

SHELTER FOR ALL, A DREAM IN THE MAKING



EDITOR'S CORNER

HabLife welcomes you aboard! A journey just started. It was a much awaited demand to come up with a newsletter of Habitat Technology Group from most of our friends and well-wishers. Finally, we are here presenting you the very first issue as the 2019's New Year gift!

As I sat to pen down the editorial, nothing but "Kerala Flood" comes to my mind. Being the UN Consultant for Disaster Mitigation (Sri Lanka & Maldives) since 1987, and the chairman of the National Committee constituted by the Government of India to formulate guidelines on disaster resistant building technologies, I have been attending seminars, conferences and discussions on disaster management and rebuilding Kerala since the Kerala Floods.

Here, I am sharing some of our collective experiences as Team Habitat marched together to "rebuild lives" in places where the flood waters washed away the life from every single home on its way.

Team Habitat made its way to the worst affected villages in Aranmula and Pathanamthitta, complete with an army of skilled and unskilled personnel, both men and women. Our team had engineers, architects, masons, electricians, plumbers, contractors, administrative staff and even a few well wishers. The team was competent and successful in resurrecting houses to completely functional and livable spaces, that too within hours.

Without waiting for a moment, we plunged into action, cleaning up and fixing broken houses. We were actually kindling faith in lives... in the hearts... of those flood-affected villagers. The spirit of standing with them at their hour of crisis gave us, in turn, a rare sense of 'fulfillment'. It was such a gratifying experience that everyone in our team came back with greater insight about the meaning of life. I could give my team a feel of fulfillment I enjoyed doing relief works, which took me beyond the borders. This is the energy that drives me. At the end of the day I feel I'm building lives and not houses!

Warm regards,

G SHANKAR
FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN
HABITAT TECHNOLOGY GROUP

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HABITAT TIES UP WITH ASTER HOMES TO REBUILD KERALA

Aster D M Healthcare, a healthcare services provider in India and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), pledged Rs 12.5 crore for building new houses and repairing damaged ones in the flood-ravaged areas, back in September 2018. "We are entrusting the construction of houses to Habitat Technology Group and the work will start once the State Government identifies the areas where houses need to be rebuilt and repaired. The plan involves construction of new houses for those who lost their houses fully in the flood, then cluster homes for group of people if government provides land, and retro-fitting of partially damages houses.", said Aster DM Healthcare Chairman Azad Moopen.

We will be building disaster-resistant houses using locally available material. The houses will be cost-effective as well as energy-efficient. In tribal areas, they will be culturally sensitive to their surroundings also. "We are expecting a cost of up to Rs 5 lakh for constructing a house (450-500 sq ft) and a maximum of Rs 1.5 lakh for retro-fitting," said G Shankar, architect and founder, Habitat Technology Group. About 50 odd designs will be shown to the beneficiaries from which they can select, he added.

A QUICK BREATHER FOR FLOOD-HIT KERALA HABITAT'S POST-DISASTER PROTOTYPE SHELTER IN 23 DAYS FOR RS. 5.5 LAKHS



A socially committed organisation, Habitat was the first and the fastest to come up with flood resistant prototype within 23 days as a relief to the Kerala state which was hit by the worst flood of the century. The state witnessed over 483 deaths, 14 missing cases reported and over a million people displaced.

Built in just a one cent of a plot at the police guest house compound near Jagathy at DPI junction in Thiruvananthapuram, the 3-storey house is made of recycled mud tiles, coconut shell, treated bamboo, ceramic tiles, interlocking mud blocks, concrete and a little coat of paint in terracotta finish. The structure that stands on 6-foot pillars houses 2 bedrooms, an open kitchen, living area with built-in seating, bathroom, and open terraces. One of the interesting features of the house is its scope for modification. The terrace is convertible to a room and basement to a car park, work area, studio or a reading room.



CHALAI HERITAGE REDO PROJECT KICK STARTS

The historic Chalai market in Thiruvananthapuram is set for a total makeover similar to the S M Street in Kozhikode.

The first phase of the project will be completed in 4 months, covering the vegetable market, amenity centre and main entrance. Minister for Tourism, Cooperation and Devaswom Kadakampally Surendran laid the foundation for the redo project on Kerala Piravi Day. Led by architect G. Shankar, Habitat is executing the project in two phases.

HABITAT LAUNCHES HEEM TO ENHANCE EMPLOYMENT SKILLS

Being a Government accredited Nodal Agency that is authorized to carry out developmental works under the de-centralization process in Kerala, Habitat launched in November a new start-up program called HEEM (Habitat Employability Enhancement Mission) combining the core objectives of AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) and NEEM (National Employment Enhancement Mission).

Habitat intends HEEM as an innovative and integrated job-oriented resource development program for training the youth of the country for a career that is in high demand and also to prepare them for a bright future.

HEEM targets individuals who are pursuing graduation or completed a graduation (or diploma) in any technical field. Three-month long EESD courses will have more thrust in hands-on training by Habitat. Students can look forward for excellent training, motivation, employable training skills, and best of all, selected candidates will get opportunity for internship in Dubai.

PEOPLE'S ARCHITECT SHANKAR BELIEVES THAT HOUSING MUST BE MADE AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT



FIRST EARTH BUILDING IN THE GOVERNMENT DOMAIN LAUNCHED

Habitat completed the work of State Police House, the first earth building in the Government domain. Located at DPI Junction, Trivandrum, India. The aesthetically designed two-storey building was constructed for the Kerala State Police.



ILLICKAL KUNJOSEPH HOUSING COLONY AGREEMENT SIGNED

Our media had celebrated the inspiring act of Dr. V K Manoj, an orthopaedic surgeon in Dubai, and his wife Jayasree Sebastian, a teacher at St. Mary's Higher Secondary School, Kallanode, Kozhikode, who donated their one-acre land to homeless. They spend around two years to identify 14 genuine families for this noble cause.

On 12th Dec 2018, the family was here in the Habitat office to meet G Shankar and sign an agreement for Illickal Kunjoseph Housing Colony work. The colony will see a cluster of fourteen eco-friendly houses of 465 sq.ft each at Chembanoda, Kozhikode.

LIFE BEYOND ARCHITECTURE...

G SHANKAR AT THE RENOWNED SHARJAH BOOK FAIR

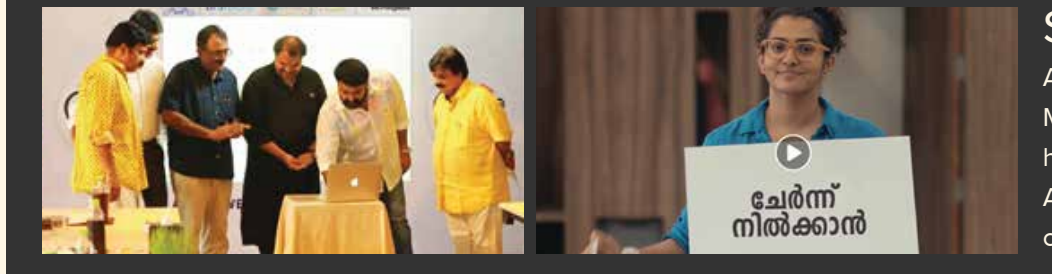


With Resul Pookutty, Oscar-winning sound designer, and Mohan Kumar, External Affairs Director of SIBF.



With leading publisher Ravi DeeCee, Managing Director, DC Books

The 37th edition of Sharjah International Book Fair (SIBF 2018 from 31st Oct to 10th Nov), had a footfall of nearly 2.23 million visitors, including 230,000 school students this year. SIBF, which is the region's biggest literary and cultural extravaganza, invited G Shankar to speak at the event. Among the noted personalities present were Shri. Nambi Narayanan, former scientist of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), who was framed in the infamous ISRO espionage scandal and later found innocent and given a clean chit, Resul Pookutty, Oscar-winning sound designer.

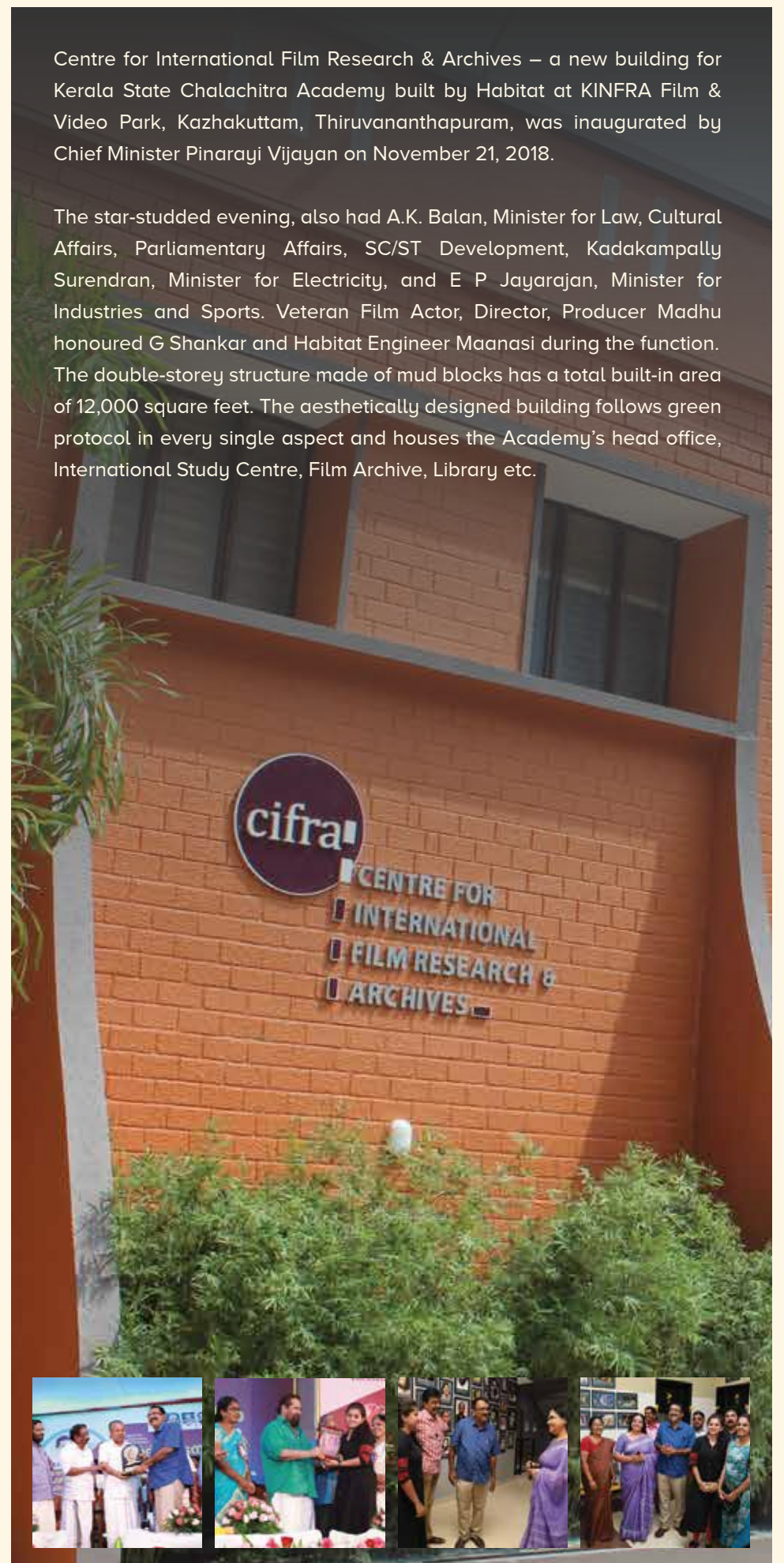


CIFRA BUILDING LAUNCH



Centre for International Film Research & Archives – a new building for Kerala State Chalachitra Academy built by Habitat at KINFRA Film & Video Park, Kazhakkuttam, Thiruvananthapuram, was inaugurated by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on November 21, 2018.

The star-studded evening, also had A.K. Balan, Minister for Law, Cultural Affairs, Parliamentary Affairs, SC/ST Development, Kadakampally Surendran, Minister for Electricity, and E P Jayarajan, Minister for Industries and Sports. Veteran Film Actor, Director, Producer Madhu honoured G Shankar and Habitat Engineer Maanasi during the function. The double-storey structure made of mud blocks has a total built-in area of 12,000 square feet. The aesthetically designed building follows green protocol in every single aspect and houses the Academy's head office, International Study Centre, Film Archive, Library etc.



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An initiative of Madhyamam daily in association with the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA) and UAE Exchange, and executed by Habitat, the project helps to give shelter to those who can't afford it. Actor Mohanlal released the Akshara Veedu theme song on 24 November, 2018 at Kochi. The launch event saw celebrities like Jayasurya, Shwetha Menon, Honey Rose, Maniyanpilla Raju.

TRAINING STUDENTS IN GREEN BUILDING TECHNOLOGIES

Habitat successfully conducted a 2-day hands-on training on green building technologies using mud and bamboo at Bamboo School, Mudavanmughal on 1st and 2nd of November, 2018. Several architects and civil engineering students joined the training for a course fee of Rs. 500, which includes food.

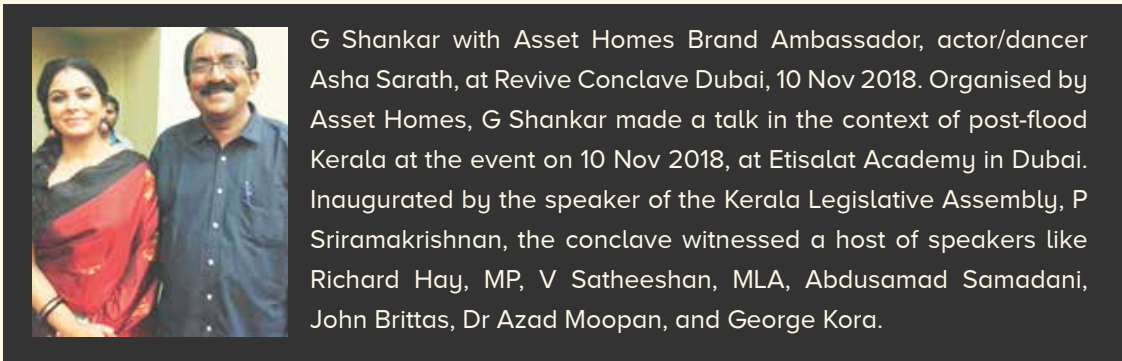




G Shankar giving away the key-note speech at the event "Rebuild Kerala" at Indian Social Club, Abu Dhabi in November 2018



Habitat completed a 480 sq ft budget home at cost of Rs. 5 lakhs for Baharain Kerala Samajam, to be handed over to the needy whose family lost their livelihood means. The philanthropic organization is led by P V Radhakrishnan Pillai. The charity of the Samajam has reached two children, who lost their parents at a very young age. The kids are being looked after by their 80-year-old grandmother. It gives a great sense of fulfillment to Habitat, which completed the project in time regardless of hurdles caused by the ravaging floods that wreaked havoc in the state.



G Shankar with Asset Homes Brand Ambassador, actor/dancer Asha Sarath, at Revive Conclave Dubai, 10 Nov 2018. Organised by Asset Homes, G Shankar made a talk in the context of post-flood Kerala at the event on 10 Nov 2018, at Etisalat Academy in Dubai. Inaugurated by the speaker of the Kerala Legislative Assembly, P Sriramakrishnan, the conclave witnessed a host of speakers like Richard Hay, MP, V Satheeshan, MLA, Abdusamad Samadani, John Brittas, Dr Azad Moopan, and George Kora.



One of the fastest growing bath brands in the world with presence in over 45 + countries, Jaquar Group felicitated our chairman, G Shankar at the Kochi Architects Conclave on 20th December 2018, at Grand Hyatt Kochi Bolgatty.



Cover Page of Hindi Prachar Sabha's journal: G Shankar inaugurating the Hindi Divas celebrations 2018



G Shankar giving keynote speech on Sustainable Design at Kochi Design Summit 2018, on 11 Nov 2018



Material scientist, Dr.Jan Van Dam of Wageningen University, Netherlands, visited Habitat office in Trivandrum and took a study class on "Coconut Fibre Based Boards" on 2nd November 2018. Yet another guest for the day was Shri R. V. Achary, senior structural engineer and author of several books including one on conflicts in traditional architecture. He delivered a thought-provoking talk on Vastu, it's history and significance in current times.



G Shankar enlightening Balavilas volunteers during an eco restoration session in December, 2018 at his residence – Siddhartha.



G Shankar speaking at the inauguration of the Vetturoad Market work in Kaniyapuram on 21st Oct 2018.



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