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# CityMatters



## Encroachment: A Menace

**T**hough *Amanishah Nullah* is actually a boon for the Jaipur city, the negligence of government and administration and greed of land mafia has converted it into a bane. It was originally Dravyavati river and was the main source of drainage of rain water. Today, three lakh people are living in the *nullah* bed and more than 100 colonies have come up in this area.



In compliance with the High Court's recent order on *Amanishah Nullah*, the Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) swung into action and demolished many illegal constructions in the dry river's catchment area, including residential and non-residential buildings. The government has made an assessment of illegal buildings in a nine km stretch of the 40 km *nullah* so far. As far as the centre line of the *nullah* is concerned, the government is following the Malviya National Institute of Technology map prepared in 2010 to decide the width of the catchment area and identify the encroachment. It is evident that if we are able to clear the path of this *nullah*, the rain water can be drained effortlessly and Jaipur city need not face flooding.

But the question is why such an encroachment sprung up in the first place. One reason for such kind of encroachments is that politicians are loathe to evict encroachers, who are permanent vote-banks usually created by the legislators themselves. Civic officials also turn a blind eye as encroachments are often an additional income. The police too are not lagging behind. They complete the troika which exploits the mushrooming numbers. With the authorities all gaining, encroachments in the city are pervasive and thriving, much to the discomfort of the citizens. Be it the road, parks, pavements, markets or public land, there is encroachment at every place.

Removing of encroachment is not an easy task. Residents of Mohan Nagar, Jagannath Puri and Kiran Vihar, who have received notices, took to the streets and alleged that JDA was biased in determining the centre line of the *nullah*, which plays a crucial part in determining the encroachment status of hundreds of houses. They have threatened to go to the Supreme Court.

As per geologists, *Amanishah Nullah* can also become a major source of ground water conservation. It is necessary to demarcate the *nullah* area and erect a wall on both sides. Poonam Chand Bhandari, a lawyer, stated that the width of *nullah* has become only five feet near Mansarovar Heritage Inn's building. It needs to be ensured that not just poor suffer due to anti-encroachment drive, but also influential builders, corporates and institutions should bear the brunt. The displaced persons should be rehabilitated.

Shanti Dhariwal, Urban Development and Housing (UDH) Minister, clarified that the State Government had no immediate plans to rehabilitate the illegal occupants as its priority was to execute the high court order and remove all encroachments. The *Amanishah Nullah* will be declared a no-encroachment zone. The state government is planning to move the Supreme Court in the *Amanisha Nullah* matter to seek more time for demolishing the encroachments and also make an attempt to get relief for the residents hanging on the 'borderline' of eviction.

There is an urgent need for strengthening the drainage system and this should be started with *Amanishah Nullah*. Plantation should be done on both sides of *Nullah* with clear demarcation with wall or pillars. Government's firmness against encroachment is appreciable and this should continue to make life of Jaipurites comfortable.



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### INSIDE

- ◆ Improving Service Delivery through Enhanced Civic Engagement
- ◆ Domestic Gas Supply Pipeline Soon
- ◆ 'AC double-decker' Train Flagged Off
- ◆ Committee to Monitor Cable TV
- ◆ Metro Updates

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## MYCITY



The Asia Foundation

## Improving Service Delivery through Enhanced Civic Engagement

*Civic engagement is one of the critical norms of good urban governance. This could be achieved by promoting democracy through free and fair elections to ULBs, providing space for civil society participation, promoting civic sense through mechanisms like city watch groups etc.*

Urban local bodies (ULBs)/Municipalities play an important role in the planning and development of urban areas. ULBs are responsible for providing basic infrastructure and services in cities and towns. However, the performance of many of these bodies/municipalities including Jaipur, has continued to deteriorate over time. One of the reasons for their poor performance is ineffective and insufficient participation of the citizens in the decision-making process.

**Keeping these drawbacks in mind CUTS conceptualised** and initiated a new project entitled "Improving Service Delivery by Urban Local Government in the City of Jaipur through Enhanced Civic Engagement" (MyCity) in partnership with The Asia Foundation. The intervention commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2012.

The objective is to **assess the status and quality of service delivery by urban local government in the city of Jaipur** through Citizen Report Cards (CRC) by engaging stakeholders and create a Public Services Index (PSI) of each of the selected wards based on delivery against key services to improve the quality of services by the Urban Government.



Enhanced voice to urban citizens in local decision making, **improved citizen participation in urban local governance and better services** are the expected outcomes of the intervention. Under the intervention, a CSO consultation was organised on August 28, 2012, which was attended by 22 representatives of Jaipur-based CSOs. A Councillors' consultation meeting was organised on September 28, 2012 and 14 councillors, including Deputy Mayor of Jaipur Manish Pareek attended the meeting. The formal launch of the project is scheduled to be held on October 31, 2012.

### BRTS: Gujarat Succeeds where Delhi Fails

Taking a dig at the below-par performance of Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) in Delhi, Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi said his state had outstripped the national capital. "Gujarat succeeds where Delhi fails," Modi said, speaking at the inauguration of Asia's first BRTS conference at Ahmedabad on September 06-08, 2012.



According to the State Government, the conference was hosted here against the backdrop of 'best practices of Janmarg Ltd BRTS model' in the city, and was being attended by management experts from Asia, Latin America and Africa, amongst others.

Modi, on this occasion, announced a plan to set up a Multi-Modal Affordable Transport Authority for the developing urban areas in Gujarat. (PTI, 06.09.12)

### Nepali Man Bites Snake to Death

A Nepali man who was bitten by a cobra snake bit it back and killed the reptile in a tit-for-tat attack. Mohamed Salmo Miya chased the snake, which bit him in his rice paddy, caught it and bit it until it died.

The snake, called "goman" in Nepal, is also known as the Common Cobra. Police official said the man, who was being treated at a village health post and was not in danger of dying, would not be charged with killing the snake because the reptile was not among snake species listed as endangered in Nepal.

(Reuters, 23.08.12)

### Cucumber & a Cuppa keep you cool

A cup of tea with a cucumber sandwich tops the list of best foods to have during hot weather. According to the researchers, however tempting ice creams may be, they will not work to beat the heat.

Even water should be drunk at room temperature rather than ice cold during the hottest days of the year. While the British colonial favourite of cucumber sandwiches work best during summer, the crust free, white bread versions served in posh hotels and tea rooms, do not seem to work best.

Fruit and vegetables with high water content are particularly good for hot weather, which includes cucumber but also watermelon and celery.



(IE, 23.08.12)

### Brussels to Fine Offensive Language

The people of the Brussels will have to mind their manners from now on, with the city authorities announcing new fines of up to •250 for insults traded on the streets. Brussels is known for its family-friendly and cultivated lifestyle but the mayor wants to crack down on the everyday unpleasantness found in any big city.

To do so, officials came to an agreement with judicial authorities to impose fines of between •75 and •250 for insults, petty theft and rough jostling where no physical harm is caused.

The spokesman for the mayor said the courts up to now had been too busy to take up such cases and as a result many police "had little incentive to take any action over such incidents". (BL, 05.09.12)





### **B2 Bypass gets HC's Nod**

The Rajasthan High Court has given a nod to the decision of the State Government to open B2 bypass, which diverts heavy traffic coming from Agra and Tonk towards Ajmer through New Sanganer Road, after the DCP traffic submitted a report before the Court.



A division bench of the Supreme Court in February 2012 had dismissed the plea raised by residents of Mansarovar locality to place a ban on the vehicular movement on B2 bypass. The bypass had been in the limelight due to successive accident-related deaths in the recent past. Many times residents had blocked the road after mishaps.

The Supreme Court had asked the traffic control board to undertake an exercise to judge the utility of the newly constructed bypass for heavy vehicular traffic compared with the rate of accidents and submit a report before the High Court.

(Tol, 04.08.12)

### **Domestic Gas Supply Pipeline Soon**

After Kota becoming the first city in the state to get fuel gas through pipelines in households, other major cities of the state will follow. Reliance Company tendered for the same, but the process did not move. A letter has been sent to the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board to initiate the process.



The Gas Authority of India Limited is working in Kota and now is in the process of initiating the same in Rajasthan in association with Rajasthan Petroleum Corporation Limited.

City Gas Grids will be created in cities, such as Jaipur, Bharatpur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Bikaner, Ajmer, Bhilwara, Alwar, Sriganganagar etc.

(DB, 07.08.12)

### **Ducting in Jaipur after 2017**

The UDH Department has shelved the much awaited pilot project for ducting (underground tunnel for wiring) in the walled city. The project will be initiated

only after JDA or JMC have enough funds. The construction work for the ducting project will cost ₹3404.72 crore.

The government, in an affidavit to the Supreme Court, said that currently, projects such as *Ghat Ki Ghuni*, Jaipur Metro, ring road, overbridges, underpasses and parking areas are under construction. As a result, the roads in the city are congested and it will not be feasible to initiate the project in the walled city which is not only densely populated but also has narrow lanes and old buildings.

Recently, the ducting project was mired in controversy as UDH Minister Shanti Dhariwal questioned the bureaucratic nod without bringing it to his notice.

(DB, 25.08.12)

### **Free Schools of Towers**

The Rajasthan High Court has ordered Chief Secretary CK Mathew to make sure that all mobile towers are removed from schools by October 07, 2012. In its order, the High Court has fixed October 01, 2012 as the deadline for cutting-off power supplies, batteries and generator sets from the buildings.



While October 03, 2012 has been fixed as the deadline for removing equipment and the deadline to bring down the towers from the school buildings has been fixed for October 07, 2012. The division bench of Chief Justice Arun Mishra and Justice NK Jain (I) ordered this while hearing the petition filed by former Justice IS Israni.

The Court, on August 22, 2012, had ordered removal of mobile towers from schools within 15 days, but till date these towers have not been removed.

(DNA, 22.09.12)

### **Door-to-door Garbage Collection**

The civic body, after facing strong criticism for delaying the door-to-door garbage collection scheme, is now finally set to launch it. The contracted A to Z firm will start door-to-door garbage collection in the city.

In the first phase the door-to-door garbage collection will start in 21 wards of the city. The firm will be responsible for garbage collection, sweeping roads, and dumping the waste. An official said

the government has decided to levy user charges on the consumers for door-to-door garbage collection and disposal depending on their electricity bills. The facilities would be provided free of charge to those consumers with an electricity bill of up to ₹1,000.



The consumers – domestic, commercial and industrial – would be charged as per their electricity bills. While domestic consumers will have to shell out an additional sum of up to ₹300 on their bills, for commercial and industrial consumers the hike in the electricity bills would be up to ₹1,000.

(RP, 15.09.12)

### **'AC double-decker' Train Flagged Off**

The much-awaited AC double-decker train was flagged off by Railway Minister Mukul Roy on August 16, 2012 from Sarai Rohilla station in Delhi. The service was announced by former Rail Minister Mamata Banarjee in her Budget for 2011-12.

The train would have 13 coaches with a sitting capacity of 120 passengers in each coach. The lower floor of the double-decker has a capacity of 70 passengers while the upper floor has an in-take capacity of 50 passengers. The double-decker train is going to replace the Jaipur-Delhi non-stop special and would halt at Gurgaon, Delhi Cant and Delhi Sarai Rohilla stations.



The fare from Jaipur to Gurgaon would be ₹327. For Jaipur to Delhi cantonment, it would be ₹337 and the journey from Jaipur to Delhi Sarai Rohilla would cost ₹347.

(IE, 17.07.12)

### **Permit to 8k Autorickshaws**

The Regional Transport Office (RTO) of Jaipur has decided to issue permits to around 8,000 autorickshaws which were so far running without permits in the city.

The decision was taken in the Traffic Control Board meeting.

A decision to connect the autorickshaws with either a control room or a call centre was also taken. In this regard, a team will be constituted to inspect other cities where the system is functional and submit a report. The team will comprise members of Traffic Department, RTO and JDA. It is expected all autorickshaws in the city will be connected with the global positioning system.

The official further said permits will be issued to around 5,000 diesel and 3,000 LPG autorickshaws. (RP, 21.07.12)

## Committee to Monitor Cable TV

Having a problem with a show being telecast on a cable channel? You can now lodge a complaint with a district-level

monitoring committee in Jaipur. Headed by the Jaipur Police Commissioner, the Committee has been entitled to deal with such complaints under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.

The Committee would keep an eye on whatever is being telecast on cable TV. It will also ensure that pirated material is not aired on the local cable channels. If any complaint against satellite channels is registered then, the Union Ministry for Information and Broadcasting should be informed. (HT, 04.10.12)

## Survey Soon for Monorail

The State Government has stepped up efforts to bring monorail to three cities – Jaipur, Jodhpur and Kota. A team of engineers from Malaysia and Engineering Projects India Limited would conduct the

survey of these three cities soon.

UDH Minister Shanti Dhariwal, said: "Efforts are being made to improve the public transport system. The engineers of Malaysia and Engineering Projects India Limited have been called for conducting a survey of the three cities." The survey is being conducted for the second time in these cities to find out the possibility of starting monorail at minimum cost, he said.

Cost is a major factor which the State Government is worried about. The state Government is planning to introduce monorail on the public private partnership (PPP) model. For elevated tracks for monorail, the cost is ₹140 crore per kilometre. (DB, 09.09.12)



# Metro Updates



## Ready by June 2013

Trains will start transporting passengers on the Jaipur Metro railway system by June 2013. The metro rail network has been developed by DMRC with an investment of US\$2bn. Close to 55 percent of work on the first phase has been completed with the remainder on course to be completed to schedule. The metro train system is being developed in two phases, out of which, the development of the first phase is further divided into two legs, which include IA and IB. Once both legs have been completed, metro trains will run between Mansarovar, Chandpole and Bari Chaupar.

(www.rail.co, 24.07.12)

## Met-row over PPP Model

Though the Delhi airport Metro express line was the first project (in Metro in the city) under PPP and had a sordid fate, this has, apparently had no impact on phase-II of Jaipur Metro which was also planned under the PPP mode. The State Government refuses to backtrack and marches ahead with the PPP. The State Government has planned to take on phase-II, (Ambabari to Sitapura) a 24 km stretch on PPP model. The cost of the whole project is pegged at ₹6,238 crore. The State Government will invest ₹1200 crore while the rest will be shared by the company which wins the project under PPP and the Central Government.

(Tol, 27.07.12)

## Metro: for you, with you, 24X7

Had a heated argument with your spouse and forgot your lunch box to office? Got a crease on your shirt that needs a quick fix? Need to urgently have your locks trimmed or pick up a gift for your colleague? Don't worry, the Jaipur



Metro rail project will now come to your rescue. Life, indeed, will play out on a fast track along Mansarovar to Chandpole, once the metro project's retail offerings kick into action. From takeaways, cafes, book shops, gift, laundry and

drug stores to saloons, the nine stations dotting the metro's route are slated to provide a pleasant shopping experience to commuters.

(DNA, 17.08.12)

## Skilled Staff, a Problem

The issue of availability of skilled manpower for operation and maintenance (O&M) during phase-I of Jaipur Metro has resurfaced. The issue was raised in Lucknow in a meeting with the Research Design and Standards Organisation. One of the points in the report indicates that the O&M could be a major bottleneck in the smooth run of Jaipur Metro. Viewing the technical glitches the DMRC has already proposed to handover the operations to them for a year. The suggestion was proposed to iron out any glitches that may occur during the operations in initial months.

(Tol, 22.08.12)

## Metro to Run with New Coaches

The government's dillydallying in approving purchase of rolling stock might have cost the Jaipur Metro project dearly as JMRC had hinted at a possibility of plying old (or used) trains (coaches) on the newly-constructed tracks from Mansarovar to Chandpole. However, the hopes are not completely dashed as the new coaches are being manufactured. The DMRC claimed Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEM), the contracted company, has been asked to expedite manufacturing. The pink coaches are almost ready while the work of wheelers is underway.

(DNA, 27.09.12)

Sources: BL: The Hindu Business Line; DB: Dainik Bhaskar; DNA: Daily News and Analysis; IE: Indian Express; HT: Hindustan Times; PTI: Press Trust of India; RP: Rajasthan Patrika; Tol: Times of India