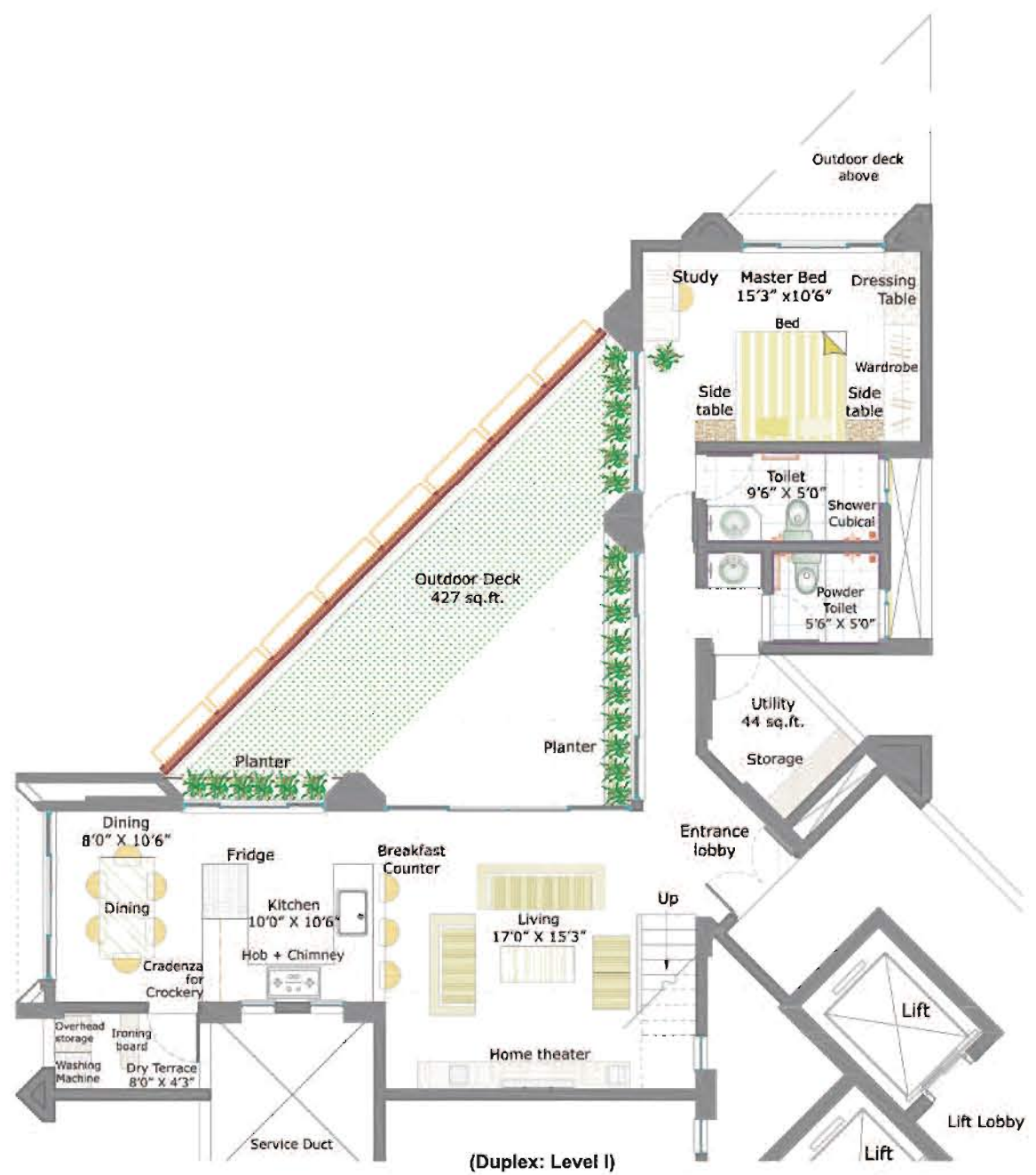




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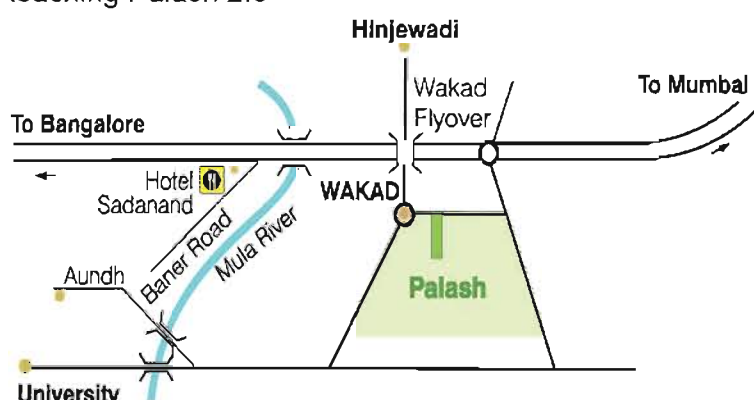


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Green housing scheme launched

Parag Jadhav

BY A STAFF REPORTER
reporters@sakalherald.com

WAKAD: Palash, the green commune, launched a five-star eco-housing scheme here on Friday. The promoters and builders of the scheme, Vilas Javdekar and Associates, claim that it is the first-of-its-kind scheme in the world.

Director General of YASHDA Ratnakar Gaikwad inaugurated the housing project. This is also the first eco-friendly housing project approved by Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation. The Science and Technology Park will monitor the project. Municipal Commissioner Dilip Band, Aditya Muchal and Vijay Dhombre of Knowledge Interlinks Consultancy were present.

"With the increasing urbanisation the pollution is increasing drastically. Eco-housing can help in checking the pollution," Gaikwad said and added, "This project will set a benchmark for the future schemes." Echoing the



Ratnakar Gaikwad inaugurating the eco-friendly housing project, at Wakad on Friday

sentiments Band said, "We need to spread awareness about eco-friendly housing. Solving problems like garbage management and other related issues would be easier."

The scheme has been planned keeping four R's - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Renew - in mind. Climatic

changes and global warming have been considered while providing facilities. Steps like bio-climatic design, solid waste management, solar energy, wind energy, recycling of water and recycling of garbage for energy generation are some of the key features of the scheme. The project may to be completed by 2009.

As soon as you sit down at his table, Aditya Javdekar of developers Vilas Javdekar & Associates places what looks like a crumpled ball of paper before you. You smooth out the ball and confront a list of shocking factoids about the state of the earth today. You're a little nonplussed. 28-year-old Javdekar doesn't look like the quintessential *khadi* clad environmental activist. But then, he isn't. Turns out the crumpled ball is part of a brochure for his company's latest project, Palash, The Green Commune, that's coming up at Wakad.

"You know, any town, metro, or village will have more homes than factories. But even in the US, where people set up green commercial buildings, they haven't really looked at homes. Now for the first time, an organisation in India, the Science and Technology Park of the University of Pune, has taken the initiative to address homes. They are creating eco housing norms for Pune and under that, you have to earn 1000 points to be rated a 5-star project. We have made design and utility provisions so we will be at that five star rating," says Javdekar who reveals that the company headed by his father has been attempting to be innovative for a while now.

"Nothing much has changed in the last 40 years since construction first became a business in India. Compared to other industries, there has been no innovation

your buildings are oriented with the sun path and the wind direction, how your *uttarayan* and *dakshinayan* are... All this contributes largely to how your building exterior shapes up. Bioclimatic architecture, materials and water management are all part of it," says Javdekar who reveals that within Palash "one drop of

ids in it, get mixed. This is directly joined into your drainage, which then goes into the river. So essentially, right now you have a big gutter flowing through the city. The toxicity in the river is so high that it cannot support vegetation or life forms," he says.

"Our idea is that water will be recycled

Aditya Javdekar of Vilas Javdekar & Associates tells Manjula Narayan that eco-friendly housing can make a real difference to the planet



Going GREEN

in construction materials or methodology. We knew that something had to change; that an industry which is a substantial portion of the GDP could not be so inactive in research and development," says Javdekar who adds that he first really thought about eco friendly housing two years ago while attending a seminar at Hyderabad's CII Complex, which, incidentally, is India's first platinum-rated green building. Another seminar addressed by Dr Zende, programme manager for the United Nations Environmental Programme, where he spoke about carbon emissions and their future impact, convinced him once and for all that ecohousing was the way to go.

"It starts with site planning and includes design, architectural layout, how

water will be reused at least two times".

"As a result of global warming and the melting of the glaciers, our water sources are eventually going to shrink. With the population increasing every day, we will need to be a more careful with water. A water management system will ensure that your contact water, which is what you use to bathe or wash your hands, gets reused as flush water.

This flush water will then be sewage treated and used for things like gardening and car washing. So there will be two separate water treatment plants for the grey and black waters," says Javdekar who feels passionately about the current state of the Mula Mutha. "Right now, grey and black water, which is water with sol-

within the complex so that you use less water per person per day. To a large extent, we will also try to use water from the bore well, which will be treated to make it fit to drink and for personal use. That way, you're not putting any pressure on civic amenities and there'll hardly be any drainage let out into the corporation," he says.

And that's not all. Household garbage will be segregated and taken to the plant where it will be converted into biogas, which will then be used as an energy source to run the 'Commune's' water pumps and perhaps even for water heating or cooking.

"It's very easy for us to sell 350 flats in today's market. But the engineering challenge was to make the houses affordable. The common person who is otherwise going to buy a home in that bracket should be able to afford it," says Javdekar who admits that the flats are "about 10 percent costlier than the average".

But that's only at the acquisition level. "If you consider that someone will in a flat for a span of 10 years, then you'll see

that it's going to be much cheaper because maintenance costs will be tremendously lower," he says adding that the most important thing about the project is the fact that the building management systems will operate at "a very subconscious level".

"There might be times when you might not be 100 percent eco friendly. Mistakes do happen and you cannot have regimented army-like living in a common residential complex.

That's why it's important to build eco-friendliness into the subconscious level of the building management system. So if you leave the lights on, it's OK because the energy is from a free source, which is renewable. Really being affordable and putting subconscious eco-friendly systems in place were the two main challenges for us," says Javdekar who believes that the project will attract "people who belong to a particular school of thought".

"That is why we've called it 'Palash, the Green Commune'. We are planning to have a community living kind of ambience. So if you don't subscribe to this school of thought, you cannot be a part of this. Because you cannot be the only one littering around. That's why we're inviting only those people on board who feel as strongly about this as we do," he says. But isn't the construction boom itself adding to the planet's woes?

"See, you cannot do away with construction itself because you need homes. You can't go back to the stone age and start living in caves. What we are trying to find is the best possible or least harmful solution in an urban setting," he says earnestly adding that the eco lounge attached to the project will be the venue for exhibitions on environmental subjects.

"This is a showcase and in such a project, the builder's involvement is much larger and the intent is important. Maybe I'm not the best person to speak to about eco-friendly materials and about how experts are now thinking that bamboo with its tensile strength can be combined with concrete in construction. We have senior technical people to take care of all that. But behind all this the builder's intention needs to be very strong," he says adding "The reason I'm doing this is because I have a two-year-old daughter and I don't want her to go to college in an oxygen bubble... Because that's how it will be in the next 20 years."

So does this mean his homes will be reserved for an intellectual elite, a more evolved species of buyer?

"We're just looking at the globally aware kind of person. You don't need to be a scientist to choose an eco friendly option. If you have children it's a simple answer - yes or no. You can either choose to be eco friendly or not," he says. You can't help but agree.

Eco-housing to witness new benchmarks in city

Sadanand Godse

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Pune: An eco-housing project with 80 per cent green cover, recycling of water, solid and liquid wastes and conservation of electricity was launched at Wakad on Friday. The seven apartment buildings under the Palash Eco Housing Commune will also ensure decent working and living conditions for its construction workers.

The eight-acre seven-building project, being built by city-based Javdekar and Associates, is expected to get the five star rating, the highest rating for ecological-friendly construction awarded by the eco housing cell of the ministry of science and technology.

The rating system prescribes 88 criteria, including use of building material, recycling of waste and working condition for labourers.

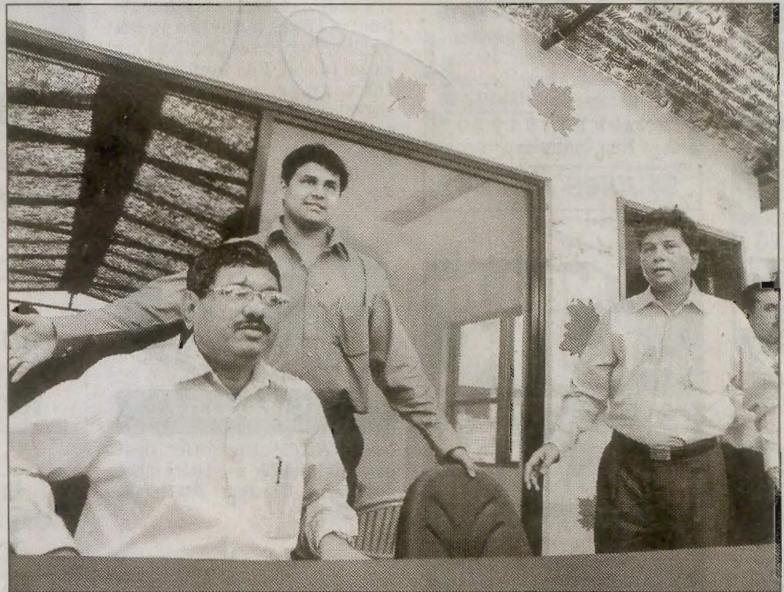
It also specifies acceptable housing for labourers at the site, including crèche for children, educational provision for children of labourers, potable drinking water and insurance cover for accidents, all subject to regular inspections from the survey body.

Mid-2009 is the completion date for the project, which has seven buildings of 55,000 square feet each with 2 BHK, 3 BHK and penthouse accommodations and 80 per cent green cover.

The project was launched by Ratnakar Gaikwad, director-general of the Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration (Yashada), in the presence of Dilip Band, commissioner of the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation and Rajendra Jagdale, director general of the Science and Technology Park of the government of India.

The Palash commune has been designed to provide homes that match with the ethos of harmonising modern living with nature. "The commune's architecture is based on the concept of reduce, reuse, recycle and renew," said Aditya Javdekar, managing director of Javdekar and Associates.

For reducing the use of steel and other renewable and non-renewable materials, the commune will have passive solar architectural design including shedding devices and double walls. Buildings will be appropriately oriented to max-



GREEN SHEEN: From left, Ratnakar Gaikwad, Aditya Javdekar and Dilip Band during the inauguration of the Palash eco-housing project at Wakad on Friday

imise the benefits offered by the sun and wind.

There would be energy-efficient lighting systems and intelligent electrical circuit planning for electricity conservation and sewage treatment system for water conservation, Javdekar said.

Recycling of water and garbage would be done inside the commune and solar and wind energy will be used. The commune, with a final sale value of Rs 125 crore, will have its living area in an elevated vehicle-free zone.

According to Gaikwad, by 2010 the urban population in Maharashtra would cross the 50 per cent mark of the state's total population. "In such a scenario, projects like Palash are worthwhile models for replication."

Yashada will put the eco-housing pattern for documentation for its state institute for urban development projects and submit proposals to all the municipal corporations and municipal councils in the state to adopt such measures for promotion of green buildings.

Band said such projects would get full co-operation from the administration, although he refrained from mentioning any monetary or other tangible aspect. The sector 12 Pimpri-Chinchwad National Township Development Authority, a project taken up on the lines of Nigdi Pradhikaran, would conform to all the eco-housing standards, he added.