



**CHAPTER VII**  
**IMAD SHAHI COINAGE**





**Forts Mahur Berar Sultanate**



**CHAPTER-VII**  
**COPPER COINAGE**  
**OF THE IMAD SHAHI DYNASTY**

- **Brief History**
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**Brief History:**

The Imad Shahi kingdom of Berar consisted of present districts of Akola, Buldhana, Amravati, Yavatmal, mostly of the Parbhani district and parts of Nanded and Aurangabad districts of Maharashtra. Among other principalities of the Bahmani's greater kingdom. The Imad Shahi kingdom was first to assume independence and first to fall in the Deccan. The Imad Shahi dynasty had four rulers, who ruled from 1487 to 1568. In 1568, certain Tufail Khan usurped the throne, but he was killed by Murtuza Nizam Shah-I in 1574, thereby the kingdom was then annexed into Ahmadnagar.

**Fatehullah Imadul Mulk (1487-1510)**

Fatehullah, later named Imadul Mulk by the Bahmani prime-minister, Mahmud Gawan, was the founder of Imad Shahi kingdom of Berar. When the process of disintegration of the Bahmani kingdom began, he took great advantages of the prevailing circumstances and severed relations with his Bahmani masters. Earlier, he served under Khwaja Jahan Turk, the Bahmani prime-minister. After the death of his leader, he joined the corps of Mahmud Gawan. After completion of extensive campaigns, Mahmud Gawan reorganized the Bahmani *Tarafs* (provinces) into eight. In Berar province, Fatehullah was confirmed as its governor. Even after the treacherous murder of Mahmud Gawan, he was involved in the administration of the Bahmani state. Owing to court

intrigues and sensing danger for his own life, he left Bidar for Berar, not to come back again. From 1487 he acted independently as king of the Imad Shahi dynasty. After lapse of few years Bahadur Gilani usurped governorship of Goa and assumed control of many places on the western coast. In response to Mahmud Shah Bahmani, Fatehullah sent a large force that suppressed the rebellion of Bahadur Gilani. Fatehullah Imadul Mulk died in 1510 at Ellichpur and was succeeded by his son Alauddin.<sup>1</sup>

### **Alauddin Imad Shah (1510-1529)**

Alauddin Imad Shah was also known by the name Alauddin Darya Khan. While his father, Fatehullah Imadul Mulk was functioning as *Wazir* and *Amir Jumla* (Minister and commander-in-chief) at Bidar, Alauddin Shah was made deputy in the province of Berar. Thus he managed the affairs of Berar provinces and got considerable administrative experience in absence of his father. When, in the civil strife at Ahmadnagar led to the exile of the foreigners (*Gharibuddiyar* of Shia faith), Alauddin Imad Shah gave shelter to them in Berar. He supported them and even invaded the kingdom of Ahmadnagar. However, he got defeated at the hands of Mukammil Khan, the Nizam Shahi commander, at Rahuri. Though the king was Sunni by faith, but he supported Yusuf Adil Shah of Bijapur, when he established Shia faith in his kingdom. Mahmud Shah Bahmani and Amir Ali Barid opposed the move, but Yusuf in alliance with Alauddin Imad Shah defeated his opponents.

In another event, Alauddin Imad Shah aided Mahmud Shah Bahmani, when he took refuge in Berar. Both of them marched against Amir Ali Barid, but the Sultan out of panic joined opponents. Hence Alauddin Imad Shah retired to Berar. Later, when Amir Ali Barid

attacked Mahur, a neighbouring province of Berar, Alauddin Imad Shah forced him to take retreat. He appointed Ghalib Khan, as his vassal and made expansion of Berar's boundaries in the south, now Imad Shahi kingdom touched Ahmadnagar's frontiers. In the remainder of his life the king was involved in the struggle among the Deccani Sultanates. He died in 1529.

### **Darya Imad Shah (1529-1560)**

After the death of his father, Darya Imad Shah ascended on Imad Shahi throne. In event of war, Darya Imad Shah allied with Ismaeel Adil shah of Bijapur against the alliance of Bidar and Ahmadnagar. As a result the allied forces were defeated. In a succession contest at Ahmadnagar, Darya Imad Shah supported his son-in-law Abdul Qadir against his brother Husain Nizam Shah. When the latter protested, he ordered his son-in-law to quit Berar.

Later, Husain Nizam Shah entered into an alliance with Darya Imad Shah. They both marched to Sholapur, however got defeat at the hands of Ainul Mulk, a commander of Bijapur forces. Then they retreated. Further continuation of alliance with Ahmadnagar, Berar did not benefit any longer. The king died in 1561 and was succeeded by his son Burhan.

### **Burhan Imad Shah (1561-1568)**

When Burhan Imad Shah ascended on the throne of Berar, he was in his minority of age. Hence the affairs of the state fell into the hands of Tufail Khan, a minister of the kingdom. Tufail Khan's power advanced so rapidly after his usurpation that the king of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur were induced to seek his destruction and marched their united forces against him.<sup>2</sup>In the beginning Berar joined hands with

Bijapur, Bidar and Vijayanagar. The alliance proved too so strong for Husain Nizam Shah that he sued for peace.

In 1564, when the efforts of the Deccan confederacy against Vijayanagar were on, the overtures were made to Berar. But the Beraris refused to join the confederacy and informed that they would have none of it so long as Husain Nizam Shah was associated with it. In the battle of Talikot, Berar remained completely aloof. Both Ahmadnagar and Bijapur formed an alliance to punish Tufail Khan for his neutrality against Vijayanagar. They invaded kingdom of Berar, however, Ali Adil Shah fell to bait of Tufail Khan and agreed to retire. However Murtuza Nizam Shah continued his campaign till he was able to confine Tufail Khan, his son Shamshirul Mulk, Burhan Imad Shah and another son of Tufail Khan, in the fort of Lohgarh. They died shortly afterwards, as it was said that they were poisoned under the order of Murtuza Nizam Shah.<sup>3</sup> Thus came to an end of the political career of the Imad Shahi family. Then Berar became a part of Ahmadnagar kingdom and remained so till 1596, when it was ceded to the Mughals.

### **Copper Coinage:**

Regarding the Imad Shahi rulers no inscription after their independence is available, but like other rulers, they might have assumed the titles of *Shah* initially. Of the Imad Shahi kings no coins were found in Marathawada region, though ruled the major portion of the region. It was believed till recently that the kings of this dynasty did not issue any coin in their names. But some coins have come to light.<sup>4</sup> Those show that the first ruler had issued some copper coins, which bear the following legends;

Obverse: *Fateh Allah Imad Shah Khald Kibreya Allah*

(Let Allah perpetuate the greatness)

Reverse: *Dar Al-Sultanat Gowil* (The capital of kingdom, Gowil)

The legends required to be discussed. The obverse contains the legend that possesses the name of the king and a prayer that exposes the greatness of God. Following the pattern of other neighbouring sultanates the reverse legend states the name of the mint town (Gowil) capital of the kingdom. The patterns of the coins are not new one but followed from other Deccani coins. It is presumed that all the kings of the Imad Shahi dynasty have struck at least copper coins, as the coinage is mark of suzerainty of the kings. Due to early decline and downfall of the dynasty, the coins became rare and not found abundantly.<sup>5</sup>

### **Notes and References**

1. Gazetteer of India. Maharashtra State, Part-II (Medieval period),  
Ed. Dr. Kunte, B. G., Mumbai, 1972; pp: 201-03
2. Gazetteer of India. Maharashtra State, Part-II (Medieval period),  
Ed. Dr. Kunte, B. G., Mumbai, 1972; p. 209.
3. Gazetteer of India. Maharashtra State, Part-II (Medieval period),  
Ed. Dr. Kunte, B. G., Mumbai, 1972; p. 211.
4. Gupta, P. L. (2006): 'Coins' Published by National Book Trust,  
New Delhi, India, Fourth edition.p: 137
4. As the Imad Shahi kingdom survived for about a century  
independently along with its powerful Deccani neighbours.  
Its rulers played a role in the political affairs of the Deccan.  
They may have issued respectively at least copper coins in  
series, which are not yet known. Hence an independent  
study of the Imad Shahi coinage is due since long. If  
serious efforts from the scholars and research students are  
to be made in this regard, the details of the Imad Shahi  
copper coinage may come out in the years to come.

### GENEALOGY OF THE IMAD SHAHI KINGS OF BERAR



