

# THE MAN WHO DRAWS INDIA

**A**rchitect Hafeez Sorab Contractor set up his practice in 1982 with a dedication to design excellence, and sophistication in building technology. Today, Hafeez Contractor heads the largest architectural firm in India. He considers himself to be the most misunderstood architect. "I have often been labelled as a rich man's architect. The reality is I give appropriate designs for the purpose it is intended, from luxury residential to rural primary school," he said.

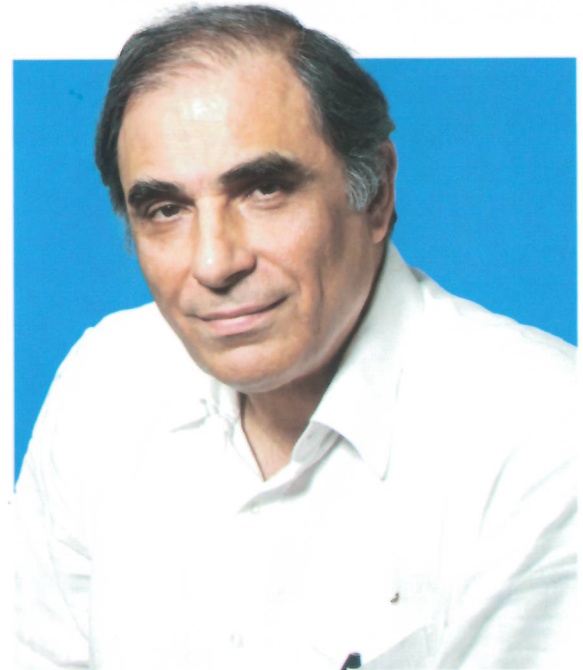
Apart from commercial construction projects, Hafeez Contractor has worked on solutions for the issue of slums by investing in research and conceptualizing ways to positively impact the urban environment with proposals for public spaces and slum redevelopment.

Architect Contractor is passionate about social housing. He strongly advocates vertical and compact cities for judicious land use, lesser inter-city travel and quality of life. "As a society we are moving away from our traditional ways of prudent use of resources. Same trend is evident in city planning," he expressed.

Apprising on what the correct approach should be, Contractor said, "We should be retrofitting the infrastructure of existing cities and developing high density areas around the cities

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*Recipient of India's third highest civilian award - Padma Bhushan, architect Hafeez Contractor has impacted the skyline of much of the built environment of metropolitan India, with an unmistakable identifying stamp. According to him land is the most precious commodity which we have not inherited but have borrowed from our children.*



*Architect Hafeez  
Contractor  
Founder, AHC*

connected to the main city via high level roads, underground tubes and public transport." Architect Hafeez Contractor suggests modifying floor space index (FSI) rules by city planners to coordinate the housing requirement and infrastructure development.

He said, "To maintain a balance between increasing population and limited land resources, high density urban cities are a must. The way we are planning by limiting FSI and restricting height of structure, we are not only destroying the agricultural land but also within cities increasing commuting distances and reliance on automobiles. The city planners in India need to make plans backed by scientific data. The cities should be planned not for today but next 50 years."