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The Bangladesh Monitor

JOURNAL ON ● AVIATION ● TOURISM ● HOTEL & RESTAURANT ● CARGO & SHIPPING ● BANKING

April 1-15, 2010

An exhibition of 'Traditional Boats of BD' is now on at national museum

—A Monitor Report

Dhaka : Friendship-a NGO has organised another exhibition titled 'Traditional Boats of Bangladesh.' from March 23, 2010 at the Nolinikanto Bhattashali Exhibition Hall at the National Museum.

Sponsored by AB Bank, the exhibition will end on 19th April 2010. The exhibition is displaying different aspects of traditional boats, including scale models, the building of the boats and the livelihood associated with boat-building. The aim of the exhibition to allow people not only to admire the beauty and craftsmanship of these collectible items,

but also to understand their unique influence making them entirely unique, while the sea-going vessels had some influence but managed to put local twists to the designs, making them very Bengali. For thousands of years, boats and boat-building were a

crucial part of the life of Bangladesh and with the arrival of the diesel engines, this patrimony is on the verge of extinction. Not one large wooden boat has been built in the rivers of Bangladesh over the last decade and the thousands of years of technology is no longer passed on from generation to generation. Thus, most of today's master boat-builders are the last generation of carpenters.

Fearing the loss of such an important and inimitable heritage, Friendship took the initiative to save not only the last of the boats and the



Friendship and AB Bank jointly announced holding of an exhibition on Traditional Boats of Bangladesh. Seen in the picture are Yves Marre, Runa Khan, Shamim A. Chowdhury and Zaved Tariq among others —Photo : Monitor

As part of the Cultural Preservation programme, Friendship undertook the task of making exact to-scale models of the 50 types of boats that have been documented so far, and reconstructed and renovated life-scale boats including a palowari, shampam, and now extinct patham. To create awareness, it also organises exhibitions on

Traditional Boats of Bangladesh at home and abroad.

In 2005 and 2006, Friendship organised exhibitions at the National Museum and Bengal Gallery, respectively. Additionally, there have been 4 exhibitions in Europe, including one in the Maritime Museum in Paris and another at the prestigious Salon Nautique de Paris. Preparation

for another 3-month long exhibition in Luxembourg is underway.

AB Bank, the sponsor for the exhibition, is the first private sector banking initiative in Bangladesh. The bank has taken initiatives to promote the heritage of Bangladesh. One such initiative is the sponsoring of the exhibition 'Traditional Boats of Bangladesh', which is organised by Friendship.