US researchers design tsunami-resistant house

BOSTON: US researchers have designed a house they say is better able to withstand a tidal wave and are planning to build 1,000 of them in Sri Lanka, one of the countries hit by last year's deadly tsunami. Carlo Ratti, a teacher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was at a wedding in Sri Lanka when the tsunami struck the region last December. When he returned to MIT, he worked on the design of the "tsunami-safe(r) house" with colleagues at his school, Harvard University and British engineering firm Buro Happold. "The goal was low-tech construction with high-tech design," Ratti, a civil engineer who heads MIT's SENSEable City Laboratory, told Reuters on Thursday. "We came up with a design that is five times stronger than traditional (Sri Lankan) houses." reuters