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Gargaon Palace and Talatal ghar

ASI conducts ground penetration radar survey

STAFF REPORTER

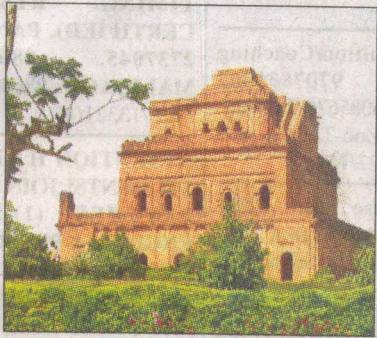
GUWAHATI, April 2 – The Guwahati Circle Office of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has taken up the work of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) Survey at the Gargaon Palace and at the Joysagar Talatal Ghar with the objective of finding out if there is any structure buried under these protected archaeological areas. This is the first of its kind survey undertaken by the Guwahati ASI Circle in the North-east, said the ASI Circle in a press release.

The GPR survey, being undertaken with the help of the Kanpur IIT, is also aimed at laying at rest the myths associated with the structures, that is, existence of underground tunnels, existence of more floors, etc. The work started on March 29 last and will continue till April 4 in the initial phase.

As GPR is a very important non-destructive tool for the archaeologists for investigating buried structures, so to educate the other archaeologists of

the region, the Guwahati Circle had sent invitations to all the archaeological departments of the North-east region.

The ASI has found some structural remains on a hilltop in the Jogighopa area of Bongaigaon district, while under-



taking some developmental works. These remains, which are believed to be of Ahom era, are in a very dilapidated condition and

assumed to be watch towers, later used by the Britishers, as the location of the hill is strategically very important. It overlooks the Brahmaputra, said the ASI in its press release.

In the Dahparvatia archaeological site of Tezpur in Sonitpur district, the ASI has found around the temple ruins, a boundary wall going 5 feet below the surface with a thickness of 1.2 metre. The entrance of the boundary could not be traced out due to the existence of a tree ring around it. This is a unique finding, which speaks about existence of a *Pradakshinapatha* around

(See page 4)

ASI conducts ...

(Contd from page 1)
the temple, but at the present state of things, it could not be said with certainty whether it was a part of the temple or existed on an open *Pradakshina* around the temple.

However, this finding has established that the temple had its original entrance from the east direction and the placing of the door lintel in the *Garbha Griha* is placed in the wrong direction, that is – facing inwards, whereas it should have been placed in the opposite direction. This probably took place in the early 20th century, when the Britishers

excavated the area and re-erected the architectural members. The ASI plans to undo the wrong conservation work done by the Britishers in 1924-25, said the ASI.

Meanwhile, the ASI Guwahati Circle has been able to free 7.5 bighas of the 15 bighas of land of the Bamuni Hills ruins of Tezpur in Sonitpur district, which was under encroachment since 2000. In this matter, the ASI said it received the support from MGVK Bhanu, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister and Deputy Commissioner of Sonitpur Lalit Gogoi.