Maintaining Old Buildings During Post-Gazetted Period-Case Study: Kuala Lumpur

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Abstract
Conservation and preservation of old buildings is one of the current concerns within the built environment of our nation. It is realised that these buildings have important significance and contribution to our nation's historical development. Unfortunately, most of the problems affected these buildings during post gazetted period. These problems arise due to building protection and maintenance management has not been emphasized by current related conservation law and guidelines, or by organizations or parties that are responsible for the maintaining of these buildings. Many old buildings in Kuala Lumpur face these problems which greatly affect the building's performance and condition, structure stabilization and building character. Therefore, there is a greater possibility that Malaysian could loose the cultural significant and heritage value of these old buildings owing to the related organisation or parties that are involved and responsible in their conservation and maintenance management are unable, fail or ignore to apply suitable and appropriate ways or method to protect and maintain them.

Introduction
According to Chen (1982), the importance of many old buildings is not only of their function in the past, but also as a reference of a former lifestyle. In addition, Kohl (1986) outlined that, these old buildings also contribute to the character of our past architectural and cultural heritage originality. However, its original characteristic cannot be fully reproduced or captured by documentation, picture, photographs, graphic images or any mass media. Even though we can reproduce it through various types of media; there is a lack of originality and authenticity of these new productions (Fieldan, 1979; Badan Warisan Malaysia, 1990; ICOMOS, 1990).

In the past, there were no specific laws and guidelines to protect the old buildings and its related heritage in Malaysia. However, the effort to conserve these buildings started during the colonial era, especially during the British colonialization. After our nation independence Day, building conservation and preservation was put under the jurisdiction of Federal Constitution (Mehd Radzi, 1995a). Despite that, Lakhbir (1986) claimed that the legislation aspect in conservation is still in a piecemeal situation whereby there are many loopholes and lack of integration. In addition, enforcement of current laws is not being carried out properly and has not met the current needs of the old buildings. Even though, these laws are strongly emphasized by non-government organisations who are interested in conserving the buildings.

According to Pickard (1996), interaction of old building materials with the environment cannot be avoided. Generally, all building materials are affected by the degradation process. Therefore, the qualities of these materials also decrease rapidly through dilapidation process. Owing to this process, the characteristic and overall qualities of the buildings are affected (A. Ghafar, 1994; Hollis, 1999; Paiman, 2002). Abdul Hakim Mohammed & Wan Min Wan Mat (1991) claimed, it is impossible to ensure that old buildings remain maintenance free. However, if building maintenance management can be applied properly, the amount of building maintenance works can be minimized. In order to achieve this, any management team for old buildings must be able to consider the economical value and capability of their building. By considering economic value and capability, these buildings are able to fulfill their practical current function and stay intact.

However, during the post gazetted period, the issue and problems related to maintenance management of old buildings always arise and affect the conservation and preservation process. For instance, building ignorance and illegal renovation works by the owners and users, trespassing by the illegal parties, insufficient building control management and lack of experience of building management teams create complicated problems to these buildings (Department of Museum & Antiquity, 2000). Therefore, in carrying out management and maintenance responsibilities, the management team for old buildings face many problems in order to ensure their buildings are stable and