Khudro Nri-Goshthi Museum in Rangamati: Engagement of Ethnic Communities

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Abstract: Rangamati district is an important center of ethnic groups especially the hilly tribes locally addressed as "*Pahari*" people. "Khudra-Nrigosthi Museum" is located at Rangamati, one of the hill districts of Bangladesh. The research question was how this museum is dealing with its communities for representing their culture and lifeways to understand the engagement of ethnic communities with the museum. Fieldwork was undertaken at Khudra-Nrigosthi Museum and surveyed the local ethnic communities through questionnaires and interviews. This field investigation tried to open a new door for the cultural representation of communities through an ethnoarchaeological study conducted and connecting the Rangamati Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum located at Rangamati Upazila along with different ethnic communities residing at Rangamati which will contribute the development of the museum and break these barriers to give them an idea about the diverse cultures hidden in the hills of Bangladesh to promote diversity and social inclusion.
Keyword: Museum and Community Engagement, Ethnic Culture, Ethnic Community

1. Introduction:

The "Khudra-Nrigosthi Museum" is located in Rangamati town one of the three hilly districts of Bangladesh. The museum is one of the important tourist attractions of Rangmati town. This museum represents the history, culture, heritage, and traditions as well as the socio-economic aspects of the people of different ethnic communities of Chittagong hill tracts of Bangladesh. The Museum exhibits include life-size models of the people of different ethnic communities with their traditional costumes, textile outfits, jewelry, traditional musical instruments, coins, sculptures made of wood and metal, utensils, art and crafts, and paintings based on ethnic culture and lifeways. This museum is an organ of the Khudra-Nrigosthi Cultural Institute of Rangamati which was established in 1978. It is an autonomous institution. It was handed over to the Rangamati district council on the 1st of May 1993.

Firstly, a field visit was undertaken at the Khudra-Nrigosthi Museum then surveyed the local ethnic communities through questionnaires. At the time of the field visit at the Khudra-Nrigosthi Museum, we have undertaken interviews with the employees and studied the documentation system of the museum. We also commenced an ethnological study on the ethnic communities around Rangamati based on collections displayed at the museum. We also explored the issue of representation at the museum while interviewing the museum employees and different ethnic community members.

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Human settlements have developed in Bangladesh from the distant past, as evidenced by the numerous important archeological sites of different periods located in different parts of the country. Rangamati district is an important center of ethnic groups especially the hilly tribes locally addressed as "Pahari" people. They have the distinctive cultural heritage of this country. Many small ethnic communities are living in this area. There are three ethnic cultural Institutions and museums in three hilly districts of Bangladesh. The most prominent one is at Rangamati district headquarters to preserve and represent the historical evidence of the land, people and, their culture and heritage.

As we know, archaeology as a discipline deals with the history of mankind by studying material remains and a museum is a permanent institution to preserve, conserve, research, and display the material evidence of the people for education and enjoyment. To understand the role and function of a museum, surveying is the primary step of the study. The methods of surveying, Ethno-archaeology, and ethnographic study of people can be utilized to understand museum-community interactions. Ethno-archaeology opens a new door to understanding the material evidence of past people. On one hand, it helps us gather a huge amount of information from the people of a specific region.

It also creates the opportunity of communicating with new people and new societies. This is where this format of surveying stands out from the other ones and becomes very significant to us. Archaeology and Museology as a discipline, gives us the golden opportunity of mixing up with people of different cultures and knowing their engagement with the institution closely.

Museum study is a major part of visual studies. We need to learn how to manage museums, curate, document and organize the display of museum properties, the collections related to the achievement of humankind for education and enjoyment. It is important to understand the role and functions of museums in society ((Ambrose and Paine 2006).. It makes it responsible to find out if the museums are properly projecting necessary information and artifacts of the engaged communities and cultures.

A field survey was undertaken at Rangamati to study Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum, documented their collections on display, and find out strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as an organization. Visiting the Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum of Rangamati Hill district allowed us to do this extensive field research. Interviewing the visitors, local communities and museum staff helped out to learn what the museum is projecting, what they are representing, and what lacking they have. This fieldwork has rebuilt perspectives during visiting Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum and engaging with local communities.

To date, ethnoarchaeology's contribution to the study of intangible heritage has received very little attention. There are surprisingly few ethnoarchaeological studies that specifically address the less obvious traces of past and present society. Non-material evidence is becoming more and more important in archaeological theories and methodologies for investigating the meaning and value of artifacts, resources, and settlement patterns. Due to its unique traits, ethnoarchaeology can successfully advance the study of living civilizations' intangible cultural legacy and highlight its significance to the study of those of the past. (Biagetti et al., 2016). Thus, such fieldwork needs tremendous attention. This field investigation tried to open a new door for the cultural representation of communities through an ethnoarchaeological study conducted and

connecting the Rangamati Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum located at Rangamati Upazila along with different ethnic communities residing at Rangamati.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

This research aims to analyze the community engagement with the Rangamati Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum. The main objective of the investigation is to determine the engagement of the ethnic communities of Rangamati through ascertaining their representation by proper observation and interviewing. The general objectives are:

To determination of the knowledge of the local communities related to the museum and its history and their portrayal within it.

To identification of ways for associating or connecting the community with the Khudro Nri-Goshthir museum.

To distinguish opportunities and challenges of engagement between the community and the museum.

1.2 Methodology

The methodology is very crucial for any research. The methods of any survey or investigation for research depend heavily on the objectives it was designed to achieve. It is possible to combine both theoretical and practical knowledge used in any research through field-level surveys or studies. The practical application of theoretical knowledge is recognized as a very important issue. So, we have to determine the objectives of our research by synthesizing and analyzing various types of pre-data before conducting field-level research. Neither one should expect a survey to be completely accurate at its first attempt nor can a researcher bring out the total within a short period. All they can do is collect the best data that goes perfectly with their aims. And for that, The strategies and techniques adopted to carry out a survey must be in line with its objectives or intent. It is necessary to plan the whole strategy and methods based on the research aims and objectives before conducting the research.

So, considering this we decided our aim for conducting this filed investigation and presented one main objective and three general objectives under it.

Collection of data: The collection of data includes interviewing the local communities, collecting demographic information, geographical information, and ethnographic study.

Determining the representation: To observe and document whether the museum is representing all the ethnic communities and if it is over or under-representing any of them.

Determining the challenges and opportunities: Interviews with visitors and museum staff can be useful for determining what challenges are faced while working in the museum if there is any lacking. Determining what doors of opportunities, the museum can open for the local communities by engaging them. Undertake SWOT Analysis.

The method followed in this particular research work depends on the basic practices of Ethnoarchaeology and ethnology. The methodology included various types of activities like interviewing, observation, interviewing, documentation, etc. Ethnoarchaeology deals with communication. So, the entire fieldwork mostly depended upon conversations and discussion. Besides, literature was studied to gain primary knowledge. The later part included the proper archiving of the gathered data and giving them a readable form, which can later be used for further research work. The entire project was divided into three different parts for the convenience of research. They are:

Pre-survey work: Pre-survey work included the formation of a questionnaire of three different kinds. Firstly, for the local ethnic communities. For them, the questionnaire was formed very cautiously with proper supervision, so that it does not include any questions that can hurt the feelings of ethnic minorities. Ethnic minorities have a long history of oppression and most people of plainland have stereotypical thinking about their culture. So, we needed to be careful regarding the sensitive questions.

Secondly, the questionnaire was formed for the museum general visitors, and thirdly, for the museum staffs. Pre-survey work also included studying available pieces of literature. We studied different ethnic groups in our survey and gathered them to study. We also reached out to different ethnic community students studying at universities and tried to gather the necessary information before going to the fieldwork. Maps of the survey area were collected and studied as well.

Fieldwork: Fieldwork is the part where research is undertaken at the field level to collect the raw data for the research work. As a part of the fieldwork, we visited the Khudro Nri-goshthir Museum. The basic purpose of visiting the museum was to document it, find necessary internal documents of the museum, collect published literature from the museum library, and interview visitors and museum staff. Visiting the museum, we also focused on finding out if anything was missing and if any particular community(s) were being under or overrepresented. We also went to different villages to meet local communities and interviewed them. We tried to form in-depth conversations in an interactive way with the target of knowing their involvement and representation in the museum. In this way, we also got to know the culture and lifestyle of different ethnic communities closely.

Post-survey work: post-survey work includes the proper archiving of gathered information and documents, further study of them, and preserving them for further research works. Publishing field report is very important. A preliminary report is prepared and kept as a copy, gathered information, and publish in a journal in such a way that it stays there forever and helps future researchers.

Fieldwork is very challenging. The researcher might lose any link to the information due to any dilemma. So, we had to work in a very quick manner while gathering the information on the field. The researcher has to organize this scattered information and compile them together inside one document properly. Otherwise, the research loses its value. It is important to have proper communication between the informants of the museum and communities so that to verify everyone's observation rightly noted. This is the exact manner that is followed in the post-survey work of this project.

As mentioned in the above (methodology), the investigation was conducted in June, 2022. Within these days it is very much challenging to perform this filed research. Additionally, research methodology, cultural representation and ethnoarchaeology are very much important thus, through knowledges had gained, tried to implement on these investigations. This Field research could be termed as the new beginning of learning on Museum studies at this town. The unrest situations in the CHT are also an important limitation for research to be conducted there as the issues are very much sensitive.

1.3. Study Area

The following sites were selected for the fieldwork to collect necessary data. We have explored the area near the Jhograbil Primary School, Rangamati, Marma Area, Rangamati, Tanchangya Para (Triratnangkur Bouddho Bihar), Rangamati. The main

focus was on Khudro-Nrigosthir Jadughor at Rangamati, The Khangboy wood curving workshop, and some ethnic people around Tabolchori area.

1.4 Literature Review

Before conducting a field investigation an extensive literature review was undertaken to learn and earn knowledge about the area and its people as much as possible. Once the field aim and objectives are decided the researcher must collect information as much as possible to create strength to not only their paper but also for strengthening their methodology and framework. Library works for this research investigation were not only limited to books rather archives, online blogs, web resource pdfs, different research papers (both published & unpublished), published papers, articles, and most importantly maps of different types everything was included within. While gathering information some very important aspects have come upfront. Along with gathering information about the history of Rangamati, all the information related to the ethnic communities, their traditions, and cultures, perspectives of different writers on the communities, cultural representation, the Khudro Nri-Goshthir museum, ethnoarchaeological study, and the ways previous researchers had conducted their studies, etc. were collected. It was also observed whether previously any researcher had conducted any ethnoarchaeological or museological study or similar studies on the same topic. It was not found any publication on similar research topics. For the literature review work, the Khudro Nri-Goshthir Institute's other strong wing which is their Library (museum, cultural institute & library are called the wings of the Institute) has played a very important role to help us gather information regarding published information. While having an open-ended discussion with the museum authorities we came to know that every year the Institute tries to publish some journals in Bangla and English. *উপজাতীয় গবেষণা পত্রিকা, বৈসাবি , বিজু– সাংগ্রাই – বৈসুক , গিরিনির্ঝর পূজা পার্বণ etc. "The Chakma Race", "Pleasing Tribal Cultures in Chittagong Hill District", "ম্রো রূপকথা" , "লামাহ পালাহ বারমাস", "চাকমা ও বাংলা অভিধান", "পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম ক্ষুদ্র নৃগোষ্ঠীর বর্ণাঢ্য সংস্কৃতি," "রাধামন ধনপুদি," "চাকমাদের প্রাচীন ধর্মগ্রন্থ–আঘরতারা বিশ্লেষণ", "পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রামের উৎসব ও বিবাহ", "পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রামের বিংশ শতাব্দীর কবিতা," "পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রামের উপজাতি," "পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম ক্ষুদ্র নৃগোষ্ঠীর সঙ্গীত ও নৃত্য," "পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম ক্ষুদ্র," "নৃগোষ্ঠীর নির্বাচিত গান (১ম খণ্ড)," "ক্ষুদ্র নৃগোষ্ঠীর গবেষণা পত্রিকা–৪র্থ খণ্ড," "ত্রিপুরা লোককাহিনী ও কিংবদন্তী, "* etc. are some mentionable books published by the Rangamati Khudro Nri-Goshthir Cultural Institute which have different editions, most of them are in Bangla. Other than the library of Khudro Nri-Gosthir Museum during the Pre field work from the Seminar Library of Department of Archaeology and other libraries few books provided exceptional information in terms of history.

Literature review opens many windows, perspectives, and concepts on not only the aim of the proposed research but also on many other issues which might have been slipped out or haven't been touched. Cultural representation, ethnoarchaeology, and ethnology had to be understood in terms of undergoing this investigation. Through observation, it was found that in Bangladesh no works have been conducted on the cultural representation of ethnic communities in the museums which had created a great opportunity along with creating a few challenges also. Although several works have been conducted by researchers and ethnoarchaeologists whose sources, we get from "Ethnoarchaeology: the search for a self-corrective approach to the study of past human behavior" (Agorsah, E. Kofi, 1990), "Ethnoarchaeology, Pottery, and Technology:

Bridging Ethnographic and Archaeological Approaches" (John W. Arthur, 2003), "Ethnoarchaeology in Action" (Kramer et al., 2001), etc.

Incredible works were also done on Cultural representation which provides us with details on how to conduct our study e.g., "Representation & Cultural Memory" by Vicki Allen, "Representation Of Cultural Memory In The Process Of Preservation Of Identity" by T. Bohdana, Stuart Hall's "Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices", "The Intangible Elements of Culture in Ethnoarchaeological Research" by S. Biagetti, F. Lugli & Jamiyan - Ombo, etc. had immense information based on which we tried to plan our investigation and pursue our research by developing the aims and objectives.

2. **Theoretical Background:**

The book Ethnoarchaeology in Action by David and Kramer guides the reader through a wide range of ethnoarchaeological study. This is the first thorough work on ethnoarchaeology that is not an edited volume. (Hudson, 1993; Gould, 1978; Kent, 1987; Kramer, 1979; Longacre, 1991; Longacre & Skibo, 1994), (Arthur, 2003). John W. Arthur has introduced us to bridging ethnoarchaeology, pottery & technology. Anna Bottesi through her research paper on "Are Museums Allowed to Keep a Secret" has concentrated on showing how ethnographic museums are challenging the power hierarchies implied in the act of reflecting other people's cultures. The curator of the South American section of the Welt Museum Wien made a decision regarding how to display sacred and secret objects, or items that only certain groups of people are permitted to view. This article analyzes that decision and discusses how artifacts should be handled in the event that storage is not an option. She also voiced concerns about how to meet the demands of a crowd drawn to the idea of the exotic and possibly forbidden. How may this difficulty be turned into a chance for us to consider the privileges we do or do not have? (Bottesi, 2021). The core concern of ethnoarchaeology is how ancient relics are interpreted by archaeologists. To deduce the human actions that produced comparable patterns in the archaeological record, its practitioners examine the material remains of living societies. Ethnoarchaeology, sometimes known as action or living archaeology, differs from ethnography in that it focuses on issues that ethnographers frequently avoid, such as the disposal of household garbage. It also asks explicitly archaeological questions regarding material culture (Sapirstein, 2022). Material culture studies fall under the broad umbrella of ethnoarchaeology. There is no one technique to perform ethnoarchaeology on a particular material or issue; every research has its unique methodologies.

Over the past fifty years, much ethnoarchaeological research has been conducted. At first, researchers tried to compile a list of every substance and every activity related to it from a single civilization (Kleindienst and Watson 1956). To answer a particular research issue, the majority of ethnoarchaeologists concentrate on a single material culture. Recent studies show that the same kind of material may be used to create a huge variety of various kinds of study inquiries. For instance, studies on ceramics range from use alteration (Arthur 2002, 2003; Kobayashi 1994; Reid and Young 2000; Skibo 1992) to style using the chain operation approach (Gosselain 1992, 2000), examining the relationship between performance and style (Longacre 2000), exchange (Kramer 1997; Mohr Chavez 1992; Stark 1992, 1994; Stark and Longacre 1993), or use life (Kramer 1997; Mohr Chavez 1992; Stark 1992, (Neupert and Longacre 1994; Shott 1989; Tani

1994). Numerous ethnoarchaeological investigations started in the 1960s and 1970s focused on how ethnic communities used their surroundings and ties to earlier foragers. Examples include the research done on the Alaskan Nunamiut by Binford, the Upper Amazon Basin by DeBoer and Lathrap, the Western Desert Aborigines by Gould, and the Kung San in the Kalahari Desert by Yellen. The general-comparative methodology of the New Archaeology is best shown by Binford's 1978 study. Between 1969 and 1973, Binford followed the Nunamiut to find solutions to his unsatisfactory statistical analysis of Middle Paleolithic (180,000–40,000 years ago) items from sites in France. Some behavioral "functions" are undoubtedly shared by the majority of nomadic hunter-gatherers, even if the current Nunamiut are very different from their prehistoric counterparts including the usage of modern weapons. In addition to tables of measurements and maps of sites and waste patterns, Binford provided in-depth accounts of butchering, tool-making, encampment, and seasonal travels. These data support cross-cultural inferential models, which are the goal of "middle-range theory," in addition to providing a considerably deeper foundation for analyzing archaeological assemblages.

An exemplary method for getting the idea of Ethno-archaeology can be mentioned as the "Middle range Theory". Although the investigation that we are conducting cannot go through the processes of Binford due to the lack of time and experience with ethnoarchaeology but through his works we definitely could provide a background to our works. Perhaps in the future the works undergone by not only Binford but different Ethno-archaeologist could be used to conduct another research more broadly on the investigation that we have conducted so that we can come to a better analysis and could provide far better recommendations.

3. Ethnoarchaeological Field Survey

Ethnoarchaeology is the study of peoples from an anthropological perspective for archaeological purposes, typically through examining the physical remnants of a civilization (David & Kramer, 2001). Archaeologists who have received training as ethnographers can conduct ethnoarchaeology, which is the deliberate gathering and analysis of ethnographic data on human behavior and its effects, to address problems relevant to archaeological investigation. The first half of the research of Rangamati Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum and the engagement of their communities is completely an ethnoarchaeological field.

Rangamati a land of natural beauty, is situated between 22.028° and 23.044° north latitudes and 91.056° and 92.033° east longitudes. The 6116.13 sq km Rangamati District is bordered to the north by Tripura, the south by Bandarban, the east by the Indian states of Mizoram and Chinpradesh, and the west by Chittagong and Khagrachhari. In 1983, the Rangamati Subdivision became a district. It is divided into ten upazilas, with Rajasthali being the smallest (145.04 sq km) and Baghaichhari being the largest (1931.28 sq km). The only city in the country without rickshaws, a tourist city surrounded by lakes.

The district is inhabited by 13 communities including Chakma, Marma, Tanchangya, Tripura, Murang, Bom, Khumi, Kheyang, Chak, Pangkhoa, Lusai, Rakhaine, and Bengalis. Rangamati, Khagrachhari, and Bandarban - these three hill regions were formerly known as Karpas Mahal. When Bandarban and Khagrachhari separate districts were formed from the Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1981 and 1983, the main part of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Rangamati, emerged as a hill district. The proof of the presence

of Chakmas could be seen in the Chittagong Hill Tracts during the sixteenth century (Rahman, 2015). On a map (Fig-1) made in 1550 by Joao De Barros, popularly known as the Portuguese Livy and one of the first major Portuguese historians, the Chakmas living in the present-day Chittagong Hill Tracts are shown. A history of the Portuguese in India, Asia, and southeast Africa is presented in Décadas da sia ("Decades of Asia"). The word Chacomas, which means Chakma Kingdom of the Chittagong Hill Tracts farther east, comes from the map, where he named the port of Chittagong as Chatigam. In the Rangamati District, the Chakma Circle Chief is in charge of collecting money using the conventional way of collecting money. The legal Chakma circle Chief is the Chakma king.

Fig 1: *"Decadas da Asia" by Joao de Barros (1496-1570)* (Mapping Bengal - The De Barros Map, 2022)

East is up on the map since it is east-oriented. Despite the fact that the initial edition of this map dates from 1615, Portuguese versions have changed many of the location names,

and many of them are no longer recognizable. This map's geographic data was created between 1525 and 1535 CE. (Mapping Bengal - The De Barros Map, 2022)

Fig 2: Ptolemy Geographia, Gerardus Mercator, Cologne, 1578

The eastern part of Bengal is included in Ptolemy's eleventh map [Fig-2] of Asia: India Extra Gangem or India outside (meaning the other side of) the Ganges. There is a string of cities on the east bank of the Ganges: Celydna, Aganagora, Talarga – none of which have been identified. On the coast, the city of Pentapolis could be at or near Chittagong.

The Catabeda River possibly the Karnaphuli River and Baracura Emporium is thought to be the town of Ramu near Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

Fig-3: Map appears in James Knowles' Memoir of Mrs. Ann H. Judson, late missionary to Burmah. Boston: Lincoln & Edmands, 1832. (GmbH, www.oldmapsonline.org, 2022)

Since the signing of the Hill Tracts Agreement in 1996, a new dimension has been added to the specific administrative structure that already exists in the Hill Tracts from the British era. A task force for the resettling of refugees and internally displaced people returning to India, as well as a land commission for settling land disputes in the hilly areas, have all been established in Rangamati. In addition, the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board, Hill District Council, and a group named the Bazar Fund for Hat-

Bazar Management have been established to carry out development efforts in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Different ethnic communities residing here have different religious beliefs. Most of the ethnic communities residing here are Buddhists and some are Hindus, Christians, and Muslims. The Kazaria Temple, Rajban Bihara, Bodhibriksha Mandir, World Peace Pagoda, Sapchari Shanti Dham Buddhist Monastery, etc. are mentionable Buddhist temples. Behind Motel George there is a small temple of Goddess Durga. The name of the Temple is Sri Sri Sarvajanin Durga Matri Temple.

4. Representation of the Ethnic communities at Khudro Nri-Goshtir Museum:

There are displays of various artifacts and collectibles representing various ethnic communities including Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Tanchanghya, Mro, etc. But upon observing all the collections of the museum we can find that the collection of artifacts representing the Chakma community is larger in number. If we observe the items on display, there we can get ideas about the various lifestyle choices of the members of the ethnic communities. We can get ideas about the way how they dress, how their social structures are built and maintained, and how they conduct their day-to-day lives. We can also get various ideas on how their agricultural systems work and what methods they use in their farming sectors. By observing the items on display at the museum we can also obtain some amount of insight into how the sociopolitical structure of these community function. While conversing with the museum personnel and the community members it was uncovered that there is no scope for consultation with the community's representative at the time of planning the exhibition. Therefore, some communities are underrepresented and some of them are overrepresented in the museum galleries. To ensure the proper representation of different communities it is very significant to engage the descendent ethnic communities with the museum.

4.1 Community Engagement:

The fieldwork allowed us to engage closely with the members of the ethnic communities. Interviews with the members of the ethnic communities were conducted with the help of a detailed questionnaire. By engaging with the people living in the area, important information was gathered which allowed us to get more insight into the viewpoint of these people regarding the museum. Throughout conducting the interviews, we managed to find out that they don't have any knowledge about the museum. Most of the people interviewed, in many cases, had informed us that they have not either heard of the museum or had not been inside. More steps should be taken to increase the level of community engagement with the ethnic people. Only by connecting the two elements, we can hope for the improvement of the museum establishment and increase the connection between the ethnic people and the rest of our nation. The purpose of this research is not only to bring the communities to the front but also to showcase the tradition and their representation in the museum. It also tries to open a window for the communities and the museums to get engaged and create a bridge so that the scope for community engagement widens or opens up and their proper representation is assured. It also focuses on drawing the attention of the public towards the museum and embarks its immense importance.

5. Analysis of collected data:

Collected data has been analyzed using different data analyzing techniques. The data analysis which is the main strength of this research adds value and shows the recommendation of the interviewees. Data may work miracles after it has been cleaned

up, converted, and made suitable for use. In addition to containing a range of helpful information, analyzing the data as a whole reveals extremely minute patterns and features that would have otherwise gone unnoticed. It enables researchers to evaluate the data, ensuring that nothing is omitted that may prevent them from concluding it.

It also depicts the total methodology that has been used to conduct the whole research. The data analysis shows what the report wants to state and the researchers' works. As mentioned in the methodology that the whole research had a mixed approach and did not have any fixed participants. Thus, random samplings were collected from the study area and data were collected through open-ended surveys and one-to-one discussions. 30 people (25 community + 5 staff of the museum) altogether have agreed to give an interview thus data analysis has been performed on those 30 interviewees. Analysis was done in two ways: on is spreadsheet analysis and other is spatial analysis.

5.1 Spreadsheet Analysis

The data collected through interviewing were collected from the questionnaires and were compiled to find out the knowledge of the community about the museum, the programs arranged by the museum authorities to increase their outreach, recommendations, the interest of communities in the museum, etc. A few analyses have been presented through pie charts to show:

a) The Knowledge of the community regarding Museum:

The question that we had tend to ask the community was whether they have any knowledge about museums or have they ever been to any museum. Out of 25 people 20 had been to museums, on the other hand, 14 of them had been to the Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum but unfortunately 6 have never have heard about the Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum and 5 have never been to any museums. (Fig-4)

The most important discussion on this aspect is that despite residing there, people are not aware of the Museum. Rather after the open-ended discussion, it came to light that people mainly recognize the Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum as the Rangamati Cultural Institute. The Cultural wing of the institute is very much strong and has a great outreach within the community rather than its museum wing.
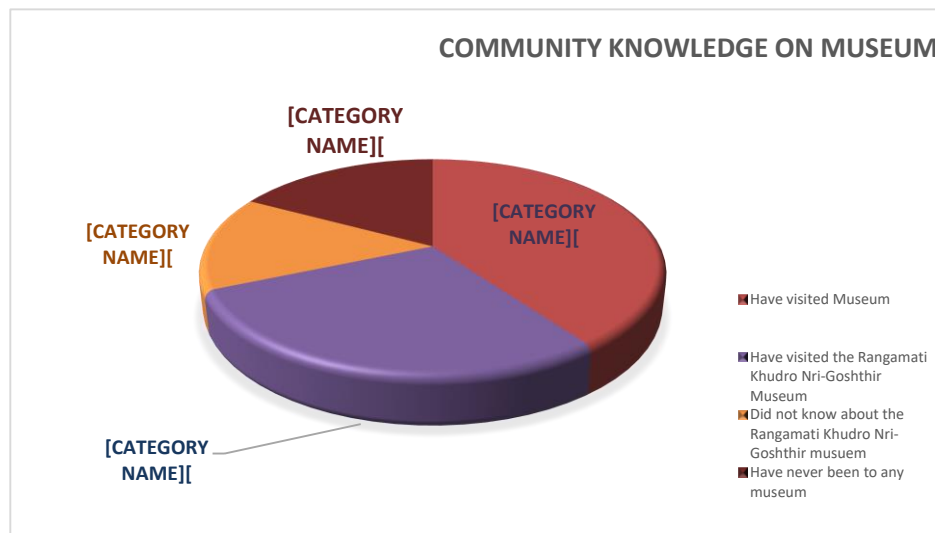
Fig- 4: Pie- Chart showing the knowledge of the community regarding museums.

   b) **The Communities' Interest Over the Museum**:

The second emphasis that we had given to fulfill our objective of community engagement with the Khudro Nri-Goshthi Museum was observing whether they want to visit the Museum again, or after the discussion they feel like going to the Museum. Questions were asked to those 14 who had already been to the Khudro Nri-Goshthi museums on whether they will go to the museum again (Fig- 5). Out of which 9 were interested to go again, according to the other 5 the condition of the museum is not attractive, to some it does not represent the history but rather is based on the ongoing traditions that's why they do not feel to become a return visitor.
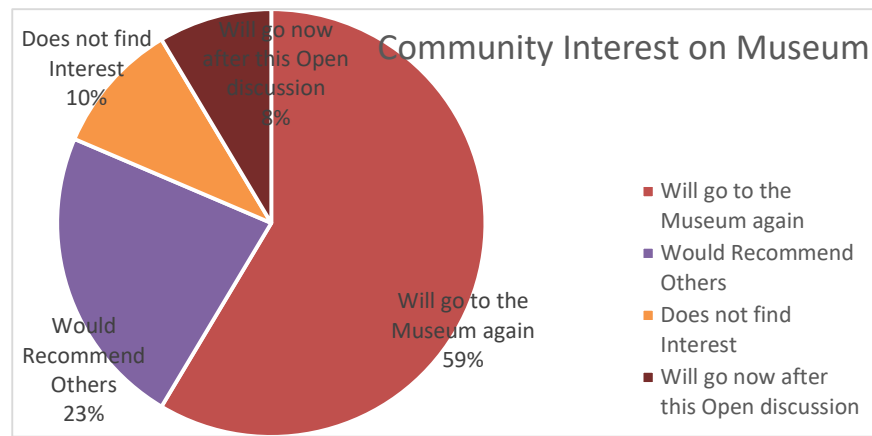
Fig- 5 : Pie- Chart showing the interest of the community regarding the Khudro Nri-Goshthir museum.

c) Outreach:

According to the observation of the community, it became very much important to know how the museum creates its outreach or promotion. Through discussion, it came to light that during every national occasion such as Victory Day, International Mother Language Day, Independence Day, etc. the Institute arranges different events and competitions which engage different schools of Rangamati Sadar and other nearby Upazila. The Pie Chart (Fig-6) shows the programs arranged by the Institute. It is to be noted that the Cultural wing is the strongest wing among the four. Due to the programs arranged by the Cultural wing, the outreach of the Institute is much more than the Museum. The community has very much interest in attending the cultural programs as the Biju mela is quite famous and very much attractive to the young people.
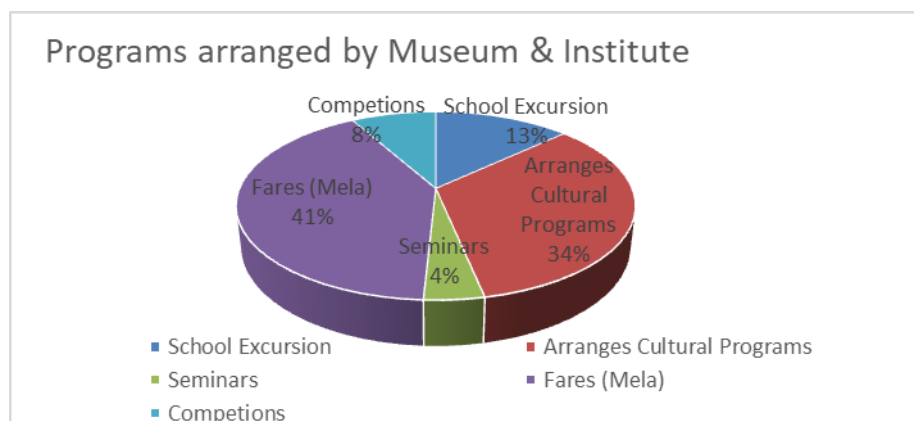
Fig- 6 : Pie- Chart showing the programs arranged by the Rangamati Khudro Nri-Goshti Institute

d) Visitors of the Cultural Institute:

In a Museum which focuses completely on depicting cultures and traditions of the ethnic community questions may arise on who are the prime visitors (Fig- 7). The number of Government authorities (especially the higher authorities) is highest in number when it comes to visiting the museum. Due to different pieces of training, nationally observed days, etc. reasons the authorities are somehow bound or invited to visit the Museum. Before COVID-19 (i.e., 2020) due to excursions many schools within the Upazila used to visit the museum but now the amounts have lessened. The community people mainly visit the museum during the Biju fare. Tourists mostly visit the place but that is also not in a higher amount.
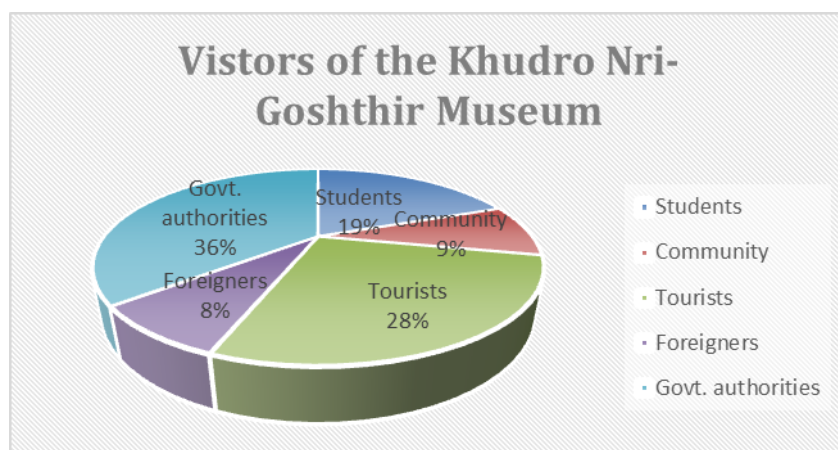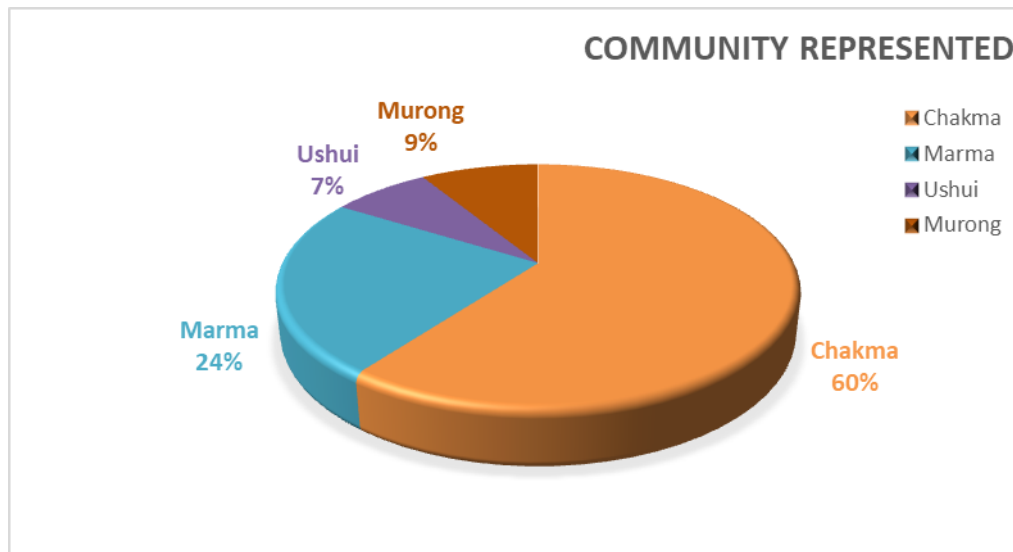

Fig- 7 : Pie- Chart showing the visitors of the Rangamati Khudro Nri-Goshthir Institute

e) The Community Represented in the Rangamati Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum:

The final and most important Data of our analysis i.e., the representation of communities at the museum. There are twelve major ethnic communities residing within Rangamati. The museum has tried to represent all those twelve communities. But it was very much important to identify which community has been showcased more and which community is still lagging behind. The Population census states that the majority among all those

communities are the Chakmas and the second highest are the Marmas. The Museum has well maintained its conservation according to the census. But somewhat could not gather or collect much from the Ushui community.

Fig- 8 : Pie- Chart showing the community representation of the Rangamati Khudro Nri-Goshthir Institute

     f)   **The community's interest in the Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum:**

The analysis was done using the survey data that had been gathered. The analysis was conducted following the investigation's goals and objectives. The community's interest in the Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum was analyzed and found that 68% of them went to Museum, 10% of them were interested to attend Biju Fare and 22% were interested to visit Cultural Institute for enjoying cultural events (Fig-9).
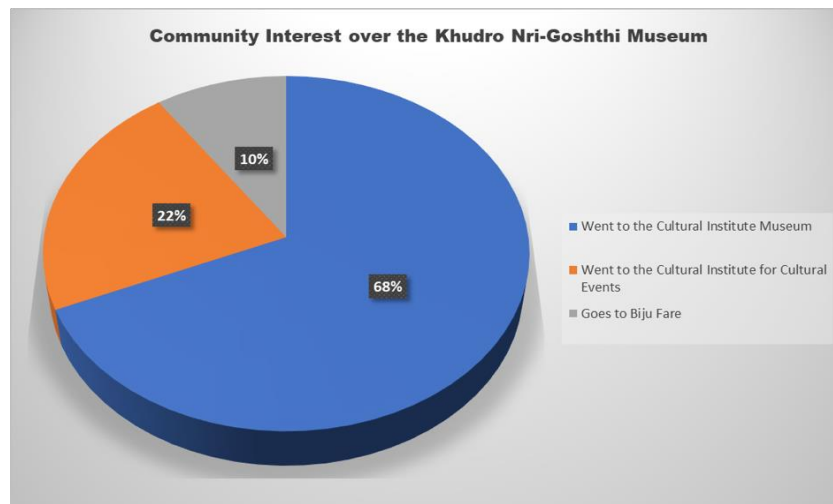
Fig-9 : Pie- Chart showing the community interest over the Rangamati Khudro Nri-Goshthir Institute

Since there were no specific participants, we randomly selected 20 people and asked them a few questions. Through their responses, we learned that even though the majority of those community members had visited the museum either once or while it was free some of them even had no idea that the Cultural Institute had a museum. The interest in visiting the museum was explored and found that Out of the 20 participants, 8 participants still would go to the museum, 1 is not sure or does not have any statement, 7 does not want to go again and 4 would not recommend others on visiting the museum as they feel it does not have any Centre of attraction (Fig-10). While interviewing the museum staff, the different types of programs arranged by the authorities have been found.
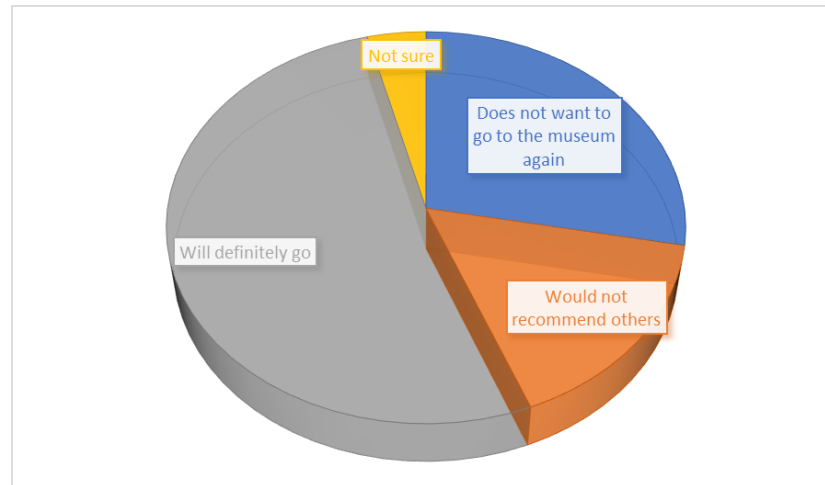

Fig-10 : Pie- Chart showing the response of the visitor of the Rangamati Khudro Nri-Goshthir Institute

6. Challenges & Limitations for Community Engagement

Other than the shown data on the analysis there were many more questions through which we got some recommendations and depending on which we had also established our recommendations. There are a few gaps between the Institute and the community which has created a few challenges. But it also needs to be said that the Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum deserves praise for being the first Ethnic Community Museum and is still trying to develop itself. There are still many gaps that were observed such as less representation of few communities, not reaching out to the primary schools rather only flourishing their outreach on the known schools, arranging only one fare and that is also on "Biju", the galleries not being numbered and are not properly organized, etc. So, based on this the report has tried to categorize a few challenges which if once overcome could bring possibilities and opportunities.

There was little negligence observed within the community as many of them do not feel like visiting the museum. Mostly the community gets involved with the Cultural Institute thus when there are programs such as Plays, dances, fare, festivals, etc. the community goes mainly to the Institute premise, not the museum. According to the staff, the museum is free for all during occasions or festivals but very few people are aware of this, especially the schools. Due to several sensitive issues going around the CHT and the COVID-19 impact the school authorities also do not encourage to initiate excursions for

the children which is a big reason for the children not to know about the museum. Museum authorities don't follow any communication with the school to bring students to their museum. Museum authorities do not have priority to bring people to the museum. It was unearthed at the time of the interview that the concept of community engagement with the museum is not clear to the museum staff. The community people also don't have any idea regarding the possibility to participate in museum activities.

6.1 Museum Role and Projection:

According to the Museum staff, they are trying to transform the museum. They have submitted a development proposal and the application is under review process. They have stated that the museum will go through a few changes among which some notable mentions are making it multiple complex buildings, developing a sound system, projection of documentaries, restarting of souvenir shop, etc. which is under the process of development.

The history of the communities is still very vaguely presented in the museum for which it became difficult to know about certain communities. As mentioned earlier the galleries are not numbered properly and are not organized due to which it was tough to document the objects & artifacts. A few things are still in their stock which we get from the stock register but have not been presented in the museum for confidential purposes. Few people stated that the traditional clothes, materials or ornaments, etc. shown are still being used by them thus there is nothing new for them to see. If the museum had emphasized its history also it'd have been more pleasing for them to see.

It has also come to light that there is a lack of supporting staff in the museum. There are still many positions left blank as recruitments are paused. The museum has clarified and corrected a few of its amendments and hopefully will fill up those positions. But other than this it has been known that the officers do not come to their respective duties every day. We faced the situation as we were not able to take interviews with the respected authorities for which there are some knowledge gaps within us regarding the Museum. It has also been observed that although after the inaction of the Khudro Nri-Goshthir Sangskritik Protisthan Ain 2010 made for the institutions as No cultural institutes will be known as Tribal Museums, under Section 4 of the aforementioned statute, but rather as "Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museums." but it has been observed that the term "Tribal people" is still being used in their brochure and some galleries. Also, the souvenir shop is closed now but through an interview, it came to light that the price of the souvenirs is a bit overpriced.

The Interview, Data analysis, and Observations have opened many aspects to interpretation. Recommendations are essential for the plans to move the field of study forward. Recommendations are any further recommendations that a researcher wants people to take on board or that will be taken into consideration while doing future studies. These are entirely based on what they have learned or on potential future endeavors that they could be interested in. In our research, the recommendations could be divided into two groups. There are the recommendation of the Interviewee and the recommendation of the Interviewer.

7. Recommendation
7.1 Opinions of the Respondents

The interviewees were mainly the community people, the Museum staff & the visitors. Among them, few have provided some recommendations that might help to overcome challenges and gaps shortly.

  i)   The museum should focus on the history of the ethnic communities also rather than only being involved in traditions. There were also many traditions or cultures practiced long ago which have faded or extinct with time. Those are important to preserve.

  ii)   The Chakma & The Marma community have their language and script. When any of us visit the museum with our children it would have been better if there were labels also written in our languages. As they are representing our communities it could also bring a new aura to the Museum as the children will be able to see their language being depicted or getting dignity.

  iii) The community people should involve themselves also, as sensitive issues are going around it is sometimes impossible for the authority to reach them. If they give us the courage, we can change the modalities accordingly.

  iv)   The museum is very much gloomy it would have been better if it had few decorations and facilities like the National Museum. The dullness discourages viewers to visit again.

7.2 Recommendation of the Interviewer

Through thorough observation, a few recommendations have also been developed as an interviewer. A few recommendations are given below:

  i)   Organizing the gallery and numbering them. The galleries should be organized specifically on the names of the actual community. E.g., in every gallery, there were mixed jewels of Chakma or Lushai or other communities. If someone only notices the name of the gallery, they will think that certain jewelry belongs to the community shown with a statue. Either they can create a separate section for jewels or keep the jewels accordingly with their communities.

  ii)   The community people especially the parents & teachers should take the initiative to take their children to the museum. The museum bears shreds of evidence of antiquity, tradition, and culture. The children need to learn and preserve that knowledge within. These would also help the museum authorities to develop themselves and the museum itself. But if there stays such a gap of not interested and no space of providing or giving suggestions then no reformation can be done.

  iii) The museum still needs to work on its outreach. It should spread from the grassroots level to the urban area. It needs to break its boundaries and look into reaching out to the community itself too.

8. Conclusion:

The power dynamics at ethnographic museums are changing in the twenty-first century, as we can observe. This, according to Clifford, represents "a move from a "colonial" to "cooperative" museology. Utilizing collections to advance intercultural understanding, museums, and indigenous peoples have begun to collaborate to correct the inequities in cultural representation. As human behaviors and expressions reflect each person's particular situation in the world, culture is self-perpetuating but also continually evolving. As a result, everything material and every manner of life, both past and present, is a unique synthesis of its predecessors and the environment in which it exists. It is significant to note Hall's focus on the prefix "re-" in representation, which emphasizes a

sense of recurrence and revisiting as if what is represented by the media is only a duplication of what was there before. Contrarily, ethnoarchaeology may successfully encourage the expansion of research into the intangible cultural legacies of contemporary civilizations and underline the significance of such research for the study of earlier civilizations. Non-material evidence is becoming more and more important in archeological theories and approaches that investigate the importance and meaning of artifacts, resources, and settlement patterns.

By evaluating the representation and identifying the ethnic communities that are more and less represented in the museum, we have attempted to achieve our goal through the study. Keeping in mind McClusky's work, which demonstrated that museum workers must continually utilize their imaginations to come up with novel methods to display cultures sensitively (Harris, 2003), we also sincerely agree with this. Through our observation, we believe that the Khudro Nri-Goshthir Museum has enough scope and ways to develop and engage communities by thinking more creatively and taking decisions. It is possible to supply enough context without sacrificing the object. It is through objects and exhibitions that museums construct their most powerful reproduction. (Tythacott, 2022).

Rangamati is a land of versatility. Here, people from different communities live together. It is not like they do not have a conflict between them, and it is very obvious to say, they have a long history of being oppressed by the different agencies and some people in the mainstream community who are still very regressive in thinking. Apart from these facts, most people in Rangamati still live in harmony despite their ethnic identity. The natural beauty of the Rangamati district is still mesmerizing to travelers from different parts of Bangladesh and around the globe. The green hills and waterbodies of Rangamati give travelers a peaceful mind for a bit and take them away from the typical urban life.

The Khudro Nri-goshthir Museum is a place that represents Rangamati in front of the world. For this reason, the museum must be providing authentic information about the communities and overall Rangamati as a district. In this sector, there is a lot to develop. This study has already discussed what steps can be taken to develop the museum and make it more presentable in front of the local community and visitors from around the world. It is a duty of us all to be helpful in the process of development. The museum authority has a lot to do, but the local and central government needs to act accordingly as well to be a part of this development process. The fieldwork that has been conducted will allow us to understand the ethnic community which is an integral part of our population on a deeper level. With the data collected and presented, we will have a better understanding of them. This understanding will allow the government to take necessary steps to ensure and protect their culture, heritage, and human rights.

In the end, it is the grace of this simplicity that ought to inspire us with optimism and confidence to keep tackling the problems of cultural representation. As a conscious populace and as public institutions, we must include the communities by promoting intercultural conversation. Giving society the tools to deal with an increasingly global community is one of the museums' duties in the modern world. It is also crucial for communities to take action from within.

My sincere gratitude towards the authority of Khudra-Nrigosthir Museum Rangamati for their support during the time of fieldwork at the Museum and for providing the necessary documents, information, and for their kind permission to take pictures and use them for academic purposes. I would like to show special acknowledgment to Mahid, Mahisun Rashti, Riddhy, Abrar Faisal, Iraboti, Muslima, Monklachin, Fahim, Oliza, Sudipto, Mazed, Borsha, Tawsif, and other students of 47 batch of the Department of Archaeology, Jahangirnagar University for their valuable support in the fieldwork. I would like to acknowledge the support of Deneb Dewan, my friend, as he guided us through the local ethnic communities and showed hospitality throughout the fieldwork at Rangamati.

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