



A bird's-eye view of Nateshwar shows the archaeological site in its full glory, while a closer look at the ruins, below, reveal intricacies of the ancient stupas.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

# Remnants of a Buddhist civilisation in Nateshwar

Archaeologists find pyramid-shaped stupa and more

FARHANA MIRZA and ANILA KISHWAR TARANNUM

The recently excavated Nateshwar archaeological site bears witness to the Bengal region's thousand-year-old history, with its pyramid-shaped stupas, wide walkways, mandaps and households. Ranging from biological remains of flora and fauna, to terracotta, metal and stone artefacts and unique architecture, the archaeological findings at Nateshwar paint the picture of an ancient civilisation that once dwelled in the country we now call home.

After the remarkable feat of excavating the Wari-Bateshwar ruins, Dr Sufi Mustafizur Rahman, professor of archaeology at Jahangirnagar University, is the director of this project.

"The archaeological site of Nateshwar in Bikrampur has the potential to become a centre of Buddhist culture in South Asia, and earn its place as a world heritage site. From last December to March, we have conducted archaeological survey and excavation, discovering pyramid-shaped structures, and other important artefacts," said Dr Sufi in a press briefing at Nateshwar excavation site in Munshiganj's Tongibari upazila recently.

With support from the cultural affairs ministry and government's archaeology division, this excavation and research project is being supervised by Bikrampur Foundation. The work began in 2010.

Dr Sufi mentioned, "In the years 2013-18, over 5,000 square metres of land was discovered. Last year, we excavated ancient residential structures in Ballalbari." On the pyramid-like structure, Dr Sufi said, "This is a Buddhist stupa, akin to other stupas of this subcontinent such as Sanchi, Bharhut,

Amaravati etc."

"Preliminary excavation was done in nine sites in the years 2010-13. We discovered six rooms where monks once lived, one mandap (worship pavilion), and pentagonal stupa in Rampal union. In 2013 at Nateshwar's Deul area, we found a Buddhist temple, octagonal stupas, brick walkway and drains," he added.

Keeping in mind the huge scale and scope of the preservation work, Bikrampur Foundation partnered up with the Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology in China's Hunan province. "Through carbon dating, we have determined two timelines for the Buddhist residences - 780-950 AD for the first period and 950-1223 AD for the second," said Dr Sufi.

There is a temple made of brick, three octagonal stupas with mandap, 51-metre long brick roads, multiple rooms and hall rooms, and entryway. Before the rainy season hits in full swing, the archaeological sites will be specially protected to prevent water from getting in, said Dr Sufi. He also announced the end of this phase of the excavation for the year.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs, KM Khalid said at the briefing, "These archaeological treasures must be preserved. Detailed research efforts will reveal the correct history of this site to enrich Bengali culture."

Abdul Gani, a local teacher who visited the site, said, "This discovery has the potential to change the face of this area. These valuable artefacts must be protected at any cost."



## Non-govt college teachers demand MPO

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers who are imparting education at honours and master's level at non-government colleges staged a sit-in n front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday for the second day, demanding inclusion in the government's Monthly Pay Order (MPO) system.

Bangladesh Non-government College Honours-Master's Teachers Forum leaders said they will stage a hunger strike unto death from today in front of National University in Gazipur to expedite their one-point demand.

The forum's member secretary Mehrab Ali said the recently adopted MPO guideline does not have any scope for enlisting them.

"We will continue the movement until our demand is met," he said, adding, at least 3,500 teachers from 207 non-government colleges are deprived of MPO facilities. Teachers said they are passing their days in hardship.

## Govt has key role in ensuring early childhood development

Says Brac IED research

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lack of public knowledge, inequality and poverty remain challenges against early childhood development (ECD) in Bangladesh, a research unveiled yesterday.

Outlining a set of recommendations, the study said the government has a key role to play in supporting positive development in the context of urbanisation and technological advancement.

Brac Institute of Educational Development (Brac IED) and the Frameworks Institute (FWI), a Washington based nonprofit think tank, jointly conducted the study titled "Reframing Early Childhood Development (ECD) in Bangladesh".

The study was conducted in different districts including Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna and Sylhet.

The findings were presented in a workshop held at Brac Centre in Dhaka.

According to the report, some 16 ministries have functions in ECD sectors in accordance with the government's "Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Policy 2013" and "Strategic Operational and Implementation

Plan of Comprehensive ECCD Policy 2016".

The study reveals nine types of threatening factors including chronic stress, inadequate support for families, lack of standards for day care centres and pre-schools, inadequate services for marginalised population, environmental toxins, traditional gender roles, and loss of positive cultural practices.

The study placed a six-point proposal to improve ECD outcomes in Bangladesh which include - ECD education to five key categories of people (policymakers, teachers, religious leaders, parents, and health professionals); improved conditions for beneficiaries; use of science to spread policy information; attention to at-risk populations; better coordination of range of services and translation of policy into practices.

Md Gias Uddin Ahmed, additional secretary to the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education; Mohiuddin Ahmed, deputy director of Pre-primary Education under Directorate of Primary Education; Eric Lindland, senior research fellow of FWI; Ferdousi Khanom, senior research associate of Brac IED, and other experts also spoke at the programme.

## Ershad files GD seeking protection of properties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday filed a general diary with Banani Police Station, seeking protection of his properties as he has been unwell over the last several months.

"He [Ershad] filed the GD so that none can copy his signature to take hold of his properties in his absence," Ershad's Deputy Press Secretary Delwar Jalali told The Daily Star last night.

Banani Police Station Sub-Inspector Gulshan Ara Banu confirmed the matter to The Daily Star. The GD was filed around 2pm, he said.

Early this month, Ershad donated all his movable and immovable properties to a trust. The trustee board includes HM Ershad, his son Eric Ershad, Ershad's personal secretary Shamsuzzaman Mukul, cousin Md Jahangir, and Maj (ret'd) Khaled Akhtar.

His wife Raushan Ershad and brothers were left out of the trustee board.

In his 2018 wealth statement submitted to the Election Commission before the last national election, Ershad mentioned that his yearly income was Tk 1.08 crore. His main sources of income are shares of various companies, unspecified businesses, salaries from various companies, and honorariums.

Ershad's latest acquisitions are two flats in Gulshan and Banani, worth Tk 6.2 crore and Tk 4.9 crore respectively.

## PROTESTING BUS DRIVER'S DEATH

# Transport workers go on strike in Ctg, Rangpur

STAR REPORT

Transport workers are enforcing a strike in Chattogram and Rangpur protesting the death of a bus driver.

A 24-hour-long strike started in Chattogram from 6:00pm yesterday while all the eight districts in Rangpur division would face an indefinite strike from 6:00am today.

Meanwhile, a murder case was filed with Karnaphuli Police Station against 10 to 12 unidentified persons in connection with the driver's death.

On Tuesday, a bus driver was beaten to death by a group of people who claimed to be detectives in Patiya upazila of Chattogram.

The victim's brother filed the case yesterday, Md Alamgir, officer-in-charge of Karnaphuli Police Station, said.

"We have talked to locals and are trying to gather information," he added.

Meanwhile, Jahedul Islam, assistant commissioner (Karnaphuli zone), told The Daily Star, "The case will be investigated by Counter Terrorism Unit of Chattogram Metropolitan Police as it is sensitive."

The dead, Jalaluddin, 55, was a driver of a Shyamoli Paribahan NR Travels bus, said Azim Uddin, supervisor of the bus and also witness of the incident.

The incident took place between Shantir Hat and Shikabaha areas on Chattogram-Cox's Bazar highway around 11:45pm. "A group of eight to 10 people,

introducing themselves as DB men, intercepted the bus. They were not wearing any uniforms or jackets but were carrying firearms," claimed Azim.

The bus was heading towards Gazipur's Chandra from Cox's Bazar via Chattogram.

He said they started to search the vehicle and at one point, handcuffed Jalal saying he was smuggling yaba, and then took him off the bus and started beating him.

"After 10 to 12 minutes, they brought him inside and asked where the pills were," Azim added.

Jalal was taken out, beaten again and left unconscious after he denied the allegation of smuggling drugs, Azim further alleged. Jalal died at Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

The detective branches of both the district police and Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) denied the allegation, claiming no drive was carried out in Patiya.

Officials of CMP and district police have already visited the spot.

Seeking anonymity, a police official, who visited the spot, told The Daily Star yesterday, "Police have talked to several persons and collected CCTV footage from the toll plaza of Shah Amanat Bridge in Karnaphuli area.

"Police have found presence of law enforcement agency personnel in the area," added the official.

"In CCTV footage, five vehicles including a car and two SUVs of a law

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Bangladesh Navy Chief Admiral Aurangzeb Chowdhury pays a courtesy call on China Navy Chief Vice Admiral Shen Jinlong at Qingdao city on Tuesday. The Bangladesh navy chief is visiting China on the occasion of its navy's 70th anniversary.

PHOTO: ISPR

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department

Office of the Executive Engineer

District: Gazipur

www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No: 46.02.3300.000.07.020.19-986

Date: 24/04/2019

## e-Tender Notice No: 33/2018-19

e-Tenders are invited on the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following work under Gazipur District.

Sl No.	Tender ID & Package No.	Name of work	Tendering method	Tender published and last selling date
01	309388 & GDP-3/Gaz-43	Improvement of Sakashor-Akulichala Road (Sakashor Konabari GC-Akulichala Road) at Ch. 00-1000m under Union: Moddhopara, Upazila: Kaliakoir, District: Gazipur (Road ID No. 333325076)	(LTM)	25-04-2019 & 12-05-2019
02	300691 & Gaz/VRP/18-19/W-09	Rehabilitation of Pubail ferry ghat-Nagari Road from Ch. 00m-800m under Union Nagori Upazila Kaliganj District Gazipur (ID No. 333344002) [Salvage Cost Tk. 98660.00] (ninety eight thousand six hundred sixty taka) only.		
03	309387 & GDP-3/Gaz-42	(a) Improvement of Kawraid UPC-Lalpokure Bazar via Simultoly Bazar Road at Ch. 2500-4600m under Union: Kawraid, Upazila: Sreepur, District: Gazipur (Road ID No. 333863022) [Salvage Cost Tk. 33367.00] (thirty-three thousand & three hundred sixty-seven taka) only. (b) Improvement of Kawraid UPC-Lalpokure Bazar via Simultoly Bazar Road at Ch. 4600-6400m & 7400-7620m under Union: Kawraid, Upazila: Sreepur, District: Gazipur (Road ID No. 333863022) [Salvage Cost Tk. 787530.00] (seven lakh eighty-seven thousand & five hundred thirty taka) only.	(OSTETM)	25-04-2019 & 26-05-2019
04	309389 & GDP-3/Gaz-44	(a) Improvement of Bormi UPC (PUC)-Bauni Bazar Road at Ch. 5525-7575m under Union: Urme/Goshinga, Upazila: Sreepur, District: Gazipur (Road ID No. 333863005) [Salvage Cost Tk. 1,89,988.00] (one lakh eighty-nine thousand & nine hundred eighty-eight taka only) (b) Improvement of Goshinga-Savarchala (P/School) Road at Ch. 00-1000m under Union: Goshinga, Upazila: Sreepur, District: Gazipur (Road ID No. 333865121)		

This is online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branch.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)) (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

**Md. Amirul Islam Khan**

Executive Engineer

LGED, Gazipur

Phone: 9263989, Fax: 9264128

Email: [xen.gazipur@lged.gov.bd](mailto:xen.gazipur@lged.gov.bd)

GD-751