

# Delhi's journey since 1803, at the click of a mouse

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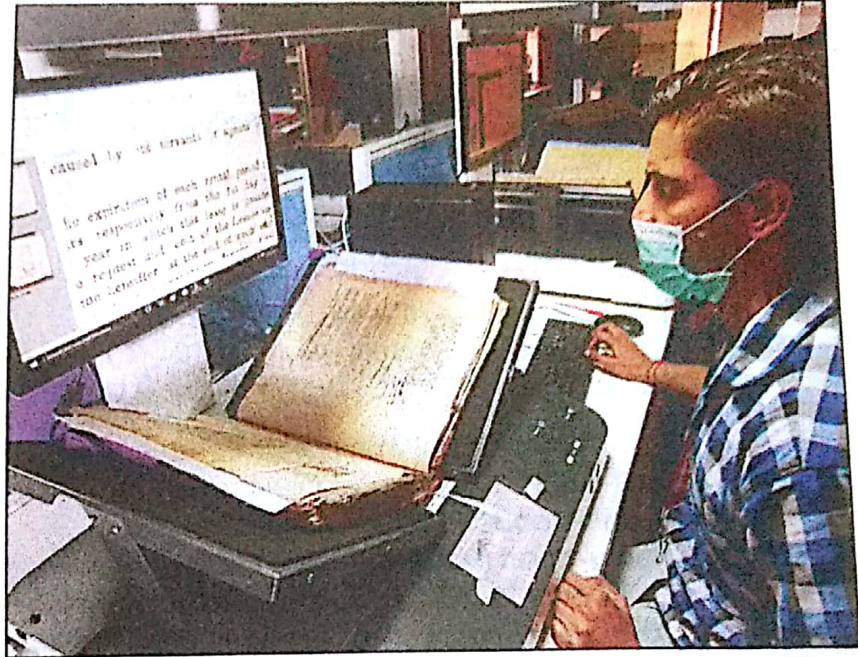
**New Delhi:** Over 50 lakh pages of archival records, which have been digitised over the past 16 months, will be made online within a month by Delhi government. The digitised records, which include a large number of government orders, rare photographs and manuscripts, will be available on the website of Delhi Archives that is likely to be launched by chief minister Arvind Kejriwal.

While the access to the repository of historically important documents would be free, those interested in downloading the hi-resolution document would have to sign up and pay a fee.

Delhi Archives has a repository of over 10 crore records from 1803 to 1990, which are being preserved, digitised and microfilmed in a phased manner. In the first phase, the department is digitising about four crore records, which is likely to be completed by February 2020. Over 1.5 crore records have already been digitised of which about 50 lakh would be put online.

"We have planned to start with 50 lakh digitised documents and will be adding more on a daily basis on the Delhi Archives website," said Sanjay Garg, nodal officer of the digitisation and microfilming of archival records project.

The records include the trial of the last Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, firmans (imperial orders) and sanads of Shah Alam-II, Revolt of 1857, land acquisition records of Lutyens' zone, rare photographs of freedom fighters,



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and old heritage and archaeological buildings and government orders narrating historical and political journey of Delhi, among others.

Several maps and plans of Delhi, gazettes of governments of India, Punjab and Delhi, records of freedom fighters, conviction records of Central Jail and Tihar, and property registration records from 1870-1990 are also being digitised.

The project was inaugurated by deputy CM Manish Sisodia in September 2017. This will be one of the biggest archives for researchers and academics digitised over 30 months and at a cost of Rs 25.4 crore. "We are using German technology for undertaking this massive exercise," Sisodia said.

A team of 125-150 archivists, some of them from Germany, have been meticulously preserving each document, digitising

and microfilming it at the Delhi Archives headquarters in Qutub institutional area. Abhinandita Mathur, adviser in the art and culture department, said the digitised records would also benefit people looking for the annals of their ancestral properties. "Though paper records are available at Delhi Archives, not many know how to access them," she added.

The government has also decided to record the history of Delhi in the voices of about 200 people, including some well-known names, under its ambitious "oral history project" that is likely to be launched on January 14.

Historians, artists, authors, politicians, bureaucrats, farmers, traders, among others are likely to be recorded in individual sessions of 45-60 minutes. The audio, videos and text of the collected information would also be put on a website.