



NUHASH PALLI: AT THE WORDSMITH'S HAVEN

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Located inside the shaal and gojari woods, Nuhash Palli was the late Humayun Ahmed's sanctuary. Amidst the greenery of his self-made haven, you can still feel his presence. Spanning across almost 14 acres of land, the picturesque estate was also the celebrated author's favourite shooting spot for almost all the TV plays and films he directed. It is now a popular picnic spot where hundreds of people throng each day, not only to take a much-needed break from the hustle-bustle of the big city but also to experience the essence of the place that held the writer captivated for years.

To reach Nuhash Palli, one has to get off the bus near Hotapara, on the way towards Mymensingh. The distance from Dhaka to Hotapara is around 40 kilometres. Nuhash Palli is only 8 kilometres away from Hotapara bus stop in Gazipur. From there, a Tk150-200 ride on a three-

wheeler motor rickshaw (unique to Gazipur) will take you to Nuhash Palli. If travelling by car, the ride might take around two to three hours depending on the traffic, weather and road conditions. More or less, everybody you meet on the way knows the path to Nuhash Palli and will be happy to give you directions. The road is a little rough and bumpy towards the end. There are, however, a few hotels and inns on the way where you can stop by for tea and snacks.

Upon entrance through the large gate at Nuhash Palli, a marvellous sculpture of a woman standing with her child welcomes the visitors. A few steps ahead is a small pool with clear water. There is also a skull carved out, basically a fountain, spurting its jaws. A pretty brick house with a brightly painted blue door stands next to the pool. This is the where

writer stayed when he visited Nuhash Palli. It is, however, restricted to public. There is also a small pond past the house with freshly bloomed lotuses. Placed in the middle of the pond is a majestic statue of a mermaid, drawing attention of the visitors. There is also a tree house – a favourite among the kids. A chess room, with life size chess pieces, goes on demonstrate the visionary writer's sense of aesthetics.

Ahmed was well known for his love of nature and Nuhash Palli is a living example to that. There is a large stretch of land hosting various medicinal and fruit bearing trees. One of the main attractions of the place is a *dighi* or a mini lake at the extreme north end. A wooden bridge has been constructed to cross the beautiful "Leelaboti Dighi". The writer's works bear testament to how much he enjoyed rain and moonlit nights. He therefore cre-

ated 'Brishti Bilash', a shelter from where he could observe rain. The green yard in front was his favourite spot to watch the various phases of the moon. There is also a little eatery inside the premises serving humble *bhorta-bhaat*. The place is also well facilitated with power supply, prayer rooms and washrooms.

Nuhash Palli was a constant source of inspiration to Humayun Ahmed and this is where he had been laid to eternal rest. Anyone willing to visit his grave can take a separate route along the west of Nuhash Palli. It is open to everyone, any time of the year, free of cost. However, the entrance to Nuhash Palli will cost Tk 200 per head, excluding children under 12 years of age. From April to November, Nuhash Palli is open to visitors. From December to March, it can be booked only for picnics. Visiting hours are 8am to 5pm, always.

PHOTOS: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

