

King Edward College

First Medical College building was of the Anatomy Department. However, it went through timely alterations in 1887, 1892 and subsequently in 1915. The original entrance to the main hall, faced South in beginning but later faced North indicating modifications through donation by the Nawab of Faridkot.

The present-day building famously known as Patiala block of King Edward Medical College is not the actual structure that was constructed in 1883. The newly constructed building known as Patiala block was established and inaugurated in 1915 by Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, Viceroy and Governor General of India. Both Patiala block and Bahawalpur block were constructed in the colonial era of British Raj and they were the extension projects of 1914 and 1916 respectively. Patiala block built as the replica of the Palace of Nawab Bhupinder Singh. Marble from mines of Balochistan, teakwood from Burma and sandstone from various states in India were brought to build the architectural masterpieces. The building comprises of administrative office, a large library cum examination hall, four lecture theatres, a museum, a council room and common rooms for staff and students. This block was named after Nawab Bhupinder Singh of Patiala (October 1891- March 1938) who was famous for his bold architectural designs and construction of buildings. He donated generous funds and known for his extravagance. It was an expansive structure by any standards where Burma teakwood was used extensively. Façade of Patiala has two balanced wings on its sides with a central dome and a pattern of three arches along with domed tower. This well designed symmetrical building is elegant not only in its structure but also in its function. This charismatic building has different architectural features

which are symbolic representation of various dynasties and portico, which has archway entrance from East to West. Inside the portico, dado work is used for decoration in the form of cartouche and crown with lotus flower which represents Buddhism. The entrance corridor is ornamented with different types of architectural features, pilaster, inverted cone (latu), dental frieze, corbel and brackets. On entering through portico in a hall which has central wooden staircase. The quarter landing staircase with three types of newel posts has been used for central staircase. This wooden staircase is influenced by the Victorian (1870 to 1910) style. Then there are marble slabs one of which carries names of the donors, another of graduates of the college who laid their lives for the countrymen. Square collar column are used in this block which are divided into three parts including capital, shaft and base like human body. The columns have ionic type capitals which are decorated simply with a design of diamond. Before going to the main library hall there is a corridor which gives the look of arcade but actually is a placement of collar columns. The Main Library Hall has tapered roof and this significant and historical hall has also been used for shooting of many films.

The structure or design of Patiala Block is not only an Imperial stamp of British Raj. It also shows the cross-cultural connection of ingenious and foreign elements in architectural language. The domes of the building both in Patiala block and Bahawalpur block have pendative or Byzantine style with and imposed circular dome above. The domed towers of both buildings are similar in structure as the minarets of Sheesh Mahal of Palace in Patiala built in 19th century by Maharaja Narindar Singh and Sheesh Mahal of Lahore Mughal Fort.

In 1909, Lt. Col. D.W. Sutherland, King Edward Memorial Fund was launched in 1910 to expand the facilities of the college, Mayo Hospital, Albert Victor Block and Lady Aitchison Hospital. Lahore Medical College was renamed as King Edward Medical College on 21 December, 1911. Dr. Sutherland worked hard for the progress of this newly named institution. A stroke of good fortune came in the form of the King Edward Medical Memorial Fund. Lt. Col D.W. Sutherland became Principal of the King Edward College.

“The naming of Lahore Medical School to King Edward medical college has an intriguing history of its own. The college was named after Edward VII. As expected from a King, Edward VII lived a life of luxury but with bad health. Edward contracted typhoid, the disease that was believed to have killed his father King Albert. There was great national concern, as a King, he had numerous responsibilities. Therefore, he needed immediate medical attention. Sadly, that was not properly available at that time. Towards the end of his life he suffered from pneumonia. Also, his wife, Alexandra of Denmark, suffered from Otosclerosis, a congenital disease. He died on 16 May, 1910 from pneumonia. King George V, son of Edward VII, established this memorial fund in recognition for the need of providing medical treatment to the common people, as a service to humanity and homage to his parents”. (Haider 2018)

In 2006 KEMC was upgraded to King Edward Medical University. Prof. Dr. Mumtaz Hasan (Sitar-e-Imtiaz) became the first Vice Chancellor of KEMU

Bibliography

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