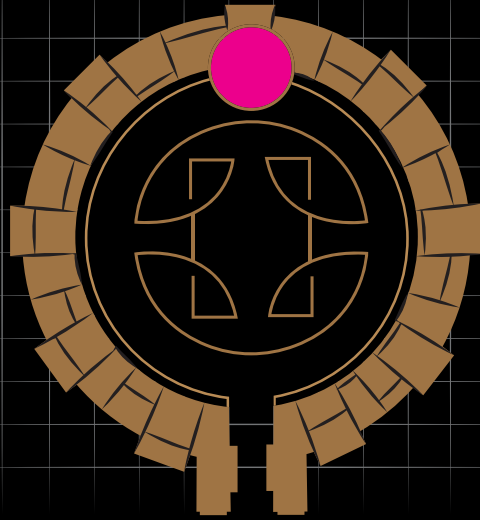


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November, 2024

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Dear Fellow Members of the Indian Institute of Architects,

September is a month bursting with a variety of observances, from global awareness days to national celebrations. It's a time to reflect, learn and contribute to various causes. A healthy body leads to a healthy mind as we remind ourselves by observing the National Nutrition week. Humanity is aspiring to reach the sky and we observe Skyscraper Day on 3 September which marks the day the ability of a man to construct an industrial masterpiece. To maintain the balance between these aspirations to meet the sky and also look sensitively at the living beings on ground we celebrate International Day of Charity on 5 September every year to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions to achieve sustainable development goals. Another important event, Teachers' Day in India is celebrated on 5 September every year to mark the birth anniversary of India's second President Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan. On this day we appreciate and recognize the efforts of teachers in making responsible individuals who will help to build this nation. International Literacy Day is observed on 8 September every year to make people aware of the importance of literacy which no doubt is a matter of dignity and human rights. International Day of Democracy is observed on 15 September to remind people that democracy is about people. And with the current tensions going in the world, International Day of Peace (UN) is observed on 21 September around the world.

The September issue of JIIA has a distinctive cover page which illustrates the unique blend of culture, nature and people of Goa who understand this blend so correctly and which reflects in their architecture as well. And so, it was an appropriate venue to host India's most awaited IIA Young Architects Festival (YAF) this year. The theme of YAF resonated with enquiring about the vernacular and its various interpretations done by the master speakers and the workshops held during this festival. Attended by the architectural fraternity across India who were enriched with the discourse on new vernacular architecture.

We at IIA, want to thank all the participants for their overwhelming attendance at YAF. On behalf of the YAF Team, we want to thank our IIA President and the his Office Bearers for supporting the young talent in architecture in India and the world.

Taking this endeavour ahead, IIA is bidding to host the prestigious event of the UIA Convention in 2027 in Mumbai. We urge all IIA members and the entire architectural fraternity to support this endeavour in whatever capacity you can. With the similar enthusiasm which all the IIA members have shown for ANVESHAN and YAF, I urge all IIA members to register in large numbers for our upcoming *Pinkprint* on 8-10 November hosted by IIA Odisha Chapter.

An appeal to all IIA members to contribute to JIIA with articles, projects, research papers and most importantly, in terms of sponsorship and funding. Thank you for your continued support and readership.

Prof. Vinit Mirkar
Editor, JIIA



Ar. Vinit Mirkar

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Imm. Past President, IIA

Greetings!

It is always a pleasure to see young architects and students of architecture involved in IIA events and activities. This year, IIA's Young Architects Festival (YAF) was organized and hosted by IIA Goa Chapter and was a remarkable success.

India's population is about 140 crores, out of which, 50% of its population is below the age of 25 and around 65% population is below the age of 35. When we see this in comparison with countries like China (37%) and Japan (48%), it is easy to understand the reason why we Indians are at the top in almost every field. Today's young architects are talented; they have brilliant ideas; and we at IIA must use that talent to help grow IIA.

Architecture is so much more than drawing lines on paper or on a computer. Education in colleges or institutions is a must. Beyond that, gaining the right experience is very important. Only getting a job is not enough. One needs to try different things, to expose herself or himself in many different and relevant situations and different environments, so that various experiences can be learnt while earning and which teach the most. It is very important to explore and broaden horizons. For this, architects and students must join IIA, and learn by engaging with their own community / fraternity as well.

Often we find that the profession of architecture gets thrown under the bus. Many times, the profession may not be fair. And this is not always due to issues of gender or diversity. There may be other factors at play, which may cause issues for everyone. But we architects are trained to recognize problems and create solutions in how things could be better. Architecture, like other fields, is constantly evolving and leaves people behind who can't adapt to change. The profession rewards hard work and those who can execute efficiently.

The truth is every single person who has found success with architecture has burnt his or her hands at one time or another. People get lied to, not paid and sued. At the same time the successful ones are those, who instead of complaining, have taken those setbacks and used them as opportunities for inspiration to keep moving forward. This profession isn't easy and is highly competitive. Negativities exist in each profession and every industry its own problems. The grass isn't always greener on the other side.

The young Architects Festival held at Goa, was very well received by the young architects and students. I believe that, young generation of the profession will try to connect with the positivity in the profession and join people doing great things and join hands to make constructive and worthwhile changes in the profession of architecture.

Ar. Vilas Avachat
IIA President

COVER THEME

Capturing the Spirit of the Vernacular

IIA YAF, Goa



The cover image for this issue captures the essence of the IIA Young Architects Festival (YAF) 2024 held in Goa on 27 – 28 September 2024 at Alila Diwa.

YAF 2024 is a flagship event of IIA which this year revolved around the theme of *Interpreting the Vernacular*.

The cover draws its inspiration from the landscape of Goa characterised by the presence of the sun, the sea and the tropical landscape. It captures the energy of the festival which was created by the presence of speakers from all over India and Southeast Asia, and the exhibitions and workshops that took place during the festival.

The timbrel vault technique developed in the fourteenth century was experimented with at the Festival by the participating students. An exhibition of architectural models, as a tool to assist on site construction and design, was showcased at the Festival along with a breathtaking exhibition of photographs on vernacular architecture of India.

The festival took place at a venue set in the tropical landscape of Goa creating just the right vibe for IIA YAF 2024 in Goa.

‘The process is as important as the end-result’ was the starting point, beginning with the structure of workshop mid-progress. The core idea was to depict the various overlapping components of the Festival, ranging from the workshop and varying exhibitions to discussions and awards. Inspired by traditional inked sketches, with a focus on line work to highlight the main shapes and forms, with minimal colours in large brushstrokes. Keeping in mind the surroundings of the event, natural elements were incorporated, from the foliage and the trees surrounding the entrance, as well as flowing lines and waves to create a sense of depth between the many layers of the festival.



Ar. Anup Moreshwar Gadgil (A20353) graduated from Goa College of Architecture in 2002 and completed M.Arch (UD) from SPA, New Delhi in 2006. He is a visiting faculty at the Goa College of Architecture. He is also a member of the IUDI, and actively involved with their activities.

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JIIA Call for Papers, Articles, Projects

The Journal of the Indian Institute of Architects invites original and unpublished contributions from members **ONLY** (academicians, practitioners and students) under the following FIVE categories. Submission in each category is strictly only through the respective google forms.

In order to be accepted for publication, all material sent in these categories should have the following components:

1. MS Word document file with text only. Please do not format it in anyway. The numbered captions for all the images will also be in this document.
2. Folder with all images (minimum 300 dpi), numbered according to the captions given in your text file
3. Photograph of the author/s (minimum 300 dpi).
4. Author biodata – Maximum 50 words.
5. PDF (optional)– showing the intended layout. This pdf should include text and all images, with numbered captions.

Category 1 : Articles

google form link: <https://forms.gle/7pDFva1HDH4hfUyj8>

Essays, interviews, articles (1500- 2500 words), book reviews (600 and 750 words), travelogues, sketches and photo-essays in the areas of architecture, planning, urbanism, pedagogy, heritage, technology, ecology, theory and criticism, visual design, practice or any other relevant subject pertaining to the built environment. (Details of the format will be available on the JIIA website).

- For a design project, please include the 'Fact File' with the following details : Project Name, Location, Plot area, Total built up, Structural consultants, Project completion. Also please give the photo captions and credits. Please ensure that the image is referred to within the text. For eg, "As seen in Figure 1...". This is essential for the layout.
- For design projects, plans and sections of the project are desirable along with the photographs.
- Book reviews should be only of books by Indian authors. please include the "Fact File" with the following details: book title, author name, publisher, year of publication, ISBN, language the book is written in, genre (technical/ fiction/ etc.), no of pages, dimensions (in cm), type (Kindle/ paperback/ hardback), available at (amazon.in/ flipkart.com/ others).
- Please send a write-up of about 200-300 words along with sketches and photo-essays.

Category 2 : Student Work

google form link: <https://forms.gle/hyhsCoK6QPe6qDJu8>

Summaries of dissertations (2000-3000 words) at the level of B.Arch. & M.Arch., and theses at the Ph.D. level. The Guide for that work will be mentioned as the Co-author. (Format will be available on the JIIA website).

Category 3 : Contributions from Chapter Correspondents

google form link: <https://forms.gle/Ru4JBLSHwaYEBTcg7>

- (a) *Chapter News*: This includes various interesting activities from the Centres of your Chapters (maxm. 500 words for the news from the *entire* Chapter).
- (b) News of conferences by the academic institutes in your respective Chapters.
- (c) *Obituaries* : Obituaries of IIA members should consist of the photograph of the departed soul, the dates of birth and death and a short 50-word note.

Category 4 : Research Papers

google form link: <https://forms.gle/Z9YWQQMaw843N1eT6>

Research papers (2000-5000 words) in the prescribed format. The research may be based on their ongoing or completed research. (Format is available on the JIIA website). All contributions in this category will be double blind peer-reviewed before being accepted for publication by academic experts of repute.

Category 5 : Cover Design

google form link: <https://forms.gle/BSkuE5cApXdy7dX1A>

Students from affiliated colleges are invited to design the cover page theme. This should be a graphic based on some aspect of Indian Knowledge Systems. The submission will include the graphic file (jpeg or corel draw); a theme note (with a title) of about 500 words explaining the concept of the graphic.

Please note that the image you send will be adjusted as per the layout requirements of the JIIA Cover.

Please note:

1. All submissions will be accepted only through google forms.
2. Submissions will **NOT** be accepted through email.
3. Any queries to be addressed to : jiaeditorial@gmail.com.
4. When you correspond with us, please give your email id (that you regularly use) and your cell no. (preferably with WhatsApp).
5. It is compulsory to mention your IIA regn. No. Submissions will **NOT** be accepted from non-members.
6. The review process takes anywhere between 4-6 weeks. Since it may not be possible to respond to all authors who send in their work, we will definitely revert if and when your work is accepted.
7. JIIA does not charge any fees for publication of any professional or academic work.
8. It is understood that submission from an author is an original work, unpublished anywhere else, and that IIA and JIIA are in no way responsible for any matter or dispute arising out of the publication of the same.
9. All authors are requested to refer to further detailed information available on the JIIA website.

IIA Declaration on World Habitat Day

This year, World Habitat Day will be observed on Monday, 7 October 2024, with the theme *Engaging Youth to Create a Better Urban Future*. Recognized globally, as the most populated nation housing 1.4 billion, having more than 50% population below the age of 25 and more than 65% below 35, India is globally known for housing the largest proportion of the young population.

Known as 'home to a fifth of the world's youth population', with an average age of an Indian placed at 29 years, compared to 37 for China and 48 for Japan, India holds the distinct advantage of population dividend, by housing the largest population in the most productive phase.

With cities becoming the centre stage of economy, employment, hope opportunities, infrastructure and services, a large number of Indian youths are opting for urban centres as their preferred place of residence and employment. The presence of a large young population in Indian cities presents both an opportunity and a challenge.

As developing world urbanizes rapidly, with majority of cities growing in unplanned, irrational and haphazard manner, creating numerous operational and developmental problems of population, poverty and pollution; role, relevance and importance of youth, forming majority of urban population, as new generation of leaders and change-makers to emancipate urban areas becomes critical.

Recognising the presence of the large proportion of the youth population and their critical role in urban emancipation and regeneration, the United Nations has accepted *Engaging Youth to Create a Better Urban Future*, as the universal theme for The World Habitat Day this year. Considering this UN mandate, and recognising the critical role and importance of young architects, we, the members of The Indian Institute of Architects and Office Bearers of all Chapters, Centres and Sub-Centres of IIA, do hereby solemnly resolve, undertake, commit, dedicate and reaffirm as under:

- That IIA, shall use all available resources at its command, to empower young architects, by embedding state of art professional skill, knowledge and understanding, to make them better professional architects.
- That IIA, shall support all young architects, irrespective of region, caste, creed, language etc., in learning and promoting the art and science of designing sustainable buildings and urban spaces by optimizing the use of nature and natural resources.
- That IIA, shall take all possible steps to involve and include all young architects, as an active and productive partner, in the professional activities organized by the Institute.
- That IIA, shall continue to hold a dedicated festival for Young Architects. on an annual basis, for creating a platform for young architects, to showcase their ideas, projects, talents, skill and innovations, to make the profession of Architecture, more qualitative and productive.
- That IIA, shall help, support and guide young Architects in initial years, to establish their professional practice and make it more qualitative and productive.
- That IIA, commits itself to create an enabling environment and dedicated structure for young architects, to leverage their strength, talent, energy and ideas to promote the profession of architecture and make it socially acceptable and culturally relevant.
- That IIA, working in partnership with academic institutions, locally and globally, shall make all efforts to review, revise and redefine architectural education, to make it more qualitative, productive and focused, based on the leveraging available talent with the young learners.
- The IIA, partnering with architectural institutions, commits to involve students of Architecture in undertaking studies, carrying out analysis, in identifying urban issues and defining realistic options/ programs for rational urban development.

- *That IIA shall focus on leveraging the technological skill, including AI, AR, VR, BIM etc., available with the young professionals to make the rendering of the professional services at local level, more focused, qualitative, cost-effective, time-efficient and productive.*
- *That IIA, shall create an enabling mechanism to ensure universal availability of architectural education to the deserving youth having limitation of financial and physical resources.*
- *That IIA, while working in close collaboration with parastatal agencies working at national and state levels, shall focus on creating policies and programs for using the inherent strength of youth, to provide quality architectural services in the remotest corner of urban India, for creating sustainable and safe built environment.*
- *That IIA, while working with urban local bodies, shall take all possible steps to make Architects in general and young Architects in particular, integral part of urban planning, development, management and governance process; besides including and involving them in planning of urban spaces for involving youth.*
- *That IIA, shall work in close collaboration with young professionals to leverage their strength in promoting universal acceptability of the profession of Architecture and making it people centric.*
- *That IIA, shall assist, advise and work as a partner with young architects to consult, co-operate and collaborate with all professional agencies operating in the country in the domain of planning and designing of human settlements and to evolve rational and realistic strategies and options for promoting planned development.*
- *That IIA, while recognising the role and importance of young professionals, commits itself to create an effective institutional framework for enhancing the role of young architects in making urban spaces/ cities, living more qualitative and productive.*
- *That IIA, commits itself to create a dedicated platform for spacing both old and young members of the profession to interact, discuss, deliberate and innovate the options for making cities more sustainable and liveable.*
- *That IIA, shall continue to work closely, with young architects, to achieve the universal good of humanity, communities, environment and ecology besides achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, defined by the United Nations, to transform cities into sustainable/ better places to live and work.*

Ar. Vilas Avachat

President

The Indian Institute of Architects

Time Overrun in Indian Construction Projects and Mitigation Possibilities

By Dr. H. M. Thapliyal and Prof. Ankit Arora

ABSTRACT

Construction delays are a common occurrence in projects. When they arise, they need to be evaluated quickly and managed efficiently. When any degree of complexity is introduced to the mix it can become particularly difficult for project staff, who are overworked while dealing with site issues and other project pressures, who may be untrained in forensic analysis or programming skills. This often manifests itself as a poor strike rate in achieving extensions of time entitlements by contractors or, when the employer's team lacks these skills and awareness, a record of granting excessive extensions of time to contractors. Through this paper, it is observed that nowadays client-related issues along with improper planning in most projects are the principal reasons affecting time overrun in the scheduling of any construction project. Time overrun in construction scheduling affects both the cost and time. If the schedule of the project is delayed then automatically the project duration increases. If the project duration increases, the overall cost of the project increases and therefore the productivity of the project gets reduced.

Keywords

Time overrun, Mega projects, Delays, Construction projects: Cause, Effect, Factors.

1. Introduction

Deferrals brought about by the customer, for example, late accommodation of drawings and particulars, visit change requests and erroneous site data produce claims from both the primary temporary workers and sub-contractual workers which commonly involve extensive court fights with tremendous monetary repercussions. Deferrals brought about by contractual workers can, for the most part, be ascribed to poor administrative abilities. Absence of arranging and a poor comprehension of bookkeeping and money related standards have prompted numerous contractual workers' ruin.

Deferral is additionally brought about by poor material administration. Material selection and resource allocation is imperative for improving efficiency in development ventures. The administration of materials ought to be considered at all periods of the development procedure and all through the development and creation periods. This is on the grounds that poor material administration can frequently influence the general developments like time, quality and spending plan.

All these factors lead to delays in construction and this research aims to bring out all the aspects of fast-tracking like speedier construction technology and alternative methods for earlier project delivery, scheduling and monitoring process, construction process, etc. and the related managerial issues.

Fast-tracking construction projects sometimes becomes an urgent necessity to rehabilitate homeless people or infrastructure after a devastating earthquake, a sweeping flood or any disaster. Many situations like executing building foundation between the snow time and the autumn time, maybe between high tide and low tide zone which itself demands fast-tracking architecture

The benefits of fast-tracking architecture may be classified as –

- Quicker return on equity
- Freeing resources for other projects
- Avoiding technical obsolescence
- Bonus available for early finish
- Arresting ongoing construction costs

Alternatively, project fast-tracking is defined as a technique used to accelerate schedules. Generally, it means that construction begins on a facility before the design is complete i.e. a structure foundation is designed before the final design is complete. For a private sector owner, fast-tracking is usually used with a negotiated contract delivery system, a process not generally available to engineering and construction on several project sub-elements that occur concurrently. Its principal objective is to shorten construction time for the overall project by starting some of the work as soon as it has been designed.

2. Significance of Problem

Administration of designing and development ventures has obviously gotten more complex in comparison to earlier times. Earlier to the 1970s, development ventures were conveyed through the conventional approach with an architect/engineer for plan review and a common temporary worker for development, or through the design-built approach highlighting an engineer/contractor included in all stages of the extend, from the beginning through plan to development. Amid the 1970s, specialised complexities of ventures, expanded government controls, spiralling swelling and political weights all have contributed to the development which came about seeking creative strategies to guarantee speedier completions. With the conventional extended conveyance framework falling flat to meet the show challenges, the owners found it essential to end up more included within the organisation and administration of their ventures.

In an exertion to abbreviate venture terms and offer assistance to meet general venture goals, staged development and fast-tracking administration

procedures (Assaf, 2006) have been created as a portion of the proficient development administration (PCM) approach. The PCM joins together a three-party group comprising of the proprietor, originator and development supervisor in a non-adversary relationship and it gives the proprietor an opportunity to take part completely in the development preparation.

Both, staged development along with fast-tracking, squeeze the extended length by covering work bundles. Before long, as the plan and development stages are covered, an entirely modern arrangement of interrelationships among originators, temporary workers and proprietors are shaped which must be overseen exceptionally effectively to realise fruitful completion of development ventures. Nowadays, with the instability of swelling and intrigued costs, and with the competitive commerce world requiring proprietors to do their best to defeat adverse competitors, these quickened venture conveyances are getting to be alluring subsequently building up the contrasts between the fast-tracking procedure and the staged development approach. Through advance and big budget ventures, the effect of compressing and covering plan exercises can achieve better fast-tracking. An in-depth delay investigation is displayed to reveal the effect of fast-track-related issues on the development length. At last, based on the content received through various questionnaires and surveys in this paper and in reference to other fast-track ventures that experienced troubles, proposals are made for the successful utilisation of this quickened method.

3. Aim

To propose strategies for fast-tracking delayed projects in India using building management techniques.

4. Objectives

- To determine the various factors which are mostly influencing the delay in construction projects in India.
- To understand the factors influencing delay in different stages of construction projects, from conception to completion.
- To analyse and recommend various strategies that can help in overcoming the delaying projects.

5. Methodology

This exploration is done in a number of phases, including literary reviews and research journals, data collection, discussion and conclusion. Through

the literary study, we identified 11 factors causing Time Overruns in Delhi NCR. For data acquisition, a total of one hundred (100) sets of questionnaires were consigned to the persons operating in the organisations of the chosen ten construction sites located in Delhi NCR. The answerers included Contractors, Clients, Quantity Surveyors, Project Managers, Engineers and Architects. The assessment of Time Overrun factors was carried out using the 4-point Likert scale from 1 to 4 as follows:

1. Can be abandoned
2. Small impact
3. Average impact
4. Exorbitant impact

Out of 100, seventy-five (75) respondents reverted. This was contemplated to be sufficient for the investigation based on the supposition that the outcome of an exploration survey could be appraised as prejudiced and of tiny worth if the return rate was lower than 30–40%. The responders involved in the survey had several years of experience in operating different types of projects.

6. Scope and Limitations

1. Due to time constraints, the study shall be restricted to group housings in Delhi NCR.
2. The scope of the research is mainly to focus on the study of challenges that the construction sector is facing presently.
3. Limited application of the latest technology at construction sites in the Indian construction industry may result in major deviations in the fast-tracking processes assumed during the course of the study.

7. Historical Background

With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, rationalised industrial technology entered the field of building construction. Almost fifty years ago, Steel and RCC were used only for major buildings. Gradually the use of structural frames increased and innovations were made in building materials, equipment and technology to increase the speed of construction.

The concept of fast-track construction was initiated in the U.S. with an aim to save time in the production of buildings. 'Fast-Track' construction refers to a building method with an aim to erect a building as rapidly as possible, immediately after the design work has been completed and the finances have been raised. Thus, a 'Fast-Track' construction technique may be defined as a technique which

executes the building in a lesser period of time as compared to other techniques also feasible for the same building, fulfilling all requirements such as functional, aesthetic, structural etc., may be at an additional cost in some cases.

It is a matter of concern that the construction industry in India is still in primitive state. Our conventional and traditional labour-intensive technology is obsolete. For the construction of walls, most of the bricks have to be broken into different sizes at the site leading to wastage of materials as well as poor quality construction. For the development of chunks, costly wooden covering is utilised. On account of steel, the work power needs to hang tight for a timeframe until the sections have increased sufficient quality and before development can be taken further up. For lifting material and work, platforms and derricks are utilised rather than man lifts (Al-Kass, Mazerolle, & Harris, 1996). Due to the continual use of these obsolete techniques, the construction industry suffers heavy losses. There is 8-10% wastage of material which can be saved using mechanised construction. The building produced is of poor quality, with honeycombing in concrete and bulging occurring in slabs. The value or cost of construction is higher due to wastage of material, formwork and wages of workers. Also, the methods of assembly and erection are more complex. The time taken for the completion of the building using traditional methods is much longer than using mechanised means. Slum tenements emerge at construction sites which is again wasteful as the material is non-recoverable.

Such losses can be avoided using Fast-Track construction techniques. India has achieved a high rate of technological development in other fields. The detailed knowledge of state-of-the-art construction techniques is available to us. The reluctance to switch over to such techniques is either due to lethargy due always or fear of failure. Anything new is treated with skepticism and the transition from the conventional to the modern is not always easy. To change the present state of the construction industry we need to consider not only the technical and financial factors but also the socio-cultural aspects of our country.

8. Major Factors that Cause Delays

- Delay in revision and approval of design documents
- Suspension of work by owner
- Non-use of advanced engineering design software
- Delays in site mobilisation
- Low productivity and efficiency of equipment

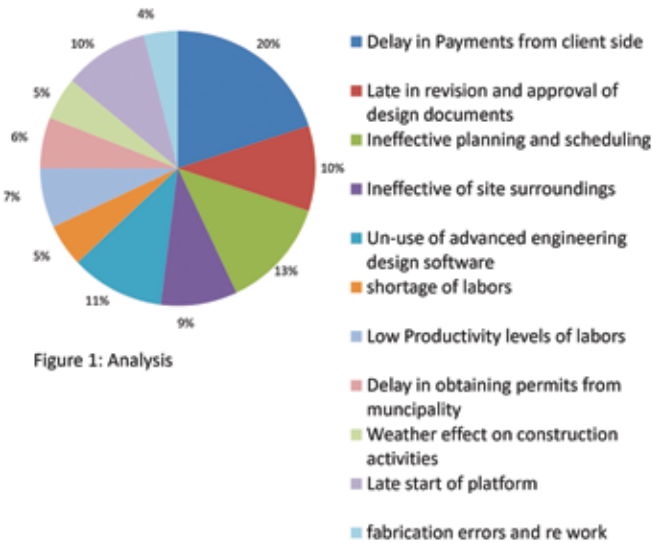


Fig. 1: Analysis

Source: Analysis of Data from Questionnaires, Surveys & In-person interviews

- Damage of sorted material while they are needed urgently
- Late procurement of materials
- Low productivity level of labour
- Delay in performing final inspection and certification

9. Analysis

The major causes of delays identified are discussed below. These are the factors upon which if no laxity is done, we can decrease the delay in construction projects and produce efficient work.

10. Conclusions

There are many practical challenges any PMC may face in projects in India. Finding their solutions from the very root level and discussing them with the client before the final deal will be beneficial for the project, the client as well as PMC. From the very first the schedule shall be proper and must be positively followed. On a daily basis, tracking of schedules, junctions, aims, risks and benchmarks must be recorded and should be briefly studied. This will be helpful in decision-making to get sound and positive results. Mainly the risks and negative factors shall be highlighted and must be worked on and preventive measures must be found. Issues related to time, cost and quality must be given priority and should be discussed with the client openly and PMC should seek the solution with their help. From the selection of the site, planning, designing and construction to the handover of the project, the PMC must consider every critical issue and must discuss it with the

client. The manpower on the site for the purpose of construction shall be strong in order to eliminate the problems regarding lack of labour. Issues related to government and other authorities must be presented to the client in the first place so that their solutions may be found and the pace of the project remains unhindered.

Through this paper, it is observed that nowadays client-related issues along with improper planning in most projects are the principal reasons affecting time overrun in the scheduling of any construction project. Time overrun in construction scheduling affects both the cost and time. If the schedule of the project is delayed then automatically the project duration increases and if the project duration increases the overall cost of the project increases and therefore the productivity of the project gets reduced.

And it seriously affects the owner and contractor in many ways. Most factors related to consultants are due to not understanding the client's necessities, not having proper project information, absence of some detail in drawing etc. It is examined that most delay occurs as a result of contractors' insufficiency in obtaining newfangled equipment and unjustifiable usage of material in construction. The aforementioned causes result in disputes that occur in construction, hence it is obligatory that material of the highest quality is used in construction. Far-sightedness of requirement material is also important as resource management is also a significant cause as a result of which delays occur in construction. So, it is imperative that the provision of material must be prompt. It is predicted that some delays occur in projects due to a shortage of labour. There may be variation among labour, injurie, and low yield of work. Furthermore, other reasons for time overrun are project conditions like site, complexity and complications in work due to weather. Time overrun also occurs due to extrinsic factors like changes in bureaucracy and government etc. The client must be mentally and financially strong to start a new project due to which we can reduce delays in projects.

The client must appoint a project manager who has the following expertise:

- Communicate effectively, including developing good listening skills.
- Ensure that a multidisciplinary team operates in the most cooperative manner to achieve its goal effectively.
- Understand their client's business needs from building projects and tailor services to meet them.

11. Future Scope

The future scope of the study can be extended to identify the other significant causes of construction time overrun in India. Finally, a delay-solving model can be developed by utilising diverse delay investigation approaches to minimise the effects of time overrun in construction projects in India.

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Transformation of Commercial Centres in Suburban Towns

Evolving the Framework of a Research

By Ar. Sandipan Sinha, Dr. Sanghamitra Sarkar, Dr. Abhiroop Das and Dr. Sanjib Nag

Introduction

Transformation is a marked change in form, nature and appearance. It is essentially a change of space and time which generates adaptation. Transformation of a Commercial Centre takes place along the axial spatial formation. Sometimes two adjacent market clusters transform into one. Adaptation creates domination, which with time gives rise to transformation (Mishra & Pandit, 2013).

A Commercial Centre is one of the most vibrant urban public spaces which is not only a space for commercial exchange but also one where people meet and interact almost the entire day. Traditional Commercial Centres, which are widely known as markets, function not only as trading places, but also as spaces for life conception, sociocultural interaction and recreational facilities both in regional and urban scope (Aliyaha, Setiokoc, & Pradotod, 2017).

Suburban towns, in the Indian context, are medium towns away from the metropolitan cities with populations ranging from fifty thousand to five lakhs, governed by the Municipal Council (URDPFI Guidelines, 2015).

An urban unit, due to the process called Urbanisation, goes through these kinds of changes, which in the Urban Design and Planning discipline, is called Urban Transformation. Many cities around the world witnessed huge transformations due to rapid development during the 21st Century. Studies found that the development of technology and globalisation are two major causes of rapid

urbanisation and unplanned transformation of urban spaces (Hameed Basee & Riadh Abdulla, 2012). As a response, interventions on urban transformations are undertaken for the better social, economic and spatial quality of the cities, which could be named urban renewal, rehabilitation, improvement or regeneration, which all are synonymously used in this context (Alkiser Yasemin, 2009). To understand the trend of this transformation we need to study the changes in major functional aspects of a city. These kinds of empirical studies are very less, in spite of some legitimate efforts made in the recent past (Madeleine, 2019). Transformation is true both on a macro scale, i.e., global, economic, political and social structures, and also at the micro level, i.e., the way in which people fashion their everyday lives (Sarkar, Ghosh, & Nag, 2020). *Figure 1* shows a similar transformation of Singapore, Bayfront Avenue in the last two decades. In *Figure 2* it is shown how the Urban Design intervention transforms a traditional Commercial Centre of T-Nagar, Chennai into an organised, pedestrian-friendly urban space.



Fig. 1: Singapore cityscape, then & now.

Source: <https://www.triphobo.com/blog/timelapse-evolution-before-after-of-famous-cities, 2023>



Fig. 2: T-Nagar Chennai 5 years ago and now.
Source: Authors, 2022



Fig. 3: Ancient Commercial Centre, Roman Forum.
Source: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Rome/The-Forum>, 2023



Fig. 4: New Market, Esplanade, Kolkata.
Source: Authors, 2023



Fig. 5: Royales Saint Hubert, Classic Shopping Centre, Brussels, Belgium.
Source: <https://pixabay.com/photos/galleries-royales-saint-hubert-3599461/> Images, 2023

Characteristics of the public space offered by a Commercial Centre depend on the inherent characteristics of the particular city or the surrounding settlement. The study of the transformation of the Commercial Centre indicates the evolution of an important public space from the past, which dates back to ancient times. Retailers sitting together, to sell their goods under one roof or in a clustered form, defines a public market. Besides that, other wholesalers and mercantile offices altogether make the area a Commercial Centre. Continuous urban expansion has led to the constant transformation of these spaces into today's shopping malls.

The transformation of this Commercial Centre dates back to the Agora. This transformation, for the purpose of documentation, needs new approaches to determine intervention areas and priorities, especially in situations that affect the whole city (Salihoglu, Albayark, & Eryilmaz, 2021). In Figure 3 the Commercial Centre of the Roman era is shown and in Figures 4 and 5 the same Commercial Centre in the present-day scenario has been depicted.

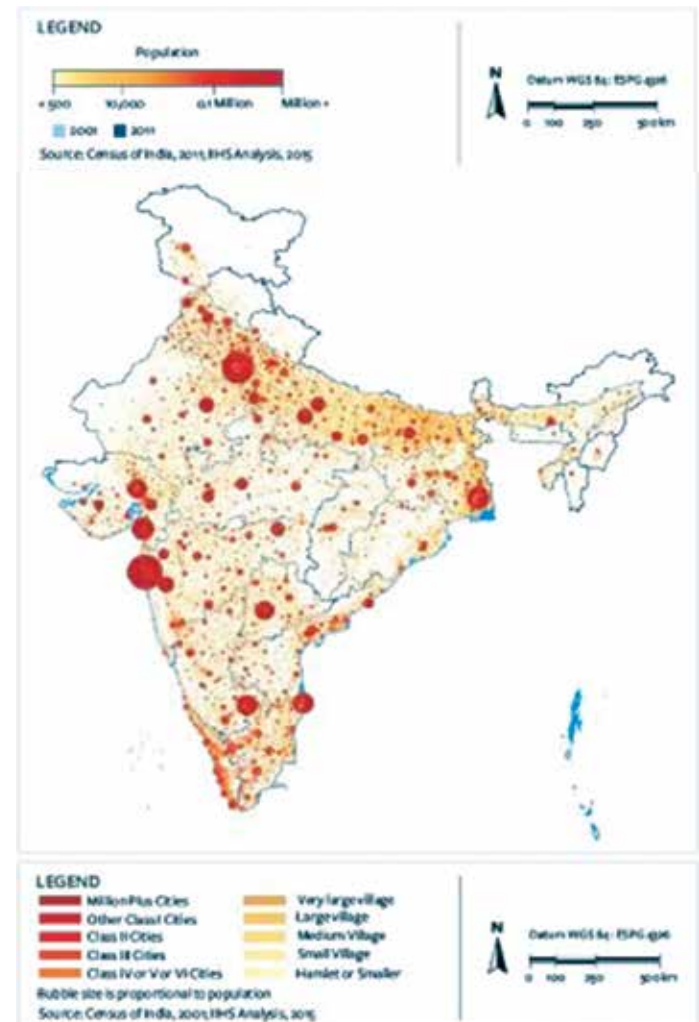


Fig. 6: Mapping of classified towns in India.
Source: Census of India, 2011

Table 1 defines a Medium Town as per the URDPFI Guidelines. United Nations in 2019, estimated that by 2027 India could be the world's most populous country by replacing China. India's urbanisation is about to greatly accelerate in the coming decades. During 2011–36, almost 73% of the rise in total population will be on account of urban growth (Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, 2020).

The last Census data has clearly spotted all types of Urban Setups throughout the nation (Census of India, 2011). *Figure 6* shows all types of Urban Settlements. This figure shows the fast urbanisation of the Medium Towns beside the metro cities.

West Bengal has continuously witnessed growth due to urbanisation in the last two decades. Cities have grown towards the city boundaries and city magnets such as Commercial Centres have started

emerging as small magnets in suburban areas. Commercial streets, the very common form of commercial market cluster, are a very important component of urban transformation due to their continuous organic growth (El-Haggag Mehanna, 2019). Bengal had at least 5 capitals/urban centres before Kolkata – Gour, Rajmahal (now in Jharkhand), Dhaka (now in Bangladesh), Nadia and Murshidabad. So, the urbanisation trend of the state seems to be metacentric rather than depending on only one Centre, Kolkata.

Table 2 lists some important towns of West Bengal which have a population range of 1 to 5 lakhs. The mapping of the towns in *Figure 7* shows towns having a population of more than 1 lakh in West Bengal. Among these, medium towns away from Metro Cities could be picked up as suburban towns for case studies.

Table 1: Medium Towns among the Classification of Urban Settlements.
Source: URDPFI, 2015

S.No.	Classification	Sub-category	Population Range	Governing Local Authority	Number of Cities as per Ceasus of India. 2011
1.	Small Town*	Small Town I	5,000-20,000	Nagar Panchayat	7467
		Small Town II	20,000-50,000	Nagar Panchayat/ Municipal Council	
2.	Medium Town	Medium Town I	50,000 to 1,00,000	Municipal Council	372
		Medium Town II	1 Lakh t[5 Lakh	Municipal Council	
3.	Large City	..	5 Lakh to 10 Lakh	Municipal Corporation	43
4.	Metropolitan City	Metropolitan City I	10 Lakh to 50 Lakh	Municipal Corporation/ Metropolitan Planning Committee	45
		Metropolitan City II	50 Lakh to 1 Crore	- Same _	5
5.	Megapolis	..	More than 1 Crore	- Same -	3

Table 2: Medium size Towns listing in West Bengal.
Source: Census of India 2011

Town	District	Type	Population
Bardhaman	Purba Bardhaman	UA	3,47,016
Malda	Malda	UA	3,24,237
Baharampur	Murshidabad	UA	3,05,609
Habra	North 24 Parganas	UA	3,04,584
Kharagpur	Paschim Medinipur	UA	2,93,719
Shantipur	Nadia	UA	2,88,718
Dankuni	Hoogly	UA	2,49,840
Dhulian	Murshidabad	UA	2,39,022
Ranaghat	Nadia	UA	2,35,583

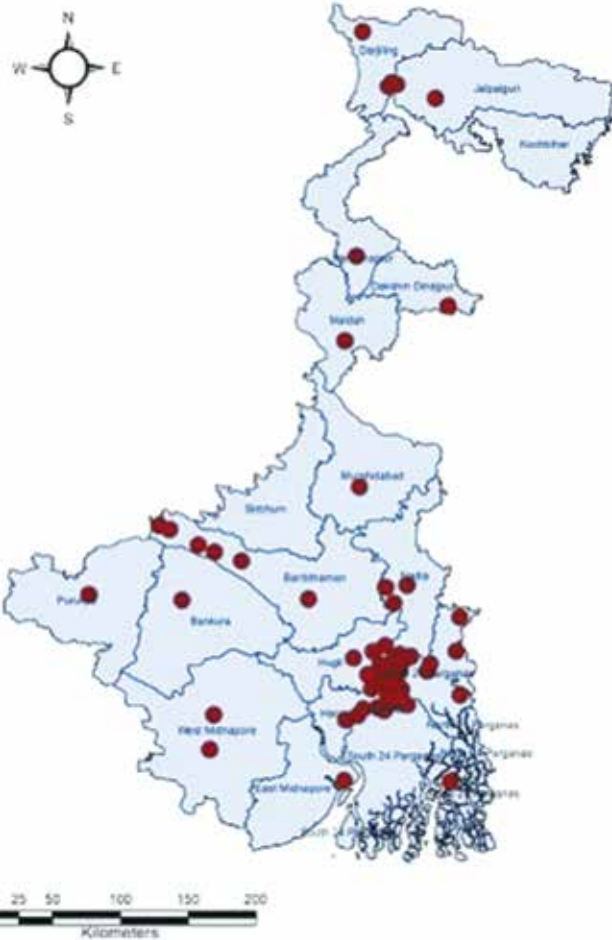


Fig. 7: Mapping of Class I towns of West Bengal.
Source: Das et al., 2021

The intent of this study is to establish the relevance of the research on the Transformation of the Commercial Centre in medium-sized towns i.e., suburban towns. The transformation of a city like Kolkata has been studied so far. The suburban towns have a scope to capture its transformation trend which might open up a new scope of developing Urban Design guidelines for them to accommodate the changes by retaining the sense of the place.

In this context, research work needs to be carried out for further investigation regarding the Transformation of Commercial Centres in suburban towns, considering the overall spatial development in selected towns in developing countries.

For the present research work, the objectives are defined as:

- To define the related terminologies and establish the research premise through secondary research.
- To identify the parameters/sub-parameters affecting the transformations of Commercial Centres in suburban developments through secondary research.

- To establish the parametric relationships through secondary research.
- To validate the parametric relationships.
- To investigate the transformations of selected sites of West Bengal based on these parametric relationships.
- To apply statistical tools to validate data collected from field investigations based on these parametric relationships.
- To formulate relevant strategies and recommendations based on this study, to guide similar transformations in desired directions.

Based on these research objectives, a generic methodology can be framed to arrive at appropriate strategies and recommendations for these suburban towns as their identity can be retained for further future development. To attain this, further literature study and on-site study are to be performed which will lead towards the expected strategy recommendations for this transformation of Commercial Centres in suburban towns so that it can retain its original identity for better sustainable further development.

Commercial Centres and Suburban Towns

Commercial Centres have distinct features when their capacity and spatial distribution in a Metro City and in a Suburban Town are compared. The Commercial Centres in suburban towns are far from metro cities and the differences are very distinctive in socio-economic conditions as well as in functional and spatial arrangements. Commercial Centres take over more functions of higher order like services, public culture and administration, thus restricting the economic activities in the local area (Malgorzata, 2015). In the territory of suburban towns progressive and diversified transformations of the structure of trade can be observed, which changes consumer behaviour. The intensity of modifications depends on the size of the town and its proximity to a metropolitan area. The local Authority looks after the trade and services as it is a major development factor.

The transformation, if not intervened, is actually a piecemeal process continued through decades. *Figure 8* depicts the development of the Kanchrapara Commercial Centre located adjacent to the Kanchrapara Railway station. Commercial Centres of suburban towns have been witnessing the advent of national and international franchises in suburban towns gradually in the last few years. The Commercial Centre used to have a shopping street with all the front facades on both sides of the road as individual shops. This type started changing with some of the shopping



Fig. 8: Kanchrapara Commercial Centre.
Source: Authors, 2023

mall-type buildings starting to offer everything under one roof. In *Figure 9* this type of emergence of a shopping mall in the railway town of Kharagpur is captured. This new concept drove the transformation to a more intense and interesting level.

Transformation of Commercial Centres in Suburban Towns

The transformation of Commercial Centres is driven by urban expansion. Besides the development of e-commerce, which resulted in the creation of big warehouses and distribution hubs, local commerce hasn't changed much in terms of both wholesale and retail establishments. Other changes took place in terms of volumetric growth and an increase in diversified items/goods. The Kanchrapara Commercial Centre can be taken as an example of this kind of transformation. As the centres of connectivity in terms of Bus Terminus or railway stations are being focused, the more operational Commercial Centres, often adjacent to them, are getting automatically focused on. With the advent of Central Institutes like AIIMS at Kalyani, the city is certainly about to grow and expand as it is projected to cater to more and more people pouring into the local area. Transformation, triggered by population growth, is inevitable as the demand for consumption increases. The level of urbanisation in West Bengal is shown with a comprehensive diagram in *Figure 10*.

Such growth triggers the transformation, which this current study intends to focus on. The research questions whether there is any pattern to this kind of transformation. The research also questions whether this is an organic growth driven by some common forces of urbanisation which leads to similar types of transformations of the Commercial Centres of suburban towns. Planning for these towns is now a challenge as it is attributed to three important points such as -

- A considerable number of cases of urbanisation are unaddressed and unacknowledged in India.
- The transfer right of development was not properly handed over from the State/UTs to ULBs as envisioned in the 74th amendment of The Constitution and



Fig. 9: Big Bazar at Kharagpur since 2001.
Source: Authors, 2022

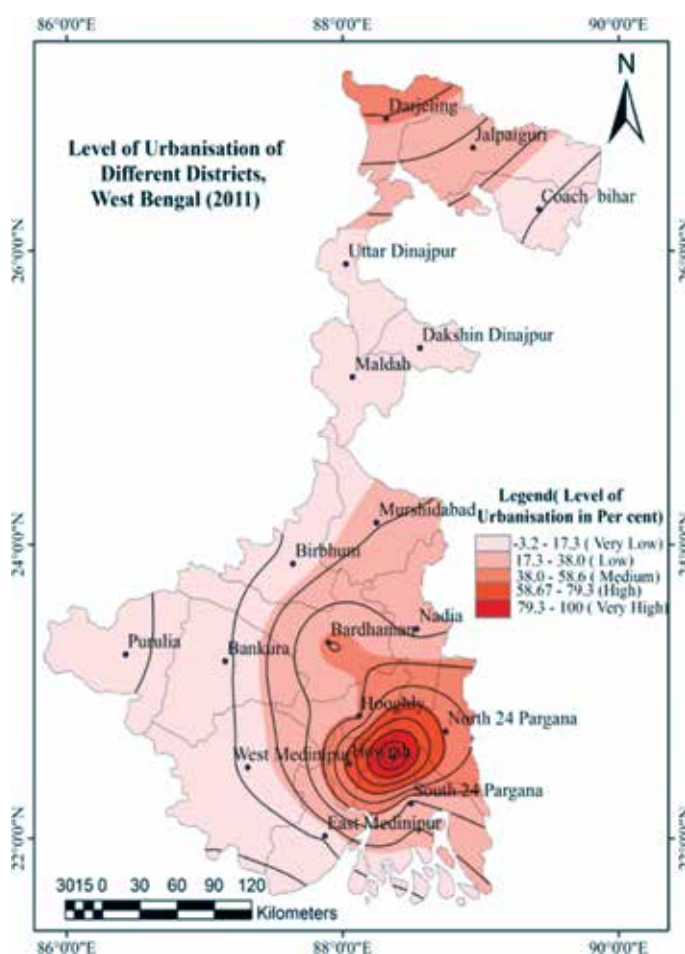


Fig. 10: Level of Urbanisation in West Bengal as per Census 2011 data.
Source: Ghosh & Khatun, 2022

- Lack of a proper Master Plan for urban areas. Almost 65% of the total 7933 urban settlements in India do not have it yet (Aayog, Sep, 2021). These are the causes for the sporadic development in an unplanned manner which is prone to affect the spatial pattern and arrangement of spatial functions.

Present Scenario

In this research, the target cases are the 'Suburban Towns' i.e., Medium Towns away from the urban conglomeration, and the case study will be selected from West Bengal, India. As per URDPFI, there are two types of Medium Towns - Medium Towns I with a population range between fifty thousand to one lakh and Medium Towns II where the population range is one lakh to five lakh (URDPFI Guidelines, 2015). In the twentieth century, the growth of urbanisation was restricted to the area of Kolkata and Durgapur-Asansol urban-industrial agglomeration (Samanta, 2012). In the twenty-first century, urban growth took place in the areas away from the dominance of metropolitan influence. This growth can be defined as 'Subaltern' in nature (Samanta, 2012). As there is no Master Plan of growth, the increased business and its accumulation in and around the Commercial Centres of these 'Suburban Towns' leads towards the creation of anarchy. This has an inevitable effect on the basic services provided for the place. The movement channel, the water distribution system, the sewage system and the electricity distribution system, besides the overall spatial distribution system, are being loaded by extra pressures leading to a very vulnerable situation to retain the urban pattern. Hence, to prevent further deterioration, research on the pattern of growth in all these aspects is the need of the hour.

Research Direction

The five dimensions, besides Efficacy and Justice, are indispensable for a city to function properly with a proper form (Lynch, 1981). Besides this, the research emphasises the five Imageability parameters of Lynch, such as District, Edge, Path, Node and Landmark (Lynch, 1960) as well as the parameters derived by Paul D. Spreiregen, such as Shape, Pattern Texture and Grain, Urban Space and Open Space, Vistas, Magnet Generators and Linkages, Special and Overall Activity Structure, Strong and Weak Acres of Orientation, Point of Conflict, Historic and Special Districts, Community Structure, Areas of Preservation and Places needing Clarifying Design Elements (Spreiregen, 1965).

In an attempt to intervene in the Urban Design issues of unprecedented growth of Commercial Centres in suburban towns, the research has to establish the evaluation criterion to emphasise upon during the physical survey of these towns which will involve detailed Literature Studies to identify all related parameters and sub-parameters.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above discussion and subsequent analysis, Suburban Towns in West Bengal have emerged as important zones of enquiry in terms of their potentialities with respect to the transformation of the Commercial Centre. In this process, these transformations lose their overall significance and utility, in spite of having the potential of adaptability, according to the altering needs.

Thus, this research work theoretically studies the transformations of Commercial Centres with respect to suburban towns and envisages their interrelationships, which in turn establishes a parametric relationship between the same. In due course, this would further induce on-site surveys of similar such transformations, in selected suburban towns and would yield data to analyse and vindicate the parametric relationship. This analysis would help to formulate relevant strategies and recommendations for determining such transformations. The overall outcome of this entire exercise is expected to result in investigating the subject matter of the said research work in a holistic manner, especially with reference to the suburban towns of West Bengal as case studies.

In future, it would help to undertake necessary interventions in similar existing situations, to guide them in a desired direction, so as to help to develop alternative proposals including anticipatory plans, to acquire maximum gain. Subsequently, the ultimate outcome would result in guiding the said transformations of Commercial Centre in suburban towns, in particular, and improving the overall physical environment of such towns, in general.

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Odyssey through India's Timeless Traditions

By Dr. Komagal Anupama K

India, with its kaleidoscope of cultures, languages and traditions, stands as a testament to a rich and diverse heritage that has withstood the test of time. As an Indian brought up in a vernacular residential setting, my journey through this tapestry of traditions has been a fascinating exploration of the cultural wealth that defines our nation. Growing up amidst this resplendent physical setting, every nook and cranny of our ancestral home echoed with stories of a glorious past. The positive psychodynamic emotions embedded in the walls of these homes are palpable – a celebration of family bonds, cultural pride and a legacy that has weathered the sands of time. The meticulous attention to detail in the design and construction of these homes is a testament to the commitment to preserving their cultural heritage.

Nestled in India, my upbringing has been deeply intertwined with the customs and rituals that have been passed down through generations. Our home, a microcosm of this heritage, served as the canvas upon which the vibrant hues of Indian culture were painted. From the rhythmic beats of classical Carnatic music to the aromatic wafts of traditional Indian cuisine, every aspect of our daily life was a celebration of our rich heritage.

One of the most striking elements of India's traditional heritage is its linguistic diversity. Growing up in a vernacular residential setting, my earliest memories are adorned with the cadence of my native language – the sweet lullabies my grandmother sang and the tales of ancient epics that were woven into the fabric of our conversations. Language, in India, is not merely a means of communication but a conduit through which stories, values and traditions are transmitted

across generations. Conversations in our vernacular home were not just a means of communication but a rhythmic symphony of words that carried the essence of cultural ethos. The vernacular language, spoken with pride and reverence, connects us to the roots of our heritage, creating a sense of continuity and belonging.



Vernacular residential setting - earliest memories

As I reflect on India's heritage, the timeless art forms that have flourished across the centuries come to mind. The dance form is a homage to the gods, a celebration of life, and a testament to the cultural continuity that defines India. Culinary traditions, too, play a pivotal role in India's rich heritage. The meticulous preparation of traditional Indian dishes are rituals that have been handed down from one generation to the next. Each meal is a sensory journey through the history of our land, with flavours that tell tales of trade routes, invasions, and the fusion of diverse culinary influences. The cuisine is not just about the art of cooking; it is a manifestation of the psychodynamic positive emotions associated with family, community and celebration. The elaborate meals served during festivals and special occasions are a testament to the commitment to hospitality and the joy of sharing their cultural heritage through the culinary arts.



Cuisine is not just about the art of cooking

Religious diversity is another cornerstone of India's heritage and growing up in a vernacular residential setting offered a front-row seat to the plethora of festivals and rituals that punctuate the Indian calendar. From the vibrant celebration of *Sankranti*, a harvest festival in India, to the grandeur of *Ganesh Chaturthi*, our lives revolved around these sacred moments. The ancient temples, with their intricate architecture and spiritual aura, stand as living monuments to the deep-rooted faith that has been an integral part of Indian civilisation.

The physical setting of India is adorned with temples that boast unique architectural styles, showcasing the intricate craftsmanship of the artisans of yore. The temples, with their towering *gopurams* and intricate sculptures, are not merely places of worship but living monuments that bear witness to the spiritual legacy of India. Religion and spirituality are integral components of India's traditional heritage. All



Grandeur of Ganesh Chaturthi

regions are dotted with ancient temples that stand as architectural marvels, reflecting the religious fervour that has been an intrinsic part of cultural tapestry. The rituals and festivals that punctuate the Indian calendar are occasions of communal celebration, fostering a sense of unity and shared identity.



Ancient temples that stand as architectural marvels

India's rich and traditional heritage is not confined to the past; it is a dynamic force that continues to evolve and adapt. The advent of technology has brought about a new wave of storytelling, with digital platforms providing a global stage for India's cultural narratives. However, as we celebrate our heritage, it is crucial to acknowledge the challenges that threaten its preservation. The rapid pace of urbanisation, the encroachment of modern lifestyles, and the erosion

of indigenous languages pose significant threats to the continuity of our traditions. It is imperative for us, as custodians of this rich heritage, to find a delicate balance between embracing progress and safeguarding the essence of our cultural identity.

In conclusion, my journey through India's rich and traditional heritage has been a tapestry woven with threads of history, culture and psychodynamic positive emotions. In a world that is constantly evolving, the preservation of cultural heritage becomes not just a duty but a responsibility. The psychodynamic positive emotions associated with our traditions, the warmth of our hospitality and the beauty of our art forms are treasures that deserve to be cherished and shared with the world. As we embark on this journey through time, let us carry forward the legacy of with pride, ensuring that the rich tapestry of our cultural heritage remains vibrant and relevant for generations to come.

My journey as an Indian brought up in a vernacular residential setting has been a profound exploration of India's rich and traditional heritage. From the linguistic tapestry that weaves our stories to the vibrant arts, culinary delights and religious fervour that define our lives, every facet of our existence is a reflection of a heritage that transcends time. As we navigate the complexities of the modern world, it is our collective responsibility to cherish, preserve and pass on the invaluable legacy that is India's cultural treasure trove.



Positive emotions associated with our traditions

All images courtesy: Author



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Indian Railway Stations

An Approach to a New Framework

By Ar. Samruddhi Gujar and Ar. Vivek Pai

Indian Railways (IR), a symbol of steadfastness and progress, has a rich history spanning over 160 years. As a catalyst for India's industrialisation, it has become a vital lifeline for the nation. Owned and operated by the Government of India through the Ministry of Railways (MoR), Indian Railways boasts of the fourth largest railway network in the world and ranks as the eighth largest employer globally. The initial push for railway development in India originated from London in the 1830s, primarily for freight transportation. IR is one of the busiest and oldest transport networks operational in India. The network spreads in all directions throughout the country. Divided into 17 zones, the railways are a well-managed network in itself. These rail networks suffice the transportation needs of both passengers and goods.

An Indian railway station is a fascinating hub of activity where a multitude of events unfold simultaneously. The hustle and bustle of running trains and hurried passengers, continuous announcements, hawkers vending their goods, and the lively chatter of travelers create an atmosphere full of energy. Separate from passengers' movement is the goods shed area catering to the freight. Despite the chaos, a certain awe and excitement accompanies every train journey, especially when starting or ending at some of India's oldest railway stations. Thus, railway stations have become a part of people's experience in their journey. The oldest railway stations in India, as seen in figures 1 and 2, are not just a part of our history and heritage but also a great example of fine architecture and management skills of Indian Railways. These railway stations have stood the test



Figure 1: Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus Railway Station, Mumbai
Source: Times of India



Figure 2: Kanpur Junction Railway Station

Source: Wikipedia

of time and are still good to last for decades if not centuries. Some of them are recognised UNESCO world heritage sites and some are a part of our lovely memories. These stations also stand as icons for the city, as landmarks giving brief glimpses of the city. Station structures thus become the first impression visitors have about a city they are visiting.

With the expansion of new railway networks, along with the extension of existing lines and the construction of new locomotives, many of these stations, constructed over a century ago, now face challenges with aging infrastructure amid a growing passenger demand. The increase in the number of passengers puts a load on the already existing facilities. To address this concern and to elevate stations into iconic city landmarks, the Ministry of Railways has introduced the Manual for Standards and Specifications for Railway Stations (MSSR). This manual provides guidelines for the development and redevelopment of stations, ensuring they are prepared for future demand and meet world-class infrastructure standards.

The Vision of the Government – Transformation of Indian Railway Stations

The redesign and redevelopment of railway stations across India are pivotal steps in redefining the country's transport infrastructure and urban identity. Indian Railways is committed to providing top-quality infrastructure for passengers and

stakeholders by continuously enhancing its stations. IR operates along 7,000 stations, serving more than 17.5 million passengers daily with some major stations accommodating 100-200 million passengers annually. IR has embarked on a comprehensive development plan for its railway stations across the country. The MoR aims to construct railway stations into passenger-friendly spaces with state-of-the-art technology while also optimising revenue generation potential. This responsibility for the development of railway stations has been delegated to the respective railway zones or authorities. In June 2009, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) issued an MSSR. This groundbreaking manual sets forth guidelines, standards and specifications for constructing new railway stations and redeveloping existing ones, aiming to elevate them to international standards in terms of operational efficiency and passenger comfort. The redevelopment of Indian railway stations will be guided by the public-private partnership (PPP) model, leveraging real estate potential to generate revenue and improve facilities. The MSSR manual emphasises fully utilising station land to enhance amenities and prevent disorganised encroachments. It ensures transparency in partnerships by clearly defining work scope, performance expectations, risk management and service quality, setting minimum standards for construction and management.

Planning an area requires a clear vision and objectives to achieve that vision. Likewise, the redevelopment

of railway stations cannot be accomplished without setting specific objectives to guide the process. The primary objective of the MSSR manual is to serve as a binding document, establishing a benchmark for planners and architects to analyse and redesign of railway stations. Additionally, the manual aims to adopt world-class standards, deliver high-quality infrastructure and services and utilise the potential of airspace above stations and surrounding railway land. It seeks to transform stations into urban landmarks and city symbols by enhancing services and passenger experience. The manual sets comprehensive standards for station design, prioritising architectural vision, efficient passenger movement, and integration with other transport modes. It emphasises safety, security, comfort and convenience for customers while maintaining high standards of architectural quality, innovation, aesthetics and cost-effectiveness. The manual also underscores the importance of integrating stations with urban surroundings, preserving the local environment, and promoting sustainable design through the use of eco-friendly materials and resources.

The objectives in place aim to benefit both railways and passengers through the redevelopment process, ensuring that the station design harmonise with the surrounding environment. The redesign of railway stations, as adopted by the Ministry of Railways, embraces a holistic approach to promote both financial and aesthetic development for the city and its people. Enhancing passenger comfort and experience is paramount, and providing contemporary amenities at railway stations plays a crucial role in achieving this goal. Properly designed commercial developments around stations not only create vibrant public spaces but also significantly enhance passenger safety, particularly during off-peak hours or when traffic is low. Moreover, well-planned commercial activities at these stations can improve their financial viability, helping to reduce losses and bolster the bottom line of Indian Railways, even if the redeveloped stations are not entirely profitable on their own. Additionally, the strategic use of land for commercial purposes around stations will generate substantial revenue for Indian Railways, supplementing its income streams. This is especially important as the focus shifts increasingly toward passenger operations with the commissioning of dedicated freight corridors.

With the rise of metros, rapid transit systems, and high-speed trains, public expectations of railway stations are evolving. To ensure that IR remains competitive and does not lose passenger traffic, the

redevelopment of stations with thoughtful design is essential. Furthermore, improving the image of IR through such development is key to attracting more passengers, particularly in the face of growing competition from airports and bus terminals, which have made significant advancements over the past two decades. The design with a vision is a design set to anticipate future needs, inspire innovation and create lasting value. Just as every structure is uniquely tailored to its users and environment, the design of station buildings must also prioritise the needs of their users. The MSSR for railway stations document is not just a set of guidelines; it is a visionary framework that aims to transform the very essence of how railway stations function, look and feel.

Station Planning under MSSR

Railway stations, often located at the heart of urban areas, have a profound influence on the perception of a city. A well-designed station with superlative amenities not only serves the immediate needs of passengers but also enhances the city's identity, making it a more attractive destination for tourists, investors and residents alike. When designing an architectural vision for a city that handles millions of passengers, it is crucial to ensure that all visitors and travelers experience comfort while enjoying world-class amenities in one place. Achieving the vision of a redeveloped railway station requires adherence to a specific set of standards and guidelines. It integrates all the Indian standards for modern facilities, advanced technologies and sustainable practices, aiming to meet future demands of IR and reflect India's aspirations for modernisation.

In addition to managing people, the flow of vehicular traffic is essential for efficient circulation to and from the railway station. The manual ensures that designs incorporate comprehensive planning for pedestrian and vehicular movement. This includes separating boarding and alighting passenger circulation and facilitating the smooth movement of various vehicular modes. The manual emphasises the importance of designing the structure by integrating it with their local architectural style yet unique to stand out as a prominent building, using local materials and traditional design elements that showcase their rich culture and history through façade design, interiors, colors and green technologies. Enhancing the landscaped area surrounding the station building will help stations blend seamlessly with their surroundings while promoting sustainability. This approach not only preserves the cultural heritage of cities but also promotes environmental stewardship,

aligning with global efforts to combat climate change. This integration outlined by MSSR is crucial for creating stations that are not just functional but also aesthetically pleasing.

In addition to enhancing the visual appeal of railway stations, the MSSR document also focuses on improving the passenger experience. The guidelines emphasise the need for user-friendly designs that cater to the needs of all passengers, including the elderly, differently-abled, and children. The incorporation of features such as clear signage, accessible facilities, comfortable waiting areas and efficient passenger flow management ensures that stations are not just transit points but welcoming spaces that prioritise the comfort and convenience of users. Moreover, the emphasis on safety and security, with provisions for advanced surveillance systems, emergency response mechanisms and fire safety measures, ensures that passengers can travel with peace of mind. Furthermore, the MSSR document advocates for the incorporation of smart technologies and digital solutions in station design. The use of digital signage, real-time information systems, automated ticketing and mobile apps for navigation and services are some of the innovations that are set to revolutionise the way passengers interact with stations. These technologies not only improve efficiency but also provide a personalised experience for passengers, making their journey more seamless and enjoyable. The adoption of smart technologies is also in line with the Government of India's Digital India initiative, further reinforcing the country's commitment to embracing the digital age.

The holistic approach advocated by the MSSR document also extends to sustainability, a critical aspect of modern infrastructure development. The guidelines encourage the use of renewable energy sources, rainwater harvesting, waste management systems and energy-efficient designs to minimise the environmental footprint of stations. This incorporation of green building practices not only reduces operational costs but also contributes to the overall sustainability goals of cities, making Indian railway stations exemplars of environmentally responsible development.

By establishing new standards for design, functionality, and sustainability, the guidelines facilitate the development of world-class stations that cater to modern travelers' needs while enriching the urban landscape. Emphasising aesthetics, user experience, smart technologies, and environmental sustainability, these stations are envisioned as vibrant, dynamic spaces that go beyond being mere

transit points, actively contributing to the social, economic, and cultural development of cities.

A New Path towards Station Design

As India strides toward its goal of becoming a global economic leader, the strategic redevelopment of railway stations under the MSSR framework is set to play a pivotal role in shaping the image of India's cities as shown in figures 3 and 4. By introducing a comprehensive approach that prioritises functionality, aesthetics, sustainability and user experience, the MSSR ensures that these stations will no longer be just points of transit. Instead, they will evolve into vibrant, multi-functional hubs that encapsulate the spirit of modern India— dynamic, forward-looking and deeply rooted in its cultural heritage. The economic impact of the MSSR document cannot be understated. Stations designed according to these guidelines are envisioned as bustling centres of activity, offering a range of services and amenities that go beyond traditional expectations. This shift not only enhances the passenger experience but also stimulates local economies by creating new business opportunities and jobs. The integration

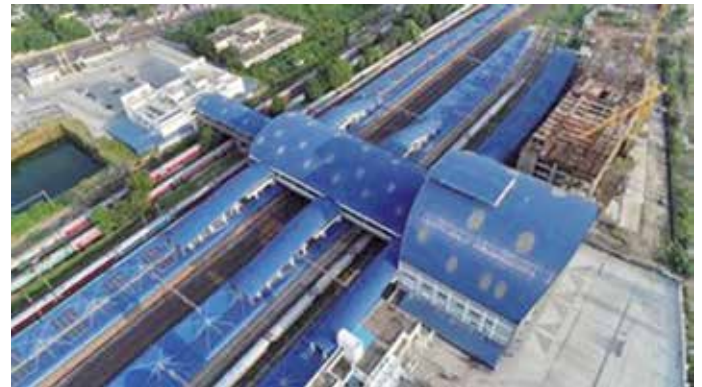


Figure 3: Rani Kamalapati Redeveloped Railway Station
Source: Author



Figure 4: Air concourse interiors of Rani Kamalapati Railway Station
Source: Author

of commercial spaces within stations provides a sustainable financial model for their redevelopment, ensuring that these projects are not just viable in the short term but also profitable in the long run. In essence, the MSSR document is more than just a set of guidelines; it is a blueprint for the future of India's urban infrastructure.

As India continues its journey towards becoming a global economic powerhouse, the redevelopment of railway stations under the MSSR framework will play a crucial role in shaping the country's urban future. These stations will serve as gateways to cities, reflecting the progress, aspirations and diversity of India. By embracing the principles outlined in the MSSR document, Indian cities can look forward to a new era of infrastructure development that is world-class in every sense, offering passengers not just a journey but an experience that is efficient, comfortable and memorable. The railway stations of the future, designed with the guidance of the MSSR, will stand as symbols of a resurgent India, ready to take on the challenges of the 21st century with confidence and pride.

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FROM SOIL TO SUCCESS

GROWING A LEGACY ROOTED IN THE LANDSCAPE

Ar. Monalisa Panda

A personal journey of entrepreneurship rooted in nostalgia, highlights overcoming gender biases and challenges while synergizing people, land and culture through landscape architecture.

Have you ever had one of those moments where a single question stops you in your tracks? For me, that question is always: “Why landscape architecture?” It’s a question I often hear, and it always makes me pause. You see, I could give you the textbook answer—talk about sustainability, creating harmony between people and nature, or the importance of green spaces. But the real answer? Well, it’s a little more nostalgic than that. It all starts with a 5-acre piece of land, a traditional courtyard house, and a childhood filled with the smell of ripe mangoes and the feel of soil between my toes.

Like many children of the 90s, I spent my summers in my grandparents’ village, a place where my grandfather lovingly transformed the land into a thriving homestead farm. It wasn’t just a backyard; it was an ecosystem—complete with fruit-bearing trees, vegetable patches, an open well, and a biogas plant. Nothing went to waste. The straw from our paddy fields was used as cattle fodder, and the manure served as fertilizer or fuel for the biogas plant. He did all of this long before “sustainability” became a buzzword. In today’s world, my grandfather would be called an eco-warrior; back then, he was just my “Jeje bapa” (Grandfather). Who knew, that those summers spent wandering in narrow stone pathways lined with flowering shrubs, and watching nature work in perfect balance would plant the seed that will one day grow into my passion for landscape architecture.

In 2020, when the world was in a tailspin, I made a pivotal decision that would change the course of my life. I chose to take on the challenge of running a landscape business — that changes dynamically and grows infinitely. With a notebook and pen in hand, I began outlining my vision for a landscape architecture business. As I sketched out my plans, two pressing questions loomed large in my mind.

“As a woman, will I be able to run this business successfully?” I drew reassurance from the many remarkable female architects who had established successful firms. However, the second question was more pressing: Could I survive in a niche field like landscape architecture, which was almost unheard of in Odisha? Spoiler alert: I’m still here, so I guess the answer is yes!

During the pandemic, I received numerous enquiries about plants, terrace gardening, and soil types. Many people, driven by isolation, were reconnecting with nature. This renewed respect for the environment became a catalyst for my vision. It solidified my resolve, not just to secure clients but also to educate others on the importance of landscape architecture.

At the time, I had just moved to Bhubaneswar after completing my master’s degree, leaving behind my hometown of Rourkela. Everyone knows, that entrepreneurship is never easy, and as a woman in the landscape architecture field, the challenges felt amplified. Many of the projects I undertook were in rural or suburban areas, and I initially struggled to visit these remote sites alone, often including a family member for support. Every hero needs a sidekick, and mine was either my cousin or occasionally my mother! Despite these challenges, the untouched

natural beauty of these sites fuelled my passion and strengthened my resolve. The obstacles I faced boosted my confidence as a landscape architect, particularly as a woman in the fields.

Despite my qualifications and experience, I often sensed skepticism from clients, many of whom inquired whether I had a male partner to assist with project execution. This underlying bias cost me several projects. Apparently, the perception is that plants grow better when a man is involved. In India, where society still expects women to balance professional aspirations with familial responsibilities, for young, unmarried women like me, these expectations are compounded by concerns about the future.

Many friends and family viewed my firm as a side project rather than a serious, long-term endeavor. This perception—that women’s entrepreneurial efforts are hobbies rather than careers—highlighted one of the many barriers I faced. When I sought to expand my firm after the first year and approached potential investors, I found that many were biased against women-led businesses, seeing them as “risky” compared to male-led ventures, thereby perpetuating the gender gap in entrepreneurship.

After grappling with these challenges for two years, I decided to bring on a male partner as a co-founder—a former classmate and fellow landscape architect. We both believed that the collaborative efforts of male and female talents would be a catalyst for innovation in this creative entrepreneurial journey. Yes, sometimes you have to play by the rules to break them!

I remember an agro-tourism project early in our partnership, located in the harsh, remote region of Bargarh, Odisha. In the sweltering summer heat, with temperatures soaring to 45°C, we worked on a barren 10-acre plot. Our grueling schedule began at 3 a.m., with on-site work from 4:30 to 10 a.m., and resumed in the evening from 4 to 7 p.m., to avoid the harsh hours of the sun. This laborious routine continued for 20 days, with only the kindness of our client keeping us hydrated. In this project, our partnership truly flourished—while he managed the labourers, I coordinated the designs and provided quick solutions for on-site changes. I realised I could turn the societal misconceptions we faced into an advantage, using them to build stronger systems and teams that would fuel our growth. This was where I truly found my stride. Two years later, when we revisited the site, we were overjoyed to see the land transformed into a lush, thriving environment. The sight of guavas, water apples, and the taste of freshly squeezed sugarcane juice from the once-barren

farmland was a poignant reminder of our struggles and sacrifices. Who knew a glass of sugarcane juice could taste sweeter than success?

One of the crucial parts of entrepreneurship, networking, presented its own challenges. Yet, it connected me with architects who had faced similar struggles, assuring me that I was not alone. I chose to focus on the love, generosity, kindness, and positivity of those around me. I am grateful for the unwavering support of the architectural community, who looked beyond my age and gender. Their dedication to fairness and their efforts to create equal opportunities have been instrumental in guiding young landscape architects like myself.

As I reflect on my journey, I understand entrepreneurship is not just about building a business; it is about blurring the thresholds and advancing gender equality and creating a legacy. Like my grandfather created an ecosystem that inspired me, I aim to create an ecosystem where nature thrives and communities flourish, where every design is a seed of hope for the future.

In a barren land, it takes a resilient pioneer species to grow vigorously and help the entire habitat to flourish. I aim to be that pioneering force in the realm of landscape architecture in the state, fostering growth and success in this field.

This is just the beginning.



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Understanding Local Culture as an Attribute for Placemaking in India

By Priya Sangani and Ar. Sayon Pramanik

1. Introduction

Following the doctrine of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*' (The World is one Family), India has been housing multiple diversity groups with their various social backgrounds. Historically, India has had a strong cultural presence globally. Indian subcontinent was the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, with documentation for all belief systems, doctrines and rules in Sanskrit. Various rulers brought their own cultures throughout the history and India welcomed all. Many religions with even contrasting customs are practised, which include Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism, to name the major groups. Each community has their own beliefs and practices resulting in numerous forms of art, clothing, languages, cuisines, prayer houses, communal spaces and customs. This diversity in belief systems results in diverse lifestyles. Demands and needs of each community are guided by their belief systems and mythology. These cultural differences highly affect daily activities and practices, at an individual and community level.

India's diversity however, makes for a more cohesive society due to tolerance and understanding of communities. India remarkably maintains harmony among all groups by adjusting individual and shared aspects of life. This harmony is achieved due to unique solutions and understanding in economic practices, educational values, food habits, social events, transport and infrastructure and one important aspect being the shared places or public places.

For accommodating their cultures and practices, communities transform their neighbourhood spaces to what suits them the best. The physical environment of different places in the world is guided by the culture and practices of its inhabitants. Beliefs and understandings of people affect their perception of physical environment as well (Mezini, 2012).

Vernacularity in architecture and urban design is evident in India, but the factors are not just the climate, but community practices and rituals as well. The shared and public spaces often accommodate daily activities and social interactions among neighbours. Although placemaking is a well-researched practice in the context of the Global West, it's application in a country with such diverse needs may need to consider some more aspects that affect design of a public place. Thus, it is necessary to investigate the need of consideration of local culture as an attribute for designing public spaces in India.

2. Public place and its roles

Public places have been a centre of interaction of community and have been used in various forms historically. They have been used as a third place for daily activities and practices by people, while often playing multiple functions. Ancient Greek Agoras, medieval market squares, green pockets in the industrial era, inhumane development of contemporary cities during automobile-led growth, are all stages that led to realisation of need of good quality public places.

Public activities, recreation and socialising among people is what a public place supports. Additionally, public places must play some roles in daily lives of the people. Public places must serve as platforms for dialogue among people of diverse social and economic backgrounds, genders and ages for creation of more inclusive societies. These places are not personalised to individuals, thus are great places to learn about other communities. Public places have or gain an identity of themselves, or significance to individuals or a community, which fosters unity. These places act as third places between home and work and must have an environment which is accessible, fun and comfortable for people to be in.

3. Space and place

Human value transforms a space into a place. Places give meaning to spaces, while spaces give the context and familiarity to places (Ezzeldin & Assem, 2019). Understanding the difference between both terms has helped various scholars in determining significance of community involvement in designing good public places. To make a space, a place, as an object, is required to give value. It is an object that helps recognise a space. As humans spend more time, they gradually add this value to a space, which makes it a place for people (Tuan, 1977).

4. Placemaking - global scenario and attributes

The essences of place, community, landscape, location and time come together to form a place. Although planners may carry out the ultimate implementation, people are at the centre of the decision-making process in this participatory approach. Placemaking is the process of changing a location from its original surroundings to one that is shaped by people, their rituals, activities and daily lives (Ellery et al., 2021). Practitioners have been working to make spaces better in order to give individuals a more appealing, secure and stimulating environment in recent years. Streets, markets, festivals, recurrent events and other well-known or historic sites all exhibit signs of being well-created places. However, practitioners are currently focusing on altering normal spaces, brownfields and frequently underutilised areas with the assistance of the public.

Rather than architectural or urban design studios or corporations, placemaking initiatives are typically undertaken by public organisations. Global efforts have been made to educate all those involved in placemaking decision-making by organisations such as PlacemakingX and Project for Public Spaces. They create guidelines and organise activities that

promote placemaking knowledge, awareness and practice (Project for Public Spaces, n.d.-b). An empty lot or an already-used busy area can be transformed into a destination. Locations can cater to any certain user group, neighbourhood, or kind of activity. These locations are recognisable because they foster social connections.

Various scholars have contributed in adding knowledge to this understanding of public place creation. In the 1960s, sociologist and urbanist William H. Whyte and writer Jane Jacobs developed the concept of a place, or the idea of desirable public areas. They discussed improving the aesthetics of streets and public areas as opposed to merely ensuring that they serve their intended purposes (Jacobs, 1961; Whyte, 1980). The term "topophilia," which refers to humans' affective connections to their material surroundings, was first used by Yi-Fu Tuan. He made a distinction between the ideas of location and space in a later book. Place is about giving space a human value (Tuan, 1974, 1977). Sense of place is defined by Edward Relph as the capacity to identify various locations and identities within a place. After introducing these ideas, Edward Relph introduced some dimensions or factors of place, giving rise to the process of placemaking and its components (Relph, 1976).

Inspired on Whyte's ideas, Fred Kent developed 'Project for Public spaces' in 1975 and 'PlacemakingX' recently in 2019, to promote placemaking at a worldwide scale. Through these organisations, he introduced four characteristics of places, as well as other guidelines and principles for placemaking (PlacemakingX, n.d.; Project for Public Spaces, n.d.-a). Jan Gehl discussed cities at eye level and human size (Gehl, 1987). He increased the range of factors that may be considered in order to create high-quality public areas, including flexibility, inventiveness, safety, comfort, sociability, aesthetics and accessibility.

The parameters that affect a location must be studied in order to construct a place. These characteristics are elements that come together to form a quality place, or they are variables that aid in defining a place. Various authors have provided varying parameters for placemaking and they have continued to refine each other's models.

Through Project for Public Spaces, Fred Kent introduced four main attributes of placemaking, their intangibles and the measurables for easy evaluation of quality of public places (Project for Public Spaces, 1975). These are-

- **Sociability** - The ability of a place to induce social interactions and bring people out, is sociability of that place. Some measures to evaluate sociability of a place are street life, social network and ability to cater to different user-groups.
- **Access and Linkages** - This attribute deals with physical and visual accessibility and connection of the place to its surroundings. This can be measured using traffic data, pedestrian activities, parking and transit usage patterns.
- **Uses and Activities** - Activities in a place are a main component of place giving reason for visiting to people. Some measurables from this attribute are local business ownership, useful infrastructure and understanding land-use maps.
- **Comfort and Image** - This attribute deals with perception of people about visual safety, outdoor comfort, spaces to sit and the image

the place creates. This encompasses various types of comfort like thermal comfort, outdoor comfort and visual comfort.

Table 1 lists some tools that can be used for analysing individual attributes of placemaking.

5. Contextuality of placemaking

Time, location, landscape and community are the essence of any place (Relph, 1976). Philosophers contend that a place's location is more easily determined by its culture than by its exact location. A place's temporality is derived from the various events and changes that it experiences across time.

Placelessness is a phenomenon can be caused by pseudo-locations, mass culture and standardisation. It might be fatal to adopt the same patterns and tactics that practitioners from all over the world utilise for placemaking. It would result in locations that might not be important to the neighbourhood.

Table 1: Tools for analysis of placemaking attributes
Source: compiled by authors

Attribute	Factor	Analysis through	Tool
Sociability	Interaction points, temporal pattern of activities	Observation	Activity mapping
	Pedestrian flow and access points	Observation	Activity mapping
Access and Linkage	Accessibility	Space Syntax- Depth - Justified Graphs	DepthmapX
	Connectivity, integration, choice	Space Syntax - Axial line analysis	DepthmapX
	Betweenness	Space Syntax - Betweenness centrality	DepthmapX
Uses and activities	Identification of activity locations, activities, design features accommodating activities	Observation, location of activities	Activity mapping, land-use map and surveys
Comfort and Image	Visual comfort- daylight comfort level	Daylight glare, shade and shadow	Rhino plugin- Radiance- Grasshopper
	Visual comfort- balance of lack of privacy vs visual connectivity	Space Syntax - Visibility Graph analysis and Isovist analysis	DepthmapX
	Thermal comfort	Universal Thermal Comfort Index	Rhino plugin- Ladybug- Grasshopper
	Pedestrian comfort	Wind and Universal Thermal Comfort Index	Rhino plugins, Autodesk CFD
	General ambience and image	Public opinion	Survey

Every community has its own distinct culture due to the diversity of its ethnicities, cultures, languages, socioeconomic status, backgrounds, customs, societal systems and hierarchical organisations. Because of this, a placemaking solution that works for one community might not work at all for another and enforcing it as such would mean omitting the most crucial component of placemaking—a people-centred approach. Local communities do not attach much importance to pseudo-places and uniformity doesn't meet their demands. Hence, a space may be physical form or absolute form of any location, but place is contextual.

Contexts can be understood as settings of different aspects in a space, guiding perceptions of a place. Locals develop place attachment based on different contexts in a place, working solely or in combination. Physical context is the context arising out of location and physical features around the place. Socio-economic context of a place is associated with the social and economic backgrounds of the local communities. Place perception may vary with different user contexts, including age groups, gender groups and occupational backgrounds. Community culture and practices is another significant context that imparts features to a place.

6. Placemaking in India

Evolving culture and practices lead to evolution in demands of communities. Demands from all resources including the spaces they live, work and play in. With each community, comes their own spaces corresponding to their needs. For instance, the *Pol*s (gated communities in the walled city of Ahmedabad) of Gujarat are home to various communities according to religion and economic class. Hindus and Muslims, Gujarati speakers and non-Gujarati speakers, occupational groups - the small-scale producers and traders, lower-income, middle-income and higher-income groups, are some major group classifications in *Pol*s. The gated communities can accommodate activities of all the groups including the prayers and rituals, daily activities, food habits, festivals and cultural events and society meet-ups in a single neighbourhood. There are *otlas* to sit and do daily activities, *chabutaras* to feed birds and open spaces for festivals, customs and for the kids to play in. Part of the reason for this maintained harmony is the availability of spaces for all in this inclusive community. Though traditionally designed without the modern placemaking concept, these spaces have been efficient in providing comfort, activities and accessibility to accommodate the social life of communities residing in.

Indian neighbourhoods have always had shared spaces in forms of courtyards, *chowks* and markets. However, contemporary neighbourhoods in India are more responsive to the increasing housing demands and thus have denser and higher buildings and lesser open spaces. The public places have been shifted outside, like parks and recreational areas, instead of being integrated into the neighbourhoods. Such developments result in lack of physical, perceptual and psychological comfort (Gulati, 2020). Due to urban sprawls in Indian cities, impacts of physical planning don't reach in every suburb, which leads to basic services like transport, services, open spaces, community resources and activities being out of reach for the public. Some open spaces aren't sociable in terms of image and walkability. These places, signify placelessness in terms of standardised pseudo-places which were produced in mass to accommodate urban density, as discussed above.

The placemaking attributes can help in creating accessible and comfortable spaces in Indian cities, but to attract people to actually use them, it is necessary to incorporate the local context along with other attributes, which are generic for all cities. In case of India, cultural context could vary in community, neighbourhood, sector and city scales. To make meaningful places, cultural values of the local communities must be incorporated in public place design.

The scholarly articles on placemaking in India talk about case studies and applications and about the factors and impacts of placemaking. This includes discussion of placemaking in respect to policies, ecology-conservation, heritage, technological interventions and some articles mentioning cultural revival in existing places (Goldstein, 2016; Murphy et al., 2019; Shinde, 2012; Singh & Kumar, 2023). However, very less articles mention using culture as a tool or attribute in creation of new places.

7. Discussion

In India, there are various points of culture which could be tapped to find ideal locations and developed as good public places. Although the lack of study of placemaking process, analysis methods and attributes in the Global South restricts complete utilisation of the process in India. The country needs its own set of redefined attributes which includes culture and practices.

Culture has the power to revitalise and repurpose places through the application of creativity and culture, whether through the creation of new cultural purposes for pre-existing spaces or the enhancement

of the uses and functionalities of locations that hold cultural significance. Culture includes the materials, iconic resources and meanings to create valuable places and cities (Rausell-Köster et al., 2022). Contemporary neighbourhoods must strive to use these resources to make more relatable places, along with catering to the needs of increasing density. A country where extensive cultural practices are observed in daily-life, adding culture as an attribute for placemaking would only aid in creating the most meaningful places.

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Das House

A Symphony of Elegance and Modernity

By Ar. Chirag Kapadia

Fact File

Name of Project : Das House
Name of Firm : Threshold Design Studio
Location of Project : Thane
Project Completion : 2023

In the bustling city of Mumbai, where architectural marvels are a dime a dozen, Das House stands as a unique testament to the vision and creativity of Threshold Design Studio. Under the expert guidance of Threshold Design Studio's founding Architects Chirag Kapadia and Sandesh Rane with their senior associate Architect Yagnik Bathija, this interior project has become a shining example of modern design with a distinctive touch.

The defining feature of the Das House lies in its creative use of Polyurethane (PU) finish as a key material. This choice not only showcases the architects' boldness but also adds a layer of sophistication that ties the entire design concept together seamlessly.

As one steps into the Das House, the central axis directs the eye towards the Mandir, the spiritual heart of the home. The metallic PU finish on the screen doors of the Mandir becomes a focal point, setting the tone for the entire residence. It's not merely a place of worship; it's a visual masterpiece that captures the essence of modern design.

The open living and dining area, bathed in natural light, is a testament to the architects' mastery. Here, a PU-finished display unit commands attention, adding an element of luxury to the space. The balconies extending from the living room, adorned with patterned tile flooring and stylish outdoor

furniture, offer a seamless transition between indoor and outdoor living.

The kitchen, often the soul of any home, is a masterclass in functional aesthetics. Grey speckled granite countertops and olive green glass shutters,



Figure 1: Furniture Layout
Source: Threshold Design Studio



Figure 2: Dining area with display unit
Source: Author



Figure 3: Balcony area in living room
Source: Author



Figure 4: Mandir in the centre of the house
Source: Author



Figure 5: Modular kitchen finish in back painted glass
Source: Author



Figure 6: Kids bedroom with veneer wall panelling
Source: Author



Figure 7: Kids bedroom study and wardrobe
Source: Author



Figure 8: Master bedroom with veneer wall panelling
Source: Author

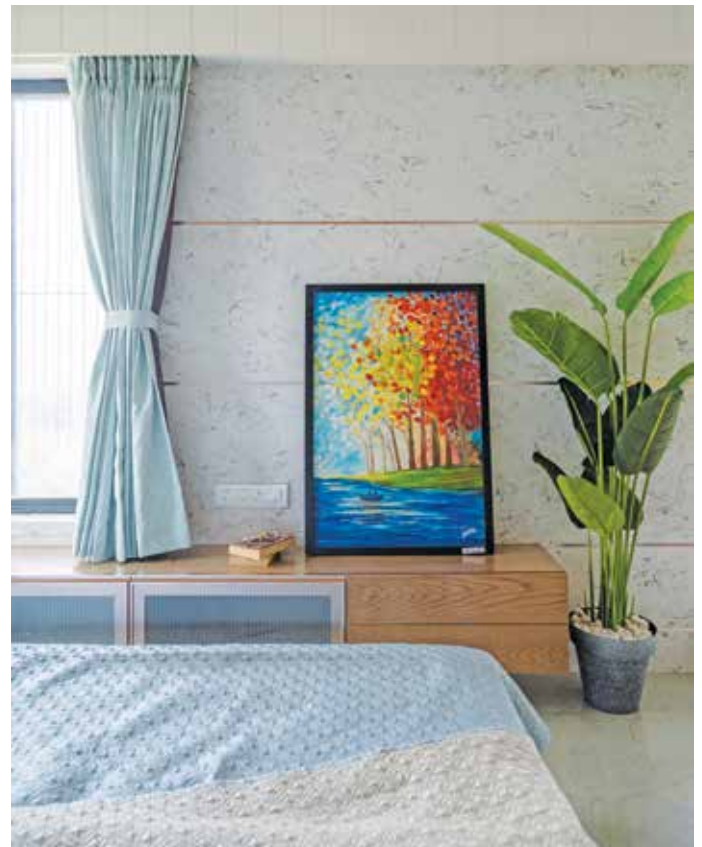


Figure 9: Master bedroom TV unit area
Source: Author



Figure 10: Master bedroom balcony space

Source: Author

all finished with the sleek matte black handles, create a contemporary and inviting culinary space.

Venturing into the younger inhabitant's domain, the 14-year-old's room is a vibrant and playful oasis. Pastel greens, textured wallpaper, and a mix of terrazzo and subway tiles in the bathroom make for a space that resonates with youthful energy and joy.

On the other end of the spectrum, the elder teen's room exudes maturity and sophistication. Veneer panelling, a large white PU-finished study table, and a dressing table bring an air of refinement, creating a space that evolves with the occupant.

The master bedroom, designed with a softer palette, is a haven of tranquillity; wooden fluted panelling on one wall adds warmth, transforming the room into a sanctuary for relaxation and rejuvenation.

In conclusion, the Das House is more than just a residence; it's a symphony of elegance and modernity. Through the ingenious use of PU finish, Threshold's team has not only met but exceeded the client's desire for a home that stands apart. The Das House is not just a space, it's a living work of art that will undoubtedly inspire and captivate for years to come.

All Images Courtesy: Author



Ar. Chirag Kapadia is an Assistant Professor at Rachana Sansad's Academy of Architecture (IIA-Affiliated) and is one of the founders of the *Threshold Design Studio*, along with Ar. Sandesh Rane and Ar. Yagnik Bathija. They specialise in boutique architecture and interior design projects, ranging from high-end residences to commercial spaces. He is particularly interested in contextual design and concept development integrating community development and sustainable construction.

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Udaipur, the City of Lakes

By Ar. Moksha Bhatia

The “white city” of Udaipur in India, is renowned for its distinctive fusion of nature, culture and architecture. Founded by Maharana Udai in 1559 A.D. following the advice of a holy man overlooking Lake Pichola, this scenic town is home to several architectural marvels.

Udaipur has been the blend of experiences for various poets, artists, architects, writers and painters. The attractive intricate details on every

structure are flabbergasting as an architect. Sitting at the Gangaur Ghat, one can see the picturesque glassy waters reflecting romance in the blend of architecture and nature. The soul-nourishing view makes you appreciate the old Indian touch of narrow streets filled with people, street food, forts, palaces, temples and colourful fabrics at shops.

Udaipur is the city that leaves you with an eidetic memory.



Soul-nourishing glassy waters of Udaipur



One fine evening at Lake Pichola

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Daiji Bridge Pol connecting Ambrai Ghat and Gangaur Ghat



The 'Lake Garden Palace' - Jag Mandir



A magnificent castle elegantly perched atop Lake Pichola's island



City Palace is a voyage to the land of the courageous and the architecture of indestructible fortress-like mansions



Since 1651, worship has been continuously held in Jagdish temple



Intricacy of the architecture in the heart of Udaipur



The subtle romance between the colors in a street in Udaipur



Gallery of the mysterious Bagore ki haveli

All images courtesy: Author



Ar. Moksha Bhatia (A27831) is a graduate of Punjab Technical University, Mohali and has completed her Masters in Urban Design. She is an avid traveler and documents different places for her *Urbanism Spinning* platform. Being an architect, she likes to photograph, heritage buildings and districts the most. She believes that architecture and travelling co-exist.
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The Landscape Series

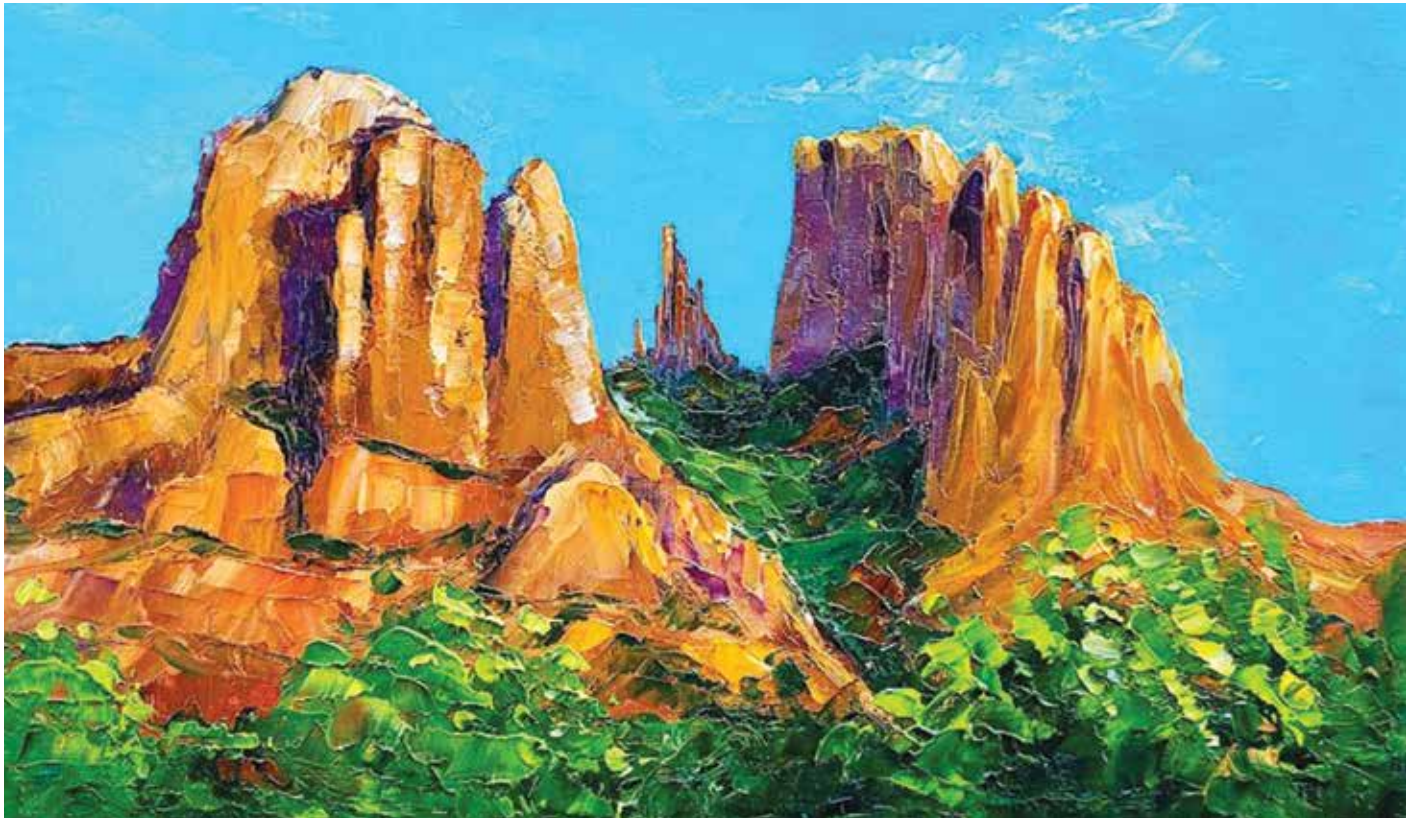
Ar. Vilas Avachat has captured the rocky desert landscapes of the states of Arizona and Colorado in the United States of America on canvas.



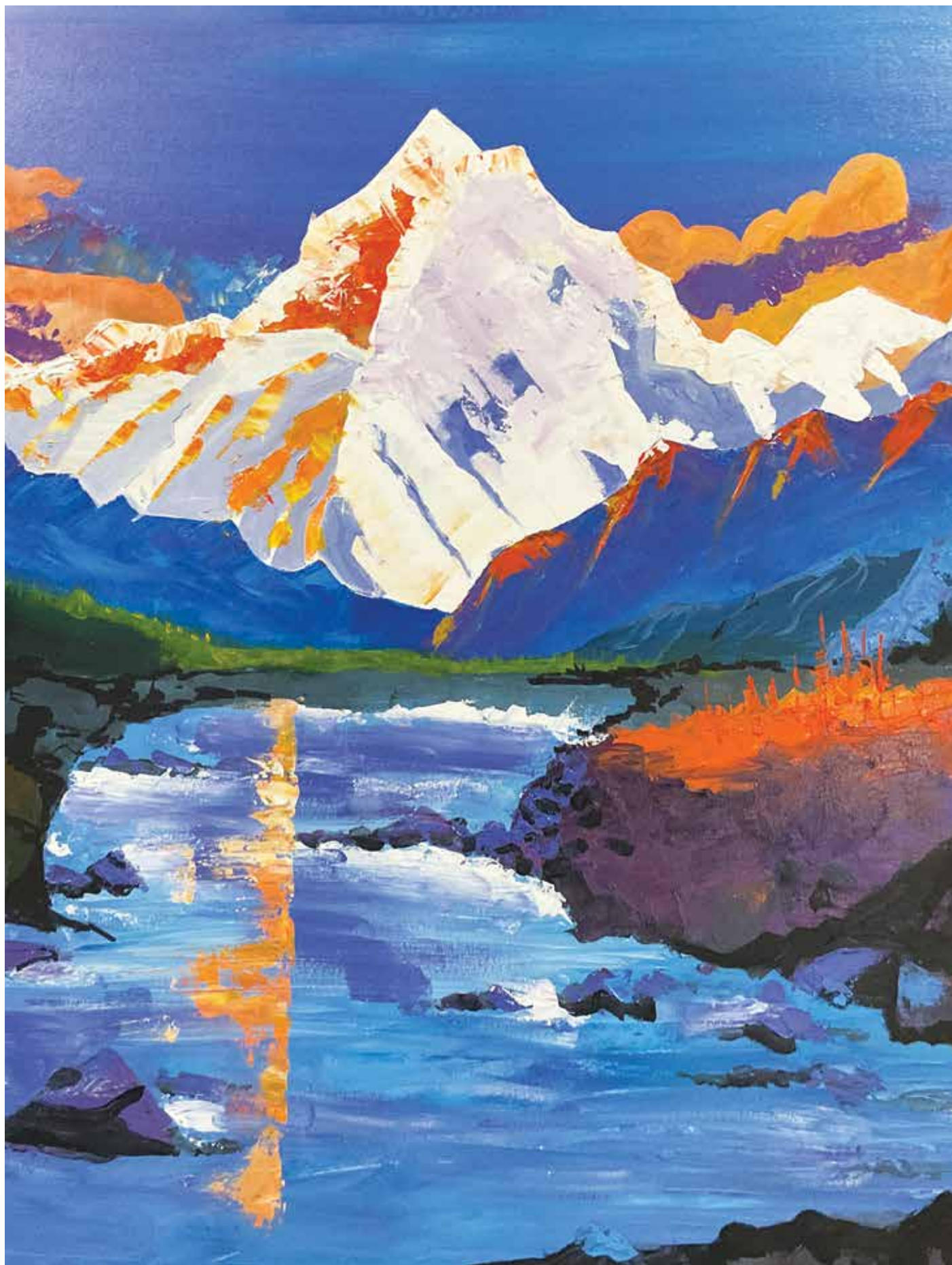
Waterfall



Sonoran Desert, Arizona, USA



Cathedral Rock at Sedona in Phoenix Arizona, USA



Rocky Mountains, Colorado, USA



Monument Canyon, Colorado, USA

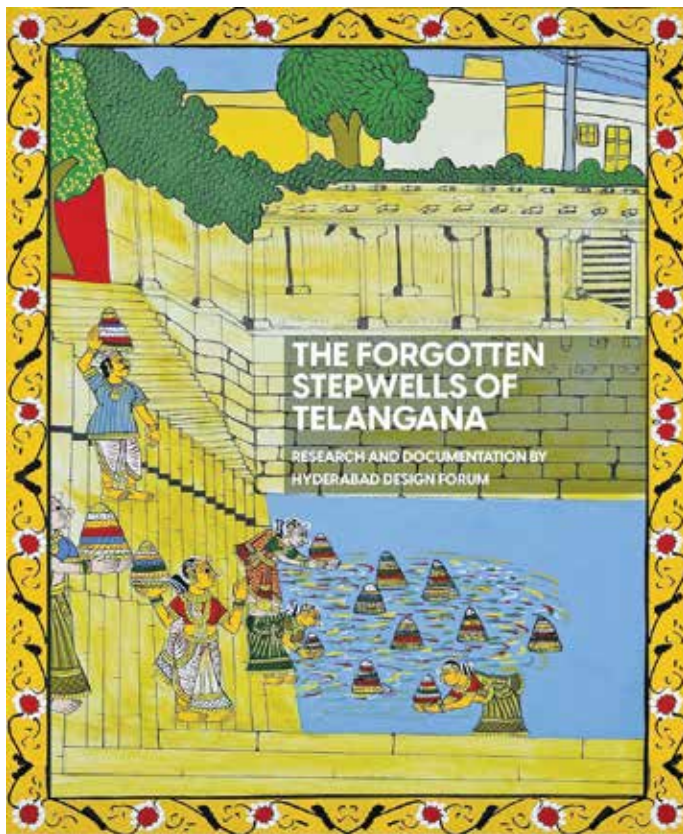


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The Forgotten Stepwells of Telangana

Author: Hyderabad Design Forum

Reviewer: Dr. Rama R Subrahmanian and Ar. Veena Choudhary



The Forgotten Stepwells of Telangana: Research and documentation by Hyderabad Design Forum: Book Cover

ISBN: 978-93-5891-153-4

Genre: Non-fiction

Language: English

Publisher: Hyderabad Design Forum

No. of Pages: 293

Year of Publication: 2023

'The Forgotten Stepwells of Telangana' is a compilation of exceptional writings from scholars/practitioners, who present stratified study of water heritage in the region, that comprises and transcends people, places and architecture making it a magnum opus for architectural literature. From the pragmatic origins and architectural evolution to the cultural and religious significance, the book provides a holistic understanding of these structures, supported by meticulous research, captivating visuals and a scholarly narrative that engages both experts and enthusiasts.

The journey commences with a nuanced introduction, setting the stage for a profound exploration of the architectural evolution of stepwells. Beginning with a notable analysis of water as an integral part of the different religions, rituals, traditions and civilisations across the globe, the first three chapters serve a reminder that the knowledge and engineering pertaining to the storage of water was pursued with efficiency since ancient civilisations around the world. Within the Indian landscape, these meticulously trace the historical roots of these structures, initially conceived as pragmatic solutions for water storage in arid regions. The narrative unfolds the gradual transformation of these utilitarian structures into architectural marvels, demonstrating the symbiosis of form and function. Select movies and stories also serve as 'recommended references' and add ingenious flavour to the piece. The convergence of the belief and architecture with the ancient treatise and the impact of the same on the community is well presented in the case study of Devaryamjal Seetha Ramachandraswamy Temple. The initial chapters weave together narratives of community life, reiterating the importance of stepwells to the physical

well-being of the inhabitants and social and cultural fabric of the region. These subterranean reservoirs became more than utilitarian spaces; they evolved into communal hubs, fostering social interactions, cultural activities and religious ceremonies. These also interweave maps to understand the gradual appearance and consequent disappearance of the stepwells in the region.

By placing Telangana's stepwells within the larger historical narrative of Indian architecture, the authors not only provide context but also encourages readers to appreciate the interconnectedness of architectural developments across regions. Chapters 4 through 6 present the case for water storage devices in the region. These effectively navigate through the demands of the land, elucidating how stepwells evolved in response to changing technological landscapes. From the ingenious placement of wells to retaining walls, lime mortar compositions and structural strengthening, the intricate staircases and the incorporation of ventilation systems, the book meticulously examines the technical aspects that enabled the efficient management of water resources. This exploration enriches the reader's comprehension of the engineering prowess that underpinned these structures, transforming them into feats of sustainable water management. While the primary focus remains on Telangana, 'Stepwells of Telangana' situates these structures within the broader context of India's architectural history. This comparative approach enriches the reader's understanding, providing a comprehensive view of the shared influences and distinctive regional characteristics of the stepwells in Telangana.

Subsequently, chapters 7 through 9 explore the socio-cultural influences on the construction of stepwells in the region through documentation of motifs found on the stepwells, the stories surrounding the women patrons of the stepwells and Bathukamma festival. Here we also find the artistic drawings of religious symbols, motifs and drawings contributing to the understanding of stepwells. The chapters meticulously explore the symbiotic relationship between stepwells and the communities they served, illustrating how these structures became vital nodes of spiritual and social convergence. The authors paint a vivid picture of the vibrant tapestry of life surrounding these wells, showcasing the myriad ways in which they were interwoven with the cultural identity of Telangana.

Chapter 10, settles the curiosity for the conservationists by setting out clear steps taken to conserve stepwell at Bapu Ghat in Hyderabad. Relocation of turtles and snakes from the vicinity, investigation driven material selection, documentation of the

stepwell and subsequent conservation of the same describes the meticulous nature of the profession. Moving beyond historical retrospection, it actively engages with the contemporary challenges faced by these architectural relics. This chapter presents a poignant call to action, shedding light on the imminent threats posed by neglect, urban development and environmental changes. The author's impassioned plea for the preservation of these structures adds a sense of urgency to the narrative, compelling readers to recognise their role as stewards of cultural heritage. In this section we also come across individual anecdotes drawing parallels with their search for their identity and discovery of stepwells. The subsequent chapter takes readers into the exploration of buildings in contemporary settings inspired from the form and function of stepwells thereby presenting evidence for the inclusion of history of architecture in the academic arena. Complementing the scholarly narrative, the inclusion of visually captivating photographs transforms this chapter into a visual feast.

Chapters 12 and 13 present the documented and undocumented stepwells in the region. The chapters serve as a valuable resource for raising awareness about the need for conservation efforts. Through meticulous documentation of the current state of Telangana's stepwells and the challenges they face, it not only advocates for preservation but also offers insights into sustainable conservation strategies. This dimension transforms the work into a contemporary manifesto for cultural preservation, emphasising the relevance of historical architecture in the face of modernisation.

With picture references, illustrations and architectural drawings, this book becomes a databank for scholarly reference and leisure reading alike. Each image is carefully curated, providing readers with a vivid representation of the grandeur encapsulated within these architectural wonders. From the ornate carvings adorning the wells to the intricate geometric patterns and the sheer scale of the structures, the photographs offer a tangible connection to the artistic expression and craftsmanship inherent in the stepwells. The visual component enhances the reader's immersive experience, allowing for a more profound appreciation of the architectural details and aesthetic nuances. These visuals transcend the limitations of textual descriptions.

One of the distinctive strengths of this scholarly endeavour is its accessibility to a diverse audience. The book navigates the delicate balance between academic rigour and engaging prose, making 'The Forgotten Stepwells of Telangana' equally accessible to both scholars and casual readers. Small narratives

by Ar. Yeshwanth Ramamurthy are woven into the book to enliven the process of reading. This inclusivity aligns with the broader objective of preserving and promoting cultural knowledge beyond academic circles. As we navigate the complexities of a rapidly changing world, 'The Forgotten Stepwells of Telangana' beckons readers to become custodians of cultural legacy, ensuring that these architectural marvels endure as testamentary monuments to the richness of human ingenuity and creativity.

Aptly emphasised in the preface, the current climate crisis necessitates a dialogue around the water heritage of the country. This book is an important step in the direction. The book was released at the World Architecture Festival at Singapore and received a warm reception.

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Hyderabad Design Forum (HDF), established in 2015, is a collaborative team of planners, architects, urban designers, landscape designers and interior designers. It facilitates workshops, research and documentation, integration of rural artisanship, consultancy services and catalyses synergy between various design disciplines. It is led by President Ar. Yeshwant Ramamurthy who has also written the prologue for the book. The foreword in the book is written by Dr. Jutta Jain-Neubauer. Furthermore, Ar. Yeshwant Ramamurthy, Ar. Sneha Parthasarthy, Ar. Srivalli Pradeepthi Ikkurthy, Ar. Kalpana Ramesh, Ar. Mounica Derreddy, Prof. Naheema Shahnawaz, Ar. Aparna Bidarkar, Ar. Deepika Srikanth Murthy, Ar. Arunima Shankar, Ar. Kaushik Kumar, Ar. Avinash Nair, Ar. Akash Balakrishnan and Dr. Neelima Gudavalli are the contributing authors for the book.

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NATIONAL EVENT
HELD BY IIA GOA CHAPTER

IIA Young Architects Festival YAF, Goa

Interpreting the Vernacular

By Ar. Anup Moreswar Gadgil and Ar. Milind Ramani

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The IIA Young Architects Festival, YAF 2024, took place at Alila Diwa Resort at Goa, with the theme transitioning from 'Interpreting the Vernacular' to 'Inspirations from the Vernacular'. The event, held on 27 – 28 September 2024, generated great energy and enthusiasm from Team IIA Goa.

This year's theme, *Vernacular*, prompted reflections on the directions and insights the Festival could provide. Speakers were carefully selected through extensive deliberation, offering a blend of experience while showcasing young practices.

The Keynote Address by Ar. Gerard da Cunha highlighted his journey in architecture from his early days, setting the right tone for discussions. This address, in tandem with the exhibition featuring Mr. Tejinder Randhawa's documentation of *Vernacular Architecture in India*, provided a compelling photo journey across the country.

The first half of the first day featured intriguing presentations by young practitioners Ar. Nidhish Kurup and Ar. Vikram Desai, focusing on the integration of nature and materials in architecture. The second session included presentations by Ar. Tallulah D'Silva and Ar. Eureka Khong, exploring developmental issues in Goa and collaborations with local craftsmen in Bihar. A thought-provoking video by Ms Nitya Navelkar, a student at NID Bhopal, addressed the challenges facing Goa's mangroves.

The day concluded with a stimulating presentation by Ar. Samuel Barclay, who discussed the need for skill upgrades among makers and improved

communication methods in architectural practice. The first day wrapped up with a Gala Night, allowing participants to reflect on the day's dialogues at the serene venue.

The second day began with a presentation by Ar. Ambrish Arora, showcasing various case studies that emphasised local materials and craftsmanship. His work demonstrated sensitive, frugal design ideologies that made significant statements in the landscape.

The day continued with Ar. Senthil Kumar Doss, who expressed his passion for geometry and ancient structural knowledge through his experimental designs. Ar. Swapnil Valvatkar presented his work at various scales, emphasising simplicity in approach and form.

Ar. Rajiv D'Silva, highlighting the journey of the vernacular and insights into the word 'vernacular' and its interpretations. Later, Ar. Ajay Sonar explained his journey through the making of architecture through model making as a tool, elucidating an array of projects highlighting his professional journey.

The event culminated with Ar. Kevin Low's presentation, *The Vernacular* which provided a fresh perspective on the discussions and raised important questions about the professional learning process.

Overall, the Festival concluded successfully, filled with valuable lessons, experiences, and memories. It effectively kept the dialogues open for all of us to ponder upon.



1. The Make-Believe exhibition from Ar. Ajay Sonar



2. Ar. Ambrish Arora presenting at the event



3. Ar. Amit Sukhtankar with Ar. Kevin Low



4. Ar. Gerard Da Cunha engaging in conversation at the exhibition



5. Band by Bors



6. IIA Council Meeting in progress



7. Engrossed audience



8. Enjoying the evenings



9. Exhibition of *Vernacular Houses of India* by Tejinder Randhawa, curated by Ar. Gerard Da Cunha



10. Intriguing journey of models by Ayy and Monali Sonar



11. Kevin Low at his Googly



12. The President of IIA at the exhibitions



13. Tallulah, the environmental crusader



14. The Organising Team



15. Team Goa



16. The lighting of the lamp



17. The registration desk



18. The serene venue



19. The venue



20. Young Nitya showcasing the challenges facing Goa's mangroves.



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9th COUNCIL MEETING OF THE TERM 2023-2025 AT GOA ON 26-09-2024.

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11	Ar. Roli singh	Uttar Pradesh	A29282
12	Ar. Abhishek Tiwari	Uttar Pradesh	A29283
13	Ar. Roopsi Gupta	Uttar Pradesh	A29284
14	Ar. Amit Kumar Yadav	Uttar Pradesh	A29285
15	Ar. Rishabh Kushvaha	Uttar Pradesh	A29286
16	Ar. Mohd Bilal Ansari	Uttar Pradesh	A29287
17	Ar. Amit Gupta	Uttar Pradesh	A29288
18	Ar. Prerna Jaiswal	Uttar Pradesh	A29289
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26	Ar. Richie Anna Mathew	Kerala	A29297
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36	Ar. Ashish Hukumchand Gaydhani	Maharashtra	A29307
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NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER

IIA MAHARASHTRA CHAPTER

IIA PUNE CENTRE

Design Competition for MCA Club House at Gahunje, Pune

The Maharashtra Cricket Association (MCA), in association with IIA Pune Centre, has officially announced a design competition for the new Club House at Gahunje, Pune. The pre-launch event was held on 4 September 2024 at the JW Marriott in Pune, featuring key figures from both organisations. The event was attended by MCA President Hon. Rohitji Pawar, MCA Secretary Mr. Kamlesh Pisal, IIA Pune Centre Chairman Ar. Vikas Achalkar, and Convenor Ar. Kapil Jain. Ar. Kapil Jain provided a detailed presentation on the competition's rules, regulations, design brief, and schedule. Hon. Rohitji Pawar highlighted the significance of the competition and provided insights into the registration process. He emphasised that all relevant details, including competition guidelines and registration procedures, are available on the MCA website. In addition, Hon. Pawar announced the prize structure for the competition:

For Professionals: First Prize – Rs. 25,00,000; Second Prize – Rs. 15,00,000; Third Prize – Rs. 10,00,000

Merit Prizes: 5 Nos. Each Rs. 3,00,000

For Students: First Prize – Rs. 3,00,000; Second Prize – Rs. 2,00,000; Third Prize – Rs. 1,00,000

This competition aims to engage creative minds from various fields to contribute to a significant development in the cricket community. Professionals and students interested in participating are encouraged to register and submit their designs through the MCA website.

For more information and to register, please visit the MCA website at: <https://cricketmaharashtra.com/index.php/mca-club-house/>

IIA NAGPUR CENTRE

Nagpur Centre has initiated the setting up of two Students' Centres at two architecture colleges in Nagpur. The installation ceremony of the first Student Centre of IIA at the National level was held at Women's Education Society's Smt. Manoramabai Mundle College of Architecture (SMMCA), Nagpur on

3 August 2024, giving IIA Nagpur Centre the distinction of being the first IIA Centre at the National level to have taken the initiative to formulate and install a Student Centre. The Student Centre establishment and installation was co-ordinated by Dr. Sampada Peshwe (IIA Nagpur Centre Co-ordinator for Student Centres). Ar. Mrinmayee Tiwari, IIA Faculty Co-ordinator of SMMCA, facilitated the formulation of the SMMCA Student Centre. The following Student Centre Team was installed – Saniya Bijwe (Chairperson), Srishti Jain (Vice Chairperson), Nehal Pali (Secretary), Bhakti Raut (Secretary), and Swamini Dayyamvar, Shruti Rajpal, Vedashree Jugade, Khushi Choudhary, Unnati Yadav and Mayuri Mehta as members.

Ar. Raviraj Sarwate (Hon. Treasurer, IIA Maharashtra Chapter), Ar. Parag Yelne (Chairman, IIA Nagpur Centre) and Dr. Sampada Peshwe addressed the students on the advantages of an IIA Student Centre and its contribution towards enhancing their team-building and leadership skills. The Installation Ceremony was also graced by Ar. Aniket Khodwe (Vice-Chairman), Ar. Rajesh Kakde (Hon. Treasurer), Ar. Parikshit Choudhari (Hon. Secretary), Ar. Priyadarshan Nagpurkar (Co-opted Exec. Member, Maharashtra Chapter), Executive members Ar. Subodh Chinchmalatpure, Ar. Ziyaullakhan Pathan, Ar. Anuradha Tikkas and Ar. Sunny Gupta. Dr. Roopal Deshpande (Principal, SMMCA) thanked the IIA Nagpur Centre team for their support in the formation of the Student Centre. The badge-pinning ceremony was performed at the hands of the IIA Nagpur Centre Executive Committee.



Launch of the Design Competition
(L to R): MCA Secretary Mr. Kamlesh Pisal, MCA President Hon. Rohitji Pawar, IIA Pune Centre Chairman Ar. Vikas Achalkar, and Convenor Ar. Kapil Jain



The newly installed IIA Student Centre Teams of SMMCA, Nagpur (Top) and Dept. of Architecture & Planning, VNIT, Nagpur (bottom) with the IIA Nagpur Centre Executive Team

The second IIA Student Centre was installed at the Dept. of Architecture & Planning, Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT), Nagpur on 23 August 2024. The Student Centre establishment and installation was co-ordinated by Dr. Sampada Peshwe (IIA Nagpur Centre Co-ordinator for Student Centres). The formulation of the VNIT Student

Centre was facilitated by Dr. Sarika Bahadure (IIA Faculty Co-ordinator of VNIT). Ar. Raviraj Sarwate (Hon. Treasurer, IIA Maharashtra Chapter), Ar. Parag Yelne (Chairman, IIA Nagpur Centre) and Dr. Sampada Peshwe addressed the assembly of students and apprised them about the institution of IIA and the benefits of being associated with this premier professional body of Architects in India as a Student Centre. Dr. Sameer Deshkar (HOD, Dept. of Architecture & Planning, VNIT) welcomed the IIA Nagpur Centre Team. Ar. Rajesh Kakde (Hon. Treasurer), Ar. Parikshit Choudhari (Hon. Secretary), Ar. Priyadarshan Nagpurkar (Co-opted Exec. Member, Maharashtra Chapter), Ar. Husain Karori (Exec. Member), Ar. Sunny Gupta (Co-opted Exec. Member) and Prof. Rajshree Kotharkar also graced the occasion. The Executive Committee members performed the badge-pinning ceremony. The following Student Centre Team was installed – Aarya Dhage (Chairperson), Sakshi Sanghvi (Vice Chairperson), Swikrita Nayak (Secretary), Siddhi Baheti (Secretary), and Riya Singhal, Ayush Patil, Chiranthan, Harshita Pathak, Anjaneya Pawar and Ummeemun Husain as Members.

IIA ODISHA CHAPTER

Chairperson Ar. Swopnadutta Mohanty Appointed to Council of Architecture

In a recent notification, the Department of Higher Education stated that the Central Government appointed five architects, possessing recognised qualifications elected by the Indian Institute of Architects (IIA) as IIA representatives on the Council of Architecture for the term 2023-2026. The five architects appointed will represent different zones

of the CoA. Ar. Swopnadutta Mohanty represents the eastern zone of the CoA. This appointment comes at a crucial time as the architecture industry continues to evolve, particularly with the growing influence of new technologies like Artificial Intelligence. Ar. Mohanty's inclusion in the CoA will ensure the Odisha region's perspective is represented in the national-level policy and decision-making processes.



IIA President Ar. Vilas Avachat felicitating Ar. Swopnadutta Mohanty along with other IIA Office Bearers.

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