

Heritage Information

Section-1: Identification of the element



Heritage Location

Division

Barishal

District

Barishal

Upazila

Barishal Sadar (Kotwali)

Details Address

Geolocation(Latitude)

22.69999722

Geolocation(Longitude)

90.36666389

Community Category

Religious

Community

Hindu

Name of the Heritage, (as used by the community or group concerned)

Diwali, 'Festival of lights' at Mahasmashan, Hindu Crematorium

Short title of the Heritage, (preferably within 200 words)

Diwali is a common festival for Hindus of Barishal during Kali Puja.

Concerned Community(ies)/Group(s), (who recognize the element as part of their cultural heritage)

Hindu community of Barishal

Physical location(s) of the element/how often it is practiced

Crematorium in Barishal city

Short description of the Heritage, (preferably within 350 words)

A two-day Diwali cremation ceremony is organized every year, during the occasion of Kali Puja, at the largest crematorium in the subcontinent in Barishal town of Bangladesh, at Kaunia Mahasmashan in the city to seek peace in the soul of deceased relatives. Around the Diwali festival, the Mahasmashan area becomes a popular destination for people from home and abroad. The whole cremation area is illuminated by candlelight. At this time, relatives pray for the peace of the soul of their loved ones and the followers of traditional religion believe that worshipping the ghost on the 14th day before Kali Puja brings peace to the soul of the deceased. So, the bereaved light a lamp on the altar and pray to the Creator for heavenly bliss for the departed souls. He added that the cremation Diwali festival which started on Friday night will end at 10 pm on Saturday. Every year on this day, Hindus come to the grave of their relatives at the original crematorium of Barisal on the full moon day of Chaturthadashi and pay their respects by lighting candles. Besides,

worship is performed there. On the occasion of Diwali festival, thousands of Hindu men and women from different parts of the country gathered at Kaunia Mahasmashan and Adi crematorium of Natun Bazar. On the occasion of this festival, the cremation protection committee decorates the traditional Kaunia crematorium with lights. Thousands of people from all over the country, including India, gather at the traditional crematorium every year to pay their respects at the cremation Diwali festival. Meanwhile, on the occasion of the Diwali festival, according to sources, the tomb of Mahatma Ashwini Kumar Dutt, one of the leaders of the anti-British movement, has recently been brought from India. Strict security measures are put in place by the administration around the Diwali festival, the largest crematorium in the subcontinent. The Cremation Diwali festival has been celebrated in Barishal since 1928. During the two-day festival, various cultural programs are organized for the visitors.

Domains of the Heritage (applicable fields)

- Oral Traditions and Expressions
- Performing Arts
- Social Customs and Traditions
- Knowledge and Practices related to Nature and Universe
- Traditional Craftsmanship
- Food

Section-2: Characteristics of the element +

Practitioner(s)/performer(s) directly involved in the representation or practice of the Heritage (including roles, name, age, gender, social status, and/or professional category etc.)

According to Sanatan Dharmalambi, every year on Bhoot Chaturdashi Punya Tithi, the mahasmashan is illuminated with the light of thousands of candles. On this day, Hindu devotees gather at the Mahasmashan and light candles at the mausoleum in memory of their deceased ancestors and relatives. At the same time, Kali Puja is celebrated.

Other tradition bearers (individuals/groups and their roles)

Hindu community of Barishal

Language(s), register(s), speech level(s) involved

Local language of Barishal

Associated tangible elements used (if any)

Dresses, Fruits, traditional cakes, candle lights, flowers etc.

How are women and people of other genders associated with this Heritage?

Females says prayers to the God.

Division of labour during the practice of this Heritage

Both male and female practice this heritage

Elements to which other customary practices or practices may be connected or accessed in any respect of the heritage (if any)

Kirtan with religious songs and open music for the satisfaction of the soul of the loved ones.

Modes of transmission to others in the community

transmission takes places amidst the Hindu community only

Organizations concerned (non-governmental organizations and others)

Barishal Mahashahan Raksha Committee

Section-3: State of the element (viability) +

Threats to the enactment

No

Enactment Threats Description

N/A

Threats to the transmission (if any)

No

Threat to associated tangible elements and resources (if any)

No

Viability of associated intangible elements (if any)

No

Have been taken any safeguarding measures to preserve this Heritage practices? (if any)

N/A

Section-4: Data gathering/documentation, Consent and preparation of inventory entries +

Consent of community/group/individuals concerned for data collection with a view to inventorying

Oral Consent has been taken.

Restrictions on use of collected data, (if any)

No

Section-5: Resource Person +

Data provider/Resource person (persons/groups, community representatives)

N/A

Date of data collection

Place(s) of data collection

Barishal

Section-6: Safeguarding techniques +

Existing safeguarding techniques adopted by the community for the safeguarding of the Heritage

Not necessary

Suggestions for safeguarding of the Heritage from the community

Uninterrupted security arrangements should be ensured by the police during the festival.

Section-7: References to literature, discography, audiovisual materials or archives +

References to/in literature

<https://barta24.com/details/national/59951/barisal-diwali-festival>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Bp4y0-ogFla/?hl=bn>

□ Audiovisual materials or archives

Some videos are available on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6Y5H-58XhM>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFK2jEAAEsY>

□ Discography or archives

N/A

□ Section-8: Modalities for updating the information contained in the inventory entry

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□ Data Compiler (persons/groups, including community representatives, who compiled the information)

N/A

□ Date of Community Consent

25-01-2022

□ Consent of community/group/individuals concerned for data collection with a view to inventorying

Yes

□ Present Condition of Heritage

Developing or Expanding

□ Brief description of Present condition of the Heritage, (if any)

Every year on Bhoot Chaturdashi Punya Tithi, the mahasmashan is lit up with thousands of candles. On this day, Hindu devotees gather at the Mahasmashan and light candles at the mausoleum in memory of their deceased ancestors and relatives. At the same time, Kali Puja is celebrated. Every year, lakhs of people from India, Nepal and other parts of the subcontinent gather in this crematorium, which is almost 200 years old. Devotees and tourists come from all over the country to see the Diwali festival of this crematorium.

□ Section-9: Community suggestions

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□ Brief description of suggestions for safeguarding of the element by community members/experts/holders, (if any)

□ Restrictions on use of collected data, (if any).

□ Section-10: Upload Document

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Heritage Details Document

