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Sultan's palace unsafe for tourists

PRIYANKA CHOWDHURY

The fire safety arrangements in Tipu Sultan's palace in Kalasipalayam, does not conform to the Karnataka State fire safety norms. The authorities at the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) have not upgraded the fire safety at the palace. The staff and the tourist who visit the palace everyday are, therefore, at a risk.

There are only six fire extinguishers for the entire palace and are almost falling apart. The extinguishers haven't been refilled or checked. The check tag on one of the extinguisher said that it had last been refilled on October 23, 2002, and the next refilling date was on October 24, 2003.

This 17th century palace is one of the oldest palaces in Bangalore. Certain parts of the palace like the pillars are made of wood, making it prone to fire.

Ritika Kumar, a tourist to the palace said, "The palace is quite beautiful, but it's a shame that they don't have proper fire safety arrangements to protect it. The old and broken fire extinguisher also shows that they do not care for the safety of the visitors and tourists to the palace."

The palace also doesn't have any other fire safety arrangements. For example, smoke detectors.

Mr. Kempgowda, Senior Conservation Assistant (ASI),



Fire extinguishers from Tipu's era are not adequate for modern times, placing lives at risk in event of fire. by author

said, "The fire safety arrangements at the palace are quite bad. The total number of extinguishers for the whole palace are not sufficient and need to be increased. The palace should have other arrangements as the palace is made out wood and attracts around 500 visitors everyday." He said that he ha

historical monument. He said "We can use only those equipments that will synchronize with the monument.

"We are definitely looking into the matter. But it is a time consuming process and will take time to implement", he added.

written a letter to the authorities at ASI to sanction a plan to have adequate safety requirements, like, sufficient number of fire extinguishers, better water supply and smoke detectors, in the palace. But as long as the ASI does not sanction the plan, they cannot contact the fire department for help.

Mr. Gangadhara Naidu, Fire Station Officer (North fire station), said, "We carry out inspections at the palace, but we can only do it when the order comes from the head office." He also added that the ASI needs to send them a letter so that they can come and demonstrate the new fire safety technology. But ASI has still not sent a letter to them about the demonstration of the new fire safety technology.

Mr. C.B.Patil, Deputy Superintendent Archeologist (ASI), said, "We hold routine check-ups at all the historical monuments." About the new fire safety technology, he said, "We are surveying the market for the right kind of technology." He added that they could not use just any kind of equipment, as it was a

Schools, colleges yet to implement cell phone ban

Offenders not fined for using cell phones during class

KAREN SOLOMON

Most schools and colleges in Bangalore have still not implemented the mobile phone ban, issued by the government on October 5 2007. The ban was issued to Primary and Higher Secondary Schools, including II and I Pre- University College (PUC) colleges. Center of Public instruction (CPI) educational official, Mr. Rajendran's Secretary and Mr. Sadashiv, said that the circulars regarding the ban have been sent to the colleges.

He said that if students were found using mobiles, then they were confiscated and not returned to the students. The students however, were not fined. Although the circular says, that the offenders will be fined.

At Sri Vinayaka School for Primary and High School Education, a teacher who refused to disclose his name, said that some students were found using mobiles in the school premises and in the class as well. They were asked to switch it off. The Principal of the school, refused to comment on any questions regarding the ban.

Ms. Naureen Aziz, the Head Of Department of Mass Communication

Department for Jyothi Nivas College, said that they had already implemented a ban on use of mobile phones in the college a year ago.

She said that she wasn't aware of the circular that ought to have been distributed by the CPI.

Therefore didn't know that ommittee to check implementation of ban, inspections, etc has to be formed. She said that the teachers and the Principal used their mobile phones in the staff rooms and did not take them to the class.

Ms. Aziz said that they were very strict about mobile phone use in class and that they had caught many students sending sms in the class. Also if they were found taking calls, they would take immediate action. She said, "The mobile phones will be confiscated and put in a special cover with the name of the student and kept safely till the end of the year."

She also said that they wouldn't report it to the authorities, because they could handle the matter and did not want to get the students into trouble.

In cases of emergencies, she said that Bharatiya Sanchar Nigam Limited's (BSNL)

one rupee coin phone couldn't help. She cited one instance, when one student's mother was in the hospital under crucial circumstances and that she was let to have the phone so as to be informed of any incidents. Nikheth, a student of II PUC from CMR National Junior College said that, there was the news of ban, but that they are using mobiles not in front of the teachers. She said that no committee was

formed and no inspections of mobile phones. Although some students were caught for using mobile phones in the class, but no strong action had been taken against them, other than temporary confiscation of the



Cell phone use is not restricted to adults as children break the rules by Debi Prasad

phone. Students from other schools and colleges including the East Point School and Baldwins school, said that the ban hasn't been implemented in their schools yet.