terracotta is the new-age replacement for conventional cladding

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Terracotta as a building material is the new age green material, which not only provides the ethnicity, but also renders the technical advantage that an architect looks for in a material. Terracotta can be used both as an exterior façade material and as an interior material. With its impact resistance and less than 5% water absorption features, in addition to other features such as maintenance-free properties (which means one doesn't have to keep a constant watch to check if the sheen has been worn out or not), insect-resistance, heat insulation and the fact that it is fungus proof, terracotta truly scores almost in all departments as a true all-weather building material.

When we think about an interior building material, what I am looking for here is an aesthetically superior material which has also a nuance of subtlety embedded in it. Terracotta ticks mostly all these points. It comes in a variety of colors, like the warm terracotta red orange, slate gray, beige, and the family of earthen colors which renders the warmth that others lack.

Terracotta, while primarily used in external facades, is the new age replacement for the age-old ACP or stone cladding, as the dry cladding system used for installation gives an edge over the conventional cladding items that use wet cladding. To explain better, dry cladding is a system wherein there is a gap between the building skin and the building material itself, thus providing a gap which acts as an insulation to the

building skin and gives a second protective layer to the building itself. By virtue of this gap, an airgap is created which renders the building the temperature buffer. This means that during summer, direct heat doesn't travel inside for lack of conduction. Also, during winter the gap provides the buffer, wherein the cold doesn't percolate in through conductive properties.

Wet cladding means the tiles are fixed directly on its skin with the use of mortar and other adhesives. If there is a leakage in the pipes in the shafts, then the leakage stains can be visible on the tiles which gives an aesthetic disadvantage to the building itself. Dry cladding prevents this from happening.

As an interior material, hand prints or smudges which can often be caused by users, won't be taking place due to the wax coating that is provided on the tiles. Given their earthy yet smooth textures, terracotta lends a good balance to the absorption as well as the reflective properties of light itself.

Adobe campus at sector 132, Noida, is one such prestigious project, where terracotta has been used both in interiors and exteriors. In interiors, it has been used in the Atrium which is the central core as well as one of the prime spaces in the building. While terracotta had been used copiously in the exteriors mainly to give the much-needed insulation from the southern sun, the texture and the color itself render the aesthetic upliftment, which in turn gives a unique balance between contrasting the blue glass and the terracotta red orange.

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