

CHARACTERIZATION OF BUILT HERITAGES IN A SECOND ORDER CITY IN ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

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Abstract

In continuation of the pursuit related to the human endeavor of heritages in second order cities in India, a comprehensive study on heritage resources present in Vizianagaram town, Andhra Pradesh, India was taken up next to the earlier attempt at Visakhapatnam city. Vizianagaram town forming a part of the Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region was found to harbour 24 important heritage structures and sites representing reasonable number of architectural styles and typologies and the same are analyzed and discussed in this communication. In the light of re-formulation of Andhra Pradesh state and ambitions to develop mega and smart cities with capital at Vijayawada, the present study assumes greater significance to providing information for the synthesis of the noted heritages with urban landscape to promote historical, cultural and socio-economic merits of the town.

Keywords: Heritage sites, Historic affiliation, Heritage typologies, Architectural styles

Introduction

The quality of life, living environment, indigenous techniques and knowledge carried over from the past are considered as cultural heritage. Conservation of these cultural heritages has been a challenge to all levels of government and especially for local governments who are in direct contact with manifestations of these heritages. Moreover, old buildings and older areas of the city should be looked upon as assets rather than liabilities because they represent the history of communities, embodying their tradition, heritage and culture through architecture and the urban form.

Majority of these historic city centers are decaying for several reasons. These centers are looked upon as liabilities rather than assets that represent the history of the family, community, its tradition, art, architecture and overall planning. The ignorance about the value of these historic centers and

their financial unaffordability to maintain these areas make the situation even worse. To avoid this situation, efforts must be taken to conserve our rich built heritages in a systematic way to minimise its destruction.

Literature review

The identification of built heritages or sites is a means by which official bodies recognise and valorise built heritage deemed to have a special standing. The most famous appellation is perhaps that of UNESCO World Heritage (Leask and Fyall, 2006), but many governments operate listing schemes which are usually accompanied by protective measures..

Heritage policies are not well embedded in certain Asian regions, for example, where there are barriers to enforcement and more urgent calls on scarce resources (ADB, 2006). Wherever the location, arrangements for awarding heritage status may not satisfy everyone with complaints about selection criteria, insufficient funding and inadequate protection. There are likely to be differences in attitudes amongst stakeholders and greater popular participation is often advocated with a view to giving the less powerful a voice in decisions (ICOMOS, 1990). Nevertheless, despite their shortcomings, formal mechanisms do indicate consensus about public sector obligations concerning the guardianship of built heritage.

Both tangible and intangible heritages on mother earth were identified as one of the important fields of human endeavor since 1940's (Larkham, 2010). United Nations General Assembly (1996) in its the Habitat Agenda, directed all the countries must recognize the historical and cultural heritage is an important asset, and strive to maintain the social, cultural and economic viability of historically and culturally important sites and communities. As an upshot, several countries around the world have been marching ahead in the subject to demonstrate the benefits accruing out of these non-renewable proud resources to the present as well as future generations and the need to synthesize these cultural heritages with progressive urban landscape.

A number of works of recent origin in the line include inventory and description of several heritage structures from many geographical entities around the world (UNESCO, 2004, 2005a; Buckley, 2007; www.hamilton.ca, 2008; Stewart *et al.*, 2008; HBACW, 2008; ASI, 2008, 2010a, b; Bold and Kovacec, 2009; Mishra, 2009; Rajamani, 2010; Ravindran, 2010; Bailey, 2011; Harun, 2011; Kerr, 2011; DC, 2012) and the same were detailed in the earlier publication (*loc.cit.*). World over, it is a practice to distinguish archaeological systems from heritage subjects based on age as the basic criterion. The standards for distinguishing the two groups usually differ from country to country and in India, the criterion is set at 100 years. That means all assets with 100 or more years of existence in India fall

into archaeological arena while the ones less than 100 years enter the heritage spectrum (GoI, 2011).

Andhra Pradesh State

At this juncture, it may be apt to add that the importance of second order cities and towns in Andhra Pradesh, assuming greater significance in the light of recent separation of Telangana region with 10 Districts into a separate state leaving the parent state with 13 Districts. The new Andhra Pradesh State is relegated to eighth place with 160,205 km² of area and holds tenth place with a population of 49,386,799 in India (India Census, 2011). However, the state retained the second longest (972 km) coastline of the country and contained 5 international trade gateways. National metropolises, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and Bengaluru are still well within the reach of the new state.

In the light of re-formulation of Andhra Pradesh state and ambitions to develop mega and smart cities with capital at Vijayawada, the present study assumes greater significance to providing information for the synthesis of the noted heritages with urban landscape to promote historical, cultural and socio-economic merits of the town.

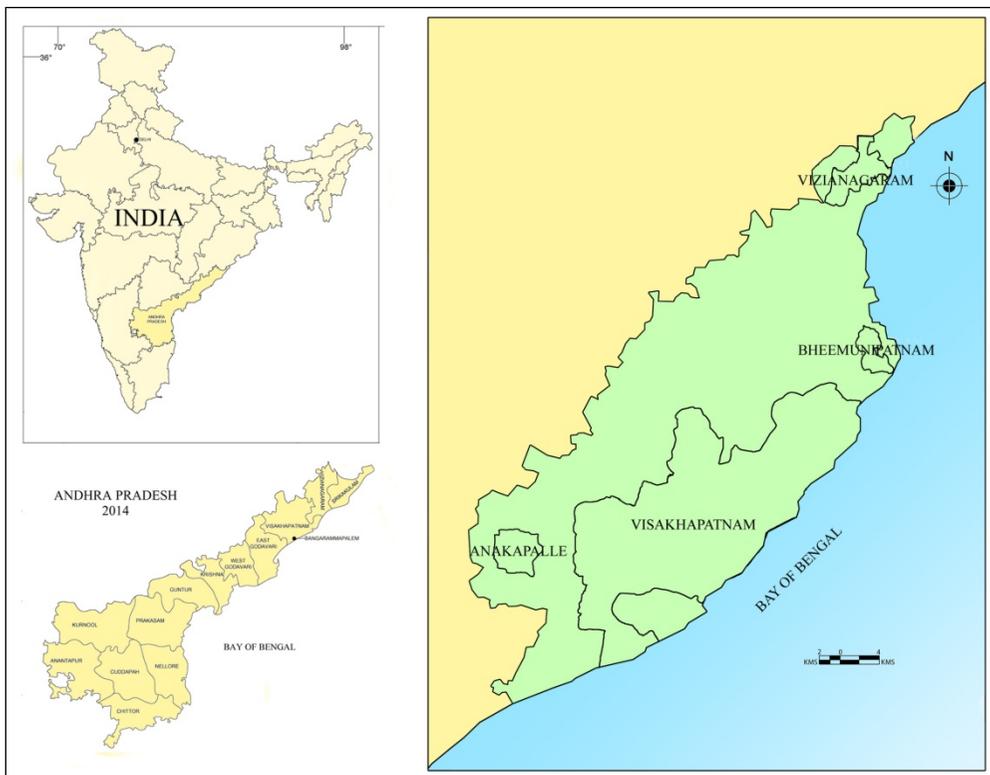


Fig. 1: Major historical agglomerations in Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region

Vizianagaram in the context

In the process, several first order cities around the world have geared up to meet the requirements right from identification of heritages to their conservation and synthesis with modern landscapes utilizing state-of-the-art technologies. However, second order cities and towns in many nations, especially in developing countries like India did not yet raise to the occasion. Given this scenario, a comprehensive study on heritage structures and sites and their preservation was taken up in Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region (under the jurisdiction of Visakhapatnam Urban Development Authority, VUDA) lying along the east coast of Andhra Pradesh in India. This Metropolitan Region mainly embraces Visakhapatnam city, Anakapalle, Bheemunipatnam and Vizianagaram towns. In the first step, heritage structures and sites present in Visakhapatnam city of this metropolitan region were described earlier (Giduthuri, 2013) and as a follow up, relevant resources of another town, namely, Vizianagaram in the region are being described and analysed in this communication.

Vizianagaram (literally meaning the ‘City of Victory’), an erstwhile princely town (18°12’N and 83°42’E) and District Headquarters of the District by the same name lies about 50 km to the northwest of Visakhapatnam with 18 km of proximity to Bay of Bengal (Fig. 1). The town being the biggest municipality in the state, with a population of 227,533 more or less equally represented by males and females (111,596 and 115,937, respectively) (India Censes, 2011); is an important business and educational center of the northern coastal Andhra Pradesh and adjoining Odisha state. Development of the town got accelerated in recent years due to astronomical growth of the proximal city Visakhapatnam and the same is likely to be boosted further now due to the said division of the state.

Government views on heritage

The local urban development authority, namely, VUDA has prepared a separate Zonal Development Plan (ZDP) for Vizianagaram during 1989 (VUDA, 1989). In this plan, ‘Fort and its surroundings’ were included as heritage structures and sites for conservation that too without any course of action and legal framework to achieve the goal indicating the whimsical attitude of the authorities towards the pride heritage possessions of the town. The new Master Plan (2007), reasonable number of heritage structures and sites in Vizianagaram area added.

The Vice-Chairman, Visakhapatnam Urban Development Authority (VUDA) constituted a committee consisting of planning officers from local urban bodies, professionals from various fields and NGO’s to list tangible heritages in Vizianagaram town during 2001. This document envisaged to facilitate in creating a policy for setting up regulations and to aid heritage

conservation in the town. In 2005, Department of Tourism, Government of Andhra Pradesh published coffee table book on heritages of Vizianagaram, which is unknown to local administration as well as for the public. Nevertheless, the said survey remained on the paper without further study. In this juncture, it is very much apt to study on Vizianagaram town's heritage and its characteristics that formed Vizianagaram town as a unique distinctiveness and local identity.

Need for Significance Assessment

The “cultural significance” of a place can be defined as “aesthetic, historic, scientific and social value for past, present and future generations”. Hence, thus significance is an expression of the cultural value afforded a place, site or item. Understanding the significance of an historic building or area (the “asset”) and the possible impact of the proposed scheme on this significance is the key to good conservation practice.

Methodology

As the maps of heritage structures and sites of Vizianagaram town contained in Revised Master Plan of Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region-2021 (RMPVMR-2021) or the ZDP concerned are not full-fledged and do not indicate any detail of the structures and sites, physical surveys were conducted and important resources were identified based on the methodologies as narrated in the earlier publication referred above (Giduthuri, 2013).

Results

The result of the present study reveals that the historic buildings throughout the city have strong cultural meaning for people and their architectural character/ history because they are familiar and recognizable feature of a place.

As a result of extensive inventory, a total of twenty-four prominent heritage structures and sites could be located from Vizianagaram town area in Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region (VMR) (Fig. 2) and their salient characteristics are as follows.

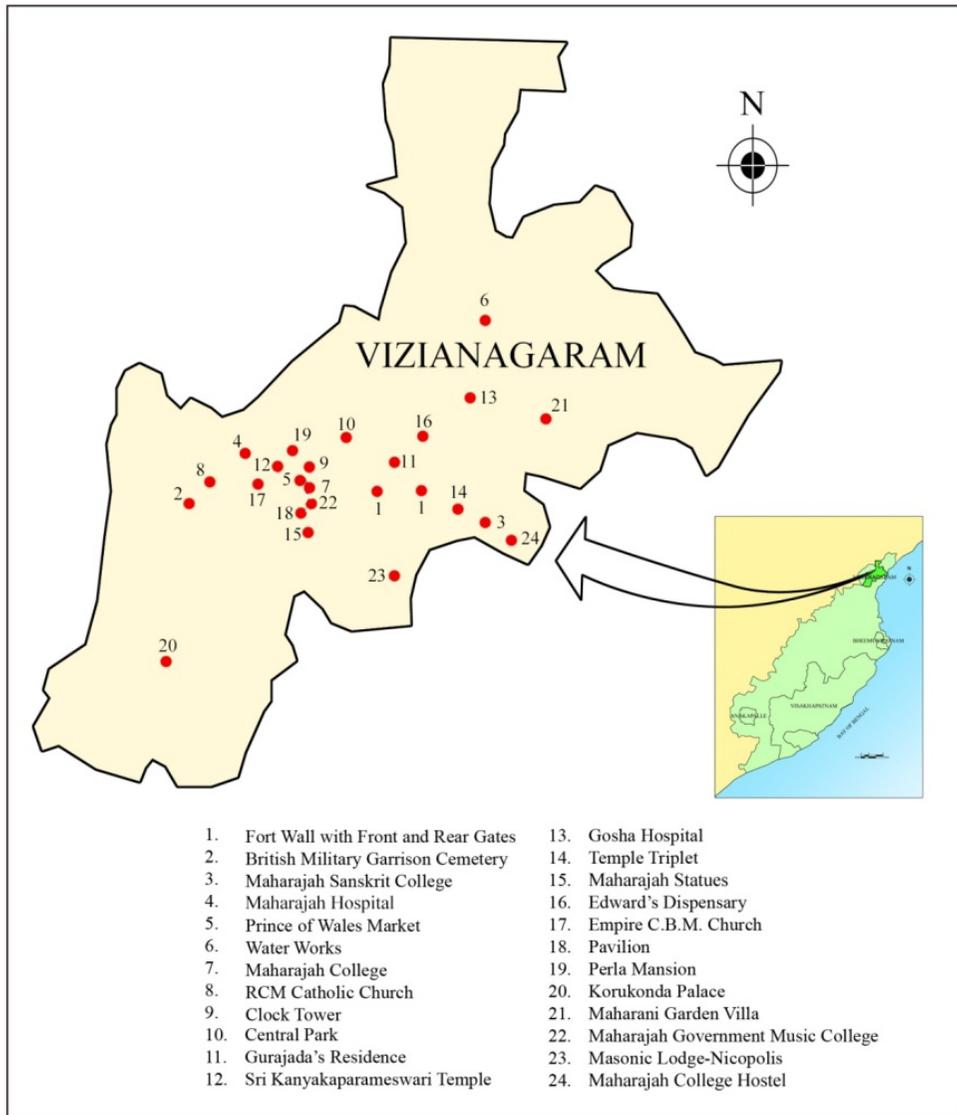


Fig. 2: Map showing locations of Built Heritages in Vizianagaram town

Fort Wall with Front and Rear Gates (18°06'39"N, 83°24'39"E)

A fort wall of 10m height and 8m to 16m width at top runs around the 240m square periphery of the Vizianagaram Fort. The wall along with the four corner bastions having inward inclination was built of stone fortified internally with earthen mounds soled over by stone slabs. A large two-storey gateway known as 'Nagar khana' of elaborate design was erected on the eastern side and a smaller gateway more or less similar in design on the opposing side.

British Military Garrison Cemetery (18°06'28"N, 83°23'23"E)

A cemetery was developed in the Cantonment area by the Garrison establishment in 1811 to serve the British Military personnel. This equilaterally laid out facility bounded by stonewall with an entrance gate is architecturally a fascinating funerary of stone capped / rectangular/ pyramidal tombs.

Maharajah Sanskrit College (18°06'28"N, 83°24'41"E)

Maharajah Vijayarama Gajapathi-III established a Sanskrit school in 1860 and the same transformed into Maharajah Sanskrit College during later years. This rectangular structure was laid out in stone as a single floor with a simple classical colonnaded front verandah accessible through five circular arches.

Maharajah Hospital (18°07'16"N, 83°24'14"E)

A building was constructed in 1861 to offer medical services exclusively to the coterie of Vizianagaram Maharajah and the same was opened later to the public too. The structure rectangular in plan and symmetrical in elevation was laid out mainly in stone as a single floor with a simple classical colonnaded front verandah accessible through nine circular arches made of brick.

Prince of Wales Market (18°06'55"N, 83°24'31"E)

In commemoration of King Edward VII's visit to India, Maharajah Ananda Gajapathi Raju had developed a market place in 1876 to promote trade and commerce. The yard was laid out along one of the banks of a large tank ('Peddacheruvu') consists of several independent segments catering exclusively to different trades like grocery, vegetables, medicines, utensils, timber, cattle, fish/ meat products, etc.

Water Works (18°07'44"N, 83°25'40"E)

A large well of 9m depth together with water supply network was designed by W. J. Addis in Phoolbagh Palace during 1876-77. The well, known as 'Oudh Khana', lying outside the wall-bounded palace was dug to octagonal boundaries and lined with dressed stone besides being housed in an intricately designed octagonal tower bearing serrated decorative bands, semicircular arches and circular openings. A large span single flight staircase made over a freestanding stone arch that directly leads to the first level was also added to the facility.

Maharajah College (18°06'51"N, 83°24'35"E)

In 1857, Maharajah Vijayarama Gajapathi-III founded an Anglo-Vernacular school that developed into a full-fledged college later in 1868 and further into a Post Graduate college in 1879. This simple two-storey structure built in stone masonry is rectangular in plan and symmetrical in elevation consisting of a series of rooms flanked in the front and rear by colonnaded and arched verandahs.

RCM Catholic Church (18°06'42"N, 83°23'26"E)

A church was built for the service of British Military personal by the Roman Catholic Missionary in 1883 in the cantonment area. The symmetrical structure resembling a 'Latin Cross' in plan was laid to double-height in stone masonry fortified with buttresses. This impressive construction houses altar at the rear of the hall over which a double height belfry was added.

Clock Tower (18°06'58"N, 83°24'34"E)

A clock tower was built at the entry point of Prince of Wales market in 1885 by Diwan M. R. Ry. Rai Bahadur Valluri Jagannadha Rao Panthulu, the then Deputy Collector and Municipal Chairman. This symmetrical structure made in stone to octagonal peripheries was provided with gothic style windows and decorated along the outer edges with serrated bands. The tower gradually tapering to the top parapet accommodates a circular staircase within the five overlying units of which the middle houses a clock displaying in four directions.

Central Park (18°07'06"N, 83°24'37"E)

On munificence from Hon'ble Mirza Sri Pusapati Ananda Gajapati Raj Mouryasultan, Maharajah of Vizianagaram G.C.I, Diwan M. R. Ry Rai Bahadur Valluri Jagannadha Rao Pantulu, the then Deputy Collector and Municipal Chairman developed a central park during 1887-89. The park enclosed by peripheral walls was laid out in a vast land with football grounds, circus grounds, Prakasam Park, Lord Wenlock garden library, Victoria Jubilee park and tennis club besides facilitating various cultural activities.

Gurajada's Residence (18°06'43"N, 83°24'43"E)

The personal residence of Mahakavi Gurazada Venkata Apparao stands as a symbolic reflection of the great contributions of the individual to modern Telugu literature and influential social reforms. A small and simple two storey rectangular residential structure with central courtyard having a small colonnaded/ arched frontal verandah in the ground floor and a

colonnaded verandah in the first floor was built by the Mahakavi ("the great poet") sometime between 1887-1897.

Sri Kanyakaparameswari Temple (18°06'59"N, 83°24'25"E)

A temple to the community goddess Sri Kanyakaparameswari was constructed in 1891 by the trading community in Vizianagaram. The temple was built in a triangular plot out of stone as a Sanctum Sanctorum having ornate Bengal roofed 'Vimana' and a *Gopuram* triplet of similar style with cusped arches over the entrance.

Gosha Hospital (18°07'00"N, 83°25'00"E)

Maharani hospital for women and children, popularly known as Gosha hospital was founded by Maharani Kumarika Appalakondayamba in 1894. This medical establishment is a diamond shaped complex with four independent single storey structures interconnected by corridors around a courtyard. While the central unit is a twin-roofed structure preceded by low roofed colonnaded verandah, the other three units are single roofed blocks with similar verandahs all around.

Temple Triplet (18°06'36"N, 83°24'44"E)

A temple complex dating back to 1900 accommodates three temples individually of Sri Gowri Sankara Parvatavardhini, Sri Neelakanteswara Swami and Sri Veera Rajeswara Swami. A row of three temples, each consisting of a Sanctum fronted by a Mandapam, were constructed to the rear of a square courtyard and a corridor bearing three gopurams (two-storey high, arched on all four sides and pyramidal roofed) in axis with the three temples was put up to the fore of the courtyard. This temple complex is colloquially known as *Muddu Kovellu* (Temple Triplet).

Maharajah's Statues (18°06'39"N, 83°24'29"E)

Maharani Kumarika Appalakondayamba erected two life size bronze statues casted in London in memory of her predecessors on the eastern bank of 'Peddacheruvu' situated on the rear of Vizianagaram Fort in 1900. These widely separated statues were installed over raised pedestals enclosed by chattries made of metal dome supported by partly plain and partly twisted cast iron pillars.

Edward's Dispensary (18°06'52"N, 83°24'46"E)

A dispensary named after King Edward VII was put up in 1904 to meet the healthcare requirements of the citizens of Vizianagaram. This simple structure was laid out in stone masonry as a single floor with Madras terrace

on an elevated plinth to resemble the medical symbol 'Plus' with open verandahs in the four corners covered by tiled roofs.

Empire CBM Church (18°07'01"N, 83°24'08"E)

A church was built for the service of civilians by the Catholic Baptist Missionary in 1904. The structure laid to double-height in stone masonry consists of a huge prayer hall fronted by three-storey height central belfry supported by buttresses and flanked by small colonnaded single-height verandahs.

Pavilion (18°06'39"N, 83°24'29"E)

A large pavilion was constructed in 1910 by Vizianagaram Rajahs behind the Fort on the eastern bank of *Peddacheruvu* (big Tank). The structure square in plan was made of beautiful decorative marble and stone columns/ cusped arches covered by a dome bearing a metal finial.

Perla Mansion (18°07'02"N, 83°24'24"E)

A mansion was put up in 1911 by "Perla" family acting as financiers to Vizianagaram Maharajahs for self-occupation. This two-storey habitation is having a number of rooms surrounded by verandahs supported by classical columns. A projected frontal balcony enclosed by cast iron/ decorated wooden railings was added in the first floor. Art-deco concepts with paintings done by Italian and French painters were adopted in decorating the interiors.

Korukonda Palace (18°02'41"N, 83°19'10"E)

A palace constructed in 1912 by Maharajah Vijayarama Gajapathi Raju-IV at Korukonda village in Vizianagaram District was acquired later by Rajah Saheb Dr. P.V.G. Raju who donated it to Government of India to set up a *Saink* School. A colossal building square in plan with two floors was constructed out of stone in a sprawling compound having an elaborately designed gateway. The ground floor consists of a central lounge flanked by rooms on either side while the first floor comprises of a central '*Darbarhall*' with dance galleries on either side.

Maharani Garden Villa (18°06'43"N, 83°25'05"E)

The villa currently adopted as Municipal Commissioner's residence was built to rectangular plan with two-storeys sometime during late 19th century amidst a royal garden. The structure was constructed in stone masonry as a central unit surrounded by arched verandah in the ground floor and a similar unit with verandah enclosed by parapet in the first floor.

Maharajah Government Music College (18°06'34"N, 83°30'89"E)

Maharajah Pusapati Vijayarama Gajapathi Raju-IV founded a 'Gana Patasala' in 1919 and spared the Town Hall constructed in 1900 to accommodate the establishment that was taken over by Government of Andhra Pradesh in 1955. The facility constructed on an elevated plinth in stone masonry consists of a majestic central hall surrounded by verandahs having colonnaded semicircular arches on all sides with the four corners enclosed into rooms.

Masonic Lodge-Nicopolis (18°06'31"N, 83°24'53"E)

Maharajah Vijayarama Gajapathi Raju convinced by the cardinal principles of freemasons conceived a Masonic lodge. The idea was consolidated in 1931 on patronage received from Maharani Kumarika Alakarajeswari Devi. The two-storey facility constructed on an elevated plinth in stone masonry consists of a central hall flanked by colonnaded semicircular arched verandahs with side rooms in the front and rear in the two floors.

Maharajah College Hostel (18°06'24"N, 83°24'45"E)

In 1935, the Maharajah of Vizianagaram constructed a boy's hostel resembling English countryside residence for Maharaja College students. This simple and gracious two-storey structure built in stone consists of a series of rooms appended in the front by a slightly smaller verandah having eleven equidimensional arches flanked on both ends and sides by half-span arches in ground floor and simple colonnaded verandah guarded by wooden railing in the first floor.

Discussion

The inventory of built heritages was characterised in the light of their historical affiliation, heritage typologies and architectural styles.

Historical affiliation of Built heritages in Vizianagaram town

The inventory of heritage resources in Vizianagaram town revealed the presence of a wide range of structures. These buildings derived their origin during two periods of different major rules in the country/ region, viz., Native-Colonial rule: 1701-1900AD (D1) and British era:1901-1947AD (D2), the majority being in 18th to early 20th centuries. Thus, eleven heritage structures came up during Native-Colonial rule and thirteen during British era (Table 1, Fig 3).

Table 1: Historical affiliation, heritage typologies and architectural styles of heritage structures and sites in Vizianagaram town

Heritage structure/ site	Heritage typology	Architectural style
Historical Affiliation: Native-Colonial Rule 1701-1900AD		
British Military Garrison Cemetery	Commemorative architecture	British Colonial
RCM Catholic Church	Religious structures	British Colonial
Clock Tower	Symbolic associations	British Colonial
Fort Wall with Front and Rear Gates	Domestic Habitat	Indo-Saracenic
Gosha Hospital	Public constructions	British Colonial
Maharajah College	Public constructions	Vernacular
Maharajah Hospital	Public constructions	Vernacular
Maharajah Sanskrit College	Public constructions	Vernacular
Prince of Wales Market	Trade centers	Vernacular
Sri Kanyakaparneswari Temple	Religious structures	Hindu
Temple Triplet	Religious structures	Vernacular
Central Park	Garden spaces	British Colonial
Water Works	Domestic Habitat	British Colonial
Historical Affiliation: British Era: 1901-1947AD		
Edward's Dispensary	Public constructions	Vernacular
Empire C.B.M. Church	Religious structures	British Colonial
Gurajada's Residence	Domestic habitat	Vernacular
Korukonda Palace	Domestic habitat	British Colonial
Maharajah Statues-1 and 2	Commemorative architecture	Artifacts
Maharajah College Hostel	Domestic habitat	Vernacular
Maharajah Government Music College	Public constructions	Vernacular
Masonic Lodge-Nicopolis	Cultural organisations	British Colonial
Maharani Garden Villa	Domestic habitat	British Colonial
Pavilon	Commemorative architecture	Indo-Saracenic
Perla Mansion	Domestic habitat	Vernacular-Art deco

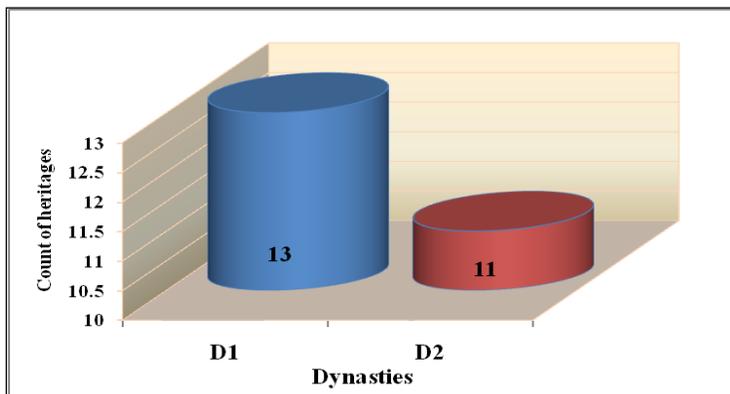


Fig. 3: Heritage structures and sites in Vizianagaram town during different dynasties (D1-Native-Colonial rule; D2-British era)

Most of the surviving heritage structures were put to certain degree of adoptive reuse that may not be fully justified in every instance, especially from the viewpoint of heritage conservation principles.

Heritage typologies of heritage structures and sites in Vizianagaram town

On organizing the 24 heritage structures and sites into different typologies under the nomenclatures adopted, *viz.*, Commemorative architecture (HT1); Cultural organisations (HT2); Domestic habitat (HT3); Garden spaces (HT4); Public constructions (HT5); Religious structures (HT6); Symbolic associations (HT7) and Trade centers (HT8), seven structures and sites were identified into the category of Domestic habitat, six into public constructions, four into religious structures, three into Commemorative architecture, one each into cultural organisations, garden spaces, symbolic associations and trade centre (Fig. 4). Thus, domestic habitat and public construction typologies are found to be most dominant followed by religious structures in the town whereas the rest are mostly representative period.

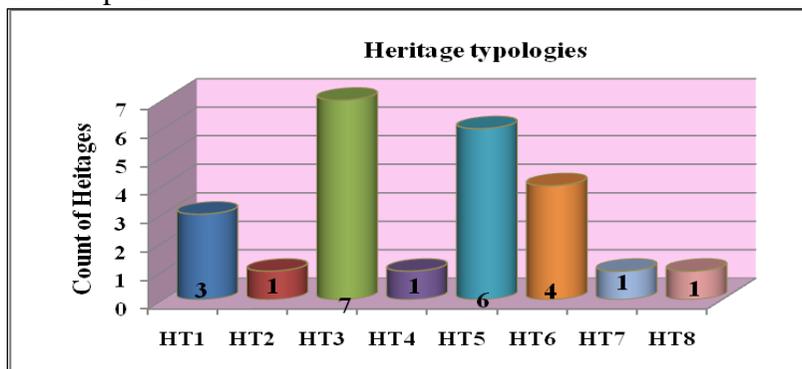


Fig. 4: Heritage typologies in Vizianagaram town
(HT1-Commemorative architecture; HT2-Cultural organisations; HT3-Domestic habitat; HT4-Garden spaces; HT5-Public constructions; HT6-Religious structures; HT7-Symbolic associations and HT8-Trade centers)

Architectural styles of heritage structures in Vizianagaram town

The 24 heritage resources identified in the study area were distinguished as belonging to six established architectural styles, *viz.*, British Colonial (AS1), Hindu (AS2), Indo-Saracenic (AS3), Artifacts (AS4), Vernacular (AS5) and Vernacular-Art Deco (AS6), based on influences of the main rule or dynasty and prevalent architectural features (Fig. 5). Of these, British Colonial followed by Vernacular architectural are dominant whereas the next are exemplars.

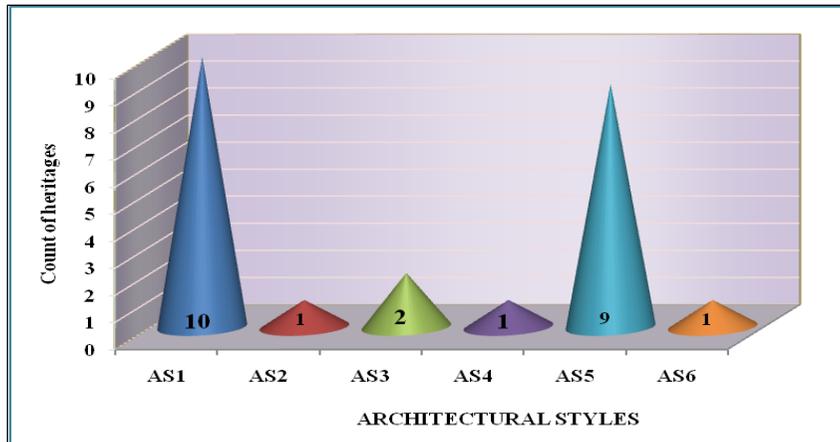


Fig. 5: Architectural styles of heritage structures in Vizianagaram town (AS1- British Colonial; AS2-Hindu; AS3-Indo-Saracenic; AS4-Artifacts; AS5-Vernacular and AS6-Vernacular and Art Deco)

Status of Built Heritages in Vizianagaram town

As per the Regional Plan, the Conservation area admeasures 801 hectares and contains a number of heritage monuments and sites of high architectural significance. The styles of architecture like, Romanesque, Gothic and Neo-Roman were originated by the Greeks, where the roof was covered exclusively by lintels. Some of these vestiges are found in Kerala. Gothic style has flourished in Goa during the tenure of Portuguese rule as variety of Manueline.

Eighteen Built heritages of Vizianagaram town depicted in a map that was prepared by Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) during the formulation of RMPVMR-2021 based on age, architectural value/ specialty/ importance and socio-historical relevance. The list along with that of the others in RMPVMR-2021 was formally submitted by VUDA to the Ministry of Municipal Administration and Urban Development of Government of Andhra Pradesh without following any codal formalities required to seek statutory backup for these heritage resources from the government. In the absence of any further explicit efforts to obtain statutory backup to the rich heritage resources of the region by the urban local body, many precious resources are on vanishing path. Prior to this study, Phoolbagh Palace (*Dudhkhana*) and Rani Mahal (Queen's palace) building within the Fort and Minor Rajah bungalow were demolished while several churches and temples have been altered according to property owners whims and fancies with least respect to the heritage values being carried by them. During the present inventory, it is noted that British Military Garrison Cemetery is abandoned and vegetation over grown all around. Clock Tower is encroached by hawkers. Shop buildings in Prince of Wales Market on

either side of the main road were sold to individual traders and are being modified with latest building materials and contemporary elevations. Water Works structure that played vital role in supplying water to Phool-bagh Palace once turned into a no man's place now without even an approach road. Building materials like granite treads of the main staircase, stone balustrades, flooring materials of the water works structure were stolen.

However, a sign of relief is that Fort wall and bastions with Front, Rear Gates were removed of blackening/ dirt/ lichen/ moss and its Moat were as refurbished with soft landscape during 2004 by the initiation of the then District Collector and District Tourism Officer. Buildings within the Fort and Gurajada's Residence are put to adoptive reuse for Colleges and Library respectively while Maharani Garden Villa was converted as Vizianagaram Municipal Commissioner's residence. Structures at Squash Court, a building and entrance gateway of royal family's private airport at Chintalavalasa situated on the suburbs of Vizianagaram town are also in dilapidated condition.

This appalling state of affairs is mainly due to lack of a persuasive conservation policy, which should take care of inter departmental coordination, surmount piecemeal approaches, favour property owners and developers, generate public awareness and summon local involvement. A timely response in this line followed by a suitable action course especially by the administration of the new Andhra Pradesh State is called for to save several heritage structures at least for renovation and adaptive reuse without disturbing their innate historical and cultural values.

Conclusions

All twenty-four heritage structures and sites in Vizianagaram are significant resources from the state and local heritage perspectives particularly in the light of downsizing of the State due to separation into two states besides their unique historical affiliations, heritage typologies and architectural styles. Therefore, they deserve extra-regional importance for the furtherance of practices, customs, culture and traditions attached to them. Timely rescue and upkeep of these heritage structures and sites also keeps them as good sources of inspiration to sustain an everlasting stable, harmonious and peaceful society in the region. Further, these architectural legacies and contextures spanning around two and half centuries enormously contribute in augmenting cultural, historical, religious, social and technological knowledge base of the region. Thus, these heritage structures and sites deserve to be given top priority both by the local and state governments for urgent conservation so as to eternize them for the benefit of several progenies.

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