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MCD bans parking of commercial vehicles on Red Fort stretch to decongest area

After much delay, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has finally begun work on decongestion of the Chandni Chowk area. As a first step, the civic body has banned the parking of all commercial vehicles on the stretch between the Red Fort and Fatehpuri Masjid.

In order to ensure that only private vehicles are parked in the area, the MCD Deputy Commissioner (DC), City Zone, has awarded a new contract worth over Rs 5 lakh for the maintenance of the parking lot.

The move, however, has not gone down well among traders with establishments in the area. They are unhappy about the fact that commercial vehicles like tempos and carts, which are essential for their trade, will be banned. "We have to load and offload our goods, for which we need to park these vehicles near the shops. While the MCD has disallowed parking of these vehicles on the main road, it has not given us an alternate space," Surash Bindal of the Chandni Chowk Traders' Association said.

Traders are also worried the ban could be the civic body's move towards gradually eliminating the age-old wholesale bazaars of Chandni Chowk. The MCD wants to shift the historic bazaar. Though it has not

yet completed the multi-level parking space at the Gandhi Ground that was supposed to be an alternate parking spot for us, it is in a great hurry to shift out our trade,” Bindal alleged.

According to MCD Leader of the House Subhash Arya, the contract has been awarded on “a temporary basis for just three months to check if the plan is feasible”.

“All types of vehicles were being parked on the stretch, leading to major traffic congestion. The City Zone has thus regularised the parking lot, limiting it to private vehicles,” MCD spokesperson Deep Mathur said. City Zone DC Vijay Singh remained unavailable for comment.