

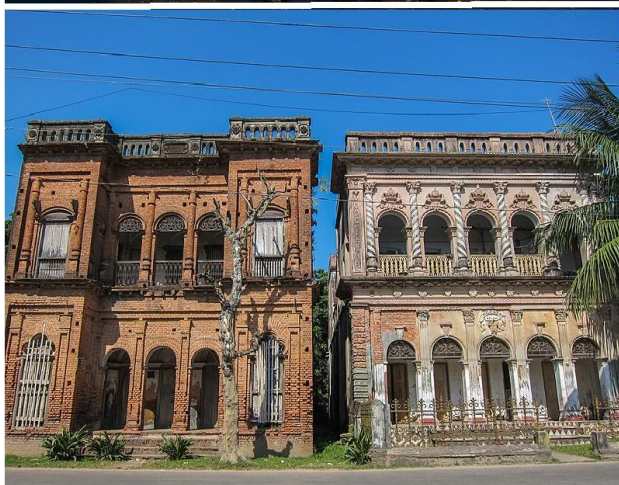


Sonargaon is a historic city in central Bangladesh. It corresponds to the Sonargaon Upazila of Narayanganj District in Dhaka Division. Sonargaon is one of the old capitals of the historic region of Bengal and was an administrative center of eastern Bengal. It was also a river port.

Location:

**Sonargaon** originally Svarnagrama or Suvarnagrama, denotes an ancient janapada (territory) of Vanga stretched on both banks of the Brahmaputra, which is said to have originally been inhabited by a race called Svarna-bhushita, literally meaning 'dressed up with gold' and signifying a people traditionally adorned with gold-wear. The antiquity of this region may be traced back to the period of Kuru-Pandava war described in the Mahabharata, and even earlier. Its importance in ancient time is borne by the traditional holy bathing places of [LANGALBAND](#) and [PANCHAMIGHAT](#) on the west bank of the Old Brahmaputra. The ancient territory of Suvarnagrama was originally bounded on the east by the Meghna, south and west by the Dhaleswari and Sitalakshya respectively, and north by the Brahmaputra forming northern extremity of the modern greater Dhaka district. To demarcate the site of the territory in modern geographical context it may roughly correspond to the tract of land between the Sitalakshya and the Meghna now constituting the district of Narsingdi and the major part of Narayanganj district.







## History:

Sonargaon was the capital of the ancient kingdom ruled by Isa Khan of Bengal. Bengal is now divided into West Bengal, which is a state in India and Eastern Bengal, which is the nation of Bangladesh. Today, old Sonargaon is home to some of the oldest buildings in Bangladesh.

Old Sonargaon can be found near Narayanganj and Dhaka, cities in Bangladesh, and is considered one of the first and oldest capitals of Bengal. Sonargaon was known as “The City of Panam” and was a focal part of the renowned Deva Dynasty until the thirteenth century. Mainly middle or upper class people inhabited Sonargaon during that time period.

After the thirteenth century Sonargaon was made a secondary capital to the main capital of the Sultanate of Bengal. This subsidiary position that Sonargaon had now taken, lasted until the arrival of the Mughals. The Mughal Empire originated in India and was first founded in 1526 by Babur, a Turco-Persian leader. The imperial Mughal viceroys ruled Bengal, and thus Sonargaon, for nearly a century before Bangladesh was founded in 1608.

Today, many people still visit the historic city of Sonargaon. They are attracted by its immense beauty and by the ruins of buildings and relics that date back to the era of Bengal. The Goaldia Mosque is situated in the Goaldi village and is a wonderful example of an ancient Sonargaon building. The Folklore Museum is another attraction, which is visited by many. The Folklore Museum of Sonargaon houses a variety of artifacts from all over Bangladesh, representing the many cultural groups that exist in this country.



For those interested in historical and archaeological relics, which have been unearthed from Sonargaon, the Jainal Abedin Museum is a good place to visit. You can still see the intact shrines of Shah Abdul Alia and Panjpirs, and the Tomb of Sultan Ghias ud Din. If you travel just out of Sonargaon, into the countryside, you will see an example of a Moghul Palace and an old museum. These two buildings are located on beautiful grounds with lots of birds, trees and plants, a pond and a number of sheltered walks.

Panam City:

**Panam City** is situated at Sonargaon, Narayanganj in Bangladesh. It is an ancient historical city in Bangladesh. Among the three cities of Boro nagar(Big City), Khas Nagar, Panam Nagar, it was the most attractive city.<sup>[1]</sup> There are many historical buildings which were built centuries ago and those are related with the history of Baro-Bhuyan. It covered 20 km area of Sonargaon. Panam City is one of the most visited tourist spots in Bangladesh.

As the capital of the fifteenth-century Bengal ruler Isa Khan, and once an important trading and political center, Sonargaon boasts

architecture of the Sultanate, Mughal, and colonial periods. The Sonargaon historic city, located near the present-day capital of Dhaka, includes several Mughal monuments—among them the Sonakanda River Fort, the Panch Pir Mazar Shrine, and Ibrahim's and Abdul Hamid's Mosque. British colonial architecture preserved in Sonargaon includes the Ananda Mohan Piddar House, and other street-front houses. For travelers making their way along the 2,500-kilometer Grand Trunk Road from Peshawar in the Hindu Kush, Sonargaon marked the end of the line. Threats to the site include flooding, vandalism, unauthorized occupation, illegal development etc.



Trandes:

Sonargaon was an ancient center of muslin production and textile manufacturing. The fertile farmland around the town also generated rice exports. The English traveler Ralph Fitch described the cotton textile weaving culture of the area in the 16th-century. Weavers



formed a large part of the population. In 1580, he states "The houses here, as they be in the most part of India, are very little, and covered with straw, hay and a few mats round about the walls, and the door to keep out the Tygers and the Foxes. Many of the people are very rich. Here they will eat no flesh, nor kill no beast; They Hue of Rice, milke, and fruits, they go with a little cloth before them, and all the rest of their bodies is naked. Great store of cotton cloth goeth from hence, and much rice, wherewith they serue all India, Ceylon, Pegu, Malacca". Sonargaon was a river port with access to the Bay of Bengal through the mouth of the Bengali delta.<sup>[3]</sup> Maritime ships travelled between Sonargaon and southeast/west Asian countries.





Crafts and Arts of Sonargaon

#### Places:

- **Sadarbari** (Folk-Art and Crafts Museum). 9am-5pm, Fr-We. An old mansion built in 1901 to house a Hindu Zamindar. A mix of Indian, European and Mughal architecture. One entrance has steps leading down to the tranquil lake, while the other is embellished with a beautiful mosaic of blue and white tiles. There is an exhibition inside, with numerous displays concerning the area. There is also a gift shop. Tk 100.
- **Panam City** (Painam Nagar). First settled by wealthy Hindu merchants in the late 19th century, they fled to India during the Partition of India when Bengal became a Muslim region. The area was largely abandoned, leaving it today as a crumbling neighbourhood of huge mansions slowly being reclaimed by nature. The narrow street of mixed architecture has a lot of charm, being a mystical town from centuries past. TK 100..
- **Goaldi Mosque**. A small mosque built by Mullah Hisabar Akbar in 1519 CE. It has been fairly well-maintained by the Government, and



tourists are welcome to visit in a respectful manner. There is another mosque about 50 metres away, built during the Mughal era.

- **Mosque and Tomb of Pir Mohammad Yusuf.** An old mosque built to honour a Sufi saint, along with his tomb. Built 1700 CE.
- **Tomb of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah.** The oldest surviving Muslim monument in the country, it is the resting place of the independent Sultan. Although the site carries a lot of history, it doesn't carry any real historical architecture and is quite unimpressive.
- **Panch Pir Dargah,** Sachilpur. Tombs of Sufi saints (Pirs) from the 17th century. A historical mosque is also on site.
- **Shiva Shrine.** Just north of Panam City there is a tall Hindu Shiva Shrine.