

Governor House, Lahore

The present building of Governor House, a historic wonder of Anglo-British architecture surrounded by lush green lawns, presents a beautiful panoramic view with a history of 419 years.

In 1600 A.D, Emperor Akbar built a magnificent tomb (which still forms the nucleus of the building) on the grave of his cousin Qasim Khan (d.1597 A. D). Khusal Singh, one of the Generals of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1799-1839), built residence for himself and his contingent officers adjacent to the tomb. He used the front lawns to establish military camps for his troops.

When British annexed Punjab in 1849 they acquired this place, in exchange to Haweli Dewan Hakim Roy Sialkot, on the request of Teja Singh nephew of Khusal Singh. The British during 1851-1853 reconstructed the building by obliterating the Haweli of Khusal Singh into their own residence. Civil Eng. Lt. Col. Napier prepared the estimate and plan to reconstruct the Haweli into British residency. Lt. Fagan finalized the construction of the building under the direct supervision of Sir Henry Lawrence. Deputy Commissioner Mr. Boring was the first one to reside the newly constructed house, after him Deputy Commissioner MacGregor was the second. Then Sir Henry Lawrence (President Board of Administration), who left his old secretariat residence was the third to acquire the House. In 1858, the Residency was named Government House, Lahore.

In 1892, a double story wing was constructed on the southern side of the building. In far South of the wing a beautiful balcony was constructed under the supervision of Mr. Lock Wood Kipling, Principle of Mayo School of Art (1882) and father of the famous writer Rudyard Kipling.

On the Northern side of building offices were constructed in 1905. In 1913, on the Northern side of the building Governor wing, Family wing and Darbar Hall were constructed consequently. The guest wing in which Royal Suite is situated was specially built for Prince of Wales later King Edward VIII.

In the British Era, the building of Governor House was used to host the visiting Royal guests and Viceroys. After partition it continued to host state dignitaries and foreign diplomatic missions anchoring to Lahore. The founder of nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the first Governor General of Pakistan, venerated the august Governor house with his presence both as a guest and host.

Chaudry Muhammad Sarwar is the 58th Governor of Punjab.