



Chittagong University Museum

A place of pleasure and pleasurable learning...



University of Chittagong

Chittagong-4331, Bangladesh.



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University of Chittagong



Message of the Vice-Chancellor and Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Museums are storehouses of multidisciplinary knowledge, which can play a vital role in the era of new media to discover how history functions in society. Today, more than ever, we must realize the usefulness of a museum on wider terms. Visiting a museum develops an enlightened understanding of our present, through a better knowledge of the past. Thus both literate and illiterate people can be benefited by the visual education.

The history of The Chittagong University Museum goes back to 1973, when the University was newly founded. The CU Museum is the first and only University Museum in Bangladesh till now. The existence of our museum in the university campus is really supporting history education in conjunction with entertainment. Moreover, this museum has also become an archeological and historical research centre in this region.

I confidently hope that this brochure depicting a fairly accurate picture of our museum, would be a useful resource for the professionals as well as the general public as a reference guide. I'm sure, not only the scholars, researchers and students of particular subject but also the scholars of other discipline will be significantly benefited using this brochure.

Professor Dr. Iftekhar Uddin Chowdhury

Vice Chancellor, University of Chittagong
and Chairman, Board of Trustees, Chittagong University Museum



A colorful Tapestry art woven by Rashid Chowdhury, the pioneer and renowned tapestry artist in this subcontinent .



University of Chittagong

Message of the Director of CU Museum

The mission of the University of Chittagong Museum (CU Museum) is to collect, preserve, study, exhibit, and thus stimulate appreciation for and advancement of knowledge of works of art that collectively represent the broader spectrum of human achievement at the highest level of quality. All these activities are done in accordance with the highest professional standards and aim to serve the public in general and the academics in particular.

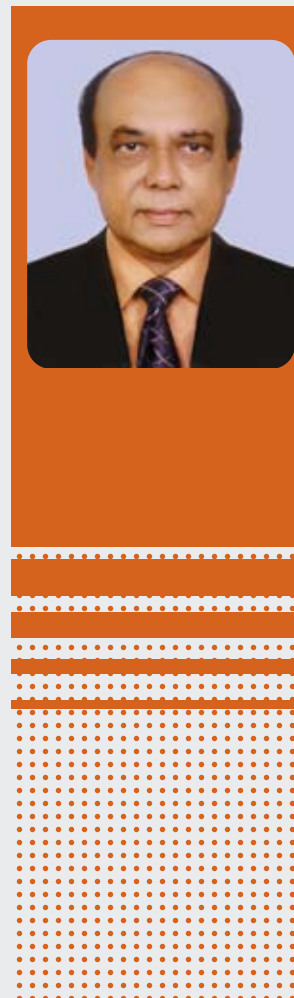
The CU Museum as an effective source of visual education and aesthetic pleasure has, over the years, turned into a bridge between the University and the public. The museum is now quite well organized and in addition to regular exhibits, we always arrange special exhibitions which attract hundreds of visitors who come for the pleasure of history and heritage.

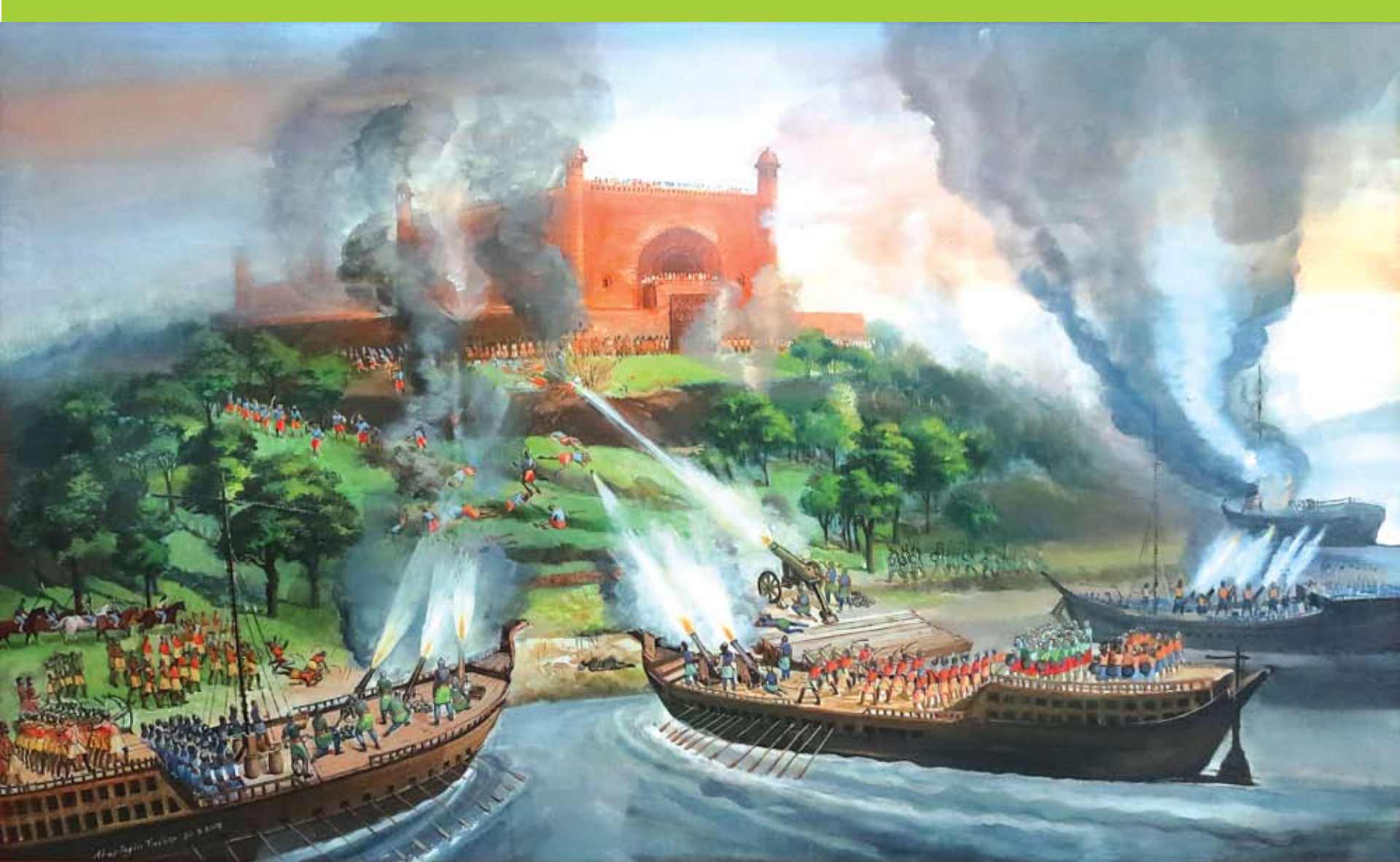
This brochure published for commemorating the 42nd anniversary of the CU Museum, highlights the origin, growth and development of the CU Museum with an updated account of text and photos till 2015. The publication of this brochure is an initiative to bring the whole picture of the CU Museum to a greater audience. We are pleased that we have been able to bring out this brochure which will be a source of inspiration for our present and future generation who, we hope, will be motivated to work using these materials for future progress.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the members of the publication team who supported me by working day and night for gathering the information about CU Museum for this brochure.

Professor Dr. Emran Hossain

Director,
Chittagong University Museum, University of Chittagong





A historical painting in acrylic by Alaptagin Tushar, depicted on the "War of Karnafuli" was held on 26th January 1666 between Arakanese Troop and Mughal Navy.



Chittagong University Museum:

"A place of pleasure and pleasurable learning"

The consolidation of nationhood, which is the prime factor and pre-condition for all sorts of development activities, the healthy growth of a spirit of harmony, national regeneration and intellectual awakening, can be best achieved through the visual confrontation of treasures from the past which must have an effective link with the present, because past is the foundation of present and inspiration for future. A museum enables people to explore evidence collections of the glorious past for inspiration, learning and enjoyment.

Chittagong, an ancient seaport with a natural harbour in Asia, has an enriched history as a gateway to Bengal with over a thousand years of heritage. The region was part of the ancient Bengali kingdoms of Harikela, Samatata and Srihatta Mandalas from the 7th century AD/CE onwards. Numerous rulers periodically occupied this region and thus it flourished with diverse cultural influence. Conservation of cultural heritage is a prime responsibility of the government and other pertinent public-private organizations. But, the state-sponsored conservation work in this region is too neglected and accordingly, the eastern part of this country has barely witnessed establishment of any historical and archeological museums before the inception of Chittagong University Museum. Apart from this, the considerations of great antiquity of Chittagong and the academic and social obligation of the university, has aroused the need for a museum.



The University of Chittagong [CU], a multidisciplinary, research-oriented public university, took the responsibility of this historic region by founding its own academic museum. As an academic museum, the Chittagong University Museum accelerates advanced learning by the provision of materials and facilities for research. It also aims to stimulate public interest and encourages understanding and appreciation of the history, archaeology, anthropology and art heritage of Bangladesh. The museum is administrated by a Board of Trustees. The board of trustees believes that it will serve as a “place of pleasure and pleasurable learning”.

The major objectives of the museum can be summarised as follows:

- > Collecting, classifying and preserving a large variety of artistic, archeological, historical, anthropological and cultural objects with trust on behalf of the society and community.
- > Making these materials accessible for research and education, share and interpret information that is related to collections and reflecting diverse views and observation.
- > Organising exhibitions of the collections to focus publicly.
- > Publication of the materials including databases.
- > Organising different type of programmes related to museum and society.
- > Consult and its involvements to the people and their communities.
- > Review of performances for innovation and its improvement.
- > Encourage people to explore and revealing collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment purposes.

Currently, the museum has become a centre of excellence in the university campus by establishing pleasurable learning experiences and creating an academic atmosphere through exhibitions, seminars, research and publications as a tool of visual education and entertainment. It is a great pride for us all.

■ History of Establishment:

The Chittagong University Museum was established on 14 June 1973 at the initiative of the Chittagong University Authority. Though the Chittagong University Museum was officially opened on that day but its founding process actually initiates on 26 November 1966, also the day in which CU started its journey. The idea of a museum inadvertently emerged from an exhibition where some 24 objects of antiquity were displayed to mark the university's inauguration. Mr. Mumtaz Hasan, president of the Museum Association of Pakistan and the then Managing Director of the National Bank of Pakistan, donated those items to the university. Renowned historian and antiquarian Prof Azizur Rahaman Mallick (1918-97), the first Vice Chancellor (VC) of CU, conceived the idea and actively initiated the collections along with eminent historian and supernumerary professor Dr Abdul Karim, also a former CU VC and Head of the Department of History. It is learnt that Prof Mallick was behind the bringing of Varendra Research Museum under the Rajshahi University in 1964. He was also the honorary curator of the Varendra Research Museum. The other objects were collected through a joint field survey conducted by the teachers and students of the Department of History at CU. Shamsul Hossain, one of the students of the first batch of the department and also the first curatorial founding staff of the Chittagong University Museum, was a member of the survey team led by Prof Dr Abdul Karim.

In the beginning the Chittagong University Museum started its operation and activity at a small room on the first floor of the Arts Faculty building with the 30 pieces of antiquities from the Department of History. Thereafter, it was housed in two rooms on the ground floor of the same building. Later the museum was shifted to the Kala Bhaban (current Zilla Shilpakala Academy building) at Mohammed Ali road in Chittagong.



CU Museum has functioned since 1977 to 1988 in the Kala Bhaban (current Zilla Shilpakala Academy) at Mohammed Ali road, Mahedibag, Chittagong.

Before final settlement at the present site, it was relocated on the 3rd floor of the AR Mallick Bhaban (the then Central Library building) on CU campus in 1988. The long cherished dream came true through re-shifting of the museum collections and exhibits at a permanent place (the present location) on CU campus in 1992.

The museum reached the feat finally in course of time. Duly, those who contributed with their priceless efforts in various ways to help the age-old museum gain the current shape can never be forgotten. They are — Mr. Nurul Quader Khan, Ex-Addl. Deputy Commissioner of Rajshahi, Mr. Muhiuddin Hossain of Mirsari, Chittagong. Mr. A. Z. M. Obaidullah Khan, the then Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong, Professor M. Aziz Khan, Professor Abul Fazal, Professor Anisuzzaman, Professor Muhammad Yunus, Professor A. M. Serajuddin, Professor Mokaddesur Rahman, Professor M. A. Khan, Professor M. A. Ghafur, Professor Murtaja Baseer, Professor R. I. Chowdhury, Dr. Nazimuddin Ahmed, Professor Rashid Chowdhury, Dr. Harun-ur-Rashid, Dr. Abdus Sayed, Professor Abdul Mannan, Dr. Ranjit Sarma, Dr. Buiyan Ikbāl, Dr. Emran Hossain, Professor Masud Mahmud, Professor Abul Monsoor, Professor Jamal Nazrul Islam and Professor Moinul Islam.

The museum now is engaged with many national and international organisations that donate objects of antiquity, financial assistance and other elevate supports. Bangladesh National Museum, Directorate of Archeology, Varendra Research Museum, British Museum, Fort foundation, The Daily Star and Heritage Chattigrama are some of organisations, to which we express our profound gratitude, never-ending respect and heartfelt thanks and gratitude.



■ Museum Location and facilities :

The Chittagong University campus is 22 kms north of the Chittagong city. Western side to the Hathazari road and Fathiabad railway station, over 1754-acre [7.10 square km] area occupies the campus surrounded by hills, and covered by forest, which very much fascinating to visitors from home and abroad. The campus looks like a natural museum (open-air museum). The three-storey Library and Museum building is located at the Centre of C.U. campus and stands at the foot of a hill facing the South. The CU library occupies largest portion of the building and its entrance is south-faced whereas, the museum entrance is at the west side of the building and it occupies 20,000 sq ft.

The first floor of the museum houses five permanent exhibition galleries, as follows :

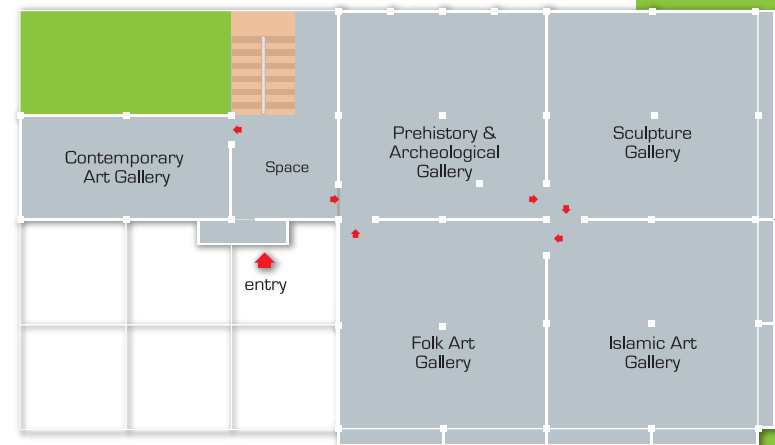
- 1) Pre-History and Archeological Gallery
- 2) Sculpture Gallery
- 3) Islamic Art Gallery
- 4) Folk Art Gallery and
- 5) Contemporary Art Gallery

On the other hand,
the ground floor consists of the following facilities and services :

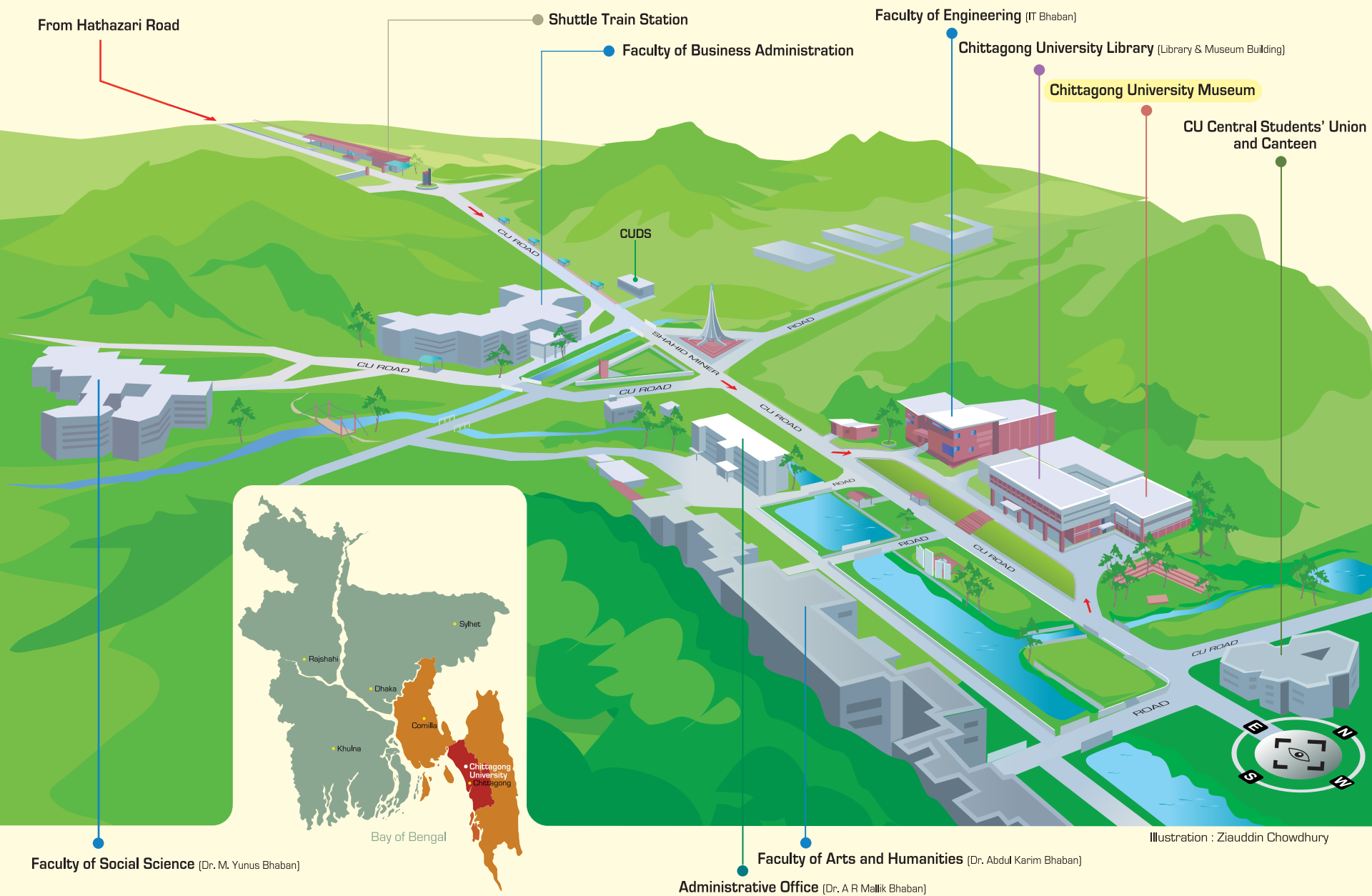
- 1) Abdul Karim Sahityavisharad Kosh Granthagar
(Abdul Karim Reference Library)
- 2) Conservation Laboratory
- 3) Lobby-cum-space for special exhibitions, seminars and workshops
- 4) Documentation and research service centre
- 5) and the Museum Stores and Offices.

It's also facilitates:

An open-air stage (Mukta Mancha), Thematic gardens, museum yard and spacious parking lot complete the Chittagong University Museum's premises.



Chittagong University Museum Gallery Diagram



Chittagong University Museum location and university campus map

The surroundings of the museum building are thoughtfully laid with large trees and flower beds. More than 200 indigenous and exotic tree species have been planted on the museum premises. The university campus also holds diverse species of flora and fauna.

A thematic garden styled “Ekushey Chattar” consists of 21 trees of different varieties including Bleeding Heart, Birds of Paradise, Naglingam [Cannon balt], Agar [Aquillaria agallocha], Mahua [Butter tree], Raktan [Liphopetalum fimbriatum], Gutgutia [Bursera serrate], Arjun [White murdah], Bakul [Indian meddler], Debdaru [Mast tree], Kadam [Kadamba], Krishna Chura, Jarul [Queen Flower] and Sonalu [Cassia fistula].

Many scholars and eminent personalities from home and abroad visited the CU museum and have planted their memorial trees around the garden. The nameplates are also arranged chronologically under the memorial trees.

The open-air stage [Mukta Mancha] has a beautiful spectator-gallery. Under the large tree-shades various cultural programmes are held regularly. The audience comprising of thousands of students, teachers and staffs turn the museum campus into a ever-known scenario of vibrant and glittering chaos.



Jarul [Queen flower]



Naglingam[Cannon Balt] flower



A panoramic view of the Chittagong University Museum and the open-air stage

■ Visiting hour & other facilities :

With free of cost entrance, the museum opens for general visitors every day at 9:00 am and closes at 1:30 pm while students, teachers and researchers may get there at 8:00 am and depart at 2:00 pm apart from official vacation and holidays.

Reading and studying spaces are available at the reference library located inside the museum (on the ground floor). Only listed members can use the museum objects and archival materials. Any body can be a CU museum member by filling up an application form with detail identity documents. The application form is available in office as well as on to the website (www.cum.org.bd) of the museum.

Every single day various transports, including the CU teachers and staff busses from and to the university campus move frequently. Besides, a shuttle train, the lone of its kind in the country, hits the rail-track between Chittagong city and the university campus; facilitating thousands of its students enjoy a nice ride.

However, food and beverage are also available from the dawn to the very late hours here on the campus. Most of the university's eateries, restaurants and canteens are easy to access and open for all.



Shuttle train, the lone of its kind in the country, hits the rail-track between Chittagong city and the CU campus.



■ Significant collections of the museum :

The collection of the museum contains raw source of history and culture of Bangladesh. As a nation grows, it is bound to review its past to see what past of its legacy is relevant, to an inhibiting factor and for growth. The artistry and heritage of Bangladesh have periodically been enriched by the ethnic diversity of demographic varieties settling this region in the form of its historical evolution. The cultural plurality is manifesting the form of material and non-material properties. This region was the frontier zone and a major maritime port of the subcontinent, has always been an ideal place of cultural confluence.

The exhibits described and documented in this museum have been carefully chosen from numerous antiquities found in and around greater Chittagong and several parts of the country, which encompasses more than two thousand years of history. The number of artifacts collected in this museum is not very big, but in spite of the small number, scholars and connoisseurs may find these to be valued treasure. According to acquisition register, a number of objects of antiquities are nearly 2,000 pieces. Those objects include ancient and medieval coins (gold, silver, copper), Bengal sculptures (stone, bronze, wood), epigraphs, inscriptions, manuscripts, wood works, terracotta, arm and armaments, textiles, metalwork, metal ware, porcelain, jewelry, minor art and contemporary art of Bangladesh.

Collection of Pre-History, Archeology -

Discovering prehistoric material evidence in this region is very meager and that is why the phase is sunk in obscurity. The local hills bear dimly exposed prehistoric evidences of the region. The museum received a gift of a fish fossil found on Nasiarabad hills in Chittagong, which may facilitate study of the natural history of this area. There are also a number of outstanding wooden fossils in collection.

The ancient sites in Bengal are replete with small figurative sculptures, mostly made of clay. They represent animal and human forms. At a subsequent stage the interior and exterior of the temples were also richly decorated with sculptured terracotta.

Mainamati, being the major archeological site in Chittagong division, secures a position of great prominence in our collection, as it is included in the academic territory of this University. Other than 51 objects of antiquities of Mainamati that were borrowed from the director of Archaeology and Museum, Government of Bangladesh, by Chittagong University Museum, it still has some other Mainamati collections. The objects from Mahasthangahr and Paharpur archeological sites also belong to the museum currently. The punch-marked coins found in various parts of Bangladesh and terracotta plaques from Paharpur, Bogra being the oldest objects of antiquity. Some octo-alloy bracelets were found in Mahasthangahr. Prehistory and Archeology gallery exposes a number of terracotta plaques, metal images, ornamental bricks, clay votive stupas, seals and sealing, beads and pottery-like oil lamps with its stands.

At the corner of the gallery, a diorama of primitive life is on display, which illustrates artist conception that focuses a family in Sitakunda hill area.



Earthen oil lamp with its stand found in Mainamati



Terracotta plaque from Mainamati

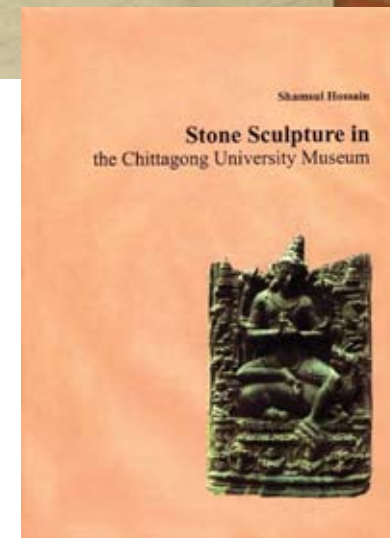


Collection of Bengal Sculptures -

Sculptures are most valuable objects in a gallery of a museum as a visual representation of the glorious past. They carry a great deal of social-cultural evidences from the days gone by with them. CU Museum has 52 stone and 25 bronze sculptures in its collection. A large portion of this collection has come as antiquities confiscated by the country's customs and police authorities. The black basalt stone and metal sculptures depict diverse religious belief. Most of them belong to Hindu cults of "Pala-Sen" (AD 800 to AD 1200) dynasty. One Surya image of this collection shows Gupta influence. These Brahmanical and Buddhist iconography constitute belief, attitude, implement, style in textile, ornament and coiffure and other ideas from antiquity. The stone sculptures are in the gallery with a chronological order as Vaisnava, Saiva, Saura, Sakta, and Ganapatya respectively. These images significantly bear the skill of the sculptors, the urge of the patrons and the devotion of their keepers. The send stone sculpture Garudarudha Visnu of 9th century AD found in Mirsarai, Chittagong is an oldest cult.

In addition, wooden and metal sculptures are also carrying the fruits of aesthetic impulse of the artists that fascinates to visitors as well as scholars.

We have published a descriptive catalogue on the stone sculptures prepared in 2011 by Dr Samsul Hossain, former deputy curator of the CU museum. It is one of the existing research works of the Iconography of the Bengal sculptures.



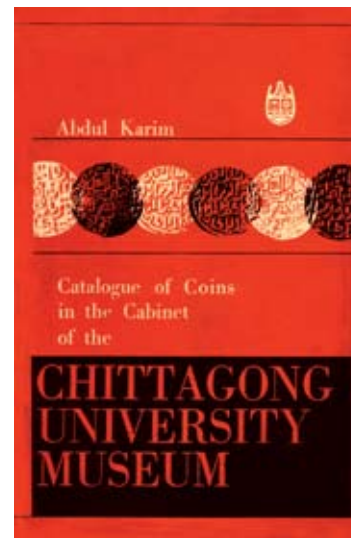
The descriptive catalogue "Stone Sculpture in the Chittagong University Museum" prepared by Dr. Samsul Hossain, former deputy curator of CU museum in 2011.

Collection of Ancient and Medieval Coins-

Numismatic objects constitute the major part of the total collection in any museum, big or small. In fact, coins constitute important source materials for reconstruction of the history, particularly in Bengal. Besides, coins reflect to a great extent the prosperity or otherwise of a state's trade, industry and commerce, and also its relations with other states.

The Chittagong University Museum has procured a fairly good number of the ancient and medieval coins — about one thousand silver and copper coins, brass seals and medals. More than half of the coins belong to the Sultans of Bengal and Mughal emperors. Among the total collection, coins of the Harikela Kingdom, tri-lingual coins of Arakanese king, coins of Tippera king and Punch mark coins are remarkable and significant in the regional context. Furthermore, a small collection of gold coin consists of three coins of Islamic period, nine coins of Gupta period and one punch marked coin. One of the gold coins was issued in Hijri 77/AD 696 by Abdul Malik bin Marwan, an Umayyad Caliph, which was found in Hajiganj of Chandpur.

We also have a separate publication on the collected coins up to 1979 titled "Catalogue of Coins in our Cabinet of the CHITTAGONG UNIVERSITY MUSEUM" prepared by eminent historian and numismatist Professor Dr. Abdul Karim.



A separate catalogue on coins titled "Catalogue of Coins in the cabinet of the Chittagong University Museum" prepared by professor Abdul Karim.



Coin of Harikela Kingdom



Gupta Imitation Gold Coin



Coin of Arakanese King

Collection of Islamic Art, arms and armaments-

Islamic Art portrays the artistic creation of Islamic culture. Mosques and other monuments' decoration with terracotta architectural ornaments had continued during the Muslim rule in Bengal. A collection of unearthed sand stone architectural members such as pier, base stone, lintel, capital, turret, miharab, inscription and terracotta embellishments are mentionable. Five stone inscriptions constitute our collection of epigraphs. These materials and inscriptions illustrate the architectural style of the Sultanate and the Mughal periods.

The arms and armament collection in this museum are only 21 in number. Cannons played an important role in medieval warfare. Chittagong University Museum own one precious inscribed brass/bronze cannon of Shah Jahan. A fortunate stroke of serendipity was favoured by getting it through Karimunnesa Begum of Chittagong, a wife of Mughal officer. Other inscribed Bengal cannon marked with two fish symbols; one iron naval cannon and several medieval swords, and shields are also exclusive among the collections.

Various types of Arabic calligraphy, hand written copy of the Holy Quran, medieval literature (Puthi) and photographs of the country's historical Mosques are also placed in the gallery.



Medieval Arms and armaments



"Cannon of Shah Jahan" a precious inscribed bronze cannon.

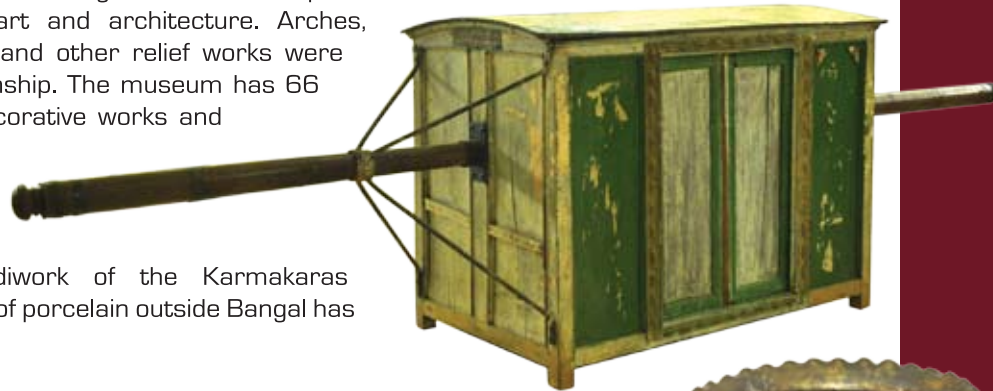
Collection of Minor and Folk arts, Textiles -

Traditional folk artisans of Bangladesh have laid their great contributions and skills to this art in different mediums. And, they have also the importance of the cultural, social and ritual background, which is closely associated with every aspect of such findings, and it continues to be an integral part of the country since its early period. The fascinating and traditional painted pottery both – the ritual and secular viz. different kind of small pottery as well as painted terracotta toys & dolls is a conspicuous feature of folk art in Bangladesh. Clay or terracotta cult-figurines and the toys are designed for only temporary use- in seasonal festivals, domestic rites or children's play. Readily accessible materials such as clay, wood, paper, straw, jute, cloth, and cane are thus manipulated with swift dexterity in age-old forms. This museum has gathered a remarkable collection of dolls, toys, images, vessels and embroidered hand-fans from Chittagong through a survey scheme.

Wood, the natural building medium of the region, was also adapted to the requirements of decorative art and architecture. Arches, columns, lintels, pilasters, images and other relief works were carved in wood with fine craftsmanship. The museum has 66 pieces of wooden architectural decorative works and images.

Chittagong University Museum has a small collection of alloy ornaments what reflects high handiwork of the Karmakaras [blacksmith]. The modest collection of porcelain outside Bangal has been gained.

The tradition of folk art has bloomed in such a region with a pure indigenous artistic impact and quality that is closely associated with the earth & environment, mind and memory of the traditional artisan groups of all. In that respect, it is a huge accumulation of household utensils made of brass, copper and aluminum. Baskets made of cane; inscription of the old Bangla script, tribal ornaments, metal ware, pati (mat), Nakshi Kantha (embroidered quilt) water pot, palanquin, lanterns, Hukka (tobacco pipe), chest, mask, bow, tambourine etc. have been showcased in the folk art gallery. Hand-woven textile machine and gramophone have recently been added.



Collection of Contemporary Art -

It explores the world of art of Bangladeshi artists. Bangladesh possesses a very rich tradition and trend in the traditional art as well as in the contemporary modern art. The artwork of the country can be classified mainly in three to four categories i.e. realistic, semi-abstract and the stylized way of expression. The works of local artists are imbued with deep social content and passion in the trend of contemporary modern art. It is no wonder that eminent figures like Zainul Abedin, Rashid Chowdhury, Qumrul Hasan, Murtaza Bashir and some others are followed by a galaxy of equally bright talents who have gained much fame, popularity and recognition as Bangladeshi artists. Their works go in the line with the standard of the trend of the World Contemporary Art. Interestingly enough, we do have the collection of artworks from those prominent artists.



Zainul Abedin was not only a pioneer artist, but also established art education in Bangladesh. Zainul's work as remarkable creation in the drawing-based work, and so on also brought more respect on the work embodying boldness, perfection, free and very swift handling of both brush and pen. We managed to collect one of his paintings "Manpura" that illustrates the characteristics of his artistic style.

If one attempts to evaluate contributions in the field of establishing art institutes, and inspiring art movements in this country, the most prominent name after Zainul Abedin would undoubtedly be that of Rashid Chowdhury. Not only across the country, but also he is well-known as the pioneer and greatest tapestry artist in the subcontinent. Being an avant-garde artist, he established higher education in fine arts in Bangladesh by opening the department of fine arts at Chittagong University. The museum currently has two large tapestries and one oil painting of the veteran artist.

In the field of sculptural work, the name of Syed Abudullah Khalid is noteworthy. We consider ourselves lucky enough that his sculpture "Bust of Abul Fazal" is in our collection. The collection of artworks in the gallery is in various media like oil painting, acrylic, water colour, print making, pen-sketch, sculpture and porcelain. Other than that, a number of works of distinguished artists, among others, Qumrul Hasan, Md. Kibria, Murtaza Bashir, Chandra Shekar, Nitun Kunda, Monsurul Karim, Hasi Cakrabarti, Ansar Ali, Mohammed Yunus, Shafiquel Islam, Saiful Kabir and Jahed Ali Chowdhury are on display in the museum.

There is also a 104-foot long and four-foot wide mural painting styled 'Abahoman Bangla Bangalee' which separated in 11 sections. A group of artists has depicted this large mural painting based on the country's Liberation War and exhibited it in the showcasing of Kolkata of India and in that of Chittagong, Bangladesh back in 1972.

■ Abdul Karim Sahityavisharad Reference Library :

A good reference library is an essential adjunct to any research institution and more so for a museum which will cater for research activities. The museum maintains a well-equipped reference library for study and identification of the works of art and objects of antiquities that would come into the fold of its collection. This collection also promotes and encourages the study of Bengal History and Culture. The reference library called “Abdul Karim Sahityavisharad Kosh Granthagar (Abdul Karim Reference Library)”, a tribute to the ardent “Puthi[medieval Bangla literature]” collector Abdul Karim. The library is enriched with over 4,000 books and 2,000 precious documents. The collection of books on particular subjects like Religion and philosophy, Numismatics, Epigraphy, Folk art and Craft, Anthropology, Ethnology, Paleography, Geography and Geology, History, Archeology, Fine arts, Architecture, Museology, Iconography, Minor arts, Musicology and Dance, Sociology and Cultural history, and so on. The library is categorized with the books in different shelves where Chittagong University Publications acquire its own one [shelf].

“Chattagram (Chittagong) Corner”, a slot inside the library, is especially classified for a collection of books related to Chittagong region. Captain Pogson's Narrative During a Tour to Chateegaon, the first local history Ahadith al-Khawanin or Tarikh-i-Chatgam, in Persian by Maulvi Hamid-allah Khan, the first Bangla local history Chattagramer Itibritta by Tarakcandra Dasgupta, A history of Chittagong by Dr. Suniti Bhushan Qunungo, History of the Port of Chittagong by Misbahuddin Khan, The Chittagong Hill Tracks, Sre Rajmala, Padmabotti etc are noteworthy in this corner.

We have a large volume of Archeological Survey of India, Epigraphia Indica, Annual reports on Indian Epigraphy, The Indian Historic Quarterly and collection of Bengal Art, which are very rare in Bangladesh.



CU Museum Archives :

The archive of the museum is also enriched with old and rare manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Pali and Bangla, rare printed books, booklets, many posters, pamphlets, newspapers clippings, publications, periodicals, journals, Arabic and Persian documents, and other archival materials for use of the scholars. The collection of archival materials exceeded 3000 pieces. Old printed books collected from a private museum at Habiganj, named Ahorani. The books first up were collected in 1975. 98 pieces of ancient Pali and Sanskrit old manuscripts written on peppier leave and old paper yet not have been translated for lake of expert on this field. We are trying to prepare a descriptive catalogue of those manuscripts for use of the researchers. In addition, we have a collection of rare books, journals and atlases. Among the rare collection of atlases “Memoir of a map of Hindustan or the Mughal empire and his Bengal atlas” by James Rennell is mentionable.

The museum also possesses a worthy collection of huge documents (photographs, letters, publications and posters) on the country's Liberation War collected from home and abroad and correspondences of eminent personalities. Among these collection the Time, the News-week, The Economist and many other world leading foreign magazines and publications during the liberation war are remarkable.

Exhibitions of these documents along with other collections at Chittagong University Museum organized on different occasions drew attention of the teachers, scholars, students and the general visitors. We have published a small booklet containing lists of the documents of special exhibition [Mukti Judder Dalil Patrer Bishesh Pradarshani] on the occasion of celebration of the silver jubilee of independence in 1996 and its updated version in 2014.



Booklet published containing lists of the documents of special exhibition [Mukti Judder Dalil Patrer Bishesh Pradarshani] on the occasion of celebration of the silver jubilee of independence in 1996 and its updated version published in December 2014.



CU Museum preserved rare Manuscripts in Sanskrit, Pali and Bengali.



Current Activities and Future Plan of the Museum :

Attracting the attention of research scholars of national and international repute in the fields of history, art and archeology the Chittagong University Museum has already been proved to be a worthy and signature research institute in Bangladesh.

Various constraints due to fund crunch do not always allow the smooth development of a museum, particularly where expenditure rises day by day. A US based organisation 'Fort Foundation' donated a grant of financial assistance for the development of the museum back in 1995. Meanwhile, the modern display technique has been applied in the gallery, which attracts more visitors with academic pursuits. The Daily Star in association with "Heritage Chattigrama" presented some valuable printed documents that are related to history and heritage of Chittagong along with exhibition furniture in 2012.



Chittagong University Museum website

The museum is internally linked with many academic departments of the University, namely— History, Islamic History, Bangla, Institute of Modern Languages, Sociology, Fine Arts, Anthropology, Journalism, Bangladesh Studies, Physics and Zoology. Students of Institute of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong regularly practice their "Museum Study" drawing classes in the museum gallery. Fresher's of undergraduate level of different departments of the University, other Universities and colleges make study tour in the museum under respective educational exchange programme. Of course, being a public institution, we strive to make our objects available to the "wider public", so that the society as a whole can earn benefit. Every year flocks of visitors, including researchers from home and abroad visit the museum with great enthusiasm.



ASEMUS website featured on the CU Museum

During the period of under-graduate level admission (honors) the number of aspirant visitors exceeds tens of thousands. Besides, the museum registers a vibrant atmosphere in different significant occasions as visitors gather there in an even bigger scale. Apart from the permanent exhibition at the gallery, the museum has been regularly pitching many special exhibitions, organising seminars and symposiums, and also workshops on subjects focusing its academic interest. The museum authority organises programmes with a colorful procession marking the World Museum Day on May 18 every year.

The current museum director Dr. Emran Hossain, also a Professor of History Department at the University, committed to develop this museum gradually since he took the charge after the retirement of Dr Shamsul Hossain, former Deputy Curator and in charge of Chittagong University Museum.

With the rapid development of technology the term “Digital” has created such a phenomenon that it is accentuated across the globe heavily nowadays. To keep pace with time we should preserve our art heritage in the digital manner and explore them with the global people in the era of globalization. In this connection, CU Museum has taken up the initiative to launch it's own website www.cum.org.bd, and also started digitally preserving the documents of objects belong to the museum. Our high expectation might be fulfilled when the total database of the collections are done with.

Recently CU museum has joined with an international museum organization the Asia-Europe Museum Network – ASEMUS. CU Museum is the first member of this organization in the country. ASEMUS has featured our museum information on to their website at <http://asemus.museum/museum/chittagong-university-museum-bangladesh/>. In addition, 10 masterpieces of the CU Museum will be revealed on to the website of the Virtual collection of Asian Masterpieces (VCM) for attention of international audiences within short time.



The collection is growing steadily by means of active search of objects (e.g. field explorations), or obtaining collections from both public and private sources. The museum authority has always been concerned to enhance its resources to mitigate the researchers' quest, looking for more specialists (teachers, researchers and students) who are far more earnest and interested in sharing their passion, specialised knowledge and research results. We always try to involve our faculty colleagues in the development and delivery of events. We are trying to make our best contribution to history, culture and society of Bangladesh in the 21st century. At present, the museum is examining the possibility of commencing some short courses and special education classes aiming at skilled human resources.

The exhibition space is not large enough, so it needs to be enlarged. In fact, due to limitation of space, the museum is currently facing difficulty in functioning properly with regard to one of its basic tasks 'showcasing and preserving (scientifically) valuable materials'.

The Chittagong University Museum always needs assistance from general people, scholars and ardent minds who would extend their helping hands by giving museum objects, donating financial assistance, and even imparting advice for creating an academic atmosphere with more effectiveness, liveliness and uniqueness.

Ziauddin Chowdhury

Display Officer,
Chittagong University Museum, University of Chittagong.
15 May 2015

Publications and Printed Materials of the Chittagong University Museum

Books

- 1) Shamsul Hossain, **Stone Sculpture in the Chittagong University Museum**, 2009.
- 2) Shamsul Hossain. (ed.) , **Aitihiyan**, Silver Jubilee Lecture and Other Articles, 2003.
- 3) Shamsul Hossain, **Art and the Vintage**,
A catalogue of Exhibits in the Chittagong University Museum, 1988.
- 4) Abdul Karim, **Catalogue of Coins in the Cabinet of the Chittagong University Museum**, 1979.

Booklets

- 1) **Mukti Judder Dalil Patrer Bishesh Pradarshani**, [A special exhibition catalogue published on the occasion of celebration of the independence Day 2014], 10-16 Dec., 2014.
- 2) Abu Imam, **Wari Bateswar : A New Chapter of Bangladesh History**
[Chittagong University Museum Foundation Day Lecture], 14 June, 2003.
- 3) Mahbubul Haque, (ed.), **Pachis Bacar Purti : Chittagong University Museum**
[Souvenir published on the occasion of celebration of the silver jubilee], 8-12 Nov., 1998.
- 4) **Mukti Judder Dalil Patrer Bishesh Pradarshani**, [A special exhibition catalogue published on the occasion of celebration of the silver jubilee of independence], 16-31 Dec., 1996.
- 5) **Dr. Muhammad Sahidullah Bihesh Smarak Pradarshani**,
[A special exhibition catalogue], 8-14 July, 1996.
- 6) Abul Fazal, **Baktrita** [Inaugural Speech of the Vice-Chancellor at Special exhibition of documents of Liberation war], 26 March 1974.



Folders

- 1) **Dr. Nawazesh Ahmader Alokcitrer Bishesh Pradarshani**, 13-18 Dec., 1997.
- 2) **Pracin Patra- Patrikar Pradarshani**,
[on the occasion of inauguration of Department of Journalism at Chittagong University], 1-4 June 1996.
- 3) **Ansar Alir Baishaki Mela** [A photography exhibition], 24 - 30 Apr., 1994.

Posters

- 1) **Mukti Judder Dalil Patrer Bishesh Pradarshani**,
[A special exhibition of liberation war documents], 10 - 16 Dec., 2014
- 2) **Ralli O Bishesh Pradarshani**, [Rally and a special exhibition on the occasion of celebration of the World Museum Day 2012], 22-24 May 2012.
- 3) **Mukti Judder Dalil Patrer Bishesh Pradarshani**,
[A special exhibition of liberation war documents], 24 - 26 Mar., 2009
- 4) **Sultani Amale Chatgaon Taksal**
[Chittagong University Museum Foundation Day Lecture], 22 June 2006.
- 5) **Bangalir Sthapatta Chinta : Ekti Aitihashik Samiksha**
[Chittagong University Museum Foundation Day Lecture], 14 June 2005.
- 6) **Silver Jubilee of Chittagong University Museum**, 8 - 12 Nov., 1998.
- 7) **Mukti Judder Dalil Patrer Bishesh Pradarshani**,
[A special exhibition of Liberation war documents] , 10 - 16 Dec., 1996.





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