

On November 18, 2015, young leaders from around the world got together in one city. Their mission was to discuss vital issues of the world, including those of their own country. For the seventh time, One Young World (OYW) organised the biggest youth summit with more than 15000 youngsters from 34 countries, from the ages of 18 to 30. Every year the summit is hosted across the globe. For the first time it was arranged in Asia. Bangkok, the city of angels, hosted this grandiose event, bringing the young world in front page discussion.

One Young World, a non-profit organisation, was founded in 2009 by David Jones and Kate Robertson. This UK based organisation aimed to bring the brightest young minds together and



YOUTH

## A WORLD DISCUSSION

APURBA JAHANGIR  
PHOTOS: COURTESY



empower them to make lasting connections for positive change. With this aim OYW inaugurated their first summit back in 2010 in London. The response was massive as they continued their summit with full throttle, taking it to different countries every year. In 7 years, One Young World has travelled to countries such as Ireland, South Africa,

USA, Switzerland, and now Thailand. The summit includes various segments. The four day discussion covers a range of global challenges and they are discussed by world renowned change makers. OYW has a group of councillors who attend the summit every year. These councillors are globally famous for their contribution towards the society. Councillors include

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, Bob Geldof, Kofi Annan, Sir Richard Branson, Jamie Oliver, Jack Dorsey, Arianna Huffington etc. Our very own Nobel Peace Laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus is also one of their councillors. His plenary session on social business is noted to be one of the most packed sessions of the summit. There are also guest speakers



NUMBERS

403

is the number of Syrian civilians killed by Russian air strikes since September this year. The UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) said that when the strikes were launched from September 30 to November 20, the death toll stood at 403 civilians including 97 children. Meanwhile, the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), another monitoring group, said at least 526 were killed, including 137 children, since Russia launched its first air strikes.

Source: aljazeera.com

PHOTO: INTERNET

## HERITAGE

The palace of Puthia is one of the most renowned archaeological sites of Bangladesh. The palace, for its magnificent ancient Greek style architecture and beautifully landscaped courtyards and gardens, attracts a lot of tourists and history enthusiasts from all parts of the country.

Puthia, now a small town in Rajshahi district, was home of one of the ancient dynasties who once upon a time ruled the entire Rajshahi district from their magnificent palace at Puthia. This dynasty was formed during the reign of Mughal Emperor Akbar when its founder Pitambar was appointed by the emperor to rule the entire Rajshahi area as a local governor. His son Nilambar got the honorific title of Rajah from Mughal Emperor Jahangir for his policy of public welfare and obedience to the Mughal Empire.

In 16th century Nilambar erected a brick built palace on stone-carved

foundation as his family residence cum official court. This ancient palace collapsed during the great Assam earthquake of 1891. Then, in 1895, queen Hemantakumari built another palace on the same foundation which is still standing in a dilapidated condition as a memento of the lost glories of Puthia's kings and queens.

The then rulers of Rajshahi chose this place for their administrative district as it was a bit far from the eroding Padma River which also ensured safety from the marauding Portuguese pirates. The palace is surrounded by deep, spacious moat. The moat filled with freshwater ensured constant water supply to the surrounding villages and the palace. The palace is connected to the village through narrow walkways which could easily be blocked in case of danger.

The main structure of the palace is a colossal two storied building with magnificent Corinthian columns and

hanging balconies. In places, the exterior wall of the palace is exquisitely decorated with floral patterns, statuettes and coloured tiles. The entrance of the palace is marked by a huge gateway and two garages for the carriages of the royal families. The ground floor of the palace was used to house the servant's quarters, a barrack, a prison and the treasury office of the estate. There is a well in the ground floor where death row prisoners were thrown away and killed.

A wooden staircase takes the visitors to a huge hall room which was used as the king's court. The large room with huge window overlooking beautiful gardens was once upon a time decorated with beautiful glazed tiles and chandeliers. The heavy, empty hanger of the chandeliers and a few damaged glazed tiles still testify about its lavish past. Beside the court room there are several rooms which were used as the living quarters of the members of the

## THE ROYAL PALACE OF PUTHIA

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN  
PHOTOS: ANWAR ALI



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royal family. Every room of the living quarters have an attached hanging balcony. Most of the decorations and ornamented tiles have been wiped out due to lack of preservations. There were three beautiful renaissance style sculptures on the roof of the palace which were destroyed by the Pakistan army during the liberation war of 1971.

Till 2010 the palace had been used as a government college. However, the

building became so decrepit that the college was shifted and now the palace lies abandoned under the custody of the archaeological department. During the recent earthquakes, several months earlier, many dangerous cracks developed in the ceiling and walls of the palace. If immediate step is not taken to preserve this historic site, the nation will lose a remarkable piece of heritage for good.