

Preserving Urban Roots: The Case of Shakhari Bazaar, Dhaka, Bangladesh


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ABSTRACT

his paper discusses how conservation activities in an historic urban settlement can be carried out in the most supportive manner. Conservation is not only preserving a few historic buildings but rather preserving the urban cultural heritage and the environment that gave birth to city culture. The importance of “Preserving Urban Roots”, that is protecting historical cities through preservation, restoration and revitalization, is a universally accepted matter, but in reality it is a neglected issue. Historic urban quarters of old cities are often strongly characterized by environmental degradation and many of them are now suffering serious destruction and are losing their characteristics due to negligence. Shakhari Bazaar in Dhaka is a significant historical quarter, a coherent neighborhood of richly detailed buildings, where a traditional community has lived for centuries, but the existing environment of this area is vulnerable. This study is aimed at understanding the various processes of conservation in this historic urban settlement. The processes include having appropriate attitudes, developing greater community participation, preparing detailed documentation of the study area, identifying core/peripheral aspects of culture and built-form, and cultivating financial and institutional support. The study also makes the case for providing necessary services in the area and developing the total area as an ideal conserved area, not only by restoring existing building but also by preserving the traditional culture and heritage, shape and size of this area.

Key Words: *Conservation, Cultural heritage, Cultural tourism, Shakhari Bazaar, Urban roots.*

INTRODUCTION

The conservation of urban historical sites must be one of the basic aims of urban planning and seen as a continuous and permanent process. The process needs to be supported by a proper understanding of those mechanisms that generate and influence the formation of spatial structures. Conservation demands the integrated action of federal, state and local entities, plus the participation of the community. As part of its full application of

citizenship, the community must be included in planning decisions. The basic tools of preservation are an analysis and evaluation of prevailing conditions and inventories. These tools lead to a better understanding of cultural and the nature of a property. The participation of the community in inventorying reveals the value it attaches to the relevant property and stimulates its concern regarding the property

Legal protection of urban historical sites is to be achieved through different procedures; cataloguing, inventorying, urban regulations, tax exemptions and incentives, listings as to cultural interest and expropriation.

Along with conserving an area it is very important to improve the quality of the living environment for citizens. Options should be incorporated into preservation plans to promote an urban space where citizens can live with the required urban services and environment while continuing their culture and practices.

Dhaka, a city pulsating with fourteen million people, is looking to its heritage for a new lease on the future. The search for renewal can begin in the crowded, winding and forgotten *mahallas*, the indigenous settlements, of old Dhaka where the thriving city began in the last millennium. This is where the oldest and most graceful buildings still stand as legends of the grandeur and magnificence that these buildings once embodied. A tryst with

the past is only possible by ambling through the city to feel the pulse of the vibrating, indigenous localities among the maze of lanes and byways. The streets have grown organically to include seven hundred mosques, and bazaars in every *mahalla*. This is old Dhaka, a place that has been changing continuously, like any other living city, where traces of its evolution is still visible in many parts. This is just the tangible component of Old Dhaka heritage, which, by all means, deserves to be conserved with its pride intact. Amongst the congestion, traffic jams, dilapidation and despair, and within its variegated scenarios, there is hope of glory and beauty, which needs to be tapped to maintain the roots of its culture.

Shakhari Bazaar is an historic quarter and has been a sanctuary of a specific, ethnic business community for more than three centuries. The observed life-style has a long history and is part of a tradition that dates well before the age of these ruinous buildings. The pace and practice of life found there mixes and mingles with other parts of Old Dhaka with an

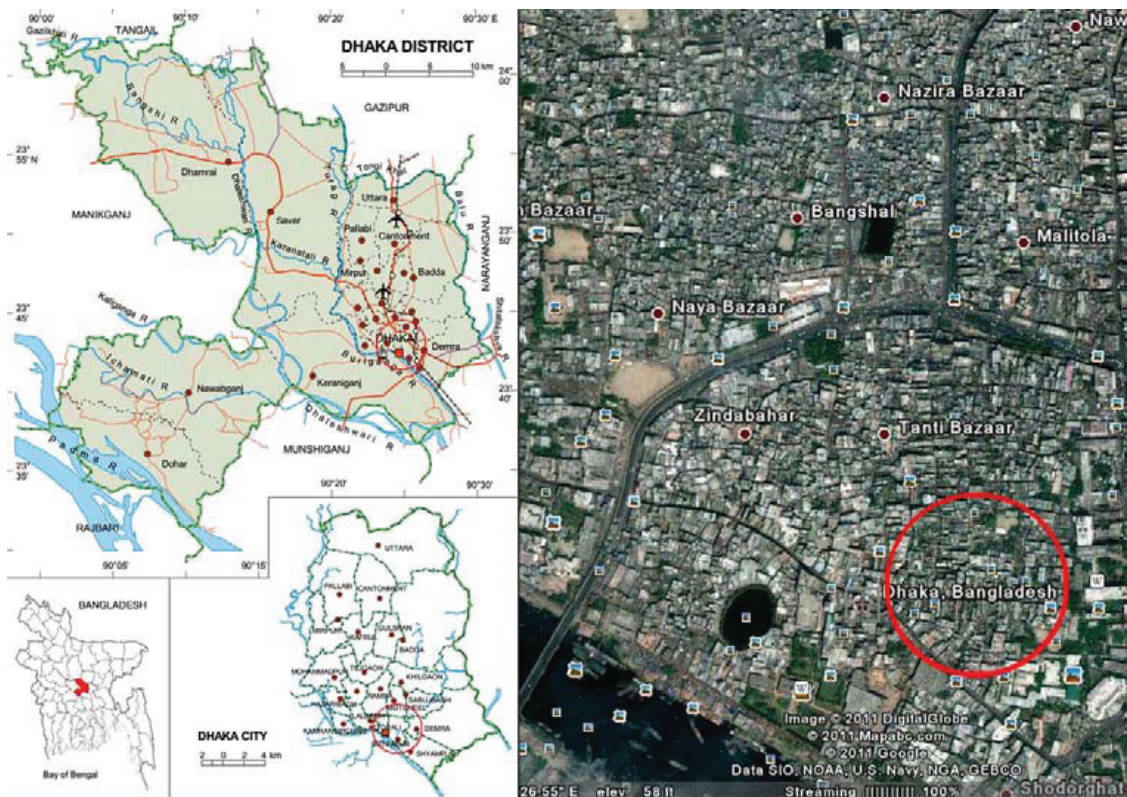


Figure 1:
Shakhari Bazar location map in Dhaka city,

appropriate harmony. The exuberant diversity of life and its colourful expressions give that part of Old Dhaka a true sense of urbanity. The living environment and living within Shakhari Bazaar have long reached an unsustainable state. This is due to inadequate and non-existent services and sanitation, crime and violence, and economic hardship. With conservation of the area there is a potential for renewal and for citizens to survive in Shakhari.

STORY OF AN URBAN CHARACTER: SHAKHARI BAZAAR

For centuries Dhaka has been famous for its traditional arts and crafts. Many of its old localities bear the names of the trades or crafts which were once practiced here. Shakhari Bazaar, also known as Shakhari Patti, is one such old locality. The name implies that the area began as a settlement of "Shakharis" or a community of craftsmen specialized

in making conch shell ornaments (Imamauddin et al., 1990). The shakha ornaments have a specific socio-cultural value, applied only to married Hindu women, which ensured its regular and widespread use in Hindu areas. Most of the inhabitants of this area belong to a specific caste of the Hindu religion and still practice the traditional craft handed down to them over generations.

The dynamics of Shakhari Bazaar rests on the unique way of life of these residents as well as their buildings. The original buildings were one or two storied and 80% to 90% of the buildings, including the extensions, are comparatively of recent origin. This can be seen from the beam-column and reinforced slab system of construction.

In the urban context of Dhaka, Shakhari Bazaar engenders its significance in several ways; culturally the area houses a specific ethnic group, socio-economically it provides trade and business for a very special kind of crafts, and architecturally it demonstrates a developmental pattern and



Figure 2:
Narrow Street and active street life of
Photograph: Iftekhar Ahmed



Figure 3:
A craftsman selling shankha

morphological characteristics that are typical of the area.

Over the ages, Shakhari Bazaar has been elevated to the level of the most popular centre for religious festivities. As one of the most densely populated areas in the world. Shakhari Bazaar also has the largest concentration of the Hindus in Dhaka. At present there are about 10,000 people living in Shakhari Bazaar, all within an area of 4.6 acres of land which makes it one of the highest density areas of the world.

Submerged in the fabric of these buildings are the footprints of different periods witnessed by Dhaka, from the Mughuls, through the colonial period and East Pakistan, to the independent Bangladesh. Unfortunately, recent observations of Shakhari Bazaar clearly indicate an active process of decay and destruction primarily attributed to unplanned growth, random alterations, over densification and poor maintenance. Shakhari Bazaar has grown over four centuries along a narrow 10-12 feet wide road, 600 feet long which connects Islampur Road with Nawabpur Road. Rows of densely built walk-up houses, having very narrow frontages, 10-12 feet on the average, flank the street. Fronting the street, manufacture and sale of conch shell products and other items of the decorations for Hindu gods' statues, are carried out. The rear part of the ground floor and the upper floors are used for residential accommodations. The high plinths, the triple arch of ground floor façades, the overlooking balconies, and decorated parapets facing the street are typical architectural features of Shakhari Bazaar. Building plots have great depths up to 90 feet compared to their narrow frontal widths. High population density, lack of open space (percentage of built up area 80%-90%), inadequate utilities and services, poor sanitation together with other socio-economic factors have caused a general degradation of the area that eventually caused deterioration of the buildings and their environmental condition.

Shakhari Bazaar life-style has a long history rooted within tradition that dates well beyond the age of these dilapidated buildings. Shakhari Bazaar Street suggests the presence of a space that is different from the visible physical space – a social space for an ethnic group. As mentioned

before, living environments in Shakhari Bazaar has long reached an unsustainable state. Despite the existence of social cohesion, manifested in the form of an operating panchayet, these problems do not make living in Shakhari Bazaar a very pleasing experience. An increase in population, accompanied by highly skewed ownership pattern and low affordability, results in the additions of floors above an inadequate foundation instead of redevelopment.

MORPHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

A striking characteristic of the area is the oblong and linear plots with very narrow frontal widths. The following factors may have been responsible for the development of such plot shapes. Each original owner may have received a plot with street frontage so that living and trading could be practiced together. However, as business flourished, the living quarters could only expand backwards. Such expansions could only proceed up to 70 to 80 feet as similar backward growths from an opposite lane set limits. Security aspect, such as threats of burglary or robbery, may have encouraged Shakharis to build closely-packed houses along narrow streets whose only two openings could easily be sealed, shutting off the whole area if necessary. Narrow houses, approachable only through narrow dark corridors and unexpected stairways, were perhaps deliberately designed to confuse intruders. Another reason for narrow plot sizes could be the subsequent divisions among successors each requiring a street frontage.

HOUSE PATTERNS AND CHARACTERISTICS

In spite of the piecemeal and sporadic growth of the community over centuries, most buildings in Shakhari Bazaar exhibit the following common features: houses are divided into three segments, the commercial part facing the street, the residential area in the middle and the service precinct, consisting of toilets and washing areas, in the open courts at the rear. Access to the inner part of the house is

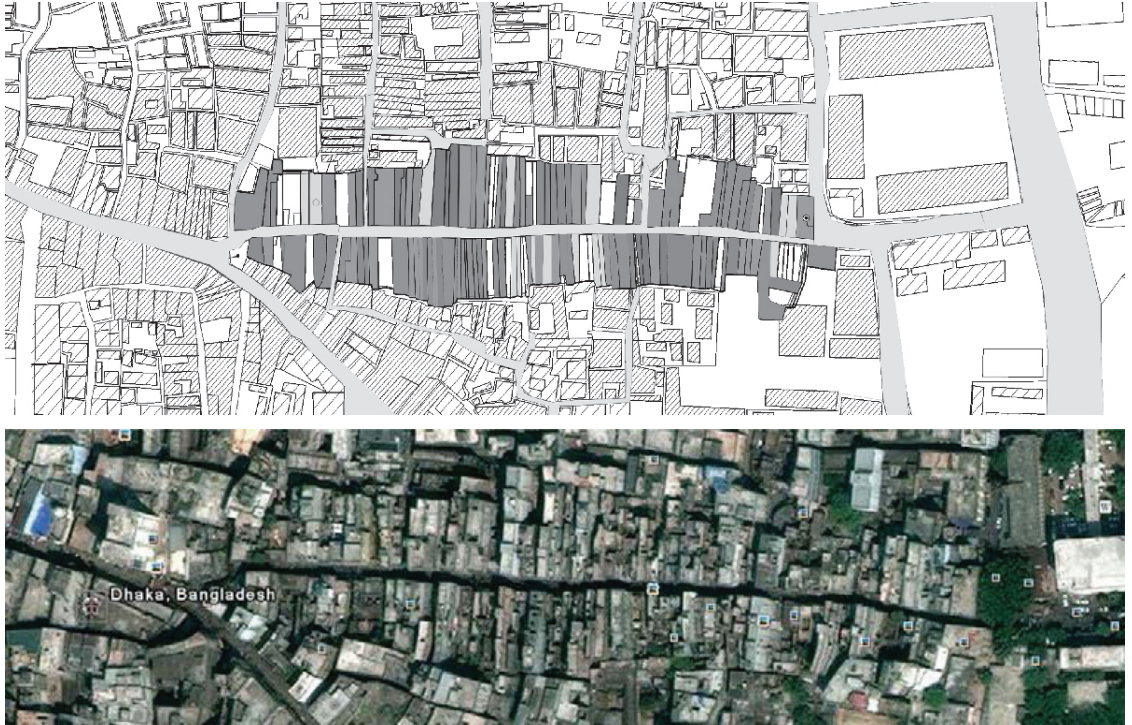


Figure 4 and 5:
Map and Aerial Photograph showing the linear layout of row houses of Shakhari Bazaar. (Not to scale)
Source: Fig 4 Urban Study Group and Fig 5 Google Earth.



Figure 6:
Vibrant street life and rich architectural heritage of Shakhari Bazaar, source: www.thedailystar.net, accessed on 4th December, 2010.

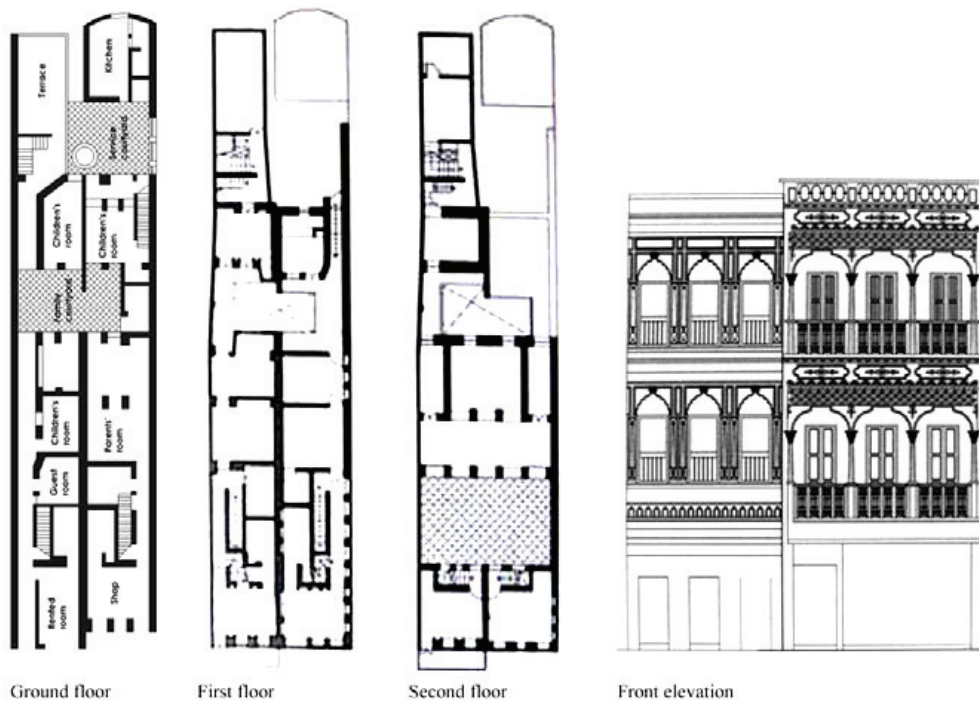


Figure 7:
Typical plan of the row houses, Source: Urban Study Group

through a corridor placed at the side of the house. Corridors are usually divided by a party wall to provide access to other rooms and to upper floors through stairways. Corridors ultimately terminate at the service areas in the rear. Upper floors are mostly used for residential purposes. No separate cooking spaces are provided in the buildings; cooking is mostly done within family bedrooms. Rooms are arranged within two parallel party walls along a narrow corridor from which two stairways lead to the upper floors.

Absence of light-wells on the ground and first floors results in poor lighting and ventilation. Light penetration to these two floors is through the building's front and rear only. In addition to the above, many houses contain small temples on the topmost floors and many have balconies on the upper floors overlooking the Shakhari Bazaar buildings. This design is found in almost all the houses on the narrow plot configured streets. It is interesting to note that a few houses which have been built very recently over old plots follow the same old patterns, the narrow frontage

with extensive depth. This unique characteristic imposes so many restrictions on building expansion that the people were left with very limited choices. This typology appears to be a natural outcome of the very socio-physical conditions which created the community. However, in the past the residents undertook incorporating modern and technological amenities as demanded by urban living. Shakhari Bazaar now appears as no more than an inner-city slum, inhabited by a poor section of the Hindu community.

BUILDING ARTS, MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES

The buildings of Shakhari Bazaar trace the history and evolution of building crafts, construction and materials of Dhaka for the past few hundred years. Most of the old buildings were built with load-bearing walls; only the recent buildings follow the post and lintel construction system. The walls of the old buildings are 20 to 24 inches thick and are built with brick, lime and mortar. Brick sizes vary from building

to building and in fact are useful means to assess the construction period. The simple rule is, the smaller the brick size, the older the building. In general 1.5 x 4 x 6 inch sizes indicate an early period; 2 x 4 x 8 inch sizes a middle period and 3 x 5 x 10 inch sizes indicate the contemporary period of construction. In old buildings, the common practice was to plaster and paint. Arched openings were made over doors and windows and niches were recessed inside the walls to create storage spaces as well as to keep deities and other objects. Various types of columns with ornate capitals were used to decorate façades and inner courts. Some older buildings have vaulted roofs. The rafter and purling technique for roof construction was commonly found in buildings, for which steel I-beams and wooden beams were equally used. Most buildings have high plinths two to three feet above street level. However, there seems to have been no common agreement regarding ceiling heights. They vary widely from building to building in some extreme cases even the minimum head room clearance is not provided.

The repetition of common building features and the uniformity in architectural treatment creates an harmony and continuity in the overall development of Shakhari Bazaar area. For example, in the treatment of ground floor façades, triple

arches are common to almost all old buildings. Only the ornate works surrounding the arches vary widely from building to building. It is interesting to note that while the rear portions of most buildings are usually left unfinished or in an incomplete stage of construction, the street front of each building invariably possesses a finished appearance. There seems to be an inherent desire and a concerted effort on the part of the inhabitants to provide this completed look to the buildings when viewed from the street. To achieve this, decorative parapet walls have often been constructed to terminate buildings. The building crafts also show a high level of development which is evident from the intricate designs visible in the cast-iron balcony railings and in the brackets and the column capitals.

In contrast to the decorative building fronts, the interiors of the rooms are relatively simple and unadorned. Only the niches or recesses in the thick walls contain elaborate carving. The interiors are mostly painted lime mortar. Most of the doors and windows of the buildings were originally made of expensive wood with decorative designs, but have now been replaced by low quality wood, steel or mill steel sheets. Old cast-iron railings with their ornate work have been replaced in many buildings with ordinary metal grills.



Figure 8:
The Street elevation of the linear row houses of Shakhari Bazaar
Source: *Architectural and Urban Conservation in the Islamic World*

FORCES OF DEGRADATION IN THE URBAN FABRIC OF SHAKHARI BAZAAR

Plot distribution: In the beginning, there was a single family or single household on each plot. But over time, when the family increased, there was a need to divide the plot. The result was a linier shaped building that was increased vertically. Currently every floor is divided according to need.

Building space over time: These old building were built about 100-250 years ago. At first, these buildings were three or four stories. Due to increasing population or household size the buildings' heights were increased to five to seven stories. About ten to twenty years ago new buildings of two and three stories were built alongside the older structures.

Demolition of the heritage buildings: There are 157 houses in the area. Most of them are 200 to 300 years old. Many of the houses face serious threat of collapse due to their age and added load of new construction as indicated above. As the houses share walls or very close to each other, when a house is demolished or reconstructed, the foundation soil of the adjacent houses becomes unstable and vulnerable. On 9th June 2004, house No. 81, a five storied house, collapsed, killing 19 people (The Daily Bangladesh Observer, 2004). It caught the Government's attention. After a preliminary survey, a decision was made to demolish the houses that were a high risk in terms of collapsing. Fifteen of these houses have already been demolished for this and other reasons and have been replaced by new houses.

Low levels of ventilation and lighting: As every plot is linier and they are very close to each other there is a problem of ventilation and lighting. Proper air and light cannot enter each floor. More over the windows and the doors are very small and are not sufficient for proper ventilation and lighting. As a result these buildings are not suitable for healthy living

Lack of open space: In the Shakhari Bazaar there is lack of proper open space. Every building is very close to another building. In the areas under study there are no open fields or play grounds. As a result

the mental and physical growth of the children is hindered. For the children living in Shakhari Bazaar this is an important issue.

Threats: The historic urban fabric of the *mohalla* is facing complete extinction due to the following factors: the absence of adequate legislative framework for the protection of historic areas or area conservation per se, the lack of statutory financial support, a blanket lack of awareness compounded by inadequate development control regulations, and the lack of resources. In addition, the development of cultural tourism needs to be regulated because the shifting socio-economic aspirations of people, fueled by speculative redevelopment, is fiercely being promoted by informal developers and is increasing. To achieve a holistic conservation plan, these problems should be addressed at different levels.

Legal and policy issues: At the root of the complex tenure ship pattern lays the issue of the Vested Property Act. Due to multiple ownership from inheritances, and the endless legal conflicts, it is a complicated situation. Any effort to solve the problems of Shakhari Bazaar needs to solve this problem first. Then there will be other issues regarding building by-laws and covenanting for conservation.

Economic issues: For a successful outcome of the project, economic interventions are required for businesses, crafts, and housing. Various forms of financial incentives for conservation as exemptions of municipal taxes, income tax rebate, and soft loans should be offered. Financial support shall be required to compensate for the maintenance costs of the listed buildings. Cultural tourism can be incorporated in the planning as a means of generating revenue, which at the end can play a very significant role in the creation of new investments, income and employment opportunities. The financial supports for businesses need to have a bias for the existing and traditional crafts related businesses. To encourage leveraged investment from the private sector and the public sector, investments need to be very carefully planned.

Physical developments: For a Sustainable Conservation Plan, it should be remembered that real people and a real community are involved. Any

conservation measures must take into account their economic/financial capability to participate in the maintenance of the restored buildings. It is important to remember that these people have been living in these buildings and will continue to do so in the future. Accordingly provisions for the maintenance for regular upkeep of the buildings and repairing of damages should be taken into account.

CONSERVATION PROPOSALS FOR SHAKHARI BAZAAR

In this jungle of manmade structures, the fear of buildings breaking down and taking with them many lives is always in the minds of the people. The local people try to keep the buildings safe by using what little knowledge they have of building structures. But the reality is totally something that cannot be ignored. As per the authorities concerned in Dhaka, the original structures were not made to sustain the loads they are presently experiencing. Then the worst of the worst; the event of which all were fearful and knew was due to happen one day, became a tragedy in the history of Shakhari Bazaar. A building more than 200 years old collapsed due to unauthorized expansion over a weak foundation. Some of the local people say the building collapsed due to the repair work in the attached building. Both reasons caused the accident. The situation has crossed the limits of both structural tolerance and occupancy. Although this is a warning for the nation at large, this does not mean executing a demolition plan. The Shakhari Bazaar crisis is an emotive cultural issue as much as it is a down-to-earth housing question. An intervention has long been due to address both these issues and questions. In preparation of a progressive sustainable intervention, the following key courses of actions can be taken into account:

Short term structural crisis mitigation: A detailed technical study of the listed, vulnerable buildings should be the first step to restore structural safety without demolition. The methods used by the reputed local firm Shaheedullah & Associates Ltd. can be considered in this regard.

Long term housing crisis improvement: Special financial schemes need to be devised for repairs and renewal of residential buildings having a large

number of occupants, especially for those located in the historic quarters of Old Dhaka. The following policies adopted by the 'National Housing Policy of India' for the 'Conservation of Housing Stock and Rental Housing' (Clause 4.6. 1.) can act as pointers to develop these schemes: (iii) fiscal and property tax incentives and financial assistance for expansion and up gradation of dwelling units, and, for proper maintenance of buildings; (iv) access to materials and technical assistance. In this regard, private housing finance institutions like DBH, IDLC and others can be of help since, in some cases, the owners are financially solvent to obtain a private level loan. Also, these institutions should show some social responsibility towards society.

Stakeholders' participation: At all levels the decision making process must involve meaningful participation of the stakeholders, especially the Shakhari Bazaar panchayet. Recently, after the collapse of the building, a local committee has been formed of 21 members. Meetings have been held and owners of individual holdings were asked to participate in the collective effort to identify and help resolve the problems. Government, on the other hand, should try a different approach for the minority community. Religious rituals and community locality are major factors for people deciding to rent houses in Shakhari Bazaar. An effort to provide similar facilities in other parts of Dhaka city, where small Hindu communities are practicing, should, in time, help build up an attraction for those localities. This would eventually redistribute the pressure presently faced by the Shakhari Bazaar area.

Promote and manage tourism: The objective of this is to promote and manage tourism in ways that respect and enhance the heritage and living cultures of the host communities. To provide the conservation area well managed opportunities for tourists, the accessibility into the area should be enhanced. For this purpose a multi-storied parking space can be proposed for facilitating tourists' vehicles. Remake the current parking spaces on the main street of Shakhari Bazaar into pedestrian walkways to extend the tourists' experiences that are enjoyable, respectful and educational. The settlement at Shakhari Bazaar has grown along a narrow 14'-0' wide road connecting Islampur road

with Nowabpur road, for a distance of about 1000 feet. The road could be converted in to a pedestrian walkway to encourage cultural tourism. The visitors may pass their leisure time in a pleasant way, walking or sitting on both sides of the walkway. Modern traffic is incompatible with the narrow street of Shakhari Bazar. The street has a pleasant pedestrian scale and therefore should be converted into a pedestrian lane. The tourists could walk safely along the walkway while watching the Shakhari at work. At night the illuminated street lights on the walkway would give a different, abstract feeling and touch to the entire neighborhood which will be more attractive for the tourists or visitors.

Subsidies for Shakha trades and crafts: A different policy for subsidizing Shakha trades and crafts could help the people in these occupations earn a reasonable living. Currently much of the shakha is being imported from India, at a much lower rate than it is prepared here, and the whole process is controlled by only a few well to do businessman.

Indiscriminate use of billboards: The traditional pattern of advertising in Shakari Bazaar is that the shop owner's erect a lot of billboards on their buildings. The architectural styles of the buildings are not visible due to the display of the billboards. The shop owners should be made aware of the poor visual impact of this practice so that they can be motivated to remove the billboards from the building.

Overhanging telephone and electrical cables: The T&T and electrical cables are hung along and across the building. These overhanging cables undermine the aesthetic view and heritage image of the area. So there should not be any cables hanging on the buildings, rather the cables should be concealed under the main walkways.

Community involvement: The members of the host community have to have an understanding of local heritage and culture first hand. To this end community members should be involved in planning for conservation and tourism. Conservation and development are not mutually exclusive objectives; they should and can be part of a single planning process. Conservation projects

need provisions for development just as surely as competent development requires an adequate approach in determining conservation policy (Jigyasu, 2003).

Complex tenure arrangements, rent control issues, official apathy, lack of awareness, lack of incentives for improvement and maintenance of old buildings, nodal choices, poor quality of infrastructure, poorly planned transport networks leading to location obsolescence of many areas, and deficient waste management all render conservation a difficult task. However, expeditious action is possible and recommended by the following approaches in key heritage locations: generating public awareness, developing urban renewal schemes, addressing traffic management, making infrastructure improvements and addressing solid waste management issues. All of these require full community involvement.

Identification of tourism potential in specific areas: The basis for identifying potential areas of tourism would include; further research and documentation of the city's past, consideration in planning development projects such as infrastructure and education, improving public awareness and recognition of the value of this heritage, identification of potential projects for assistance by international aid organizations and cultural foundations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With its linear built form, rich history and special craft, Shakhari Bazaar has a unique heritage and deserves special attention for conservation. Most of the old buildings should be conserved except for the few that are potentially hazardous. Those houses should be redeveloped keeping their footprint and possible façades. The others can be renewed and revitalized. The area should be promoted as a spot for cultural tourism, for both local and international tourists, focusing on the special craft of shankha. An improved infrastructure along with the preserved buildings will add new life to the locality.

The area should not be turned into a 'Museum' after declaring it a 'Heritage area'. It is the people and their craft along with the special arrangement

of row houses that form the image of the place. The participatory conservation approach should be sensitive to the needs of the local residents to avoid possible 'gentrification' common in similar renewal projects

The tourism industry should promote and manage tourism in ways that respect and enhance the heritage and living cultures of Shakhari Bazaar. Tourism promotion programs should protect and enhance cultural heritage characteristics. A significant proportion of the revenue derived from tourism programs should be allotted to the protection, conservation and presentation of Shakhari Bazaar. Visitors should be advised of this revenue allocation. Collaboration between heritage/conservation board and the tourism industry is a must for success.

Tourism activities and developments should minimize adverse impacts on the heritage and lifestyle of the Shakhari Bazaar community, while responding to the needs of the visitors. The promotion, distribution and sale of local crafts and other products should provide a reasonable return to the Shakhari Bazaar community, while ensuring that their cultural integrity is not degraded. Participatory conservation should provide opportunities for members of the host community and visitors to experience and understand that community's heritage and culture at first hand.

To sustain the living heritage of the area and the old craft of 'shankha', government should reduce taxes on the craft, arrange for micro credits on easy terms, and create an atmosphere for investment, both public and private

CONCLUSIONS

Internationally, the historic preservation movement is the most important change to have occurred to architecture and urban design since the modern movement. In Dhaka however, the preservation movement is not yet guided by a grand vision or an overall strategy, but has largely been based on spurts of spontaneous action that have not yet become sustainable. There is a sense of urgency, but the absence of a sound conservation policy has been a great weakness. Lack of funds, lack

of vision, no public awareness or participation in conservation initiatives, high pressure on land, multiplicity of agencies dealing with issues that affect conservation are some of the factors that affect the preservation effort. It is clear that a comprehensive direction is being sought and yet only some of the basic issues have been addressed to date.

Conservation needs to be a mass movement that is only possible if the general public benefits from it or are made aware of the possible benefits of conservation. This can be done only if a direction oriented approach is taken towards conservation and all the players work in tandem to achieve a set of objectives. However, strategies are meaningless without knowledge and understanding of what exists. Survey, analysis and the compilation of an inventory are vital in terms of the conservation of buildings and structures, both individually and in groups. Only on the basis of understanding the area's morphology can appropriate policies and programs for change be drawn up. Conserving the built heritage of Dhaka is a difficult task that requires simultaneous action on several levels – legal, institutional, financial, educational and technical – to be effective.

In the urban context of Dhaka city Shakhari Bazaar is a significant area with its own traditions and culture. The government listed Shakhari Bazaar as a historically important conservation area by a gazette notification on February 12, 2009. This area is economically important due to Shankha businesses and being an important heritage site of Bangladesh. Unfortunately, by recent observations, it has been proved that the environment of the area is deteriorating day-by-day due to lack of urban utilities and services. It is observed that the depreciating buildings in the conserved area should be brought under an immediate restoration and maintenance program.

This study proposed a comprehensive plan for conserving the Shakhari Bazaar area as a heritage site and developing the area for cultural tourism with increased accessibility and other amenities for the tourists.

The study has also proposed enhancing basic utilities and services. A main consideration includes addressing drainage and sewerage lines in the area.

The Shakhari Bazaar area should be considered as an artisan's village for traditional craftsmen. The Shakhari community, living in these age-old buildings, has to make provisions so that they can continue to live in this area. These provisions include restoring the buildings, providing regular building up keep, and protecting the buildings against damages. The restoration work of two buildings in the area should be carried out by the government to encourage the community to participate in such a restoration drive for their individual house. Through community participation, involvement and initiative, the Shakhari would be able to restore all of the deteriorating buildings. The expenditure incurred in the implementation of the restoration work would be realized from the owners of the building.

Proposed area strategies ensure the continuity of old Shakhari Bazaar and the conservation process will enhance its significance; it will be developed as a cultural urban area. It is assumed that government will sanction the requisite funds because the government has declared this area a conservation area. If the government provides necessary support then the whole project will be a pilot project for cultural community conservation and redevelopment.

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