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TODAY'S ANALYSIS

(16 September 2023)

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- INDIA'S NEW PARLIAMENT



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19/1A Shakti Nagar, Nagiya Park Near Delhi University, New Delhi - 110007 (India)



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INDIA'S NEW PARLIAMENT

In the **75th year of Independence**, in May, PM Modi **inaugurated the new Parliament building**, and installed the '**Sengol**' near Lok Sabha Speaker's chair.

It is part of the **Central Vista Project**.

NEW PARLIAMENT BUILDING
WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE 

A four-storey structure
Total area: **64,500 sq m**
Seating capacity: **1,224 MPs**
Cost: **Rs 970cr**
Estimated completion: **2022**


Part of **Central Vista redevelopment project**

Tata Projects limited has won the bid for its construction

ADDITIONS

- A grand Constitution Hall to showcase India's democratic heritage
- Lounge for MPs
- Library
- Multiple committee rooms
- Dining areas
- Ample parking space

Unlike the present Parliament, the new building will not have a Central Hall



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WHAT IS THE CENTRAL VISTA PROJECT?

- The avenue is part of the larger Central Vista project, where a new **triangular Parliament Building**, along with the **Central Secretariat** and several **other Government offices** are being rebuilt.
- **Called Kingsway during British rule**, it was built as a ceremonial boulevard by **Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker**, the architects of New Delhi, in around 1920.
- Running from Rashtrapati Bhavan on Raisina Hill through Vijay Chowk and India Gate, the avenue is lined on both sides by **huge lawns, canals and rows of trees**.

WHEN DID THE PROJECT START?

- The construction work for the Central Vista Redevelopment Project started in **February 2021**, with the new Parliament building and redevelopment of central vista avenue as its first phase.

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WHAT IS CENTRAL VISTA PROJECT

TOI

A plan to redevelop
the 3-km long stretch
from Rashtrapati
Bhavan to India Gate

INCLUDES

- New Parliament building
- Common Central secretariat
- New residences for PM and Vice President
- New building for PMO



Estimated
cost
₹20,000cr

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THE OLD PARLIAMENT BUILDING

- The parliament building's construction took six years – from **1921 to 1927**.
- In the 1919 plan for the construction of the Parliament, it was decided to have a **council house**, comprising:
 - Legislative Assembly Chamber (which later became the Lok Sabha),
 - Council of States Chamber (which is now the Rajya Sabha) and
 - Chamber of Princes (later became Library Hall).
- **Architecture**
 - In 1919, Lutyens and Baker settled on a circular shape for the Parliament.
 - They felt it would be reminiscent of the Colosseum, the Roman historical monument.
 - It is also popularly believed that the circular shape of the **Chausath Yogini temple** at Mitawali village in Madhya Pradesh's Morena provided inspiration for the Council House design. However, there is no historical evidence to back this up.
 - A few Indian elements, such as **jaalis** (a latticed carving depicting objects like flowers and other patterns) and **chhatris** (a domed roof atop a pavilion-like structure) were added.

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- **Goal of the architecture**

- The goal of the architecture was to project the strength of British imperialism and rule over India.
- Hence, both the architects agreed to highlight the superiority of European classicism, upon which Indian traditions had to be based.

- **Material used**

- The circular building has 144 cream **sandstone pillars**, each measuring 27 feet.

- **Foundation and inauguration**

- The **foundation for the existing Parliament was laid by the Duke of Connaught** on February 12, 1921.
- It was inaugurated in January 18, 1927, by then Governor General of India Lord Irwin.
 - Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, a member of the Governor-General's Executive Council and in charge of the Department of Industries and Labour, invited Viceroy to inaugurate the building.

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What will happen to the old parliament building now?

The **building will not be demolished** and will be converted into a **'Museum of Democracy'** after the new Parliament House becomes operational.

THE NEW PARLIAMENT BUILDING

- In 2019, the central government announced the redevelopment project to give a new identity to the 'power corridor' of India.
 - This project is known as **Central Vista redevelopment project**.
- The plan includes:
 - The construction of a new parliament,
 - Prime minister and vice-president's residences along with 10 building blocks that will accommodate all government ministries and departments.
- **Piloted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**, the plan aims to change the face of the Lutyens' Delhi.
 - Lutyens' Delhi shows off India's iconic buildings such as South and North blocks of Central Secretariat, Parliament House, and Rashtrapati Bhavan.

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WHAT WAS THE NEED FOR A NEW BUILDING?

- **Current building is 96-years-old**

- As per the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the current building is 96-years-old and poses structural safety concerns.

- **Seating space for MPs**

- The present building was never designed to accommodate a bicameral legislature for a full-fledged democracy.
- The number of Lok Sabha seats is likely to increase significantly from the current 545 after 2026, when the freeze on the total number of seats lifts.
- The Central Hall has seating capacity only for 440 persons.
- When the Joint Sessions are held, the problem of limited seats amplifies.

- **Distressed infrastructure:**

- The addition of services like water supply and sewer lines, fire fighting equipment, CCTV cameras, etc., have led to **seepage of water** at several places.
- **Fire safety** is a major concern at the building.

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- **Obsolete communication structures:**

- Communications infrastructure and technology is antiquated in the existing Parliament, and the acoustics of all the halls need improvement.

- **Safety concerns:**

- The current Parliament building was built when Delhi was in Seismic Zone-II; currently it is in Seismic Zone-IV. This raises structural safety concerns.

WHAT IT WILL LOOK LIKE
Features of New Parliament Building

Lok Sabha
To be designed on theme of **peacock**

Current seating capacity 552	Proposed seats in new chamber 888 (Can accommodate 1,277 for joint sitting)
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Rajya Sabha
To be designed on theme of **lotus**

Current seating capacity 245	Proposed seats in new chamber 384
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National symbols
Crown of the building to get National Emblem, main courtyard to have Banyan tree

Each floor to get ministers' offices & committee rooms

First floor to have dining facility for MPs, VIPs and visitors

Constitution Hall at centre to have three entry points

Constitution Hall will have same height as that of existing Parliament

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THE SENGOL

A historical sceptre from Tamil Nadu 'Sengol' is installed at the **new Parliament building**

inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **May 28**.

THE LESSER-KNOWN FACTS ABOUT THE SENGOL



1. During the Chola Era, the 'Sengol' (sceptre) was considered a sacred symbol of authority.

2. It embodied the Chola Kings' might, legitimacy & control over their realm.

3. Thanks to the efforts of Rajaji, the Sengol symbolised the transfer of power from British to Indian control in 1947.

4. Designed by a jeweller in Madras, the Sengol was ceremonially handed over by Lord Mountbatten to Nehru to mark India's independence.

Nandi bull
symbolizing justice and strength

INDIA UNRAVELLED

THE SENGOL THUS CONNECTS THE INDIA OF TODAY WITH THE BHARATIYA CIVILISATION OF THE PAST

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ORIGIN

- It was used on **August 14, 1947**, by then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru when the transfer of power took place from the British. It was kept in a museum in Allahabad.
- The word Sengol is derived from the Tamil word '**Semmai**', meaning '**Righteousness**'. It is a civilisational practice from the **Chola kingdom**, which was among the leading kingdoms in the Indian sub-continent for centuries.
- **Symbolic:**
 - According to Tamil tradition, **a high priest presents a sceptre to a newly crowned king** as a symbolic gesture of power transition.
 - The one accorded the '**Sengol**' is expected to impart a just and impartial rule. **C Rajagopalachari**, the last Governor General of India, suggested that this tradition, observed by the Chola dynasty, could serve as a **significant symbol of India's freedom from British rule.**
- **Features:**
 - The 'Sengol' was crafted by a renowned jeweller in Madras **Vummidi Bangaru Chetty**. This impressive sceptre measures **five feet in length** and features a '**Nandi**' bull at the top, representing the **concept of justice.**

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