

MIMAR

ARCHITECTURE
IN DEVELOPMENT





One of the houses designated to be preserved, saved from the bulldozers just in time.

rules must be legislated. The legislation will aim at encouraging local individual initiatives yet will also include clauses which will allow the City to intervene if necessary.

Update

At least the destruction has ceased. The planning team, headed by John Warren, is trying its best to conserve some of the buildings which are about to collapse. The government has instituted emergency action to implement the proposals and carry out studies that are required to further develop the programme for the area. MIMAR is watching the progress with interest and will report on the situation again in the future.

Chikal: Vault Technology Introduced

The Development Workshop, an organisation involved in indigenous rural and urban development, has been working in Chikal, Niger since November 1980, implementing a builder's training project to introduce improved mud-brick vault technology into the region. The project was initiated at the request of the Niger Institute for the Study and Application of Integrated Development.

The rural buildings of the area, are traditionally constructed of mud-brick walls and floors, with thatched roofs. The thatch is becoming a scarce resource and has the disadvantage of being both flammable and liable to harbour vermin. It also needs to be

replaced regularly. The improved mud-brick vault technology overcame these problems while remaining affordable, local resource based and easily assimilable into low income communities.

Workshop member, Allan Cain, trained four rural builders who had no previous experience and with the help of six workers constructed a small literacy centre using the new technology. The speed with which Cairo taught the builders — a mere two weeks — demonstrates that this approach expanded into a regional, or even national, training programme, builders across the country could be quickly trained in the technique.

The Niger project is the third Development Workshop training programme it has undertaken in the Third World since 1973. The Workshop is currently consultant to the Angolan Government on local resource based construction and is setting up an 'Institute for Popular Housing'.

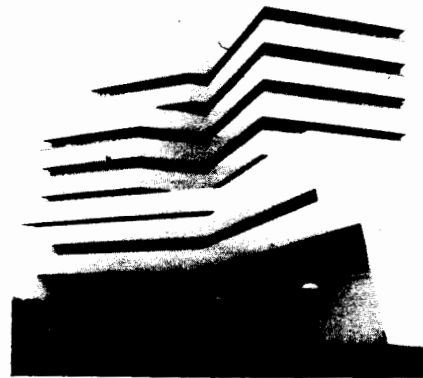


The recently constructed Literacy Centre was built in three weeks by locally trained builders. It covers an area 5m x 10m and uses mud-brick vault technology. The taller vault at the left, behind the entrance, is a wind-catcher. Photo: Allan Cain/Development Workshop.

Jakarta: The ASEAN Secretariat Building

The ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) Secretariat building was opened by President Suharto of Indonesia in June this year.

The building, constructed in four stages over a three-year period, was financed by the Indonesian Government. The building costs escalated greatly from the original estimates so that the final costs came to be



Rp. 6 billion (approximately US\$9.6 million).

The ten storey structure is the creation of Suyudi of PT Gubah Laras, which designs many of Indonesia's embassies abroad. The building was designed and constructed before the present law limiting government buildings to eight storeys.

The total covered area is 13,815 square metres which includes a large basement. The building uses a conventional column and beam structure and most materials are from within Indonesia, except for glass (imported from Japan), the toilet fixtures and the wall paper. The construction company was rather proud that it was able to use a twenty year old crane to carry out the work.

The office has all the conveniences associated with 'modern' building. There is a large conference room set up for a four-language interpreter system. The building is fully centrally air-conditioned but has pivoted windows, openable in case of a power failure. There is also a back-up electricity generator. The water is stored in two tanks and is pressure circulated. There is even the usual piped music which can however be controlled in each office.

This building is the largest and one of the most modern to be constructed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and is styled after many European buildings. At present it is very under-utilised, but perhaps as the ASEAN countries expand their common activities it will be more fully occupied. It is a pity that the building is only a symbol of "modernity" and the cooperation between countries but bears no relation to the regional architecture of ASEAN.