

getting ruined due to lack of proper maintenance. Inset, the nameplate on the palace premises.

PHOTO: STAR

Zamindar Bari on verge of ruin

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Chapainawabganj

Kansat Zamindar Bari, which has great historical value, is a deserted house now and on the verge of ruination after years of neglect.

Locals say the building, erected in 1867 in Shibganj upazila of the district, is gradually falling apart due to negligence of the local authorities.

Surjya Kanta came to Kansat village from Muktagachha in Mymensingh and built the big, decorated mansion, originally called Surjya Garh, on about 2.24 acres of land on the bank of the Pagla river, around 25 km from the district town.

The exquisitely decorated two-storied mansion has 16 rooms.

Surjya Kanta had two sons, Shashi Kanta and Shitangshu Kanta. Shitangshu was the last zamindar.

Shitangshu went to Kolkata after the partition of India in 1947, and the Pakistan government took ownership of the building.

It remained unused until after the liberation of Bangladesh, when it was made the union land office. The office was later shifted to the kachari bari in front of the mansion.

Prof Mazharul Islam of the Department of Bangla in Chapainawabganj Government College, and a local historian, said

the zamindar bari is a heritage in the district. This building has historical value because it is a physical connection with our past, he added.

"It was built around 1867. At that time, the place was crowded because many people built their houses around the zamindar bari. So, it will help us know about the culture and religion of the people of that time," he said.

Abdul Mannan, 60, of Kansat bazar, said the local authorities have never taken any steps to preserve the building.

It is the only zamindar house in the district, but now it has turned into a dumping spot for garbage and a den of drug addicts, he

added.

Nurul Islam, assistant land officer of Kansat union, said the building is seriously damaged. He urged the authorities to take immediate steps for preservation of the building.

Locals said if the historic Zamindar Bari is not renovated it will be destroyed and the memories of the zamindars will be lost forever.

Kansat Union Parishad Chairman Benaul Islam said the government should renovate the building for its historical value.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Shibganj Shafiqul Islam said he will take necessary measures for preservation of the building.