

DELHI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY LIBRARY PRESS CLIPPING SERVICE

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NAME OF NEWSPAPER _____

DDA Targets Year-End Finish For 7 Projects On Yamuna Floodplain

Revamp Includes Wide-Scale Plantation, Setting Up Of Selfie Points, Greenways

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New Delhi: Delhi Development Authority aims to finish seven of the 10 projects related to restoration and rejuvenation of the Yamuna floodplain by the end of this year. They said, however, that development agencies had taken over portions of the sites already developed, causing delays in the execution of the projects within the deadline.

The project at Asita East involving 90 hectares between the Old Railway Bridge and ITO barrage) was fully complete, while on the remaining 107 hectares falling in Uttar Pradesh, 73% of the civil work and 55% of horticulture work had been finished.

"We have planted grass helpful for floodplain ecology and 5,500 trees native to riverine ecology there," said a DDA official. "As a result, 67 resident and migratory bird species have been spotted at the restored waterbody, floodplain forests and grassland. We have created selfie points and greenways."

On the western bank of the Yamuna in the same stretch, 82% of the civil work and 28% of horticulture work had been accomplished. "Here we restored 7.4 hectares of existing depressions with the capacity to augment 1.8 lakh cubic metres of water. We have also planted grasses and 5,700 trees native to floodplains there," informed the official.

However, at Kalindi Aviral (Nizamuddin Bridge to DND Flyway), DDA had to repeat some of the work despite having finished 99% of the project. "A portion of the 100-hectare site was taken up for the regional rapid transport project. We are waiting for the agency concerned to vacate

SAVING THE RIVER

Status of projects under the Yamuna floodplain restoration scheme

1 ASITA Old Railway Bridge to ITO Barrage | Located on eastern bank

Area | 197 hectares
Cost | ₹13.3 crore
Status | 90% of the work completed

2 KALINDI AVIRAL Nizamuddin Bridge to DND Flyway | Western bank

Area | 100 hectares
Cost | ₹13 crore
Status | 100% work completed, but rework in progress after RRTS project

3 KALINDI BIODIVERSITY PARK DND to Kalindi bypass | Western bank

Area | 115 hectares
Cost | ₹7.6 crore
Status | 27% completed

4 YAMUNA VATIKA Old Railway Bridge to ITO Barrage | Western bank

Area | 200 hectares
Cost | ₹14.3 crore
Status | 70-80% completed

5 AMRUT BIODIVERSITY PARK New Railway Line to Nizamuddin Bridge | Eastern and western banks

Area | 108 hectares
Cost | ₹31 crore
Status | 76% completed



Restored waterbody at Yamuna Vatika

6 GHAT AREA Wazirabad to Old Railway Bridge | Western bank

Area | 66 hectares
Cost | ₹13.7 crore
Status | 67% completed

7 YAMUNA VANASTHALI Wazirabad to Old Railway Bridge | Eastern bank

Area | 236.5 hectares
Cost | ₹11.1 crore
Status | 87% completed

8 MAYUR NATURE PARK Nizamuddin Bridge to DND Flyway | Eastern bank

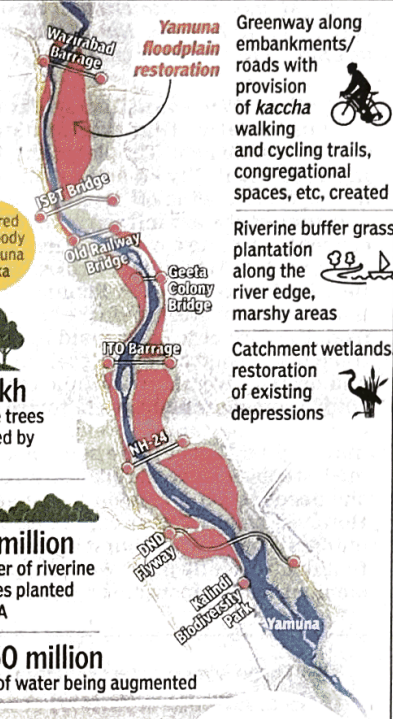
Area | 397.8 hectares
Cost | ₹82.2 crore
Status | Not started yet

9 ECO-TOURISM AREA Geeta Colony Bridge to ITO Barrage | Western bank

Area | 30 hectares
Cost | ₹86.7 crore
Status | Not started yet

10 HINDON SAROVAR Nizamuddin Bridge to DND Flyway | Eastern bank

Area | 45 hectares
Cost | ₹1.5 crore
Status | Not started yet



Greenway along embankments/roads with provision of kaccha walking and cycling trails, congregational spaces, etc, created

Riverine buffer grass plantation along the river edge, marshy areas

Catchment wetlands restoration of existing depressions

6 lakh native trees planted by DDA

9.5 million number of riverine grasses planted by DDA

1,350 million litres of water being augmented

First seven projects to be completed this year; work on Mayur Nature Park, Hindon Sarovar and Eco-tourism not started yet



the place so that we can resume the restoration. We are facing a similar challenge at Yamuna Vanasthali, where a

portion has been occupied by the National Highway Authority of India," said the official. TOI didn't receive a re-

sponse from the National Capital Region Transport Corporation in this regard. While only 27% of the civil and horticulture work had been finished at Kalindi Biodiversity Park, around 75% of the project was completed at Amrut Biodiversity Park. "The site near Nizamuddin Bridge covering both the banks of the Yamuna has seen 76% of the civil work and 16% of the horticulture work," the official informed. The horticulture work here has been entrusted to the National Biological Research Institute. Between Wazirabad and Old Railway Bridge, the 16-hectare Vasudev Ghat site has seen 67% of the civil work being completed. "The pilot project here is unique among all ghats in the overall floodplain restoration and rejuvenation scheme because it proposes landscaping in the Charbagh style with Baradaris and Chhatris derived from the historic adjacent garden of Qudsia Bagh," the official revealed. "We proposed to use wastewater from the existing drains with their outfall in the river which will be filtered using coir logs and reed plantation before release into the river."

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RK Tiwari, principal commissioner (horticulture), DDA, commented, "The Yamuna floodplain is being developed on ecological principles and this takes time. The emphasis is on developing riverine grasslands and we have planted 12-15 varieties of grasses. Tree plantation is also being done in a multi-tier manner. We prefer wild fruit tree varieties endemic to the floodplain to support avian wildlife."

TOI didn't receive a re-

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NAME OF NEWSPAPER **Hindustan Times** NEW DELHI
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Anti-encroachment drive at pavement temple in east Delhi runs into protests

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NEW DELHI: Scores of residents in east Delhi's Mandawali protested and got into confrontations with officials on Thursday after the Public Works Department (PWD) came to the spot with a bulldozer to raze a railing around a Shani temple that encroached upon a pavement, leading to tense moments before paramilitary reinforcements were called.

The religious structure at the centre of the issue is located on Narwana Road in East School Block of Mandawali. A part of the steel rail fencing was demolished at around 9.30am but civic agencies held off on proceeding with the drive as protesters began arriving, with many raising slogans and chanting "Jai Shri Ram". Several women were seen getting into scuffles with paramilitary personnel deployed to restrain the protesters.

"The encroachment was on the footpath and only six to seven metres of the railing was demolished," said a senior PWD official, requesting anonymity. "The demolition was carried out after we received information about plans for an illegal expansion of the structure," said a second PWD official.

While some women were seen standing at the protest site with lathis, police said that there was no violence, and no injuries were reported. "We have not registered a case nor have we detained anyone. The situation is peaceful although we have kept some forces deployed at the spot," said Amrutha Guguloth, deputy commissioner of police



Locals stand around the "Shani Temple" in Mandawali while some women scuffled with security forces.

SANJEEV VERMA/HT AND PTI

(east).

Locals said a small peepal plant growing in the middle of the pavement became a Shani temple and a spot of worship for them after someone placed an idol under it. When the statue was placed varied widely as locals pegged the time from five to 20 years ago.

Over the next years, a round marble slab came up around the tree, as did a steel fence. "Since some men would harass school girls at this spot, some five-six years ago we constructed a small room next to the tree to serve as a police booth. But no policeman ever used the booth," said Ram-esh Chand Sharma, a retired railway employee and a resident of the area.

As time went by, the grille was expanded to over 40 feet long and 15 feet wide, and the overall structure started blocking the pavement entirely.

"We kept some potted plants around the temple. The fence was to keep cows away from the plants," said Rishi Kumar, a local RWA member.

"As the tree grew, more of us began seeing it as our sole place for worship since our neighbourhood lacked temples," said Munni Devi, a woman in her 70s who sat on a chair on the road to keep the security forces away.

It was a little over 20 feet of the grill that was eventually demolished, said the PWD officer. "There are no further plans for demolition in the area as of now, but action will be taken immediately if there is any kind of new construction," the officer added.

The protesters called it a "conspiracy" by the Delhi Government and said that a Mohalla Clinic located some 200 metres away too was set up on the same pavement. "This is a conspiracy



to target our religious structures. I will protest at this spot for the next week if needed to keep the bulldozers away," said Devi.

Residents said that they got to know about the government's demolition plans about three-four days ago. "On Tuesday we had a meeting with the district officials who assured us that only a part of the fence would be demolished. But today they came for the entire temple," said Rishi Kumar. There is also a Delhi Development Authority board on a piece of land behind the land saying, "Encroachers will be prosecuted".

Meanwhile, a letter to lieutenant governor VK Saxena, Delhi minister Atishi alleged that she learnt from the PWD that the LG issued the order to demolish 14 religious structures. "The officers have told me that the then home minister Manish Sisodia in February 2023 had opposed

the demolition proposal and suggested that necessary changes should be made in the projects map. But when this file was put up to you, you overturned his proposal and gave the order to demolish the religious structures," Atishi wrote.

The minister appealed to the LG to withdraw his order to demolish the religious structures. She said the officers also informed her that LG has noted in the file that demolition of religious structures pertains to law and order, and LG is the competent authority to take a decision on this. "In future, all files related to demolition of religious structures should not be sent to the elected government. The files should be sent to you directly from the chief secretary," she added.

HT reached out to the LG office which did not respond to queries seeking a comment.