

# No room for pests

Pest control is a largely ignored part of construction activity.

## V. Sajeev Kumar

Pest control measures, lesser known in the construction sector, are an important prerequisite in eliminating the danger of termite attacks to buildings, especially wooden structures.

There are various methods of controlling pests, including the application of residual sprays, misting, fogging, baiting, larviciding, dusting, foaming, netting, prevention, exclusion, sanitation and treatments.

According to Mr Sam Ea-

saw, Managing Director, Rentokil India Pvt Ltd, a leading pest control service provider, it is essential for construction sites to maintain a high standard of hygiene and sanitation to prevent the transmission and spread of infectious diseases within the premises.

## PREVENTIVE MEASURE

Pest control in the pre-construction stage is essential to keep termites out. It is a preventive measure to ensure that there will be no termite attacks later on. Usually the presence of termites is only noticed when extensive damage is done already and this is where Rentokil has a role to play, with its different packages, with warranty of three, five and 10 years, he said.

Mr Easaw, who was here for a visit, said the pest control market in India is estimated at around Rs 700 crore, with a growth rate of around 20 per cent annually.

According to him, the market in Kerala offers good potential with a constant rise in disposable incomes and awareness of the negative and unhealthy effects of pests. The tropical climate in Kerala is also conducive for pest species, so naturally the risk of infestation is high. The Indian market in general is highly fragmented, with a large number of small players, he added.

Residual treatment and spraying are applied to walls to efficiently control ants, cockroaches, flies and mosquitoes.

There are very efficient baiting systems, such as gel treatment for cockroaches which perish by eating the gel. Another method is trapping, which is resorted to control rodents and flies.

Subterranean termites are among the most damaging pests in India as their attack from within the structure damages wooden fittings beyond control.

The company is focusing on raising public awareness about the harmful effects of pests.

## AT WORKPLACE TOO

Workplaces are another area where pests can be a menace. Employees may be subjected to certain health risks, such as rabies, Lyme Disease and par-

asites if they come in contact with live or dead pests, or their waste products.

Rentokil takes care of these aspects for clients that include five-star hotels in Kochi, Kozhikode and Thiruvananthapuram, IT/ITES companies, catering centres, shipyards, retail outlets, commercial offices and residential clients.

The company, which is in the field of pest control for more than 80 years, claims that the chemicals it uses are human friendly and have minimum environmental impact, but at the same time act efficiently on the pests.

Pest control, while ensuring a healthier lifestyle for people, also ensures protection from diseases such as malaria and dengue, he says.