

## Heritage Information

Unique Id:

BGD-40.87.2023.00084

### Section-1: Identification of the element

#### Heritage Location

##### Division

Khulna

##### District

Satkhira

##### Upazila

##### Details Address

##### Geolocation(Latitude)

##### Geolocation(Longitude)

##### Community Category

Artists

##### Community

Rural

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

Potgan: performance and content analysis

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

As one of the elements of folk culture Potgan has been flowing with the traditions of this country. Patagan is still being used as a popular medium in South Bengal which conveys various messages to the public. This performance art falls under the domain of Performing arts.

##### 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

Potgan performed in Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Munshigonj, Narayanganj, Cumilla etc. But nowadays Khulna, Satkhira is performing contemporary contents.

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

Folk culture carriage is a unique identity of a country or region. As a element of folk culture Potgan has a rich history. Potua have been making pots in rural Bengal for a long time. These Potua painters belong to the caste. These patua are professional who make pictures and perform music for their livelihood. The content of music is based on mythological,

contemporary or folklore. From generation to generation, from village to village, these patuas carry their pots and perform it. In the past, the main feature of Khulna's Potgun which is adjacent to the Sundarbans, was the Sundarbans-based theme. Pot's narrative was based on various folk tales of the Hindu-Buddhist-Muslim community. But now the content of Potgan has expanded from the past. As before, the content of Potgan was mythology but now Potgan is served as a popular folk medium for public awareness. While conducting field survey at Shyamnagar Thana in Satkhira district, I got an opportunity to see this performance. Both men and women are in Patua community. Each group has a total of 8 to 10 artists and 4 to 5 musicians. And the chief Patua is one who narrates the events through songs to the beat of the melody. He has a stick in his hand through which he points the picture. Besides, the two patuas hold the potchitra at both ends and display the potchitra in keeping with the events of the main potgan. On the other hand, two to four people performed Potgan as well as the content of Potgan. The costumes of the potuas depend on the subject of the pot. However, in the case of dress one thing is noticeable that everyone's dress is the same, including the main potua. Usually they wear brightly colored clothing. Potgan is a combination of painting, song, dance and acting. In Satkhira district, besides mythological events, pot songs are organized in various public awareness activities. An NGO called Leaders organizes potgan at different times of the year, among other public awareness activities, such as child marriage, dowry system, climate, polio vaccination campaigns, malaria eradication, communal harmony, tree planting, raising awareness about AIDS, raising awareness about human rights, anti-women awareness etc. Musical instruments include drums, tambourines, flutes, palms, harmoniums, etc. Although the use of the flute is essential in mythological potgans, the use of the flute in contemporary event-based potgans is rare. As the days go by, the potgan that has risen from the soil of rural Bengal is becoming

#### ☐ 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.)

Both male and female are performed in Potgan. In that case gender and age issue doesn't matter. Potua Imam hossen (55) Day labour, Nilima rani(25) Student, Ratan babu (35) farmer.

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

Apart from the 2 Photos artist group, there are many roles in Kankan performances as the artists have specific costumes which are in the same color and design and the organizers sometimes create local romances to make them from local tailors in Satkhira district. Various NGOs of Satkhira district organize path songs with the students to increase social awareness. In that case, they are held one after another under the supervision of NGO.

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

The word pot comes from the Sanskrit pot which means cloth. The people of Patkhi Satkhira call the performers Patua because of the songs that are sung with pot pictures. They serve songs in the regional language.

#### ☐ Associated tangible elements used (if any)

Among the objects they use various musical instruments, sticks for directing images, pot images.

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

There is no gender discrimination in pot art. Basically, women draw pictures on cloth with the sweetness of the mind. The women in the performance team also participated fluently.

#### ☐ Division of labour during the practice of this Heritage

In this performance there is no division of labour.

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

No practices involved with access the element.

#### □ Modes of transmission to others in the community

This performance is transmitted from one generation of Potua to another. But now this generation is getting somewhat discouraged by the influence of modern culture and technology.

#### □ Organizations concerned (non-governmental organizations and others)

Some NGOs are working towards safeguarding of this performance practices. Almost lost, Potgan has returned to Khulna in a new form. Various private development agencies are now using Potgan as a means of development communication. In particular, the Khulna development agency called 'Rupantar' is playing a key role in reviving Potgan and making it a popular medium again. Also an AGO called Leaders working with potgan for awareness.

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

#### □ Threats to the enactment

##### □ Enactment Threats Description

Now this generation is getting somewhat discouraged by the influence of modern culture and technology. Though once upon a time only traditional culture was the main entertainment and educational element. One of the threat to the continued practice of this tradition is the changed of occupation of the Potua because in this profession they are not getting evaluation like before. As this performance has come down. Even doesn't perform in some areas.

#### □ Threats to the transmission (if any)

Besides, the tendency of the present generation (now educated / less educated) new generation of potua lose their interest about their hereditary occupation. On the other hand Seeing the current position of Potua no one of the new generation wants to come to this profession anymore.

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

N/A

#### □ Viability of associated intangible elements (if any)

Potchitra is associated with Potgan. Potchitra carries the folk tradition that the Patua communities have been drawing since time immemorial.

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

In Khulna division some NGOs are working towards safeguarding of this performance practices. Such as Leaders, Rupantar etc.

### □ 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

Verbal consent was obtained during the conversation with potua Imam Hossen (55), Ratan babu(35) and Nilima rani (25).

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

No restrictions were found.

### □ Section-5: Resource Person

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

Information provided from- Imam hossen. He had given information during field work. Nilima Rani. She had given the

information during pandemic by phone call.

**□ Date of data collection**

**□ Place(s) of data collection**

29/3/2019, Friday, Shymnagar thana, Satkhira zilla. 30/03/2019, Saturday, Shymnagar thana, Satkhira zilla. 18/9/2020, Saturday, phone call.

**□ Section-6: Safeguarding techniques**

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

No safeguarding techniques existing in the community.

**□ Suggestions for safeguarding of the Heritage from the community**

Potua Imam hassan said, in the past, we used to get payments from different places in a year for performance. In past time Potgan were organized on various occasions. But now we are not in the previous ssituation . We don't have to go to another profession if we get the same demand as before.

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

**□ References to/in literature**

1.Prothom Alo, Potchitrer Nogar Songskoron, by Moloy bala, June 09, 2017. 2.  
<https://www.banglanews24.com/#>

3.Wekipedia.

**□ Audiovisual materials or archives**

N/A

**□ Discography or archives**

N/A

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

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

Armin Hossen of ACEEPH will be supporting this traditional Potgan.

**□ Date of Community Consent**

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

Consent from Nilima rani,Imam hossen, ratan babu.

**□ Present Condition of Heritage**

Threatened with extinction

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

Threatened with extinction

## □ Section-9: Community suggestions

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

1. Government should take more step for the existence of this performance and for this it is needed to give the potua community sufficient financial support. 2. Encouragement / motivation program among the Potua community. 3. In order to encourage future performance it is essential to spread awareness and importance about folk culture. 4. In modern media this performance should be telecast so that new generation can be know about our traditional culture. 5. As a traditional intangible culture it is also needed to include in text book . 6. Nowadays social media plays an important role in communication. So on social media it can be shown as a traditional element.

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

No restrictions.

## □ Section-10: Upload Document