

J N PETIT LIBRARY WINS UNESCO RESTORATION AWARD

Uma Kadam

The exquisite J N Petit Library and Reading Room in Fort has won the UNESCO Award for Distinction for its restoration work. The reading room, which is the pride of the library, was not closed for a single day through the two years that work was under way. With this, conservation architect Vikas Dilawari has earned his 11th UNESCO award, a likely record. "Most of my awards have come from restoring buildings owned by Parsis. We conserved the exterior and interior of this 1856 structure with lime pointing, decorative ceilings, coloured glasses and wooden screens from 2012 to 2014," he said. Administrator Bomi Umrigar said, "The board and committee had the will to preserve this beautiful structure, so we managed funds despite meagre sources of revenue." The library, designed in neo-Gothic architectural style, was founded by a dozen Parsi students. —**Bella Jaisinghani**



Around 1895, the mother of Jamsetjee Petit donated Rs 2.5 lakh towards the venture in memory of her deceased son. The land was obtained from Jamsetjee Tata and the Government of Bombay