RANIPOKHARI RECONSTRUCTION & CONFLICT SETTLEMENT

Proposed Elevation of the Balgopaleshwar Temple

SUBMITTED TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NEPAL'S RECONSTRUCTION (ICNR – 2020)

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY,
SINGHA DURBAR, KATHMANDU, NEPAL

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Nepal is adorned with a plethora of cultural heritages and sights. These heritages must be protected as a trust for future generation and identity. Their proper care requires a strong and effective institutional environment and knowledge. There have been several complaints on the confusion and overlapping in the reconstruction of Ranipokhari by the previous institution. In order to look into these problems and conflicts, the NRA ultimately handled it safely to address the conflicting situation. NRA has started the work by efficiently reconstituting the works in two parts. One is the participatory approach and the other by the contracting out the service. NRA requested me to offer my services as an Archaeological Expert Member of the reconstruction committee. In the process of study, many experts, historians, archaeologists, engineers, architects and skilled talents provided their invaluable opinion and shared with me their precious experiences. This opportunity has enlightened me to take up the right approach in the conservation of the traditional pond, an immense heritage monument of great significance to the nation. I would like to sincerely thank all those experts who shared with me their valuable experiences and opinions. I would also like to thank NRA for giving me an opportunity to write the paper. I hope, this paper will amicably nail down the reconstruction confusion and lead to proper conservation of monuments and protection of their historical flavor. I expect this paper to be a stimulating milestone for proper guidance in respect to the reconstruction and restoration of monuments of the country.

- Bishnu Raj Karki, Archaeologist
Ranipokhari Reconstruction and Conflict Settlement

Bishnu Raj Karki

Abstract

Conflict is a ubiquitous subject but rarely implied in the field of monument conservation where public perception of heritage sanctity clashes with that of the concerned authority. Post-earthquake Ranipokhari restoration is one such controversial issue that was delayed by three years to commence the work of Ranipokhari conservation.

An expert team constituted for the restoration had initially prepared a research proposal that was not approved by the Kathmandu Municipality and the Department of Archeology, as it resorted to modern construction technology. The conflict was eventually resolved when a second proposal was submitted by the expert team in line with heritage restoration principles for implementation by the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) for the restoration of Ranipokhari and Balgapaleshwar temple.

In-situ restoration principle is used or applied in the process of partial restoration or reconstruction of the property. The restoration principle basically deals with whether there is total destruction of the monument and it needs to be rebuilt from the base level of the monument. If such be the case, the authority or the conservator must go to the original configuration as much as possible with the available evidence. Thus, the initial stand of the authority was baseless, as there were abundant archaeological evidences scattered in and around the temple precinct along with historical evidences. The importance of the study lies on factual research and investigation of evidence to retain the historical authenticity of the monuments.

Key words: conflict, conservation, restoration, reconstruction, excavation, exploration

1. Introduction

Hominids first appeared on the earth around six million years ago in the Miocene Period. As water is essential for human survival, its management has been associated with humans since the dawn of human civilization. Water Resource Management is the activity of planning, developing, distributing and management of water resources for rational and optimal use. Early humans used the water from rivers and fountains. The age of agriculture (which began approximately 1000 to 8000 BC) changed the life style of men from nomads to settlers in areas where water was available. Water management systems were then developed by diverting and channelizing surface water from rivers, and also utilizing groundwater in the form dug-wells and also collection ponds.

In Nepal, the Shakya, Mithila and Lichchhabi civilizations flourished through the use of contemporaneous (ancient) technology. The Lichchhabi is developed water channelizing systems from the rivers as well as water tapping systems from original sources for drinking and other purposes. The Mallas followed the technology of their predecessors and also developed their own. Therefore, this era is famous for the construction of ponds to balance the ecosystem of towns, as well as provide water supply for dealing of accidental fires in the city. Water was also supplied through numerous stone spouts by tapping springs or transfer through stone conduits. The construction of the

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Ranipokhari in Kathmandu as a commemorative monument of excellence holds paramount importance for our civilization. It was built in the memory of the sudden demise of the beloved son of King Pratap Malla, Chakravartendra Malla. The title Rajrajendra Nepaleshwara Maharajadhiraja is inscribed on a pillar in the form of a huge rectangular column standing in front of the Degutale Temple at the Hanuman Dhoka Durbar Square. The inscription is dated Nepal Sambat 790, Bhadra Shukla 12 Para 13, Shravana Nakshetra, Savana Yoga, Brihaspati Vara. It is also said that the pond was constructed to express the condolences of the deeply sorrowful mother Queen Anantapriya, Princess of Kuchibihar, Mahanagar, present India.

The construction work of the pond was completed on NS 790, Aashwin Yoga, Shukla Purnima, Uttaravadra Nakshetra, Dhruba Yoga, Som Bara - written by the then writer Krishna Deva. The record starts with the invocation of the Goddess Kalika and proceeds to say that water brought from different sacred sites and pilgrimage centers in India and Nepal was brought and put into the pond for religious consecration. Hence this pond constitutes a significant religious heritage landmark in Kathmandu.

Queen Bhuvan Laxmi, consort of King Bhupalendra Malla, was honoured with the beautification of the precinct of Ranipokhari in 1691 AD (NS 811) to welcome the frontier king. After the great contribution of Queen Bhuvan Laxmi nearly 21 years later, a second name was christened to the pond as Nhpukhu meaning "Ranipokhari".

Historical account reveals that the temple of Balgopaleshwar and the bridge were reconstructed by the powerful Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana in 1851 AD. He had changed the original Granthakuta Style into the Dome (Shikara) Style. The Dome Style was popularized by him in Kathmandu Valley. He was also the pioneer to introduce the neoclassical architecture in Nepal. The neoclassical architecture is an architectural style produced by the neoclassical movement that began in the mid-18th century in Italy and France.

The temple and the pond were again struck by the 8.0 Richter Scale Patana (Bihar) Earthquake on 15th January 1934. The then ruling Prime Minister, Juddha Shumshere, immediately started to address the conservation of heritage destroyed by the earthquake along with Ranipokhari and Balgopaleshwar Temple. He also constructed the temple on the footing of the original plan and base-wall made by King Pratap Malla. The reconstruction and fencing of temple and pond were completed in BS 1994.

2. Research

2.1 Issues/Objectives

The objective of this study was to prepare a detailed documentation of prevailing archaeological objects and structures to conserve and reconstruct the Ranipokhari and temple as per existing laws, bylaws and guidelines in line with UNESCO norms.

2.2 Methodology

Data Collection:

The purpose of data collection and information is to know the existing situation and historical details of the property and prioritize with the needed justification the approach that is suitable for adoption to the reconstruction. Mainly, there are two types of data collection, i.e., primary and secondary data collection.
The primary methodology is to scientifically resolve the conservation problem and issues through collection of archaeological data by excavation and exploration and prepare the proposal by focusing on the retention of the historicity as well as tradition and identity of the monument for future generations in a scientific manner.

The secondary data is collected by gathering the required information through reports, archaeological exploration and excavation reports done by the Department of Archaeology, historical documents including inscriptive records and also examining the number of decisions made by the DOA, OKMC and the experts’ report for the reconstruction of the temple, pond and bridge.

2.3 Key Results

Ranipokhari is restored to its original forms. The authenticity of the monument is reconstructed in recognition of the traditional skill and technology. Thus, revival work will enlighten both present and future generations. The reconstruction of the Ranipokhari, will become an ideal model reconstruction work inside and outside of the country as a masterpiece monument for the nation.

3. Discussion

The property became a great issue of contention in the process of reconstruction with its style. The issue came to the surface while OKMC was constructing the temple and the wall of the pond using cement mortar and steel. Hence, the reconstruction approval given by the DOA to the OKMC became a national issue. As a consequence, a number of discussions were arranged with the experts, brick layers and engineers to confirm the validity of the previous expert team’s report including the decision on the configuration and construction guideline.

4. Plan of the Pond

The construction of Nhupukhu, later called Ranipokhari, was a colossal task that must have taken considerable time and effort in the selection of the appropriate site, planning, design and execution of construction albeit no document relating to these activities have been found. According to the statement of Let Prof. Dr. Mukunda Raj Aryal, there is a connection between Tundikhel and Ranipokhari. As per his account, the Tundikhel was then a swamp land. The water is coming from Tundikhel to Ranipokhari. The other proof is an inscription dating to the time of King Aanshuvarma that was found at a stone spout in the present subway while construction work was being done on it to the north of the Bir Hospital. The stone spout was in running condition with plenty of water, but which was closed due to the underground subway. The spout is now kept in the National Museum at Chhauni, Kathmandu. Next evidence is Sundhara conduit, which was connected to Tundikhel and is destroyed. During the construction of Provident Fund Building was found the wooden water channel connected towards the Tundikhel, which is deepest from the ground level from Tundikhel.

The evidences strongly support that the pond was constructed during the reign of King Pratap Malla. On the south-side of the tank there is a small volume of water entering into the pond via a channel structured out of bricks.
4.1 **Structural Plan**

The construction plan was made with an engineering design that is square in shape. There are six layers, square in plan, including the outer-most square (outer skirt). The first square is the plan of the temple, then immediately the temple precinct, and then respectively the lower and second wall plans as well as the outer skirt plan. The measurement of each square has been shown in the detail plan map. The pond encompasses the temple in its cardinal point with stone conduit in the outer skirt and in between including a circumambient path for the walkway. Thus, the people use the walkway on the outer side of the existing temple and also conduct worship at the temple which is open once a year during the Tihar festival. Ranipokhari was fenced by the Prime Minister Juddha Shumshere Rana. But, it destroyed the beauty of the landscape and the pond,
Previous Measurement of the Pond

West Side: 123.25 meter; East Side: 124.20 meter; North Side: 160.13 meter;
South Side: 164.56 meter
As Build Plan After Reconstruction of the Ranipokhari
Prepared by Er. Purna Bahadur Shrestha
Pond Area including Bridge and Temple = 222,818.95 Sq. Ft. (40-11-0-0)
Temple Base Area = 3,846.54 Sq. Ft. (0-11-1-0)
Bridge Area = 1,925.05 Sq. Ft. (0-5-2-02)
Total Ranipokhari Area = 338,650.46 Sq. Ft. (61-13-2-0)
According to the archaeological excavation on the south-west side of the pond, four layers of black-cotton soil and sand have been found. Each layer of black-cotton and sand has been found to be of $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inch thickness. Traditionally, the pond bed has been prepared from black-cotton soil and sand layer to protect the seepage of water, and to retain it in the pond. But, at present, renovation of the bed has added 1 to 2 feet of black-cotton soil on the previous bed-layer.

6. **Water Resources Management System**

Water resources management system of Ranipokhari is of paramount significance. The archeological investigation found three types of water-inlet technology to collect the water in the tank. One was the stone conduit and other is the re-charging mechanism from repository water. Water conduits were constructed at nearly 300 meters distance in the four directions of the tank, i.e. Tindhara Sanskrit Pathshala in the north-east, present Ranipokhari is in the south-east corner – Nepal Electricity Authority Building, and likewise Bhotahiti in the south-west and Ranipokhari Corner Football Team’s Building in the north-west. These stone-conduits were managed to recharge water in the pond.

6.1 **Water Inlet System**
The other sources of water recharge systems were also found during the construction of the lower level of wall of the tank situated in the northern and western sides. These resources are made of hollow structure of bricks to convey water through seepage. The detail studies of the systems were found to have seeping water infiltrate/flow through the system to recharge water and are made of uneven brick-bats and small pebbles, which help to filter the water. Other side of the tank wall's recharge system was not found during the construction period, which might be destroyed by modern construction, i.e. Kathmandu Metropolitan Office. So, it was a great mistake to destroy the original recharge system.

6.2 Well Management

The third is the rainwater harvesting system. Ranipokhari is located in the lowland than the city. There must be a well constructed somewhere on the outer skirt of the tank and rainwater charged into it to filter before being conveyed into the tank.

![Semi-circle Brick used in Well, 1670 AD (NS 790)](image)

The well is also a good recharging system of the pond in the medieval period. Devamala Bamsabai has mentioned that the seven wells were made for the management of water recharging system in the bed of pond. But, no evidence is found of the existence of a well during the construction of the tank. There are two top semi-circular parts of terracotta-ringled wells found at Balgopaleshwar temple's plinth in the present restoration process. This indicates that water recharge systems from wells must have existed during the then past period. The system seems already destroyed in the previous restoration of the tank.

6.3 Outlet (Flood Gate)

The outlet system of the tank is found nearby the south-east corner of the wall structure during the reconstruction. The outlet is nearly of 2 feet width and 1.5 feet height made of brick and lime mortar.
structure. The outlet wall is continually goes up to 2 meter height towards the inner-side. The top of
the structure is covered by boulder and filled with black cotton soil.

Thus all the construction activities proved the structure was made for the outlet purpose and the stone
boulders put above the structure was a marker and cover of the outlet, as and when necessary to open
it. The cleaning once a year of the well, tank and other water resources including conduit has a long
tradition in the Newari Society on the day of Sithi Nakha and is still practiced. (Sithi Nakha is one
of the important festivals in the Newar community which is celebrated every year on the sixth day of
bright fortnight of Jestha. The festival is celebrated in honor of Kumar, the elder son of the God
Mahadev and Goddess Parvati. Hence this day is also known as Kumar Shasthi.- source:
http://vishramsociety.org.np/sitti-nakha/).

According to the position of the outlet structure, it could be said that the cleaning water goes to the
Tukucha, which is at a lower level than Ranipokhari. Traditionally, all the rainwater and outlets were
running towards the south-east side of the city of Kathmandu. Thus, the traditional outlet system is
already destroyed, which is not possible to revive. If the outlet is necessitated in the future, an
alternative system should be made.

Outlet Structure of Ranipokhari

7. Construction Technology of the Walls

Wall construction technology pays attention to the water seeping system from the peripheral ground
level. Both lower and upper dry-bricks walls are constructed by the different size of local bricks.
During the past period, these bricks were called Ma-appa. In the middle of the wall, there are two
layer of flat bricks made for strengthening the dry-structure. And the topping of the wall Phya-appa
(big flat bricks, size: 16.5” x 3” x 12”) were used to protect the wall, which are generally found in
ponds, monuments including the plinth of palaces during the medieval period. On the back portion
of the wall, black-cotton soil (Kalimati) is used from one and half to two-feet thickness. The black-
cotton soils are highly argillaceous (very fined grained and dark)and contain a high portion of
calcium, magnesium and carbon. They are tenacious of moisture and exceedingly sticky when wet.
Therefore, dry-brick structures are made for constant wetness to avoid breach. But the present
construction has made a great mistake to use the mortar in between the dry-brick structure without a
proper study of the traditional technology and skill.
The middle breast-wall was not made only in the traditional shape and size but it is totally made of stonemasonry. The Office of the Kathmandu Metropolitan City designed to destroy the traditional wall and made stone-masonry work. Later reconstruction work resorted to cladding the Dacha-appa to smoothen the surface of the peripheral wall. All the walls are made of dry-structure with Ma-appa (the then local bricks) for the strengthening the wall and to promote seeping the water into the tank. This also helps to filter the water but the reconstruction work has ignored the traditional skills and filtration of water. The modern construction works have damaged the traditional filtration system because they had made stone masonry wall for the strengthening of wall. After this unavoidable reconstruction, the dust particle mixed with water come into the tank from the peripheral plinth area. This will not help to make a proper filtration system.
Detailing of Original Wall Structure, Prepared by Ar. Sunil Shakya
8. Bridge Technology

The word bridge is not used in the context of the list of monuments in the Guideline of Conservation. But in the pages of the Nepalese history, bridge construction technology is clearly found since the medieval period. The reconstruction of the bridge of the Balgopaleshwar temple of Ranipokhari gives an opportunity to know the technology and skill of bridge construction in the medieval period. The bridge is constructed on the stone foundation above that 6'5” height brick-structure using yellow soil mud mortar. The yellow soil is formed under the broad-leaved forests in humid sub-tropical area, chiefly over the parent materials formed by clayey shales; it is acidic and contains low humus content; and its yellow color is caused by the presence of ferric hydro-oxide (http:encyclopedia2, the free directory); which is less soluble in water. The outer face of the base-wall is made of the special Dachi-appa dry-brick structure.

The configuration of the bridge consists of plastered lime surface done in the Rana Period. During the detail inspection of the demolition, the bridge is found to be constructed of Dachi-appa faced brick. There are sixteen sections of arches made in mud mortar. But, the curved portion of the wall consists of lime-mortar masonry for the strengthening of the upper portion. It shows that the technique to prepare the lime mortar brick masonry was started in the Malla Period, which shows that the knowledge of lime-mortar was developed and used for load bearing structure construction during the medieval period. The same technology was also adopted by the then Prime Minister Chandra Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana in the construction of the Largest Palace of Asia, i.e. Singadurbar. There are different in size of bricks used for the bridge construction work. The sizes of the bricks are as follows:

1. Outer bricks of the wall (Dachi-appa): 9.5” x 6” x 2.5”
2. Inside bricks of the base wall: 17” x 14” x 3.5”
3. Different size of Locked bricks : 10” x 6.5” x 2.5”

9. Configuration of the Temple

The temple of Balgopaleshwar is one of the significant monuments of Granthakuta Style having four cupolas at the cardinal points of the temple. In the time of King Pratap Malla, he had built the temple
for the Goddess Kalika. According to the historical records, that temple was pulled down by Prime Minister Junga Bahadur Rana after 300 years and constructed in the Nagara (Gumbaj) Style which was popular during the Rana Period. After the time of Junga Bahadur Rana, this temple once again hit by the Patana Earthquake in 1934 along with many parts of the wall of the pond. The then Prime Minister Shree Juddha Shumshere Rana reconstructed the pond in the same style with little change in the shape and size of the dome of the temple. But both this renovation works were done in the original base of wall of the temple which was made by King Pratap Malla. Then again, it was hit by the earthquake of 2015 VS (Gurkha Earthquake). The reconstruction work of the temple and pond was begun by the Kathmandu Metropolitan City with the authorization of the Department of Archaeology. The Office of the Kathmandu Metropolitan City (OKMC) had started the reconstruction work with a new plan and design for commercial purpose as well. This office had started the work without damage assessment of temple and wall of the pond. With the demolition of the original form recourse was taken to stone masonry wall construction. The local people opposed the construction work. Before the construction work was stopped by the local people and heritage lovers, OKMC had already built nearly half of the wall of the pond in stone masonry.

Similarly, the foundation of the temple OKMC had been erected by using cement/concrete/iron rod pillars. It was a great mistake on the part of OKMC to use modern construction. They did not follow the conservation rules and regulations with due respect to the restoration works of historical and archaeological value of monuments. The question arose here how the OKMC got the permission from DOA to construct the temple and wall of pond in violation of the Ancient Monument Preservation Act, 2013 BS. The shoddy conventional modern construction work of the OKMC shocked heritage lovers and the local community. This is the cross purpose of Ranipokhari. When it became a national issue, the reconstruction work has been taken over by the DOA. Again, the DOA also has advanced the conservation work on the same footing of the OKMC. Then again, the issue of Ranipokhari Conservation applying the wrong conservation principle followed by the DOA was widely opposed within the Kathmandu Valley.

Finally, the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) was handed over the responsibility for the conservation of Ranipokhari. NRA constituted an expert team comprising of Archaeologist Mr. Bishnu Raj Karki, Structural Engineer Prof. Prem Nath Maskey, Architect Prof. Sudarshan Raj Tiwari and Civil Engineer Mr. Purna Bahadur Shrestha from DOA, which was assigned to finalize the configuration of the Balgopaleshwar Temple of Ranipokhari.

The constituted expert team had concluded the following regards to the configuration of temple on the basis of following evidences:

(a) The existing dome, Gumbaj (Nagara), of the temple was constructed on the plan of Granthakuta Style.
(b) The original timber truss was used in the Granthakuta temple and the stone base of the door was used in later construction work.
(c) The measurement and size of wall of the temple has not been changed, which is clarified by the photographs before demolition of the temple by the OKMC. The photographs
show the inner section of the wall made by the Dachi-appa, which is the style of the Malla period to build the Dachi-appa wall even in the inner-side of the temple.

According to Prof. Mr. Sudarshan Tiwari, the temple was made according to the Bastu Shastra (conservation code). The outer measurement of the temple has 13’ x 13’ square feet. The size of the temple plan has determined the height of the temple from the plinth level up to the Amalaka (base of pinnacle) level. In line with the principle of 3W System by Prof. Tiwari’s philosophy, the height of the pinnacle is 13’; thus the total height of the temple is 13’ x 4 = 52’ (fixed) as determined including pinnacle.
Another evidence is the painting in the Granthakuta Style along with the landscape of the time by an artist, who was associated with the Prince Waldamer of Prussia, and visited as a royal guest the Kingdom of Kathmandu Valley. 50% of the landscape of the painting can still be recognized at the side of the present Police Building of Ratnapark. The above mentioned physical features and illustration have substantiated the original configuration of the Balgopaleshwar Temple.

10. **Recommendation of the Configuration**

On the basis of the physical and historical research, the expert team has recommended the following:

1. Expert team has recommended to demolish the stone masonry wall and the cement concrete foundation beam and use the traditional materials and techniques for the reconstruction of the temple.
2. The temple plinth should be constructed by using the traditional materials as in the previous design and plan.
3. The expert team has also recommended to excavate the north and south part of the plinth to determine the status of the foundation.
11. Conflict Regarding the Reconstruction

Conflict is a ubiquitous word used in contradictions and clash of opinions with or without violence. How any conflict arises in space and time depends on the particular activities conducted by the authorities in a controversial manner or contrary to public perceptions and opinion. The word "conflict" is used here as a struggle between DOA, Municipality and the local community. The Department of Archaeology is responsible for the conservation and restoration of any kind of monuments above 100 years in age. The authoritative institutions that are empowered with the conservation of monuments or traditional social institution such as Guthi Sansthan, local entities and the local community. But prior to authorizing any of the above-mentioned bodies, it is necessary to prepare a conservation plan with detail damage assessment by the DOA of the monuments. The DOA has the guidelines for conservation and trained manpower, which is not available with other institutions. Constant vigilance on retaining the archeological integrity and value of the property in the execution of restoration of heritage sites and monuments is essential. Therefore, from the beginning, inspections of the conservation work need to be conducted continually to assess if the works is ongoing according to the guidelines.

But, the case of Ranipokhari Restoration Project was totally neglected by the concerned authority from the very outset. Hence, it became a matter of social concern. Conservation or restoration is defined as the act or process of restoring/renovating the form, features and characters of a heritage asset as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other period in history and reconstruction of the missing features in the restoration in order to establish with testimony the unique character of the period. Restoration or the reconstruction work means not executed implies evasion and disregard for history.

The reconstruction work that has been done by the OKMC was not honest or ethical in terms of history. The aim of the reconstruction plan was merely commercial and not social. Thus, the purpose of conservation, restoration or reconstruction, is not to use it for commercial purposes. Social norms and values are volatile and subject to change but the historical value and sanctity should be kept as it is without losing its historical testimony.

The construction of Ranipokhari was derailed from its historical identity. The plan of restoration was beautifying the property to generate income with establishment of coffee shop, restaurant and bar, which was not only criticize-able but also punishable according to the Ancient Monument Preservation Act, 2013.

When Ranipokhari was started to be rebuilt for commercial purposes using foreign materials to beautify it for amusement, the local people rose against such plan and activities that damage its archaeological value instead of protection and preservation. For proper restoration, the historical construction materials have to be taken safely and preserved for reuse rather than replace them by modern materials. The distinctive materials, features, finish and construction technology are examples of the craftsmanship of the historical period that should be reflected in true restoration.

Compelled by popular opposition, a tripartite council constituted an expert committee to submit a proper conservation report along with the design, configuration, and construction materials to be used to truly reflect the time of Pratap Malla within 15 days. The expert committee consisted of an archeologist from independent personnel - architect, structural engineer, historian and two members from the archeology department, one member from OKMC, i.e. Executive Officer and three members
from the concerning wards. The consultative committee also comprised members from the political parties. All these were responsible for the submission of the historical as well as archaeological report.

The committee commenced the activities from inspection of the temple and tank construction technology including material, skill and the evidences of the configuration of the Pratap Malla era. After collection of all secondary and preliminary data in terms of the heading of the temple style, and other specific details, an analysis was done by the team members according to guiding principles of the council. With the findings and evidences, the team-members have established the configuration of temple and the materials, techniques that were used during the Malla period. The team concluded the report and submitted it to the committee. After the submission of the report, the project was handed over to the Department of Archeology for further advice and conservation by the OKMC. But the DOA did not follow the resolution proposed by the expert team to reconstruct according to its principle by saying that what they have done is in-situ restoration, which is a valid principle. Therefore, it is not necessary to follow the experts' advice.

But, the DOA ignored the principle of each property being recognized as a physical feature of its time, place and use. The restoration work needs to stabilize, consolidate, and conserve the materials and features of the restoration and will be physically and visually identifiable upon the close inspection as well as the documentation of the property. The expert team's report was according to the established and proper principle. Without following the proper principle of the conservation and preservation, this had created conflict in further advancement of the project. Then, it became a national issue in respect of the reconstruction work. The NRA has called a meeting of the national experts including archaeologists as well as art-historians to discuss on the dispute. Property should be conserved on the basis of evidence of Pratap Mall's configuration. Simultaneously, a complaint was filed in the Supreme Court by an independent lawyer. This was the first case ever seen in the history of conservation and renovation in Nepal. The Supreme Court has also given the mandate that the property should be restored according to the principle of archaeological restoration. At the same time, the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation has also directed the DOA to support the verdict of the Supreme Court. All these directions and decisions have not been followed by the DOA. It was then realized that a new authority should be required for the reconstruction in the proper archaeological guidelines. Then the Council of Ministers has given the mandate to the National Reconstruction Authority to complete the restoration work of Ranipokhari and Balgopaleshwar Temple.

NRA has taken up the controversial task of completing the restoration of Ranipokhari. Then NRA setup the expert team. The expert team has concluded about the configuration of the temple within a very short time and submitted to the NRA. The expert team consisted of an archaeologist, architect, structural engineer and civil engineer. Thus, the report submitted by the expert team is being followed by the NRA in re-commencing the reconstruction of Ranipokhari.

The creation of an awkward situation for the reconstruction of the property seems to have stemmed from the initially wrong procedure which created the conflict. Now, the conflict has been settled in line with the guiding principle of reconstruction.

Such conservation or restoration work should never be considered in a frivolous or irresponsible manner. Standards and guideline principles are the basic tools for restoration with documentation. The documentation has established the historical records and attributes of outstanding value.
Thus, the present reconstruction plan has considered and included all the values of history and archaeology to execute the reconstruction work. In this manner, the NRA has resolved the conflict in the construction of Ranipokhari with the guiding principles of reconstruction.

12. Recommendation and Suggestion

We must understand the science of conservation, which depends on meticulous research and patient understanding. It is not proper to just speedup reconstruction and restoration of monuments as and when necessary without adequate research and proper understanding. The construction work of Ranipokhari was not really belated but the local people were in haste to reconstruct it. Therefore, one should first agree on the appropriate principle that must apply to achieve the reconstruction goal. But, this paper is not insisting that the reconstruction work of Ranipokhari has been perfectly achieved as per proper guideline. There were many overlaps in the construction process without analysis of the previous technology and workmanship, although the present reconstruction of Ranipokhari by and large respects and bears testimony to the contribution of King Pratap Malla. This reconstruction process gives us the message that any such type of reconstruction should be done with detailed investigation and research in the future.

13. Glossary

Reconstruction : The word "reconstruction" within the heritage discourse implies identical reconstruction, i.e., the re-building to a state as near as possible to the original. This is really achieved in practice as far as possible in a close relationship with the original. As the skill of the original craftspeople has been lost, the authenticity of the original materials and their historic value cannot be regained in the absence of proper evidence through meticulous research.

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