

JANASEVANA HOUSE

SLA ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

By Archt. D. P. Chandrasekara & Archt. Premali Paranagama, University of Moratuwa

'Janasevana House' competition was conducted by "The Sri Lanka Architect" as one of the means to achieve the objectives of the SLIA's commitment to community architecture in 1991/'92.

The competition focused its attention on

- a. Creating an awareness of architecture and the architectural profession and the current housing programme in Sri Lanka.
- b. Educating the general public to appreciate good architectural creations.
- c. Developing a generic house form (a prototype or prototypes) suitable for low income family groups in Sri Lanka which could be adopted with regional and personal modifications.
- d. Promoting effective systems of space utilisation for low income family groups of Sri Lanka.

The competition was in three categories viz.

Category I

An Essay in Sinhala, Tamil or English for those under 20 years of age. This was directly related to the public awareness programme of SLIA which has identified the need for greater and deeper public sensitivity to the housing issue of this country. It also attempted to highlight the need for greater concern by professionals in the housing programme.

In particular, the essay competition could help to develop and recognize the intellectual capacity of the younger generation to grapple with the issues connected to built environment.

The topics given for the essay were as follows :

- 1.1 The housing problem of Sri Lanka is not only a matter of the number of houses required.
- 1.2 Man did not create architecture only for shelter.
- 1.3 Architecture like drama must have meaning as well as providing aesthetic satisfaction.
- 1.4 Architecture is essentially different to building construction.

Category II

The design of a low cost house for a Janasaviya recipient. This category of the competition was aimed at finding suitable design solutions for the low-income groups, which can be adopted in the ongoing housing development programme.

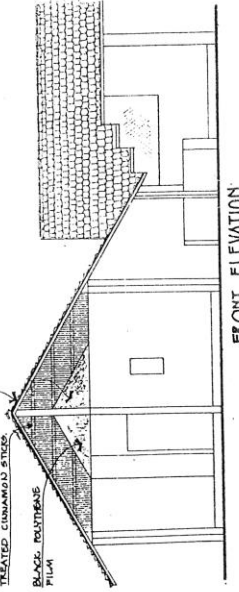
At present nearly all the houses of the low-income category are designed by users themselves which may at best give what they prefer. This is a far cry from what is correct for them as well as others and the physical context. The intention of the competition was to identify, a generic house form or forms which low-income groupers could adopt in their house constructions with modifications to suit regional, climatic or personal variations.

Category III

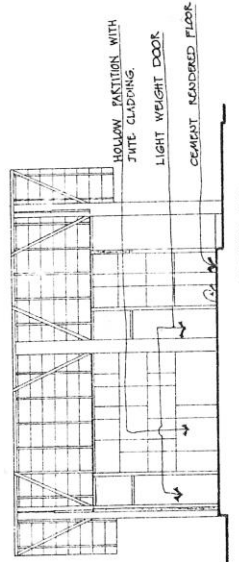
The design of a Interior layout of a room. It has been observed that users frequently make modifications in low and middle income group housing especially to the interior lay out. This problem arises mainly due to the lack of awareness of ways of effectively using the available internal spaces for different activities. The alterations cost money, creating unnecessary burdens to persons with limited income and also exhaust the limited resources of a developing country.

The competitors were to select a house from any of the electoral housing schemes or model villages. In this house a minimum of two spaces and the activities performed within them had to be identified. The competitors were asked to redesign these spaces for better space utilization. This included the design of interior and furniture.

CALCUT THIS ROOF-FITTED IN
PIPED VENTILATOR IN
TREATED CUNNINGHAM'S STEEL
BLACK ROASTERS
FILM



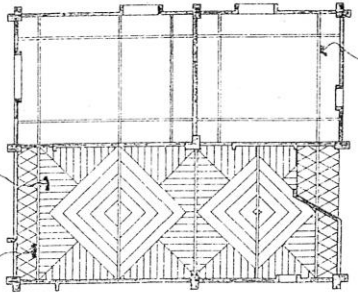
FRONT ELEVATION



SECTION X-X

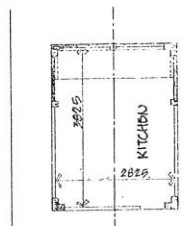
HOLLOW PARTITION WITH
FIVE CLADDING
LIGHT WEIGHT DOOR
CEMENT RENDERED FLOOR

10x10 COCONUT RAFTER STIFFENED FOR
WALLS, ALSO SUPPORTING THE LATTICE
CEILING OF TREATED CUNNINGHAM STEEL.
CEILING FINEL AT 3000 FROM FINISHED
FLOOR LEVEL



10x10 COCONUT RAFTER (STIFFENED) FOR
WALLS, ALSO USED TO SUPPORT WALL
PRELIVING AND CORROD IN ROOMS.

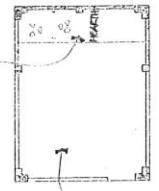
CEILING PLAN



COLLAPSE DINING TABLE WHICH
WHEN NOT IN USE WILL BE A LOW
DIVIDER FOR THE ROOM AND WHEN
NEEDED CAN BE LIFTED BY HAND.
THE DOTTED LINES AND LEGS PANEL
SUPPORTED ON WELDED LEGS.

COB DUNG AND CLAY MIXTURE
LAID ON WELLS COMPACTED
HARDWARE FILL.

CLAY RENDERINGS ON COMPACTED
DRY EARTH FILL SUPPORTED ON
BAMBOO FRAMEWORK.

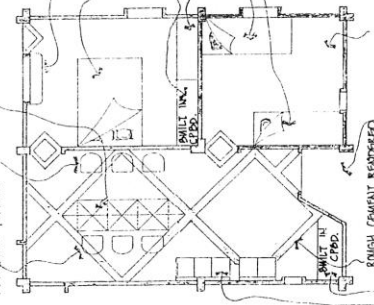


PATIO FLOOR
PAVED IN 90 THICK
COPPY CUT TANK SLABS
DRESSING TABLE - TIED TO WALL

BED - RIDDERED COIR MATTRESS
ON BRICK FRAME AND TIMBER BATTENS
CLIPPARD UNDERNEATH

CLOTHES HANGER

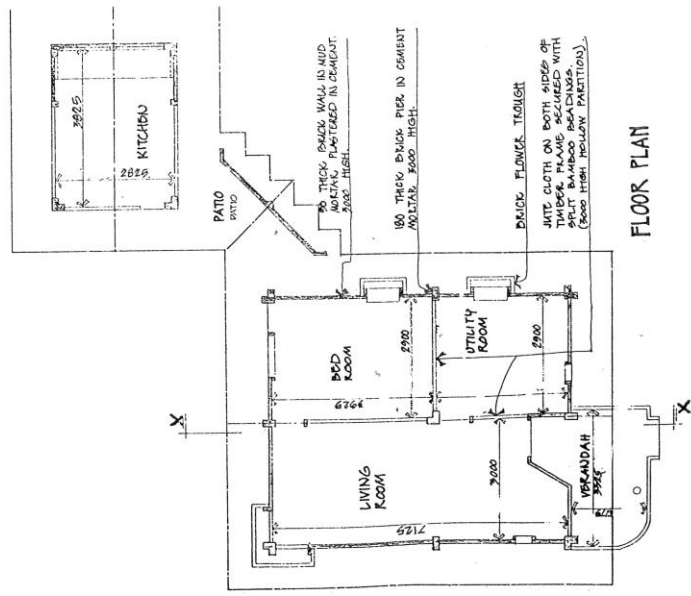
COLLAPSE BEDS HINGED
ON WALL



FURNITURE ARRANGEMENT
AND FLOOR
RENDERING PLAN

ROUGH CEMENT RENDERED
STRIP DESIGN ON FLOOR.

BUILT IN BRICK SEATS WITH
FOAM RUBBER CUSHIONS



FLOOR PLAN

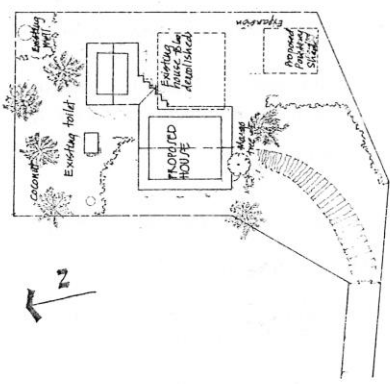
PATIO

90 THICK BRICK WALL IN MID
WALL PORTAL IN CORNER
2000 HEIGHT

180 THICK BRICK PIER IN CEMENT
MULTIPLY 2000 HEIGHT

DRIVE FLOORS TROUGH

JUTE CLOTH ON BOTH SIDES OF
TIMBER FRAME PARTITIONS WITH
WOODEN PANELS (GOOD HIGH HOLLOW PARTITIONS)



SITE LAYOUT
PLAN

JANASEVANA HOUSE : 2ND PRIZE
WINNER : DILAN TIRIMANNA

Chitrani
Ritaula,
Kandana.

THE RESULTS OF JANASEVANA HOUSE COMPETITION

JANASEVANA HOUSE : 2 ND PRIZE WINNER : DILAN TIRIMANNA

Dilan Tirimanna is a young Chartered Architect practising on his own. Having obtained the first degree from the Moratuwa University in 1983, he completed his academic career by obtaining his M.Sc. (Arch.) in 1986. His home town is Kandana where he resides with his wife. He is a past pupil of St. Joseph's College.

The Entry

The house is designed for a family of four comprising of the grandmother, father, mother and a 6 year old daughter. The designer apparently senses a lack of motivation on the part of the father resulting in this state of affairs in the family; being Janasaviya recipients who are the poorest of the poor. As described by the designer, the house to be built is an attempt to instill this absent sense of confidence and to induce motivation.

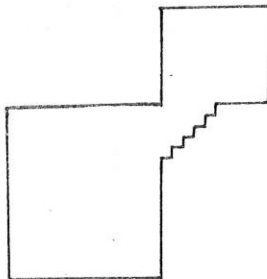
Other than for exceptional situations in general this problem sensed by one designer could be or should probably be the problem area common to all Janasaviya recipients. The poorest remains the poorest through lack of motivation, absence of self-confidence and the like, rather as a helpless victim of fate. His Excellency the President thus has begun to instill this confidence and pave the way through Janasaviya. Better food, clothing and shelter received would give them a taste of what life could offer; and then shown the opportunities at reach through self-employment. The family is sustained for two years, showing glimpses of a better life which they have to achieve through their own determination. Janasaviya only supports this beginning of a long path.

Architecture could also support this theme. The house should only be the core; a beginning like what Janasaviya is all about, a glimpse of the better "comfortable" shelter. The house would "grow" when the family "grows" and

complete when the family finds completion.

Comment

The concept could lead to generate a prototype with a core of the basic facilities, a cooking space, sleeping and living area and toilet which could grow and develop and extend as the situation of the family improves and develops for the better. This has been the attempt of the designer, when he mentions that the whole site is considered as their house and the building being only the core. "It is the shell which provides security and protection but the activities are not restricted to this space."



By placing the building diagonally across the site it facilitates this idea by providing a private external space as well as a public external space. The building could subsequently grow into these spaces. Although the design provides the basic areas in terms of facilities, if it was more flexible in its usage (rather than a definite demarcation of boundaries of a rectangle) where one external and internal spaces flowed into one another, the outdoor space would have been more effective in use.

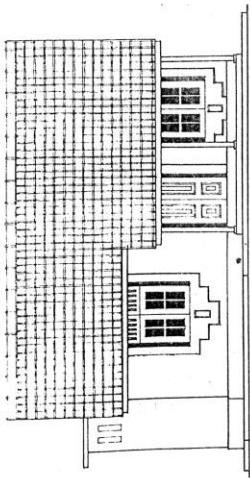
The patio attempts to capture this idea, but its relationship to the other internal spaces could have been much more effective.

The way that two gable roofs are joined together is noteworthy. The solution employs a gable roof which is less costly (while also strengthening the feeling of incompleteness) and further explores methods of connecting the two roofs.

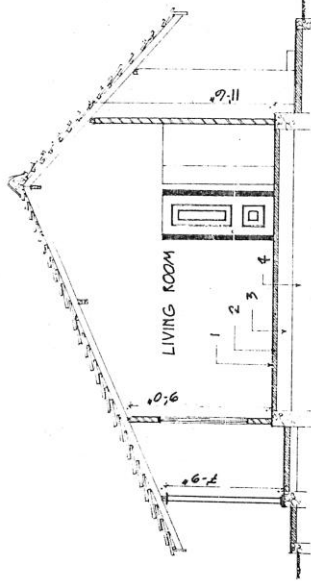
As this staggered area is proportionately small in relation to the larger rectangular block, one has second thoughts about its visual pleasantness.

An attempt to deviate from the conventional attitudes of making a low cost house is evident. Cinnamon sticks, polythene films, cloth partitions in bamboo frames, coconut rafters have been used with aesthetic sense while serving a functional or structural purpose. Doors and windows are hinged reducing the cost of the frame, and have been designed aesthetically using materials locally available at a minimum cost. However, more careful thought in articulating the elevations, specially the openings and proportions would have produced a more aesthetically pleasing facade.

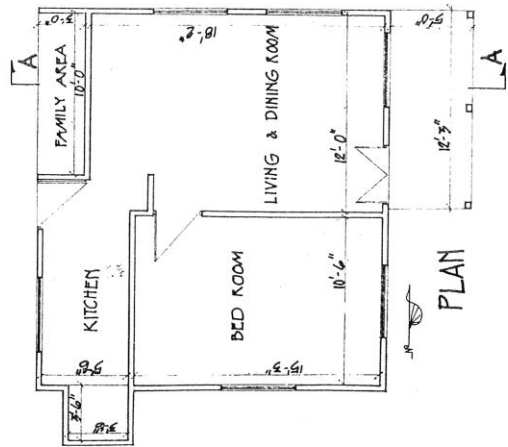
Spans have been kept low to a maximum of 3m, enabling economical roof framework thus facilitating a low cost. 125 thick non-load bearing walls are sandwiched between 225 x 225 brick pier reducing the cost of the superstructure while contributing to a economical substructure, if and when necessary.



ELEVATION TO ROAD

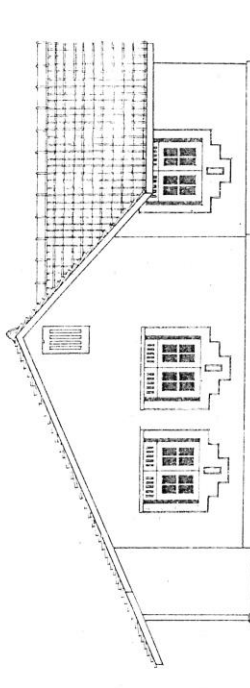


SECTION - A-A

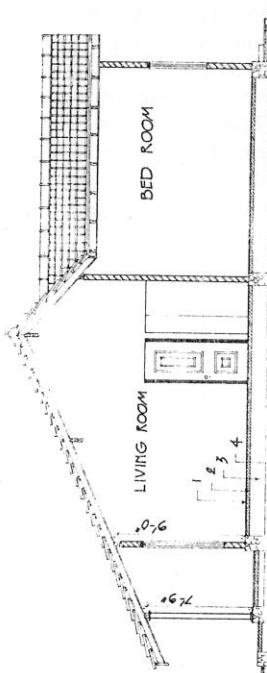


PLAN

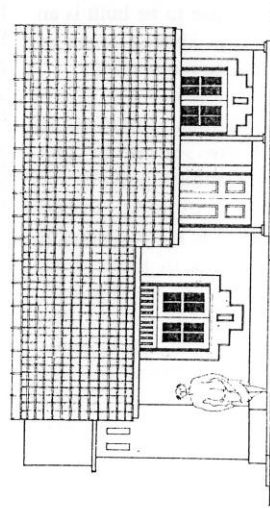
JANASEVANA HOUSE
STAGE I



SIDE ELEVATION

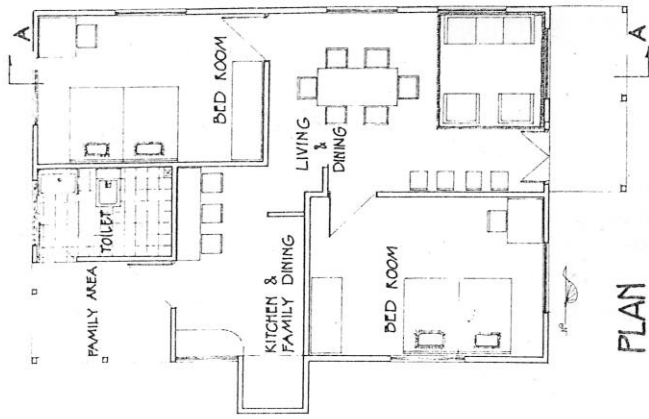


SECTION - A-A



ELEVATION TO ROAD

JANASEVANA HOUSE
STAGE II



PLAN

JANASEVANA HOUSE :
Merit Award

Winner :
Ajith Nishendra Karunasena
Dept. of Architecture
University of Moratuwa

JANASEVANA HOUSE : MERIT AWARD WINNER : AJITH NISHENDRA KARUNASENA

Ajith Karunasena is a sixth year architecture student at University of Moratuwa. He completed his first degree; B.Sc. (B.E.) in 1988. Ajith's home town is Hikkaduwa and did secondary schooling at Dharmasoka Vidyalaya, Ambalangoda.

The Entry –

The house is designed for a fishing family at Panadura, consisting of four members, husband, wife, and two children.

Considering the low affordability factor of the family, the house is designed to be constructed in two stages. Stage I consists of a verandah, living dining area, and a kitchen. Stage II construction work provides an additional bed room, a toilet,

and a family area at rear. It also makes the kitchen larger allowing family dining activity to take place within it. The stage I structure has a gable roof. The stage II roof will be joined to the above with two sloping valley gutters.

Comment

The competitor has attempted to create geometrically completed built forms in both stage I and stage II.

However, it would have been better if the simplicity and the geometrically completed form of the roof had not been disturbed by the introduction of valley gutters in stage II.

JANASEVANA HOUSE : MERIT AWARD WINNER : MADHAVA PREMARATNE

Madhava is a 3rd year architecture student at University of Moratuwa. His home town is Narammala and completed his secondary education at Royal College Colombo. Madhava has made a name as an architectural cartoonist.

The Entry

The proposed house is designed for a family living in a village near Narammala. The selected family consists of a grandmother (70 yrs), her son (40 yrs), her daughter-in-law (37 yrs), one grandson (6 yrs) and two grand-daughters (4 and 2 yrs). The only bread-winner of the family; the son, works as an agricultural labourer.

The proposed house has a verandah, multipurpose hall, kitchen and a room. The gable calicut-tiled roof with low eaves blends well with the surrounding rural neighbourhood. The 'L' shaped front verandah, well as a social gathering space.

Comment

The competitor has attempted to create cost-effective architecture by designing building and furniture elements for multiple functions, such as window sash for a table, living-room chairs for beds etc.

The design intends to use traditional building construction methods such as rammed clay walls, windows with 'Kitul' bars etc. However, it would have been better if an effort had been made to improve these construction techniques to suit present conditions.

The total estimated cost of the house is Rs. 20,000/- ■



Panel of Judges and the sponsors of Janasevana Architectural Competition selecting the winning entries