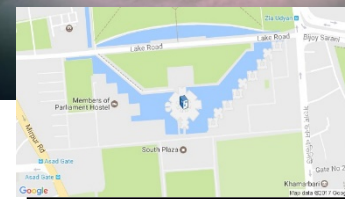


Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban

As we know it modernist architecture is typically interpreted as futuristic and without context. However, the National Assembly building called Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban is the finest example of modern architecture that has been well thought out and stays true to the principles of the Bengali architecture. Throughout I will aim to analyse and look deeper into the meanings and aspects of the building for instance the astonishing geometric shape incorporation into the building as part of the Bangladeshi culture. Looking deeper into the information about it, historical factors and the construction of the building, in comparison with other structure similar to this. These will highlight any similarities or differences between each other with comments on the use, function and aesthetic. After thoroughly going through all the information and points, I will conclude at the end with a clear understanding of the successfulness of this building.



This breath-taking structure was created by the architect called Louis Kahn, which was made to serve as a national assembly house located in the centre of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar (a town of Dhaka city), mainly hosting parliament meetings and gatherings along with other importance's. It is very versatile in the sense that it has modern features and designs with a slight reference back to the ancient times in the ideal of unifying Pakistan. This building started its construction around 1961, however was only later completed after Louis Kahn's death in 1983. Kahn's vision was immensely affected by the causes of the liberation war of Bengali people during that time making it hard for him, which may have even been a factor playing in the cause of his heart attack. In terms of its main use right now, it is considered as a symbolic monument with the uses of parliamentary gatherings and mainly a building to go see as a sightsee and relax.

An astonishing completion price was around £23 million which has more than doubled what the original cost was meant to be. Not only is the building itself extraordinary, but the artificial Lake surrounding is cleverly and beautifully constructed to compliment the design of the exterior with a creative way to transfer different types of transport and ways of getting in the building.

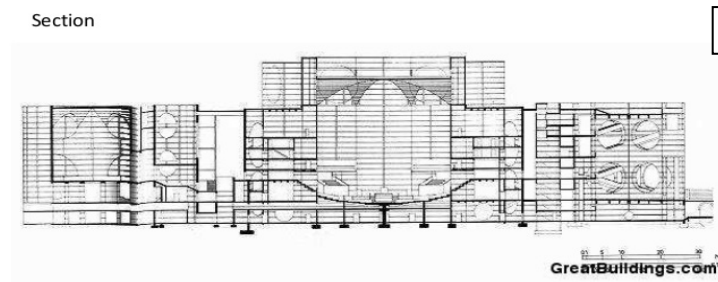
The whole exterior of this building has very interesting visual characteristics. The outer facade is a complicated yet a pleasant geometric design which complements the surrounding buildings, marrying the old and new cultural identities and allowing visitors to also look around through the openings that were wittingly designed to stand out in a way that was very subtle yet effective. This was a clever idea as it substitutes any required windows to allow natural lighting into the interior to importantly envision light as the creator of space. Concrete and deep recessed external marble lines were used for the aesthetic of the outer façade all a testament to the local materials and values. The use of exposed concrete walls was an interesting idea which were used to contrast the surrounding buildings and merge with its culture. The whole building is divided into three parts, these are the Main Plaza, the South Plaza and the presidential Plaza. Louis Khan's vision and objective was not only having a government at the heart of the building, but also optimising other spaces to project out of the centre. ^[1]

"You see a series of columns you can say that the choice of columns is a choice in light. The columns as solids frame the spaces of light. Now think of it just in reverse. I am working to develop the element to such an extent that it becomes a poetic entity which has its own beauty outside of its place in the composition. In this way it becomes analogous to the solid column I mentioned above as a giver of light."

-Louis Kahn (interview, YouTube video, 2018)^[2]

The South Plaza mainly serves as a visual and formal entrance to the parliament building it contains controlling gates as you go through these there is a driveway with a main mechanical plant room, large car parking space, equipment stores and a ramp that leads directly to the main building. The smaller part of the building also known as the presidential Plaza located in the North, serves as a gathering area for the MP's and other visitors. Main features of this ground floor are noticeable marble steps, a gallery and occupied spaces for shops and other smaller businesses.

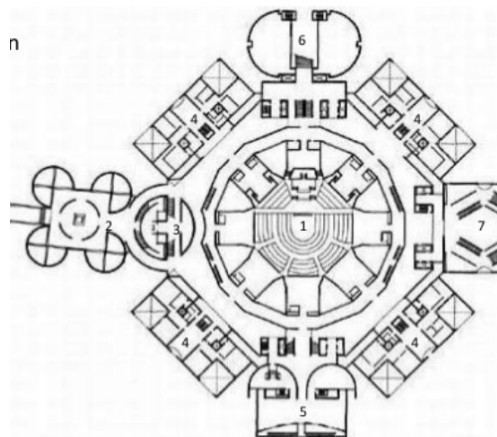
The main Plaza consists of nine individual blocks, 8 of the peripheral blocks rise to the height of 110 feet while the octagonal block rises to the height of 155 feet. Within these there are different function and uses with and interplay of different levels, linked together with horizontal and vertical corridors, lifts and stairs with the incorporation of a harmonious feel to the interior.



[Grab your reader's

This shows the intricate section through the 155 ft tower in the middle of the design, with some of the fluid use of detailed textures and shapes all the way around the building.^[5]

1. Assembly Hall
2. Mosque
3. Court house
4. Office
5. Lounge room
6. Recreation area
7. Entrance into the presidential area.





From this site plan it is also clear to see how the space flows and works within, with immaculate symmetry revolving around the middle meeting area. Also shows the four available entrances and exit hallways that lead out. It is a well thought out and a successful way of engaging all of the criteria of the building by having it so consistent inside and out.

Having to face the issue of protection against sun and rain Louis Kahn had to think of an idea which would incorporate the natural elements and make them useful within the design. This is where the geometric shapes on the facade come in, the use of triangles and rectangles would prove useful when thinking about free circulation of air throughout. All of these ideas were later proving how advanced of time Louis Kahn was and how successful this would become.

The structure of the interior design is very carefully devised to satisfy the needs of people that will be using each of the required spaces. The chamber in which the parliament and the MPs are gathered up consist of the total seating capacity of 354 with the podium, two VIP areas and the galleries. The main feature within that floor is the clear storey space above the parabolic shell, which lets in all the natural daylight and surrounds the walls and creates the effect Louis Kahn was trying to convey. Overlooking the parliament chamber is the upper levels in which the visitors are allowed to come and view the gallery, lounges, library and party rooms. Any important personnel will have their own office spaces within that floor. All of this was carefully devised to create functional, spatial interior design. With then the basement of the structure accommodating the parking area, officers and maintenance services for the building. It is safe to say that the building carries its own clarity of form and composition. He wanted to create the effect and make it appear as if the structure rose out of the water. Cleverly making the visitors think about the reasoning of his ideas on this building.



[Grab your

The unbelievably huge structure has 50 staircases, 1635 doors, 340 toilets, 335 windows, 300 partitions, 35,850 square feet of glass shutters, 58,500 wooden shutters and huge number of wooden panels in the building. All of this is arranged within the 10 levels of the main central design. With all this in mind it has then been awarded the Aga Khan Award for its architecture, back in the earlier times of its popularity, making it one of a kind in that country and something to be proud of.^[6]

Tourism & Accessibility

The main building is partially restricted of access for visitors and is limited to authorised staff and the MPs. The other areas of the building are however open and free to explore, which attracts a lot of tourists every year, especially during major holidays. The overall area inside and out is very popular among joggers, people who go on walks with family and skaters, with easy access from any of the four roads surrounding the building. Considering the prime minister living very close by the official building, the whole area is one of the highest security places in Dhaka, meaning its also a safe place to chill around at.

Comparison

Scottish Parliament Building

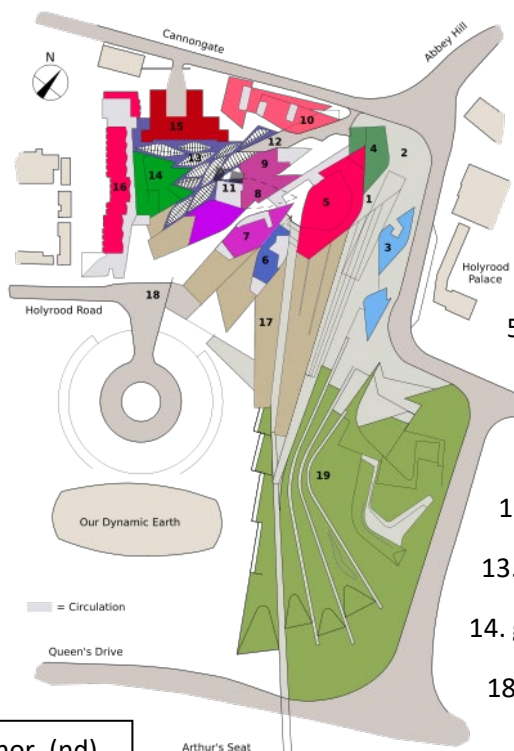
This crazy but modernist style of a design sits in Edinburgh in front of the Holyrood Park and Salisbury Crags designed by a Spanish architect, Enric Miralles. Nothing like this has ever been done before or since. It was praised as one of the most innovative buildings in the UK today. It was made from mixtures of steel, oak, and granite which commenced in building and approval in 1999 and finished in 2004. It is a very iconic creation and design that is surely up there with the innovation of and creativity in terms of its form. Like the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban it is a very tall building that has many floors which focuses on different uses throughout.



No author, (nd)

Similarly, to the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban its primary use is for parliament duties therefore equipped with the same ideals with the central ideas of the main parliament meeting area, alongside the extra spaces used for other things not related to the main event gatherings. Having a completely different material sourcing, they have a very similar feel to the colour of the material choices.

Maps,(Nd)



1. Public entrance
2. Plaza
3. Pond
4. Press Tower
5. Debating Chamber
- 6.7.8.9.10. Tower One, two, three, four, five
11. Main staircase
12. MPs entrance
13. Lobby
14. garden
18. Car park/vehicle access

No author, (nd)

Evidently there are a lot of similarities when it comes to aspects of certain areas/rooms that this building evokes. For example, the use of a Plaza within or the debating chamber. Arguably considering the completely different style of layout, they do have similar placements in which they chose to put the access in and the chamber placement. Not only have they both considered the fluidity of the building itself but also the location of where it's built. Thinking about the importance of having it at a popular/convenient location. Yes, the exterior spaces are very different in the sense that one is surrounded by a lake and the other is not, however they both have a very welcoming sense of a relaxing place to walk or exercise around at.

Nevertheless, there are many things that differ mainly the material choices and how they were sourced. Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban's focus was to integrate the local materials and combine them into the flow of the surrounding, whereas arguably the Scottish parliament building is not as successful in doing so thinking less about the locality and more about it looking modern and quickly done to just only fit the criteria of what's inside. In a sense they are built for the requirements of each individual country so depending on the needs they have that is how they would be considered and designed. A big difference between the designs of these buildings is that no two elevations seem the same and are very all over the place, in contrast to the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban which is very symmetrical and organised in a specific way. They differ a lot on the price of the completed building too, Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban is considerably less than the Scottish parliament house yet is seen more successful and conveys more of a thoughtful message in my opinion, which is an important factor to consider.

Conclusion

Arguably one of the most accomplished designs of its time, the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban is successful for many reasons. Its unique geometric shape incorporation is like no other, the use of bizarre materials and shapes that are not usually considered in architecture were made to be very successful in terms of the aesthetic appearance of the exterior and the interior views of every angle. Louis Kahn made it his mission to create something meaningful for that country that would represent its culture and society, and the era of independence from Pakistan, which has definitely been portrayed in his work. The function of the building flows really well, it shows how much thought went into the design layout of the interior space, having perfect sense of where everything is. He creates this feeling of amazement as you walk through the naturally lit building which works perfectly and complements the material choices, he decided to build it with.

This has most definitely made that country a more known and more visited place. Who would not want to go see that in person? It has become a gathering place for all sorts of people from the business aspect to the relaxing and sport too. Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban is undoubtedly more than just a building, it is a piece of art and beyond the era of creation that has worked really well and still continues to grow in popularity to this day.

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