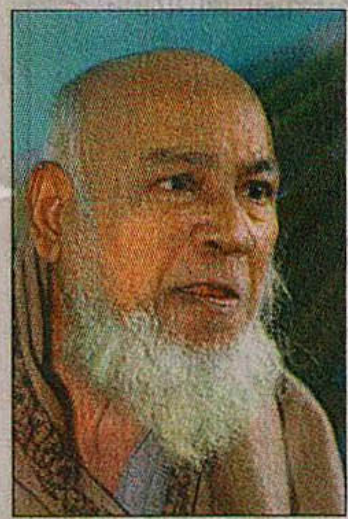


Chalonbil Museum in Natore

Precious collections at a village museum



Professor Abdul Hamid

ONE may not be elated as expected when the area of Chalonbil Museum at Khaibzipur village is reached. One may not find any striking buildings just after a hazardous and painful journey. He may even resent his arrival and assume his journey is fruitless finding a small room entirely covered with flower trees, called *Bagan Bilash* (*Bougainvillea*).

But one look at the bark of a tree covered with a collection of a book written in Sanskrit would make the traveller ease a little the pain gone through on the journey. But one would completely forget the trouble faced when one comes to know of a copy of a manuscript of the Holy Quran written by Emperor Alamgir and King Nasir Uddin.

And if you are interested in numismatics you will have the pleasure of finding among a collection old coins and notes, a note of Tk 10,000 that belonged to the then Azad Hind Fouz of Shoubas Bose.

The terracotta found on the earthen pots, discovered during excavation in different areas of Chalonbil is in no way less beautiful. The new generation may ask various questions on seeing ancient (*Boilaw Wala Kharam*) wooden sandals there.

The initiative of Professor Abdul Hamid of Khaibzipur village at Gurodaspur Upazila in Natore district saw the emerging of a museum in 1978. There is no record of the number of visitors to the museum. According to an Archeological Department employee a total of 50 visitors on a daily average come to the Museum although the communication is not so good.

Professor Abdul Hamid expressed his experiences of visits to different countries with the aim of putting up Chalonbil Museum at this late age of 74. However, it is not known how many remember him. Alone in his home, he is visible to anyone who visits him in the Khaibzipur village, depending on others to move. It is well-known that Professor Hamid declined Taghma-e-Khadmot (TK) title which was conferred to him by the then Pakistan government for his social work, but his affection for his people was so great that he could not leave them. Thus he still remains in the village with the rural people despite the opportunities to live elsewhere comfortably.

He collected some antiques from other



countries on his visits and preserved them in the Chalonbil Museum. A reputed litterateur, the late Rostom Ali Komopuri of Bogra helped him a great deal in collecting some of the antiques.

Locals said that visitors to the museum do not fail to visit the old, ailing professor. The Archeology Department declared Chalonbil Museum as 'protected' a few years ago but did nothing for its development due to shortage of funds. Some items in the museum still lie on the floor with no protection, said a department official of department. No arrangements have been made to even place the collections in proper position. On the other hand no employees have been appointed other than the present three.

Another priceless piece is one of the four manuscripts of the constitution of Bangladesh that is displayed in the Museum, along with a piece of stone used in building a pyramid in Egypt. Professor Abdul Hamid collected a number of valuable statues.

Story: HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU
Photo: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN



নিম্নলিখিত বিদ্যমান বিস্তৃত কামতেনামঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ
 প্রাচীনঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ
 সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ
 সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ
 সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ সত্যপূর্ণঃ