

PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

WORLD HOUSING EXHIBITION OPENS TOMORROW

PRESIDENT PERFORMS CEREMONY

New Delhi, January 19, 1954.

The President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, will declare open tomorrow perhaps the most unique exhibition ever when he turns the key and unlocks the door in the main gate of the International Low-Cost Housing Exhibition in New Delhi.

Against the relics of the Purana Qila on Mathura Road a small township of 66 full-scale model houses has sprung up on the exhibition grounds. The massive decaying walls of the Qila, reminders of an age when building materials, time, space and labour were available in abundance, stand out in sharp contrast to the fine, austere exterior of the exhibits, conceived in a period when rising costs have compelled emphasis on utility, conservation of material and scientific planning.

Sponsored by the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply, Government of India, the exhibition is spread over an area of 60 acres at the site of the Railway Centenary Exhibition last year. The Central and State Governments, various foreign Governments, institutions and semi-Government and Indian and foreign commercial concerns, are participating in the exhibition.

FULL-SCALE MODELS

In the Model Houses Section some Central Government Departments have constructed exhibits. The Central Public Works Department has

put up.....

put up 12 houses, including two models of the designs that won the President's Award in the designs-competition organised by the Ministry. The Military Engineering Service and the Northern Railways have built three houses each. The States of Assam, PEPSU, Saurashtra, Madhya Bharat, Rajasthan, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh and Andamans have erected one house each, Hyderabad, Bombay, U.P. and Punjab two each and West Bengal six. Foreign Governments, agencies and concerns have built four houses which include one by Burma and one by the Technical Cooperation Mission. Indian institutions and semi-Government bodies like the Central Building Research Institute, the Forest Research Institute, All India Housing Association, Delhi Improvement Trust, Hindustan Housing Factory and Sindri Fertilisers and Chemicals Ltd. have constructed eleven houses. Fourteen models have been set up by Indian concerns and private individuals.

WIDE RANGE

These model houses cater to all kinds of climatic conditions as well as rural and urban environments. They have been constructed with a view to accommodating a family of average size and their cost varies from about Rs.1,700/- to Rs.5,000/- which is the maximum limit permissible under the terms and conditions of the exhibition.

All conceivable types of cheap materials have been used in the construction of the models. The main emphasis in all the houses is on utility and durability without sacrificing architectural beauty. From dried grass, bamboos, plywood and aluminium the materials pressed into service range to cement, concrete, bricks, cinder blocks and asbestos. The houses have small gardens befitting their costs. In one of the model houses, furniture and furnishings, the design of which won the second prize in the competition are on view.

A replica.....

MAHATMAJI'S HUT

A replica of Mahatma Gandhi's hut at Wardha has been built near the model village centre which provides the rural setting. The centre contains full-size models of a school, which can also be used as a panchayatghar, a first-aid clinic, and a working model of a plant which can convert cowdung into combustible gas for lighting and cooking while retaining its manural properties. A grain store, a co-operative store and a ghani; two wells, one a tube-well for drinking water and the other an ordinary well for general purposes, community showers, lavatories of different designs easy to construct without skilled help, a cattle shed and a compost bin have also been included in the centre. Avenues of gainful employment in villages in relation to rural houses are also on display in a long hut. A village potter, a black-smith, a carpenter and a weaver can be seen actually working here.

The approach to the model houses section is through an imposing gate flanked on either side by two walls fanning out in arcs with sculptures in brick depicting masons and artisans handling various tools of the building profession. Just beyond the main gate is a shell of the globe containing small scale models of housing in various countries.

EDUCATIVE SECTION

In another section, educative models and charts, designs photographs of houses and towns have been displayed. Apart from the Governments of Bombay, Punjab, Madhya Bharat, Himachal Pradesh, PEPSU, Vindhya Pradesh, Bengal, U.P., Madhya Pradesh and Madras, the Governments and concerns of Puerto Rico, Thailand, Finland, British Guiana, Burma, Singapore, Indonesia, Fiji, Austria, Dares-e-salam, Germany, Kenya, the United Kingdom, Ceylon, Italy and Australia are participating in the section. The United Nations has sent material for this section. Some institutions, and semi-Government bodies from India are also taking part.

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In the building and material section exhibits have been sent by the Governments of U.P., Punjab, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh, some Indian and foreign concerns, and semi-Government bodies and institutions. Other sections showing exhibits relate to construction techniques, heavy and light machinery, tools, and domestic services. About 30 Indian firms have put up stalls to display their wares.

TOY TOWN

A novel feature in the amusement park is a toy town. A miniature ancient Rajasthan fort has been built on a dummy hill with a serpentine lake at its foot. A small menagerie of birds and animals specially brought out from the Alipore Zoo, Calcutta, adds to its attractions. In one corner of the serpentine is a boat house restaurant.

The Railway Centenary Exhibition theatre has been renovated and covered. It has a seating capacity of 1,000 on a gentle gradient. Performances by well-known artistes in the country have been arranged and spread over a six-week period. The lighting equipment, provided free by a Madras firm, is the most modern and is being installed for the first time in the country.

Together with the exhibition the United Nations is organising a Seminar on Housing and Community Improvement from January 21. The International Federation of Housing and Town Planning is also holding its first Regional Conference in South East Asia from February 1. A meeting of the ECAFE's Inter-Secretariat Working Party is scheduled to be held next month. International authorities in town planning and housing will be participating in these deliberations which will cover all aspects of housing including materials, techniques and designs. Model houses in the exhibition will also be studied by the experts.

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There is also a stall of the Planning Commission, showing models of the various schemes envisaged under the Five Year Plan. As a visitor enters the stall a big volume of the Plan greets him. Under it revolves a round wooden frame giving all the salient features of the Plan. There is a question and answer gadget. Just press a button, and the answer will be flashed across a glass plate. Besides panels of photographs, there are three dimensional charts showing the targets and progress so far. Models of the Bhakra Dam and the Sindri Fertiliser Factory have also been included.

Standing guard on the entire exhibition is the pylon. On its apex is the revolving globe which will be lighted at night. At the base the four sides of the pylon's trough are decorated by murals.

GT/KP

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