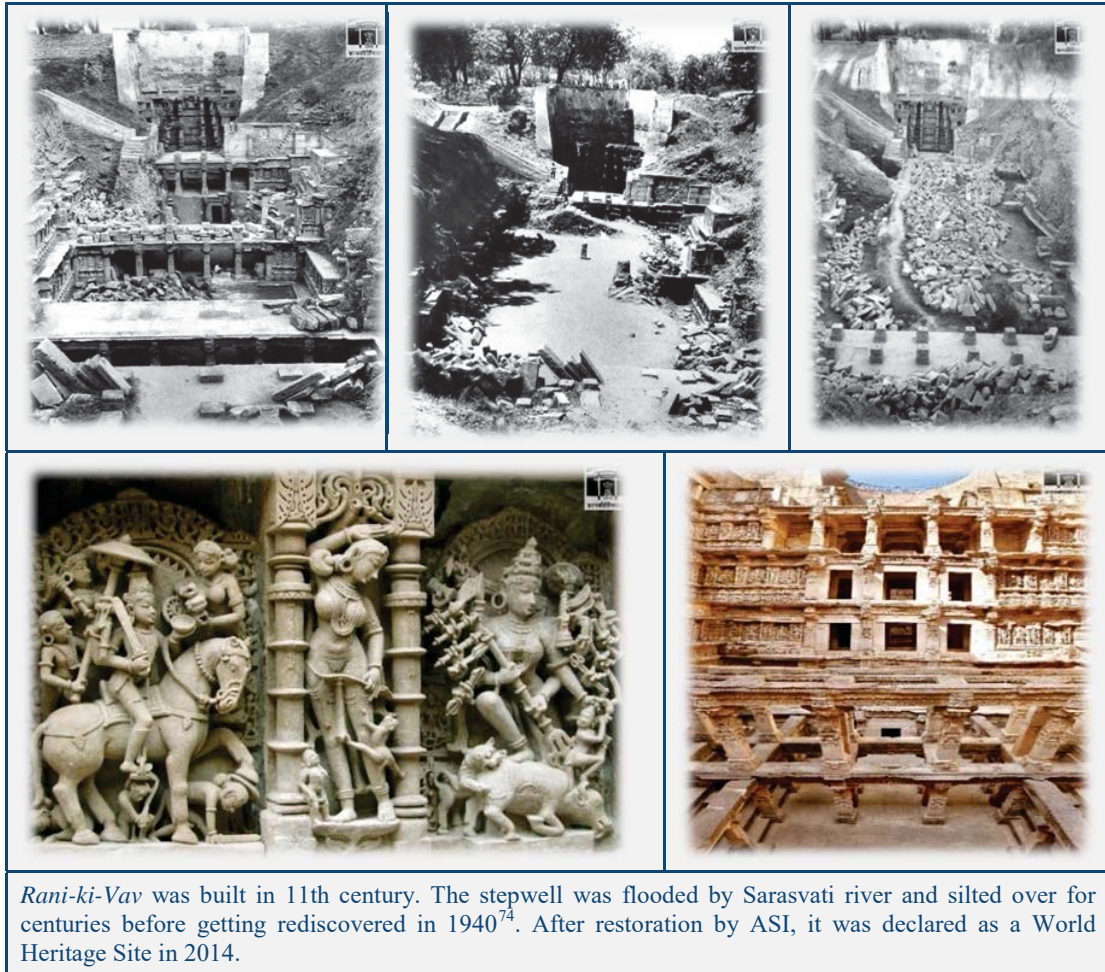


Chapter 10: Good Practices in Heritage Conservation

As part of its World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy, UNESCO had been sharing best practices in heritage conservation. In the previous Report, practices followed by Victoria and Albert Museum, London and *Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya*, Mumbai were discussed as examples of good practices in museum management. ASI had also shown its technical capability in heritage management through conservation activities undertaken at national and international levels. The restoration work undertaken by ASI at *Rani-ki-Vav*, a stepwell situated in Patan, Gujarat is depicted in the following photographs:

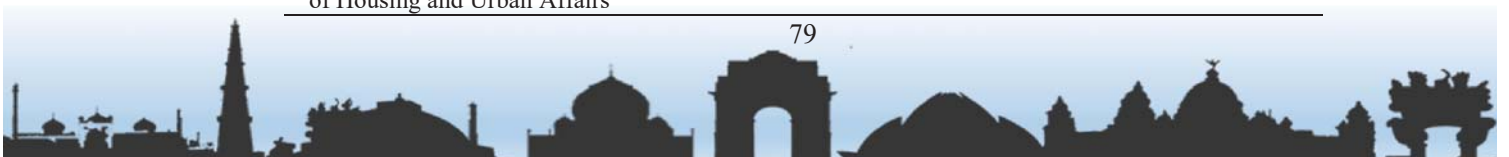


Rani-ki-Vav was built in 11th century. The stepwell was flooded by Sarasvati river and silted over for centuries before getting rediscovered in 1940⁷⁴. After restoration by ASI, it was declared as a World Heritage Site in 2014.

Recent projects undertaken by the Government *viz.* *Adarsh Smarak*, Monument *Mitras*, *HRIDAY*⁷⁵, agreement with ISRO for monument mapping, are also examples of good initiatives undertaken by ASI in heritage conservation. During the follow-up audit, some of the concern areas were examined with a view to identify best practices followed elsewhere. These examples, as discussed below, could be considered by the Ministry in addressing the relevant issues.

⁷⁴ Source: ASI

⁷⁵ Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY) scheme launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs



A. Database of Monuments and Antiquities

The work regarding preparation of database of all monuments and antiquities in the country by NMMA had been lagging. Similarly, PAC recommendation regarding creation of an inventory of all CPMs displaying to the public various information had not been implemented.

Audit noted that the digital management of archaeological sites/objects is an initiative followed by universities and governments in the world. A ‘Heritage Information System’ can provide a framework to store and organize all monument/antiquities related information to generate a central database to facilitate inquiries, research and better heritage management works. Integration of similar process with the data base of monuments and antiquities (under process) will facilitate a comprehensive and dynamic heritage information and management system in the country.

(Paras 6.1 and 6.2)

B. Antiquities declared as monuments

The AMASR Act defines any coin, sculpture, manuscript, epigraph or other work of art/craftsmanship including article, object or thing detached from a building or cave as antiquity. However, as illustrated in Annexe 6.2 (d), canons, guns statues have also been notified by ASI as independent monuments.



Jahan Kosa Gun, an antiquity notified as monument

It was noted that relevant laws of many countries *viz.* Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arab, define their antiquities as movable or immovable. The issue of incorrect declaration of an immovable antiquities as monument (*e.g.* statue carved on a stone, immovable mounted cannons) could be resolved by further elaborating the definition and notification of antiquities as movable/immovable.

{Para 6.3.4(d)}

C. Management of Antiquities in the Museum

The management of antiquities begins with their acquisition, followed by accession, safe placement in the museum gallery, reserve or at sculpture shed. In this Report, several issues on antiquity management *viz.* absence of database of artefacts, incomplete handing/taking over, their verification, storage and display, have been pointed out. In this regard, the best example of collection management mentioned by the Ministry⁷⁶ was at Glasgow Museum Resource Centre (GMRC), Scotland. According to the Ministry, GMRC had a comprehensive security system for storing about 10 lakh objects from seven regional museums of Scotland managed through computerised records, location charts and interlocking areas. The concerns raised by audit could be resolved through a centralised storage centre of artefacts with computerised database system for their management.

(Para 8.1)

⁷⁶ In Comprehensive security policy for museums documented by the Ministry

