

CHAPTER – III

Management of World Heritage Sites

The General Conference of the UNESCO in 1972 adopted a Convention concerning Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage. The Convention sought to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. India ratified this Convention in November 1977.

The ASI functions as a nodal agency for nomination of World Heritage Sites (WHS) to the UNESCO. The ASI also has 19 Cultural World Heritage Sites under its administrative control.

The WHS can be a natural, cultural or a mixed site. A total of 29 sites in India had been approved as WHS till February 2013. Out of these, 19 sites (all cultural) are currently under the administrative control of the ASI. Two are with the Ministry of Railways, one with the State Government of Rajasthan, six with the Ministry of Environment and Forest and one with a temple Management committee Bodhgaya in Bihar.

3.1 World Heritage Sites (WHS)

The UNESCO Convention of 1972 was developed with the following objectives regarding world heritage sites -

- To define World Heritage in both cultural and natural aspects,
- To enlist Sites and Monuments from the member countries which were of exceptional interest and universal value the protection of which was the concern of all mankind; and
- To promote cooperation among all nations and people to contribute for the protection of these universal treasures intact for future generation.

World Heritage Sites are designated by UNESCO and procedures followed are as laid out in the Operational Guidelines of UNESCO prepared for this purpose. Even after nomination, for each site there is a provision for periodic monitoring and assessment by UNESCO.

It is prestigious for a country to have a site listed on the World Heritage list. This citation gives boost to tourism and helps local economies to prosper. The recorded sites on the World Heritage list now stands at 962, which includes 745 cultural properties, 188 natural properties and 29 mixed properties. Despite active

participation in this area, so far, India has only 29 sites (details are in **Annex 3.1**) included on the WHS list. Countries like Italy (47), Spain (44) and China (43) had comparatively higher number of sites.

3.1.1 Procedure for inscription of a Site as a WHS

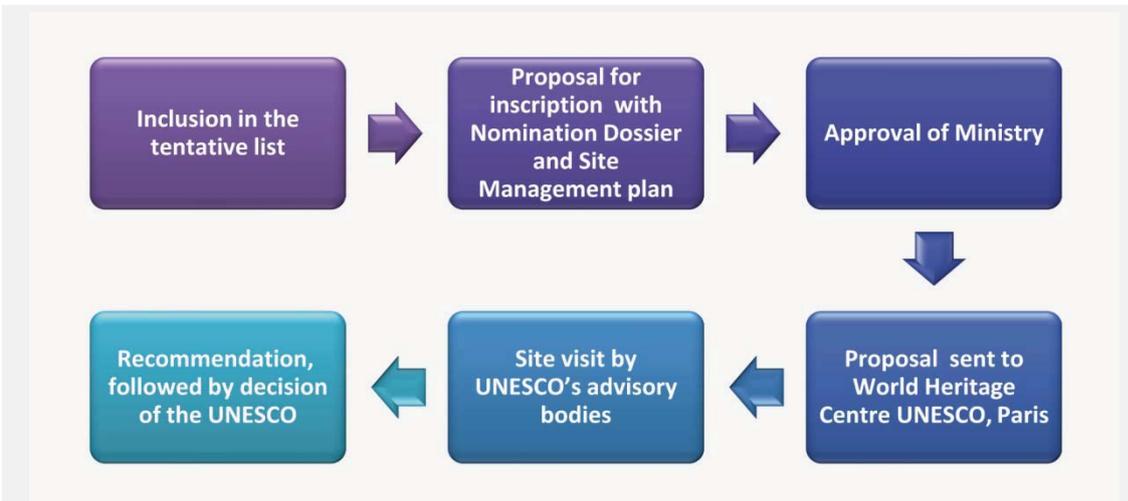


Chart 3.1 Procedure for inscription of a site as a WHS

- A site is first taken into a tentative list of UNESCO which is being maintained by the ASI in India. The sites that remain in the tentative list for a period of one year or more may be forwarded for final nomination.
- For the final nomination, a proposal is sent with nomination dossiers containing details of the site and its conservation plan. Since 2008, Site Management Plan (SMP) was mandatory for the nomination dossier.
- After approval from the Ministry, the dossier is sent to the World Heritage Centre (WHC), UNESCO Paris for further evaluation and approval.
- This is followed by a site visit by UNESCO's advisory bodies viz. International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) or International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)¹⁶, for evaluation.
- Based on this site visit a recommendation for "rejection", "deferral" (deferred), "referral" (requirement of additional information) or inscription is given. Then, UNESCO gives the final verdict. The property is inscribed in the list, if the World Heritage Centre is satisfied about the criteria and justification of the Outstanding Universal value (OUV) given in the nomination dossier.

¹⁶ For Natural sites

3.2 Nodal Agency for World Heritage Sites

The ASI informed us that the Ministry was the nodal Ministry and the ASI was the nodal agency on behalf of the Government of India for all World Heritage related matters. We found that there were no written orders to this effect available with the ASI. In the absence of these basic orders, we were unable to derive full assurance regarding the ASI's assigned role and performance. Our understanding of the ASI's role was in accordance with practices as found in the records.

3.2.1 Declining Performance of the ASI

Till now, (2012), the Government of India had submitted 53 proposals to the UNESCO. Of these, 19 ASI protected monuments are inscribed. Till 1993, the ASI had 16 inscribed WHS with reference to its own monuments. All 16 dossiers for these monuments were prepared in house by the ASI. Subsequently, this work was mostly outsourced to external consultants. With the increased use of consultants, we also noticed a steady decline in acceptance of proposals. We observed that during the last five years (2007-12), the ASI had submitted only three proposals, none of which was accepted. Out of these, two were outsourced to consultants at a cost of ₹ 79.84 lakh.

We noted that an Advisory Committee on World Heritage Matters was constituted (November 2011) in the Ministry for rendering advice and to bring about improvement in the matters relating to inscription of World Heritage Sites. The Committee had met seven times since its inception. However, there was no addition to the World Heritage list till November 2012.

The Ministry replied (May 2013) that the Advisory Committee had defended and upgraded the previous nominations of Western Ghats and Hill Forts of Rajasthan. The Ministry also stated that there were factual errors in ICOMOS evaluation for Hill Fort Rajasthan which were later accepted by ICOMOS in the World Heritage session. However, no documentary proof was provided for this and the fact remained that no new site was added to the World Heritage Site list.

3.2.2 Criteria for Selection of Sites for Tentative List

A tentative list is an inventory of those properties which each State Party intended to consider for nomination. It was a mandatory requirement before a site was finally considered for nomination. In 2011-12 India had 34 sites on the UNESCO Tentative List (Details in **Annex 3.2**) out of which 14 monuments are protected by the ASI. Proposals for tentative list forwarded by State Government, NGO and trusts, etc. were processed by the ASI as per advice of the Advisory Committee on World Heritage Matters. After filling the requisite format for tentative list it was sent to the Ministry for approval and thereafter to Permanent Representative of India (PRI), UNESCO who then submitted it to WHC for further evaluation and approval.

There were no defined criteria for selection of a monument/site for the tentative list. There was no standard procedure for follow up of each tentative site or prioritisation amongst the tentatively listed sites for final nomination.

3.2.3 Non revision of Tentative List

As per UNESCO guidelines it was envisaged that the tentative list were to be reviewed and updated every 10 years.

As per the records of the ASI, attempts had been made to revise the tentative listing in 2002, 2004 and 2009-10. But the ASI failed to update the list despite receiving inputs from various stakeholders. Even now, workshops were being held for revision of tentative lists, but no time frame had been fixed for completion of this exercise. In the absence of regular revision, we noticed inconsistencies and overlaps in the tentative list. For example, 'Golconda Fort of Hyderabad' appeared twice in the tentative list. Similarly nomination dossier for 'Sri Harminder Sahib, Amritsar' was withdrawn, however, it still features in the tentative list.

The Ministry stated (May 2013) that the revision of Tentative List of India is underway since 2012.

3.3 Preparation for Final Inscription

From the tentative list, nomination dossiers were prepared. The nomination document was the primary basis on which the committee considered the inscription of the properties on the World Heritage List. We observed that -

- The ASI had not defined any specific criteria for the selection of sites to be nominated from the tentative list. There were proposals in the tentative list from 1998 onwards but sites were being picked up randomly for preparation of dossiers for final nomination. Some nominations were picked from the tentative lists, while others, such as Jantar Mantar were picked up for final nomination without being on the tentative list.
- After the site was selected, a nomination dossier was prepared. There were no guidelines for development of the sites selected in the tentative list to prepare them for final nomination. In the ASI, we found that the activities constituting preparation for final inscription included only selection of consultants for nomination dossiers and Site Management plans. There was no project or concerted effort to develop the site *per se*.

Recommendation 3.1: The ASI should define objective criteria and requirements for selection of site for the tentative list and from the tentative list for final inscription of World Heritage Site, as this will help in prioritising, planning and preparing the sites before nomination.

Recommendation 3.2: The ASI should adopt a systematic approach for the development of tentative world heritage sites through conservation and site management. This alone can ensure final inscription of the site.

The Ministry stated (May 2013) that ACWHM was in the process of updating the tentative list and was also ensuring that management systems were in place before the dossiers were sent to WHC. Besides, the ASI was trying its best to maintain the prospective World Heritage Site in a good state of conservation. The reply is not correct as the ASI did not distinguish and categorise any monument as prospective World Heritage Site at any stage of its planning or execution of works.

3.3.1 Selection of Consultants for Nomination Dossiers

We noticed that external consultants were appointed by the ASI for preparation of nomination dossiers of WHS and also for Site Management Plans. The selection process differed from case to case. In some cases, the ASI appointed the consultants and in others, the States did so. Our scrutiny revealed lack of transparency, tendering irregularities and undue favours to consultants. In all the five¹⁷ cases proposed by the ASI, the sites had not been enlisted on the World Heritage List till December 2012 despite several attempts and contractual liability of ₹ 1.76 crore¹⁸ towards the consultancies¹⁹ as detailed below:

Santiniketan, West Bengal (2009) :

Work for Nomination Dossier - In May 2009, work was assigned jointly to Ms Abha Narain Lambah and Shri Manish Chakravorty at a cost of ₹ 35 lakh.

Status of Proposal: Nomination submitted in January 2010 was withdrawn after assessment of ICOMOS and not taken up for resubmission.

Irregularities noticed in Audit :

- Site was picked up randomly.
- Instead of open tendering, limited quotes were called from eight consultants. No criteria were on record for this short listing.
- Despite being incomplete, the bid given by one of the bidder was not rejected and declared as L1.
- Work was awarded jointly to L1 and L4 bidders in violation to CVC guidelines.

¹⁷ Santiniketan, Majuli, Serial Nomination of Harappan sites, Extension to Pattadakal and Rani ki Vav.

¹⁸ Out of which payment of ₹ 1.05 crore had been released.

¹⁹ The nomination dossier of Rani ki Vav was prepared in house

Majuli, Assam (2004, 2008, 2012)

Work for Nomination Dossier:

1. In 2004, Ms Nalini Thakur and Shri Surojit Jaradhara were assigned the work.
2. In 2008, Ms. Poonam Thakur and Shri Rohit Jigyasu were assigned the work at a cost of ₹ 16.84 lakhs.
3. In 2012, Shri Suryanarayan Murthy (M/s Kshetra) was assigned the work involving payment of ₹ 28 lakhs.

Status of Proposal:

The three proposals were respectively referred for additional information, deferred and found technically incomplete by ICOMOS. The site could not get the inscription till now.

Irregularities noticed in Audit:

- The site was the largest river island of the world, yet it was presented as a Cultural site and not a Mixed or Natural site.
- The ASI experimented with three different consultants. However, the work was not satisfactorily carried out by any of them.
- In one of the three cases, the dossier was evaluated and approved by ACWHM, however, found technically incomplete. This shows the improper vetting by ACWHM.
- In all the three cases the consultants who had prepared the dossier, were not held responsible for rejection of the dossiers, being incomplete.

Serial nomination on Harappan Sites (2008)

Work for Nomination Dossier:

Shri Ranesh Ray was assigned this work at a cost of ₹ 65 Lakhs in March 2009

Status of proposal:

Proposal was deferred by the ASI for 2010 even before completion of Dossier.

Audit observed that:

- Except Dholavira, none of the site was included in the tentative list.
- Selection of consultant was non-transparent and was done on nomination basis without tendering.
- Payment of ₹ 38 lakh was released in August 2009, on the basis of a performance report.
- Condition for performance guarantee was waived without justification.
- Scope of work was decreased mid-way by removing two sites (Rakhigarhi and Bhirrana) without proportionate reduction in fees.
- The ASI failed to provide excavation reports of the sites due to which final nomination could not be prepared.
- Contract was faulty as despite non-availability of excavation reports, the ASI accepted the responsibility of providing them.

Extension proposal for Badami and Aihole to the Pattadakal Group of Monuments (2002-03, 2010-12)

Work for Nomination Dossier:

1. Work was assigned to Shri A. Ramanathan and Shri Ranesh Ray at a cost of ₹ 14 lakhs which was enhanced to ₹ 24 lakhs in 2003.
2. M/s ADEI DRONAH was awarded the work at a total cost of ₹ 31.56 lakh (2011).

Dossier was not ready till November 2012.

Irregularities noticed in Audit :

- From ₹ 14 lakhs in 2002 the estimate rose to ₹ 31.56 lakh in 2011 and yet the work could not be completed.
- The consultants in 2003 were selected in a non transparent manner through nomination.
- In 2010 Dharwad Circle issued Expression of Interest (EOI) for selection of consultants. The EOI had a restrictive clause as a result of which only consultants who had earlier worked on WHS projects were eligible. Given the few projects taken up in India, it restricted competition to only the consultants selected earlier.
- In 2011, ADEI DRONAH was awarded work without approval of IFD and the Ministry.
- ADEI DRONAH was selected as it was a Karnataka based consultant. However, such location criteria were not adopted in any earlier consultancy.
- There was no clause for penalty in case of delay.

3.3.2 Preparation and Implementation of Site Management Plans

A site management plan is a document which gives a holistic perspective on conservation and management of the site. Submission of Site Management Plan²⁰ was mandatory as per UNESCO's Operational Guidelines of 2008. We found that these plans were not ready in the case of 15 out of 19 sites of the ASI. Even where the plans were prepared, these were not implemented on the site.

We observed that the ASI appointed four consultants for the preparation of Integrated Management Plan (IMP)/Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP)/Site Management Plan (SMP) for four sites for an amount of ₹ 2.92 crore, out of which a payment of ₹ 2.59 crore had already been made to the consultants. However the work was still incomplete as the CCMP/IMP/SMP had not been finalised by the ASI.

²⁰ The Site Management plan can be in the form of Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP), Site Management Plan (SMP) or Integrated Management Plan (IMP), depending upon the requirements of the site.

Table 3.1 Status of SMPs/IMPs/CCMPs

Site	SMP consultant	Remuneration (₹ in lakh)	Commencement of work	Finalisation of SMP/IMP/CCMP	Status of implementation
Hampi, Karnataka	Nalini Thakur	14.25	2004-05	Not yet finalized	Not implemented ²¹
Red Fort, Delhi	Gurmeet Rai	91.46	2005	2007	Not implemented
Ajanta Caves, Maharashtra	Abha Narain Lambah	92.13	2007	Not yet finalised	Not implemented
Ellora Caves, Maharashtra	Gurmeet Rai	94.60	2007	Not yet finalised	Not implemented

IMP for Champaner Pavagadh was being prepared by in house team of the ASI. Process for preparation of IMP for the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri had been initiated in 2012. However, the EOI was cancelled in 2012 itself and was yet to be taken up again.

We found that the Site Management Plans were poorly prepared and hence could not be implemented. The plan provided no guidance to the Conservation Assistants and other field staff about the actual management of the site. It was mostly an academic document discussing concepts and theoretical approaches for management of the site.

The ASI was therefore unable to comply with the mandatory requirement of UNESCO for submission of SMPs.

The Ministry stated (May 2013) that IMPs or SMPs were dynamic documents that require phased implementation over several years.

3.4 Site Inspections at the World Heritage Sites

The grant of World Heritage status did not translate into better availability of facilities, funding and staff for these sites. For all practical purposes of conservation, security and maintenance, the ASI did not differentiate between other sites and World Heritage Sites. On these WHS, the total revenue collected was ₹ 320.03 crores against which an expenditure of ₹ 243.96 crore was incurred during the period 2007-12. The footfall of Indian and foreign visitors put together was 887.08 lakh.

Considering the revenue generated from these WHS and the footfall, in our opinion the ASI should have made efforts in ensuring availability of better facilities for the

²¹ The Ministry intimated (May 2013) that the IMP of Hampi is already under implementation through a special World Heritage Authority created for this purpose. Several sub sectoral plans under IMP are in various stages of implementation and a formal inclusion of IMP in the Master Plan is under process.

visitors and ensured better conservation and security of these monuments. The information in respect of the visitors, details of revenue and expenditure incurred on conservation is at **Annex 3.3**. During the joint physical inspection, we noticed that different sites had varied issues that related to security, public amenities, encroachment and unauthorised construction, audio guide services etc. (Details in **Annex 3.4**).

3.5 Status of Amenities at World Heritage Sites

Some highlights of the status of Public Amenities, as noticed during joint physical inspections are as follows (**Details in Annex 3.4**).

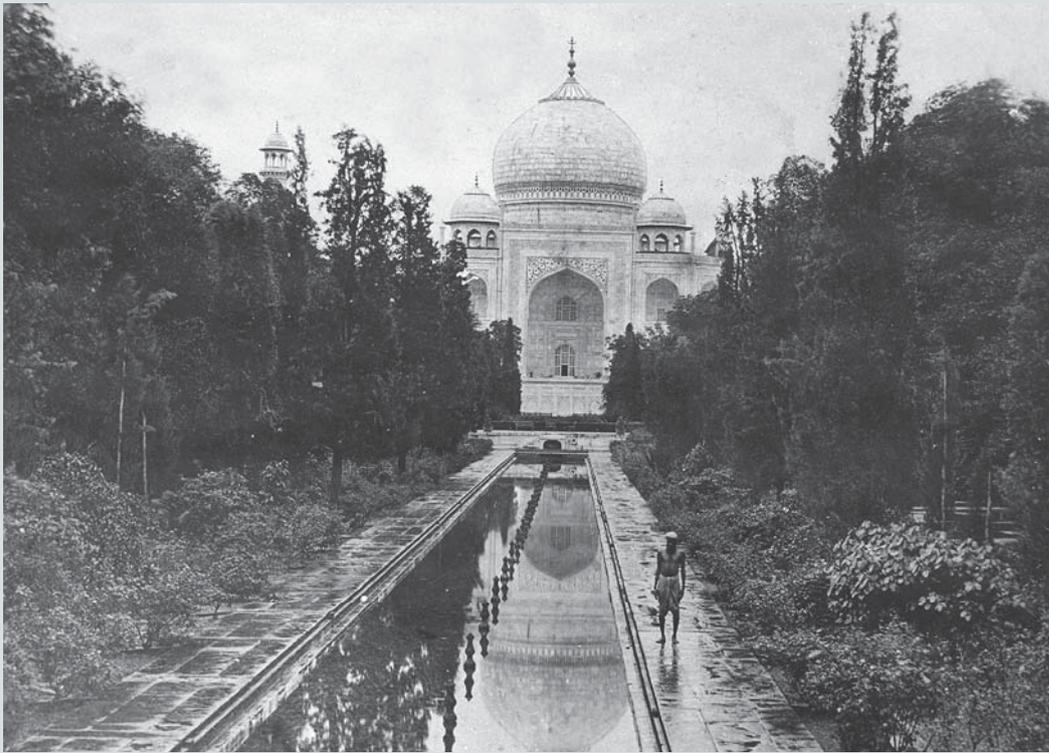
- At World Heritage Sites of Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh, Fatehpur Sikri Uttar Pradesh and Champaner Gujarat 628 cases, 194 cases and 107 cases of unauthorised constructions respectively were noticed.
- Encroachments were noticed at five of these sites namely Red Fort, Qutb Minar, Bhimbetka, Hampi and Champaner
- It was noticed that out of 19 World Heritage Sites nine monuments were partly closed to the public. These included Taj Mahal Agra, Red Fort Delhi and Qutb Minar Delhi.
- At 14 out of 19 World Heritage Sites no audio guide service was available. These included sites like Ajanta, Ellora, Khajuraho and Red Fort²².
- Security Equipments like hand held metal detectors, scanners etc were not available at 7 out of 19 World Heritage sites and CCTV was not installed in 16 out of 19 sites.
- Facilities for differently-abled visitors were not available at 6 out of 19 World Heritage sites viz Humayun's Tomb, Bhimbetka etc

Recommendation 3.3: *The Ministry should develop a separate project for maintenance and security of World Heritage Sites. There should be proper assessment of funds, security and conservation requirements.*

The Ministry (May 2013) accepted the recommendation.

²² Audio Guide facility in Red Fort, Delhi was started in July 2012.

Case Study 1: The Taj Mahal, Agra



The Taj Mahal Agra is a mausoleum of white marble built by the Mughal emperor, Shahjahan. It is famous for its unique layout, perfection in symmetry and inlay work. Construction of the Taj Mahal was completed within a period of 17 years from 1631 to 1648 AD at a cost of about ₹ 4.0 crore. The Taj Mahal was declared a centrally protected monument of national importance in December 1920. Considered as one of the Seven Wonders of the World, it was inscribed on the list of World Heritage Sites in 1983.

During last five years:

- 0.31 crore foreign and 1.73 crore Indian tourists visited the Taj Mahal, through which the ASI earned ₹ 84.90 crore as revenue.
- The total expenditure incurred on the preservation and conservation of the Taj Mahal was ₹ 7.55 crore.
- 128 employees of the ASI and 275 of CISF were deployed for the maintenance and security of the Taj Mahal.

However, despite generating maximum resources amongst all the ASI monuments, the maintenance of the site was inadequate as discussed in the succeeding paragraphs. The Site Management plan was yet to be finalised and implemented.

Status of Public Amenities

Adequate public amenities like drinking water, toilets, ramps for physically challenged (upto a certain level) and wheel chairs were available at the Taj Mahal. However, signage in Braille was not available at the Taj Mahal. The cloak room facility was not available at the western gate of the Taj Mahal though most of the Indian visitors entered from this gate. Parking facility was located about a kilometer away from the entry points.

We found that though mentioned at the counter, audio guide facility was unavailable for Korean, Japanese, Chinese and Gujarati languages. The ASI in January 2010, proposed before the Supreme Court to construct Visitors Centres at Eastern and Western gates of the Taj Mahal to accommodate entry ticket counter with a covered queuing area for security, luggage room, information area, waiting rooms and toilets etc. There was also a proposal to set up site interpretation centre. We noticed that the action plan for actual construction was yet to be submitted by the ASI.

Encroachment and Unauthorised Construction in and around the Taj Mahal

We noticed encroachment within the premises of the Taj Mahal near Khan-i-Alam's Bagh. Neither action was taken by the ASI to remove the encroachment nor was it mentioned in the list of 249 encroachments provided by the ASI HQ for all the centrally protected monuments.

We also noticed that only 1 out of 24 unauthorised constructions around the Taj Mahal was demolished. We further noticed that an old temple next to the outside boundary on the eastern gate was constructed without authorisation. The ASI neither took any action nor lodged a complaint with the concerned authorities on these unauthorised constructions.

Preservation and Conservation of the Taj Mahal

We noticed that the Circle office failed to properly preserve the outer boundary of the Taj complex. The left side boundary wall at the eastern gate was in poor condition. No conservation work was carried out by the Circle office on this wall. Large nails were dug into the 400 year old wall and animals were routinely tethered to them.



We also noticed cracks in the outer walls, broken stones fixed in the wall, missing designs, use of cement in the wall, seepage, fixing of plastic pipes, and broken jalis.



Plastic pipe fixed in the wall



Broken jalis of the outer wall



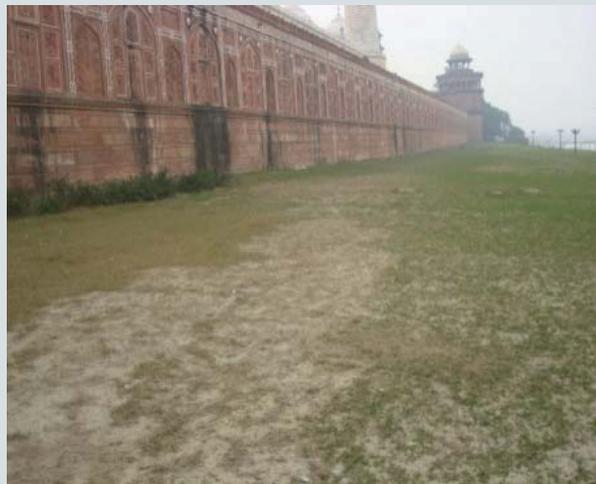
Missing stone and plaster



Inlay work



Stains on the stone



Garden not maintained

Conservation and preservation works inside the monument were also not satisfactory. The plaster was fading at the main entrance to the monument. There were instances of missing inlay designs and seepage. Even the gardens were not maintained properly.



Garden not maintained



Missing design

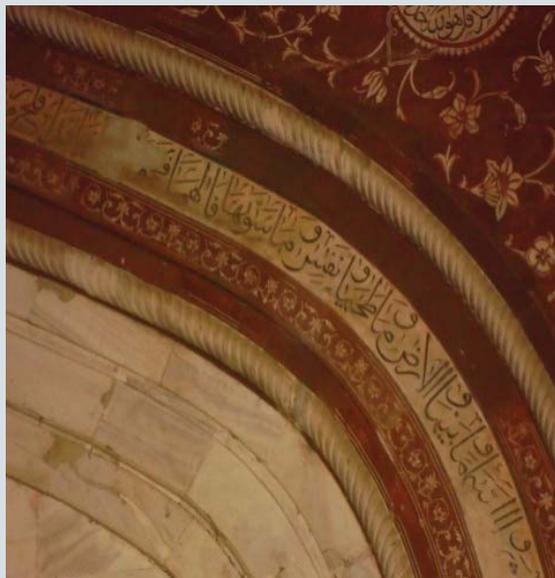


Seepage on the roof

On the eastern and western side of the main mausoleum, there were Mosque and Mehman Khana respectively. We noticed that not much attention was given to the maintenance of these parts which was reflected in missing plaster, missing designs and seepage.



Cement work on wall in the mosque



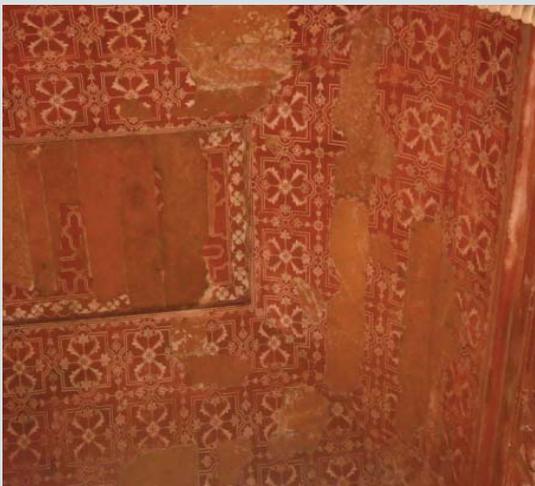
Missing design in the mosque



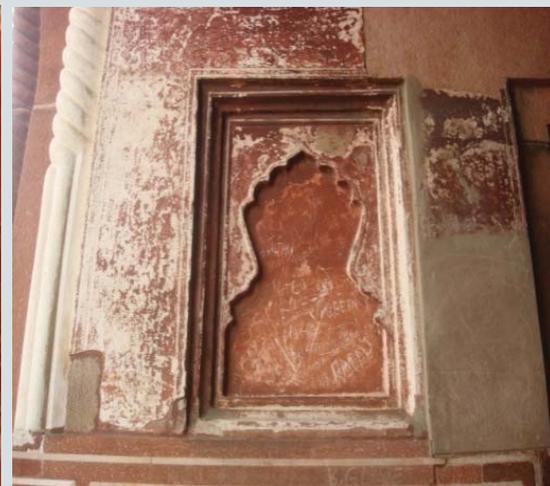
Broken flooring of the mosque



Seepage and cracks in the Mehman Khana



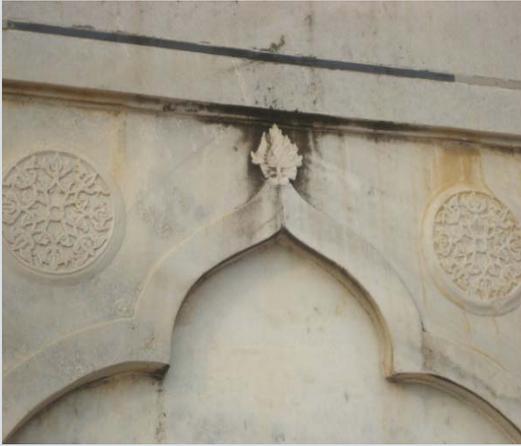
Missing designs in the Mehman Khana



Fading of plaster of Paris in the Mehman Khana

Main Mausoleum

Main mausoleum of the Taj Mahal is the main attraction and heart of the monument. It is a pure white marble structure having inlay works of original semi precious stones. We noticed that certain efforts were made by the Circle office to preserve and conserve this area. However, there were some deficiencies. The ASI stated that because of a large number of visitors at the Taj Mahal, they did not get adequate time for the conservation and preservation of the monument. Lack of coordination mainly among the chemical treatment/cleaning with Circle office works was also noticed. There was a missing design from the main Iron Gate. We found that stones were missing, white floral designs had turned black and cracks were also noticed in the design.



Black stains at the marble designs



Patch work on the marble design



Broken floral design



Patch work of the inlay work

The Science Branch with the help of UNESCO established a stone conservation laboratory in Agra in November 2006. The lab was to check the quality of stone prior to use in works. We noticed that ₹ 1.35 crore was incurred on account of stone flooring in the campus during 2007-08 to 2011-12. However the quality of the stones used was not checked in the stone conservation laboratory.

Case Study 2: The Red Fort, Delhi



Red Fort, Delhi

Brief History

The Red Fort was constructed by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in 1648 at a cost of ₹ one crore. Red Fort a massive military fortification, also housed the administrative headquarters of the empire as well as royal palaces. The art work in the Fort is a synthesis of Indian, Persian and European art. It also represents the zenith of Mughal architecture. In 2007 the World Heritage Committee inscribed the Red Fort, Delhi as a World Heritage monument.

During last five years,

- Seven lakh foreign and 1.17 crore Indian visitors visited the Red Fort, through which ASI earned ₹ 25.59 crore as revenue.
- The total expenditure incurred for the preservation and conservation of Red Fort was ₹ 15.77 crore.
- 119 private security guards and 317 CISF personnel were deployed for the security of the Red Fort.

Notification

The monument was notified in February 1913 and it includes some parts²³ of the Fort. Later another notification was issued in July 2002 to cover some additional parts²⁴ of the Fort.

As a result of notifications, the Red Fort was treated as two different monuments by ASI HQ and Circle office (as per the list of 174 monuments in Delhi Circle), whereas the inventory of Delhi Circle published by the ASI showed Red Fort as one monument and mentioned the second notification as supplementary to the first notification.

Unauthorised Closure of monument or its parts

Hamam, Moti masjid and *Baoli* in Red Fort were permanently closed for the visitors without the approval of the competent authority. It was also noticed that there were restrictions to visit the Mumtaz Mahal, Khas Mahal, Diwan-e-Khas etc for the general public. Even visitors were not allowed to closely see the takht at Diwan – e- Aam and Diwan – e- Khas.

Encroachment and Unauthorised Construction

It was noticed that parts of Red Fort were being used by officials of the ASI and security staff for residential purposes. DG ASI, DSA and CA of Delhi Circle were staying inside the Fort. Security guards both of CISF and private security agency were also staying inside the monument. There were many offices situated in the Red Fort complex viz the Institute of Archaeology, Hostel, Office of National Mission of Monuments and Antiquities, Office of Science Branch, Horticulture Branch, CA's office and office of the Commandant, CISF.

It was also noticed during the joint physical inspection that temples and mazar also existed in the Red Fort Complex and appeared to be used for regular prayers though not authorised. This was not communicated to the Circle/DG office and was not included in the list of monuments, where unauthorised prayers are being held.

²³ Naubat Khana, Diwan – e- Aam, Mumtaz Mahal, Rang Mahal, Baithaka Musamam Burj, Diwan –e- Khas, Moti Masjid, Sawan and Bhadon pavilion, Shah burj, Hamam with all the surroundings including the gardens, paths, terraces and water courses (Lal Qila).

²⁴ Delhi fort of Lal Qila, Asad burj, water gate, Delhi gate, Lahori gate, fortification wall, Chhatta bazaar and Baoli.



Residence of DG, ASI at Red Fort



Accommodation provided to CISF



Mazar inside Red Fort



Temple inside Red Fort

Public Facilities

- Audio guide facility started in July 2012 only in two languages i.e. English and Hindi.
- Visitors had to walk more than a kilometre to reach the ticket counter either from the nearest bus stop or from authorised parking lot.
- No CCTV cameras were installed at Lahori Gate. At Delhi Gate no CCTV camera and metal detectors were installed. No system was in place for security check of the vehicles entering the premises of Red Fort.
- No Braille facility was available at the monument for visually impaired people.

Comprehensive Site Management Plan (CCMP)

The ASI prepared the CCMP in 2007-08 through a consultant at a total cost of ₹ 91.46 lakh. However, the CA informed that CCMP was not practical and it was difficult to implement. Important issue like overhead wiring was not mentioned in the CCMP. Thus the expenditure was rendered wasteful.

Non Receipt of Revenue

The contract for managing the parking at the Red Fort was awarded to an ineligible contractor²⁵ in September 2010. The contractor stopped depositing the money from July 2011 and the total dues against the contract as on 31 May 2012 were ₹ 1.14 crore including electricity charges and penalty.

Organising Cultural Events

The terms and conditions of permission for organising cultural event in Red Fort garden were not adhered to by the organisers of the annual Ram Leela.²⁶ The ASI did not take any action against them. The ASI also waived off the prescribed fee of ₹ 50000/- per day stating that it was a religious function. (Refer Para 2.8.5).

Physical Condition of the Monuments

Joint physical inspection of the complex revealed that it required widespread preservation and conservation; further some parts were in a dilapidated condition and needed immediate attention. The details are as follows:

Improper conservation works on the walls, dilapidated conditions of the stones were noticed at Lahori Gate.



Main entrance at Lahori Gate



Closed shop near Chhatta bazaar

Naubat Khana and Diwan – e-Aam

Many stones at the entrance gate of the Naubat Khana were seriously damaged and signs of improper conservation work carried out at the gate were easily visible. The floral design was replaced with different colours and the work done was also a patch work. Cement work was also noticed on the monument. The *takht* was covered with a net to protect it from pigeons and bats. However, pigeons were able to enter

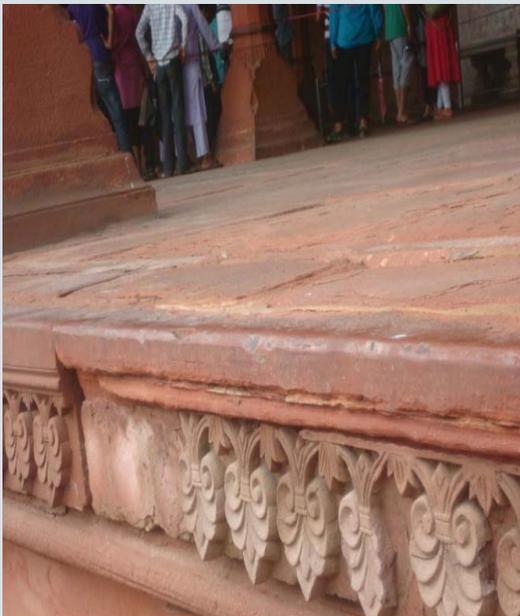
²⁵ The firm did not have the requisite experience in the related field

²⁶ M/s Lavkush Ramlila Committee and M/s Nav Shree Dharmik Lila Committee

inside the net and the purpose was defeated. The net was also spoiling the overall aesthetic appeal of the place. Widespread seepage was noticed on the ceiling of the Diwan-e-Aam. The rear wall had a number of cracks and required chemical treatment. The brackets holding the structure were falling off and needed to be conserved immediately.



Missing Plaster



Missing floral design



Rear of Diwan-e-Aam in need of chemical cleaning

Diwan-e-Khas

Efforts were made to restore the design of the walls to its original shape however, the work was abandoned midway. This area also required proper chemical conservation.



Missing design on the wall



Test work carried out on one pillar

Sawan and Bhadon Pavillion

Chemical conservation work was not carried out uniformly in all the areas. The *Hyat Baksh* garden between these two pavilions were found to be lacking maintenance. We noted that there was a lot of wild vegetation and the water channels were in a damaged state. The pathways also needed restoration.



Inlay work carried out at Sawan Pavilion



Improper maintenance of Hyat Baksh garden

Jafar Mahal and Baoli

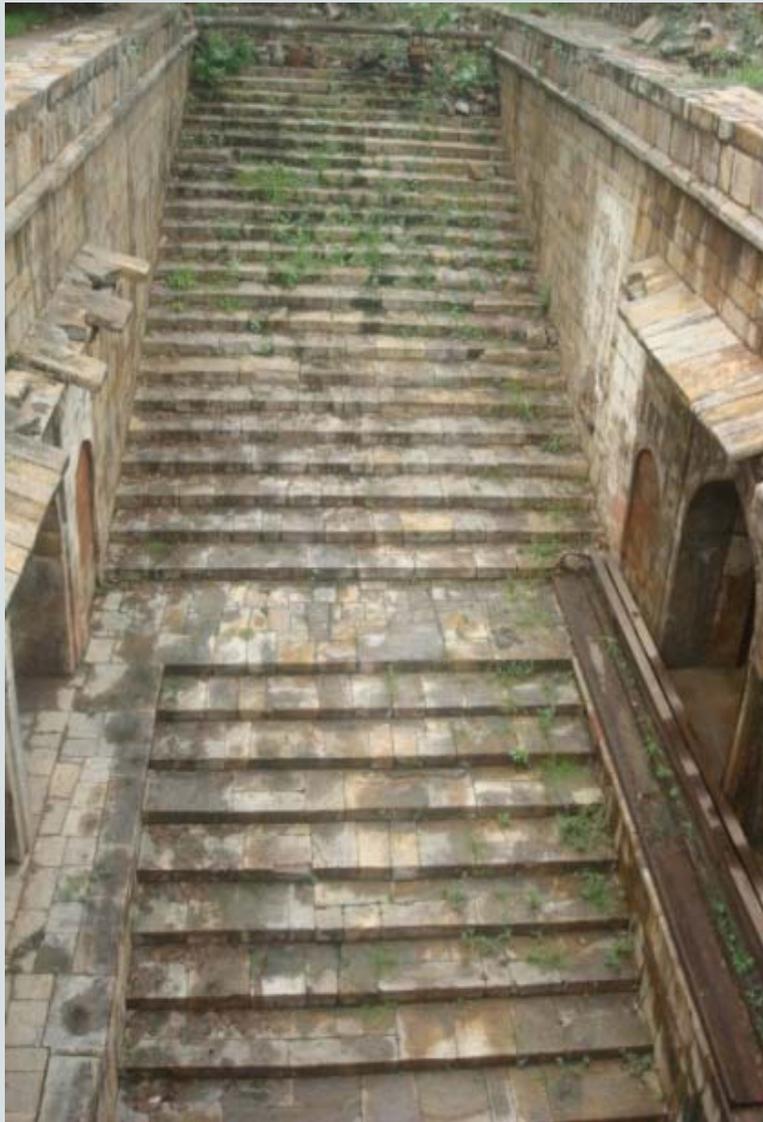
Jafar Mahal, a red sand stone structure used to be filled with water. The jalis were found broken, a lot of vegetation, seepage and cement work were also noticed. There were areas where stones were missing; there was no plaster on the bricks and water logging was seen on the floor. The *Baoli* at the Fort needed immediate attention for preservation. The stones and some portion of the wall of the *Baoli* was found broken and a lot of vegetation was noticed. The garden next to the *Baoli* was in a completely unkempt condition.



Missing stones and water logging in Jahaz Mahal



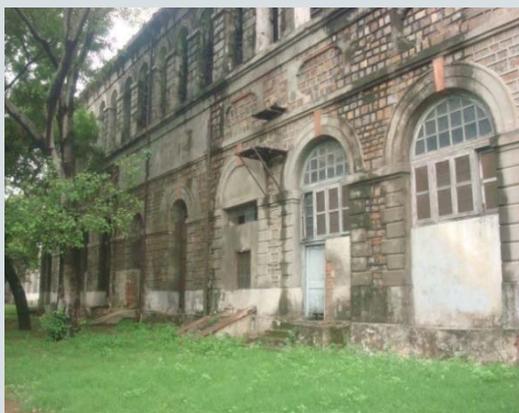
Stagnant water in Baoli



Improper maintenance of Baoli

GE Building

The British-era GE building was occupied by the Office of the National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities. Several modern equipment and fixtures like ACs, electricity fittings, ceramic tiles etc. were installed there. The pathways were covered with grass highlighting poor maintenance.



British period building at Red Fort



Improper maintenance of pathways and gardens

The above observations make it clear that this symbol of our national pride and a World Heritage Site, had not received the care and protection it required. The ASI officials highlighted the issue of shortage of funds and manpower. However, we found that a comprehensive assessment of preservation works and funds requirement had never been carried out. No concrete efforts were made to obtain funds through the NCF or any other alternative route. No proposal for comprehensive preservation of the Monument was put up to the Ministry for separate funds allotment. The Ministry on its own failed to take any initiative in this direction.

Case Study 3: Ajanta Caves, Aurangabad



Brief History: The rock cut caves near Ajanta contain perfect specimens of Indian Rural Paintings. These were discovered in 1819 by British Officers while hunting. They were excavated between second century BC and seventh century AD. They were excavated in a semi-circular scarp overlooking a narrow sinuous gorge. The total area of painting at Ajanta Caves was approximately 2994 sq mts. The caves were notified in November 1951 and inscribed as World heritage list in 1984.

During last five years:

1.17 lakh foreign and 15.4 lakh Indian tourist visited the Ajanta Caves through which ASI earned a revenue of ₹ 4.97 crore.

The total expenditure incurred for the preservation and conservation of Ajanta Caves was ₹ 7.19 crore.

The strength of private security guards deployed was increased from 22 to 42 in 2011. State police also did patrolling in the Ajanta Caves.

Site Management Plan

Site Management Plan was under preparation by an external consultant and an expenditure of ₹ 81.10 lakh had been incurred on it.

Security

We noticed that private security guards were engaged in the sale of entry tickets also. No scanners and CCTV were available at the site.

Status of Public Amenities

- No toilet facility was available for the physically challenged.
- There was no audio guide facility at the site.
- No cloak rooms were available for the visitors.

Conservation

The identification and execution of the projects of chemical conservation of the paintings and other monuments of the Ajanta caves was the responsibility of the “Field laboratory at Ajanta’ under Science Branch. An analysis of the chemical conservation and preservation carried out on the paintings at Ajanta, revealed the following:

- 1) There was no mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the results of cleaning and fixing responsibility against defective execution.
- 2) There was no laid down documented policy for chemical cleaning/conservation of the paintings.
- 3) Inventory of the paintings had not been prepared.

Financial Assistance from Japan Bank for International Co operation (JBIC)

The Government of India (GOI) signed an agreement with Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in 1992 for phase I and in 2003 for phase II. An expenditure of ₹ 17.03 crore was incurred during both the phases. The objective of the project was “to conserve and preserve monuments and also natural resources around and improve the infrastructure and visitor management, carry out tourist development activities and training programmes for higher quality of the life of local population in Maharashtra, predominantly in Ajanta”.

Present Condition:

- The unstable micro climatic conditions in the caves affected the state of conservation of the mural paintings. Due to the impact of variation in relative humidity, a portion of painted plaster along with mud had fallen from its stone carrier. Falling of white pigments from the ceiling of cave No.2 was also noticed.
- The thick coat of protective layer applied on the paintings by the earlier restorers, accumulated dust, soot, excreta of bats etc had created an obscuring haze over the murals.

- The solvents, chemicals, etc. used for cleaning were changed frequently and the indiscriminate use of solvents caused chalkiness on the paintings.



Cave Number 17 East wall, Removal of chalkiness

Impact of visitors

The National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) Nagpur was identified (July 2012) to carry out capacity study of the caves and the project was in progress. Entry of visitors was to be restricted to 40 inside the caves but this was not enforced leading to a reported increase of six to seven *per cent* in relative humidity.



Crowd of visitors in Cave Number 2

The impact of visitors inside the cave also increased carbon dioxide concentration. This highlighted the need for controlling the number of visitors inside the caves at a time. Also no emergency evacuation plan has been prepared till date.

Keeping in view the high influx of visitors and fragile condition of the caves, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), in August 2012, initiated a project to create a replica of these caves with the aid of foreign technologies and financial assistance from JICA.