

WHV – Safeguarding the works of architect Muzharul Islam

The Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam: an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement in South Asia, Bangladesh

PROJECT DATES

Cultural property inscribed on the Tentative List (2023)

01-31 December 2024

THE SITE - The architectural works of Muzharul Islam from 1950 to 1990 is a series of buildings that illustrate the fusion of a unique understanding of context and modernist philosophy to create a new architectural language for tropical countries like Bangladesh in the post-colonial era. The components span almost forty years and are situated all over Bangladesh. The projects' chronology demonstrates an evolution of unique architectural solutions to create strong characteristics for the region's institutional buildings. The series showcases the adaptation of an open plan, blurring the boundary between interior and exterior and the use of industrially produced materials, which were not mainstream. Among his four decades of work, the Faculty of Fine Arts, Dhaka University (1953-1955) was the first commissioned project by the then East Pakistan's government. Later, the Jahangirnagar University (1964) demonstrates an evolution of the same philosophy in a wider scale.

OBJECTIVES - Implemented for the second time, the project aims to create awareness on safeguarding and documenting the works of Muzharul Islam and strengthen collaboration between local and international partners to protect the current state of the site, in particular against renovation and restructuring works potentially affecting the value of the elements proposed for inscription, and at ensuring the establishment of community-led heritage management programs.

ACTIVITIES - Volunteers will visit the archives of four educational institutions part of the site, and will help preparing architectural documentation, conservation management plans and monitoring systems to promote the understanding and protection of Muzharul Islam modern heritage. They will also implement intergenerational awareness-raising campaigns leveraging the experience of living architects having shared their work and life with Muzharul Islam, helping bridging through interpersonal and emotional connections the gap of understanding of modernist philosophy and architecture in South Asia.

PARTNERS - Polytechnic Institutes (Bogura, Barisal, Pabna, Rongpur, Sylhet); Getty Conservation Institute, Tigerman-McCurry Architects, MYS Foundation.

Nagar Upakhyon - Perceive

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