REDISCOVERING DELHI: 2.0

Report on Hastsal Minar

Submitted by

Muskan, 3 rd year

Roll no:- 1080

B.A.Economics Hons.

JANKI DEVI MEMORIAL COLLEGE

(University of Delhi)

2021-2022





HASTSAL MINAR (MINI QUTUB MINAR)

Most human constructions fall apart in due course of time, some constructions outlast their eras and become monuments; Hastsal Minar is one such structure.

I chose it because people don't know about this place and due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we can't go anywhere far from our house to do research. Hastsal Minar is near my house; that's why, I chose this monument.

Acording to the legends, the Hastsal Minar, locals call it *Chhota Qutub Minar, Kaushal Minar* or Hastsal *ki Laat*, is a minaret /tower in Hastsal village in Uttam Nagar, West Delhi. It was supposedly built in 1650 by the Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan (reign, 1628-1658) near his hunting lodge in Hastsal. The tower structure and design resembles the Qutub Minar and was possibly inspired by it.

According to the locals, Hastsal came into existence during the era of PrithvirajChauhan. Although some believe that Hastsal (apparently a vernacular version of the Sanskrit word *Hasti Shala,* which translates into 'the home of elephants') housed the elephants of the mythical Pandavas. However, the red sandstone architecture suggests that it is more likely to belong to the Mughal period. In any case, there is no information available and not even a notice board has been placed in front of the Minar. As of now, it stands around 17 meters tall; but originally, it must have been much taller. The top portion has now broken down and there are many urban legends surrounding it. According to some stories, it was hit by a plane. But that's not really believable, as that would have been recorded somewhere.

The structure reminds one of Islamic era monuments. The base is octagonal like many other Delhi monuments. The tower has twelve faces and there is an entry door too, but it remains locked. Earlier, the local kids used to climb the tower using internal stairway and play at the top. But it is no longer allowed. It's also believed that there was an underground tunnel connecting it to a Bara Dari (a building or pavilion with twelve doors designed to allow free flow of air).



The compound has been completely encroached upon, so only a few square feet of land remain around the Minar. It is surrounded by brick houses on all sides and cannot be seen from a distance, despite being a reasonably tall structure. The surroundings are dirty; it is in an abysmal state of disrepair.

The most interesting things about this place that there are bustling bazaars & residential enclaves, crowded with pedestrians, shoppers and motorcyclists and teeming with multi-hued shops festooned with glittering hoarding offering stationery, confectionery, gold jewelry, everyday necessities, pharmaceuticals, utensils, brassware and the like.

References

- https://www.thebetterindia.com/146509/news-qutub-minar-shah-jahan-delhi/
- http://pixels-memories.blogspot.com/2016/01/kaushal-minar-hastsal-village-delhi.html?m=1
- https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/delhi-hastsal-minar-mini-qutub-minar-facelift-shah-jahan-5329941/
- https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hastsal
- https://m.jagran.com/blogs/infotainment/hastsal-minar-cousine-of-qutub-minar-built-by-shahjahan/amp/
- https://www.thehindu.com/features/friday-review/history-and-culture/Standing-not-so-tall/article16190560.ece