



Murshidabad
Heritage Development Society



Heritage



Gimes

Newsletter of Murshidabad Heritage Development Society

Vol. 1 No. 1 - June 2011

President's Prelude

Friends,

“LIVE FOR GREATNESS” was the dictum that guided many people of our country in the past. They have left behind rich history in tangible and intangible forms. Murshidabad is an exquisite example of such great culture, wealth and peaceful plurality. This valuable heritage has been handed down to all of us – to be trustees, to enjoy it and to preserve it for posterity.

Like recent scientific findings have shown that stem cells from the umbilical cord can be preserved for future vitality, heritage too serves to strengthen the past, current and coming generations. Indeed, it has brought us together. People who have cared for their heritage are blessed with positivity. Murshidabad Heritage Development Society is a platform for those wanting to attract that vigour.

This inaugural Newsletter records the milestones that have been crossed till now. The Newsletter will be published semi-annually and circulated widely. In future, the Society will pursue a calendar of activities - strive to get a month dedicated for National Preservation, publish Guide-books to save beautiful Landmarks, compile books of stories, dressage and gourmet cuisine, hold art/photographic competitions. We will share experiences and preservation processes, propagate the universal values and give awards to heritage champions. Ways for obtaining low-interest loans and tax benefits for heritage property restoration will be found.

“LIVE FOR GREATNESS” is our motto. You and us shall together celebrate the greatness of the past to win a magnificent future!

Sidharth Dudhoria

The concept of Murshidabad Heritage Development Society (MHDS) was made public at the iLead College campus and was launched on 31 October 2010 at Dadabari, Kolkata with the blessings of Rashtra Sant Acharya Padmasagar Suri Swarji Maharaj and Sangh Ratna Sadhvi Sri Shashi Pravaji Maharaj.

The objective of the Society has enthused people from all walks of life and many persons and organizations have enrolled as Life & Annual Members.

Within this short span, the Society has made considerable progress to create awareness, encourage tourism and facilitate the revival of the glory of Murshidabad in general and Azimganj-Jiaganj-Lalbagh region in particular.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Resurgence



‘Resurgence’ on 14 November 2010 at the Netaji Indoor Stadium, Kolkata had evocative sermons by Rashtra Sant H.H. Acharya Padmasagarsuri Swarji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Ravi Shankarji about Indian Heritage with a focus on Murshidabad to the audience of 11000 people (see photos).

At the function a vibrant audio visual on Murshidabad’s history was presented; a book on Murshidabad and a souvenir were

distributed; and the Society’s Website www.murshidabadheritage.com was launched.





Laudable Developments in Murshidabad

Pratishtha at the new Mandir at Dadabari in Jiaganj

Architectural Planning for addition of accommodation at Swetamber Jain Kothi, Azimganj

New Mandir being built at Dadabari in Azimganj

Inauguration of the new Hall for computer education at Azimganj Keshar Kumari Balika Vidyalaya

Ayurvedic Camps



Ayurvedic medical camps, manned by experts from Bangalore, were held at Azimganj and Sagardighi benefitting 300 people.

'Resurgence II' at Azimganj



'Resurgence II' on 14 December 2010 at Azimganj had emotional sermons by Rashtra Sant H.H. Acharya Padmasagarsuri Swarji Maharaj, Sangh Ratna Sadhvi Sri Shashi Pravaji Maharaj and the Municipal Chairman, Sri Shankar Mandal, extolling the people to care for their rich heritage and preserve the environment of Murshidabad.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT



MHDS members at CII 'Destination East'

MHDS participated in CII's Tourism related 'DESTINATION EAST' at Kolkata in February. The stall, promoting Murshidabad as a destination for Heritage and Spiritual Tourism, evoked keen interest amongst the numerous visitors including International & National Tour Operators and Travel Writers. At the invitation of MHDS, a group of foreign delegates visited places of historical and architectural interest in Murshidabad. The Society organized a cultural function and sponsored their visit.



MHDS member with tour operators from Bangladesh



Yoga Camps



MHDS, in association with Art of Living, organized a Yoga Camp at Azimganj last January for 400 participants.

Infrastructure Development

MHDS is in close contact with Senior officials of the Tourism Department for improving the infrastructure in Murshidabad and for beautification of the various temples and places of tourist interest.



Cultural Programme organised for International guests by MHDS in Murshidabad.

Tourist Boats

MHDS has encouraged the construction of a Party Boat (see photo) and another Bajra style one. They will shortly start plying in Azimganj-Jiaganj-Lalbagh waters for tourists' pleasure rides and sight-seeing.



Education Propagation



MHDS facilitated seminars on Value Education in Kolkata and in Azimganj in association with Smt. Nirmala Bothra.

Youth Leadership Development

Several Youth Leadership Development programmes in collaboration with Art of Living, have seen participation of about 12000 people from across Murshidabad. MHDS sponsored a Youth Conference at Berhampore in June to create awareness of heritage and instill values (see photos).





Study Tour

MHDS facilitated a study tour of Murshidabad by Weaver's Centre for Arts and iLead College students and faculty.

Visitors in the recent past

In the recent past, several visitors such as Maharaja of Sirohi, Trustees of Bhawanipore Jain Mandir and Foreign Tour Operators have visited Murshidabad.

Kudos To

- Azimganj-Jiaganj Municipality for widening the roads of Azimganj and setting up a lovely Park and Children's play-area at Jiaganj Sadar Ghat.
- Tourism Department, Govt. of WB for holding the Hazarduari Festival.

Augmentations of accommodation and food arrangements



MHDS is in touch with stake-holders in the Azimganj-Jiaganj-Lalbagh belt for various projects to attract spiritual tourists. Banners and posters (see photo above) have been put up at many important locations in Murshidabad, Kolkata and Gujarat. Augmentation of accommodation is being planned. Arrangement for regular availability of food for spiritual tourists is also being made.

INTERACTIONS & PARTICIPATIONS

- An interactive session organized by the Craft Council of WB with MHDS members, Historians, Architects and Museum Curators.
- MHDS members participated in the World Heritage Day celebrations by the Rotary Club of Calcutta in April 2011.

RESTORATION HEROES

Katgola - Doogar Family (see photos)

Jagat Seth's Mandir – Mahimapur Shree Shree Parashnath Temple Committee (see photos)



Katgola - Old ▲



Katgola - New ▶



Jagat Seth's Mandir-Old ▲



Jagat Seth's Mandir- New ▶

Hosting of officials & others

- MHDS hosted several officials of the WB Tourism Department in Murshidabad last December and in February 2011.
- Leading restoration architects Ms Ski & Mr. Anthony Harrison from the UK were hosted at Katgola and Azimganj.
- Famous Curator from the Victoria & Albert Museum, London Ms. Sonia Ashmore was shown around Katgola and Azimganj. She has evinced interest for putting up a display of Bengal Textiles from their unseen collection.
- MHDS hosted the Ambassador of Oman in India, Mr. Humid, who shared valuable experience of heritage preservation in their country.

Opportunities

- Health-care Center at Azimganj
- Medical College & Hospital construction in Berhampore
- Tourist mini-vans
- Guides / Story-tellers/ Photography / Studio
- Restaurants
- Hotels / Guest Houses / Home-Stays
- Diagnostic Center at Azimganj/Jiaganj
- Textile Museum
- River Cruises
- Preservation & Conservation of monuments etc
- Craft bazaar.

Collaborators

- Art of Living Foundation
- Tourism Department, Govt. of West Bengal
- WBTD
- INTACH
- I-LEAD College
- Azimganj-Jiaganj Municipality
- Weavers Center for Arts
- Appropriate Designs, Architects
- Garden Café



Sri Raghavendra Singh, Principal Secretary, WB Tourism with MHDS members at Azimganj



Architects & Curator with MHDS member at Katgola

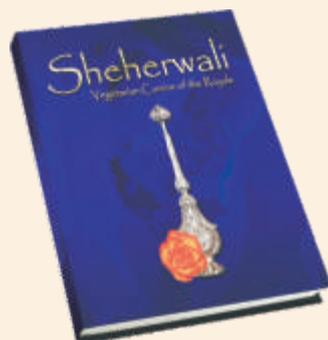


Ambassador of Oman in India, Mr. Humid and his wife at the boat in Kolkata.

Lobby for Murshidabad's Development ...

- Installing tourism signage and hoardings on roads from Kolkata & Siliguri to Murshidabad and from Murshidabad town to Azimganj-Jiaganj-Katgola;
- Add Air Conditioned coaches on trains to Murshidabad;
- Converting Wazif Manzil in Lalbagh into a 3 star-rated accommodation for tourists under the PPP model;
- Repairing the erosion and reinforcing the river embankment from the Rani Bhawani terracotta temple in Baranagar to the Sadar Ghat in Azimganj;
- Broadening the roads leading to Dada Bari and Rani Bhawani temples in Azimganj & Baranagar respectively;
- Lighting the monuments & temples to emphasize their delicate architectural features;
- Repairing the exquisite Naubat Khana monument in front of the Chintamani Parasnath temple at Azimganj and for help to convert it into a museum;
- Setting up of a Crafts Village;
- Publication of books and pamphlets highlighting Azimganj-Jiaganj-Katgola region;

Future Programmes and Events



- Tour of historic sites of Murshidabad
- Celebrate the World Heritage Week in November
- Release of Sheherwali Cuisine Book
- Release of a book with stories and anecdotes of Senior member of the Sheherwali community.

Chief Mentor: Rashtra Sant H.H. Acharya Padmasagarsuri Swarji Maharaj

Names & Contact Nos. of the founding Governing Body members:

| <u>NAMES</u> | <u>DESIGNATION</u> | <u>CONVENOR OF</u> | <u>PHONE</u> | <u>EMAIL</u> |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
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HOW TO REACH MURSHIDABAD

Road Route

Kolkata to Berhampore – 211 Km

Kolkata • DumDum Airport • National Highway 34 • Barasat • Ranaghat • Santipur • Krishnagar (116 km) • Palasi • Berhampore

Berhampore to Jiaganj – 24 Km

Berhampore • Murshidabad Town (14 km) • Jiaganj
• Cross River Bhagirathi by ferryboat to Azimganj

Berhampore to Azimganj (alternate) – 29 Km

Berhampore • Palsunda (17 km) • Lalbagh • Azimganj

Rail Route

| Train Schedule | | | | | | | | | | | May 2011 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| UP TRAINS | | | | | | DOWN TRAINS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13017 Ganadevia Express II 2S CC | 13113 Hazarduari Express II 2S CC | 15643 Puri Kamakhya Express II SL 3A (sun) | 53173 Sealdah Lalgola Passenger (unreserved) | 53175 Sealdah Lalgola Passenger II FC | 13141 Teesta Torsa Express II SL 3A 2A | 53179 Kolkata Lalgola Passenger (unreserved) | 13465 Intercity Express II 2S CC (mon-sat) | 53001 Howrah Azimganj Passenger (unreserved) | 53177 Sealdah Lalgola Fast Passenger (unreserved) | 15959 Kamrup Express II SL 3A 2A | 13103 Bhagirathi Express II 2S CC | 13145 Radhikapur Express II SL 3A 2A | 13163 Hately Bazare Express II SL 2A 3A | 53003 Howrah Malda Town Fast Passenger II SL | 12517 Kolkata Guwahati Garib Rath 3A(sun.thu) | 15721 Paharia Express II SL 3A 1A (sat) | 13027 Howrah-Azimganj Jn Kaviruru Express II 2S | 53181 Lalgola Passenger II SL FC | 13146 Radhikapur Express II SL 3A 2A | 15960 Kamrup Express II SL 3A 2A | 13164 Hately Bazare Express II SL 3A 2A | 15722 Paharia Express II SL 3A 1A (sat) | 53174 Lalgola Sealdah Passenger (unreserved) | 13104 Bhagirathi Express II 2S CC | 13028 Azimganj Jn-Howrah Kaviruru Express II 2S | 13466 Intercity Express II 2S CC (mon-sat) | 53178 Lalgola sealdah Fast Passenger (unreserved) | 12518 Guwahati Kolkata Garib Rath 3A(sun.thu) | 53180 Lalgola Kolkata Passenger (unreserved) | 13018 Ganadevia Express II 2S CC | 13114 Hazarduari Express II 2S CC | 15644 Kamakhya Puri Express II SL 3A (Fri) | 53002 Azimganj Howrah Passenger (unreserved) | 53172 Lalgola Sealdah Passenger II SL FC | 13142 Teesta Torsa Express II SL 3A 2A |
| 6:50 | 7:30 | 8:00 | 12:20 | 13:40 | 14:00 | 15:15 | 16:00 | 17:00 | 17:35 | 18:25 | 19:30 | 20:05 | 21:25 | 21:40 | 21:55 | 22:40 | 23:05 | SEALDAH | 5:10 | 6:10 | 7:20 | 10:00 | 10:25 | 13:55 | 12:50 | 15:20 | 20:20 | 21:45 | 22:30 | 3:50 | 4:30 | 4:40 | | | |
| 6:05 | 7:30 | 8:00 | 12:20 | 13:40 | 14:00 | 15:15 | 16:00 | 17:00 | 17:35 | 18:25 | 19:30 | 20:05 | 21:25 | 21:40 | 21:55 | 22:40 | 23:05 | KOLKATA/CP | 6:25 | 7:20 | 8:30 | 11:00 | 11:25 | 14:55 | 13:50 | 16:20 | 21:25 | 22:30 | 3:50 | 4:30 | 4:40 | | | | |
| 13:05 | 11:30 | 13:26 | 17:57 | 19:09 | 21:25 | 22:15 | 22:40 | 22:17 | 0:35 | 1:30 | 3:25 | 1:52 | 1:52 | 4:50 | 4:14 | 4:50 | 4:14 | JIAGANJ | 0:07 | 0:48 | 1:45 | 3:00 | 4:51 | 6:10 | 7:40 | 9:06 | 14:31 | 16:10 | 16:15 | 20:40 | 22:15 | 23:30 | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | A'GANJ JN. | 0:07 | 0:48 | 1:45 | 3:00 | 4:51 | 6:10 | 7:40 | 8:22 | 10:20 | 15:30 | 16:15 | 20:40 | 22:15 | 23:30 | | | |

Time required for visit

Three days for the Azimganj-Jiaganj experience, or two days for all sight-seeing, or one day for specific sight-seeing

- Share your story • Support heritage • Become a member

Murshidabad Heritage Development Society

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