



COVER FEATURE

RENASCENT'S FORMULA FOR HUMAN- CENTRIC ARCHITECTURE

Bakul Chandra's design mentorship and contextual wisdom, Dushyant Kumar's executional edge, Parul Agarwal's healthcare and institutional design expertise, and Varun Agarwal's innovative waste-free construction solutions converge in a firm that's designed over 60 million sq ft of progress. This is Renascent Consultants. With a philosophy that dictates "architecture should do more than exist; it should elevate", they've created the blueprint for a new kind of architectural practice: one where patient-centric healthcare, sustainability, and design excellence aren't aspirations but non-negotiables

INTERVIEW BY **KASHISH KAUSHAL** PORTRAITS BY **ANKUSH MARIA**

This narrative of Renascent Consultants begins with two imagined realities, both rooted in everyday life, yet a stark contrast differentiates them. All of us, at some point in our lives, have been to an institute or a college campus. And sometimes fortunate but usually under unfortunate circumstances, we have found ourselves pacing up and down in a hospital corridor. For the majority of people in India, healthcare facilities often end up inducing anxiety rather than extending comfort, and some institutional spaces have blatantly given precedence to efficiency over inclusivity. Thus, there exists a critical need for architects who understand one fundamental truth: buildings are not merely structures made of bricks, stones and cement—they are ecosystems for healing, learning, and living. In today's modern age, the role of design in healthcare and institutional ecosystems has surpassed visual appeal and entered the realm of therapeutic intervention. There is concrete research that reveals the role of biophilic design in reducing hospitalisation time, lowering patient mortality rates, decreasing pain levels, and mitigating stress for both patients and healthcare providers. When architecture integrates natural light, healing colour palettes, unobstructed spatial flow, and connections to nature, it becomes a catalyst in speedy recovery. This is the philosophy that Renascent Consultants personifies, and precisely why their work matters to our future. A collective consisting of four visionaries—Bakul Chandra, Varun Agarwal, Dushyant Kumar, and Parul Agarwal—Renascent Consultants have coined a new rulebook in Indian architecture: spaces designed with purpose and built with sustainability are meant to alter how patients heal, students learn, and communities thrive.

What struck us almost instantaneously when we met them was not their individual genius, but the synergy they've cultivated over decades of collaboration. Dr. Bakul Chandra, an alumnus of SPA Delhi with 29 years of experience, brings strategic consulting and design strategy development to the table. His approach to architecture is profound: "Our mantra has always been that 'free advice has no value' and there is no value without the right attitude, approach, thinking and ethics," he shared. Varun Agarwal complements this with his technical prowess and attention to detail. Then there's Dushyant Kumar, whose structural engineering expertise ensures that architectural layouts maximise space efficiency while clearing the way for smooth operational workflows. And Parul Aggarwal brings a deeply empathetic approach to design. What makes these four click is their shared belief that "looking good only counts if it does good too". Yet what makes them different is equally interesting. Their contrasts—Bakul's affinity for history and context versus Parul's no-nonsense focus on what actually works, Varun's ability to

make spaces feel alive, and Dushyant's laser-sharp grip on numbers and timelines—spark a "community of ideas," as Bakul terms it, where cross-training in architecture, engineering, and interiors dissolves silos. This collaborative dynamic has resulted in over 1000 successfully delivered projects across 50+ cities in India and abroad, spanning healthcare, medical education, institutional campuses, industrial complexes, and hospitality architecture.

Their portfolio reiterates their commitment to upgrading the common man's experience of built environments. Take for instance the location of our cover shoot, the PIECO Office in Kirti Nagar, New Delhi—a 7,000 sq ft biophilic sanctuary that puts employee's well-being at the forefront. Low ceilings and dim light were transformed into light-drenched, earth-toned oasis using glass partitions and modular furniture. Another exemplar project is the Graphic Era Hospital in Dehradun, a 1.5 million sq ft, 800-bed super-specialty hospital with an attached 150-seat medical college that has redefined sustainable healthcare design in Uttarakhand. Through biophilic design principles, an open floor plan, and integration of local materials to reduce carbon footprint, this project blends efficiency with empathy to serve and care for the patients. The design team prioritised "healing colours" and "spatial fluidity," engineering not just a medical facility but "a space to breathe, connect, and unwind" where "the mix of water, greenery, and light turns this space into more than just a landscape—it becomes part of the healing journey". And their project Mansarovar Medical College & MGU Hospital, including hostels, extends this goodwill, addressing India's healthcare chasm by integrating Net Zero principles for long-term communal resilience. For the common person seeking medical care, these are no longer intimidating hospitals or clinics, but environments designed to nurture recovery.

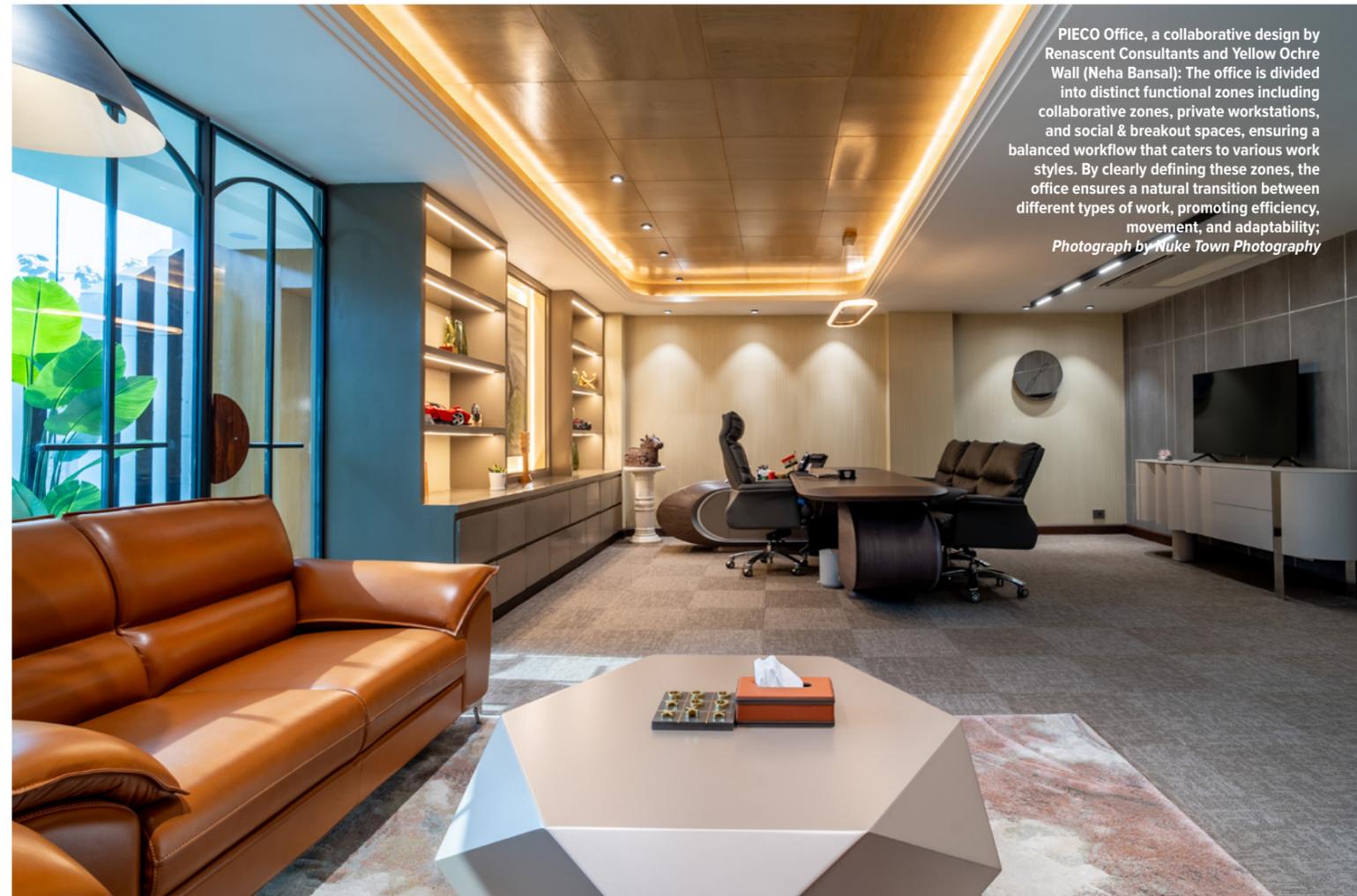
Their commitment to sustainability through the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) certification process reveals how deeply they care about what their work stands for. The Graphic Era Hospital is designed for IGBC Gold-rating, representing not just an environmental credential but a fundamental design ethos. As Parul Agarwal articulates, "A design philosophy must fit the current and future requirements. It must be based on functionality, efficiency, flexibility, sustainability, and aesthetics." For Renascent, achieving IGBC certification means employing locally sourced materials to lessen environmental impact, creating climate-responsive designs that optimise energy efficiency, and implementing elements that forge connections between occupants and nature. By prioritising sustainable design, they ensure that healing environments don't compromise future generations' well-being—that the spaces designed for care today don't extract environmental costs tomorrow.

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Our philosophy represents a fusion of tradition and innovation, embracing the rich cultural heritage of India while incorporating modern materials, technologies, and sustainable practices.”

—BAKUL CHANDRA, *Founding Partner & Mentor, Renascent Consultants*

Graphic Era Institute of Medical Science, Dehradun:
The USP of this project is that this happens to be a Teaching Hospital and unlike other facilities of similar nature, it has the intent and infrastructure of any modern contemporary private healthcare facility of this scale. Furthermore, this healthcare facility is designed for the Gold-rating from the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) and has met specific criteria related to sustainability and environmental performance



PIECO Office, a collaborative design by Renascent Consultants and Yellow Ochre Wall (Neha Bansal): The office is divided into distinct functional zones including collaborative zones, private workstations, and social & breakout spaces, ensuring a balanced workflow that caters to various work styles. By clearly defining these zones, the office ensures a natural transition between different types of work, promoting efficiency, movement, and adaptability; Photograph by Nuke Town Photography



Graphic Era Institute of Medical Science, Dehradun: This expansive 800-bed super-specialty hospital and other buildings including the 150-seat medical college is meticulously planned to deliver an unmatched healthcare experience to all end-users



Spotlighting Renascent Consultants feels like unearthing a quiet force long labouring behind the elevations, now stepping into the light where their narratives deserve to be celebrated. After all, their work directly influences patient recovery rates, reduces hospital-acquired stress, creates educational environments where students thrive, and demonstrates that contemporary Indian architecture can be both globally competitive and locally rooted. Architecture shapes behavior, influences healing, and determines whether institutional experiences feel alienated or nurturing. When architects get this right, as Renascent Consultants consistently does, the impact ripples through families, communities, and entire regions seeking quality care and education. Through this interview, we hope that emerging architects recognize that their greatest responsibility lies not in creating iconic forms, but in crafting spaces where humanity can flourish. And may it also serve as a constant reminder that some of architecture's greatest innovations come not from individual geniuses, but from collaborative minds who understand that the best work happens when diverse expertise is unified by shared values.

THE GENESIS & VISION

Kashish Kaushal (KK): Tell us about the founding story of Renascent Consultants. What brought the four of you (Bakul Chandra, Varun Agarwal, Dushyant Kumar, and Parul Agarwal) together, and how did you envision transforming the architectural landscape?

Bakul Chandra (Bakul): Bakul Chandra co-founded Satsangi Chandra Design Consultants in 1999 with Prof. MS Satsangi and Dushyant Kumar, Varun Agarwal & Parul Agarwal associated in various capacities before they branched out in 2005. Feeling the

need for development of a more contemporary signature design character & fresh solution-oriented approach which results in distinctive high-quality building structures and environments, all four of us joined hands again in 2012 to start this enterprise where looking good only counts if it does good as well. Taking a cue from its legacy projects, we have established ourselves as a well-known design firm for path-breaking projects in healthcare, educational & institutional and industrial projects, including various residential and hospitality projects within a short period of time.

KK: The name 'Renascent' means being born again. How does this philosophy manifest in your architectural approach, and what kind of 'rebirth' were you seeking to bring to Indian architecture?

Bakul: The 'rebirth' being sought is about reviving the essence of Indian architecture, which often gets lost in literal copies of traditional styles. Our philosophy represents a fusion of tradition and innovation, embracing the rich cultural heritage of India while incorporating modern materials, technologies, and sustainable practices. This approach allows us to create buildings that not only respect their context but also push the boundaries of creativity and functionality. It's about creating a new wave of Indian Architecture that's rooted in its past yet boldly modern, addressing the needs of today's society while preserving the country's architectural identity. We wish to capture the spirit that defined ancient Indian architecture and infuse it into contemporary designs.

KK: Each of you brings distinct expertise - your strategic consulting, Varun's technical proficiency, Dushyant's structural

engineering, and Parul's design sensibility. How do these diverse skill sets complement each other in your collaborative process?

Bakul: Our diverse expertise creates a powerful and dynamic synergy. I help out with strategic consulting and mentorship that helps the team to understand the project's vision and goals, while Varun's technical proficiency ensures our designs are feasible and efficient. Dushyant's structural engineering expertise brings stability and safety to the forefront, and Parul's design sensibility crafts spaces that are aesthetically pleasing and user centric. This multidisciplinary approach allows us to tackle complex projects from multiple angles, anticipating challenges and opportunities that might be overlooked by a single discipline. By combining our strengths, we create holistic, well-rounded solutions that exceed client expectations and positively impact the built environment. It's a true collaborative effort, where each person's expertise elevates the others, resulting in architecture that's innovative, functional, and beautiful.

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY & CONTEMPORARY APPROACH

KK: Your core philosophy states that "looking good only counts if it does good, too." Can you elaborate on how you balance aesthetics with functional efficiency in your projects?

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—VARUN AGARWAL
Renascent Consultants

Varun Agarwal (Varun): For us, it's not just about creating visually stunning buildings; it's about crafting spaces that are both beautiful and functional. We achieve this balance by prioritizing the needs of the users and the environment. We start by understanding the project's purpose, the users' requirements, and the site's unique conditions. Then, we integrate aesthetics and functionality simultaneously, rather than treating them as separate entities. By considering both form and function from the outset, we create buildings that are not only visually striking but also efficient, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of their occupants. It's about striking a harmonious balance between beauty and functionality.

KK: With years of combined experience, how has your design thinking evolved, particularly in response to changing urban dynamics and client expectations?

Varun: Our design thinking has evolved significantly over the years and has become more human-centric, sustainable, and responsive to the complexities of the modern urban landscape. We're constantly learning and adapting to create spaces that not only meet but exceed client expectations. Urbanization and technological advancements have led us to incorporate smart building technologies, data-driven design, and adaptable spaces that respond to evolving user needs.

Park Group of Hospitals: The facade of the Park Hospital was reimagined to give the existing structure a renewed architectural identity. Defined by a fluid S-shaped, serpentine element, the design introduces a sense of movement and dynamism to the otherwise linear form



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Our multidisciplinary approach has been a game-changer! By cross-training team members, we have managed to foster a culture of collaboration and knowledge-sharing.”

—DUSHYANT KUMAR, *Renascent Consultants*



As members of IGBC, we stay updated on the latest sustainability standards and best practices. We incorporate green building principles into every project, from site selection to material choice and energy-efficient systems.”

—PARUL AGARWAL, *Reascent Consultants*

SAM Medical College & Hospital, Bhopal: Spread across a 24 acre site, the development houses a 700 bed tertiary care hospital and a Medical College with 150 student intake—supported by thoughtfully planned hostel facilities to ensure comfort, convenience, and a sense of belonging for students and residents who live and learn within the campus every day. A key landscape feature is a specially designed, man-made pond that has been integrated within the master plan to help recharge and maintain the water levels of the site

Sharda University, Greater Noida: This campus is defined by a sleek, contemporary facade of exposed brick and concrete, accented with coloured tiles that evoke continuity and connection to its roots. Emphasising sustainability and identity, the design incorporates eco-friendly materials, energy-efficient systems, and distinctive visual markers such as gateways, plazas, and staircases that unify the campus



We're also more aware of the importance of resilience, sustainability, and social responsibility in our designs. We've adapted by creating spaces that promote occupant health, incorporating biophilic design elements, and prioritizing natural light and ventilation. We've shifted from a focus on standalone buildings to designing holistic ecosystems.

JOURNEY: MILESTONES, GROWTH, AND EVOLUTION

KK: From a core team of four to 25+ architects and engineers today, with over 60 million sq. ft. designed and a 96% repeat clientele rate, what milestones or perhaps a breakthrough project best symbolizes Renascent's growth?

Bakul: Graphic Era Institute of Medical Science (GEIMS), a Medical College & Hospital project located at Dehradun, is a milestone project for our firm. This expansive 1200-Bed Super-specialty Hospital and other buildings including the 250-Seat Medical College spans over 2.5 million square feet, has been designed with a view to provide highest quality patient care, establish state-of-the-art infrastructure with the best possible clinical & nursing care expertise, and, to provide quality medical education to nurture skilled Medical Practitioners. Graphic Era Hospital is a testament to excellence in design and sustainability. By integrating local materials, biophilic design principles, and patient-centric planning, the hospital promises to deliver exceptional care while minimizing environmental impact. The USP of this project is that this happens to be a Teaching Hospital and unlike other facilities of similar nature, it has the intent and infrastructure of any modern contemporary private healthcare facility of this scale. Graphic Era Hospital represents a visionary approach to healthcare infrastructure, setting a new standard for future design projects of similar nature.

Furthermore, this healthcare facility is designed for the Gold-rating from IGBC and has met specific criteria related to sustainability and environmental performance.

KK: Your multidisciplinary approach—cross-training team members in architecture, structural design, and interiors—sounds revolutionary. How does this collaborative approach spark new ideas, and how have tools like BIM or innovative materials helped you grow from local Delhi projects to international ones?

Dushyant Kumar (Dushyant): Our multidisciplinary approach has been a game-changer! By cross-training team members, we have managed to foster a culture of collaboration and knowledge-sharing. Architects learn about structural design, and structural engineers learn about architectural nuances. This overlap sparks new ideas and innovative solutions. Tools like BIM enable us to create detailed digital models, simulate real-world scenarios, and collaborate seamlessly with stakeholders. Innovative and sustainable materials have also expanded our design possibilities. These materials not only reduce environmental impact but also add unique textures and aesthetics to our projects. This approach has enabled us to successfully deliver projects in various countries, leveraging our expertise to navigate local challenges and create contextually relevant designs.

KK: As members of the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC), how do you ensure every project meets contemporary sustainability standards?

Parul Agarwal (Parul): As members of IGBC, we stay updated on the latest sustainability standards and best practices.

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By combining our strengths, we create holistic, well-rounded solutions that exceed client expectations and positively impact the built environment.”

—**BAKUL CHANDRA**, *Founding Partner & Mentor, Renascent Consultants*



Mansarovar Medical College & MGU Hospital, Bhopal: The complex is designed as a state-of-the-art medical and academic environment, integrating advanced diagnostic facilities, modern patient care spaces, and innovative learning and research zones that foster collaboration and excellence in medical education



Mansarovar Medical College & MGU Hospital, Bhopal: The project incorporates sustainable systems and responsible building strategies, including energy-efficient technologies and water-conservation measures, ensuring a resilient and environmentally conscious healthcare campus



Mansarovar Medical College & MGU Hospital, Bhopal: Rooted in a healing-centric design philosophy, the architecture prioritises patient wellbeing through thoughtful layouts, natural light, greenery, and calm, restorative spaces that enhance comfort, safety, and efficient clinical workflows

We incorporate green building principles into every project, from site selection to material choice and energy-efficient systems. We conduct thorough assessments to identify opportunities for sustainability, such as rainwater harvesting, solar energy integration, and waste reduction and use of certified green materials. We collaborate closely with clients and stakeholders to ensure that sustainability goals are met and exceeded wherever possible.

WORK AND PROJECTS

KK: Healthcare architecture forms a significant part of your portfolio. What drew you specifically to this challenging sector, and how do you approach the unique complexities of medical facility design?

Bakul: Healthcare architecture is indeed a challenging yet rewarding sector. We were introduced to this sector when we got the opportunity to design a Medical College for the first time. Thereafter, we were drawn to it because of the profound impact that healthcare environments can have on patient outcomes, staff efficiency, and overall well-being. There's a tremendous opportunity to make a positive difference in people's lives through thoughtful design. When approaching medical facility design, we consider the unique needs of patients, families, and healthcare staff. We prioritize creating healing environments that promote comfort, reduce stress, and support the care process. This involves designing spaces that are not only functional and efficient but also aesthetically pleasing and easy to navigate. We work closely with healthcare professionals to understand their specific needs and workflows, ensuring that our designs support their critical work. From infection control and safety to wayfinding and patient privacy, we address the complex requirements of medical facilities while creating environments that are both functional and humane.

KK: Projects like the Sharda University in Greater Noida, Graphic Era University in Dehradun and Shri Venkateshwara University in Gajraula highlight your institutional expertise. Walk us through the design process and what feedback from students or faculty surprised you most?

Dushyant: All these projects are indeed notable examples of our institutional expertise. When designing these projects, we followed a user-centered approach to understand their needs and aspirations. We conducted extensive research to identify the needs of the users and then developed a design strategy that incorporated innovative learning spaces, collaborative areas, and state-of-the-art facilities. We also prioritised sustainability, natural light, and ventilation to create a healthy and productive environment. The feedback from students and faculty was overwhelmingly positive, and one aspect that surprised us was the appreciation for the incorporation of natural elements and outdoor spaces. Many students and faculty members mentioned that the green spaces and courtyards had a profound impact on their mental well-being and productivity. We were also surprised by the strong sense of community that developed among students and faculty, which was facilitated by the design of the campus. The open spaces and collaborative areas encouraged interaction, knowledge sharing, and a sense of belonging, which is essential for academic success.

Biophilic design principles are central to your healthcare projects. How do you integrate nature and healing environments while maintaining operational efficiency?

Parul: Biophilic design is indeed central to our healthcare projects. We integrate nature and healing environments in healthcare settings by incorporating elements like natural light, greenery, and views of nature.

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Urbanization and technological advancements have led us to incorporate smart building technologies, data-driven design, and adaptable spaces that respond to evolving user needs.”

—VARUN AGARWAL, *Renascent Consultants*



Delhi Public School (DPS) Jaipur: Blending climate-responsive design with contemporary educational needs, the campus employs thick masonry walls, shaded facades, and perforated jaalis to moderate Jaipur's harsh climate



Delhi Public School (DPS) Jaipur: Conceived as a dynamic hub for learning and community, the design integrates flexible academic spaces, performing arts studios, and green courtyards — creating a vibrant ecosystem where sustainability, comfort, and creativity converge within a cohesive architectural language



Renascent Office: This office in Delhi embodies a minimalist yet collaborative open-plan layout, fostering a "community of ideas" among its team members. Earth-toned palettes with pops of green from indoor plants create a calming, nature-inspired atmosphere, countering Delhi's urban hustle while promoting productivity and well-being



Renascent Office: Glass-walled meeting pods and modular furniture allow for seamless adaptability, mirroring the multidisciplinary ethos that blends architecture, engineering, and interiors into innovative environments

We also use natural materials, like wood and stone, and incorporate plants and green walls to create calming environments. To maintain operational efficiency, we design spaces that are not only therapeutic but also functional and easy to maintain. Some specific design elements we incorporate include healing gardens, courtyards, and rooftop terraces, which provide patients, families, and staff with peaceful retreats and access to natural light and fresh air. By prioritizing biophilic design, we create healthcare environments that are both restorative and functional.

KK: The Park Hospital in Gurugram showcases your facade design expertise. How do you approach building envelopes for healthcare facilities in Delhi's challenging climate?

Varun: Building envelopes for healthcare facilities in Delhi's climate requires careful consideration of the region's intense solar radiation, high temperatures, and pollution levels. We design building envelopes that are resilient, sustainable, and optimized for energy efficiency. Some of strategies we employ include specifying high-performance glazing systems that minimize solar heat gain & reduce UV transmission, using shading devices such as louvers or overhangs, incorporation of green façades and roofs to provide additional insulation & reduce urban heat island effect, and select materials that are durable, low maintenance & resistant to Delhi's climate conditions. Thus, we create building

envelopes that not only reduce energy consumption and operational costs but also provide a healthy and comfortable indoor environment for patients, staff, and visitors.

KK: Sustainability sounds ideal, but it's often hard to champion for. What compromises have you faced (e.g., green materials vs. budgets in education builds), and how do you advocate IGBC-aligned designs without alienating private-sector clients?

Dushyant: Sustainability can be somewhat challenging to implement, especially when faced with budget constraints and client ignorance. However, we've found that by prioritizing sustainability from the outset and exploring cost-effective options, we can often find creative solutions that meet both budget and sustainability goals. To advocate for IGBC-aligned designs, we focus on the business case for sustainability, providing data-driven insights on cost savings, and showcasing successful case studies. By framing sustainability as a value-adding proposition rather than just an added cost, we've been able to successfully integrate sustainable design principles into many of our projects.

VISION AHEAD: DREAMS, RISKS & LEGACY

KK: For the next generation of architects, what legacy do you hope Renascent leaves?

Bakul: We envision Renascent as a catalyst for positive change,

inspiring a new wave of architects to design buildings and spaces that not only push the boundaries of creativity but also prioritize the well-being of people and the planet. Our legacy should be one of resilience, adaptability, and commitment to the environment. We aim to demonstrate that architecture can be a powerful tool for social and environmental transformation, and that sustainable design is not just a trend but a necessity.

KK: If you could design one "dream" project unconstrained, what would it be?

Parul: If we could design one "dream" project unconstrained, it would be a sustainable, self-sufficient eco-development that showcases a harmonious blend of nature and architecture. This development would be powered entirely by renewable energy sources, incorporating cutting-edge green technologies and innovative waste management systems. It would feature lush green spaces, parks, and water bodies, seamlessly integrating natural elements into the built

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—**PARUL AGARWAL**
Renascent Consultants

environment. Buildings would be biophilic in nature. It would also incorporate vibrant public spaces, community centers, and cultural institutions, fostering a strong sense of community and social connection. This development would serve as a model for sustainable urban development, showcasing the possibilities of environmentally conscious design.

KK: In 13 years, Renascent has reborn urban spaces across sectors. What's one piece of advice you'd give your 2012 selves, and how does it guide the firm's next chapter?

Bakul: If one were to give advice to Reascent's 2012 selves, it would be "stay adaptable and open to innovation." The architectural landscape is constantly

evolving, and being receptive to new ideas, technologies, and methodologies will be crucial for growth and success. By staying adaptable and innovative, Renascent can continue to push boundaries and deliver impactful projects that shape the future of urban spaces. ✚