



## INTACH

DELHI CHAPTER

Weekly News Clippings – 106

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### Editor's Note

*'Yamuna no better than drain'*

*Frequent flights 'shake' Qutub*

*Greens see red over DTC depot*

*"Yamuna Cleaning to take seven-eight years"*

*Delhi will have its own state bird, animal, flower*

*DDA razes illegal parts of mosque raises local ire*

*Lodi era arch being used for new construction*

*Court asks MCD to restore marriage hall*

#### **'YAMUNA NO BETTER THAN DRAIN'**

It's official. All those accusations about the failure of the government to clean up the Yamuna were acknowledged by the CM herself on Tuesday. Answering a question during the budget session, Dikshit admitted that despite the crores of rupees that have gone into cleaning the river Yamuna, "there has been no result". And while she assured that beautification of the riverbank would happen in time for Commonwealth Games 2010, she admitted there was little chance of the river being ready for the Games. "There is a lot that needs to be done to clean the river, which requires time, at least seven eight years," added Dikshit. The statement came after BJP MLA S P Ratawal sought to know whether the Yamuna riverbank would be developed for the Games as well as when the treatment plants would start functioning. The question certainly seemed to touch a nerve with the CM, who, perhaps for the first time, openly acknowledged that the government's much-touted Yamuna Action Plan I and II had failed to address the problem, despite almost Rs 500 crore having been spent on the project. "It is shameful that the Yamuna is no better than a dirty drain right now," added the CM. Dikshit added that proposals to use the Seine model — the river flowing through French capital Paris — was not possible in Delhi, as there had been a tremendous amount of unplanned growth in the city. Claiming that the "foreign technology" would need to be customized for the city's needs, Dikshit added that the beautification of the riverbank would, however, be on track for 2010. The city though will have to wait for the river Yamuna to get back to its pristine self for another few years. "The sanitation situation has worsened in the past few years with the growth in population, and that has added to the problem," added Dikshit.

#### **SOURCE**

**24<sup>th</sup> June 2009, Times of India**

#### **FREQUENT FLIGHTS 'SHAKE' QUTUB**

A temporary bus depot being planned on the Yamuna riverbed close to the Commonwealth Games Village has met with stiff resistance from certain environment groups. Citing the L-G's moratorium on further construction activity on the riverbed, the group claimed that allowing even something temporary will open the gates for more such projects to come up on the floodplain. The depot will be developed by the Delhi Transport Corporation

It will be allotted to it by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) on a temporary basis and will have to be vacated within a week of the end of the Games. The project, strangely, has been cleared by the L-G, though on the condition that no permanent construction is allowed at the site. "Even though they are saying that no permanent structures will come up, the riverbed does not have the type of soil that will allow parking unless it is concretized. Once the project is cleared, anything can be done there on the pretext of the Games. When there are alternative sites available in and around the Village, why is the riverbed being thrown open to this kind of activity? This will also set a bad precedence for other agencies who will all rush for so called temporary set-ups on the riverbed," said Manoj Misra, convenor, Yamuna Jiye Abhiyan. However, DTC officials maintain they will not be deviating from the conditions set out for the depot. "It is being allotted to us on a temporary basis so there is no question of us not vacating the place after the Games. Only bare minimum work will take place there that includes compaction of ground for parking, bringing in a CNG pipeline for fuelling and some temporary structures," said a senior DTC official. The conditions laid out for the temporary bus depot include no permanent construction. The land will remain with DDA and will only be licensed to DTC till a week after the Games are over.

**SOURCE**

**24<sup>th</sup> June 2009, Times of India**

**GREENS SEE RED OVER DTC DEPOT**

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**SOURCE**

**24<sup>th</sup> June 2009, Times of India**

**"YAMUNA CLEANING TO TAKE SEVEN-EIGHT YEARS"**

Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit told the Delhi Assembly on Tuesday that the Yamuna Action Plan I and II have not yielded any tangible result despite crores of rupees having been spent on cleaning the river. She admitted that the project would take atleast seven to eight years to complete. The chief Minister made the statement in response to a special mention by BJP leader S.P.Ratawal who had stated that only 500 km of the 1,375km length of the Yamuna was dirty and Delhi, through which 2 percent of river passes, contributes 80% of the pollutions. Also, he lamented that while 18 effluent treatment plants were to be

set up to intercept the sewer the sewer waste flowing into the river, they have not been completed. Ms. Dikshit candidly admitted that the pace of growth of Delhi had been so rapid and unauthorized and unplanned structures had come up so fast that there was no ready solution for handling the garbage and faecal waste generated by them.

**SOURCE**

**24<sup>th</sup> June 2009, Hindu**

#### **VK SLAMS CM'S REMARK ON YAMUNA**

Condemning the statement of Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit that the cleaning of Yamuna shall take eight to ten years, the leader of opposition, Prof V K Malhotra, today said that despite spending Rs.2,000 crore on the Yamuna cleaning campaign, it has been reduced to a dirty drain. In fact for the last three elections, the Congress government has been constantly promising to clean the Yamuna but nothing has happened so far. And yesterday's statement of Mrs. Dikshit is nothing but a breach of people's trust", Prof Malhotra said adding that sports persons from across the world will come to the Game Village at the bed of the Yamuna, so it is the responsibility of the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, to chalk out a plan to clean up the river before the Games.

**SOURCE**

**25<sup>th</sup> June 2009, Statesman**

#### **DELHI WILL HAVE ITS OWN STATE BIRD, ANIMAL, FLOWER**

Delhi will soon have its state bird, animal, tree and flower. INTACH, on the directions of the Delhi government, is working on the selection of species for making it a state symbol. The intach suggested Indian Peafowl and purple seabird in the birds' category. Recognized for their innumerable medicinal properties, Neem and Pilkhan have been named for the tree category as a state symbol. While rose and Lotus have been chosen for the flower category.

**SOURCE**

**25<sup>th</sup> June 2009, Asian Age**

#### **DDA RAZES ILLEGAL PART OF MOSQUE RAISES LOCAL IRE**

A "regular anti-encroachment" demolition drive by the DDA has raised a small storm in Mehrauli. The agency on Monday evening demolished parts of a mosque that it claims was illegally jutting into a Lodi-era ruin of an arch at Andheria More in Mehrauli. But several locals pelted stones at DDA officials in protest. Among the protestors were young students who lived and studied in the madarsa run by the local imam, and residents who said they offer prayers regularly at the mosque. The site is recorded in conservation panel INTACH's list of heritage structures as the ruin of an arch dating back to the Lodi period. It is said to have been a complete arch till 1993, when a builder demolished it partly. The imam and members of the managing committee of the mosque, known as Masjid Dibiya Wali, said the land was transferred to the Delhi Wakf Board in a notification issued in 1070, and that the wall and the tin shed demolished by the DDA are part of the mosque's land. Committee members, though, agreed the mosque was not used for prayers for several decades after independence and it was revived only over the last couple of months.

**SOURCE**

**24<sup>th</sup> June 2009, Indian Express**

#### **LODI ERA ARCH BEING USED FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION**

Waking up to illegal encroachments at the site of Lodi period ruins in Mehrauli where some locals are building an unauthorized structure using the remains of a monument, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has halted construction for the time being. Sources said a historic

Historians say the arch was originally part of a tomb or gumbad which was partially demolished in early 1993. Only parts of the original monument managed to survive, including the arch with extensive calligraphy work of the era in which it was built. “The ruins and arch are listed heritage structures according to INTACH Delhi Chapter and also feature prominently in MCD’s heritage list. It is not known what the original monument was but the calligraphy work on the arch shows that it belongs to the Lodi era,” said a source. TOI on Thursday found that locals had started building a structure at the site where the ruins of the monument are, in Andheria More in Mehrauli. “The arch is being used as part of the new structure. Already a side of the wall has come up and at the speed at which locals seem to be working, it will just be another a few days before the entire structure is complete,” reported a source. The construction has already come to the notice of the state department of archaeology, which is currently working on the restoration of 92 monuments in the city not under the jurisdiction of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). “The unauthorized construction at the historical site cannot be allowed to continue under any circumstances. We are going to serve a notice and then lodge a police complaint in this regard to stop the activity. A Lodi period arch cannot be misused and become part of a modern structure. We will ask the police to restrain the construction activity as this ongoing work will not be permitted,” said a top official from the state department of archaeology. Historians and conservationists fumed that this was a major violation of a historical monument. “The arch was the only portion of the structure which was still intact after the building was first demolished and the remaining portions collapsed over the years. At a time when the government is working towards notifying unprotected heritage structures, it is appalling that such an illegal building is coming up on the main road of Mehrauli,” said a conservationist. MCD, on their part, was also quick to take action. Deep Mathur, director (press and information), MCD said: “we are examining the matter and will take up the issue with concerned authorities and take appropriate action.” MCD officials, however, added that as its heritage list was pending notification with Delhi government for the last five years, the action taken for the unauthorized construction would be limited.

**SOURCE**

**26<sup>th</sup> June 2009, Times of India**

#### **COURT ASKS MCD TO RESTORE MARRIAGE HALL**

Plot no.3202 A in Beadonpura, Karol Bagh, was not supposed to be the structure it is today. In the books of the MCD it is still a barat ghar, constructed after a British government directive in 1905. Encroached upon by an influential family of the locality in 1972, it will finally be converted into what it used to be, a community centre, courtesy a tireless fight by the residents’ welfare body and an order from the court. Besides a severe reprimand for not protecting the property against illegal occupation, the MCD has got six months to evict the encroachers and give it back to the residents of Beadonpura in the form of a community. In 1972, one Mohan Lal Kuredia and his family illegally occupied the plot and constructed a house on it, and subsequently developed some shops on the ground floor. Resistance by the Adarsh Beadonpura Residents’ Welfare Association failed to yield any result. And when their repeated complaints to the MCD and DDA also fell on deaf ears, they moved court. Kuredia’s family, in the meantime, sold it to Kuldeep Singh, a municipal contractor, and Naresh Kumar. The court also hauled up the MCD for not taking adequate steps to evict the encroachers despite receiving several complaints had to wait for more than 35 years to secure an order from this court. The Delhi Chief Secretary and municipal commissioner have also been asked to take action against the erring officials.

**SOURCE**

**28<sup>th</sup> June 2009, Indian Express**

**Should you have any comments or suggestions, you could reach us at**

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