

Tracing the Courtyard Typology from the Past: Highlighting a Need for Conservation in Case of Historic Settlement in Historic Town of Gwalior

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Abstract : The existence of Courtyards in India can be traced back to 'Indus valley civilization' and various layers of history bearing implications like socio-cultural, traditional, religious, climatic, etc., moreover serving as a breathing space in case of historical core areas. Over time, with the overlay of various historic layers within the historic urban cores and the present high density populace, the cores are getting congested day by day. In this case, courtyards may emerge out as an efficient medium to provide quality of life through livable spaces. Presently, with the growing population of the historic town of Gwalior, town in Madhya Pradesh holds remarkable essence of courtyards with its multiple concepts over time. Its scale and function varies from an imposing grand appearance in palatial form, up to functional practices as residential. Its privilege can also be drawn in urban forms, in sharing single space by multiple dwellings and in temples which can be sketched specifically in the region. Moreover, the effectiveness of courtyards has proven balance and control of micro-climate in such composite climate region. The research paper aims to underline the concept of courtyards in case of a mixed use neighborhood, Naya bazar, in Lashkar area of Gwalior, which developed during 19th century, highlighting the need of its preservation. The paper also elaborates its various implications on user-space relationship as in the present context, and growing congestion in the area, user and space relationship is seen lost. The noticeable change in the behavioral context in buildings and users can be noticed with the downfall of courtyards, isolating users with land. Also, a concern has been expressed on negligence of courtyard planning in future development, suggesting recommendations on preserving the courtyard typology as heritage.

Keywords : courtyards, Gwalior, historic settlement, heritage

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