

Representation of ‘Struggle for freedom and human rights’ in the Liberation War Museum of Bangladesh

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The Liberation War Museum Bangladesh was established in 1993 through a private initiation in a colonial period two-storied house. The original museum consisted of six galleries with almost 13,000 objects. In 2017 the museum was shifted to the newly constructed building along with a collection of 21,000 objects. The collection mainly consists of archival materials, photographs, personal belongings of the martyrs (clothing diary, letters, watch, specs, and car) weapons, wireless radio, warplane, helicopters, etc. The present collection is displayed in four permanent galleries.

The main objective of the museum is to present different events concerning the political, social-cultural and economic rights of people of then East Pakistan, and how East Pakistani people upheld and maintained the ideology of a syncretistic pluralistic society in which people of different ethnic groups and religion can cohabit with equal rights. The museum talks about the bravery of both men and women of all tiers and ages who directly or indirectly took part in this war and the making of the ‘Freedom Fighters’. The independence war of Bangladesh is hence known as the ‘People’s War’.

The museum illustrates both atrocity and violence in one hand and the empathy and support of mankind on the other hand. The museum linked the events with contemporary pressing social and humanitarian issues. The research will enquire and evaluate how the museum galleries narrate the story of the war along with the rich cultural heritage of Bangladesh, how different events and sensitive issues of the war were dealt or highlighted for museum audiences of all groups starting from primary school levels. How the remnants and events of the war (skeletons, skulls, arms weapons) were reflected through photographs, dioramas, and replicas. Furthermore, the display galleries reflect the ideology of a pluralist society where communal harmony will exist forever.

Keywords: *Liberation war, East Pakistan, Freedom Fighter, People’s war, Plurality, Syncretism, Communal harmony*