



An alley of Old Dhaka; an ordinary rickshaw ride; children playing in the rain; and the little joys and every day celebrations that constitute the rural and urban life of Bangladesh - the exhibition titled Time and Temporality, held at Drik Gallery offered these vivid images and much more.

Aspiring photographer and architect, M M Maksud Biplob and the Facebook

FINDING MEANING IN THE MUNDANE

photography network, The Moment, arranged a three day exhibition which ended on March 24.

The exhibition does not overwhelm you to look into something extraordinary, but as you go through an array of 138 photographs, you will surely walk out of the gallery with renewed passion for appreciating and documenting the everyday beauty that exists around you.

The title of the exhibition, "Time and Temporality", was a deliberate choice, as the organisers wanted to capture the beauty of everyday moments, and appreciate the magnificence in the mundane.

"Art exists in the simple elements of our life, and if you observe them carefully, you will always be able to see more," says Sadia Arefin, the organiser. "Once we learn to appreciate the beauty in these moments, the most humble day to day activities become the most precious ones."

The response from photographers from all over the country was amazing,



FAYEKA ZABEEN SIDDIQUA
PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

says Sadia. "We received around 800 photographs in all, and 138 photographs were selected. The photos at this exhibition were chosen and printed by our sponsor - Paradigm, an organisation that offers integrated design services."

I have 50 photos here, and the rest are from 38 photographers from both home and abroad. Even though so many minds got together for a single endeavour, we all strongly relate to each other in our similar quest to seek the beauty around us," says Biplob, with a smile. "As an architect, composition matters to me the most in my photographs. See the lines and wrinkles on her face with a backdrop of the lost Panam city?" he asks as shows one of

his photos. "They represent the experience and memories that people gather as they age." Biplob, a photographic hobbyist, says that he always has his camera with him so that whenever he sees something interesting when he is walking down the road or going somewhere, he can take a picture immediately.

A deliberate focus in finding beauty all around us is another way of finding meaning in the mundane. And photographers of this exhibition have done just that - they captured the little moments that we often neglect or overlook, helping us gain a new appreciation of our everyday lives. ■



HERITAGE

Thinking of having a quick weekend-tour outside Dhaka? Only some fifty kilometres away from the capital, Baliati Palace can be the perfect place for your weekend getaway. This magnificent ancient Greek style palace is one of the most famous archaeological sites near Dhaka. Built on 55.4 acres of land, this huge palace complex is also one of the largest colonial era zamindar palaces still existing in Bangladesh.

Gobinda Ram Saha, a rich salt merchant got the feudal lordship over a vast, fertile area of Manikganj during the first half of the 18th century. The magnificent palace was erected by his successors in the 19th century. According to an inscription found in the palace, it is known that the inaugural ceremony of the palace was held on the 1st of Boishakh, 1300 Bengali year which is April 14th, 1893 CE.

Surrounded by a perimeter of ponds, the huge palace is divided into four blocks inhabited by the four successors of the zamindar. There are similar but individual gatehouses for each of the blocks. The statue of a roaring lion on the apex of every gatehouse symbolises the wealth and power of the zamindar family. The



THE GRANDEUR OF BALIATI

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

PHOTOS: MD ADILUZZAMAN ADIL

palace is standing on the marvellously decorated, gigantic Corinthian pillars. Exquisite floral ornamentations all over the palaces and magnificent marble statues and lanterns leave the visitors wonderstruck.

There are four more buildings behind every block of the palaces. These three storeyed almost, ruined buildings were used as the female quarters. In the north of the palace premises, there is another building which was once used as the servant's quarter, palace stable and garage. There is also a huge pond with

four ghats for the four families.

Legends say that once there was a huge salt barn at the centre of the palace premises to symbolise the source of the wealth of the founding zamindar. This is why Baliati palace was once known as the Palace of the Salt Barn (Golabarir Prashad). Now the palace has been named after the village where it is situated.

The zamindars of Baliati were renowned for their contribution in spreading education in this part of Bengal. Kishori Rai Chowdhury, one of the zamindars of Baliati established Jagannath College (now Jagannath University) in Dhaka which he named after his father. He also established many schools and charitable clinics in Manikganj district. archaeological department has been maintaining this huge palace complex

since 1987. There is a museum in the 2nd block where different objects used by the zamindars have been preserved for exhibition.

Thanks to the palace's grandeur and reachable location, it attracts a lot of visitors from the surrounding area. Baliati can be reached through direct bus service from Dhaka to Satoria. However, the palace remains closed on Sundays and half days on Mondays. Although a lot of tourists visit the palace every day, there is no noticeable arrangement for refreshment for the visitors. If proper maintenance of the palace and refreshment arrangement for the visitors can be ensured, this archaeological site can be a great place for learning, recreation and entertainment for the tired Dhakaites. ■

