

The main attraction of the museum is a 25-foot-long boat, crafted from a solitary log of wood. This was recovered from eight feet beneath the local Chawai riverbed many years ago. This precious relic has been donated by residents of the Ambur Khana area of Panchagarh district for display in the museum.



WITH many historical monuments and antiques in a state of disrepair, the need of the hour is the preservation of these priceless remainders of the past. Take for example, a large number of antiques, including a 1,000-year-old boat, inadequately preserved in the Panchagarh Government Mohila College premises, despite its immense archaeological value.

The former principal of the college, Mohammed Nazmul Haque, established a museum called "Rock Museum" in 1997 in the northern district of Panchagarh, at the base of the Himalayas. Some local elite of the district, including Ansar Ali, Tarikul Islam, Harmuz Ali and Tabibar Rahman, are said to have inspired him to establish the beautiful Rock Museum.

The main attraction of the museum is a 25-foot-long boat, crafted from a solitary log of wood. This was recovered from eight feet beneath the local Chawai riverbed many years ago. This precious relic has been donated by residents of the Ambur Khana area of Panchagarh district for display in the museum. However, as a teacher in the Panchagarh Government Mohila College pointed out, the boat is

inadequately preserved.

Also in the collection are many colourful antique stones, which were kept open to the elements.

There is a tug of war between the Ministry of Education and the Department of Archaeology as to who will preserve the antiques. As a result, neither of the two sides has taken the initiative to safeguard these remainders of the past.

About seven crore years ago the Himalayas and adjacent areas including Panchagarh were touched by a shallow ocean named Tasis according to a display board of the museum. So local people and some historians believe that on an excavation many such antiques may be

Recovered from Panchagarh and adjoining areas.

The collections were made at the personal initiative of Nazmul Haque, but may be destroyed if not preserved properly by the department concerned.

The collections in the museum include old paddy, earthen articles, stones and wood logs dating back hundreds of years.

Story & photo: MD. HASIBUR RAHMAN  
BILU



## Panchagarh preserves a 1000-year-old boat

