

STONE PROCESSING



Impressive buildings, great masterpieces were created by processing natural stones. In the territory of Uzbekistan, the secrets of the art of processing natural stones were known since ancient times. In particular, the people who lived near the marble mines learnt processing this type of stone. Gazgon village of Nurota region is famous for its *sangtaroshs* (stone processors). Among residents of this place, the art of *sangtaroshlik* (stone processing) has been passed from ancestors to generations. Famous master Tokhir aka's contribution is great in restoring marble decorations of all historical monuments in the territory of Uzbekistan. He belongs to the 10th generation of *sangtaroshs*.

Masters from Gazgon learnt how to prepare objects and building decorations using marble from their ancestors. The objects made by Gazgon masters processing marble can be divided into three types:

1. Household objects
2. Tombstones
3. Pillars and decorations for buildings

In the past some household objects were made for using at home, at present they are being made as artistic compositions.

Tombstone preparation also has two types: modern and historical. Historical tombstones are made of bigger marble piece in rectan-



gular form and it is decorated on its top and/or its sides with the margins, containing verses or surahs from Qur'an or information about the deceased person. Modern tombstones are prepared in a slim rectangular form which stands on a special deck. Only its surface contains information about the deceased.

In *sangtaroshlik* preparing decks for building pillars is the main direction. Special attention is paid to its height, compatibility with column pillars and compatibility of the patterns which will be engraved in it. Every single pillar deck is produced separately. The reason of making pillar decks from marble is preventing rotting of wooden

pillars as the result of water leakages or precipitation.

The most complicated task in *sangtaroshlik* is making building decorations, because the volume, shape and complicatedness of the patterns of the decoration should correspond the building. Therefore, such works are lead only by experienced and qualified masters. They sketch the patterns of decorations and then allow engraving them from the stone.