



The Terrace



History and Heritage

The presence of the widely respected Qazis (Judges and Justices) of Katha is indicated well before the 13th Century AD. The Royal Decrees (Shahi Firmans) of the Rulers of Delhi and the Delhi Sultanet indicate the award of lands and estates to the Qazis of Katha whose principal and honoured vocation, as the word suggests, was the Dispensation of Justice.

During the period of 13th to 18th centuries, a number of noble houses and mansions were built on the elevated mound of Katha by the Qazis. The Headquarters, the principal residence and the flagship of these noble mansions, the oldest and the largest of them all built more than 7 centuries ago, was The Haveli.

During the Mughal period, The Haveli and Katha maintained their prominence. The Qazis of Katha continued to occupy the prominent and key positions of "Qazis -Judges and Justices" in the Mughal Empire and The Court was convened in Katha to dispense justice. The region also became a popular hunting ground for the Moghul Kings and Nobility with Katha as one of the favourite "Shikargahs" during the Mughal era. After the Mughal Empire came to an end, like the pre-Mughal periods, the practice of convening of the Court at the Haveli in Katha continued well until early 20th century.

The Haveli, during its existence for centuries, has witnessed the dynasties, the empires, the kings and the sultans in their heydays and their down falls; Invaders like The Tamerlane camping and holding his durbar nearby and moving on; has hosted the nobles on hunting expeditions; has been the venue of the courts dispensing justice; has seen grand celebrations and tragedies; the exodus; has felt abandoned, deserted, uncared, doomed and decayed.

In mid 1990s, Shariq Bin Raza, an (ex) international civil servant with his wife Alka Raza, a writer and journalist initiated the gigantic task of consolidation, extensive restoration, reconstruction, renovation and refurbishing of the remnants and ruins of the Haveli which now is known as "Shikwa - Mehrabon Wali Haveli". Shariq and Alka who have lived for more than 24 years overseas in 12 countries and territories and have travelled to more than 90 countries around the world, along with their son Sahil, returned to Katha in 2009 and live in "Shikwa - Mehrabon Wali Haveli"