The initial idea was to search for the essence of Islam devoid of ritualistic and symbolic attributes. To question convention and imagery, to hack back to the time of the beginning – to question 'What is a Mosque?'. Mosques essentially a place of congregation of devoted Muslims, gathered in brotherhood, facing Qibla in submission to one God, One present. Clarity of space is prerequisite as there is no expression of mystic myth, no hierarchy. Thus, the prayer hall of Bait Ur Rouf mosque is a carefully scaled and proportioned volume that is contemplative in nature is yet lit to enhance the feeling of all as equal.

The mosques from the Sultanate period mark the glorious legacy of Mosque architecture in Bengal. In the thirteenth century with the advent of Islam, Mosques built were not influenced by foreign style but combined and adapted elements found in local tradition. Built in brick, these mosques essentially embody a style that is unique to Bengal. To root a mosque to the place, it is crucial to analyze and extract from tradition what is essential. Bait ur Rouf Mosque is an attempt at creating a language of architecture that takes essence from the Sultanate period and gives a contemporary expression.

The tradition of mosque building in a certain location is influenced and localized by the use of local materials, climate, local customs, and techniques. Bait or Rouf, mosque celebrates local tradition of construction, material and craftsmanship of bricks. The building breathes naturally through porous brick facade that wraps the prayer hall, essentially a pavilion on eight columns. Ample skylight allows the space to remain lit throughout the day introducing a sense of spirituality. Modest budget raised through donations required responsible spending by careful selection of material and construction without sacrificing the quality of architecture.

Bait ur Rouf mosque is a small yet effective example of people's will towards a better living environment in the fastest growing city in the world. When government's lack of attention, plan or policy towards unmanageable growth fail to respond to the basic need of urban dwellers people suit their will and resources toward a positive living environment that contribute to a healthy urban life. Small scale participatory projects are unique ways of contributing to urban dwelling in contemporary cities.
THE LOCATION IS A RAPIDLY URBANISING nieuwerkHOOD TO THE NORTH OF DHAKA CITY

LIGHT WELLS CHANGING THE DIRECTION OF LIGHT

VIEW OF RIWAQ FROM THE ENTRANCE HALL

PRAYER HALL BEFORE DHURUH PRAYER, PEOPLE GATHERING FOR THE JAMAI

PLUNTH AS PUBLIC PLAZA FOR THE COMMUNITY
WHEN PERSONAL FEELING TRANSCENDS RELIGION AND THOUGHT LEADS TO PHILOSOPHY, MIND OPENS TO REALIZATION...
ONE SUCH REALIZATION IS THAT THE QUINTESSENCE OF TRADITION IS NOT WORSHIPPING ASHES BUT PRESERVING THE FIRE.
ESHARUL IS A CRAFTSMAN WHO WORKS WONDER WITH TERRAZZO FLOORING. HE COMES FROM KAPITA NEAR TO RIVER PADRAJ. HIS FAMILY AND DWELLING IN PICTURE. THE FLOOR IN THE PRAYER HALL IS MADE WITH WHITE STONE DUST COLLECTED FROM STONE CUTTING SHOP, AND WHITE CEMENT. TERRAZZO FOR THE BIMETERS FLOOR ON THE UPPER LEVEL IS MADE OF WASTED CEMENT FROM CONSTRUCTION.

SHARIFU, SUJAM IS A BRICK MASON FROM CHHINN NABARGANG NEAR RIVER MAHIMANDA. BRICK WORK FROM NORTH BENGAL IS A CRAFTSMANSHIP THAT IS APPRECIATED THROUGHOUT BANGLADESH. SHARIFU WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THE BRICK WORK IN BAITUL ISLAM MOSQUE. TO MAKE A 10" THICK PERFORATED LOAD BEARING BRICK WALL WITHOUT REINFORCEMENT WAS A GREAT CHALLENGE DURING CONSTRUCTION OF THE MOSQUE.

TO ALLOW WIND INTO THE SPACES THE LOAD BEARING BRICK WALLS ARE CONSTRUCTED AS PERFORATED BRICK WALLS. METAL STAIR TO UPPER FLOOR ALSO OF PERFORATED METAL SHEET ALLOW WIND AND LIGHT.