

KEY WORDS:

Mubarak Mandi Palace at Jammu, Palace for people, Dogra heritage

A palace for people: Exploring the role of people’s emotions in the adaptive reuse of Mubarak Mandi Palace of Jammu

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ABSTRACT

India’s countless architectural heritages having a rich historical legacy are gravely neglected and awaiting conservation efforts. Mubarak Mandi Palace Complex (MMPC) of Jammu, a Grade-I heritage that Dogra rulers founded in the early 18th century is also deteriorating. However, Mubarak Mandi Jammu Heritage Society (MMJHS) is working on restoring certain buildings. The MMPC has a large central courtyard surrounded by various palace buildings having elements with intricate carvings that exhibit a confluence of many architectural styles. This paper employs mixed methods including a literature review that establishes the historical importance of the palace complex and the need for its restoration and adaptive reuse. A need is felt to promote a participatory approach for adaptive reuse; therefore, a survey and interviews of Jammu residents inquired into their emotional attachments to the MMPC. The paper documents people’s emotions, perceptions, and opinions about the restoration and adaptive reuse of MMPC and its surroundings. This will help to understand the strategies and programs required for adaptive reuse. The paper provides suggestions to ensure the heritage MMPC is well maintained and continues to engage the major stakeholders, the people of Jammu and their future generations.



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Introduction

The Dogra rulers built the Mubarak Mandi Palace Complex (MMPC) of Jammu, a grade-I state heritage. Its construction began during the reign of Raja Dhruv Dev (1707–1733 CE). It continued over several phases, with significant contributions by later rulers such as Maharaja Ranbir Singh in the late 19th century. The palace served as the royal seat of the Dogra dynasty until 1925 when Maharaja Hari Singh moved to Hari Niwas Palace (Chaudhary & Katoch, 2008).

The palace has intricate carvings and showcases confluences of various architectural styles including Rajputana, Colonial, and Mughal. The Kings celebrated festivals like Holi, Diwali and Baisakhi and hosted public events at the large central courtyard. In the 20th century, important government activities were housed in the MMPC (Chaudhary & Katoch, 2008, p1-2). The Jammu residents and kings treasured the cultural heritage and worked in the civic buildings. Today, certain parts of MMPC premises are being used, however many are in different stages of dilapidation. Harrer in his paper mentions the Austrian art historian from the 19th century, Riegl (1903), who pointed out that monuments age to their worth, and their preservation protects the historical narrative they constitute. Heritage buildings represent a region's historical background, culture, and identity. It is in keeping them that future generations could associate with their cultural and collective past (Harrer, A., 2017). They are excellent learning tools for both the public and professionals such as architects, historians, and students of culture. Therefore, there is an urgent need to conserve, preserve and adaptively reuse the palace to pass on its tangible and intangible cultural legacy to future generations.

The paper presents a brief history of MMPC and the photo documentation highlights the importance of this heritage complex and its current state. A literature review sheds light on the importance of heritage, adaptive reuse and its connections with people's emotions. Dogra generations have been fondly telling many stories related to the city of Jammu, its kings, various spaces of MMPC and how the kings used them. This paper addresses the need to inquire into the relationship of the people of Jammu with MMPC, and their emotions about the Palace. The survey and interviews lead to a deeper understanding of people's memories and stand regarding the future of this palace and its premises. This research helps to understand the strategies and programs required and provides suggestions for the adaptive reuse of MMPC to ensure that the heritage is maintained well. The suggestions focus on continuing to engage the people of Jammu and their future generations and research concludes with reiterating the need for the 'Palace for People'.

Methodology

Literature reviews of various articles, research papers and books help to establish the importance of the legacy and lineage of various Dogra kings who constructed MMPC and ruled Jammu. It also validates different architectural styles showcased in the palace complex and inquires into the arguments of various authors regarding the protection of the

heritage, adaptive reuse and the role of people's emotions in heritage preservation. To inquire into Jammu residents' emotional attachments to the MMPC, a survey was conducted in 2024 using Google Forms in which 208 Jammu residents participated. The interviews attempt to document people's memories, perceptions and opinions about the restoration and adaptive reuse of the complex and its surroundings. Supported by the literature review and survey findings, the paper provides suggestions for the adaptive reuse of MMPC. This research was a part of the author's undergraduate dissertation and includes the author's photo documentation.

A brief history of Mubarak Mandi Palace (MMP)

Chaudhary and Katoch's book titled "Mubarak Mandi Palace, an Inheritance of an Ailing Heritage" presents the detailed history of the palace. They mention that before MMPC, the rajas of Jammu used to reside in Purani Mandi palace, which no longer exists. Raja Dhruv Dev (1707-1733 AD) from the Dev dynasty laid the foundation of MMPC at the banks of the river Tawi as per his father Raja Gaje Singh's wishes (1692-1707 AD). He named the palace Mubarak Mandi as that means congratulations in Urdu (Chaudhary & Katoch, 2008, p6-7). In 1782, Sikh invaded Jammu and set fire to the palace causing significant damage. In 1846, Dogra dynasty rule was established and Raja Gulab Singh (1792-1856 AD) added many buildings to the palace complex. Subsequently, Raja Ranbir Singh (1856-1885 AD) contributed hugely to the palace complex construction. He added Gole Ghar Palace and Sheesh Mahal on the northeast side to enjoy the panoramic views of the river with his queens. He built palaces for his sons Pratap Singh, Amar Singh and Ram Singh. He also added administrative buildings with large halls for administrative events and public gatherings. Maharaja Pratap Singh ruled from 1885 to 1925 AD. He built a palace for his queen on the Eastern side of the complex to enjoy Tawi river views (Chaudhary & Katoch, 2008, p6-7).

Renovation and reconstruction were carried out several times in this palace complex for various reasons including a fire caused by firecrackers in 1898 in Pratap Singh's reign. This fire caused huge damage to the administrative buildings namely the Dewani office, Foreign Office, and Green Darbar. In 1913, on the occasion of Raja Amar Singh's wedding, his father Maharaja Pratap Singh renovated the palace complex. Again In 1925, Pratap Singh renovated the Pink Hall, Green Hall and the central pavilion for the Raj tilak ceremony of Hari Singh. This ceremony was conducted in the central pavilion aka central courtyard and over one thousand people were hosted. Although Raja Hari Singh shifted his residence to a Manda palace in the forest area, the MMPC remained an administrative hub till 2007 (Chaudhary & Katoch, 2008, p6-12).

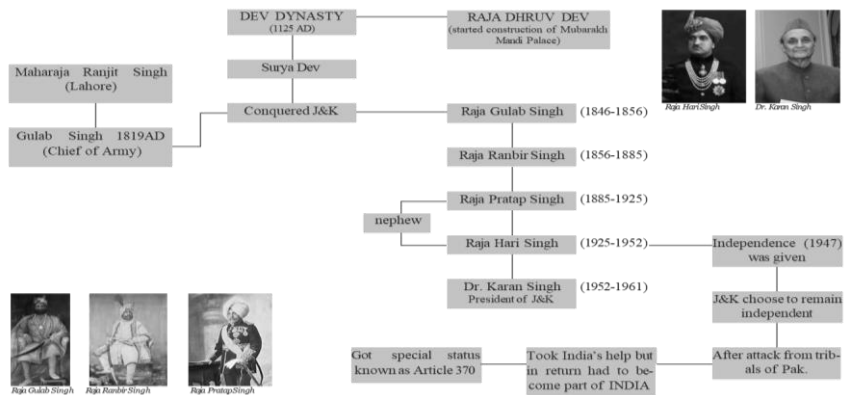


Figure 1: Rajas and historical narratives. (Source: Drawn by Author, based on Chaudhary & Katoch, 2008, interviews with local historians and other literature.)

Architecture of the palace

The central courtyard can be seen as the main essence of MMPC as all buildings were built around it over two hundred years. The idea of urban space is deeply integrated into this complex as entrances of different buildings and verandahs open into this courtyard space. The complex has about 61,000 square meters of built spaces and about 22,000 square meters of open spaces. Construction materials include various local materials like bricks, stones, gravel, surkhi (brick dust mortar) and floors decorated with marble. Upper floors are supported on iron girders and intricate ironwork is seen in railings. The palace's thick walls range from two to six feet and multiple marble jharokhas help to control temperatures in cold winters. Deodar wood is used in doors, windows and extended balconies.

There are three entrances to enter the courtyard, called deorhis. MMPC has both mardana and zanana residential palaces. Raja Ram Singh's Palace, Maharaja Pratap Singh's Palace, Gole Ghar, and Sir Raja Amar Singh's Palace are the mardana palaces. Rani Bhandrali's Palace, Nava Mahal, Raja Ram Singh's queens' Palace, and Maharani Charaki's Palace are the zanana palaces. Earlier kings' palaces are not known. The administration buildings are Pink Hall, Marble Hall, Grey Hall, Toshakhana (for jewels), and Gharvi or Garvai khana (for medicines).

The complex showcases various architectural styles (Fig. 4) including the native Jammu and several others showing influences of the prevalent era and patronage by different kings. The predominant Hindu architecture shows a confluence of Islamic (Fig. 4-Gole ghar's domes), Colonial (Fig. 4-Raja Ram Singh's palace's windows), Gothic (Fig 4-pointed arches of Garvai khana) and European Baroque. The later constructions show the Rajasthani style with European Baroque. Different styles of domes can be seen here, namely traditional Hindu and Rajputana styles, hemispherical and saucer domes and onion-shaped domes. Several types of arches like pointed, lancet, round and flat can be observed throughout the

MMPC. Different types of columns with decorative capitals and bay windows- jharokhas (Fig. 4) of various sizes and styles of carvings can be seen in various buildings. Wooden ceilings show plaster of Paris decorative work in Kashmiri style. Dogra artisans have carved various motifs like lotus and chinar leaf in cornices, ceilings, and deorhis.



Figure 2: Plan of Mubarak Mandi Palace. (Source: Base Google maps, various literature, tracing and labelling by Author)

Need for preservation of MMP

Heritage buildings are repositories of a region's historical background, culture, and identity. It is in keeping them that future generations could associate with their cultural and collective past. As emphasised by Riegl in the early 20th century; monuments age to their worth and their preservation protects the historical narrative they constitute (Harrer, A., 2017). Ruskin (1885) argues that conservation helps preserve the craftsmanship and integrity of such buildings so they do not deteriorate into a point of no return (Ruskin, 1885). Without care and reuse, heritage structures degrade and ultimately are lost. MMPC heritage buildings feature a unique blend of architectural styles and craftsmanship, reflective of their times' socio-political and cultural contexts. Thus, preserving them is an effective way of conserving critical historical artefacts that give people a sense of belonging and rootedness to their place and culture.

Over the centuries, several fires have caused significant damage to MMPC. Although certain efforts have been taken to renovate the buildings; yet, the continuous degradation

of the structures, lack of enough resources and political will have taken a toll on this invaluable heritage causing dilapidation in many buildings. Several intricately painted interior wall paintings are faded. Lack of maintenance, thermal expansion and contraction, moisture, decay of materials like timber, stucco, and brick due to fungus, algae, mosses and insects' effects, and broken waterproofing leading to water seepage from roofs add to degradation. Strong winds coming from the open eastern side of the River Tawi, also impact MMPC structures. Additionally, its location poses a potential threat from the seismic effects and many areas of the buildings have suffered defects due to earthquakes. Therefore, there is an urgent need to address these issues to preserve the invaluable cultural heritage.

The need for appropriate adaptive reuse

New uses for heritage buildings result in their continued use and prevent abandonment. French architect and author Viollet-le-Duc, known for his restoration work, mentioned that among the best strategies to protect historic structures is to make them useful again (Viollet-le-Duc, 1990). Adaptive reuse allows heritage buildings to fulfil modern needs, such as being used as cultural centres, offices, or museums. As per the Venice Charter of 1964, reuse preserves their historical essence and at the same time assimilates them into the urban landscape of today, hence keeping them alive and relevant (Jokilehto, 1989). Reuse of heritage contributes to the local economies by providing tourism and cultural experiences and provokes community pride and identity. It creates social connectedness through cultural programming by contributing to the public and private good. Conservation and adaptive reuse negate the environmental damage evident in complete demolition and new construction. The reuse of existing structures helps in the conservation of embodied energy while also decreasing construction waste, thus aiding sustainable development (Bullen, 2013). Architects and designers can integrate modern energy-efficient technologies into historical structures. This combination of tradition and modern innovations supports sustainability, reducing the need for newer environmental damage-causing materials. Appropriate strategies can reduce energy consumption while ensuring the building remains functional (Langston et al., 2008).

Adaptive reuse may also include careful incorporation of new additions. These additions should not compromise the original building fabric, but create a harmonious dialogue between past and present while giving a directive for long-term future use. Modern approaches to conservation highlight the balance between conserving historical value and serving the present needs (Arfa et al., 2022). Heritage buildings should be designed and adapted for modern use to retain their historical significance. Riegl's use-values and commemorative balance support this approach where one can achieve functional adaptability without compromising the heritage value of the buildings (Harrer, A., 2017).

Martinez pointed out that in 1883 Italian architect Camillo Boito considered it essential that buildings retain their material integrity, which makes them resources for educational purposes (Martinez, 2016). Thus, the reason why conservation and adaptive reuse of heritage buildings can be very crucial for the preservation of identity, sustainability, and integration with modern society is that this type of structure allows one to show respect for the past, cherish history and the new application can actively engage local community and tourists. One important point is that the preservation of heritage buildings is often driven by a perceived sense of loss. Harrison (2013) suggests that the desire to conserve is often linked to the fear of forgetting or losing important connections to the past. This can be particularly evident in buildings that have sentimental or historical significance.

Nostalgic and emotional attachments to heritage

The memories and perceptions people have related to the heritage buildings are deeply intertwined with nostalgia and emotional connections. Heritage buildings often hold significant sentimental value for individuals, serving as physical markers of personal and collective histories. According to Holtorf (2005), heritage is not merely about preserving the past but about the meanings and emotional connections people associate with specific places and objects. This highlights that heritage is often perceived as a symbol of continuity, where individuals want to preserve what is familiar and meaningful to them (Holtorf, 2005). However, this attachment can sometimes lead to conflicts with the needs of future generations. Perceptions of heritage are not always uniform. Different generations often hold contrasting views on what should be preserved and what should evolve. Holtorf (2005) and Harrison (2013) both argue that heritage is a dynamic, evolving concept, shaped by contemporary needs and future aspirations. What was once considered a significant cultural heritage, becomes irrelevant to younger generations, raising the question of whether preservation is always necessary or if future generations should have the autonomy to decide what is worth preserving and how to use it. This reflects the broader challenge in heritage conservation: deciding what to preserve, for whom and how. Therefore, it is important to inquire into the emotional attachments of the people of Jammu concerning MMPC.

Role of emotions in adaptive reuse

Various conservation architects and professionals have emphasized the role of emotions in adaptive reuse in different projects similar to MMPC. Modi et al. point out that spaces and places are interconnected with emotions and the experience of a particular location induces certain emotions (Modi et al., 2009). Weijs-Perrée et al. conducted a study in the Netherlands for a 2020 project "Regeneration and Optimization of Cultural Heritage in Creative and Knowledge Cities" where they analysed the relationship between people's emotions with public spaces and pointed out that people are happier when the public spaces have pleasant ambience and are inclusive, safe and secure (Weijs-Perrée et al.,

2020). To bridge the past with the present, it is important to design spaces that balance historical integrity with the emotional and spiritual needs of the users. This aligns with the adaptive reuse approach, which seeks to preserve the cultural essence of a building while incorporating contemporary uses.

Additionally, adaptive reuse is a way to foster emotional engagement through storytelling, as seen in projects that revive heritage sites by inculcating community narratives and interactive elements. This process not only preserves architectural heritage but also creates spaces that inspire a sense of belonging and respect for the past in future generations. Such strategies can guide the transformation of MMPC underpinned by the emotional connections with visitors, ensuring it becomes a vibrant cultural hub rooted in historical context.

The Role of 'heritage makers' in balancing the past and the future

The concept of "heritage makers" emerges while negotiating the tension between preserving the past and meeting contemporary needs. According to Harrison (2013), heritage makers balance the preservation of a building's historical integrity with the challenges of modern life. Unlike traditional conservation architects who focus primarily on maintaining the status quo, heritage makers adapt and repurpose buildings to ensure they remain relevant, well-maintained and functional for the long-term future. Holtorf (2005) highlights that heritage's value lies not in static preservation but in its adaptability to present and future contexts. The work of heritage makers requires a thoughtful approach that considers the needs of all stakeholders while ensuring that the building's legacy is not negated but reinterpreted for future use.

The process of determining what to preserve often involves complex power dynamics that include various stakeholders. This showcases the need for a democratic framework that incorporates diverse perspectives and considers the evolving needs of the people. This democratic approach is imperative to avoid the dominance of one group's narrative on the other. The narratives may be the nostalgic visions of people or the expert opinions of architects, heritage makers need to strike the right balance. Therefore, the role of a heritage maker involves interpreting and balancing possibly conflicting viewpoints to ensure that heritage remains meaningful to all.

Survey and interview of the people of Jammu

To understand the emotional connection and interaction of the people of Jammu with MMPC, various activities of people were observed at different times of the day. The research was carried out in January and February 2024. The photo documentation was recorded in the open spaces in the mornings (7-11.59 am), afternoons (12-5.59 pm) and evenings (6-9 pm). Throughout the day, men and women groups were observed engaging

in walks, sitting and interacting with others, taking children to open ground and playing with children. In the afternoon, people were seen sitting under trees or soaking in the sun, and children rode bicycles. In the evenings, children and adults were seen playing active sports like badminton.

A survey was conducted using Google Forms in February 2024 in which 208 Jammu residents participated. Participants included 88 males and 120 females. 35% of the respondents were aged between 10-25, 44% between 26-50, 19% between 51-75 and 2% were above 76 years of age. Thus, most respondents were under the age of 50. The following questions were asked:

- Do you know about the history of the MMPC?
- Do you stay in the 5 km radius of MMPC and how frequently do you visit?
- Which activities do you participate in when in MMPC?
- Which places do you visit on the weekends?
- What would you like to do in MMPC if the buildings are restored and adaptively reused?
- What is your opinion about long-term maintenance to preserve the sanctity of the place?

MORNING ACTIVITIES



AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES



EVENING ACTIVITIES

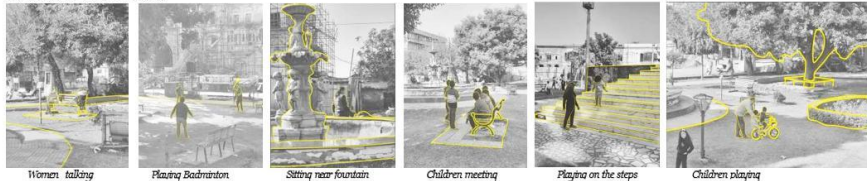


Figure 5. Activities observed in MMPC at different times. (Source: Photos, highlighting and labelling by Author)

Survey, Discussion and Findings

- Only 20% of the respondents were unaware of the history of the MMPC, and these were under the age of 25. About half the respondents stayed within 5 km of MMPC, yet 80% of all the respondents mentioned that they visit MMPC at least once in 6 months and about 25% of them visit once a month. These frequent visits indicate a strong connection between the community and the palace.
- Activities that most of the people engage in at MMPC include cultural events, social gatherings and taking leisurely walks with their friends in the courtyard. This space is particularly valued for daily activities such as walking, relaxing, and socialising, highlighting its importance as a communal area.
- On the weekends, about half of the respondents visit MMPC, more than half prefer going to Tawi riverfronts and 12% mentioned visiting libraries nearby. Between 50% to 60% of the respondents mentioned having emotional attachments. In the case of adaptive reuse of the MMPC, they would like to experience historical enactments, and interactive museums, engage in cultural workshops in the palatial buildings and take children to public parks and play areas in the open spaces of MMPC.
- Most believe the palace should be accessible to everyone, not just the wealthy or government officials. This reflects the community's desire for the site to serve as an inclusive space that welcomes all people, regardless of their socio-economic status. They want the palace to be a place for people to gather, engage in cultural activities, and feel a sense of belonging.
- Over 90% of the respondents mentioned they would like to see an experiential interactive museum at MMPC. They feel that an interactive digital museum would make the historical significance of MMPC more accessible and enjoyable for everyone. Also, this will create excitement for the younger and future generations as technology can create sensory experiences to engage with the historical narratives of MMPC.
- Regarding long-term maintenance, over half of the respondents mentioned that they would like to volunteer and actively engage in overseeing that the sanctity of the premises is maintained. This is assuring that a participatory design approach will lead to the long-term protection and continuous usage of the said heritage properties.

People's memories - Interviews of people in the neighbourhood

To understand the emotional connection of people in the neighbourhood, 25 people were interviewed in person and recorded in January and February 2024. Following are a selected few that highlight all other interviewees' comments.

- Ramesh Sharma, a 65-year-old local Historian mentioned, "I remember as a child accompanying my grandfather to the palace where he would tell stories about the Dogra kings and their grand durbars. The ring of footsteps in those long corridors

made me walk through history. The view of the Tawi River from the palace was magical, especially at sunset."

- Aarti Devi, a 50-year-old Artisan said, "The palaces were, in fact, my inspiration for embroidered designs. These intricate carvings and motifs of flowers on the walls and ceilings used to inspire me. I recall that the crafts fair which was held once in the courtyard of the palace was a big moment in my life as a young artist."
- Imran Malik, 40, a photographer mentioned, "As a young boy, I used to come here during Lohri celebrations. The palace would be lit up, and the open courtyards would be filled with music and laughter. Families gathered to celebrate, and I still remember the aroma of local delicacies filling the air. It was like stepping into a fairytale."
- Rohini Gupta, 28, a college student said, "Even though parts of it are in ruins, Mubarak Mandi still has an aura. I visit it often to sketch or just sit and think. It's peaceful yet powerful. I imagine what it must have been like during its prime, with royals walking through its corridors. It feels like a bridge between the past and the present."
- Raj Kumar, 75, a retired teacher mentioned, "I hope MMPC gets the restoration it deserves. This palace is more than just a building, it's an agglomeration of our identity and cultural heritage. Young generations need to experience it and learn its history. If preserved well, MMPC can become a centre of art, culture, and education for the long-term future."
- Nitin Pande, 58, a shopkeeper in the neighbourhood mentioned, "I have always gone here with our friends and families to watch the palaces from outside and get fresh air. It will be so good to go inside these palaces".

The interviews reveal people's involvement with MMPC for generations, their aspirations towards its restoration and their strong wish to be included in the future use of the palaces.

Suggestions for making the "Palace for People"

Transforming MMPC into a vibrant Palace for People demands an approach that blends technology, community participation, adaptive reuse, and sustainability. These strategies ensure that heritage's historical essence is preserved while they become dynamic spaces which resonate with contemporary audiences. Suggestions for interventions for adaptive reuse that can be incorporated at MMPC:

- Engaging visitors with interactive experiences: Technological innovations like virtual and augmented reality (AR/VR) offer immersive experiences that enable visitors to know about the restricted or unseen parts of heritage buildings. Virtual tours, 3D reconstructions, and Augmented Reality gadgets create attractive, interactive experiences that engage tech-savvy audiences and younger generations (Tipnis, 2020). Additionally, community involvement in storytelling can enrich the visitor experience by connecting the building's history with local

cultural narratives. The organisation of cultural events and educational programs nurture emotional connection and ensures the building reflects both past and present values (Holtorf, 2007). MMPC central courtyard can be used for events like musical concerts that can be conducted against the historical backdrop which may momentarily blend the heritage with people's modern aspirations.

- Contextual reinterpretation with adaptive reuse: Adaptive reuse can creatively reimagine places to serve contemporary functions—like converting a palace building into a library or cultural centre which allows heritage structures to meet the needs of modern communities while respecting their past. Additionally, designing flexible and multifunctional spaces ensures that heritage buildings serve diverse purposes, from exhibitions to performances, attracting a broad audience (Tipnis, 2020; Holtorf, 2007).
- Sustainable conservation techniques: Sustainability is inherent in the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings. Additionally, eco-conscious restoration techniques, such as using energy-efficient systems and eco-friendly materials align the conservation process with current environmental concerns (Tipnis, 2020). Balancing conservation with modern functionality demands methods like minimal intervention and consolidation that focus on preserving the authenticity of the structures while ensuring their longevity (Harrison, 2013).
- Highlighting aesthetic and architectural qualities: Restoring and showcasing iconic architectural features like intricate jharokhas, carvings, decorative columns and design motifs enhances public interest by highlighting the beauty and craftsmanship of heritage buildings (Holtorf, 2007). Techniques that respect historical layers, such as stratigraphic conservation, allow visitors to explore the building's evolution over time, promoting an appreciation for its narrative through different historical periods (Harrison, 2013).
- Balancing authenticity with modernity: It is imperative to achieve the delicate balance between preserving authenticity and embracing modern interventions, during the adaptive reuse of a heritage. While some scholars highlight the importance of maintaining original features (Burman, 2008; Del Río Carrasco, 2008), others argue that authenticity should reflect cumulative changes over time (Bridgwood & Lennie, 2013). It is essential to ensure that new interventions complement, rather than overwhelm, the historical fabric of the building, thereby retaining its relevance in the contemporary context (Jokilehto, 2007). Therefore, new additions to MMPC will need to be carefully designed not to overpower the heritage.
- Community Involvement: The role of the community in heritage conservation is extremely important. Involving local stakeholders and residents in the decision-making process helps ensure that the building's transformation reflects local interests and memories. This participatory approach enhances the "genius loci", the spirit of the place by preserving the physical structures and the intangible cultural significance tied to the site (Petzet, 2008; Russell et al., 2011). This engagement fosters a sense of ownership and pride, which is necessary for the long-term sustainability of heritage sites (Graham et al., 2009). Therefore, community events can be conducted at a possible 'Town Hall' in the MMPC

where the people continue to use, share ideas, maintain and cherish the heritage.

Ongoing efforts for the preservation of MMPC

Currently, the Jammu and Kashmir Government is funding and helping with the restoration of MMPC. The Government is providing monetary support to the Mubarak Mandi Heritage Society, established in 2006. MMHS's vision is to adaptively reuse MMPC as a "Tourism Destination-cum-Socio-Cultural Heritage Centre". It is working on the preservation of cultural heritage through several activities like the Jammu Mela that may boost tourism and involve local people. Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) proposed a master plan in 2008 for which the implementation began in 2019 (Sahni, 2019). Renovated Darbar Hall now houses a Dogra art museum. This is a welcome effort, yet, several buildings need persistent efforts and appropriate adaptive reuse considering the emotional attachment of the people of Jammu.

Conclusion

Mubarak Mandi Palace Complex has a rich historical legacy and features unique architectural styles and craftsmanship, which reflect their times' socio-political and cultural contexts. Currently, MMPC buildings are in different states of degradation, although restoration work is underway in certain buildings. Preserving MMPC premises is necessary for the conservation of the invaluable tangible and intangible heritage of the people of Jammu. There is a strong emotional connection between the people of Jammu and MMPC as established by the survey and interviews. This connection is a commentary on the heritage's physical fabric and human experiences, as well as their relationships and stories. The architectural preservation and adaptive reuse will strengthen people's bond with the cultural heritage inspiring pride and curiosity in future generations. This paper suggests possible programs for adaptive reuse of MMPC buildings based on people's viewpoints. These perspectives having a participatory approach can guide the transformation of the Mubarak Mandi Palace Complex into an experiential, interactive public space, a 'Palace for People' that resonates emotionally with people, ensuring it becomes a vibrant cultural hub rooted in its historical context. ■

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