



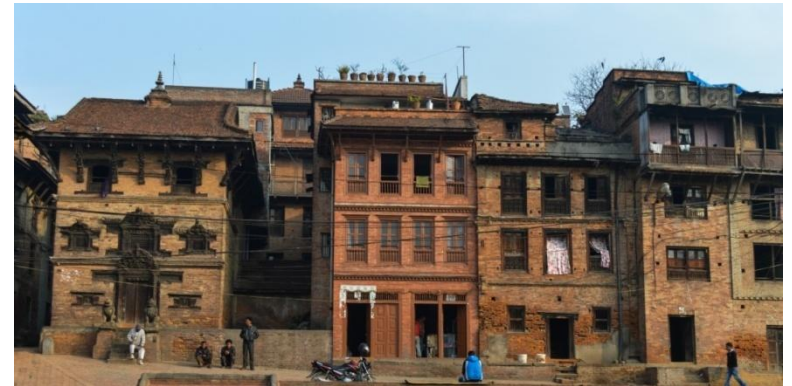
IS THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION STILL A SOUGHT-AFTER PROFESSION IN NEPAL?

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The 21st Asian Congress of Architects, Incheon, South Korea 8th-12th September, 2025

HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE IN NEPAL

- Nepal has inspired and provided a backdrop for exceptional works of architecture and urban design through its achievements in the field of architecture in history
- Palaces, residences, temples, squares, rest houses, water spouts, plazas with intricately carved wooden doors and windows, brick façade with timber structure and stone works.



HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE IN NEPAL

- In 18th and 19th C, during Shah period, the local architecture style shifted to neo-classical style(elements of Greek and Roman architecture) influenced by the visits to Europe.
- Standardized three-storeyed houses with shop-fronts, pilasters, arches and volutes dominated the urban domestic architecture and instilled a sense of modernity in the new Kathmandu (Gutschow, 2011).
- In around 1950m the first concrete structure.



HISTORY OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN NEPAL

- It was only after 1951 (democracy), Nepal was open to outer world.
- After 1957 Foreign architects such as Robert Weise (Central Library Of Tribhuvan University), Carl Pruscha (CEDA building, Taragaon, now museum and Benjamin Polk (Narayanhiti Royal Palace, now museum) were commissioned to design a number of projects.
- Reintroduction of local architectural scale.
- Architects like Gangadhar Bhatta (First Architect of Nepalese origin), Er. Shankar Nath Rimal, designed prestigious government projects such as City Hall (1970), Martyrs Gate (1958), Nepal Academy (1963), etc.



ARCHITECTURE AS PROFESSION IN NEPAL

- Architecture as profession was in shadows until 1990s because of minimal number of architects.
- Projects were designed by civil engineers and draftspersons having handful building design experiences.
- Even more, the clients used to depend upon the expertise of local contractors.
- Only the elite groups hired architects for their projects who knew well about the architecture profession.



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WHY IS ARCHITECTURE LACKING AS PROFESSION IN NEPAL?

- People have impression that it is the engineers who design buildings.
- Architects are very few in number as compared to civil engineers.
- Even the Government of Nepal hasn't formally recognized architecture as a separate profession and has been recruiting as engineers and are registered under Nepal Engineering Council
- There are only about 70 architects working in Government institutions in various positions.
- To apply in Government sector, an architect has to apply in "Building and Architect" section where civil engineers can also apply.



ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION IN NEPAL

- Students who had interest in Architecture went to India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, USA and Russia to study architecture under various scholarships
- In 1999, Tribhuvan University, Institute of Engineering started the Bachelors degree of Architecture in Nepal and gave affiliations to number of campuses to start architecture course subsequently.
- Currently there are 17 architecture schools under five universities in Nepal, producing 550+ architects annually. Lately, the students studying architecture is declining.



ESTABLISHMENT OF SOCIETY OF NEPALESE ARCHITECTS (SONA)

- Established in 1990 by a group of enthusiastic architects who studied abroad and came back to work as architects.
- SONA's objectives:
 - Protect rights and responsibilities of architects.
 - Promote architectural profession among the public.
 - Advocating the importance of architects in any building projects.



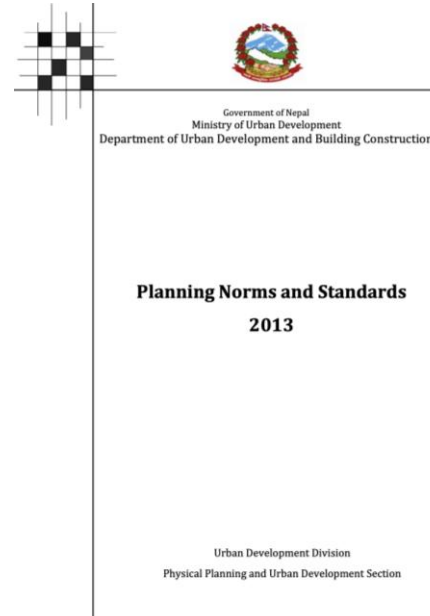
CAREER OPPORTUNITY

- **In the Government** : municipalities, Department of Urban Development and Building Construction
- **Non-Government:** NGOs, INGOs
- **Private Sector:** architecture and engineering firms, Commercial, Real estate, health buildings, hospitality.
- **Specialized Fields:** Eco-friendly buildings, interior, conservation projects,
- **Education Sector** : Universities, Research



PREVALENT ISSUES

- **No fixed remuneration**, Experienced ones charge up to 6-8%, whereas the young firms are struggling for 1-3% project fee.
- **No legal contract** with the clients, resulting in the issues regarding design ownership. Ethics less clients tend to run away with designs and then start building on his own.
- Engineering firms charge **very less** than architecture firm hence more clients are inclined towards engineers, but no quality deliverables.



CURRENT SCENARIO

- All in all, Yes, the architectural profession is still sought after in Nepal, with growing demand driven by national infrastructure development, urban expansion, and the reconstruction efforts following the 2015 earthquake.
- Senior architects have helped pave the way for young architects in the society for the betterment of the profession.
- People have started hiring architects to design their space, buildings, landscapes etc.
- Private and Government institutions have collaborated with SONA to organize design competitions for their projects to select the best design among number of participants.



