

Old city wall vandalized by influential people

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By Zulqernain Tahir

LAHORE, Feb 25: Some influential people have vandalized the historic wall of the Old Lahore between Sheranwala and Kashmiri Gates allegedly under the patronage of Ravi Town administration.

The wall has been broken in two places to create easy access to Havelis owned by Mian Pervaiz and Abu Bakar Mufti. The original bricks of Mughal period were reportedly recovered in the process and treated as debris.

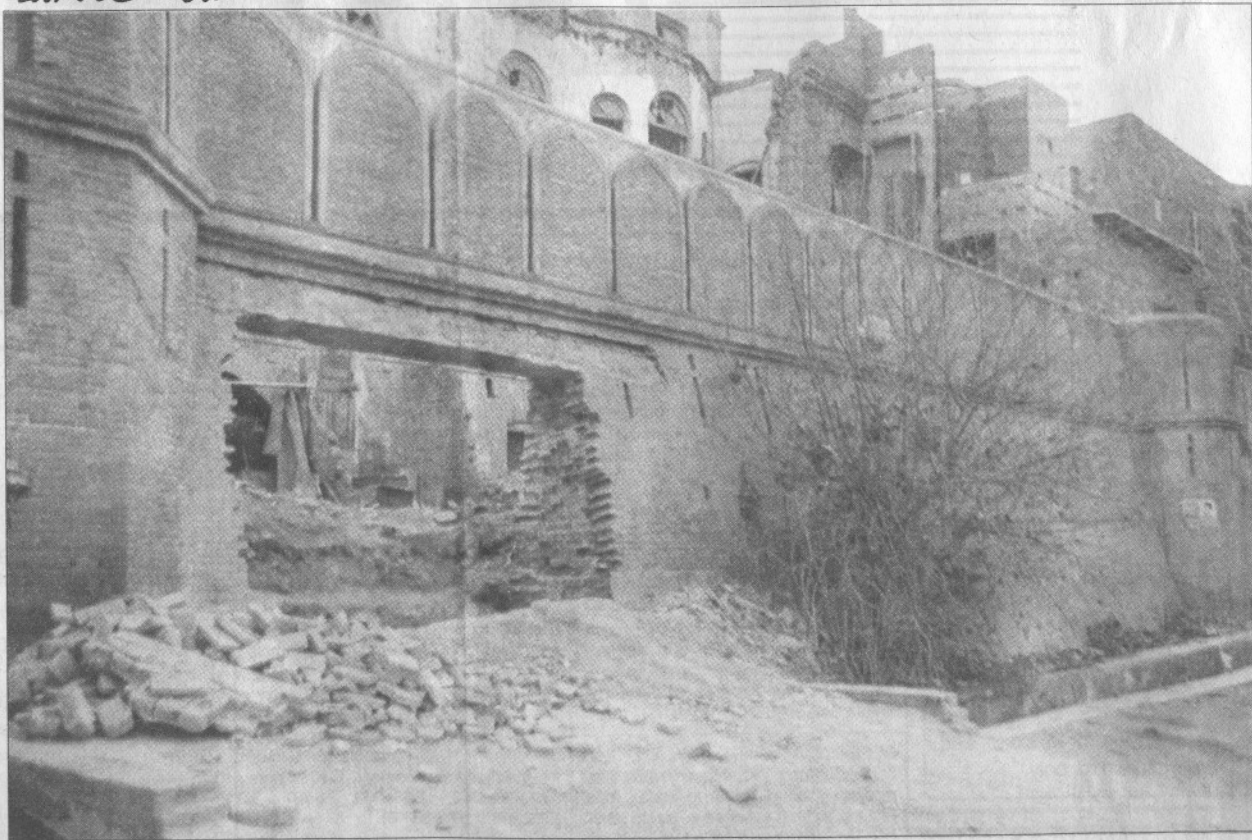
According to local residents, Mr Mufti had broken the wall a year ago while Mian Pervaiz did so more recently. They said that those who had vandalized the wall were quite influential people and nobody could dare question them in the locality.

Interestingly, Mr Mufti has had a wooden gate fixed in the wall while Mian Pervaiz is following suit.

The men of Mian Pervaiz working at the site informed *Dawn* that the (not-so-historic) "gate" was being built with the permission of the authorities concerned.

The remains of the wall from Masti Gate to Sheranwala Gate were rehabilitated under a World Bank project in the early 90s. The government had planned to rehabilitate the entire original boundary wall of the Walled City but could not do so due to lack of funds.

When contacted, District Coordinator Officer Khalid Sultan expressed his ignorance about the damage. He said that Ravi Town administration was responsible for the wall's upkeep. He said that he would take up the matter with the Ravi



Town administration.

LDA estate management director Asad Amir said that the wall had been rehabilitated by the LDA, but its management

was later handed over to the then Metropolitan Corporation of Lahore. Now, he said, it was under the control of the Lahore district government.

Archaeology department's north circle officials, when contacted, expressed their ignorance about the happening but expressed serious concern over the matter.