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CAG slams CP recast plan

Dubs Project Unrealistic, Says Poor Execution Marred Redevelopment

TEAM TOI

New Delhi: In its report for 2016, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has come down heavily on the plan to redevelop Connaught Place in the run-up to the 2010 Commonwealth Games. The objective of New Delhi Municipal Council's project to restore the heritage architectural character while easing vehicular and pedestrian movement in the popular commercial hub hadn't been fully achieved after the start in 2006.

The report attributed this failure to the lack of "realistic planning, coupled with poor execution and monitoring of implementation of works, led to non-achievement of the project". Pointing out lapses, CAG said that the project required the installation of 64 roofed escalators in new and existing subways at a cost of Rs 80 crore, but only 22 were put in place for Rs 11.17 crore, that too without roofs. Of them, 14 were rendered dysfunctional after execu-

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RUNNING AROUND IN CIRCLES: Restoration of the façade in run-up to the 2010 Games was done only in outer and inner circle at a cost of Rs 40.02 crore, while middle circle was not covered, the CAG report said

utive components were stolen. Halfway through the project, NDMC also cancelled the proposed two-level underground parking lot for 2,200 cars estimated to cost Rs 112 crore. As for the area's surface development plan, only 11 of the planned 34 toilets were constructed,

while none of the proposed 300 items of street furniture, 10 high-mast streetlights and 36 kiosks were installed.

While the project cost dropped from the approved Rs 615.20 crore to Rs 477.02 crore, the report said that the Rs 18 crore spent on utility corridors, sur-

face development, water supply and flooring of the market's corridors was either unfruitful or avoidable. "Restoration of façade was done only in outer and inner circle at a cost of Rs 40.02 crore, while middle circle was not covered. Flooring of façade corridors was included in

the plan but not executed, while the desired structural stability report was not obtained by NDMC from the contractor and the owners were not apprised about the stability status of their buildings," it said.

CAG also observed that the 129 fire hydrant boxes installed across Connaught Place for fire-fighting at a cost of Rs 4.97 crore of the approved Rs 9.5 crore were either damaged or stolen. "The efficacy of the works to augment fire fighting capabilities was not established in audit despite expenditure of Rs 4.97 crore," the report said.

The audit report concluded that even after overstepping the four-year deadline for completion of the contracted work, facilities like subways, escalators, underground parking space and improvement of landscaping and lighting intended to ease both traffic and pedestrian movement were never finished.

NDMC refused to comment on the matter.

Social Sectors