



REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Provisional Agenda item 11.3

*Seventy-second Session  
New Delhi  
2–6 September 2019*

SEA/RC72/18

9 July 2019

### **Management and Governance matters: Status of the SEA Regional Office Building**

Regular updates on the status of the WHO South-East Asia Regional Office Building at Indraprastha Estate in New Delhi, India, have been presented to the Regional Committee since its Sixty-eighth session in September 2015.

Following Decision SEA/RC70(2) at the Seventieth session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia in Maldives in September 2017, the Regional Committee decided that the best option for managing the precarious structural issues of the Regional Office Building was to redevelop the whole campus.

With excellent cooperation and substantive contribution from the host country to finance and manage the demolition and reconstruction of a new Regional Office Building at the existing site, the Regional Office relocated to two temporary swing spaces in central Delhi with effect from 14 May 2018 in a smoothly executed transition. The old Regional Office Building was evacuated by the end of July 2018.

The Secretariat is working closely with the Government of India on the execution of the reconstruction project.

This Working Paper provides updates on progress from the last Regional Committee with the following highlights:

- Signing of the following agreements on 8 January 2019, for execution of the reconstruction project:

Tripartite agreement between:

- i. The President of India acting through the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India;
- ii. The World Health Organization for the South-East Asia Region; and
- iii. The NBCC (India) Ltd, the project management consultant

Bilateral agreement between:

- i. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India; and
- ii. NBCC (India) Limited, the project management consultant

- Progress made at the design stage of the project; and
- Continued dialogue between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, and the World Health Organization, Regional Office for South-East Asia, towards efficient and successful completion of the project within agreed timelines.

The attached Working Paper was presented to the High-Level Preparatory Meeting for its review and recommendations. The HLP Meeting reviewed the paper and made the following recommendations for consideration by the Seventy-second Session of the Regional Committee:

**Action by WHO**

- (1) Provide the latest update on the SEA Regional Office Building reconstruction project to the Seventy-second Session of the Regional Committee in September.

This Working Paper and the HLP Meeting recommendations are submitted to the Seventy-second Session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia for its consideration.

## Introduction

1. During its Sixty-eighth session in Dili, Timor-Leste, in September 2015, the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia reviewed and noted the preliminary report on the status of the South-East Asia Regional Office Building in New Delhi, India.
2. The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India, invited the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) to undertake a detailed analysis of the existing facilities at the Regional Office campus. The CPWD issued a report titled “Seismic strengthening of buildings at the WHO SEARO campus, New Delhi” in January 2016.
3. Following the findings of this analysis, comprehensive technical studies on the structural status of the WHO South-East Asia Regional Office Building were presented to the Sixty-ninth session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in September 2016. The Committee expressed concern over the safety of the current Regional Office Building and agreed that the condition of the building warranted an immediate decision on temporary relocation of staff members and construction of new premises.
4. Accordingly, vide its Decision SEA/RC69(3), the Regional Committee requested the Regional Office to proceed with the move to temporary premises and finalize a sustainably funded reconstruction strategy for a new Regional Office Building, urging Member States to contribute as much as possible. Pledges for contribution were made by DPR Korea, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor-Leste amounting to US\$ 1.34 million for the project.
5. The WHO Secretariat provided updates on the temporary move to the Seventieth session of the Regional Committee in Maldives in September 2017, including on the signature of lease agreements for the temporary accommodation of the Regional Office identified as well as on funding for the reconstruction project by the Government of India. A detailed business case report outlining the business requirements and the risk assessment of three available options was presented. The three options were:
  - refurbishment of the existing campus,
  - redevelopment of the whole campus,
  - part redevelopment and part refurbishment of the existing campus.
6. The Regional Committee vide its Decision SEA/RC70(2) decided to adopt “Option 2: redevelopment of the whole campus” for a total estimated budget of US\$ 55.89 million, with WHO covering the cost of the relocation of the staff to temporary premises for a period of up to five years for an estimated amount of US\$ 20.49 million. The decision also expressed deep appreciation of the Government of India for its continued generosity in hosting the Regional Office for South-East Asia in New Delhi, including agreement on its part to take responsibility for financing and managing the construction of the new Regional Office Building that would amount to approximately US\$ 35.4 million (Indian Rupee 228 crore).

7. Following these developments, the Regional Office for South-East Asia shifted to temporary swing spaces on 14 May 2018 in a smoothly executed transition. Vide its letter F. No. M. 11020/01/2014-IH dated 14 December 2017, MoH&FW appointed the National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) Limited as the project management consultancy agency for this reconstruction project. In this context, following a competitive bidding process, Achal Kataria Architects was appointed by NBCC to finalize the designs and concept plan for the new building.

8. This Working Paper presents the progress made since the discussions on the subject at the Seventy-first session of the Regional Committee in September 2018.

### **Progress on building the new Regional Office**

9. The Government of India, and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in particular, have made all efforts to ensure that the building project is completed in the shortest possible time frame.

10. The NBCC, on behalf of the Government of India, prepared and carried out all competitive bidding processes and contracts with the architects and engineers, allocated the different work packages to duly qualified companies, and are ensuring robust monitoring and quality control over all contracts.

11. The progress is outlined below under various heads, as per the ongoing work:

#### **Tripartite agreement**

12. Tripartite agreement between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, the World Health Organization South-East Asia Region and the NBCC (India) Ltd, the project management consultant, was signed on 8 January 2019. By this agreement, the Government of India shall finance NBCC for the demolition of the existing buildings and the reconstruction of the WHO SEA Regional Office Building. Excerpts from the agreement are as follows:

- WHO will have an active role throughout the implementation of the reconstruction project to clear the design, specifications and all other important aspects of the redeveloped WHO SEA Regional Office Building.
- NBCC, in consultation with WHO, will manage the planning and designing including detailed engineering for the reconstruction project works and concept designs for all elements of the new building compliant with GRIHA 5-star rating, including removal, storage, repositioning and restoration of artwork from the Conference Room and Goa Room of the Regional Office Building.

13. In her commitment to provide regular updates to the Member States on the status of the South-East Asia Regional Office Building project, the Regional Director, Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, vide her letter 14 January 2019 informed the honourable ministers of health of Member States of the South-East Asia Region about the signing of the tripartite agreement.

14. Upon the confirmation of the project through the affixing of signatures in the Tripartite Agreement, the Regional Director wrote to Member States who had pledged funds to proceed with the disbursement to SEARO bank accounts so that the required expenditures are planned and implemented.

### **Bilateral agreement**

15. Subsequent to signing of the tripartite agreement, the NBCC took possession of the site from WHO on 18 January 2019.

16. In addition, a bilateral memorandum of agreement was signed between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, and NBCC Limited agreeing on the scope of the consultant's responsibilities, implementation of the project, timelines and payment terms.

### **General contractor**

17. After a joint review of the technical details of the tender documents between WHO, NBCC and the Architects, the work was awarded following a full competitive bidding process to Parnika Commercial & Estates Pvt Ltd on 8 May 2019 with a comprehensive EPC (engineering procurement construction) contract.

### **Preservation of artwork**

18. The contract for restoration and preservation of selected pieces of art in the Regional Office, which required to be extricated from the building, was awarded to INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) by the NBCC.

19. Work on removing the iconic M.F. Husain wall mural titled "*The History of Medicine*" and the ceramic-tile artwork from the Goa Room was completed by 19 June 2019. This was an ambitious and complicated project with the most modern technical procedures being implemented for the safe removal of the artwork, a feat hitherto never attempted anywhere in Asia. The pieces have been moved to safe storage for preservation until they can be reinstalled during the construction phase of the new Building.

### **Project Monitoring Committee**

20. As mandated by the tripartite agreement, a Project Monitoring Committee for the SEA Regional Office Building redevelopment project has been established. It comprises officials from WHO, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, and NBCC. The Committee meets regularly to review progress of the project, according to the agreed terms and conditions. The Committee has met twice since the signing of the Tripartite Agreement.

21. The first meeting of the committee was held on 12 April 2019 and was chaired by Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia. NBCC informed about the details of the project including the status of payment release, expenditures incurred, various statutory approvals, barricading of the site and ongoing removal of the artwork by the conservation agency INTACH.

22. The NBCC also informed that the new building has been designed with a total FAR (floor area ratio) of 2.68. This follows the change of land use from the original category of sociocultural organization (1.0 FAR) to government office (2.0 FAR) and further increase to 3.0 FAR as permitted for the redevelopment project.

23. The Project Monitoring Committee held its second meeting on 24 June 2019 wherein they were informed of the appointment of the General Contractor, Parnika Commercial & Estates Pvt Ltd. The committee was also informed that the General Contractor officially took possession of the site on 20 June 2019 once the artwork from the building had been transported offsite for safe storage. The Committee noted that the contract stipulates a timeline for handover of the reconstructed building, which is within 24 months from the date when the General Contractor takes over the site.

## **The way forward**

24. The NBCC has obtained all the approvals for the scope of work, technical specifications, drawings, and environmental permissions required for the reconstruction project. Following the removal of artwork by INTACH, demolition of the old building has already commenced.

25. The overall project timelines allow for full completion of all activities by April 2022. As per contractual timelines with Parnika Commercial & Estates Pvt Ltd, the General Contractor, all efforts will be made to hand over the building to WHO in 2021. The Secretariat will continue working closely with the MoHFW, Government of India towards making this project a success within these timelines and report on the progress of the project to the Regional Committee each year.

26. Following the Regional Committee Decision SEA/RC69(3) to finalize a sustainably funded reconstruction strategy for the Regional Office, the Secretariat urges those Member States who are yet to confirm, to consider pledging funds. This will be critical to enable specific elements of the project to be completed while ensuring that the project is reflective of WHO's representative and convening mandate.

27. The Working Paper is submitted to Seventy-second Session of the Regional Committee for noting.