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Pink City or Stink City



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Jaipur should be cleaned. India has only one 'Pink City.' Don't make it a 'Stink City.' These are the caustic remarks of a visitor to Jaipur upon seeing piles of garbage and stinking lanes in the city.



Like on the pathetic condition of city roads, the CM has also publicly expressed his anguish on dumps of garbage lying across the city. But like the continuing poor city roads, there has been no respite from the increasing waste strewn of the roads. The problem has assumed such alarming proportions that it has necessitated the Rajasthan High Court to summon the Chief Executive Officer of the *Jaipur Nagar Nigam* with a concrete plan.

The Central Government has made Municipal Solid Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000. These rules apply to every municipal authority responsible for collection, segregation, storage, transportation, processing and disposal of municipal solid wastes. The municipal authority would be responsible for the implementation of the provisions of these rules. The Secretary-in-charge of the Department of Urban Development of the concerned State has the overall responsibility for the enforcement of provisions of these rules. An implementation schedule and parameters of compliance have also been laid down therein.

Whether or not the CEO of *Jaipur Nagar Nigam* has drawn up a plan to be submitted to the Rajasthan High Court keeping the above rules in mind is not known. What has been widely reported in the media recently is that management of waste in Jaipur may be handed over to the private sector. It has been further reported that officials of the *Jaipur Nagar Nigam* are very impressed with the Surat model in Gujarat.

It may be recalled that Surat was struck by an outbreak of a plague. It showed what negligence in the area of solid waste management could lead to. Surat is now regarded as one of the cleanest cities in the country and it is not surprising that officials of *Jaipur Nagar Nigam* desire to replicate the same model without the same provocation.

What must, however, be borne in mind is that the Surat Municipal Corporation is a cash-rich municipality. The *Jaipur Nagar Nigam* is not similarly blessed. The Surat model, however, does bring out the fact that the problem is not insurmountable if there is a will. In Surat, the then Commissioner of the Surat Municipal Corporation has been hailed as the Champion for this turnaround.

The recent performance of *Jaipur Nagar Nigam* does not instill similar confidence. Under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, cities like Hyderabad, Pune and Bangalore acted in time to procure funds for Drainage Master Plans and have completed one-third of the projected work whereas the *Jaipur Nagar Nigam* is even now only discussing sending a proposal!

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Transport: Crumbling Infrastructure

'Each year it seems to take less time to fly across the ocean and longer to drive to work,' pertinently points out an unknown author. Like all major cities within the country and abroad, Jaipur has become synonymous with traffic and parking problems. Rising vehicular traffic and population coupled with inadequate public transport and apathetic civic sense has severely constrained and even reduced available spaces, causing chaos on the roads.

Induction of low-floor buses and construction of the Metro and Bus Rapid Transit System in the city has only exacerbated the problem on the roads. To provide immediate relief, the concerned authorities have taken some steps but long-term solutions such as construction of flyovers, broadening of roads, and construction of slip-lanes would need more time and resources.

Traffic

Among the successful new traffic management systems put in place on the city roads are the ones at Khasa Kothi Circle, Bais Godam and the Government Hostel. These have considerably eased traffic congestion.

At the Trimurti Circle (Police Memorial), the suggestion of right diversions provided by traffic experts from Delhi and



Chandigarh has helped partially though it requires deployment of more traffic police personnel and information to commuters. Eventually, the circle might need to be done away with and a traffic signal intersection constructed by moving the memorial to an alternative destination.

For long term implementation, 12 points have been chosen in the city where traffic would either be diverted or traffic light signals will be introduced. Linking of colonies directly with the main roads is also on the anvil. Certain changes at other busy intersections, such as Sodala, Ambedkar and Chomu are being contemplated. Eight rail over bridges would also be built to ease traffic congestion. The OTS crossing has seen an increasing number of traffic bottlenecks



and accidents. A plan to broaden the slip roads at the intersection and providing for speed breakers is in the final stages.

Ironically, suggestions emerging out of a two-year study conducted by CUTS with Lund University of Sweden comprised construction of (inexpensive) speed breakers and raised zebra crossings at certain accident-prone areas to calm the traffic. These were not implemented by Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) citing violation of the norms of Indian Road Congress. Now one of the suggestions is being considered after two years and a couple of mishaps that could have been averted!

Parking

The city is yet to draft a parking policy and in absence thereof, decisions are taken by the Traffic Control Committee of the JDA. Uncontrolled parking system has resulted in various agencies such as JDA, Nagar Nigam, PWD, Roadways, Railways, Managers of shopping malls, etc. fixing parking charges according to their own convenience and whims. Parking rates in the city have been reported to be more than even Mumbai and New Delhi.



Parking woes are most acute in the walled city as also on the main arterial MI Road. However, the Urban Development Department is working on a few major parking projects, specifically at Ram Niwas Bagh and Ram Lila Maidan. The facility is expected to be ready later this year.

A ray of hope

The World Bank (WB) has offered to extend financial and technical assistance to the state government for improving and developing a comprehensive traffic management system for three cities including Jaipur. The WB has asked for a Detailed Project Report (DPR) to be submitted by the government by May 2011. It is expected that the DPR would cover the problem holistically, including improvements in public transport such as improving city roads, introducing lane system and new buses, trams, local trains, etc., installation of cameras and on-line traffic monitoring systems as prevalent in developed countries.

Seven Railway Overbridges on the Anvil

To avoid traffic congestion on busy railway tracks, the JDA in collaboration with North Western Railway, will construct nine railway overbridges in



Jaipur. The Railways has already provided its consent on seven. This will bring down the distance by linking many places. A survey of nine railways tracks was conducted by the JDA.

The state government has started action for acquiring land, under Section 4(I) of Land Acquisition Act. The cost to construct the overbridges will be shared by both JDA and railways.

(RP & Tol, 10.02.11)

Shudh Ke Liye Yudh

Recently, residents of Jaipur rushed to local hospitals complaining of nausea after consuming milk supplied by the Jaipur Dairy. Residents complained that the milk smelled of phenyl and this allegedly caused vomiting and discomfort. The Jaipur Dairy collected milk samples from 30 different areas in the city. The Dairy formed a three-member committee to look into the complaint. The Department of Medical and Health also collected samples of milk for testing.

Further, it has been recently reported in the Jaipur media that vegetables supplied in parts of the city are being irrigated with waste and sewage water. The concerned officials are ignoring the fact thereby increasing possibilities of onset of chronic diseases.

In the meanwhile, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has said that his government's campaign against fuel adulteration will continue. It is not merely a campaign but also an action plan of the state government. The campaign would run against adulterators

and black marketers. Flagging off two mobile labs to check adulteration in petroleum products, Gehlot said people involved in such acts will not be spared.

(DB, 07.02.11; RP, 11.02.11 & 23.03.11)

World Class Station Still a Dream!

Since the last three years, the dream has been to make Jaipur Railway Station a world class facility but nothing has been done in this direction. The announcement of making Jaipur Railway Station a world class facility was made in rail budgets of February 2008 and July 2009 respectively.

A letter for the appointment of an adviser is stuck with North-South Railways. The main function of an adviser is to prepare a framework for the facilities to be provided to the passengers at the station. After the preparation of framework, tenders would be invited for the development of facilities.

The electrification of railway line of Jaipur-Sawai Madhopur has not yet started. These announcements were made in rail budget of previous years.

(DB, 15.02.11)

- ◆ The foundation stone for the first phase of the Jaipur Metro Project from Chandpole to Mansarowar was laid on February 24, 2011 and the second phase from Ambabari to Sitapura was also announced by the Union Minister for Urban Development. (DB, 25.02.11)

- ◆ Is expected to test run the Jaipur Metro in March 2013 with revenue operations from November 01, 2013 and transport 11,500 passengers during peak hours. It will start with four coaches and switch to six as the traffic increases. (Tol, 01.01.11 & 23.02.11)

- ◆ Foreign companies have expressed great interest in being appointed as consultants for the Jaipur Metro. In the meanwhile, Rail India Technical & Economic Services (RITES) has been appointed as third party inspectors to ensure quality. At the same time, appointment of a veterinary in the metro project on deputation has become a subject of ridicule. (DB, 15.03.11 & 31.03.11)

- ◆ For rehabilitation of about 600 families and businesses to be displaced in the first phase, JDA has started looking for land. (RP, 19.02.11)

- ◆ The Rajasthan High Court has issued notices to the state authorities, Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation and JDA's land acquisition officer asking them to justify the project on a petition filed by shop owners of Station Road alleging that the project was a wastage of national property and

Metro Updates



natural resources and that no proper survey was done prior to the decision to launch the metro. (Tol, 10.03.11)

- ◆ A car was crushed under a piling machine at the Metro site on Ajmer Road in February 2011 killing one person thereby raising security concerns. (Tol, 04.02.11)

- ◆ The Project Consultant has informed that in India various seismic zones have been identified and Jaipur falls in Zone 2. Metro structures in Jaipur will be designed in such a manner that they can withstand earthquakes likely to occur in Zone 2. (Tol, 17.03.11)

No Control on Mobile Towers

Mobile towers are being installed near high density residential areas, schools, playgrounds and hospitals in Jaipur city despite the ban. About 4,500 mobile towers in Jaipur and 17,000 in Rajasthan are causing pollution by consuming 1.27 crore litres of diesel everyday. These are towers of 13 companies, and apart from one or two the rest have not taken permission from the Pollution Control Board for the installation of diesel generator set.



Diesel costing ₹51 crore is consumed every month by the towers. Companies, despite receiving notices from the Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board, are not following the norms of pollution control. (DB, 18.03.11)

Land Reduced for Convention Centre

The land for the proposed Convention Centre at Pratap Nagar, Sanganer and development of related facilities has been reduced. For the Convention Centre, an area of about 16 hectares had been earmarked near Bambala Puliya which has been reduced

to 11 hectares. About ₹150 crore would be invested by the contractual firm for the development of the Centre.

There would be no reservations for government programmes at the Centre (to be developed under the public-private partnership model). The state government like any other organiser has to book the facility. The Rajasthan Housing Board would be getting ₹7 crore every year for providing free land for the Convention Centre. (RP, 15.02.11 & 18.03.11)

Jaipurites Facing Water Scarcity

The underground water of Jaipur would suffice for only a few years now according to reports in the media. This



is largely due to non implementation of guidelines relating to digging of tube wells and recharging of groundwater through water harvesting.

Scarcity-hit Rajasthan is likely to come up with a legislation to prevent excess exploitation of water. There is a need for legislation in the direction of conserving water in the city. The government took several steps for its proper execution but its success will depend on legal and institutional reforms. (RP, 30.01.11 & DB, 16.02.11)

Mismanagement of Low Floor Buses

Introduction of about 260 low floor buses in the city without planning for their terminals is now becoming a problem. About ₹50 lakh were spent on these buses but in absence of a terminal, they are being parked overnight wherever space permits. Anti-social elements vandalise the buses and their routine maintenance is not possible.

Despite running with full load of passengers, losses are mounting. The buses are being run by the Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation (RSRTC) while their management is with Jaipur City Transport Services Limited (JCTSL). About 1200 drivers and conductors man these buses in shifts in addition to the administrative staff and it is estimated that RSRTC has already spent about ₹11 crores without compensation from JCTSL. (RP, 30.01.11 & 24.02.11)

Bits and Pieces

Jaipur in the State Annual Budget

The annual budget 2011-12 have a couple of announcements to cheer the residents of Jaipur.

- ◆ Separate water projects for Jaipur, Shahpura-Jaipur, Viratnagar and Phulera for long-term solution of the drinking water problem. The government to spend ₹60 crore for replacing the worn out water pipelines in 183 urban localities, including those in Jaipur.
- ◆ 265 villages in Jaipur district to be linked to the Dudu-Bisalpur drinking water project before the onset of summer.
- ◆ Special efforts for heritage conservation in Jaipur.
- ◆ ₹2 crore on beautification of the Jantar-Mantar observatory, which is included in UNESCO's list of world heritages.
- ◆ The Planning Commission to provide additional aid for establishing the 'international museum and art square' at the Sawai Man Singh Town Hall and Jaleb Chowk.
- ◆ Jaipur quilts to be made tax free.
- ◆ A couple of more police stations to investigate crimes against women.
- ◆ Jaipur-based Government Dental College to be made a constituent college of the Rajasthan Health Sciences University, which will spend ₹2 crore on the development of the college.
- ◆ Rajasthan University to get a centre dedicated to high-level research and education work. The centre, equipped with ultramodern gadgets, to be set up at the University's Centre for converging technologies.
- ◆ Another cricket stadium to promote sports in Rajasthan.
- ◆ Work to soon begin on 47 kms of the proposed Ring Road passing through southern Jaipur.

(Tol, 10.03.11)



Sources: DB: Dainik Bhaskar; RP: Rajasthan Patrika; Tol: Times of India