

Ms. Arti Mehra, Mayor of Delhi today in a letter written to Mr. Jaipal Reddy, Union Urban Development Minister has requested him to immediately focus attention on the humanitarian and public interest aspect of the severe hardships being faced by the affected families residing at 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors in various areas of Delhi and find a legally acceptable solution without any loss of further time. She also sought kind intervention of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and Chief Minister of Delhi in this matter by forwarding copies of letter to them. She demanded that the Union Urban Development Ministry must come out either with an Amnesty Scheme or an Ordinance regularizing the unauthorized construction on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors of residential premises within the jurisdiction of Delhi.

In the letter she said that MCD is a statutory body created by an Act of Parliament in the form of *Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957 (Amended, 1995)*. The Deliberative Wing of MCD is responsible for formulating or enabling other agencies to formulate laws for the welfare of the citizens. It is in this capacity that MCD has already passed a Resolution that the Government should come out with an Amnesty Scheme or come out with an Ordinance regularizing the unauthorized construction on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors. Since the matter lies within the jurisdiction of the Union Urban Development Ministry, the plea of MCD is submitted for doing the needful at the end of Urban Development Ministry.

She highlighted that most of the people residing on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors of residential premises are lower and middle class people who have purchased these flats by taking loans from bank. These people have been beguiled by the crafty builders. They fell into their net out of their dire need for affordable accommodation in the city where the price of properties have gone beyond the means of lower and middle classes. They are already paying the price of their houses through their nose. Besides, they are being exposed to vagaries of nature during this inclement weather conditions and examination time. It would also be appreciated that the entire water supply system of these buildings is situated on the top floor.

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The demolition of such buildings will lead to disruption of water supply. It will make the situation worst not only for people residing on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors but the entire building. Unfortunately, while formulating Delhi Master Plan - 2021, the planners did not take into account the sad plight of these residents.

The Mayor disclosed that it is ironical that whereas in the Delhi Master Plan - 2021, relief has been provided to rich farmhouse owners as well as banquet hall owners situated in the institutional, industrial and commercial areas, no thought has ever been given to the poor and middle class people residing on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors.

The Mayor said that many months have passed since the issue was highlighted through Delhi High Court judgement as well as observations of the Monitoring Committee. But, it appears that the Union Urban Development Ministry has so far not taken the matter seriously. It is, therefore, the high time that proper and immediate attention should be paid for finding a resolution of the problem. There is growing resentment among the residents of Delhi, particularly those residing on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors on account of Government's inaction with regard to their miserable plight. They don't deserve to be dealt with raw hand. The Government has to come out with a solution, which is acceptable to the Hon'ble Delhi High Court, Mayor emphasized.

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**MAYOR APPRISES PLANNING COMMISSION OF  
MCD'S FINANCIAL PROBLEMS IN CARRYING OUT  
DEVELOPMENT WORKS IN RURAL AREAS**

Mayor, Ms. Arti Mehra today apprised Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission of the financial difficulties being faced by MCD in carrying out development works in rural areas due to high handedness of Delhi Government. She apprised Mr. Ahluwalia that during the year 2005-06, Rural Development Board was constituted by the Delhi Government. Thereafter, the proposed amount for the development of rural areas and maintenance of roads was discontinued to be give to MCD with the result, the development works in the villages have been badly affected due to paucity of funds. Prior to the constitution of board by Delhi Government, Municipal Corporation of Delhi was getting Rs.30 crores through Delhi Government and development works were carried out in the rural areas easily with the above amount.

Mayor stressed due to paucity of funds, MCD is not able to carry out development works in rural areas having 191 rural villages. She sought the intervention of the Planning Commission in the matter for providing grant of Rs.30 crores per year to MCD through Delhi Government, so that the development works in the rural areas could be taken up.

Ms. Arti Mehra said that under Section 39 of DMc Act, 1957, the Rural Area Committee is constituted from the Area Councilors representing the rural areas. All the development works/schemes for the betterment of rural areas are put up to the Corporation after the approval of Rural Area Committee and then these schemes are executed in the rural areas in a phased manner. Under the 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, an amout of Rs.260 crores as allocated for the development of rural areas and maintenance of roads.

Mr. Ahluwalia patiently heard the Mayor and assured that he would get the matter examined and endeavour to solve the issue in an amicable manner.

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FOR FAVOUR OF PUBLICATION

Thursday, 10 January 2008

**MAYOR URGES THE CHIEF MINISTER TO RELEASE  
NECESSARY FUNDS TO MCD TO  
CARRY OUT DEVELOPMENT WORKS IN RURAL AREAS**

Mayor, Ms. Arti Mehra today met the Chief Minister of Delhi, Ms. Shiela Dikshit and urged her to release the necessary funds to MCD to enable it to carry out development works in rural areas. She said that there is a Committee in MCD namely, Rural Area Committee which looks after the development works in the rural areas of Delhi. Also a Rural Development Board has been constituted by the Delhi Government for this purpose. We in MCD find it difficult to get the development works in rural areas falling in MCD, executed due to paucity of funds.

Mayor said that the Chairman and the Members of Rural Area Committee always approach her to take up the matter with the Delhi Government for release of funds so that the grievances of people could be redressed. The condition of roads, galies, kharanjas, schools etc. is dilapidated. Necessary steps for carrying out the development works could not be taken for want of funds. The amount is available with the Delhi Governmnet but the same is not being released to MCD's Rural Area Committee.

Ms. Arti Mehra pointed out that a meeting was held under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister where it was decided that Rs.65 crores will be released to MCD for development of works in rural areas, but the said amount was not released.

The Chief Minister assured Mayor to look into the matter and get the needful done.

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**MAYOR MEETS THE CHIEF MINISTER TO  
APPRISE HER OF THE PROBLEMS IN  
REHABILITATION OF MONKEYS AT ASOLA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY**

Mayor, Ms. Arti Mehra today met the Chief Minister of Delhi, Ms. Shiela Dikshit and apprised her of the problems being posed in rehabilitation of monkeys at Asola Wildlife Sanctuary. She pointed out that the boundary wall has not been fully constructed and with specific height. As long as it is not done, it will not be possible to contain the monkeys within Asola Wildlife Sanctuaries. The monkeys are not getting adequate diet there, as a result of which they are coming out of the sanctuary and going to nearby areas. They also come out in open.

Ms. Arti Mehra said that the Municipal Councillor of Asola area has pointed out that the villagers of the adjoining areas are facing serious monkey threat. She said that she had written to her a letter on 20<sup>th</sup> November, but Delhi Government has not taken any step to control the problem of monkey menace.

Mayor demanded that the monkeys are well fed and boundary wall be completely built as per specific height. The Chief Minister assured the Mayor that she will get the matter examined for appropriate action.

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**FOR FAVOUR OF PUBLICATION**

**Thursday, January 17, 2008**

Mayor, Ms. Arti Mehra today said that the success of democracies in India, Brazil and South Africa will have great bearing on major parts of the World. She said that India is an exemplary model of decentralized governance. The other countries like Brazil and South Africa are also deepening their experience at grassroot democracy. There is a lot at India, Brazil and South Africa in share and strengthen there democratic processes and enrich the life of citizens. She was addressing India-Brazil-South Africa Local Governance Forum which was inaugurated by Mr. Jaipal Reddy, Minister of Urban Development. Dr. George Mathew, Director Institute of Social Sciences read the welcome address.

Addressing the gathering, Mayor said that municipal bodies today have an awesome responsibility to provide decent standards of living in the rapidly expanding cities. They also have to evolve a work culture which consciously places public welfare above all other considerations. The common man's contact with the municipal bodies continues from the cradle to the grave. The challenges facing urbanization are indisputably alarming. Let us not forget that in the history of the world, Indians like Brazillians and South Africans have stood out as city builders as is evident from the traditions we carry from the ancient civilizations.

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**MAYOR LAUNCHED ANAEMIA CONTROL PROGRAMME IN  
SHAHDARA NORTH ZONE**

Mayor, Ms. Arti Mehra today launched Anaemia Control Programme in Shahdara North Zone from MCD Primary School, New Usmanpur. *Fortis Healthcare Limited and SRL Ranbaxy* have come forward to collaborate in this *Anaemia Control Programme*. They made beginning from Shahdara North Zone. They will conduct Haemoglobin estimation of 35,000 children of 4th and 5th Classes in MCD Primary Schools in Shahdara North Zone having 192 schools and 49000 children in 4th and 5th Classes. The remaining 14,000 children will be covered by technical staff of School Medical Scheme and MCD's Hospitals. This collaboration will be a part of their corporate social responsibility and they will not charge anything. Dr. Harsh Vardhan, MLA, Dr.V.K. Monga, Chairman, Medical Relief and Public Health Committee, Smt. Satya Sharma, area Municipal Councillor, Mr. A.K. Singh, Deputy Commissioner, Shahdara North Zone were also present at the inaugural function.

The Mayor on this occasion said that it is a sort of national emergency and all health providing systems should contribute to this programme so as to control Anaemia which is affecting physical and mental growth of our children. It is a major cause of school drop out also. It is a well known fact that anaemic child grows into an anaemic adult. It is also authenticated that anaemic mother produces anaemic child. Wherever Heamoglobin estimation have been done, iron folic acid tablets are being distributed and the results will be assessed after 6 months. Along with this programme, nutritional counselling is also being provided.

Chairman, Health Committee, Dr. V.K. Monga informed that Anaemia Control Programme of MCD's School Health Scheme is progressing at a good pace. A total of around 20,000 children have been examined in Shahdara South and West Zone of MCD. The data throws some glaring results. Some schools have 100% anaemic children and in fact, all schools have more than 85% children anaemic, he said.

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## FOR FAVOUR OF PUBLICATION

Tuesday, January 22, 2008

Mayor, Ms. Arti Mehra today brushed aside Delhi Chief Minister, Mrs. Sheila Dikshit's interference in the working of MCD. She strongly criticized the formation of Delhi Parks and Garden Society without even taking MCD into confidence. Before going to the media, it would have been better, if she had talked to MCD to ascertain the factual position. It is highly preposterous to assume that MCD has made no contribution towards greening of the city and the parks are not being properly maintained. She said that the fact is that MCD has played very important and effective role in making Delhi green.

Mayor also criticized the Chief Minister's statement that the MCD is able to utilize 30% of its funds. As per the records, MCD has already utilized more than 70% of its funds and the remaining will be spent during the current financial year itself. It is in fact, Delhi Government which is out to throttle MCD by depriving it of its timely release of rightful allocation of funds. The funds are released in time. MCD would be able to take better care of civic services including its greening activities. MCD is managing 14,596 parks and gardens and other green areas within its jurisdiction. The greening cover provided by these parks and gardens is spread in an area of 5500 acres.

MCD is an autonomous body created by an Act of Parliament and any effort to undermine its autonomy would be strongly resisted. The taking over of the functioning of MCD with regard to parks and gardens is unconstitutional. Under the Act, maintenance of parks and gardens is obligatory function of MCD. It would be better if she carries out an introspection in the functioning of Delhi Government, particularly the bodies which were taken over by it to improve the performance. For instance, Delhi Vidyut Board and Delhi Jal Board have recorded sharp decline in their performance. Neither the supply of water, nor power has improved. The sewage disposal is working in a very shabby manner. No control rooms have been set up wherein citizens could lodge their complaint. No work has been done through Rural Development Board. The boundary walls around Asola



Wildlife Sanctuary has been built despite Delhi High Court Order and monkey menace is growing in nearby areas.

Ms. Arti Mehra said that MCD is earnestly trying to upgrade all its civic services including the parks and gardens. The society proposed by the Chief Minister is set to promote Private Public Partnership, whereas MCD is already working on public participation in horticulture and greening operation in a big way. A large number of parks, roads etc. have already been given to different NGOs under approved MOU schemes of MCD. An innovative scheme under the title "Public Private Partnership" has already started for development and management of Municipal parks by direct involvement and complete participation including finances through registered RWAs and local societies etc. This project has been taken up on pilot basis and is being implemented in two zones on experimental basis in Central and South Zone to begin with. We invite interested groups to obtain forms from the Office of the Director (Horticulture), MCD, Tourist Camp Side, Jawaharlal Nehru Marg on any working day between 10.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m.

Every year, Mayor said, a set target around 1.5 - 2 lacs Tree Plantation on Roads, in Parks & Gardens, Central Verges, Traffic Circles, Municipal Institutions, School, Strategic points and other areas meant for greenery including Sanitary Landfill Sites etc. is assigned to the Horticulture Department of MCD. Last year, a target of palantation of 1,75,000 trees was assigned to the department and against this, the achievement was 1,74,196. Similarly, this year also a target of palantation of 2,00,000 numbers trees of different species was assigned to the MCD as against the target. 1.80 lacs trees have already been planted in different areas of Delhi under the jurisdiction of MCD. The department stands successful in its eefforts making these sites green and clean and visual impact of greenery on most of the City Road etc.

Actually, this greening operation is possible due to augmentation of water through tube wells instead of depending upon other sources. In this respect, every year, a number of new tube wells are being installed extending irrigation facility to 300-500 parks. This year also the

Department has installed 232 numbers tube wells for irrigation of lawns and watering of plantings etc. in its parks and gardens. As such, at present the department is maintaining 2640 tube wells for irrigation of lawns and watering of plants etc.

Besides development and improvement of green areas, every year open sites are being enclosed with boundary wall with griisl and fencing etc. for their protection and development as green in the coming years.

Mayor added that apart from this, we are also mechanising our working in a big way adding latest machineries as Tractor Drill Machines, Light Motor Vehicles, Excavator-cum-Loaders, Sky-Top Machines, Tree Cutting Machines, Petrol operated Grass Cutters, Hedge Cutters and other machinery etc. in addition to the existing infrastructures. Besides this, we are also providing number of Children Play Apparatus in the parks to facilitate children to play in these corners/parks and developing some innovative parks such as Shaheedi Park, Indraprastha Park, Herbal Garden in Punjabi Bagh, M ini Herbal Garden in Prashant Vihar, Ajmeri Gate park, Developmetn of 12 acres park in Tagore park Colony just behind TB/ID Hospital, Kingsway Camp anda Landscape Garden in State bank Colony near Gurudwara in Civil Lines zone. In addition to these gardens, we are developing two Ornamental Parks and one Children Park in each Ward in each Zone. Besides this, one Herbal Corner is being developed in each Zone.

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