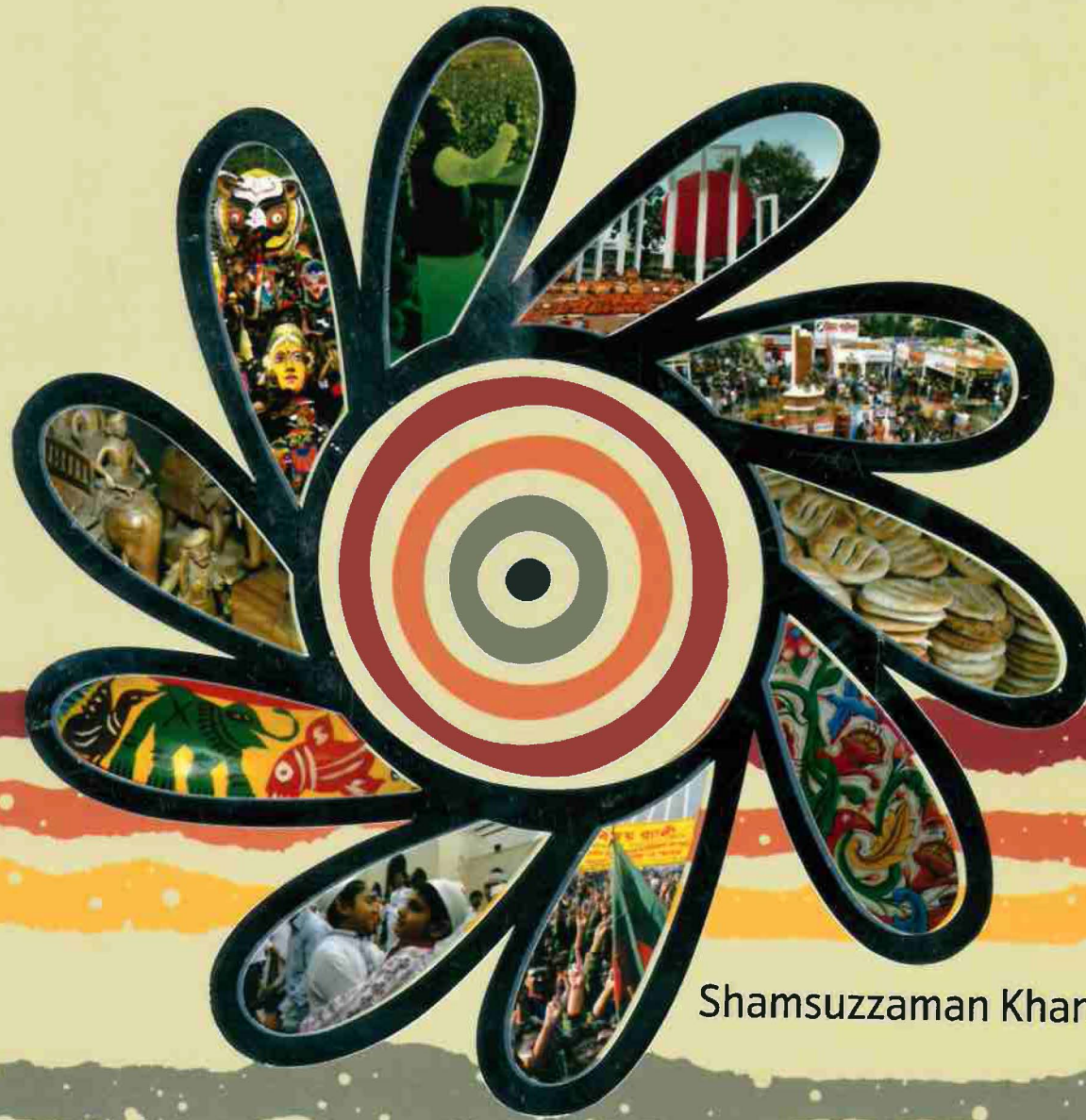


# TEN ELEMENTS OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF BANGLADESH



Reçu CLT / CIH / ITH  
Le 21 SEP. 2017  
N° 0420

Shamsuzzaman Khan • Firoz Mahmud • Shahida Khatun

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# Ten Elements of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Bangladesh

A Study Based on the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding  
of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Shamsuzzaman Khan | Firoz Mahmud | Shahida Khatun



Bangla Academy

Programmes on Bangla Language and Literature  
Preparing Dictionaries Researches and Publications  
Funded by Ministry of Cultural Affairs  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Project Director Mobarak Hossain  
Fiscal Year 2015-2016. Serial 66

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Cover Design Sabyasachi Hazra

Lay Out and Book Design Shahida Khatun

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Pictures

Murshid Anwar

Mohammed Mozammel Huq  
and Different Sources

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Published by

**Shahida Khatun**

Director

Folklore, Museums and Archives Division  
Bangla Academy, Dhaka, Bangladesh

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Printed by

Aminur Rahman Sultan

Manager, Bangla Academy Press

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Print Run 500

Date of Publication June 2016

B.A 5550

Price Taka 400.00 only, US \$ 50

ISBN 984-07-5559-5



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Bangla Academy staff offering a flower-wreath at the National Memorial on the occasion of Victory Day





# The Rickshaw and Rickshaw Painting in Dhaka City

Firoz Mahmud

## Basic Information:

### State Party

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs representing the People's Republic of Bangladesh

### Name of the element in English

The Rickshaw and Rickshaw Painting in Dhaka City

### Name of the element in the language and script of the community concerned

ঢাকা নগরীর রিকশা ও রিকশাচিত্র

### Other name(s) of the element, if any

The Rickshaw and Rickshaw Art in Dhaka City

### Name of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned with the element

The rickshaw owners, the rickshaw *mistris*, the rickshaw artists, the rickshaw pullers, and the rickshaw connoisseurs and art lovers, all of whom live in Dhaka City, are the communities or groups concerned with the element. The rickshaw owners own the rickshaws. A rickshaw owner owns as many rickshaws as he can afford. The rickshaw *mistris* are the skilled workers who are capable of doing structural and artistic work for the purpose of framing, installing, decorating and painting a rickshaw body onto a rickshaw sub-frame. The rickshaw artists fall into two groups: those who paint on plastic sheets and those who paint on plates of corrugated iron. Each rickshaw is pulled by one person who rents it from a rickshaw owner on a daily basis; therefore, the rickshaw pullers form the largest community. The rickshaw connoisseurs and art lovers are a large supportive community.





### **Geographical location and range of the element**

The element is present throughout Dhaka City where rickshaws are now most numerous. Dhaka City is the Capital of Bangladesh. It stands on the Buriganga River. Bangladesh, located in South Asia between India and Myanmar, now consists of 64 districts. The rickshaw now appears in all cities, towns and suburbs of every district. Even though the geographical range of the rickshaw and rickshaw painting is the whole of Bangladesh, the most prolific and predominant center of the same is Dhaka City. The rickshaws of Dhaka City, apart from being most decorative and dazzling, depict all the known themes of rickshaw painting. More importantly, Dhaka City represents the best specimens of rickshaw painting in Bangladesh.

#### **Five criteria for inclusion in this inventory:**

#### **1. The element constitutes a constituent of the intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention.**

##### **1A. Domain(s) of the Intangible Cultural Heritage as defined in Article 2.2 of the Convention**

The element is related to the following two domains of the intangible cultural heritage:

Social practices, rituals and festive events

Traditional craftsmanship

##### **1B. A brief summary description of the element**

The rickshaw, a human-propelled transport on three wheels, is an outstanding feature of Dhaka City. Rickshaw craftsmanship has been highly renowned for its traditional process of fashioning the rickshaw by hand. Every part of a rickshaw is decorated and painted. Tassels, tinsel and twirling bits hang from its different parts. Some parts are pinned in bright patterns. Plastic flowers sprout in the front and on sides. Dhaka City's Rickshaw painting is the most enthralling representation of transport art in the world. Painting is the embodiment of the rickshaw as it is seen all over its body. Part of the aluminum sheathing and the entire rectangular plate of corrugated iron, both appearing at the rickshaw's back, have pictures elegantly painted. Being efficient and convenient as a mode of transport for short distances and highly decorative with thematic pictures the rickshaws have become significant and attractive. As the rickshaw is a slow-moving vehicle, the paintings that it

carries are easily visible to the onlookers who can enjoy them fairly well even in the movement. The moving rickshaws are viewed as a roving exhibition of paintings—a mobile panorama which is seen nowhere else in the world. The rickshaws with its decorations and paintings create such a pervasive and emblematic feature of urban life in Dhaka City that it has given birth to social practices, rituals and festive events. New rickshaws are always a blaze of colors and paintings in Dhaka City, which is rightly called the Rickshaw Capital of the World.

##### **1C. Who are the bearers and practitioners of the element and what do they do?**

The bearers and practitioners of the element are the rickshaw *mistris* (craftsmen) and the rickshaw artists. The rickshaw *mistris* work in the rickshaw workshops, each of which is owned by a master rickshaw *mistri*. Mohammad Sahabuddin, popularly known as Tekka Mistri, has been a renowned master rickshaw *mistri* for twenty-three years. A rickshaw is fashioned according to a process. Five rickshaw *mistris* participate in the process in a sequential manner. Usually two of them frame a rickshaw body and then install it onto a rickshaw sub-frame, one of them decorates it, and two of them paint floral and animal motifs on various parts including the aluminum sheathing of the rickshaw. The rickshaw artists, commissioned by the master rickshaw *mistri*, work at home, as they do not paint anything on a rickshaw body. They paint exquisite floral motifs on plastic sheets and thematic pictures on plates of corrugated iron. They deliver these to the master rickshaw *mistri*. The master rickshaw *mistri* then selects a few painted plastic sheets and only one painted plate. He sizes the painted plastic sheets. His equipment is a sewing machine. He sews the painted plastic sheets. He also uses scissors and templates for cutting out patterns of plastic tacks. Once the plate with a thematic picture is placed above the rickshaw's bumpers and all the painted plastic sheets and patterns of plastic tacks are used to embellish the rickshaw's hood, the final product is a gorgeously decorated and painted rickshaw.

##### **1D. How are the knowledge and skills related to the element transmitted today?**

The knowledge and skills related to the element are of two categories: (1) the knowledge and skills relating to rickshaw craftsmanship and (2) the knowledge and skills of the rickshaw artists. The knowledge and skills relating





Decorating a rickshaw in an atelier



Painting a rickshaw in an atelier

to rickshaw craftsmanship are transmitted by word of mouth and practical demonstration by the experienced rickshaw *mistris* (craftsmen) to the apprentices in a rickshaw workshop. The master rickshaw *mistri* hires the apprentices. As the traditional process of fashioning the rickshaw is further perfected and developed in a rickshaw workshop, the master rickshaw *mistri* plays a leading role in the transmission of the knowledge and skills. While the apprentices get trained in the process of working with the experienced *mistris*, they acquire competence by diligent habit and constant practice which cannot be codified in written words. The rickshaw artists transmit their knowledge and skills to the apprentices by applying the hands-on-training method. Acquisition of the required knowledge and skills by the apprentices is largely based on a teacher-pupil relationship and is mostly dependent on imitation and incorporation of gestures. Creativity is achieved by the apprentices through enjoyment and devotion to work. The rickshaw artists usually pass on their knowledge and skills to their children and close relatives. While all the rickshaw *mistris* are men, the rickshaw artists are both men and women.

**1E. What social and cultural functions and meanings does the element have today for its communities, groups or individuals?**

The rickshaw and rickshaw painting characterize Dhaka City and its residents' identity. As the element has been practiced and transmitted with spontaneous zeal and visceral passion, it has become an established part of this city's cultural tradition.

Rickshaw painting is a dynamic form of urban folk art. As a key part of the urban landscape in Dhaka City, gorgeously decorated and painted rickshaws have been the subject of films and other artwork. With colorful floral patterns, natural imagery, birds and animals, creative depictions of historical events, fables, heroes or movie stars, and words of precept, rickshaw painting provides the bearers and practitioners with a sense of identity and continuity. To the general public, rickshaw painting, being colorful and stunning, is eye-catching. Its thematic pictures tell stories of Bangladesh, of everyday life, of what the rickshaw artists treasure as a kaleidoscopic view of their imagination. The rickshaws spread colors all around and add a notch of vibrancy to the otherwise mundane streets. The brilliance of rickshaw painting lies in its innocence and in the manifestation of imaginative power.

Rickshaw painting is so popular that the connoisseurs and art lovers occasionally sponsor exhibitions of rickshaw art. Recently a Grand Rickshaw Race was held in Dhaka City as part of the Dhaka Rickshaw Fiesta Week.



**1F. Is there any part of the element that is not compatible with existing international human rights instruments or with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, or with sustainable development?**

No part of the element is compatible with existing international human rights instruments or with the requirement of mutual respect among the communities, groups and individuals concerned, or with sustainable development. It is worth mentioning here that this human-propelled conveyance on three wheels, so crucial to the practice and transmission of the element, is the cheapest, most convenient and absolutely pollution-free transport of Dhaka City. It is also the most popular mode of transport for short distances. In spite of a steady rise in motorized vehicles in the city its residents demand the continuity of the rickshaw. Even though rickshaw craftsmanship is laborious and may seem eccentric with respect to the dynamics of a globalized market, its presence symbolizes a unique culture of hard work and cooperation.

**2. Inclusion of the element in this inventory will contribute to ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and to encouraging dialogue, thus reflecting cultural diversity worldwide and testifying to human creativity.**

**2A. How can the inclusion of the element in this inventory contribute to the visibility of the intangible cultural heritage in general and raise awareness of its importance at the local, national and international levels?**

The element is valued by the communities, groups and individuals concerned. The inclusion of the element in this inventory will definitely strengthen the objective of the bearers and practitioners to use their traditional knowledge and skills as an example of their social and cultural identity. This assumes a symbolic significance and enormous relevance for achieving the goals of the 2003 Convention of UNESCO. Because of the writings of foreign scholars like Rob Gallagher, Joanna Kirkpatrick and Henry Glassie who have studied the element extensively, it is being appreciated beyond Bangladesh. Since the 1980s foreign residents in Bangladesh and tourists have been buying thematic pictures of rickshaw painting from the rickshaw artists. The inclusion of the element in this inventory will, therefore, contribute to the visibility of the intangible cultural heritage in general and raise awareness of its importance at the local, national and international levels.

**2B. How can the inclusion of the element in this inventory encourage dialogue among communities, groups and individuals?**

The communities, groups and individuals involved strongly hold that rickshaw painting possesses symbolic as well as decorative power. While the rickshaw owners love to embellish their rickshaws with all sorts of decoration, the rickshaw *mistris* spend time and energy to enrich and stimulate their ingenuity and inventiveness with a view to satisfying their clients. The rickshaw artists, on the other hand, visualize new themes to demonstrate their creativity and imagination. The rickshaw pullers, though mostly illiterate, enjoy interpreting thematic pictures in their own ways when asked. The inclusion of the element in this inventory could, therefore, encourage dialogue among the communities, groups and individuals involved.

Moreover, with the inclusion, positive openness to share knowledge could be displayed as a further example of dialogue among diverse groups and individuals. The inscription would certainly also weigh on the conscience and responsibility of those involved in promoting the element to stimulate such dialogue.

**2C. How can inclusion promote respect for cultural diversity and human creativity?**

While rickshaw craftsmanship requires a high level of precision and expertise, rickshaw painting requires a high level of vision and creativity. To promote rickshaw craftsmanship and rickshaw painting is to defend cultural diversity and human creativity. Inclusion of the element would then promote respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

The element is at the centre of many social and cultural practices, rituals and events: musical performances, exhibitions, seminars, workshops, fairs and awards. Inclusion would then assure a reinforcement of the international awareness of the importance of cultural diversity and human creativity.

The rickshaw *mistris* are proud of their association with the element and are committed to improving and refining their craftsmanship. On the other hand, the rickshaw artists are proud of their creativity. Inclusion would certainly inspire them beyond measure to carry on the established tradition to earn respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

**3. Safeguarding measures that are elaborated may protect and promote the element.**

**3A. How is the viability of the element being ensured by the concerned communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals? What past and current initiatives have they taken in this regard?**

The element has survived due to the ingenuity and inventiveness of the rickshaw *mistris* on the one hand and due to the vision and creativity of the rickshaw artists on the other. The experienced rickshaw *mistris* and the master rickshaw artists have been successfully passing on their knowledge and skills to the succeeding generations.

The rickshaw consists of a rickshaw sub-frame and a rickshaw body. The rickshaw sub-frame comprises the forward portion of a bicycle, trailing two wheels, and two solid springs. Even when the cost of production was high the rickshaw *mistris* (craftsmen) succeeded in fashioning rickshaws in thousands. The rickshaw sub-frame is locally made of imported iron. All

the materials required to frame a rickshaw body are now locally produced. The rickshaw *mistris* are maintaining the viability of rickshaw craftsmanship quite successfully.

Alinoor, Ahmed Hussain, Alauddin Ahmed, R. K. Das and Abdul Latif were icons in rickshaw painting in the past. They were a source of inspiration to the emerging rickshaw artists. At present Syed Ahmed Hossain, S. M. Samsu, Dherendra Chandra Das, Rafiqul Islam, Tapan Das and Saleh Mohammed are icons in rickshaw painting. They have visualized new themes to paint thematic pictures. Consequently rickshaw painting has been enriched. They are now using better enamel paints and superior brushes. The new generation of rickshaw artists is emerging under their leadership.

**3B. Identify the safeguarding measures that have been and are currently being taken by the communities, groups or individuals concerned:**

- Transmission, particularly through formal non-formal education
- Preservation, protection



Rafiqul Islam, a master artist, painting a thematic picture for a rickshaw



Tekka Mistri sewing plastic sheets in his atelier



The writer collecting information from Rafiqul Islam



Promotion, enhancement

Revitalization

**3C. How has the State Party safeguarded the element? Specify external or internal constraints, such as limited resources. What are its past and current efforts in this regard?**

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs of the Government of Bangladesh supports cultural activity through various statutory institutions or organizations. Funding for cultural activity has increased substantially.

In 1980, the Dhaka Museum (now the Bangladesh National Museum) embarked upon a project for the photographic documentation of rickshaw painting, but it did not lead to any publication due to resource constraint.

Since 1999 there has been a growing appreciation of rickshaw craftsmanship and rickshaw painting in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh National Museum collaborated with the Alliance Francaise in organizing a month-long exhibition of rickshaw and other paintings of 83 artists. This exhibition began at the gallery of the Alliance Francaise in Dhaka City on 2 October 1999. Obaidul Quader, State Minister, Ministry of Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs, was the chief guest. France Lasnier, Director of the Alliance Francaise, handed over the 560 rickshaw and other paintings of 83 artists to the Bangladesh National Museum on 29 February 2000.

Bangla Academy published Henry Glassie's *Traditional Art of Dhaka* in 2000. This book contains a study on rickshaw craftsmanship and rickshaw painting.

At the invitation of the Bangladesh National Museum Henry Glassie and Firoz Mahmud conducted extensive fieldwork for creating a superb collection that could be organized into an exhibition on Contemporary Traditional Art of Bangladesh. This exhibition, which opened on 21 May 2000 at the Bangladesh National Museum, included items of rickshaw painting and a highly decorated rickshaw. This project resulted in a publication that includes rickshaw craftsmanship and rickshaw painting.

**3D. Identify the safeguarding measures that have been and are currently being taken by the State Party with regard to the element:**

Transmission, particularly through formal non-formal education

Identification, documentation, research



Thematic rickshaw paintings





Thematic rickshaw paintings

- Preservation, protection
- Promotion, enhancement
- Revitalization

**3E. What measures are proposed to help to ensure that the element's viability is not jeopardized in the future?**

In their free, prior, explicit and informed consent to the inclusion of the element in this inventory the bearers and practitioners of the element have given much emphasis on improving the rickshaw's technology. They have strongly asserted that the rickshaw's current design has to be improved. Most of the rickshaw's current faults stem from the fact that it is a tricycle made out of bicycle components. A tricycle is a different vehicle—its steering, balancing and wheel tracking are all different. The rickshaws in Dhaka City are also used for carrying goods. A rickshaw often carries almost half a ton in weight. For this reason, many of the bicycle components used in the rickshaws make them unsuitable for this job that the rickshaws are often supposed to do. On the other hand, the rickshaw's high profile and high centre of gravity cause several problems. For example, the high profile causes severe wind resistance and restricts the rickshaw puller's rear view, while the high centre of gravity makes the rickshaw more liable to topple over. These problems originate from a common cause—the design of the passenger seat and hood. It is worthwhile to examine the Comilla rickshaw. Comilla is a town in eastern Bangladesh, not far from Dhaka City. Nevertheless the Comilla rickshaw is much different in design. It is identified mainly by its wider seat and squared-off hood shape. According to Tekka Mistri, the Comilla rickshaw is more comfortable for the passengers but tiring for the rickshaw puller. The Dhaka City's rickshaw is uncomfortable for the passengers but relaxing for the rickshaw puller. We suggest that the government commission a team of mechanical engineers to review the problems cited above in order to improve the rickshaw's technology.

The Dhaka City Rickshaw Hood Body Maker Welfare Association should continue to strive to safeguard the professional and economic interests of the rickshaw *mistris*. The master rickshaw artists should continue to join hands to organize exhibitions of their works featuring a wide range of themes. They should also collaborate with the connoisseurs and art lovers to participate in workshops and related events. The rickshaw owners, the rickshaw *mistris*, the rickshaw artists, and the rickshaw pullers should all be encouraged to



participate in social practices, rituals and festivals so that they can feel the uniqueness of the cultural heritage that the element has shaped so profoundly.

It is also of utmost importance to set up a training school for the master rickshaw *mistris* to help them formalize and consolidate their role in the realization of activities and programs and update and deepen their technical and cultural knowledge relating to rickshaw craftsmanship.

The Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) should aim at building conditions of cultural ferment and sharing of values between the practitioners and the civil society in a perspective of refreshing paradigms of cultural assets of the communities, groups and individuals concerned.

Motor-vehicles are rapidly increasing in Dhaka City. Car restraint and priority to public transport are essential to deal with traffic congestion. More separate lanes should be provided for rickshaws.

The uniqueness of Dhaka City's gorgeous rickshaw and rickshaw painting must be protected. To ensure this protection, the Bangladesh National Museum and the Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation must be active in promoting the element by holding exhibitions and publishing catalogues. These two institutions should collect a few gorgeous rickshaws each and should keep on collecting representative specimens of rickshaw painting, especially thematic pictures painted on plates of corrugated iron. Gorgeous rickshaws should be put on display in museums. The Folk Heritage Museum of Bangla Academy should embark upon an ethnographic survey to collect information and specimens relating to rickshaw craftsmanship and rickshaw painting and should publish an illustrated book.

Identification, documentation and research are of great importance for proper and scientific preservation and understanding of rickshaw craftsmanship and rickshaw painting. Researchers need to study the history of the element and to identify the problems that affected the prospects of rickshaw painting in the past and might affect now and in the future. It may be mentioned that during a short period of time human imagery was banned in rickshaw painting for political reasons. The rickshaw artists reacted so sharply that they introduced animal imagery in such a way that animals started behaving like human beings in rickshaw painting. When human imagery came back in full vigour, animal imagery remained in use and it still remains. Researchers have discussed this interesting episode both at home and abroad. In this way

researchers can enlighten the connoisseurs and art lovers to stand by the rickshaw artists in times of crisis.

### **3F. Implementation of the proposed safeguarding measures by the State Party**

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs is expected to request the Ministry of Industry to commission a team of mechanical engineers to review the problems relating to the rickshaw's current design and to make recommendations to improve the rickshaw's technology. The Dhaka City Municipal Corporations, in collaboration with the Roads Division of the Ministry of Communication, is expected to improve the network of roads in Dhaka City to provide more separate lanes for rickshaws. The Ministry of Social Welfare is expected to set up a training centre for the master rickshaw *mistris* to help them update and deepen their technical and cultural knowledge pertaining to rickshaw craftsmanship. The Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) is expected to build conditions of cultural ferment so that the practitioners of the element can share ideas and views with the civil society in a perspective of refreshing paradigms of cultural assets of the communities, groups and individuals concerned.

The rickshaw is a vehicle for transmitting the indigenous art or painting. Therefore, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs is expected to implement the proposed safeguarding measures through the Bangladesh National Museum and the Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation. Researchers of these two institutions and of Bangla Academy and the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh will ensure the viability of the element both as a component of cultural identity and as a dynamic aspect of urban folk art. All these institutions will organize lectures, seminars, workshops and exhibitions relating to the element with adequate publicity. These institutions will also strive to publish catalogues, books and articles. A doctoral dissertation on the element will be an outstanding feature of the all the initiatives and efforts. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs is expected to provide the funds needed.

### **3G. Implementation of the proposed safeguarding measures by the communities, groups or individuals concerned**

The communities, groups or individuals concerned are always committed to safeguarding the element not only because it provides them with a steady source of income or employment but also because it gives them a sense of

pride, unity and continuity. They are willing to participate in the process of improving the rickshaw's technology. Through their mentors they will update and deepen their technical and cultural knowledge pertaining to rickshaw craftsmanship or rickshaw painting. They will welcome any plan to arrest traffic congestion. They will take part in dialogue with the civil society to understand the proposed safeguarding measures and participate in their implementation. They will encourage the promotion of the element through rickshaw art exhibitions, musical performances, rituals, fairs and events like the Dhaka Rickshaw Fiesta Week 2013 and the Rickshaw Race of 15 March 2013. The Dhaka City Rickshaw Hood Body Maker Welfare Association will continue to strive to safeguard the professional and economic interests of the rickshaw *mistris*. The master rickshaw artists will continue to get together to organize exhibitions of their works featuring a wide range of themes. They will also collaborate with the connoisseurs and art lovers to participate in workshops.

Finally, the communities, groups or individuals concerned will collaborate with researchers and give them access to their workshops or studios, providing information and giving interviews. They will also allow photographic and video coverage of their structural, artistic or creative work. In short, they will contribute as much as possible to proper and scientific identification and documentation.

**4. The element has been nominated for inclusion in this inventory following the widest possible participation of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior, explicit and informed consent.**

**4A. Participation of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned and their free, prior, explicit and informed consent**

During 2005-2006 the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh undertook a cultural survey funded by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. The purpose of the survey



Rickshaws carrying passengers



Dhaka, The Rickshaw Capital of the World





stakeholders. These meetings provided opportunities to the bearers and practitioners to express their opinions and voice their concerns.

From the government side, in addition to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangla Academy, the Bangladesh National Museum, the Bangladesh Folk Arts and Crafts Foundation, and the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation contributed directly or indirectly to this nomination process.

#### **4B. Respect for customary practices governing access to the element**

Access to all aspects of the element is open. There are no customary practices governing access to the element. The rickshaw workshops are open to visitors. Visits to the rickshaw workshops are encouraged by the rickshaw *mistris* (craftsmen) as visitors are fascinated by the traditional process of fashioning and decorating a rickshaw. The rickshaw artists work at home. With prior appointment a visitor can observe a rickshaw artist painting on a plastic sheet or on a plate of corrugated iron. One can buy a painting directly from a rickshaw artist.

#### **5. The element included in this inventory is of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory of the State Party (the People's Republic of Bangladesh) as defined in Articles 11 and 12 of the Convention.**

It is worth mentioning here that in 2005-2006 the State Party (the Ministry of Cultural Affairs of the People's Republic of Bangladesh) commissioned a cultural survey to prepare an inventory of the Cultural Heritage of Bangladesh. The results of the survey were published in 12 volumes in 2007. The State Party formally adopted the volumes as the national inventory of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The 11<sup>th</sup> volume entitled *Living Traditions* includes different elements of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Bangladesh. THE RICKSHAW and RICKSHAW PAINTING IN DHAKA CITY was included in this volume. It may be mentioned here that the 11<sup>th</sup> volume was accepted as the national inventory of Bangladesh when Traditional Art of Jamdani Weaving was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on 4

December 2013. We have now updated the information pertaining to the element in the inventory mentioned below.

The element is of the intangible cultural heritage present in Bangladesh. The element has been included in the inventory entitled *Ten Elements of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Bangladesh: A Study Based on the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* published by Bangla Academy which is a National Academy of Arts and Letters (created by an Act of Parliament of the People's Republic of Bangladesh). Bangla Academy, governed by its Council, is a statutory organization of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the State Party. The inclusion of the element in this inventory is based on the free, prior, explicit and informed consent of many bearers and practitioners in Dhaka City.

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