In pursuit of ‘Healing Places’

RAZAVI MEDICAL COMPLEX AT NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE, MAHARAGAMA

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‘Art and architecture are important allies in the perennial struggle with ‘Health’, which leads to the metaphor of ‘the architecture of hope’. - Charles Jencks-

National Cancer Institute Maharagama is the focal point for treatment for Cancer in Sri Lanka, as the cancer incidences have doubled since the eighties. It was in 2010 that the Architects together with a philanthropic donor, Ms. Ahmed Tea (Pvt)Ltd, revived the design of the much needed State of the art Hospital complex specialized in Oncology. Recognizing the limitations of the Sri Lankan welfare healthcare system coupled with the donors ‘vision’ based on ‘empathy’ to gift the Sri Lankan citizen, a Hospital Complex to match international standards, a unique approach to design was initiated. The Concept of ‘Salutogenic design’, a term coined by Professor Alan Dilani (2008) shifts the focus from treating disease to creating conditions for healing places.

CALLING FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT IN HEALTHCARE DESIGNERS SCOPE OF WORK.

Healthcare architecture has evolved to accommodate passive and active sustainable design features to advance in achieving quantitative requirements of healthcare. However, the ability to achieve qualitative requirements based on human needs are greatly lagging behind. Latest research recommends a new approach to healthcare design which includes both the design of healing spaces as well as the supportive healthcare systems, exerting both upstream leverage on the supply chain and down-stream influence on the healthcare givers and the community in order to create “holistic” healing places. The holistic approach based on the ancient wisdom of Ayurveda, to create healing places is deep rooted in the ancient Sri Lankan context. The present practice of pathogenic approach to healing is aimed at treating the disease. Whereas the Salutogenic approach promotes wellness through holistic healing. Health is a concept that goes beyond absence of disease to include
physical, mental, and social well being. It is argued here that, translating this into physical healing places defines the new role of the designer as a “healthcare specialist”.

**CREATING A HEALING ENVIRONMENTS**

“Holistic design is the process-Healing Places is the result”

Design for the body mind and spirit –*Barbara J. Huelat.*

Concept of the creation of a’ sustainable green Village has its origins in the ’ Healing Envirenments’ surrounding ancient hospital complexes at Mihinthale and Anuradhapura.

![Image-2](Image-2)

Peaceful environment for healing.  
Personalize healthcare based on Ayurveda  
Mihinthale Hospital complex, near Thuparama Stupa

Creating a healing environment for the entire cancer Institute was conceived with the understanding that Architecture has its limitations of practicality and knowing well that creating a healing environment cannot be developed through a pre-scripted processes. The essential guide was ‘evidence based design’ and careful understanding of end users sensitive needs with compassion. The Master plan is based on the concept of connection with nature with the re-creation of a ‘ Green sustainable village’. Re-uniting disconnected parts of the hospital with a green space become the through fares and foot paths connecting to a central spine which are the ‘common facilities’. The concept of a green village surrounded by a herbal garden is the connection to nature.

Modern interpretation of a healing environment at National Cancer Institute

![Image-3](Image-3)

‘Healing Gardens’ in a controlled environment  
‘Healing places’ for seating area
DESIGN CONCEPT OF MASTER PLAN

‘A Vision for a sustainable hospital’  ‘GREEN SUSTAINABLE VILLAGE’

National Cancer Institute at Maharagama

CREATING A ‘HEALING ARCHITECTURE’

Healing Architecture is created by making connections with healing gardens, both internally and externally, with sustainable and regenerative practices that include both Architectural and management systems. After much research and experimentation sustainable management systems and sustainable performance practices were included which will make this a project a ‘Model Hospital complex.

INNOVATIVE ACTIVE AND PASSIVE SUSTAINABLE FEATURES

Innovative management systems

For the first time in Sri Lanka a Hospital information Management System (HIMS) has been designed and developed to satisfy the health information requirements at the National Cancer Institute (NCI)

E-Health as Hospital Information Management System (HIMS) has been designed and developed to satisfy the health information requirements at the NCI with the assistance from Ahmad Tea Pvt Ltd as part of their Razavi Medical Complex project. Software now to be used nationwide. Created a DNA testing facility which could direct treatment resuting in efficiency system to be adopted in other hospitals

Innovative Building performance system

Created a patient care hospital which data base state of the art surgical facility and after care services.

Created passive and active cooling method of improve indoor air quality.

Incorporated waste disposal system for solid, liquid, toxic radio active waste.

Training for house keeping and staff on oncology.

Rain water harvesting system.

use of healing gardens in courtyards.
CREATING HEALING PLACES

The holistic concept of “place making” will transform architecture to a healing place connecting to a human activities related to caring based on empathy and spirituality.

Architects experience in healthcare tourism based on Ayurveda, the holistic approach to mind, body and spirit healing has prompted the creation of hospitals as ‘Healing Places’ with ‘Healing Gardens’. This remains an ongoing research on the therapeutic benefits of healing and nature. It also questions whether buildings that restore the natural surroundings can purport to heal and restore people. Inspiration to merge natural healing features into the built form to humanize the mechanical nature of modern hospitals is the result of this process.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Holistic design searching for creating ‘Healing architecture’ continues by making the ‘patient’ the main focus. The patient who is often disorientated and losing self confidence, is to be rejuvenated by the friendly atmosphere which acknowledges their importance and recognizes the human condition without losing humanism and dignity. Any success of the Razavi Medical complex should be a testimony to the human spirit that aspire for “architecture of hope”. Hence the name “RAZAVI”
translated in to English as” Contentment and satisfaction as a reflection of difficult phases in our journey of life”.

PROJECT DETAILS

Location- National Cancer Institute, Maharagama

Client- Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka

Recipient- National Cancer institute, Maharagama

Donor-Ahmad Tea Pvt.ltd (MOU signed between Government of Sri Lanka and Ahmad Tea Pvt.Ltd

Cost-phase-i -Rs. 3 billion, phase ii-Rs.2.5 billion, phase-iii-Rs.3 billion

Completion date –July 2015

Phase-1 (ground +6)

Area -20000 Sq.m
373 Beds for adult patients (both medical and surgical)
5 operating theatres
12 surgical ICU beds
12 ICU beds
Day chemotherapy unit
Indoor and outdoor pharmacies
19 paying beds
Neutropenic ward for children
Laundry and sterilization department
Patient’s canteen on each floor
Consultants offices
General amenities such as consultant rooms, TV rooms, praying rooms

Phase-2 (ground +6)

Area -16000 Sq.m
Ground floor is strictly for public activity, overlooking a green park landscaped for leisure and recreation
Entrance at ground level
Family and patients counseling area
Dining and pantry

Pediatric ward a-

162 beds + 30 nos isolation rooms

Pediatric ward b -225 beds

Family and patients counseling area

Dining and pantry

Services

Lead consultant- Design cues

Client representative- Amir Joseph Afshar (Architectural), Sara Afshar (Healthcare Management)

Sonali Perera, Sabry Sikkander (Management)

Cost consultant- Q.Serve

Services consultant- Building Services Consultants

Structural engineer- Laksiri Cooray

Main Contractor – Nawaloka Construction company (Pvt) Ltd.