# Central Vista Project

## Why in news?

In the 75th year of Independence, India has a new Parliament building, built by Indians, and embodying the culture, pride and spirit of the entire nation.

## What is the Central Vista Project?

- The Central Vista project is the revamping project of the Central vista area from Rashtrapati Bhavan till India Gate.
- The plan includes the construction of a new parliament, Prime Minister and Vice-President's residences along with 10 building blocks to accommodate all government ministries and departments.
- **Ministry -** The project is piloted by the Central Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- **Time Frame -** The project was announced in 2019 by the Central government of India and is estimated to be completed by 2024.
- **Budget Outlay -** The gross rough estimation for all the planned development/ redevelopment works is about Rs. 20,000 crore.

## What is the need for the project?

- The existing Parliament House was commissioned in 1927 and showing signs of distress and over-utilization.
- The existing Parliament is not able to meet the current requirements in terms of space and amenities.
- **Safety concerns -** Current building is not designed according to fire norms.
- **Distressed infrastructure -** Excessive repairs have worsened the condition of the building.
- **Inadequate workspace -** The current parliament building poses a space constraint.
- **Narrow seating space -** The seating halls are cramped and only the first two benches have the desk space to place documents and papers.
- **Obsolete communication structures -** The communications infrastructure and technology is dated.
- **Vice President's House -** Vice-President, Chairman of Rajya Sabha's house is in Maulana Azad Road away from the Central vista.
- **Prime Minister's House -** Prime Minister's official residence is also outside the Central Vista in Lok Kalyan marg.
- **Decolonisation -** The old structures in the Central Vista embodies the Colonial rule of India.
- **Ministries -** Out of 51 ministries, 12 have offices outside the Central Vista which hinders coordination and synergy.

## What are the criticisms against the project?

- The project started along with the COVID-19 pandemic year which spurred several criticisms.
- **Healthcare -** Funds have been diverted from public healthcare and COVID-19 response to the Central Vista Project.
- **Renovate -** Instead of building a New Parliament building, the existing Parliament building could be renovated.
- **Green Space -** The revamping project reduces the green spaces in the area.
- **Heritage -** The Central Vista Project is leading to a destruction of its Architectural Heritage.
- **Public Space -** The project will lead to reduction of public spaces and conversion of public spaces into Government use.
- **Old Act -** The role of managing the task is assigned to Central Public Works Department (CPWD) based on old Colonial Act, the Government Buildings Act, 1899.

## What are the arguments put forward by the government?

- **Healthcare -** The Master Plan was conceived in September 2019, much earlier than the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.
- Public Health has been a priority of the government and never compromised at the cost of the project.
- Till date, only 2 projects of New Parliament Building and Redevelopment of Central Vista Avenue have been awarded fund.
- **Green Space -** The overall green cover within Central Vista area will increase under the Master Plan.
- No trees would be cut and the trees would also be transplanted to Eco-park.
- **Old Act -** The Government Buildings Act, 1899 is in operation since 1899 and has not been repealed.
- The CPWD has been awarded the role based on the Section 3 of the Act which exempts all Government Buildings from the regulation of municipal laws.
- **Public Space -** Additional public and green spaces shall be added in Central Vista Avenue.
- Places like the National Museum, Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, Central Vista Avenue and India Gate will be accessible to the public.
- **Heritage -** None of the listed Heritage Buildings in Central Vista will be demolished further they will be retrofitted and refurbished for their future use.

## What is the way ahead?

- India has grown out of its colonial past and the new Parliament building should be considered as a symbol of it.
- Still the heritage of the century old building must be preserved for its architectural marvel.
- The proximity of the ministry offices must aid and improve the synergy among the ministries.
- The technological and communication features added to the Parliament should be put in good use to improve its efficiency.

- The resilient and safe buildings of Central Vista should be made and example of Indian Architectural heritage.

**References**


1. Business Standard - What is Central Vista Project?
2. Central Vista