



INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

(Peer-reviewed, Refereed, Indexed & Open Access Journal)

DOI : 03.2021-11278686

ISSN : 2582-8568

IMPACT FACTOR : 5.71 (SJIF 2021)

Shivnibas: Behind oblivion

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DOI No. **03.2021-11278686**

DOI Link :: <https://doi-ds.org/doilink/08.2021-52715976/IRJHIS2108006>

Abstract:

Archeology plays a very important role in the history of our country. There are many archeological sites scattered in different parts of the country, which have been reduced to rubble due to lack of proper maintenance. Shivnibas in Krishnaganj block of Nadia district bears silent evidence of history as such a historical archeological monument. Shivnibas, built by King Krishnachandra Roy himself and carefully, is counting the days waiting for its destruction in one corner. But at one time this Shivnibas was bustling as the capital of Nadia, the gathers of the people, the palace was always busy. The Shivling, the largest Shivling in Asia, has highlighted the glory of Shiva. King Krishnachandra Roy of Nadia built a temple on the banks of the river Churni to protect his life, property and wealth. As a worshiper of Shiva and to protect it from the hands of the bandit Nasrat Khan, he wanted to build two large Shiva temples and make Shivnibas the equivalent of Kashi. It was here that the famous 'Bhaimi Ekadashi' fair was introduced and a month-long festival was organized for the entertainment of the people. But today Shivnibas, which is neglected, rejected and deprived of human gatherings, continues to bear witness to history as only three temples. Through this research paper, my main objective is to present the heartfelt pride of the recently destroyed Shivnibas to the public.

Keywords: Nadia, Shivnibas, Krishnachandra, Temple, Architecture, Bolan Song.

Introduction:

"Shivnibas" in Krishnaganj block of Nadia district is an ancient town rich in historical and antiquities of Bengal. At present the distance from Kolkata to Mazdia railway station is 104 km. Any one get off at Mazdia station by auto or Toto, can go to Shivnibas by bus, the distance is 3 km. Shivnibas Mandir bus stand is 22 km on Krishnanagar to Mazdia bus route, time is about 45 minutes. Can get off the bus and reach the Shivnibas temple ghat on foot. Visitors can reach the famous shrine by crossing the river Churni by boat. The Shivnibas temple is now easily accessible as a paved bridge was built over the Churni river a few days ago. This place is not only famous for its history, it

is also one of the rarest Shiva temples in India. Shivnibas is comparable to Kashi, so it is known from the archeology department—

*“Shivnibas tulya Kashi,
Dhanya nadi Kankana.
Upore baje dev Ghari
,Nichey baje thanthana.
Oh amar sadher Kankana.*

”Initially, Shivanibas was the capital of Nadia during the British rule. The Mazdia station was also named "Shivnibas". Later the name of the station was "Krishnaganj", now known as "Majdia".

The largest Shivling of Shivnibas is the "Raj Rajeshwar" and its temple (known as Old Shiva's Temple) is a fine example of architecture. Islamic ornaments are evident on the ornate pillars inside the temple. This temple was built in 1676 AD. At each corner of the steep wall are eight narrow pillars of 8 minarets. The influence of the Gothic style is evident in the north and east facing entrances and arches above the gates. This Shiva temple has a 16 feet 7 inches high rectangular foundation placed on the altar, the height of the temple is 120 feet. The height of Shivling is 9 feet 9 inches and the fence including spout is 28 feet 6 inches. There is no other such large fence in Asia. To pour water on the head of this Shivling, 5 steps have to be broken, only then water can be poured on the head of Shivling. The arches at the entrance and the imitation arches filled with the same shape on the remaining walls are a plaque on the south side reminiscent of the Gothic style. Engraved here —

1676

“Yo jatah khuluh Bharate surataru jeta digisanshake.

Senanimukh Bajirajbilasya Sankhyavati Daspurey.

Kritba mandir sindhu Chumbishikharang Bhopal Churamani.

Satra Shriyut Krishnachandra: Nripati: Shambhunga Samasthapayata.

”There is another relatively small four-storied Shiva temple at some distance to the east of the Rajarajeshwar temple. The temple is relatively small, the east side of the temple is 28 feet long and 60 feet high. Inside this temple known as "Rajeshwar", the height of Shivling is 6 feet 3 inches and the fence is 16 feet. The temple was established in 1684 AD. If anyone wants to pour water on the head of Shivling, can go up 3 stairs and pour water. It is said that King Krishnachandra established this temple and got the title of "Devaraja". Carved on the temple plate ---

1684

“Yah sansaktatr saivamurtibasudhenanangaske sanchabat.

Sankhat: Kshitidevarajpadbhaka Srikrishnachandra: Prabhu.

Tasya khasunipatedwitiyamohishi murtter Lakshi swayang.

Prasaddrobore prasadsukumhng shamvung samosyhaypyata.

"To the east of this temple is the west-facing 'Charchala' temple of Ramsita, perched on an eight-foot-high foundation. The main temple is 42 feet long and 32 feet wide. However, looking at the style of the temple, it is unlikely that this building was there at first. The roof of the temple is very rarely shaped like a rocking bell. Although there are 5 entrances to the building, there are 3 entrances to the sanctum sanctorum, which is a fancy architecture. There are four narrow ornate minarets at the four corners of the summit. Ramachandra is seated on a wooden throne in the sanctum sanctorum, Sita Devi and Lakshan are standing on the other side. However, no resemblance can be found between Sita and Ramchandra. From this it is easy to guess that Krishnachandra established only Ramachandra. Evidence of this can be found by looking at the idol of Ramchandra. Later Sita was probably established. Because next to Ramchandra, why will Sita be a slender looking octahedron? If both were established at the same time, then Sita's face would also be on the right stone with Ramchandra. There are also idols of Makali, Annapurna, lots of Shivalings, Radhakrishna, Narayana Shila, Ganesha on the throne of Ramchandra. The inscription on the west wall of this temple is as follows –

"Devah Srikrishnachandra: Kshitipati's toilko brahma rajarshibangshe.

Yohsau bhrikantasakhi shrutibasubasudhaisangsake brahma rajarshibangshe ..

Preyasastismahisyah paramagatijhrate janaki laksnanobhyabe.

Prasade Pradurasit Trijagadapati: Sriyuto Ramchandra:.

"Maharaja Krishnachandra wanted to establish a large Shivalinga and temples in Shivanibas and build it as the second Kashi or Kashidham of Bengal. From 1728 to 1782 AD, Krishnachandra gave Shivnibas the status of capital. However, after his reign, the capital of Nadia was abandoned at Shivnibas. Gradually the palace became forested. One by one all the lights of Rajpuri went out. No court sits in the capital, no prince enters through the huge gate. No elephant can be seen in the elephant stable, no horse can be seen in the stable. At present the solitude seems to be meditating here, this forested town is back to its former form. But the majesty of space is still intact. That is why even today many people enter this holy land every Monday in the month of Sravan. Devotees from far and wide came to this Shivnibas on foot and poured water on the head of Shivling. This pilgrimage became sacred after millions of people.

King Krishnachandra was a pious man, he did not do any work without the advice of priests and fortune tellers. Fearing a possible attack by the famous contemporary bandit Nasrat Khan, King Krishnachandra took refuge in Shivanibas, a forested place 16 miles from Krishnanagar (not having this name at that time), thinking that the capital was not safe. There he set up camp on the banks of the river Churni and spent his days with his family. It is said that one day while bathing in the Churni

river, a rui fish fell on the king's feet. He became very worried and took refuge in Raghunath Mishra. After counting, the priest Raghunath Mishra said that there would be no danger if a Shiva temple was built and lived here.

However, on the advice of Raghunath Mishra and to get rid of the Maratha invasion, King Krishnachandra started living in Shivnibas with his family and wealth. Build huge palaces, elephants, horses houses, barracks and small forts around the palace to protect the palace. As a result, the king's kingdom was fulfilled. Although the palace was protected on three sides by the Churni, Mathabhanga and Kankana rivers, one side was unprotected. So King Krishnachandra cleverly dug a canal from the end of Mathabhanga and Ichhamati and kept Shivnibas safe and mixed it with churni and kankana in front of Chandannagar school. Since Nasrat Khan was a devotee of Shaiva, the construction of Shiva temple would save him from bandit attack. Initially, there were plans to build 108 Shiva temples, but a few were built on an emergency basis. Although he later built more Shiva temples, most of them have been reduced to rubble.

Rumor has it that this Shivnibas was the fortified palace of the king (whose ruins are still there). The king used to travel secretly to Krishnanagar through the fortified secret passage of this fort. Today its ruins continue to bear silent witness to history. In many cases houses and gardens have now been built in all these abandoned places of the king. In some cases, gardens have been cut and farmland has been created. Shivlings have been found in several places due to cultivation. Some of them have stays a place in the temple of a nearby devout devotee, some have stay a place in the temple.

Kashidham-like Shivnibas is located in a corner of Nadia and bears witness to history. Witnesses are crushed, witnesses are ruins and temples. At one time the market used to sit here two days a week, but today it does not. Now the last bell from Prasadpuri can no longer be heard. The bricks of the ruined palace of King Krishnachandra are silent witnesses of history. Everything is over except for a little Vita. In many cases the bricks have been laid on the road by raising the foundation of the wall. Most of the holes except for one mound in the palace. The once vibrant elephant sanctuary, the stable, the fortress-- all sold out. But hopefully, Krishnachandra Ghosh, a local 80-year-old man, has been able to preserve some of the forts that mark the distant past. Krishnachandra Ghosh and his son Nimaichandra Ghosh have kept them as treasures of yaksha. Here is the oldest Kali temple of Shivnibas. There is a specialty of this temple, there is no idol or statue of Makali in the temple, there is only a stone slab made of square stone. This rock is worshiped as an idol of Makali.

King Krishnachandra Roy of Nadia was an enthusiast and patron of culture. Local proverb, he was "Vikramaditya of Bengal". Authentic patron and new supporter in all fields of knowledge, learning and art. In the eighteenth century, the culture of Nadia was the culture of the whole of

Bengal. It is well known that contemporary Krishnanagar was the seat of Bengali culture. A new chapter in the history of Nadia's antiquities began at that time. Not only had that, in this century Maharaja Krishnachandra set an example of multifaceted talent. He set up 'Toll's' for education and donated land to Brahmin scholars. Zamindari rights were also sold to some villages adjacent to Shivnibas under these Brahmins. Most of the Kanyakujva Brahmins who came here were from Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh.

Sanskrit Vidyasamaj was formed with these Brahmins. All Tolls have disappeared with the passage of time. At present that Toll has found a place in the new island. Maharaja Krishnachandra's dream Shivnibas is no more today. There is no king-- there is no Shivnibas in that Rajpuri. Once upon a time, this town was full of people, it was lively, it was beautiful. Today, as the capital of Nadiaraj Krishnachandra, Shivnibas is the only place in the pages of history. The fair, which started on 'Bhaimi Ekadashi' in the month of Magh every year, lasted for 28 consecutive days and ended on Shiva Chaturdashi. Even after moving from Shivanibas, the capital of Nadia, to Krishnanagar, every year from Krishnanagar Rajbari, one of the princes of Rajbari used to come to Shivnibas on the occasion of 'Ekadashi fair'. Tenants used to gather on both sides of the road from Krishnanagar to Shivnibas to visit the king or prince. The women greeted him with conch shells and owls. But for the last 60-70 years no one came.

Shivnibas also played a significant role in the cultural field. Not far from this Shivnibas is the village of Krishnapur (Keshtopur), where the people of the Ghosh community live. They were at one time skilled in warfare, probably used as the king's staff. Adjacent to this village, in the village of Raninagar, a fair of 'Pir Sahib' is held as a meeting of Hindu-Muslim culture. This is the ancient fair of Nadia, even from Bangladesh a lot of people gather here. It is said that Mamud Zafar Khan was the chief and responsible commander of the army of King Krishnachandra of Nadia. Towards the end of his life he became a devotee and practiced in the village of Krishnapur. After death, innumerable people worship at the place where his body is buried according to his will. This 'Pir fair' has been going on continuously since 1980, which lasts for three days. People's faith is worshiped here, the desire is fulfilled. Just as Hindus worship in the tomb of Pir Sahib according to Hindu scriptures, so Muslims worship according to their scriptures. There is no difference. Mohammad Ansar Ali Mandal, a long-time patron of the fair, said, "Everyone comes here forgetting caste differences." This Mamud Jafar is mentioned in Bharat Chandra Roy's poem 'Annadamangal'. Religious festivals and folk ceremonies centered on the Samadhi Mandir of this Muslim saint have been enriching the way of life of a region in Bengal for almost two hundred years.

Krishnapur 'Bolan' is also famous for its contemporary songs. These songs composed and sung by rural folk poet Prahlad Patani are sung in Chaitramas on the occasion of Gajan. Prahlad Patani used to form groups with the Ghoshes of the Yadav clan of Krishnapur village and perform this

song in different villages. Songs about Ramayana, Mahabharata, Sachinimai Radhakrishna are also sung. Respected Buddhiswar Ghosh, a landlord of the local Krishnapur village, has been working hard to preserve this century-old Nadian traditional Bolan song and pass it on to the next generation. Today, this song has spread to different parts of Bengal through his single efforts.

Local priests Swapan Bhattacharya and Prashant Bhattacharya now worship in the temples of Shivnibas. From the time of their father Kamlesh Bhattacharya, Swapanbabu has devoted himself to the worship of the temples of Shivnibas. Swapanbabu's nephew Nilratan Bhattacharya has also dedicated himself to the service of God. Visits to Shivnibas temples are from 8 am to 12 noon and from 4 pm to 6 pm. Swapanbabu lamented, “Every time there is a vote, but no step of the government reaches here. But yes, with the financial help of the local administration, the temple premises have been paved, iron railings have been installed around the temple attic. The broken part of the temple has been whitewashed. The temple receives income from donations and fairs of devotees. The temple was renovated from this income. I hope that this Shivnibas, which is intertwined with the memory of Krishnachandra, will regain its former glory.”

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