

Amity students wow judges, win event to redesign a model Walled City



The winning team with their model and trophy

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THEIR idea may have just been recognised for being futuristic but, then, teenagers will always be teenagers. So the moment Amity International School, Saket, won a ministry-organised competition with their innovative model for reconstruction of Chandni Chowk, up went the fists in the air and the decibel level rose a few notches as students shrieked in joy.

The competition — 'Future Cities India 2020, Stu-

dent Infrastructure Design Projects' — is organised every year by the Department of Science and Technology.

Arjun Hans, a member of the winning team, said in trying to redesign the Mughal-era Chandni Chowk, their design aimed to retain the "very essence of the place", which, he said, was recognised by the judges. "Our idea was restoration," he said, "not destruction. In designing the model of Chandni Chowk, we did not want this plan to come as a cultural shock to people."

Union HRD Minister and

Lok Sabha MP from Chandni Chowk constituency Kapil Sibal, who was the chief guest at the event, said: "Chandni Chowk is an example of our lost heritage. The challenge is to modernise the 350-year-old city while retaining its ethos, culture and heritage.

"India is at the cusp of building cities (and) most of the cities have not been built. India (now) has the opportunity to build new cities and we have to build them differently."

Calling the competition an opportunity for children to "expand on this pro-

gramme", he said, "This allows young people to understand problems of the city."

The winning team used concepts like piezoelectricity (electricity generated due to pressure), rainwater harvesting, underground hydraulic lift parking, solar panels, aerogels, carbon nanotubes and such in their model.

Neha Ahooja, a Class XI student from the school, said, "We worked really hard on this project. It feels good our ideas are being appreciated."

The team has also been given a scholarship of Rs 88,000.

The competition 'Future Cities India' was launched in 2006 by the ministry and Bentley Systems, with the focus this year being Chandni Chowk. Students from several city schools came up with several innovative ideas to make the area part of a 'future city' by 2020.

Last year, the challenge centred on Indian Railways' plans to refurbish the country's ageing railway stations, and six of the models developed by the students were taken to Rail Bhawan for a detailed study.