Mutiny (1806-1807 AD)

The Vellore Mutiny was the first large scale mutiny by Indian soldiers against the British, setting the stage for the 1857 freedom struggle. Though, it was a short-lived one and lasted only one day, it was violent and bloody and rebels stormed into the Vellore Fort and killed and wounded as many as 200 British soldiers, resulting in around 100 mutineers being executed on 10 July 1806 at the fort.

Vellore Mutiny was a bloody affair with both the British and native sepoys fighting for justice. At Vellore Fort, the 1500 sepoys located in the garrison mutinied and killed over 200 of the 370 Europeans in the fort. On 10 July 1806, the Vellore mutiny was however rapidly smashed due to the quick response of Colonial Robert Gilesspee (1766 -1814). The basic reason for the mutiny was the implementation of General Order, introduced by General Agnew (the Agnew turbans), in which the new standing regulations were published.

The New Regulations of the Madras Army emphatically prohibit native soldiers from sporting caste marks on their faces or, for the matter, flaunting earrings or whiskers on parade. Though the regulations had been in vogue for a while, they had not been uniformly followed across the length and breadth of the Madras Army, and each regiment was left to its own devices as far as coping with these regulations was concerned.The new order, though, removed all ambiguity on this score and strove to enforce uniformity.

The new regulation initially led to general discontent among the native troops (Hindus and Muslims) stationed at Vellore Fort, cutting across barriers of caste and religion. Matters were compounded by the introduction of new turbans that had leather as a building material,

thus affecting the sentiments of both Hindus and Muslims as leather was considered polluting both communities.

Moreover, the sepoys claimed that the new head gear resembled the one worn by the avowedly 'lowly' and 'half-caste' drummers in the regiments. Discontent had now assumed an overt form, though, not violent in tenor. on 6 May 1806, the sepoys of the second battalion, 4th regiment, refused to wear the new Agnew turbans. The tension had burst forth into the open, and the air was now rife with rumours of the fakirs roaming around and staging puppet shows that exhorted the sepoys to kill their European officers.

Things were now poised on a razor's edge, and finally, on 10 July 1806, an open mutiny broke out with a large number of native sepoys and officers attacking the European troops and their white officers stationed in Vellore Fort. Reinforcements, though, arrived from nearby Arcot under Major Armstrong and Col Gillespie. Meanwhile, the Mutineers proclaimed Futteh Hyder, son of Tipu Sultan, as their new ruler and hoisted the Tiger-striped flag of Tipu Sultan. But the rebellion was swiftly crushed by Col Gillespie. 800 sepoys were found dead in the Vellore Fort alone. 600 soldiers were imprisoned in Trichy and Vellore. Some mutineers were hung, and some were shot dead. The uprising was thus brought to a bloody end. Tipu Sultan's son was sent to Calcutta. General Craddock, the Commander-in-Chief, and William Bentick, the Governor of Madras, were recalled by the British Government. The mutiny started at Vellore Fort by the native sepoys against the British and ended with great failure. There was no proper leadership and it was not well organised by the Indian native sepoys.

Tourist Attractions at Vellore Fort

The Vellore Fort is one of the classical examples of medieval architecture. It is regarded as the best in South India. An interesting fact that makes the Vellore Fort more interesting is that the fourth is completely made of granite stone, imported from Arcot and Chitoor. The Jalakanteswara Temple was constructed by the Vijayanagar Empire. Inside the fort are many bronze sculptures. One of the dark secrets associated with the temple is that it was used as a secretive weapons store during the revolt against the British in 1806.

The various mahals inside the fort complex are dedicated to three main rulers are- Tipu Mahal, Begam Mahal, and Khandi Mahal. The Tipu Mahal has around 150 rooms, and it is adjacent to the Hyder Mahal, which has a around 200 rooms. These palaces have a very lavish interior architecture that matches the lifestyle lived by the Sultans. Other places of interest inside the fort complex included St John's Church and the Mosque. Another feature of the fort is the Archaeological Museum of India housed inside the Vellore Fort. Apart from these tourist establishments available inside the Fort, there are very few tourist places housed outside the Fort.

They are:

1. Sripuram Golden Temple (15 km away from the fort)
2. Muthu Mandapam (3 km away from the fort)
3. Amirithi Zoological Park (25 km away from the fort)
4. Armamalai Cave Paintings (65 km away from the fort)

Location of the Vellore Fort

The Vellore Fort is situated in the centre of Vellore City, opposite the old bus stand. Vellore lies on the Chennai-Bengaluru National Highway, 210 km from Bengaluru and 139 km from Chennai. The nearest railway station is Vellore-Katpadi junction, while the closest airports include Vellore Airport, Tirupati Airport, Chennai Airport, and Bengaluru Airport. The Government of India issued a stamp commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Vellore Mutiny, which was released by the Government of Tamil Nadu.The 16th-century fort is now open to tourists and managed by the Archaeological Survey of India. It houses a diverse collection of treasures spanning Ancient to Modern times, covering anthropology, botany, geology, numismatics, prehistoric studies, and zoology. The Fort City of Vellore is famous for medical tourism in recent times. However, you can recollect the past history of the city if you visit Vellore Fort, a 16th-century fort situated here. You can see the grand ramparts and wide moat is supplied from Suryagunta tank. The fort was captured from the Carnatic Nawabs by the British in 1760 AD, and it was possessed by them up until the dawn of Indian independence in August 1947. ❑

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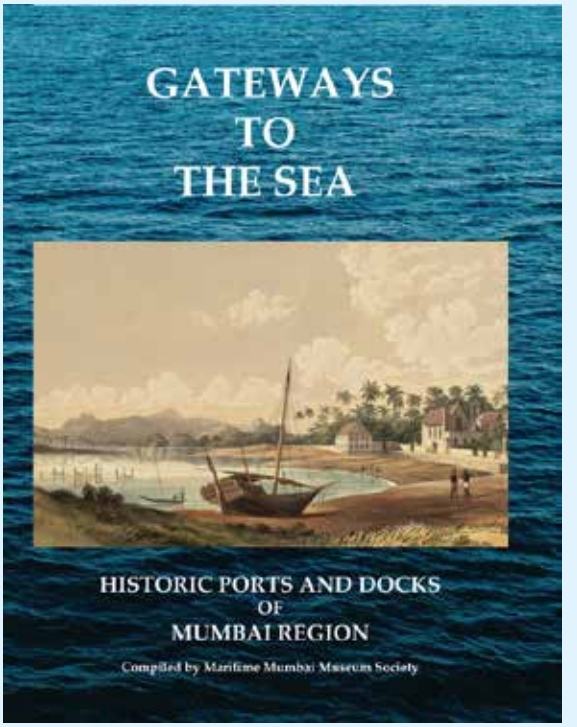

'Gateways to the Sea' is a compilation of essays that illuminates for the reader the history of the Maharashtra and Konkan coastal regions from every perspective- geopolitical, geographic, economic, cultural, people, land, rivers, estuaries, and sailing vessels. The fertile hinterland had an abundance of agricultural produce like mangoes, coconuts, and spices, while artisans and crafts persons created products like cotton cloth, cartwheels, jewellery, and gems, which were prized in markets as far as the Arab lands and beyond, to Greece and Rome. 'Gateways to the Sea' explores the fascinating growth of ports including Sopara, Vasai, Mahim, Thane, Kalyan, and Chaul, and the numerous forts at harbor mouths and hinterland.

Ports and Docks are the hubs around which the lives of coastal communities are built. As centres of commerce, trade, and enterprise, they attract travellers and merchants from around the world. Some of the ancient ports in Mumbai and its surrounding districts have archaeological evidence of trade with Greece and Rome. There is a history of trade with the Arabs in medieval times, and with Portuguese, Dutch, and British seafarers in more recent times. Trade created coastal cities and townships of wealth and power and cosmopolitan cultures. Colonial invaders tussled with the regional ruling powers - most notably the Marathas for supremacy, to control these ports.

Over time, these thriving ports have decayed and, with the siltation of river mouths and creeks, some ancient ports are now lost to antiquity. It is important for future generations to be aware of the illustrious past of the Ports and Docks of the coast in and around Mumbai. This book is an endeavour by eminent authors to record the history of seventeen of these ports and docks. ❑

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Murud-Janjira Fort

Medieval Ports and Forts

In Maharashtra, a number of coastal forts are built on headlands or capes. Twentyeight small and large rivers originating in the Sahyadri mountain range travel a distance of approximately 50 to 60 km to merge into the Arabian Sea, forming creeks in the coastal region. A coastline includes bays with narrow inlets or creeks, a coastal plain means a narrow strip of land along the coast not more than five kilometres in width, while a headland is a landform jutting into the sea. A number of forts were constructed at the mouth of these river creeks e.g. Revdanda and Korlai forts on Kundalika Creek. The fortified island of Janjira lies just within the entrance of the Danda Rajapuri creek, the mainland creek being half a mile distant to the east and a mile to the west (Joshi 2011). An interesting feature is that out of these twenty-eight creeks, twenty-one have forts at the mouth as well as in the upstream region of the creeks. Forts that are situated more than two kilometres away from the coast are called inland or hinterland forts; the term hinterland is applied to the land beyond a coast or creek from where material is brought to the port for export (Joshi, Unpublished Thesis 2014).

The major portion of this work is based on fieldwork and exploration of coastal as well as hinterland forts in Raigad district. For this purpose, some traditional techniques were used, such as survey maps and village-to-village studies. However, the accuracy level of results has increased with the help of modern tools like geophysical surveys and computer software. To overcome the limitations of traditional survey systems, it is necessary to utilise modern techniques along with traditional methods (Caltran 2012). Excavation is another useful methodology that can provide new data about coastal sites.

Trade and Ports on the West Coast of Maharashtra

The chief ancient ports on the north Konkan coast were Sopara, Sanjan, Chaul, Thana and Kalyan. These ports from very early times were places of trade and commerce with the west. The reference

to Chemula (modern Chaul) occurs in the Kanheri inscriptions in the fifth century which mention that the excavation of the cave was funded by a merchant from Chaul. He is described as "famous among the millionaires of the great city of Chemula as one whose widespread fame had bathed in the three seas" (*Kolaba Gazetteer* 1964). In a copper plate grant of the Silahara king Anantdev (1094), the status of the port at Chaul was equated with that of Shurparaka (Sopara) and Shristhanaka (Thana). Subsequently, Chaul has been mentioned as either Saimur or Jaimur in the travel accounts of several Arab travellers such as Masudi (915), Muhalhil (941), Al Istakhri (950), Ibn Haukal (976), Al Biruni (1030), and Al Idrisi (1130). In later centuries, Chaul was also visited by many European travelers such as Nikitin (1470), Barbosa (1514), Fitch (1584), and several others (*Kolaba Gazetteer* 1964). According to Ibn Batuta, colonies of Muslim traders and sailors were seen on the west coast, as well as an increasing

Map 1

number of mosques. Marco Polo (1290) points out that although a Hindu king ruled over the Malabar region, trading activity was controlled by mercantile Arabs (Sastri 1966).

The medieval period saw two types of trading activities: internal trade between the three most powerful dynasties, Nizam Shahi, Adil Shahi, and Bahamani, and trading by these three dynasties with the other states or foreign countries through trade centres and harbours. Ports like Vasai, Kalyan, Chaul, and Danda Rajpuri belonged to the Nizam Shahi rulers, while Bagmandala or Bankot, Dabhol, Rajapur, Kharepatan, Satavali, and Banda were under the Adil Shah dynasty. Thana port was on the boundary of the dynasties of the Gujarat Sultan and Nizam Shah (Chitnis 2002: 304).

According to Barbosa, many traders, workers, and sailors gathered at Chaul harbour for the purpose of trade, which flourished particularly in the months of December to March. Malabar exported medicines, wax, palm sugar, emery stone, and copper, and imported cotton, rice, wheat, and millet. Muslin and woven cotton and silk were exported from Chaul and Dabhol to Diu in Gujarat. Goods such as spices and copper were imported at port Mandala (Barbosa 1865:71). Danda Rajpuri, another important sea port in Raigad District, was visited by a number of ships belonging to Moors, Gujaratis, and Malabaris. The seaport of Mandala (Bagmandala port located at the mouth of the Savitri Creek) received spices, copper, silver, coconuts, and areca nuts from many regions, as these were in high demand from traders of the Deccan.

However in the 15th century, the monopoly of the Arabs in trading was challenged by the Portuguese. The Portuguese dominated the Arabs because of the superior quality of their ships, technology, military power, and strong willpower. Consequently, Indian Muslims and Arabs lost their supremacy on the coast and were replaced by the Portuguese, British, and Dutch (Personal communication: Prof. Mate). This turn of events led directly to the emergence of forts on the west coast of Maharashtra.

Ports and Forts in Raigad District

Various types of forts were constructed according to the landscape in the medieval period by different rulers in Raigad district. Only the coastal and hinterland forts located on Kundalika

Table 1: Forts and ports situated on the creeks at Raigad district

Sr.	Name of the River/Creek	Name of the Primary Port	Fort at Primary Port	Name of the Secondary Port (Hinterland)	Fort at Primary (Hinterland) Forts
1	Panvel Creek	Nhava	Gharapuri	Belapur	Belapur
2	Karanja Creek	Karanja/Uran	Karanja/Dronagiri	Nagothane	Sagargad
3	Thal	Thal	Underi/Khanderi	Mahagaon	Ramdarane
4	Kundalika	Chaul	Rajkot/Revdanda/Korlai	Roha/Ashtami	Birwadi/Avachitgad
5	Natural Creek -Mandad	Danda Rajpuri	Danda Rajpuri/Janjira	Natural Creek-Mandad	Tala/ Mandad/ Ghosala
6	Savitri	Bankot/ Bagmandala	Bankot	Mahad/Dasgaon	Mahad kot/ Dasgaon

and Mandad creeks have been selected for the present study. The location of forts on the port site (both primary and secondary) has geopolitical significance. Detailed information based on exploration has been given relating to coastal and hinterland forts and ports.

Kundalika Creek: Port and Fort of Chaul

Chaul (18° 33'17.09" N; 72° 56'23.34" E) and Revdanda are two separate forts located in close vicinity (Map 2). Chaul fort is also popularly known as Agarkot, although there is no evidence of this name in any literature. Rajkot was the original name of Chaul fort in historical documents. The main entrance of the fort is located on the boundary of the Katkar Ali area of Chaul. Upper and Lower Chaul, are today commonly called Chaul and Revdanda respectively. The distance between them is 3 km and they are close to the coast. The Chaul and Revdanda forts are on the north bank of the Kundalika River. The village and fort Revdanda or Lower Chaul were established on a huge sand bar that runs north to south (Da Cunha 1876).

Map 2

A fortified mosque is located near the silted area at Chaul. In the medieval period, the Kundalika river used to flow just beside the mosque; in fact, ships could anchor near the structure. This area has slowly silted over the last 400 years, and now the river has shifted direction and flows 500 metres away from the mosque. Similar kinds of mosques were constructed at strategic locations along the west coast by the Nizam Shahi and Adil Shahi rulers e.g. at Dabhol, Rajapur, and Purngad. About one kilometre to the east of the mosque, right on the shore of the creek, are located some remains of the old Nizam Shahi fort (Rajkot), mostly the walls of the main citadel.

Excavation at Chaul

Archaeological evidence of habitation in the Early Historic and medieval period has been found at Chaul. An ancient embankment wall and a dilapidated stone structure looking like a jetty have been discovered at the edge of the old mud flat. Explorations and excavations at Chaul have revealed the salient features of an active ancient port that functioned from the 3rd century BC to the 18th century. The habitation area was spread over approximately two km along the north bank of the Kundalika River. Archaeological evidence confirms the significance of Chaul as the major port in the international maritime trade that was

in continuous operation for about two millennia. Rajkot fort was built there to protect trading operations in the port (Gogate 2006). After the rise of Mumbai as the major port on the west coast of India, many smaller ports like Chaul and Dabhol gradually lost their importance in overseas trade (Gogate 2006-07).

Another, more important, reason for the decline of Chaul port was the siltation of the north bank of the Kundalika river. The water level at the mouth of the river decreased, which prevented larger ships from coming close to the port, i.e., near the mosque area. The rate of siltation till the seventeenth century was gradual, but after that, it gathered speed and, as a result, the Kundalika river has changed its course more than a kilometer away from Chaul. A large mud flat is now seen between Chaul and the river.

Revdanda

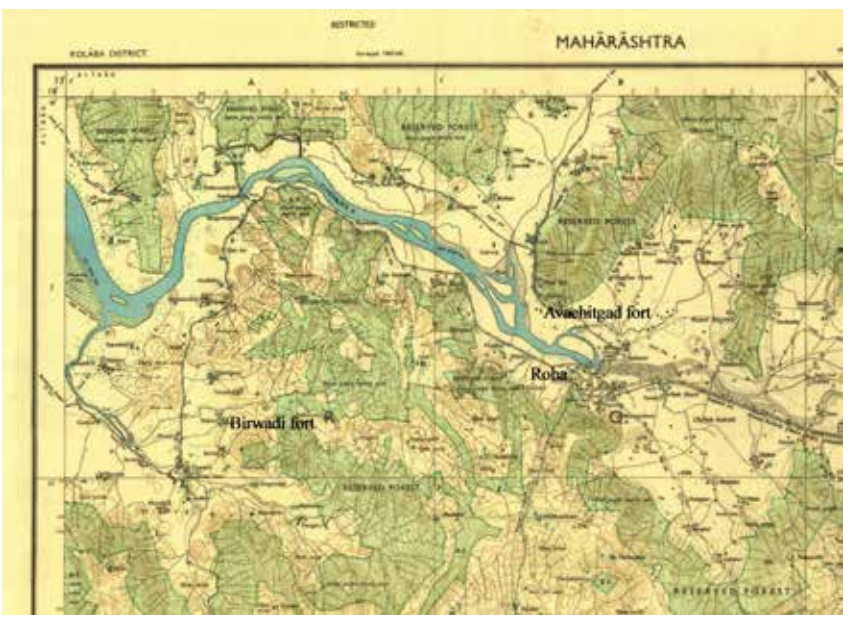
Revdanda Fort (18°52'50.43" N; 73°25'31.22" E) is situated on the north bank of the Kundalika river. The Portuguese were the masters of the sea and they were very specific about the construction of forts. Revdanda is a coastal fort surrounded by seawater on three sides while the land side is protected by a deep moat. Various types of construction are seen inside the fort but they are not from the same period. These structures were built between 1520 and 1721. The only five-storied tower was constructed near the western fortification wall to keep watch on movement on the sea. According to Marco Polo, the merchant traveler from Venice, Chaul was a largely Muslim town, while Revdanda was a Portuguese town (Joshi 2011).

Korlai

Korlai Fort is located at the mouth of Kundalika Creek. The hill is 50 m from the seashore and is completely fortified with strong walls and bastions. The fort is 861 m long and its average breadth is 27 m. It can be entered through one of eleven gateways, of which four are on the outer side and seven on the inner. Today a new pathway has been built to reach the fort from the lighthouse. Burhan Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar built a strong fort on top of the hill in 1521. After that, in 1594 it was captured by the Portuguese. This fort was reconstructed by D Felippe Mascaren has in 1646. Finally, the British captured the fort in 1818 (Joshi 2011).

Hinterland Forts

Birwadi: Birwadi fort (18° 25' 25.30" N; 73° 02' 33.60" E) is situated 18 km south-west of the town of Roha. The fort is located on the hill range running perpendicular to the Sahyadri main range from Roha. When Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj tried to capture Janjira fort in 1657, the Siddi ruler lost the hinterland area and retreated to Janjira. At that time the Lingana and Birwadi forts were constructed by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj to keep watch on the movements of the Siddis as well as to control trading activity around the Kundalika River (Joshi 2011).



Map 3

Avchitgad: A hill fort at Avchitgad is located on a 298 m high hill, 5 km from the town of present Roha. The fort is situated to the north of the Kundalika River near the village Medha on the Roha-Nagothane road. According to local historians, this fort was built by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. In February 1818, Avchitgad was captured by a British officer, Colonel Prother, along with other forts such as Surgad, Sarasgad and Sudhagad (*Naire Konkan* 82).

Roha is basically a secondary port on Kundalika River. It was

commonly used by traders for the import and export of a variety of goods. In the late medieval period, traders and merchants of several different communities such as Gujaratis and Marwadis, Vanis, Konkanasth and a few Deshasth Brahmins, Bohris, and other Muslims were part of a trading network (*Kolaba Gazetteer* 1964). The important export items were wood, salt, fish, and rice. Wood was collected from the surrounding villages, and rice from farmers who auctioned it to merchants coming from Mumbai and Ratnagiri. They travelled through the Kundalika Creek, bringing their own container vessels to collect these articles and carry them home. The fishermen (*Kolis*) between Revdanda and Roha caught and dried fish and sold it to the Deccan traders who regularly came to Roha for the auctions. Oil, clarified butter, chillies, and cloth were the main imports at Roha (*Kolaba Gazetteer* 1964).

Map 4

Forts located on Mandad Creek

Janjira Fort: The fortified island near Danda Rajpuri commonly called Janjira Fort lies just at the mouth of the Mandad Creek. It is one of the ten important island forts in Maharashtra. According to the text *Mirat-e-Ahmadi*, Malik Ahmad attacked Janjira Fort in 1482-83. At that time the fort was under the local Koli community. The Kolis fought against Malik Ahmad and defeated him. In 1490, Malik Ahmad founded the Nizam Shahi dynasty and finally captured the fort. According to the European traveller Clance Etinerary, the fort was taken from the Kolis in 1526 by the Abyssinian commander Perim Khan. Ever since then it remained under the Siddis and was never captured by either the Marathas or any other dynasty (*Kolaba Gazetteer* 1964). Ample archaeological remains are located in this fort.

Danda Rajpuri was a major trading port and centre situated at the mouth of Mandad Creek. A small fort was constructed on the coast near Janjira at Danda Rajpuri village in order to protect the trading port. This place was fortified using local rock, i.e., basalt, excavated from the nearest mine in the village Danda Rajpuri. Structures like a step well, a mosque, a cemetery, and some structural plinths can be seen today inside the fort of Danda Rajpuri. A huge mosque was built at this port very similar to that in Dabhol and Chaul (Sherwani and Joshi 1974).

Tala and Ghosala: Tala and Ghosala are two minor forts, as compared to Janjira, located at the end of Mandad creek. Tala was a marketplace during the medieval period and a secondary port located near Tala village. To protect the trading activity Tala and Ghosala forts were built near the secondary port.

Discussion

From the known historical records, it becomes evident that till about the 14th century, the local rulers showed almost no interest in the coastal region. Therefore, the Arab traders did not need to build fortified posts or forts on the west coast, and we hardly find the existence of any forts of this period on the coast of Maharashtra. The situation began to change when Malik Kafur attacked and destroyed the port of Dabhol in 1312. After that, the north Konkan coast was under the control of King Bimb of the Mahikavati dynasty. In the medieval period, the ports of Dabhol and Chaul came under the influence of the Yadavas of Devgiri. But it proved very difficult for the Mughals and Yadavas to take

control of the Konkan region because of its thick forests. So, they constructed roads in the Konkan and tried to keep control of only those routes that connected the trading ports and the marketplaces (Apte 1973).

The Arab merchants had never felt any threat from the Mughals or the Bahamanis, but in 1498, at the end of the 15th century, there was a revolutionary change in the history of international maritime trade and trading settlements. Portuguese traders entered the Arabian Sea, started making inroads on the west coast, and tried to snatch the trade from the Arabs with the help of their warships built using superior technology; consequently, the Arab monopoly of trade in the region was seriously shaken. The Portuguese had orders from their king to drive out other traders, especially the Arabs, from the Eastern trade, and to build forts at the trading centres. The real emergence of forts in the Konkan began during this time, for these political-economic activities prompted the safeguarding of commercial interests and centres by the Gujarat Sultans, the Bahamanis, and the Portuguese.

The forts of Karnala and Sankshi, built by the Gujarat Sultans were probably the earliest forts in the Konkan hinterland. Thus, one can say that though the fort building activity began much earlier in the Western Ghats and on the Deccan plateau, it took a while to begin in the coastal region. The end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century was an important period in the context of fort building activity in the Konkan. The Portuguese established their supremacy over the north Konkan. The south Konkan, on the other hand, was divided between the Adil Shahi and Nizam Shahi rulers. All three powers started building forts within their territory, not only on the coast but also in the sea, just near the shore islands. Initially, the Portuguese built factories at Revdanda and Chaul in the Nizam territory, on the pretext of securing their trade and settlements. These fortified settlements soon proved a threat to the supremacy of the Nizam. The emergent conflict between the Portuguese and allied forces of Nizam Shah and Adil Shah led to the building and strengthening of Korlai, Revdanda, and Rajkot forts. Nizam Shahi rule ended in the middle of the 17th century, around the same time the Maratha power started expanding in the Konkan region. The Marathas captured both hill and coastal forts of the Adil Shahs and Nizam Shahs in the Konkan, along with some new forts that were built in strategic locations e.g., Khanderi, Kolaba, and Padmadurga. The Marathas concentrated on building forts at strategic locations at the mouths of the creek and its hinterland, to enable them to seize merchandise as soon as it entered their territory and thereby control trade and commerce in the region.

This system of fort construction, one at the mouth of the creek and the other in the hinterland, is commonly seen on the west coast of Maharashtra. One or two forts were built at the mouth of the creek to control the traffic as well as port activities, e.g., Fort Korlai and Revdanda at the mouth of Kundalika Creek. Goods were transported from many small towns to the secondary port and shifted via shipping vessels to the primary port for export. Sometimes, where the marketplace was well established, traders came directly to secondary ports for trading, as can be exemplified by towns like Roha, Pen, and Mahad. Small-sized warehouses were built at the secondary ports to facilitate internal trade. Foreign traders, however, would come to the primary ports with their merchandise; these primary ports were not only local trading ports but also acted as international trading centres. Forts were built by taking advantage of the local landscape for the protection of such primary and secondary ports. Secondary ports were also protected by constructing fortified walls on the hilltops. By controlling the forts at primary and secondary ports, it was possible to control the internal and international trade, and creeks in general.

The history of fortification on the west coast of Maharashtra shows that these forts were deliberately built at strategic locations, first by the Deccani rulers, and later by the Portuguese. This tradition of constructing forts on the coast and hinterland started in the period of the Adil Shahi and Nizam Shahi rulers. It was very difficult and timeconsuming to travel overland through the hilly region in the Konkan, whereas the primary ports were easily accessible by creeks through small vessels or ships.Today, all these old routes are no longer in operation due to urbanisation and the construction of tar roads. As no one is interested in

travelling through creeks, the forts on these creeks have lost their importance. Now products are easily brought from the sea to the inland market by land routes. To protect these routes, small check posts with coast guards are positioned along the coast, with a convenient connection to highways. In effect, the role of the fort has now been taken over by check posts, though the purpose is still the same as in the medieval period. ❑

(This is an excerpt from the book 'Gateways to the Sea : Historic Ports and Docks of Mumbai')

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India on the UNESCO World Heritage List

Over 750 cultural, natural, and mixed sites have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Their splendour enriches our lives and illustrates the diversity of our planet and its inhabitants.

The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, an international agreement adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1972, was founded on the premise that certain places on Earth are of outstanding universal value and as such should form part of the common heritage of humankind. The nations or States Parties that adhere to the Convention have become part of an international community, united in a common mission to identify and safeguard our world's most outstanding natural and cultural heritage. Whilst fully respecting the national sovereignty, and without prejudice to property rights provided by national legislation, the States Parties to the Convention recognise that the protection of the World Heritage is the duty of the international community as a whole. A total of 42 properties from India are inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Agra Fort

Near the gardens of the Taj Mahal stands the important 16th-century Mughal monument known as the Red Fort of Agra. This powerful fortress of red sandstone encompasses, within its 2.5 km-long enclosure walls, the imperial city of the Mughal rulers. It comprises many fairy-tale palaces, such as the Jahangir Palace and the Khas Mahal, built by Shah Jahan; audience halls, such as the Diwan-i-Khas; and two very beautiful mosques.

Ajanta Caves

The first Buddhist cave monuments at Ajanta date from the 2nd and 1st centuries BC During the Gupta period (5th and 6th centuries AD), many more richly decorated caves were added to the original group. The paintings and sculptures of Ajanta, considered masterpieces of Buddhist religious art, have had a considerable artistic influence.

Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara at Nalanda, Bihar

The Nalanda Mahavihara site is in the State of Bihar, in north-eastern India. It comprises the archaeological remains of a monastic and scholastic institution dating from the 3rd century BCE to the 13th century CE. It includes stupas, shrines, viharas (residential and educational buildings) and important art works in stucco, stone and metal. Nalanda stands out as the most ancient university of the Indian Subcontinent. It engaged in the organised transmission of knowledge over an uninterrupted period of 800 years. The historical development of the site testifies to the development of Buddhism into a religion and the flourishing of monastic and educational traditions.

Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi

On a hill overlooking the plain and about 40 km from Bhopal, the site of Sanchi comprises a group of Buddhist monuments (monolithic pillars, palaces, temples and monasteries) all in different states of conservation most of which date back to the 2nd and 1st centuries BC. It is the oldest Buddhist sanctuary in existence and was a major Buddhist centre in India until the 12th century AD.

Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park

A concentration of largely unexcavated archaeological, historic and living cultural heritage properties cradled in an impressive landscape which includes prehistoric (chalcolithic) sites, a hill fortress of an early Hindu capital, and remains of the 16th-century capital of the state of Gujarat. The site also includes, among other vestiges, fortifications, palaces, religious buildings, residential precincts, agricultural structures and water installations, from the 8th to 14th centuries. The Kalikamata Temple on top of Pavagadh Hill is considered to be an important shrine, attracting large numbers of pilgrims throughout the year. The site is the only complete and unchanged Islamic pre-Mughal city.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus)

The Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, formerly known as Victoria Terminus Station, in Mumbai, is an outstanding example of Victorian Gothic Revival architecture in India, blended with themes deriving from Indian traditional architecture. The building, designed by the British architect F W Stevens, became the symbol of Bombay as the 'Gothic City' and the major international mercantile port of India. The terminal was built over 10 years, starting in 1878, according to a High Victorian Gothic design based on late medieval Italian models. Its remarkable stone dome, turrets, pointed arches and eccentric ground plan are close to traditional Indian palace architecture. It is an outstanding example of the meeting of two cultures, as British architects worked with Indian craftsmen to include Indian architectural tradition and idioms thus forging a new style unique to Bombay.

Churches and Convents of Goa

The churches and convents of Goa, the former capital of the Portuguese Indies – particularly the Church of Bom Jesus, which contains the tomb of St Francis-Xavier – illustrate the evangelisation of Asia. These monuments were influential in spreading forms of Manueline, Mannerist and Baroque art in all the countries of Asia where missions were established.

Dholavira: A Harappan City

The ancient city of Dholavira, the southern centre of the Harappan Civilisation, is on the arid island of Khadir in the State of Gujarat. Occupied between ca. 3000-1500 BCE, the archaeological site, one of the best preserved urban settlements from the period in Southeast Asia, comprises a fortified city and a cemetery. Two seasonal streams provided water, a scarce resource in the region, to the walled city which comprises a heavily fortified castle and ceremonial ground as well as streets and houses of different proportion quality which testify to a stratified social order. A sophisticated water management system demonstrates the ingenuity of the Dholavira people in their struggle to survive and thrive in a harsh environment. The site includes a large cemetery with cenotaphs of six types testifying to the Harappan's unique view of death. Bead processing workshops and artefacts of various kinds such as copper, shell, stone, jewellery of semi-precious stones, terracotta, gold, ivory and other materials have been found during archaeological excavations of the site, exhibiting the culture's artistic and technological achievements. Evidence for inter-regional trade with other Harappan cities, as well as with cities in the Mesopotamia region and the Oman peninsula have also been discovered.

Elephanta Caves

The 'City of Caves', on an island in close to Mumbai, contains a collection of rock art linked to the Lord Shiva. Here, Indian art has found one of its most perfect expressions, particularly the huge high reliefs in the main cave.

Ellora Caves

These 34 monasteries and temples, extending over more than 2 km, were dug side by side in the wall of a high basalt cliff, not far from Aurangabad, in Maharashtra. Ellora, with its uninterrupted sequence of monuments dating from AD 600 to 1000, brings the civilisation of ancient India to life. Not only is the Ellora complex a unique artistic creation and a technological exploit but, with its sanctuaries devoted to Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism, it illustrates the spirit of tolerance that was characteristic of ancient India.

Fatehpur Sikri

Built during the second half of the 16th century by the Emperor Akbar, Fatehpur Sikri (the City of Victory) was the capital of the Mughal Empire for only some 10 years. The complex of monuments and temples, all in a uniform architectural style, includes one of the largest mosques in India, the Jama Masjid.

Great Living Chola Temples

The Great Living Chola Temples were built by kings of the Chola Empire, which stretched over all of south India and the neighbouring islands. The site includes three great 11th- and 12th-century Temples: the Brihadisvara Temple at Thanjavur, the Brihadisvara Temple at Gangaikondacholisvaram and the Airavatesvara Temple at Darasuram. The Temple of Gangaikondacholisvaram, built by Rajendra I, was completed in 1035. Its 53-m vimana (sanctum tower) has recessed corners and a graceful upward curving movement, contrasting with the straight and severe tower at Thanjavur. The Airavatesvara temple complex, built by Rajaraja II, at Darasuram features a 24-m vimana and a stone image of Lord Shiva. The temples testify to the brilliant achievements of the Chola in architecture, sculpture, painting and bronze casting.

Group of Monuments at Hampi

The austere, grandiose site of Hampi was the last capital of the last great Hindu Kingdom of Vijayanagar. Its fabulously rich princes built Dravidian temples and palaces which won the admiration of travellers between the 14th and 16th centuries. Conquered by the Deccan Muslim confederacy in 1565, the city was pillaged over a period of six months before being abandoned.

Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram

This group of sanctuaries, founded by the Pallava kings, was carved out of rock along the Coromandel coast in the 7th and 8th centuries. It is known especially for its rathas (temples in the form of chariots), mandapas (cave sanctuaries), giant open-air reliefs such as the famous 'Descent of the Ganges', and the temple of Rivage, with thousands of sculptures to the glory of Lord Shiva.

Group of Monuments at Pattadakal

Pattadakal, in Karnataka, represents the high point of an eclectic art which, in the 7th and 8th centuries under the Chalukya dynasty, achieved a harmonious blend of architectural forms from northern and southern India. An impressive series of nine Hindu temples, as well as a Jain sanctuary, can be seen there. One masterpiece from the group stands out – the Temple of Virupaksha, built c. 740 by Queen Lokamahadevi to commemorate her husband's victory over the kings from the South.

Hill Forts of Rajasthan

The serial site, situated in the state of Rajastahan, includes six majestic forts in Chittorgarh; Kumbhalgarh; Sawai Madhopur; Jhalawar; Jaipur, and Jaisalmer. The eclectic architecture of the forts, some up to 20 kilometres in circumference, bears testimony to the power of the Rajput princely states that flourished in the region from the 8th to the 18th centuries. Enclosed within defensive walls are major urban centres, palaces, trading centres and other buildings including temples that often predate the fortifications within which developed an elaborate courtly culture that supported learning, music and the arts. Some of the urban centres enclosed in the fortifications have survived, as have many of the site's temples and other sacred buildings. The forts use the natural defences offered by the landscape: hills, deserts, rivers, and dense forests. They also feature extensive water harvesting structures, largely still in use today.

Historic City of Ahmedabad

The walled city of Ahmedabad, founded by Sultan Ahmad Shah in the 15th century, on the eastern bank of the Sabarmati river, presents a rich architectural heritage from the sultanate period, notably the Bhadra citadel, the walls and gates of the Fort city and numerous mosques and tombs as well as important Hindu and Jain temples of later periods. The urban fabric is made up of densely-packed traditional houses (pols) in gated traditional streets (puras) with characteristic features such as bird feeders, public wells and religious institutions. The city continued to flourish as the capital of the State of Gujarat for six centuries, up to the present.

Humayun's Tomb, Delhi

This tomb, built in 1570, is of particular cultural significance as it was the first garden-tomb on the Indian subcontinent. It inspired several major architectural innovations, culminating in the construction of the Taj Mahal.

Jaipur City, Rajasthan

The walled city of Jaipur, in India's north-western state of Rajasthan was founded in 1727 by Sawai Jai Singh II. Unlike other cities in the region located in hilly terrain, Jaipur was established on the plain and built according to a grid plan interpreted in the light of Vedic architecture. The streets feature continuous colonnaded businesses that intersect in the centre, creating large public squares called

chaupars. Markets, shops, residences and temples built along the main streets have uniform facades. The city's urban planning shows an exchange of ideas from ancient Hindu and early modern Mughal as well as Western cultures. The grid plan is a model that prevails in the West, while the organisation of the different city sectors (chowkris) refers to traditional Hindu concepts. Designed to be a commercial capital, the city has maintained its local commercial, artisanal and cooperative traditions to this day.

Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Telangana

Rudreshwara, popularly known as Ramappa Temple, is located in the village of Palampet approximately 200 km north-east of Hyderabad, in the State of Telangana. It is the main Shiva temple in a walled complex built during the Kakatiyan period (1123–1323 CE) under rulers Rudradeva and Recharla Rudra. Construction of the sandstone temple began in 1213 CE and is believed to have continued over some 40 years. The building features decorated beams and pillars of carved granite and dolerite with a distinctive and pyramidal Vimana (horizontally stepped tower) made of lightweight porous bricks, so-called 'floating bricks', which reduced the weight of the roof structures. The temple's sculptures of high artistic quality illustrate regional dance customs and Kakatiyan culture. Located at the foothills of a forested area and amidst agricultural fields, close to the shores of the Ramappa Cheruvu, a Kakatiya-built water reservoir, the choice of setting for the edifice followed the ideology and practice sanctioned in dharmic texts that temples are to be constructed to form an integral part of a natural setting, including hills, forests, springs, streams, lakes, catchment areas, and agricultural lands.

Khajuraho Group of Monuments

The temples at Khajuraho were built during the Chandella dynasty, which reached its apogee between 950 and 1050. Only about 20 temples remain; they fall into three distinct groups and belong to two different religions – Hinduism and Jainism. They strike a perfect balance between architecture and sculpture. The Temple of Kandariya is decorated with a profusion of sculptures that are among the greatest masterpieces of Indian art.

Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya

The Mahabodhi Temple Complex is one of the four holy sites related to the life of the Lord Buddha, and particularly to the attainment of Enlightenment. The first temple was built by Emperor Asoka in the 3rd century BC, and the present temple dates from the 5th or 6th centuries. It is one of the earliest Buddhist temples built entirely in brick, still standing in India, from the late Gupta period.

Mountain Railways of India

This site includes three railways. The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway was the first, and is still the most outstanding, example of a hill passenger railway. Opened in 1881, its design applies bold and ingenious engineering solutions to the problem of establishing an

effective rail link across a mountainous terrain of great beauty. The construction of the Nilgiri Mountain Railway, a 46-km long metre-gauge single-track railway in Tamil Nadu State was first proposed in 1854, but due to the difficulty of the mountainous location the work only started in 1891 and was completed in 1908. This railway, scaling an elevation of 326 m to 2,203 m, represented the latest technology of the time. The Kalka Shimla Railway, a 96-km long, single track working rail link built in the mid-19th century to provide a service to the highland town of Shimla is emblematic of the technical and material efforts to disenclave mountain populations through the railway. All three railways are still fully operational.

Qutub Minar and its Monuments, Delhi

Built in the early 13th century a few kilometres south of Delhi, the red sandstone tower of Qutub Minar is 72.5 m high, tapering from 2.75 m in diameter at its peak to 14.32 m at its base, and alternating angular and rounded flutings. The surrounding archaeological area contains funerary buildings, notably the magnificent Alai-Darwaza Gate, the masterpiece of Indo-Muslim art (built in 1311), and two mosques, including the Quwwatu'l-Islam, the oldest in northern India.

Rani-ki-Vav (the Queen's Stepwell) at Patan, Gujarat

Rani-ki-Vav, on the banks of the Saraswati River, was initially built as a memorial to a king in the 11th century AD Stepwells are a distinctive form of subterranean water resource and storage systems on the Indian subcontinent, and have been constructed since the 3rd millennium BC. They evolved over time from what was basically a pit in sandy soil towards elaborate multi-storey works of art and architecture. Rani-ki-Vav was built at the height of craftsmens' ability in stepwell construction and the Maru-Gurjara architectural style, reflecting mastery of this complex technique and great beauty of detail and proportions. Designed as an inverted temple highlighting the sanctity of water, it is divided into seven levels of stairs with sculptural panels of high artistic quality; more than 500 principle sculptures and over a thousand minor ones combine religious, mythological and secular imagery, often referencing literary works. The fourth level is the deepest and leads into a rectangular tank 9.5 m by 9.4 m, at a depth of 23 m. The well is located at the westernmost end of the property and consists of a shaft 10 m in diameter and 30 m deep.

Red Fort Complex

The Red Fort Complex was built as the palace fort of Shahjahanabad – the new capital of the fifth Mughal Emperor of India, Shah Jahan. Named for its massive enclosing walls of red sandstone, it is adjacent to an older fort, the Salimgarh, built by Islam Shah Suri in 1546, with which it forms the Red Fort Complex. The private apartments consist of a row of pavilions connected by a continuous water channel, known as the Nahr-i-Behisht (Stream of Paradise). The Red Fort is considered to represent the zenith of Mughal creativity which, under the Shah Jahan, was brought to a new level of refinement. The planning of the palace is based on Islamic prototypes, but each pavilion reveals architectural

elements typical of Mughal building, reflecting a fusion of Persian, Timurid and Hindu traditions The Red Fort's innovative planning and architectural style, including the garden design, strongly influenced later buildings and gardens in Rajasthan, Delhi, Agra and further afield.

Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka

The Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka are in the foothills of the Vindhyan Mountains on the southern edge of the central Indian plateau. Within massive sandstone outcrops, above comparatively dense forest, are five clusters of natural rock shelters, displaying paintings that appear to date from the Mesolithic Period right through to the historical period. The cultural traditions of the inhabitants of the twenty-one villages adjacent to the site bear a strong resemblance to those represented in the rock paintings.

Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas

This serial property encompasses the three most representative examples of Hoysala-style temple complexes in southern India, dating from the 12th to 13th centuries. The Hoysala style was created through careful selection of contemporary temple features and those from the past to create a different identity from neighbouring kingdoms. The shrines are characterised by hyper-real sculptures and stone carvings that cover the entire architectural surface, a circumambulatory platform, a large-scale sculptural gallery, a multi-tiered frieze, and sculptures of the Sala legend. The excellence of the sculptural art underpins the artistic achievement of these temple complexes, which represent a significant stage in the historical development of Hindu temple architecture.

Santiniketan

Established in rural West Bengal in 1901 by the renowned poet and philosopher Rabindranath Tagore, Santiniketan was a residential school and centre for art based on ancient Indian traditions and a vision of the unity of humanity transcending religious and cultural boundaries. A 'World University' was established at Santiniketan in 1921, recognising the unity of humanity or 'Visva Bharati'. Distinct from the prevailing British colonial architectural orientations of the early 20th century and of European modernism, Santiniketan represents approaches toward a pan-Asian modernity, drawing on ancient, medieval and folk traditions from across the region.

Sun Temple, Konark

On the shores of the Bay of Bengal, bathed in the rays of the rising sun, the temple at Konark is a monumental representation of the sun god Surya's chariot; its 24 wheels are decorated with symbolic designs and it is led by a team of six horses.

Taj Mahal

An immense mausoleum of white marble, built in Agra between 1631 and 1648 by order of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his favourite wife, the Taj Mahal is the jewel of Muslim art in India and one of the universally admired masterpieces of the world's heritage.

The Jantar Mantar, Jaipur

The Jantar Mantar, in Jaipur, is an astronomical observation site built in the early 18th century. It includes a set of some 20 main fixed instruments. They are monumental examples in masonry of known instruments but which in many cases have specific characteristics of their own. Designed for the observation of astronomical positions with the naked eye, they embody several architectural and instrumental innovations. This is the most significant, most comprehensive, and the best preserved of India's historic observatories. It is an expression of the astronomical skills and cosmological concepts of the court of a scholarly prince at the end of the Mughal period.

Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai

Having become a global trading centre, the city of Mumbai implemented an ambitious urban planning project in the second half of the 19th century. It led to the construction of ensembles of public buildings bordering the Oval Maidan open space, first in the Victorian Neo-Gothic style and then, in the early 20th century, in the Art Deco idiom. The Victorian ensemble includes Indian elements suited to the climate, including balconies and verandas. The Art Deco edifices, with their cinemas and residential buildings, blend Indian design with Art Deco imagery, creating a unique style that has been described as Indo-Deco. These two ensembles bear testimony to the phases of modernisation that Mumbai has undergone in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (GHNPCA)

This National Park in the western part of the Himalayan Mountains in the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh is characterised by high alpine peaks, alpine meadows and riverine forests. The 90,540 ha property includes the upper mountain glacial and snow melt water sources of several rivers, and the catchments of water supplies that are vital to millions of downstream users. The GHNPCA protects the monsoon-affected forests and alpine meadows of the Himalayan front ranges. It is part of the Himalaya biodiversity hotspot and includes twenty-five forest types along with a rich assemblage of fauna species, several of which are threatened. This gives the site outstanding significance for biodiversity conservation.

Kaziranga National Park

In the heart of Assam, this park is one of the last areas in eastern India undisturbed by a human presence. It is inhabited by the world's largest population of one-horned rhinoceroses, as well as many mammals, including tigers, elephants, panthers and bears, and thousands of birds.

Keoladeo National Park

This former duck-hunting reserve of the Maharajas is one of the major wintering areas for large numbers of aquatic birds from Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, China and Siberia. Some 364 species of birds, including the rare Siberian crane, have been recorded in the park.

Manas Wildlife Sanctuary

On a gentle slope in the foothills of the Himalayas, where wooded hills give way to alluvial grasslands and tropical forests, the Manas sanctuary is home to a great variety of wildlife, including many endangered species, such as the tiger, pygmy hog, Indian rhinoceros and Indian elephant.

Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks

Nestled high in West Himalaya, India's Valley of Flowers National Park is renowned for its meadows of endemic alpine flowers and outstanding natural beauty. This richly diverse area is also home to rare and endangered animals, including the Asiatic black bear, snow leopard, brown bear and blue sheep. The gentle landscape of the Valley of Flowers National Park complements the rugged mountain wilderness of Nanda Devi National Park. Together they encompass a unique transition zone between the mountain ranges of the Zanskar and Great Himalaya, praised by mountaineers and botanists for over a century and in Hindu mythology for much longer.

Sundarbans National Park

The Sundarbans covers 10,000 km^2 of land and water (more than half of it in India, the rest in Bangladesh) in the Ganges delta. It contains the world's largest area of mangrove forests. A number of rare or endangered species live in the park, including tigers, aquatic mammals, birds and reptiles.

Western Ghats

Older than the Himalaya mountains, the mountain chain of the Western Ghats represents geomorphic features of immense importance with unique biophysical and ecological processes. The site's high montane forest ecosystems influence the Indian monsoon weather pattern. Moderating the tropical climate of the region, the site presents one of the best examples of the monsoon system on the planet. It also has an exceptionally high level of biological diversity and endemism and is recognised as one of the world's eight 'hottest hotspots' of biological diversity. The forests of the site include some of the best representatives of non-equatorial tropical evergreen forests anywhere and are home to at least 325 globally threatened flora, fauna, bird, amphibian, reptile and fish species.

Khangchendzonga National Park

Located at the heart of the Himalayan range in northern India (State of Sikkim), the Khangchendzonga National Park includes a unique diversity of plains, valleys, lakes, glaciers and spectacular, snow-capped mountains covered with ancient forests, including the world's third highest peak, Mount Khangchendzonga. Mythological stories are associated with this mountain and with a great number of natural elements (caves, rivers, lakes, etc.) that are the object of worship by the indigenous people of Sikkim. The sacred meanings of these stories and practices have been integrated with Buddhist beliefs and constitute the basis for Sikkimese identity. ❑

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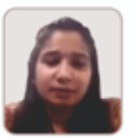
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