



THE GLORIOUS RUINS OF DELHI

2020

PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT BY
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TANVI NIGAM

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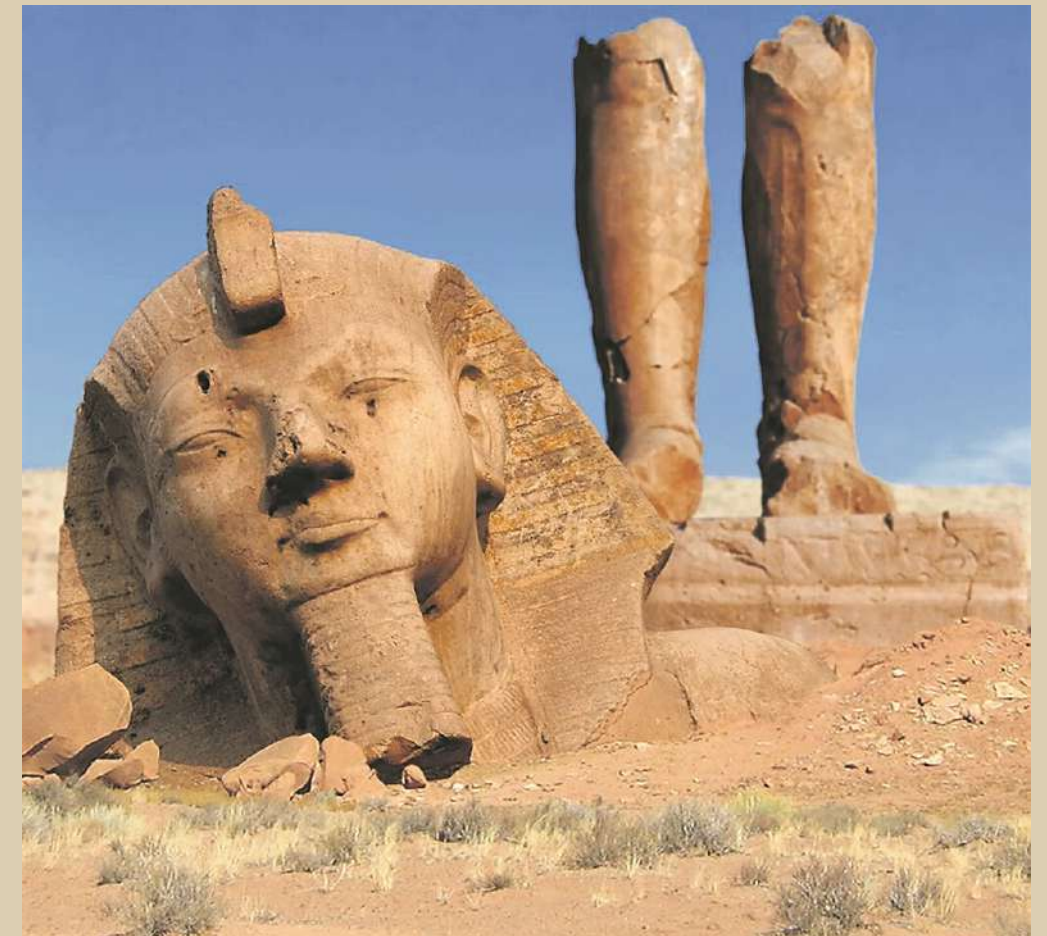
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OZYMANDIAS

By Percy Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look upon my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.



Class 10th, CBSE, English

ABOUT

The archeological sites and monuments are the evidences of a historical past associated with them. The same is the case with Delhi which has seen some of the important dynasties in the past, these dynasties had left their imprint upon each of the archeological building which we see today. Some in very destructive stage. It us the utmost duty of we, the citizens of India, to keep and conserve these heritage buildings so as to enliven our glorious past. The conservation of these monuments has been given to a higher authority but is also every individual's moral duty.

The poem mentioned in the beginning of the previous page clearly depicts the effect of time on these heritage monuments, as with time, these monuments break down or withers down, slowly and steadily. On the other hand, we all can try to protect them in our own ways, starting with not disrupting them at all. Every commnity and society has a very precious heritage which has to be and can be transferred to the next generation and it is the responsibility of the civil society to transfer that heritage to the next generation.

According to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, if someone destroys, removes, injures, alters, defaces, imperils or misuses a protected monument s/he shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to three months, or with a fine which may extend to five thousand rupees, or with both. However, It is disheartening to note that some people, forgetting that they are doing an irreparable damage to invaluable archaeological masterpieces, inscribe their initials, names, places, addresses or messages on these national treasures. The conservation and protection of these monuments cannot be neglected any further. This coffee table book is dedicated to all the frontline workers indulged in conserving these monuments. This book consists of 39 photographs captured in the period between January-February, 2020.

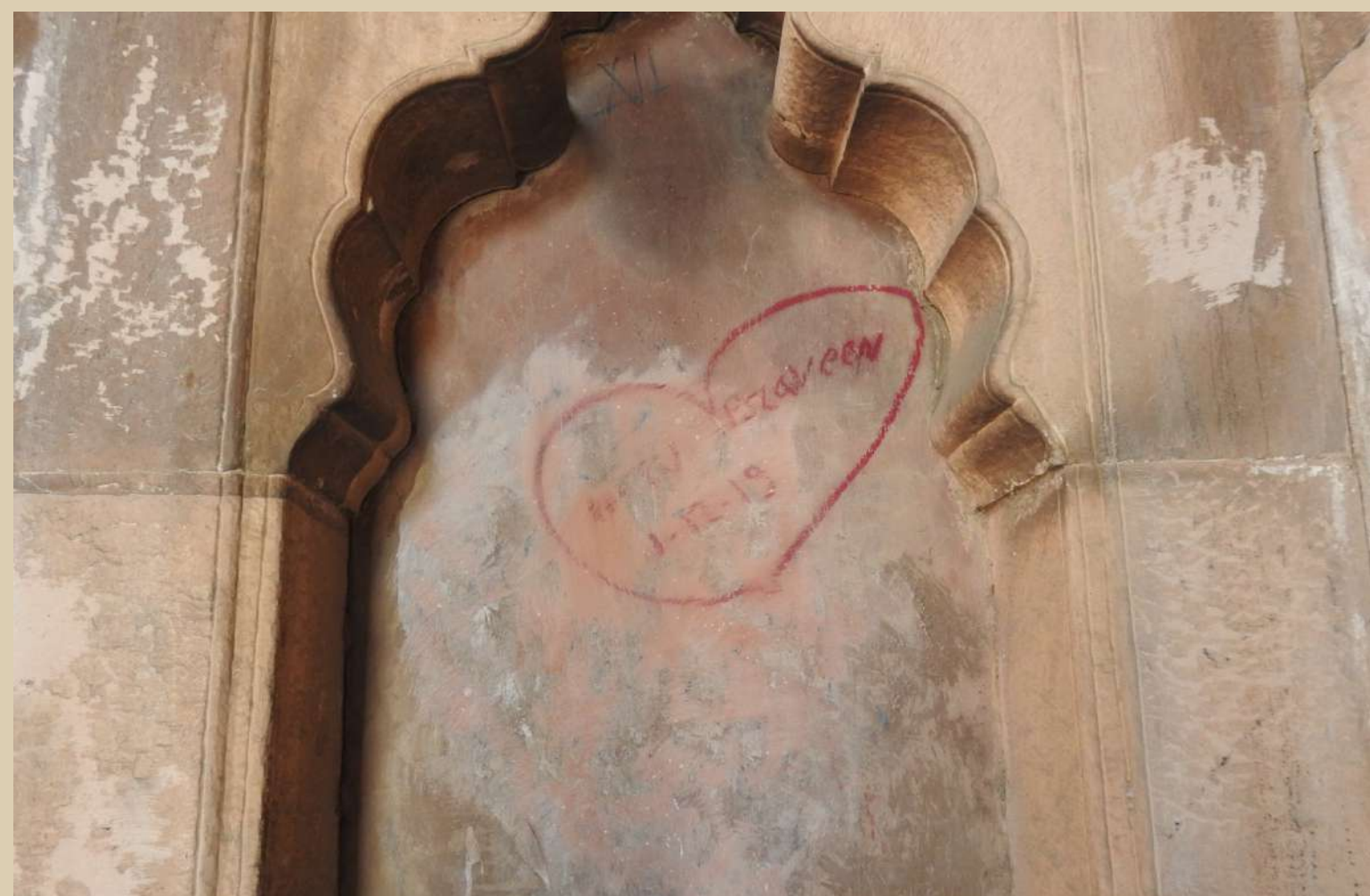
ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), as an attached office under the Department of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and Culture, is the premier organization for the archaeological researches and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation. Maintenance of ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance is the prime concern of the ASI. Besides it regulate all archaeological activities in the country as per the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. It also regulates Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972.



The organization has a large work force of trained archaeologists, conservators, epigraphist, architects and scientists for conducting archaeological research projects through its Excavation Branches, Prehistory Branch, Epigraphy Branches, Science Branch, Horticulture Branch, Building Survey Project, Temple Survey Projects and Underwater Archaeology Wing.

The real challenge before us is to plan the necessary measures of conservation with a view to assure the survival of these built cultural heritage and unique symbols of our civilizations for centuries to come, with as little intervention as possible but without altering or modifying in any way the authenticity of their original character. To ensure the stability as well as proper conservation of our cultural heritage, there is a need to give more thrust to the scientific research in conservation.



QUTUB MINAR

Qutub minar is the highest single tower in India, situated in the Mehrauli area of Delhi, it is a UNESCO world heritage site.

It marked the site of the first muslim kingdom in North India.



HISTORY

Qutb Minar was begun after the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque, which was started around 1192 by Qutb-ud-din Aibak, first ruler of the Delhi Sultanate. The mosque complex is one of the earliest that survives in the Indian subcontinent. The minaret is named after Qutb-ud-din Aibak, or Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki, a Sufi saint. Its ground storey was built over the ruins of the Lal Kot, the citadel of Dhillika. Aibak's successor Iltutmish added three more storeys.





SULTANGHARI TOMB

Located in Vasant kunj of New Delhi, built by Iltutmish, Qutbuddin Aibak's slave, for his eldest son in 1231, Sultan Ghari's Tomb represents the first tomb which was built for a Muslim royal in northern part of India during the medieval period.



HISTORY

Itutmish's son, Sultan Ghari, had fought numerous wars to defend the empire. He was the most favorite child of Itutmish. Mahmud was also throned as the Governor of Lachnauti, which was then known as Dhaka. However, as ill luck would have it, the prince died at Lakhnauti in 1229. Perhaps, the climatic peculiarity of Bengal did not suit his physical state. As a result he fell ill severely and succumbed to death. It is learnt that Itutmish, who reigned the empire as the founder of Slave dynasty, could not recover from the shock of Sultan Ghari or 'Sultan of the Cave's death immediately. With the passage of time, Itutmish overcame his grief and decide to build a tomb for his beloved son at a juncture of his reign when his own subjects were rebelling against him.





The tomb was falling to ruins till the Delhi Development Authority took up the project of restoration of Sultan Ghari's Tomb in 2003. The plan of the tomb structure is unusual. It is in the form of a fortress with a courtyard like layout, not common among tombs. It is built over a raised plinth of certain height in rubble masonry work. The octagonal shape of the tomb is also unique as it has been built within the fortress like outer structure with four corner towers, over a Ghari (cave) in front of the western Qibla wall of the mosque.





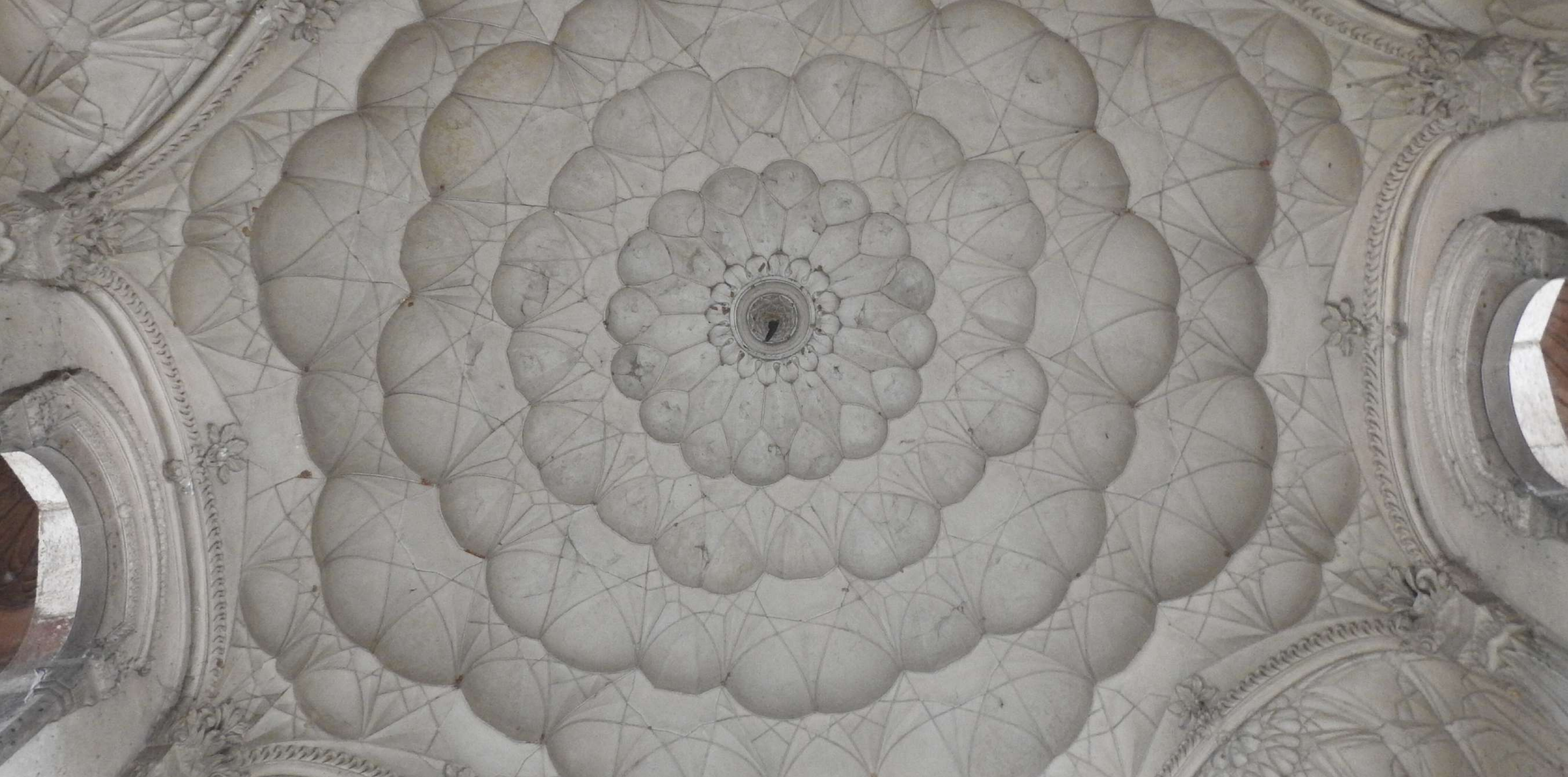
The heritage area of Sultan Ghari extends to 25 ha (61.8 acres), which has been zoned as per the topographical features to implement appropriate restoration and conservation actions. In order to restore this monument, which has been declared as a Grade A Monument by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), the Delhi Urban Heritage Foundation evolved a Plan combining restoration works along with creation of a pleasant environmental ambience to bring out its ancient glory. ASI's control extends only up to 300 m from the tomb since the rest of the area surrounding it is proposed for urban development by the Army.





SAFDARJUNG TOMB

Safdarjung Tomb was built in 1754 in the late Mughal Empire style for Nawab Safdarjung. The monument has an ambience of spaciousness and an imposing presence with its domed and arched red brown and white coloured structures.



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 is a sandstone and marble mausoleum. The monument has an ambience of spaciousness and an imposing presence with its domed and arched red brown and white coloured structures.

Architecture

The tomb has four key features which are: The Char Bagh 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.





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"When the hero of plain bravery departs from the transitory, may he become a resident of god's paradise"



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".

TOMB OF MOHAMMAD SHAH

The third monarch of the Sayyid dynasty which ruled the Delhi Sultanate. He succeeded his uncle, Mubarak Shah to the throne. Both Muhammad Shah and his son, Alam Shah who succeeded him, were supplanted by the Lodi dynasty.





Architecture

The tomb consists of an octagonal-chamber surrounded by a verandah. The three arched openings on each face are supported on double square pillars which are typical of the buildings of this period. The eight-pillared chhatris, the dome of typical Afghan type, sloping masonry of buttresses, guldastas above the corners and along the angles of the drum are important architectural and decorative features of the building. There are eight graves in the building, the one in the centre is of Muhammad Shah.



SHISH GUMBAD

A tomb from the Lodhi Dynasty and is thought to have possibly been constructed between 1489 and 1517 CE. The Shish Gumbad (glass dome) houses graves, whose occupants are not unequivocally identifiable. With its facade divided horizontally by a string course, it has an external semblance of being double storied. Its western wall is provided with an arch which serves as a mosque.



Architecture

Shish Gumbad is constructed in square shape. Combination of bracket and lintel beams, the architecture is a blend of Islamic and Hindu architectures. Although the Gumbad has an external semblance of spanning in two floors, the structure made only in one floor. The western wall of the Gumbad consists of mihrab which also served as a mosque.

The main chamber of the monument measures 10 square metres(108 sq ft). The ceiling is decorated with plaster work that contains Quranic inscriptions and floral designs. The monument was originally decorated with blue enamelled tiles that shined like glass. The Gumbad hence got its name "Shish Gumbad". The blue tile embellishment presently only remains on top of the main frontage in traces.





BARA GUMBAD

A medieval monument located in Lodhi Gardens in Delhi, India. It is part of a group of monuments that include a Friday mosque (Jama Masjid) and the "mehman khana" of Sikandar Lodhi, the ruler of the Delhi Sultanate. The Bara Gumbad was constructed in 1490 CE, during the reign of the Lodhi dynasty. Its construction is generally attributed to Sikandar Lodhi, and it is believed to have the earliest constructed full dome of any building in Delhi.

Architecture

It is speculated that the Bara Gumbad was constructed to provide a gateway to the nearby mosque or a large walled enclosure. Although the structure does not house any tomb, there is a platform in the central courtyard that suggests the structure to be a burial place.

Bara Gumbad is grouped together with a mosque and "mehman khana" which is a smaller structure with five bays. All the structures are constructed on a 4 metres (13 ft) high platform, with a total area of 1,050 square metres (11,302 sq ft). The platform measures 30 metres (98 ft) (east-west) and 25 metres (82 ft) (north-south).





Humayun's Tomb



The first garden-tomb on the Indian subcontinent and is located in Nizamuddin East, Delhi, India, close to the Dina-panah Citadel, also known as Purana Qila (Old Fort), that Humayun found in 1533. It was also the first structure to use red sandstone at such a scale. The tomb was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993, and since then has undergone extensive restoration work, which is complete.



Restoration work by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC), in collaboration with Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), began around 1999 after research work, which started in 1997, and was completed in March 2003. Around 12 hectares of lawns were replanted, and over 2500 trees and plants, including mango, lemon, neem, hibiscus and jasmine cuttings, were planted in the gardens. Installation of a new water circulation system for the walkway channels was also undertaken. To ensure that water flowed naturally through the channels and pools on the 12-hectare (30 acre) site without the aid of hydraulic systems, the water channels were re-laid to an exacting grade of one centimetre every 40 metres (1:4000 slope). This eventually enabled water to flow through the watercourses in the gardens, and dormant fountains to start functioning once again.





Architecture

The tomb built of rubble masonry and red sandstone, uses white marble as a cladding material and also for the flooring, lattice screens (jaalis), door frames, eaves (chhajja) and for the main dome. It stands on a vaulted terrace eight-metre high and spread over 12,000m². It is essentially square in design, though chamfered on the edges to appear octagonal, to prepare ground for the design of the interior structure. The symmetrical and simple designed on the exterior is in sharp contrast with the complex interior floor plan, of inner chambers, which is a square 'ninefold plan', where eight two-storied vaulted chambers radiate from the central, double-height domed chamber.



KHAN-I-KHANA

His tomb is situated in Nizamuddin East on the Mathura road near Humayun's Tomb in New Delhi. It was built by him for his wife in 1598, and his body was placed in it in 1627.

Architecture

This tomb was originally built by Rahim for his wife in 1598, but he himself was buried here in 1627. The tomb is topped with a bulbous dome and is adorned with canopies and arches. The tomb of Rahim is located below the surface and is inaccessible to the public. The first floor of the tomb contains two small raised platforms, though the rest of it is pretty bare with nothing much to see.

At present, conservation and renovation of this tomb is being undertaken which comes under the current project of conserving heritage buildings of Delhi by Ministry of Culture, Archeological survey of India.



SOURCES AND CREDITS

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the content had to be taken from the material available online.

1. Google
2. Google - wikipedia
3. Archeological survey of India - asi.nic.in
4. CBSE books - cbse.nic.in

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my special thanks of gratitude to Prof. Siddharth Mishra, Chairperson, VSJMC, and Prof. (Dr) Charulata Singh, Dean, VSJMC, for their guidance and encouragement, and for giving me this opportunity to present this coffee table book titled, 'The Glorious Ruins of Delhi'. I am also extremely grateful to my mentor, Dr. Atul Upadhyay, who mentored me and was a constant source of support and motivation throughout the completion of this book as my final project.

I also express my thankfulness to all those who encouraged me, leading to the successful completion of this Lab File, especially my parents.

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