



**Murshidabad**  
Heritage Development Society



# Heritage



# Gimes

Newsletter of Murshidabad Heritage Development Society

Vol. 2 No. 1 - May 2013

## Highlights

- Murshidabad Heritage Festival
- Sri Sri Ravi Shankar
- Medical Facility
- Yatri Niwas
- Ladies Wing
- Vocational Training Centre
- Recipe contest
- Sponsor a Student

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## Preview

This Newsletter records the Society's activities over the past 2 years. Several developments in Murshidabad district are included for information. It contains a recipe for a favourite Sheherwali dish. The first 10 respondents to rightly guess the name of the dish will be eligible for prizes.

Sponsored by the Society, a Vocational Training Center (VTC) has been set up in Jiaganj. Six youngsters, trained in the VTC as Electricians, have found employment. It is hoped that many more VTC will help make the youth employable.

"Live for Greatness" is our vision. The spirit of adventure, the risk-bearing ability, the romantic ambitions and the glorious aspirations - all these are our inheritance over centuries.

Some of that heritage can still be seen in the magnificent mansions and charming temples, in the philanthropic hospitals and educational institutions of Murshidabad, in the culinary delights and distinctive attire, in the business acumen and ethical dealings of the Sheherwali community.

But some of that heritage has withered over time and a few others bear a forlorn look. The once fiery passion is now a flame. One wonders about the disappearance of a large selection of mangoes, about the neglect of world-famous Murshidabad silks. Where are the modern day visionaries like Dhanpat Singh, Bijoy Singh, Bidhan Chandra? When will we celebrate the great Indian Heroes?

As the Custodians and Keepers of the Flame, come and join hands to march "Back to Greatness" for a fabulous future.



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

## Governing Body

Names	Designation
Sidharth Dudhuria	President
Sanjay Doogar	Vice-President
Sandip Nowlakha	Secretary
Sudip Dudhuria	Treasurer
Sunil Churoria	Jt. Secretary
Pradip Boyed	Jt. Secretary



Names	Designation
Tushar Singhi	Asst. Secretary
Sekhar Nahar	Member
Sanjaypat Sing Dugar	Member
Rajib Churoria	Member
Rabin Monohat	Member

# Sheherwali Cuisine Recipe Book



The book by Pradip Chopra was released in Kolkata in January 2012 by Harshvardhan Neotia at a glittering ceremony at iLead Campus. The book has evoked a huge response from Chefs, food Experts and aficionados. It is hoped that the second edition will be published soon.

## Bengal Leads Summit

The new State Government held a summit named 'Bengal Leads' in January 2012. The Society put up a stall at the Milan Mela ground where the 'sites and sights' of Murshidabad were highlighted. Ministers, dignitaries, policy makers and visitors were delighted with the exhibition.

## Heritage Quiz

The Society celebrated the World Heritage Day by organising a Quiz on Bengal Heritage in collaboration with iLead and West Bengal Tourism on April 18, 2012 in Kolkata. About 80 senior school students participated in the quiz. It is hoped that heritage quizzes become hugely popular in future years.

## Medical Facility

To meet a long-felt need of the citizens of Murshidabad and to commemorate HH Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's visit to Murshidabad, the Society bestowed through his holy hands a digital X-Ray unit to London Missionary Hospital in Jiaganj.

## News And Events

### Murshidabad Heritage Festival - Resurgence 2011

The first heritage festival in Murshidabad, "Resurgence - Murshidabad Heritage Festival 2011" was organized by the Tourism Department of Govt. of West Bengal in association with Murshidabad Heritage Development Society and with the support of Crafts Council of West Bengal, West Bengal Kayaking & Canoeing Association, Union Ministry of Culture, Art of Living Foundation and others in Azimganj, Jiaganj and Lalbagh-Nashipur on 17 & 18 December, 2011. The festival brought to the fore the Sheherwali Cuisine, Sheherwali Cuisine Recipe book, a Boat Race on the River Bhagirathi, Cultural Programme/Entertainment, Competitions for the Youth, Crafts Bazar, Puja and Jain Temple Visits. A gathering of 3000 invitees enjoyed the two-day festival. A souvenir recording the festival was published by the Society.

## Swimming Competition



For 69 years, the world's longest open-water swimming competition is being conducted on the Bhagirathi River by Murshidabad Swimming Association. It started from Jangipur and finished at Berhampore, 81 KM away. On 2 September 2012, your Society sponsored the second part of the Competition that began from Jiaganj and finished at Berhampore 19 KM away. Besides swimmers from different states of India, it attracted competitors from the neighbouring countries also. The sporting spirit witnessed, especially in some handicapped competitors, was marvellous.

## Sheherwali Cuisine Dinner



Consultant Chefs got fascinated by the distinctiveness of the Sheherwali cuisine. They encouraged ITC Sonar, Kolkata to host a sampling of the cuisine in September 2012. Several members of the Society, in traditional attire, explained the delicate ways of the culinary experience. It is hoped that some of the distinctive dishes of this cuisine will be incorporated in various menus.

## Community Efforts

### Support for the New Yatri Niwas

A new Yatri Niwas is under construction in Jiaganj. Many members participated at its Bhumi Puja in 2011. Members of the Society have aided the designing of the Yatri Niwas. On the request of the Acharya Padmasagar Suri Charitable Trust, Jiaganj, the Society has sponsored a room at the Yatri Niwas.

### Support to architecture students

The Society facilitated and gave liberal support to two students of Architecture who chose Murshidabad for their thesis. One interviewed senior members of the Society to prepare her thesis on "Built Heritage and Lifestyle of Sheherwalis". The other did extensive work at Katgola Gardens for her paper "The Heritage Park at Katgola".

### Scholarships to students

The Society gave scholarships to 8 school students and 5 college students in Murshidabad.

### Restoration Guide

#### Technique for plastering old structures using lime & sand

Lime and fine sand mortar mix ratio

15kgs : 90kgs

- Sieve fine sand to remove gravel and impurities. Soak the lime in water for 3 days to mature it. Then mix the sand and lime as mortar. The mortar will be ready for plastering. After plastering, water-cure for 7 days.
- Water-cure the brick work that requires plaster for 3 days. Sieve fine sand to remove gravel and impurities. Mix the sand and lime with water. Soak the mix in water for 1 day. The mortar will be ready for plastering. After plastering, water-cure for 7 days.

## His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar visit to Murshidabad



On 4 March 2013 HH Sri Sri Ravi Shankar addressed a packed house at the Jain Kothi Azimganj. The invitees were the members of Murshidabad Heritage Development Society, Azimganj Shree Sangh, Jiaganj Shree Sangh, Councillors of the Azimganj Jiaganj Municipality and members of the Art of Living Foundation, including 7/8 foreigners from different countries of South America (Peru, Brazil and Argentina) and Canada. He recalled the function at Netaji Indoor Stadium; talked about love and happiness; asked the assembly to get involved in the preservation of Murshidabad's rich heritage and blessed everyone present with peace.

Before leaving Azimganj, HH took delight in the restoration of Bari Kothi, blessed hundreds of devotees while visiting the new temple at Rambagh and was mesmerised by the majesty of the Katgola Palace.

## Launch of Ladies Wing



To make the activities more inclusive, a Ladies Wing of the Society was launched at Kolkata on 28 April 2013. Members discussed various projects that the Ladies Wing could undertake like a Mango Fest, a Book on Mangoes, another edition of the Sheherwali Cuisine Recipe book, Archiving of Textile collections for a museum and several aspects of the Murshidabad Heritage Festival. It is hoped that these activities would help the Lady members to take up responsibilities and shine.

## Vocational Training Centre

A Vocational Training Centre for electrical and electronics has been set up in Jiaganj in collaboration with Schneider Electric and SSRDP Trust. This is training people for gainful employment. Skills training and a placement service will also be looked at in future.

## Lobbying with Eastern Railway

A much larger number of people have started visiting Murshidabad for heritage and spiritual tourism, for commercial and trade purposes, for studying the ethos and lifestyle of various groups for repairs and renovations to various temples and monuments, for film making etc. With the oncoming Murshidabad Heritage Festival, the Society lobbied with Eastern Railways to increase the number of coaches and trains to and from Murshidabad. Thanks to these efforts, the Railways made a prompt study and increased the number of Air-conditioned coaches. The study has put in place steps to help the railways to increase the number of coaches when the traffic goes up further.

## Visitors in the recent past:

- His Excellency Governor of West Bengal - Sri Gopal Krishna Gandhi
- Honorable Chief Justice J.N. Patel - Kolkata High Court
- Honorable Justice M.S. Shah - Kolkata High Court
- Mrs. M. K Narayanan, wife of the Governor of West Bengal
- Judges of Kolkata High Court.
- Judges of the Supreme Court
- Ms Aparna Sen - Film Director
- Union & State Ministers
- Times of India team
- Bengal Ambuja Team

## Preservation Heroes: Bari Kothi in Azimganj

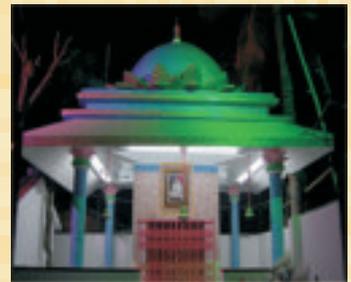
The Society inspired some stake-holders to restore the heritage of palatial structures.

'Bari Kothi', inspired by Greek and Roman architecture and built in the 17 century was one of the most handsome palatial buildings in Azimganj. It housed, amongst others, a beautiful Sheesh Mahal and a drawing room with exquisite hand-painted artwork on its tiled walls. It was the residence of Rai Bahadur Budh Sing Dudhoria and his descendants. In a recent development, scion of this family, Pradip Kumar Sing and brother Sudip Kumar Sing Dudhoria acquired the heritage portion of 'Bari Kothi' from their Uncle.

As part of their enthusiasm and commitment towards restoring and preserving heritage, they intend to restore it to its former glory. They believe that it a responsibility of each and every family that has interest in such heritage structures, to preserve their legacy for future generations.

## Bhairavji Mandir In Azimganj

A small temple of Bhairavji beside the train tracks in Azimganj used to command a big following. However, with people migrating from Azimganj it lay in a state of neglect and disrepair. Recently some members of the Kothari family including Pradip Kothari, now settled in Hyderabad, got together to restore the temple and beautified it. It has now restarted attracting a big following. The Kothari family and all those involved in this restoration need to be commended for this.



## Sambhavnath Mandir In Azimganj

The temple of Lord Sambhavnath, with its huge 'Pratima', next to the train tracks in Azimganj has been repaired and newer facilities for pilgrims have been provided. The temple will look anew as soon as the painting of the temple will be completed. The Trustees of this temple need to be commended.

## Opportunities:

- Internet based Learning School
- Hotels, Guest houses, Bed & Breakfast (B & B) homes
- Mango processing Vegetable processing Film - making Museum

## Collaborators:

- Tourism Department-Government Of West Bengal Art Of Living
- Schneider Electric iLead ITC Sonar Ministry of Culture
- Lalbagh Municipality Azimganj Jiaganj Municipality



# Recipe of a favourite Sheherwali Dish

Ingredients - (Good for 4 people)

- Channa dal - 100 gms.
- Ginger - 1 inch
- Refined oil - Half cup
- Asafoetida(hing) - a pinch
- Wheat flour - 200 gms
- Green Chilli - 2-3 pcs.
- Mustard seed - Half tbsp
- Grated coconut - 2 tbsp



## Preparation

Soak channa dal in water for 4 hours. Grind into a thick paste with ginger and chilli. Put salt to taste.

Put 3 tbsp oil and half tsp salt to flour and knead a soft dough with water. Keep aside for ½ hour. Break the dough into

small balls and roll out like chapattis. Spread the channa dal paste evenly on the chapattis. Roll the chapattis. Boil water in a big pan and put

in the rolls for 2-3 minutes. Take the rolls out of the water. Let it cool. Cut the rolls into one inch pieces.

Heat 3 tbsp oil in a pan and put mustard seeds in it. When mustard seeds start crackling, put a pinch of asafoetida, this is the 'baghar'. Add the baghar to the cut rolls. Garnish with grated coconut. Serve with dhania chutney.

## Win a Prize

Guess the name of the dish. Send your entry immediately to the Society. The first 10 respondents to rightly state the name of the dish will be eligible for prizes.

Name of the Dish.....

Name:..... Email: .....

Address: .....

..... Phone: .....



## Gift a Sponsorship to a Student

Ravi, a bright and talented boy of Murshidabad was just 13 when his youthful father died of a stroke. Within a short time Ravi's grandfather, not being able to bear the shock of losing a young son, also died. Both earning members of the family had died in quick succession. Ravi did not know how to continue with his education and faced the threat of dropping out of school.

His life will be changed for the better as a result of your donation. There are many like him who need your financial support. With your support and that of other sponsors, Murshidabad Heritage Development Society will help educate Ravi and others like him. (Name changed for confidentiality) Make a donation. You have the power to change lives. Gift education to a student.

Cheque/DD to be made in favour of "Murshidabad Heritage Development Society" and sent to the Society with your complete address. Donations will be eligible for deduction u/s 80G of Income Tax Act 1961.



Yes, I want to sponsor a student

Name .....

Address: ..... Phone: .....

- Donation Amount
- Rs.30,000/- for the education of 5 students
  - Rs.18,000/- for the education of 3 students
  - Rs. 6,000/- for the education of 1 student

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