

Master Plan Regulations Needed to Revive the Heritage: A Case of Bhopal

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Abstract : *Heritage is the identity of every respective state. Over the years, with the beginning of modern era, importance of this heritage has been degrading, giving rise to the need for Heritage Management. Physical management of heritage sites is backed by involvement of Policies and laws. Various policies and laws are framed for preservation, protection and proper management of the cultural heritage at the state and central level. Heritage management framework for built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes, archaeological sites, and development within heritage conservation districts throughout the city is necessary. These policies and laws need to be considered in the master plans of the city for their proper implementation by the authorities. Since it is a document that governs the growth and development of a city it is essential for it to keep a record of the existing heritage and its conservation policies and regulations.*

Case of Bhopal is analyzed that has a rich cultural heritage and is a major developing city of Madhya Pradesh. Various sites are recognized by ASI and state archaeology department. The monuments are in the vicinity of lakes and are located in the core city area (near the old walled city). Master plans and Heritage management and conservation acts are evaluated that govern the conservation and development around them. The study showed that master plans over the years (1991, 2005 and 2021) have not considered heritage laws and development regulations. The development regulations are also not enforced around the site due its ignorance in the development plan. The paper therefore reflects the need to include heritage laws and policies in the development plans and also how its ignorance led to the deterioration of the Heritage.

IndexTerms - - *Heritage, Policies, Development plan, zoning regulations.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and preserved for the benefit of future generations. Heritage is of great significance to each society. The range of what is regarded as heritage has broadened significantly over the years. Heritage properties were tended to be individual monuments and buildings such as places of worship or fortifications and were often regarded as standalone, with no particular relationship to their surrounding landscape. Today, heritage places cannot be regarded as separate from development activities, isolated from social changes that are occurring, or separate from the concerns of the communities. There is general recognition that the whole environment has been affected by its interaction with humanity and is therefore capable of being recognized as heritage. It becomes even more necessary to make judgments about what has significance and what does not. The recognition that heritage places are not isolated has led to their surroundings being addressed both as a physical setting and as a series of social, economic and environmental threats and opportunities. This means that a heritage management system and all those involved in it must have the capacity for influencing decisions about what takes place there. [3]

Cultural heritage is the value people have given to items and places through their association with those items and places. It also represents the continuity from one generation to another of a group's culture, values and attitudes. Culture heritage belongs as much in the present as it does in the past and that it evolves and changes along with society. This notion represents a shift in conventional cultural heritage management. As our understanding of cultural values has changed over time so has the way in which we manage these values.

According to the Department of Environment and Conservation (NSW, Australia) the primary objectives for cultural heritage management are to:

- acknowledge the intrinsic link between cultural heritage and the natural environment
- manage the historic heritage places, landscapes, cultural practices and stories
- manage evidence of past land uses in addition to specific significant historic places and landscapes
- Work actively with community groups to facilitate the conservation of and access to their heritage
- Facilitate conservation outcomes through the sustainable use of buildings, landscapes and places, thus enabling a vibrant and living approach to heritage conservation and management.

Where the significance of heritage has been assessed and further planning is required, a CMP should be produced., it outlines the values of a place in detail, describes its significance and associated history, sets out the actions required for its proper management, for both restoring it and for its maintenance.

The wider scope of heritage nowadays has led to many more players or stakeholders being involved in its management. It is essential that the heritage bodies work with other stakeholders as far as possible to develop and implement an agreed vision and policies for managing each heritage place within its broader physical and social context.[2]

II. HISTORY OF HERITAGE LEGISLATION AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN INDIA

India is one of the countries possessing rich cultural and natural heritage, thus, the preservation of historical structures should have some objectives for safeguarding national cultural identity. Various policies and laws have been framed for preservation, protection and proper management of the cultural heritage at the state and central level in India.

India had its first law enacted way back two centuries ago in form of Bengal Regulation XIX of 1810 and this was followed by Madras Regulation VII of 1817. However, both the Acts were silent on the buildings under the private ownership. The Act was enacted to empower the Government to prevent injury to and preserve buildings remarkable for their antiquity or for their historical or architectural value.

The Indian Treasure Trove Act, 1878 was published to protect and preserve treasure found accidentally but had the archaeological and historical value. This Act was enacted to protect and preserve such treasures and their lawful disposal. The Cultural heritage was given importance when The Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1904 was promulgated. This Act provided effective preservation and authority over the monument particularly those, which were under the Director General and empowering him to decide whether any article, object or thing is or is not an antiquity for the purpose of the act and his decision was final. In 1951, The Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Declaration of National Importance) Act, 1951 was enacted. Consequently, all the ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains protected earlier under 'The Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1904' were re-declared as monuments and archaeological sites of national importance under this Act. Another 450 monuments and sites of Part 'B' States were also added. Some more monuments and archaeological sites were also declared as of national importance under Section 126 of the States Reorganization Act, 1956.

In order to bring the Act on par with constitutional provisions and providing better and effective preservation to the archaeological wealth of the country, The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act 1958 was enacted on 28th August 1958. This Act provides for the preservation of ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance, for the regulation of archaeological excavations and for the protection of sculptures, carvings and other like objects. Subsequently, This Act repealed 1951 Act. [4]

In year 2010 amendment was passed to insert few new provisions, one of them was constitution of National Monument Authority. It will make recommendations to the central government for grading and classifying protected monuments and protected areas, oversee the working of the competent authorities, to suggest measures for implementation of the act etc.

The Antiquities and Art Treasures Act 1972 was enacted for effective control over the moveable cultural property consisting of antiquities and art treasures. This act repealed 1947 act. Various states are having and have proposed laws for their respective states i.e. Tamil Nadu 1961, The Madhya Pradesh Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1964, Victoria Memorial Act, 1903, Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961 etc.

III. CASE STUDY- HERITAGE IN BHOPAL

Bhopal was built on the site of the 11th Century City of Bhojpal, founded by the Parmara King Bhoj (1000-1055). The city was first known as Bhojpal, named after king Bhoj and the dam ('pal') that is said to have been constructed by him to form the lakes surrounding Bhopal.

The present city of Bhopal was founded by one of Emperor Aurangzeb's Afghan soldiers Dost Mohammed Khan, who took advantage of the chaos that followed Aurangzeb's death in 1707 and managed to establish his small kingdom in Bhopal. Although the kingdom was small, it survived several wars and became a princely state in British India in 1818 [2]. Bhopal was declared the capital of Madhya Pradesh in 1956.

Bhopal is well connected to the major cities of India. The municipal area of Bhopal is 285 square kilometers and the planning boundary covers around 601 sq km. With the regional setting comprising Sehore, Guna, Bhopal, Raisen and Vidisha Districts, Bhopal is the largest commissionerary of Madhya Pradesh. Lying on the edge of the Malwa Plateau, Bhopal has a hilly terrain. The city holds the beautiful view of low hills and the surrounding large lakes.

Over the last three decades Bhopal has grown as the largest administration town in MP. The locational advances of the city have given it importance but the strong historical past that weaves behind it, has given the city its structure and identity. With 30 percent of the urban municipal area covered under the ancient manmade lakes, Bhopal stands strong with respect to the natural resource availability. In the ancient times, these lakes were built as a place for recreation and some for potable water and sanitation purpose, thus providing a new identity to Bhopal city as 'the city of lakes'. The regional setup of Bhopal comprises of Sanchi (a world heritage site) and Bhojpur (village built by Raja Bhoj), rock shelters of Bhimbetka (also a UNESCO recognized site) and various other sites of historic importance.

Bhopal is one of the few cities in India that holds a strong history of Female Emperors. With Kamlapati mahal identified by the archaeological survey of India as the monument of national importance and more than 10 sites identified by the Directorate of state archaeology of Madhya Pradesh, the significant effects of the strong past still survives in the city. The sites being identified by the state archaeology department include- Chaman Mahal, Rani Mahal, Gond Mahal, Fort wall, Taj Mahal, Golghar and Mausoleum of Dost Khan and Fateh Bibi. Other historic sites include Sadar Mahal, Iqbal Maidan, Shifa Manzil, Gayhar Mahal etc.

Today, Bhopal remains a city of considerable beauty. The two lakes of Bhopal still dominate the city; bordered along their shores are the old city with its marketplaces, magnificent mosques and palaces, and the new city with its verdant, exquisitely laid out parks and gardens, broad avenues and streamlined modern buildings. [1]



Figure 1. Location of the Selected Sites

For the purpose of study three sites were selected namely Taj Mahal, Kamlapati Mahal and Sadar Manzil. The sites are located in the inner core of the city and are open to the public. The sites are abandoned because of lack of awareness among the people. There is a dire need of heritage management in Bhopal considering the number of heritage sites and the history of the city as a whole. The historic account of the sites and their existing condition is discussed further.

3.1 Taj mahal

Taj mahal was constructed as a royal palace by Shah Jahan Begum at the cost of Rs.3 million that time (equivalent to 50-100 crore now). It took 13 years from 1871 to 1884, for the construction of the beautiful fort. The palace was originally planned to be named as Raj mahal, but the British residents of Bhopal suggested naming the immensely beautiful palace as Taj Mahal. Taj Mahal was built as part of the complex of monuments which includes the Benazir Palace (the begum's summer residence) and the Taj-UL-Masjid along with three surrounding lakes.

The palace consists of 120 rooms, eight big halls including, Sheesh Mahal called the 'Deewane khas' (place for the important people), 'Deewane aam' (the general public's court) and an elaborate fountain structure called 'Sawan Bhadow' (the name explains that the structure always has the atmosphere of rainy season). The backside of the view has a magnificent view of the lower lake and the chants of Taj-ul-masjid echo around. The Noor Mahal and the Taj Mahal were the royal residences and were connected by a rail line. One can see a curious mix of Islamic and Hindu architectural elements in the Taj Mahal.

During Indo-Pak partition, the Palace served as a refugee camp for Sindhi. The order was given and personally supervised by Nawab Hamidullah Khan. Refugees stayed there for four years, before shifting to Bairagarh. Palace suffered major damage during this period. After independence many royal families of Bhopal tried to live in the place but couldn't cope with the cost of maintenance. After that the palace was left alone without any maintenance. Till 2005 the palace suffered complex damages. In 2005, the palace was declared a state heritage monument by the government. As of now the palace is not open for the general public, one needs special permission for the visit.

3.1.1 Existing Condition

It is a huge palace covering an area of 16000 square meters. It has parts like Diwan-e-khaas, sheesh Mahal, Sawan bhado (only present at two places in India, one in Shalimar garden, Srinagar and one here), and Diwan-e-aam. Presently repair and renovation work is going on the site. It is an abandoned building with very few people having knowledge about it. The residents of Bhopal are unaware of such place existing very near to the famous Taj ul Masjid. It is a site recognized by the state archaeology department under the Madhya Pradesh ancient monuments and archeological sites and remains act 1964. Until 2013, the Taj Mahal was under the archives department. In 2014 the monument was handled over to the Madhya Pradesh tourism department. Now, a private builder from Indore will develop the 120-room Taj Mahal - the royal residence of erstwhile Begum of Bhopal - into a heritage hotel from January 2019. The state tourism department said it didn't have enough funds to restore the heritage structure, as the project would require over Rs 60 to Rs 80 crore.

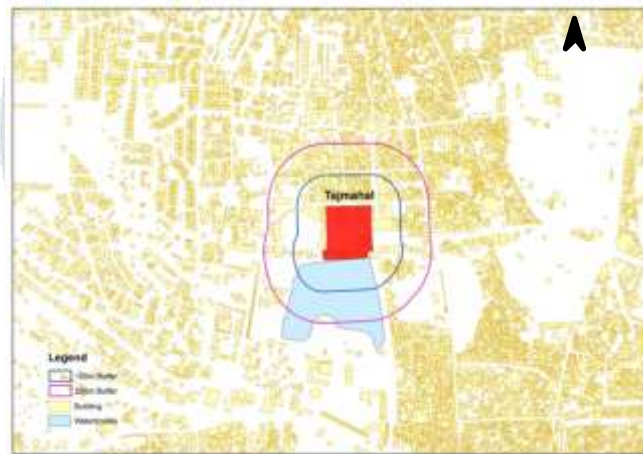


Figure 2. Built Structures around Taj Mahal

3.2 Kamlapati Mahal

The palace was built by Dost Mohammad Khan for the queen after the death of Nizam shah. He built her a safe place within the city, the Kamlapati Mahal. The palace is built on the bank of chota talab (lower lake) and perched on the embankment of the renowned 'Bara Talab' (big lake) dating back to the Parmara period (11th century CE). The palace has a beautiful view of both the lakes. The features of the palace have a strong impact of Mughal architecture.

It is a seven storey building, out of the seven floors, five are submerged into water. It is said that the palace looks like a ship when seen from underwater at night. In 1989 the palace was recognized a heritage site of national importance by Department of archaeological survey of India. Under the department's authority, road facing façade of the palace was renovated and painted.

3.2.1 Existing Condition

The building of the palace is situated inside a park known as Kamla Park in the old city area on the main road. Only the front façade of the mahal is maintained and on the ground floor is a small museum which exhibits plans, sections and pictures of the mahal. The rest of the building is in dilapidated condition and closed for the public. The park is neither very well maintained nor totally abandoned. It serves as a common neighborhood park with facilities like drinking water, public toilets, dustbins, benches etc. The back side of the park is connected to the lower lake and the remains of the palace can also be seen from there. Development has taken place very adjacent to the lake and the palace. There is no entry fee charged to visit the mahal and the park. It was recognized as a site of national importance under the Ancient

monuments and archaeological sites and remains Act, 1958. The place is developed as a small recreational area rather than a place of national historic importance.



Figure 3. Built Structures around Kamlapati Mahal

3.3 Sadar Manzil

Sadar manzil is a unique combination of Asian and Western style of architecture which makes the place stands out from the other traditional Islamic architecture in Bhopal. This place was built with exceptional architecture and aesthetic beauty, with brick-red color and grand design. The palace is built around a courtyard with a central fountain surrounded by the Charbagh ground. The palace has a double cusped arched entrance that leads to a three bay open hall - the Diwan-e-Aam. The main entrance consists of a massive wooden door, which leads to a smaller main gate. The first floor comprises of a huge terrace and was accessible only by the royal family while the second floor is flanked by four majestic domes on the corner. The main courtyard of the building showcases a magnificent fountain. Ceiling of main hall is intricately painted with flowers and vases in Kashmiri style. One can also notice Chandeliers hanging from the palace ceilings in certain rooms. Nawab's seat was arranged such that the ruler could notice anyone entering the building. A large podium overlooking the garden held the seat of the ruler, with windows on the sides to offer the royal women a view of the proceedings.

3.3.1 Existing Condition

Sadar Manzil has served as the office for Bhopal Municipal Corporation for quite a few years. Recently meetings were conducted between BMC and the Heritage cell and it was discussed to move the office from the site and develop Sadar Manzil as a Heritage site again. BMC office was moved to a new location in 2015 and all the activities going on the site were shut down. The site is currently being restored and will be preserved as a historic site under Smart City. The restoration is said to be a flagship project. The site after restoration will be preserved as a heritage site and the activities will be shifted to other locations.



Figure 4. Built Structures around Sadar Manzil

As per our observations from various site visits one of the major factors that led to the deterioration of these sites was the high density development around them. Also there were no public facilities available in the two of the three sites. (See table.1). There are no attraction elements present in the sites to attract public and make them aware about their history and importance.

Table 1. Facilities Available on the Sites

Sites	Facilities			Development around site
	Drinking water	Public toilet	Dustbins	
Taj Mahal	No	No	No	Yes
Kamlapati Mahal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sadar Manzil	No	No	No	Yes

IV. ANALYSIS OF MASTER PLANS OF BHOPAL

The existing condition of sites indicates that they are not maintained properly. Master plans of Bhopal have been analyzed for the purpose of evaluating heritage rules and regulations stated in them. Since master plan is the document governing a city's growth and development, provisions in it are needed for proper heritage management and conservation. For Bhopal three master plans are released till date for the year 1991, 2005 and 2021. They are studied in detail to evaluate heritage regulations (if any).

4.1 Bhopal Master Plan 1991

The plan was prepared in the year 1984 with the vision of development till 1991. There are no special provisions for heritage areas mentioned in the master plan. The plan only talks about the account of history without any emphasis on provisions for the development or preservation and conservation of these sites. The central core area which is the old city area is a special zone mentioned in the master plan. There are separate regulations mentioned for this zone but the area does not include any of the heritage sites. When the plan was prepared the development had already occurred around the heritage areas still there is no mention about the special regulations to be followed around the sites for development and also for the conservation, maintenance and management of these sites. The 1991 master plan has proposed Sadar Manzil to be used as a public semi-public building further defining its use as an office for the Bhopal Municipal Corporation.

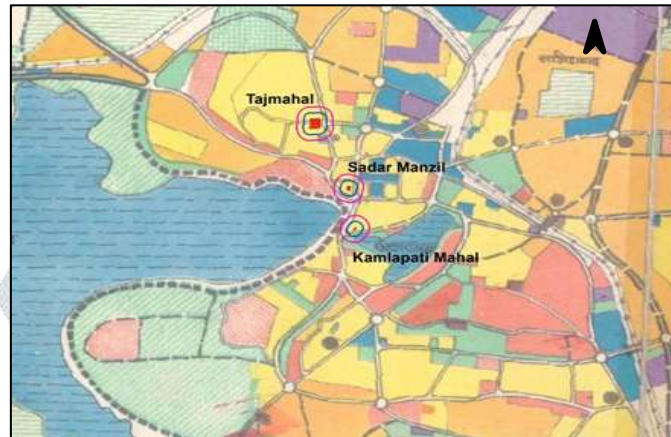


Figure 5. Land use map as per Bhopal Master Plan 1991

4.2 Bhopal Master Plan 2005

The plan mentions the inadequacy of the previous plan that it did not include heritage aspects. It was the successor of 1991 master plan. This plan also mentions conservation of heritage areas as one of its objectives but no further provisions were made to fulfill these objectives. The focus of the plan was mainly on infrastructure development and its improvement with no consideration of heritage by laws and provisions. There were no development regulations and heritage zones defined in the master plan around heritage sites.



Figure 6. Land use map as per Bhopal Master Plan 2005

4.3 Bhopal Development Plan 2021

The 2021 Bhopal Development plan was initiated in the year 2005. It was discarded by the public at the time of public review. It also had no provisions for the protected and reserved heritage sites and zones. The core city area where most of the monuments exist is a high density area with mixed land use dominated by commercial activities thus no further scope of development exists, but if redevelopment occurs by laws and regulations should be revised to take into account the heritage sites present in the vicinity.



Figure 7. Land use map as per Bhopal Master Plan 2021

4.4 Inference

The master plans overall have not mentioned about the heritage sites and neither about the special bye-laws or regulations that have to be followed in, near, and around the site. The idea of using the Sadar Manzil as an administrative office can be considered as an appreciable initiative as it assigned some purpose to the heritage site but majorly it led to the degradation of the structure due to poor maintenance. Also there is no mention in the master plans about the other monuments which are of historic importance to the city. It neither includes the history of such sites nor their future use. On the contrary many other cities have separate provision in their master plans for heritage management, for example Jaipur and Chandigarh. They have a separate chapter about their history, heritage laws, heritage zones and regulations near and around heritage sites. The Jaipur Heritage Management plan is a comprehensive documentation and review of the historic fabric of Jaipur city to integrate the 18th century unique planning of Sawai Jai Singh's Jaipur to the '21st Century Renaissance Vision' as stated in the Master Plan. It lists 1096 heritage areas/ buildings distinctly categorize the present day heritage resources and heritage managers for Jaipur city and outline the heritage objectives. It presents an action plan that identifies planning level and project level activities for the heritage resources namely, heritage sites in the walled city and out the walled city. Its findings were incorporated into the 'Jaipur Master Plan 2025' in 2009 - 2010.

The present conditions of the monuments indicate that even after the sites being protected under various central and state heritage acts, the conditions of preservation, conservation and management of the sites is not up to the mark. A detailed list of heritage sites must be developed for Bhopal and each of the sites should be stamped with an information board that identifies them as heritage sites and also provides a brief account of why they qualify to be treated as important.

V. EVALUATING ACTS UNDER WHICH THE SITES ARE RECOGNIZED

Two out of three sites have been recognized under state archaeological act and ASI act viz Taj Mahal and Kamlapati Mahal respectively. The sites are evaluated on the basis of acts under which they are recognized.

5.1 The Madhya Pradesh ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains act, 1964

The act defines ancient monument in terms of the number of years it has been existing which is 50, Taj Mahal satisfies the criteria as it was built in 1884. The act talks about the duties of the officer and the procedure to be followed for development near the historic sites. There is a mention about the protected areas and reserved area around the site but details of measurements about the distances of each are missing. For the purpose of accessing the site, permission is needed from the officer according to the act. Also to carry out mining, construction or excavation work permission is needed. There is no such work going on the site, only the site is being cleaned to be further developed as a hotel. Therefore the site is in accordance to the act under which it was identified, but this itself insufficient in detailing out the activities, do's and don'ts for the protection and conservation of sites.

5.2 Ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains rules 1959

The act defines ancient monument as 'any structure, erection or monument, or any tumulus or place of interment, or any cave, rock-sculpture, inscription or monolith which is of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which has been in existence for not less than 100 years'. The Kamlapati mahal was built in 1722 and qualifies to be an ancient monument under this act. The act identifies monuments of national importance. The act gives the public right to access. The Kamlapati mahal is an open accessible monument inside a park. No excavations should be carried out in the site under the act, since a large part of the site is underground it is neither accessible nor can be excavated. The antiquity i.e. the façade of the mahal is protected under the act.

VI. CONCLUSION

Bhopal is a case of arrant ignorance of heritage management and how the lack of interest of administration has led to the destruction of these prestigious sites. From the construction of the massive manmade lakes by Raja Bhoj to the beautiful Taj mahal by Sikander Begum, Bhopal is a treasure of the archaeological beauty of its time. Madhya Pradesh Archaeological Department has recognized various sites within the city planning boundary, under Madhya Pradesh Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1964. The act identifies the various affected areas but lacks in the perspective to take action. The act needs necessary amendments and their proper inclusion in the process. Also ASI identified site has faced major degradations. Their acts need up gradation and actions to be taken in case of violations.

Although there were efforts by the state and central government in the past years to improve the conditions of the monuments, the orientation of the development of the city didn't show much cogitation toward it, reason being the negligence in the development plans. The three drafted and approved Master plans of the city had negligible assimilation towards involving heritage management polices into the development norms. This ignorance has resulted in loss of importance of most of the monuments of the city. If the master plan had mentioned the heritage norms, and had shown interest in their implementation, Bhopal's long lost heritage importance had got its substantial concern.

The key to competent management of Heritage sites, it is necessary to have robust norms or frameworks that are flexible to the ethnic nature of the historic site. There is need to adapt practices that have strong judicial backing to decrease their violations. Master Plan being the major document that looks at the development flow of the cities in India, it is overt that every sector that needs concern should be content in the document. Heritage Management norms need consideration in the development documents of the city for their successful implementation.

Also as a social and cultural change intensifies, greater demands are made to conserve heritage as a brake against unwanted change and even as a means of effective change. Thus, there is great urgency to preserve the Indian cultural heritage before its complete extinction. There is a need for a comprehensive law to deal with overall aspects of the heritage in India. Also, there is dire need to create and stimulate awareness among the public for the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage. Unless people realize the value of the heritage and its benefits, no conservation scheme to be successful. Finally, it is the duty of every citizen of India to preserve and protect the legacy. Laws, rules regulation won't work unless we cooperate in this mission.

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