

**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENGINEERING SCIENCES & RESEARCH  
TECHNOLOGY****“ELEVEN SHIVA TEMPLE COMPLEX”, ABHAYNAGAR, JESSORE,  
BANGLADESH: THE POTENTIAL HUB OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN  
REGENERATION****Zenat Islam<sup>\*1</sup>, Md Saiful Anam<sup>\*2</sup>**<sup>\*1</sup>Lecturer, Department of Architecture, State University of Bangladesh<sup>\*2</sup>Architect, Partner, Chotushkon

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.1228830

**ABSTRACT**

A historical building or complex that is several hundred years old must have undergone through changes due to various reason and most importantly degradation of time. Communities faced with the challenge of saving such heritage structures, especially one that has no immediately available use and is threatened with neglect or demolition. Though Bangladesh is a little country it has thousands of examples like this. But conservation of those building or site can plays an important role to create sustainable urban regeneration. That's why it is important to ensure some attachment between the community and this structure. Only when the community will feel that this structure is their own asset, they will conserve it and that will be the most resilient process. In depth, this paper will discuss the potentiality of Eleven Temple Complex, Abhaynagar, Jessore as a hub of sustainable urban regeneration and the importance to grow the awareness of self-belongingness among the communities.

**KEYWORDS:** Conservation, Community participation, Cultural tourism, Sustainable urban regeneration.**I. INTRODUCTION**

The balance between conservation and redevelopment in developing countries is very difficult to maintain. While the conservation of historic towns and cities in the Western world is considered a common situation, many non-Western countries are still in debate over whether to develop or demolish. In the context of this study, regeneration refers to: giving back life to the area, by bringing back social, physical and economics activities. With the rich history of Eleven Shiva Temple Complex and special craft, it has a unique aura and deserved special attention. There is a good scope of promoting cultural tourism here. Being a living heritage site, the existing population must participate in the conservation process. A “community-based” conservation process should be promoted to market the area as a tourist attraction and help to make the complex as a religious pilgrims and a tourist attraction for its historical value. To develop the micro-economic activities of the locality and encourage self-employment of the local people through the development of this old structure can be new dimension through sustainable urban regeneration.

**II. METHODOLOGY*****Methodology***

Methodology of the study contains literature survey (scholarly articles and newspaper data), site survey through observation, informal interviews, taking photographs and producing and analyzing drawings.

**III. LITURATURE REVIEW*****Heritage Conservation***

The term heritage has different meanings to different context. World Heritage Convention classifies heritage into two categories:

Cultural heritage: a monument, group of buildings or site of historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value. Natural heritage: includes outstanding physical, biological, and



geographical features, different kind of plants or animals species and areas with significant scientific or aesthetic value those could be best for conservation (UNESCO, 1972).

#### *Sustainable Urban Regeneration*

Sustainable urban regeneration is a comprehensive process which deals with the social, economic and environmental vitalization at the same time for a long term urban vibrancy. Sustainable urban regeneration refers to a process that will help reconstruct or rehabilitate the urban fabric, revitalize community-based economy and built social capital (Ng, *et. al*, 2001). It not only deals with social equity and justice issues, but also promotes and enhances diversity in culture, economy and built form (Ng, *et. al*, 2001).

#### *Cultural Tourism*

Cultural tourism is concerned with a country or region's culture, especially its art and architecture. It generally focuses on traditional communities who have diverse customs, unique form of art and distinct social practices, which basically distinguishes it from other types/forms of culture [7]. Cultural tourism includes tourism in urban areas, particularly historic or large cities. It can also include tourism in cultural communities (i.e. festivals, rituals), and their values and lifestyle. It is generally agreed that cultural tourists spend substantially more than standard tourists do.

#### *Heritage Conservation and Sustainable Urban Regeneration*

Heritage conservation can help to visualize the diversity of urban form and to explore the cultural, political and historical character of the urban areas. Heritage conservation can also support to dig out some crucial incidents and events that might have brought major changes in the development trends, urban fabric of the city and the townscape. In a way the conservation of heritage is a crucial factor in the long-term prosperity of a city. Furthermore the involvement of community in the process of heritage conservation can bring sustainable results (Ng, *et. al*, 2001). The significance of quality historic environments has become increasingly evident as part of place-marketing/ city image initiatives as urban areas have sought to use cultural policy as a strategy of urban regeneration (Bianchini & Parkinson, 1993; Ward, 1998). Both conservation and regeneration interests were prepared to work pragmatically and accept that their views would not always predominate, though each had a tendency to feel that that in a situation of conflict it was they who had to give way.

### **IV. CONSERVATION OF ELEVEN SHIVA TEMPLE COMPLEX**

#### *Background of Eleven Shiva Temple Complex*

There were several independent Hindu states established in Bengal during the Mughal period like those of Maharaja Pratap Aditya of Jessore and Raja Sitaram Ray of Burdwan. These kingdoms contributed a lot to the economic and cultural landscape of Bengal. Extensive land reclamations in forested and marshy areas were carried out and intrastate trades as well as commerce were highly encouraged. These kingdoms also helped introduce new music, painting, dancing and sculptures into Bengali art-forms as well as many temples were constructed during this period. Militarily, they served as bulwarks against Portuguese and Burmese attacks. The 11 Shiva Temple complex at Abhaynagar, Jessore which is a sign of ancient architecture of 1749 during the Hindu Raj in Bengal. From historical background, there were 1200 bighas of land was given to the each of 11 Shaivites by the honorable princess 'Abhaya'. Still the rest Brahmins of that time are living in this place and serving the temple. The Biggest temple at the north full of terracotta of hindu myth and an excellent edifice of their culture and tradition. The temple complex is undertaken to renovation process on 30/07/2003 by Department of Archaeology. Abhaynagar, the ancient village is situated in Jessore District. It is an archaeological site, bounded by the lush greenery where the birds still sing hiding among the bushes. Abhaynagar has a great importance for its ancient architectural value which represents the 15<sup>th</sup>& 18<sup>th</sup> century's architecture in this region. This is only one complex in Bangladesh where eleven Shiva temples are located together.

#### *Location of the Site*

The site is located in Bhatpara Bazaar, Abhaynagar, Jessore. The site, 11 temple complex dedicated to Lord Shiva is partially destroyed; the place still shows the majesty of the glorious past of Bengal

### **V. ARCHITECTURAL STYLE**

#### *Type of the Temples*



[Islam\* *et al.*, 7(4): April, 2018]

IC<sup>TM</sup> Value: 3.00

The characteristics of the temple are At-Chala with triple entrance and rich terracotta façade which we can found in 18<sup>th</sup> centuries Hugli-Bardhaman temple. For the great archaeological and spiritual value it will be attract tourist from different region. So to preserve 11 Shiva temple & some tourist facilities can be promoted in this area to attract more tourists from home and abroad. The impressive Abhaynagar is that a place where a visitor enchanted by the aesthetic beauty, Mother Nature portrayed here but on the other the magnificent antiquated architecture, reminder of our glorious past, must make him curious.

**Figure:**

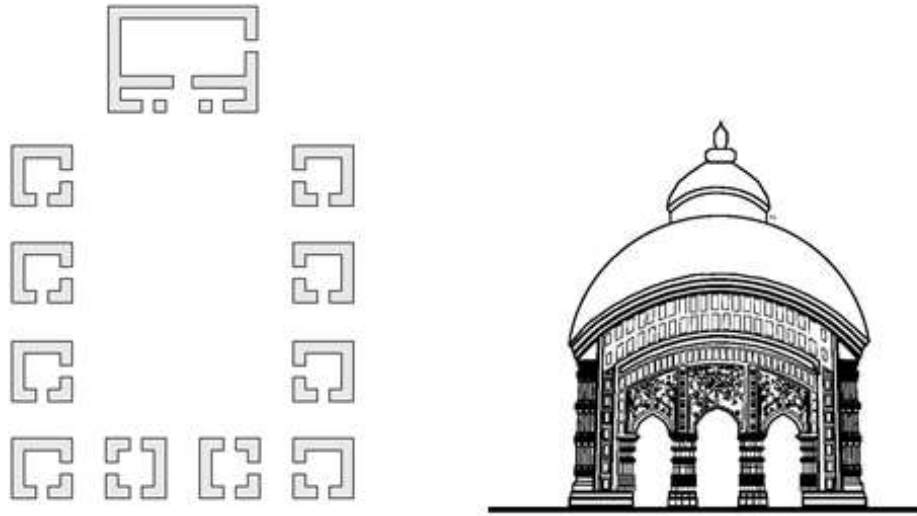


*Before conservation*

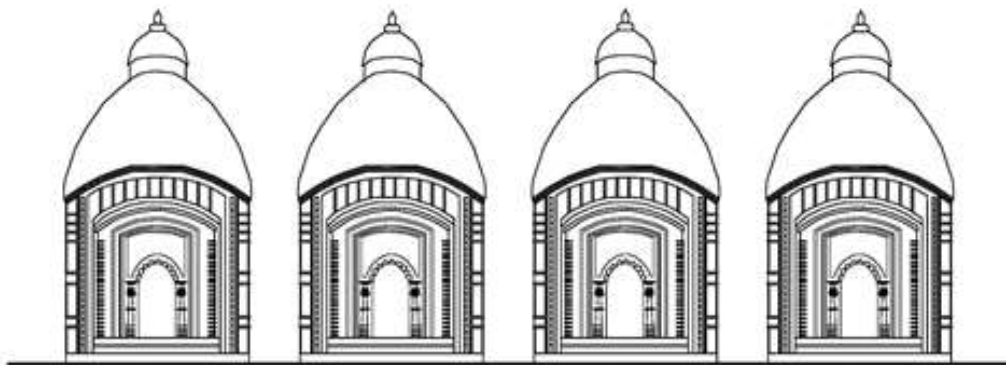
#### *Stylistic Analysis*

The documentation was made by oral survey, and other heritage structures that were built at the same time. The temple of the North side is the biggest one which contains a number of terracotta which represents the life style of that time. Other ten temples are same in size and decoration. Each temple had AttChale (roofs).

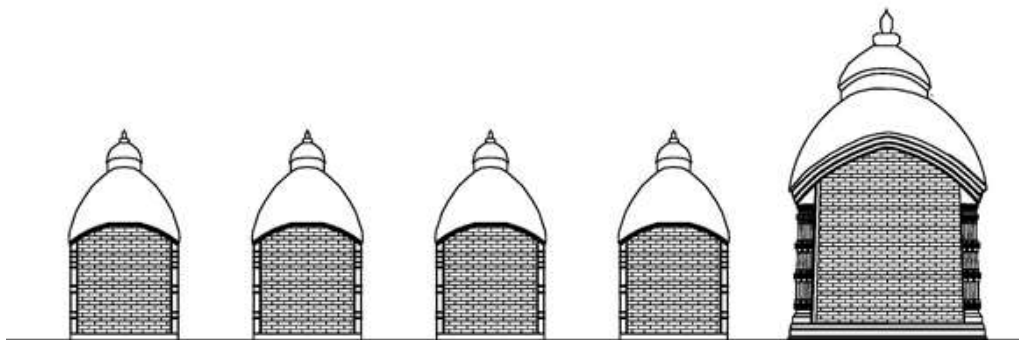
Figure:



*Plan (left) and front view of central temple*



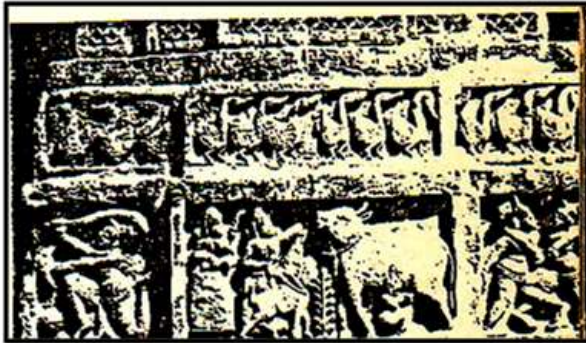
*Front elevation of the temples*



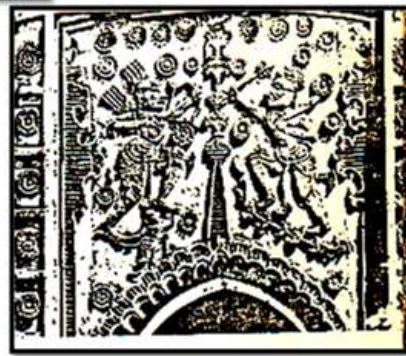
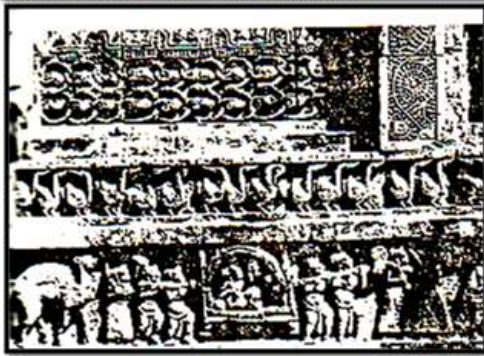
*Side elevation of the temples*



**Detailing of the Terracotta of the Temples**



This terracotta represents their life style  
1. Great victory against mughal  
2. Their communication system  
3. Hunting in sundarban, cattle rising



2

1

*Terracotta- Detail*

*Achievement through the Development*

**Figure:**



*After Conservation*

**VI. URBAN REGENERATION THROUGH PARTICIPATION**

### *Potentiality as a hub of urban regeneration*

Heritage conservation is a broader and holistic term which needs broader and comprehensive policies for protection of collective memories. Although the legal and institutional framework plays an important role in the conservation of vernacular built environment and cultural values but community has a key role in achieving sustainable results in the urban development. The community involvement gives more diverse policies, open and transparent procedures and a strong sense of belonging and ownership to their ancestor's social cultural and historical values (Ng, *et. al.*, 2001). Urban heritage and historical buildings are positive issues in a field where there has been a significant lack of platforms in global cooperation. To preserve the essential features of the building's history and cultural heritage, it is necessary to single out the best means of suitable protection from decay and destruction.

### *Community Participation*

A "community-based" conservation process needs to engage residents and others stakeholders in developing a broad plan for its pragmatic application. The best possible solution would be to conserve the site by developing the conservation management plan with people using an active participatory approach.

### *Promoting Cultural Tourism*

Cultural tourism is concerned with a country or region's culture, especially its art and architecture. It generally focuses on traditional communities who have diverse customs, unique form of art and distinct social practices, which basically distinguishes it from other types/forms of culture. Cultural tourism includes tourism in urban areas, particularly historic or large cities. It can also include tourism in cultural communities (i.e. festivals, rituals), and their values and lifestyle. It is generally agreed that cultural tourists spend substantially more than standard tourists do. As Eleven Shiva Temple Complex has many of the qualities described here, there is good scope of promoting it as a spot for cultural tourism.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Only conservation of a building or complex is not enough to accelerate the process of resilience. For sustainability it needs the participation of the community as well as some measures should take by the government. Promoting cultural tourism is such an approach which can give a new dimension in case of urban regeneration. So the authority should provide comprehensive policies to ensure sustainability of conservation process. By promoting such facilities Eleven Shiva temple complex can be a proper destination for religious pilgrims and a cultural hub of urban regeneration through the community participation.

## VIII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank Khulna Divisional Museum, The Archeology Department of Bangladesh and the local people of Abhaynagar for the information as well as The Department of Architecture of Khulna University to carry out this research.

## IX. REFERENCES

- [1] Mee Kam N G , , Alison Cook, and Ernest W. T. Chui, "The Road Not Travelled: A Sustainable Urban Regeneration Strategy for Hong Kong", in *Planning Practice & Research*, Vol. 16 No. 2, 2001.
- [2] A. Y. Chohan, and P. W. Ki, "Heritage Conservation a tool for Sustainable Urban Regeneration", 41st ISoCaRP Congress, 2005.
- [3] Bianchini, F., & Parkinson, M. (Eds.), *Cultural policy and urban regeneration: The West European experience*. Manchester: University Press, 1993.
- [4] The definitive version of this article is published by Taylor and Francis as: Pendlebury, J, Conservation and Regeneration: Complementary or Conflicting Processes? The Case of Grainger Town, Newcastle upon Tyne, *Planning Practice and Research*, Volume 17, Issue 2 May 2002 , pages 145 – 158
- [5] Livio de Santoli, SUSTAINABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT - Vol. II - *Historic Buildings: Conservation, Management And Policy Issues*.

## CITE AN ARTICLE

Islam, Z., & Anam, S., Md. (n.d.). "ELEVEN SHIVA TEMPLE COMPLEX", ABHAYNAGAR, JESSORE, BANGLADESH: THE POTENTIAL HUB OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN REGENERATION. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENGINEERING SCIENCES & RESEARCH TECHNOLOGY*, 7(4), 737-742.