

Why is CAG not auditing ad spend of Centre, other states, asks Delhi CM

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NEW DELHI: Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal termed the Comptroller and Auditor General's audit report on the Delhi government's ad spend as "politically motivated" and accused the auditor of acting at the behest of the BJP.

"There was a time when the CAG used to unearth 2G and coal scam. But it's painful that now it is doing politics. The moot question is why is the incumbent CAG doing so? I would request

the CAG to leave politics for politicians," Kejriwal told reporters at Delhi assembly.

Kejriwal dared the central auditor to come up with rules that bar the state government from advertising outside Delhi.

"All governments are doing it. If we have improved ease of doing business then we will like to advertise in Mumbai, requesting people to invest in Delhi. Other governments spend crores in holding investors' summits. We chose to reach out by putting out ads. What's wrong with it?" the AAP national convener said.

The chief minister said his government had requested the CAG to audit the advertisement budget of other states and the Centre, but the central auditor refused to conduct it.

Refuting the observations that the Delhi government ads on saving money in construction of flyovers and dispensaries were non-verifiable, Kejriwal said all related documents were provided to the auditors.

'REPORT VINDICATES AAP'S CLAIMS ON MCDS'
Accusing the BJP-ruled MCDs of

making the municipal bodies a centre of corruption, AAP leader Dilip Pandey said the CAG report submitted to the assembly on Friday vindicated their stand.

"The MCD has not fulfilled its responsibilities to control vector-borne diseases. BJP has changed the nomenclature of the MCD from municipal corporation of Delhi into malaria chikunguniya and dengue. BJP and Congress have made MCD a centre of corruption and Delhi as a dustbin," the AAP leader said.

PWD faces flak for poor planning, design of projects

NEW DELHI: The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India slammed the Delhi government's Public Works Department for not investing 'adequate efforts and time' in planning and preparing design for the projects before execution.

"This resulted in inflated detailed estimates valuing ₹38.68 crore and execution of extra items valuing ₹147.43 crore. Provisions were violated as inadmissible payment of ₹1.51 crore was made for items which were not included in the schedule of quantities and wasteful expenditure of ₹1.30 crore," it said.

PWD was also pulled for delay in Barapullah phase-II between JLN stadium and INA.

"The drawings prepared by the consultant proved to be inaccurate during the execution of work. The increase in quantities after award of work resulted in additional expenditure of ₹55.34 crore," the report said. **HTC**

CP makeover: Auditor criticises slow pace of project, raises safety concerns

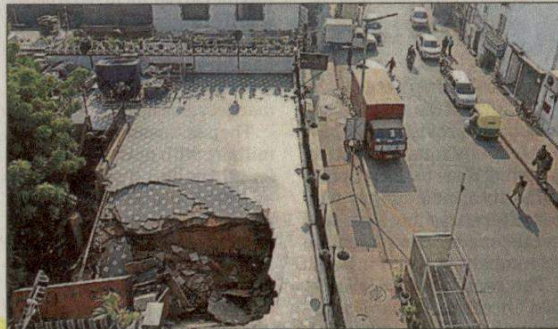
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NEW DELHI: The ambitious redevelopment of Connaught Place has been criticised by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) over the failure to complete the project. It also raised concerns over the structural safety and chaotic traffic and pedestrian movement in the 84-year-old market.

The redevelopment project touted to be a showcase for the 2010 Commonwealth Games failed to achieve its key objective of restoring the architectural and heritage character of CP, the report said.

With more and more structures collapsing in this iconic hub that dates to 1929, the CAG rapped the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) for not including any survey on structural stability of the buildings. Even the improvement of firefighting



■ The rooftop wing of Cafe Unplugged collapsed in Connaught Place on February 11.

RAVI CHOUDHARY/HT FILE PHOTO

capabilities done at a cost of ₹4.97 crore could not be assured, the report said.

"Even after a delay of over four years, restoration of the façade was completed only in the outer and inner circles while study to ascertain the structural stability of the buildings was not carried out," it said.

CAG said the facilities such as subways, escalators, underground parking space and improvement of landscaping and lighting to ease traffic and pedestrian movement and improve visitors' experience were not completed.

Though the project was conceptualised in February 2005, it

is yet to be declared complete and accounts were yet to be closed (as on March 2016).

The scope of the project as envisaged in the project report was reduced from ₹615.20 crore to ₹477.02 crore.

On the service tunnel, concessionaire Engineers India Limited (EIL) incurred ₹180.48 crore on its construction as of May 2015 and ₹12.47 crore on other items needed to make the tunnel operational, which was not included in the cost approved by NDMC.

"Thus, as against an allocation of ₹71.21 crore and contractual cost of ₹157.85 crore, EIL incurred ₹192.95 crore on the service tunnel, due to change in technology and execution of unapproved items. Neither prior nor ex-postfacto approval of the council was sought for the revised estimate and change in technology despite the huge increase in cost of 171%," the report stated.