

2.52 cubic metres of Earth

In tangible terms, all that life is reduced to is 2.1m x 1m x 1.2m = 2.52 cubic metres of earth.

This earth is not as per the specifications given by the landscape architect.

- It may or may not be sweet earth or good red soil
- It may or may not be free of subsoil, stones, clumps and clods, sticks and roots
- It may or may not be friable loam taken from a well-drained site that is free from flooding
- It may or may not be mixed with a defined proportion of good farmyard manure
- The soil pH may or may not range between 7 to 8 and the percentage of organic matter may not be known.

But these are tangible terms.....Intangibly speaking, the soil test report of this 2.52 cubic metres of earth reads as such:

- Contains an unimaginable wealth of knowledge
- An unparalleled combination of talent, intelligence and humility
- An unpredictable play of humour, wit and sarcasm
- An unerring accuracy of design detail
- A repertoire of words that always aptly defined the undefinable
- An ability to read the depths on scanning the surface
- A flair for using minimal expressions for conveying the maximum meaning
- A simplicity that is hidden deep in the depths of complexity

*As I write this, I realise that I need to stand corrected – **the specifications of this 2.52 cubic metres were crafted by its landscape architect to the minutest detail possible over a period of 67 years and 214 days...***

In the depths of this earth may bloom many a tree under whose shade may thrive many a life...may the lives that have been blessed by the shade of this tree honour and celebrate the value of this 2.52 cubic metres of earth.

*Notes by **Shilpa Bakshi Chandawarkar** on 04.12.2015 after a visit to Jama Masjid, Jamia University, New Delhi.*

The author was, is and continues to remain a student of Professor Mohammad Shaheer