

Joynul Abedin's paintings need to be preserved

From Aminul Islam

MYMENSINGH, Jan 7: The valuable paintings of Joynul Abedin are being destroyed due to lack of proper preservation and maintenance at Joynul Abedin Art Museum here.

Shilpacharya Joynul Abedin established the art museum and named it Joynul Abedin Sangrakashala (Art Museum) at an old building on the bank of the River Old Brahmaputra near Shaheb Quarter Park area in the district town on April 15, 1975.

It is learnt that this old house was established by a jute merchant named Bardew about 200 years ago during the British rule. Later on the house was sold to Nalini Ranjan Sarker, the then finance minister of the British region who left the home during partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. This abandoned house became government property later where government officials resided till inauguration of the art museum. The then Vice-President of Bangladesh Syed Nazrul Islam formally inaugurated the art museum at a function on April 15, 1975. The function was attended, among others, by Dr Kazi Motahar Hossain and Professor Abdur Razzaque.

The museum was being run by a committed with the Deputy Commissioner and local elite as per agreement with the founder of the museum, Joynul Abedin. Following instruction of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, a Board of Trustee was formed in 1980 to look after the museum. The board turned the one-storied house into a two-storied building.

During the inaugural period, Joynul Abedin displayed 70 pieces of his art works at the museum. But 17

were stolen on May 2, 1992. Of the stolen art pieces, 10 were seized from the house of an artist in the capital city the same year and those were kept in the National Museum.

Besides three art works were taken back by the wife of the late artist.

Now there are 50 art works of the artist in the museum. Two books on Picasso Museum and the master works of Vincent Van Gogh presented by Vicentel Samaniego of Philippine also were kept at the museum. Of those, seven were painted with oil colour and the rest with water colour, pencil sketch, pen sketch and crayon.

Out of the art works seven painting on famine, waiting in Ferry Ghat, a malnourished child in the lap of his mother, a woman with a pitcher in her waist, Kazi Nazrul Islam, a woman just after bath, snake charmer daughter's pan and transparent water, a woman of Mexico, on the back of a horse, on the back of a dunkey, and life struggle are still creating charm.

Considering the importance of the museum, National Museum submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs to develop it and took the charge of the museum on August 31, 1999. The concerned ministry took up a scheme to develop the museum through constructing boundary walls, guard rooms, a guard shade, a cottage, a ticket counter, an open stage and repairing the entire house of the museum with supplying necessary furniture and equipment.

The National Museum following lease of property paying a total of Taka two crore 18 lakh seven hundred and fifty-eight as the value of

all the movable and immovable property from the local district administration, started development works of the museum in September, 1999.

In recent days, the rush of visitors have increased many times. People of the district town as well as from other districts of Mymensingh region through the museum. It remains closed only on Thursday.

The museum has also been turned into a tourist spot for the art lovers. People from different parts of the country, especially the students visit the museum every day.

The museum is not just a museum, rather it is an institution for art lovers. It the proposed open stage is constructed here, the artists would be able to develop their skillness through holding workshops, seminars and other functions.

The only art school of Mymensingh region after the name of this great artist, is being run on the ground floor of the museum. It has been facing various problems due to lack of fund the school is being conducted by three students of this great artist.

Shilpacharya Joynul Abedin spent his boyhood in Mymensingh town and he studied in Pandit Para Pathshala, Mymensingh Zila School, Mrityunjoy School.

However, construction work of the museum is going on at a snails pace.

Immediate steps should be taken to finish the development activities within due time and enrich the museum by collecting all the paintings of the artist.



Front view of Joynul Abedin Art Museum on the bank of the River Old Brahmaputra in Mymensingh town. — Starphoto

One person committed suicide each day in Magura last yr

From Hossain Seraj

MAGURA, Jan 7: At least one person committed suicide each day in this district from January to December last year, official sources said.

Police sources said, some 409 people, mostly women committed suicide while in the previous year 382 and in 1998 the number of

48 in Shalika upazila.

The 1998, 171 in Sadar, 76 in Sreepur, 70 in Shalikka and 25 in Mohammadpur upazila.

Magura district is considered as a suicide-prone area.

According to the report of Coordi-

The report also said, the country faces economic and social problems. Complex realities of life prompted them to commit suicide.

Talking to this correspondent a Sociology teacher in a Magura College, Khan Mazharul Huq Lipu said, family feuds, failure in love or examination, dowry, rural arbitra-

Year	Sadar	Sreepur	Mohammadpur	Shalikka	Total	Per day (Average)
	upazila	upazila	upazila	upazila		
1998	171	76	25	70	342	0.94
1999	199	65	80	48	392	1.07
2000	199	63	93	54	409	1.12

deaths was 342.

Upazila-wise break-up of suicides in 2000 is as follows: 199 in Sadar, 80 in Mohammadpur, 63 in Sreepur and 54 in Shalikka upazila.

In 1999, 199 in Sadar, 65 in Sreepur, 80 in Mohammadpur and

nating Council for Human Rights in Bangladesh (CCHRB), at least 719 people committed suicide in the country during 1999, while the number was 382 in Magura district which is above 50 per cent of the total deaths.

tion and poverty are the main causes of increasing suicides which can be removed only through socio-economic development.

Padma erosion changed map of Chapainawabganj in 30 years

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Jan 7: Unabated erosion by the mighty Padma changed the geographical map of the frontier district during the last 30 years rendering over one lakh people homeless, reports UNB.

Over one hundred educational institutions, many hat-bazaars and several human habitations went into the gorge of the River Padma inflicting a loss of over Tk 300 crore.

The river changed its course 13 times in the last two decades and came close to the town devouring human settlements one after another. But no effective initiatives were visible to protect the erosion.

The erosion by the river started in the 1960s and took serious turn in the 1990s. It grabbed a vast portion of Panka, Narayanpur, Uzirpur and Durlabpur unions uprooting thousands of residents

from their homesteads and turning them economically and socially impoverished.

In the face of huge mass demand, the government allocated Tk 31.1 crore for constructing two-kilometer embankment in 1994. But in 1995, a meeting of the ECNEC reduced the figure at Tk 6.90 crore and the project was approved in 1996.

But the government sanctioned Tk 35 lakh only and Water Development Board made 14,500 CC blocks in first phase at a cost of Tk 31.4 lakh and dropped those into the river near Narayanpur school to protect river erosion, but the exercise proved futile.

Meanwhile, in the face of continuous erosion, the Padma merged with the Pagla near Ratneshwarpur. Following the merger of the two rivers, the erosion intensified threatening the

very existence and Nawabganj town and Rajshahi-Nawabganj highway.

Over 20,000 people from all strata, including journalists, physicians and elite, laid siege the DC office demanding construction of an embankment and filed a memorandum to the Prime Minister.

In this context, the government approved a project of Tk 65 crore to construct 16-kilometer embankment with eight spars from Durlabpur to Narayanpur last year. But the project is yet to see daylight due to reason unknown.

Concerned sources said if the work on the project could not be started in time, the Tk 65 crore project would go in vein as the Padma may change its course at any moment.

News snaps

Bicyclist killed in road mishap

RAJBARI, Jan 7: A bicyclist was crushed under the wheels of a speeding bus at Goalanda on Rajbari-Faridpur highway on Friday, report UNB.

Police said Khalilur Rahman, a fruit vendor, met the tragic end of his life when the Rajbari-bound bus from Faridpur knocked him down near Monalisha Cinema Hall.

Dacoity at PWD engineer's residence

BANDARBAN, Jan 7: A dacoity was committed on Wednesday night in the residence of Executive Engineer of PWD, Bandarban, reports BSS.

Police said, a group of armed dacoits entered into the residence of Executive Engineer Arab Ali at dead of night in Kyaching Ghata area of Bandarban town. They looted valuables worth Taka 30 thousand. The robbery was committed 200 yards away from the police camp. Later on, the dacoits looted a tea stall nearby. They beat up the tea-stall owner, Subas Das. A case has been registered with Bandarban police in this connection.

BCSIR stove gaining popularity

NARSINGDI, Jan 7: Stove (Unnata Chula) evolved by the BCSIR is gaining popularity among housewives, reports BSS.

Reason for the popularity is that this stove consumes comparatively less fuel and time. It is also pollution free. The work on improve stove project started here from July 1999 with active cooperation of district Ansar, VDP and BRDR. The supervisor of the project said, a total of 1,886 improved stove have already been distributed in Narsingdi sadar, Shibpur and Monohardi upazilas. The upazila-wise distribution of stoves: Narsingdi Sadar-284, Shibpur-600 and Monohardi-1002. There are two types of stove single burner and double burner. Improved stoves save 60 per cent of fuel cost less than the traditional ones. Fuel wood worth about Taka 30 crore would be saved a year if the improve stove is used by all the families here.

Water scarcity in Chapainawabganj

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Jan 7: Acute scarcity of pure water has been prevailing in the district town for long time, reports BSS.

Town dwellers are getting only 5,18,276 gallons of water against the daily requirement of about 46,53,000 gallons. Of the total, the municipality supplies only 3,71,500 gallons and 1,46,776 gallons are collected from hand driven tubewells. The remaining 41,34,725 gallons always remain deficit. Only 25 per cent of town dwellers are getting drinking water supplied by the authorities and the rest are collecting from river, canals, ponds and other water bodies.

VGf cards for jobless workers

SUNAMGANJ, Jan 7: A total of 43,700 special VGf cards have been allocated for two months for poor people, reports BSS.

Official sources said, every year about four lakh poor day-labourers become jobless during the Bangla month of Aswin and Kartik. These special VGf cards are meant for these poor jobless people. Upazila and municipality-wise break-up of the VGf card is as follows, a total of 7,000 VGf cards for Sadar upazila, 4,000 for Jagonnathpur, 6,500 for Chhatak, 3,500 for Douara, 2,500 for Bisamborpur, 2,500 for Zamalgonj, 5,000 for Dormopasa, 3,500 for Tahirpur, 4,500 for Derai upazila, 2,000 for Shalla upazila, 900 for Chhatak municipality, 900 for Derai municipality and 900 VGf cards for Jogonnathpur municipality. Each VGf cardholder will get 20 kgs of rice per month.



Unnayan Dhara, a development organisation in Jhenidah district, is engaged in various uplift activities. Some beneficiaries are seen preparing an inter-fish plot of the organisation. --Star

FFs receive monthly allowance

Allowance for insolvent freedom fighters has been disbursed recently in three districts, report agencies.

In Shariatpur, Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak distributed Tk 6,19,200 among the insolvent freedom fighters of Sadar, Bhedarganj and Damuddya upazilas.

Each freedom fighter received Tk 18 hundred as allowance for a six-month period.

Addressing a function on the occasion, the minister said the freedom fighters are the best sons of the nation and nobody will tolerate the enemies who speak against the freedom fighters. Whip Prof Khaleda Khanam and Col (Retd)

Shakawat Ali, MP, also spoke on the occasion.

State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Abdul Quddus opened the programme in Natore through a function at the district council auditorium.

Under the programme, a total of 191 helpless freedom fighters in six upazilas of the district will receive Tk 300 each per month.

In Rangpur, Social Service Department distributed allowance among the poor freedom fighters at Bhedarganj upazila auditorium.

State Minister for Communications Muhammad Anisul Haque Chowdhury attended for function as chief guest.

Five get life term in Gopalganj

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, Jan 7: A court here recently sentenced five people to life term in prison in an arms case.

The convicted were identified as Shahadat Sheikh, Abdul Halim Molla, Abdur Rahman Kazi, Moniruzzaman Molla and Sabur Sharif, who hail from the district.

The five were arrested with firearms when they were travelling in a boat in the River Madhumati on May 12, 1999.

After examining the witnesses and records the judge pronounced the verdict.