BRICK BY BRICK: A JOURNEY THROUGH IIMA ARCHIVES

Established in 1961, IIM Ahmedabad is steeped in history with a journey displaying an evolution through six decades - 'Brick by Brick'. From its inception to the current times (1961-1921), the Institute embraces umpteen facts, anecdotes and astounding information - making a lasting impression through generations of students, faculty, staff and many other stakeholders. The vision of the founders, iconic architecture of Louis Kahn, exemplary alumni community, the benchmark set by the faculty, leadership of various Chairpersons and Directors, along with many changes IIMA has accepted with time - the journey of the premier Institute exists much beyond the eclectic thoughts of the beautiful by lanes and classrooms.

LEFT:
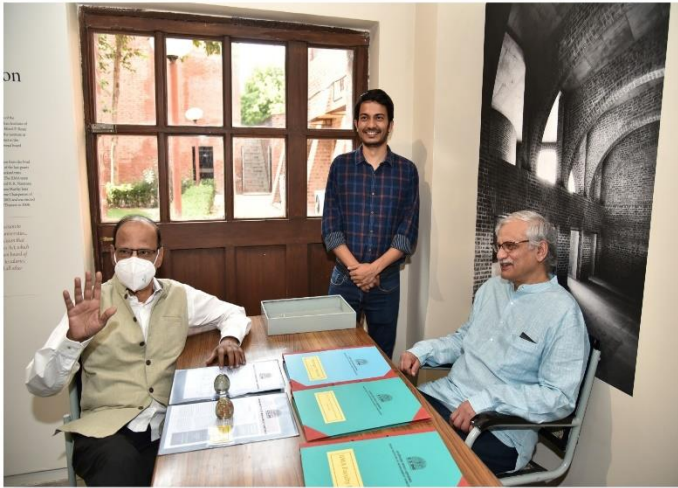Louis Kahn and B.V. Doshi at the NID campus

TOP CENTRE:
IIMA's first 'campus': Nirmala Bakubhai bungalow

TOP RIGHT:
The demonstration arches constructed by Louis Kahn

BOTTOM CENTRE:
Dormitories under construction, mid-1960s

On November 10, 2021, IIMA inaugurated its permanent exhibition 'Brick by Brick: A Journey through IIMA Archives' at D-15, Ground Floor. Prof Errol D'Souza (Director IIMA) and Shri Prafull Anubhai, (Author, The IIMA Story) inaugurated the exhibit, marking the emergence of a novel landmark destination in the Heritage Campus. Planned and executed over two years, the first-of-its-kind project was ideated by Prof Chinmay Tumbe with the current IIMA Archives team led by Prof Vijaya Sherry Chand. The exhibition consists of two galleries designed by Prof Tanishka Kachru (Senior Faculty, Exhibition Design) and her team from the National Institute of Design (NID). The entire space is curated to provide an enriching and educational experience, preserving institutional memories through a large collection of detailed documents and artefacts related to the evolution of the Institute.

Rewriting history spanning six decades, the galleries celebrate the preservation of the IIMA legacy. The exhibition has on display the first communication from the Harvard Business School or the permission letter from the Central Government to establish 'All India Institute of Management' in Ahmedabad, the first advertisement to invite applications for PGP in 1963, the resignation letter from Vikram Sarabhai, handwritten letters of Vikram Sarabhai on MIT letterheads, official communications made between various stakeholders, the origin of the IIMA's logo depicting the 'Tree of Life' motif, first-ever book at the iconic the Vikram Sarabhai Library, IIMA's first original computer drive with storage, details of the first Common Admission Test (CAT) in January 1977, and much more to connect deeper with the IIMA roots. The displays on the walls guide the visitors through the founding members including Dr Kamla Chowdhry, the first female students of the PGP batch, the first computer at IIMA during 1970-71, and many other important aspects of the rich institutional history. The exhibition also features a document featuring details of around 10,000 IIMA alumni and faculty members, with a paperweight from 1982 also adorning the older table used by the IIMA faculty. With so much to experience, this seems like just a beginning!