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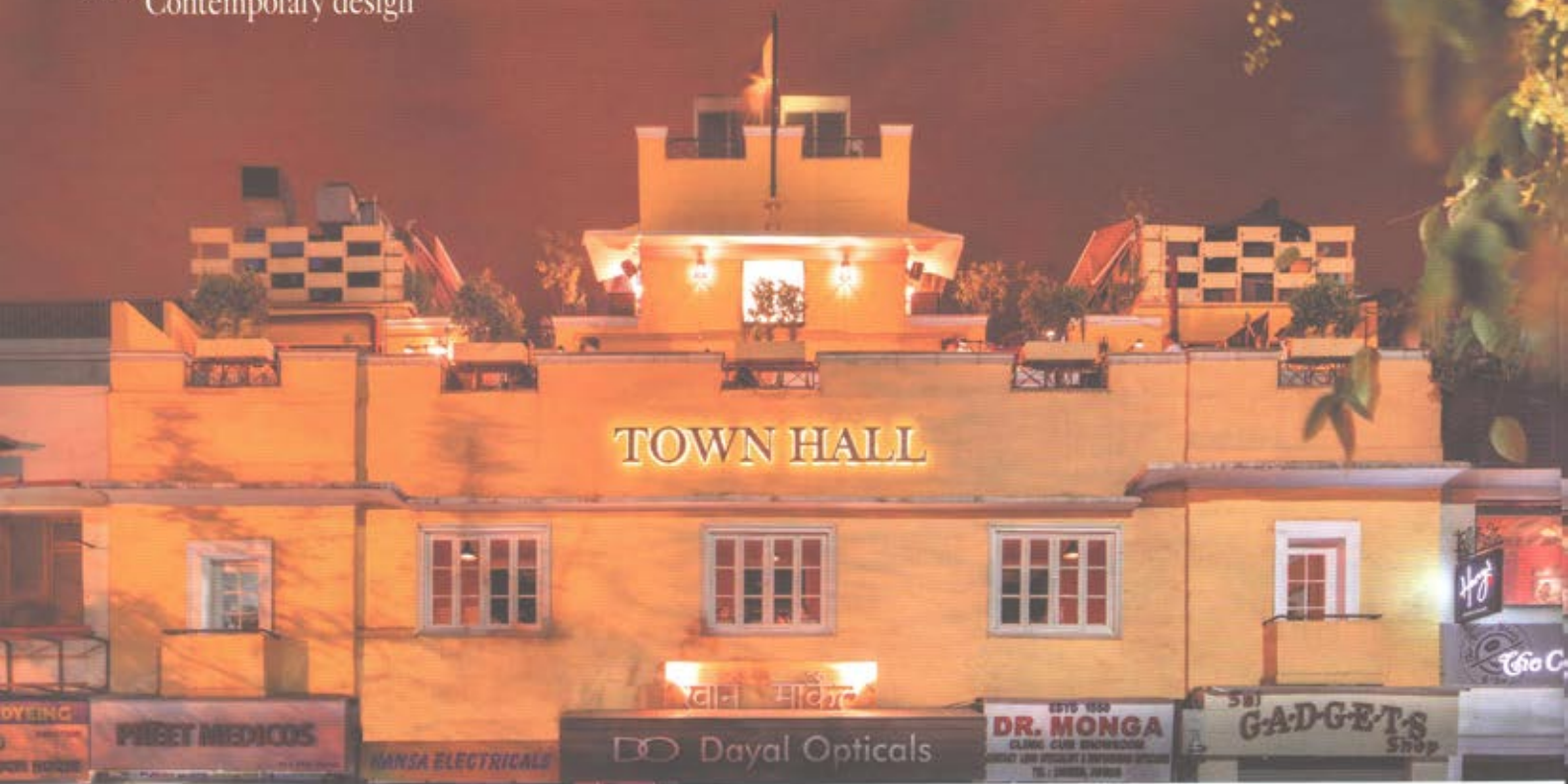
Cover Story
The End of Tradition?

Special Feature
**Modular Kitchen, Cooking
Aesthetically**

Interview
Jimmy Mistry,
CMD, Della Group



**Paradigm Shift in
Hospitality Design**



Recreating the Post-Independence Era

Townhall, Khan Market, New Delhi DCA Architects

The brief was to use the largest area in the centre of Khan Market, NCR, and design a place for the community amidst an existing structure, where a lot of people can meet and gather together. This was a unique opportunity, to design an extremely large space with multiple challenges in the heart of the posh market in central Delhi. Thus, DCA Architects came up with something like the Townhall

Adopting a contemporary design approach for an independent nation within the domain of the colonial heritage and enlivening the resurgent industrial spirit of a newly independent country as Nehru envisioned, an array of spaces are designed through different sections, both for individual spaces and sizable sections for larger gatherings. Planned in a dynamic manner, the space recreates the post-independence era which is when the market was built. The look and spirit for the restaurant cum bar is therefore of an independent India and the brief included the intent to keep the colonial past alive while bringing out the fun and contemporary look of modern India.

As the name 'Town hall' suggests, this whole zone, i.e., the main hall, is developed as a community space for the purpose of interaction, casual meetings and to express and share ideas, views and thoughts. The old style of the structure is restored and enhanced to fulfill the present requirements with the whole space being divided into different zones. Existing walls and levels have been tweaked and modified in a creative and innovative manner. The high ceiling height of the main hall is further extended as an opportunity to be exploited, with enhanced usage of the central space at the heart of the restaurant. The old fanlights were restored and exploited to establish a visual connection to the terrace above.

Plenty of cornices existed inside as well as outside, almost all of which have been recreated, modified and enhanced in order to rebuild the colonial character while endowing it with an industrial spirit in a novel manner. A bridge overlooking the passage of the Khan Market is enhanced in order to maximise the location potential; this is where the Sushi bar corner is placed at the first





DCA Architects is an award-winning, nationally and internationally acclaimed, multi-disciplinary design firm, based out of New Delhi, India. Founded in 1996, over the last two decades, the firm has accomplished architecture and design projects across diverse scales and typologies. Today,

the firm has to its credit, remarkable, award-winning and widely acclaimed projects.

Spearheading group DCA are architects Amit Aurora and Rahul Bansal, who graduated in 1993 from the esteemed School of Planning and Architecture (SPA), New Delhi. Both the partners, through their individual expertise have contributed towards the firm's robust image in the design industry, with a special focus on delivering design excellence and innovation. With their dedication towards contextual and sustainable designs, inspiring young talent and nurturing human relations, today, they lead an energised and enthusiastic team of over 40 professionals.

Since its inception in the year 1996, group DCA has been focused in its approach as a skillful balance of talent, experience and hard work.

floor to add interest and rests at one corner, while on the other corner there is a gallery and a verandah, painted yellow, next to the windows, further highlighted with verandah lighting. On the terrace level, a semi-open kitchen in the centre within the erstwhile location of the clock room adds drama. A huge square clock facing the main square is placed as it was there traditionally, reminiscing of the old clock tower. The main bar is located at the upper level on the terrace level above the sushi bar.

Terraces existed on multiple levels; the big terrace is laid out in an interactive manner with an open seating plan on the other side, while the small terrace has its own intimacy and privacy. Being outward facing, it gives one a chance to enjoy the views of the location. Every table on the terrace has a table lamp that enables guests / visitors to adjust their lighting level and set their own mood. The whole seating



is designed in an outgoing manner to provide a specific appeal to each nook and corner; a variety of wooden furniture with specific characteristics has been used to provide privacy and private space to those who want to stay away from the crowd. For the lighting, table lamps and peanut lights are used along with lamp shades and broadly, industrial hanging lights augment the overall look and feel.

The terrace is laid out in fire brick flooring, while the lower floors are planned in a combination of cement and terrazzo flooring. The demographics and the social behaviour are always kept in mind even though the basics are same, but the behaviour and social aspects vary from place to place. The local clientele, age groups and preferences are respected for the entire place-making exercise to become successful. Being true to the language and approach, the patterns and textures adopted are very classical in order to give an authentic character to the space along with an old world charm as it was there in fifties. The restaurant design is hence, a quaint mix of colonial heritage and inherent spirit of the post-independence era that is modified and tweaked to contemporary times in modern India today. ▲

fact file:

Typology	:	Hospitality
Name of Project	:	Townhall
Location	:	Khan Market, New Delhi
Name of Client's Firm	:	R.VN Hospitality
Principal Architect	:	Amit Aurora
Design Team	:	Amit Aurora, Rahul Bansal
Built Up Area	:	6340 sqft
Open Area	:	5300 sqft
Photographer	:	Avnish Dhoundiyal

