

An Integrated Approach to Cultural Heritage Management in the Indian Context

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Abstract : With the widening definition of heritage, the challenges of heritage management has become more complex . Today heritage not only includes significant monuments but comprises historic areas / sites, historic cities, cultural landscapes, and living heritage sites. There is a need for a comprehensive understanding of the values associated with these heritage resources, which will enable their protection and management. These diverse cultural resources are managed by multiple agencies having their own way of operating in the heritage sites. An Integrated approach to management of these cultural resources ensures its sustainability for the future generation. This paper outlines the importance of an integrated approach for the management and protection of complex heritage sites in India by examining four case studies. The methodology for this study is based on secondary research and primary surveys conducted during the preparation of the conservation management plans for the various sites. The primary survey included basic documentation, inventorying, and community surveys. Red Fort located in the city of Delhi is one of the most significant forts built in 1639 by the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan. This fort is a national icon and stands testimony to the various historical events . It is on the ramparts of Red Fort that the national flag was unfurled on 15th August 1947, when India became independent, which continues even today. Management of this complex fort necessitated the need for an integrated approach, where in the needs of the official and non official stakeholders were addressed. The understanding of the inherent values and significance of this site was arrived through a systematic methodology of inventorying and mapping of information. Hampi, located in southern part of India, is a living heritage site inscribed in the World Heritage list in 1986. The site comprises of settlements, built heritage structures, traditional water systems, forest, agricultural fields and the remains of the metropolis of the 16th century Vijayanagar empire. As Hampi is a living heritage site having traditional systems of management and practices, the aim has been to include these practices in the current management so that there is continuity in belief, thought and practice. The existing national, regional and local planning instruments have been examined and the local concerns have been addressed. A comprehensive understanding of the site, achieved through an integrated model, is being translated to an action plan which safeguards the inherent values of the site. This paper also examines the case of the 20th century heritage building of National Archives of India, Delhi and protection of a 12th century Tomb of Sultan Ghari located in south Delhi. A comprehensive understanding of the site, lead to the delineation of the Archaeological Park of Sultan Ghari, in the current Master Plan for Delhi, for the protection of the tomb and the settlement around it. Through this study it is concluded that the approach of Integrated Conservation has enabled decision making that sustains the values of these complex heritage sites in Indian context.

Keywords : conservation, integrated, management, approach

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