



Talk: Building as Learning Aid

Speaker:

Kabir Vajpeyi, Principal Architect, VINYAS Centre for Architectural Research & Design and Advisor Infrastructure, SSA, Ministry of Human Resource Development

Date / Time:

September 14, 2012 - 3:45pm - 5:15pm

Venue:

Room No. 206, Second Floor, Pixel B, APU

Abstract:

The physical environment that encompasses us or a child at any point of time provides varied opportunities and potential to interact with it and learn. Building as Learning Aid (BaLA) is about developing and using the physical space around the child as a learning resource in a child-friendly manner. The lecture will focus on developing understanding on how the physical space around us can be developed as a learning resource. It is about what can be creatively done with existing environments using local resources. The ideas can be easily applied to new school situations as well. In the backdrop of 'Goals of education' in India, in a wider social context, the 'Four pillars of learning' as propounded by UNESCO, the 'Constructivist approach' of National Curriculum Framework 2005 and 'How children learn?', the lecture will highlight the relevance of BaLA. It will also dwell on child friendliness and how it can be manifested in the design of infrastructure provisions through simple adaptations. The significance of multiple-use settings for creating varied teaching-learning situations and embellishing them with multiple-use learning resources as core BaLA principles shall be explained. Further, it will elaborate, through examples, how the physical settings and learning elements can be used across various subjects and concepts across grades. It will establish BaLA as an interface between pedagogy and physical space. It will also demonstrate how, the Use-Efficiency-Ratio of various spaces increases with BaLA and the significance of various processes to achieve it, through case study.

The BaLA ideas have been implemented across several States and UTs in India across several thousand government schools and are now part of the Whole school Development Planning under RTE. The entire lecture will be supported by a range of visual material – photos, graphics and video clips to explain and make the issues clear to the participants.

A Note on the Speaker:

Kabir Vajpeyi is Principal Architect, VINYAS, Centre for Architectural Research & Design, New Delhi and Advisor Infrastructure, SSA to Ministry of Human Resource Development,

Govt. of India. Kabir is a practicing architect with extensive experience on developing learning environments in schools in rural as well as urban areas. He and his architect-urban planner wife Preeti Vajpeyi founded Vinyās – to undertake innovative, application oriented, interdisciplinary research and design, build capacity and provide policy support.

VINYĀS has advised and provided consultancy to the Government of India, the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, DFID, GTZ, Aga Khan Foundation, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, HUDCO, apart from several NGOs and private institutions on matters related to education, building design, conservation, tourism, training, construction, policy, etc. Their work has been listed amongst 32 Inventive Indians: Great Stories of Change in 2009. Vinyās conducts workshops and training programmes for administrators, architects, engineers, teachers and masons in participative design and construction practices. Vinyās's work had also been featured in an international Architecture and Design magazine, - DOMUS in December 2011. Vinyās team has oriented and trained over 7600 Children, Teachers, Principals, Engineers, Architects, Administrators, Policy Planners, Ministers, across the country since 2005. Kabir has also conducted several Lectures and sessions on planning school and other social infrastructure for more than 400 Phase 1, Phase III and Phase IV officers at Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration since 2010.

Kabir's first book, 'BaLA' - Building as Learning Aid (in Hindi, English and Marathi), has been widely read and used by several thousand schools across the country, mostly government schools in rural or urban areas, to improve the learning environment for children going to elementary schools. Through Vinyās, he and his team has been providing advice and technical support on BaLA in developing school environments to several state governments of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Delhi, Bihar, Assam, West Bengal, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Kerela. Presently, he is also Advisor, Infrastructure for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) to the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India. Under SSA, his initiative with MHRD under Right to Education, as part of policy at the national level is on Whole School Development Planning, which will influence more than thirteen lakh primary and elementary schools across the country in next few years. This school infrastructure policy envisions school's built environment as ecosystem for learning. He has contributed in the National Curriculum Framework 2005 by NCERT on School and Classroom environment. He also conceptualized the School Infrastructure Development section in the revised framework of SSA under Right to Education act 2009. As member of the subgroup constituted by the MHRD for the national level 12th Plan on Elementary Education he has contributed significantly on the Infrastructure Development Section for the Planning Commission of India.