

VI. Living Human Treasures System (LHTS)

Not exactly, as it is elaborated in UNESCO website. But Bangladesh Fine Art and Crafts Foundation, a government institution initiated a project almost with a view to achieve same result. The programme was taken in 1996 and it was functional up to 2001. Under this programme a family of each of the individual art and craft such as pottery, weaving of Jamdani saree, weaving of Cane Mat etc was selected and invited to stay at the *Karu Palli* (Village of Arts and Crafts) at the premises of the Foundation. They were given grants for the subsistence of their entire family and they were allowed to stay there for one year. They could also make a profit from the selling of the goods they produced here to visitors especially to the foreign tourists. At the same time their youngsters were getting the training from the elders. This project was supported solely by the Government of Bangladesh. Apparently the programme was working well at first. But there was a problem that these people were out of their roots for one year. After one year they found difficulty to settle in their old community. So gradually they became less interested to come to the *Karu Palli*.

During our survey we have seen that people like the idea of conducting similar project like The Living Human Treasures. We also recommended to the Government and NGOs and Private Organisations to take specific programmes for the safeguarding of Living Heritage those are on the verge of extinction. As for example, we have found Mr. Tugia Rema from the Garo community, a minority tribe living in the district of Netrokona. He is 74 now and probably the only surviving priest (they call *Khamal*) who knows the *mantras* for observing different festivals such as during the planting season, harvesting season etc.