

BASIC ELEMENTS

WITH A MATERIAL PALETTE COMPRISING AN ASSORTMENT OF STONES AVAILABLE IN THE COUNTRY, design firm Odyssey creatively exploits the inherent features of these natural products to give shape to a majestic monument in Hyderabad that celebrates life and its incredible diversity

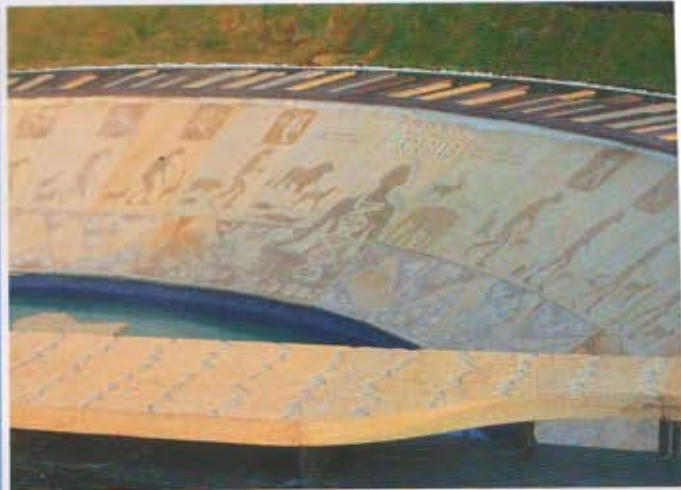
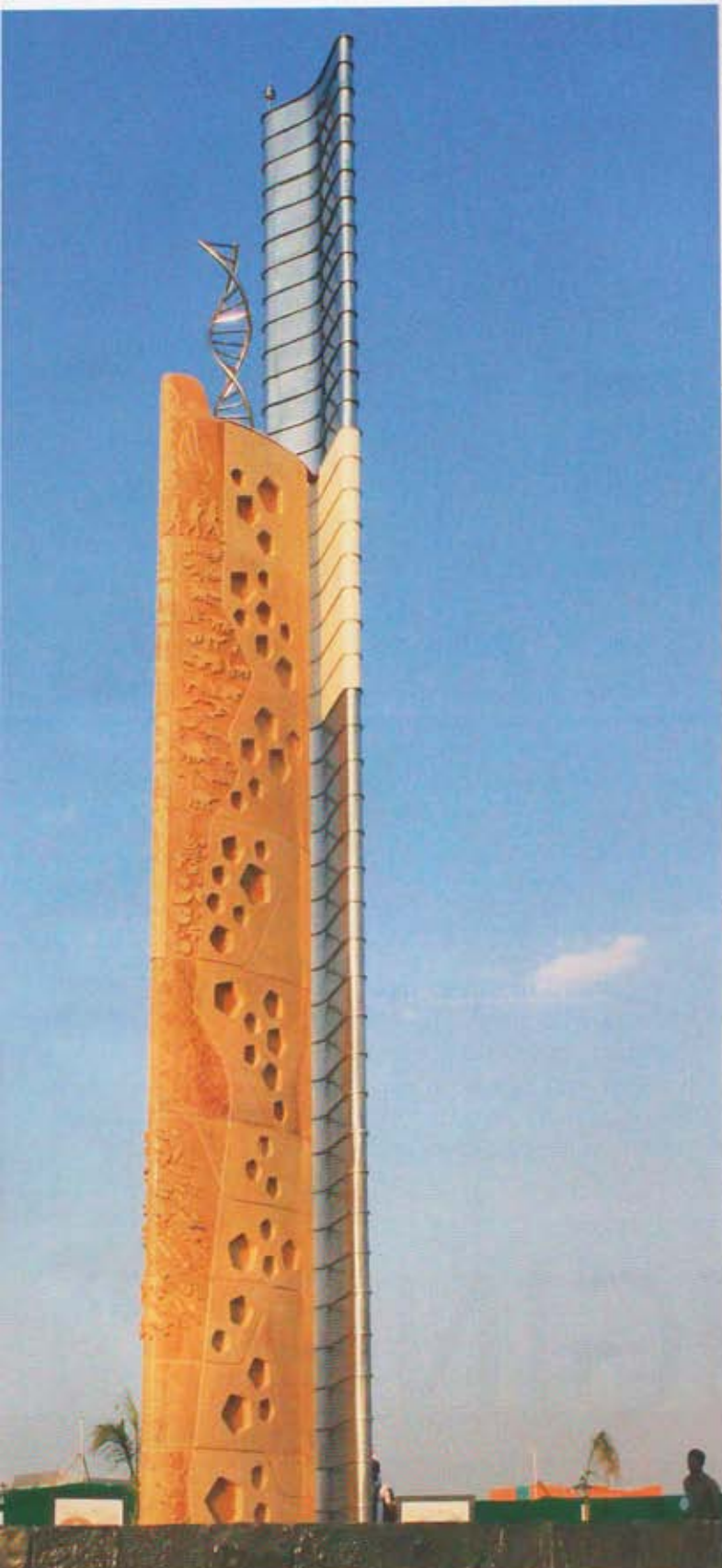
Standing tall on a sprawling 15-acre land located along the Mehdiapatnam-Gachibowli Road, Hyderabad, the monument at the Biodiversity Park is a marvel crafted in stone, seeking to give artistic expression to the great mystery of life on earth and its creation. Odyssey, a firm with expertise in stone applications for interior and exterior design, was invited to collaborate on this project by Genesis Planners Private Limited, the project's lead architects. Depicting solid, liquid and gaseous forms, the monument includes a 32-foot high elliptical Biodiversity Pylon, symbolising the evolution of the human species.

The base of the pylon is composed of concentric circles representing nature's five elements—earth (prithivi), air (vaayu), water (jal), fire (agni) and ether (akaash). The outermost ring, the Ring of Air, is represented by twelve trees and features a stair skirting on which the names of 193 countries are etched. The Ring of Earth, an ambulatory pathway has a black granite surface in antique finish with engravings of names of all 191 species of

the Tree of Life. The Ring of Fire is represented by the sun in a black granite base with radiating lines in the colours of fire sculpted from red granite and yellow Jaisalmer stone. A transitional mural wall slopes down in between the Ring of Fire and the Ring of Water. Divided into three zones, it depicts the three aspects of biodiversity—system (prakruthi), species (prani) and structure (antarlaya). Ninety pieces of Etah goldstone were installed with each piece shot blasted, hand polished and treated with different finishes.

Water jet technology was used to craft a map of the world floating in a bowl of water in the Ring of Water, which signifies the incubation of life. The Ring of Ether is represented by a fan-like structure and comprises two levels—the base level is made of chipped and stacked pieces of black granite while the upper level is made of slabs of engraved Etah goldstone. The mammoth undertaking required procuring, sawing, processing and polishing 165 tonnes of stone and is now an architectural landmark in the city.





In the middle of the pylon are depictions of Dasa Avatars. CNC milling was used to cut and curve 21 pieces of 250mm thick Etah goldstone, each piece weighing approximately 1,200kgs. The complete story of the evolution of the human species was then engraved on these individual pieces