

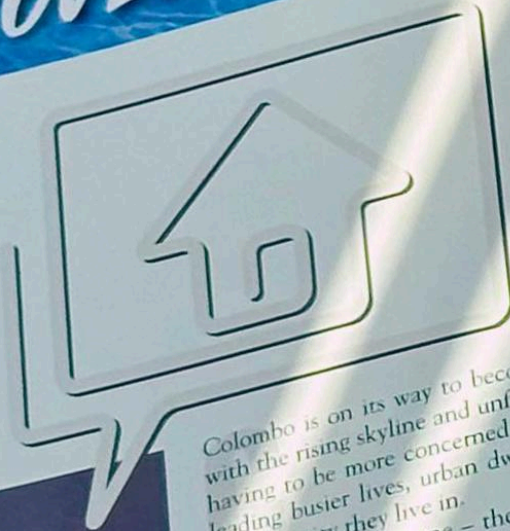
HIGH-RISE LIVING



URBAN MAKEOVER

High-rises are transforming lifestyles in Sri Lanka's commercial capital

Mihindu Keerthiratne
in conversation with
Ruwandi Perera



Colombo is on its way to becoming a major city in South Asia, with the rising skyline and unfolding landscapes come with having to be more concerned about the environment. Leading busier lives, urban dwellers are gradually changing with the city they live in.

Mihindu Keerthiratne – the renowned architect and founder of Mihindu Keerthiratne Associates – observes how the pace of progress of large-scale development projects. He discusses how a new lifestyle must now be instilled in Sri Lankans.

Q: How are Sri Lankans adapting to high-rise living?

A: Generally and traditionally, Sri Lankans are not used to high-rise living. Land prices are skyrocketing especially in urban areas. In the acquisition of land, people must also spend on construction. It is a matter of fortune – although that would depend on the individual's fortune.

There are positives to living in a house with your family. You are literally closer to the environment. But its negative side is the face of social issues like burglary.

Apartments are more cost-effective since the cost is spread across the units. The other positives include amenities like pools, security, the convenience of managing your property and a freer lifestyle.

Although there may be disadvantages to living in high-rises, and even children are adapting easily.

We are in the process of reaching the same stage as Singapore and Hong Kong where high-rise living is on its way to emulating them, and people will do so out of compulsion.

