

= Tomb of Safdarjung =

Safdarjung 's Tomb is a sandstone and marble mausoleum in New Delhi , India . It was built in 1754 in the late Mughal Empire style for the statesman Safdarjung . The monument has an ambience of spaciousness and an imposing presence with its domed and arched red brown and white coloured structures . Safdarjung was made prime minister of the Mughal Empire ( Wazir ul @-@ Mamlak @-@ i @-@ Hindustan ) when Ahmad Shah Bahadur ascended the throne in 1748 .

= = Geography = =

The tomb is located near the Safdarjung Airport at the T junction of Lodhi Road and Aurobindo Marg ( road ) in New Delhi .

= = Background = =

The structure was constructed in 1754 in the late Mughal Empire style Safdarjung .

Mirza Muqim Abul Mansur Khan , who was popularly known as Safadarjung , who ruled over Avadh was an independent ruler of Avadh as viceroy of Muhammad Shah.He was very rich and most powerful . With the death of Emperor Muhammad Shah of Mughal Empire , he moved to Delhi . When Mohammed Shah Ahmed Shah ascended the throne of the Mughal Empire in Delhi in 1748 , Safdarjung was made the Chief Minister ( Vizier ) of the empire with the title of Wazir ul @-@ Mamalk @-@ i @-@ Hindustan and at that time the empire was on decline as their rule extended only to North India .

As Vizier he had taken all powers under his control as the king was only a puppet , a figurehead , who was into enjoying life with wine , opium and women . But he overestimated and over exercised his powers with the result that the Emperor ? s family called their Hindu Maratha confederacy to help them get rid of their Vizier . A civil strife ensued and eventually in 1753 Safdarjung was driven out of Delhi . He died soon thereafter in 1754 . After his death his son Nawab Shujaud Daula pleaded with the Mughal Emperor to permit him to erect a tomb for his father in Delhi . He then built the tomb , which was designed by an Abyssinian architect .

To the south of this tomb is the historic site of the battle that was fought in 1386 between Timur of Mangol and Mohammed Tughlaq when the latter was defeated .

= = Architecture = =

The Safdarjung tomb , the last monumental tomb garden of the Mughals , was planned and built like an enclosed garden tomb in line with the style of the Humayun tomb . It was completed in 1754 . The slabs from the tomb of Abdul Rahim Khankhana were used in the construction of the tomb .

The tomb has four key features which are : The Charbagh garden plan with the mausoleum at the center , a ninefold floor plan , a five @-@ part façade and a large podium with a hidden stairway .

The main entry gate to the tomb is two @-@ storied and its façade has very elaborate ornamentation over plastered surfaces and is in ornate purple colour . There is an inscription in Arabic on the surface and its translation reads ? When the hero of plain bravery departs from the transitory , may he become a resident of god ? s paradise ? . The rear side of the façade , which is seen after entering through the gate , has many rooms and the library . To the right of the gate is the mosque which is a three @-@ domed structure marked with stripes .

Entering through the main gate gives a perfect view of the mausoleum . Its walls are built high and the central dome , which is the main mausoleum of Safdarjung , is built over a terrace . Red and buff stones are the materials used for building the main mausoleum which measures 28 metres ( 92 ft ) square . The central chamber , square in shape , has eight partitions with a cenotaph in the middle . Here there are partitions in rectangular shape and the corner partitions are in octagonal shape . The interior of the tomb is covered with rococo plaster with decorations . There are four towers around the main tomb at the corners which are polygonal in shape and are provided with kiosks . They have

marble panels which are faded , and decorated arches . There is an underground chamber in the mausoleum which houses the graves of Safadrjung and his wife . The ceiling of the mosque has been plastered , painted and ornamented .

The façade , though built in the style of the Taj Mahal , lacks symmetry as the vertical axis has been given prominence which has resulted in an unbalanced appearance to the tomb . The dome is more elongated ; the central part has a taller pishtaq . The four minarets at the four corners are part of the main mausoleum which was totally a different concept in elevation compared to the Taj Mahal where the towers are detached and away from the facade of the tomb .

The architecture of the tomb is praised and also derided ; it is derided for the lack of proportioning of its various units and use of poor material for construction . Reginald Heber , who was Bishop of Calcutta between 1823 and 1826 , based on the light brown colour of the stone used , had observed that the tomb has the ? colour of potted meat ? . Even ASI has observed that the marble used for ornamentation in the towers though pleasing is ? rather florid ? . Another observation is that the tomb can not be compared to the Taj Mahal or the Humayun Tomb , as , at the time it was built , the Mughal Empire was on the decline and sandstone had to be used and lines were set improperly and the quality appeared ? thread bare ? .

= = Garden = =

The large square garden surrounding the tomb is surrounded by a wall that is approximately 280 metres ( 920 ft ) long on each side . The layout is in the form of four squares with wide foot paths and water tanks , which have been further subdivided into smaller squares . The garden is in the Mughal charbagh garden style , and is a smaller version of the garden of the Humayun Tomb which is also built in Delhi . One channel leads to the entrance gate and the other leads to the three pavilions . The main podium over which the mausoleum is built measures 50 metres ( 160 ft ) on each side . The high walls have been built in rubble stone masonry and have recessed arches in the interior . The towers or chatris are octagonal in shape . Its overall layout consists of four pavilions which have multiple chambers and the entrance gateway to the east is impressive . On the eastern side adjoining the gate are many apartments and a mosque , and a courtyard . The pavilions are laid out in the western , northern and southern directions and are named Jangli Mahal ( palace in the forest ) , Moti Mahal ( pearl palace ) and Badshah Pasand ( King ? s favorite ) respectively . Nawab ? s family used to reside in these pavilions . Now the entire monument is under the control of Archaeological Survey of India ( ASI ) who have their offices in the pavilions and also a library over the main gate

= = Recent times = =

On 21 August 2012 , the then Health Minister of India , Ghulam Nabi Azad offered Eid prayers in a mosque in the complex . However under the law of Archaeological Survey of India ( ASI ) , " prayers at centrally protected monuments are not allowed unless the practice was prevalent at the time when it was notified as protected " and it is one of the 174 protected monument of ASI in Delhi . Earlier also , Indian vice president Hamid Ansari " planned to offer Eid prayers " at the tomb but was cancelled at the " eleventh hour " .

The tomb has four fountains on each of the four sides . In December 2013 , it was reported that a plan was going on for " activating the fountains " as officials believed that they " were in working condition " . But " in recent excavation " , ASI unearthed a drainage system adjacent to the fountain . The system would " help them restart these " . Though there are four fountains , but according to ASI , only one , which is opposite to the main entrance would be made " functional " .

In June 2014 , the ASI shifted their office from the tomb to General Pool Offices near the Indian National Army Colony . In November of the same year new visitor boards were installed in the tomb to " promote the lesser known but striking monuments in the city [ Delhi ] " .

The Hollywood film Jobs released in 2013 , was shot in the tomb .