

Heritage Information

Section-1: Identification of the element



Heritage Location

Division

Dhaka

District

Kishoregonj

Upazila

Details Address

Geolocation(Latitude)

24.426046

Geolocation(Longitude)

90.982067

Community Category

Professionals

Community

Fishing Community

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

Process of making dry fish, Chapa Sutki

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

The food that adds to the taste buds of Bengalis is Chyapa (dry/fermented fish) which is a popular culinary practice, falling under Domain 3

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

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

Kishoregonj haor area, or Sylhet Basin. The core haor area, alternatively referred to as the Haor basin or the Sylhet basin, is estimated to spread over an area between 4,450 km² and 25,000 square kilometres by experts. The total area of haor-type wetland ecosystem in Bangladesh is 80,000 square kilometres.

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

Chyapa su?ki (?????? ?????) is a local delicacy within the cuisine Bangladesh. It is known by different names in different parts of the country. Such as- Chapa, Chapa Shuntki, Sidhal or Sidhul, Hidal (regional name Mymensingh and Comilla region), Barma (in hilly region). It is known abroad as English word Semi-fermented fish. There is no parallel to dried fish within the cuisine of Bengalis. Usually different species of fish are dried in the sun to produce dried fish. Haoranchal of Bangladesh is the largest producer of dried fish of native species. A large portion of the poor in the north-east of the country make a living by processing fish in the traditional way. Usually these dried fish are used to produce a special fish product called chyapa, or dried fish. It is also called semi-fermented fish product because the fermentation

process is not completed in the process of preparation of this product and the final product is obtained semi-solid structure. Its preparation is also varied. It is not possible for everyone to make it. Only a few families in the fishing community have been making chyapa shuntki for generations. Puti, swamp barb like small fresh-water fish is used as the main raw material for the production of dried fish products. It is prepared by the traditional method of fermentation process and does not require much technical knowledge and its production cost is relatively low. Chyapa is an easily available source of dried meat and many people in our country use it as food for its special taste and aroma. Pressed dried fruits are an integral part of our countrys food culture. According to Alam (2007), many people are reluctant to eat because of its special smell, but once they can overcome this pungent odor and put it in their mouths, even the hard-core apathetic people are attracted to the chyapa because of its insane taste. Chyapa shuntki has magical powers to attract the consumer. People are not so addicted to any other food in Bangladesh. In addition, the semi-gajan method has been used for centuries for the conservation of small fish in Bangladesh, especially putti fish. This delicious fish product continues to play a huge role in meeting the shortage of meat during the non-fishing season and economically during the famine or manga days.

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.)

Practitioners: People from the haor areas of Bangladesh, mostly Haor areas fishermen, storekeepers, self-employed chyapa dry-fish traders both male and female.

Other tradition bearers (individuals/groups and their roles)

Local and foreign buyers, and local suppliers.

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

Language: Regional dialect of Bangla. Kishoreganj in the Haoranchal has its own local form of language.

Associated tangible elements used (if any)

Artisans, pottery, machine, earthenware utensils, trowel, polythene, sunlight, large pot or dish.

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

From the Bengali month of Ashwin to the month of Kartik and Chaitra, is the period of year when Chyapa is processed, Both the male and female workers sitting in the respective yard or makam. They get paid after 100 taka per sack. Each bag contains up to 45/50/60 kg. Usually those who are skilled in this work are employed.

Division of labour during the practice of this Heritage

The fishermen collect small, medium or large size putti fish from the haor and dry it and supply it to the storekeepers of Chappa. The women of the haor region help in drying the fishes. Women help. The dried fish are brought to the yard and stored by the storekeepers and saved by the women of the local or haor area. In exchange for a fixed wage. If they save the fish in a sack, they get 100 taka. Then the women and men workers fill the jars with putti fish oil and cover the mouths of the jars with a thick polybag lining. They cover it. In this way, the germination process lasts for three to more months. Although the minimum period is three months, the longer it lasts, the better. In this way, men and women have an equally active role in the distribution process of making chappa from putti.

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

Not applicable.

☐ Modes of transmission to others in the community

Once upon a time, the fishermen or the general community of the haor area were engaged in the work of making chyapa for generations but now it is not so common. Mr. Md. Alauddin, the chyapa-warehouse keeper of Barabazar in Kishoreganj, said, "Once upon a time, the Hindu community in Burma (Myanmar) used to make chyapa and store it in the family tradition. But now it is not same. People from any community in the society are engaged in this work only for the sake of earning money, not to carry on the tradition passed down from one generation to the next". So, it can be said that it is a tradition to make chyapa for earning money from business including warehousing of chyapa.

☐ Organizations concerned (non-governmental organizations and others)

Chyapa

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

☐ Threats to the enactment

☐ Enactment Threats Description

☐ Threats to the transmission (if any)

No.

☐ Threat to associated tangible elements and resources (if any)

Reducing of hoar areas fish day by day as a result producing of chappa decreasing ultimately. In that case, concerning people changing their profession.

☐ Viability of associated intangible elements (if any)

Making various kinds of pitha-puli,carry,foods.

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

-Raising awareness to increase fish production in Haor. -As part of the peoples economy, to keep alive the ways of the chappa process. -Proper evaluation of the concerned workers and increase of their wages. - Preserving the occupations related to the hereditary process.

☐ 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

Yes, they have.

☐ Restrictions on use of collected data, (if any)

No

☐ Section-5: Resource Person +

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

1. Md. Alauddin Owner of Mersas Momota Bhandar (godown of chyapa) 2. Azizur Rahman Owner of Mersas Tanvir Traders(godown of chyapa)

☐ Date of data collection

13-07-2020

□ Place(s) of data collection

Kishoreganj, Borobazar. Mersas Momota Vanddar.Kishoreganj

□ Section-6: Safeguarding techniques

+

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

Inventorying, making various kinds of pitha eaten with food made from chyapa shut.

□ Suggestions for safeguarding of the Heritage from the community

Creating awareness among the people of the Haor area, protection of Haor, cultivating more and more fish and dry fish.

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

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□ References to/in literature

Ahmiya.Ramchandra Chowdhury is a poet who wrote Manasamangal in Barak Valley. In his poem, Chand Saudagar crossed the sea with 'sidal' (dried fish) for trade and also described the method of making 'sidalpura'. Halkhata author M. A.Malik. In his book, Malik mentions that the Ahomis and the Tipars eat chappa or sidal. There are also a number of articles specifically about Chappa Sidal in Kishoreganj. These are:-

<https://sharebiz.net/%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%B6%E0%A7%8B%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%97%E0%A6%9E%E0%A7%E0%A6%9A%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%AF%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%AA%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B6%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%81%E0%A6%9F%E0%A6%95/>

<https://www.bhorerkagoj.com/2017/11/18/%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%B6%E0%A7%8B%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%97%E0%A6%9A%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%AF%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%AA%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%AF%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%9A/>

<http://mini.thesangbad.net/news/country/%E0%A6%86%E0%A7%9C%E0%A6%A4%E0%A7%87%20%E2%80%98%E0%A6%64323/>

<https://m.banglanews24.com/national/news/bd/172988.details>

□ Audiovisual materials or archives

□ Discography or archives

No.

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

+

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

Tanjuma Mahmud

□ Date of Community Consent

14-07-2020

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

Will be collected after COVID19

Present Condition of Heritage

Developing or Expanding

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

Section-9: Community suggestions



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

1. Better information needed to help sustain the sectors important role with respect to livelihoods and food security. 2. Further efforts required to develop viable interventions to improve working conditions, food safety and fisheries management.

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

A wide range of fieldwork has been hampered by the recent lockdown situation. Chyapa processing and seasoning is mainly carried out in Ashwin / Kartik / Chaitra months. But due to fieldwork during the current monsoon season, it was not possible to collect all the information. In addition, the scarcity of fish in the haor has also hampered the economic market as the chappa,s market has been hampered.

Section-10: Upload Document

