

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

WEST BENGAL CHAPTER

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REGISTERED HEAD OFFICE : PROSPECT CHAMBERS ANNEXE, DR. D. N. ROAD, FORT,
MUMBAI 400 001, PHONE : 2204 6972, 2288 4805 • FAX : 2283 2516 • GRAM : STHAPATYA
MAILING ADDRESS : 121, SHANTI PALLY, R. B. CONNECTOR, KOLKATA 700 107 • TEL : 2441 2106

At a glance



A mémoire on
Late Ar. Hiren Choudhury



Teachers' Day
Celebration

An Evening with
COA Representative from
IIA, Eastern Zone



From the Chairperson's Desk

Dear Members,

The fervour and the passion that one sees during Durga Puja in West Bengal across residents and visitors alike, does not really have a parallel anywhere in the world. Idols moulded with love and care, in the seemingly nondescript surroundings of Kumartuli undergo a transformation when they are positioned in the intricately designed and executed pandals making even the heart of a non-believer skip a beat.

Excitement as one stands in the queue when touring different pandals; the sighs of appreciation which are on many a lip all along the way; strangers connecting with each other through a nod, glance or a smile; playful contests on the number of pandals visited; delicious sweets enough for the year; planning on the attire for each of the special days; All this and much more result in a lifetime of memories every year.

And then nostalgia is in the air as these fantastic structures have to be dismantled and it is time to bid adieu to the Goddess. The time for grand family reunions comes to a close and we wistfully get back to our mundane life with tales to tell for years to come.

I am sure that all of you had a beautiful festive season with your loved ones! I hope that our Chapter and all our members have a peaceful and fulfilling year ahead and I seek the blessings of all our senior members in this prayer.

With Warm Regards

Yours in Service,

Ar. Gita Balakrishnan
West Bengal Chapter, The Indian Institute of
Architects

Editorial

Dear Friends,

After the series of (thank God) online purchases to meet long wish-lists and perhaps a few obligations for the festive season, it has just left us with memories to cherish for the rest of the year and beyond. Some of us must have enjoyed a hectic yet exciting pandal-hopping time with the family and friends, not only to get an insight into but also to feel the ethos that makes this city during the Puja. While few others clung on to the scarce moment away from usual busyness and continuous pressure of deadlines and enjoyed a pure free time for the person we see in the mirror.

Meanwhile, amidst uncertainty on Global political arena where people hardly have a choice to select any deserving acceptable political leader for the most powerful economy of the world, we have started observing a new positive trend for the fraternity as more and more projects of architectural significance are being awarded through design competition, although one may still argue over the format, jury, prize or other conditions but nevertheless this is a move surely towards the right direction.

This newsletter beside covering the activities our chapter pays homage to Ar. Hiren Choudhury, whom we recently had lost, through an article on his life and work, which was contributed by one of his Junior Colleague Ar. Divya Manek. I must thank my new team member Shubhayan Modak of IEST who had really helped me put this issue together.

Wish you all great time. Happy Designing.

Yours In Profession,

Ar. Abhishek Dutta,
Editor, West Bengal Chapter
The Indian Institute of Architects

Like no other : a mémoire on late Ar. Hiren Choudhury

The day we all said goodbye to Hiren Sir, almost everybody said the same thing - there was no-one like him. It sounded like a cliché at the memorial service, but it could not have been more accurate. I have had the honour to be in his office and perhaps life for the last three years and I have barely scratched the surface of who he was.

Ar. Hirenranath Chaudhury aka Hiren Da to many, was an atheist. But a religiously educated non-believer of religion. "You cannot reject a thing in this world that you don't know"; he would say; hence his complete knowledge in most books of religion. He never however believed in working on religious holidays. Just as he often said "Life is all about merriment and you kids need to party".



This passionate and dedicated architect, was also an actor who owned the stage with the same burly and reassuring presence that had held his office for the last 5 decades. "We may lose the game, but we will not quit till the last whistle", was the motto which kept him in alive and active in our erratic and sometimes shattering business since 1972. Graduated from Bengal Engineering College, Shibpur in 1958, he worked in Ghosh Bose & Associates until he decided to begin his 44 year journey as Pace Consultants.

Hiren-da really made his own style of modern architecture



DAKSHINAPAN, Dhakuria, Kolkata

deeply rooted to our region, culture and tradition which did not ape the west. He played with solid blocks, straight lines and minimum use of glazing.

In Dakshinapan, his first major breakthrough, he designed residential blocks, shops and an Auditorium in a way that spaces resemble a shopping arcade not a mall, recreating an organised open bazaar with narrow street markets and alleys. The interplay of levels, natural ventilation, and scattered open gathering spaces made it an instant hit among the youth as well as their upper generation. It eventually grew to become a cultural hub with auditorium and open display and performance areas.

Webel Bhavan was the first IT office when the West Bengal Government declared Salt Lake, Sector V, IT Sector of Kolkata. He aggressively broke the tradition of use of glass box. He found a poetic balance of form with plenty of green, making it an ideal setting for the upcoming IT industry.



In Webel II, sequel to Webel Bhavan brought in a dynamic character with a huge foyer bragging the advancement in structural and symbolizing the modern IT industry. The huge space further is mirror clad to create an illusion of space and carefully receded it removing glare. Similar to the previous one, here he achieved a poetic play of masses at a higher level considering the shape of the plot, visible at a distance.

With Abhikshan Bhawan, Office and Research Building in



Salt Lake Sec. V, he modernized courtyard planning. He chalked out the office complex with running corridors inter-connecting the different blocks and used semicircular arches which brought in traditional elements but without the usual proportions.



He enjoyed life to the hilt. No-one who knew him said there was anything left for him to do as he had almost done it all. From being the college dada who dated the HoD's daughter, to partying every-night and making it to work on time, to eloping with the love of his life without his parent's consent (a huge secret he told me in confidence which everybody knew) and starting their beautiful life together, to becoming a passionate architect with a proud array of works to his name. He despised my food choice of vegetables over meat and had tasted every living creature he could lay his hands on, stopping just short of cannibalism. Even at 84, he led a healthy life and fortunately suffered very little. The stubborn man that he was, did not take kindly to medicines and toeing-the-line. Little did we know that he would never have to. He was the captain of his ship till the end.

There really is no-one like him. And I honestly doubt there ever will be.

Ar Divya Manek
Architect at PACE (May 2014- present)

Ar. Hiren Choudhury, one of the stalwarts of this era, passed away on 1st Sept 2016 at the age of 84. IIA WB Chapter conveys condolences to his family. From the newsletter team, we thank Ar. Divya, for this very personalized note covering many of his works which we decided to publish only with negligible edits.

3rd GBM for the term 16-17

The 3rd General Body Meeting for the term 15-17 was held on 5th Sept, 2016 at the chapter premises. Despite the transport strike, a good number of members, fortunately could make it to the meeting.



The Office Bearers addressing the gathering

Many senior members including Ar. Dulal Mukherjee, Ar. Chandra Banerjee, Ar. Akhil Ranjan Sarker actively participate by voicing their opinions on various issues as was discussed in the meeting.



Members interacting at the meeting

Upcoming Events

- IIANATCON 2016

IIA National Convention 2016 is being hosted by Karnataka Chapter. It will be held at The Lalit Ashok, Bangaluru, India on 1-3 Dec, 2016 with the theme : Imagining the Indian City.

For details please visit www.iiangatcon2016.com

- IIAPL

IIA Premiere league, the annual sporting event of IIA is being organised by Assam Chapter at Guwahati from 6th to 8th January 2017. This year's event will have 10km Marathon, Cricket, Table Tennis and Badminton.

A walk to remember – to East Kolkata Wetlands

Honouring a request from I.I.T. Kharagpur a “Wetlands Walk” was urgently organised by IIA WB Chapter in association with the IIA-WB Sustainability cell touring the East Kolkata Wetlands (EKW) in the morning of 6th Oct. A team of around 10 delegates joined the walk on behalf of IIT Kharagpur (along with Prof. Gita and Prof. Deepak from Universities abroad). The team was lead by Prof. Joy Sen who lauded the efforts of IIA to bring together a milieu for environmental awareness among Scholars, students and professionals of the city such as Ar. Prasad Ranjan Das, Ar. Debananda Mukherjee, Ar. Kamal Perival, and others.



A few local volunteers like Mr. Prabhas Mullick and others, engaged by East Kolkata Wetlands Management Committee, took the group around as the team visited the Dump-yards, Bantala lock gate, Lal Kuthi Lock gate and other parts of wetland. They shared with us the historic background as well as the present issues they face in protecting the wetlands.

Dr. Chandrima Mukhopadhyay guided the group with some interesting insights into this treasure trove of our city. We have learnt that East Kolkata Wetland is a 12,500 hectares Ramsar site, located in the periphery of Kolkata Municipal Corporation beside the EM Bypass. EKW which is ecologically connected to the Sunderbans and Bay of Bengal, is a patchwork of tree-fringed canals, vegetable plots, rice paddies and fish ponds – and the more than 20,000 people who work in them – daily transform one-third of the city's sewage and most of its domestic refuse into a rich harvest of fish and fresh vegetables.

As she explained, the EKW wetland is divided into three sections:

1. Core area (consisting of the main ecological system, where all kinds of Construction or land conversion is strictly prohibited),
2. Internal buffer area, and
3. External buffer area.

In both the internal and external buffer area minor soft construction was allowed.

The government, being under pressure from the big-name real estate developers, and understanding the potential of huge revenue from large-scale developments, has also been undecided and implicit about whether to preserve the wetland or encourage the development, which although might be short term profit but will definitely be a long term disaster for the City of Joy.

The entire programme was successfully co-ordinated and concluded by Ar. Abhishek Dutta, Ar. Anirban Bhaduri Mandal and Ar. Indranil Ghosh.



IIA WB Chapter Sustainability Cell has been formed to facilitate the society as a whole to be more aware and sensible towards Environment related issues.

Members are requested to send their suggestions towards formulation of road map for the cell. Members are free to send their queries to the cell and/or seek opinion on various environment related issues.

Teachers' Day Celebration

On the evening of 9th September, IIA WB Chapter celebrated the Teachers day at the chapter premises. Prof. Santosh Ghosh, the designated speaker for the evening, unfortunately, could not attend and deliver his lecture on the evening due to health issues. Ar. Sonia Gupta, read out his brief message for the evening.

Honouring the last minute request from the chapter, Prof. Samaresh Mukherjee delivered Lecture for the evening on "Permanent Low-cost Vernacular Architecture". He was felicitated by the chapter along with Prof. Monideep Chatterjee who shared his journey with Late Prof. Amiya Banerjee with the august gathering.



Prof. Samaresh Mukherjee presenting his works on PLVA

Ms. Abhisikta Ghosh, who stood first in part I of IIA Examination, was also felicitated on the occasion. She had been awarded to be a part of the Indian delegation to Arcasia Student Jamboree 2016 at Hong Kong. In a letter to the chapter chairperson, she has reported her experience and expressed her gratitude to IIA-and to the few members who had donated for her expenses for the trip.



Ms. Abhisikta with the Indian Delegation at Arcasia, Hong Kong

An Evening with COA Representative from IIA, Eastern Zone

An interaction session with Dr. Amitava Roy, IIA East Zone Representative and EC member, COA was arranged on October 26, 2016, (Wednesday). A good number of concerned members attended this meeting where Dr. Roy discussed on issues like Transparency in COA affairs, Reducing costs involved in litigations, Enabling Architects to participate in more important roles in both Rural & Urban areas, Educational reforms, Change in Regulation last attended to in 1983 with present challenges and CoA's approach to tackle situations like mushrooming low quality educational institutes producing inadequately trained architects and making the profession suffer as a whole. Members had a few question on CoA activities e.g. training and research centres, Proposed Changes in the Architects Act and Educational Reforms, Corruption during the process of inspection, Earnest Money Deposit and the practice of under quoting, Harassment by Architectural Software Companies, Architects practicing as Private Limited Companies, attending IIA Council Meetings, KMC Municipal Building Committee nomination and Dr. Roy candidly answered queries of members with his well prepared presentation.



Ar. Sunil Maniramka felicitating Dr. Amitava Roy

The meeting ended with a lot of promise by Dr. Roy as he was felicitated by Ar. Sunil Maniramka, Vice-Chairman, WB Chapter.

All members are requested to send their opinion, suggestions and feedback towards making the newsletter even more interactive.

Send to editor.iiawbchapter@gmail.com

Competition News

1. A temple for Hilma

Submission: January 22, 2017;
Registration: January 20, 2017;
Language: English;
Location: Stockholm, Sweden
Prizes: 1st Prize: £1,000, 2nd Prize: £700,
3rd Prize: £400;
Type: Open

The objective of A Temple for Hilma is to design a structure to house the work of Swedish artist Hilma af Klint, located in Stockholm, Sweden. Alongside the af Klint collection, the design should incorporate a secondary space for e.g. temporary exhibitions, lectures etc. – the exact function of this space is left to the discretion of each participant.

Website:
<http://www.combocompetitions.com/current-competition>

2. Puerto vallarta masterplan architectural competition

Submission: January 31, 2017;
Registration: January 05, 2017;
Language: English, Spanish;
Location: Puerto Vallarta, Mexico;
Prizes: 1st Prize: \$5000, 2nd Prize: \$3000,
3rd Prize: \$2000, 4th Prize: \$1000;
Type: Open

Participants are asked to create ground-breaking and inventive projects with the intention of provoking and questioning our perceived notions of hospitality. Furthermore, this intervention should not be treated as solely an architectural opportunity; it should also stimulate human psychology in relationship with the conception of space (SCALE) and environment (CONTEXT) while addressing design solutions (ARCHITECTURE).

Website: <http://competition.taferresorts.com/>

3. Blue Clay Country Spa

Submission: February 15, 2017;
Registration: January 25, 2017;
Language: English;
Location: Kurzeme, Latvia;
Prizes: 1st Prize: US \$11,000,
2nd Prize: US \$6,000, 3rd Prize: US \$2,000
Type: Open

The Blue Clay Country Spa architecture competition, in partnership with SRED Global real estate developers, is tasking participants with presenting designs for a countryside guest house that would specialise in providing health treatments using this unique and naturally occurring organic product. Blue clay has long been used in restorative treatments, and provides health and beauty benefits in its naturally occurring form.

Website: <https://blueclaycountryspa.beebreeders.com/#competition>

4. Site dwelling

Submission: February 04, 2017;
Registration: January 30, 2017;
Language: English;
Location: Salir do Porto, Portugal;
Prizes: 1st Prize: €2000, 2nd Prize: €1000,
3rd Prize: €500;
Type: Open

The Site Dwelling, located on the cliff of the bay, in the village of Salir do Porto, Portugal aims to create a secluded destination, a place of retreat to engage with the landscape while providing shelter from the natural elements. This is a place to stay and inhabit for a few days, offering visitors a unique experience in a very special setting; visitors must leave the space as they found it, empty.

Website: <http://www.arkxsite.com/>

5. Mars City Design Challenge 2017

Submission: January 30, 2017;
Registration: December 15, 2016;
Language: English;
Location: Concept;
Prizes: N/A;
Type: Open

We need more architects and artists for human mission in Space exploration, and vice-versa, architects and artists need to explore outside of our “world”. Imagining the near future life, a second home for us on Mars.

Website:
<https://marscitydesign.com/design-competition>

6. San Francisco House of Music

Registration Deadline - 11/27/2016;
Submission Deadline - 12/03/2016;
Open To- All;
Entry Fee- 40 - 50 - 75 - 100 €;
Awards- First 2000 €, Second 1000 €

AWR Competitions proposes the design of a new building inside the Golden Gate Park, San Francisco House of Music. The project wants to become an important link between the past and the present of the city. This new space, in addition to the Opera in the War Memorial Opera House, will be a place where new trends of classical and contemporary music will perform. The building will be a place where the community will be able to use the common areas and will enjoy the spectacles surrounded by the nature of the context.

Website: <http://www.awrcompetitions.com/>

The Architect's Challenge Set 7

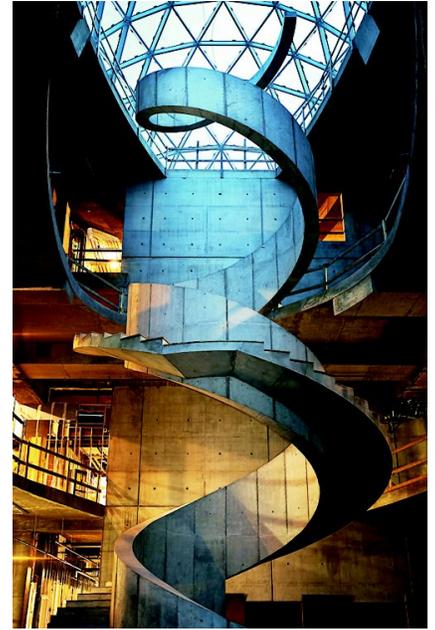
Please send your answers to editor.iiawbchapter@gmail.com by 30th November, 2016



1. In which country was this cool piano house recently built?



2. Name this indoor man-made beach. Also identify which country it is from.



3. Which American state has a museum with this eye-catching spiral staircase? What is the name of the museum?



5. Name this monument and the country where it belongs to.

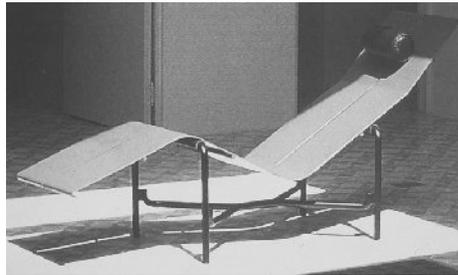


4. Identify this building and the country it belongs to.

The Architect's challenge Set 6 Answer



1. National science centre Achyut Kanvinde 1992



2. "Paulistano" Chaise Lounge, furniture design, 1957 by Paulo Mendes da Rocha



5. World's First 3D printed bioplastic and tensile fabric Facade, it is a temporary structure for Netherlands exhibition by Neptunes'



4. The Paulistano Athletic Club, São Paulo, Brazil, 1958 by Paulo Mendes da Rocha



3. Küppersmühle Museum, Grothe Collection, Duisburg, Germany, 1999 by Jacques Herzog & Pierre de Meuron

Right Answer given by : Ar. Arnab Chatterjee (5/5), Mr. Debmalya Ghosh (4/5)

Executive Committee IIA West Bengal Chapter 2015-17

Chairperson	Ar. Gita Balakrishnan	09831175272	g_balakrishnan@hotmail.com
Vice Chairman	Ar. Sunil Maniramka	09831027764	skmaniramka@gmail.com
Treasurer	Ar. Saibal Sen	09830262327	ar.saibalsen@gmail.com
Joint Secretary	Ar. Anjan Ukil	09830112696	ukilanjana@gmail.com
Members	Ar. Debjit Adhikari	09830057326	debjit62@gmail.com
	Ar. Dipankar Das	09831135661	d_dipankar2000@yahoo.co.in
	Ar. Malay Kumar Ghosh	09831025515	malay.espace@rediffmail.com
	Ar. Sudipta Seal	09831163185	seal.sudipta@gmail.com
	Ar. Subhrajit Gunakar Mitra	09830446668	sgmitra82@gmail.com
Co-opted Members	Ar. Sujoy Dhar	09830030875	sujoy.d@mvp-international.com
	Ar. Sonia Gupta	09830065104	
	Ar. Anirban Bhaduri Mandal	09830074779	
Ex-Officio	Ar. Subhojit Dey	09831133184	
	Ar. Indranil Ghosh	09831011595	
	Ar. Dilip Chandra Chatterjee	09830227033	dilipchandra25@gmail.com
Editor	Ar. Abhishek Dutta	09748325700	arcondesign@gmail.com

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"Abused woman and Maa Durga residing in the same lady of the 21st Century" by Sulagna Mukherjee, 3rd year, IEST Shibpur.

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Chapter email : iawbchapter@gmail.com.

If undelivered return to :

The Indian Institute of Architects
West Bengal Chapter
121, Shanti Pally, R. B. Connector
Kolkata 700 107
Phone : 2441 2106

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