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Current Condition of Historical Heritage Buildings in Tebing Tinggi

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Abstract

Tebing Tinggi is home to numerous historical relics, yet their physical condition is increasingly concerning. Many structures are damaged, altered, destroyed, or deliberately demolished, with none officially designated as cultural heritage sites. This study investigates the current state of historical relics in Tebing Tinggi, focusing on historical buildings, their physical conditions, and the factors contributing to their neglect. An observational method was employed, examining buildings with traditional Malay, colonial, and religious architectural styles. These relics are owned by (1) descendants of traditional Malay rulers or families, (2) the Tebing Tinggi Municipal Government, state-owned enterprises, or other institutions, and (3) religious congregations. The findings highlight significant disparities in preservation efforts: traditional Malay buildings are often poorly maintained or damaged unless preserved through self-funded efforts by families. Colonial buildings managed by the city government are frequently altered, while those overseen by state-owned enterprises or other external institutions are relatively well-maintained. Religious buildings, despite modifications, generally remain in good condition.

Keywords: Historical heritage buildings; physical condition; Tebing Tinggi

1. Introduction

The preservation of historical heritage in Indonesia has become increasingly important, particularly in urban areas where rapid development often endangers historical relics. Tebing Tinggi, a city rich in history and culture, exemplifies this challenge. As a key trade hub and transportation center in North Sumatra, the city is home to numerous historical relics that encapsulate Indonesia's complex history, including the colonial era, the struggle for independence, and post-independence socio-economic developments. These relics—ranging from historical buildings to cultural sites and artifacts—stand as silent witnesses to the pivotal events that have shaped Tebing Tinggi's identity and legacy.

Despite their undeniable historical and cultural significance, the preservation of these relics faces numerous challenges that threaten their survival and continued relevance. Rapid urbanization and unchecked development have contributed to the neglect, deterioration, and even complete loss of many historical sites in Tebing Tinggi. A significant obstacle to effective preservation is the insufficient attention, resources, and support from key stakeholders, particularly the local government and relevant authorities (Government of Indonesia, 2022). This lack of commitment is exemplified by the absence of an integrated policy framework, such as a Local Regulation, specifically designed to identify, protect, and manage the city's cultural heritage. Without such legal and administrative measures in place, Tebing Tinggi's rich historical legacy remains highly vulnerable, overshadowed by the demands of modern development and urban expansion. The absence of clear guidelines for conservation, combined with inadequate public awareness and community engagement, further exacerbates the risk of losing these irreplaceable relics, which serve as tangible links to the city's past. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder approach to ensure that Tebing Tinggi's historical and cultural heritage is preserved for future generations.

As Tebing Tinggi continues to expand, the increasing demand for land to accommodate infrastructure and housing development often clashes with efforts to preserve its historical buildings (Lozny, 2006). This conflict has led to many historical structures falling into various states of neglect and degradation, with some at risk of permanent loss. This article examines the current condition of these historical buildings, shedding light on the factors contributing to their decline and the challenges associated with their preservation. By addressing these pressing issues, the discussion aims to emphasize the critical role these relics play as tangible links to the city's rich history and cultural identity. Protecting them is not only essential for honoring the past but also for enriching the heritage and legacy that future generations will inherit.

2. The Method of the Research

This study employed a qualitative methodology (Abdussamad, 2021) to investigate the state of historical heritage in Tebing Tinggi. The data collection involved field observations and site visits to assess the physical condition of historical sites and conduct in-depth interviews with informants who possess knowledge about these relics (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The historical heritage was then categorized into distinct types, including traditional Malay cultural elements, colonial influences, and components reflecting the city's multicultural community.

To complement the fieldwork, a literature review was conducted, drawing on information from newspapers, books, and archival materials related to Tebing Tinggi's historical buildings. This dual approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of the subject. Collected data were rigorously verified for relevance and accuracy before being analyzed (Sugiarto, et al. 2015). The verified data were interpreted and systematically presented in the study to provide insights into the challenges and opportunities for preserving the city's cultural heritage.

3. Result and Discussion

The rich history of Tebing Tinggi is vividly reflected in its diverse historical relics, spanning from the traditional Malay Kingdom to the revolutionary era. These relics showcase the city's unique blend of cultural, architectural, and historical significance. Among the notable heritage sites is the Sri Pamela Plantation Hospital, formerly known as the Tebing Tinggi Central Hospital, which was established under the Hospital Vereeniging Padang en Bedagei Foundation. Another key landmark is the Tebing Tinggi Railway Station, along with the former employee residences of the Deli Spoorweg Maatschappij (DSM), underscoring the city's pivotal role as a transit hub in North Sumatra.

Tebing Tinggi's pluralistic identity is also reflected in its religious heritage, with prominent cultural landmarks or suspected cultural heritage sites such as the Nur Addin Grand Mosque, the Methodist Church, the Gurdwara Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Temple, and the Maha Dana Temple (Kong Hock/Keng). This multicultural character is further enriched by the preserved shophouses in the Chinatown area (Jalan Bedagei and Jalan Letjend S. Parman) and traditional Malay residences, such as those of Datuk M. Ali and Tengku Tokoh, which provide a glimpse into the city's vibrant past.

As an administrative center, Tebing Tinggi has inherited several historically significant sites that highlight its colonial and post-colonial legacy. These include the Post Office, a key communication hub during its time; the Gemeentehuis (Town Hall), which served as the administrative heart of the city; the staff residences of the *gemeente*, which housed local government officials; and the official residence of the Onderafdeeling Padang en Bedagei controller, a prominent colonial administrator. Together, these structures reveal the city's role as a vital center of governance and administration.

During the Japanese occupation and post-independence periods, Tebing Tinggi played an instrumental role in regional history. Under Japanese rule, the city was designated a *haminte* (district-level city) and later evolved into a *kotapraja* under Deli Serdang Regency before becoming the municipality now known as Tebing Tinggi City. A significant event in its history occurred on December 13, 1945, when local residents, motivated by a desire to disarm Japanese forces following Japan's surrender, clashed with the occupying troops. This bloody conflict resulted in substantial casualties on both sides and is commemorated by a memorial monument honoring the resistance and sacrifices of the people.

In the post-independence era, Tebing Tinggi further enriched its historical and cultural legacy through the construction of symbolic monuments and buildings. These include *Gedung Juang 45*, a structure commemorating the struggle for independence, and the *Tugu Tokoh Taman Siswa*, which celebrates educational pioneers and cultural resilience. Together, these heritage sites and monuments serve as enduring reminders of Tebing Tinggi's multifaceted history, preserving its legacy for future generations while celebrating its rich cultural identity.

3.1. Traditional Malay Cultural Nuances Relics

3.1.1. Kerajaan Padang Palace

The Kerajaan Padang Palace in Tebing Tinggi no longer exists, having been repeatedly ravaged by fires, with the most recent one on March 13, 2022, which completely destroyed what remained of its structure. Over the years, the palace had suffered multiple fires, each one contributing to its gradual deterioration before its final devastation. Originally constructed by the Dutch, the Padang Royal Palace blended colonial architectural styles with distinct Malay and Chinese influences (Khatami, 2020), making it a unique and historically significant landmark. The view of the palace before it was destroyed can be seen in Figure 1.



Figure 1. (a) Front view of the palace, (b) Side view of the palace

As shown in Figure 1, the palace was a multi-story building, characterized by its elegant curved elements and sturdy pillars that not only supported the upper floors but also enhanced its aesthetic appeal. The structure was adorned with ornamental features, many of which were made from wood, including decorative *listplang* (wooden moldings) and a traditional Malay-style fence. The ground floor, typically an open and expansive area, was constructed using a combination of solid walls and wooden boards, which extended upwards to create a uniformity between the lower and upper sections of the building. The upper portion continued the architectural framework of the lower floors, with differences mainly in the interior layout, designed to accommodate the needs of the royal family.

Historical photographs of the palace reveal its grandeur, showing a majestic and impressive structure that once stood as a symbol of the city's historical and cultural significance. However, the building that was destroyed in the 2022 fire was reportedly only a portion of the rear section of the original palace, suggesting that much of the historical essence of the site had already been lost prior to its final destruction. The loss of the Kerajaan Padang Palace is not only a tragedy for the city but also a significant blow to the preservation of Tebing Tinggi's cultural heritage.

3.1.2. Kerajaan Padang's Balai Kerapatan Building (Koramil Building)

Similar to the Kerajaan Padang Palace, Balai Kerapatan Building no longer stands in its original form. The site has since been repurposed and now serves as the Military Rayon Command (*Koramil*) Building, as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. *Koramil* Building, the former of Kerajaan Padang's Balai Kerapatan Building

The original Balai Kerapatan Building featured a distinctive octagonal-shaped front section seamlessly transitioning into a rectangular structure at the rear. Over time, the building has undergone several modifications, significantly altering its original design and functionality. A front terrace was added, and the surrounding yard was gradually elevated to match the rising height of

the nearby road. The roof, once constructed from traditional tiles known for their durability and temperature-regulating properties, has been replaced with corrugated metal sheets, a change that impacts the building's historical and aesthetic value.

At the front, the freestanding pillars that originally created an open and inviting access point have been partially enclosed. The previously open space between the pillars is now restricted to a single, central entrance, with only one gap remaining unobstructed. While changes to the interior layout from the front to the rear remain undocumented, it is likely that adjustments have been made to accommodate contemporary needs and functions.

Architecturally, the building is characterized by interconnected hipped roofs. The front roof is broader, complementing the octagonal shape, while the elongated rear roof extends the structure's rectangular section. Ventilation openings are a notable feature, particularly at the front and rear, with multiple vents positioned strategically at each corner of the octagonal front. Historical photographs suggest the building was once elevated, with high ceilings and ample ventilation that allowed for natural airflow, keeping the interior cool and comfortable even in hot weather. The original tiled roof further enhanced this cooling effect by facilitating heat dissipation.

The building's current condition, however, reflects significant alterations. The elevated floor level has diminished the structure's original height, making it appear noticeably lower. Additionally, replacing the tiled roof with corrugated metal sheets has adversely affected air circulation, resulting in a stuffier interior with reduced comfort levels. These changes underscore the challenges of preserving the building's historical integrity while adapting it to modern requirements.

3.1.3. *Datuk Ali House*

The current condition of Datuk Ali House is shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Datuk Ali House

As shown in Figure 3, the current state of Datuk Muhammad Ali House reflects significant neglect and disrepair. Once a symbol of architectural and cultural heritage, the house is now abandoned, no longer occupied by its heirs. While the building remains structurally intact, visible damage has taken its toll, particularly on the roof, which has sections that have collapsed, exposing the interior to further deterioration. Other elements, including the doors, windows, and wooden components, are also damaged. The surrounding yard is overgrown with unchecked vegetation, and the faded paint adds to the overall sense of abandonment. The timeline for when the house was last inhabited remains unclear.

Architecturally, the house represents a harmonious blend of colonial and traditional Malay styles, as evident in its decorative elements. The two-story structure features a design where the upper floor mirrors and continues the framework of the lower level. The roof, originally a tiled hipped design, has suffered severe damage, compromising its functionality and historical integrity. A terrace, likely a later addition, has been integrated into the original design.

The front entrance is distinguished by a terrace that extends to a second-floor balcony, creating a sense of symmetry and elegance. The entrance terrace includes curved wall designs and is flanked by symmetrical windows on either side. These windows, along with those on the second floor, are likely "*sisir*" (comb-style) windows, a traditional design that promotes ventilation. Above the doors and windows are matching ventilation openings, also styled in the "*sisir*" motif, enhancing airflow throughout the structure.

On the second floor, the arrangement of doors and windows mirrors the layout of the first floor, maintaining architectural balance. The second-floor door opens onto the balcony and is flanked by windows, each topped with ventilation openings. The flooring on the second level, constructed from wood, also serves as the ceiling for the ground floor. This wooden structure,

combined with high ceilings and thoughtfully placed ventilation openings, created a naturally cool interior, ensuring comfort for the occupants in the past. Despite its current state of neglect, the house remains a testament to the intricate craftsmanship and architectural heritage of its time.

3.1.4. Puri Sri Menanti Malay Traditional House

This building is located on Jalan Badak, Kelurahan Badak Bejuang, Kecamatan Tebing Tinggi Kota, Tebing Tinggi City, at coordinates 3°20'57.04"N and 90°09'36"E. It is bordered by public roads to the north and south and by residential houses to the east and west. The building has a rectangular layout with a total area of 106.7 m². Its current appearance is shown in Figure 4.

The structure of the house embodies the hallmarks of traditional Malay architecture, characterized by its elevated design supported by sturdy wooden pillars beneath the main floor. A notable feature is the terrace on the right side, accessible by a staircase positioned directly in front of the entrance, enhancing the house's welcoming appearance. Constructed primarily from wood around 1919, the house was built by Unyang from Leyla Menja. Its original owner, Atok Hasyim, served as the *penghulu negeri* (traditional leader) of Padang, overseeing the administration of Kampung Semut and Kampung Jeruk, which further underscores the house's cultural and historical significance.



Figure 4. Puri Sri Menanti Malay Traditional House

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Remarkably, the house is still maintained by the family heirs, preserving its legacy and connection to the past. In 1992, a weaving facility known as the Leyla Tenun House was built adjacent to this traditional Malay house, further enriching its cultural importance. Historically, the house served as the residence of its owner, Atok Hasyim, and also functioned as a venue for various community events, traditional ceremonies, and significant family gatherings. Moreover, it became a hub for Malay *songket* weaving, showcasing the artistry and craftsmanship of the region.

This multifunctional role highlights the house's importance as both a familial home and a cultural center, embodying the rich traditions and practices of the Malay community. Despite the passage of time, its continued use and preservation reflect a deep respect for heritage and the enduring value of traditional architecture.

3.1.5. Kontrolir House

This building is flanked by two smaller structures on its left and right. The main building served as the residence of a colonial-era *kontrolir* (administrator), while the smaller side buildings were likely used as housing for servants. The main house features a hipped roof, with a spacious front terrace covered by an extended roof, as shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. (a) The former *kontrolir* house (b) Photo of the former *kontrolir* house from the air

The facade at the front of the house may have been shorter in the past, but it now features a fairly large terrace bordered by an iron fence, with an open area extending beyond it. Decorative wooden panels enhance the upper sections of the structure, while *lisplang* (ornamental boards) adorned with Malay-inspired motifs add a touch of cultural elegance. The terrace includes three entrance doors: the central door serves as the main entrance, leading to the living room, while the doors on the left and right provide access to bedrooms located on either side of the living room.

Inside, the house features a spacious living room that acts as the central hub, connecting to the rear section through a corridor. This central corridor is flanked by additional rooms on both sides, each with its own door, ensuring privacy and functionality. Toward the back of the house lies a large room, likely used as a dining area, accommodating gatherings and family meals.

At the rear of the main building, a smaller annex is located, possibly serving as a utility or service area. Adjacent to this annex, a gazebo has been added in more recent years. The gazebo, designed as an open-air space, provides a comfortable setting for gatherings, particularly for the families of officials who currently occupy the residence. This addition complements the traditional architecture while introducing a modern element for communal use, blending historical charm with contemporary functionality.

3.1.6. Post Office

The building of the post office features a Stepped Gable design at the front, characterized by decorative stepped elements. The roof, originally a gable, has been replaced with corrugated metal. At the front, there is a protruding room currently used as a reception area for customers, while the rear section serves as an open sorting area for goods, organized according to their shipping destinations, as shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6. Tebing Tinggi Post Office

Flanking the main building are smaller structures. On the left, there is a smaller building that likely served as a mail sorting area, evident from the small compartments designed to hold letters based on their destinations. While the front façade has undergone significant alterations, the sides and interior retain much of their original design. Notable preserved elements include the upper windows and ventilation panels, which provide excellent airflow. The windows allow ample natural light during the day, and the high ceilings contribute to a cool indoor environment.

At the rear of the main Post Office building, additional rooms extend into the sorting area and mail compartments, reflecting the operational design typical of historical postal facilities. Adjacent to the Post Office is a secondary structure, which now functions as a coffee shop (*kopang*). This building has undergone significant modifications to suit its new purpose, with interior partitions removed to create a more open and welcoming space. These changes have transformed the structure into a modern social venue, while its proximity to the Post Office preserves a visual connection to the site's original historical context.

3.1.7. Tebing Tinggi City Museum Building

The Tebing Tinggi Museum Building follows the style of twin buildings and was originally a former *gemeentehuis* (town hall) (Kerchman, 1930). However, several alterations have been made over time, leading to noticeable differences between the left and right sides of the structure. This two-story building features a gable roof, which has been replaced with corrugated metal. Various ornaments have also been added, giving it the appearance of a newer building, as shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Tebing Tinggi Museum Building

At the front of the building, wide windows with curved tops provide a distinctive architectural feature, allowing natural light to flood the interior. The side of the building is directly adjacent to the main road and is bordered by a relatively high wall, offering a sense of enclosure and privacy. At the rear, a water tower stands, reportedly part of a separate structure located behind the main building, adding a functional and historical element to the site.

Inside, the building contains several spacious rooms spread across multiple levels. The first floor houses various rooms in the main section and on the right side of the building, while the upper floor, equally spacious, is accessible via stairs. These areas are currently utilized as part of the Tebing Tinggi Museum, with spaces divided into specific sections to accommodate exhibits and museum operations. Some rooms are equipped with doors, providing separation and flexibility in use.

The rear section of the building contains additional rooms, including one designated as a press secretariat, reflecting the building's multifunctional purpose. This combination of historical architecture and modern adaptation makes the structure a valuable cultural and operational asset for the city.

3.1.8. The Heritage of the Railway Company in Tebing Tinggi

The buildings left behind by the Deli Spoorweg Maatschappij railway company in Tebing Tinggi include several structures such as the railway station, the company executives' residences, and workers' housing (Waskito, 2014). Some of these historical buildings have been well-maintained, while others have been renovated or abandoned due to lack of use. The Tebing Tinggi railway station, for example, has undergone several changes, particularly to its lobby, but the general form of the left and right wings of the station has remained mostly unchanged. Some building details have been modified to accommodate the use of new materials for repairs, such as the roof. While the roof now uses corrugated metal, the original supporting framework, including the rafters, still appears to be in place. The legs of the trusses and the purlins are made from the same old materials. The current condition of the buildings is shown in Figure 8.



Figure 8. (a) Tebing Tinggi Railway Station, (b) Former Residences of the Railway Company's Executives

The entrance area of the railway station has undergone noticeable changes, likely as part of modernization efforts, making it challenging to distinguish between the original structure and later additions. These modifications are most apparent in the station's front entrance, which now bears a blend of historical and modern elements.

A prominent building from the same period is a two-story structure that likely served as official housing for railway station staff. This grand building still stands, albeit with considerable damage over time. The most significant issue is the roof, where sections have collapsed due to the deterioration of the wooden rafters originally supporting cement tiles. Window shutters show varying states of disrepair, with some intact but requiring maintenance. Despite damage, the door and window frames remain in place, though the windows are mostly boarded up or broken. Above the doors and windows, decorative ventilation openings fitted with colored glass are still visible, adding charm and providing natural light.

Inside, the building features concrete flooring throughout. The left and right sides of the ground floor contain multiple rooms, while the central area likely served as a living room. This space connects to what was probably the family room through double doors adorned with decorative ventilations and colored glass panels. Behind the central connecting door, iron rails are visible, suggesting the previous existence of a rolling door system, though no remnants of it remain.

The family room houses a wooden staircase leading to the upper floor. The staircase, made of high-quality wood, is largely intact, showcasing meticulous craftsmanship. The upper floor, designed for private or family use, likely mirrors the layout of the lower level. It features a wooden floor, still in excellent condition, visible from the ground floor. However, some stairs are damaged, restricting access to the second floor.

At the back of the main building, a corridor connects to an elongated rear structure, which likely served as quarters for servants, drivers, and housed the kitchen. Similar buildings, numbering at least three, are situated nearby. While they remain relatively intact, these structures have also suffered from neglect and damage. To preserve them and prevent vandalism, some have been rented out to the public, balancing heritage conservation with practical use. This complex of historical structures reflects the era's

architectural and functional design, offering a glimpse into the daily lives of railway officials and their households during the building's prime.

3.1.9. Official Residence of the Tebing Tinggi Municipal Police Chief

Like many colonial-era buildings, the official residence of the Tebing Tinggi Municipal Police Chief (*Kapolsek*) features a spacious yard. It is located in a very strategic area, at the heart of the government center, in front of Sri Mersing Square. The building remains largely intact, although the roof has undergone a significant change, with ceramic tiles replacing the original roofing material. The roof design is a combination of a "*limasan*" style and a gable roof over the terrace, as shown in Figure 9.



Figure 9. The Official Residence of the Tebing Tinggi Municipal Police Chief

The building's structure showcases a blend of materials, with concrete forming the lower portions and wood utilized for the upper sections. The front terrace is covered by a gable roof, with wooden ceilings and trim. Traditional Malay motifs embellish the upper trim, while an ornamental pinnacle at the roof's apex enhances the structure's aesthetic appeal, reflecting a fusion of colonial and local design influences.

The terrace serves as a transitional space, bridging the outdoors and the interior. Flanking the terrace are rooms with front-facing windows, likely serving as bedrooms. The sides of the building exhibit a striking mix of materials: concrete forms the base, while wooden walls compose the upper portion, imparting a distinct colonial-era charm. The central section of the structure, however, is constructed entirely of brick, adding durability and a cohesive architectural element.

The interior has been adapted over time, with the central space now functioning as a family room. At the rear of the house, the construction mirrors the front, with stone lower walls and wooden upper walls. Modifications, such as the addition of concrete walls, suggest an evolution from the original design to meet the expanding needs of its residents. It is plausible that the building initially consisted of two separate wooden structures connected by a corridor, later unified into a single cohesive design.

Behind the main building are several additional structures, though their origins—whether contemporary with the main house or later additions—are unclear. One building to the left of the main house appears similar to the servant quarters commonly found in colonial-era residences, with designated spaces for domestic staff such as servants and drivers. These auxiliary structures align with the functional requirements of official residences from that period, providing an insightful glimpse into the lifestyles and architectural practices of the era.

3.1.10. Gedung Juang 45

Gedung Juang 45 is located on Jalan Sutomo, Kelurahan Rambung, Kecamatan Tebing Tinggi Kota, Tebing Tinggi City, with coordinates at 3° 19' 38" N, 99° 09' 37.6" E. The building is bordered to the north by Bank Sumut, to the south by residential houses, to the west by Bank Sumut Syariah, and to the east by Bank Mandiri. This building features a square-shaped floor plan, consisting of two floors and covering an area of 240 m². The construction is made entirely of brick, with a tin roof. At the front of the building, there is a terrace directly in front of the entrance, measuring 5.2 x 3.5 meters. The current condition of the building is shown in Figure 10.

Historically, Gedung Juang 45 was established in 1889 by the Dutch colonial government as the office for the Onder Afdeling Padang and Bedagai. The building has now stood for 132 years. It was originally used as a government center and the administrative hub for the Dutch colonial administration in the Padang and Bedagai region. Today, the building serves as the secretariat for the DHC 45 (Defenders of the Indonesian Struggle 45).

This building is a two-story structure. At first glance, it does not resemble an old building, likely due to the extensive renovations it has undergone. The doors and windows have been modified to meet contemporary needs. The windows are now made of glass, unlike in the past, where they were likely wooden. The ventilation openings, which were once essential for fresh air, have also been sealed with glass, making the interior of the building feel hot and poorly ventilated.



Figure 10. Gedung Juang 45

Additionally, the roof has been replaced with a tin roof, diverging from the original design, which had a combination of gable and saddle roofs at the front. The front terrace is covered with a roof supported by columns, and the entrance door has been replaced with a new one. Similarly, the windows and ventilation openings on the left and right sides are now sealed with glass.

On both wings of the building, there are rooms with three window frames and ventilation slots, which have been sealed with glass as well. The second floor's facade mirrors that of the first floor, but the doors have been replaced with wider windows. As with the lower floor, everything is sealed with glass. Each section of the building is framed by semi-columns, which maintain elements of colonial architectural style. The central part of the building features a round ventilation opening at the top, bordered by a profile that also reflects colonial design.

The interior of the building, as observed during a survey, was empty. At the back of the building, a staircase connects the two floors. The second floor has a wooden floor, and the rooms are divided by partitions made of materials such as plywood.

3.1.11. Sri Pamela Hospital Heritage

The Sri Pamela Hospital complex was originally the Centraal Hospital Padang en Bedagei, a medical facility associated with plantation companies in the Onderafdeeling Padang en Bedagei region (Khatami, 2020). The complex includes the doctor's residence, hospital wards, and operational support facilities, as shown in Figure 11.



Figure 11. (a) The Doctor's Residence, (b) The Hospital Wards

The director's office building at Sri Pamela Hospital has undergone significant changes, particularly to its interior. The roof of the building originally featured a gable roof with a stacked design, with the upper portion narrowing towards the top. However, the roof has been replaced with corrugated iron. Additionally, a gable roof was added to the protruding sections. The roofs now appear stacked on top of one another. The entrance is located on the left side of the building, with rooms on the right side used as offices. The doors and windows seem to have retained their original designs, though the interior has been largely reconfigured to suit office needs. At the back of the building, an additional structure has been added. While the interior has been heavily modified to meet modern requirements, the building's exterior largely preserves its original form.

The staff house is located not far from the Director's office of Sri Pamela Hospital, both situated within the same compound. Locals refer to these two buildings as twin structures, although it is unclear whether they were originally designed as such. While the current conditions of the buildings show differences, it is believed that the Director's office underwent significant interior renovations, though the exterior was largely preserved. The façade of the office remains unchanged, and the hospital's front porch still retains its original design, which may have led to the misconception that the two buildings were originally identical. However, this belief may simply stem from the fact that both buildings are old (from the colonial Dutch era), stand on large, attractive grounds, and have remained intact over time.

The old hospital ward building at Sri Pamela is no longer used for its original function. These former patient wards, which were once identical, are now partly used as storage areas, while others are no longer in use. The roof structure consists of a gable roof with a stacked design, likely intended for ventilation. The roof is covered with cement tiles, some of which have collapsed, but overall, it remains functional for storage purposes.

In the front of the building, there is a porch with wooden molding that features a semi-circular motif. The interior is divided into small rooms on the left and right, which were used as staff quarters. The central space is a large open area that once served as

the main ward for patients. The windows are wide and equipped with two leaves of glass, and the high ceiling promotes good airflow, providing ample fresh air. The ceiling frame is made of wood and is reinforced with metal supports along the edges.

3.2. Multicultural Society Relics

3.2.1. Masjid Raya Nur Addin (Nur Addin Grand Mosque)

Masjid Raya Nur Addin is located at 126 R. Suprpto Street, Badak Bejuang Village, Tebing Tinggi City, Tebing Tinggi. The building is situated at coordinates 3°19'45" N, 99°09'35" E. Built in 1865 by Tengku Haji Muhammad Nurdin, the ruler of the Kingdom of Padang at that time, the mosque is a historical relic of the Kingdom of Padang (Ananda, 2019). It is estimated to be around 156 years old and is the oldest mosque in Tebing Tinggi. The mosque has a rectangular layout, measuring 48.55 x 38.90 meters (1215 m²) and stands on a plot of land covering 2871 m², as shown in Figure 12.



Figure 12. Masjid Raya Nur Addin

The mosque features a square layout, constructed with sturdy brick and cement walls, and is adorned with two prominent minarets flanking its left and right sides. Access to the mosque's courtyard is provided through a corridor, offering a seamless transition into its sacred space. At the front, a series of arches with curved tops connect gracefully to supporting pillars, showcasing a blend of traditional and functional architectural elements. The entrance area is marked by a simple curved roof, complementing the mosque's understated elegance. The roof itself is covered with modern tiles and transitions into a pointed, pyramid-shaped structure, crowned by a classic onion dome at its peak, symbolizing the blend of traditional and contemporary design influences. Surrounding the main prayer hall is a spacious terrace, creating an inviting area for congregation overflow or quiet reflection. Wide doors seamlessly connect the terrace to the interior prayer hall, allowing for natural ventilation and easy access. Nearby, an old well stands as a testament to the mosque's historical significance, remaining in use to this day and adding a tangible link to the past. This architectural harmony and functional design make the mosque a cherished landmark in its community.

3.2.2. Methodist Church

The Methodist Church is located on Jalan Gereja, Kelurahan Tebing Tinggi Lama, Kecamatan Tebing Tinggi Kota, Kota Tebing Tinggi. The building is situated at coordinates 3°19'42"N 99°09'47"E. To the north, the church is bordered by GMI Anthiokhia Tebing Tinggi and the Ostrom Methodist Christian School. To the south, it is bordered by the Post Office. To the west, it is bordered by the former Herna General Hospital, and to the east, it is bordered by residential houses. Figure 13 shows the current condition of the church.



Figure 13. Methodist Church in Tebing Tinggi

This building has a rectangular layout with a building size of 13.70 x 7 meters. The roof has likely been replaced with a metal roof in a saddle shape. The entire structure is built with cement walls. The front features a porch and an entrance with two doors.

There is a ventilation space above the doors, originally intended for lighting, but it no longer uses glass or is covered with other materials. On the left and right sides, there are windows with louvered shutters. There are also columns next to the door that support the upper structure. On both sides of the building, several windows and parts of the structure are now closed but still show traces of their original design. Currently, the church is no longer used for religious services due to its deteriorating condition, with several sections, especially at the back, having been destroyed. The church is approximately 94 years old and is the oldest church in Tebing Tinggi. It was built in 1927 as the Eviscoval Church by the legendary Methodist missionary. This church was the first Methodist church in Tebing Tinggi, established by a Korean missionary, Reverend Ostrom.

3.2.3. Dhana Temple (Kok Heng/Keng)

The temple was a donation from the Chang family around 1899, as indicated by the inscription on the bell currently stored there, which is no longer in use due to damage. According to information, the temple is about 121 years old, based on the inscription on the bell. This aligns with the information from the temple's administration, which notes that about 20 years ago, a ceremony was held to commemorate the temple's 100th anniversary. The current condition of the temple can be seen in Figure 14.



Figure 14. Dhana Temple (Kok Heng/Keng)

Currently, the temple has undergone significant renovations, with additional buildings added to the left, right, and rear. The original structure remains in the front and center, marked by the use of wooden construction. At the back of the Dhana temple, there is another temple representing the Confucian and Taoist traditions. The altar is divided to cater to both Taoist and Confucian worshippers. The Taoist altar is located at the front, while the Confucian altar is at the back.

3.2.4. Sikh Temple Gurdwara Shree Guru Granth Sahib

This is a place of worship for the Sikh community in Tebing Tinggi. The building is simple and clean, in contrast to Hindu temples, which are typically adorned with statues of gods. This place of worship appears empty, except for an altar used for reading mantras and some musical instruments. The rest of the space is an empty room where congregants gather, as shown in Figure 15. Another part of the building serves as a storage area for sacred scriptures and a place to prepare for ceremonies. In this area, there are several photographs of spiritual leaders, as well as a list of Sikh priests.



Figure 15. Sikh Temple Gurdwara Shree Guru Granth Sahib

The historical heritage of Tebing Tinggi has faced various challenges, including neglect, destruction, alteration, and repurposing for public use. For instance, the Royal Palace of Padang was abandoned and eventually destroyed by fire. The former DSM residential buildings on Jalan Imam Bonjol are also under threat, as many have been left vacant, with some homes missing roofs and overtaken by overgrown vegetation. The *Gemeentehuis* (now the Tebing Tinggi Museum) and the Residence of the Controller of Onderafdeeling Padang en Bedagei, while still standing, have undergone several modifications. Similarly, many traditional Malay heritage houses remain, though only a few, such as the homes of Datuk M. Ali and Tengku Tokoh, remain but are poorly maintained. The Chinatown shophouses have either been altered or completely replaced with new commercial buildings.

On a positive note, some heritage sites continue to function in their original form, such as the former Landraad office (now the Tebing Tinggi District Court) and the Kerapatan Kerajaan Padang Building (now housing the Koramil 13/TT Dim 0204 DS office).

The Tebing Tinggi city government has made efforts to preserve cultural heritage, such as restoring the Malay House (Puri Melayu Sri Menanti) in Bandar Utama Village. Additionally, the Department of Education and Culture has begun documenting cultural heritage and potential heritage sites.

However, the overall condition of cultural heritage in Tebing Tinggi has deteriorated due to factors such as public indifference, the lack of regional regulations for heritage preservation, and the absence of a Cultural Heritage Expert Team (TACB). As a result, none of the suspected cultural heritage sites in Tebing Tinggi have been officially designated as Cultural Heritage at the district or city level (Waskito, 2014). To protect, manage, and develop cultural heritage in the city, urgent efforts are needed to prevent further damage, destruction, or loss.

4. Conclusion

Based on the conditions outlined above, it is essential to take immediate and decisive action to officially designate suspected cultural heritage sites as protected cultural heritage. This process should be expedited due to the numerous threats these invaluable sites face, including physical damage, changes in use, natural disasters, and more. For example, many historic commercial buildings (shophouses) in Tebing Tinggi's Chinatown area are being demolished to make way for modern developments, presenting a significant risk to the area's original architectural heritage. Moreover, the repurposing of these buildings adds another layer of challenge, as renovations often lead to alterations that undermine the historical authenticity and integrity of the sites (Lussetowaty, 2015).

In addition to these threats, unforeseen risks such as natural disasters—including floods and fires—pose a substantial danger to the preservation of cultural heritage. A recent example is the tragic fire that destroyed the Royal Palace of Padang, underscoring how quickly valuable historical landmarks can be lost. Such incidents contribute to the irreversible loss of original features and cultural significance, further emphasizing the urgent need for protective measures.

The importance of designating these cultural sites as protected cannot be overstated, as it represents a critical step in preserving the heritage and historical identity of Tebing Tinggi. Preserving these sites is not just about maintaining physical structures; it is about safeguarding the cultural stories and memories that define the community. Therefore, local authorities must prioritize the legal recognition and protection of these cultural heritage sites without delay. By doing so, the city will ensure that future generations can experience and learn from these irreplaceable historical treasures, fostering a deeper appreciation for the region's rich cultural legacy.

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