

# In the Memory of Charles Correa, Ambuja Neotia Group Organized an Annual Memorial Lecture

KOLKATA, India, June 21, 2016

The architect-fraternity of Kolkata and the Ambuja Neotia Group paid tribute to the legendary architect Mr. Charles Correa through the first '**Charles Correa Annual Memorial Lecture**' on **18th June**, exactly a year after his sad demise.

The idea of an annual lecture in his memory is not only to remember his legacy on a specific day but also to engage in activities, research and practice of his values in architecture throughout the year. **The first years' lecture was graced by Mr. Correa's wife, Mrs. Monika Correa, eminent Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design - Mr. Rahul Mehrotra, who is also his son-in-law, renowned Paraguayan architect Solano Benitez and Mr. Harshavardhan Neotia, Chairman of Ambuja Neotia.**

An architect of international repute, who had designed iconic buildings across the world, had a deep connection with **Kolkata** through his only work in Eastern India - **City Centre Salt Lake**, a project by the Ambuja Neotia Group. The master architect had a natural bond with Ambuja Neotia through a shared philosophy of environment-friendly and sustainable architectural development. He designed City Centre such that the mall became an extension of city streets, people and the overall social microcosm.

**"Charles Correa's vision of an eco-friendly and human-centric urbanisation of India is of utmost relevance today. While I initially had a hard time getting him convinced to build a commercial project, eventually I ended up learning many essential values of work from him. He never tolerated mediocrity and in his own assertive style always enriched the person he worked with,"** said **Mr. Harshavardhan Neotia.**

One of the main speaker at the event, Mr. Solano Benitez, who too shares Mr. Correa's philosophy of life-inspired designs said, "Charles Correa had captured the very essence of architecture - that human beings share their dwelling spaces with the different elements of nature - air, light, animals, forest

**- and cannot possibly plan their existence by undermining any of these components."** Mr. Benitez recently won the prestigious **Golden Lion award** in Venice for his work. His unique structures based on low-cost materials such as bricks have earned him world renown and are specifically relevant for developing countries.

**Mr. Rahul Mehrotra, Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, said, "Charles Correa's legacy for India however, will be that he was the most important figure in the first generation of architects in independent India. His contribution of articulating a clear agenda for architects in India was critical. His ability to theorize the everyday in productive ways for designers and construct a clear idea of India will be his everlasting impact. To take the obscure agendas of modernism and root them in the Indian reality will serve as the foundation for many generations of architects in India. But most importantly Charles Correa will be seen as an architect whose agenda was about creating relevant and humane architecture and cities and doing this with the greatest integrity in a landscape of mediocrity, hypocrisy and extreme greed. In the future, Correa's ideas will become even more powerful, relevant and will resonate more broadly in our globalizing world."**

### **About Ambuja Neotia Group**

Ambuja Neotia is one of the most prominent and respected corporate houses headquartered in Kolkata with its forte in real estate and recent forays into hospitality, healthcare and education. The company, under the stewardship of Mr. Harshavardhan Neotia has been responsible for landmark projects in and around Kolkata such as Udayan, Kolkata's first CondoVille created around the Public Private Partnership model, City Centre, the mall that went on to re-write several retail rules, Ffort Raichak, Kolkata's first luxury weekend getaway and the pastoral hamlet by the Ganges, Ganga Kutir amongst many others. The Group also championed the cause of woman and child healthcare by setting up Bhagiarthi Neotia Woman & Child Care Centre in Kolkata. The Group also has several projects in Eastern India as well as other parts of the country in the pipeline and is continuing to live by its maxim of making a difference to the way people live.