

Do you have a flair for trendy, pop music and you have buddies who like the same? You are about to experience one of the most exciting events ever. With the slogan *Ananda O Moja Thakuk Shobar Majhe* (Let there be joy and fun in everyone), renowned carbonated beverage brand, Fanta has launched its much awaited talent-hunt programme, popularly known as Fanta Band to discover the country's first generation of teen pop bands.

It is the first talent-hunt reality show in Bangladesh that will select the best pop band formed by teenaged boys and girls. The show will be aired on GTV, with their radio



PHOTO: COURTESY

partner being Radio Foorti and Youth Engagement partner being the The Daily Star. Cats Eye has agreed to be the wardrobe partner. Three of the country's most famous music icons; Fuad Al Muqtadir, Elita Karim and Jon Kabir will be judging the talent show, along with grooming the fervent young participants. "I think the most exciting part of this programme is it will test the team-performance of the young musicians and singers rather than testing their

FEEL THE VIBE WITH FANTA BAND

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

name, age and address. The top 300 entries have been selected for the next round, from which, 100 of the most vibrant, talented and spontaneous performers have been short-listed to be vetted and groomed by these top-chart musicians. Finally, 20 finalists will be selected to perform in the grand finale and among them the jurors will select the five first ever teen pop bands of Bangladesh.

"A unique feature of this show is that it will create space for the upcoming pop musicians of our country. Pop music is one of the most popular formats of music in

Aspirant participants participated in the audition round just by calling 3690 and recording a song along with their name, age and address.

the country; however, it is also one of the least focused sectors of our thriving music industry. From the young participants I will expect innovative and some original performances and my message for them is whatever you do in your life, whether its music or not, do it with love and passion," says Jon.

This event is not only an opportunity for teenagers to showcase their talents, but also a platform for these young minds to blend in, innovate and interact maybe for some future projects. "We rarely see events and programmes dedicated to teenagers. These young minds need a place to express themselves or to vent out. I think the whole Fanta Band concept has also created the grounds for new friendships and youth interaction," says Elita.

| ENDEAVOUR |

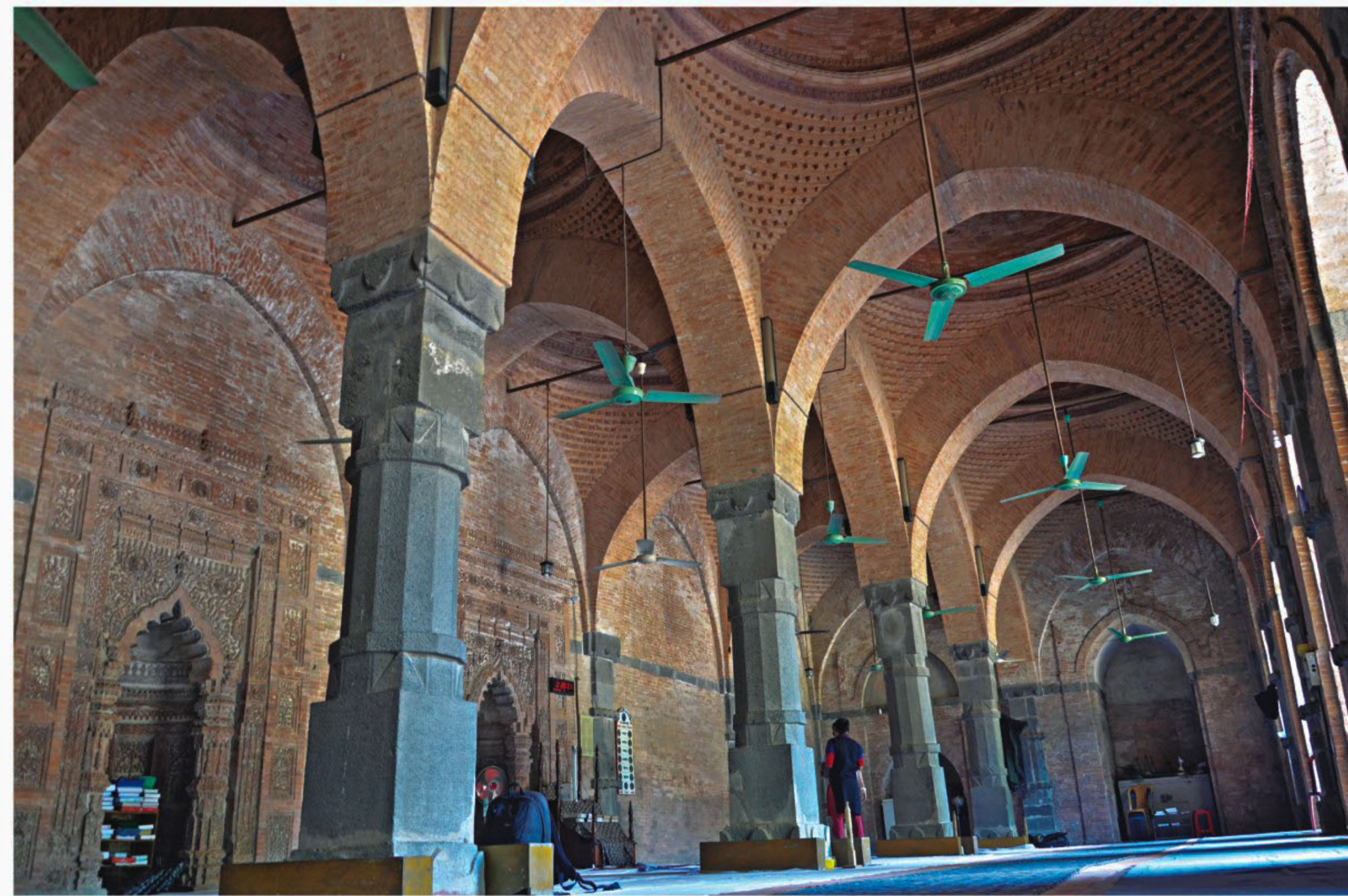
HERITAGE

Bagha, now a serene, small upazila town located some 40 kilometers away from Rajshahi city, was once upon a time, a thriving trading centre on the bank of mighty Padma River. One of the remnants of its glorious past has survived the wrath of time and it is considered one of the most significant and beautiful archeological sites of Bangladesh. It is the Shahi (grand) mosque of Bagha, the most beautifully decorated mosque built in the independent sultanate period of Bengal.

Surrounded by an ancient freshwater lake, beautifully landscaped orchards, ancient ruins, graveyards of the saints who preached Islam in this area and with a recently built museum, the mosque along with its scenic premises is an ideal place to reminisce about Bangladesh's prosperous history. Established by Nasrat Shah, the Sultan of independent Bengal, in the year of 1523-24, the mosque is well known for its depiction on the banknote of fifty taka.

Built on a stone-carved pedestal measuring around 8-10 feet high, it's a rectangular structure with four decorated corner turrets. The structure is seventy five feet in length, forty two feet in width and twenty four feet in height. There are 5 beautifully decorated twelve feet high archways which not only serve as the entrances, but also ensure superb ventilation in the mosque. There are ten semicircular domes on the arched roof supported by six pillars made of black basalt stone.

The mosque is famous for its magnificent terracotta ornamentation. The entire mosque wall- both interior and exterior is covered with elaborate depiction of exquisite floral patterns, abstract fretwork and geometric patterns. There are four decorated *mihriabs* (prayer niche) in



THE GRAND MOSQUE OF BAGHA

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

PHOTOS: ANWAR ALI



the mosque which are considered the epitomes of Islamic terracotta ornamentation. There are also Arabic and Persian calligraphic inscriptions attached to the interior and exterior walls of the mosque.

Another similar but smaller three domed structure can be found a few yards away from the Shahi mosque, which was built for the women worshippers of the noble families. This special mosque for women is locally called the "mosque of the stolen plaque". The caretaker of the mosque says, "The calligraphic inscription on the black-stone plaque which you can see attached to the exterior wall was stolen by some robbers during the 90s. They sold the plaque to a curio shop in Delhi, India. However, the curse of Allah fell upon them and they suffered a lot. Then, the same robbers, who had stolen the plaque, bought it back and returned it to the mosque."

Despite of its historical significance, signs of negligence in preserving this mosque is quite eminent. During the earthquake of 1897, a part of the mosque collapsed which was repaired in

accordance with the actual design during the late 70s. Since then, no steps have been taken for further maintenance in the last thirty five years. Many of the decorated terracotta tiles have been fractured and a lot of the beautiful patterns, damaged. There is only one caretaker to guard and maintain the mosque and its huge premises of 256 bighas of land.

Due to its remote location, very few people are actually concerned about the maintenance of this significant and beautiful heritage site. The mosque and its picturesque premises will be able to attract a lot of tourists and history enthusiasts from home and abroad if proper maintenance is ensured.

PEARLS OF WISDOM



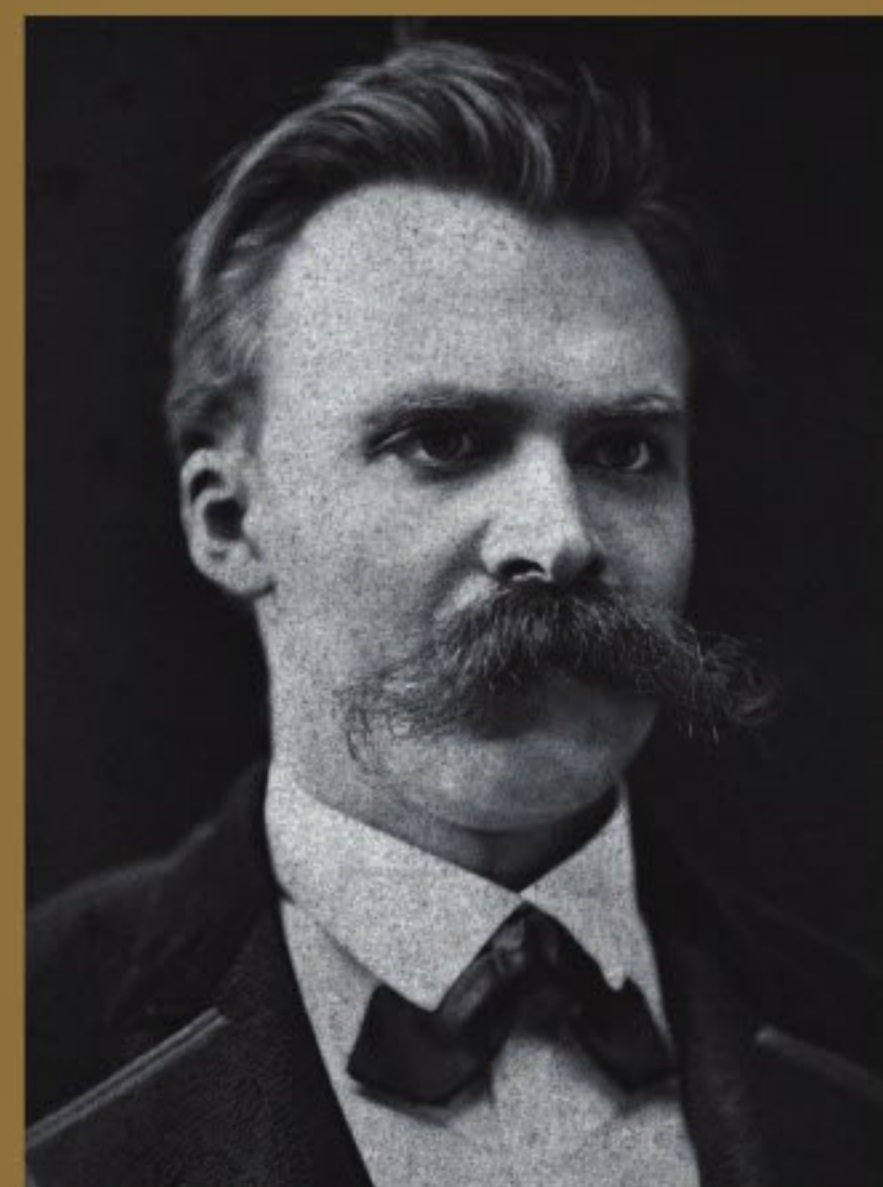
"THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR AND FAMOUS LANGUAGE IS MUSIC."

PSY
South Korean singer and songwriter



"MUSIC WAS MY REFUGE. I COULD CRAWL INTO THE SPACE BETWEEN THE NOTES AND CURL MY BACK TO LONELINESS."

MAYA ANGELOU
American author, poet and civil rights activist



"WITHOUT MUSIC, LIFE WOULD BE A MISTAKE."

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE
German philosopher and cultural critic

TOP 7

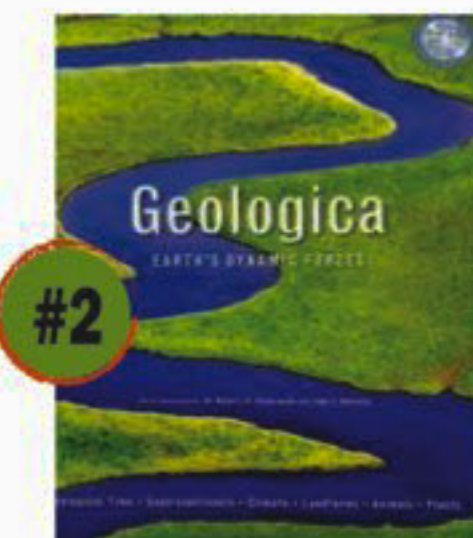
PICK OF THE WEEK



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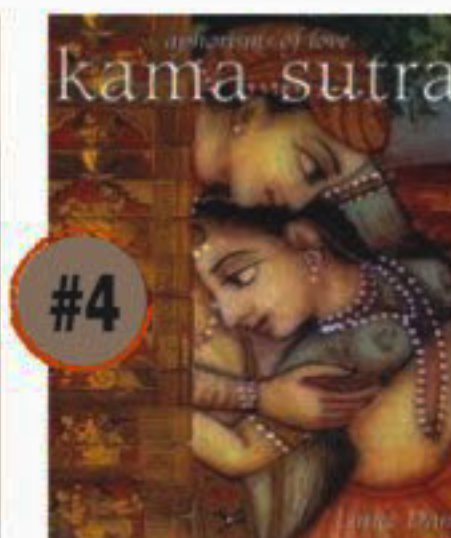
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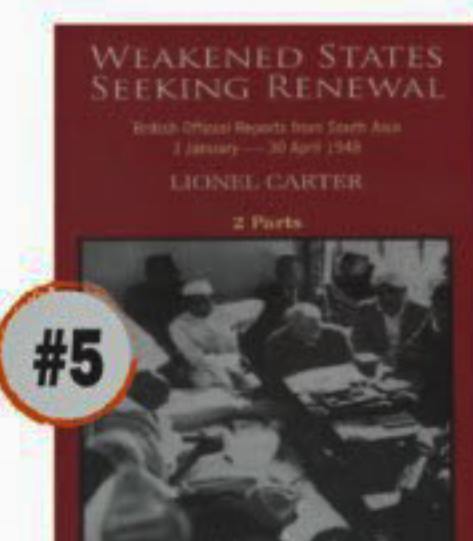
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