

Govt out to give revenue push to Heritage Street

Exploring options to fund upkeep cost of ₹37 lakh per month

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The Tourism Department is exploring the possibilities of generating revenue from the Heritage Street and the multi-lingual interpretation and information centre in the basement of the Golden Temple's entrance plaza.

A team of officials led by Principal Secretary, Tourism and Culture, Jaspal Singh and Tourism Director Shiv Dular Singh Dhillon today walked down the Heritage Street and visited the interpretation centre.

Jaspal Singh said the possibility was being worked out to make the maximum use of the underground infrastructure of the interpretation centre in the first phase.

He said international food and coffee chains like Barista, Café Coffee Day (CCD) etc. could be roped in. "Besides, railway or bus ticket booking, tourists information centre, ATMs, money changers, souvenir and gift shops can be added. We are working on various options to make the facility self-reliant so that its maintenance could be



Principal Secretary Jaspal Singh (centre) and Tourism Director Shiv Dular Singh Dhillon (right) during their visit to the Heritage Street in Amritsar on Monday. PHOTO: VISHAL KUMAR

sustained," he said.

The previous SAD-BJP government had conceptualised the idea of setting up a corpus of Rs 30 crore for the promotion of culture and tourism. This amount was to be kept at the disposal of the Amritsar Culture and Tourism Development Authority (ACTDA), constituted in 2016.

The ACTDA had hired BVG India Ltd for the

operation and maintenance of the Heritage Street and the interpretation centre. The firm provides 24x7 specialised mechanical cleaning of not only the pedestrian area leading to the Golden Temple, but is also responsible for overall maintenance and security of installations alongside the street, be it statues, fountains or the lamp posts.

The corpus could not be formed in the run up to the Assembly elections.

Tejinder Singh, General Manager, said the maintenance cost came to around Rs 37 lakh per month. "The power bill alone stands at Rs 7 lakh. Besides, there are service charges paid to the firm which has deployed around 150 workers dedicated to this project," he said.