

Heritage Information

Unique Id:

BGD-40.50.2023.00076

Section-1: Identification of the element

Heritage Location

Division

Khulna

District

Kushtia

Upazila

Details Address

Geolocation(Latitude)

Geolocation(Longitude)

Community Category

Artists

Community

Rural

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

Ruponti performs Lathikhela, a martial art of Bengal

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

Lathi Khela is a traditional martial arts practice which involves the use of 'Bamboo' sticks called 'lathi'.

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

Rural areas of Bangladesh.

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

Despite being a woman Monjurin Sabrin Chowdhury Ruponti has excelled as a 'lathiyal' - stick player- and earned a reputation by performing in various shows in the district town. Her reputation as a lathiyal spread in 2016. In January that year country's lone organisation of the lathiyals, Bangladesh Lathiyal Bahini, organised a two-day festival at Kushtia Government College. Besides Kushtia, 500 lathials of 25 teams from various districts including Narail, Jhenaidah, Pabna, Natore, Meherpur, Chuadanga and Jashore participated in the festival. In spite of the strident expansion of global urban culture into the indigenous domain, Bangladesh is abode to a traditional martial arts practice which involves the use of

'Bamboo' sticks called Lathi Khela. It developed as an extension of martial defence skills used by native practitioners of the art known as 'lathiyals' (in Bengali) and is variously known as 'lathi-khela', 'lathi-bardi', 'sardar-khela', 'nurdi-khela'. It is an alternate profession for most of the 'lathiyals' who are mostly from marginalized, subaltern communities i.e. landless labour, carpenters, pallbearers, masons etc. From various historical sources . We are informed that in medieval Bengal 'lathikhela' used to be a highly skilled art, as most feudal lords employed groups of 'lathiyals' to defend their fiefdoms. However, due to the decline of patronization and other socio-politico-economic reasons, there was a marked waning in the practice of 'lathikhela' during the British Era till it was brought back to limelight by a highly perceptive and visionary Colonial civil servant, Gurusaday Dutta. In 1932 Dutta started the 'Bratachari' movement with the aim of preserving individual and regional cultural diversities. 'Brata' signifies a solemn or sacred purpose and 'chari' denotes one who pursues a purpose, ideal or objective. Through this movement Dutta revived many dying art forms of Bengal. In his words: 'the Movement is to bring back to humanity, in all countries, the ideal and practice of the wholeness of life which, alike in the individual, the national and the international sphere has been so grievously shattered in the modern world in every country by the fragmentary outlook on, and treatment of, life in education, science, work, play and social functioning. ' Presently, it continues to be popularly practised, but with little or no patronization. Also, there is almost no systematized method for preserving its 'content knowledge'. In the worldwide

☐ 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

☐ Practitioners(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.)

☐ Other tradition bearers (individuals/groups and their roles))

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

☐ Associated tangible elements used (if any)

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

☐ Division of labour during the practice of this Heritage

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

☐ Modes of transmission to others in the community

☐ Organizations concerned (non-governmental organizations and others)

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

□ Threats to the enactment

□ Enactment Threats Description

□ Threats to the transmission (if any)

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

□ Viability of associated intangible elements (if any)

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

□ 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

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

□ Section-5: Resource Person

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

□ Date of data collection

□ Place(s) of data collection

□ Section-6: Safeguarding techniques

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

□ Suggestions for safeguarding of the Heritage from the community

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

☐ References to/in literature

☐ Audiovisual materials or archives

☐ Discography or archives

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



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

☐ Date of Community Consent

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

☐ Present Condition of Heritage

☐ 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)

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

☐ Section-10: Upload Document



Heritage Images

