IIM-A would be protected if Gujarat approved AMC list

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AHMEDABAD: The only piece of architecture by Louis Kahn in India, the IIM-A complex, would not have had faced the danger of being demolished had the state government notified the list of 318 heritage building list that the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) had prepared, of heritage buildings outside the walled city.

On the list were 56 buildings of the post-Independence era, including the IIM-A complex and the four buildings designed by Le Corbusier — Villa Shodhan, Villa Sarabhai, ATMA building, and AMC's Sanskar Kendra in Paldi. All these were built between 1951 and 1957. Ahmedabad happens to be the only place in the world where Corbusier designed four different buildings.

The list was prepared by the AMC, the Gujarat chapter of Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) and the Urban Management Centre (UMC) in 2015. Experts had visited all these buildings and assigned them scores out of eight. Based on these scores, the buildings were graded as Grade 1, Grade 2A and Grade 2B etc.

The Ellis Bridge cannot be pulled down as the AMC had it on its heritage list. Shah Jahan's Moti Shahi Palace in Shahibaug and Fatehwadi are part of the city's heritage as well. The heritage committee recommended that the precincts of Gujarat College and Charles Correa's Sabarmati Ashram museum also be included on the list as a part of examples of modern architecture," said a senior AMC heritage committee member. The official added that Town Hall, MJ Library and other 20th century buildings outside the walled city have been listed.

"The list is pending approval from the state government. It was twice submitted to the urban development department for consideration. Had the government approved the list, it could have saved us from international embarrassment," said a senior AMC official. "IIM-A would have had to approach the AMC to make any modifications to the buildings had the list been approved," added the AMC official.