



AUGUST'08

S	3	10	17	24	31
M	4	11	18	25	
T	5	12	19	26	
W	6	13	20	27	
T	7	14	21	28	
F	1	8	15	22	29
S	2	9	16	23	30

SECOND VII / MMXII
 Last month, we had with some trepidation – and more than a few butterflies in our stomachs – placed the very first issue of Archchorm in your hands. The letters, congratulatory notes and calls that we received over the last month will stay in our hearts forever. It helped spur our young designers into yet another creative burst of writing – which has culminated in this, the second issue of Archchormer. I have often been asked by friends and relatives, about what drives us architects: is it the thrill of seeing our designs manifested in real structures and spaces that people live and work in or the beauty of traveling (in my case to Rudrapur, Varanasi, Mumbai, Chandigarh, among others)? What makes all the early morning meetings and late night efforts worth it? (For a slightly tongue in cheek answer, please refer to the reproduction of an SMS sent by Anurag Sarawaj, Ranchi- published in the feedback section.)

We always seem to have a few new faces – and keeping our travel schedules in mind, sometimes I find myself asking people if they are waiting for someone – only to be told that they are working in Archchorm. After that it is a race between me and my sheepish grin as to who gets out of the door first!

A special good bye is now due for Aishu our handworking interior design trainee – good bye because she resumes her studies; partial because there is no escaping Archchorm, and she will continue working with us part time (the perils of which the poor girl will soon understand).

August will also mark the 81st birthday of Ar. B. V. Doshi, a pioneer among Indian architects, a person who has worked under the 'Mastar himself', Le Corbusier! Here are a couple of views of the School of Architecture, Ahmedabad (CEPT) – one of the enduring projects.



In this issue of Archchormer you will read an article by members of our **chessing game players** – whose numbers increase even as I speak – on the wonders of the Mercedes Benz museum, Mohi. adds a fresh dimension to architecture-arguably and probably the first ever article on design by a hardcore finance person!

On a lighter note, about 50% of the people who wrote back to us complained bitterly that Vikas we mentioned Pamela Anderson, we didn't include a photograph of her, thereby forcing them to jog their memories of her!



Well, for all those people- here she is!

- FEEDBACK**
 Ten reasons why I chose to be an Architect:
1. I hate sleeping.
 2. I have enjoyed my life in childhood.
 3. I can't live without tension.
 4. I want to have a disturbed family life.
 5. I believe in "Kam karu, phal ki kasamna mat karu"
 6. I don't want to spend time with my parents.
 7. I want to take revenge on myself.
 8. I wanted to break up with my friends.
 9. I want social boycott.
 10. I love to work on Sundays and holidays.

Aanchal Agarwal, aspiring fashion designer, always interested in architecture.

Anurag Sarawaj, serial entrepreneur and archchorm well-wisher

Feedback at archchormer@archchorm.com

archchorm works

Border plaza on the access corridor Delhi – Gurgaon expressway on NHR, India.
Give us your visiting card in the road infrastructure, was the simple brief given to start this complex and challenging project.

Idea was to design and develop a facility that speaks functionality from concept to the final detail- from the concrete of the pavement and the building, steel of the canopy area- Per islands, glass of the control room and the booths, all had to come together as a comprehensive scheme.

The largest plaza in Asia, the sheer size of the lane areas gave the emphasis on the canopy. A beaded white sheet floating on seven distinct piers of concrete is a structural marvel and probably the single cause for all the gawking here of Pankaj Gupta, structural engineer from Roark Consultants. Architecturally the canopy was bottom. It with coloured LEDs to give the daily commuter a different rendering and flavour everyday.

The building roof doubled up as a parking lot, a statement to being associated with flyovers and highways that was a result of lack of floor space and need of security. From the surreal wasteland of parking the cars parked on roof to giving people a strategic deck to enjoy the plaza view, the toll plaza design in India graduates to the next generation!

The Toll Plaza has 3 distinct areas of operation:

Plaza Zone - consisting of the 'flared area' of the highway to accommodate the 32 lanes with one 'Toll booth' on each island for toll collection, a canopy over the islands spanning 16 M wide, 150 M long and 7.2 M to 15 M high (varied), a tunnel running orthogonal to the road under the islands. The entire canopy is supported only on 7 columns and of course, my favourite color, the entire faced road is illuminated with 30 M high mass using 400 watts HD lamps.



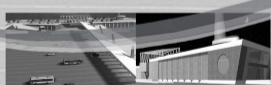
Toll Control Zone - consisting of 'cash up' area in the basement at the end of the tunnel, a strong room and a money transfer facility to the bank. There is a 'control room' on the first floor, supported on a single column and the bridge. It oversees the total operation of toll collection and views of the entire 'plaza zone' to visually control and manage the entire system.

Toll Operation Zone - which controls the administration and maintenance of the toll plaza. The 'point of sales' which facilitates the computer requirements such as purchasing prepaid cards, registering complaints and submitting suggestions.

The design philosophy is to segregate the public area from the money handling area for the security reasons and ease of operation for the entire system. The electrical and electronics are the lifelines of a toll plaza.

A plaza of this nature and scale gave us a challenging opportunity to think out of the box with an able tolling team lead by Aishu Le Roux. Brainstorming sessions with Sounth, design discussions with Kuldesh Singh, drawing preparations with our dependable Devender and site works with a committed Shahzad has made it a very satisfying engineering experience for me.

The designer, the architect and toll plaza mood lighting was a fantastic opportunity, and an apt platform to exhibit the role of urban lighting in modern city life and the 'power of power'



Mr. S P Gupta, 'Uncles' to most of us - is very much the pillar of the office. An engineer with more experience than our ages and a zest for seeking towards excellence that never diminishes- all this and much more- that is Mr S P Gupta. He has, jointly with Shahzad Ahmad, chosen to showcase the DS Constructors Toll Plaza on the Delhi-Gurgaon expressway.

Shahzad Ahmad: The respect and position he enjoys in the office is not merely based on his being one of the oldest Archchorm family members. Rather, he commands this position due to his sheer knowledge and experience. Shahzad's cool and composed demeanor balances the everyday crisis management he does at Archchorm. Very dependable and a professional who takes up full ownership and responsibility on projects!

At the initiation of the idea of the Archchorm, I was a hesitant participant with two thoughts constantly bothering me. Firstly, how would I fit in with a group of 18 people which consisted solely of architects, interior designers and structural consultants; and secondly what would I gain from the immensely architectural study tour? As the planning progressed my inhibitions of joining the tour started fading a back seat and I decided that I would want to be a part of the tour if not for anything else, but to also in person how the buildings one has only observed in the books and magazines actually look and impress upon one self.

Though I have been abroad on earlier occasions, the excitement over a fresh visit never seems to diminish and I am always upbeat at the thought of traveling to a new place and exploring!

Thanks to the combined effort of GPS navigational system and our in-house human navigators the drive through the unwinding roads or fast moving highways and the visually impeccable countryside was an exciting and fun as the buildings proposed to be visited during the day. I was sometimes overruled by the occupants of the buildings rather than the architectural marvels we were visiting (couldn't my ears get the wrong picture – tell me clearly that I am sitting at the BMW and Mercedes cars, the ornate details of La Touraine and Villa Savoye, and not the beautiful terrazzo floor guides, unlike other Archchorm staffers...)



The fantastic carping experience was my first and I enjoyed the whole process- be it setting up the tents and kitchen, queuing up for the food, cooking, eating or the witnessing up!

As the only non-technical member of the group apart from Zoysa (two year old budding architect), I would say I am now able to better appreciate the design or the significance of space and volume in a building than I used to earlier, though a bit of design sensitivity had already been inculcated in me just because of working in an architectural office for seven years.

Being the finance person on the job, and having been involved in the planning of the trip, I know the amount of efforts put in and the back breaking financial implications of the tour! However in no way does it deter me in wishing many more Archchorms for the office- though there is a small request. As the person in charge of keeping everybody's passports, I would appreciate that people with only single passport booklets are allowed on the next tour, if only to reduce some of my burden!

The need and importance of proper thought process and planning in a building could not have been brought up in a better way than visiting and standing in the middle of a building you have seen in photographs. **Someone half right and half wrong is believing and learning too.**

Mohi Mathur - Ultra dependable, your man for a crisis, financial juggler- well that's Mohi. The korymba in ARCHHerm, he epitomizes the last man standing to many of us. Example- when we needed an article in an absolute emergency, he was the man we turned to unanimously.



The Mercedes Benz museum stands as a modern icon of the city under the gates of the Daimler Benz factory in Stuttgart-Ulmerturheim, Germany. Designed by the Dutch design office UN Studio (winner of the esteemed international competition), this majestic museum opened in 2006. The museum has a built up area of 16,500 square metres and just for the record, over 860,000 visitors visited it last year.

It is based on a unique cloverleaf concept, which has 3 overlapping circles. Half the museum is dark with controlled night lighting and the other half bathes in sunlight with large glass windows. This is an attempt to showcase cars in day, and night as their designs need to look good in both environments. It has a futuristic exterior and designer interiors, the product seemed complete in every faculty of creativity. The building is an exposed concrete shell, bare and strong in its form with sleek interiors that complement the architecture. Cars were displayed on the walls which seemed akin to a race track. The entire built volume evoked a sense of speed (they have even placed the light boards of the car every 15 seconds on the surround system- just in case one wanted a complete surround experience). The LED lights with moving projections, concrete discs, dynamic dimmable link magnetic locking systems and the amphitheatre bring together a sense of style and imagery that one associates with Mercedes. The design envelope was powerful, but yet didn't overpower the display. It seemed to justify its functionality while capturing the essence of the renowned company.



Car models through the last century are interestingly displayed- each along with a piece of world history - to help visitors visualise the context in which the car was built. All this reflects the constant innovation and evolution of the company. At present there are over a 150 vehicles on display, including the legendary 500K, 260D and the 170V series.

A must see for all car buffs, the moment you walk in through the doors of the ultra modern eight-storey building, you are transported into the world of cars - or more specifically Mercedes. According to folklore, the Austrian Consul-General in Nice, Emil Jellinek, ordered a low car with the stipulation that it had to be named after his daughter. No prizes for guessing her name: **Mercedes!**



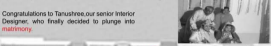
'Say a lie, say it big, keep it simple, keep saying it and finally people will believe you.'

Adolf Hitler

Aanchal Dhawan, an interior designer, is working on projects of varying scale. Her infectious smile and cheerfulness apart, the enthusiasm she brings to the job, coupled with an ability to happily work hard make her an integral part of Archchorm.



Archchormer was successfully launched last month, getting a stupendous response from all quarters. This pumped up the morale of all those who are directly involved with it, encouraging them to put in better efforts for this and the forthcoming issues.



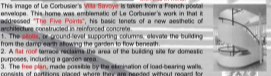
Congratulations to Tanushree, our senior Interior Designer, who finally decided to plunge into matrimony.

Archchorm proudly announces the opening of its gym (overlooking our terrace garden)- As expected the fittest members of the staff have already hit the gym with a vengeance, while the slightly out-of-shape (and that is the understatement of the year) members are waiting for an opportune time!

Archchorm's office trip - an annual feature- took us to a 'haveli' at Mandawa, Rajasthan where we celebrated Sounth's birthday in style. Last you think that the visit was merely just again- with Sounth in charge of all leisure activities- getting back to work seems like a holiday.

Bas Boonzaaier (Archchorm manager, Holland) visited our office to kick off a railway project. This would mark the beginning of a two-year outsourcing venture for Archchorm.

STRETCH MARKS: Due to the enormous heat generated on air or frames, Concorde airplanes stretched an extra 20 centimeters during supersonic flight. Their carpets and paint were designed with this in mind!



- This image of Le Corbusier's **Villa Savoye** is taken from a French postal envelope. This home was emblematic of Le Corbusier's work in that it addressed **'The Five Points'**, his basic tenets of a new aesthetic of architecture constructed in reinforced concrete.
1. The **columns** or ground-level supporting columns, elevate the building from the damp earth showing the garden to flow beneath.
 2. A **flat roof** terrace reclaims the area of the building site for domestic purposes, including a garden area.
 3. The **free plan**, made possible by the elimination of load-bearing walls, consists of partitions placed where they are needed without regard for those on adjoining levels.
 4. **Horizontal windows** provide even illumination and ventilation.
 5. The **freely-designed facade**, unconstrained by load-bearing considerations, consists of a thin skin of wall and windows.

UPCOMING PROJECTS:

Archchorm has designed a new interior products showroom for the **Villa Pavia** group at Chandigarh. This 10,000 sq. showroom highlights the latest trends in Italy and the rest of Europe. Construction is underway and the grand opening is expected around Diwali.



HIGHEST BRIDGE
 The Millau Viaduct Bridge, 341 m high, is located in the south of France. This architectural wonder is breathtaking indeed! Although they passed within an hour and a half of travel time from the bridge, the Archchorm members could not visit this wondrous piece of work because of lack of time. Never mind, it will happen!

NEW JOINEES:
 B.S. Manukharan, Architect
 Pradeep Singh, draftsman
 Mohammed Shahid, Architectural draftsman
 Arshwin Singh, Interior draftsman
 Ashish Kumar, Architectural trainee

BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH:
 Tanushree twenty fifth



I have chosen to write for multiple reasons. One, its an effective way to communicate with archchorm members, associates and well wishers. Two to share design thoughts and laid but not least, to improve on my writing skills as I am tired of talking, talking the whole day long! I almost feel guilty of convincing clients all the time. Talking reminds me of my nephew vidur who was making a presentation recently on 'hilar and the opening line clarified how close architects are to hilar and his beliefs. I said, 'say a lie, say it big, keep it simple, keep saying it and finally people will believe you!'. Have thought of dedicating this month's piece (after the bukhara dal last month) to one of my greatest inspirations on earth-MUJI, a design house, a way of life. I really urge you and hope that, can find a way to inspire people some day to this and to create like muji.



muji was born in japan, as young as a lot of archchorm team members, in 1980, muji's basic philosophy is to design and develop simple household products at the most reasonable prices, utilizing the best of materials and technology. the simplicity advocated by it falls in line with architecture. they started with 5 products and are now at more than 7000. IKNO lanka coined the word **MUJIYAN** that basically means 'brand free' and 'quality products'.

muji designed it with their incredible stationery collection and my undying gratitude for the same. my interpretation of muji is to simply strip the object of every embellishment, keeping the essence intact. to test and stretch the limits of every form and material and reduce it to the only logical answer to the problem or function its trying to address. isnt that supposed to be the architectural theory? muji designs stem from lifestyle details through consumer profiling, the emergence of what to make is innovative itself. design of a pencil sharpening blade that occupies your finger form getting out to rain shower speakers to the most innovative in your bath are completely mad and lovable products.

muji is an aspiration to reach a level where nothing more can be added and nothing is removable each and every element true to itself and critical to the whole, bringing a level of comfort and a smile on the end users face.... a simple need that architecture needs to satisfy as one of its primary aim.

no muji product bears any branding. **that's the brand!**

