

# Bhawal Rajas' relics in a shambles

Mounds of plastic shoe soles, wads of cement bags and other plastic wastes are what now adorn the Nolgola Rajbari in Mitford area, once housing a bustling *Kachhari* (tax office) and a fine retreat of the Bhawal Rajas in the city.

Floral motifs made of tiles were pilfered and broken off the walls leaving the house denuded of its ornamental beauties. Parts of the ceiling were covered with tin shed as the brick shed and wooden bars were missing in some places.

There are at least five structures in the compound -- all of them are now being used as small plastic recycling factories and for making cement bags. According to workers this place is being used as a factory for several decades. Some structures are being used as staff quarters of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC).



Sri Krishna of this family first obtained Bhawal pargana in 1704 from Diwan Murshid Kuli Khan. Since then his family had been in charge of Bhawal till the abolition of zamindari system in 1951. Raja Kalinarayan Roy, who got titles

"All the quarters inside the compound are built encircling a courtyard. This is a rare feature.

Abdur Rauf, manager of Bhawal Court of Wards, said they handed over the Nolgola Rajbari to DCC in 1981 and did not

Dr Khairuddin Ahmed, professor, Department of History, DU and former director general of the National Archives, said that in 1850s the Nawabs and Rajas of Bengal grew a tendency to have a Kachhari Bari in Dhaka especially those who had estates in the

"Even if the Rajbari contains a little or no significant architectural features it has great historical values. It is not important that a dwelling should have important architectural features. USA preserved the slave cabins, which has no architectural features but those are parts of history. It is a part of our history. It is a spot from where modern city life started. It is our duty to conserve the place," he said.

"It is rather ironic that the recording companies who are vocal against piracy today in fact began their business way back in the late 80's by pirating Hindi and English music and some are still doing the same. It is sheer hypocrisy that former pirates have now joined hands to beat 'new pirates'. No conscious musician can be a party to it. It is purely the business of the music companies to sort it out and the only way to do it is to introduce the royalty system," he added.