

*World Heritage Series*

# Agra Fort



32

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA



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## Agra Fort

AGRA FORT is the treasure house of early and later master pieces of Mughal architecture. The lofty ornamented fortification walls, strong decorated bastions and monumental gateways namely Akbari Darwaza (Amar Singh Gate), Hathi Pol, (Dilli Darwaza) are the finest specimens of Akbari style of Mughal architecture. The Mughals are credited to have constructed imposing Gates which surpassed all proto types of the Sultanate and Rajput Gates in Northern India.

Following the Timurid and Indian traditions, the Mughal architecture assumed a new style of building art in the sub continent. This is adequately represented by Akbari Mahal, Jahangiri Mahal and the elegant Khas Mahal, Char Bagh gardens, ornamental tank, fountains and the peerless Musamman Burj, the shallow monolithic marble basin, Diwan-i-Am (Chihil Sutun), Diwan-i-Khas, Shish Mahal, Turkish bath with their fine mirror decorations are the most attractive specimens of the marble buildings of Shah Jahan. The coloured pietra-dura inlay work with marble and rich relief carvings in red stone represent magnificent architecture design and ornamentation.

The two rectangular pavilions and the Jharoka darshan, built in Bengal style are matchless structures representing mature Mughal architecture.

Among the religious buildings are the small marble mosque Mina Masjid, Nagina Masjid and the celebrated Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque). The early marble specimens of Shah Jahan are notable for their designs, gates, prayer halls, supported on Shah Jahani pillars, pilasters, capitals, graceful mihrabs, elegant marble domes and ablution tanks.



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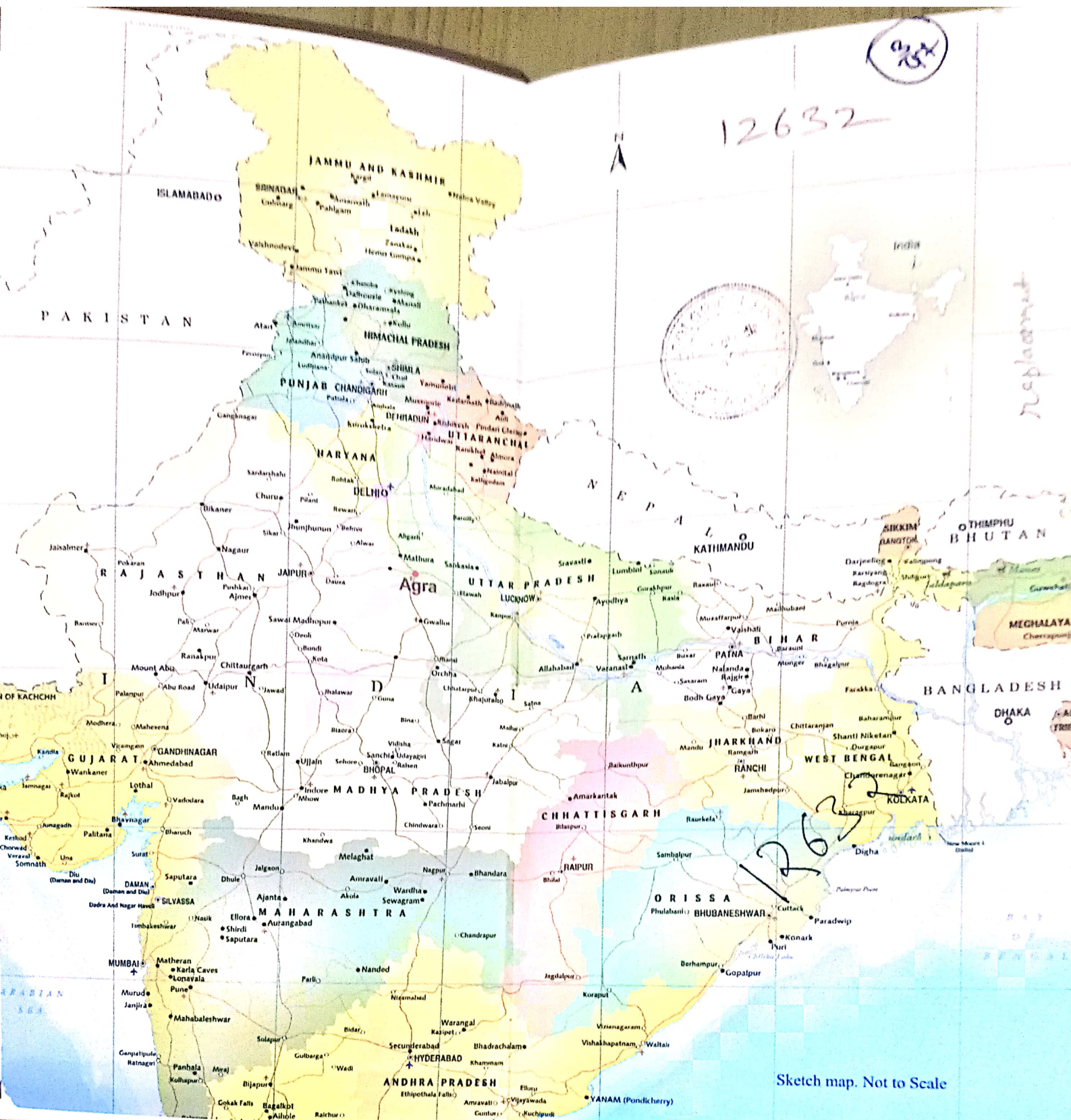
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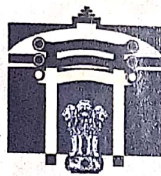




World Heritage Series

# AGRA FORT

W.H Siddiqi



प्रत्कीर्तिम्पावृणु

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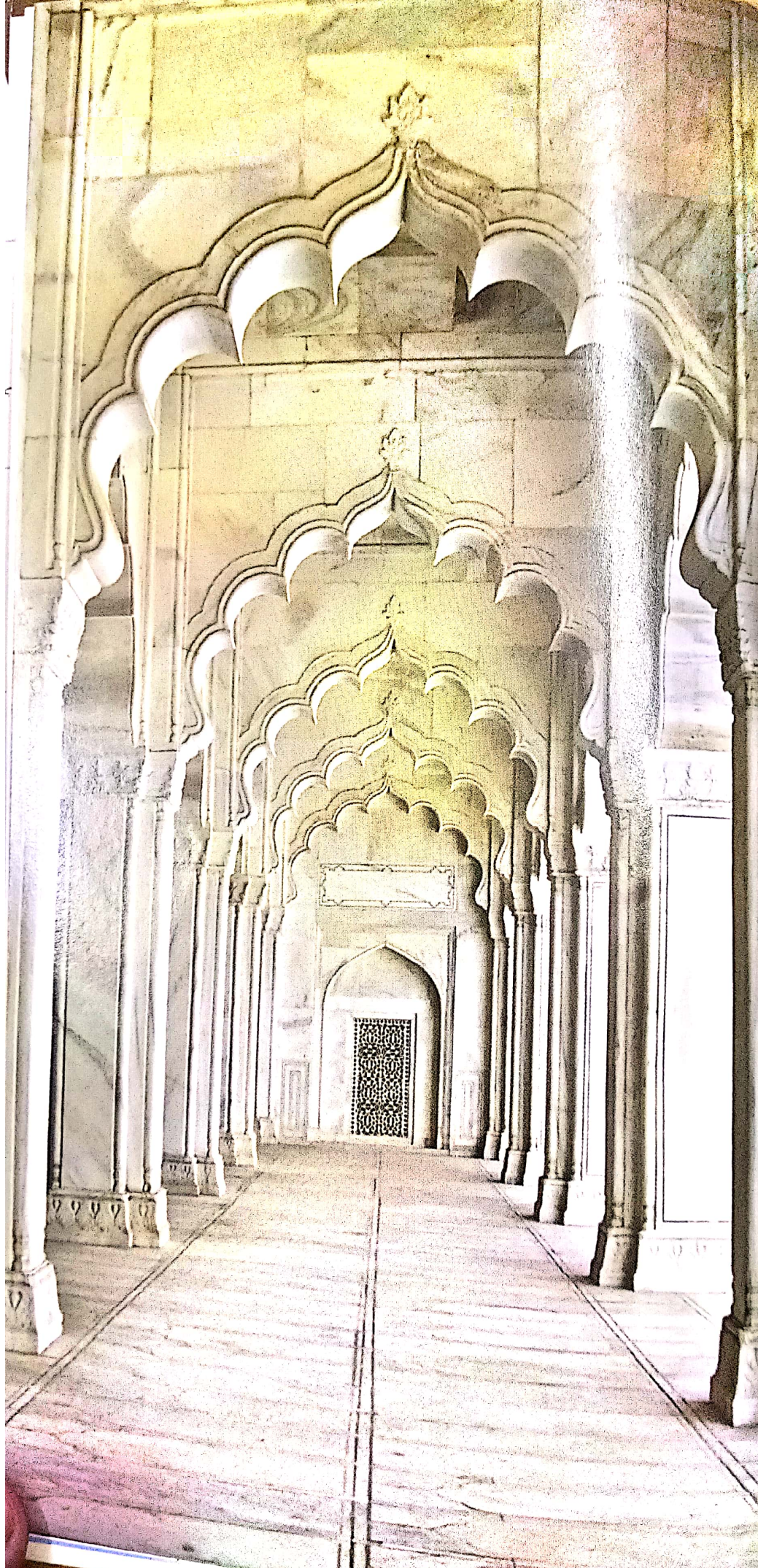




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# FOREWORD

The Agra Fort represents the first major building project of Akbar. It was built between 1565-1575 AD on the site of an earlier castle and Shahjahan added to it in the next century. Although it was a magnificent military structure with strength as the primary consideration, the ornamental aspect was blended in to give the Fort a special aesthetic character.

According to Abul Fazl, Agra Fort had 500 buildings, constructed in the beautiful Bengal and Gujarat style. Today, very few buildings remain in the Fort. But they are a testimony to the marvel of Indian architecture during the reigns of Akbar and Shahjahan at Agra.

The elegant edifices in Agra Fort - Akbari Mahal, Jahangiri Mahal, Diwan-i-Aam, Diwan-i-Khas, Musamman Burj, Shish Mahal, Moti Masjid and Dilli Darwaza - provide the visitor a wonderful opportunity to appreciate Mughal architecture, design and decoration. They are also a window into the administrative system and the life and times of the Mughal Emperors.

Agra Fort was declared as a monument of national importance in 1920. Since then, the Archaeological Survey of India has been responsible for its conservation and maintenance. Acknowledging its exceptional and universal value, the Fort is inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List since 1983. We hope this guide book will add to the visitors' understanding and enjoyment of this World Heritage Site.



Anshu Vaish  
Director General



## INTRODUCTION

Agra City, headquarters of a Division and District of the name in the state of Uttar Pradesh is situated on the banks of the river Yamuna. The city was

the seat of the Mughal Empire for more than a century and is well known for its magnificent monuments of Mughal Architecture. Agra City is well connected by rail, road and air with most of the important cities of India.



## BRIEF HISTORY

The early history of Agra is obscure but traditions trace its origin to the great epic period of the Mahabharata when it was called Agravana. Tradition also mentions its association with the early life and exploits of Lord Krishna.

The archaeological excavations at Agra Fort and Mahtab Bagh have revealed ancient remains of different ages in the form of ruined structures, sculptures, coins, inscriptions, bricks and pottery. Mauryan bricks were

also found at Agra. There were ancient temples of different sects, which testify to the historic, religious and commercial importance of the place.

The Mankameshwar Temple and its deep plinth and other findings establish its origin to at least 2000 years back.

However, the town was founded long before the Mughal's conquest of India. The city with its brick fortress is mentioned for the first time in the Qasida, (long panegyric in verse) composed in

Agra Fort



praise of Ghaznawid Prince Mahmud bin Ibrahim by the famous early Persian poet of Lahore Mas'ud bin Sad bin Salman (d. 1151) assigning the conquest of Agra Fort, most probably during the reign of Sultan Mas'ud III in 1099-1115. The town was then ruled by one Rajput Chief Jaypal.

The Agra Fort was traditionally known as Badalgarh, constructed by one Badal Singh. Around 1475 in the 15th Century A.D. the Chauhan Rajputs gained independence shortly after Ghaznawid occupation. Agra was conquered by Sultans Muhammad bin Sam in 1193 of Delhi and remained subjugated but the Rajputs often declared independence after paying tributes to the Delhi Sultans. When Sikandar Lodi transferred his seat of Government to Agra, he occupied Badalgarh in which he

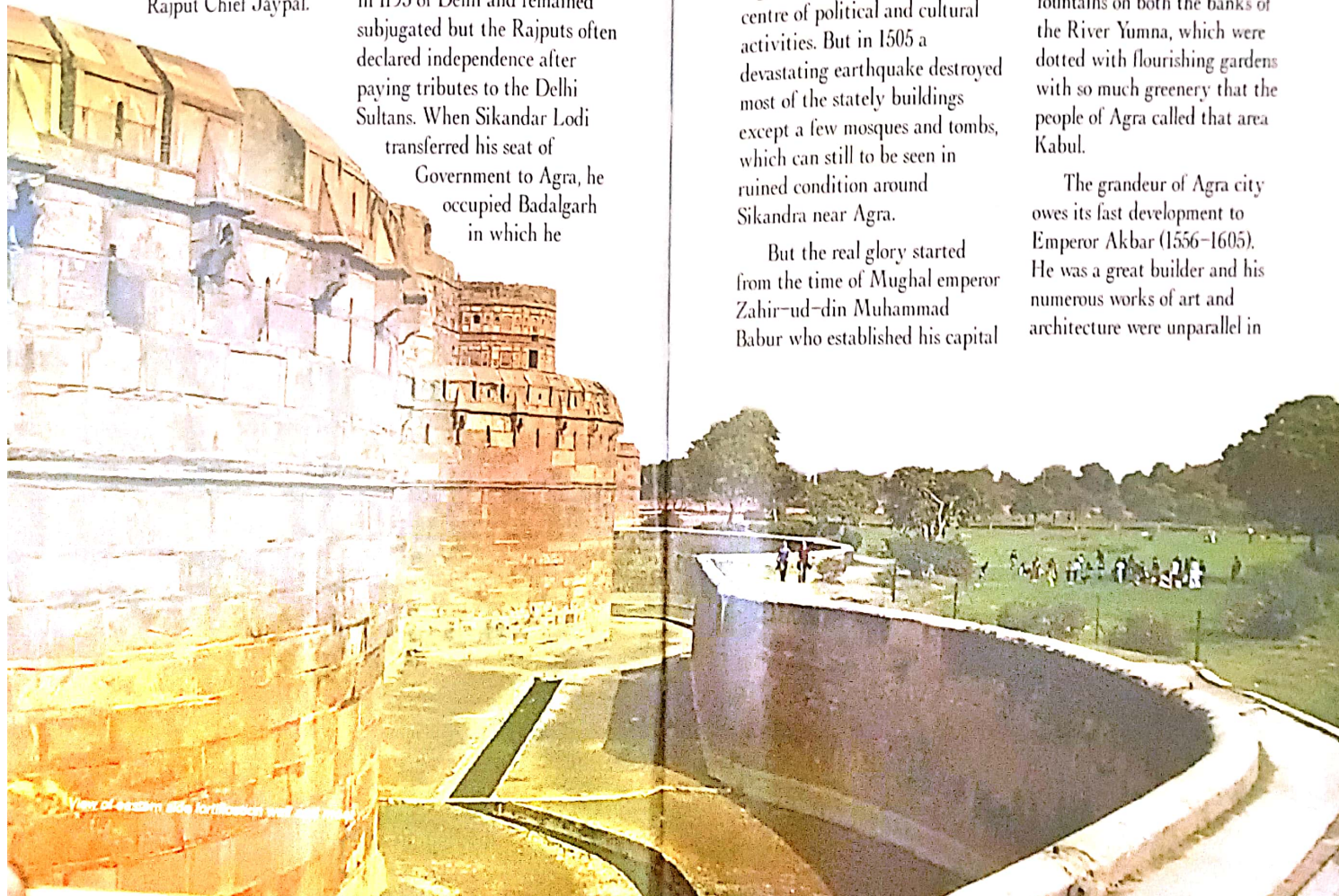
constructed his Palace. However, Akbar demolished it and constructed a strong Fort with red sand stone, having beautiful carvings on the surface.

The city flourished under the Lodis and eminent scholars. Sufis, saints and poets flooded Agra, which soon became a centre of political and cultural activities. But in 1505 a devastating earthquake destroyed most of the stately buildings except a few mosques and tombs, which can still be seen in ruined condition around Sikandra near Agra.

But the real glory started from the time of Mughal emperor Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur who established his capital

at Agra in 1526. He built his palace in the Persian Char Bagh Garden and founded a series of stately buildings, ornamental gardens, pleasure pavilions and other landscaped structures. His architects cleverly designed such hydraulic schemes with masonry water channels, cisterns and fountains on both the banks of the River Yumna, which were dotted with flourishing gardens with so much greenery that the people of Agra called that area Kabul.

The grandeur of Agra city owes its fast development to Emperor Akbar (1556-1605). He was a great builder and his numerous works of art and architecture were unparalleled in





medieval India. He constructed a large number of impressive buildings such as tombs, hammams, forts, palaces, caravan *sarais*, bridges, tanks, gardens and mosques of great architectural merit. Akbar is the only known Emperor who founded and built fortresses and palaces at five different places viz. Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Allahabad, Ajmer and Lahore –all within fifteen years.

He had also established significant ateliers of paintings, book making, translation bureau and mints, at Agra, Fatehpur Sikri and Lahore. These illustrated manuscripts, albums and miniature paintings are preserved in different museums, private collections and libraries across the world.

Having the most capable and learned ministers and advisors, Akbar developed the most efficient military and revenue administration. He followed the extremely farsighted and conciliatory policies of the Government and introduced a unique system of peace with all (Sulahkul). He had the nobility, which was based not on hereditary but personal merits. Akbar forged unity and friendship with Rajput rulers by matrimonial and political alliances. He was a keen observer of men and studied the behaviour of his people and adopted very sympathetic attitude. For a better understanding he got the numerous classical works of Sanskrit translated into Persian

language, which was used in the court. This provided close insight into the religious and cultural institutions of India.

Akbar followed a policy of great humanism and patronised the Bhakti and Sufi movements in India. He was the first Indian ruler to have issued Ram-Siya tanka silver coin and won the hearts of the Hindu population. He attached great importance to the Sufi settlement at Sikri for the spiritual merit of a Sufi Shaikh Salim Chishti whose prayers were granted with the birth of Akbar's son Prince Salim. The Emperor made Sikri the capital of the Mughal empire and adorned it with beautiful stately buildings of Indian style from where he adopted the most liberal policies of harmonious development of Indian art and culture.

Akbar's architecture synthesised Central Asian and regional Indian building traditions into a new universal Mughal Imperial style, expressed in red sand stone and highlighted with white marble, on a scale not emulated until the reign of his grandson, Shah Jahan.

Akbar demolished the old Fort of Sikandar Lodi and erected a new and extremely

grand Fort at the old site of Badalgarh on the western bank of the Yamuna and built many magnificent buildings including imposing gateways, residential palaces, audience halls, offices and ornamental gardens.

The Fort of Agra, Qila-i-Akbari has strong and lofty surrounding walls. Each wall, 20 m. high and separated by 12 m. deep moat, near Amar Singh Gate with two lookout towers typical of the entrances to the Fort. The supporting arch, of modest dimension compared to the structure, is crowned with a large blind arch flanked by false painted windows. It is decorated with flat relief geometric designs.

The Fort was provided with four gateways and every day 3000 to 4000 active builders and strong-armed labourers carried on the work. From the foundations to the battlements, the fortress was composed of hewn stone, each of which was polished like "the world-revealing mirror; and was ruddy as the cheek of fortune and they were so joined together, that the end of a hair could not find place between them". The Fort was completed with its loopholes (*sang-andaz*) in the space of eight years (1565-73) under the



View of Fort from Madhugarh Garden



It is believed that on his ascension, Shah Jahan changed the name of Agra to Akbarabad after his beloved grand father Akbar. This however is not mentioned in contemporary histories. However large number of coins in gold and silver bear testimony to the change of the name of Agra to Akbarabad. The legends on the gold coins of Shah Jahan are as follows : In a circle with dotted circle outside: in two lines formed in Nasta'liq script Kalima in the centre and on the border Basidq-i-Abi bakr wa adl-i-Umar; bazirm-i-Uthman wa ilm-i-Ali A.H 1040 (A.D. 1630-31) in third Regnal year. On the other side Shahabu'd-Din Muhammad Shah Jahan Sahib Qiran-i-thani Darb-i-Akbarabad.

Then there are coins of A.H. 1042 Regnal year 5. A.H. 1043 of 6<sup>th</sup> Regnal year and of A.H 1064 of 28<sup>th</sup> Regnal Year (1653-54 A.D) Akbarabad remained popular upto 20<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The celebrated Urdu poet, Ghalib was born at Akbarabad.

superintendence of Qasim Khan Mir Barr-wa-Bahr.

Thus the Agra Fort, though standing on the plain ground, unlike a hill fort, had been planned to be impregnable by the skilful use of the architectural stratagems the origin of which can be seen in the Din Panah Fort (Purana Qila) Delhi.

The lower ramparts have a battlemented parapet, whose merlons are oblong and slope forward to render scaling by besiegers impossible. These are alternated by embrasures; machicolations have been regularly disposed below them along the string course. The

judicious and harmonious combination of these features gives this fort a substantial aesthetic character. Besides being a strong military structure, it is also a good example of early Mughal architecture.

The Agra fort is built on an irregular semi-circular plan, with its chord lying parallel to the course of river Yamuna. The massive enclosing walls veneered with finely dressed sandstone slabs are about 21.34 metres high. The double ramparts have been provided with broad massive circular bastions at regular intervals. A broad deep moat, running round the semi-circle of the Fort from the northern point

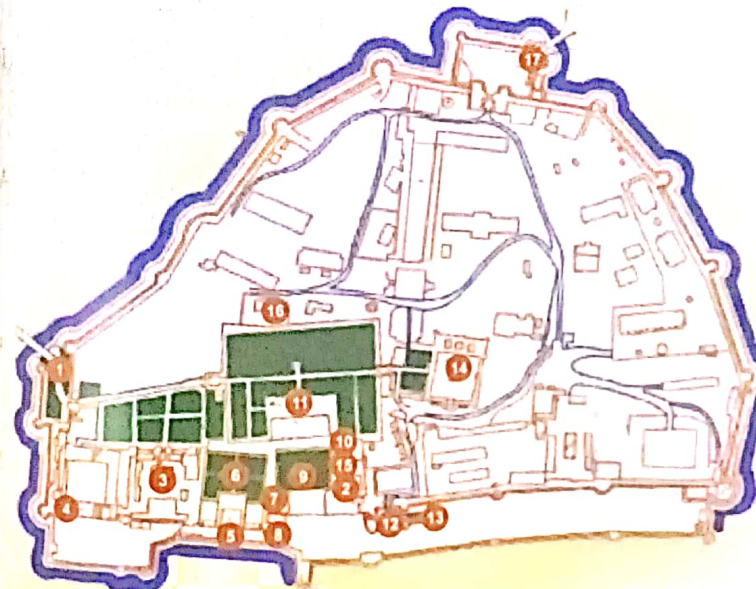
to the southern separates it from the main land and renders it inaccessible except through the two draw-bridges. Abul Fazl the court historian recorded that the Fort had more than 500 buildings of masonry after the beautiful

designs of Bengal and Gujarat. But now only 27 buildings survive.

The Agra Fort is inscribed on the list of World Heritage Monuments by the UNESCO since 1983.

### Layout Plan of Agra Fort

- |                    |                           |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Amar Singh Gate | 10. Meena Masjid          |
| 2. Bath            | 11. Diwan-i-Am            |
| 3. Jahangir Mahal  | 12. Ratan Singh Ki Haveli |
| 4. Akbari Mahal    | 13. Water Gate            |
| 5. Khas Mahal      | 14. Moti Masjid           |
| 6. Anguri Bagh     | 15. Meena Bazar           |
| 7. Shish Mahal     | 16. Salimgarh             |
| 8. Musamman Burj   | 17. Delhi Gate            |
| 9. Machchi Bhawan  |                           |





# THE GATES

## AMAR SINGH GATE

The south gate is the main entrance for the public. It is now called Amar Singh Gate, which was originally known as Akbari Darwaza as William Finch, an English traveller who visited India between 1608 and 1611 has recorded. It was renamed as such about the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the British. Distorting the episode of 1644 when Rao Amar Singh, elder son of Gaj Singh, the Rathor chief of Marwar and then a Mughal Mansabdar, assassinated Mir Bakhshi Salabat Khan and violated the sanctity of the Mughal Court and was himself cut to pieces. The British made a torso of a stone horse and fixed it

near the Gateway and circulated the story that Amar Singh escaped alive with his horse which jumped over the ramparts across the moat and was converted into a stone sculpture. The gateway was renamed Amar Singh Gate accordingly, which later became popular among the masses.

The plan of this Gate is identical to that of the Delhi Gate and it also has a drawbridge over the moat. The main entrance viz. the Hathi Pol has an open space at the Delhi Gate but here it is given a magnificent court with colonnades overhanging it. It is more adequately protected than the Delhi Gate. But the bastions of the Akbari Darwaza



Amar Singh Gate



Second Amar Singh Gate

are smaller and less ornately finished. Their lower portions are divided into oblong and arched panels that are covered with glazed tiles in beautiful geometrical designs in blue, green, yellow and white colours. The panels of the upper parts are plain. Each bastion is covered by a *chhatra* made of heavy piers instead of slender pillars, a circular *chajja* and with an inverted lotus hemispherical cupola. The cupola was originally decorated with glazed tiles, whose remains are visible at some places.

After entering the barbican of the southern Gate, one faces a

tall multi-storeyed Gate of red-sandstone on the eastern side. It has a small pointed arched entrance. The Gate is built over a high plinth with a rectangular small platform supported on stone brackets. The arch is outlined by white marble inlay work of geometrical design.

The surface of the Gate is flanked by two arched panels decorated with marble inlay. There are square panels on both sides over which there is a long rectangular panel with six small holes over which are three loopholes of temple shikhar design with a parapet of wide flame design.



The interior of the Gate has colonnades with a rectangular super structure with parapet merlons. The quadrangle has arcades with series of arched spaces, super-imposed by series of colonnades.

## THE SECOND GATEWAY

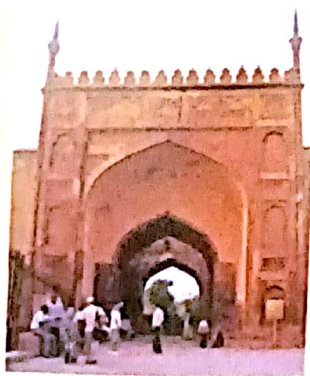
This three storeyed strongly built gate constructed with red sandstone is remarkable for its unique features, strength and surface decoration: The shapely pointed arch of the entrance is decorated with stone carvings in relief. There is a rectangular window in its second storey and the third storey is notable for its three openings supported on square pillars and brackets. The parapet has flamed merlons with small openings in the centre. The attached bastions (quoins) are topped with circular low domes. The entire structure is marked for deep niches and rectangular panels, decorated with blue and white mosaic bands with floral and geometric designs. The domes were also decorated with glazed tiles.

## SHAH JAHANI GATE

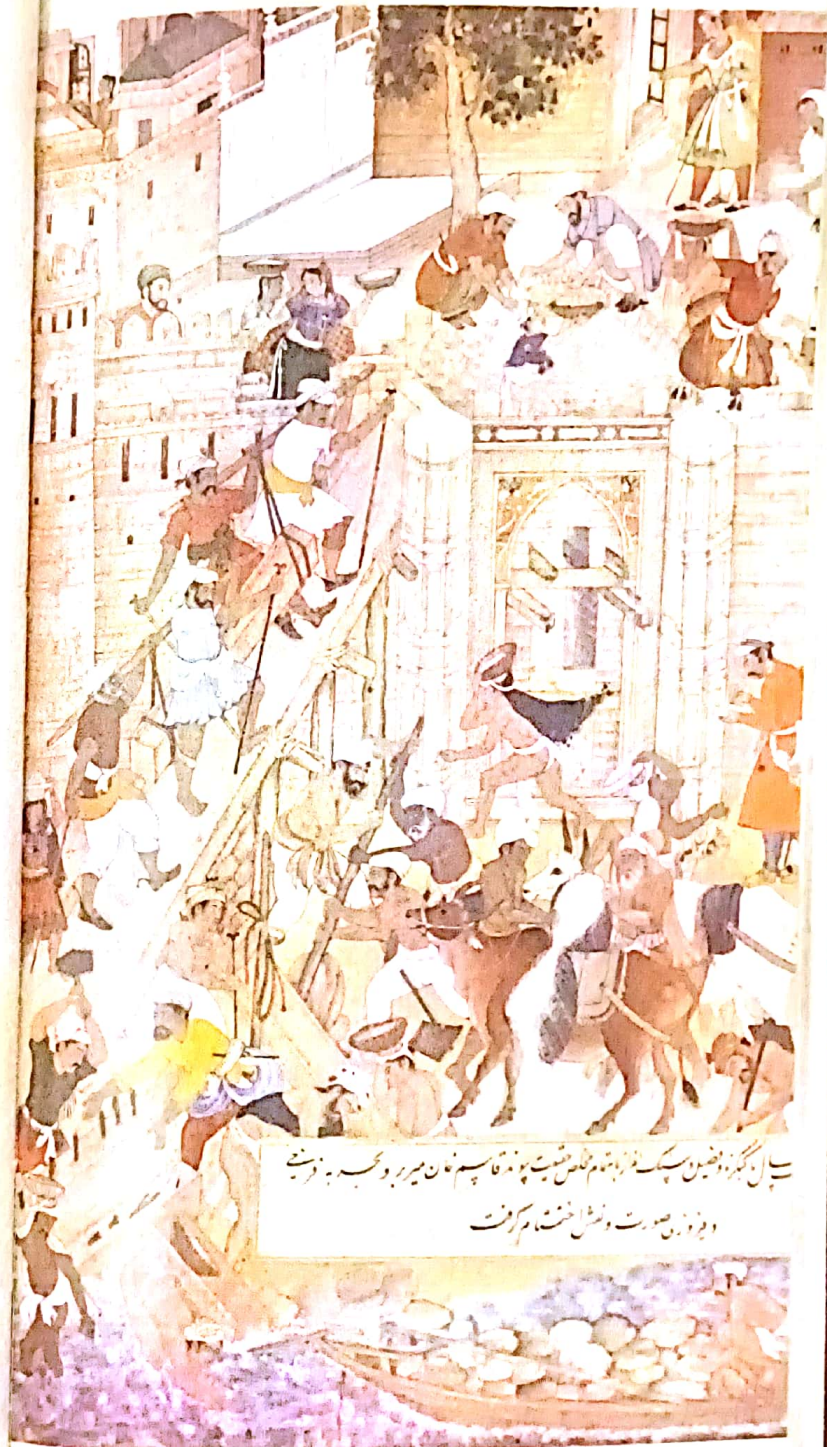
There is a wide stone approach with strips, rising from Amar Singh Gate to Shah Jahani Gate. The approach is so prepared specially for easy approach by riding horses.

This double Gate with interior platforms on both sides and double arches are the typical features of Shah Jahan's monuments built in lakhauri bricks with lime. The structure is veneered and dressed by sandstone slabs.

The façade of the gate has series of deep rectangular blind niches. The top is also covered with rectangular large panels superimposed by beautiful merlons and flanked by engaged turrets on both sides with solid turrets (*burgis*) crowned by tall stone finials.



Shah Jahani Gate



سپاہ نگار: زمین سپک نزار بہ نام خاص شہیت پوند قاسم خان میر بر و حجب بہ خوش  
و فراز صورت و نیش خشت، کم گرفت

The building of the water gate of the Agra Fort  
Painting by Miskina with Sarwan and Tulsī Kūrī, from the Akbarnama, 1590-95



## AKBARI MAHAL

Situated at the southeast corner at the northern alignment of Jahangiri Mahal in Agra Fort, overlooking the river are the remains of Akbari Mahal. It is the oldest building of the Fort, being contemporary to the stepped well *baoli* and the rampart walls. Originally it had a portico (*deorhi*) on the western side whose lower walls are still extant. The portico opened in the spacious rectangular courtyard

paved with red sandstone slabs. The courtyard was surrounded by large living rooms and a double storeyed pavilion connected with rooms on the eastern side with flat roofs. The interior hall had several windows overlooking the river, which must have been originally provided with lattice work which are now missing.

The style of architecture of the pavilion and rooms is of trabeate order but occasionally four centered arches are used as

decorative arcading for aesthetic reason. The walls are notable for stone carvings and double brackets.

The present excavation in the northern side near the southern wall of Jahangiri Mahal of the Akbari palace by the Archaeological Survey of India, Agra Circle has revealed the series of stepped lavatory, topped by red sand stone slabs. These must have been used by the royal ladies of the harem.

It is approached by a stair case leading to the underground arrangement. Behind the lavatory there is a long service lane for cleaning the lavatory.

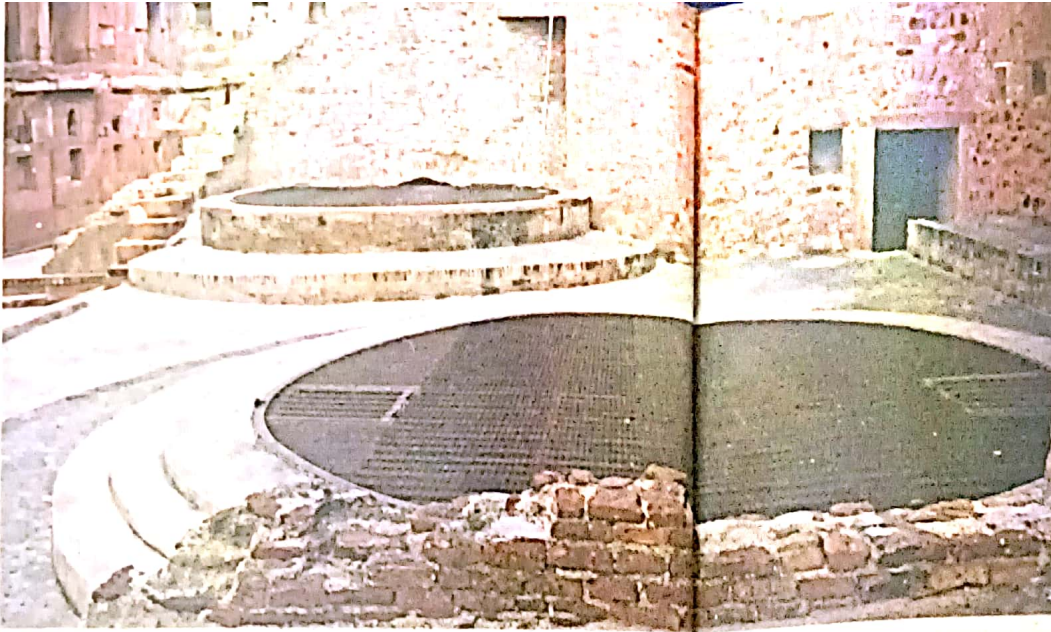
## AKBAR'S BAOLI

The step-wells were meant for supply of water and also were used a retreats for the inmates from the heat of summer time. The step-well or the *baoli* in Agra Fort in Akbari Mahal



River view side of Akbari Mahal





Akbar Baoli

compound near the Bengali Burj was built by Akbar. For convenience a stairway leads down to the water level. Its purpose was purely utilitarian as is evidenced by the unusual size of the shaft the well being 8m. in diameter and 25m. in depth.

It is six storeyed each with a rotating gallery round the shaft which is 5.4m. in diameter. The lowest storey has no rotating gallery instead it has four flights of steps descending to the water at 24m. below the mouth of the well. The first storey also has whispering galleries and a corridor leading to a site of chambers situated on the north-west in a big storage well. Originally this well must have drawn water from the *baoli*

through the Persian wheel system as is found in the northern water works at Fatehpur Sikri. The second and the third storeys have two spacious octagonal chambers on the east and west sides of the shaft which are the principal features. These rooms evidently served as cool places of retreat during the hot season. The *baoli* was placed with special relation with the Fort walls in such a position that could draw on the outer air for ventilation through two walls at right angles. The question of ventilation was a very important one in this case, for it must be borne in mind that the well was primarily designed to afford a cool retreat during the heat of the day. This is clearly demonstrated by its intimate

connections with the place and its spacious subterranean chambers. The main approach down a wide flight of steps in the thickness of the outer wall is clearly part of the original design of the Fort.



Zanana lavatory Akbari Mahal



### HAUZ-I-JAHANGIRI (Jahangir's Bath)

The lithic bath basin is now seen in front of the entrance of the so-called Jahangiri Mahal. This circular bath bowl is carved out of a single block of granite.

The monolithic tank (*hauz*) is 1.22 m. deep, 2.4m. in diameter and 7.62m. in circumference at the rim which

indicates that it was not buried into the ground and was mobile so that it could be transported and used in the camp as well as in the harem for bathing.

A Persian versified inscription in the Nasta'liq script was carved in relief which mentions 1611 as the year of its construction. The date coincides with the marriage of Jahangir with Nur Jahan Begam.

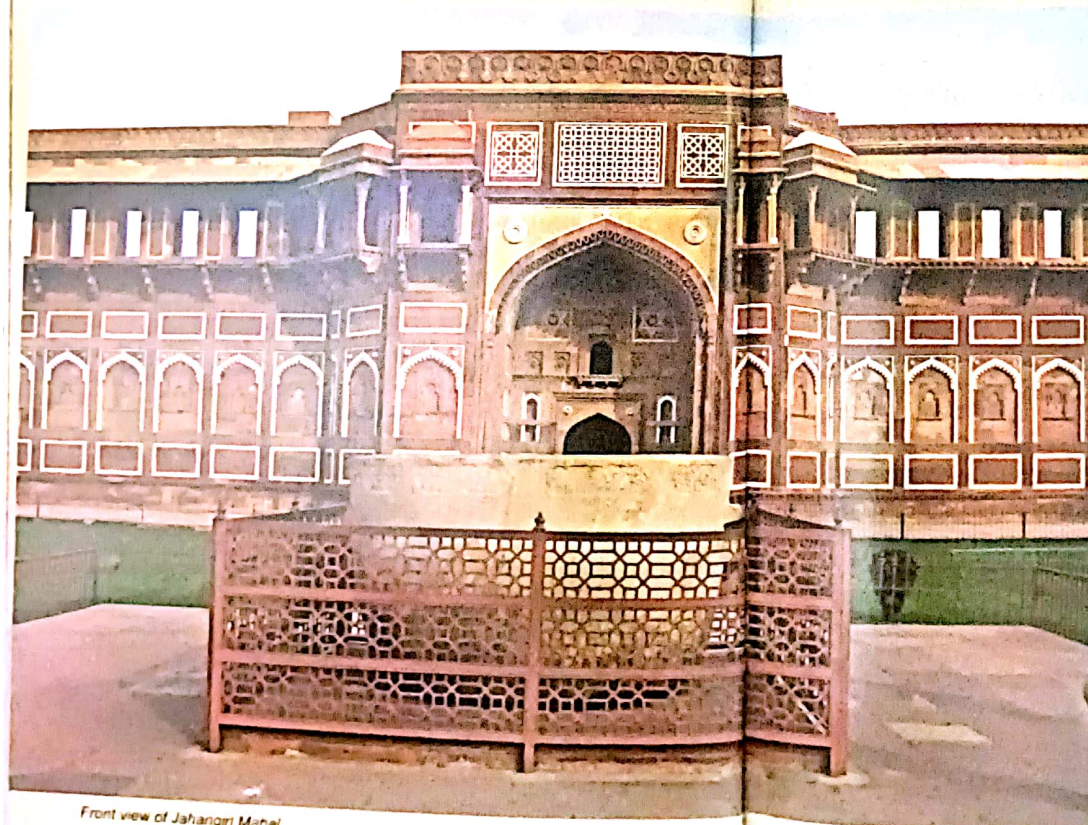
Therefore, it is evidenced that it might have been presented to her as one of the marriage gifts.

This basin was discovered from the ruins of one of the courts of Akbar's palace in Agra Fort in 1843 and placed in front of the Diwan-i-'Am, from here it was removed to Public gardens (Company Gardens) where it suffered damages.

John Marshall, then Director General of Archaeological Survey of India, brought it back to Agra Fort in 1907 and placed it where it is now located and most probably gave the name Jahangiri Mahal because of the reference to Jahangir in its inscription though it is only a part of Akbar's Bengali Mahal.

### JAHANGIRI MAHAL

Jahangiri Mahal is situated in the south east quadrant of the Fort, where it was effectively protected from public areas. Its outer walls rise with the massive ramparts of the fortress on the river. Its strategic dominance over the surroundings emphasises its Imperial character. The so-called Jahangiri Mahal despite its name, was built by Akbar. It is one of the earliest surviving buildings of Akbar's reign and the earliest palace extant. The Jahangiri Mahal is the only portion of the Fort walls apart from the Gates distinguished by the ornamental treatment accorded to its eastern facade. The architectural setting of the Jahangiri Mahal is defined by clarity, simplicity and integrity of its different components.



Front view of Jahangiri Mahal



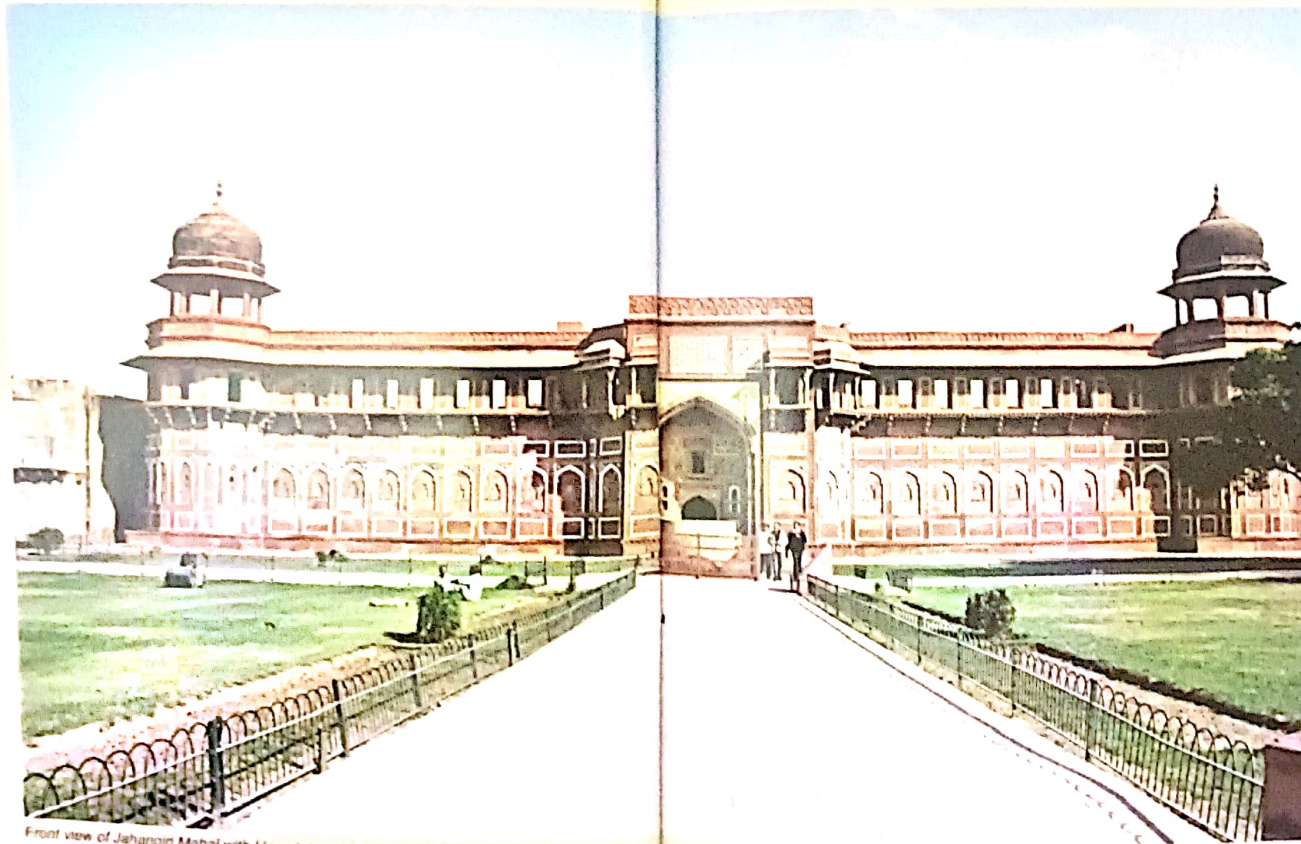
Another most striking aspect of the building is the exquisite surface ornamentation including marble inlay and intricate geometric and floral patterns. It has no inscription nor clear mention in contemporary Persian histories, therefore the architectural setting of the palaces of Agra

Fort are the source of its historical position. The apparent alignment with Akbar's Palace, *baoli* and its connection with the subterranean chambers clearly defines the contemporaneity of the Akbari Mahal.

Jahangir in his memoirs has clearly mentioned the buildings were erected by his father Akbar

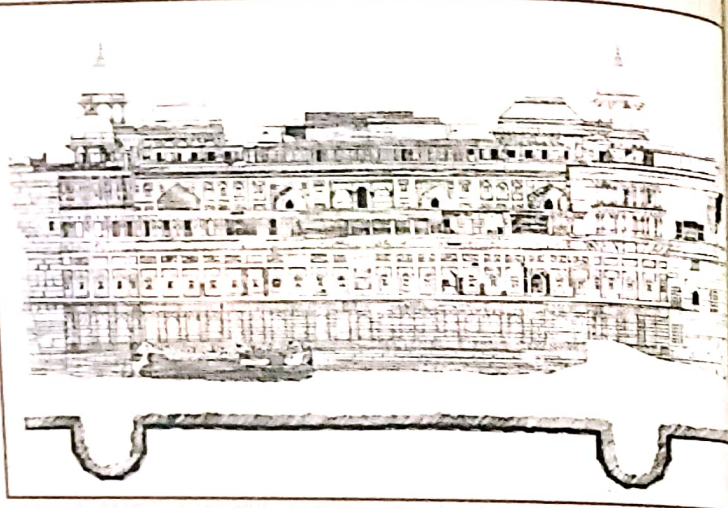
but did not take any credit for the construction of an excellent palace like Jahangiri Mahal. Akbar's authorship of Jahangiri Mahal is therefore obvious both by its architectural setting and historical background and its design at Agra and Fatehpur Sikri is also very well known.

The large facade of the palace is most remarkable for its projecting portico whose lotus parapet is decorated with beautiful merlon in relief, a rectangular opening with carved panels and projecting balconies supported on circular pillars, elegant brackets with Bengal



Front view of Jahangiri Mahal with Hauz-i-Jahangiri





Jahangiri Mahal Agra Fort (East Elevation)

slanting roofs on both sides of the deep pointed shapely arch where decoration with marble lined niches and six pointed stars comparable to the main gate of Purana Qila, New Delhi.

The monotony of the wide eastern walls is broken by series of rectangular openings (*darichas*) overshadowed by parapet walls with merlons and pillared *chhatris* on both corners' engaged bastions. Below are the series of marble inlaid outlines of rectangular panels and marble lined niches with lotus buds and marble arches that spring from the elephant trunks which are the modified form of *Gaja Lakshmi*, a symbol believed to be most auspicious

by the Rajput rulers. Below the niches are the square and rectangular panels outlined by marble inlay work. The entire structure is constructed in lakhauri bricks and veneered by finely dressed and carved red sandstone slabs on a one metre high plinth. The red sandstone slabs are so finely joined that no end of a hair can penetrate into the joint as correctly recorded by Abul Fazl, a court historian of Emperor Akbar.

The building is arranged with the grand central square portico (*deorhi*) finely executed four arches with lotus friezes and arcuate squenches supporting the excusitely carved in the form of a full bloom lotus whose petals



Jahangiri Mahal interior view

and central lotus are designed with thick marble inlay work.

The passage through this porch requires a grant of admission by the door-keeper to the visitor. The portico provides very protective restriction. Immediately next to the portico is a gallery, which accommodates series of apartments meant for lodging the royal maidservants. Here one faces a service window,

which opens in the southern hall (*Diwan Khana*) whose walls have space in between. This is the first appearance of a service window in Indian domestic architecture.

The façade of this outstanding double storeyed hall is supported by double square pillars with multiple brackets with exquisitely fine carvings, which were originally painted in blue and other colours whose



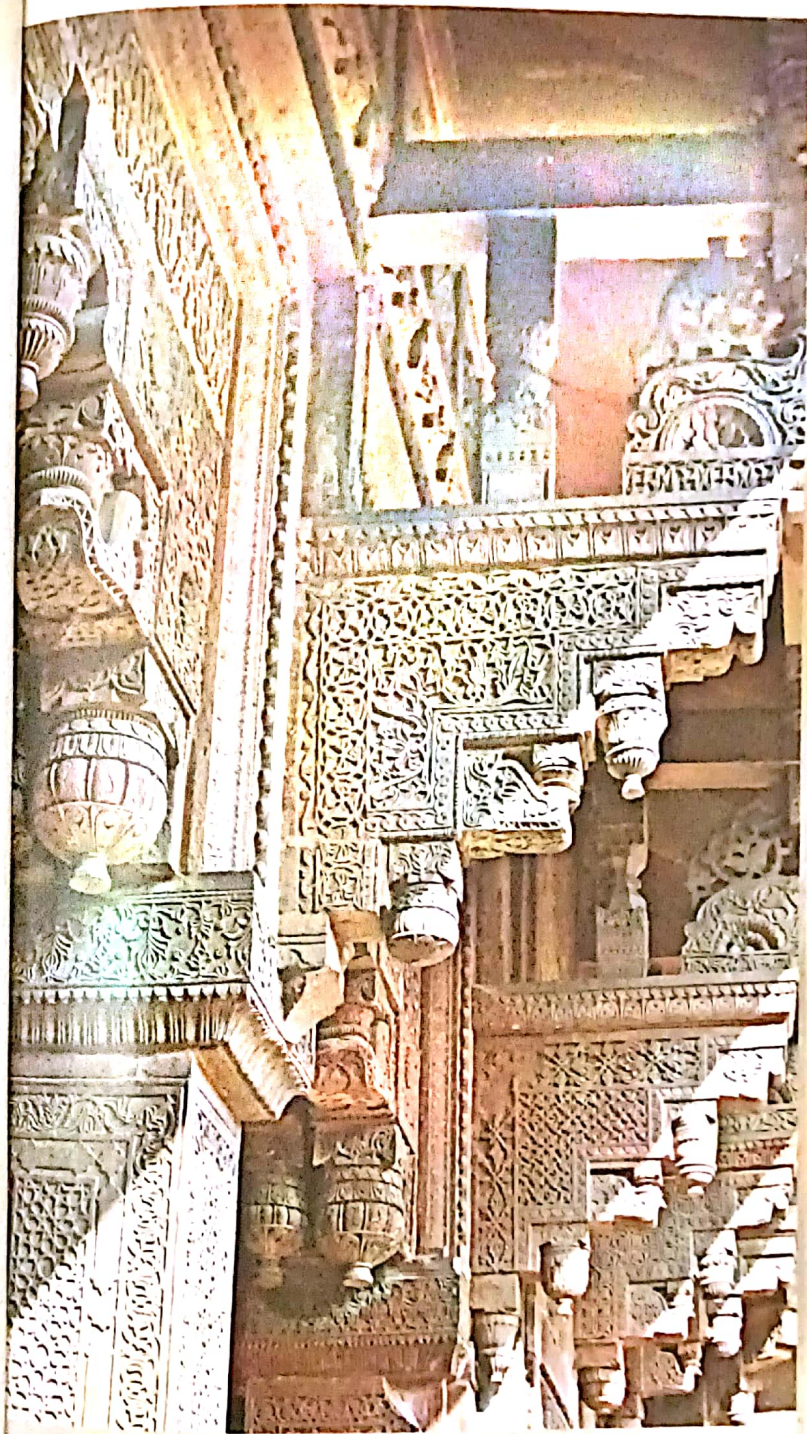


Jahangir with a Portrait of Akbar, circa 1614

remains can still be seen here and there. The upper parts of the beautifully carved brackets are decorated with parrots and other birds. The upper storey is composed a of series of fine arches, central projecting balcony and overshadowed by *chajjas* or eaves. The service window indicates that this hall must have been used by the Emperor for entertaining his intimate friends, guests who were offered refreshments and drinks through this service window. There is a square large open courtyard, around which western and northern halls are arranged with flat carved ceilings and deep niches in the indigenous style of unparalleled sophistication and beauty. Then there are rectangular *chhatris* on the centre of the

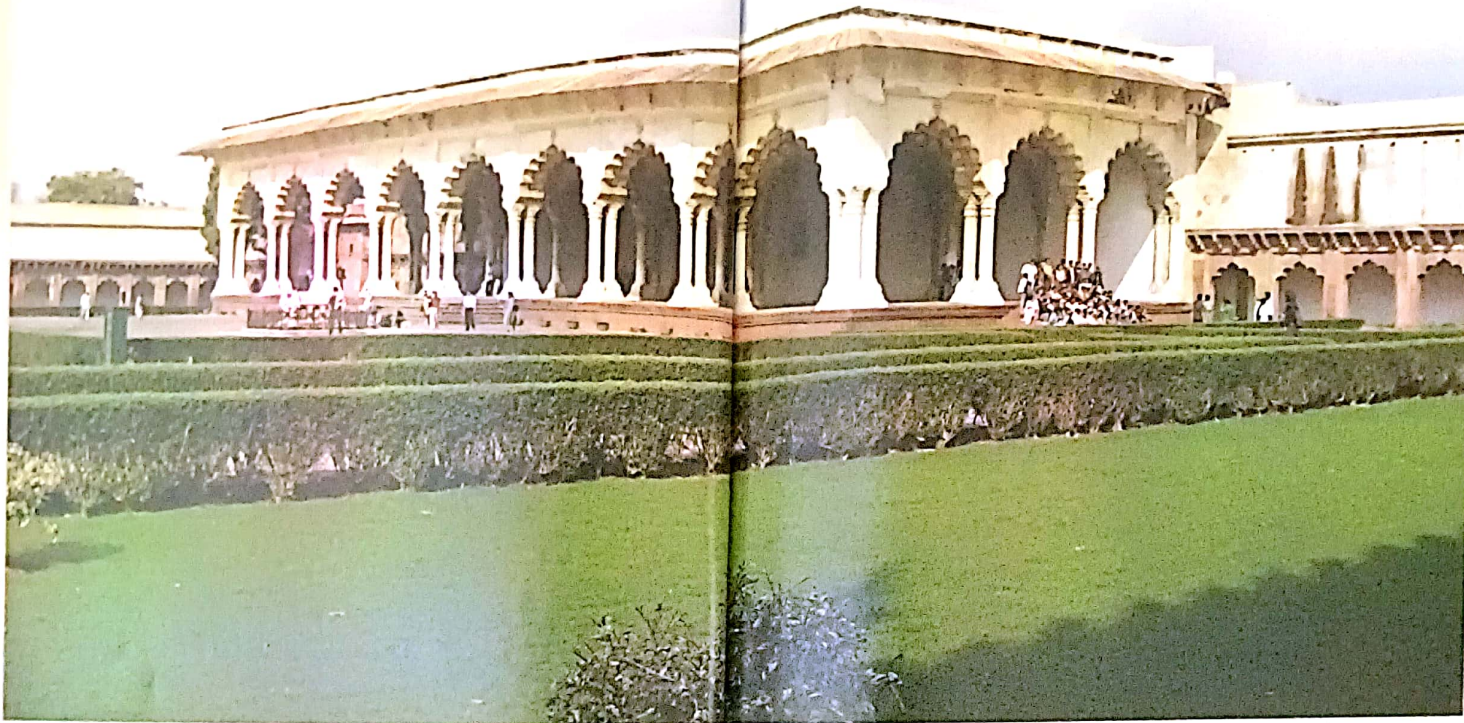
facades. The first floor of northern hall is supported by carved square pillars, brackets and its flat ceiling is supported by struts in the form of serpents indicating the *makra* forms of the Gujarati temple architecture. The western hall around the court is believed to be the temple meant for the principal queen of Akbar, Maryamuz-Zamani, mother of Jahangir who also lived in this palace.

The veranda leading to the second large courtyard with stone floor is supported by a low flat ceilings with arcuate ceilings. The eastern opening is supported by two beautiful tall carved pillars of Central Asian design. In the centre of the courtyard is an elegant octagonal cistern with a



Jahangiri Mahal: interior view with brackets





Diwan-i-Am (Hall of Public Audience)

fountain whose inner borders are decorated with lotus buds. The fountain must have had perfumed water to spray in the evenings when the Emperor retreated for recreation with dance and music. The eastern wall is screened by decorative series of arched windows. There were more than a dozen rooms arranged in this double storey arrangement where wide arched openings are decorated with marble outlines. The parapets on the first floor are crowned with merlons.

The entire red sandstone surface is profusely covered with delicate carvings in relief in floral and geometric designs. Looking to the space covered and delicacy of the surface carvings it has no match in the entire range of Indo-Islamic architecture. The northern Bengali domed apartment was known as Nashaiman-i-Zill-Ilahi, which was used by the Emperor during summer and rainy seasons. The interiors of the rooms around eastern courtyard were plastered

and covered with beautiful arabesque and stucco coloured designs. And the northern apartments had inner walls decorated with *aina bandi* (mirror work) and lime stucco of geometric pattern.

### DIWAN-I-AM (Hall of Public Audience)

Akbar did not erect any permanent building for holding his Public Audience Diwan-i-Am or Private Audience (Diwan-i-Khas) though both

these Mughal institutions were founded by Emperor Akbar. The Sultans of Delhi had only one such institution Bar-i-Am or Bargah. During the reign of Emperor Akbar the function of the Audience was held in temporary wooden structures added with *shamiyana* in Agra Fort. This arrangement continued during the reign of Jahangir (c.1605-1628). On 14<sup>th</sup> February 1628, Shah Jahan issued an order that halls for his public audiences should be constructed in all the



great-fortified forts (palaces) of the capitals of the Mughal Empire, particularly at Agra and Lahore.

These halls were first built in wood (Iwan-i-Chobin) which were later replaced by larger structures, painted with marble plaster.

Shah Jahan's historians and poets described the Audience Hall as Iwan-i-Daulat Khana-wa-Khas-o-Am or Hall of

Public Audiences and Iwan-i-Chehil Sutun of Forty-pillared Hall, which is now called Diwan-i-Am.

The Diwan-i-Am is built in red sandstone on a raised platform (1.25m) in a rectangular plan measuring 61.77 m by 20.12m. The total large pillars are 48 but if the corner ones are omitted, there are 40 long pillars over which the engraved arches support the flat stone roof.

The Hall is opened in three sides with multi foiled arches except the eastern side with the structure of the *pharokha* contained the celebrated throne Takht-i-Murassa which was occupied by the Emperor for giving public audiences in the forenoon. Few attempts have been made to integrate the information contained in literary and visual sources with what can be derived from the architecture itself.

The reason given by the Court historians for the construction of the Diwan-i-Am, namely to protect the Emperor's *Rhoman* from the vicissitudes of the weather.

It is Abu Salih Karkhi who tells us about Shah Jahan's Audience Hall. Karkhi describe both the wooden hall of Agra and the stone hall of Delhi which he describes as Iwan-i-chehil Sutun (forty pillared state hall).

*Diwan-i-Am of Shah Jahan's Fort*





Diwan-kada-i-adl-o-dad (court house of Equity and Justice) and Bargah-i-Sulaimani with several famous legendary and historical palaces of the past, in particular with the Iwan-i-Nushirmwan and the Bargah-i-Sulaiman.

Shah Jahan's Chehil Sutun in the courtyards of Khass-wa-Am acquired their greatest splendour during the yearly Nawruz celebrations of the Mughal Court. All three Audience Halls follow exactly the same scheme, but they are not all the same size. The biggest Hall is that of Agra, those of Lahore and Delhi are smaller and close to each other in their dimensions. Each of the Diwan-i-Ams shows the same flat roofed hypostyle construction erected on a grid pattern.

The twenty-seven bays are demarcated by covered ceilings (*chashma*) set off by multi foiled arches (*taq-i-marghuldar*) and large twelve-sided "Shah Jahani" columns. The columns are paired on the outer sides, which produce a quadruple formation in the corners. Each hall thus has forty-eight full columns and twelve half columns.

In addition to being the Administrative Centre of the Mughal Empire the Diwan-i-

Am, provided a stage for the great court festivals, in particular Nawruz (the Persian New year Day) and Julius (the accession anniversary). It was also the setting for such state ceremonies as weighing the Emperor and Princesses on his solar and lunar birthdays (*jashn-i-Wazn-i-shamsi*, *jashn-i-Wazn-i-qamari*). When the royal princesses wedding was held the Diwan-i-Am was sometimes called *Khalwat* ("seclusion" or "retirement"), because on those occasions men had to evacuate the courtyard to allow the Imperial women to use the Diwan-i-Am as an exhibition hall where they arranged the dowry and the wedding presents for display during a public audience by the Emperor to the court. The Audience Hall also played a part in the celebration religious festivals such as 'Id'. The Emperor feasted scholars and pious persons with a banquet there on the Milad (the Prophets Birthday). During the whole month of Ramadhan, fast breaking meals (*iftar*) would be given to the deserving poor at Imperial expense. The Emperor also used it to receive foreign dignitaries and delegations. The Hindu festivals were also celebrated at the Diwan-i-Am as



Emperor Shah Jahan on the Peacock Throne

is evidenced from a contemporary painting of Emperor Jahangir celebrating Holi at Diwan-i-Am at Agra. The painting made by Govardhan is preserved in the Rampur Raza Library collection.

All in all, the Diwan-i-Am was the centre of Court events and Mughal rule where the power and pomp of the grand Mughal were enacted.

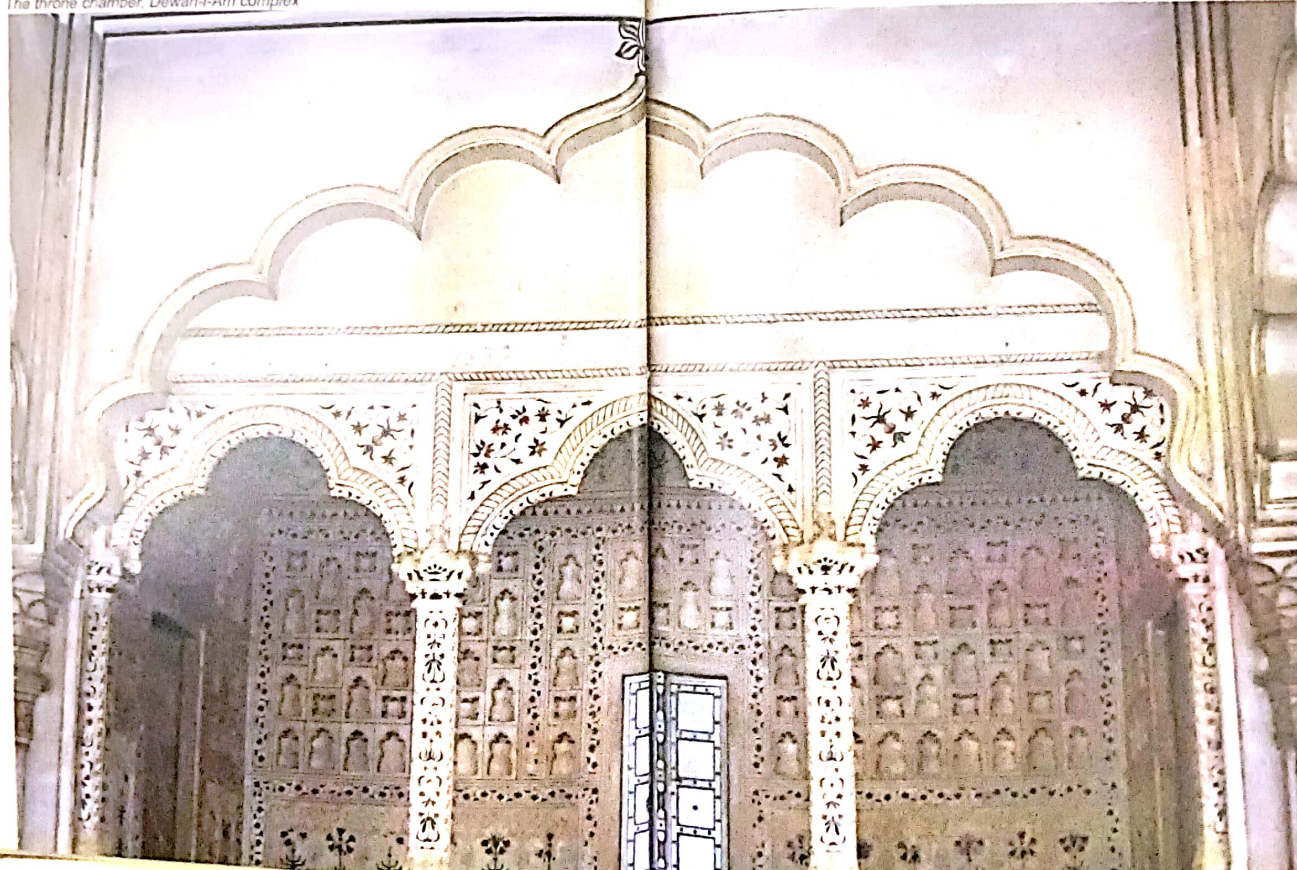
The silver balustrades were set up originally for the Mughal



nobles to stand in front of the Emperor according to their *mansabs* (ranks). Those who held the rank, more than five to ten thousand, stood near the *Jharoka* of the Emperor. The lower ranks stood behind these nobles. The officers holding ranks lower than 200 in the numerical hierarchy did not stand in the Diwan-i-Am hall but in the red sandstone arched galleries that stood near

the Chehil Sutun Hall. The silver and wooden railings were fixed in the hall for different ranks of nobles attending the Darbar. The Hall and its demarcated areas inside were embellished with fine European brocades and Iranian carpets which added lustre to the Diwan-i-Am and created awe in the hearts of the nobles and the public who visited for redressal of their grievances.

The throne chamber, Dewan-i-Am complex



There is a rectangular marble dais with four fountains in the Diwan-i-Am in front of the *Jharoka* where the Prime Minister used to stand and submit the grievance applications of the public to the Emperor for consideration.

The Diwan-i-Am is backed on the east by a wall in the middle of which is the throne chamber, an alcove of richly inlaid marble with a trefoil

arched ornate façade. The arch is finely decorated with *pietra dura* works. This chamber is connected with the Machhi Bhawan on the east, while from the Diwan-i-Am a flight of steps leads to Machhi Bhawan and further on the palaces where from the royal ladies had viewed certain ceremonies of the Diwan-i-Am through the perforated screens of the marble windows on the right and left sides of the alcove.



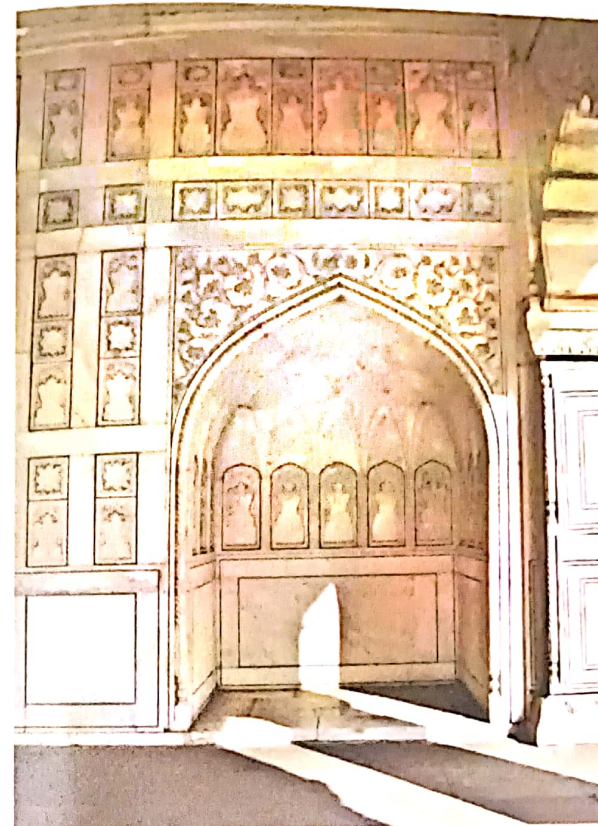
### TOMB OF JOHN RUSSEL COLVIN

This tomb is situated on the south side in the quadrangle of the Diwan-i-Am. It is an open grave with some decoration in stone. Lord Colvin was stationed at Agra, as Lieutenant Governor of the North Frontier Provinces. During the First War of Independence on July 5, 1857 the

British troops suffered heavy loss at Agra because of the aggressive attack of the Indian Freedom Fighters. Lord Colvin who had taken shelter in the Agra Fort died of cholera in the central room of the Shah Jahani Mahal. The inscription on the tomb records that Lord Colvin was born on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1807 and died on 9<sup>th</sup> September 1857.



Tomb of John Russel Colvin



Inside Dewan-i-Khas

### DIWAN-I-KHAS (HALL OF PRIVATE AUDIENCE)

This elegant structure was constructed by Shah Jahan in 1636 as is evidenced by its long Persian inscription. It consists of two large halls, an outer columned hall and inner closed hall, both connected by three

multifoiled archways. The outer one measures 29.26 by 10.1m and The inner one 12.20 by 7.97 m. The outer hall is covered by a flat roof supported on multifoil arches springing from exquisitely fine marble pillars. The façade is remarkable for its double pillared arrangement with sophisticated floral bases and capitals, richly decorated with inlay of semi-





Exterior view of Diwan-i-Khas and corridor of Machchi Bhawan

precious stones. The walls and pillars of the hall are finely embellished with petradura and dado panels with relief carvings of floral motifs.

Here is a long Persian inscription in Nasta'liq characters, inlaid in black marble, on the south wall of the Diwan-i-Khas which eulogises Emperor Shah Jahan for his glorious and just reign besides it records that

the Emperor Shah Jahan has suspended a golden chain of justice for listening to the grievances of the people for justice in A.H. 1046 (A.D. 1636). It is apparent that Shah Jahan also followed his father in providing a chain of justice in the Diwan-i-khas as is mentioned in the inscription.

The court met every day for deciding appeal cases and for

considering the policy matters of the Empire. Beside important persons and ambassadors of foreign countries also met the Emperor here. The Hall was remarkable for the presence of the celebrated *Takht-i- Taus* (The Bejewelled Peacock Throne) which was made in 1634 A.D. and after the construction of Diwan-i-Khas was placed here

And later shifted to Delhi after the construction of the Red Fort in 1648.

The Inner Hall about which Abdul Hamid Lahauri recorded as *Tambi Khana*, has *Shah-Nashin* alcoves with a raised seat for the Emperor. The walls in between the two halls have beautiful *jhalis*, gracefully designed and finished with floral patterns.

### KHAS MAHAL (OR ARAMGAH-I- MUQADDASA)

Shah Jahan was a great builder and was trained as a Prince in architecture at Ahmedabad when he was the Governor of Gujarat, where he constructed the elegant *Shahi Bagh* palace. He had great resources and a superior sense of building art. Marble was already used by Jahangir. The *Pleasure Palace* (now *Tomb*) of *Itimad-ud-Daula* at Agra is one of the finest buildings of its kind with profuse *petra-duera* work on the outer surfaces and lime stucco work with paintings in the interior surfaces.

Shah Jahan was greatly inspired by such masterpieces and built his palaces at Agra and Lahore Forts, after demolishing



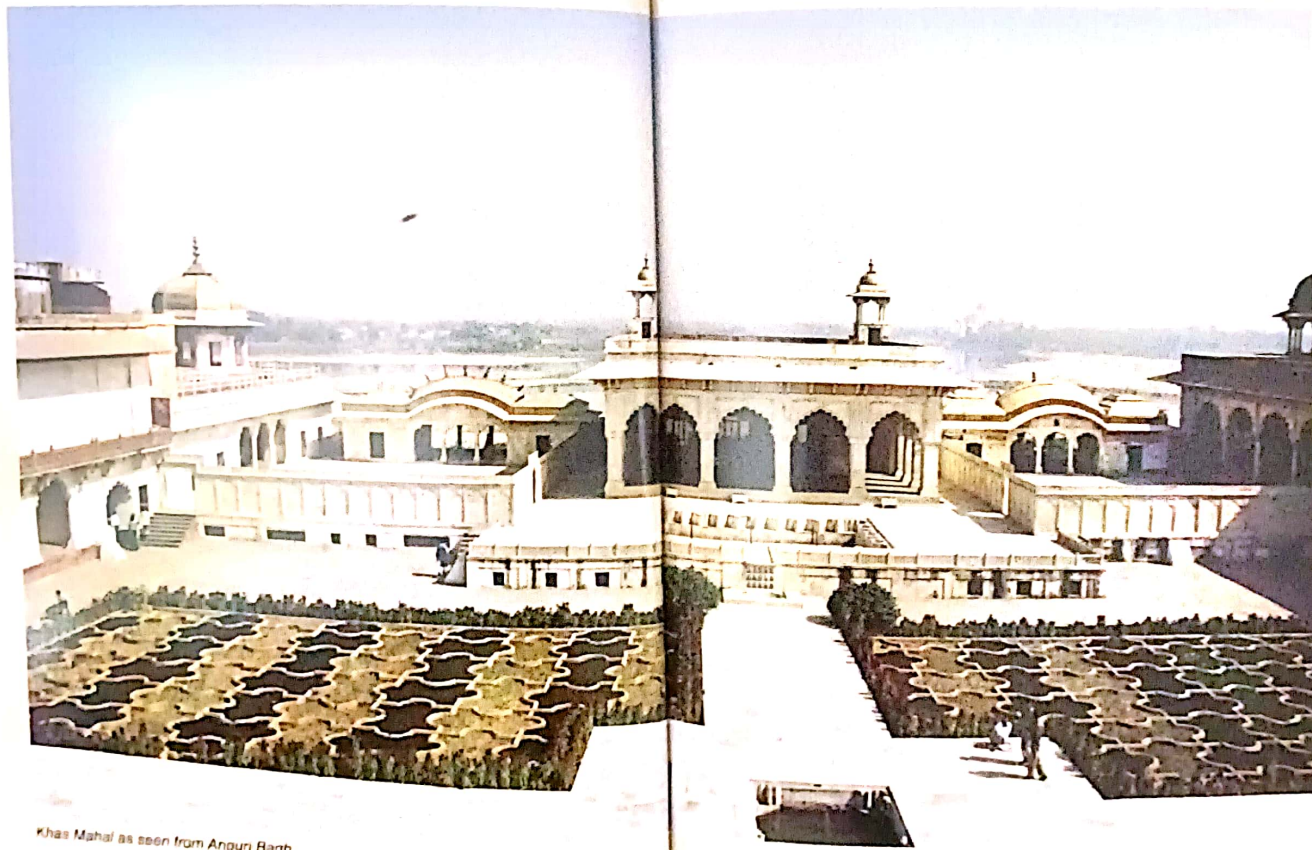
red sandstone structures of Akbar and Jahangir in 1637.

Suited to his taste, Shah Jahan constructed the Khas Mahal which was called Aramgah-i-Mualla (The exalted place of rest) or Aramgah-i-Muqaddas (The holy resting apartment) as is mentioned by Abdul Hamid Lahauri in his Badshah Nama. The building comprises open

Terraces and a hall, flanked by a pavilion on either side serving as partitions. The structure is erected on a sufficiently elevated platform paved with marble. It is the royal palace of the Emperor, splendidly set the Harem complex which includes curtain walls (Sar-i-parda), elegant tanks, fountains and a waterfall (*chadar*) surrounded by living

apartments with courts and verandahs. The palace is laid out in three receding levels, namely the main palace overlooking the river with spacious open terraces and garden in front of it standing majestically in a delightful setting, reflecting the fine aesthetic sense of Shah Jahan.

The main palace consists of a Central Hall with alcoves and rooms on sides and a large *dalan* on its front facing an open platform with tank and fountains overlooking the garden now called Anguri Bagh. The complex is built in chaste marble, which was originally fabulously painted and gilded in gold.



Khas Mahal as seen from Anguri Bagh



Originally the niches above the dados were decorated with Imperial portraits. The *dalan* is composed of cusped arches, supported on square piers. The roof of the portico is surmounted on engrailed arches. An elegant rectangular tank with scalloped border is in the centre of the platform facing the so-called Anguri Bagh. The water rippled through a shallow canal to the waterfall behind with chini-khana (series of canal niches) is provided with such water devices. A rainbow is created when the fountains play with coloured water. These water devices created an enchanting cool atmosphere during hot weather.

## THE GOLDEN PAVILIONS

On either side of the Khas Mahal is an oblong pavilion with Bangla roofs and curved *chhajjas* or eaves. Badshah Nama mentioned these structures as Bangla and recorded that the northern one was used as *Jharoka Darshan* (in addition to the Shah Burj).

These pavilions are constructed in red sandstone and thoroughly stuccoed shining like white marble. The pavilions are fancifully, though wrongly called Jahan Ara and Roshan Ara apartments. A unique feature is the provision of white marble curtain wall (*Sari-parda*) which separates the main palace from these pavilions. These are divided into vertical sections each one bearing a trefoil arch.

This Shah Jahani palace was an ideal medieval harem complex of the Mughal period.

The Khas Mahal (Royal palace) complex was constructed by Shah Jahan and it was meant for the ladies of the royal harem and comprised the main marble structure with its north and south pavilions the Anguri Bagh (Grape Garden) formed part of the residential quarters and the royal bath decorated with fine mirrors. The three white marble pavilions are higher than the Anguri Bagh overlooking the river stand on a marble terrace.

The colonnade or portico, which is of the same size as the inner hall has five arched openings in front of and three each side having flat roofs. Above the painted dado panels are carved and painted with floral

designs particularly with poppy flowers. The three archways lead to the inner hall and opposite them are three windows overlooking the river. The roofs of the gallery and hall are of plain marble, but according to Abdul Hamid Lahauri these were profusely decorated and painted in gold and colours originally and some of the traces found in the hall support the view of the contemporary historian.

The walls have a number of deep niches, which have been decorated with the portraits of Mughal Emperors from Timur to Akbar and Jahangir, which were taken away by the Jats in 1761-1774.

The iron rings in the ceiling of the hall were evidently meant to suspend chandeliers.



Jahan Ara Pavilion



Roshan Ara Pavilion



The big tank in the centre of the platform measures about 15m. by 9m. externally, which has a red sand stone bed with five fountains and thirty two jets. The zig zag inlay of the escape channel from it known as *pusht-i-mahi* (back of the fish) a popular design of the Mughals from the time of Emperor Babur. The fountain creates a rainbow into the atmosphere when the fountains are played with coloured water.

This pavilion is also in the shape of an Indian palanquin. Both these pavilions are constructed of red sandstone, which were exquisitely plastered over with marble and shell plaster, shining like white marble. Abdul Hamid Lahauri, the court chronicler of Shah Jahan specifically recorded details about these pavilions and mentioned the use of light wood in the ceilings. He recorded that "this *Daulat-Khana-i-Khas-wa-'Am* was previously an ordinary building, meaning thereby that it was of red sand stone, but it was then made of marble in the tenth year of Shah Jahan's rule i.e. about 1636 A.D. Lahauri mentions that it shines better than marble, like a mirror. These side pavilions have curved eaves and curved roof of Bengal.

It lays an added emphasis on the upper horizontal lines, which would otherwise have been monotonous and would have necessitated a superstructure. The curved attractive roofs of the pavilion and at the same time provide, an impressive superstructure.

### MACHCHI BHAWAN

The Machchi Bhawan (Fish Palace), with the marble balcony, stands at the back of the Diwan-i-Am, has spacious court with series of flat roofed chambers enclosed in front by arcades of Indo-Islamic style. Originally the court was adorned with marble tanks and fountains in which gold and silver fish were kept which provided amusement for Emperor. Its upper floor is on a level with the Diwan-i-Khas and the Nagina Masjid. Originally the entire structure was covered with shining marble plaster which is still extant in the colonnade of the marble projecting balcony which once had Shah Jahan's Golden throne (Aurang-i-Zarrin) which used to be occupied by the Emperor. The pillars and walls of the colonnades are so finely plastered with lime and other ingredients that it is not possible to identify and distinguish them from the marble



Machchi Bhawan

throne balcony and the red sand stone plastered pillars of the colonnade. Abdul Hamid Lahauri the court chronicler of Shah Jahan calls this structure the store-room for the Imperial ornaments and precious jewels.

A quadrangle better known as Machchi Bhavan is an official complex of double storied structure around a courtyard, with arched galleries. The south central marble pavilion is remarkable since it has the royal seat for the Emperor to watch the activities in the courtyard of Machchi Bhavan.

The ornamental tall Shah Jahani pillars of the galleries are covered with Mughal deluxe lime plaster so closely and which matches the marble pillars of the pavilion that it is not possible to make out that the pavilion and the pillars of the galleries are of two different material such as red sand stone pillars covered with shining lime plaster, exactly like marble and the marble pavilion of the structure. It is really the excellent workmanship of Shah Jahani artisans which is reflected in the construction of the structure of Machchi Bhawan.



## GHAZNI GATE

There is an arcaded façade of five bays, the western most multifoil arch of Shah Jahan's Mahal which is now closed by a glass screen. The room contains a massive wooden doorway known as Ghazni Gate, which measures 5.6m. in length by 2.7m. in width, which was brought by General Nott from Ghazni after

the Afghan Expedition of 1842. It was wrongly considered to be the sandal wood gate of Somnath temple of Gujarat, believed to be taken by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni in A.D. 1024-25.

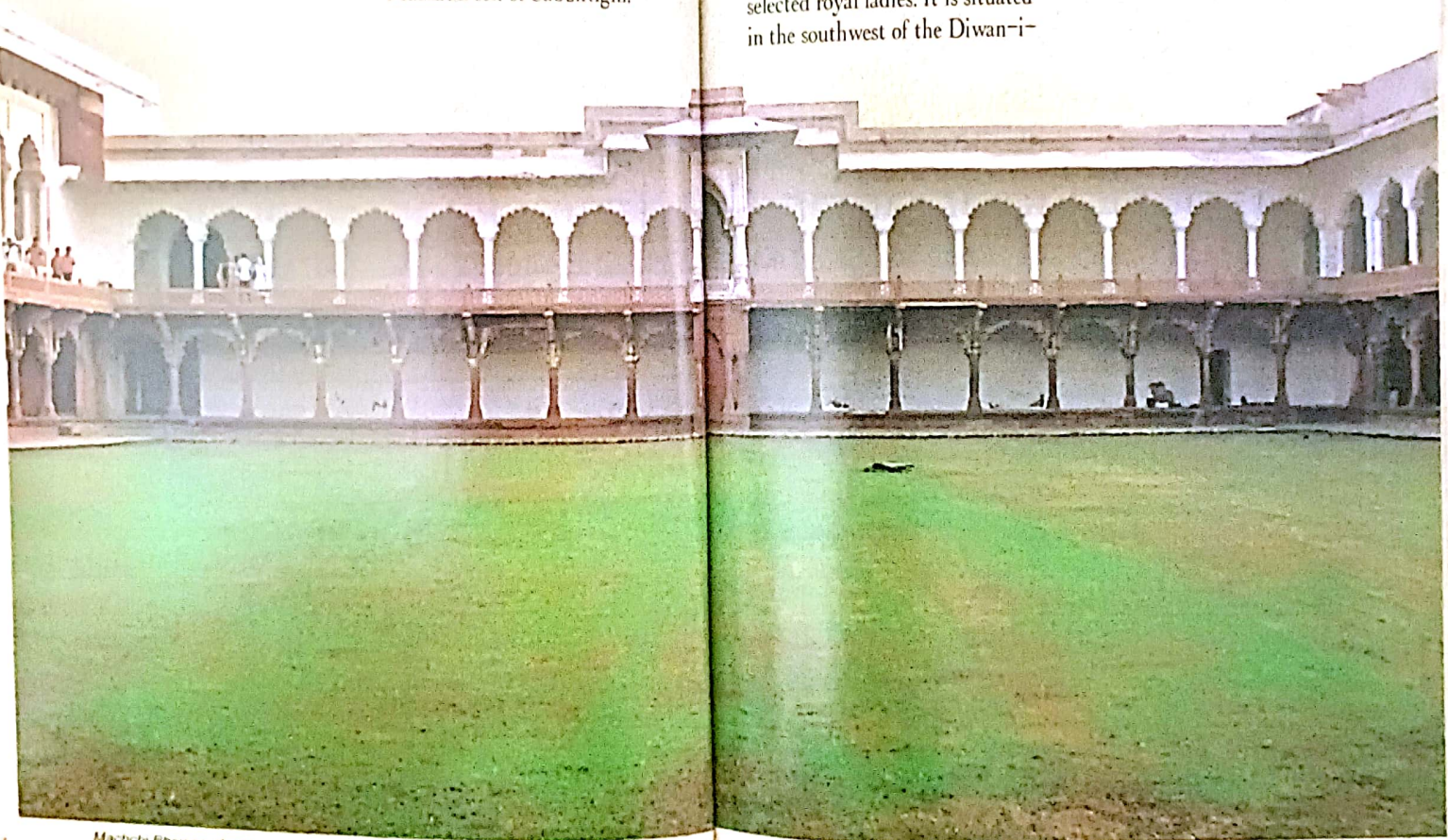
The Gate most probably belonged to the mausoleum of Mahmud as is evident from an Arabic Kufic inscription invoking blessings for the Sultan Mahmud son of Subuktigin.

The arch is designed purely on Islamic pattern. It was brought to Agra Fort and placed in Diwan-i-Am. But it was placed here in its present position at a later date.

## MINA MASJID

This small mosque was built in white marble by Shah Jahan for the use of his own and his selected royal ladies. It is situated in the southwest of the Diwan-i-

Khas and to the south of the Machhi Bhawan. Built in marble, it has a small open court (*Sahn*) in front of the three arched prayer Chamber. The court is paved with alternate squares of marble and Jasper slabs. The prayer chamber measures 6.71 m. by 3.96m. The structure is plain and simple and secured on all sides by lofty walls, which indicate its use by royal ladies.



Machhi Bhawan, double storied structure around a court yard





Mina Masjid

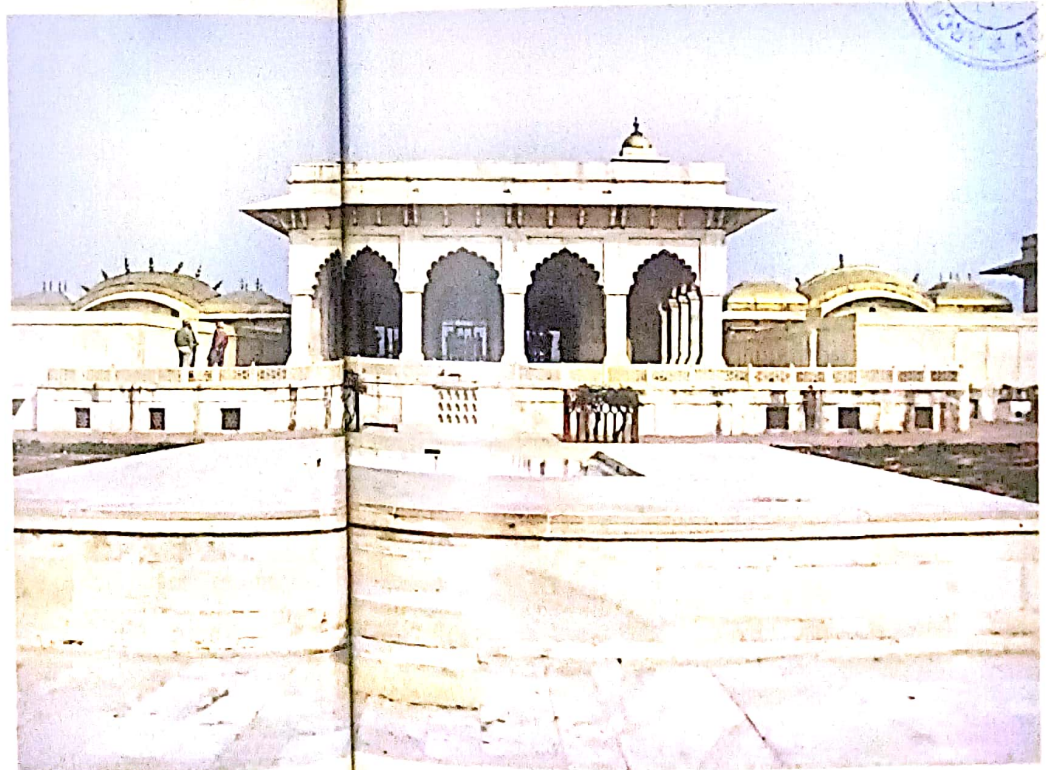
Looking towards Khas Mahal, there is a large spacious *dalan* (verandah) of white marble, composed of nine cusped arches, supported on double pillars and protected externally by wide eaves (*chhajja*). The eastern gallery tower is built of red sand stone. Its western chamber is closed by transparent mirrors to view Ghazni Gate. The so-called Babur's stepped well is situated beneath it. The subterranean apartments in seven storeys and

the so-called Phansi Ghar are also located under this complex.

The central pavilion on the large platform at the back of the Diwan-i-Khas is Shah Jahan's sleeping apartment better known as Khas Mahal but in the contemporary historical literature it is mentioned as Aramgah (or khwabgah) or place of rest. Flanking it on either side are two almost similar rectangular pavilions (in the form of

## SHAH JAHAN'S APARTMENT

The royal apartments of Shah Jahan are situated to the south of the white marble Khas Mahal set transitionally inbetween the two major residential complexes of two different periods. Shah Jahan first attempted to convert the existing red sandstone building to suit his refined taste. It consists of a spacious hall and a side room with an octagonal tower overlooking the river. The interior constructed in lakhauri bricks and sandstone veneering with white stuccoed in fine lime plaster which is colourfully painted with vegetal motifs. The entire palace originally glittered like white marble.



Khas Mahal



palanquin) with three arched openings within a screened enclosure over looking the river. From the northern one Shah Jahan presented himself from the central arched opening to the public outside the Fort, a daily ceremony current from the time of Emperor Akbar which was famous as *Jharoka Darshan*.

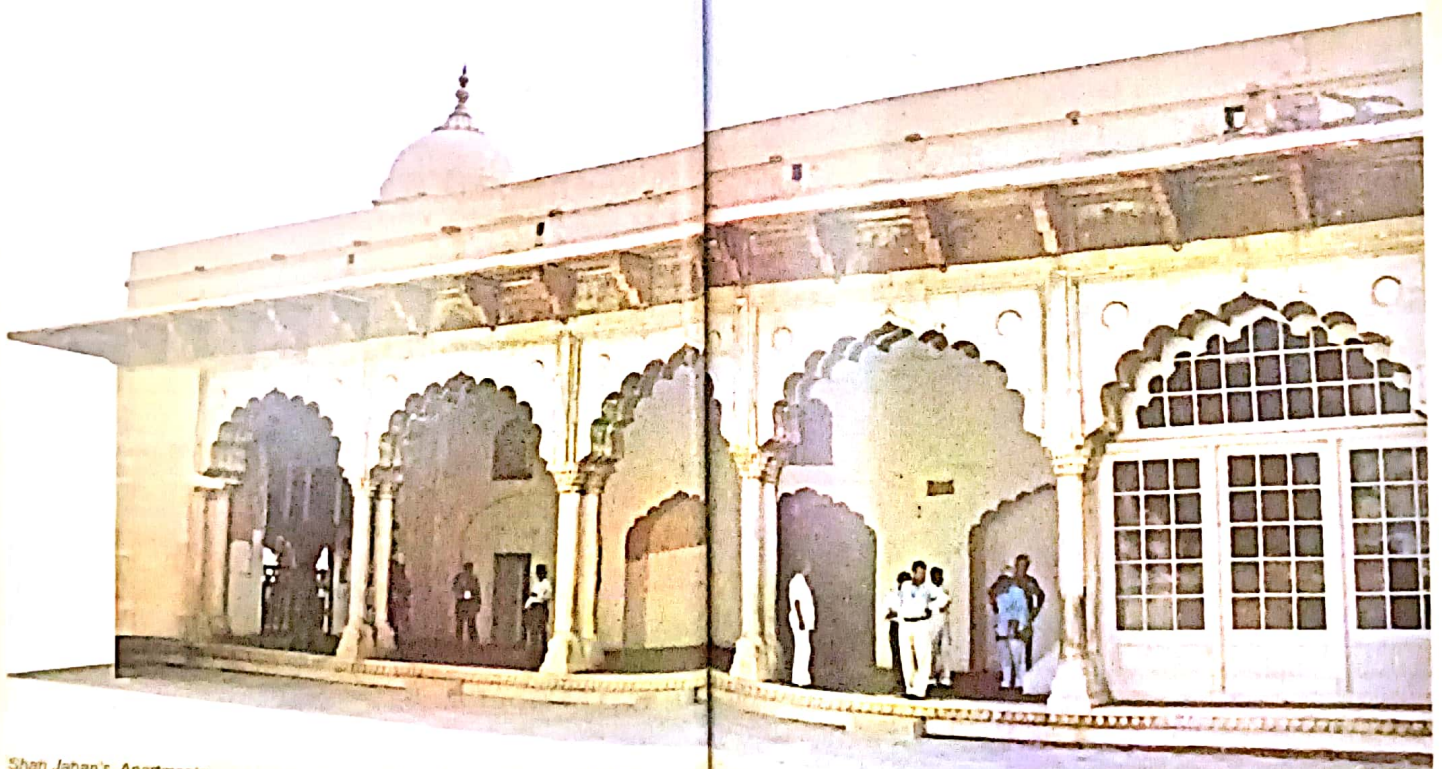
These rectangular pavilions are surmounted by curved

sloping eaves and standing Bangala roofs which are gilded in gold on copper sheets covering the roofs. Abdul Hamid Lahori the contemporary historian who was Shah Jahan's official chronicler, records that when the Emperor presented himself to his subjects under this gilded golden roof it appeared as if there were two suns. One was light from the morning sun reflected

on the roof of this pavilion. The other was the Emperor himself. Light reflected from the gold roof appeared to crown the Emperor with a halo of the sort after depicted in contemporary paintings and described in literature.

The almost similar rectangular pavilion on the other side of the Aramgah was said to have been used by Princess

Jahan Ara Begum, eldest daughter of Emperor Shah Jahan, popularly called Begum Sahib. She was also declared as chief of the harem after the death of Mumtaz Mahal in 1651. She was also entrusted with the royal seal *Muhr-i-udak* which was earlier kept by Mumtaz Mahal and which solemnized all the *farmans* and royal orders.



Shah Jahan's Apartments



There are several chambers on the southern side of the Khas Mahal which face a rectangular pavilion with an arcuate embellished ceiling. Its eastern platform has a deep reservoir with a fountain, which creates a rainbow in the atmosphere when filled with coloured water and the fountain functions. On three sides of the Anguri Bagh there are double storied square chambers most probably used by the royal ladies.

The rectangular garden has (marble) stone laid out plan

inside the garden. This was originally full of plants of sweet fragrance flowers. It seems after some time later grapes were grown in this garden, which gave the name Anguri Bagh. The garden has an opening in the western wall.

### ANGURI BAGH

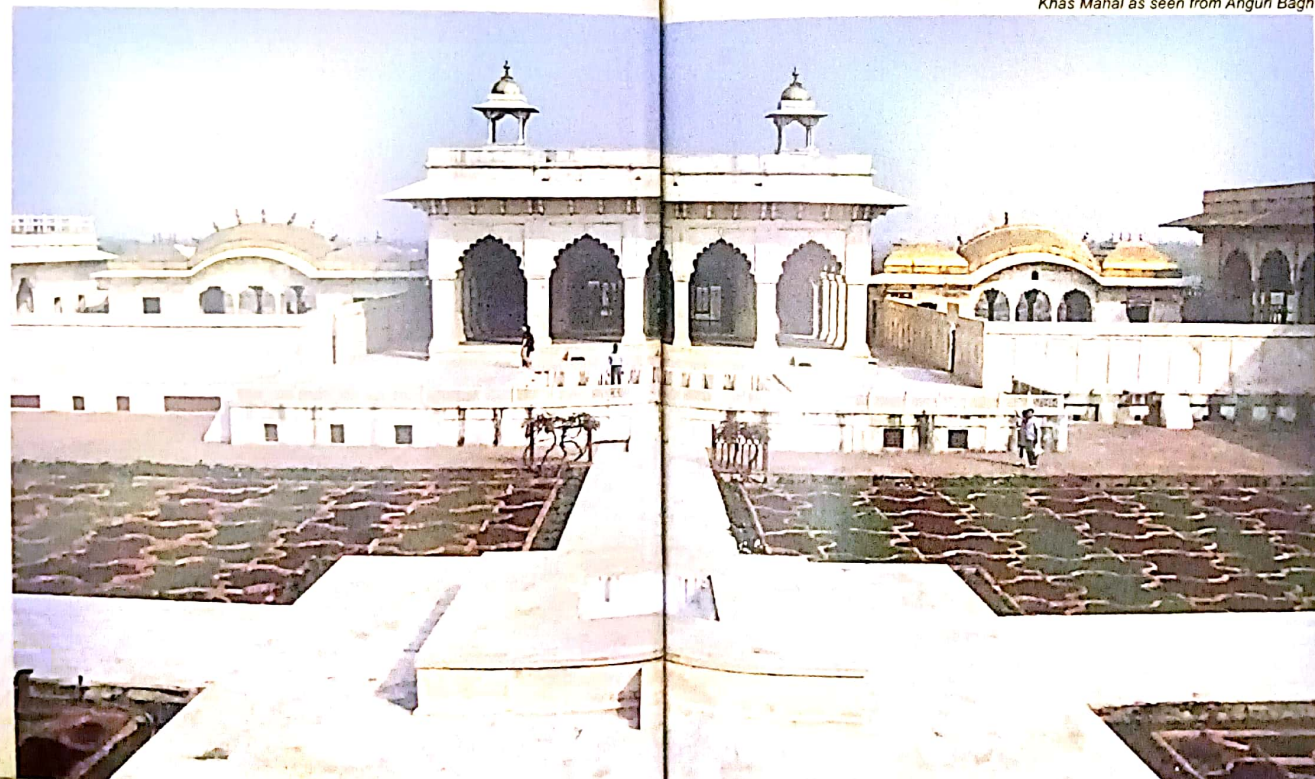
The large rectangular court measuring about 67.6m. by 52m. in front of the Khas Mahal is the

garden laid out in the Char Bagh pattern with small hexagonal grids of red sandstone, now called Anguri Bagh. According to Abdul Hamid Lahauri this garden had dwarf plants of sweet fragrance. Most probably grapes (*angur*) were grown at a later date in this garden which gave it the present name. The garden is attached to the Khas Mahal by Shah Jahan in 1637. On the east below the marble terrace there is a small tank in the centre of the quadrangle marble paved

platform measuring 14.7m. square from which radiate four marble paved paths measuring about 5.5m. wide.

In the north, south and west sides the garden is surrounded by a double storied red sandstone building finely plastered in white lime, having series of living self contained chambers which were apparently used by the inmates of the harem. These have cusped arched openings which substantiate the Shah Jahani origin.

*Khas Mahal as seen from Anguri Bagh*





## MUSAMMAN BURJ

Near the Diwan-i-Khas is situated the private residential areas of Shah Jahan which stand on a plinth overlooking the river. On the north side is the most eloquent octagonal tower better known as Musamman Burj (octagonal tower). At its site there were palaces of Jahangir, which were constructed by him and are mentioned in his Memoirs. These palaces were demolished by Shah Jahan and in their place the most elegant marble multi-storied tower was constructed by Shah Jahan for his beloved queen Mumtaz Mahal Lady of the Taj as mentioned in Badshah Nama. The marble surface was finely decorated with sophisticated *petra-duera* with precious coloured stones. Adjoining the Musamman palace to the west is the extremely pretty pavilion called Shah Burj. It is a rectangular building with a flat marble ceiling supported by richly inlaid marble Shah Jahani pillars on the west side. Its court is flanked by finely carved marble screen with beautiful merlon design on the north. The marble façade is richly decorated with fine inlaid work with precious lapislazule petals of the flowers.

The northern wall of the pavilion has two rectangular openings, which had beautiful wooden doors that are now missing. In the centre of the floor of the pavilion is a large rectangular monolithic ornamental basin with a scented fountain. The borders and the interior of the single existed carved marble cistern has a beautiful floral design decorated with inlaid precious coloured stones. The eastern wall has tri-arched opening, the central one being larger than the side ones. The walls have a series of deep arched niches. The octagonal specious chamber is exquisitely decorated with paintings in gold and multi coloured precious inlay work. The outer verandah is supported on faceted embellished pillars whose openings provide a panoramic view of the Taj Mahal and its surroundings with the river Yamuna. The outer structure is also richly embellished particularly the graceful pillars, capital beams and friezes have delicate panels of scrolls with leaves flowers and buds. The interior and exterior marble walls of the Musamman Burj are also elegantly decorated with *petra duera* with coloured precious stones. It is rightly



A view of Musamman Burj





Fountain inside the Musamman Burj

considered to be the gem of Indo-Islamic architecture in India. The dome of the Musamman Burj is gilded in gold on copper sheet. Emperor Shah Jahan exposed to his octagonal chamber is filled with his daughter Jahan Ara and a few royal ladies by his side.

### PACHISI COURT

The so-called Pachisi-court situated at the lower story of Musamman Burj, measuring 11.5m. by 11m. paved with marble octagons representing the pattern similar to a Pachisi board or Indian backgammon. But in fact it is an ornamental cover for the drains below. It drains water out of the palace, and its irregular sides contradict the suggestion that it was a board on which pachisi was played by

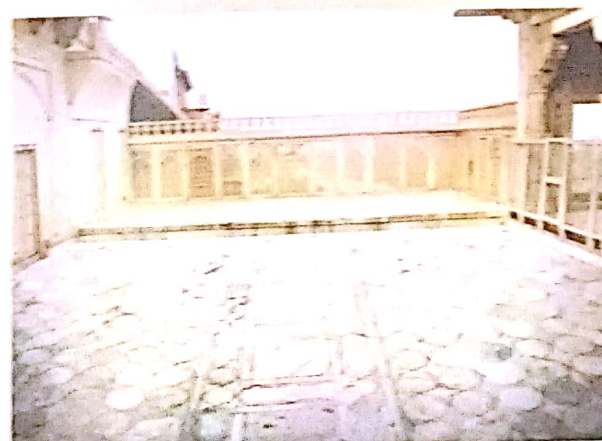
the Emperor with maid servants, or living games men. As it is, this game is played with only one-man rival to another. The platform is to north measuring 11m. by 5.5m. is paved with 465 square marble slabs, bordered on all sides by strips and is enclosed on the north and east by superb marble screens exquisite in geometric designs through which royal ladies might have viewed the sports of elephant fights etc. in the eastern enclosure below.

The main hall of the Musamman Burj, measuring 11.5m. by 6.5m. internally is unadorned with exquisite fine inlay work and carved shallow cistern with a perfumed fountain in its centre. The entire walls and ceiling of the Burj are inlaid with costly coloured stone in the form of plants and flowers and has no

match in any other Mughal palace. The original precious stone of inlay were taken by the Jats in 1761-1774. But at the instance of Lord Mayo and Northbrook, imitations were inserted and inlays were skillfully repaired which we see now.

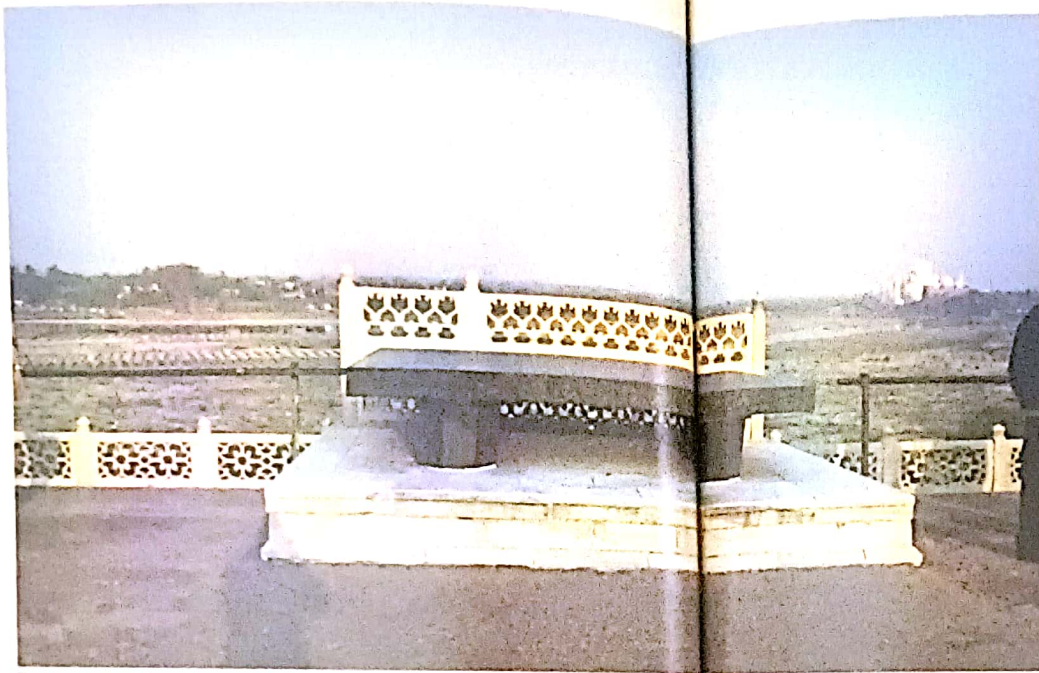
### THRONE TERRACE

The Throne Terrace measuring 55.6m. by 25.2m. in front of the Dewan-i-Khas is actually the roof of the chambers constituting the eastern wing of the Machchi Bhawan. It has historical relics in the form of two thrones one of which is of white marble on the west overlooking the Machchi Bhawan and the other one is in black stone or of rough stone (sang-i-mahak) on the eastern side overlooking the river.



Pachisi Court with beautiful marble floor





Takht-i-Jahangiri (Black throne of Jahangir)

## TAKHT-I-JAHANGIRI (BLACK THRONE OF JAHANGIR)

Prince Salim rebelled against his father Akbar in 1602 and made his seat of official activities at Allahabad. He got this throne made of black touch stone (sang-i-mahak). After his accession Jahangir brought it at Agra and placed it on terrace of Diwan-i-Khas, as is mentioned in Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri by Emperor Jahangir. It was made of touch stone (sang-i-mahak or kasauti) and is very black and shining. This monolithic throne is 3.5m. Long and 2.8m. broad.

Its octagonal pedestals are 39cm. high. The top of this slab slopes from the centre to the sides like the back of a tortoise. Persian versified inscriptions in Nasta'liq characters, most probably written by Abdullah Mushkin Qalam, are carved in relief against floral background with date A.H. 1011 (A.D. 1602), mentioning Sultan Salim when Emperor Akbar was still the overlord.

It is interesting to note that there is one specimen of Nasta'liq calligraphy in the collection of Rampur Raza Library which contains the date A.H. 1011 (A.D. 1602) of Abdullah Mushkin Qalam Shah Salimi

inscriptions written by Abdullah Mushkin Qalam carved on the throne mentioning his accession in 1610.

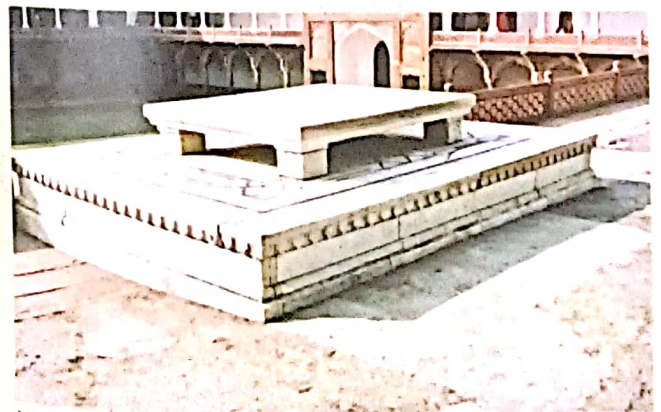
William Hawkins an English traveller noticed this throne at Agra Fort and mentioned in his travelogue.

## MARBLE THRONE

Rectangular in shape this white marble throne is remarkable for its construction and its history. The large slab is supported on four marble legs carved out of a single block, and stands on a white marble slab measuring 15 inches high. Abdul Hamid Lahauri records that it was used by Shah Jahan. A wooden bejeweled throne was placed over this marble slab and occupied by the Emperor particularly during the summer evenings and nights.

(i.e. belonging to king Salim Shah) apparently written at Allahabad where his other inscriptions can be seen on the famous monolithic pillar at Allahabad Fort.

When Jahangir brought the throne from Allahabad in 1610 to Agra he got two more



Marble Throne of Shah Jahan

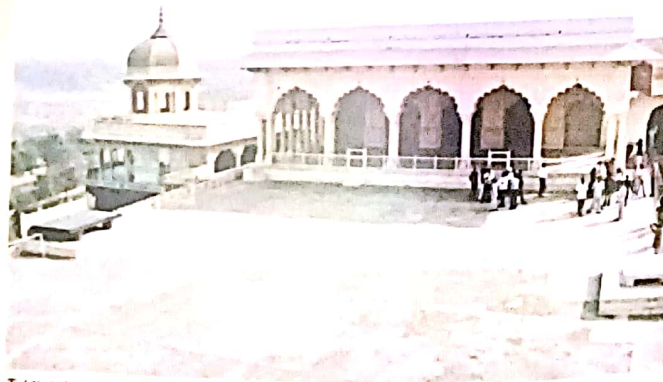


## JAHANGIR'S CHAIN OF JUSTICE (ZANJIR-I-ADL)

Somewhere at the present terrace of Diwan-i-Khas, Emperor Jahangir had suspended his Chain of Justice (ZANJIR-I-ADL) in c 1605 A.D. He recorded in his Memoirs that after his accession the first order he gave was for the fastening up of the Chain of Justice so that if those engaged in the administration of justice should delay or practice hypocrisy the aggrieved might come to this chain and shake it so that its sound might attract his attention. It was made of pure gold. It was 30 *gaz* (24.6m.) in length and had 60 bells. It weighted one quintal. Its one end

was fastened to the battlement of the Shah Burj and the other to a stone post on the bank of the river. Contemporary foreign travelers like William Howkins personally saw it. It has also been depicted in a contemporary painting made in 1620.

This was a novel way to redress the grievances of the people who could approach the king, the highest judicial authority of the Empire directly without fear or formality for immediate relief. There was no distinction of caste or creed or between poor and rich. It is as much a dream as a lesson to modern jurists. Jahangir's administration of justice viz. 'ADL-I-JAHANGIR' became a legend in Indian history.



Takht-i-Jahangir opposite the Marble Throne



Jahangir at the Jhoroka Window, circa 1620.



## UNDER GROUND APARTMENTS OR TAHKHANA

An under ground complex of stairways, corridors, tunnels and chambers exist beneath the palaces all along the riverside. Originally it extended from the *baoli* (step-well) near Bengali burj to the Machhi Bhawan and had entrances from the *baoli*, eastern court to Jahangiri Mahal, Anguri Bagh and Musamman Burj. In fact Akbars palace, which was originally converted and used to serve as its foundational basement with which every quarter of his palace was secretly connected. Such a gigantic height from the river, it housed his harem (seraglio) which had 5000 women.



A view of the Tahkhana

Abdul Fazl records that not withstanding the great number of faithful guards, Akbar kept his own vigilance through this complex. All entrances as also the original stairways, tunnels and corridors have been closed and are now accessible only through a window.

It is believed that an octagonal room in its first floor had a *Phansighar* (execution chamber) with 57m. long wooden beam across it for private execution of offenders of the harem chastity. Babur's *baoli* and well, a tank with cascade and series of rooms are also there. Slits for ventilation are given in the corridor which runs along the Fort wall. There is also a *Jharokha* in the second floor below. It is more spacious and has



A view of the Tahkhana

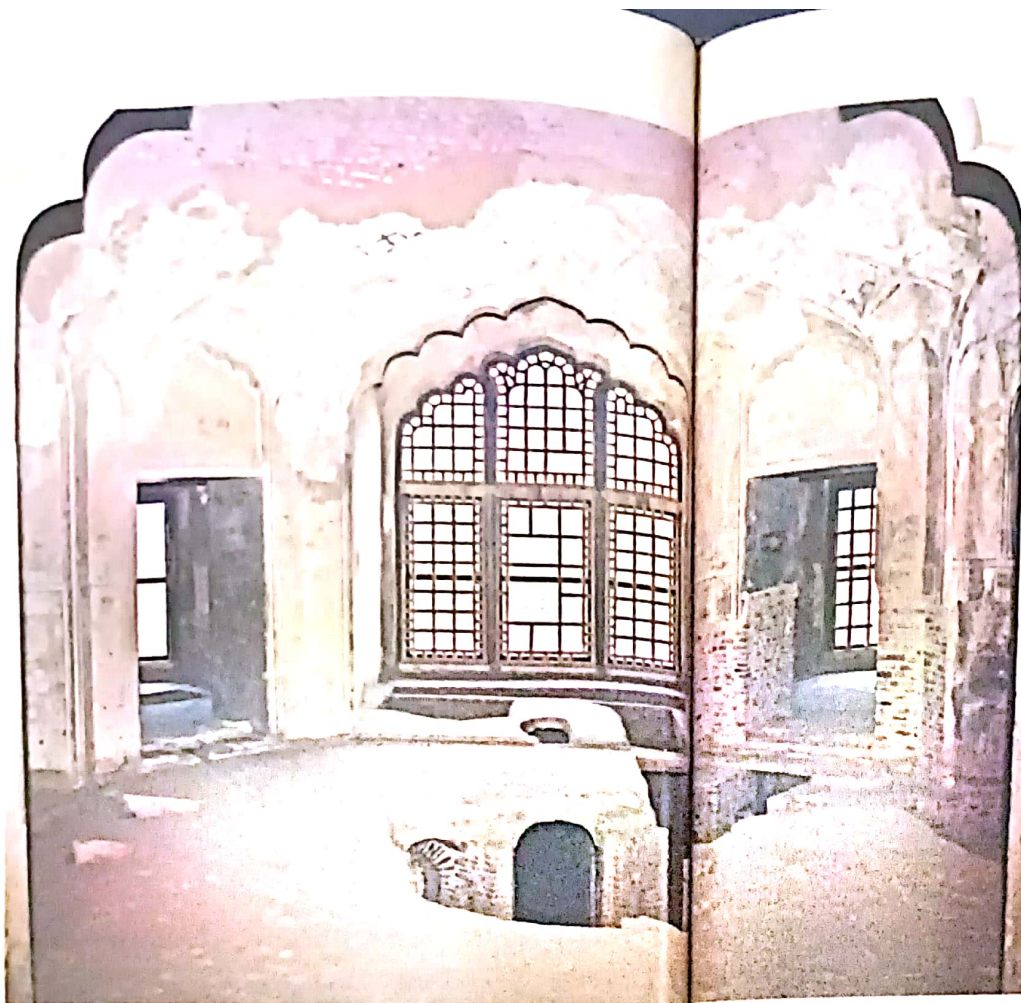
larger apartments and a more complex network of halls, rooms and corridors. Agra Fort contained the largest treasury of the Mughal Empire and this floor was probably reserved for storing treasure in gold, silver, coins and jewellery. These underground chambers have now been closed for security reasons. They remain a great mystery even today as they were during the Mughal times.

## SHAHI HAMMAM

The Emperor's bath is connected with the throne terrace on the north and is approached through the Machchi Bhawan court below. It comprises set of vaulted chambers containing the bath.

The walls of the bath are constructed by lakhauri bricks and lime, coated with thick





Interior view of Shahi Hammam (Bathroom)

stucco which still contain traces of floral designs. There are traces of furnaces and a few water channels for heating the baths on the west. The Badshah Nama records that it is exquisitely inlaid, ornamented and decorated both internally and externally, and also mentions the existence of a large cistern with fountains on all sides in the centre of the *hammam*. Abdul Hamid also records the existence of hot and cold baths and which according

to him were so fitted with mirrors of *Halab* (Aleppo) that the river bed and the royal gardens reflected on them.

The doors and the niches of the *hammam* have been supplied with the mirrors of *Halab*, which added to the general decoration scheme of the building. There used to be held *ghusal-khana* meetings in which a few most trusted noblemen were invited to consider serious state affairs.

## NAGINA MASJID

This beautiful small marble mosque is situated at the north west corner of the Machchi Bhawan at the level of Diwan-i-Khas and Shahi Hammam overlooking the large court of the Diwan-i-Am. It was built by Emperor Shah Jahan in 1635-36 A.D. for the use of the nobles and officers who came to attend the Diwan-i-Khas functions. This rectangular *maqsura* or prayer chamber is two bay deep with three arched openings in the façade. The central arch is larger than the side ones. The *chhajja*, protecting the façade is curved in the middle above the central arch and parapet, indicating the Bangala influence in its construction. The structure is surmounted by three bulbous Mughal domes crowned by



Exterior view of Shahi Hammam



lotus-petals and *kalash* with metallic finials. The central dome is larger than the side ones. The central court has a small water tank with cascade for *wazu*. The prayer chamber is notable for the inlay in black marble the place of prayer (*musalla*) in the white marble flooring. There are ornamental marble railings in the court adjacent to the prayer hall.

The mosque is elegant though very simple when compared with its successor Moti Masjid made of chaste marble in Red Fort Delhi, built by Aurangzeb in 1658-59.

The flooring of the prayer chamber is inlaid with prayer spaces (*musallas*) and at the further end is a small chamber overlooking the open area of the

Diwan-i-Am. The local guides wrongly state that this mosque was built by Aurangzeb after the confinement of Shah Jahan. According to authentic contemporary histories Shah Jahan was never imprisoned but simply confined to certain parts of the palace, apparently in the Khas Mahal areas. The mosque

was evidently built by Shah Jahan as is proved by the multifoiled cusped arches and elegant marble pillars of Shahjahani style. The mosque was used by Shah Jahani noblemen who came to attend the Darbar in the Diwan-i-Khas in the evenings.

View of Nagina Masjid with Moti Masjid in the backdrop







Zariana Mina Bazar

## ZANANA MINA BAZAR

It is a historical fact that there used to be a Mina Bazar (female handicraft market) in Agra Fort from Akbar's reign. But the building where it was held seems to have lost its identity. The only building which could have been used for this Bazar may have been Machchi Bhawan whose arcades and entrance on the south connecting it with ladies apartments of Khas Mahal. The Machchi Bhawan also has a marble pavilion where there should have been a bejewelled throne for the Emperor witnessing the activities of the Mina Bazar. Abul Fazl and other historians provide graphic accounts of this Bazar which was called Fancy Bazar, where the royal ladies and the wives and daughters of the Mughal nobility displayed and sold their goods, particularly gems, jewellery, embroidered clothes and other sophisticated things, particularly on the Nauzur or Khush Roz (Joyful Day) (Persian New Year day) celebrations.

The Emperor, the Queen, Princes and Princesses would bargain and purchase these items. Sometimes the Princes became



interested in the daughters of noblemen and proposals were sent to the noblemen and vassals of the kingdom. It is said that Emperor Jahangir liked Mehrun Nisa later Nur Jahan Begam in this market who later on became the most powerful Queen of Jahangir's Empire. Similarly it is related that Shah Jahan fell in love with Arjunand Bano Begum, daughter of Asaf Khan in the Mina Bazar and married her who became the most favorite Queen as Mumtaz Mahal whose mausoleum Taj Mahal has no match in the whole world and now the seventh wonder of the Universe.

### SHISH MAHAL (TURKISH BATH)

To the north-east corner of the court in the lower storey is situated the illustrious building Shish Mahal (Palace of Mirror) which is so named because of the fine profuse embellishment of mirror on the arches, walls and the ceilings with irregular geometric and floral patterns in thick stucco relief work covering the walls and ceilings. Most of the glass work was missing but were restored by the Agra Circle of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1978-81. This creates a

picturesque scene when lighted with candles. It was constructed in 1637 and served as the luxurious bath of Khas Mahal.

The bath comprises of two chambers, each about 12m. by 7m. The inner chamber has apsidal ends and a marble tank with a fountain and the second chamber has also a similar tank in the east wall. Originally the stucco reliefs were painted

artistically with mirror and gold. The floor of the chambers was of white marble.

As mentioned in contemporary histories the Emperor used to hold Ghusul-Khana, secret meetings in which only a few selected nobles attended with the permission of the Emperor.

The glass mosaic ornamentation was executed in

the Khas Mahal complexes of Shah Jahan in Agra Fort. Abdul Hamid particularly mentioned the use of mirror work in the Shah Burj, Hammams, Sard Khana, Garm Khana and the Shish Mahal. He further informs its decoration in the Hammam-i-Shahi, "opposite to the hall of the Daulat Khana-i-Khas there is a Hall, adjacent to which is a Hammam consisting of several



*Inside the Shish Mahal*



buildings which overlook the river Jamuna, the garden at the foot of the *Jharoka-Darshan* and all other gardens on the river side. The artisans have so well executed, on its interior and exterior, inlay relief, glass mosaics and other wonderful works. The arches and the doors of the *Hamam* having Aleppo glasses added to the beauty of the edifice.

The glass work in the Agra Fort has survived in the Shish Mahal and that too, fortunately, on the grandest and the most sumptuous scale. The mural glass ornamentation in its interior (*ainabandi*) in the words of

Abdul Hamid, is undoubtedly the best of its kind in India.

The Shish-Mahal is composed of two large halls of equal size, each measuring 11m. by 6.5m.

The glass mosaic consists of stucco relief work in the form of *guldastas* with natural leaves and flowers emitting magnificently out of the typically Indian *kalasa* with or without glass work, producing a gorgeously superb effect.

Its production has been done with lakhauri bricks skeleton with a layer of fine lime plaster in mixture with gypsum which rendered extra-ordinary strength and shine.



Chittor Gate

## CHITTOR GATE

This impressive Gate is pierced in the western wall of the Machhi Bhawan. Originally this fine gateway of the Machhi Bhawan was meant for the private approach of ladies to this place. Now it is provided with the bronze Chittor Gates. They have been brought here from the famous celebrated Hill Fort of Chittorgarh as a trophy by Emperor Akbar who captured the Fort in 1568.

## DARSHANI-DARWAZA

The *darshan* or 'showing' ceremony was always considered important by the early Mughal Emperors and we read of Aurangzeb insisting on being carried to the *Jharoka* (window) even when bedridden so as to convince his devoted subjects that he was alive.

Finch says that from the Darshani-Darwaza the Emperor showed himself every morning at sun-rise and viewed his nobles and common subjects paying him homage (*taslim*) from the plains below. He also sat there every noon, except on Sundays, to see the fight of beasts.

## TAH KHANA

The Badshah Nama mentions the subterranean chambers below the building of the Diwan-i-Khas whose walls were nicely polished and painted in gold. It contains two cisterns, one is fed by a waterfall and the other larger one is connected with it by a water channel which conveyed water to it from the former. The grand platform or the throne terrace attached to the *aiwan* measures 125 ft. long 97 ft. broad under whose chambers *ashrafis* (gold coins) were stored. These underground chambers were also used by royal ladies during the summer season as a retreat from the unbearable heat.

## SALIMGARH

The so-called Salimgarh has been variously described by scholars and attributed to Salim Shah Sur (1545-1552). But it is apparently a mistake since the Agra Fort was constructed by Akbar after removing the dilapidated Rajput and Lodi palace of the site. Moreover, neither Abul Fazl nor Badauni or the author of *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* has referred to any such structure of pre-Akbars time in the Agra Fort.



Most probably this double storeyed building was erected by Emperor Akbar for the residence of Prince Salim who had his own palace separately at Fatehpur Sikri.

This rectangular structure of ashlar masonry is situated in the north west of the Fort area. It had several chambers on both the floors with a *Baradari* on the upper floor, which has since

collapsed. The architectural details of pillars pilasters, beams and brackets are very similar to the residential buildings of Fatehpur Sikri. The fine carvings

on the surface pillars, beams and ceilings seem to have been executed by the artisans of Fatehpur Sikri.



Salimgarh





Pathway and Garden leading to Moti Masjid

### MOTI MASJID (PEARL MOSQUE)

This most elegant mosque constructed by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan on a raised plinth. It is built on an elevated ground, sloping from west to east just in front of the north gateways of the Diwan-i-Khas enclosure. The Khizr Gate (Water Gate) in the east provided entrance from river

side for the Mughal nobles and officers, who offered prayers during the period they attended the Imperial court. The river Yamuna was very much navigable and the Emperor mostly preferred journey by boat. Even Akbar visited the site for the construction of Agra Fort by boat.

The structure is externally made of red sand stone but the entire interior is finished with white marble. It is one of the first Shah Jahani mosques at Agra in marble after the one built in the Dargah of Hazrat Khawaja Muin-ud-Din Chishti at Ajmer which was built when he was a prince. It is a single quadrangle mosque with a central courtyard

which measures 49m. by 47m. The mosque (prayer hall) measures 71m by 58m. There is a large tank (*hauz*) in the centre of the courtyard, which measures 3.5 sq.m.

The arcaded cloisters (*riwaq*) on the northern, southern and eastern sides measure 11 feet in width with a beautiful gateway in the middle of each one of them. These cloisters are built in marble with typical Shah Jahani pillars and engrailed arches, shaded by projecting eaves. Both the northern and southern gateways consists of ornamental *iwans* and are crowned by three square *chhatris*. The eastern main gate is larger and more monumentally composed than the gates in the north and south sides. It is a double storey structure and was the Imperial Gate. There are octagonal towers attached to the corners, which are surmounted by corresponding *chhatries*. The prayer hall on the western side of the court measures 49m. by 17m. It is three bay deep with seven arched openings of cusped arches of Shah Jahani pattern. The façade is protected by wide eaves.

The superstructure of the mosque is remarkable for its magnificent three bulbous domes of Shah Jahani style with seven





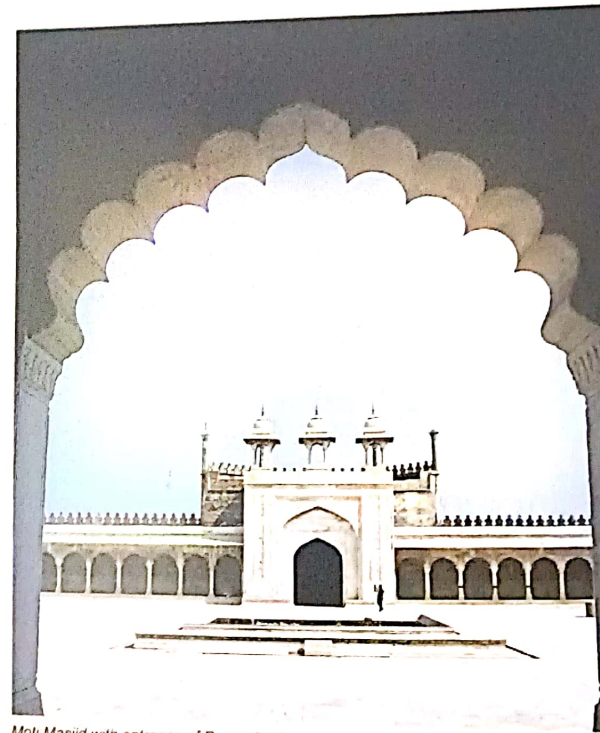
Cloister inside the Moti Masjid

square kiosks (*chhatris*) crowning the façade of the building which add much to the height and skyline of the mosque.

A long Persian inscription in elegant Nasta'liq characters inlaid with black marble on the frieze of the façade which eulogises the graceful marble mosque and records its construction by Shah Jahan in seven years (1648-1655) at a cost of rupees three lakhs. As the

mosque has the main entrance on the river side, it served as the Jami Masjid for Friday prayers to Mughal nobles and officers beside other dignitaries who came to visit the Daulat Khana of Agra Fort. This fact is borne out by its large dimensions.

That the Moti Masjid is an architectural matchless marvel is emphasised by its inscription which records: "It is a palatial building of paradise made of invaluable pearl for since the



Moti Masjid with entrance of Prayer Hall





Moti Masjid with courtyard and hauz in the centre

beginning of the inhabited world, a parallel of this mosque built entirely of white marble has never been produced since the creation of the world. No place of worship like it resplendid and brilliant from top to bottom has ever appeared before."

The panels in the western wall are finely carved and the

floor of the prayer chamber is laid with prayer spaces (*musalla*) bordered by strips of light yellow marble. On either side are marble screens behind which are the marble panel chambers (*Muluk Khana*) meant for the Emperor, Princes and other important noblemen.

## DILLI DARWAZA

The Delhi Gate was the principal gateway of the Fort and hence it was designed most monumentally. As Badauni noted, it was completed in A.H. 976 (1568-69). It faced the city to which it was connected through a *chowk* which was later

reconstructed by Shah Jahan when the Jami Masjid was built. Besides the provision of such usual features as high, extra-strong bastions which projected and towered forward, high ramparts and their battlemented parapet with merlons which sheltered the defenders who could



safely fire at the besiegers under their cover through loopholes and embrasures and the deep broad moat with draw-bridge over it which could be lifted up and disconnected the Fort from the main land rendering it inaccessible to the invader. The approach was also ingeniously planned to put the defenders in a definitely advantageous position. The Delhi Gate was also called the Hathi Pol (Elephant Gate) because of two stone sculptures of life-size elephants which adorned the entrance on the western side with raised trunks making an impressive arch. The elephants are no longer extant only their pedestals have remained in situ.

Two beautifully designed and ornamented bastions strengthened the hexagonal entrance originally served as the "Naubat Khana" where ceremonial music was played at fixed timings and with regular intervals firstly to denote time and secondly the movements of the Emperor. *Naubat* (ceremonial music) was part of the medieval life.

The gateway has a four storied elevation on the eastern side in reaching terraces, composed of living rooms,

verandahs and pavilions. The bastions are octagonal in plan and double storied and are crowned by a *chhatra* each. The lower storey has arched and oblong niches; the upper one has arched alcoves with openings and similar niches beautifully alternated along the elevation on each octagonal side. White marble has been judiciously used with red sandstone in the scheme of surface decoration. In fact, the whole building has been most profusely ornamented and Akbar spared no money or effort to give it a regal impression. All possible techniques of decoration were adopted and, as it seems, and not able artisans were employed on this project. Thus, it has inlay and mosaic, stone carving chiefly in geometrical, floral and stylised designs, and stalactite, painted and of course, covering with glazed-tiles. Carving in bold relief has been done in oblong panels around the arches on the western facade, and in brackets, lintels and friezes on the eastern brackets, particularly those with elephant-heads with raised trunk, based on indigenous prototypes. Beautifully designed *jalis* have been used on the balustrades of the balconies. The oblong panels of carving around

the arches were provided on western facade and in brackets and lintel and friezes on the eastern brackets particularly those with elephant heads with raised trunks. The interior has been decorated in lime stucco on arched niches, soffits in archaic design, geometrical and stalactite. Besides external surfaces have also been treated with stucco and paintings. The glazed tile decoration is limited to frieze where it is strikingly produced in deep red, green yellow colours. The soffits and arch balcony of the topmost *chhatris* were also decorated with glazed tiles. Though much of it has been defaced whatever remains testify to the original glory.

A Persian inscription in the guard room of this gate records Akbar's departure in 1599 and arrival in 1601. The epigraph was executed by Muhammad Masum Nami, a nobleman of Akbar. Jalalu'd-Din Muhammad Akbar Padshah set out in (A.H.) 1008 (1599) and returned to Agra in 1010 (A.D. 1601).

The bastions have a fine combination of tile ornamentation and stone carvings, whose composition as a whole is extremely impressive, befitting an entrance gateway.

The upper storey halls have now been renovated and modernised earlier housing the Naubat Khana.

The chronogram, giving its date of construction was composed by the famous court poet Faizi as Bina-i-Dara-i-Bihisht (i.e. the building of the Gate of Paradise) in A.H. (A.D. 1567).





## Conservation at Agra Fort

The Archaeological Survey of India, Agra Circle has carried out conservation in various parts of Agra Fort complex. The important conservation works are briefly given below.

### Year 2000-2001

The old and decayed red sand stone flooring in the northern verandah of Jahangiri Mahal was restored. The decayed plaster of the ceiling of Diwan-i-Am was replastered in special lime mortar. The broken marble *Jali* of the Musamman burj was restored with new one as per the original. The missing part of red sand stone *Jali* of Phansi Ghar was replaced with new one.

### Year 2001-2002

The underpinning and re-plastering work of the Birbal house was completed. The decayed ornamental plaster of the northern *dalan* of Raja Ratan Singh palace was restored as per the original. The Moti Masjid was conserved by way of pointing, underpinning and water tightening. Besides, Mughal pattern doors were provided at the basement cells of Moti Masjid. The work of providing red sand stone *jali* of Machhi Bhawan was taken up and the work was in progress. The red sand stone flooring in front of Diwan-i-Am was taken up and partially completed.



Garden in front of Jahangiri Mahal, after restoring the red sand stone flooring

### Year 2002-2003

The red sand stone flooring in the remaining portion of the Diwan-i-Am complex (in the north-western side) was taken up for environmental beautification. The remaining work of replastering in Raja Ratan Singh ki Haveli was completed.

### Year 2003-2004

The southern entrance gate of Diwan-i-Am complex was conserved by restoring the missing red sand stone pinnacles, guldasta, veneering stones and decayed plaster. Similarly, the northern entrance gate of Diwan-i-Am complex was conserved by restoration of missing kangoora stone and veneering stones as per the original. The work of depalstering of decayed plaster was taken up and work is in progress. The work of providing red sand stone pathway in Diwan-i-Am complex towards Moti Masjid and Ratan Singh Ki Haveli was completed.

The Moti Masjid was conserved by pointing and water tightening of the eastern and southern side wall. The missing and broken marble *chhaja* stone of the Moti Masjid were replaced with new one as per the old pattern.

The southern side cells of the Meena Bazar were conserved by underpinning, pointing, edging, red sand stone flooring and restoration of decayed and missing doorframes of the cells. The fortification wall was conserved by providing and replacing decayed and missing red sand stone veneerings. The so called Shivaji cell was conserved by providing with lime concrete on roof after removal of the debris of the collapsed roof; provided lime concrete flooring in the pathway of the corridor, replacing the missing and decayed brackets, pillar, thibi as per the original. The decayed plaster of the interior of the building was de-plastered and re-plastered matching to the original.

### Year 2004-2005

The conservation works of the so called Shivaji cell was completed which include water tightening of roof terrace, replacement of old and decayed red sand stone members as veneering, plain dasa, dab, quid and re-plastering work where ever required.

Conservation of the Diwan-i-Am complex was attended by replacing the red sand stone pillars, plain dasa and veneer stone



in verandah and water tightening of the roof terrace and laying lime plaster of verandah wall. The north side gate of Diwan-i-Am was conserved by replacing the decayed red sand stone pillars and veneer stones in courtyard of the gate and lime punning on walls wherever missing or decayed.

The Moti Masjid complex was conserved by replacement of red sand stone pan patti design dasa, plain dasa, bracket, dab, and door frame and provided with lime concrete flooring in the southern side cells.

The fortification wall (Riverside/Hathi ghat side) was conserved by lime plastering after underpinning on lakhauri brick walls, replacement of red sand stone veneer stones, dab, quid near *Hathi Ghat* and laying lime concrete on of the pathway on the top of the fortification wall.

The Musamman Burj complex was conserved by replacing the broken white marble *chhajja* at the back of the Khas Mahal and octagonal type white marble railing and Muttaka on top of Musamman Burj roof.

Underpinning, laying lime concrete and replacement of sand stone patti design dasa, frame and *chhajja* was carried out at Mina Bazar Hind complex. The

conservation works at Anguri Bagh complex include replacement of red sand stone pan patti design Dasa, plain dasa, dab veneering, flooring in front of Shish Mahal and providing Mughal pattern door in opening of cells. The Machhi Bhawan complex was conserved by replacement of red sand stone pan patti design dasa, plain dasa, dab, veneering, flooring, door frame, and lime punning on walls and providing Mughal pattern door in opening of cells.

The Amar Singh Gate complex was conserved by replacing of decayed red sand stone pan patti design dasa, plain dasa, dab veneering, carved panels, flooring, door frame and water tightening of roof terrace by laying lime concrete on roof.

Beside, the Diwan-i-Khas was also conserved by replacing white marble *chhajja* wherever missing.

#### Year 2005-2006

In Diwan-i-Am, in continuation of previous year, the work of replacement of red sand stone pillars, dasa, veneer stones in verandah was carried out. Lime punning over the plastered surface, recessed pointing on lakhauri brick flooring and red

sand stone veneering was done, roof terrace was water tightened.

In continuation of previous year, the fortification wall of riverside was conserved by lime plaster on lakhauri brick wall after underpinning, replacement of decayed red sand stone veneer stones, dab, quid near Hathi Ghat to Amar Singh Gate and red sand stone flooring over the top of the Fort wall. The fortification wall in Salimgarh area from Amar Singh gate to south-west corner was conserved by vegetation cleaning from top of the wall and laying lime concrete on same wall in place of dead concrete. The cells in the wall were underpinned and replastered.

In Moti Masjid complex the works which were started last year was completed and the works include red sand stone pan patti design dasa, plain dasa, bracket, dab, quid and door frame and lime concrete flooring in southern side cells.

The *Doli* in Akbari Mahal was conserved by water tightening and cleaning of underground chambers and provided with iron mesh door in openings to prevent bats. The Akbari Mahal toilets were conserved by underpinning, water tightening and laying lime

concrete in place of dead lime concrete. The Taksals and underground cells was conserved by underpinning, water tightening, cleaning of underground chambers in Taksal and below Jahangiri Mahal and providing red sand stone flooring.

The first floor of Machhi Bhawan was conserved by restoration of richly carved lime plaster in north and west side verandah with lime mortar and lime punning over plastered surface and laying lime concrete on roof terrace in place of dead one.

In Jahangiri Mahal, red sand stone flooring in south-west courtyard, water tightening of roof terrace by laying lime concrete in place of the dead one, replastering on wall and parapet was done.

The water moat from Musamman burj to Amar Singh Gate was desilted and lime plastered on moat wall after removal of dead pilaster.

#### Year 2006-2007

The Fortification wall from Water Gate to Amar Singh Gate was conserved by replastering, underpinning of kangooras, red sand stone flooring on top of wall as per original. In continuation of previous year, the conservation of the Salimgarh side cells in the



fortification wall was carried out and completed and the works include underpinning, re-plastering of the cells in the same wall and laying red sand stone flooring on top of the wall. The outer fortification wall from Amar Singh gate to south west corner was partially conserved by laying lime concrete on same wall, re-plastering and underpinning of kangooras and red sand stone flooring on top of wall. The inner fortification wall near Bengali Burj was conserved by replacement of red sand stone veneer stones, dab, quid wherever missing and damaged and water tightening of the wall with lime mortar.

In continuation of last year, the conservation works of Jahangiri Mahal was carried out and completed which include replacement of red sand stone carving members as *chhajja*, bracket, pillar base, pinnacles and water tightening of roof terrace.

In Mina bazar complex, the conservation works include lime plaster on lakhauri brick wall after underpinning with lakhauri bricks and lime mortar, replacement of red sand stone members in place of decayed and bulged stones as bracket, dab, pan patti design dasa, plain dasa and flooring etc and water tightening of roof terrace with lime concrete.

#### Year 2007-2008

At Anguri Bagh complex the work of racking out decayed carved plasterwork was taken up and re-plastered matching with the original wherever necessary. Beside, damaged and broken Muttaka and *Jali* railing of red sand stone in the Upper story were also replaced.

In continuation of previous year's work, repair to 3<sup>rd</sup> Complex of Mina-Bazar was continued during the period under review and almost 90% of work has now been completed. The old cement plaster which was provided by the Army in the past was racked out from walls, ceiling and cells and exposed area was conserved by underpinning and recessed pointing. The work is in progress. The moulding below the parapet has also been restored.

The Moti Masjid complex was repaired by racking out of dead lime concrete and relaid it again matching to the original. The marble *chhajja* stones were restored with new ones. The bulged out marble Gola galta stone were also replaced. The broken Kangooras stones of the parapet wall are conserved by restoring the decayed, broken and missing one.

The Water Moat near Amar

Singh Gate was also repaired by way of cleaning of garbage from drain and moat, taking out damaged lakhauri brick flooring and resetting after providing base concrete, recessed pointing in open joints with lime mortar were also attended to. The paved pathways from Amar Singh Gate to Diwan-i-Am was repaired by replacing the old decayed and worn out red sand stone slabs. The Fortification wall from Amar

Singh Gate to south-western corner was repaired by underpinning, plastering, restoring of red sand stone flooring, laying lime concreting and providing veneer stones wherever missing/ broken. Damaged veneering stones wherever necessary were also replaced by new one.

#### CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE MUGHAL EMPERORS OF INDIA

Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babur  
c.1483-1530  
r.1526-1530

Nasir-ud-Din Muhammad Humayun  
c.1508-1556  
r.1530-40; 1555-56

Abul-Fath Jalal-ud-Din Muhammad Akbar  
c.1542-1605  
r.1556-1605

Nur-ud-Din Muhammad Jahangir  
c.1569-1627  
r.1605-1627

Shahab-ud-Din Muhammad Shah Jahan  
c.1592-1666  
r.1627-58

Mohi-ud-Din Muhammad Aurangzeb (Alamgir)  
c.1618-1707  
r.1658-1707



## References

1. Professor S. Nurul Hasan, Agra, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition. (London, 1960) p. 252.
  2. Abdullah, *Tarikh-i-Daudi*. Edited by Professor Shaikh Abdur Rashid (Aligarh, 1969), p. 40
  3. E.O. Oertel, Reports of the P.W.D. officers on the Conservation of Archaeological Buildings in the United Provinces for the year 1905-06, p. 79. The Maurian bricks found in the excavation near the western entrance of the Jahangiri Mahal, cf. *Ibid*, p. 6-7. R.Nath, *History of Mughal Architecture* Vol. II, p. 102
  4. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* (Persian) Edited Syud Ahmud (Allygarh, 1864), p.2. R. Nath, *History of Mughal Architecture* Vol. II, New Delhi, 1985, p. 102, S. Nurul Hasan, *op. cit*, p. 252, Elliot and Dowson History as it is told by its own Historians. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, *op.cit*
  5. Khwaja Nimatullah, *Tarikh-i-Khan Jahani-wa-Makhzan-i-Afgani*, Edited by Imamud-Din Vol. I, (Dacca, 1960), p. 175, 195, 196, Abdullah *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, *op. cit*. p. 36
  6. Ni'matullah, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 196, Abdullah *op. cit.*, p. 60
  7. Beveridge, A.S. *The Memoirs of Babur*, Part III, 532, *The Babur Nama, Memoirs of Babur, Prince and Emperor* translated and edited by Wheeler M. Thackston (Washington, 1996), p. 360.
  8. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, *op.cit*. p.2
  9. Various dates, ranging from 1567 to 1571, are traditionally assigned to the construction of Agra Fort. The *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* (Persian text) (Ally Gurh), 1864, p. 2, gives the period of erection as 15 or 16 years, but the *Badshah Nama* (Persian text), Vol. I, p. 154 and the *Ain-i-Akbari* Blochmans translation, Vol. I, p. 380 are evidently correct in assigning the completion in eight years ie. in A.D. 1565-1573.
  10. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol II, *op. cit*. p. 180
  11. Muhammad Salih Kambo, *Amal-i-Salih* (Persian) Vol. II (Calcutta 1924), p. 407
  12. *Archaeological Survey of India Annual Report* 1907-08, p. 8-9, R. Nath, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 121-122.
  13. R. Nath, *Some Aspects of Mughal Architecture* (New Delhi 1976) p. 23-26
  14. For details see William Klingelhofer, *The Jahangiri Mahal of the Agra Fort Expression and Experience in Early Mughal Architecture*, *Muqarnas* vol. 5, 1988, pp. 153-169, John Marshall, 'Conservation of Monuments of Agra', *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report*, 1903-04, p. 164-193
  15. Muhammad Salih Kambo, *Shah Jahan Nama* (Persian), *Shah Jahan Nama* (Urdu consisod) edited and translated by Mumtaz Liyaqat (Lahore, 1982), pp. 118-119, *Ibid*. p. 94-97 where Shah Jahans daily routines are described.
  16. Abdul Hamid Lahauri, *Badshah Nama* Vol. I, Calcutta 1867, p. 235-236. Lahauri also mentions that during the time of Akbar and Jahangir and also during the early year of Shah Jahan's reign the Darbar was held under an awning (Aiwan-i-Parcha) set up in court of the Jharoka-i-khana-i-khas-wa-'Am (throne chamber of the Diwan-i-'Am) supported on a wooden structure. *Shah Jahan Nama*, (Urdu) *op. cit.*, 118
  17. Ebba Koch, *Diwan-i-Am and chihil Sutun: The Audience Halls of Shah Jahan* Cf. *Muqarnas*, Vol. XV, 1994, pp. 143-165.
  18. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* (Persian) *op. cit*. pp. 3-4.
- It is not mentioned in the contemporary or later records that Shah Jahan also suspended a Chain of Justice in the Diwan-i-Khas, as is authentically mentioned in the epigraph of the Diwan-i-Khas.
19. *Badshah Nama op. cit*, Vol. I p. 240-241 where details of the buildings and their decorations are given.
  20. *Ibid*. According to *Badshah Nama*, 'these pavilions which have two cells on both sides were profusely decorated in gold and colours and the outer roof with curved pent sides, from which spring copper-gilt spikes, was originally covered with wood and sheets of gold.'
  21. M.A. Husain, *An Historical Guide to the Agra Fort* (Delhi, 1937), p. 33-34, 56.
  22. R. Nath, 'Some Aspects of Mughal Architecture' *op. Cit*. p. 31-32
  23. *Badshah Nama op. cit* Vol. I pp. 240-241
  24. *Ibid*, p. 239, which he mentions as *Muthamman Khana*



25. Muhammad Kazim, "*Alamgir Nama*" (Persian), pp. 928-934, which records that the corpse of Shah Jahan was removed from the Musanman Burj to the *aiwan* near it to be bathed and shrouded. The body was then placed in the coffin of sandal wood and conveyed through the passage leading from the Burj to the gate beneath it which, though closed, was specially opened for the occasion. Thence the funeral procession proceeded through Sher Haji Gate of the Fort (now closed) and crossing the river Yamuna deposited the coffin in the mortuary chamber of the Taj, beside the grave of his beloved queen Mumtaz Mahal.

26. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Persian, p. 2-4, *Badshah Nama op. cit.* (Persian) Vol. I, p. 238.

27. W. H. Siddiqi, *Catalogue of the Exhibition of Rampur Raza Library, held at India International Centre, New Delhi on 6 to 12 October, 2006*

28. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* (Persian) *op. cit.* p. 2-3

29. *Badshah Nama, op. cit.* (Persian) Vol. I, p. 239, R. Nath, *Some Aspects of Mughal Architecture, op. cit.* p. 129-134

30. *Badshah Nama*, Vol. I, *op. cit.* p. 238-239

31. *Shah Jahan Nama* (Urdu) *op. cit.* p. 497-498

32. Badayuni, *Muntaklaabut-Tawarikh* Persian, Vol. II, (Calcutta, 1865), p. 108.

## Useful Information

### Air

Agra is well-connected to cities like Delhi, Khajuraho, Varanasi. The Kheria airport is 6 km from Agra city. Airlines connecting are Air India, the national carrier and a number of private carriers.

### Rail

Agra is a major railway junction on main broad gauge routes to the south, east and west. Two of the best trains namely Shatabdi Express (between New Delhi and Bhopal) and Taj Express (between New Delhi and Gwalior) are available to access Agra. Some other trains servicing the city are : G.T Express (New Delhi to Chennai), Dadar Express (Mumbai to Amritsar), Jhelum Express (Jammu to Pune), Kalinga Utkal Express (New Delhi to Puri), Karnataka Express (New Delhi to Trivandrum), Ujjani Express (Dehradun to Ujjain) and Hyderabad Express (New Delhi to Hyderabad)

### Road

Agra is well-connected to the following cities by road : Mathura, Delhi, Chandigarh, Kanpur, Lucknow, Varanasi, Jhansi, Chitrakoot.

Agra's distance by road, from the main Cities is : Delhi 203 km, Gwalior 118 km, Jaipur 237 km, Khajuraho 393 km, Calcutta 1287 km, Varanasi 657 km, Mussoorie 417 km, Mumbai 1204 km.

### City Transport

UPSRTC Bus Stand, Idgah, Enquiries, Tel : (0562)2420324

UPSRTC Bus Stand, Opposite Power House, Enquiries, Tel : (0562)2464557

City Bus Service : UPSRTC operates city buses to and from the main archaeological sites.

Taxi : Air conditioned/non air-conditioned taxi are available at the railway stations, airport, hotels and at major tourist spots.

Other transport : Un-metered auto-rickshaws, tongas and cycle rickshaws are available, rates of which are negotiable.

### Hotels

Agra Ashok  
6B, The Mall Road,  
Tel : 2462990/2393777  
reservation@hotelagraashok.com

Amar  
Tourist Complex Area,  
Fatehabad Road  
Tel : 2331884 - 89



Amar Vilas  
Taj East Gate Road, Taj Nagri  
Scheme  
Tel : 2231515  
reservation@amarvilas.com

Clarks Shiraz  
54, Taj Road Agra  
Tel : 2226121 - 32  
clarkraz@sancharnet.in

Holiday Inn  
Hariparbat Crossing.  
Tel : 2525460 - 75

Reservations@holidayinnagra.  
Co.in

Howard Park Plaza  
Fatehabad Road, Taj Ganj.  
Tel : 4001870 - 71  
hpp@sarovarhotels.com

Jaypee Palace  
Fatehabad Road Agra  
Tel : 2330800 -19  
reservations.jpa@jphotels.com

Mansingh Palace  
Fatehabad Road  
Tel : 2331771- 78  
sales.agra@mansinghhotels.com

Mughal Sheraton  
Fatehabad Road, Taj Ganj  
Tel : 4021700  
reservations.itcmughal@  
itcwelcomgroup.in

Park View  
Fatehabad Road  
Tel : 6523031, 2331139

Taj View  
Fatehabad Road, Taj Ganj  
Tel : 2232400 - 18  
tajview.agra@tajhotels.com

Trident Hilton  
Tajnagri Scheme Fatehabad Road  
Tel : 233 1818  
agra@trident-hilton.com

#### General Details

Altitude: 169 metres above  
sea level. Area 82 sq. km.

Language: Hindi, Urdu,  
English

Temperature  
Summer: 21° C - 45° C

Winter: 4° C - 32° C

Clothes  
Summer - Cotton

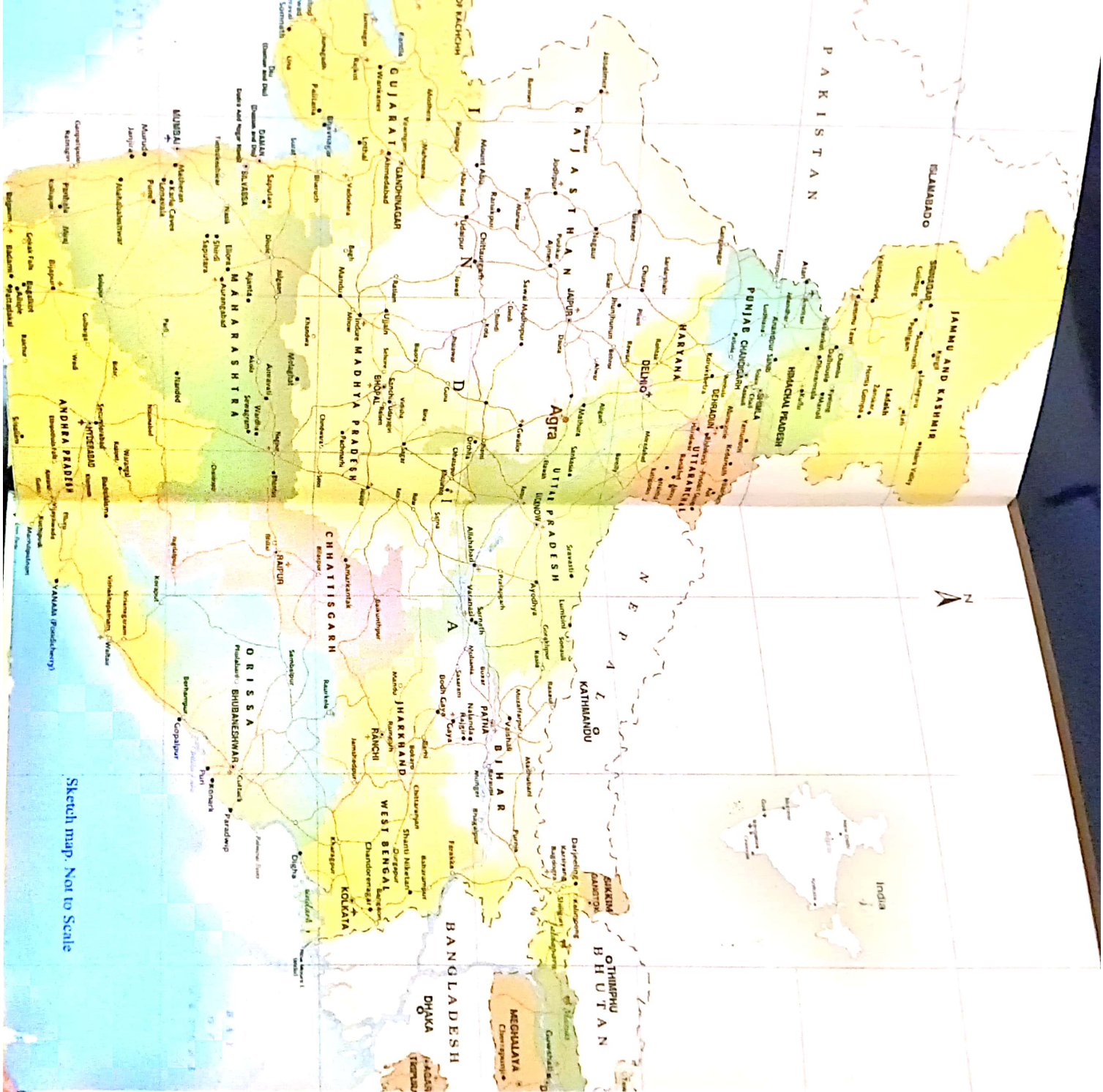
Winter - Light Woollens

STD Code : 0562



12632





Sketch map. Not to Scale



## World Heritage Series

### Agra Fort

Qutb Minar & Adjoining Monuments

Humayun's Tomb & Adjoining monuments

Fatehpur Sikri

Khajuraho

Konark

Sanchi

Ajanta

Old Goa

Mahabalipuram

Hampi

Ellora

Chola Temples

Pattadakal

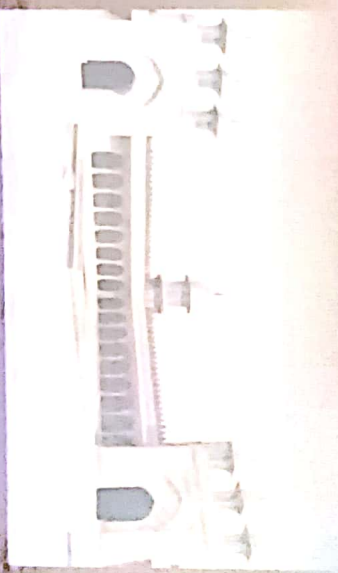
Agra Fort

Taj Mahal

Elephanta

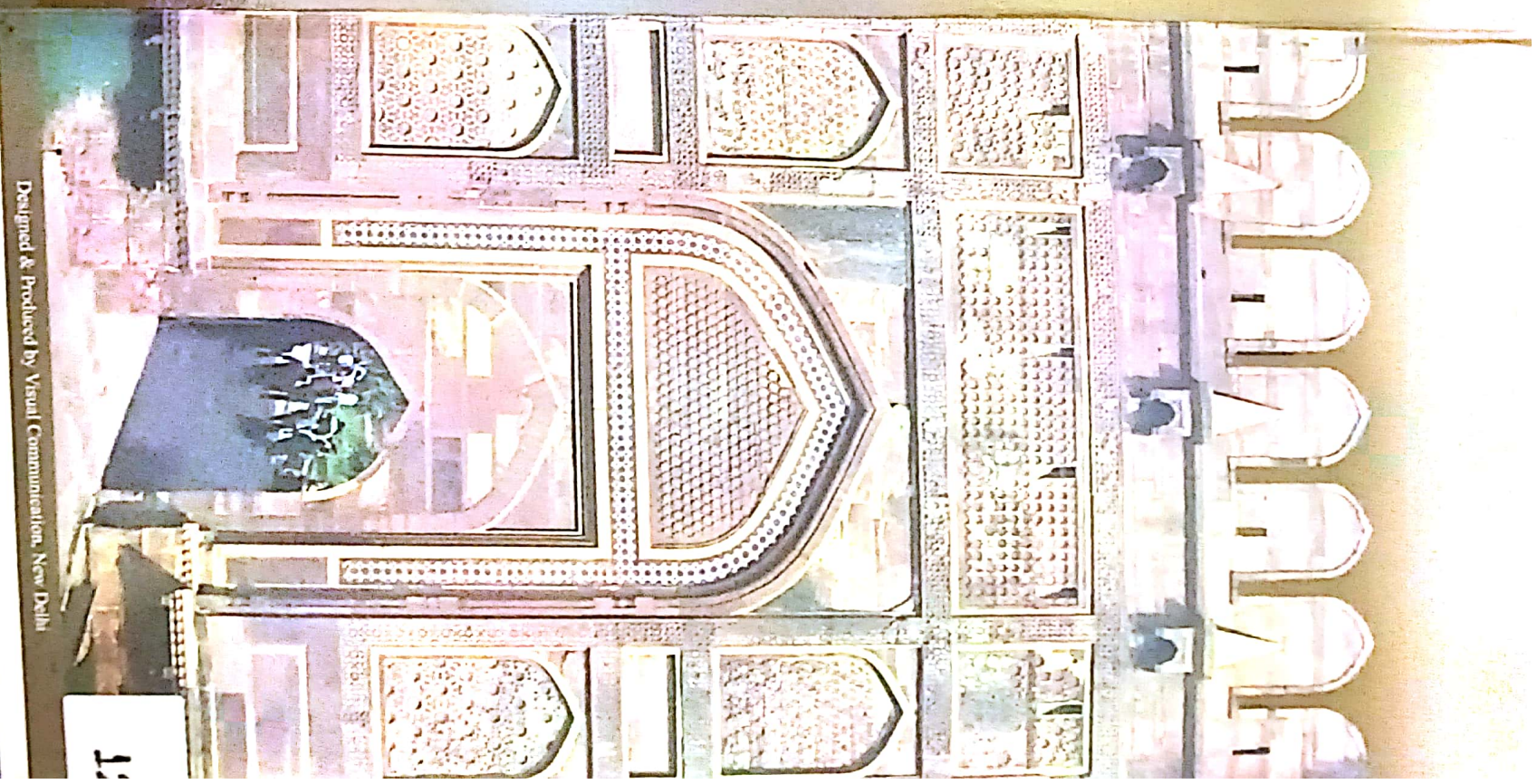
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