



INTACH

DELHI CHAPTER

Weekly News Clippings – 126
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Editor's Note

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HERITAGE STATUS TO PARLIAMENT HOUSE

A Joint Parliamentary Committee will soon be constituted to maintain the heritage status of the imposing parliament House, Speaker Meira Kumar said here on Thursday. The Committee, headed by her, would comprise leaders of various political parties and have a technical advisory committee of experts headed by Lok Sabha Secretary General. The proposal for having a JPC, mooted by the Speaker, was welcomed by leaders of all political parties at a meeting convened by her ahead of the winter session of Parliament beginning on November 19. "Now even if a nail has to be fixed, the Committee's permission will have to be sought," she said adding eminent architects, historians and those attached with INTACH and the National Museum would be part of the technical committee. Kumar had recently expressed concern over the building showing 'distressing signs' as it was being utilized by more people than earlier estimated.

SOURCE

13th November 2009, Pioneer

CM UNVEILS COMMEMORATIVE MEDALS

The Chief Minister of Delhi, Sheila Dikshit, unveiled the commemorative medals carrying images of India's best known historical architectures in gold, silver and bronze with illuminated Qutub Minar as a backdrop. The Indian Heritage Commemorative medals are launched to raise global awareness for the protection of heritage monuments and 27 such sites have been identified in India. While releasing the medals Dikshit said that it is a matter of pride that Delhi is a host to three world heritage sites- Qutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb and red Fort. These medals will be sold at souvenir shop in the vicinity of world heritage sites as well as selected banks around the world, Sanjeev Batra, CMD of MMTC Limited along with Koichiro Matsuura, Director General UNESCO and Jawahar Sircar, Secretary Culture, Government of India were also present at the ceremony according to press release.

SOURCE

13th November 2009, Pioneer

CONSERVATION EFFORT: ASI WORKSHOP TRAINS OFFICIALS ON EFFECTIVE USE OF LIME

TO train its officials across the country on the correct use of lime -- an essential binding medium popularly used in restoration and conservation projects -- the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) organised the 8th lime training workshop in association with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC). Twenty eight ASI officials from 12 state circles are attending several field and laboratory sessions at the Humayun's Tomb as part of the week-long

"As part of the urban renewal project in the area, monuments like the Humayun's Tomb, Sundar Nursery and Nizamuddin Basti are currently undergoing conservation work using lime. The project is being used as a training opportunity," Sangeeta Bais, conservation architect, AKTC and coordinator for the workshop told Newslite. "After the completion of the workshops, it is hoped a comprehensive manual for lime mortar use in India can be prepared." The project, which began in September last year and is co funded by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, aims to train conservation assistants, foremen and chemists who are regularly involved in restoration work of heritage structures. The workshop focuses on the process of mortar testing, chemistry of lime, details of the source material and how to effectively use lime. K N Shrivastav, Director General, ASI, said, "The use of lime is an age-old practice and involves ancient technology, which most officials are unaware of. Such training sessions help to acquaint them with correct practices. We want to train a large section of officials across the country so that they develop technical know-how and can effectively conserve heritage structures under our jurisdiction." Participants from Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Bengal, Rajasthan, Goa, Maharashtra, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Bihar attended the workshop this year.

SOURCE

11th November 2009, Indian Express

INDIA SHOULD LEAD IN PRESERVING HERITAGE SITES: UNESCO

Monument of heritage sites must be preserved for future generation as they represent the cultural diversity of the country and India should play a leading role for this purpose, said Unesco director general Mr. Koichiro Matsuura while celebrating the 64th anniversary of Indian-Unesco cooperation today in the premises of Qutub Minar amidst pleasant ambience. Launching the world heritage series commemorative medal programme on the occasion, Mr. Matsuura said, "The programme aims at raising global awareness for the preservation of world heritage sites through the sale of gold, silver and brass medals portraying views of outstanding sites from all over the world." Expressing gratitude to ministry of culture and ASI for hosting this programme at Qutub Minar complex that have long history of Indian richness. At his inaugural speech, the secretary, ministry of culture, government of India, Mr Johar Sarkar said, "Heritage sites illustrate both intangible and tangible things and cover living tradition of men."

SOURCE

12th November 2009, Statesman

MUD PACK FACELIFT FOR HERITAGE

To give a new look to the city's historical monuments, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is using the ageold formula of multani-mitti pack to clean the surface of these historical buildings. While Alai Darwaaza in Qutub complex has already got the mud treatment, the ASI is now planing to use the same technique on the tomb of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq. Clay pack treatment has been commonly used on monuments earlier and it became more popular after it was used on the Taj Mahal. Archaeologists said while multani mitti was used on marble surface, it has been found to be equally effective on red sandstone also. Other monuments in Delhi to get this clay pack treatment are Jama Masjid gateways and Chausanth Khamba in the past. Senior officials said the effect of clay pack treatment would last up to six to seven years and, hence, multani mitti was chosen for the annual cleaning of Monuments. A K Mathur, deputy superintending archaeological chemist and who is overseeing the work, said: "Over the years, dust, dirt, pollutants, etc get deposited on the surface of monuments, besides insect nests, cobwebs and bee hives. Accumulation of such impurities increases the disintegration process of monuments and hence they need to be cleaned. First we clean the monument surface of the dust and other deposits and then apply the multani mitti paste and cover it with a polythene sheet and leave it for 24-hours. The mud pack absorbs the impurities as it dries. After the dried mud is removed the monument comes out clean and gives a shiny look." Officials said certain stains on the surface of monuments could not be cleaned the normal way. "We used some multani mitti during the chemical cleaning of Barah Khamba in the past, and are also using it in the conservation

Here, we have found deposits of impurities that cannot be removed by any other method. Only multani mitti comes to our aid,” added Mathur. The clay pack treatment at Alai Darwaaza started about two months back and a visible improvement can be seen. This is the first time that this structure has been given such an intensive cleaning. “The clay pack treatment was applied here so that the monument regains its lost glory. It got darkened considerably over the decades and we wanted to remove the impurities that got deposited on its surface. After the treatment, the surface looks much cleaner and we expect this effect to last for at least five years before the process of cleaning with mud pack can be repeated again. Multani mitti is a natural cleaning substance and it has no side effect on the monument surface,” said an ASI official. When the signs of ‘ageing’ started showing up on Taj Mahal some years back and the marble started getting a yellowish tinge, conservationists prescribed a beauty treatment for the monument of love in the form of mud pack. The process of applying mud pack has been popularized since then.

SOURCE

16th November 2009, Times of India

CITY MONUMENTS TO HAVE SIGNAGES DETAILING HISTORY

The ASI has decided to put up signages and cultural boards detailing the history and significance of the structure in front of every monument. Initially it will be put across 46 monuments on the heritage route in the next three months to inform visitors ahead of the Games about their historical and architectural values. Later it will be put across all monuments of the city, an ASI official said. The ASI is developing these boards. “Cultural notice board will have historical details of the monuments, like who built it, when did he build it, the reasons behind its construction if any etc,” ASI superintendent archaeologist K.K Mohammad said. The signages project, being undertaken by three independent organizations under the supervision of the ASI is expected to be complete in three months time, he added. Mr Mohammed said that the work has been allotted to three bodies. Displaying signages, conservationists say, is a worldwide practice and helps preserve the heritage character of cities. Each of the three bodies has been given a contract of Rs 25 to Rs 30 lakhs.

SOURCE

16th November 2009, Asian Age

OF SAHIBS AND BUNGALOWS

Raisina forest dak bungalow is now a forgotten transit point, yet up to the early years of the 20th century it was the only habitable place for British officers beyond Raisina Hill. Quite close to it was Gurdwara Bangla Sahib, where in the third decade of the 18th century lived Sawai Jai Singh II, the builder of the Jantar Mantar. The Maharaja’s palace was later acquired by the Sikh community which built a gurdwara in it after their child Guru Harkrishna, died there. Raisina dak bungalow came up much later, probably in the last decades of the 19th century. Here the officer who looked after the forest initially stationed. The forest was not a thick one but there was sufficient vegetation, besides the tall trees, where wildlife thrived- wolves, hyenas, pigs, blue bull, chinkara, blackbuck and a few leopards. Raisina dak bungalow had its counterpart in Delhi dak bungalow situated near what is now the Kashmere Gate GPO. Like that bungalow this one was also believed to be haunted- not by the spirits of murdered lovers but by the ghost of a ranger who had been killed by a leopard.

SOURCE

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