



Location: Kumartuli, Islampur, Dhaka

Ahsan Manzil was the official residential palace and seat of the Nawab of Dhaka. The building is situated at Kumartoli along the banks of the Buriganga River in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Construction was started in 1859 and was completed in 1872. It was constructed in the Indo-Saracenic Revival architecture.

History:



The construction of the palace was begun in 1859 and completed in 1872. Abdul Ghani named it Ahsan Manzil after his son Khwaja [AHSANULLAH](#). At that time the newly built palace was known as Rang Mahal and the earlier one was called Andar Mahal. Ahsan Manzil was partly damaged by a terrible tornado On April 7, 1888, particularly the Andar Mahal of the palace. Nawab Ahsanullah rebuilt the Andar Mahal and repaired the Rang Mahal using good quality bricks that were brought from Raniganj. The exquisite dome of the present Rang Mahal was interposed. Ahsan Manzil was badly damaged again by the earthquake of 12 June 1897. However, Nawab Ahsanullah had it repaired again.

Constructions:



Ahsan Manzil is one of the significant architectural monuments of the country. Established on a raised platform of 1 metre, the two-storied palace measures 125.4m by 28.75m. The height of the ground floor is 5 metres and that of the first floor 5.8 metres. There are porticos of the height of the ground floor, both on the northern and southern sides of the palace. An open spacious stairway has come down from the southern portico, extending upto the bank of the river through the front garden. There was once a fountain in the garden in front of the stairs, though it does not exist today. The spacious north and south verandas of both the floors rest on semicircular arches. The floor is covered with marble.

To construct the dome of Ahsan Manzil, the square room on the ground floor was given a round shape with brickwork in the corners. The room was then given an octagonal shape near the roof by squinches. This octagonal shape took the form of the drum of the dome. Finally, the kumud kali (buds of lotus) shaped dome was constructed by gradually slanting the eight corners to the peak. The dome is 27.13 m high from the ground.

Internally, the palace is divided into two symmetrical halves on either side of the dome. There is a large drawing room in the east wing of the first floor. On its northern side there is a library and a card room, and in the eastern corner there are four square room'

On the western wing of the first floor there is a spacious Jalsaghar with a Hindustani room on the northern side and four square rooms in the western corner. The vaulted artificial ceilings, made of wood, in the drawing room and the Jalsaghar, look very exquisite. The floors of these two rooms are made of wooden planks. On the ground floor there is a big dining hall and six square rooms in the eastern part. In the western side, there is a gigantic darbar hall and to its north is a billiard room.

The floors of the dining and darbar halls are decorated with white, green and yellow coloured ceramic tiles. The famous strong room, where the valuables of the nawabs used to be stored, was the middle of the five rooms located in the western half of the ground floor.

There are attractive wooden stairs in the room that is attached to the north of the room covered with the dome. The balusters were ornamented with vine leaves made of iron along the railing of the stairs. The wooden ceiling of the room, decorated with geometric designs, is very elegant. A visitor's book bound in gold used to be kept by the stairs during the halcyon days of the nawabs. Distinguished visitors to the palace would note down their observations in it.

The thickness of the walls of the palace is about 0.78 metres. The doorways are placed within semicircular arches. The inner doors had

multi-coloured glasses and the exterior ones were of wood with designs. Wooden beams supported the roof of these rooms.

The height of the two-storeyed inner house is slightly less than the Rang Mahal. Nevertheless, the wide southern verandas on both floors and the parapet on top offer a delicate look that is in harmony with the Rang Mahal. Iron beams have been used in constructing the roof.



Visiting Hours :

Summer Season (April – September)

- Saturday – Wednesday : 10:30 am to 05:30 pm

- Friday : 3:00pm – 7:30pm
- Thursday: Weekly Holiday

Winter Season(October –March)

- Saturday – Wednesday : 9:30 am to 4:30pm
- Friday : 3:00 pm to 7:30pm
- Thursday : Weekly Holiday