

# Architect 2011

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Basil Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development ceremoniously declared open the 29th Annual Sessions of the Sri Lanka Institute of Architects (SLIA), Architect 2011, with the Inauguration Ceremony.

Shri Vikram Mishri, Deputy High Commissioner of India and Architect Ruth Reed, President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, graced the occasion as Guests of Honour. The Inauguration was also attended by delegates from the Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA) and the Architects Regional Council Asia (ARCASIA), as well as members of the local and global architectural fraternity, other professionals, students, media and the public.

A celebration of the profession of architecture in the country, the ceremony commenced with the lighting of the traditional oil lamp. The Welcome Address was delivered by Architect Chandana Edirisuriya, President of SLIA, while a brief synopsis of Architect 2011 was also presented.

Elaborating on the objectives of the Annual Sessions, Archt Chandana Edirisuriya stated, "Once a year, we create a platform for architects, members of the construction industry, trade and the public to interact. Through this, we create and try to maintain the momentum

in the construction industry, so that it benefits those who are in the industry as well as the public.” The sessions, especially the exhibition, helps create greater awareness of the sector and introduces new technologies and creations.

The theme of this year’s sessions was ‘Architecture for all: City + Community’, which aimed to showcase issues facing architects in fulfilling their task of giving expression to the values and aspirations of the community. With the government of Sri Lanka implementing numerous development projects, which were aimed at benefiting the community, the sessions sought to deliberate on the role of architects in national development including in community architecture and discuss past achievements and emerging trends and issues in this sphere. The keynote speaker of the Conference, gold medalist Archt Prof Raj Rewal from India, gave a synopsis of his presentation, to be delivered at the National Conference, during the Inauguration.

Architect and urban designer, Prof Raj Rewal has made a great impact on the Indian cities and community through his architectural approaches for over several decades. His humanist approach to architecture responds to the complexities of rapid urbanisation, the demands of climate, cultural traditions and building crafts and technologies. His most recent publication is entitled ‘Humane Habitat at Low Cost’.

A key feature of the evening was the presentation of scrolls and awards. Scrolls were awarded to new members who entered the profession, while several awards, including the Design Award, Colour Award and Research and Publication Award, were presented in recognition of creativity and the work carried out by members of the architectural fraternity in the past year. The Young Architect of the Year Award appreciated emerging talent, while local industries and products were given a boost through the Product Award. Several local architects were conferred with honours during the inauguration in recognition of their service and contribution to the profession. A publication titled ‘50 Years of Architecture in Sri Lanka’ was also launched during the ceremonial inauguration.

The Annual Sessions also included the National Conference, Architects’ Work and Trade Exhibition, the Annual General Meeting and the Fellowship Night.



