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### Structures for Common People

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- One of the architectural features of medieval India was also a coming together of styles, techniques and decorations in public and private spaces of non-royal sections of the society.
- These included buildings for domestic usage, temples, mosques, khanqahs and dargahs, commemorative gateways, pavilions in buildings and gardens, bazaars, etc.
- The city of Mandu is located sixty miles from Indore, at an elevation of over 2000 feet and overlooks the Malwa Plateau to the north and the Narmada valley to the south. Mandu's natural defence encouraged consistent habitations by Parmara Rajputs, Afghans and Mughals.
- As the capital city of Ghauri Dynasty (1401 – 1561) founded by Hoshang Shah it acquired a lot of fame.
- Subsequently, Mandu was associated with the romance of Sultan Baz Bahadur and Rani Rupmati.
- The Mughals resorted to it for pleasure during the monsoon season. Mandu is a typical representation of the medieval provincial style of art and architecture.
- It was a complex mix of official and residential-cum-pleasure palace, pavilions, mosques, artificial reservoirs, baolis, embattlements, etc.
- In spite of the size or monumentality, the structures were very close to nature, designed in the style of arched pavilions, light and airy, so that these buildings did not retain heat. Local stone and marble were used to great advantage.
- Mandu is a fine example of architectural adaptation to the environment.
- The Royal Enclave located in the city comprised the most complete and romantic set of buildings, a cluster of palaces and attendant structures, official and residential, built around two artificial lakes.
- The Hindola Mahal looks like a railway viaduct bridge with its disproportionately large buttresses supporting the walls.

- This was the audience hall of the Sultan and also the place where he showed himself to his subjects.
- Batter was used very effectively to give an impression of swinging (Hindola) walls.
- Jahaaz Mahal is an elegant two-storey 'shippalace' between two reservoirs, with open pavilions, balconies overhanging the water and a terrace.
- Built by Sultan Ghiyasuddin Khilji it was possibly used as his harem and as the ultimate pleasure and recreational resort.
- It had a complex arrangement of watercourses and a terrace swimming pool.
- Rani Rupmati's double pavilion perched on the southern embattlements afforded a beautiful view of the Narmada valley.
- Baz Bahadur's palace had a wide courtyard ringed with halls and terraces.
- A madrasa called Asharfi Mahal now lies in ruins.
- Hoshang Shah's tomb is a majestic structure with a beautiful dome, marble jaliwork, porticos, courts and towers.
- It is regarded as an example of the robustness of Afghan structures, but its lattice work, carved brackets and toranas lend it a softer hue.
- The Jama Masjid of Mandu was built on a large scale to accommodate many worshippers for Friday prayers.
- It is entered through a monumental gateway, topped with a squat dome, beyond which lies an open courtyard flanked with columned cloisters on three sides, also topped with smaller domes.
- The building is faced with red sandstone.
- The mimbarin the Qibla Liwanis supported on carved brackets and the mihrab has a lotus bud fringe.
- Pathan architecture of Mandu is regarded as too close to the structures of Imperial Delhi to make a bold statement of local traditions.
- Nevertheless, the so-called robust, austere Pathan architecture of Mandu with its surface embellishments of jalis, carved brackets, etc. , and the lightness of the structures was an important intervention in the narrative of the Indo-Islamic architectural experience.
- Taj Mahal was built in Agra by Shah Jahan as a mausoleum for his deceased wife Mumtaz Mahal.
- Taj Mahal was the apogee of the evolutionary architectural process in medieval India.

- The sublimity of the building comes from its orderly, simple plan and elevation, amazingly perfect proportions or symmetry, the ethereal quality marble has lent to it, the perfect setting of baghand river and the pure outline of the tomb silhouetted against the sky.
- The patina the Taj has lends it a different hue at various times of day and night.
- The Taj complex is entered through a monumental red sandstone gateway the opening arch of which beautifully frames the mausoleum.
- The tomb is laid out in a Chahar Bagh, criss-crossed with paths and water courses, interspersed with pools and fountains.
- The structure is placed on the northern extremity of the bagh instead of the middle to take advantage of the river bank.
- Shah (1626 – 1656) the seventh Sultan of the Adil Shahi Dynasty of Bijapur (1489 – 1686) .
- Built by the ruler himself it is a striking edifice in spite of being unfinished.
- The tomb is a complex of buildings such as a gateway, a Naqqar Khana, a mosque and a sarailocated within a large-walled garden.
- The Gumbad is a monumental square building topped with a circular drum over which rests a majestic dome, giving the building its nomenclature.
- It is built of dark gray basalt and decorated plasterwork.
- Each wall of the tomb is one hundred and thirty-five feet long and one hundred and ten feet high and ten feet thick.
- With the drum and the dome, the building rises to a height of over two hundred feet.
- The tomb chamber contains the burial place of the Sultan, his wives and other relatives, while their real graves lie perpendicularly below in a vault, accessed by stairs.
- The hemispherical masonry dome over a square base was constructed with the help of pendentives.
- These pendentives not only lent shape to the dome but also transferred its weight to the walls below.
- New vaulting systems consisting of arch-nets or stellate forms in squinches were created to cover angles formed by intersecting arches.
- The building has an amazing acoustical system.
- Along the drum of the dome there is a whispering gallery where sounds get magnified and echoed many times over.

- At the four corners of the building are seven-storeyed octagonal spires or minaret-like towers.
- These towers house staircases leading to the top dome.
- The drum of the dome is decorated with foliation.
- A heavily bracketed cornice resting on corbels is a distinctive feature of the facade.
- Gol Gumbad is a fine convergence of many styles located in medieval India.
- Monumentality, majesty and grandeur, integral aspects of the architectural experience in India, are associated with buildings of Bijapur. While its structural particularities of dome, arches, geometric proportions and load bearing techniques suggest Timurid and Persian styles, it is made of local material and is decorated with surface embellishments popular in the Deccan.
- Four towers at the corners are reminiscent of turrets attached to mosques such as Qila-i Kuhna Masjid and The Purana Qila In Delhi.

## **Jamamasjid**

- Large mosques spanning huge spaces also dotted the landscape of the Indian sub-continent in medieval times.
- Congregational prayers were held here every Friday afternoon which required the presence of a minimum of forty Muslim male adults.
- At the time of Prayers, a Khutba was read out in the name of the ruler and his laws for the realm were also read out.
- In medieval times a city had one Jama Masjid which, along with its immediate surroundings became the focus of the lives of the people, both Muslim and non-Muslim.
- This happened because a lot of commercial and cultural exchanges were concentrated here besides religious and indirect political activity.
- Generally, such a mosque was large with an open courtyard, surrounded on three sides by cloisters and the Qibla Liwan in the west.
- It was here that the mihrab and the mimbar for the Imam were located.
- People faced the mihrab while offering prayers as it indicated the direction of.