



INTACH

DELHI CHAPTER

Weekly News Clippings – 120

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BURIED SIRI FORT WALL MAY HOLD SECRETS, ASI PLANS EXCAVATION

Delhi will have a new tourist destination in a few months. For visitors to get a better understanding of the second city of Delhi, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is for the first time planning to excavate all buried portions of the 14th century Siri Fort wall. According to a top ASI official, Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has agreed to sanction Rs 8 crore to expose buried portions of the historical wall. “Up to 3-km of the wall is still underground. We’re planning to excavate it for the first time. Half the length of the wall is on DDA land and only 1.5-km is with ASI. Of the portion that lies with ASI, all but 200m of the wall is exposed and conserved by us,” said a senior official. The plan is to conserve the wall located on both sides of the road leading to Shahpur Jat. “Ideally, we want to expose the entire circle of Siri Fort wall — the way Qila Rai Pithora was done some years ago. DDA is looking to develop it as a green area that can serve as a tourist destination,” said the official. Currently, the underground portions of Siri Fort wall are not accessible to the public. The structure is hidden by dense vegetation. ASI is also hoping to rediscover the site’s history during excavation. Officials said there were chances of unearthing forgotten artefacts like glazed pottery or vessels. The skeletal remains of Mongol warriors can be discovered in the fortification wall and officials are hoping to make a discovery that will shed new light on the era of Alauddin Khilji. “In historical references, the second city of Delhi — Siri — derives its name from the Hindi word ‘sar’ meaning head — as about 8,000 heads of Mongol soldiers were buried in the city’s walls. Most of the wall is still buried and we are working on excavating the lower part. We hope to find more evidence of the Khilji dynasty and might also find skeletal remains of Mongol soldiers buried inside the fortification wall,” said a senior ASI official. While experts admit most of the evidence might have been in the higher part of the wall which is already exposed, there is a good chance of coming across unexplored treasures in the buried parts. “Many archaeologists are working on the complex. If nothing is found during the conservation work, it will be negative evidence,” added the official. Historians say there are chances of coming across glazed or kagaazi pottery, non-glazed ware and vessels in this heritage-rich zone. Earlier, ASI managed to trace the pattern of the exposed fortification wall and assessed it was on the lines of Qila Rai Pithora and Lal Kot, which are of earlier periods. “It was a tradition with all rulers to set up their own cities in Delhi. When the city of Siri was set up in the early 14th century, it received visitors from faraway places. Our aim is to expose these buried cities and make them accessible for the public,” said a senior ASI official. The excavation has yielded new discoveries for ASI in the form of gates, bastions and rampart walls. Earlier, only two out of the existing seven gateways could be traced in the debris. According to historians, there could be a buried palace complex within the Siri wall ruins. Siri — the second city of Delhi — was built by Alauddin Khilji in 1303 AD.

Few remains of the city can be seen in the Siri Fort complex near Asian Games Village area. High rubble-built walls in stretches in the southern and western direction, some bastions and flame-shaped battlements is all that is left of the strong fortress city which compelled ferocious fighters like the Mongols to accept defeat.

SOURCE

29th September 2009, Times of India

CBRI TO STUDY QUTUB TILT AS FLIGHTS CAUSE CONCERN

Qutub Minar will now come under intense scrutiny for keeping tabs on the extent of its tilt. After requests from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), a team of experts from Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), Roorkee will arrive in Delhi next month and conduct a periodical study of the 13th century monument to assess the tilt and ensure it has not aggravated. The report of the last Qutub study by CBRI — in 2005 — said the tilt was in the range of 2.5cm to 4.7cm to the southwest side, but there was possible danger of further tilt due to the minar's location in a seismic zone. "Till last year, there was concern that rainwater seepage was affecting the foundation of the Minar and possibly aggravating the tilt. But limeterracing around it ensured no more rainwater would dampen Qutub's foundation. Now, our concern is basically about the affect of vibrations caused by frequent movement of planes over Qutub Minar," said a senior official. Rising concern over the increasing number of planes flying over Qutub Minar and their close proximity to the structure had forced ASI to take up the matter with the civil aviation ministry. According to sources, ASI had written to the ministry a few months ago asking them to ensure low-flying planes do not come close to the 72.5m-high monument. "We were told a study would be undertaken by IIT to ascertain whether plane vibrations had affected Qutub Minar, but the study is yet to take place," said an official. ASI is also proposing to have the CBRI study conducted on an annual basis now. "Qutub Minar is a world heritage site and needs to be monitored on an annual basis," said a senior official. The geodetic survey ascertains the geological conditions around the structure. Top ministry sources said the proposal for an annual survey by CBRI was under consideration and could be started at the earliest. According to ASI sources, it was worrying earlier as planes used to fly over the minar every two minutes. Sources said: "Ever since the new runway was inaugurated last September, Qutub Minar has been on the approach path and the frequency of planes flying over it had increased tremendously." Qutub Minar, built by Qutubuddin Aibak, was the first monument in the capital to be awarded world heritage status by Unesco in 1993.

SOURCE

30th September 2009, Times of India

CM 'PROMISES' TO LOOK INTO PRAYERS AT ASI MONUMENTS

Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit has promised to look into the issue of protecting all mosques that figure in the list of protected monuments maintained by ASI. Dikshit's intervention came after Delhi Minorities Commission chairman Kamal Farooqi wrote to her about the poor condition of heritage monuments-mosques-under ASI. He had said prayers be allowed at all such monuments to "prevent misuse" Dikshit held a meeting with Farooqi and Delhi Wakt Board chairman Matin Ahmed along with Director General of ASI K. N Shrivastava. ASI's Delhi circle chief K K Muhammed were among those present at the meeting held on September 23.

SOURCE

30th September 2009, Hindustan Times

DELHI ARTS FEST PROMISES SOMETHING FOR ALL

As India's most extravagant festival Divali approaches, the capital city's cultural scene is also kicking off in a week. Delhi-based and international artistes would gather in the city to showcase their performances. Inspires by one of the most sought-after arts festival in the world the Edinburgh International Festival the Delhi Arts Festival is bound to stagger you

With all the events being ticket-free, the festival would see the participation of people from all sections and break away from the “niche” tag attached to the arts festivals. This year the organizers have decided to spread the festival on a much bigger canvas. A range of events would take place at hundreds of different locations across the city between October 3 and October 14. The festival promises something for everyone.

SOURCE

30th September 2009, Tribune

SLICE OF HISTORY AWAITS GAMES VISITORS

The MCD, in the run-up to Commonwealth Games 2010, will develop heritage walk routes across historically significant spots in Old Delhi, like Ghalib Ki Haweli in Ballimaran, Twon Hall and Zeenat Mahal in Lal Kuan. The six gates in Old Delhi- Turkman Gate, Lahori Gate, Mori Gate and Ajmeri Gate- will be part of the loop that will also cover famous tourist spots like Lal Quila and Jama Masjid. INTACH has already been roped in to help locate the heritage sites that can be selected for the purpose and also to assist with trained people who can guide tourist. “INTACH has been approached by both the Delhi Government and the MCD to conduct heritage walks during the Games. We are working in the modalities,” said AGK Menon, Convener of INTACH’s Delhi Chapter

SOURCE

1st October 2009, Pioneer

HERITAGE TAG FOR 800 CHANDNI CHOWK HAVELIS

After being ignored for centuries, the crumbling havelis in Chandni Chowk will finally be acknowledged as heritage structures. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has identified 800 havelis — which were not included in the heritage list sent to Delhi government for notification in 2001 — for conservation. The civic agency now wants to convert them into hotels, guesthouses, etc, for Commonwealth Games. MCD has photographed the buildings from outside and will now carry out a detailed survey of these havelis to see their condition from inside. The havelis will then be graded according to their historical significance and urgency to preserve the structure. Said deputy commissioner, city zone, Vijay Singh: “The staff of our zonal office photographed these buildings. Any structure which had some historical element to it was photographed. We would like to include these havelis in our heritage list once the survey is over in another four months.”

Meanwhile, a list of 775 monuments across the city is still awaiting notification as heritage structures. MCD had identified these monuments and compiled the list which was forwarded to the government for notification in 2001. Some of them have been heavily encroached while others have just given away. Said Singh: “The heritage list compiled by us earlier does not include many havelis. The Walled City is very rich in heritage and it is necessary to save these historical structures. If a gate or facade had some heritage value, the building was photographed. We discovered a haveli in Kucha Pati Ram, which is 200-year-old.” MCD wants to use at least some of these 800 structures, included in the heritage list, as guesthouses and hotels. It’s permissible under the amended building bylaws. Said Singh: “We can use these havelis as guesthouses and hotels as there is shortage of guesthouses for Commonwealth Games.” According to the amended building bylaws, if the owner of the property agrees to maintain the listed heritage building as it is in the existing state and preserve its heritage with due repairs, the owner can use it for commercial purposes — even if the building is located in noncommercial use zone. The owner will only have to give a written undertaking to this affect and will have to get the approval of the heritage conservation committee. Many of the havelis in Chandni Chowk are now home to families who pay a meagre amount — between Rs 25 and Rs 200 — to live in what was once a status symbol for the rich. The owners of most such havelis do not reside there any longer and are not interested in maintaining them. Khazanchi Ki Haveli near Dariba has beautiful carvings and designs on marble pillars, but is in a very dilapidated condition. While its roof has collapsed, some of the pillars have completely given away.

SOURCE

WALKS IN WALLED CITY TO PRESERVE HISTORY

The Walled City, with its crumbling old historic havelis and dirty, congested lanes, may soon get a new lease of life. On Wednesday, MCD and Unesco has joined hands to study how Shahjanabad and its neighbouring areas could be salvaged from further commercialization and encroachment. Major problems, including conservation hurdles for havelis, were identified in a heritage walk meant to identify and understand the complexities surrounding the Walled City, was taken by urban planners and Unesco officials. What greeted the experts as they walked through the congested lanes of Old Delhi were not only architectural marvels but also the everyday problems that locals have to live with. The project is part of Unesco's initiative to address the pressing needs of developing nations and medium-sized cities in a complex urban scenario to safeguard their intangible heritage. "It is crucial for cities to keep their identity alive. The Unesco chair on social sustainability in historic districts aims at a social and human approach for sustainable revitalization of these districts," said Marina Faetanini from Unesco UN Habit. Vijay Singh, MCD deputy commissioner (city zone), said: "We are working with various experts, including Unesco, to highlight the various problems of the Walled City and how we plan to tackle them. Many structures have been identified by us for notification which will be undertaken soon." According to sources, the Walled City accommodates 60% of the city's wholesale trade, 25% of retail trade and 28% informal trade and services though it has only about 2% of the city's total population. "History is seeped in the essence of every building in the Walled City, but with passage of time, we fear that it may be losing its significance. Residents are known to misuse the unique havelis and ruin the original architecture by making alterations to the existing structures," said a historian.

SOURCE

1st October 2009, Times of India

EXHIBITION ON MARTYRS AT RED FORT

Visitors to the historic 17th century Red Fort will have an added attraction to see for the next one month. ASI in collaboration with Shaheed — Smriti Chetna Samiti is organizing an exhibition titled 'Blood — Paintings on Young Martyrs' that will highlight paintings of children who sacrificed their lives during the freedom struggle near Naubad Khana in Red Fort. The exhibition will be inaugurated on October 2 by freedom fighter and president of the freedom fighters' movement association Shashi Bhushan in the presence of ASI director-general K N Shrivastava. Other attendees will be Ajit Cour, freedom fighter and social activist, Abasahib Raut, national president of Azad Hind Munch and artist Ravichandra Gupta, founder of Shaheed — Smriti Chetna Samiti.

SOURCE

1st October 2009, Times of India

JOINING HANDS TO PRESERVE HERITAGE

The 17th century red stone structure left a bunch of onlookers awestruck. The sheer beauty and proportion of Ghazi-ud-din ka madrasa set the tone for the heritage walk on Wednesday. Equally awe-inspiring was the intricately carved in marble Ghazi-ud-din's majar, inside the Anglo Arabic School compound. After Ajmeri Gate, the next turn was Chowk Shah Mubarak lane, with a over 200-year-old haveli (house) that once belonged to a Kashmiri family. An open rectangular courtyard inside the outer walls of the house gave a glimpse of the architectural style of a bygone era. The purpose of the walk -conducted jointly by UNESCOUN Habitat and Department of Urban Planning (School of Planning and Architecture) in association with the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) -was to involve stakeholders and decision-makers in the revitalisation of this historical area. Thus, MCD Deputy Commissioner (City Zone) Vijay Singh led the walk with Ballimaran councillor Renuka Gupta. Marina Faetanini, UNESCO's programme specialist, said: "If we do not intervene, these areas would be gone for ever." "We are not interested in just buildings but in the living heritage... the way these people live, their lifestyle," said Faetanini. A diverse group of urban planning professionals, academics and civil servants explored the lanes of the walled city. Kucha Patiram, the bastion of old

attention, especially of those from abroad. Rukin-Ud-Din Masjid, a nearly 300-year-old mosque with stone carvings, also drew admiration. The almost two-and-half km sojourn ended at Town Hall, after crossing Chawdi Bazar and Nai Sadak. THE ROUTE Starts at Anglo Arabic School, then Ajmeri Gate -- Fasil Road - Chowk Shah Mubarak gali -- Kashmiri Haveli -- Kucha Patiram - Beriwal Gali -- Seetaram Bazar Road -- Hauz Qazi Chowk - Rukin-Ud-Daula Masjid -- Chawri Bazar Road -- Badshah Bulla Chowk -- Nai Sadak and ending at Town Hall. SOME HIGHLIGHTS AND HOW TO GET THERE Anglo Arabic School: Two minutes walk from Delhi Metro's New Delhi Station on the Ajmeri Gate side. Or, drive down the Asaf Ali Road towards Desh Bandhu Gupta Road. Ghazi-ud-Din's madrasa: The red stone structure, built in 1692, lies beyond the main school building of Anglo Arabic School. Ghazi-ud-din was a prominent courtier in Aurangzeb's court and had made generous donations for the welfare of the community. Ajmeri Gate: Five minutes walk from Delhi Metro's New Delhi Station on Ajmeri Gate side. Or drive down Asaf Ali Road towards Desh Bandhu Gupta Road. Metres away from Anglo Arabic School. One of the gates on the southwest of the walled city, the gate was built during Shahjahan's time. It is named so because the road from it led to Ajmer. It is an ASI-protected monument. Seetaram Bazar: Five minutes walk from Chawri Bazar Metro Station. Alternatively, you can hop into a cycle-rickshaw at Turkman Gate and reach in 5-8 minutes. Town Hall: Near Chandni Chowk Metro station. You can also drive down from Subhash Marg and enter the main Chandni Chowk road opposite Red Fort. Built in 1865, the building was renovated in 1937-38. It houses the MCD headquarters.

SOURCE

1st October 2009, Hindustan Times

WALLED CITY CLEAN-UP WARNING

AFTER struggling for years to move wholesale markets from the congested Walled City area to the city's outskirts, the civic body might just have found a plan: make the transporters to stop venturing into the congested areas for a start. MCD City Zone Deputy Commissioner Vijay Singh said on Wednesday that the civic body will start filing FIRs against transporters functioning in the area if the process of shifting does not begin by next week. The move comes after MCD issued notices to these transporters earlier this month. Singh said moving these markets was the single most important action to rejuvenate and redevelop Old Delhi. He was speaking at a workshop -- conducted jointly by MCD, UNESCO, and the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) -- to "identify and solve" Old Delhi's problems. Held at the Town Hall, the workshop began after students of SPA, volunteers, city planners and UNESCO experts took a heritage walk through the Walled City areas early Wednesday morning. The workshop aims to "humanize the old city" and generate public participation to identify problems of the area and to solve them. The experts, UNESCO urban planning experts and MCD officials unanimously agreed that the key to restoring Old Delhi's glory lay in coming up with "feasible" solutions. Vijay Singh said shifting the "hazardous" wholesale markets out of the Walled City would be high on the MCD's agenda. Ballimaran councilor Renuka Gupta said the lack of civic sense and social responsibility among residents of the Walled City has led to a degradation of the heritage area. "The Walled City now merely appears as lanes after lanes of wholesale markets selling bulk paper, hardware and other products," she said. "There have been talks in MCD about removing 174 encroachments from Chowk Shah Mubarak to widen the road that some times narrows down to five feet. This will be done soon to ensure passage for pedestrians and access for water tankers and fire brigade services." Gupta said efforts will also be made to encourage artisans and a hub of arts and cultural activity will also be developed in Old Delhi. Experts from UNESCO said the only way to bring about any conservation in this highly populated area is to involve the community. "There has been no assessment of the type of buildings and demographics for long. There has been no feasibility study -- and I think that is the first step," said Marcellor Balbo, chairperson of UNESCO's department for social inclusion in urban policies and practices. Earlier, the heritage walk began from the quaint 17th Century Anglo Arabic School building that also includes the protected Ghaziuddin Khan's tomb. It went through serpentine lanes of Ballimaran and Kucha Pati Ram along which unauthorized slum residences have cropped up over the decades, and ended at Town Hall.

SOURCE

1st October 2009, Indian Express

NO CONSERVATION OF MONUMENTS WITHOUT EXPERTS' NOD

In order to streamline the process of heritage conservation in the country, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has put into practice a new approach following Unesco guidelines. With this, no conservation work on any protected monument can take place without seeking prior approval of a panel of experts. Proper documentation of monuments before the proposed conservation work has also become mandatory. According to top sources, five panels of experts with four to five members each have been constituted for each region in the country — north, south, east, west and central. The panel experts are from various fields with specialized knowledge on monument conservation, archaeology and heritage. “If a particular circle proposes conservation work for a protected monument, it will have to prepare a documentation report with pictures and other details and submit it to the regional panel. The panel will scrutinize the proposal, seek clarifications if necessary, discuss and recommend it for approval from a competent authority of ASI,” said director-general K N Shrivastava. Senior officials said proposals costing up to Rs 50 lakh can be approved by regional directors, but those costing more than that require clearance from the head office. “Efforts have been made to ensure all states are represented in the panel of experts. The panel will also visit the sites where conservation work is in progress and has the power to suggest changes,” added Shrivastava. Unesco guidelines clearly state that before starting any work on a historical monument, the structure needs to be studied in detail its present status documented. ASI, under the ministry of culture, looks after 3,650 monuments in the country — 173 of which are located in the capital. ASI has 24 circles under it, each of which is responsible for the upkeep, maintenance and conservation of protected structures in its jurisdiction. “Till now, the superintending archaeologist of any circle could just float a proposal for conservation requirement of a protected monument, take approval from the head office and start work. Rarely has emphasis been given on preparing a report before the commencement of work to document the present conditions of the monument. This is, however, critical for archaeological evidence and future reference,” said sources. Now, the SA will have to first document outlining not just the monument’s present condition but also the proposed conservation work, estimated costs and nature of agency. “Monument conservation is a specialised task. We are talking about toying with the facade built centuries ago, each dynasty having its own significance. Any error can be critical,” said an expert. In recent times, a lot of conservation work at protected sites has been met with criticism. Many monuments have been left with a curious shade of pink, in vast contrast to the original colour, because of improper usage of lime-surkhi.

SOURCE

2nd October 2009, Times of India

HERITAGE LOVERS OPPOSED TO RENAMING PROPOSAL

Leader of the Opposition from the Congress, Jai Kishen Sharma, said that the proposal to rename the 18th century Qudsia Bagh in the capital after the late Congress MP M M Aggarwal would come up in the House soon. “Earlier too there have been instances of streets and roads being re-named after prominent political figures, whether from Congress or BJP,” he argued. “Proper respect should be given to eminent political personalities who have served the nation. But the renaming of Qudsia Bagh is still a proposal. It will be discussed and debated in the House, and only then will a final decision be taken.” MCD sources said the proposal was most likely to be rejected now. “After seeking a clarification from the Home Ministry, it has been pointed out that under a Central Government ruling you cannot rename historical places. Now, the proposal will come up in the House in the next fortnight, and if it is accepted that Qudsia Bagh cannot be renamed, it will finally be rejected,” said a well-placed source. However, standing committee chairman Ram Kishen Singhal denied that the proposal had come up in the standing committee at all. Historians and heritage activists are strongly opposing the proposal. “About two years ago, MCD changed the name of the prominent Rajpur Road in front of Tees Hazari courts to Bhiku Ram Jain Road. This too was criticised. Renaming a historical park is much worse,” said an official. INTACH connever AGK Menon said: “This proposal is completely unnecessary. A park or a place should be named after someone associated with it,

Heritage activist Firoz Bakht Ahmed was worried about the message such a step would send out. “History must not be changed, and changing the names of historical places is a dangerous trend that stinks of communal tendencies. Tomorrow, the Muslims of Bara Hindu Rao area might approach the MCD for changing the name to Bara Muslim Rao as they are in majority there. This can only lead to communal tension,” he warned. The Qudsia Mosque was built by Qudsia Mahal Begum, also known as Adham Bai, in 1748, in her garden enclosed by a wall. She had a grand palace facing the river front. Qudsia Mosque was the private mosque of the emperor and his wife and had been built in a very simple style surrounded by three-storeyed high walls. It was destroyed during the 1857 war. The gateway and the mosque were recently restored by the ASI.

SOURCE

4th October 2009, Times of India

600 YEARS ON, GLORY RESTORED

As part of the ongoing conservation work at the monuments in Lodhi Garden, a 15th century structure has been given a new lease of life. Work on Mohammad Shah’s tomb started in June by INTACH under an agreement with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and it’s nearly over. Visitors can see the difference it has made to the tomb. Next in the line is Sheesh Gumbad and Sikander Lodhi’s tomb. Mohammad Shah (1434-1444) was the third ruler of the Sayyid dynasty and his tomb is the oldest in the historical garden which has 10 monuments. The tomb has been built in a typical octagonal pattern with a central octagonal chamber, verandahs, three arched openings on each side and sloping buttress. Inspired by Mubarak Shah’s tomb, this tomb has a more compact plan, a high dome, matching chhatris and better proportions. Senior officials said the focus was mainly on structural conservation. “We had to consolidate the structure by re-plastering it at several places. The old plaster had to be removed at several places and the building needed complete stabilisation. The minarets and moulding also required attention,” said a senior INTACH official. Another important aspect was plaster work in the dome to stop water seepage. “During the rainy season, seepage from the roof inside the monument used to aggravate the deterioration process. The intricate Lodhi carvings were also harmed by this,” said officials. Earlier, most of the plaster was peeling off the walls and the structure was broken/discolored at many places. Signs of deterioration were there with tiles missing, walls disfigured and cracks visible. Now, structurally the tomb looks much better and has drawn a lot of attention from visitors to Lodhi Garden. “Guidelines for conservation work say that minimum intervention should be undertaken in historical monuments. Work has been done only wherever necessary and no changes have been made to the original architecture,” said sources. The tomb of Muhammad Shah, the third ruler of the Sayyid Dynasty, is considered to be a fine example of an octagonal tomb built by the Sayyids and Lodhis during the 15th and 16th centuries. For royal tombs, the pattern used is the octagonal chamber. This is the first time ASI and INTACH are collaborating to conserve protected sites. In the past, INTACH has been more involved in conservation of unprotected sites like structures in Mehrauli Archaeological Park or other historical buildings not under ASI’s purview. In 2007, ASI had signed an MoU with SAIL to protect the Lodhi Garden monuments but no structural work on the tombs could take place as a conservation report for the sites had to be prepared. The garden has 10 ASI-protected structures, including five tombs, which are a crucial part of Delhi’s history and date back to as early as the 15th century under the Lodhi and Sayyid dynasties.

SOURCE

5th October 2009, Times of India

OVER 50 YEARS IN MARKING

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SOURCE

1st October 2009, Hindustan Times

SPRUCING UP OUR HERITAGE

What happens when most archaeologically rich cities hosts a sporting event second only to the Olympics? Tourists get twice the fun for the price of one. While attending Commonwealth Games 2010, they can slip out any time to visit any of the 1,200 heritage monuments this city has to offer. With as many as three world heritage sites -- the Qutb Minar complex, Humayun's Tomb complex and Red Fort complex -- to boast of, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is getting ready to showcase the legacy of the Capital to an estimated 1 lakh tourists during the Games. Of the 175 ASI-protected monuments, work has begun on sprucing up 46 of them. "These monuments are mostly important ones like the world heritage sites and also those on the routes of Games venues. The list also includes a few lesser known monuments," said K.N. Shrivastava, ASI director-general. WHAT'S PLANNED Conservation and/or repair work will be carried out at most monuments. For instance, the Tughlaqabad Fort wall and the Siri Fort wall are being restored to their original glory. The ASI is carrying out chemical treatment at a few monuments that need cleaning up. "The residents and regular visitors to the Hauz Khas area are witness to how the black colour on most of the monuments due to moss has given way to a clean sandstone yellow (or the original colour of the monuments) after chemical treatment," said an ASI official. "The landscape around helps build its ambience. So we are focusing on environmental development like lawns and other horticulture interventions," said an official from the horticulture branch. Tourists can also enjoy 'Delhi at Night'. India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) has identified more than 20 monuments. They are being lighted up by ITDC. FACILITATING TOURISTS While the world heritage sites have basic public utilities like toilets and drinking water, they aren't available at all 46 monuments. Plans are afoot to provide these facilities at all of them. Uniform brown stone signage would also come up at all sites. "The additional facilities would include publication counters that will have brochures telling the history of the place, audio guides, cafeterias and the like as available at the three world heritage sites," said another ASI official.

SOURCE

5th October 2009, Hindustan Times

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

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