

Editorial

Protibesh is a Journal of the department of Architecture in BUET where the papers of Architecture and allied disciplines are always welcomed. It provides an intellectual platform for the researchers and academicians and its appeal has already spread towards east and west by direct involvement of authors and reviewers from different corners of the world. We would like to thank the BUET authority for their financial as well as organizational support. Since last year, 2007, Protibesh has been being published by the officially recognized Editorial Board in BUET. The continuous effort of the members of the Board and the other members of the Publication Committee materialised the dream of the department of Architecture in spite of many limitations. We are also proud to launch the online publication of the back issues of Protibesh from the recent time.

This issue of Protibesh consists of six papers among these first two papers focus on architectural aspects, next two on urban design and last two on planning aspects. The first paper titled "Do Mahela" -an 'Enlightenment' about Two Storied Mud Architecture, by Sajid-Bin-Doza and Mohammad Zakaria Ibne Razzaque, discusses on vernacular mud architecture in the northern region of Bangladesh. Although mud is a popular building material in large areas of the deltaic belt yet academic contributions are rare on this topic. This paper tries to explain the two storied mud architecture, Do Mahela, and its materials' quality, the constructional techniques. It is also concerned about schemes, the planning and organizational features of this vernacular building type. It covers issues like climatic control, liveability and sustainability of the architecture as well as the house form itself. This paper seems remarkable for its attitude to bring this diminishing building method to the educated professionals who work in the domain of architecture. The paper by Professor Dr. Mahbubur Rahman discusses about the condition of affordability for Housing in the Developing Countries. Its focus is on definitional and conceptual aspects of housing as it should be viewed in the context of developing countries. This paper argues that it is often misunderstanding and miscalculation of affordability and underestimation of the components based on wrong assumptions that affect affordability to be considered in detailing a project. This makes such projects inaccessible to the target group and hence unsustainable in the long run. Moreover, the paper suggests an alternative concept of measuring affordability more realistically. Both these papers reflect the strength of localise and contextual quality as well as the conception of architecture.

The next two papers elaborate the aspects of Urban Design focusing on the quality and concept of urban space. The paper by Rehnuma Parveen and Fahmid Ahmed titled 'Impact of new Interventions on the heterogeneity of the plaza "De Coninckplein" in Antwerp city, Belgium' concentrates on rejuvenating the urban plaza with the introduction of new activities and users from other part of the city. The paper introduces a case of Antwerp where a historical urban plaza deteriorated its quality by the misuse of spaces through the antisocial activities due to shifting of business centres. The urban design theme included the regeneration of life in the plaza by improving the physical quality of space and thereby encouraging people to ensure right use of the space itself. The next paper on 'Cultural Space' written by Ms. Farhana Ferdous and Dr. Farida Nilufar elaborated on the conceptual deliberation and characterization of cultural space as urban space. This theoretical paper attempts to determine the characteristic features of 'Cultural Space' in order to visualize that theme in real world and to understand those as urban space. The strength of this paper lies in its wide spread literature hunt as well as in its commentary. It shows that the notion of cultural space is not merely a physical entity but also a perceptual reality. It has revealed a complex construct that works behind the deliberation of cultural space. It also takes the challenge of analyzing the elements of the mental construct of urban space as a manifestation of cultural space which is unique of this writing.

Protibesh always welcome the planning issues as architecture and planning goes hand in hand. The last two papers focus on planning strategy for sustainable forest development in the eastern forests of Bangladesh and aspects of planned urban development in the context of Kathmandu in Nepal. Thus the fifth paper of this issue titled 'Strategies for Sustainable Forest Conservation Practice: A Case Study on Lawachara National Park' written by Md. Shohel Reza Amin and Mrs. Umma Tamima tries to evaluate the Co-management operation towards the goal of sustainable forest conservation practice. The paper tries to elaborate how the participatory planning approach in Nirshorgo Support Project in Lawachara National Park is being endangered due to inappropriate application of the planning concept. Towards this ends it identifies stakeholder's perception about the involvement of Kamalgonj Upazila Parishad in forest conservation for reducing the drawbacks of the existing practice like the present conflict between the Forest Department (FD) and Co-management Committee, inadequate funding and training; and ambiguity in the future course

of the project. The statistical method involving the factor array for the assessment of the planning strategy is also important for the researchers in quest of appropriate methodology for such a qualitative assessment of complex social issues. Finally it suggests that local government is felt to be an active partner by the stakeholders of Lawachara National Park for forest conservation in a sustainable way.

The last paper titled 'Implementing the Proposed Outer Ring Road in the Kathmandu Valley: Creation of new sets of urban problems OR opportunity for the planned development?' discuss about the weaknesses of the proposed Outer Ring Road. The authors, Dr. Bijaya K. Shrestha and Sushmita Shrestha, try to evaluate the planning proposal with a critical planners' perspective. They also suggest an urban design guideline to address the planning implications of this mega project in Kathmandu in case of absence of Master Plan for the city itself. The authors identify the weaknesses of inadequate legislations which fail to regulate the haphazard urban growth and land pooling projects as well as the building construction. The paper identifies not only poor technical and managerial capabilities of the concerned public agencies but also exhibits, their lack of coordination and cooperation. This may result into haphazard development with high population migration and finally resulting into uncontrolled urban growth.

This issue of Protibesh also published reports on two Events that took place in BUET organized by the Department of Architecture. A Workshop was held on Fire Safety in Buildings: role of Architects on 8-9 November 2007 with the objective to raise awareness among the professionals and the related persons regarding the vulnerability of fire hazard in buildings. Prof. Dr. Nizamuddin Ahmed was the key person who delivered a number of lectures on Fire related aspects in building construction rules and legislation. Fire Service and Civil Defense authority provided a complete support on this occasion. On December 10, 2007 another workshop was arranged in the department of Architecture on Project Management for Architects. This event introduced the necessary processes, techniques and tools for accomplishing successful project outcomes, particularly those of a complex nature. It is hoped that such a Workshop may help the participants to be an effective player in the construction industry.

The articles printed here were submitted on time and this issue of the journal was due to be published much earlier. We apologies for causing inconvenience to many by failing to publish the journal on time. However we hope that the objective of Protibesh to contribute new knowledge to the field of Architecture will be achieved through this issue.

We express our regards to all the technical member who reviewed the articles and advised suggestions to each author. We express our gratitude to all the members of Protibesh Committee for their labor and services without whom the issue would not have seen the light.

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