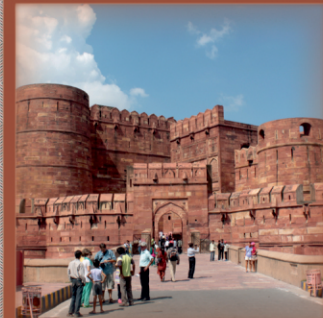


Agra fort, one of the most important and well known forts in India is situated on the west bank of Yamuna. Agra fort was built by the mighty Mughal Emperor, Akbar the Great, between 1565-73. It's imposing red sand stone ramparts form a crescent along the river front which encompasses an enormous complex of royal buildings, ranging in style from the early eclecticism of Akbar to sublime elegance of ShahJahan. The Agra Fort is inscribed on the list of World Heritage Monuments by the UNESCO since 1983.

It is believed that the Fort was originally a brick fort and the Chauhan Rajputs held it. It was mentioned for the first time in 1080 AD when Ghaznavide force captured it. Sikandar Lodi (1487-1517) was the first Sultan of Delhi Who shifted to Agra and lived in the fort. He governed the country from here and Agra assumed the importance of the 2nd Capital. It was built over the remains of an ancient site known as Badalgarh. After the death of Sikandar Lodi in 1517, his son Ibrahim Lodi held the fort until he was defeated and killed in the battle of Panipat in 1526 by Babur, he founder of Mughal rule in India.

Babur sent his son Humayun to Agra who captured the fort and seized vast treasure including the world famous "Koh-I-Noor" diamond. Humayun was coronated here in 1530. After Humayun's defeat Shershah, of the Sur dynasty occupied Agra Fort.

This fort was started in 1565 and took eight long years in its completion. The construction was entrusted to Kashim khan, who was Akbar's Commander in chief and the Governor of Kabul.



Akbar's son Jahangir mostly resided at Lahore and in Kashmir, but visited Agra regularly and lived in the Fort. Though ShahJahan, the son of Jahangir has transferred his capital to Delhi, formally in 1648, he continued to live here.

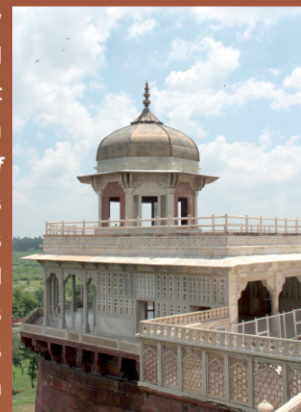
After the down fall of the mighty Mughal Empire, this fort of Agra, had to bear upon some grievous hurts on its chest, Agra remained politically unstable. It was intermittently held by the Jats and the Marathas. The British captured it from the Marathas in 1803. In 1857, the British had taken shelter to save their lives from the Mutineers and the public of Agra, though this fort has lost that glamour and grandeur of the Mughal rule, yet it deserves a keen observation by the tourists. The Agra fort had four main gates but now only the famous Amar Singh gate and the Delhi gate are in use. The rest of the two gates- namely the Hathi gate and Khizri gate (water gate) have been closed permanently and is still under Indian Army possession. The impressive Amar Singh Gate to the south leads into the fort. To its right is the so called Jahangiri Mahal, the only major palace in the fort that dates back to Akbar's reign. The architectural setting of the Jahangiri Mahal is defined by clarity, simplicity and integrity of its different components. In front of Jahangiri Mahal is a large marble pool which according to 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 Begum. And, used to be filled with thousands of rose



petals so that the empress could bathe in its scented waters. This circular bath bowl is carved out of a single block of granite. Along the river front is the *Khas-Mahal* (*Aramghah-i-Muqaddasa*), an elegant white marble hall with a vividly painted ceiling characteristic of Shahjahan's style of architecture. The two *golden pavilions* (palki style) and the

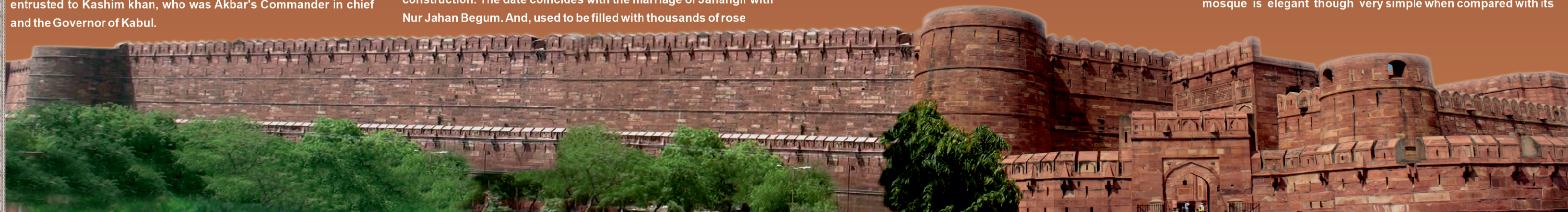
Jharokha darshan, built in Bengal style are matchless structures representing mature Mughal architecture. These pavilions were once associated with the princesses Jahanara and Roshanara.

Facing them is *Anguri Bagh* "Grape garden" with its lily pools and candle niches. 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. It was established by Akbar the Great for his empress and her ladies of his 'Harem'. It is said that the soil for this was brought from Kashmir. The *Sheesh Mahal* (Palace of mirror) and royal baths were used as dressing room by the ladies and its walls, arches and ceilings are inlaid with beautiful small mirrors. It is situated towards the north of Khas Mahal. It was built by ShahJahan in 1637 AD in the form of Turkish bath for the use of his family members. To the northeast, near the gloriously inlaid *Musamman Burj*, a double-storied octagonal tower with clear views of the TajMahal.



These were, were ShahJahan, imprisoned by his son Aurangzeb, and spent the last years of his life with his daughter Jahan Ara and a few royal ladies by his side. *Mina Masjid* "Gem mosque" probably the smallest in the world and the Emperor's private mosque, is nearby. Next to Musamman Burj is the *Diwan-i-Khas* (Hall of private audience), a lavishly decorated open

hall with fine *pietra dura* work on its columns, where royal darbars or meetings were held, it was built by ShahJahan, with white marble in 1636 as is evidenced by its long Persian inscription. It is said, that this building too was made by the same artisans, who made the TajMahal. Opposite is the *Machchhi Bhawan* ("Fish House"), once a magnificent water palace. To its west is *Diwan-i-Aam*, the Hall of Public or Audience was earlier constructed by Akbar the Great in wood (Iwan-i-Chobin) which were later replaced by larger structures, painted with marble plaster. It is built in red sand stone on a raised platform (1.25m) in a rectangular plan measuring 61.77m by 20.12m. ShahJahan's historians and poets described the Audience Hall as Iwan-i-Daulat Khana-wa-Khass-o-Am or Hall of Public Audiences and Iwan-i-Chehil Sutun of Forty pillared Hall which is now called Diwan-i-Am. To the northwest is the *Nagina Masjid* (Jewel Mosque) built by ShahJahan in 1635-36 A.D. of pure white marble for the use of the nobles and officers who came to attend the Diwan-i-Khas functions. The mosque is elegant though very simple when compared with its



successor *Moti Masjid* in Red Fort Delhi, built by Aurangzeb in 1658-59. Beneath this existed the, Meena Bazar, (female handicraft market) from where the ladies of the royal harem watched the merchants display their silks, brocades and jewellerys in the courtyard below. Towards the north side of Diwan-i-Aam, the most elegant mosque constructed by Shah Jahan in white marble is *Moti Masjid* (Pearl Mosque). The structure is externally made of red sand stone but the entire interior is finished with white marble.



It is one of the first ShahJahani mosques at Agra. As per records its construction by Shahjahan in seven years (1648-55) at a cost of rupees three lakhs.



Apart from this Agra Fort is embellished with beautiful edifices of both secular and religious nature such as Akbari Mahal, Akbar's Baoli, Pachisi Court, Darshani-Darwaza, Takht-i-Jahangiri (Black throne of Jahangir), Salim Garh, Ratan Singh Ki Haveli, Somnath Gate and John Russel Colvin's Grave. The early marble specimens of ShahJahan are notable for their designs, gates, and prayer halls, supported on ShahJahani pillars, pilasters capitals, graceful mihrabs, elegant marble domes and ablution tanks.



Public Awareness:-

The public is hereby informed hat for carrying out repair or renovation of buildings or structures in prohibited area or construction or reconstruction or repair or renovation in the regulated area of any centrally protected monuments of Agra Circle, Agra the permission of competent authority/national monuments Authority is highly essential .All the Centrally protected monuments are governed by the "The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and validation) Act, 2010. This Act is an amendment to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 (and Rules 1959 therein).



Every area, extending to a distance of 100m in all directions from the protected area or protected monument is declared as prohibited area. If necessary the central government may, on the recommendation of the Authority (i.e. National Monument Authority) specify an area more than 100m to be prohibited area on the basis of

- ♦ Every area, 200m's in all directions from the limit of prohibited area of every ancient monument and archaeological sites and remains, declared as of national importance shall be Regulated area.
- ♦ Construction of any public or any other nature is prohibited in the area of the protected monument and protected area.
- ♦ Permission from the Competent Authority is essential for carrying out repair or renovation of buildings or structures in prohibited area which were preexisted before 16th June, 1992.

- ♦ For carrying out construction or reconstruction or repair or renovation in the regulated area, the owner of a building or land is required to obtain permission from the Competent Authority.
- ♦ Whoever raises, on or after 23rd Jan, 2010, any construction in the regulated area without the previous permission of the competent authority or in contravention of the permission granted by the competent authority, shall be punishable with imprisonment not exceeding two years or with fine which may extend to rupees one lakh or with both.
- ♦ The Government of India by Gazette Notification has declared the Commissioner, Agra as Competent Authority for granting permission/forwarding No Objection Certificate application in respect of centrally protected monuments/sites under ASI, Agra Circle.

THANKS-

- ♦ For keeping the monument clean.
- ♦ For help, in maintaining the natural environment around the monument.
- ♦ For help, in preventing and avoiding any kind of destruction of a monument by anyone and report any such matter to the concerned staff.
- ♦ For help in creating cultural awareness among the masses.
- ♦ For help in maintaining the sanctity of the monuments.
- ♦ For not littering or spoiling the monument.

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AGRA FORT

A Symbol of Mighty Mughals



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