

Archaeological Site Museums of Bangladesh: Their Role and Importance in the Site Preservation and Presentation of Moveable National Heritage

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ABSTRACT

Bangladesh is very rich in its archaeological wealth of both the pre-Muslim and Muslim periods. But due importance was not given to archaeological investigation and research this area for a long time due to several causes. After the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, scenario is being gradually changed. The Government established a full-fledged department immediate after liberation with its head office in Dhaka. In 1983, the Department of Archaeology was reorganized and 4 regional offices were set up in then 4 divisional headquarters. So, the archaeological activities of the country like exploration and excavation of heritage sites and preservation and presentation got a new momentum. The oldest archaeological museums, mainly site museums, have been developed and some new museums have been established at various places like Khulna, Bagerhat. In the entire department are now running 16 museums including one Ethnological Museum in Chittagong. In these museum houses most of the important antiquities recovered from different archeological site through excavations like bronze images, stone sculptures, terracottas and coins are preserved. Mention may be made of the giant Vajrasatta from Comilla, Bronze Buddha from Paharpur etc. These museums are playing an important role in the protection and presentation of moveable cultural heritage of the country. Therefore, these museums open the opportunity among the researchers and the mass people to observe the cultural and national heritage of Bangladesh under an umbrella. In fact, archaeological museums have already become one of the nerve centers of contemporary socioeconomic and cultural activities of Bangladesh. Indeed, the importance of archaeological museums is realized as the fountain of national inspiration which makes the healthy nation. However, these museums require sustainable and effective management in order to make the visitors understand the history of the country and the cultural sequence and also to raise public awareness towards the preservation of this invaluable heritage of the country. An attempt has been made to discuss the role of archaeological site museums in the protection, preservation and presentation of national heritage of Bangladesh.

Keywords: Archaeological site museums, moveable national heritage, site preservation