



## A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE STYLISTIC SHIFT IN THE MOSQUES OF ASSAM AND MEGHALAYA WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE BENGAL PARTITION

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### RESEARCH ARTICLE



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#### Abstract

Focusing on the post-partition era, this study examines the crucial consequences of partition on the Indo-Islamic cultural and architectural heritage through the Rangamati mosque in Dhubri, Assam, and the Glass Mosque of Shillong, Meghalaya. The study aims to explore the impact of partition on the adaptation and evolution of Indo-Islamic architectural techniques and characteristics, as well as the challenges faced by artisans and their practices in relation to the prospects of the Architectural scenario in the region. The literature review suggests that by the time India gained independence in 1947, the Bengal region had also been divided into two parts, marking a significant event in the Indian subcontinent that initiated one of the largest mass migrations in history. An unprecedented disturbance caused by partition inevitably altered the political, cultural, and social fabric of this region. The case studies have been conducted through field visits, informal interviews, and rigorous content analysis. It reveals that the historical event of partition equally impacted the Indo-Islamic culture, art, and architectural heritage of Northeastern India, as reflected in the weakening of architectural aesthetics and proficiency. Besides the comparable migration of Islamic traditional artisans and craftsmen, there was an equal shift in expertise and a transformation in their skills and practices. Consequently, the study suggests, the maintenance and preservation of Islamic monuments presumably suffered due to a lack of skilled workers and caretakers.

**Keywords:** *architectural heritage, Indo-Islamic art and culture, Northeast India, post-partition effects, preservation and progression*

#### Introduction

The North-East region of India, a vibrant composite of seven states, including Assam and Meghalaya, has never been a single or uniform entity. Rather, it is a region whose identity is defined by its 'in-betweenness'; it is a historical juncture where the Indian subcontinent met with Southeast Asia (Barua 5). For centuries, this land has been a cohesive and developing intersection of diverse polities, societies and traditions. Among these, the Indo-Islamic influence emerged in its own right, not as a mere foreign influence but as a deeply rooted local identity (Nainar 25). In the river valleys of Assam and the misty highlands of Meghalaya, Islam took on a distinct form; a blend of Sufi mysticism and local craftsmanship gave rise to a distinctive architectural style that was much an amalgamation of local and Islamic ideas as the structures made of bamboo, wood, and other materials available to the land (Bhuyan 89).

However, 1947 brought a major geopolitical shift for which no artisans or patrons were prepared. The partition of India was not just a political demarcation on a map; it had a lasting impact on the subcontinent (Roy 63). While the world's attention was generally focused on the violent partition of Punjab in the west, the Northeast faced a relatively quiet but equally transformative catastrophe (Dutta 14). The creation of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) effectively turned the Northeast into a 'landlocked' frontier region, severing ancient trade routes and social bonds that had existed for generations. The partition triggered one of the largest mass migrations in human history, forcing millions of people to redefine what it meant to be 'home' or 'homeland' as they crossed new and harsh borders (Chatterjee 105).

Architecture is never a construction of bricks and stones; it is a reflection of a community's sense of belonging. Before partition, the mosques of this region reflected the fluid and spontaneous architectural style of 'Greater Bengal' as seen in the gentle curves of the 'chala' roofs, which were built exactly like the huts of the common people of the village. However, as the 'new reality' of the post-1947 period set in, commoners adopted a different approach to building their places of worship or sacred places (Kar 114). The disappearance of traditional artisans, the arrival of displaced populations with new conditions and aesthetic ideas, and

the psychological urge to search for a permanent identity in a fragmented territory have reshaped architectural paradigms (Das 65).

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study analyses the historical background of Indo-Islamic art and architectural heritage in Northeast India before partition, identifying major influences and characteristics. Simultaneously, this paper aims to explore the immediate and long-term impacts of the 1947 partition on Indo-Islamic art and architecture in Northeast India, including the displacement of communities, loss of artisans, and changes in cultural practices through specific case studies.

### **Methodology**

The study employed a qualitative, ethnographic approach to investigate shifts in architectural style and motifs through case studies of the Panbari Mosque in Assam and the Glass Mosque in Shillong. Furthermore, observations were made regarding the construction, environment, preservation and engagement challenges at the Mosques. Information on the past, present, and prospects of practices and shifts within the contextual framework was gathered through informal discussions and formal questionnaires conducted during field visits, in-depth interviews, and rigorous content analysis of primary and secondary sources.

### **Contextual Background**

The foundation of Indo-Islamic art and architecture in northeastern India does not lie in the sudden imposition of a foreign style, but rather in gradual assimilation over time into the wider Islamic world. This process gained particular momentum in the Middle Ages, driven primarily by the imperial expansionist policies of the Bengal Sultanate (Hussain 143). As the Sultanate expanded its borders into the Brahmaputra Valley, it introduced a sophisticated architectural style that was beginning to combine Persian architecture with the aesthetics of Bengal's humid, riverine landscape (Eaton 34). This was a period of synthesis; architects had to balance the demands of large, imposing features such as the '*mihrab*' and '*minbar*', essential to Islamic places of worship, with the geographical realities of northeastern India. As the region was prone to heavy rainfall and frequent earthquakes, architects often avoided the massive, heavy stone structures of northern India in favour of more flexible, durable materials. This resulted in the development of a distinct regional architectural style, or '*vernacular*', in which traditional Islamic motifs and designs were reinterpreted using brick, bamboo, and locally prepared lime-mortar mixtures, drawing on local building traditions (Singh et al. 45). These structures were not limited to serving as places of worship; rather, they were symbols of a new social order that bridged the gap between the cosmopolitan world of the sultanate and the tribal and agrarian social order of the borderlands.

Before the partition, Indo-Islamic architecture in northeastern India developed in a strong environment of cultural exchange. This was a favourable age of patronage; the construction of a mosque or madrasa was the result of the combined efforts of local Muslim rulers, Ahom royal patronage (who often donated land for the shrine or mosque), and wealthy merchants (Nainar 49). This patronage gave rise to a prolific architectural culture that was deeply intertwined with the local economy. Architectural elements were often adorned with exquisite calligraphy, but with a touch of local culture. Arabic script was sometimes set in floral designs that reflected the local flora of Assam's plains. Woodcarving became the main medium of artistic expression; the intricate geometric designs carved into the pulpits and doorways of mosques in the Khasi Hills and the Brahmaputra Valley combined Central Asian influences with local tribal motifs. Even textiles played an important role; locally woven silks and other fabrics adorned sacred spaces, creating a sensory experience uniquely '*northeastern*' (Eaton 42).

### **Case Study of the Panbari Mosque**

The Panbari Mosque, popularly known as the '*Rangamati*' Mosque, is one of the exemplary architectural monuments in the Dhubri district of Assam, representing the easternmost extremity of the medieval Islamic influence that once freely penetrated the plains of undivided Bengal and the Brahmaputra valley (Eaton 65). In the context of the Partition of Bengal, the mosque serves as a crucial '*baseline*' for scholars, as it embodies the pre-1947 cultural continuity that once bound the northeastern part of India to the larger Islamic world (Chatterjee 114). Being one of the oldest surviving mosques in the region, it embodies a distinct regional identity that developed long before the introduction of modern borders, and through this, offers a rare glimpse of the '*vernacularized*' Islamic aesthetic that once defined this borderland's identity (Nainar 59).

The history of the Rangamati Mosque is an influential blend of legend, imperial ambition, and regional culture. Although specific written records contemporaneous with the mosque's foundation are extremely scarce, historians and local folklore generally date its origins to the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century (Das 79). Its foundation is widely credited to the Sultan of Bengal, Alauddin Husain Shah (1494-1519 CE), who was known for his significant military successes and for his radical expansion (1498 CE) into the Kamata and Ahom kingdoms. During this time, Rangamati served as a strategic military base and a thriving urban centre. It also served as a bridge between the Sultanate's mainland and the unexplored frontier regions of Northeast India (Sarkar 43).

As the political context changed further, the mosque's history became inextricably intertwined with that of the Mughal Empire. In the seventeenth century, when the Mughal forces, led by generals like '*Mir Jumla*' and administrators like '*Hussain Shah*', attempted to consolidate their dominance over the region, the mosque likely underwent several stages of renovation and received renewed royal patronage (Rizvi 285). It was during this period that the mosque evolved from a frontier fortress to a focal point of the local Muslim community's civic and religious life. Over the centuries, the mosque flourished in an atmosphere of shared

cultural practice that extended across both sides of the current international border. Its historical significance lies in its survival through the cataclysmic political changes of the twentieth century; it remains a living monument to a shared heritage that predated the partition of Bengal and reshaped the region's political and social landscape (Dutta 112).

#### *Architectural style*

- **Mughal architecture:** This mosque is a fine example of Mughal architecture, known for its fine craftsmanship and balanced layout (See Fig. 1).
- **Materials used:** The mosque is mainly made of brick, lime mortar and stone.
- **Decorative elements:** The mosque features intricate carvings and decorations typical of Mughal architecture; floral and geometric designs are particularly notable (See Fig. 1).

#### *Structural arrangement*

- **Plan:** The mosque is built on a rectangular layout, a common feature of Mughal architecture. Its prayer hall faces west, i.e. towards Mecca (See Fig. 1).
- **Domes:** The mosque is adorned with three domes on its roof, which are seen as symbols of its main prayer hall. The domes are usually semi-circular; they are placed on a circular foundation (drum), and each dome has a pinnacle or finial at the top (See Fig. 1).
- **Arches:** The mosque features several pointed arches, a recognisable feature of Islamic architecture. These arches support the roof and domes and are also used in the mosque's entrances and windows.
- **Minaret:** The mosque has a minaret; a minaret is usually a tall, slender pillar, commonly used to announce the call to prayer (*adhan*).
- **Mihrab:** The mosque has a mihrab, a semicircular niche in the western wall of the prayer room, which indicates the direction of the *Qibla* or Mecca. The mihrab is more often elaborately and magnificently decorated.
- **Courtyard:** In front of the mosque is an open courtyard (*Shahn*) where worshippers can gather, a common feature of larger mosques (See Fig. 1).

#### *Construction Techniques*

- **Foundation:** the foundation of the mosque was laid using traditional Mughal techniques; deep trenches were dug and filled with a mixture of bricks and lime mortar.
- **Walls:** the mosque is built of a mixture of bricks and stones, which are firmly bonded together with lime mortar and plaster. The walls were usually made quite thick to support the heavy weight of the domes.
- **Roof:** A specific technique called 'corbelling' was used in the construction of the domes. In this method, layers of stone or brick are arranged one after the other so that each subsequent layer protrudes slightly beyond the layer immediately below it, and they meet at the apex of the dome (See Fig. 1).
- **Decoration:** the exterior and interior surface of the mosque, which includes intricate carvings and inlay work, was done by skilled craftsmen. Calligraphy is also widely evident in this decoration, especially verses from the Holy Qur'an, which are engraved on it.

#### *Significance and Conservation*

- **Cultural Importance:** The Rangamati Mosque holds a specific cultural and religious significance for the local Muslim community of the Dhubri region. In addition, it is also considered a remnant symbol of the region's historical relationship with the Mughal Empire.
- **Current Status:** The mosque has undergone several renovations over the past centuries that considerably altered the original details, such as interior decorations, calligraphy and inlay works, specifically pertaining to the migration and cultural shifts. Every effort has been made to preserve its original Mughal architectural features; however, some parts of the mosque have been rebuilt or repaired using modern construction materials.
- **Conservation Challenges:** The key challenges in conserving the mosque include various environmental factors, such as excessive humidity and heavy rainfall during the monsoon season. These factors can corrode the mosque's brickwork and plaster. In addition, neglect of maintenance, a shortage of trained labourers, or a lack of necessary funds can be obstacles to conservation.

Fig. 1. Left, prayer hall of the mosque; right, exterior and architectural details, The Panbari Mosque, Rangamati, Dhubri, Assam. *Dhubri District Administration*, Government of Assam, [dhubri.assam.gov.in/tourist-place-detail/273](http://dhubri.assam.gov.in/tourist-place-detail/273).



The Rangamati Mosque in Dhubri is a culturally and historically significant architectural monument, an amalgam of Mughal and local architectural styles. Its delicate and intricate design, rich in traditional elements such as domes, arches and ornate carvings, reflects the rich cultural heritage of

that era. Despite the various adversities it has survived over the centuries, the mosque remains a living symbol of the region's Islamic history. It continues to serve as an important religious and cultural centre for the local community.

### **Case study of the Glass Mosque, Shillong, Meghalaya**

The Madina Mosque in Shillong, commonly known as the Glass Mosque, is an imperative specimen of contemporary Islamic architecture in North-East India. Located in the Laban area of the capital of Meghalaya, it is the first mosque in India to be constructed almost entirely of glass ("Exploring Shillong's"). In this study, the mosque is observed as an instance of 'post-partition transformation'. While older mosques in the region were often built with heavy, traditional materials to blend into the landscape, the Glass Mosque uses modern, translucent and lightweight materials to create an illuminating, visible presence (See fig. 2). It represents a move away from the vernacular styles of the past towards a modern, urban identity for the Islamic community in the hills (Hassan 116).

The history of the Madina Mosque, also known as "*Kanch Masjid*", is linked to Shillong's emergence as a major administrative centre after the partition of India in 1947. As the city expanded in the post-independence era, the local Muslim community, which had lived in the Khasi Hills for generations, sought to build an architecture that would reflect their resilience and contributions to the state (Thakur 126). The project was led by the Shillong Muslim Union, an organisation that has been working for decades to promote education and communal harmony in the region.

The mosque was officially inaugurated in 2012, marking a new chapter in the architectural history of the North-East. Historically, Islamic architecture in the region was constrained by its location and the use of local materials, such as wood, thatch and bamboo. However, the *Kanch Masjid* takes precedence over this tradition by using four storeys of glass and steel that are over 120 feet tall (Ahmed 114). This change in style is significant; it shows that, after partition, the focus of architectural expression shifted in parallel from 'preserving' old styles to 'innovating' new ones. Today, the mosque persists as a symbol of innovation in a multicultural society, representing the accumulation of modern religious architecture that can adapt itself to a high-rise urban environment (Roy 205).

#### *Architectural style*

- Modern Islamic architecture: The mosque incorporates traditional Islamic architectural elements such as domes and minarets; however, they are constructed in a minimalist or contemporary style, incorporating the latest technology of embedding glass and steel.
- Symbolism: The use of glass metaphorically reflects transparency, purity, and spiritual enlightenment. The design also combines religious symbolism with contemporary aesthetics.

#### *Structural arrangement*

- Lay out plan: The mosque is built on a rectangular floor plan; it is around 120 feet in length and 61 feet wide. The central prayer hall is spacious and designed to accommodate worshippers of both genders separately.
- Minarets: The mosque has four minarets at the corners, which are tall and slender, and stylistically show geometrical elevation compared to classic curvilinear flexibility. These minarets are topped with glass domes, further enhancing the mosque's contemporary look (See fig. 2).
- Dome: The mosque has a large central dome mainly made of glass. The dome is one of the most stylised features, allowing natural light to enter the prayer room and creating a calm, luminous atmosphere (See fig. 2).
- Facade: is constructed of large glass panels set within a steel framework. The glass panels are reflective and tinted, giving the building a shimmering appearance that changes with the light (See fig. 2).

#### *Construction Techniques*

- Foundation: is constructed of reinforced concrete, designed to bear the weight of the steel and glass structure. It has been carefully engineered to withstand the effects of Shillong's hilly terrain and earthquakes.
- Steel framework: The structural strength of the mosque is provided by a steel framework. That holds the large, heavy glass panels and domes; steel is chosen for its strength, flexibility, and ability to support large glass surfaces.
- Glass Panels: An unprecedented amount of glass used in the mosque are tempered and laminated for safety, structural strength and durability. Tempered glass is stronger than regular glass and breaks into smaller, less hazardous pieces, whereas laminated glass remains intact even if broken. Double-glazed panels provide thermal insulation by reflecting sunlight, reducing heat transfer, and increasing energy efficiency.
- Roofing and Dome: The central dome and smaller domes are constructed of glass and steel. The domes are designed to be lightweight yet strong, with a steel frame supporting the glass panels. This dome structure allows natural light to enter, reducing the need for artificial lighting during the day.
- Interior Design: The interior of the mosque features elements of modern Islamic design, with intricate glass etching and calligraphy on the walls and ceiling. The glass structure helps natural light reflect, creating patterns within etched designs, and is incorporated to enhance the spiritual atmosphere.

#### *Structural constraints and resolutions*

- Climate Adaptation: Shillong's climate, characterised by substantial rainfall and humidity, poses challenges in maintaining the glass structure. The glass panels are sealed to prevent water ingress, and regular maintenance is required to keep them clean and free of algae or fungi.

- **Thermal Insulation:** Due to the extensive use of glass, effective thermal insulation is essential to maintain a comfortable indoor environment. Double-glazed panels help reduce heat loss in winter and heat gain in summer. The mosque's design likely includes ventilation systems to regulate internal temperature and humidity.
- **Structural Stability:** As Shillong is located in an earthquake-prone area, the structure of the mosque was designed to withstand seismic sensitivities. The steel structure provides the flexibility and strength needed to absorb and dissipate earthquake energy.

#### *Aesthetic and cultural impact*

- **Night Illumination:** during the evening, when the mosque is illuminated from the inside, it becomes an attractive spectacle. The glass walls and domes reflect light, creating a stunning visual impact and making the mosque a city landmark.
- **Cultural Significance:** Beyond its religious functions, the mosque is a symbol of unity and modernity for the Muslim community of Shillong. It also attracts tourists and visitors, thereby contributing to the region's tourism, cultural harmony, and architectural heritage.

#### *Conservation and maintenance*

- **Constant Maintenance:** The mosque requires regular cleaning and maintenance to maintain the clarity and beauty of the glass panels. Maintenance includes cleaning the glass surface, inspecting the steel structure for corrosion, and ensuring the veracity of the seals and joints.
- **Environmental Considerations:** The design of the mosque incorporates various measures to reduce its environmental impact, such as energy-efficient lighting, water management systems, and waste minimisation methods.



Fig. 2. Left, exterior view; centre, entrance gate; right, the prayer hall, The Madina Mosque, Shillong, Meghalaya. *Explore Our India*, [www.exploreourindia.com/grand-madina-masjid-shillong](http://www.exploreourindia.com/grand-madina-masjid-shillong).

The Glass Mosque in Shillong is a remarkable example of modern Islamic architecture, combining traditional elements with contemporary materials. Its innovative use of glass not only creates an innovative aesthetic, but also symbolises transparency and spiritual radiance. The construction and design of the mosque reflect careful consideration of the local environmental conditions, cultural significance, and the need for sustainability in adverse climates.

### **Analysis**

The immediate and distressing consequence of partition was the mass displacement of artisans, including masons, calligraphers, woodcarvers, and weavers; these artisans were the main carriers of the Indo-Islamic arts of Northeast India. For generations, these artisans had worked within a flexible and fluid 'Bengal-Assam' cultural sphere, where skills and craftsmanship were passed down through family lineages and local artisan guilds (Das 105).

#### *Displacement of Artisans and transition in spatial craft*

This migration was not just a loss of labour; it was also a reflective break in the continuity of traditional craft practices. Historically, architecture in northeastern India was a living art form that required constant maintenance and renovation to survive, especially in the region's humid climate and seismicity. The departure of the 'Mistris' or master architects who knew the appropriate chemical composition of locally prepared lime-*Surkhi*, mortar and the flexibility of '*Tkra*' (made of reeds and plaster) structures left many historic mosques in neglect. The skilled art of wood carving, once used to decorate the pulpits and cornices of mosques in the Khasi Hills and the Brahmaputra Valley, also gradually began to disappear; due to the migration of artisans across new frontiers, taking with them their tools and professional secrets (Metcalf and Metcalf 225).

Since the traditional apprenticeship or guru-disciple line was broken, the next generation of builders lacked the necessary training to accurately recreate the delicate, aesthetic Indo-Islamic architecture of the pre-partition era. In the absence of these skilled craftsmen, the region gradually shifted towards more utilitarian, standardised construction methods. The local architectural identity that had once embodied a wonderful blend of Sultanate architecture and indigenous craftsmanship was gradually replaced by 'reinforced cement concrete' (RCC) structures. Though these new structures were easier to build, they lacked the deep cultural appeal and climatic suitability of earlier local architectural styles, leading to an aesthetic shift.

#### *Conservation Efforts and Administrative Support*

A conscious endeavour has emerged to restore and preserve the Indo-Islamic heritage of North-East India. At the heart of this renewed interest is the realisation that these architectural monuments are not merely religious, but are an integral part of the

'composite culture' that the post-partition Indian state sought to build. The significant contribution to this conservation process has been endorsed by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), which, in collaboration with the archaeological departments of various states, has initiated the listing of several historic mosques and tombs as "Monuments of National Importance" (Archaeological Survey of India).

However, this institutional involvement is not limited to simple structural repairs. In a region where partition has left strong social effects, the restoration of an Islamic monument often serves as a symbolic representation of communal harmony and pluralism. ASI's approach in northeast India has evolved to address the region's specific environmental challenges, such as the high humidity of the Brahmaputra Valley and the seismic hazards of the Khasi Hills. To this end, they use specialised construction materials that are exact replicas of the original 'lime-sulphur' mix, used centuries ago (Guha-Thakurta 286). By stabilising and protecting these historic sites, the government and regional organisations are effectively re-establishing Indo-Islamic history in the official narrative of northeast India; thus, ensuring that the contributions of the Bengal Sultanate and the Mughal eras are not lost to oblivion due to modern borderlines.

The far-reaching impact of these conservation efforts is evident in the historical monuments that have been successfully saved from the brink of destruction. A notable example is the Case of Panbari Mosque (also known as the Rangamati Mosque) in Dhubri district, Assam. As one of the oldest Islamic monuments in the region, its conservation required a delicate balance between preserving its 15th-century Sultanate-style structural integrity and maintaining its ongoing use and sanctity as a living place of worship (Nainar 113). Moreover, the involvement of various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and international agencies has brought a more holistic approach to 'heritage management' in the region. These groups often fill the gaps left by state bureaucracy; they focus primarily on the 'soft heritage' surrounding architecture. This includes documentation projects that capture the oral history of buildings and the socio-economic context of the neighbourhoods surrounding them. By viewing mosques not as isolated buildings but as the heart of a 'cultural landscape', these initiatives have helped to preserve the intangible connections that were about to be severed by partition.

#### *Training and restoration*

Considerably, the most inspiring aspect of these modern advancements is the attempt to fill the knowledge gap created by the displacement of artisans following the partition of 1947. Recognising that no architecture or monument can be truly preserved unless the skills required to build it survive, various cultural institutions have organised several 'restorative' workshops. The main aim of these initiatives is to document and disseminate the teachings of almost-extinct arts such as Islamic calligraphy, traditional woodwork and traditional weaving techniques once used to decorate architecture.

By providing a suitable platform for the remaining veteran and skilled craftsmen to showcase their skills, these programmes have initiated a 'reverse flow' of knowledge. Young apprentices are being trained in the traditional tools and techniques used by their ancestors, ensuring that the unique "northeastern tone" of Indo-Islamic art survives in the twenty-first century (Ministry of Culture 46). These workshops and exhibitions are not limited to producing a few artefacts; rather, they are reviving a sense of self-respect among communities whose artistic contributions were once abandoned and marginalised by the events of Partition. The revival of these crafts has effectively reintegrated Indo-Islamic heritage into the broader context of Indian art history. This proves that while geographical boundaries may divide a land, an unbroken stream of creative expression can re-knit the fabric of a culture over time (Guha-Thakurta 303).

In recent years, there has been a surge of interest in reinterpreting Indo-Islamic art and architecture in the contemporary context of Northeast India (Hassan 79). Local artists and architects are innovatively integrating Islamic motifs and designs with modern aesthetics, resulting in novel architectural styles that pay homage to the region's rich Indo-Islamic heritage ("Indo-Islamic Architecture"). For example, the Glass Mosque in Shillong and other contemporary mosques and public buildings in Northeast India increasingly display a harmonious blend of traditional Islamic architectural elements and local modern styles. This architectural dialogue between the past and the present is what embodies the dynamic evolution of Indo-Islamic art in the region (Das 243).

*Cultural Diplomacy and Cross-Border Cooperation:* The shared cultural heritage between North-East India and Bangladesh has particularly inspired cross-border collaborative efforts to preserve and promote Indo-Islamic art and architecture (Roy 254). Various cultural diplomacy initiatives, including joint exhibitions, research projects, and exchange programmes, have played a significant role in strengthening cultural ties between the two regions (Ministry of External Affairs 15). Such collaborative efforts have facilitated the exchange of knowledge and expertise among researchers, artists, and heritage conservation experts, resulting in a more holistic and deeper understanding of the region's shared cultural heritage.

#### **Conclusion**

As Northeast India continues to grapple with the legacy of Partition, it is essential to recognise and celebrate its Indo-Islamic heritage as a testament to the region's rich and diverse cultural history. The Partition of India inflicted profound and multifaceted effects on the Indo-Islamic artistic and architectural heritage of Northeast India. The migration of Muslim artisans, the abandonment of Islamic monuments, and the resulting transition in cultural identity, including artistic expression, posed formidable challenges to the preservation of this heritage in the post-Partition era. At present, the Indo-Islamic heritage of Northeast India is an integral part of the region's cultural landscape. Ongoing conservation efforts, the revival of traditional crafts, and the pursuit of contemporary interpretations all aim to preserve and revive architectural styles. However, the aesthetic

shift in Islamic geometry and architectural form is also evident in modern Islamic design and technology, as shown in the above case studies.

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