

# FORUM FOR A BETTER HYDERABAD

Nine years of Activism & Service

NEWS LETTER : 5

JULY - AUGUST- 2009

(Private Circulation only)

*Compiled by r: R.K.Sinha*

ACITIVITES :

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## Heritage:

### **I. Golf Course in Golconda Fort:**

a. Forum had sought from ASI Hyderabad (with copy to ASI New Delhi) under RTI Act, copy of Dr. B R Mani's (Jt. DG ASI) report and recommendations pursuant to his visit to Hyderabad in last week of April. ASI has said they have received no such report.

b. On 21.8.09 FORUM (FBH) have written to ASI Hyd seeking to know what action was taken by ASI to comply with guidelines of AP Treasure Trove Act & Rules which require that the area where century old coins were found, while digging soil for golf course, should be sealed.

c. On 3rd July, a delegation from FORUM (FBH), PUCAAR, INTACH, Coalition for Urban Lakes had a meeting with Dr.J.Geetha Reddy State Minister for Tourism, Archeology, Mu-

seums, Archives & Culture and made submission why the Golf Course should not be allowed. While a detailed memorandum was earlier submitted, as desired by her a shorter memorandum was submitted on 5.7.09 mentioning repeated violations of Acts & Rules, violations of High Court orders, and why the Golf Course should not be allowed.

d. DG ASI visited Hyd on 4.8.09 and inspected the sites accompanied by officials of ASI, Hyderabad, Secretary, Tourism, Hyd District Collector and Golf Course people. FORUM(FBH) could not meet him and FORUM's letter requesting a meeting with him was not accepted by ASI Hyd.

e. On 13.6.09 a representation was submitted to Dr.YSR Reddy jointly signed by FORUM (FBH), PUCAAR, Concerned Citizens, Coalition for Urban Lakes & Dr. PM Bhargava (Founder Director CCMB) requesting the CM to intervene and cancel the Golf Course project. Earlier, a delegation of FBH, Concerned Citizens, PUCAAR and others met the central urban minister, Dr. Jaipal Reddy.



Mr .K.N.Srivastava, DG, ASI, New Delhi is on an inspection on the report of CSOs at the Nayaqila encroachment area. Mr. Navin Mittal, Hyd. Dist., Collector wearing the cap of Golf Club, and other officials are present.



The Press meet was presided over by Dr. M. Mandal. From L to R Mr. O.M. Debara, Mr. Sajjad Shahid, Dr. Jasveen Jairath, Dr. Kulsum Reddy, Mr. M.Vedakumar, Mr. Umesh Varma and Mohd. Afzul are seen

f. Following the visit of DG,ASI and his team, Forum submitted a further letter to the DG,ASI, that as so far no MOU has been



Court Yard view of Monty's Hotel, a heritage building.

within 50 metres in Naya Quila area plus land within the protected areas of the Fort, should be thought of at this stage. Such a step will mean condonation of all gross violations committed by the concerned officials. The Forum jointly with other civil societies have conveyed to the DG,ASI New Delhi that we are not in favour of any fresh MOU and have reiterated the earlier demand of cancelling the Golf Course project.

g. Obviously a powerful lobby exists which is more interested in saving the Golf Course rather than Golconda Fort. FBH jointly with some civil society groups have submitted a representation dt 19.8.09 to the Prime Minister, who is now holding concurrent charge of Ministry of Culture.

h. Booklet on Naya Quila & Golf Course was circulated to all newspapers, political parties, MLAs, MLCs and senior State Govt officers in Hyderabad.

i. A press meet was organized regarding cancellation of the golf course project in the Naya Qila area in the Fort and the protected areas of the Fort on 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2009.

## 2. De-listing of Monty's Hotel, Secunderabad:

In response to the High Court's stay order, the owner has filed counter. We are filing a counter as the contentions of their counter are not true factually nor is the logic tenable.

## 3. Demolition of a part of Vilayat Manzil bldg, Begumpet:

HMDA, and GHMC in response to Forum's letters dt 9.6.09, 20.6.09 & 13.7.09. On 11.8.09, have stated that the residence in the premises which has been demolished was not part of the notified heritage building. FORUM (FBH) have again sought information from them under RTI Act under what circumstances, part of the building was not included in the notified heritage



A Committee comprising Mr. M. J. Akbar, Mr. M. Vedakumar, Mr. Swamy Das, and Radial Road Engineers has visited from Pahadi Shareef to Tukkguda to save trees.

building when the entire building bears the name of Vilayat Manzil. HMDA have further advised that the Country club's proposal to raise construction in the position occupied by the erstwhile residential portion has been cleared by the HCC. FORUM (FBH) has asked for further information in the matter.

## 4. Condition of Heritage buildings:

FORUM (FBH) have requested INTACH on 29.7.09 to check and record condition of the already notified Heritage Buildings as part of the project, which is undertaken by INTACH=HMDA Heritage Listing Project for additional listing of Heritage Buildings.

## 5. Heritage Conservation Committee:

On expiry of the term of the previous committee, neither it has been renewed nor a new committee formed. FORUM (FBH) have represented on 29.7.09 to the concerned State Minister, Chief Secretary, Principal Secretary, MA&UD, and Commissioner HMDA for taking steps to constitute the committee as per the rules.



A part of Shatam Cheruvu was provided to Golf Course for the office



Heavy construction between Shatam Cheruvu and the Moat of the Golconda Fort

### 6. Press reports on proposed buildings inside Indira Park and Public Gardens:

FORUM (FBH) have sought info from HMDA and GHMC on 21.7.09 under RTI Act, regarding the proposed Council bldg complex inside Indira Park and the sanctioning authority therefor. New constructions are taking place/contemplated inside Public Gardens as per Press report. Keeping in view the beauty, image and landmark status of the Assembly building (-though not formally declared as Heritage-), FORUM(FBH) have requested MA&UD dept, GHMC,HMDA on 29.7.09 to ensure that environs of the Assembly bldg are well protected and to inform the FORUM (FBH) particulars of proposed constructions.

### Environment- Tree Protection:

I.District Level Tree Protection Committee for the districts of Hyderabad & Ranga Reddy is functioning meaningfully. Since road constructions/ extensions and development projects, which affect trees, are taking place beyond these two districts, the FORUM (FBH) on 20.7.09 have requested the Chief Secretary

and the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests to form similar committees for all other districts or to extend the jurisdiction of the present committee to other districts as well.

2. FORUM (FBH) have requested the Govt to extend the jurisdiction of WALTA to all areas beyond merely urban areas.

### Environment- Water bodies:

#### Hussainsagar Lake

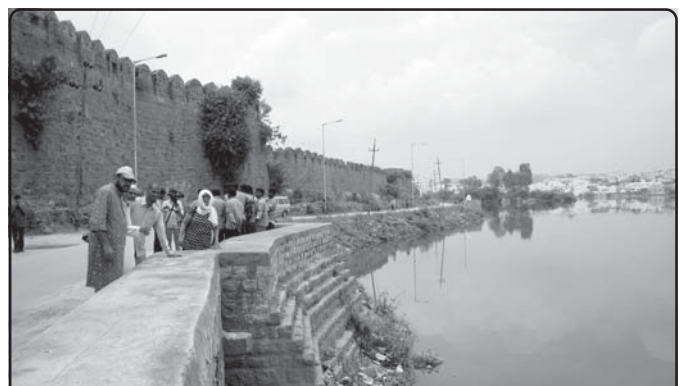
It has been gathered that Supreme Court has not issued any order on the Report of the SC appointed Monitoring committee on Hussainsagar. FORUM (FBH) is pursuing the matter. FORUM (FBH) will collect info on encroachments on other water bodies.

#### Encroachment of water bodies around Golconda Fort.

Of late, we find attempts to dig tunnels through the Moat Wall / Fort Wall, even to dig the Moat beds by blasting.. Proposals for these were rejected by the ASI. ASI's instructions to stop the works were not heeded. Constructions were commenced by GHMC even on the moat bed adjacent to Shatam Talab



An over view of Shatam Cheruvu, the encroachment can be seen around it in the shape of extended colonies



A visit by Civil Society with local populace at Shatam Cheruvu

which were prohibited by ASI but which were continued after the DGASI left Hyderabad. The construction has been stopped due to intervention of a number of CSOs, including Save the Lakes Society, PUCAAR and FORUM (FBH). We suspect there is a design to drain out the water bodies, including the Shatam talab, in course of time. Shrinking of water bodies which are natural endowments of the State when the State is suffering from a severe water shortage cannot be permitted by overt or covert operations under any pretence.

### Traffic and Transportation:

1. A press meet was organised on 23.7.09 at NSS Hyderguda, when the State Govt was urged to involve civil society groups while deciding on the Metro Rail.

2. Keeping in view increasing number of accidents on roads, FORUM (FBH) have suggested to the Commissioners of Police, GHMC, HMDA, and Addl Commissioner of Police (Traffic) on 6.7.09 that:-

—all road dividers in the city as also suburbs should be prominently painted with reflector light or glow sign, particularly at the starting & end points. Advertisers can also be roped in to do such painting while putting up ads on roads.

—lorries entering the city or plying within the city limits be fitted with glow signs/ reflectors, to reduce accidents with stationary lorries on the roads.

### Housing- Building Penalisation Scheme:

A meeting of civil society groups will be arranged to collect opinions on BPS in respect of old unauthorised constructions.



Manuscript Exhibition inaugurated by Dr. J. Geeta Reddy, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism, Govt. of A.P., at Oriental Manuscript Library. Mr. M. Vedakumar, Prof. Kishan Rao, Mr. Chukka Ramaiah, Mr. otturi Venkateshwar Rao and Prof. Tirumal Rao are seen

Meanwhile, there was a press report that GHMC have decided to regularize buildings simply by sending a simultaneous notice to the concerned BPS applicant to install necessary fire safety equipment. FORUM (FBH) insisted that BPS cert should be issued only after proper fire safety equipments have been installed and inspected. GHMC has clarified that the press report



Mr. Chandramohan Reddy, OSD, BPPA, Prof. Kodarkar Mohan Mr. M. Vedakumar, Mrs. Sanghamitra Malik with local populace after inauguration of lake view park opposite to Prasad's Imax.

misrepresented their circular and BPS will not be issued until fire safety equipments as prescribed are not actually installed and inspected.

### Miscellaneous:

1. 14th Foundation Day celebrations of COVA were held at Press Club, Basheerbagh on 20.7.09. Dr M Mandal, Shri M Vedakumar and Shri B Ramakrishnam Raju had attended on behalf of FBH.

2. On 15<sup>th</sup> Aug, 2009 Sri. M. Vedakumar has attended OML Manuscripts exhibition at O.U. Library on behalf of FBH.

3. On 16.7.2009 Sri. M. Vedakumar, Smt. Sanghamitra Malik & Prof. Kodarkar Mohan have attended the Inauguration of Lake view park by HMDA on behalf of FBH.

4. On 17.7.09, ASCI organised a workshop on Megacity Governance: Issues and Challenges. Dr, V K Bawa, Smt Jasveen Jairath, Shri C. Ramachandraiah, Shri M Vedakumar had participated.