

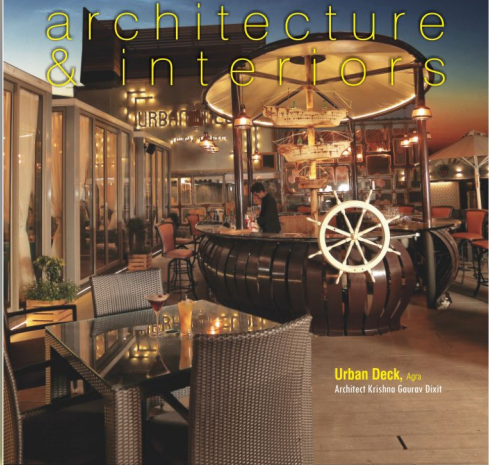
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architecture  
& interiors



**Urban Deck, Agra**  
Architect Krishna Gourav Dixit

# Reinvigoration of Purani Dilli from fumes

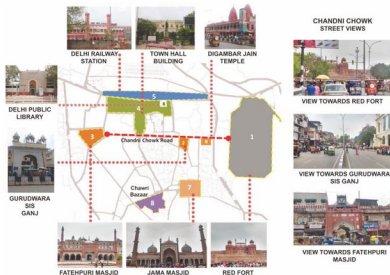
Prof. Charanjit Singh Shah, Architect, Planner, Art and Architecture critic proposes architectural notions to tackle the pollution and congestion of Chandni Chowk.



Prof. Charanjit S. Shah

Prof. Shah is a practicing architect, planner and infrastructure development expert. Besides practicing as an architect and urban planner, he is a renowned author, academician, and an educationist. He is also the Founder Secretary General of Guild of Practicing Architects, New Delhi and a Former Chairman of SAARCH. He is a great visionary and has a wide experience of more than four decades. His vision beyond imagination has transformed many of his works as a great piece of art and architecture which also befits as most sustainable projects. ■

Old Delhi, traditionally called "Purani Dilli" and historically "Shahjahanabad- the Walled city", holds deep rooted history and heritage that showcases the richness in the socio-economic, cultural and architectural grounds ever since the Mughal Dynasty that ruled Delhi, to the invasions of British Colonial trajectories. Chandni Chowk was and still is renowned for being one of the largest undying wholesale markets in India. Falling in a closed circuit with the Red Fort, Jama Masjid, Fatehpuri Masjid, Railway Station, Mahatma Gandhi Park and Chawri Bazaar, Chandni Chowk advocates responsibility, being the crucial area of connectivity to both the stagnant as well as floating population. It has sadly reached a point where the Chowk is abused by human interventions, predominantly vehicular and unorganized pedestrian possessions at the peak hours. In addition to the thick and dense floating population density, the most important factor happens to be the air pollution, which has been hitting the headlines very frequently alongside water and sound pollutions.



Chandni Chowk with important landmark building



The proposed section for underground intermodality in Chandni Chowk

Understanding the complexity of the urban fabric, infrastructural morale, day-to-day change in population and the organic functioning of Chandni Chowk, we, Creative Group have come up with substantially feasible intermodal transport system with technologically advanced methods. The metro system that connects Chandni Chowk with Kashmiri Gate and Chawri Bazaar runs underground.

Additionally, properly furnished pedestrian paths could be laid, which regularizes the current pedestrian congestion and eases the flow in walkability. There is an irrefutably important need to consider ease in vehicular movement to relieve the pressure mounting on the National capital in regards to uncontrolled pollution level. Unorganized parking practices are envisioned to be bifurcated into two parts as passer vehicles and stationary vehicles (vehicles parked). Vehicular traffic and stagnation creates a lot of ruckus in the city during peak hours. Hence, in this case, buses, cars and two wheelers could be taken further below the ground level, thereby creating breathing spaces in the city. Once vehicles go underground, the lungs of the city is comforted with the creations of open green spaces.

The holistic vision is to comprehensively establish a cohesive intermodal transport system that connects Chandni Chowk internally and externally underneath the ground. This releases the current stress above the ground, creating opportunities to restore the lost breathability. The greenery, charm and richness in the traditional offerings of Chandni Chowk will be reinvigorated by reviving the Town hall and other deceasing monumental heritage buildings in and around the Mahatma Gandhi Park region. Over 20 lakh people commute by metro, yet, the pressure mounted on roads by vehicular gushes have been resulting in tedious depletion of air quality.

The complex intermodal transport system is redefined by foreseeing future below the ground. Skywalks are also considerable methods to improve the internal circulation amongst the markets and other stop points. Reintroduction of Trams, one of the greatest heritage of the Walled City and the most economical modes of transport



Interactive pedestrian pathways

Green bays

Innovative lighting and charging point

Tram Connectivity

Green Buffers

Creating pollution free, open green breathing spaces

system, which perished decades ago, could nourish the splendor of Delhi. Separate tracks are proposed to be laid along with the pedestrian pathways above the ground level for the trams to run around Chandni Chowk, connecting important nodes. Apart from these proposals, the concept of last mile connectivity with rapid underground intermodality is envisioned to connect important destinations in and around Chandni Chowk.

**“The city is choked!”**

There is a need to generate open green spaces, plazas, city centers, recreational and cultural spaces, for which, all mega cities ought to go underground in various levels so that the connectivity in transportation through intermodality is established with great success for the issues that are likely to arise in the future. The visualized proposal could create vibrant pedestrian friendly public spaces connecting important places like Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib, Town Hall,

Railway Station, Red Fort, Fatehpuri, Nai Sarak and other markets, through skywalks, trams, pedestrian pathways, underground vehicular movements and rapid underground connectivity. The intension is to foresee a development for the future India by avoiding piece meal development in isolation. The counterproductive development will result in relaxing congestion and bottle necks in the city. Detailed research and proposal is available in the book, “Redefining Indian Smart & Sustainable Cities”, by Prof. Charanjit Shah.

“We dwell when cities breathe the well and in my vision, the built form should not be treated as a mass of brick and concrete, but as a living organism. The built form needs to breathe and be embodied to the environment.”

- Prof. Charanjit. S. Shah



Rapid last mile underground connectivity

These issues are highly sensitive and undeniably require a professional intervention so as to create a human friendly environment. Metro cities around the world including Manhattan, Tokyo, Singapore, San Francisco, etc. stand out as prime examples for multi-layer underground activities. When the cities go underground, the space above the ground level is subjected to provide plazas and green breathing open spaces for human recreation. By resorting to smart efficient tools, a net-zero environments could be attained resulting in the reduction of carbon footprints. These holistic processes shall lead towards green sustainable smart developments, restoring the lush green traditional mushroom cultivation in Delhi. ■

Written by  
**Prof. Charanjit. S. Shah,**  
charanjitshah@creativegroup.co.in / www.creativegroup.co.in



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