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PREFACE

Assalamu'alaikum wrt. wbt. and dear all,

It has been observed that in the specialized fields of architecture, planning, landscaping architecture, quantity surveying, building technology and engineering, applied arts and design, and other fields related to the built environment, there is a general lack of scholarly articles and research reports, either collectively or individually, that are closest to Malaysia, Asian and the Islamic perspectives. Consequently, the Kulliyyah (Faculty) of Architecture and Environmental Design at the International Islamic University Malaysia (KAED, IIUM) considers it to be timely and appropriate for a journal i.e. Journal of Architecture, Planning and Construction Management (JAPCM) to be established. The key aim of JAPCM is therefore to provide a platform for mitigating 'gap' in the body of knowledge to be addressed.

JAPCM offers an opportunity for researchers, research students, practitioners and authors to share their views, theoretical and empirical research findings; and readers, especially academics and students to appreciate and benefit from its contents. Research reports and theoretical papers, short practice notes, book reviews and abstracts from Masters and PhD theses and dissertations are welcome on any aspects of architecture, urban and regional planning, landscape architecture, quantity surveying, building technology and engineering, applied arts and design, and other fields related to the built environment discipline.

Happy reading.

Prof. Dr. Mohammad Abdul Mohit Ph.D.(UK),

Editor-In-Chief

EDITORIAL

Assalamu-alaikum Wraahmatillahi Wabarakatuhu

Welcome to the sixth volume and first issue of the Journal of Architecture, Planning and Construction Management or in short JAPCM.

This issue (vol.6, no.1) of the Journal of Architecture, Planning and Construction Management (JAPCM), contains five research papers, all of which discuss the various issues and challenges pertaining to the built and natural environments. The content of this issue, although dominated by Malaysian case studies, include one paper on India and another paper from Syria, which give the journal an international platform. Collectively, the papers focus on the influences of Vasu Purusha through 'bindu' and 'mandala' in moulding cultural and sacred architecture in India, urban sprawl factors and causes globally, people's interaction with open space and the benefits of urban parks in Kuala Lumpur, the need for the integration of Interior Design (ID), Architecture, Mechanical & Electrical and Facilities in construction project management in Malaysia and conservation need for the polychrome wooden 'ajami rooms in Aleppo City, Syria.

The first paper by Jaffer Adam and Depeeka examines the concept of Vastu Purusha through "bindu" and "mandala" which have been the primary form generators in the architecture in India. Through literary resources this paper examines the ability of Sri Yantra to unpack itself into various progressive spatial geometries that have inherent relationships which attain its final form as the "mandala", which is also known as the "mask of God through which eternity is to be achieved." The "mandala" is the Hindu cosmic model through which the Buddhist cosmic thinking is evolved. The first part of this paper discusses about the mandala model and its systematic structure which inspires in constructing spatial systems that build architectural spaces. and how the various elements of nature that manifests within the mandala and the geometries help generate an ephemeral form as a symbol of spirituality and awakening of consciousness. The paper presents the work on a "Peace Museum" project in Sri Lanka which bridges the spiritual philosophy of Hindu-Buddhist culture, where the mandala evolves a paradigm for a contemporary architectural thought associated with the sacredness of built spaces.

The second paper by Nur Aulia Rosni and Norzailawati Mohd Noor reviews publications on urban sprawl factors and causes extracted from two largest scientific databases namely Scopus and ScienceDirect, published during 1996-2015. The citation-based approach analysis was used to provide better understanding about the topic where the journal articles are selected by using identified keywords from a wide-ranging fields that include built environment, geography, planning, architecture, engineering, economics, transportation, health, social and spatial technologies. Subsequently, the factors and causes of urban sprawl were extracted from each publication and reviewed. The findings is presented in six categories - (i) socio-demographic, (ii) economic, (iii) political, (iv) physical, (v) environment, and (vi) transportation, pertinent to the formation of urban sprawl.

The third paper by Zainul Mukrim Baharuddin and Rashidi Othman Jasasikin Sani investigates people's interaction with open space and the benefits of urban parks in Kuala Lumpur. Opinions of visitors from nine (9) urban parks in Kuala Lumpur were collected

to address the aim of the research. Various levels of urban parks - the city parks, district and neighborhood parks were investigated. Altogether, 47 respondents were interviewed in seven parks. Findings showed that 65.42% of respondents participated in active activities such as jogging and exercise while, 34.57% preferred to have passive activities such sightseeing, rest and relaxation. The results also indicated that, when people interact with nature, 39.08% agreed that the benefit of social integration is the greatest benefit of their urban living environment. Secondly, 28.74% on health point of view. Thirdly, 18.39% agreed that urban parks could provide environmental benefits and lastly was the benefits of parks management (11.49%). Finally, the study concluded that a healthy living environment can be promoted through frequent visits to urban parks by participating in activities and nature appreciation. Therefore it is important to enhance the green strategies within urban planning and design strategy to improve healthy living.

The fourth paper written by Ismail Jasmani focuses on the need for integration and coordination of Interior Design (ID), Architecture, Mechanical & Electrical and Facilities component drawings between the consultants and the contractor drawings. All related drawings are required to be resolved and agreed upon, so as not to cause obstacles at the actual construction site and to improve the business performance in terms of time and cost of the project. A review of the performance measured in the interior design construction industry also indicates that productivity is an inadequate measure for identifying improvement targets and control activities. The use of a more holistic set of measures is recommended in order to ensure more relevant and timely information.

The fifth paper by Rami Alafandi and Asiah Abdul Rahim documents the polychrome wooden 'ajami rooms in Aleppo City in Syria. Aleppo has a long history, extending from the third millennium B.C to the Islamic era. The city flourished and became a very important station on the Silk Route. Later, Aleppo became a part of the Ottoman Empire from 1516 to 1918, and the third largest city in the Ottoman Empire after Istanbul and Cairo. As part of this empire, local Aleppine architects and craftsmen combined their techniques and cultural heritage with Ottoman culture. This research employs a historical, photographic and descriptive approach to document the 'ajami rooms by using mostly the photographs, that were taken by the first author in 2006. Since 2012 much of Syria's architectural heritage has been destroyed due to internal war. In Aleppo, the losses in both the ancient and modern parts of the city have been tremendous including some traditional houses with 'ajami. This paper recommendations to protect the ajami rooms from the current conflict and restore it for future use.

The research papers included in this issue of JAPCM covers a wider geographical scale by including two papers, one each from India and Syria. It is hoped that professionals, lecturers, researchers and postgraduate students, in built and natural environments, will find this issue (vol.6, no.1) of JAPCM interesting, useful and knowledge-expanding.

Prof. Dr. Mohammad Abdul Mohit
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