



INTACH

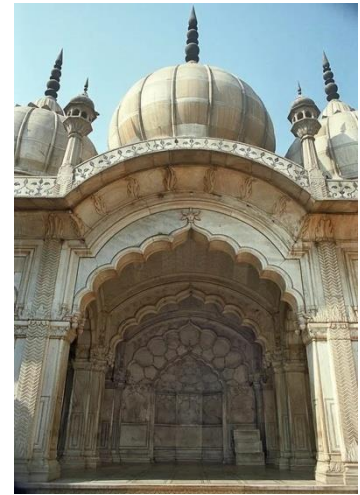
MOSQUES OF INDIA
MOTI MASJID, DELHI



The Moti Masjid or the Pearl Mosque, is a small box-shaped mosque inside the Red Fort. The Mosque was actually an addition made to the Red Fort by Aurangzeb in 1659 C.E. Visitors are not allowed to see from the inside.

HISTORY

The Moti Masjid of Red Fort was built by the Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb. The origin of the Moti Masjid, can be attributed to the practice of cruelty by Aurangzeb towards his two elder brothers- Dara Shikoh and Moorad. He did not like missing his prayers. But the Jama Masjid was too far from him. Hence, he commissioned his own private mosque. He decorated it with white marble.



ARCHITECTURE

The Masjid has three small domes carved with white marble. It has three arched screens. The Masjid is approximately 12 x 9 meters with a height of 8 meters. The prayer hall of the Mosque is inlaid with outlines of musallas in black marble. The Masjid also stands at a higher level than the courtyard.



The Moti Masjid originally had golden domes, which were severely damaged during the Mutiny of 1857. The expense of the Mosque was about 160,000 in 1659 C.E. It is situated to the west of the 'hammam'. The females of the harem in those days were allowed to attend their prayers there. The eastern side has the main entrance with a small door decorated by nailing copper plates to it.



The front side of the Mosque has two bays, a source of a fountain in the foreground, and a bangala-type roof surmounted by a single dome. The Moti Masjid is entirely made out of marble inside.

Originally, there was once a door in the northern wall for women, but eventually it was shut during the repairs after 1857. Archaeologists at that time were unable to restore the domes in their original forms, with their copper plates. However, they did some good work restoring the pietra dura.

There is also a small ablution pond or a wuzu-khana in the centre of the courtyard.

ACTIVITY

- A. White marbles have been an important component in Mughal architecture. Pick your favourite marble architecture and elaborate on why you like it.

- B. Pick a Mughal architecture of your choice and elaborate on some of your favourite architectural features.

REFERENCES

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