

SUSTAINABLE AND FLOOD RESISTANT HOUSING

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EDITOR'S CORNER

It has happened again!

Many parts of Kerala have been battered by heavy downpour. Apprehensions expressed by environmentalists that deluge 2018 was not going to be a once in a century disaster are proving right. We are paying a heavy price for the harm we inflicted on Mother Nature.

However, we cannot just lie down and lament. Life should go on. Partly damaged or fully damaged houses should be rebuilt. We have to take care of our mothers and children. We have to create a better future for the next generation. Resilience is the answer.

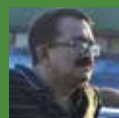
It is high time that we adopted resilience as a life vision. As all good things begin at home, we should adopt resilience in building houses first and foremost. Let us build homes that are resilient to the vagaries of climate. This can be achieved not by going against the nature but by learning and practising how close a harmonious relationship we can strike with it.

Here in Habitat, we have always promoted nature-friendly sustainable building methods. This has been an article of faith ever since we started off on a modest scale three decades ago.

Heavy rains and flash floods not only submerged many parts of the state but triggered devastating landslides in Malappuram and Wayanad districts where we lost a large number of precious lives.

The landslips in places like Kavalappara in Malappuram are direct fallout of grievous harm we have caused to the ecologically-fragile Western Ghats. Geologists have warned that long coastal stretches of Kerala are also facing a grim situation due to gross violation of coastal protection norms. Eminent environmentalist Madhav Gadgil, who conducted extensive studies on the Western Ghats, has warned that we have crossed the red line.

One of the prime reasons for recurrence of natural disasters is unscientific and unregulated constructions. Landslides that happened in recent times are on a micro level. What we are likely to face could be disasters on a macro level. The crucial question before us is whether we will be able to avoid such a tragedy which is in the making.



Warm regards,

G SHANKAR
FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN
HABITAT TECHNOLOGY GROUP

COVER STORY

RECREATING PUTHUMALA: A BIG CHALLENGE

A verdant plantation village in Wayanad, Puthumala of Meppadi panchayat was buzzing with life until 8th August 2019. A landslide swept the entire village within no time along with several lives, houses and almost all human constructions on its way.

HI Foundation, a leading NGO based in Wayanad which stands for the education and empowerment of women, has invited Habitat Technology Group to visit the place and support rebuilding of Puthumala.

A 20-member team of Habitat led by G Shankar from Thiruvananthapuram went for a 2-day site visit to Puthumala on 30th and 31st of August to assess the damage. Habitat architects and engineers working in Wayanad also joined the team.

Habitat is working on the mission of reconstructing Puthumala. Some 116 houses and a mosque, temple, school and an anganwadi each have to be built. "We have chosen Habitat Group in view of its expertise and commitment in taking up rebuilding lives in disaster hit sites in different parts of the world" said Shri. Javad Musthawafi, Director, HI Foundation.



- 116 Houses
- Temple
- School
- Mosque
- Post Office
- Anganwadi



BAMBOO LESSONS FROM URAVU

A team of internees from Habitat was taken to Uravu Indigenous Science and Technology Study Centre in Thrikaipetta village of Wayanad District in August 2019. A not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation, Uravu strives for rural empowerment through sustainable solutions since 1996. Our internees attended a session on bamboo as a sustainable construction materials at Uravu.



2-DAY MEET ON SOCIAL HOUSING



HABITAT SETS UP DISASTER RESPONSE CENTRE

Habitat Technology Group has set up a Disaster Response Centre and expressed its willingness, in a letter submitted to Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Pinarayi Vijayan, to support people across Kerala, who are bearing the brunt of the monsoon fury. When Kerala was overwhelmed by the devastating floods in 2018, Habitat was among the first agencies to support the state. It also partnered with United Nations to execute UNDP Shelter Hubs across the state that has been widely appreciated for its 'Rebuild Kerala Initiative'.

Habitat shared SOS call centre numbers in each district of Kerala through its social media platforms and website.

Dr. Venu V IAS, Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue), who heads 'Rebuild Kerala Mission', and Dr. Sekhar Lukose, Secretary, State Disaster Management Authority, have also been informed about Habitat's initiative in the prevailing situation.



A two-day meeting, which began at CYSD on August 28 in collaboration with various civil society organisations, deliberated on the issues related to social housing. It was attended by Dr G Shankar. It discussed disaster-resilient habitat planning and social housing for rural areas in Odisha.

Shri Jugal Mohapatra, former Union Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, said, "A holistic housing programme with all necessary facilities and exploring opportunities such as toilet under Swachh Bharat Mission, electricity under Saubhagya, drinking water under pipe water supply programmes and labour component under MGNREGS, is the need for rural Odisha."

The workshop was attended by delegates from different sectors including civil society, architects, social housing experts across the country, officials from the Government, bankers, financial institutions.

Padma Shri Dr G Shankar, Chairman, Habitat Technology Group; Dr Nila Madhab Prusty, President, Humanitarian Aid International; Sailendra Pattnaik, CRS; Alok Pattnaik; and Prafulla Kumar Sahoo, Chairman, CYSD, were on the dais.



CET TURNS 80

"CET days had a formative influence on my career and personality, even while I used to be at loggerheads with my faculty because I had initially felt their lessons lacked the Indian-ness in architecture. We had several visionary teachers. I was also among those who ushered in politics on the campus to counter the practice of ragging and the elitist culture that existed then. The mental turmoil I had faced then and the subsequent joy our efforts brought us made me who I am."

Padma Shri Dr. G. Shankar

An alumnus of the 1976-82 B. Arch batch, CET

SNEHAVEEDU - A HOME OF LOVE

A house constructed by Habitat under the sponsorship of Pappanamcode Engineering College, Snehaveedu was handed over to a homeless woman, who is survived by three girl children. The function, organised at the Pappanamcode Engineering College on July 30, was attended by several noted persons, including Shri O Rajagopal, MLA and former Union Minister.



PROJECTS IN ANVIL



WATERFRONT ARTIST'S STUDIO IN WAYANAD WITH DORMITORY



RENOVATION OF MUNICIPAL OFFICE, PALAKKAD



GOVERNMENT CREMATORIUM AT VEMBAYAM, THIRUVANANTHAURAM



SCIENCE CITY IN KOTTAYAM WITH A MASSIVE OVERHEAD WATER TANK AND A FOOD COURT.



CULTURAL CENTRE, NEYYATINKARA, THIRUVANANTHAURAM



SWADESHI DARSHAN PROJECT OF KERALA TOURISM



AMENITY CENTRE FOR MAHESHWARAM SRI SHIVA PARVATHY TEMPLE AT CHENKAL IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.



AMENITY CENTRE FOR SREE AYYAPPA TEMPLE, PADUTHODU, P ATHANAMTHITTA



ELEPHANT INTERACTION AREA, ELEPHANT MUSEUM, MAHOUT TRAINING CENTER, SUPER-SPECIALTY HOSPITAL, A RETIREMENT HOME AND CREMATORIUM AT ELEPHANT REHABILITATION CENTRE, KOTTOOR, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM



AMENITY CENTRE FOR ST. MARY'S CHURCH, NIRANAM, PATHANAMTHITTA

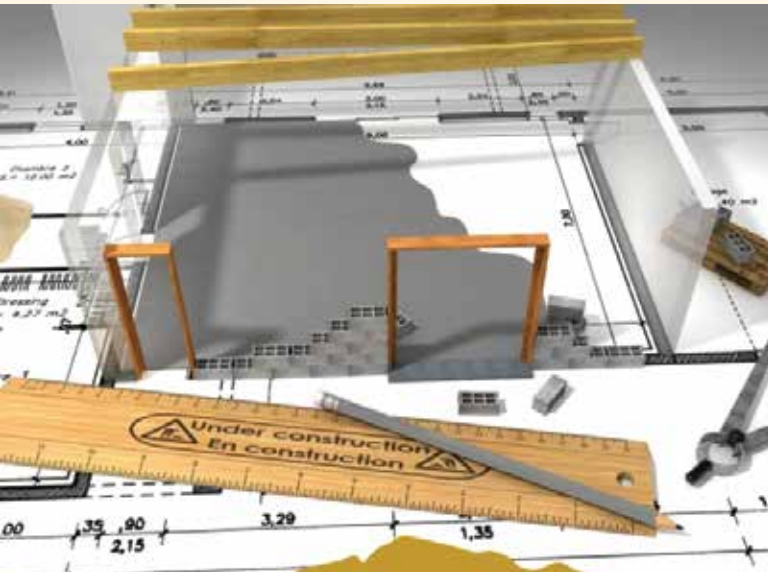


AMENITY CENTRE, CHINNAKADA, KOLLAM



PLANETARIUM IN FOUR-AND-A-HALFACRES OF LAND AT CHALAKUDY THRISSUR

THENMALA ECOTOURISM PROJECT



PARAMPARA: ART UNLEASHED

A painting exhibition held in July 2019 at Museum Auditorium was inaugurated by noted film personality Sri Adoor Gopalakrishnan.

G Shankar released the catalogue of Parampara, the painting exhibition held at Museum Auditorium, Thiruvananthapuram, where works of 32 artists were exhibited. The exhibition brought under one roof several noted artists, including Kanai Kunjiraman, as visitors and participants.



Dr. G Shankar interacted and inspired students of Global Institute of Architecture, Palakkad. He is revisiting the institute after a gap of five years and the tree he planted there last time has grown into a young tree.

Training at Habitat for students: Away from the classroom walls

- ORIENTATION CLASS
- HANDS-ON TRAINING
- INTERACTION WITH EXPERTS
- SITE VISIT
- CLIENT INTERACTION
- SITE EXPOSURE

TO ENROLL IN THE TRAINING SESSIONS, THE STUDENTS OR COLLEGE AUTHORITIES MAY CONTACT HABITAT HEAD OFFICE AT 0471 234 4904. THERE IS A NOMINAL FEES FOR THIS WEEK-LONG TRAINING.

WWW.HABITATTECHNOLOGYGROUP.ORG FB.COM/HABITATTECHNOLOGYGROUP 0471 234 4904



IN CONTINUAL CONVERSATION WITH...



▲ Senior journalist Saraswathy Nagarajan at Hab Musings.



▲ Dr. Anil Brahmaandhan and Ar Achushankar at Hab Musings.



▲ Ar Reuben Koshy at Hab Musings



▲ Ar. Suja Kartha at Hab Musings



▲ Ar. Anand D K, Ar. Sheena Abraham and Ar. Catherine at Hab Musings.



talists, design socialists and architects. The first week of July saw senior journalist Saraswathy Nagarajan as the guest. She captivated the audience with her engaging discussion on "How to read a building", yes, you read it right! Every building has a language of its own. It speaks emotions as the sun's rays enter into its spaces and take its ride as the day goes by.

The following week, Hab Musings had Dr. Anil Brahmaandhan and Ar Achushankar as guests. They set the conversation on the topic 'Engineering living spaces: A consumer's perspective'. In the last week of July, Hab Musings saw Ar. Suja Kartha conversing on the meaning of an iconic building. "The richness of a society is not just determined by its economic power alone, but is also derived from its cultural legacies preserved by its architectural heritage," she observed.

A space for unleashing thoughts, opinions, experiences, discussions, learning, unlearning and much more can happen if we sit together and chat on ideas! That is exactly what happens during 'Hab Musings,' a weekly conversation session that is being organised in Habitat since last week of June. Organised by Habitat, the event witnesses assemblage of various thought leaders, including journalists, environmen-

Ar. Reuben Koshy spoke on "what makes a building beautiful". The conversation shed light on the challenges of architects in finding the balance between aesthetics and architectural requirements. In the week that followed, Ar. Anand D K, Ar. Sheena Abraham and Ar. Catherine explored the "evolution of design". Ar. Saiju Mohamed took the discussion on a tangentially different realm as he spoke on the topic, 'The challenge of current architecture to approach the rural context'. The Hab Musings conversations are on -- every week!



FLOOD-RESISTANT HOUSING

A house was built on a one cent plot by Habitat at a cost of Rs. 500,000. According to G. Shankar, the house can resist floods and other natural calamities. "Cost-effective houses are not just for the poor, they are for everyone."- Laurie Baker. A handbook on flood and landslide-resilient housing in Kerala, published by the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority, is being distributed in schools and libraries. No other time is more pertinent than now to remember the vision of the great British-born Indian architect Laurie Baker who had said: "Cost-effective houses are not just for the poor, they are for everyone."



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