



Panam City

HerStory Foundation
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"Mira, do you know there is a ghost capital in Bangladesh?" asked Nahian.

"Don't be silly, Dhaka is the capital of Bangladesh," replied Mira.

"Today it is. But it was not always this way. In the 1500's, Bengal was divided into many independent states. Panam City was the capital of the kingdom of courageous Isa Khan, one of the last of the Baro-Bhuyan landlords. But after Isa Khan died, the

Mughals took over the land.”



"Is it the ghost of Isa Khan that haunts Panam City?" asked Mira.

"He, among many others! The city had many rulers. After the Mughals, the British East India Company took over and set up their textile offices here."

"So, Dhaka has a long history of textiles!" Mira was shocked to learn that the textile trade has so much history.

"Oh yes, Bengal was famous for a fine fabric

called muslin. It was so thin that a six-yard sari could be folded and passed through a finger ring. Panam Nagar was home to the best muslin weavers and many merchants moved here and built fantastic mansions. At the peak of its glory, the city had close to 14 00 families.”



"Oh wow, it must have been a great place to live back then!" Mira imagined the bustling city.

"It was. There were grand balls, festivals, and celebrations. But if you visit Panam City today, it is quiet and still. You will find only one street that is lined with 52 broken mansions. These houses were once grand palaces, but today they are empty and falling apart. Only dogs and trees live in Panam today. "



"Oh wow! What happened? Did the ghosts drive everybody out?" Mira loved a good scary story.

"Some say that there was a fire. Others say that when the British Raj fell apart, the people of the area started fighting. For hundreds of years, the Hindus and Muslims had lived together, but they stopped sharing the land, things fell apart, and people moved out. This is why today many people call it the Ghost

City.”



"Oh dear, that sounds sad more than scary," said Mira.

"It's true. But visiting Panam feels like time travel. In Dhaka everything is new, and the buildings are tall. But in Panam Nagar, everything feels frozen in time," replied Nahian.



Note

Panam Nagar was the capital city of medieval Bengal. Close to the Meghna River in Sonargaon, it was once a very wealthy city. Today only a small part of it remains. The street of 52 houses is an open-air museum protected as a Heritage Site by the Bangladesh Government.

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Original Story

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