

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**MINISTRY OF CULTURE**

**RAJYA SABHA**

**QUESTION NO 29.04.2010**

**ANSWERED ON**

**CONSERVATION OF HISTORICAL PLACES IN RAJASTHAN .**

484

Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Government is aware that a visitor's gallery has been constructed by destroying a reservoir in the historical fort of Aamer, gold polish has been scratched from the urns of Hawamahahal's dome and the fort's wall has been demolished for installing air-conditioner in the allotted shops inside the palace;

(b) whether Government has paid attention to the report of Controller and Auditor General (CAG) in which it has been mentioned that a lack-luster approach is being adopted in conservation of some other historical places in Rajasthan; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY)

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) TO (c) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 484 FOR 29.04.2010

(a) Amber Fort is not a centrally protected monument but protected by Rajasthan State Government. As per the information furnished by the Department of Archaeology and Museum, Government of Rajasthan, the water reservoir located within the fort was not under use since there was no water available for storage. The State Government had thus taken a decision to develop the tank into a viewers gallery for the sound and light show for the tourists.

The copper urns, originally gold-plated and placed at the eastern and western facades of Hawa Mahal were in bad state of preservation. Long exposure to sun, rain and dust had taken away the luster and sheen of the gold-plating. The birds droppings and menace of monkeys within the fort had also added to the damage caused to the urns and their external surface. In 2007, the Government of Rajasthan had taken up restoration and preservation of the urns under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme. Under the schemes the urns were not only consolidated and strengthened but the external surface was restored using gold foil as per original to the extent possible. The iron rods used originally in the urns were replaced with non-corrosive long stainless steel rods.

According to the concerned department of the State Government no damage has been caused to the fortification wall to accommodate air-conditioners in the shops.

(b) & (c) The Central Government has taken note of the observations made in the Report of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in regard to preservation of Hawa Mahal and other monuments of Rajasthan and is taking up the matter with the Government of Rajasthan for corrective measures.

Executive Summary

The Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 484 for 28.04.2010 raised by Hon'ble M. P. Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi on 'Conservation of Historical Palace in Rajasthan pertains mainly on the report of Comptroller and Auditor General on performance of the Preservation of Monuments and upkeep of museums under the control of Rajasthan State Government for period during (2004-2009).

Hon'ble M.P. desired to know whether Government is aware that a visitor gallery has been constructed by destroying a reservoir in the historical fort of Aamer, gold polish has been scratched from urns of Hawa Mahal's dome and the fort wall has been demolished for installation of air conditioner in the allotted shops inside the palace.

Amber Fort is not a centrally protected monument but enjoys protection under the Rajasthan State Government act of 1961. The reply is based on the information furnished by the Director, Archaeology and Museums, Jaipur, Government of Rajasthan.

In the CAG Report vide para No. 2.1.5.3. about Destruction of ancient tank at Kesar Kyari, Amber, the audit observed that a 18th century water tank of historical value existed near Maota, supplying water to be fountains of Kesar Kyari in the Amber Mahal Complex. The Amber Development and Management Authority has dismantled the ancient tank for construction of a viewers gallery for the light and sound show. The Amber Development and Management Authority informed (June 2009) that the use of this tank was not possible as water was not available in Maota water reservoir and it was therefore decided to develop the dilapidated tank for visitors gallery. The audit has made it clear that the action of The Amber Development and Management Authority was not in consonance with Para 25 of part I of the Conservation Manual of Archaeological Survey of India which states when the authenticity of a monument is destroyed our first duty is not to renew them but preserve them' and also "broken or half decayed original work is of infinitely more value than the smartest and most perfect new work.

The audit noticed that The Amber Development and Management Authority has allotted 11 shops inside Amber Palace after signing MoU, which also was in violation of the spirit of State Rules 1968. Many shop keepers installed air-conditioners and applied lamination on walls and floors of the fort. The original look of the palace was modified undermining historical value.

Hawa Mahal

Para 2.1.6.2. of CAG Audit Report refers to Hawa Mahal.

Hawa Mahal, built in 1799 by Sawai Pratap Singh is situated in the heart of Jaipur City.

The CAG Report states that a joint physical verification of Hawa Mahal, revealed defacement of the monument. Audit observed that due to lack of proper watch and ward visitor's writing and painting on wall, has destroyed the beauty of the historical monument. The golden polish on Kalashas of domes of Hala Mahal has been scratched and tarnished.

In reply to this Rajya Sabha Starred Question, the Director, Archaeology and Museum, Rajasthan Jaipur States that the conservation works had been carried out in the parts of Kesar Kyari (Amber) which were in dilapidated condition and the portion where roof was missing.

The earlier RCC work that had been done in past was demolished and the repair work done by using traditional techniques and the traditional 'Ladav' roof was laid.

No existing water system of historical importance has been disturbed, instead the unused and dilapidated remnants have been conserved, restored and developed in order to make the place alive.

The hauj (reservoir) has no relation to the ancient adjoining water pumping system of Persian Wheel technique and the pipe line made of sikora (small terracotta pots made up of clay). The use of hauj has not been witnessed by anyone.

No. palace/fort was has been demolished for installing air conditioners in the allotted shops inside the Amber Palace.

There are numerous gold plated urns made of copper on the eastern and western facades of the Hawa Mahal. Due to regular exposure to sun, rain and dust these urns had started losing their lusture and sheen with passage of time. The hold of these urns (or “Kalashas”) had also weakened from their places. Pigeon droppings had also been a major cause for loss of shine of the urns. Monkeys also pose a problem to these ‘Kalashas’ on regular basis and result in their losing hold and grip. The Department took up the restoration work of these urns in 2007 under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for conservation of the monument. Structurally, the urns were strengthened at their respective places by replacing earlier iron rods with long steel rods. The iron rods used to corrode and rust easily, resulting in damage to the plaster and structure of the building.

The missing urns that had fallen down and had been lost were replaced. All the urns were re-coated / plated using gold leaves as per the original technique.

Thus, after the restoration work these ‘kalashas’ have been strengthened and re-coated with gold to restore their original sheen. However, they are exposed to open weather conditions and the menace of pigeons and monkeys continue to exist.

The Central Government has taken note of the observations made in the Report of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in regard to preservation of Hawa Mahal and other monuments of Rajasthan and is taking up the matter with the State Government for corrective measures.

The expenditure incurred by the State Government on conservation of and repairs of Aamer Palace and Hawa Mahal for the year 2004 to 2009-2010 is as under :

(Rupees in Lakhs)		
No.	of Years	Aamer Palace Hawa Mahal
2004-05	92.47	39.55
2005-06		
2006-07	4.46	

2007-08	700.00	158.54
2008-09	44.00	176.53
2009-2010	567.75	133.21
Total	1404.22	512.29