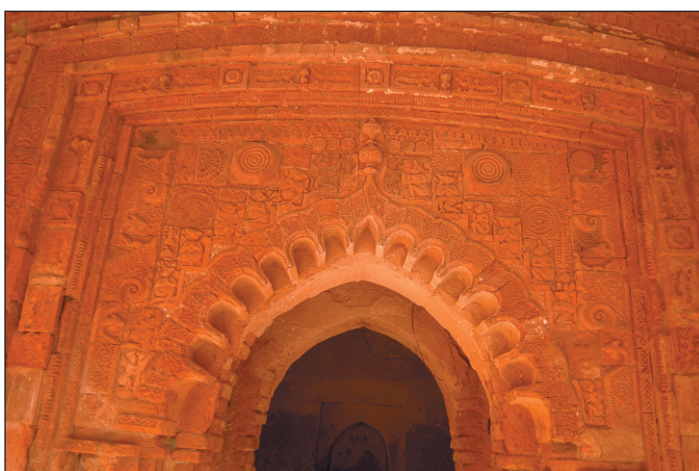


JOR BANGLA TEMPLE, PABNA

Tradition fuses with the classical



TEMPLE architecture secures one of the fascinating sectors of Bangladesh's architectural heritage.

Temples had been built in various forms, shapes and designs and according to their stylistic features they have been categorised into the traditional Rekha and Pira, the hut-shaped style (Bangla- Ak Bangla with one roof and the two roofed Jor Bangla.

Chala Char Chala or four roofed, Aat Chala or eight roofed and Baro Chala or twelve roofed), Indo-Islamic (Ratna Ak Ratna, Pancha Ratna, Navaratna etc), European Influence (Shikhara, Flat roof and with verandah, Dolmancha, Raashmancha etc) too fall into other categories.

Temple architecture dates far back, but no presence of Pre-Muslim temples are seen. What testify their presence in history are epigraphic and literary records and a few illuminated old manuscripts. As a result of the non-existence of the early temples, the newer instances have been divided into three main groups. They are Chala (roof type), Ratna type and the Shikhara type.

Many temples of Bangladesh were constructed to the Jor Bangla style, which evolved with a blend of the Indian subcontinent temple architecture and the traditional hut of Bangla.

This style is seen in the temples of Jessore, Khulna, Faridpur and Pabna. The Jor Bangla temple of Pabna is

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one of the few exclusive examples of this style still holding its head high in its natural surroundings. History says that one Bojromohan who worked for the Nawab built this temple during the reign of Nawab Serajuddowla and established the deity Sri Radha-Govinda

The temple is not so big. It has a square plan with around 27ft sides. With the feature of two adjacent huts (with thatched roofs, the height of the temple is also 27ft. There is an outer verandah adjacent to the front structure. The front façade is adorned with the intricate sculpting of various figured terracotta

plaques. These plaques silently depict tales from the war of Ramayan and Ravan, of Krishna, Balram, gods and goddesses, draws various animals and their activities.

On another side are pictures showing a procession of drummers, dancers and a palanquin bearer while another group holding weapons and their hunt is seen returning with much joy. The popularity of hunting in that area can be easily anticipated from these expressions.

Like all the terracotta works that Bengal has borne with it along the ages, this temple also has helped in contributing the cultural history of the area. These are not mere decorations but also the mute mines of information.

Stories from the Ramayana or Mahabharat endow moral lessons benefiting people who had studied the panels. Dresses and costumes, ornaments and hair styles of a particular time or place or the different aspects of daily life regarding sports, leisure, music, dance and hunting had been modelled skilfully by clay craftsmen and clad on such religious edifices.

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