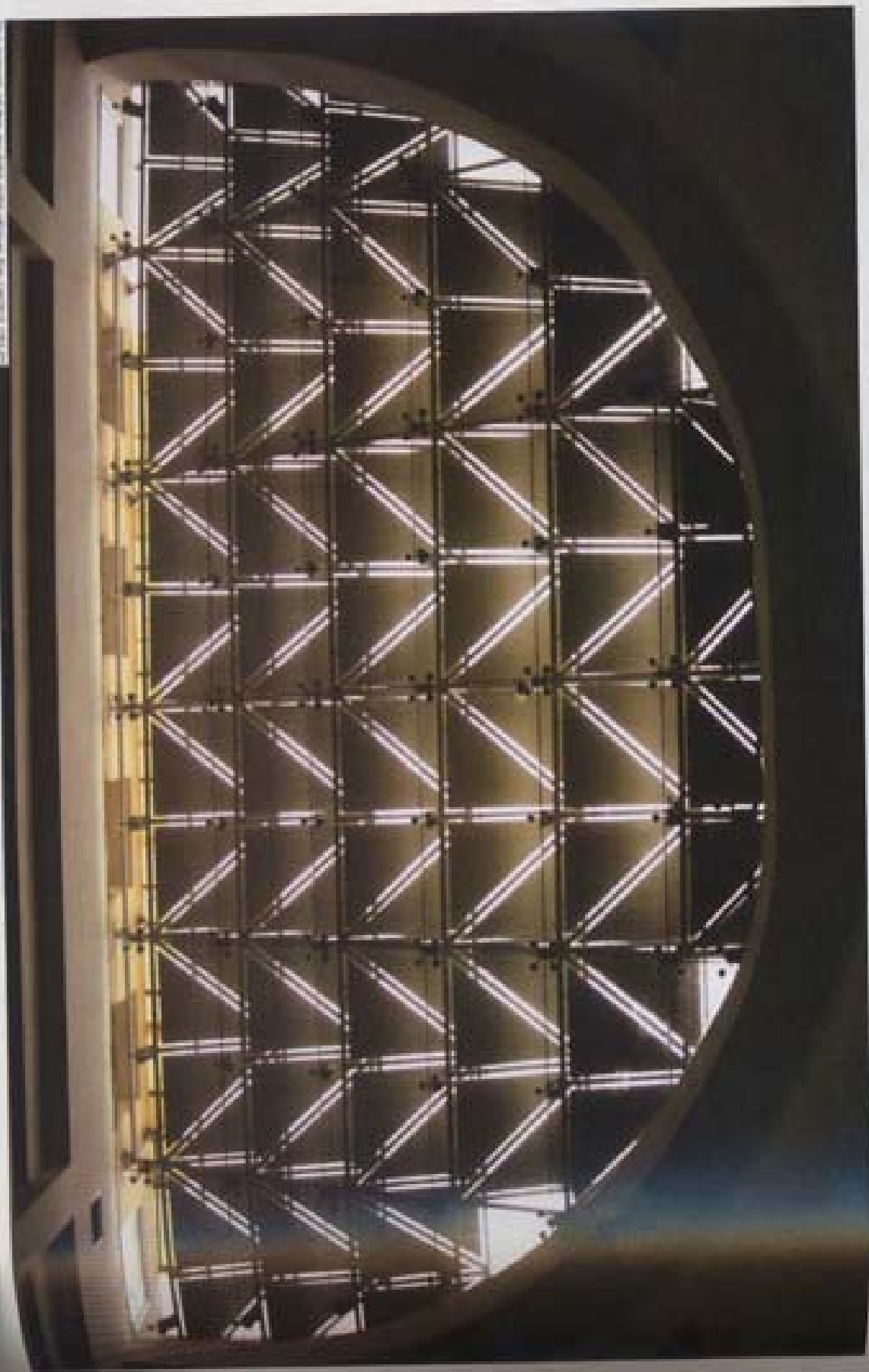


Designs on NATURE

The office of Spectral Services Consulting in Noida is a perfect example of living in harmony with nature.



walk from the sweltering heat of a Delhi August into the cool embrace of a muted office, where all can hear the fast typing sounds and a light whirr of an air conditioner (or a fan). "This is an office of a 150 employees!" I muse. "The reception area is very bright, and I look up expecting to see high intensity halogens and tubes that give me instead a massive light with a variety of panels, streak in the middle of the ceiling, light above the doors." "Dr. Jan will see you now," says one of the reception announcers, making my name. I turn towards the door but before entering the beautiful and clean clock placed besides the door.

Dr. Jan, Chairman and Managing Director of Special Services Consultancy, design and architecture firm, greets me with a wide smile. Dr. Jan is also the former of the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) and a staunch follower of green building, a cause that he has followed for several decades. This is why he naturally flowed down the stairs to the space in wall. "Everything you will see in this building has been designed in a way so as to create the impact on the environment," he says. "From an overview of the structure, you will see that it makes more sense." "From the furniture, which is made of a substitute, to the flooring of bamboo, and the carpeting made of recycled materials, everything is eco-friendly," says Dr. Jan.

"You, let's take a walk," he adds.

Dr. Jan Sheen

At the corner of the third floor of the office is substantially



To the scope to go green is commitment of Dr. Jan

"FROM THE FURNITURE, WHICH IS NOT WOOD BUT A SUBSTITUTE, TO THE FLOORING WHICH IS BAMBOO, AND THE CARPETING WHICH IS DONE FROM RECYCLED MATERIALS, EVERYTHING IS GREEN."

at the floor. As a result, all the floors are brightened by natural sunlight. "The skylight actually acts as a light catcher. It permanently inclined covers minimize direct radiation, and their angles ensure that there is no region of direct sunlight, thereby avoiding the glare on workstations. This also keeps the area cool, in turn reducing the load on air conditioning."

As we walk on, the building reveals large glass windows which are a staple feature of the structure. Dr. Jan enlightens me on how the building, spread over a 16,000 sq. ft., has been constructed to primarily face the North-South direction, the best orientation for the Indian subcontinent. And tapping on the wall, a widely proud Dr. Jan emphasizes that 77 percent of the building material is reused or salvaged. "Like the fly ash that has been used in the construction of the walls," he says. "And the broken china mosaic tiles on the roof and construction debris that has been used as the sub-base for flooring."

Energetic Endeavours

We take the stairway, the walls of which have been designed with actual blueprints, and descend to a lower floor. It is a work area where employees are busy pouring over their designs. This ergonomically designed space has no barricades or cubicles separating workstations, thereby making the space seem large and fluid. Large posters with morale boosting messages stare down from plain, white walls. Dr. Jan tells me it's an attempt by his daughter, Pooja, a fashion designer, to keep the employees charged up.

I am directed towards a chair. As we sit, the light overhead come on automatically. "It's another measure to

usage of energy. The movement-sensitive lights switch on and off as per the presence of a person in the vicinity," he elaborates. I learn that on most working days no artificial lighting is switched on in the building.

Leaving a Mark

Dr. Jan has ensured that every aspect of a green building was incorporated into this office structure, an effort which has earned Spectral Services Company a LEED Platinum by the USGBC (along in 2007) keeping in mind the requirements of a green building. Spectral also ensures that its employees get 30 percent more fresh air than the level prescribed. "High CO2 levels have a negative effect on employee productivity. So, at specific areas in all the floors, there are CO2 sensors installed that check its levels. Whenever a certain high level is detected, ducts release fresh air into the room," explains Dr. Jan.

We move on to survey the tower levels by taking the stairs all the way to the bottom. Dr. Jan clarifies that it's another attempt to reduce the load on energy by not using the elevators – employees there have been asked to take the stairs instead. As we arrive at the party, the area gets more cheery with games and tables and a dashboard 'modified tables and chairs. We walk out to the backyard, and I notice how broken pieces of glass have been used to accommodate flower pots – another example of Spectral's re-use, reuse and recycle mantra.

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Image courtesy of the USGBC, President Durgapriya, Inc.

The backyard houses the rainwater harvesting and sewage treatment plant

-Spectra is a zero water discharge building. Essentially, the rainwater sewage treatment plant helps in recovering the treated water for gardening and in flushing and through the rainwater harvesting, we make sure that we harness water. My son wonders to the bamboo being grown on the side walk. "It's a rapidly renewable resource that we have planted," smiles Dr. Jani

In a country, where the very knowledge of a green building is negligible, Dr. Jani has managed to erect a structure that might as well boogie as a water up call for builders and developers. With all its green facets, Spectra Services Consultancy serves as a perfect example to be emulated. **Q**

Dr. Jani Mathan



The corners of the building from outside. (Left and Right: Dr. Jani)

