

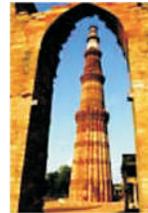
## History Revisited

What new should we say that hasn't been read, written or spoken about Delhi before? Capital city; home to world's largest democracy, a foodie's delight, an educationist's playground, a historian's wonderland and most of all, a monumental glory. Sandesh brings to you the colossal grandeur of "The city of Djinnns..."

### QUTUB MINAR

Built by Qutbuddin Aibak, the viceroy of Mohammed Ghori in 1192, Qutub Minar turned out to be the highest stone tower in India and the shining glory of the capital Delhi. It was built to celebrate Ghori's victory over the Rajputs.

The Minar is a five-storey building with a height of 72.5 metres. The first storey of the Qutub Minar was completed in the lifetime of Qutbuddin, while his son-in-law and successor, Iltutmush, added the next three storeys.



### INDIA GATE



The green, velvety lawns at India Gate are a popular evening and holiday rendezvous for young and old alike. For lovers of flowers and beauty, the open lush lawns are a true haven. But this popular monument, in reality, is a commemoration, a remembrance of all the brave soldiers who died fighting for their country.

This solemn monument, 42 metre tall was built in 1931 in the memory of the 90,000 Indian soldiers who died in World War I. It was designed by Lutyens and was originally called the All India War Memorial. The names of the soldiers are inscribed on the walls of the arc of the gate. Later in 1971, an eternal flame was lit here in memory of the unknown soldiers who died in the 1971 Indo Pakistan war.

### LOTUS TEMPLE

It is a very recent architectural marvel of the Bahai faith, located in Kalkaji, south of Delhi. Shaped like a half opened Lotus flower, this temple is made of marble, cement, dolomite and sand. This Bahai Temple is a marvel of modern architecture, that is visible from several spots in south Delhi. The lotus flower signifies purity and peace, a representation of the manifestation of God to the people of India. This ancient symbol has been given a modern and contemporary form in the structure of the Bahai House of Worship drawing into its sanctum sanctorum people from all races, religious backgrounds and culture from around the globe.



### JAMA MASJID

Jama Masjid of Delhi is the largest mosque in India. Built between 1644 and 1658, this massive mosque is one of the last architectural works of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan. The spacious courtyard of the Jama Masjid holds thousands of faithful, who visit it everyday to offer their prayers. Jama Masjid is located on a mound in the heart of the old city and adds further charm into the Old-Delhi skyline. Jama Masjid Mosque was built in red sandstone and marble by more than 5000 artisans.



Originally called the Masjid-i-Jahan-Numa, or 'mosque commanding view of the world', the Jama Masjid stands at the centre of the erstwhile capital city of the Mughals, Shahjahanabad.

Contd.

## Cultural Calendar for March 2008

### March 10

Film: Kabuliwala (with English subtitles)  
Language: Hindi  
Directed by: Hemen Gupta  
Venue & Time: ICC 5.30 p.m. Duration : 3 hrs

### March 12

Discussion on "Charandas" Play of Janakaraliya (Theatre of People) by Mr.Parakkrama Niriella  
Venue & Time: ICC 6.00 p.m

### March 14

"The Indian Inheritance & the Evolution of Art in Sri Lanka. Transformation or pale imitation?" (illustrated presentation) by Dr. SinhaRaja Tammita-Delgoda  
Venue & Time: ICC 6.00 p.m.

### March 17

Film: Do Bigha Zamin (with English subtitles)  
Language: Hindi  
Directed by: Bimal Roy  
Venue & Time: ICC 5.30 p.m. Duration : 3 hrs

### March 19

"Holi Milan" -A Programme to mark the Holi Festival by Ms. Moksha Samarasooriya & her students.  
Venue & Time: ICC 6.00 p.m

### March 27-29

"The Path of Compassion" A photographic exhibition on Buddhist historical & Art Heritage  
Venue: ICC  
Inauguration on 27<sup>th</sup> March at 6.00 p.m. (Admission by invitation)  
Exhibition dates: 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00p.m.

(Admission to all programmes is free and on first come first served basis except 27 March )

### PURANA QUILA

Purana Qila or the Old Fort is an architectural marvel and a perfect venue for hosting a culturally-rich evening. Its glory and charisma is simply unbeatable.

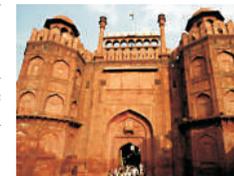


The three gates of the fort Humayun Darwaza, Talaqi Darwaza and Bara Darwaza welcome one and all. The present entrance is the Bara Darwaza, an imposing red sandstone gate on the western wall. Inside the Purana Qila is the Sher Mandal, a two-storied octagonal pavilion in red sandstone, built by Sher Shah and which Humayun used to use as a library after he captured the fort. But the Mandal at the fort is tragic, since it was here, on the tortuous stairs that the emperor is believed to have tripped and tumbled to his death in 1556.

### THE RED FORT

The Red Fort, with a circumference of over 2.2 kms, was laid out along the banks of the Yamuna River in the 17th century. The Mughal emperor Shah Jahan built it with the ambition of concentrating the Mughal power in one monument, which is less of a structure and more of a mini-city in itself.

The fort is a delight to one's imagination. Imagine the Naqqar Khana (Drum room) a/so called Naubat Khana (Welcome Room), where once drums loudly heralded the arrival of the emperor and the Diwan-e-Am (Hall of Public Audience) resounded with the incantations of the people. The fort has two main entrances - Delhi Gate and Lahore Gate.



Contd.

SANDESH

The monthly newsletter of the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo



P. T. Reddy, Life in Formation, 181 x 181 cm, 1974

**"The Path of Compassion"**  
A photographic exhibition



**Indian Cultural Centre**

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March 2008

## Past Events

### 8<sup>th</sup> January Hindustani Vocal Music Recital by Prof. Vidya Prasad Mishra



A Hindustani vocal music recital by Prof. Vidya Prasad Mishra from India enthralled the audience gathered at the Centre. He commenced the recital with Raag Mala and explained about ragas. He also demonstrated various styles of singing. The recital was a special treat for music enthusiasts.

### 10<sup>th</sup> January A programme to mark the World Hindi Day



The world Hindi Day was celebrated at the Indian Cultural Centre on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2008. The members of Old Hindi Films & Music Lovers Society of Sri Lanka presented a captivating evening of light music. The songs sung were mostly from 70's & 80's Hindi films. The evening was very well enjoyed by the audience gathered at the Centre

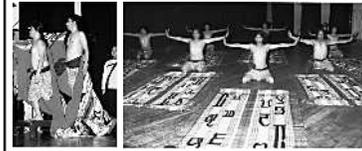
### 12<sup>th</sup> January Rangoli Mela



To mark the Thaipongal festival the Indian Cultural Centre Colombo organised a Rangoli

competition at the Centre on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2008. At the end of the day each participant was awarded a certificate of participation. The first three winners were also awarded separate certificates.

### 29<sup>th</sup> January Wahodouk – a play by Padmashree Rattan Thiyam & his troupe to celebrate the 59<sup>th</sup> Republic Day of India

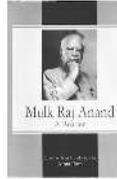


Renowned Theatre Director Padmashree Ratan Thiyam & his troupe from India captivated the audiences in Sri Lanka with their play entitled Wahoudok held at the Bishops College auditorium on 29<sup>th</sup> January. The play depicted the myth and reality of human evolution from the inception of the universe to modern times. The event was presided by the High Commissioner for India in Sri Lanka Shri Alok Prasad and Minister for Tourism Hon. Milinda Moragoda & Smt. Moragoda graced the occasion as Chief Guests.

The play by Padmashree Ratan Thiyam's troupe received very good reviews from the press. The troupe's visit was sponsored by the ICCR to celebrate the 59th Republic Day of India, and jointly organized by the High Commission of India, Colombo and the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo.

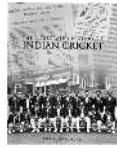
## LIBRARY

### Recent Library Accessions



#### MULK RAJ ANAND

**A Reader**  
Selections from his Fictional and Non Fictional Writings  
Edited with an Introduction By Atma Ram  
New Delhi, Sahitya Akademi, 2005, pp.638

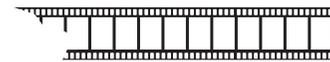


#### THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF INDIAN CRICKET

By Boria Majumdar  
With an Introduction by Sandipan Deb  
New Delhi, Roli Books, 2006, pp.254



## Films in March



### Kabuliwala (with English subtitles)



Children knew him as Kabuliwala. But they were afraid of him; he had such an imposing figure! Like all good men, however, Kabuliwala was very fond of children. Often he would distribute his bagful of 'Pista Badam' among them. Kabuliwala had come to Calcutta to earn his living, leaving behind his little daughter. Her memory haunted him all the time. And he came across little Mini – the city child in whom he saw the image of his little daughter. Thus it was that Kabuliwala took to little Mini like an affectionate father. In time a charming relationship developed between the two. At the call of Kabuliwala, the child would run down to him, the little mischievous Mini and the giant Pathan could be heard talking, laughing & playing – forgetting the world around them. Fate, however, intervened and an unfortunate incident soon separated the two. They met again. Tagore's story Kabuliwala is so well known that perhaps you have read it. Here is a film based on that great classic. A brilliant adaptation by the legendary Bimal Roy!  
**Language:** Hindi **Starring:** Balraj Sahni, Usha Kiron, Sajjan, Asit Sen, Sonu & Paul Mahendra  
**Directed by:** Hemen Gupta



### Do Bigha Zamin (with English subtitles)

Shambhu (Balraj Sahni) celebrates the arrival of rains, after two years of drought with his son Kanhaiya and wife Parvati (Nirupa Roy). His joy is short lived, as the zamindar wants Shambhu's land for putting up a factory. The zamindar manipulates and bribes the local officials into declaring Shambhu a defaulter, for not having repaid loans taken from the zamindar. The film poignantly details the efforts of Shambhu to reign his land. A film by Bimal Roy which won the 1953 Fimfare award for the Best Film & Best Director.  
**Language:** Hindi **Starring:** Balraj Sahni, Nirupa Roy, Ratan Kumar, Murad, Nana Palsikar & Nazir Husein **Directed by:** Bimal Roy

## History Revisited Contd.

### RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN



famous and beautifully landscaped Mughal Gardens.

The structure houses the residence of the President of India and boasts of having welcomed the most powerful men in history. The Rashtrapati Bhavan, built in 1931 and designed by Edwin Lutyens was the central point of the British power in Delhi. Originally called the Viceroy's House, the Rashtrapati Bhavan covers an area of 4.5 acres of land and has 340 rooms, 37 salons, 74 lobbies and loggias, 18 staircases and 37 fountains to its credit. The most magnificent room in the Rashtrapati Bhavan is the Durbar Hall, which lies directly beneath the main dome. All important Indian State and official ceremonies are held here. To the west, is the

### JANTAR MANTAR



planets can be observed.

Synonymous with the magical charm of abracadabra, Jantar Mantar, lying in the heart of Delhi, is a unique structure that was built in 1724. The monument is one of the five astronomical observatories raised by Maharaja Jai Singh II of Jaipur, the other four being located at Jaipur, Varanasi, Ujjain and Mathura. After watching the various abstract structures within the Jantar Mantar, we come to understand of instruments that were used for keeping track of celestial bodies. Jantar Mantar in Delhi is an astronomical observatory where the movements of sun, moon and

### HUMAYUN'S TOMB



princes during the first war of Independence in AD 1857.

Believed to be commissioned by Humayun's senior widow Haji Begam and known as the first example of the monumental creations of Mughal imperial architecture, This lofty imperial structure rises from a podium faced with a series of cells with arched openings and is the first of grand dynastic mausoleums that later became the hallmark of Mughal architecture. The central octagonal chamber contains the cenotaph, encompassed by octagonal chambers at the diagonals and arched lobbies on the side. Several rulers of the Mughal dynasty lie buried here and the last emperor of the dynasty, Bahadur Shah Zafar, had taken refuge in the tomb with three

The Humayun's Tomb is one of the few buildings whose architect finds mention in the records

### BIRLA MANDIR



In the ever expansive landscape of Delhi, the captivating structure of Birla Mandir, located very close to Connaught Place on the Mandir Marg, stands tall and majestic. A Hindu temple, built by the industrial family of Birla, is one of the first of its kind and plays host to a humongous number of tourists each year. The temple is dedicated to Vishnu, the second of the Hindu Trinity of creator-preserver-destroyer, and his consort Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth. The septuagenarian temple, built in 1938, was inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi (Father of the Indian Nation) on the condition that people of all castes, especially untouchables would be allowed in.

*Source: Priyanka Saxena, Incredible India*