

ARCHITECTURE+DESIGN

A N I N D I A N J O U R N A L O F A R C H I T E C T U R E

Raising
the Bar
KARL WADIA



THE
CHANGE
MAKERS
ASHA SAIRAM
BJARKE INGELS
HARSH VARSHNEYA
MA YANSONG
PURAN KUMAR
RAHUL KADRI

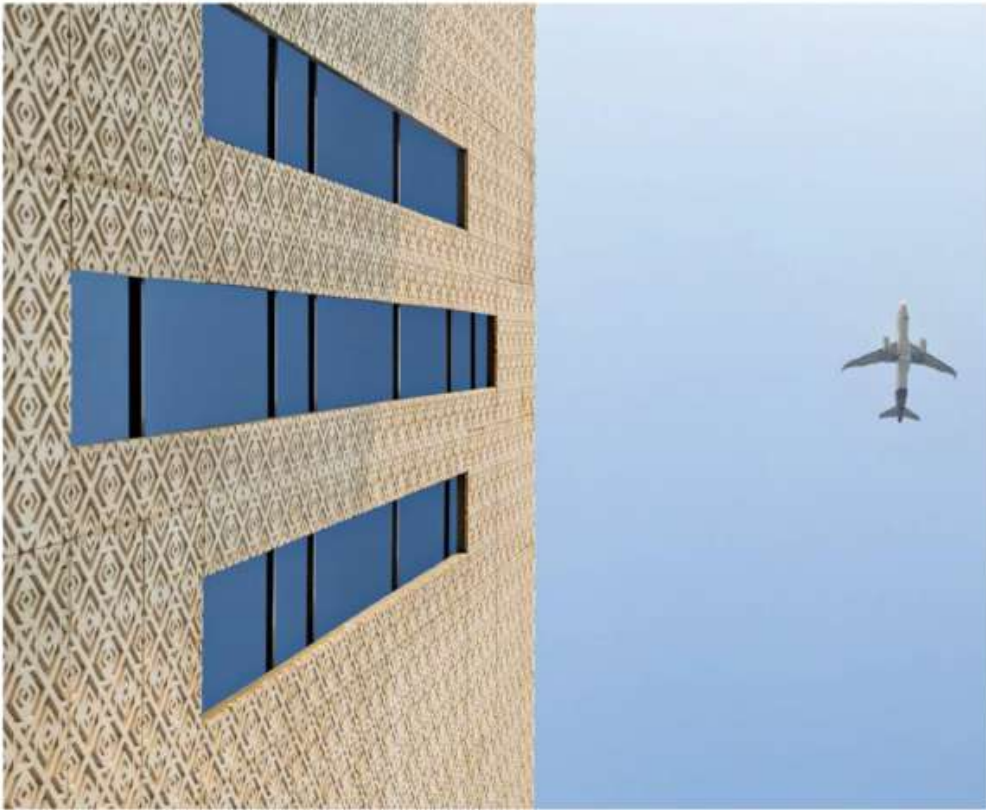




AN URBAN MARVEL

PROJECT: Exhibition Center, East Kidwai Nagar, New Delhi; **ARCHITECTS:** Stapathi

Designed by Stapathi, this Exhibition Centre in New Delhi is an exemplar of urban design and is all set to create a paradigm shift in its immediate built landscape



Sthapathi executed the futuristic build's intricate, latched GRC Jali façade inspired by a character typical to Lutyen's Delhi. Indirect light seeps into through the building's veneer, shielding visitors from Delhi's blazing summer sun, making mechanical ventilation a lesser imperative.

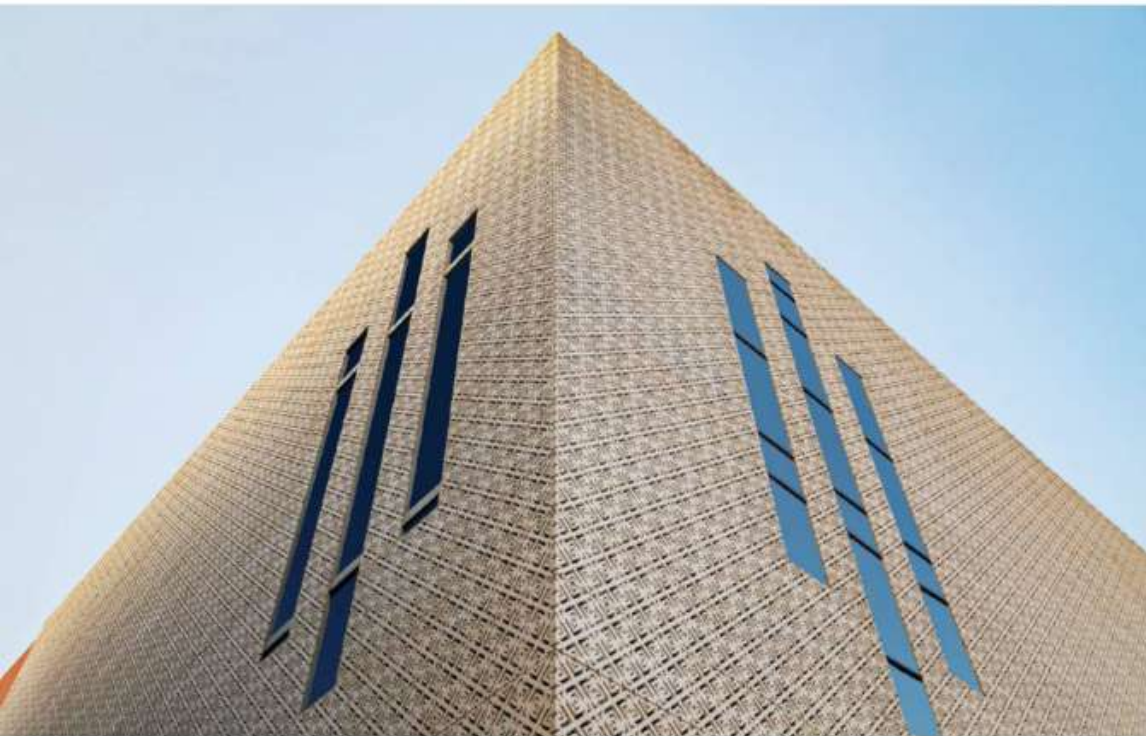
The only premise missing from the recognition of Central Delhi's East Kidwai Nagar as a Smart City was the obvious lack of an exhibition center. The Ministry of Urban Housing and Development roped in Sthapathi to execute this institutional monument.

East Kidwai Nagar emerged as a mixed-use smart city plan in Central Delhi in 2019 with the aim of lessening New Delhi's chronic housing shortage. The Ministry of Urban Housing and Development has delegated the master planning, design, and implementation of this mixed-use smart city's upcoming exhibition center to Sthapathi. Sthapathi's vision includes designing sustainable solutions for a changing world that leaves a lasting impact on communities and the environment.

In order to maximize footfall and leverage sales volumes, the project has been strategically located on the main Ring Road in New Delhi, along the central axis close to AllMS, which connects Delhi to major centers such as South Extension commercial center, NDMC precinct and the Indira Gandhi International Airport.

Indian summers are hot, but Delhi's temperatures can soar unbearably during the season. Sthapathi executed the futuristic build's intricate, latched GRC Jali façade inspired by a character typical to Lutyen's Delhi. Indirect light seeps into through the building's veneer, shielding visitors from Delhi's blazing summer sun, making mechanical ventilation a lesser imperative.





Despite its airy appearance, the site plan was initially very restrictive in terms of boundaries. Thus, the architectural intent has been to not make the center's guests feel claustrophobic. The end-to-end large column-free spaces ensure just that, whilst adding spatial depth to the compact space.



HARSH VARSHNEYA
Principal Architect, STHAPATI

Harsh Varshneya is the Director and Head of Design at STHAPATI, an award-winning multidisciplinary architectural practice headquartered in Delhi. Their globally recognised portfolio spans a spectrum of building typologies, from individual dwellings to large-scale urban developments.

Harsh graduated as a triple Gold medallist from the prestigious Sushant School of Art and Architecture in Gurugram, marking the beginning of a remarkable journey in architecture and design. His pursuit of excellence led him to the world-renowned University of Nottingham, where he received his master's in sustainable tall buildings, accredited to CTBUH, Chicago.



Since the surrounding urban fabric is a very dense settlement, the three-storey structure's surreal elevation design seems to make the building levitate. The novel design ensures porosity, and a visual connection across the two sides of the exhibition center, making it a conversation starter in the gentrifying neighborhood. Also, considering the venue's hectic event calendar, a giant built-in LED on the low-rise's façade pulls in crowds.

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Any visitor is guaranteed to be taken in by a grand double-height lobby, which has lifts leading them to the first level earmarked for exhibition spaces, while the upper floor is reserved as the community center. The architectural skeleton sits upon an existing basement structure, making it a tensile steel structure with spans ranging from 35-meters of unsupported column-free spaces inside the exhibition center. The large steel structures inside the exhibition space are open and exposed, and coloured in vibrant shades, to create a zestful vibe inside the large span structures. This allows the ground level to be

used as a covered public space enjoying natural light and ventilation.

To coordinate all aspects of a high-profile event, the exhibition center's unmatched services come with a depth of expertise and unmatched commitment to service which includes: multi-cuisine eateries at the entry level to showcase the subcontinent's gastronomy; modular, collapsible and reconfigurable exhibition spaces to stretch retail goals; ample community spaces with panoramic views on the upper decks; and duly screened jali work awnings on the terrace to allow alfresco events.

The design's pre-fabricated measures drastically reduced waste generated, drastically decreasing on-site pollution. The use of chemical compounds allowed curing or complete removal of water from at site. These prudent measures have helped the construction to be done in a rapid and efficient manner.

East Kidwai Nagar, a 35-hectare, residential-led central Delhi project is used as an exemplar project by the Indian government for its programme to develop smart cities. Despite the superlative execution, its urban landscape severely lacked a convention center that could host high-octane events in the burgeoning suburb. With this spectacular addition of the Exhibition Centre, the Ministry of Urban Housing and Development hopes to fill the gap! 🏗️