

TEMPORARY RELOCATION

From IGNCA to Janpath hotel: 3 lakh books, 60,000 microfilms in boxes

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AROUND 3 lakh printed books, over 1 lakh slides on various cultural traditions, 3 lakh manuscripts, 60,000 microfilm rolls, thousands of paintings, textiles, and other archival material — these are being packed carefully into boxes at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), as it prepares to shift to a temporary location at The Janpath Hotel. The transition is set to be complete by the end of April.

At the Centre, rolls of bubble wrap, packed cardboard and

wooden storage boxes dot the area as items are organised and put into boxes to avoid hassles during unpacking. Around 50 contractual employees have been hired for packing and moving.

Said IGNCA director R C Gaur, "We received a letter from the Central Public Works Department on February 16 that the renovation work (at the hotel) is complete and to vacate by mid-April. This month, we have started to pack all material such as paintings, microfilms and others."

The Centre also houses personal collections of 45 artists.

"Library items are being packed based on various subjects, with



Staff at IGNCA pack artwork on Thursday as the Centre readies to shift to a new space. Abhinav Saha



books being scanned using the library management software. A

list of what each box contains is being pasted on the boxes.

Everything is being numbered and packed. Microfilms are be-

ing organised and packed in a chronological manner," he said.

The shift was necessitated as the Centre, currently located at Janpath road on a plot of 10.10 hectares, will be demolished as part of the Central Vista Redevelopment project. The new IGNCA will come up at Jamnagar plot on C-Hexagon or the India Gate circle.

The tender to renovate The Janpath Hotel was given to Dee Vee Projects Ltd for Rs 90 crore, as reported by *The Indian Express*. The hotel was an India Tourism Development Corporation-owned enterprise before it became the office for the Ministry of Tourism. It was handed over to the Ministry of Housing and

Urban affairs in late 2017.

"For a year, we have been having discussions with CPWD on exactly what our requirements are. The new Centre has a library with a reading room, an exhibition hall and an auditorium, classrooms. It has sufficient space. This Centre is now becoming outdated and doesn't suit our needs," said Gaur.

The IGNCA was founded by former P.P. Rajiv Gandhi in 1985. An international design competition was held for its building, which was won by the late American architect Ralph Lerner in 1987. Its construction, however, has been incomplete for decades due to lack of funding.