Arif Hasan is a Pakistani architect and planner, activist, teacher, social researcher and writer. He studied architecture at the Oxford Polytechnic, worked in Europe in architect's offices, and on his return to Karachi in 1968, established an independent practice which slowly evolved into dealing with national and international urban planning and development issues. He has taught at Pakistani and European universities and lectured widely both in the North and the South. His current and previous involvements are listed below.

Arif Hasan’s 1987 book, *The role of Architecture in society*, brought him some notoriety. In the book, he pointed out that architects are not only involved in creating buildings, but also in reshaping society. He argued that architects have to fight for development models and other equitable practices that promote both environmental and socially, a more just orientation of life.

Unfortunately, he never really received the widespread acclaim he well-deserved. He died in 1997, but his work continues to influence the younger generation of architects in Pakistan.

**Arif Hasan**

**Architect of the Month**

**November 2019**

**October 2019**

**Jotun Architect Series**

**Appreciation by Our Museum**

**Peninsula Governor Arif**
A Pilot And injustice. There should be no minimalism. There were these very important aspects of Parawan. One, she had a consciousness of injustice and inequality in society.

It was a very strong feeling. It is very rare. People arrive at this through logic and understanding something like John Turner did, but in the case of Parawan it was immediate. It was deeply ingrained in her. The second thing was that she was remarkably altruistic. She was incapable of doing something that she thought was wrong or improper, which is also very rare. The third was, Parawan learned on the job. And her job linked her up with social activism, political activism, community activism in low income settlements on the one hand and on the other hand it linked her up with all those who were running projects in that developing low income settlement both in socio-political terms and physical terms.

And by the time Parawan matured she clearly understood what her role was. That was to provide technical advice and social guidance to the income communities for those purpose. One, for improving their settlements through whatever means they had. Second, bringing them up to political awareness so that they could make use of government power for the physical improvement of their settlements, and in this process marking existing infrastructures, identifying what was missing and how much of a part she was. And third, that was extremely important, was bringing people together from different sections so that they could operate as a larger entity. These were built in the philosophy of the Dandi movement. The Parawan is a Dandi activist. And Parawan will be a vital role model and more from Manto Ahmad Khan and from myself. And over a period of time she became the person guiding the direction of the Dandi Pilot Project.

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Four principles which I argued for when they were making the Strategic Development Plan. I said we will make projects, because that will bring in money for the city, but we will stick to these 4 principles:

1. This project will not damage the economy of the region in which Karachi is located.
2. This project will determine land use on sociological and environmental considerations and not on the basis of land value alone. Land value is important - we do not say it is not important - but a matrix should be developed to see if it serves us.
3. The project, as a priority, will serve the interest of the majority, which are low and middle-income groups.
4. The project will not damage the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the communities that live in the city.

So these are the four things that I suggested to be implemented. In reply to this a consultant of the Asian Development Bank said to me, "And, with these four criteria, you will never have any projects."

AT: If these trends continue, what kind of future is in store for you in the city of Karachi?

AH: It is difficult to answer this question, because it all depends on the institutional arrangements that are developed for Karachi. The political class and the bureaucracy of Sindh speaking province. This is the crux of Karachi’s problem. On top of that, it is a rich city - revenue rich, public rich. It is said that 70% of all formal sector jobs in Sindh are in Karachi. The best medical, educational facilities are in Karachi. Media is in Karachi. Majority of the revenue of Sindh is also generated in Karachi. And to make matters worse it is also less than 20% of the urban population of Sindh - that is what is said, by Sindhis as well as Mithais. This enormous wealth of Karachi can only be controlled by the Sindh speaking political parties through a highly centralized system of governance. Otherwise they cannot control it.

And the MQM which is not a majority anywhere in Sindh - not even in Karachi. Urdu speaking are not in a majority - they cannot control it through a highly decentralized system of governance. This is a big contradiction. And it is because of this that we have charged local body systems since Makkahsait.

Now it all depends on the ambitions take. At present the institutional arrangements are not working. The AMC is not getting money. The SMC is almost non-existent. Karachi Water and Sewerage Board has serious problems - one hears that it is going to be turned into a company. The Solid Waste Management system now has been given over to a company - the Sindh Solid Waste Management Company. Much of RDA functions have been given to another company - the Karachi Infrastructure Development Company. So today we are handing over the city to these companies. Far less resolution. It is clear that the Sindh Government, which is the master of Karachi's enormous wealth and jobs, second reason that the Sindh Government has decided that it is incompetent and it cannot run these institutions - maybe there is an element of both of them, I don't know.

Examples from other countries where privatization of this sort has taken place, and also in the case of Karachi, and other cities in Sindh, it appears that they can easily serve the interest of the rich, but not the interest of the poor.

So what is happening is that what we have is a government that is not in control of its institutions of the population - same with KE now, they don't give them electricity - they shut it down for many days in a stretch, and they have taken a lot of money from them. So it depends on the institutional arrangements. Centralization is not the best way of governing a city, but since the Pakistan Party is in the majority in the Sindh Assembly, I think we will be going in for more and more centralization. So what becomes of the efficiency of these institutions?

What is necessary are three things, apart from education and health: Housing, Transport and Jobs.

Housing - there is no plan for it at all; except to access the market, and the poor cannot

Facilities needed for people to live in. Why don't we have this trend here, so that small towns are developed in interior Sindh where people can be settled to reduce the burden on Karachi?

AH: This problem does not exist in Punjab. In Punjab, small towns have indeed developed, especially in central and northern Punjab. (urdu vocabulary) a large number of the total population. If you go into the Punjab, 35% of the total population, you will find that over 70% of the urban population and not more than 20% of the total population of Sindh.

If you do not give special concessions to investors, they will not invest. Or else the government should invest. In India all the Kothi were developed as an industrial estate. People went and settled there and they are still settled there. A lot of industries were established in Dadu - especially biscuit manufacturers. The industries that were taken over by the private sector continues to function, whereas those that remained with the government have closed down. In India, it is not the case of Karachi, but it is.

This investor wants to invest in Karachi. That is his priority. Finally he is settled in Karachi, and then he finds the banking system to be better here, as well as the infrastructure. The second reason is that we have lived since 1982-83 through a period of planning anxiety. It was an insurgency in Sindh and the institutions could not sustain themselves after that. And I think they did not even try to do it - because they were so busy in losing the wealth that they did not bother. Otherwise Lalkar, Sukkur, Dadu, Kothi, all those things had potential. After the floods of 2010 they took them to Malikpur-Nathan Shah.

I also made a proposal for the POCO - I don't know if he read it or not, although he himself had asked for it but he never got back to me after that - that proposal had stated that this city has been destroyed and now it should be resurrected in such a way that we generate at least 20,000 jobs, which can multiply in the future. So this should happen, and it can happen - it is happening in Punjab - Gujranwala, Sialkot, Faisalabad, rotary, Lathe are examples of cities that are booming with investment, with industry.