

National Conference Of Architect 2011 Focuses On City And Community

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Building on the theme, 'Architecture for all: City + Community,' the National Conference of the Sri Lanka Institute of Architects (SLIA) underlined the role of architects in national development while emphasising community architecture and also highlighting past achievements in this field.

The National Conference, which is part of the Annual Sessions of the SLIA, Architect 2011, was held in the presence of Chief Guest, Archt Ruth Reed, President of the Royal institute of British Architects (RIBA) and Guest of Honour, Archt Shahab Ghani Khan, President of the Institute of Architects, Pakistan. The delegates from the Architects Regional Council Asia (ARCASIA) and architects from India, Vietnam and Sweden participated as presenters at the event.

The keynote address was delivered by architect/urban designer Prof Raj Rewal from Delhi, India, who has made a great impact on the Indian cities and community through his architectural approaches. Another overseas success story of works by Archt Jamie Lerner was presented by Sri Lankan Architect Senaka Dharmathilake, who showcased how one could draw inspiration from such examples and adapt it to suit the Sri Lankan situation.

With the Government of Sri Lanka focused on rapid development, the theme is both timely and relevant, said Archt Chandana Edirisuriya, President of SLIA. In addition to infrastructure development, the Government has initiated projects especially aimed at benefiting the community, such as housing and urban resettlement programmes. However, development and in particular, resettlement, need to be done in a planned and systematic manner, while being sensitive to socio cultural conflicts that may arise as a result of this.

Noting that the architects have a greater role to play in such development, Archt. Edirisuiay stated, "We have ample human resources. We urge the government to obtain the services of architects in implementing urban regeneration projects or when developing new townships to ensure more planned development." He further added, "we felt that it is important for us to communicate to the government our contribution upto now in this front."

As such, the National Conference will highlight past achievements in community architecture, development of architectural philosophies that shaped neighbourhoods, towns and cities for the enjoyment of all, emerging issues which need creative approached in design and technology, emerging trends in architecture as a response to changing circumstances and formulation of research themes or propositions that could widen the scope of architects' role in community architecture.



