

## EAST DELHI WALL COLLAPSE



The boundary wall collapse killed five children; (below) Amit, who saved a four-year-old. RAJ R RAJ/HT PHOTO

## 8-year-old's quick thinking saved a life

**BODIES CREMATED** Police arrest owner and contractor of the building, residents demand owner's son be held too

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**NEW DELHI:** Four-year-old Saraswati owes her life to the quick thinking of her eight-year-old friend Amit. She was the only survivor among the group of six children on whom a boundary wall collapsed in east Delhi's Dallupura village on Wednesday.

After the wall came down, Amit spotted Saraswati within seconds and rescued her. He also alerted his neighbours, who rushed her to the hospital. "I was standing outside my house when a part of the wall came down. Within seconds, I spotted Saraswati screaming for help. I raised an alarm and at the same time began removing the bricks on her body," said Amit.

Amit is now being hailed as a hero by all his neighbours,



especially by Saraswati's parents. Though proud, the eight-year-old rued the fact that he couldn't save his other friends. "I would have tried to save my other friends too had I spotted them," he said. Those friends were cremated at the Ghazipur cremation ground in the presence of more than 100 people.

Meanwhile, the police on Thursday arrested the owner of the plot Vijender Singh Gujjar,

50, and the contractor Bhanwar Singh, 48. But the people of the area also demanded the arrest of Gujjar's son Shahzad who was reportedly present at the time of the incident. Locals alleged that Shahzad's cowardice killed the five children.

"Shahzad was present when the wall came down. We asked him to call the ambulance and the police. But he fled. When he was fleeing, my wife grabbed him and begged him to take the children to the hospital. But he kicked her in the abdomen and fled," said Satish, who lost his children Ankit, 6, and Baby, 4, in the tragedy.

Sunita, a resident of the area, said the families will fight for justice and ensure that the accused are brought to book. "We want to see Shahzad to be booked for killing our children," said Sunita.

## To check illegal buildings, civic body relaxes norms

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**NEW DELHI:** The East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC) has come under fire due to a spate of building and wall collapses in the trans-Yamuna areas. Under pressure, the agency has now decided to ease the process of getting building plans sanctioned in unauthorised colonies.

On Thursday, EDMC commissioner SS Yadav announced the agency would create a centralised force for on-the-spot detection and demolition of ongoing illegal construction.

"With the help of the police, a team of corporation officials will visit east Delhi wards and crack down on illegal construction. The targets will be ongoing construction as no prior notice is required to demolish them," he said.

Commenting on the simplification of building sanction procedure, Yadav said the move was necessary to ensure people built homes legally. "At present, many property owners build structures illegally as building sanctioning laws are stringent. A lot of documents, which may or may not be available with the owner, are required. We have done away with many such requirements," he said.

Under the new laws, building plans in all unauthorised colonies will be sanctioned as per approved regularisation plans of roads under the mixed land use policy. So, people can now apply for commercial buildings as well. Also, the general power of attorney or sale agreement either registered or notarised will be considered sufficient proof

### Compensation awarded

**NEW DELHI:** The office of the deputy commissioner (east) has granted a compensation of ₹1 lakh to the father of each victim of Wednesday's wall collapse. The family of the injured girl Saraswati received ₹10,000 as compensation. The five children who were buried alive after the wall collapsed on them were Aditya alias Azad, 2, Ankit, 6, and his sister Baby, 4, Amit, 7 and Kanchan, 7.

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of ownership.

Also, in case a plot is divided from the back instead of the middle, a three-metre-wide service road shall be considered a public road opposed to the earlier rules that required a five-metre-wide road.

Officials say simplification of the process will encourage more homes to get their building plans sanctioned and construct legal buildings. Also, contractors won't have to work in a hurry and construct weak buildings.

It has been found that mostly unauthorised buildings have collapsed, especially such structures have come up in a matter of a few weeks.

Yadav said such construction is rampant in east Delhi. Every week, the building departments of the area carries out demolition drives in which nearly 150 properties are demolished.

### quotemartial

In the past 11 years, the BJP never demanded that homage be paid to Parliament attack victims, then why now?

SHEILA DIKSHIT, chief minister, in the Delhi Assembly

## Retd cop donates wife's body for medical research

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**NEW DELHI:** A retired Delhi Police officer donated the body of his 63-year-old wife to the Organ Retrieval and Banking Organisation (ORBO) at AIIMS after she died of a cardiac arrest in the hospital on Wednesday.

The donation came a day after 34 lives were saved by a 21-year-old brain dead victim's family.

Suman Bhatia, who was diagnosed with a cancerous brain tumour in 2003, was admitted in the department of medicine at AIIMS on December 10 with the last stage of an interstitial lung disease, a form of fatal lung infection.

A Delhi-based entrepreneur, she had expressed her wish of donating her body to medical students for research, to her husband a few weeks ago. "The doctors at AIIMS took good care of her for nearly 10 years. Donating her body was her way of thanking them. She has been a great inspiration in my life, considering the way she man-

### RISEING NUMBERS



Suman Bhatia donated her body at AIIMS.

Whole body donations are rising at AIIMS. Figures for past 3 years:

2010	6
2011	17
2012	20*

\*Donations so far

aged not just her personal but professional life too. She had a strong will power that kept her going despite her disease. Now, I have also decided to donate my body," said Ramesh C. Bhatia, a retired Delhi Police ACP. The former cop has also served in the Central Bureau of Investigation and as a diplomat

in the Indian high commission in the UK.

After Suman was declared dead around 11:20am, the family informed the hospital of her decision. But since she had had a heart attack, only her cornea and bones could be used.

The family then donated her body for medical education, making it the 20th whole body donation so far this year at AIIMS.

Doctors at the hospital claimed that the trend of whole body donations was increasing in the hospital. This has provided much relief to undergraduate, post-graduate and super-specialty medical students.

"There was a time when our students only relied on unclaimed bodies provided by police for hands-on training. Often 10-15 students would work on one body," said Dr Arti Vij, chief of ORBO. "But things are improving now. We not only have sufficient bodies for our students, but are also able to provide them to other medical colleges for research," added she added.

## East Corp ties up with NGO for door-to-door garbage collection

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**NEW DELHI:** The East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC) will soon start collecting garbage from your doorstep. For the first time, the municipal body has tied up with NGO Chintan, an environmental research action group, for door-to-door collection of waste. The waste will later be segregated.

The EDMC standing committee on Thursday passed a proposal to that effect. As part of the pilot project, two wards

will be taken up. "We will select wards that urgently require this service. Currently, many people just throw their garbage outside their homes instead of dumping them at designated sites," said Mahek Singh, standing committee chairman.

The NGO will also create and operate material recovery facilities (MRF) at Sunlight colony in Old Seemapuri and at A-block at Govindpuri where the waste will be segregated. "While recyclable waste such as electronic waste will be used by the NGO for revenue generation, the non-

usable fraction will be dropped at the nearest garbage station," said SS Yadav, Commissioner, EDMC.

The cost of garbage collection and segregation will be borne by the NGO. The corporation will only provide land for operating the MRF. If the pilot project is successful, similar facilities will be provided in other areas as well.

While the NGO Chintan has been roped in for the pilot project for a year, the plan will be extended through open competition, officials said.

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