

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (BHARAT SARKAR)
MINISTRY OF RAILWAY (RAIL MANTRALAYA)
(RAILWAY BOARD)**

No. 2010/Heritage/DHR

New Delhi, Dated 11.03.2019

**Director/WH
Archaeological Survey of India,
World Heritage Section,
24, Tilak Marg,
New Delhi – 110001.**

**Sub: State of Conservation of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway,
India**

- Ref:**
1. ASI's letter No. 1-18/2012-UNESCO dated 21.02.2019.
 2. UNESCO letter No. 7799/2018/CLT/NU dated 31.10.2018
 3. This office letter No. 2010/Heritage/DHR/FIT dated 08.11.2018.
 4. UNESCO letter No. 7515/CLT/2016/MC dated 07.06.2016
 5. This office letter No. 2010/Heritage/DHR dated 01.01.2019.

In continuation of this office letter of even number dated 01.01.2019 (Ref. 5 above, copy enclosed) further details on factual position regarding current status of conservation of Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) are as under:-

1. A Fund-in-Trust (FIT) agreement between UNESCO and Indian Railways to facilitate the preparation of Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) had been signed on 20.01.2017 and the preparation of CCMP by the UNESCO is under progress.
2. The initial timeline for the final submission of the CCMP report was 20.01.2019. As requested by UNESCO vide letter No. 7799/2018/CLT/NU dated 31.10.2018 (Ref. 2 above), Railway Ministry agreed to extend the validity of Fund-in Trust agreement up to 30.09.2019 (Ref. 3 above) in accordance with Article VI 2 and 3 of the FIT, to finalize the CCMP and organize the 20th anniversary of DHR World Heritage Site celebration. Enclosed copies of UNESCO letter dated 31.10.2018 and Railway Board's letter of even number dt. 08.11.2018 may be seen.
3. As per request from UNESCO for a moratorium on works to DHR properties during the present project period, all the demolition, renovation or beautification work in DHR has been postponed till finalization of the CCMP and only repairs required for functioning of the Railway and necessary regular maintenance have been carried out in DHR without affecting the Heritage attributes and elements of DHR. Enclosed copy of UNESCO letter No. 7515/CLT/2016/MC dated 07.06.2016 (Ref. 4 above) may be seen in this regard.

4. The proposal of restoration work of Gayabari and Sonada stations which had been burned during the agitation period of 2017 has been initiated after getting the draft "Built Heritage (Architectural) conservation manual" in November 2018.
5. Several actions have been taken by the DHR for stopping illegal encroachment near the Railway track or DHR property since the inscription of the DHR as a World Heritage site in 1999. Home Secretary of Govt. of West Bengal was requested to provide protection for the valuable assets of DHR. Any illegal construction or encroachment in the DHR area is brought to the notice of the district administration and Railway Protection Force (RPF) for enforcing stoppage of such kind of intrusion.
6. Public awareness and participation programmes are organized from time to time by DHR in association with UNESCO and NGOs for involvement of the local community in supporting DHR in maintenance & monitoring and to develop a sense of shared heritage in the community.
7. Following adaptation of the CCMP, Conservation and maintenance of Rolling stock, Station buildings and other Heritage Assets of DHR will be recalibrated as per CCMP guidelines.

DA- As above



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Copy to:-

1. Additional General Manager, N.F. Railway, Guwahati.
2. Director/DHR