

[https://doi.org/ 10.33472/AFJBS.6.9.2024.463-467](https://doi.org/10.33472/AFJBS.6.9.2024.463-467)



African Journal of Biological Sciences

Journal homepage: <http://www.afjbs.com>



Research Paper

Open Access

THE EFFORTS FOR CONSERVING THE BUILT HERITAGE OF HYDERABAD: SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE PALACES OF THE NIZAM

KOLLI INDIRA 1 & DR. B. SARITHA 2

kolliindu@gmail.com & sarichaks@gmail.com

Department of Architecture, Bharath Institute of Higher Education and Research, Selaiyur,
Tamil Nādu, India.

Article History

Volume 6, Issue 9, 2024

Received: 18 Mar 2024

Accepted : 14 Apr 2024

doi: [10.33472/AFJBS.6.9.2024.463-467](https://doi.org/10.33472/AFJBS.6.9.2024.463-467)

Abstract: Hyderabad has made its mark on the map of the world in present, past and future. It has been very cosmopolitan in nature and home to people of many ethnicities across the globe. If we look into its past we get to know that the city was inhabited by people ruled by various dynasties that have created architectural marvels standing across the region till date. Built over many layers the city of Hyderabad now has many historic typologies ranging from mosques, to minarets, temples to turrets, dargahs to *darwazas*. Located on the East-West Coast Trade route the city was famous for international trade. Many of the structures came up on the trade route, called Karvan-connecting Golconda to Charminar

The rulers of Hyderabad have not only created the architectural masterpieces but also restored the ones needing repairs at different points of time. Sir Salarjung is known to have repaired Charminar and Qutb Shahi Tombs, Sixth and seventh Nizam worked on the modernization of Hyderabad. Hyderabad also had archaeological explorations across the dominions of Nizam led by Dr Ghulam Yazdani.

This paper introduces the built Heritage of Hyderabad and lists down the efforts of individuals and groups of people chronologically in conserving it, mainly from the 20th century. It also shares the idea of adaptive reuse to make conservation schemes more sustainable. If no reuse was given many of the structures would have fallen in disuse. It is noticed across the globe that in the absence of care and regular upkeep and a strong policy for conservation of historic character of the city, many of the landmarks of the past suffered neglect and fell prey to rapid urbanization.

Keywords: Qutb Shahi, Asaf Jahi, Nizam, Walled City, Charminar, adaptive reuse, restoration

INTRODUCTION:

Hyderabad, the capital city of Telangana in India is famous across the world. It is also selected as a Creative City by UNESCO for Gastronomy. Presently there is a plan to submit a nomination for a Heritage City too, as it is already part of IHCN, Indian Heritage Cities Network.

Deccan hai nageen Angoothi hai jag

Angoothi ko humrat Nagine he lagg

This is the couplet about Hyderabad state as it explains the beauty of the region. The whole world is like a ring and the Deccan is like the jewel of this ring.

Hyderabad Deccan, the erstwhile state of the Nizams, was identified as the gateway to southern India. Today it is a complex city with a beautiful mix of modern structures and the old-world charm. With hundreds of Heritage structures, the contributions of individuals and organizations that are known to have promoted the cause of heritage conservation in the city which need to be understood in detail.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The term 'Hyderabad' was known since the Qutb Shahi period. In 1590's the city was designed as a new Qutb Shahi capital, with Charminar at its centre. Around Charminar were built beautiful palaces on the banks of River Musi. The palaces had arched entrances named as Sehr-e-Batil ki Kaman, Kali Kaman, Machli Kaman and Charminar Ki Kaman, designed around an octagonal water cistern named Gulzar Houz. In 1687, the Mughal army attacked Hyderabad led by Aurangzeb. The ruler moved to Aurangabad and the Nizam, the governor of the Mughals, took over. There were seven Nizams who ruled for more than 300 years. They built their palaces across Hyderabad-Deccan and the capital city was called *Atraf-e-Balda*^[1]. The palaces that exist till date are listed here in chronological order since the early Asaf Jahi period.

Malkajgiri Baradari

Khilwat at Chowmahalla

Masarrat Mahal (Purani Haveli)

Majhli Begum ki Haveli

Zenana Mahal (Purani Haveli)

Afzal Mahal (Chowmahalla)

Mahboob Mansion

Falaknuma Palace

Nazri Bagh

Sardar Mahal

Ritz Hotel

Bella Vista

HISTORY OF RESTORATION IN HYDERABAD STATE:

The Hyderabad city has a long history of restoring its historic sites. The most important could be the discovery of Ajanta and Ellora during the British Period and Nizam sent artists there to make replicas of the frescoes of Ajanta. Sir Salarjung was known to have conserved Charminar after there was a lightning attack in the year.

In the year 1914, at the instance of Sir Akbar Hydri, the Archaeology Department was established by Ghulam Yazdani, OBE (22 March 1885 - 13 November 1962 of His Exalted Highness The

Nizam's Dominions (Hyderabad State). He was instrumental in the restoration and conservation of most sites in the Hyderabad state, including the caves at Ajanta, Bidar fort, and Daulatabad, then part of Hyderabad, Deccan. There was no notification made for the historic structures of the state, including the palaces of Nizam, as they were well maintained by the ruler, the Nizam and his nobles (Paigah, Salarjung, Hindu Rajas etc).

In 1948, after the Police Action, Hyderabad Deccan was merged with the Indian Union. Post division of the states, some major monuments went into the jurisdiction of the Archaeological Survey of India. The Charminar and the Golconda Fort of Hyderabad, among others, became the nationally protected monuments.

££

Many of the nobles left Hyderabad and the palaces were left to decay.

What happened to the palaces of the Nizam?

After division and reorganization of the state in 1956, Andhra Pradesh was formed. Some concerned citizens of Hyderabad, the capital city of then Andhra Pradesh, noticed the loss of historic character in many pockets. Dr Vasant Kumar Bawa (Retd IAS) was one such great scholar and administrative officer whose efforts can not be forgotten.

In 1976, for the first time, a listing of the heritage components of the city was undertaken by the Institute of Asian Studies, followed by yet another study by the Institute of Economics, Hyderabad. In this exercise 47 structures were identified. Six years later in 1982, the Hyderabad Urban Development Authority (HUDA) prepared a draft bill for the conservation of the Historic Areas and Historic Buildings. Because of which some regulations were enforced. Interestingly, this draft bill became the first tool for conservation legislation in the country. Two years later in 1984, a report called URBAN CONSERVATION OF HYDERABAD was published. This study was funded by the Fort Foundation. In 1988, the National Commission of Urbanization (NCU) got a report prepared on Urban Development. The then Government of Andhra Pradesh appointed a Heritage Conservation Committee (HCC) for Hyderabad, under the 1995 regulations.

Conservation of heritage sites and structures by then has become a significant issue. The HUDA study identified these significant structures. A few more heritage precincts were included in the new Government Order, No. 13, and the Draft Master Plan 2020 now had in it a list of 137 structures and 9 heritage precincts. Another 14 structures were added later, under GOMs No. 102, MA and UD (refer to the appendix). Apart from the initiatives of the government, the efforts of the NGOs and the individuals also need a mention here.

In 1930's the Idara-e-Adabiyat-e-Urdu started celebrating Quli Qutb Shah Day annually, for which the credit goes to Dr Moinuddin Quadri Zore. Following this programme, the Golconda Society was formed which organized the first Golconda Festival in the 1980s. It contributed to building public awareness. INTACH participated in a project known as Relating Heritage along with Tourism and Urban Development in 1996. A well-researched document was published by Society to Save Rocks. This had listed the rocks along with the flora and fauna of the city.

The Department of Tourism along with students of masters of Architectural Conservation from School of Planning and Architecture led by Prof Nalini Thakur worked on the old city's-built heritage. The team came up with an idea of conducting Heritage Walks. Another organization, the Forum for Better Hyderabad was formed by some sensitive citizens. They raised the voice against the destruction of heritage. Regular case filing and follow-ups are done by the Forum.

INTACH Hyderabad also worked for the inclusion of more structures in the list of heritage components. Today, there is the need to monitor the state of preservation of the components that

are already listed. Heritage Walks have been restarted from October 2009, in the Old City. The structures saved and re-used in past:

1. **Chowmahalla:** Presently functioning as a Museum, one of the best and latest attractions of the city.
2. **Purani Haveli:** A palace of Nizam, presently functioning as a Museum.
3. British Residency: presently functioning as Women's College in Koti.
4. **Falaknuma Palace:** Taken over by Taj Group of Hotels and Resorts.
5. Asman Garh Palace: Reused as a private school.
6. Devdi Khurshed Jah Bahadur: A palace of Paigah noble, reused as School for Girls.
7. Paigah Palace: Previously functioned as HUDA Office was taken over by the US Consulate for 10 years (2011-2021), recently been given back by the HUDA, presently known as HMDA.
8. Khazana Building: A Qutb Shahi Khazana (literally means the treasury), part of Golconda Outer fort, re-used as a Museum by the State Archaeology Department, presently known as Heritage Telangana.
9. Taj Mahal Hotel: A small residential unit, re-used as a hotel, very popular eatery among the locals.
10. Utsav Hotel: Originally used as Secunderabad Club, dating back to British period, re-used as a hotel.
11. Country Club: A Paigah devdi re-used as a club.
12. Chiran Club: A Paigah Devdi re-used as a club.
13. Baitul Ashraf: being re-used as a Function Hall in Masab Tank locality.
14. La-Palace- Royale: A residential structure re-used as a Function Palace.
15. Aiwan-e-ali and Manjhli Begum ki Haveli: re-used as Function Palace.
16. Errum Manzil: Functioning as an office complex for Government Organizations.
17. ENT Hospital: A government hospital is functioning in this magnificent palace.
18. Bashir Bagh Guest House: Currently functioning as Lok Ayukta Building.
19. Golden Threshold: Residence of Sarojini Naidu, currently put to institutional use.

Out of all these examples where adaptive reuse is common, let us understand the Princely Palaces of the Nizam of Hyderabad namely Purani Haveli, Chowmahalla and Mehboob Mansion.

PURANI HAVELI-As per the 1913 base-map of Hyderabad, the Purani Haveli covered almost 1/6 part of the entire Walled City. A huge area of this palace is reused as School. A beautiful City Museum is set up near the entrance. The structures stand in a fair condition. Masarrat Mahal, one of the most beautiful parts of Purani Haveli. was also known to have recently been used for UNESCO workshop in 2019-20. Some parts being used as the Police Commissioners office is under restoration too at present.

CHOWMAHALLA: Chow is four, Mahalla refers to a group of palaces. Chowmahalla is a beautiful example of a balanced mix of Persian and Indian Architecture. The erstwhile palace of Nizam is being used as a Museum and Convention centre, an Award winning project.

CONCLUSION:

The palaces of Nizams namely- Chowmahalla, Purani haveli, Falaknuma palace have been selected for the adaptive reuse and have become a great example for conservation of urban heritage. Yet some of them, especially King Kothi, still needed to come in the row. The city with a vast treasure of heritage must have strong policy and will power of locals to continue the legacy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- 1.Alladin Bilkiz ; For the love of Begam , Published by Bilkiz Alladin , Hyderabad 1989
- 2.Ashraf Dr Sayed Dawood ; Archival Glimpses of Deccan ; moazzam Hussain Foundation Hyderabad 2006.
- 3.Bawa VK , The Last Nizam ; The Life and times of Mir Osman Ali Khan, Center of Deccan studies , Hyderabad.
- 4.Bilgrami , H and SA Asgar; Landmarks of Deccan Hyderabad , Hyderabad; Governament central Press 1927; Rpt., Manas Publication Hyderabad.
- 5.Dalrymple , William ;White Mughals – Love and Betrayl in eighteenth century India ; Penguin books , Delhi , 2002 .
- 6.Fielden Bernard;Guidelines for Conservation-A technical Mannual;Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage. New Delhi 1989
- 7.Karka DF , Fabulous Mogul Nizam VII of Hyderabad , Derek Verscholye Limited , London 1955.