A preliminary review on design conservation of Mughal mosque architecture in Dhaka: A case study between Khani Muhammad Mridha Mosque and Rasulullah's (PBUH) prototype mosque in Madina

Abstract

Mughal architecture attained supremacy in the Indian Sub-Continent including Bangladesh for over five and half centuries from 17th-18th century. However, to the fourth largest Muslim population in the world, about ninety percent of the total population, the Mughal left many valuable including mosques for the Muslims. The capital city of Bangladesh, Dhaka, is studded with mosques of Mughal period and aptly regarded as the 'City of Mosques' at the same level as Cairo or Istanbul[5]. However, majority of these mosques have disappeared, in rude, preserved or repaired, giving a modern look, thus giving an impression that conservation of these invaluable historical heritage of Dhaka has always been ignored. This paper analysed the current state of architecture conservation of Mughal mosque architecture in Dhaka through a historical review of existing literature with other Mughal mosques as the conservation case study. The prototype mosque of Rasulullah (PBUH), the An-Nabaw, in Madina, Saudi Arabia, is used as a reference for the study to provide guidelines for the extent of conservation to historical mosques in use in the light of needs to accommodate the worshippers with the modern requirements. With the limitation of written literature on Dhaka architectural history and access to sites, the study had identified characteristics of Dhaka Mughal mosque architecture as heritage traits and had compared them to newly conserved Mughal mosques of its authenticity. Findings on design authenticity of the conserved mosque denote the absence of essential details and characteristics of the Mughal. Current debate in deciding what needs to be conserved and what had to adapt to meet modern needs between conservators and as practicing Muslim in new era. This preliminary study provides recommendations as a balanced guide for conservators and architects in dealing with heritage mosques as modern buildings.

Author keywords

Conservation, Design, Mughal mosque architecture

References (1)