MILITARY HISTORY OF ANCIENT BENGAL

A Study of the Fortifications at Wari-Bateshwar

Md Moazzem Hossain
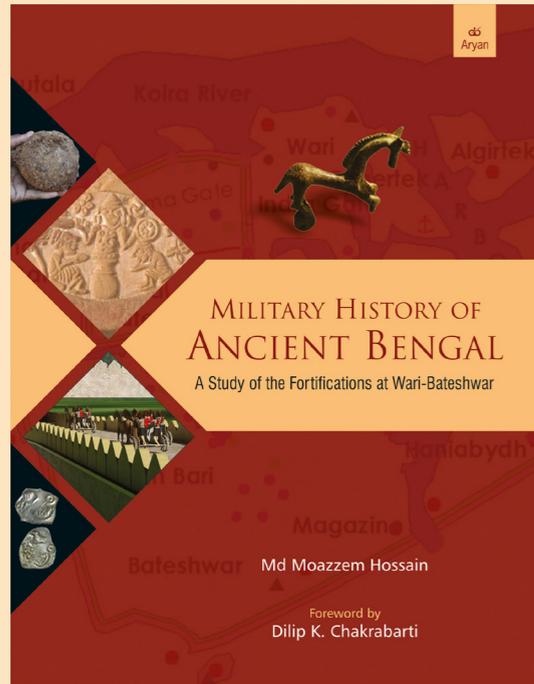
Foreword by
Dilip K. Chakrabarti

Prompting us to re-read and re-write parts of what we know about ancient Bengal, this book primarily delves into the Wari-Bateshwar archaeological sites to establish a historically important factual link between military and society in the stream of time. The volume takes us through a thrilling and historically compelling journey through systematically researched historical data, artifacts, and ecofacts from this rather uncharted archaeological site.

The work successfully infuses geo-political and geo-strategic analyses together with recovered military artifacts, terracotta and stone sling bullets, artillery ammunition, *dantakantaka*, spearheads etc. which are pertinent to military strategy and history of the period. It also frequently draws parallels to other contemporary civilizations based on unique interpretations.

The author applies a scholarly style in composing his detailed research into this literary piece beginning artfully by portraying a wider context of defensive features and fortifications of different ages and locations of the world. His brilliance is further pronounced in the part of the book that follows, where he presents a minute and detailed analysis of Wari-Bateshwar and its surrounding areas from a purely military strategic perspective. This part also serves to excite the archaeology-enthusiasts and is an eye-opener for the type of study which can be done at the many fortified historic sites of the subcontinent.

While describing the military history of Wari-Bateshwar, the volume combines an array of military aspects like tactics, strategy, principles of war, ethos, terrain analysis, forts, fortifications, organizational structures, weapons and even mentions of military music. Based on intensive and extensive field surveys and research, the present work makes a precious new contribution to the knowledge on military and defence systems of ancient Bengal. The work also places all the forts of Bangladesh in a single map for the very first time. With brilliant reasoning skills and inferences, the volume aptly identifies the fort-city Wari-Bateshwar as Gange, the ancient capital city of economically and militarily superior Gangaridai nation that was situated in the confluence of Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers.

With an enormous volume of multidisciplinary information contained in the book on ancient Bengal and contemporary civilizations, this should be regarded as a must-read for students of history and archaeology, military personnel, and enthusiasts.

Brigadier General Md Moazzem Hossain, BGBM (Bar), Ph.D. is an ardent student of studies related to military, security, and political affairs together with history, culture, philosophy, and archaeology. His passion for archaeology and associated research is clearly evident in his literary works that make artful convergence of multidisciplinary approaches of scholarship.

Born in Madaripur, Bangladesh, Dr. Md Moazzem Hossain completed his education in country's reputed institutions and universities. He has a chequered military career with multiple exposures to extra-military organizations. His current position as Dean of the Faculty of Business Studies at the Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP), is yet another attestation of his professional and educational prowess. He is also a graduate of the College of Security Studies, Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, Hawaii. He has been formally trained and educated in multiple disciplines ranging from leadership, peace studies to nuclear security.

An avid reader and contributor, Dr. Md Moazzem Hossain has several published articles to his credit. He has contributed in the *History of Ancient India* series edited by Dilip K. Chakrabarti and Makkhan Lal and published jointly by Vivekananda International Foundation and Aryan Books International, Delhi. His forthcoming book, *Forts and Fortifications in Ancient Bangladesh* is due to be published shortly. As a widely travelled person in the continents of Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas, he enjoys his trips as learning ventures and reflects the same in his works.

A naturalist by trait, Dr. Md Moazzem Hossain is inspired by natural order while embracing new found knowledge with a candid spirit.

Contents

"This is an outstanding piece of research…I am very impressed by the academic quality and scale of this work."

—Dilip K Chakrabarti, Padma Shri (2019)
Emeritus Professor of South Asian Archaeology,
University of Cambridge

"This is a welcome addition to the study of military related aspects of the Wari-Bateshwar in particular and Indian subcontinent in general."

—Rakesh Tewari
Former DG, Archaeological Survey of India

"This research focused on military aspects of an archaeological site in Bangladesh is the first of its kind in the country."

—Sufi Mostafizur Rahman
Professor, Department of Archaeology,
Jahangirnagar University