

# SOUTH ASIA

## BANGLADESH

### Historic Mosque City of Bagerhat

#### II.1 Introduction

**Year of Inscription** 1985

#### Organisation Responsible for the Report

- Department of Archaeology (DoA)  
Ministry of Cultural Affairs  
22/19 Khiljee Road, Mohammadpur  
Dhaka 1207  
Bangladesh

#### II.2 Statement of Significance

**Inscription Criteria** C iv

#### Statement of Significance

- Proposed as follows:  
“Bagerhat represents the vestiges of a Medieval Muslim town in the northern peripheral land of the Sunderban. The lost town is full of mosques, graves, reservoirs and holy tombs. Shait-Gumbad is one of the mosques, biggest in dimension, representing the flavour of the traditional orthodox mosque plan and it is the only example of its kind in the whole of Bengal. The second important monument, Khan Jahan’s tomb, is unique in architecture and calligraphic parlance.”

#### Status of Site Boundaries

- Borders and buffer zone of the property are considered adequate.

#### II.3 Statement of Authenticity/Integrity

#### Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- World Heritage value is considered to have been maintained. No changes are foreseen.



#### II.4 Management

#### Administrative and Management Arrangements

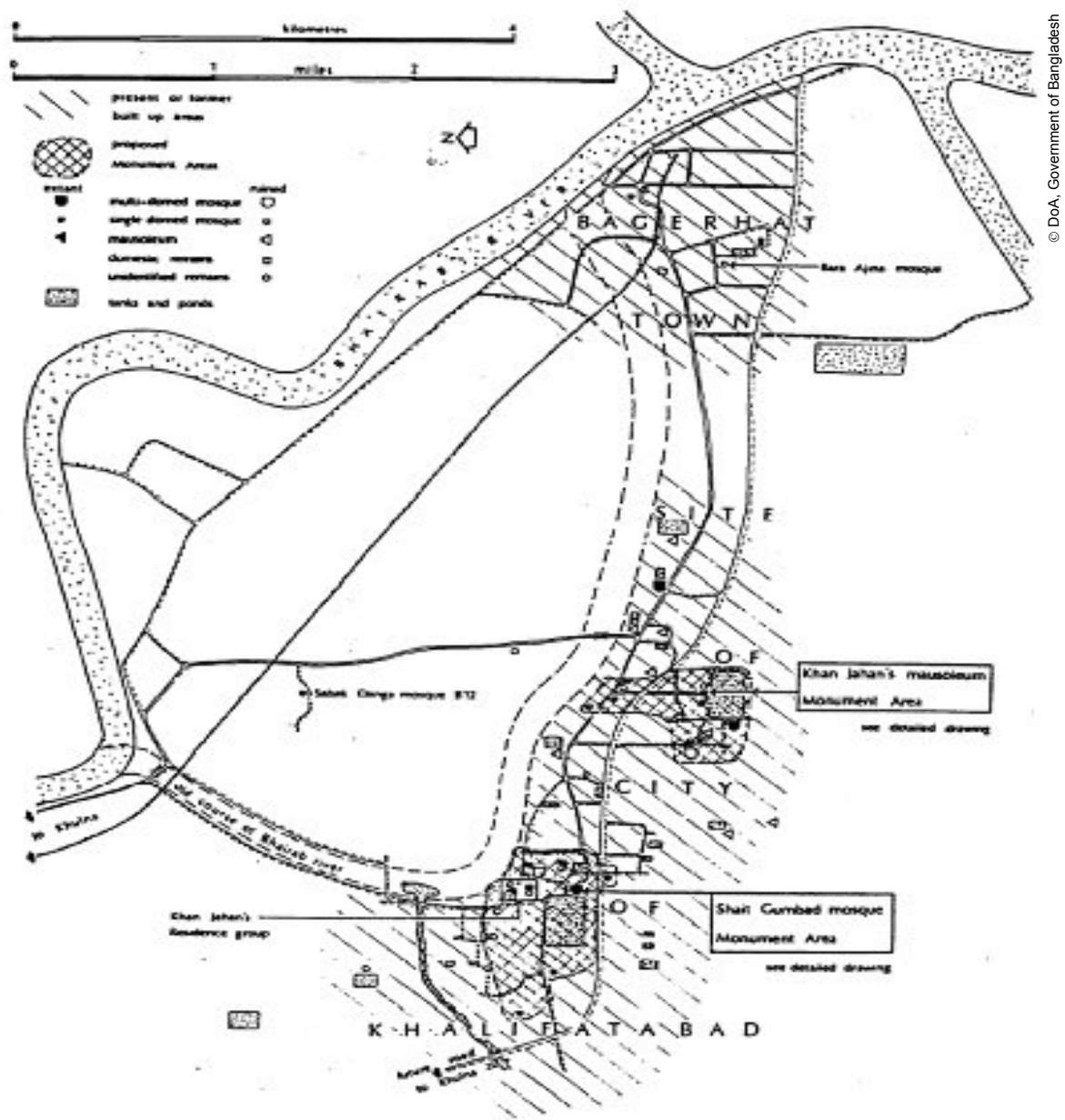
- The property is managed under the powers of the Antiquities Act, 1976.
- In addition the DoA operates under the Antiquities Export Control Act, 1947, the Immovable Antiquities Preservation Rules, 1976, the Conservation Manual, 1923 and the Archaeological Works Code, 1938.
- There is no management plan but a new action plan is in preparation.
- A Master Plan for Bagerhat and Paharpur was developed jointly by UNESCO and UNDP in 1983.

#### Present State of Conservation

- “Renovation, preservation and conservation of walls, columns, domes (including terracotta plaques and other ornamental works) for Shait Gumbad Mosque”.
- 38 acres of land is owned by DoA. 3 ancillary buildings have been demolished. A new museum, rest house and boundary wall have been constructed. Planting to control wind-blown dust has been carried out.

#### Staffing and Training Needs

- 26 staff, from Archaeological Engineer to cleaners, are employed on the site.
- Staffing level is considered inadequate. There is a plan to recruit more guides and armed security guards.
- Training needs are identified in conservation, planning, administration & management.



Bagerhat: Layout of the Old City of Khalifatabad

**Financial Situation**

- The Government is the main source of funding. No figures supplied.
- Funding is considered inadequate.
- Support from the Government of Japan is acknowledged.

**Access to IT**

- 1 PC on the site. No email or Internet access.

**Visitor Management**

- No visitor statistics supplied.
- There is a site museum, rest house, gardens and paths.
- There is an identified need for visitor facilities such as toilets and drinking water, restaurants, car parking and shops, guidebooks and improved visitor information.
- No visitor management plan, but the need to develop one is acknowledged.

## II.5 Factors Affecting the Property

### Threats and Risks

- Water logging,
- Salinity,
- Uncontrolled vegetation,
- Vandalism,
- Climatic conditions,
- Public trespassing and encroachment.

### Counteractive Plans

- No emergency plan has been developed.
- Improvements have been made to the drainage system.
- The UNESCO International Campaign to Safeguard the Monuments of Paharpur and Bagerhat was launched in 1986 and held its fourth meeting in 1999.

## II.6 Monitoring

### Monitoring Arrangements

- A monitoring system exists which is implemented by the Monitoring and Evaluation Division of the Ministry of Planning, the Planning Cell of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, and the Working Group of the International Safeguarding Campaign.
- Its key responsibility is to evaluate conservation and restoration works.

### Monitoring Indicators

- Indicators identified for monitoring conservation and restoration works consist of: (i) fieldwork, and (ii) analysis of reports.

## II.7 Conclusions and Recommended Actions

### Conclusions and Proposed Actions

- A Proposed Action Plan for the period 2002-07 is presented, at an estimated cost of US\$ 2.06 million including repair & restoration of 4 historic structures, and excavations at 2 sites.
- Support of WHF may be required for implementation of the Proposed Action Plan.

### \* State of Conservation Reports

1995 WHC-95/CONF.201/4 The Bureau received a report of the Division for Physical Heritage monitoring mission in 1994. The mission, while noting the progress made in documentation, recommended that: (i) national norms be developed with regard to archaeological investigations, recording, and conservation and construction work within the protected zones; (ii) a mechanism for planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation of conservation work and research be established by the DoA; (iii) reports on archaeological research and conservation be completed and published; (iv) the conservation laboratory at the DoA be improved; (v) signage indicating the protected area be improved; and (vi) a training strategy and programme be developed.

Suggested Bureau Recommendation: The Bureau requests the Centre to conduct a joint mission with the Bangladeshi authorities to report to the Committee at its 19<sup>th</sup> session.