FROM THE EDITOR. . . .

I think, no one would refute me if I state that Engineering heritage of our country is heavily biased towards Civil Engineering. Stupas, temples and hydraulic structures, that still remain today, bear ample testimony to the Civil Engineering prowess of our illustrious ancestors. Apart from functionality, one significant characteristic of these structures, be it a 'dagaba' or 'basawu kotuwa' (sluice for a reservoir), is the aesthetic attractiveness. This perceptive feature of a structure, dependent on several factors, is mainly influenced by geometry, scale, finish and materials used in fabrication. It is remarkable, how they have achieved so aesthetically pleasing structures with such materials as rocks, which indeed, are very hard to work with.

In contrast, one of the major shortcomings identified in present Civil Engineered structures is the diminished aesthetic attractiveness, to put it mildly. We as Engineers are conditioned during our studies to think in terms of regular geometrical shapes, so when we design structures this conditioning dominates to result in rather 'boxy' entities. This was all right at times when the main concerns of people were functionality coupled with economy.

However, during past couple of decades their perceptions have shifted from the original concerns, towards aesthetics and comfort.

We as Engineers, ethically bound to serve the society, cannot ignore the desires and trends of the people that we serve. So, we should now strive to blend all the factors of concern into our designs to result in truly aesthetic, functional, comfortable and economically Engineered structures, founded on safety as the underlying concern. As long as we fail to do so, we are committing a disservice to the society as others, insufficiently qualified in all relevant aspects required for design and construction, will be filling the gap.

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