



## Buildings & Urban Projects

‘Yamuna Jiye Abhiyaan’ since early 2007 is a civil society consortium dedicated to the restoration of river Yamuna as an eco-system in its own right

***Our focus has been the river***

We got involved with ‘buildings & urban projects’ more by default, when state agencies themselves began to eye the river’s flood plain in the name of ‘developing’ (sic) it.



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Hypothetically speaking one can  
build / construct anything and any where



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But to be 'sustainable' it should be

- **appropriate location** (as per the purpose of construction and characteristics of the land in question)
- **appropriate material** (in tune with the local climate)
- **economical to construct and maintain** (specially if public funds are involved)
- **least impact** (on local aesthetics and heritage including the natural environment)
- **legal** (as per rules and regulations and should possess all the permits)
- **just** (socially) (more so when public funds / purpose is involved)



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3 cardinal principles vis a vis natural resources

- **Precautionary principle** (when in doubt decide in favour of the resource)
- **Public Trust** (state holds the natural resources in public trust and should not squander or compromise them under any circumstances)
- **Best option** (Best of all possible choices for siting of any structure should be the norm)



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Two 'faces' of the state with reference to its  
**'life-line'** river as part of the urbanscape of  
Delhi

- a. Regulator of activities
- b. Predator on the resource



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### **State as the 'regulator' in Delhi**

#### **Statutory**

- MOEF / SEIAA (EIA notification 2006)
- Delhi Development Authority (MPD 2021)
- Delhi Urban Art Commission, 1973

#### **Executive**

- Yamuna Standing Committee (CWC), 1961
- Yamuna River Development Authority (Chaired by Hon'ble LG of Delhi), 2007

#### **Court mandated**

- Justice (rtd) Usha Mehra Committee, 2005 by HC of Delhi



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Let us look at the city

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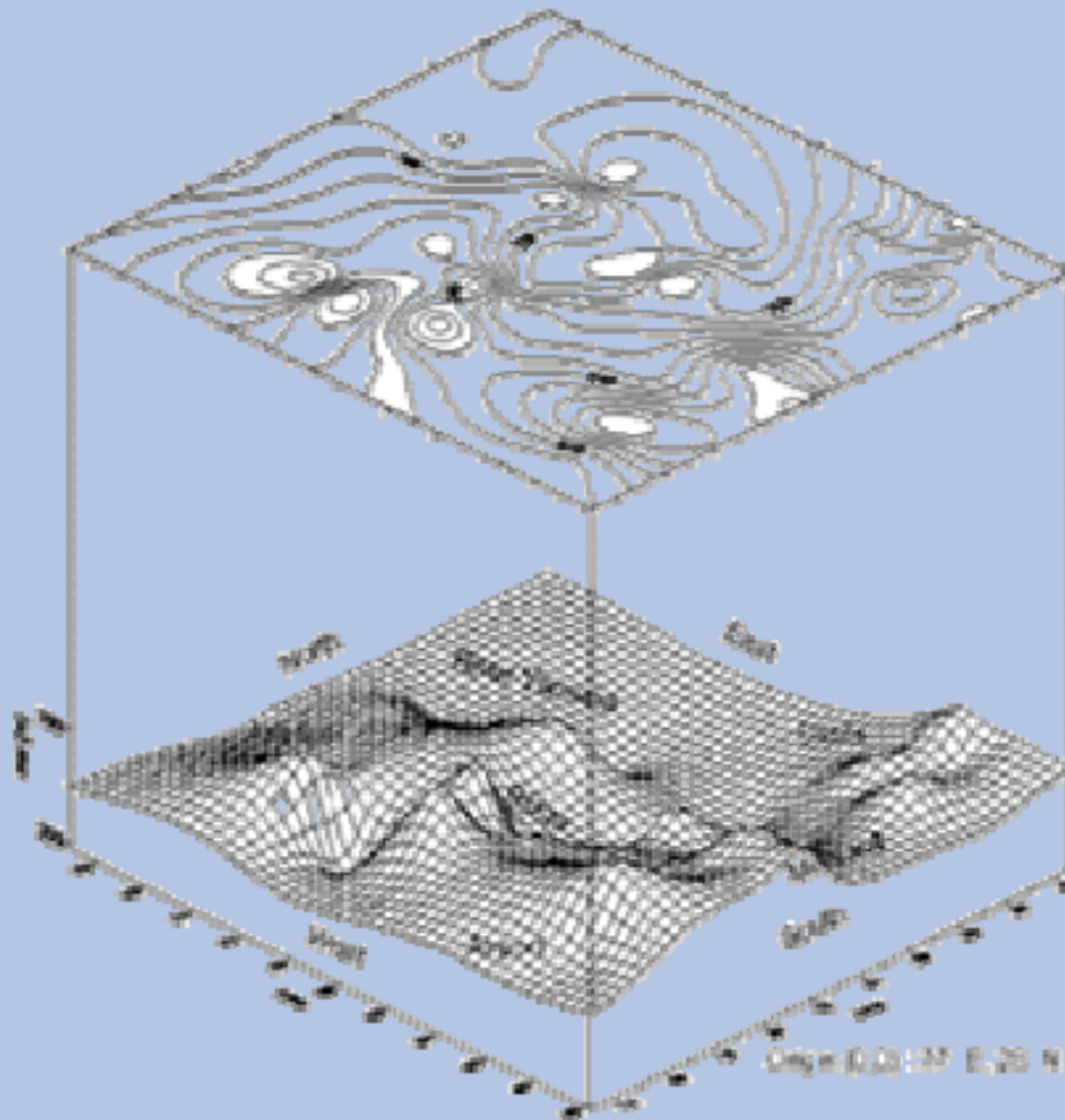


Fig.1 : Topography of Delhi.

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Mukherjee Nagar

Wazirabad Barrage



Shahadara

Yamuna Barrage

Connaught Place

India Gate

Mayur Vihar

JLN Stadium

Jamia Millia

Okhla Barrage





**River bed**

**December  
2000**



River bed

April 2004



**River bed**

**Oct 2006**





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**River bed  
Jan 2010**



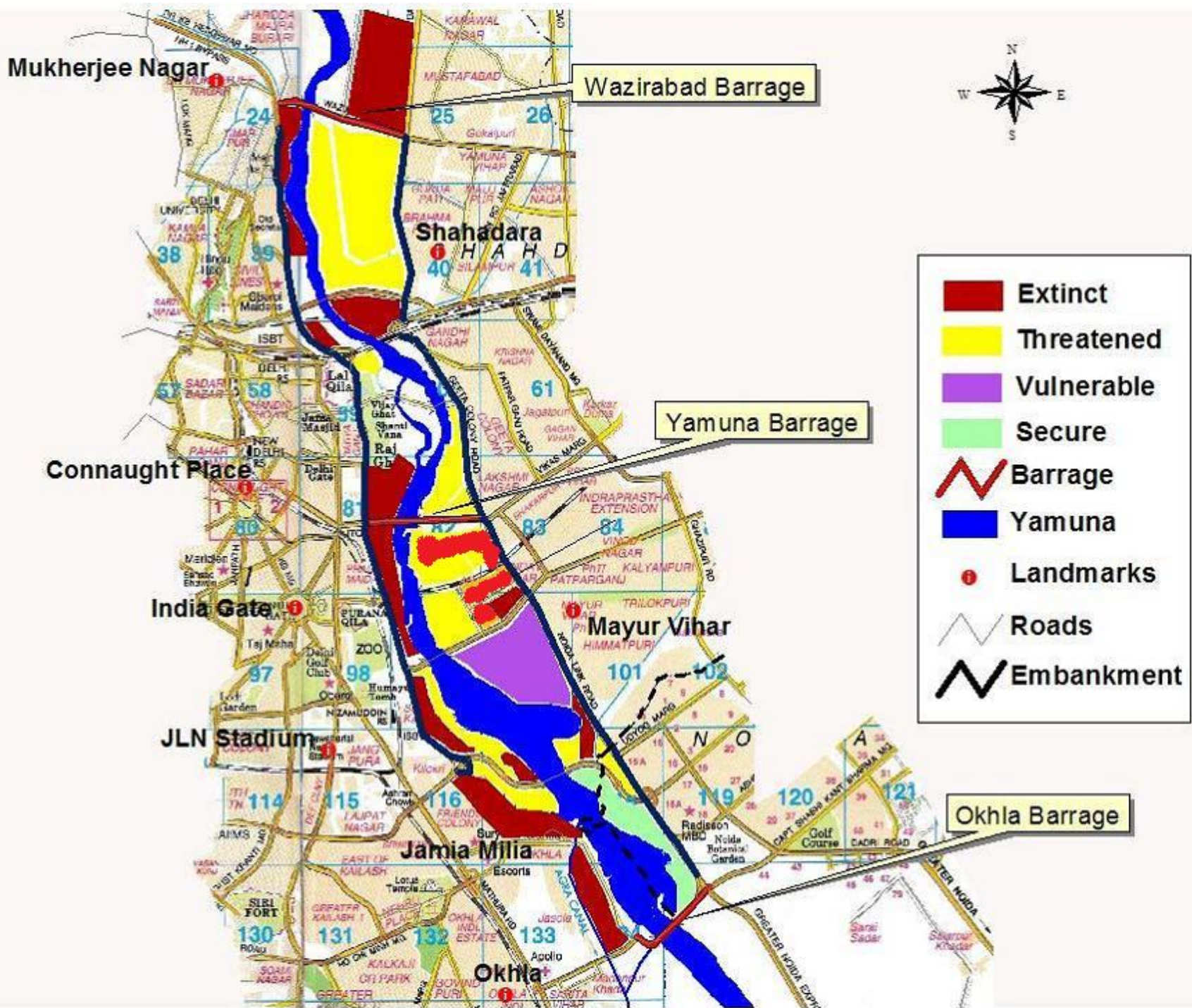
Image © 2010 GeoEye  
Image © 2010 DigitalGlobe

© 2010 Google

Bildaufnahmedatum: 31. Jan 2010

28°37'42.54" N 77°17'28.98" E Höhe 208 m

Sichthöhe 5.04 km





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CWG village – case in point



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What did the EAC recommend in its 32<sup>nd</sup> meet on 3 Dec. 2006?

.... The Committee is not convinced that environmental impacts and their mitigation have been studied to a satisfactory level. Under the circumstances the committee will go by '**Precautionary Principle**' and emphasis the point that as far as possible the proposed works should not be of a permanent nature. Since the design of the structures is still to be made this should be possible to take into consideration and adopt dismantable structures.

Unless detailed studies lead to the conclusion that the proposed structures can be left behind permanently, the proposals should proceed with the assumption that the river bed may have to be restored to the river.



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### **CWG VILLAGE**

- **Wrongly placed at a risky site (Seismic zone 5)**
- **No alternative site ever considered. Site is in river bed; next to NH and a high use Railway line (Violation of EIA manual)**
- **Constructed in violation of EAC recommendations and the EIA requirements (Para 8 (ii) and (vi))**
- **Led to two more wrong constructions as a ripple effect (Flyover and DTC depot)**



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**Come September 2010**





**Akshardham  
&  
CWG village**

**DTC bus depot**

**DMRC Yamuna  
Bank towers**





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# Ponderables

- EIA sponsored by project proponent itself can hardly ever be objective and fair
- Why are structures on the river (bridges, barrages, embankments) not part of EIA notification
- Why are railway projects not included in EIA notification 2006
- Why is there no post project EIA?

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Barrage on river Yamuna at Hathnikund (17.3.2009)



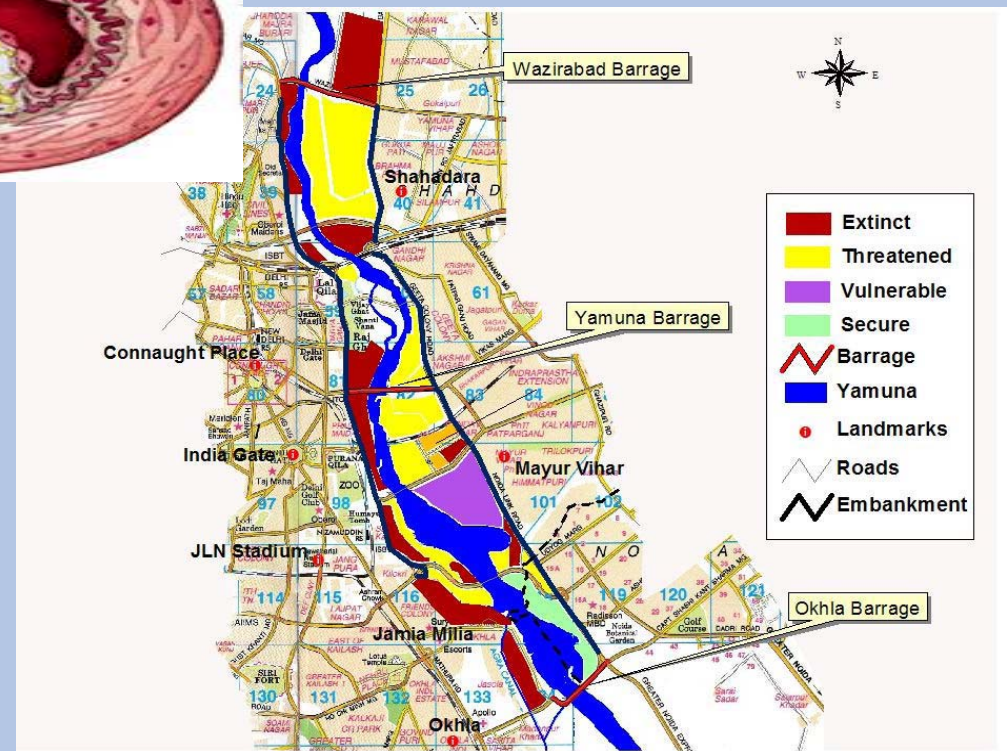


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Blood vein clogged with cholesterol

Encroached Flood plains





## **Buildings & Urban Projects**

**THANK YOU**



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## DMRC Shastri Park



Image © 2007 DigitalGlobe

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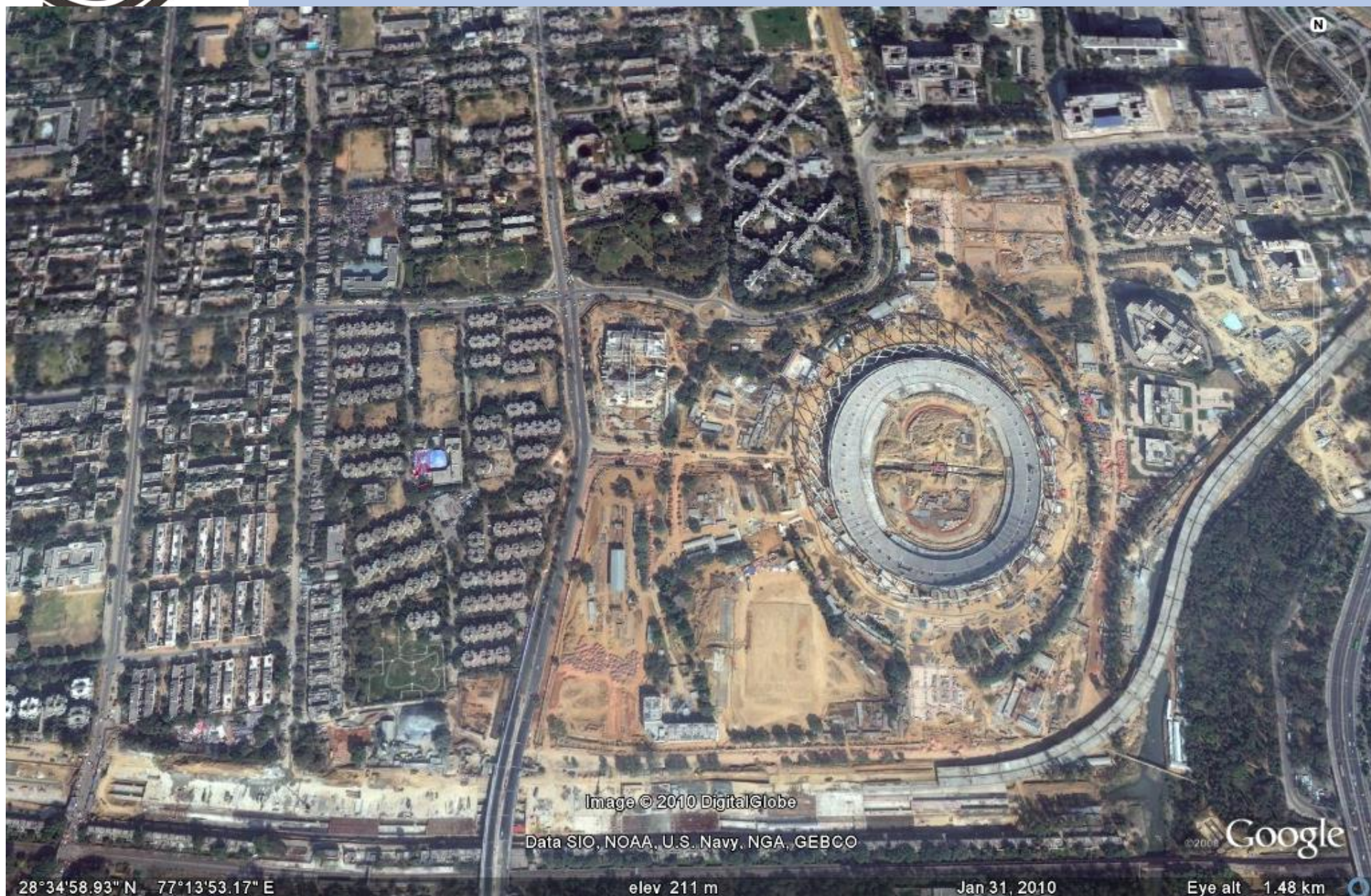
Pointer 28°40'08.29" N 77°14'20.25" E elev 669 ft

Streaming ||||| 100%

Eye alt 11850 ft



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