



VERDANT AND VIBRANT

Green buildings are taking the right shape. Developers and consumers are more aware and demand for them is increasing

BY JAYASHREE KINI MENDES

the market. In India, more than 90% of certified projects have achieved LEED Gold or LEED Platinum—which is impressive. These leaders are helping push the rest of the market forward.”

From selecting the location to daily operations, green buildings are held to the highest standards of environmental responsibility and resource efficiency. **Rakesh Reddy, director, Aparna Constructions & Estates**, says, “These buildings optimise their use of local materials, minimise their impact on local ecology and, most importantly, are built to reduce power, water and material requirements. There are certifying agencies, such as the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) that assist real estate developers to implement environmentally-friendly practices and get green building certification.”

STEPS TO TAKE

With growing awareness among the industry and home-buyers, developers are embracing green construction practices and consumers are willingly opting for such properties at a premium. **Principal architects Harsh Pote and Gaurav Sanghavi of Pentaspace**, say, “Site, location, orientation and the choice of material play a key role. The plan and elevation of the building needs to respect the natural resources of light and ventilation. Hence, one must limit the use of artificial resources like electricity, HVAC, etc. One good way to go about it is to incorporate solar lights in the common areas. One must preserve the remaining site in its natural form, which is open, and not under construction.”

While there are several dos and don'ts to a green building, **Neha Hiranandani, director, House of Hiranandani**, says with a word of caution, “Despite the awareness, green con-

struction practices are not often commercially viable as the cost of resources, including technology, is high. There is a dire need for subsidies to be offered on resources and technologies used for green constructions. Tax exemptions on green buildings can encourage developers and home buyers to opt for environment-friendly construction practices.”

To this **Sahil Jain, founder and principal architect, Morphlab**, says, “Most people mistakenly assume that building green costs more. In fact, there are many ways to ‘green’ a building that don't add to the cost and create savings in the long run. To calculate the true cost of going green, one must consider not just up-front costs, but also the life-cycle costs.” He believes that in subsequent years the cost is compensated by low operating costs because of the ease of which natural materials can be maintained.



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NEHA HIRANANDANI

▼ Developers can maximise profitability as green buildings helps save costs in the long term.

