

Rejuvenating Cultural Desire: A Case of Moti Rudrani; Cultural Village

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Abstract – Promoting rich and varied culture of a place and enhancing the economy of backward classes are one of the major objectives of rural tourism. Rural tourism focuses on actively participating in a rural lifestyle. Rural tourism allows the creations of replacement source of income.

The paper comprises of a proposed cultural village- Moti Rudrani, Gujarat. The proposal showcases the vernacular architecture and rich culture for the tourists.

Main focus has been given to research and study of the local culture and tradition. The project has goal of using architecture as a way of communicating ideas of cultural tourism. Technical aspect and detail of services are not considered as main focus. Physically challenged persons are welcomed to the village but certain areas are restricted for them due to topography of the place. The aim of the project is to encourage and strengthen the rural economy by assisting in the development of tourism. This will be achieved by giving proposal for that particular area and make a definite contribution to the regeneration and long term sustainability of that area.

This paper explores the role of architecture according to the principles of tourism in rural India. We will be using architecture as a way of economically supporting struggling villagers. The usage of locally available materials thus relating more to the surroundings. We need to design that compliments the climatic pattern and topography of the place. This paper also showcases the design that narrows down the gap between villagers and the outside world. Design that upgrades the present living conditions of the villagers. Design also highlights the natural beauty of the village setting and surrounding.

Index Terms – Rural Tourism, Vernacular Architecture, Communicating Ideas, Village Setting, Traditional House.

1. INTRODUCTION

We can understand the valuable heritage which our nation possesses only when we respect its tradition and culture. Tourism has been proved itself as one among the best ways to upgrade the lost rural culture. The village life in Gujarat forms the backbone of the Indian Peninsula. The traditions of Gujarat that was used to be practiced during old days no longer are

found in recent times in the busy city life. However many of them can still be seen to be practiced in the day to day life of Gujarat. There are only few villages left untouched.

As the architects we have commitment towards preservation of our tradition and culture which can be recaptured by frames of architecture and be highlighted globally. Culture, occupation and architecture of rural Gujarat are being forgotten and ignored which is leading in to extinction of a rich tradition.

Moti rudrani project is situated at Naukhaniya village along SH-45 (Bhuj - Khavda road) at a distance of about 13 kms to the north of Bhuj. Bhuj is the district headquarters and is centrally located in Kutch. Bhuj has been a major tourist attraction due to its beautiful palaces, museums, handicraft items, temples etc. The rural ambience and culture and its strategic location along with the Kutch tourist circuit makes Moti rudrani a unique place for rural and cultural tourism.

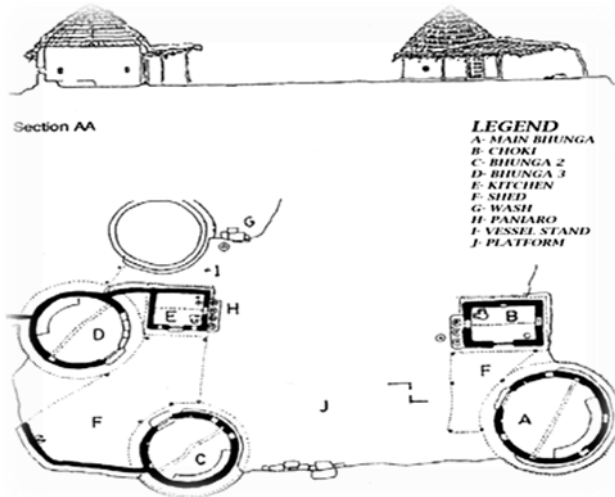
2. BHUNGA: TRADITIONAL HOUSE

The house unit is typically defined by the platform which is known as Otla that is always raised above the ground from a few centimetres upto one meter.

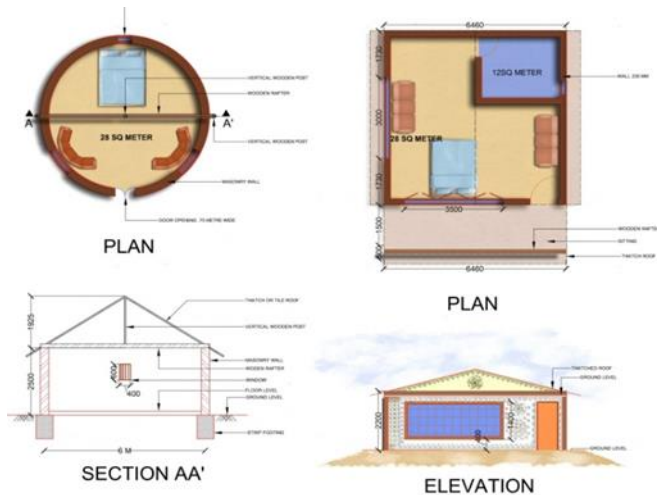
The Otla defines the domain of the home and the place for outdoor activities, one or more Bhungas (circular houses with diameter ranging between 3 and 6 meters. A typical Bhunga has a door and three or four small and low window symmetrically arranged around the door.

In front of the door and against the wall, lies a low platform called Pedlo, on which traditional furniture are placed (chaosar kothale or panjaro, manje, and sanjeero). The Chaosar kothale, generally placed on the left, is plastered with earth, and it is decorated in relief with mirrors. It can be rectangular or cylindrical and serves as a grain-food container, while other food is placed on top of it (butter, vegetables). The Manje placed at the center is carved wooden furniture covered by a pile of patch worked embroidered fabrics-dhadkee-produced

by the women of the house. This pile increases gradually over the years and is thoroughly covered with a piece of finely embroidered fabric called Dhadkila (literally, something that covers).



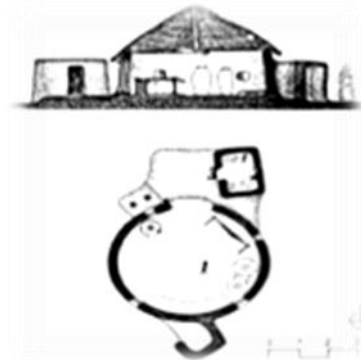
PLAN AND ELEVATION OF A BHUNGA



HOMESTAYS FOR TOURIST

Often the wall is decorated with small mirrors. These mirrors that decorate the walls inside the Bhunga also serve to multiply the light. The design on the walls hence appears to be similar to refined embroidery on traditional textiles and garments. The analogy between clay reliefs or paintings on the walls and furniture and embroidery on traditional clothes is stunning and is interesting how communities distinguish themselves through different decorative patterns, used both in walls and clothing ornamentation. Next to the Bhunga, but never set against it, there is usually a small rectangular building called Chowki, which presents small variations. The largest Chowki is used as living spaces and smaller as kitchens. Smaller units, about one

and a half meter high, not very well shaped and devoid of roof are sometimes set against the Bhunga.



MORPHOLOGY OF A UNIT COMPOSED IN BHUNGA

An enquiry centre for the visitors is provided as the admin office. All the information regarding the Moti Rudrani cultural village and the activities organized here will give the information about. For the medical treatment of tourist in case of emergency an Ayurvedic center is proposed. Core ayurvedic methodology will be used in the treatment. Workshops would be the place provided for the tourist to learn as well as experience the methodology of the embroideries performed by the villagers. Platform in front of each unit is proposed for such activities. An ethnical restaurant to make tourist taste the local delicacies. It can accommodate 82 people at a time. Interiors would exhibit the variety of embroideries. Common toilets are proposed on the site. The external walls display the embroidery pattern.

3. TRADITIONAL TECHNOLOGIES

The three main traditional building techniques seen in kutch are:

- Earth blocks
- Earth reinforced with wood or sometimes bamboo (wattle and daub)
- Stack walls or "in situ"

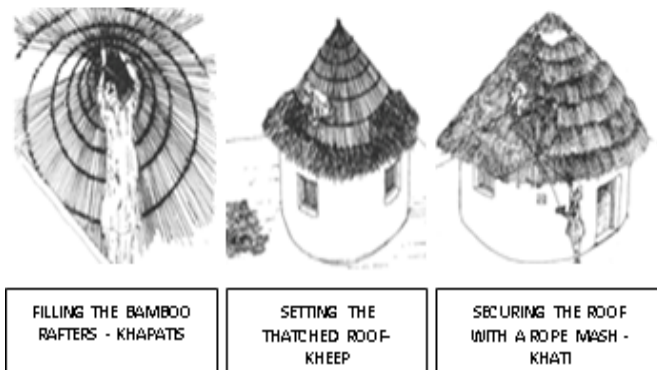
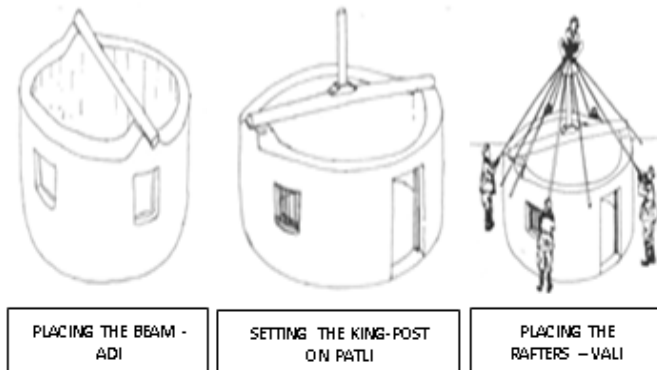
Earth blocks

The components required for the construction of walls and foundations are:

- Clayey soil and rice husk for earth blocks.
- Cement mortar used for foundations.
- Earth sourced from Banni, cow dung and local earth for plaster.
- Earth and rubble stones for filling the platform ota.

A catchment is formed with the earth sourced, water is poured in to moist the soil and the mixture has to rest for one night.

Rice husk is then added. Earth, water and rice husk for blocks composition. The compound is mixed using feet. The blocks are shaped in wooden moulds. After removing the moulds, they are left to dry and harden in the sun for a day on one side and then turned out on other to dry faster. It takes 2 or 3 days complete the process. The average block size is 20 X 30 X 10 cm.



A trench 30 cm deep and 45 cm wide is dug. Blocks for foundations are laid using a local mud plus cement mortar. The process of laying the block is locally called chanter. Walls are raised on foundations, using cow dung plus local mud mortar, mixed with water to make the compound workable. The mixture for the plaster layer, also known as gobar lipan, is made with cow dung and local mud. Water is added to improve its workability. The beam adi is placed horizontally on wall perpendicular to the door's axis. The end of the beam rests on slightly raised portion of wall and is fixed with pegs. The base patli of the vertical kingpost rest on the middle of the beam adi. The kingpost stands on middle of patli. The cone mann is fixed on the top of the kingpost. The joists vali are fixed at the top of cone mann to each other with rope kathi. Culms of split bamboo – khapatis – fill the span between valis and are fixed to them. Straw bundles – kheep are then tied to the roof structure starting from the bottom. A rope's net is then dropped from the top of the roof in order to hold the straw bundles.

Wattle and Daub

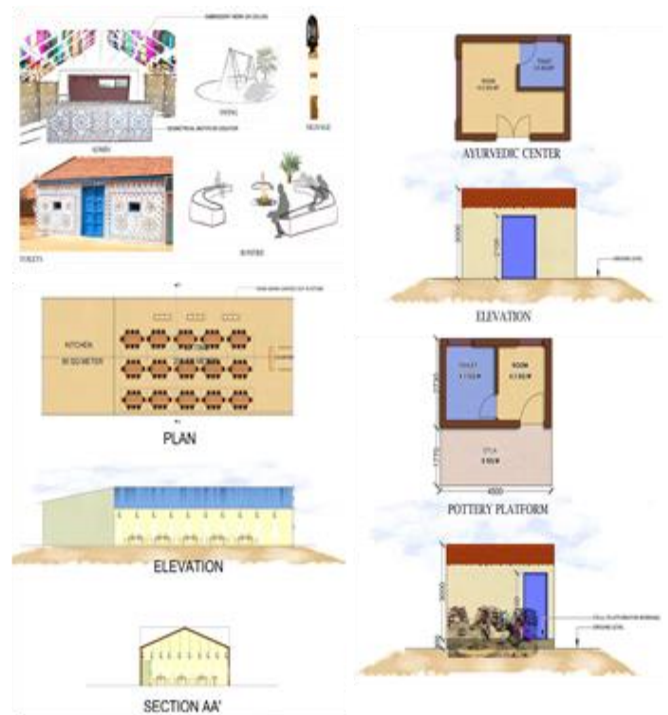
In reinforced earth construction (Wattle and Daub) branches are used as wall structure, which is then covered with earth. The branches are sunk into the platform about 40 cm deep with a height above the floor of about 170 cm. The branches are arranged along the wall, leaving an opening for the door. Smaller twigs fill in the gap left between the main branches. Branches and twigs are bound together with straw rope in order to improve the stability of the structure.

In Situ

Stack wall or in-situ is probably the most instinctive of the three construction methods analysed. A mixture of clayey soil is moulded into loaves and stacked using hands to create the wall of the bhunga. This process results in a very resistant monolithic form. A mud coating is then applied to smoothen the surface. Such dwellings are seen in the coastal village of tunda vandh.

4. CONCLUSION

The proposal promoted the tradition and culture of the Indian village heritage and enhanced the economy of the villagers. Tourists would get to experience the ambience of the village.



DETAIL OF VARIOUS UNITS

The main attractions of the site were Bhungas, Workshops, Ethnic restaurant, and market. Bhungas acted as home stays for the tourist, so that the tourists can receive aura of the village. Workshops provide a platform for the villagers who work on

these embroideries and tourists would get the chance to learn the methodology of such embroideries and perform the activity themselves. Tourists have the opportunity to purchase the various products of different embroideries from the proposed Market. An ethnical restaurant based on the theme of tradition and culture is also proposed for the tourist. The restaurant would be a platform for the tourists to experience the local delicacies of the area. Other main amenities of the site would be chaupal, watch tower, camel ride, and boat ride.



GATHERING SPACE



PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF THE SITE

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