



BP/727/2017

The Case of Kathputli Colony

ABSTRACT

The Delhi master plan 2021 introduced the “In-situ rehabilitation” approach to slum redevelopment, during which residents of JhuggiJhopdi Clusters transition to temporary housing while the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) reconstructs the settlement, so shifts the slum-dwellers back onto the first plot and into improved housing. Kathputli Colony is among the primary in-situ rehabilitation project announced under Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY). consistent with Delhi Development Authority- DDA’s plan, the present residents of the settlement would be temporarily relocated to a transit camp for the duration of construction and through Public Private Partnership, DDA will develop 2800 flats for the artist families. Home to a vibrant community of puppeteers and performers- Kathputli has long been the thing of fascination for tourists Adjacent to the Shadipur metro station of Blue Line, Kathputli Colony’s vast sprawl currently occupies valuable land in Central Delhi. The rehabilitation project offers developers to opportunity to consolidate Kathputli’s residents into sustainable housing and allowing developer to use a piece of the positioning for commercial gain.

INTRODUCTION

Kathputli Colony is a slum situated in west Delhi and built along the railway line connecting the Sarai Rohilla Railway Station to the New Delhi Railway Station. It is the world’s largest settlement of street performers and is named after the traditional Rajasthani art of puppetry, Kathputli. The community is comprised of magicians, snake charmers, acrobats, singers, dancers, actors, traditional healers, musicians, as well as puppeteers. The entire colony resembles an open theatre of magic and reverberates with songs and music. Folk artists from Rajasthan, who moved to Delhi in the 1950s, settled down in this part of the city. Later, their temporary homes changed into permanent ones and artists from other states began joining them.

In the last 40 years, the handful of people who were settled here, have now turned into a huge colony of around 3,500 households. This includes people of different occupations and residents of other states. As there was availability of land in this part

of the city, migrant workers of other states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, and Bengal also got settled in Kathputli Colony. Now, the colony is divided into eight different camps; Rajasthani camp, Bihari camp, Gujarati camp, Marathi camp, Madari camp, Andhra camp, and Bangladeshi camp. A majority of the inhabitants earn their living through performing arts like acrobatics, folk dances, puppetry, etc. Some of the residents are also employed as industrial workers and labourers and the women of the community work as housemaids in adjacent colonies.

In Delhi, in 2007, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) began planning for Delhi's first in-situ slum rehabilitation project. It chose the Kathputli Colony a jhuggi jhopri cluster tucked into West Delhi's Shadipur region, as the site for this project.

In 2009, Raheja—the private developers chosen to undertake the project—announced the construction of Raheja Phoenix, "Delhi's first true skyscraper," on the current Kathputli Colony plot. With a planned height of 190 meters, Raheja Phoenix is 54 floors of luxury flats, equipped "with sky club and helipad," according to the developers.

The Kathputli in-situ slum rehabilitation is a three-step process. First, the residents of Kathputli who qualify for the project will move from their current settlement in Shadipur to a transit camp. Second, Raheja will raze the JJ cluster and begin the construction of high-rise apartments—and a luxury skyscraper—on site. Finally, within the next three to five years, the transit camp residents will move back into the settlement, next door to Raheja Phoenix

DDA'S APPROACH

As such, the Kathputli recovery case study is making fertile ground for an exploration of the contemporary approach to slum regeneration by the DDA. Many lawmakers and players in civil society have recently turned their attention to urban poor Delhi and discussed the reconstruction route. Others, including Delhi Lieutenant-Governor Tejendra Khanna — who serves as chairman of the Delhi 2021 Master Plan's Committee for Periodic Evaluation and Monitoring — argue for private sector collaborations. "The construction of not just illegal colonies but also areas where buildings are structurally unstable should be taken up by major builders such as Tata and HUDCO. We will take up a certain area and the government will offer an alternate piece of land to provide temporary housing for people living in certain areas while work is underway," the Office of the Lieutenant Governor told *The Hindu* in October 2012. At the other hand, Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit and several others say that the responsibility for these schemes rests with the state and should not be used for profit. "This is a human problem, and it should be approached in a similar manner," Dikshit declared. Citing Kathputli Colony as an indication of how such attempts could hit speed bumps, Dikshit said, "The Delhi Development Authority declared the in-situ production of artists living in the Kathputli Colony in 2009, but nothing has happened since,"⁵ suggesting a strong difference of views on slum policy between the Delhi State Government and the DDA central agency. As Delhi's first concrete experiment in privately built in-situ slum rehabilitation — and also his first experiment in skyscraper construction — the Kathputli Project is not only an fascinating case study for scholars but one that would have important implications for the future of sustainable planning in Delhi. The Master Plan 2021, implemented in 2007, notes that about 40 percent of Delhi's needs could be fulfilled by redeveloping / upgrading current Delhi areas.⁷ The Plan also notes that "the ultimate responsibility for the supply of land and the facilitation of adequate housing to satisfy the projected demand rests with the DDA."⁸ With a great focus on the DDA's role in solving the projected demand.

HISTORY OF KATHPUTLI

In the early 1970s, a handful of itinerant performers from Rajasthan settled in West Delhi's Shadipur region. Such artists—primarily puppeteers and musicians—often migrated through the capital, and Shadipur made a convenient location for commuting to performances across the city. Over time, they were joined by a variety of artists from states like Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, and together, they began to cohere into a single settlement known as Kathputli after the type of string puppet theatre performed by its residents.¹⁰ Over the next two decades, during which many surrounding slums were demolished during the 1975-1977 Emergency, the settlement organized around its artistry, forming the Bhule Bhisre Kalakar Cooperative. With the help of the Asian Heritage Foundation, Kathputli artists found work through the Sangeet Natak Academy, a performing arts council established by the Indian government in Delhi. In the 1980s, the artists in Kathputli gained international recognition through performances at the "Festival of India" in the U.K. in 1982 and in the United States in 1985. It was around this time that the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) began to push for slum resettlement. In 1986, they proposed the resettlement of Kathputli residents in the South Delhi region of Vasant Kunj. Around 1990, DDA Slum Wing architect Anil Lall drafted more detailed plans for upgradation, according to a duplex-style housing model. And in 1996, they drafted another proposal for resettlement in Mehrauli, also located in South Delhi. All of these proposals were rejected on the grounds that neither location was as centrally located as their current Shadipur settlement.¹¹ In May 2002, a Member of Parliament, Raghunath Jha, during question hour at the Lok Sabha, sought a clarification on the allotment of Janata flats (EWS housing) in Dwarka. In response to the question, then-Minister of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation, Bandaru Dattatray stated in Parliament that 1478 Janta flats in Sector 16, Pocket B, Dwarka were reserved for the rehabilitation of residents of Kathputli Colony.¹² This plan, however, failed to materialize. Finally, following an express inclination toward in-situ rehabilitation of JJ clusters in the Master Plan 2021, the DDA chose Kathputli as the site of its first such project.

SHIFT IN DELHI SLUM POLICY

Prior to the launch of the RAY, the Master Plan for Delhi (MPD) 2021, prepared by the DDA and notified in 2007, declared a major change in the slum policy in Delhi in line with this national strategy. Until then, the prevalent policy against "squatter slums"⁷ was large-scale relocation to resettlement colonies established in the urban peripheries, where displaced families were provided with plots with (theoretically) basic civic facilities but without housing⁸ – I e, site and service programs. The drawbacks of this policy and its implementation flaws have been well known by academics and criticized by campaigns for housing rights (Dupont 2011; HLRN-HIC 2002; Menon-Sen and Bhan 2008) The long distances between the new sites and the previous ones, in particular, have a negative impact on access to employment and social networks and, more broadly, on access to the resources of the town. Sections of the allocated plots were either unlawfully resold by the slum families, or seized by real estate agents. The MPD 2021, however, recognizes the "aberrations" of the "location and operation strategy" in addressing the problem of squatter settlements (DDA 2007: Section 4.2.3). It proposes another strategy based on providing built-up

accommodation in multi-storey apartment blocks under PPP, using "land as a resource" according to the cost recovery principle (ibid). In practical terms, only part of the land occupied by the slum is used to rehouse its inhabitants, and the remainder are cleared for residential or industrial construction to be sold on the open market. Hence, this model helps the private developer to make adequate money to cover the housing costs for the poor. The hope is that the "vertical ventures" would activate the slum-occupied land estate. Another stated concept is the "closer presence" of CBOs and NGOs in the resettlement process (ibid). For Indian cities this model isn't new. Since the 1990s, the state government in Mumbai has engaged private investors, NGOs and CBOs in slum reconstruction projects. However, this scheme has been criticized on several grounds – notably for its restricted housing achievements, for supporting the interests of the real estate lobby, for its corruption, and for enabling a burgeoning land mafia in the city (Burra 2005; Nijman 2008; Singh and Das 1995; Weinstein 2008), as well as for building 'vertical slums' (Sharma 2006) and leading to distorted urban planning (Nainan 2008). By 2008, the DDA had identified 21 slum clusters for in-situ rehabilitation and intended to construct some 37,000 housing units for that purpose. The DDA is the largest single landowning agency in Delhi, and this central government entity is owned by 48 per cent of the land currently occupied by the 701 identified jhuggi-jhopri clusters across the capital (DUSIB 2014). According to the guidelines of the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB), these agencies "may either carry out the relocation / rehabilitation themselves in compliance with the Delhi Government's policy or may entrust the job to the DUSIB" (GNCTD 2013).¹⁰ In a context where the DDA is also responsible for controlling the city's planned growth and thus plays a dominant role in shaping the area.– in Kathputli Colony – is critical. Our purpose however is not to propose a comprehensive assessment of the first implementation stages of this strategy in Delhi, but to address the issue of community participation.

KATHPUTLI COLONY'S PROFILE

Home to a lively group of puppeteers and performers, Kathputli Colony currently occupies valuable land in central Delhi, well linked to the rest of the world, close to Shadipur bus depot and the eponymous metro station, approximately 8 km west of Connaught Place's central business district. This settlement is named after the string puppet theater performed by its inhabitants, who settled in this locality in the late 1960s along with other nomadic folk artists from Rajasthan (Sandal 1985). Gradually, other Rajasthan street performers and craftsmen belonging mainly to the Bhatt clan, as well as folk artists from other regions – In particular, from Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Haryana came to this city, known as the colony of artists. Due to the availability of vacant land other migrant workers from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra and Gujarat also settled there. Kathputli Colony 's total population is estimated at around 15,000 inhabitants, with a disputed number of households ranging from 2,500 to over 3,000.¹¹ It includes a variety of distinct groups, divided primarily along geographical lines, with those from Rajasthan forming the largest community and occupying the major portion of the settlement. Religious affiliation (Hindus, Muslims and a small minority of Maharashtra neo-Buddhists), caste and occupation (artists and the rest, mainly unqualified laborer's), add more differentiating criteria. The resulting social segmentation translates into spatial segregation, with separate settlement parts

corresponding to various populations. Therefore, it was possible to recognize 17 Pradhan's or local representatives of varying status, as well as many local committees. Consequently, visualizing a monolithic "culture" is difficult to maintain, but the settlement has several cultures, an important aspect to remember for a fair consultation process. This settlement has grown horizontally over time with the introduction of new groups of dwellers, and vertically with the addition of one storey to respond to the expansion of families. It is now heavily populated, with a network of small lanes and a few streets surrounding it. Though they are fitted with electrical connections, the dwellings lack sanitation facilities and only a few have individual water connections (an informal but accepted arrangement). Kathputli Colony, like many squatter settlements in Delhi, is marked by a lack of sufficient facilities and amenities, and defiant public services. Of example, there are only 100 public toilet seats available for about 15,000 residents, in poorly managed toilet blocks – only one block out of four. Most of the houses are now fully or partly integrated structures constructed with bricks and mortar. Nonetheless there are even more precarious hutments. Such economic inequalities have an effect on the residents' reaction to the renovation initiative, expressed in living space and housing conditions. Although the land-use pattern looks mainly residential, apart from convenience stores along the main street, a variety of economic activities are conducted at home, such as making puppets, toys and other craft products. The actors often use courtyards, and terrace roofs if any, to rehearse. In addition, in some parts of the area, chickens, pigs, goats, and sheep are raised. It highlights the fact that slums are not just ecological areas but also locations for productive occupations. Consequently, reconstruction or relocation of slums is not only a matter of ensuring sufficient accommodation, but also of securing livelihoods. This also describes the reluctance of certain slum inhabitants to stay in flats in multi-storey buildings because it may negatively impact their economic activities. The most prominent organizations of the civil society working in the Kathputli Colony are related to its literature. The first cooperative was founded in 1978 to protect the street performers' interests; it also provides space for craftsmen to pursue their practices, and its current president is a respected pradhan among the community of Rajasthan. In addition, two NGOs were especially active in Kathputli Colony supporting the local artists and artisans. The existence of the one that came later is reflected in the colony's landscape, with a primary school offering technical training for children of artists established at one end of the colony, as well as a pharmacy. Nevertheless, inevitably competition and rivalries arose between the two NGOs operating in the same field, in the same culture. Even today, the lessons drawn from a participatory experience for a water supply and drainage project initiated in the mid-1990s at Kathputli Colony seem relevant: "The conflicts between the two NGOs [...] have indirectly motivated the divisions within the community and disturbed participation in various stages of the process of settlement improvement" (Marulanda 1996: 10). In the context of the DDA rehabilitation project, some degree of mutual mistrust between these two NGOs has intensified, as we shall see later.

THE IN-SITU REHABILITATION PROJECT

The new reconstruction project constitutes the result of a series of failed efforts by the DDA and other groups to rehabilitate or redevelop Kathputli Colony.¹² It was marketed as "a demonstration project" and "a benchmark for other initiatives with the ultimate aim of making Delhi a slum-free society" (Raheja Builders, 2010). The proposal was released in February 2009, when the then Union Minister of State for Urban Growth,

Ajay Maken, laid the foundation stone for a 14-story housing complex of 2,800 two-room flats of 30.5 sqm plinth area for slum dwellers.¹³ The construction contract was awarded to a private firm, Raheja Developers, in October 2009, for a Rs 6,11 crore bid. The developer will have to use 60 percent of the 5.22 ha land reclaimed from the slum to build and provide the flats blocks with required services (primary and secondary school, nursery, health center, community Centre, bakery, fair price shop and a kerosene store, park, religious site and police station) to the DDA free of cost. The arrangement allows the contractor to receive all clearances from the different public agencies in question. The developer is permitted to create and sell the remaining 40 percent of the property at market prices of 170 flats¹⁴ (later revised to 156).¹⁵ This opportunity lies at the core of the DDA scheme to encourage developers to build for the economic weaker section (EWS). Raheja Developers had an ambitious proposal to construct their investment profile table for a high-end 54-story residential tower¹⁶ that would be the highest building in Delhi – Raheja Phoenix renamed Navin Minar – as well as a commercial complex in a joint venture with the Dubai-based firm that designed the world's highest tower, the Burj Khalifa (The Hindu 2011). The scheme includes moving the families to a relocation camp, which the contractor must create before construction work can begin. A troublesome job for the DDA was to identify vacant public property in the area. A significant challenge was the agitation in their respective communities of different citizens' and traders' groups against the establishment of the transit camp. Finally, the transit camp was established on a site about 2 km from the settlement in question. Eligible tenants of the Kathputli Colony will be accommodated in rows of pre-fabricated 12 sqm one-room apartments per household, with communal bathrooms and portable toilets. The camp building was finished in March 2013 but no formal notice cation had been given for the move yet by the end of January 2014. According to the construction contract, completion time was defined as two years from project start date.¹⁷ This time period was greatly extended due to many factors, including securing all necessary clearances and finding an appropriate transit camp site. As Delhi's first experience of in situ slum reconstruction under PPP, the Kathputli Colony project raises several concerns that would each merit further study, ranging from the PPP model and the role of private contractors in contract forming, bidding mechanism and contract quality, environmental clearance (Banda et al 2013), The challenges related to the transit camp (Dupont and Saharan 2013), the importance of skyscraper building for urban growth in Delhi and the views and voices of the families involved in this sector, the effects on their living conditions and livelihoods. When mentioned above, we would concentrate on the issues relating to what a substantive engagement mechanism would entail, including: detailed and reliable information given to the people involved, a transparent and equitable consultation process and informed consent.

THE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

In May 2007, the DDA released a tender asking for "skilled music" individuals to "explore and implement innovative, creative concepts and cost-effective technology" for slum reconstruction projects.¹³ Such individuals will come to form a "Group of Experts," helping the DDA prepare their slum renovation projects. Every project was to be allocated to a group of 5 to 7 consultants from the "Catalog of Empaneled Consultants" considered appropriate for the specific project by a process of "restricted selection." A brief on the basis of which each contractor is expected to create a

conceptual scheme and apply the same to DDA along with a financial quote to take on the project will be issued to the short-listed party for a given project. Earlier that year, the DDA picked Delhi-based architectural and design company Gian P. Mathur & Associates (GPMA) to work on the Kathputli scheme. Together, GPMA and the DDA devised the information and project design which formed an integral part of the developer contract. One year later, in September 2008, the DDA invited proposals relevant to Developers' empaneling to build 21 sites listed for in-situ reconstruction of JJ clusters at different locations in Delhi.¹⁶ Eight developers formally eligible for the financial bid: RA Infra Engineer, M/s Housing Construction, M/s Unitech Ltd. B.L. Kashyap and Sons, B. G. Shirke, Raheja Developers (Raheja), JMC, and Akriti City. Only Raheja joined the financial offer from these eight, however. On 6 October 2009, DDA awarded Raheja Developers the first slum rehabilitation project—5.22 hectares of land allotted to Rs. 6.11 crores and the commitment to rehabilitate the Kathputli Colony—with an estimated overall cost of Rs. 254.27 crores.¹⁸ Newspapers reported that the initiative "could see more such schemes in the national capital resulting in better living standards for the poor and thousands of people living in industrial areas. Interestingly, Raheja declared that "lines and puppets make way for the capital's tallest building with a projected height of 190 meters and 54 floors. " Though, little has been released by the DDA outside the above description. A complete picture of the Kathputli project — one worthy of giving insight into how and why the basic aspects of the reconstruction contract were decided — will take a more comprehensive view of the contractor, architecture designer, and DDA partnership.

THE COMMUNITY & CONSENT

While originally a colony of Rajasthani refugees, today Kathputli is made up of a number of different communities—including Gujarati's, Bihari Muslims, Warangal District Adivasis in Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtrians—which have been increasingly stratified along the lines of their residents' geographical origin. These lines are also economical: some Kathputli residents stay in more built jhuggis Built of brick, with television and overhead fans connected to electrical outlets — other are living in more tenuous houses. We also observed that these income inequalities play a role in deciding neighborhood opinion about the initiative, as displacement is an increase in living conditions for others, and a disadvantage for others. According to interviews, talks with the government took place through 12 "Pradhans" (heads) from different groups, who acted as intermediaries between residents of the DDA and Kathputli. Interviews show that while there is confusion about who the society acknowledges as a pradhan in everyday life, most groups have embraced a common Pradhan voice on the regeneration scheme. Throughout the course of our fieldwork, residents of Kathputli have suggested that the DDA has made no effort to speak to the city, but have met with Pradhans to discuss the scheme, most frequently on petitioning the latter. The Pradhans also communicate with chief ministers, Sheila Dikshit and Union ministers such as Ajay Maken and Kamal Nath. However, given these entry points, our fieldwork shows that most group members remain relatively unaware of the proceedings of these meetings and their outcomes. There are several NGOs present in the city, most notably the Bhule Bisre Kalakar (close to the Asian Heritage Foundation) and the Kalakar Trust, who work closely with their residents to support their craft. Both organizations are integrated into the colony 's geography: Kalakar Trust has a school situated at one end of the colony; next door, the Bhule Bisre Kalakar provides artisans with space to carry out their activities. Whilst civil society participants

are listed in both the 2021 Master Plan and the RAY program, our work finds little initiative on the part of the DDA to include these NGOs in the planning process. As late as May 2010, several community-based organizations like Mohalla Sudhaar Samiti, Lok Matha Kusht Ashram, Shadipur Bus Depot Colony Jaati Samaj, Akhil Bharti Gyaara Samaj Samiti, Jatav Samaj Samiti, Adivasi Samaj, Siddharth Vihar, Jan Pukar Sangh and Bhule Bisre Kalakar Trust submitted written submissions to the DDA seeking information on different aspects of the rehabilitation scheme. While the DDA tried to address questions, petitioners were directed to other departments for answers, suggesting a restricted capacity to communicate with these actors.

THE PARTICIPATION AND SURVEYING OF THE DWELLERS

After the details of the scheme, we will determine the extent of participation of the group living in the Kathputli colony in the entire process. GPMA was expected to do a physical and socioeconomic study as part of the curriculum which they conducted in 2009. They submitted a study which identified 2800 households.

In 2010, DDA conducted another survey in 3 stages. At first in the physical survey they identified 3100 houses. In the second stage which was a biometric survey in collaboration with Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB). The third stage was video and spot photography survey. The photos of dweller families were taken while standing in front of their jhuggi.

The legal requirements for securing a house in this accommodation program are another significant thing to look at. Possession of a ration card, voter I.D, and a V.P Singh token was considered necessary to show to be a colony resident. In addition to the same the residence cut-off date has always played a significant role in the estimation of housing stock. The deadline date was originally assumed to be January 31, 1990 when just 25 percent of the population could be accommodated, currently standing at June 4, 2009 after a long haul.

After a long series of identification of sites for relocation and the resistance of communities that already resided there being a hindrance, in March 2011 Anand Parbat which is situated 5km away from the original site was finalized for a transit camp. The site itself is an empty DDA plot.

The transition had not been smooth as many residents were not ready to move out of the colony. They claimed that their fears of inadequate housing were not being addressed. On the other hand, some were happy about the transition and felt that the government is thinking about them and sending them to a better place. During the transition, the area was cordoned off by Delhi Police, Sash Astra Seema Bal and Central Reserve Police Force.

TRANSIT CAMP

The DDA agreed to use the Delhi Cloth Mills (DCM) Region as a transit area in April 2010, a zone purchased by the DDA in 2003 after a lengthy legal dispute between the Development Authority and the DCM. It ordered that the permission of the Supreme Court in respect of the same should be obtained. Nonetheless, various circumstances — most importantly neighborhood resistance — precluded its use. The second site selected by the DDA for the transit camp was Basai Darapur, about three kilometers

from the new settlement at Kathputli. Dissenting from nearby communities, however, about ten kilometers north of Kathputli where a separate slum reconstruction project is currently being planned by the DDA. Such arrangements did not materialize, however. Eventually, in January 2011, the DDA announced that while Jailorwala Bagh was approved as the transit camp site, another location had to be chosen due to opposition from locals and the area's MLA.

Three additional locations were listed as potential sites

- (i) near Ghazipur flyover
- (ii) Sector 28, Rohini
- (iii) vacant land at Anand Parbat.

Finally, Anand Parbat was chosen as the spot for relocation in March 2011, around five kilometers from the original settlement.

The transit camp itself is situated on a plot of vacant DDA with a ring of settlements surrounding it. It's a diverse developmental terrain; virtually every DDA settlement category — authorized colony, unauthorized (now regulated) colony, recognized slum, and JJ cluster — is represented in the region. The camp looks starkly out of place on the terrain of the Ramjas Grounds. Raheja designed ivory, singular blocks made of gypsum boards, each room with a single fan and a single outlet for electricity. The DDA would also procure a variety of portable toilets for the residents, who are inadequate to supply water and sanitation to the camps. Most Kathputli residents have mixed reactions to the transit accommodation. For others only the transit camp from their Kathputli residences offers a noticeable change in living conditions. Yet many others highlight the lack of storage space (especially handicraftsmen, puppeteers and performing artists) and nearby sanitation facilities. The Pradhan's requested separate water connections, saying communications with the DDA and ministers of the Union suggest that they are to be given.

God is the one who oversees humans, who have a soul and life in them, in the same way a Puppeteer oversees puppets and blows life into them, making him a God of one sort.

In an interview to the students of School and Planning and Architecture, Delhi a resident of the famous Kathputli colony Puran Bhatt cites the above lines.

As you move through the lanes of the transit camp at Anand Parbat, what you see is life blossoming in spite of the residence being temporary, all in waves with the artistic aura that has taken over and now surrounds this place. The people have decorated the camp, painting them in subtle hues of blue and yellow with patterns that go with them, birds and trees, splashes of contrasting colours and on one wall, and on one the handprints of little children that we see roaming around and playing in the narrow streets.

In continuation with the conversation, Puran Bhatt tells the students that he knows that this camp is temporary and is not what everyone wants their home to be, so a little compromise is to be done. But he still sounds hopeful that the new place that they will get once the construction is finished will be at par with the expectations of the residents.

THE CURRENT SCENARIO

But in the more recent scenarios in an article by the times of India from 8th May 2020 we came to know that the construction has been taking place amidst the lockdown with increased protective measures. Nevin Raheja, the CMD of Raheja builders has said that possession might be given to the first batch of 120 families within 120 working days.

The current status of the new flats

On the visit to the transit camp another resident of the camp, Hariram Choudhry says “When DDA came up with the scheme of *Jahan jhuggi wahi makan*, we thought a lot about it that if we get a house in place of a slum, then it's a great deal. It's like tomorrow if we have our own house with us, then we can submit the papers in the banks take a loan of 5 or 10 lakhs and think about our kids futures and other works of importance in other ways”

His words to us sound hopeful and in gratitude that the newer generations of his community will not spend their lives in a ghetto with narrow streets, open drains and unsanitary conditions. His kids will get a future that he wanted them to have; they will have a place to grow up in a better way and opportunities that he didn't experience.

In the words of Prof. Dr Ashok Kumar, the best thing about this project is the fact that the residents will be given ownership rights. And by mortgaging their land they can take a loan and develop it as per their needs.

Puran Bhatt says that the most important asset to any artist is their art; he believes that an artist is more concerned with their art than what housing surrounds them. He tells the students that he has seen the plan of what is going to be developed for them and it makes him happy to see that ample space on the ground has been provided which will give them an opportunity to showcase their talent. There are numerous small platforms that have been designed, so if people want to meet the artists, have a look at their lifestyles of experience what they do, they can take a ticket of a minimum amount. That is what they want, not be called slum dwellers but to be acknowledged for their art, the devotion and work that goes into it.

Only time and final execution of the project will give us the bigger picture, but from what we can see right now, this scheme sure as been a source of hope in the eyes of the residents of the magician's ghetto that will fulfil their aspiration of having a rightful place in the society, rather than to be considered a bunch of slum dwelling gypsies.

REFERENCES

- Jha P, (2018) Avoiding resettlement: A case study of kathputli colony. International Journal of Current Research10, (04), 67912-67917.
- Banda, S., Vaidya, Y. and Adler, D. (2013) THE CASE OF KATHPUTLI COLONY: Mapping Delhi's First In-situ Slum Rehabilitation Project. Centre for Policy Research Working Paper 3
- Tauhid S, (2014) Kathputli Colony: The Illusion of Rehabilitation
- <http://mohua.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/1-%20DDA.pdf>
- <https://www.ritimo.org/Kathputli-Colony-The-Illusion-of-Rehabilitation>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHCirt1CYdA>

- The puppeteer and the magician's ghetto of Delhi by Mariellen Ward
- <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/work-restarts-on-kathputli-project-with-covid-riders/articleshow/75613330.cms>
- <https://planningtank.com/urbanisation/kathputli-colony-entry-point-to-in-situ-slum-rehabilitation>
- <https://www.atlasofhumanity.com/kathputli>