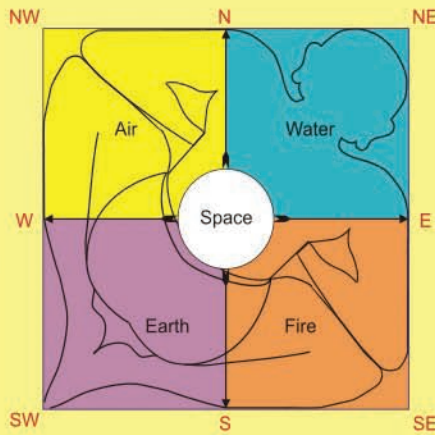




## Vaastu provisions prior to construction

### VAASTU ALERTS



Vaastu And The Five Elements

**T**he Indian structures that have survived for hundreds of years are the palaces and temples. It is no exaggeration to say that it is the Vaastu traditions that are responsible for the culture and civilization which nurtured the construction of these structures for which we feel proud even today.

**Each stage of the construction process should begin with a ritual ceremony that is conducted on an auspicious time. The architect and the householder should participate in the ceremonies, which - in Vaastu - are undoubtedly an integral part of the construction process. The rituals indirectly ensure a disciplined pursuit of the building norms.**

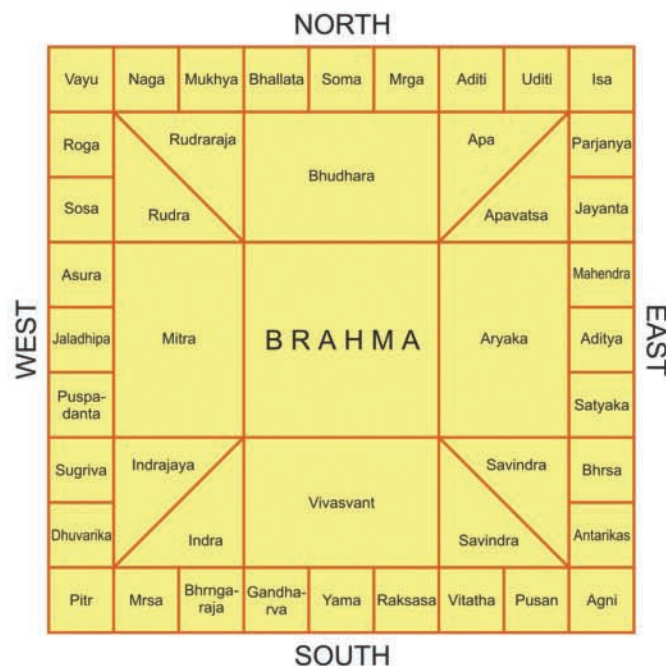
There is a narrow view that Vaastu principles apply only to constructions of home and that too of the traditional style. The Smriti texts and the Puranas extended the scope of Vaastu to include not only residential buildings but all constructions for public and private utility. The Garuda-Purana for instance, takes the word Vaastu in the sense of building houses, hamlets and mansions, formation of townships, laying out of parks and gardens, construction for commercial streets, forts, temples and monasteries. The Arthashastra adds to this list, the building of dams and digging of tanks. Both these sources include the land on which the buildings and gardens are raised in the definition of Vaastu.

This article of Vaastu Alerts is to be read with a view to applying it broadly to all built space, not merely residential flats in a modern urban environment. It deals with Vaastu provisions that apply prior to the construction of the house as well as those that apply during the construction process. This is an aspect of Vaastu that is rarely discussed. One reason for this is that invariably a Vaastu consultant is contacted to devise solutions to a crisis-ridden

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situation arising out of faulty Vaastu. However, it must be borne in mind that many of the Vaastu provisions relate to the site at which the house is built and the planning that is done prior to the construction. The initial and preparatory pacification of the

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The Paramasayika diagram indicating the deities responsible for keeping Vaastu Purush on the plot



◆ continued from page 7

## VAASTU ALERTS

deities in the site-cells is insisted upon in all the Vaastu texts as indispensable.

Further, it must also be borne in mind that Vaastu principles are inalienably linked with astrological considerations because a building's purpose is not only to serve the practical and immediate need to provide shelter to the occupants but – as per Vaastu – it is to bring about gain, happiness,

**Vaastu insists that the building when constructed has an identity of its own. This is because Vaastu designs the building to be a living organism with capacity to pulsate from within, like a human being and resonate with the pulsations of the occupants. The output of Vaastu is thus the effect and influences of the built space on the emotional, physical and material aspects of a particular individual – the Yajman – who is identified with that building. Therefore, it must be recognized a Vaastu based construction will minimize or even eliminate problems related to mental, physical and material components of one's life.**

longevity and prosperity to the occupants of the building. The several inherent and occasional defects of a house, resulting in loss, poverty and misfortune and so on are to be avoided or undone. The Vaastu consultant must therefore understand the relevant astrological particulars first and then move ahead.

To begin with, all acts pertaining to the site, be they prior to the construction or during the construction must commence with the propitiation of the Vastu-Purusha. This is indicated not only while building a new structure but also while effecting repairs and/or renovation to an old construction.

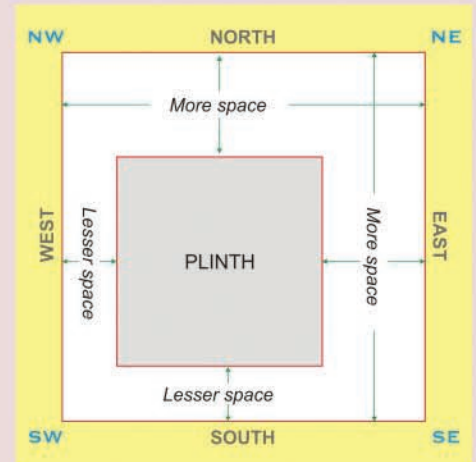
The first step towards the construction process is to finalize the team of the architect, mason/ engineer and a senior astrologer. After the team has been chosen, the site for the building must be chosen. Numerous guidelines are prescribed for choosing a piece of land that would bring happiness, growth and prosperity; these include the size, shape, sound, colour, smell, vegetation and topographical features of the land.

Thereafter, some easy and practical soil tests must be conducted which examine its compactness, fertility, porosity, oxygen and clay content of the soil. According to the result obtained, the land is categorized as superior, ordinary or an inferior one.

Astrological calculations are to be made before the commencement of the work on site to determine the auspicious nakshatra or stars, day (vara), date (tithi), income (aaya), debt (vyaya), and age (aayu).

Once the orientation of the site is established, the Vastu Purusha Mandala is superimposed on the site. The Vastu Purusha can be regarded as the master grid for design in its ideal form of square and symbolizes the cosmic man (Purusha). This has a symbolic, functional, as well as ritualistic bearing in the house. This Mandala is drawn on the purified and sanctified site.

The roof should be constructed with stone, brick, wood or concrete, depending on the scale and occupancy of the building.



Vaastu insists that the building, when constructed has an identity of its own. This is because, Vaastu designs the building to be a living organism with the capacity to pulsate from within like a human being and resonate with the pulsations of the occupants. The output of Vaastu is thus, the effect and influence of the built space on the emotional, physical and material aspects of a particular individual – the Yajman – who is identified with that building. Therefore, it must be recognized that a Vaastu-based construction will minimize or even eliminate problems related to mental, physical and material components of one's life.

The characteristics of the building materials are detailed to enable the right choice. The bricks should be compact, uniformly baked and free from any cracks and on striking, should produce a ringing sound.

For construction in timber, the wood is to be examined on the basis of its colour, bark, origin and place of growth. The stones used for construction should be of a uniform colour, dense, smooth and deeply embedded in earth. These qualities imply that it should be mature.

Each stage of the construction process should begin with a ritual ceremony that is conducted at an auspicious time. The architect and the householder should participate in the ceremonies which – in Vaastu – are undoubtedly an integral part of the construction process. The rituals indirectly ensure a disciplined pursuit of the building norms. ■

(To be concluded in December 2010)