



Roca

IT'S CURTAINS, FOR NOW!

ALL GOOD THINGS COME TO AN END, AND SO IT IS WITH THE THINK TURF SERIES THAT CONCLUDED IN MUMBAI

The final segment of the 'Think Turf - Design Excellence and Best Practices' series was conducted in Mumbai last month. The focus of the event was not merely about architectural design and practices, but also about connecting with young creative minds of today, who have adapted to even handling business aspects of architectural practices. After the welcome address by Sandeep Sharma, head of hospitality and business development, Roca, the evening was set in motion with the keynote address delivered by Yatin Pandya, principal architect at Footprints EARTH, Ahmedabad.

Pandya underlined the importance of a holistic approach when it comes to planning and development, along with the significance of understanding the local context and learning from past masters builders. He cited five key perspectives, according to him: timeless aesthetic, socio-cultural appropriateness, environmental resource management, economic affordability and structural strength when it comes to design approach. He asked questions, like how can progress be construed through growth and quantity or quality of life; and whether the notion 'west is the best' still holds in our Indian context, which is full of paradoxes and contradictions - poor and rich, rural and urban, etc. "Design is not about finding one answer to a question, but rather about finding many questions that produce appropriate answers," he stated. "We need to question whether we are building homes and communities or just houses in number and crowds being added; whether we talk of better environments or just industries?"

In a very interesting series of picture dialogues, Pandya communicated several examples on understanding Indian architec-

MUMBAI PANELISTS

Keynote speaker: Yatin Pandya, principal architect, Footprints EARTH

THE PANEL

Conrad Gonsalves, director, DLLD (Design-Learning-Living-Direction) - the moderator

Anil Salian, principal architect, Anil Salian and Associates

Apurva Parikh, associate architect-senior project lead, Architect Hafeez Contractor

Gaurav Sanghavi, joint MD, Pentaspace Consultants

Pallavi Matkari, chief architect, Runwal Group

ture in its purest local context and elaborated on learning from the values of resilience, endurance and the tradition of India's socio-cultural fabric. He believes that tradition is a living past and acknowledges the importance of the concept of pluralism - which is relevant in India. His rather vivid and fascinating examples included the typical Indian thali with its combination meal wherein 'you are the designer of your bite' in comparison to a pizza which, by contrast, is a limited experience.

Another stimulating example he gave was of the stepwells of Ahmedabad that are today functionally obsolete, yet inspire so much awe even after so many centuries - primarily because of the engaging experience they add to a person during a transit that is vertical and horizontal. He also spoke of Indian temple architecture as a beautiful experience in itself, right from a majestic gopuram (entrance gate) to the pillared corridors

1. (L-R): Conrad Gonsalves (moderator) with Yatin Pandya, Gaurav Sanghavi, Apurva Parikh, Pallavi Matkari and Anil Salian.