DHAKA TUESDAY MARCH 23, 2010

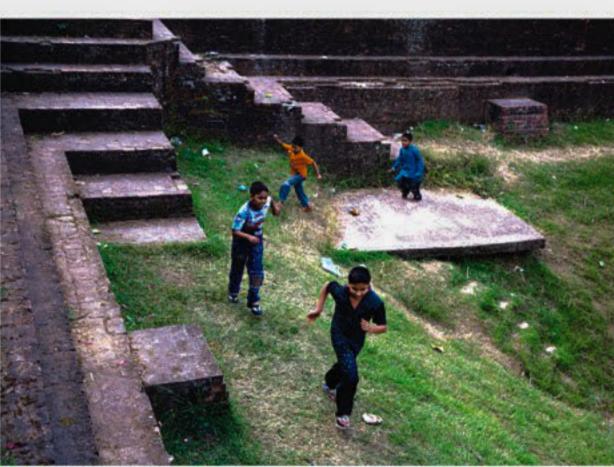
## EGITY/Intrame



On top of the world.



Water sports from a garden leak.



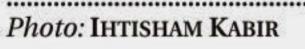
Friends exploring the sunken area around the pond.

## KELLA'S **KIDS**

HE Moghul fort at old Dhaka's Lalbagh, known locally as the Kella, has a checkered history. It was started in 1678 by prince Azam, son of Emperor Aurangzeb. But before Azam could complete it he was transferred to Delhi. The responsibility of construction fell on the governor Shaista Khan who expanded it. However, tragedy struck when Shaista Khan's favorite daughter Pori Bibi died. Heartbroken, he now felt the fort was unlucky and abandoned it, but not before erecting a beautiful tomb - built from the finest imported ingredients - in her memory.

The three main structures making up the Kella are the tomb, the mosque and the Hammam / Audience Hall. The Kella compound also has three different gates, a watch tower, barracks, several fountains, a pond, and the remains of a Moghul garden on the roof of the barracks. The setting is an open space of several acres with lawns and well-tended gardens.

Three centuries after Shaista Khan's heartbreak, the Kella he helped build is today a place of joy for the children of Old Dhaka who are starved of open spaces and greenery amid the city's congestion. Not only is there space to run, but there are also walls to scale, holes to spring into, shrubs to play hide-and-seek in, and graceful surroundings to enjoy the company of friends and family.

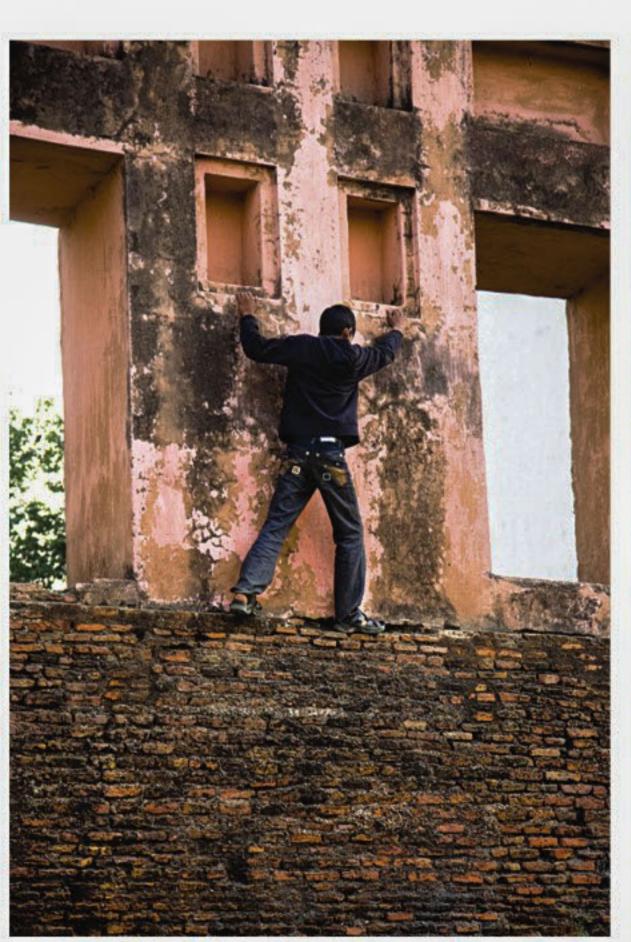




Jumping into an empty fountain.



Playing Kanamachhi near the eastern gate.



Balancing act in the Moghul garden.

