



**INTACH**

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### **GO-AHEAD TO TRAFFIC PLAN AROUND CIVIC BODY'S NEW HEADQUARTERS**

THE traffic management scheme for the area around the upcoming Municipal Corporation of Delhi's Civic Centre has got the decisive go-ahead of not only the agency but the United Traffic and Transportation Infrastructure (Planning and Engineering) Centre (UTTIPEC). With this, the plan is all set for implementation. Though the entire project may not be completed by the end of this year considering the scale of work involved, officials of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), which was commissioned to develop the proposal, said details of the first phase are now being worked out for implementation. "We presented the proposal for a holistic traffic management plan for the area around the Civic Centre (on Jawaharlal Nehru Marg) and also the SP Mukherjee Marg and the Chandni Chowk redevelopment plans. Though we would be detailing the plans only for the traffic management scheme around the Civic Centre, the comprehensive presentation showed how all the three plans are related," said A G K Menon, Town Planner and Convenor, Delhi Chapter, INTACH. "The UTTIPEC has approved the expansion of the BRT system along the routes around the Centre and this is expected to change the character of the roads. We are happy that the peoplefriendly and public transport centric aspect of the proposal has been accepted," Menon added. While INTACH is working out the detailed engineering drawings and estimates for the scheme, the other two proposals -- SP Mukherjee Marg and Chandni Chowk redevelopment plans -- are being looked into by two other consultants engaged by the New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) and MCD respectively. It is expected that once the Centre opens before the Games this year -- it is coming up near the New Delhi Railway Station -- the swelling traffic movement around it will demand strict supervision. The approved traffic plan will be in force around the MCD's 28-storey Civic Centre and will encompass Connaught Place, ITO and Shahjahanabad. Drawing inspiration from cities like London, the proposal has incorporated dedicated space for hawkers. The scheme proposes exclusive lanes for buses, segregated tracks for cyclists and non-motorized vehicles and user-friendly pavements for pedestrians.

#### **SOURCE**

**19<sup>th</sup> January 2010, Indian Express**

### **CHANDNI CHOWK RESTORATION PROJECT TO BE TAKEN UP, AT LAST**

THE Municipal Corporation of Delhi's ambitious project, the Chandni Chowk Redevelopment Plan, might finally become reality eight years after it was conceived. The United Traffic and Transportation Infrastructure (Planning and Engineering)

Centre (UTTIPEC) granted conceptual approval to the plan on Friday. The MCD city zone officials in charge of the project told Newline that UTTIPEC chairperson, Lieutenant Governor Tejendra Khanna, has given his nod and once the minutes of the Friday's meeting are approved, which is likely this week, the civic body will open bid for the project. There is a glitch however. The 'complete new look' of the heritage area will not be ready in time for the Commonwealth Games. MCD officials said since the bidding process would take time, the work might start only by March this year. The project would be implemented in different phases, MCD officials said, adding they would be more "realistic" now and take up only "as much work as can be completed on time". "Not all work will be completed before the Commonwealth Games because of previous delays. In the first phase, and therefore, we would begin only as much work as can be completed before October, when the Games begin," said Suman K Gupta, Chandni Chowk area councillor. Besides implementing the crucial traffic decongestion plan, all encroachments would be removed under the first phase of the project. Thus, neither the heritage structures in the area would be completely restored nor novelties like trams would be introduced by the time the Games kick off. Officials said till the final tender is awarded, the MCD has decided to begin preliminary work like removing encroachments and overground cables and loose wires in the area. Besides, the civic body plans to implement the first phase of the project by June. This also includes decongesting traffic, increasing space for pedestrians by restricting traffic movement, widening roads including the existing 3.5-metre lanes, road carpeting, installing street furniture and creating new multi-level parking space for traders as well as shoppers. The civic body has also decided to deal with encroachers with a heavy hand now. "It is a day's work to remove encroachments and unauthorised parking. Once the plan takes off, we will manage to control all other factors easily," said an MCD official. It is, however, yet to fix a deadline for one of the raging problems of the area, shifting out wholesale traders from Chandni Chowk. "Shifting wholesale traders is dependent on other factors like readying the alternate space under the Delhi Development Authority. So it is difficult to give a deadline now. We are, however, confident of implementing the project in a time-bound manner this time," the official said.

#### **SOURCE**

**19<sup>th</sup> January 2010, Indian Express**

#### **AMITY STUDENTS WOW JUDGES, WIN EVENT TO REDESIGN A MODEL WALLED CITY**

THEIR idea may have just been recognised for being futuristic but, then, teenagers will always be teenagers. So the moment Amity International School, Saket, won a ministry-organised competition with their innovative model for reconstruction of Chandni Chowk, up went the fists in the air and the decibel level rose a few notches as students shrieked in joy. The competition -- 'Future Cities India 2020, Student Infrastructure Design Projects' -- is organised every year by the Department of Science and Technology. Arjun Hans, a member of the winning team, said in trying to redesign the Mughalera Chandni Chowk, their design aimed to retain the "very essence of the place", which, he said, was recognised by the judges. "Our idea was restoration," he said, "not destruction. In designing the model of Chandni Chowk, we did not want this plan to come as a cultural shock to people." Union HRD Minister and Lok Sabha MP from Chandni Chowk constituency Kapil Sibal, who was the chief guest at the event, said: "Chandni Chowk is an example of our lost heritage. The challenge is to modernise the 350-year-old city while retaining its ethos, culture and heritage. "India is at the cusp of building cities (and) most of the cities have not been built. India (now) has the opportunity to build new cities and we have to build them differently." Calling the competition an opportunity for children to "expand on this programme", he said, "This allows young people to understand problems of the city." The winning team used concepts like piezoelectricity (electricity generated due to pressure), rainwater harvesting, underground hydraulic lift parking, solar panels, aerogels, carbon nanotubes and such in their model. Neha Ahooja, a Class XI student from the school, said, "We worked really hard on this project. It feels good our ideas are being appreciated." The team has also been given a scholarship of Rs 88,000. The competition 'Future Cities India' was launched in 2006 by the ministry and Bentley Systems, with the focus this year being Chandni Chowk.

Students from several city schools came up with several innovative ideas to make the area part of a 'future city' by 2020. Last year, the challenge centred on Indian Railways' plans to refurbish the country's ageing railway stations, and six of the models developed by the students were taken to Rail Bhawan for a detailed study.

**SOURCE**

**19<sup>th</sup> January 2010, Indian Express**

**NO CELL TOWERS IN LUTYENS ZONE: DUAC**

The DUAC has reportedly again rejected the NDMC's proposal to allow mobile towers in the Lutyens zone. The body has said that such structures would affect the aesthetics and the high frequency towers can also have an impact on the health of the residents. The NDMC had earlier sought clearance from the DUAC regarding putting up of towers with an intention to earn additional revenue. The mobile phone companies have been seeking permission to put up the towers in the Lutyens Zone. The DUAC is said to be of the view that the optical fibre cables and low-height towers could be used for enhancing mobile phone signals in the area. The NDMC's proposal has earlier been rejected thrice by the DUAC in the last three years. The DUAC also expressed concern over cell towers coming up in NDMC unauthorisedly.

**SOURCE**

**19<sup>th</sup> January 2010, Asian Age**

**ASI FILES CASE AGAINST RAILWAYS OVER TEMPLE NEAR HUMAYUN'S TOMB**

THE Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) on Tuesday filed an FIR against the Railways for allowing unauthorised construction on Railways land within 100 metres of a protected structure, which is illegal as per a 1958 Act. The temple -- ASI claims it was constructed recently, while Railways officials say it was built when the land was under ASI's supervision -- is within the Railway Protection Force (RPF) barracks, barely 50 metres from the Humayun's Tomb, a World Heritage Site. The FIR was registered at Nizamuddin police station. Earlier, on December 7 last year, the ASI had filed an FIR against the Railways for illegal construction within 100 metres of the centrally protected monument Nila Gumbad, which lies next to Humayun's Tomb. The foundation for a five-storey had been raised within the protected zone of the monument, and ASI officials claimed the building was meant to be a Railways guesthouse. Any construction within 100 metres of a protected monument is considered illegal under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, and the amended rules of 1992. The building's construction was stalled taking note of the FIR. But the situation this time is more complicated, for the temple has already been constructed -- there is an idol placed inside it, and a priest also lives there. The Railways and ASI have been loggerheads on sharing land near th Humayun's Tomb for beautification o its buffer zone. A senior ASI official said Railway allowed the temple to be built even as is complaining about lack of space t store railway material and to construc a resting place for drivers. It also turned down ASI's reque for a road to be diverted so that th monument could be incorporated i the Humayun's Tomb complex, th ASI official said. "The Railways refused to transfer t us half-an-acre of land for preservin archaeology and developing the buffe zone of Humayun's Tomb," the ASI o ficial said, "but it did not stop the con struction of a temple on its land." But a senior Railways official denie that the temple is a new construction According to the official, this land wa under ASI's supervision till Marc 2009, implying that the temple wa built during that period.

**SOURCE**

**20<sup>th</sup> January 2010, Indian Express**

## CENTRE BID TO CLEAR STRUCTURES NEAR MONUMENTS

IN A move that could raise the hackles of conservationists, the Union government is set to arm itself with the authority to regularize all or any illegal disputed structures and constructions that fall within the banned 100-metre radius of "protected" monuments. To achieve this, the Centre is planning to bring a hastily drafted ordinance -- Ancient Monuments and Archeological Sites and Remains (Amendment & Validation) Ordinance, 2010. Sources in the government told The Indian Express that the Ministry of Culture, which also deals with the issue of protection of monuments, is planning to seek approval for the proposed ordinance at Thursday's meeting of the Union Cabinet. Sources said unless the ordinance is issued before January 29 -- a date fixed by the Delhi High Court in a judgment relating to protection of monuments -- work on crucial infrastructure for the Commonwealth Games as well as the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), especially in areas such as Purana Qila, Hauz Khas, Humayun's Tomb, Sri Fort and Nizamuddin would come to a standstill. In its order, the Delhi HC had declared all 171 permissions granted by the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) "invalid" and directed the government and the ASI to initiate steps to remove the violations that resulted from the permission. If implemented, the order would result in large-scale demolition of Commonwealth Games and DMRC infrastructure, among others. Following the HC directive, the ASI issued showcase notice to all 171 persons/organizations, including the Delhi Government and the DMRC. There are 3,675 monuments across the country that has been declared protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. Even though, in 1992, the Centre notified that no construction or repair work would be allowed within the 100-metre "prohibited" radius of a protected monument, in the last four years alone, the ASI has given 171 permissions, including those to private parties, to undertake construction activity within the prohibited area. These permissions, Ministry sources say, were granted on the recommendation of an advisory committee of experts that the Director General of ASI constituted in 2006. Ironically, the Tourism Ministry is already in the Supreme Court against a 2004 judgment of the Delhi HC that asked the government to consider existing ground realities and come up with monumentspecific prohibited zones instead of insisting upon a uniform 100-metre band. But, the ASI didn't accept the HC ruling, choosing instead to file a special leave petition in the Supreme Court against it. Now, the decision to bring in an ordinance to achieve the same purpose is something that the Tourism Ministry could find difficult to explain. Top Tourism Ministry and ASI functionaries have held eight meetings with top lawyers since this month showing the seriousness with which the government views the situation. "If we don't bring the ordinance, work on major segments of Commonwealth Games and DMRC would have to be stopped. And, then there is the issue of permissions that have been granted to private parties, which allowed them to carry out constructions within the 100-metre prohibited zone around protected monuments. But, the final decision will have to be taken by the Cabinet," said a ministry official.

### SOURCE

21<sup>st</sup> January 2010, Indian Express

## GOVT STEPS IN TO SAVE ILLEGAL STRUCTURES

The government has decided to bring an ordinance to regularize illegal or disputed structures and constructions around monuments to clear legal hurdles in the way of several infrastructure projects linked to the Commonwealth Games here in October. The 'Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment & Validation) Ordinance, 2010' was cleared by the Union Cabinet and is being sent to President Pratibha Patil for approval, a government official said. The government's move comes in the wake of the Delhi High Court declaring 171 permissions granted by Archaeological Survey of India "invalid" and directed the government and the ASI to initiate steps to remove the violations. The ASI issued show-cause notices to civic agencies in connection with construction activities at and around 92 protected structures like Red Fort, Hauz Khas, Humayun's Tomb and Siri Fort. Among those affected by the decision were the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation and the Commonwealth Games Committee over structures constructed within prohibited areas of centrally protected monuments. The Delhi High Court had set January 29 as the deadline for the government to respond to a decision relating to protection of monuments.

## **SOURCE**

**22<sup>nd</sup> January 2010, Hindustan Express**

### **OUR LESSER KNOWN TREASURES**

Delhiites walk around, into and out of history every day. And history sometimes comes with unusual names -- Masjid Moth, Pir Gharib, Arab Ki Sarai and Khirki Gaon. But how many of us know the history of the areas we live in? "Frankly speaking, I don't know much about Khirki Extension and Khirki Gaon or its nomenclature despite having lived there for eight years. I just know that the area was a village earlier," says Ajay Sharma. Swati Kapoor, a Delhi University student who has been living near Masjid Moth for eleven years, just knows that the area is called so after a mosque in that area. "I agree it's an unusual name, as moth is a type of lentil, but somehow I never got down to discovering the reason," she says. Every monument has a story to tell, if we only care to look closely. Masjid Moth, near Anand Lok in South Extension, was built by Wazir Miyan Bhoiya during the reign of Sikandar Lodi, around 1505 AD. "Legend has it that Lodi found a grain of lentil while he was at the Grand Mosque (a mosque close to where Masjid Moth is now) and gifted it to Bhoiya as a joke. Bhoiya, instead of throwing away the lentil, planted, replanted and re-planted the harvest from that single grain till he got enough money to build a mosque," says Rakhshanda Jalil, author of *Invisible City: The Hidden Monuments of Delhi*. That mosque came to be known as Masjid Moth, and its foundation was laid by Lodi. Khirki Gaon has a similarly intriguing name. This village that lies between Malviya Nagar and PVR Saket gets its name for the Khirki (window) Masjid located here. The mosque gets its name from the numerous windows that run all around the outer wall of the structure. It dates back to the 1350s and was built by Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul Tilangani, prime minister to Firoz Shah Tughlaq. Located within the boundary of Humayun's tomb are structures like Nai Ka Gumbad, Bu Halima's garden and Arab Ki Sarai, among others. Nai Ka Gumbad is a square tomb with a doubledome and is said to have been built for the Emperor's favourite barber. "Arab ki Sarai is believed to have housed the artisans employed in constructing Humayun's Tomb, brought from Arabia by Humayun's widow Hamida Begum," says Jalil.

## **SOURCE**

**22<sup>nd</sup> January 2010, Hindustan Times**

### **12 MORE MONUMENTS NOW ON PROTECTED LIST**

With just nine months left for the Commonwealth Games, the Delhi government is trying to bring as many unprotected heritage monuments as possible under its umbrella. While 33 monuments are already protected by the state archaeology department, sources said 12 more monuments would be notified this week. This would bring the total number of state protected structures to 45. Included in the latest batch of monuments to be notified are the controversial Bara Lao ka Gumbad in Vasant Vihar as well as popular sites such as Northern/Southern guard house in Kamla Nehru ridge and the Mutiny Memorial. Also in the list of 12 monuments are Baradari tomb and mosque in Vasant Vihar, Baradari in Qudsia garden, Minar in Hashtsal village, and the mosque of Darwesh Shah in Khel Gaon Marg, Jharna in Mehrauli, Kharbuze ka gumbad at Panchsheel and sarai of basant inside MES colony, Basant Range. The last batch of 13 monuments was notified a few months ago. In all, the government has identified 92 monuments that it is planning to bring under its umbrella. The monuments will be showcased to tourists during the Games.

## **SOURCE**

**20<sup>th</sup> January 2010, Indian Express**

### **TOWERS WILL SPOIL LUTYEN'S LOOK: PANEL**

The Delhi Urban Art Commission (DUAC) has rejected the New Delhi Municipal Council's (NDMC) proposal to install communication towers in the city's Lutyens zone citing aesthetic concerns. The commission has asked the civic body to explore options of lowering the height of the towers by using advanced fibre optics technology. "A proposal had come to us from the service providers which were routed through the NDMC. Long communication towers have a negative impact on the aesthetic appeal of the surrounding area. We have suggested NDMC to lower the height of the towers," said a member of DUAC.

The civic body was looking into the option of allowing cell towers in Lutyens area as well as other areas under its jurisdiction like Mandir Marg and Baba Kharak Singh Marg and had sought the commission's clearance in this regard.

**SOURCE**

**20<sup>th</sup> January 2010, Times of India**

**GOVT TO REGULARIZE ILLEGAL SITES AROUND MONUMENTS**

Soon illegal or disputed structures and constructions around monuments will be regularized as the government on Thursday decided to bring an ordinance to this effect. The move is to facilitate several under construction infrastructure projects linked to the Commonwealth Games, which will be held here in October. Sources in the government confirmed that the Union Cabinet on Thursday cleared the proposed "Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Ordinance 2010" and has now been sent to President Pratibha Patil for her approval. The government's move comes in the wake of the ASI issuing show cause notices to civic agencies in connection with construction activities at and around 92 protected structures like Red Fort, Hauz Khas, Humayun's Tomb and Siri Fort. The ASI issued notices to several agencies, including DMRC and the commonwealth Games Committee, over the structures constructed within prohibited areas in centrally protected monuments on December 17. The ordinance will provide for flexibility on constructions depending on the necessity, the sources said. The high court set January 29 as the deadline for the government to respond to a judgment relating to protection of monuments.

**SOURCE**

**22<sup>nd</sup> January 2010, Asian Age**

**ORDINANCE ON CONSTRUCTIONS NEAR MONUMENTS ON ANVIL**

In a move that would pave the way for several development projects linked to the Commonwealth Games and Delhi Metro, the Union Cabinet on Thursday decided to bring an ordinance to regularized illegal or disputed structures and constructions around historical monuments. The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Ordinance, 2010 was cleared by the Union Cabinet and is being sent to President Pratibha Patil for approval, sources said. The Government's move comes in the wake of ASI, on the directives of the Delhi High Court, issuing showcause notices to civic agencies in connection with construction activities in and around 92 historical monuments like Red Fort, Hauz Khas, Humayun's tomb and Siri Fort. The ASI issued notices to several agencies including the DMRC and Commonwealth Games Committee over the structures constructed within prohibited areas in centrally protected monuments on December 17. The ordinance will provide for flexibility on constructions depending on the necessity, the sources said.

**SOURCE**

**22<sup>nd</sup> January 2010, Pioneer**

**WORK TO START NEAR MONUMENTS AGAIN**

There is some relief in sight for all those development projects which were stalled after the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) withdrew permission following a Delhi High Court order. The Union cabinet cleared the Ancient Monuments and Archeological Sites and Remains (Amendment & Validation) ordinance on Thursday and sent it to President Pratibha Patil for approval. Once this ordinance comes into effect, all the earlier 92 permissions given by the ASI for construction will become valid again. The ordinance will be for a six-month duration till the Commonwealth Games. Experts said this was an important development as only nine months were left for the Games and work on flyovers, parking lots and Metro lines had stopped because they were coming up within 100m of protected monuments. "The ordinance will provide flexibility in construction work," sources said. Projects such as DMRC's Metro line to Qutub, DDA work at Siri Fort complex, Barapullah Nallah and MCD's parking lot at Bahadurshah Zafar Marg have all got

into trouble with the ASI which withdrew permission as it was too close to protected sites. As most of these projects are related to the Games, there is an urgent need for an ordinance so that work can continue. “The ordinance will be of a six-month duration after which ASI will complete framing its monument-specific guidelines and amend its 1958 rule. The rules for each centrally-protected monument will be decided as per its location, significance and size,” sources said. The government’s move comes in the wake of the ASI issuing showcase notices to civic agencies on December 17 in connection with construction activities at and around 92 protected structures such as Red Fort, Hauz Khas, Humayun’s Tomb and Siri Fort. The Delhi High Court had set January 29 as the deadline for the government to respond to a judgment relating to protection of monuments. In its order, the HC had declared all the 171 permissions granted by the ASI “invalid” and directed the government and the ASI to initiate steps to remove the violations. The permissions were granted by the ASI and a high-level committee constituted by it, comprising historians and town planners, but they stand null and void following the court order. The committee had received 150 applications seeking relaxation of norms in Delhi alone and it had granted permission in 117 cases. Overall 171 structures across the country, granted permissions by the committee, were declared illegal and issued notices.

**SOURCE**

**25<sup>th</sup> January 2010, Times of India**

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