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Joysagar Ahom era arsenal to be turned into war museum

PANKAJ BORTHAKUR

SIVASAGAR, Dec 3: In a move to preserve and showcase various types of ancient canons and other warfare equipment of the glorious Ahom period, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has taken up renovation works at the historic royal arsenal, or 'Golaghar', at Joysagar in Sivasagar district to make it as a favourite destination for visitors and researchers of warfare studies.

According to ASI, the Golaghar (magazine house), situated near the Rongpur Palace (Kareng Ghar), will be decorated as an arsenal museum, where small canons of the Ahom era and pho-



The 'Golaghar' near the Rongpur Kareng Ghar at Joysagar in Sivasagar district; (right) three canons of the Ahom era preserved in the Kareng Ghar premises. – Photo: Jorhat Correspondent

tophographs of various bigger canons, like elephant canon, snake canon and water

canon, will be displayed in an attractive way.

Historical research reveals that the fortified Golaghar was developed as a royal arsenal in 1704 during the rule of King Rudra Singha, and all types of "sophisticated weapons", including canons, were kept inside it. But later, some of those canons and warfare instruments were found lying scattered in various pockets of the district, and the royal arsenal

remained a barren house for centuries. (See page 7)

Joysagar ...

(Contd from page 1)

Very few domestic and foreign visitors showed interest in having a glimpse of the royal house as they did not find any of gun or canon inside its premises.

"Now, we have planned to make this historic house a favourite destination for visitors and researchers. If the visitors find canons and other armaments of that period of historical importance in the royal arsenal of the Ahom kings, they will benefit a lot from their visit," said Dr MK Chauley, superintending archaeologist of the ASI.

The ASI official said that four to five canons would be collected from the premises of the Royal Palace of Joysagar to preserve and showcase them inside the Golaghar. Though some other ancient canons are now spotted near the Sivasagar Central Jail, curious visitors find it difficult to learn about their firing prowess, date of manufacture and other related subjects,