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EARTHQUAKE AND BLAST RESISTANT REINFORCED CONCRETE BUILDINGS FOR SRI LANKA

THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL
ENGINEERING IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF
Master of Engineering in
Structural Engineering Design

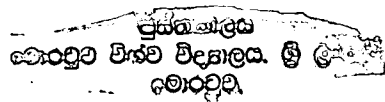


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SRI LANKA

JUNE 2001

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ABSTRACT

Earthquakes and blasts are generally considered as unlikely events by many professionals involved in the building industry. However, in many instances, such optimistic views are shown to be wrong at a great loss of human life and property. In many earthquakes and blasts, most of the deaths have occurred due to collapsing of buildings than due to any direct effect of the earthquakes or blasts.

Therefore, it is of primary importance to ensure that buildings will not collapse which requires a considerable enhancement in the ductility of the building. However, even properly designed ductile buildings can suffer extensive damage if there are certain undesirable features. Thus, it is suggested to include earthquake and blast resistance principles at three different levels; those are the use of desirable structural forms, building planning provisions and the improvement of ductility through detailing. The steps that can be taken with respect to these three areas are investigated by comparing the desirable practices with those presently adopted. The methods for adopting such improvements to reinforced concrete buildings constructed in Sri Lanka are determined with case studies. It is shown that most of the measures taken to enhance the earthquake resistance could also enhance the blast resistance. However, some other measures would need a compromise. These compromising solutions are also adopted.

One of the primary reasons for not promoting earthquake and blast resistant construction by engineers and the clients is the cost involved. Therefore, the likely extra cost involved in adopting the recommended practices was determined. It is shown that the extra cost of adopting earthquake resistant details would be about 2 % of the total cost of the project. When blast resistance is also included, it would be about 2.5 % of the total cost. This indicates that it is worth adopting earthquake and blast resistant details for the government buildings such as administrative offices, schools, hospital buildings etc and also large public buildings such as supermarkets, banks, shopping malls, etc. built in future. Such measures would be useful in minimising the destruction and the economic loss that would occur in such events.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to the Vice Chancellor, Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Head department of Civil Engineering for granting me an opportunity to follow the M.Eng. Degree on Structural Design. I wish to thank Dr (Mrs) M.T.P. Hettiarachchi for the encouragement given as the co-ordinator of research projects.

The staff members of Structural Engineering Division of Department of Civil Engineering who worked with much dedication during the lecture series is thanked with gratitude. The knowledge gained through lectures were of immense benefit to the research work presented in this thesis.

My special gratitude to Dr. M.T.R.Jayasinghe who has given me valuable advise and guidance from the initial stage to complete this research.

I wish to thank the librarian and other staff members of the library. The staff of the computer division helped in many ways during this research. There are many others who helped a lot in this project. I regret my inability to thank them individually.

It is my hope that the research presented in this thesis would be beneficial to many engineers and would serve a useful purpose.

D. F. U. Perera.

June 2001

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