



An architectural wonder of the Mughal period

ALTHOUGH the claws of time and nature have withered most of the red terracotta plaques of the 'Mathurapur Deul', the captivating artistic relic of the Mughal regime still attracts visitors from home and abroad.

Ample artworks inscribed on this 80 feet-high 'Deul' manifest the history and creative essence of the Mughal period.

There are various legends centering on this monument. Historical records say that this monument was built by the Mughal Commander-in-Chief Mansingh in the early stage of the 16th century to commemorate the dedication and heroism of his son Himmat Singh.

The monument stands at village Mathurapur in Madhukhali upazila, about 30km off from Faridpur district headquarters. Its name, 'Mathurapur Deul', has been derived from the name of the village.

Around 1594, Delhi Emperor Akbar appointed Mansingh as the Subedar of Bengal, rewarding him with rent-free lands and 5,000 soldiers. Historic records of the Mughal empire say that after reaching the then capital Tanda, Mansingh sent soldiers all around the Bengal. The whole of Bengal was then burning with revolt.

In April of 1595, Himmat Singh, the son of Mansingh, captured Bhushana (Bhushana was a pargana of the then Fatehabad and Faridpur districts of present time) when stinging the rebels, Mukunda Ram Roy was the zamindar of Bhushana pargana at this period.

During the war of Khizirpur between Himmat Singh and Mukunda Ram Roy, Mansingh sent his captain Sangram Singh further, to occupy Bhushana.

A tremendous fight took place between Sangram Singh and Mukunda Ram Roy at Fatehjitpur of Gopalganj district, the then Bhushana frontier (Fatehjitpur is now under Muksupur upazila). In consequence, Mukunda was defeated and killed. Consequently, the entire Bhushana came

under the rule of the Mughals. As Jamalpur pargana, to the north of Bhushana was yet to be occupied till then, the northern frontier could not be demarcated.

Himmat Singh at this time established his capital and advanced towards Baliakandi of Rajbari district for establishment of his supremacy in the whole Jamalpur pargana.

In March 1597, Himmat Singh died of cholera. Durjan Singh, another son of Mansingh also met a premature death. A distraught Mansingh went to Ajmer to recover from the loss.

However, before his departure, Mansingh built this monument in memory of his son Himmat Singh at Mathurapur the extreme frontier of the then Bhushana pargana. Decorated with terra cotta, the monument is a valuable archaeological relic of the Mughals.

Portraits of idols of Hindu Dev-Devis and war and fights have been inscribed on the wall of the high-rise monument with four gates. However, there are dissimilarities between the present god images of the Bengali Hindu community and that inscribed on the wall.

According to some historians, a fierce battle took place between Mukunda Ram Roy's son Chhatrajit Roy and the Mughals over the occupation of Bhushana. The Mughal won the battle and they raised the monument to mark the glorious victory.

Whatever be the authentic history behind the 'Mathurapur Deul', its structural design is so attractive that visitors get spell bound by this unique Mughal architectural wonder.

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 Story & Photo: HOSSAIN SERAJ

MATHURAPUR DEUL, FARIDPUR

