RIVAYATI HUNAR

A WORKSHOP BY ARCHITECT HABIBULLAH

Rivayati Hunar was an architecture workshop organized for the second year architecture students, by design studio advisers Ar. Fareeda Ghaffar and Ar. Afsheen Aqif in 2015. Ar. Habibullah from Abbottabad was the expert who guided the students in material techniques for traditional methods. Rivayati Hunar was an activity that involved us in the hands-on practice of creating a portable structure with traditional techniques. The workshop followed after the 'Zero Carbon Footprint workshop' by Ar. Yasmeen Lari. Thus, the students already had developed an understanding of vernacular architecture in Lari's village, and an interest in working with the local construction materials.

The task was to design and create an attractive sitting space out of the indigenous material 'Bamboo', unique building material with notable cultural and economic significance. Bamboo is becoming popular for eco-friendly consumers and environmentally responsible designers. It is very durable, hard and strong in both rigidity and density. Bamboo is the fastest growing plant species on the planet. It is a renewable resource, thus a good choice for creating a green and sustainable structure.

The first phase of this interesting activity was to design a portable sitting space that reflects our tradition and gives a glimpse of vernacular architecture. The students sketched out their ideas in sketchbooks and made study models to present these ideas. Studio advisors discussed the potential in the design of each student. Finally, after having intriguing and mind-opening discussions, the best of all designs came forward.

The very next day, the task of hands-on practice began. Students learned to cut bamboos using hand saw, split them using axe and join them using jute, learning local techniques.

The two main materials used in this structure were Bamboo and Jute rope. Each bamboo was connected to the other with a traditional bamboo joinery technique 'lashing' using jute. Ar. Habibullah taught the students different lashing techniques which enabled them to avoid nailing in the structure. The bond

between the two bamboos was stronger than that using nails, that made the material split over time.

This purely organic and beautiful structure is placed right in front of our canteen so that we can enjoy the sitting, the shade and the food. The roof design is very dynamic and provides different views at different angles. The flooring design is inspired by the Islamic geometric patterns. A central focused pentagon filled with pebbles is surrounded by diamond shapes all made with split bamboos.

The students worked together in a big group and enjoyed carrying and erecting bamboos within campus. This was a one week workshop but with the student enthusiasm and unity in working together, the task was completed in only four days. The activity was a memorable one that the students learned much from, the structures stand proud in campus.

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