

BW SMARTCITIES

The Importance of Green Buildings in Contemporary India

Any urbane construction has an adverse effect on the surrounding ecology, as it habitually adopts the path of heavy construction work which eventually consumes a large chunk of our green space, further intensifying the impact of the existing eco-environmental problems, such as resource consumption, climate change, and environmental degradation.



03July, 2020by P K Mishra

Print this articleFont size -16+

The speed and scale of rapid urbanization has brought social, economic, and environmental sustainability into challenging grounds. This necessitates the exploration of their entwined relationships, especially in a rapidly developing country like India. Simultaneously, urban ecosystems and landscapes have gradually become more vulnerable with the evolving construction prospects in the country. Any urbane construction has an adverse effect on the surrounding ecology, as it habitually adopts the path of heavy construction work which eventually consumes a large chunk of our green space, further intensifying the impact of the existing eco-environmental problems, such as resource consumption, climate change, and environmental degradation.

The concept of 'Green Buildings' today, has emerged as the logical next step for contemporary India. It is becoming increasingly imperative to address the growing sustainability concerns. The term 'Green' calls for a viable design, that ensures the structured and efficient use of energy, water and other materials required for projects. Furthermore, this approach can aid in reducing the impact on human health and the environment, for the entire lifecycle of a sustainably constructed building. This approach is less about conceptualizing the building and more about the comprehensive requisite holistic approach for sustainable utilization of the natural resources, through judicious planning. Such sustainably built green buildings are eco-friendly and resource-efficient, as they consume less energy, water and other natural resources. Thus, generating lesser wastes and greenhouse gases. As per The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) estimations, if all the buildings in Indian urban areas were made to adopt green building concepts, India could have saved more than 8,400 megawatts of power, which is enough to light 550,000 homes a year.

Along with the environmental advantages, Green Buildings provide several economic benefits as well. These can include; cost savings on utility bills for occupants or households, lower construction outlays and higher property value for building developers, increased occupancy rates or lower operating costs, for building owners and employment generation. Moreover, global industry trends have shown that sustainable living elicits positive social impact as well. Most of these benefits are associated with the health and well-being of the people who work in green offices, or live in green homes. According to Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, people in green, well-ventilated offices record a 101 per cent increase in cognitive brain function. This also suggests that better indoor air quality, increases productivity and leads to improvements in individual performances.

Key elements whilst planning a Green Project

Accomplishing operational efficiencies through green buildings, lead to sustainable growth, however adopting this mantra has varied facets to it. Preparedness towards environment-friendly methods of utilizing minimal non-renewable energy sources, low-operational energy and aiming for longer lifecycle is paramount for every builder.

A sustainable building plan should use environmentally friendly products (EPP) that lessens ecological impacts, such as global warming and resource depletion. Ensuring proper lighting,

ventilation and moisture control, are also vital in any green project, as these factors can affect occupational health, comfort and productivity, if not adequately maintained.

Furthermore, a developer should be attuned with building automation systems as per specific building requirements, which will reduce unnecessary operating expenses and dissuade resident complaints.

Adaptability in India

Consumer attitude towards environment has a great impact towards adapting green buildings. Keeping in mind the novelties, consumers are also inclined towards this sustainable change. Over the recent years growing awareness about the benefits of using eco-friendly items, has prompted a positive and pro-active response from manufacturers as well as developers across the country. However, the permeability of this phenomenon has to be still instilled amongst the consumers.

Despite the acceptance of the concept of sustainable living, widespread adoption of the same will require time, considering the present volatile growth graph of the real estate sector, which may pose as a greater challenge for many to invest in. However, irrespective of such bottlenecks, no one can deny that Green Buildings are the need of the hour. It might appear as a comparatively expensive investment, but in the long run, the returns both tangible and intangible are much higher, in comparison to any regular structure. The low operational costs, reduced energy expense and carbon emission loads are a definite upside to such projects. Thus, it holds a better prospect in terms of higher resale or rental values.

In contemporary times where India is heading towards shared economic spaces to amplify cost-efficiency, productivity and sustainability, it would be imperative to opt for a more eco-friendly lifestyle to ensure a better and brighter future for mankind.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in the article above are those of the authors' and do not necessarily represent or reflect the views of this publishing house