

BANGLADESH

1.1 Introduction

Year of ratification 1983

Organisation submitting the report

- Department of Archaeology (DoA)
22/1 Block B, Babar Road
Mohammadpur, Dhaka 1207
Bangladesh

1.2 Identification of cultural and natural heritage properties

The status of national inventories

- 345 cultural properties protected under the Antiquities Act, 1976. There are routine reviews of the list. The 1975 national inventory was revised in 2002.
- 14 natural sites are protected under the bio-diversity conservation and development policy of the Ministry of Forest & Environment.

The preparation of a Tentative List

- * 5 sites, revised in 1999.
- Revisions have been initiated within the DoA. Local authorities and local populations are involved.

Nominations and the nomination process

- 1985 1 nomination (inscribed)
(a) Historic Mosque City of Bagerhat
- 1985 1 nomination (inscribed)
(a) Ruins of the Buddhist Vihara at Paharpur
- 1987* 5 nominations
(a) Lalbagh Fort
(b) Chkota Sona Masjid
(c) Bagha Mosque
(d) Kantanagar Temple
(e) Punthia Group of Temples.
- 1997 1 nomination (inscribed)
(a) 'Sundarbans'
- 1997 2 nominations not on the Tentative List
(a) Mahasthangarh and its Environs
(b) Lalmai-Mainamati Group of Monuments
- Nominations are discussed informally with local authorities and communities.
- Nominations are considered as a way of raising international awareness and mobilising resources. Provision of adequate maps is seen as the main difficulty in the nomination process.

1.3 Protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage

Integration of heritage and planning

- Since 1987 projects for the protection of the WH Sites at Paharpur and Bagerhat have been treated as part of national comprehensive planning programmes.
- It is proposed that the Government should purchase threatened heritage in private ownership.

Participation of local communities

- Communities are encouraged to participate through involvement in meetings & consultations.
- No private sector involvement.

Tourism Development

- Admission charging and infrastructure improvements at the 2 cultural WH Sites are in place.

Financial measures and budget allowance

- DoA has an annual revenue budget of US\$170,000 and the development project has an annual budget of US\$690,000.

Professional

- DoA employs 450 regular staff and 47 project staff.
- There is one archaeology degree course, but most DoA staff are trained in-the-field.
- Training needs are identified in most disciplines of architectural and materials conservation.

New and improved services

- More sites are protected every year and the archaeological survey of the country is ongoing.
- Development projects have concentrated on Paharpur and Bagerhat. Museums have been established in Paharpur, Bagerhat and Khulna.

Issues to be addressed

- There is a need to strengthen the involvement of archaeologists in development projects, which include a conservation element.
- Engineers need practical training in conservation.
- The Antiquities Act, 1976, Archaeological Works Code, 1938, and Immovable Antiquities Preservation Rules, 1976, are all outdated and in need of revision.

1.4 International co-operation and fund raising

National and International Fund Raising

- Support from the Governments of Japan and Norway is acknowledged.
- * International Assistance from the WHF as follows:
1985 \$2,700 Training, Stonework conservation
1986 \$20,000 Technical, Drainage at Paharpur

1998 \$14,999 Preparatory, Nominations revision

1999 \$5,000 Promotional, WH Convention

- * Extra-budgetary funds mobilised by the UNESCO Division of Cultural Heritage include:

US\$13,171 Preservation, conservation at Paharpur (Voluntary contributions from the International Safeguarding Campaign)

US\$305,000 Conservation, preservation at Paharpur (Japan)

1992-97 US\$226,100 Conservation: Bagerhat (Japan)

1.5 Education, information and awareness-building

Information and awareness measures

- DoA promotes public awareness through its publications and information activities.
- TV, cinema & postal authorities have collaborated to promote heritage properties.

1.6 Conclusions and recommended actions

Conclusions and proposed actions

- Progress has been made in extending protection to cultural and natural properties.
- The Government is pursuing further nominations.
- “In order to execute conservation work properly, co-ordination between engineers and archaeologists needs to be increased”.
- There remain many specific needs at Paharpur and Bagerhat to be addressed in the period 2003-07.
- The DoA seeks the support of the WH Fund for: (i) training; (ii) site storage and securing boundaries; (iii) conservation of historic fabric.