CHAPTER-VIII

A STUDY OF DELHI AND NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION (NCR)

8.1. DELHI

Historical Background

Delhi, India's third largest city, has two distinct personalities. The ancient part of the city, known as 'Old Delhi', is a storehouse of history. Adjoining it, is a later construction a well-planned city. 'New Delhi', the elegant capital of India-the world's largest democracy.

The two parts of the city are complementary. This is a city, where 'old' and 'modern' go side by side. Delhi's strategic location had made it a frequent target to invasions. Invaders crossing the river Indus in the north-west, had to battle near Delhi to gain entry in to the rich green plains of the Ganga.

Situated in the heart of India on the west bank of the river Yamuna, Delhi is bordered on the west by the state of Haryana and on the east by Uttar Pradesh. Delhi is bounded on the west by the state of Haryana and on the east by Uttar Pradesh. Delhi is a State governed by a Lt. Governor as the administrative head and have an elected 70
member Assembly with a Chief Minister. Delhi's climate varies from hot summers to cold winters.

Delhi is linked to all major cities of India by road, rail and air. The Indira Gandhi International Airport connects it to all major cities of the world.

Delhi is the fastest growing metropolis in India. Scores of residential colonies, industries, factories, commercial houses, medical, educational and cultural institutions are sprouting in and around Delhi. This mini India attracts people from all walks of life from all over the country.

Delhi is deeply steeped in history. Habitation appears to have begun at or around the site of Delhi about three thousand years ago. Relics and remains, in the form of mud-walls, pottery, toys, ivory pendants etc. found in the excavations carried out in 1987-88 at Mandaoli village, across the Yamuna and close to Nand Nagri, indicate that this historic city was associated with the Harappan age (1700 B.C. to 400 A.D.). Later on, this historic city was associated with the Maurya, Sunga, Saka-Kushan, Gupta, Rajput, Pathna and Mughal periods through various archeological findings.
Mythology has it, that Delhi will be created and destroyed in never ending cycles of prosperity and ruins. Surprisingly it is historically true. Historians have counted at least sixteen sites and eight cities (including New Delhi), that constitute the present-day Delhi. These eight cities in Delhi reveal that each conqueror built a new city, more enduring, more grand and more beautiful than his predecessor. Thus, Delhi successively changed its location, its character and even its name. Luckily these cities went up, side by side and not on top of one another. Thus, Delhi presents a kaleidoscope of architectural design and style, ranging from the ancient Hindu to the medieval Muslim and the neo-classical architecture of the British.

Delhi is a city of contrasts. One of the oldest cities in the world, and now one of the most progressive, she combines a unique ambience of the ancient and the modern. Age-old monuments stand side by side with futuristic buildings, rambling homes are dwarfed by towering luxury hotels, technology competes with handicrafts – Delhi is India’s show window. A truly cosmopolitan city, it has brought within its fold people of all ethnic groups and their traditions and cultures, reflected in the variety of arts, crafts, cuisines, festivals and lifestyles. Delhi is pulsating with music concerts, dance festivals, theatre performances and art exhibition.
Modern India's history is synonymous with Delhi. It was from the ramparts of its Red Fort that India’s first prime minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, unfurled the national flag on August 15, 1947, signifying the end of the three hundred years long British rule. Today, as India's capital and the seat of its parliament, the city hosts world leaders, diplomats, international missions, sports meets, cultural festivals and conferences.

The fine tradition of Indian hospitality also finds ample expression in India’s capital city. A major point of entry for foreign travellers to India, it boasts of tourism infrastructure which compares with the best in the world International hotels with extensive facilities, gourmet restaurants, air-conditioned limousines, luxury coaches, bargain shopping, ethnic entertainment and convenient connection by rail and air. Delhi has everything going, and is the ultimate travel experience.

One of the oldest living cities in the world, Delhi has 20,000 ruins and 1,300 officially listed monuments. Delhi is history, and Delhi’s monuments are tablets on which the history is written. Every conqueror did his best to possess Delhi and make it his capital. Delhi is not a single city but a combination of eight cities that have been established here from as early as 900 BC to 1930 when the British
completed the construction of New Delhi as the capital of imperial India. It is, therefore, not surprising that the monuments of Delhi successfully mirror the development of the architectural styles in the country.

The earliest references to Delhi are in Buddhist and Jain scriptures but these source cannot be precisely dated. In the great Indian epic ‘Mahabharat’ composed around 900 BC, there is mention of Indraprastha, a city founded by the Pandavas on the banks of the river Yamuna. The next mention of the city is during the rule of Raja Anangpal, who built his fort in the Qutab area.

In the 11th century AD, Raja Anangpal of Kannauj, a Tomar king established Lal Kot as his capital in the vicinity of the Qutab Minar. This was the first city of Delhi. Anangpal’s successors ruled from this fort for almost a century until Visal Deva, a Chauhan Rajput raja from Ajmer conquered Delhi.

Towards the end of the 12th century, Mohammad Ghori, an invader from Afghanistan, defeated Prithvi Raj, Visal Deva’s grandson, occupied Delhi. He, however, returned to Afghanistan soon after, leaving his new kingdom in the trusted hands of his slave Alla-ud-din Khilji. The Lal Kot fort continued to be the capital till 1303 when
Khilji defeated the invading Rajputs at Siri and constructed Delhi’s second city in the area.

During the Tughlak rule (1320-1412) the third and fourth cities of Delhi were founded. Ghyas-ud-din Tughlak founded Tughlakabad which took four years to build but was deserted soon after, due to scarcity of water, Sultan Mohammad-bin-Tughlak constructed Delhi’s fourth city called Jahanpanah, close to the Qutab Minar to protect his people, living in the open plains, from attack by invaders.

Founded by Firoz Shah Tughlaq (1351-88) Delhi’s fifth city was named Ferozabad and was located in the vicinity of the present Feroz Shah Kotla.

Constructed in an area said to be the ancient city of Indraprastha, Purana Quila was erected by the Mughal Emperor Humayun between 1533-34, as Delhi’s sixth city. Humayun was, however, forced to flee from Purana Quila by the invading Afghan warrior Sher Shah Suri (1530-39). Sher Shah Suri built a beautiful hall and mosque in the fort and ruled from here till 1555 when Humayun returned to power and recaptured the fort.

Shahjahanabad or Old Delhi as it is now called, was built by Emperor Shah Jahan as Delhi’s seventh city between 1638 and 1649.
This city comprises the famous Red Fort, Jama Masjid, and contains many fine examples of Mughal architecture.

Delhi’s eighth city, now known as New Delhi was formally inaugurated in 1931. Following the British decision to shift the capital of imperial India from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911, two British architects, Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker were commissioned to design a city in keeping with the grandeur of India. This new city is today the capital of modern India.

8.2. MONUMENTS

Delhi is a complex city with many faces, with lot of historical tradition, sensitive and violent, a vortex of political and economic power, and of academic enquiry and a growing richness in the arts. There is a vitality – often a raw vitality – which informs life here. That is what persists through the ages, and it is this which will take it through the century that is coming, and to many others.

Delhi’s perspective is not of a mere century. It has seen emperors, kings, courtiers, generals, prime ministers and party leaders. While surveying Delhi, I tried to discover every facet of it starting from monuments, art and culture, parks & gardens, sports and recreational facilities. I then visited nearby places in excursions. The tourist arrival
short pattern to these places was also examined. The information collected from the survey on all these aspects is reproduced below.

8.2.1 Qutab Minar Complex

The origins of Qutab Minar are shrouded in controversy. Some believe it was erected as a tower of victory to signify the beginning of the Muslim rule in India. Others say it served as a minaret to the adjoining mosque and was used by the muezzins to call the faithful to prayer. No one can, however, dispute that the tower is not only one of the finest monuments in India, but also in the world.

Qutab-ud-din Aibak, the first Muslim ruler of Delhi, commenced the construction of the Qutab Minar in 1200 AD, but could only finish the basement. His successor, Iltumush, added three more storeys, and in 1368, Firoz Shah Tughlak constructed the fifth and the last storey. The development of architectural styles from Aibak to Tughlak are quite evident in the minar.

The 238 feet Qutab Minar is 47 feet at the base and tapers to nine feet at the apex. The tower is ornamented by bands of inscriptions and by four projecting balconies supported by elaborately decorated brackets.
Even in ruin, the Quwwat Ut Islam (Light of Islam) Mosque in the Qutab complex is one of the most magnificent in the world. Its construction was started by Qutab-ud-din Aibak in 1193 and the mosque was completed in 1197. Additions were made to the building by Iltutmush in 1230 and Alla-ud-din Khilji in 1315.

The main mosque comprises an inner and outer courtyard, of which the inner is surrounded by an exquisite collonade, the pillars of which are made of richly decorated shafts. Most of these shafts are from the 27 Hindu temples which were plundered to construct the mosque. It is, therefore, not surprising that the Muslim mosque has typical Hindu ornamentation.
Close to the mosque is one of Delhi's most curious antiques, the Iron Pillar. Dating back to the 4th century AD, the pillar bears an inscription which states that it was erected as a flagstaff in honour of the Hindu god Vishnu, and in the memory of the Gupta king Chandragupta II (375-413). How the pillar moved to its present location remains a mystery. The pillar also highlights ancient India's achievements in metallurgy. The pillar is made of 98 per cent wrought iron and has stood, 1,600 years without rusting or decomposing.

8.2.2 Purana Quila

The fort is said to be constructed on the historic site of Indraprastha (900 BC) by Humayun and Sher Shah. Covering a circuit of about a mile, the walls of the fort have three gates and are surrounded by a moat fed by the river Yamuna. The wall was built by Humayun while the buildings in the fort are attributed to Sher Shah. The notable buildings have survived in the fort are the Sher Mandal and the Quila-I-Kholina Mosque. Sher Mandal is a two storyed octagonal tower which was used by Humayun as his library.

The mosque, built around 1541-42, is a landmark in Indo-Islamic architecture. The architect has shown skill by enriching each part with moulding, bracketed openings, marble inlay, carving and other establishments. A variety of materials have also been used to construct
the small mosque (168 x 44 feet). The entrance arch is of marble, the spandrels of red sandstone studded with marble bosses, the columns and pilasters of black and white marble.

8.2.3 Humayun’s Tomb

The Mughals brought with them a love for gardens, fountains and water. The first mature example of Mughal architecture in India. Humayun’s Tomb was built by the emperor’s grieving widow, Haji Begum, in 1565 AD. Constructed with red sandstone and ornamented with marble bands, this mausoleum marks the beginning of a new tradition of ornate style which culminated in the Taj Mahal of Agra.

Designed by the Persian architect, Mirza Ghias, Humayun’s Tomb shows a marked shift from the Persian tradition of using coloured tiles for ornamentation. Located in the midst of a large square garden,
screened by high walls with gateways to the south and west, the tomb is a square tower surmounted by a magnificent marble dome. The dome stands 140 feet from the base of the terrace and is topped with a copper pinnacle. In addition to the remains of Humayun, the complex also houses the grave of many other distinguished members of the Mughal dynasty.

8.2.4 Jantar Mantar

At first sight, the Jantar Mantar appears like a gallery of modern art. It is, however, an observatory. Sawai Jai Singh II of Jaipur (1699-1743), a keen astronomer and a noble in the Mughal court, was dissatisfied by the errors of brass and metal astronomical instruments. Under patronage from the emperor, he set on himself the task of correcting the existing astronomical tables and updating the almanac with more reliable instruments.
Delhi’s Jantar Mantar is the first of the five observatories that he built with large masonry instruments. The observatory has the Samrat Yantra, a simple equal hour sun dial, the Ram Yantra for reading altitudinal angles; Jai Prakash for ascertaining the position of the sun and other celestial bodies, and the Misra Yantra which is a combination of four scientific gadgets.

8.2.5 Red Fort

So called because of the red stone with which it is built, the Red Fort is one of the most magnificent palaces in the world. India’s history is also closely linked with this fort. It was from her that the British deposed the last Mughal ruler, Bahadur Shah Zafar, marking the end of the three century long Mughal rule. It was also from its ramparts that the first prime minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, announced to the nation that India was free from colonial rule.
The Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan, after ruling from Agra for eleven years, decided to shift to Delhi and laid the foundation stone of the Red Fort in 1618. For its inauguration in 1647, the main halls of the palace were draped in rich tapestry and covered with silk from China and velvet from Turkey. With a circumference of almost one and a half miles, the fort is an irregular octagon and has two entrances, the Lahore and Delhi Gates.

From the Lahore Gate, a visitor has access to the Chatta Chowk (vaulted arcade) which was once a royal market and housed court jewellers, miniature painters, carpet manufacturers, workers in enamel, silk weavers and families of specialised craftsmen. The road from the royal market leads to the Nawbatkhana (band house) where the royal band played five times a day. The band house also marks the entry into the main palace and all visitors, except royalty had to dismount here.

The Diwan-I-Am is the Red Fort’s hall of public audience. Built of sandstone covered with shell plaster polished to look into the ivory, the 80 x 40 feet hall is sub-divided by columns. The Mughal emperors would hold court here and meet dignitaries and foreign emissaries. The most imposing feature of the Diwan-I-Am is the alcove in the back wall where the emperor sat in state on a richly carved and inlaid marble
platform. In the recess behind the platform are fine examples of Italian pietra-dura work.

The piece de resistance of the fort, the Diwan-i-Khas was the hall of private audience. The most highly ornamented of all Shah Jahan’s buildings, the 90 x 67 feet Diwan-i-Khas is a pavilion of white marble supported by intricately carved pillars. So enamoured was the emperor by the beauty of this pavilion that he engraved on it the following words. “If there is paradise on the face of his earth, it is this.”

Richly decorated with flowers of inlaid mosaic work of cornelian and other stones, the Diwan –i-Khas once housed the famous Peacock Throne, which when it was plundered by Nadir Shah in 1739, was valued at six million sterling.

Residence of the senior queens, the Rang Mahal (hall of colours) has a central hall surrounded by six apartments. The apartments are assured privacy by intricately carved screens which do not hinder the free flow of fresh air and light. The stream of paradise flows through the main hall, and is marked in the centre by a huge lotus shaped marble basin with an ivory fountain.

Constructed by Emperor Aurangzeb in 1662 as his private mosque Moti Masjid (pearl mosque) is built with highly polished
marble. The mosque is a good example of the Mughal fetish for symmetry with cusped arches, sinuous decorative designs, carved cornices and bulbous domes.

Other buildings of interest in the Red Fort complex are the Musamman Burg (octagonal tower), Khwabghah (bedroom) and the Hammam (royal baths).

8.2.6 Jama Masjid

Work on the Jama Masjid mosque began in 1650 by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan to complement his palace at the Red Fort. More than 5,000 workers toiled for six years to complete the largest mosque in India. Every Friday, the emperor and his group would travel in state from the fort to the mosque to attend the congressional prayers.

A fine example of Mughal architecture, the Jama Masjid has three gateways. The largest and highest on the east was reserved exclusively for the emperor. In the centre is a large marble tank in which the devout wash before attending prayers. The main mosque is crowned by three onion shaped domes made of white marble and inlaid with stripes of black slate. On the north and south of the complex are two 130 feet high minarets which offer a spectacular bird’s eye-view of the city.
Jama Masjid is not only architecturally beautiful, but also a place of great religious significance as it houses a hair from the beard of the Prophet and also a chapter of the Holy Quran written by him.

8.2.7 Safdarjang’s Tomb

Representing the last phase of the Mughal style of architecture, Safdarjang’s Tomb stands in the centre of an extensive garden. Built in 1753 by Nawab Shauja-ud-Daula to house the remains of his father, who was a minister in the Mughal court, the tomb is referred to as the ‘last flicker in the lamp of Mughal architecture.” It shows how the grace and simplicity of the Mughals had been overtaken by decadence. The tomb also has a mosque.
The following table shows the data of inflow of the Tourists in Centrally Protected Monuments in Delhi from the year 1996-1999.

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8.2.8  India Gate

Built as a memorial to commemorate the 70,000 Indian soldiers killed in World War I, India Gate was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and completed in 1931. Located on Rajpath, the road which leads to the magnificent Rashtrapati Bhawan, the gate is 160 feet high with an arch of 138 feet. Built from sandstone, the arch also houses the Eternal Flame, a gesture in memory of the Indian soldiers who laid their lives in the 1971 war with Pakistan.
8.2.9 Rashtrapati Bhawan

Formerly the Viceregal Lodge, the building is the highlight of Lutyen’s New Delhi and was completed in 1929 at a cost of 12,53,000 pound sterling. Located in an area of 130 hectares, the palace has 340 rooms. At one time, 2,000 people were required to look after the building and serve the Viceroy’s household. The lodge also has an impressive garden called the Mughal Garden, which is open to public twice in a year, usually in February and March.

8.2.10 Rajghat

The mortal remains of Mahatma Gandhi were cremated on this spot on the west bank of the river Yamuna on the evening of January 31, 1948. A simple open platform inscribed with the Mahatma’s last words, ‘Hey Ram’ (Oh God) is set in a garden with fountains and a variety of exotic trees.

8.2.11 Lakshmi Narayan Temple

Built in 1938, the temple is an ideal introduction to some of the gods of the Hindu Religion. The temple contains a large number of idols and visitors can also watch priests performing ritualistic prayers.
8.3 ART AND CULTURE

Art, music and dance are as symbolic to India as the Taj Mahal. They express the deep awareness of the spiritual being and the social values that have emanated from the beliefs. Contributing significantly to India’s social development since ancient times, these art forms represent the very ethos of India. As the seat of power and the home of many of the country’s ruling dynasties, Delhi has been the cultural capital of India. Even today, as the host of numerous cultural festivals, international and domestic, dance and music performances, art exhibitions, theatre and even an occasional vintage car rally, Delhi mirrors the country’s rich cultural and historical heritage. Added to these seasonal events are permanent exhibitions and museums that preserve the best that the country has to offer.
Classical Indian dance and music can trace its history back to at least three thousand years. Created initially to appease the gods in temples and at religious festivals, these forms have developed into highly stylised art forms with each region developing its own distinct styles.

A number of dance and music recitals are organised by private societies, hotels and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations. Most performances are advertised in the newspapers and through information desks at the hotels. There is a regular performance of the Dances of India at the Parsee Anjuman Hall near Delhi Gate.

Delhi has multi-lingual theatre rendering from traditional Indian epics to British comedies. Besides the National School of Drama which stages a number of plays in Hindustani, there are a large number of societies and theatre clubs that organise performances. Of the regional Indian language plays, Punjabi theatre which is very entertaining is the most popular. Over the last decade, Indian theatre has also arrived on the international scene with different languages.

**Painting** as a form of inner expression and a means to record events of history has been an integral part of India’s cultural heritage. Dating back from cave paintings in the era before Christ to modern
paintings, the country has produced paintings which can be viewed in museums all over the world. Not only does Delhi have the best collection of antique and modern paintings, but it is also home of India’s best known artists who periodically exhibit their creativity and work. There are a number of painting work shops like the Triveni Kala Sangam and the Lalit Kala Academy which have permanent exhibitions. Delhi even has its own painters village called Garhi where painters live, work and exchange ideas. The National Gallery of Modern Art has a representative collection of Indian painting from the middle of the last century onwards. This collection represents adaptation of styles which are unique and not unfamiliar. A major collection is of the paintings of the half Indian and half Hungarian painter Amrit Shergill, over a hundred paintings, of whose, including a self portrait, are displayed in the museum. Most of Shergill’s work was done after 1930. Another painter who finds prominence in this museum is Rabindranath Tagore, the nobel laureate who took up painting after his Nobel prize in literature. The National Gallery of Modern Art also holds a number of exhibitions of contemporary Indian and foreign artists.

Art played a very important role in princely India. Most rulers encouraged and patronised court painters and many traditional schools
of miniature paintings from the states like Kota, Bundi, Chamba and Jaipur. Influenced greatly by the Mughal school of painting, these miniatures done in rich colours with ample use of gold depict important events in the history of India, religious festivals, and activities like coronations and royal hunts. Delhi no boasts of a large number of museums. The National Museum in Delhi has the best collection of miniature paintings in India. Besides paintings, the museum has archaeology rooms with intricately carved stone groups and even stone beads 3,000 years old. An entire floor is devoted to Indian costumes, silver work, and cotton temple hangings. The museum also has a collection of Indian musical instruments, charts that define the evolution of Indian society.

The Indus Valley gallery displays many antiquities excavated from Mohenjodaro and Harappa, like terracotta toys, images and pots, jewellery, seals, bronze and copper implements and sculptures. The most outstanding object here is the lyrical bronze Dancing Girl.

The National Museum also has a rich collection of sculptures. All the major periods are represented here Maurya, Sunga, Satavahana, Gupta, Pallava, Chanakya, Pala and Sena. Also on view are sculptures from Gandhara and Mathura.
The Bronze Gallery has some superb pieces from the Chola and Pallava period. Among these the Nataraja figure of Shiva and the Kaliya Mardan Krishna are all time greats.

There are a number of rare manuscripts, textiles, coins and tribal art, but the museum’s most significant gallery is the one of Central Asian exhibits. Silk banners from Dunhuang, wall paintings, sculptures and other objects capture the lifestyle and culture prevalent along the ancient Silk Route that stretched between Europe and China.

For railway buffs, the Rail Museum houses the oldest working steam locomotive in the world – the ‘Fairie Queen’ – in addition to a large number of unusual locomotives and coaches that once belonged to Indian maharajas. The exhibit section traces the almost 140 years old history of the Indian railways. This includes Patiala Monorail Tramway which is internationally unique, the prince of Wales Saloon, the luxurious Maharaja of Mysore’s Saloon, the Viceregal dining, the N-class Garratt Locomotive, Railway coaches and the first locomotive built in Indian Ajmer.

In the National Museum of natural history a prehistoric animal greets the visitor to preparing him for the collection of botanical, zoological and geological objects on view within.
The Archaeological Museum situated in the historic Red Fort exhibits objects of the Mughal period such as manuscripts that demonstrate the fine art of calligraphy, paintings, textiles and costumes. One section concentrates on relics of the 1857 war (First War of Independence) like maps and weapons.

The Crafts Museum complex at Pragati Maidan is a charming oasis of mud huts with painted walls and thatched roofs, courtyards, terracotta houses recreating village life. Craftsmen at work are some of the elements that add to the rural ambience of the place. Within the museum itself are examples of traditional Indian crafts, wooden carvings and images and metalware.

The International Dolls Museum is a museum devoted to a display of dolls from all over India and abroad.

Established in 1959 and spread over an area of 214 acres, the National Zoological Park at Delhi has a representative collection of fauna and avifauna from the continents of Asia, America, Africa and Australia. Housing some 2,000 animals and birds, the Delhi Zoo also has in its collection rare and endangered Indian species like the tiger, panther, antlered deer, Indian one-horned rhinoceros, gharials, white tigers any many rare birds.
Delhi has two sound and light shows (son et lumieres), both worth seeing. The show at the Red Fort traces the history of the Mughal empire in India and outlines their glories and the eventual causes for their downfall. With well managed effects of light and sound, together with an interesting commentary, the show brings to life one of the most glorious periods of Indian history. The sound and light show at the Teen Murti House is dedicated to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India. While highlighting the personal life of Nehru and his contribution in India’s struggle for independence, the show recreates the history of modern India and particularly of her freedom movement. Both the Red Fort and the Teen Murti shows are in English and Hindustani.

Art and culture in Delhi is not restricted to auditoria, theatres and exhibition to auditoria, theatres and exhibition galleries. The advent of winter brings along a fervour which is reflected on its streets. Painters set up important exhibition near market places, street theatre can be seen usually in support of a social objective and street entertainers take full advantage of the cool weather to exhibit their skills. Most Indian festivals are also celebrated with pomp and gaiety and the visitor could be lucky to witness fireworks at Diwali, the burning of the effigy of the
8.4. SPECIAL EVENTS

Whatever the season, weather or time of the year, Delhi is alive. It is bustling with activity and its social calendar is full of exciting events and activities. This interests in the tourists a very much. Be it a religious festival, an art exhibition, a cultural evening or a trade fair. Delhi always has something to offer to its residents and visitors.

Delhi’s year begins with the festival of Lohri in January. Lohri marks the height of winter and is celebrated by burning bonfires and singing and dancing to the rhythm of drums. Also in January is the capital’s most spectacular pageant, the Republic Day Parade, celebrated on January 26 to mark the formation of the Indian republic, the impressive Republic Day Parade which originates from the President’s House and passes along Rajpath to India Gate and then to the historic Red Fort, mirrors the cultural, industrial, defence and agricultural progress made by the country. Smartly attired soldiers accompanied by brass bands and tanks march impressively along the decorated Rajpath. A number of dance and music recitals and poetry reading sessions mark the Republic Day.
The Beating Retreat is held at Vijay Chowk two days after the Republic Day Parade. At this regal function, bands from the army, navy and air force display their skills and render the very best of martial music, marking the end of Republic Day functions.

Id-ul-Zuha is celebrated in February to commemorate the sacrifice of Prophet Ibrahim. Mass prayers are held in Delhi’s largest mosque, the Jama Masjid, and visitors can get an opportunity to watch lakhs of devout in orderly lines praying to the call of the Holy Imam.

The festival of Holi is celebrated in March to signify the triumph of good over evil. The entire city wears a festive look as men and women throw colour on each other and sing an dance. Also in March is the festival of Muharram to celebrate the martyrdom of Imam Hussain.

August 15 marks the day of India’s independence from the British rule. The prime minister takes the salute from an impressive inter services parade and then addresses the gathering from the ramparts of the Red Fort. A number of cultural programmes are also organised on this day. The festival of Janamashtami, also celebrated in August, marks the birth day of Lord Krishna. Temples are decorated and special prayers are held at midnight. The festival is also celebrated by
performances of the Raas Leela or the Krishna Leela, dance dramas that depict the life of Lord Krishna. The most impressive celebration on this day takes place at Mathura; the birth place of Lord Krishna.

*Phoolwalon ki Sair* is a typical festival of Delhi. A festival of flower sellers, the day is marked by flower sellers of all religions carrying colourful fans made from flowers to the tomb of the Muslim saint Hazrat Bakhtiyar Kaki and a Hindu temple at Mehrauli. The fans are offered to the gods for a better flower season in the coming year. A cultural programme is also held at this occasion near the main pond in Mehrauli.

*Dussehra* is celebrated in October to mark the death of Ravana, the villain of the Indian epic Ramayana. Dussehra is celebrated in Delhi on a grand scale at the Ram Lila Grounds near Asaf Ali Road. A huge effigy of Ravana and his fellow conspirators is set aflame amongst the bursting of crackers and firework displays. Dance drama portrayals of the Ramayana are also held in various parts of the city.

*Diwali*, the festival of lights is celebrated in October-November to honour Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and good fortune. Most homes are illuminated with candles, lights or small oil lamps and the
entire city echoes with the sound and light of fire crackers. Prayers are held in the evening and special festive food is cooked for the occasion.

*The Urs of Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia*, a Muslim saint of the 14th century, is celebrated in November or December at this tomb at Nizamuddin.

Like elsewhere in the world, *Christmas* is celebrated in Delhi too with gaiety and festivity. Special services are held at the city’s many churches and homes are decorated with lights and Christmas trees.

Pragati Maidan, *Delhi’s trade fair complex*, is one of the largest in Asia. A number of fairs are organised here, specially during the months from October to April. Exhibitions of garments, handicrafts, books, industrial goods and general trade fairs are organised regularly at this place by the Trade Fair Authority of India. The India International Trade Fair takes place in November every year which depict the industrial development of the country and the progress made in the areas of science & technology and agriculture. Located in this complex is a small children’s amusement park called Appu Ghar.

Delhi is one of the finest places in India for growing flowers. The *Delhi Flower Show* is held in February every year on the lawns of the Purana Quila. Winter annuals are displayed at this show which usually
receives a large number of entries. A Rose Show is also organised in January to display the many varieties of roses, many of which are indigenous species that grow in Delhi. The choicest of Delhi’s chrysanthemums are displayed at the Chrysanthemum Show organised by the YWCA in December every year.

Winter is the highlight of Delhi’s social calendar. The cool weather attracts a large number of special activities. The Delhi Horse Show is held in November or December outside the walls of the Red Fort. The Vintage Car Rally, which displays a large number of rare and antique automobiles is also held in the same period. Another popular winter attraction is the annual Surajkund Crafts Mela organised at Surajkund in February. The handicrafts fair attracts a large number of village artisans who come to this venue to display their skills and sell their craft. A variety of rural entertainers add colour to the impressive fair.

8.5. PARKS AND GARDENS

Delhi is probably one of the greenest capitals of the world. Its broad avenues are lined with a variety of fruit and flowering trees and every residential and commercial area has a garden or park to call its own. Delhi’s planners have not forgotten the Mughal love for green open places, a legacy still visible in the city’s Mughal tombs and
gardens, and the masterplan for Delhi specifies large areas of green to protect its environment from the pressure of urbanisation. Both Shahjahanabad, Delhi’s old city, and New Delhi, therefore, still have a number of well landscaped parks which support a variety of trees and shrubs, many of them imported from distant lands, which are home for a variety of colourful resident and migratory birds.

Lodi Gardens are Delhi’s most popular recreational area. The park dates back to 1930 when it was inaugurated as the Lady Willingdon Park. Set around impressive stones of the Lodi dynasty, the park has a number of paved pathways which run through groves of trees and provide access to the monuments. Besides the tomb of Sikander Lodi himself, the park also houses a memorial to Mohammad Shah Sayyid built in 1433 AD. A remarkable feature of this park is that it has a selection of plants and trees that ensure that the area remains in bloom even in the hot and dry months. The park also has a small pond which to the delight of ornithologists, is the watering hole for a large number of birds.

Laid out as far back as 1748, is the Qudaisa Garden near Kashmiri Gate that is dedicated to Quadaisa Begum, the wife of the Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah. This garden with a variety of fragrant flowers symbolises the achievements of its builder who was
born as slave and rose to be a queen. The garden is also associated with the historical mutiny of 1857 when a British battery opened fire on a group of Indian soldiers at this spot.

Now called Azad Singh, this garden near the Old Delhi railway station was created by Jahanara, the daughter of Shah Jahan, the builder of Mughal Delhi. Called Jahanara Garden at the time of the Mughals, this garden was also a popular caravan sarai, a resting spot for the trade caravans passing through Delhi. The British renamed it Queens Garden, and the park is a popular recreation area today with an impressive variety of rose plants and grapevines.

Another popular garden created in the Mughal period is Roshnara Bagh. Laid out by Roshnara Begum, a daughter of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in 1650, the garden also houses the tomb of the Mughal princes after whom it is named. This garden is a popular retreat for the residents of the old Delhi city who escape to its green confines to get away from the growing commercialisation in the area. This garden is characterised by palm shaded pathways surrounded by a variety of roses and the fragrant Buddleia shrub. A Japanese garden and a network of water channels make this spot an ideal summer retreat.
Literally translated, Talkatora means 'something like a cup'. It is the bowl shaped topography of the land which gives the Talkatora Garden its name. Located at Willindon Crescent, the Talkatora Garden blends the old with the new. Located alongside with pavilions from the time of Muhammad Shah are modern stadia which are used to host it large number of national and international sporting events. The garden is also a popular venue for local fairs and festivals and its well landscaped environs attract a large number of persons. The garden also has an open air theatre which stages a number of dance and music performances.

The Buddha Jayanti Park covers a vast undulating area of the New Delhi ridge. Dedicated to Lord Buddha who found serenity in nature and chose some of the most picturesque spots to meditate, this park too is a green oasis surrounded by the modern city of Delhi. A large portion of Buddha Jayanti Park is still a natural forest which abounds in bird life, while the other has been tastefully landscaped to include waterfalls, rocks and large expanses of manicured lawns interspersed with flower beds.

The main attraction of the Nehru Park at Chanakyapuri is its landscaping. Developed over the last two decades over an area which was primarily barren, the park has few tress. This, however, is
compensated by its well manicured lawns and well kept seasonal flower beds which, in fact, represent the many varieties of local as well as imported flower species that grow and bloom in Delhi.

The most exquisite and the best cared for garden in Delhi is undoubtedly the Mughal Garden at the Rashtrapati Bhawan. Part of the president’s residential complex, the garden was created by Sir Edwin Lutyens to commemorate the shifting of the capital of imperial India to Delhi. Impressively laid out with formal lines, terrace and fountains, the Mughal Garden is open to the public in February and March. The Mughal Garden is famous for its varieties of rose species, many of which have been specially cloned in its nurseries. The garden complex is dotted with two large ponds which house a variety of fresh water fish and aquatic plants.

The entire Yamuna river-front has been developed into a series of gardens, many of which house memorials to India’s leaders. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi have beautifully landscaped parks in their honour which border the river Yamuna on one side and the busy Ring Road on the other.

Delhi is a city of parks and gardens, and tourists come across numerous historical monuments which have been preserved in their
natural surroundings with lush groves of trees and well kept flower beds.

8.6. SPORTS

The Mughals ruled India for almost 300 years, and for most of this time Delhi remained their capital. They brought with them a tradition of good living, a love for all that was artistic and pleasurable. And it was under the rule of Emperor Shah Jahan, the builder of Delhi’s seventh city, that the capital reached the nadir of opulence. Arts and crafts were revived, dancers and musicians rehabilitated, and Delhi witnessed the finest of oriental living. Along with the Mughal emperors came hordes of nobility who took up residence in the walled city and carved new vistas of recreation. It was at this time that traditional sports found patronage and established for themselves a prominent place in the lives of Delhites. Kite flying, partridge and cock fighting, pigeon rearing and wrestling were just a few of the pastimes that both the nobility and the commoners indulged in. After the Mughals came the English who were as much at a loose and as their predecessors. They too brought with them sports which were till then alien to the country. Cricket and golf, riding and polo are just a few of the sports that they promoted. In modern times, Delhi got the pride of place in the international sports arena when it was chosen to host the
prestigious Asian Games in 1952 and again in 1982. Today, the city has a mix of both the old and the new. Kite flying and pigeon rearing are as much in vogue as the modern stadia that host international as well as local sporting events.

Traditional sports, though still widely practised, are basically unorganised events and are promoted through word of mouth in the areas which once constituted the Mughal walled city. A visitor might be lucky, with the help of local guide, to chance upon a partridge fight or a kite flying competition in the Jama Masjid or Chandni Chowk area. But, with time and patience it is still possible to witness the leisure activities that once enthralled the Mughals.

Golf, polo and cricket are still very much a part of Delhi’s official sporting calendar. Spread over an area of 220 acres and dotted with historic tombs and monuments of the Lodi period, the 18 hole, par 72 Delhi Golf Club is acknowledged as the finest course in the country. Designed by Peter Thompson, the famous golf architect, the lush course supports over 200 varieties of tress and shrubs and is a natural sanctuary for a variety of birds and animals.

Originally located in an area more than twice its present size, the course at the Delhi Golf Club was consolidated to its present 220 acres
in 1950. Like the rest of Delhi, its golf course is also laid out on a part of India’s history. Carved out of a portion which was the estate of the Lodhi rulers, it has in its precincts a collection of interesting tombs and monuments.

Planted with a variety of over 200 trees, the Delhi course is the most lush in the country, and its sandy loam has produced a rich turf good for the exacting fairway shots.

More than 500 golfers walk into history every day as they play the country’s busiest course. The club also has a nine hole B course, used primarily by beginners.

Polo is said to have originated in India thousands of years ago and is linked with the mythology of the state of Manipur. Delhi’s polo season begins in November and lasts till March. During this period, visitors can watch some of the finest Indian as well as international players at tournaments like the Radha Mohan Cup and Maharaja Prithi Singh Cup. The Delhi Polo Club, which is located in the President’s Estate, also offers temporary membership on a daily or fortnightly basis to those who are keen to learn or practise the game.

The advent of winter brings with it a cricket fever and every available playground is converted into a cricket pitch. This is also the
time that a large number of international teams come to Delhi to play test matches as well as one day internationals. Winter is also the season for important national matches like the Ranjit Trophy and the Duleep Trophy. The Ferozeshah Cricket Stadium is the most popular cricketing venue in the capital.

For horse riding enthusiasts, the Delhi Riding Club offers an hourly and monthly membership. Well trained horses for professional riders and more docile ones for amateurs and children can either be ridden in the riding circle or in the pony tracks that run through the forest of the ridge.

Being centrally located in the plains, Delhi forms one of the best gliding bases in the world. The air disturbances are so favourable that the gliding enthusiast can glide as far as 1,500 km. The best season is from September to November and March to June. At these times of the year, the air currents are perfect for aerobatics and long distance flying. The Delhi Gliding Club at the Safdarjung Airport has a fleet of 10 gliders and provides a two seater with a pilot for those who wish to have an aerial view of Delhi.

Sailing is possible in Delhi at the Defence Services Sailing Club. Located on the banks of the Yamuna river at Okhla, the club hires out
good boats for racing as well as dinghy sailing. The sailing season is from October to June and races are held on Saturday and Sunday afternoon. The sailing club also organises an annual event in April.

Quite a few of the deluxe and five star hotels have facilities for tennis. The Delhi Lawn Tennis Association is, however, the apex body for the game in Delhi and has both clay as well as grass courts at their complex on Africa Avenue. The Delhi Gymkhana Club also has well kept courts and accepts temporary members.

Swimming is a seasonal activity in Delhi, primarily because there are only a few heated swimming pools available. Most deluxe and five star hotels have pools in their compounds which are normally open throughout the year. Clubs like the Gymkhana, Delhi Golf Club and Chelmsford Club only open in the summer months.

For organised sports activities like athletics, gymnastics, hockey, football, basketball, Delhi has a large number of modern stadia that host national as well as international sporting events. The Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium on Lodi Road is the largest and has a capacity to seat 75,000 people. The Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium and the Ferozeshah Kotla Stadium can host 25,000 spectators. Smaller stadia in the capital include the Ambedkar Stadium (18,000), Karnail Singh Stadium
(12,000), Shivaji Stadium (6,000) and the Talkatora Indoor Stadium (2,500). Delhi’s oldest stadium which conforms to the architectural styles of the Parliament House and the Presidential Palace is the National Stadium with a capacity of 25,000.

8.7 DELHI A CONFERENCE AND CONVENTION DESTINATION

Delhi the capital city of India is the best conference and convention venue. The India captures world attention as a tourist paradise of exotic dimensions, but there also exists a dynamic business city and a splendid venue for international conferences and conventions of no less than global standards.

Delhi has the country’s best facilities for holding conventions, seminars, conferences and exhibitions. Over the years the city has hosted some of the most prestigious conferences of the world. The city’s venues are ultra modern and numerous choices are available along with all support facilities of international standards.

8.8 EXCURSIONS

It would take more than a lifetime to explore all the facets of Delhi. Steeped in history, culture and tradition, the capital of India has an unbelievable array of activities to offer and sights to see. And yet, its location makes it the ideal base to explore other parts of the country
which are easily accessible from here because of convenient air, rail and road connections. A visitor could take a day’s trip to many of the resort destinations located close by or spend a night out at places of historical and cultural importance like Agra, Khajuraho or Jaipur.

Hardly any tourist coming to India goes back without seeing its most magnificent monument – the Taj Mahal. Agra, the city of the Taj has many other unique and interesting monuments like the Agra Fort, Sikandra and the deserted city of Fatehpur Sikri is within a day’s excursion distance from Delhi. Fatehpur Sikri is 38 Km West of Agra. Akbar conceived Fatehpur Sikri in the year 1571 as a thanks offering to the Sufi Saint Sheikh Salim Chisti. Massive in parts and tenderly evocative in places, the layout reflects Akbar’s attempt to reconcile his Islamic heritage of central Asia with the cultural reductions of Hindustan’s urge to open mindedness.

Just an hour’s flight away from Agra is the city of Khajuraho. Once a flourishing ancient capital, it is world famous for its superb temple architecture and sensuous sculptures. Of the original 85 temples which were built between 950-1050 AD, only 22 remain, but these are worth visiting to witness the fine legacy of traditional Indian temple architecture.
Capital of the desert state of Rajasthan, Jaipur, 258 km from Delhi by road, is the home of warrior Rajputs and of men and women who dress in colourful turbans and skirts to provide colour to the drab landscape. Also known as the ‘pink city’ because of the stone with which its buildings have been constructed, Jaipur has some fine monuments.

Maharaja Jai Singh’s observatory Jantar Mantar dates back to 1728 and Hawa Mahal, the five-storey palace with a façade of extensive lattice work in stone, to 1799. Inside the elaborate city palace is located the fabulous Maharaja Sawai Man Singh Museum. The grandeur of the palaces and the wealth of the museums can overwhelm the tourist. The Shekawati region in the semi-arid triangle between Delhi, Jaipur and Bikaner has spectacular art treasures adorning the walls of its havelis.

The havelis belong to Marwaris, India’s most successful merchant community. Every available inch of space, inside and over, is covered with vibrant paintings, astonishing not just for the quantity but for the quality.

For those interested in natural history and wildlife, there are a number of national parks and sanctuaries near Delhi which offer a representation of India’s rich natural heritage. Just 46 km from Delhi,
and close to the town of Gurgaon, is the Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary. Sultanpur, which is a water reserve, has a large lake which has a number of resident birds and attracts as many as 100 species of migrant birds from Europe, Siberia and Central Asia. Much grander in scale than Sultanpur is the world famous Keoladeo Ghana National Park at Bharatpur. Bharatpur receives an annual migration of over 5,00,000 birds. Migrants include rare species like the Siberian Crane and a large number of ducks. In a single day, one can usually manage to see as many as 200 species of land and water birds. For big game watchers, the Corbett National Park is one of the finest tiger reserves in the country. Covering an area which comprises both grasslands and thick forests, the park is the home of a variety of animals which include the tiger, elephant, sloth bear, sambar, chital and the leopard. Also close to Delhi is the Sariska Tiger Reserve. Forming part of the Aravalli range of mountains that run through the state of Rajasthan, Sariska supports a dry deciduous forest. Wild life viewing is fairly easy at Sariska because most of the animals come to the man made water holes which are the primary source of water in the reserve. Sariska’s wild life includes tigers, leopards, sambhar, chital, nilgai and wild boar.
Ranthambhor National Park is the superbly scenic sanctuary near the Chambal gorge, ideal cover for the tiger. It is 160 km southeast of Jaipur via Sawai Madhopur.

There are a number of resorts close to Delhi which are ideal for a day’s relaxation. Surajkund, 17 km from Delhi, is the site of a famous sun temple which was once used by the sun worshippers. A modern tourist complex has been developed close to the Surajkund Lake which offers airconditioned accommodation, restaurants and even an 18 hole golf course. Boating and fishing is permitted at the lake located a-top a hillock, the Sohna Tourist Complex, 50 km from Delhi, is famous for its sulphur springs which are believed to have curative powers.

One of the seven sacred cities of Hinduism, the ancient town of Mathura, on the banks of the Yamuna, lies 146 km southeast of Delhi enroute to Agra. It is the birthplace of Lord Krishna and the miracles associated with his life continue to give the surrounding villages a magical air of rural devotion, especially during the festivals of Holi, Janmashthami and Dussehra.

To the west before reaching Mathura is Barsana, a village on a rocky hillock, where Krishna’s consort Radha was born. Snaking through country lanes towards Yamuna is Brindavan, where the
medieval saint from Bengal, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, established his Vaishnavite cult of devotion for Radha Krishna, which is practiced to this day, with the addition of foreign devotees.

The ghats on the banks of Yamuna, perpetually thronged with pilgrims from all over India, have witnessed the building and razing of Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim structures over the countries. Mathura Museum run by Archaeological Survey of India has a superb collection of ancient masterpieces which makes Mathura’s name famous in the world of art as well as religion.

The landscape at Gwalior (320 km from Delhi, 120 km from Agra) is irresistibly royal where the fortifications are a gift of nature. The palaces of the Scindias are magnificent and contain exotic trifles missed with priceless antiques.

Jhansi, 415 km southeast of Delhi, 215 km southeast of Agra, makes an excellent base for nearby Orchha and Datia, and connects with India’s finest temple encounter, Khajuraho, another 200 km east into the interior.

Datia a tiny former state, 74 km south of Gwalior and 27 km north of Jhansi, has the seven-storied palace of Raja Bir Singh Deo (called Gobind Mandir) which is brilliant in its strength and harmony.
One of the last unspoilt jewels of Bundelkhand culture, Orchha, lies 20 km south of Jhansi. This atmospheric, abandoned city with dreaming forts reflected in the blue Betwa river, is Raja Bir Singh Deo’s creation.

Chandigarh hosts the governments of both Punjab and Haryana. It lies 250 km northeast of Delhi and is extremely well connected by trains and buses. The model layout sobering was the original type of its designer, Le Corbusier. The Rose Garden, the Museum and Art Gallery are worth a visit. The latter has a fine collection of Indian miniature paintings. Sukhna Laka relieves the monotony of Le Corbusier’s grid while Nek Chand’s rock garden is a work of sheer landscaping genius. For the rock garden alone, Chandigarh is worth a visit.

One of the most popular temples in north India, Vaishno Devi, situated at a height of 1700 metres, is 61 km north of Jammu. The cave shrine of the three Hindu goddesses, Mahakali, Mahalaxmi and Mahasaraswati, possesses a rural mystique enlivened by media exposure. Jammu is 585 km from Delhi, Katra 645 km, and the shrine another 13 km climb from Katra.

Once the ‘Queen of the Hills’, the 36 km climb from the Doon Valley now introduces the visitor to Mussoorie’s modern claim to fame,
the largest number of hotels in any hill resort in India, 350 at the last count. But it is still cool and salubrious. Landour Cantonment, for example, remains untouched by the building book. Mussoorie is an excellent base for treks into the interior of Garhwal, Nag Tibba at 3,000 metres, through dense unspoilt jungle can be done in a weekend.

The Mussoorie season only lasts six weeks in May and June and for the rest of the year there is the prospect of more reasonable room rates and the likelihood of more reliable drinking water. Mussoorie’s so-called suburban expansion west to Kempfy Falls, and east along the great snow view ridge to Dhanolti and Sarkhand Devi, attracts visitos.

The Ganga, free of the Himalayan valley, broadens out at Rishikesh. A footbridge enables the visitor to cross to the opposite bank. One can walk up to Lakshman Jhula and return over the much narrower gorge section. This would give an idea why the Ganga is believed to be the releaser from sin. Though Haridwar is known as the ‘gate’ of the abode of Shiva to the plains, it is the swelling of the uncaged river at Rishikesh that arouses the feeling of deliverance.

The oldest of north India’s game sanctuaries, Corbett is situated on the generous flow of the Ramganga, a river that divides Garhwal from Kumaun. The main entrance of the park lies north of Ramnagar
Having discussed the major tourists spots in and around Delhi, we will now discuss the problems and prospects relating to promotion of tourism in Delhi.

8.9 TOURISM IN DELHI: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

As discussed in foregoing paras, Delhi, the capital of India, has its origin from 1450 B.C. and has been in continuous existence for over a thousand years now. It is a site of many historic capital cities, traces of eight of which survive even today. The city is significant for the role it has played throughout history, having been the centre of an empire for the majority of this millennium. It is an important city in the Indian subcontinent and comparisons have often been made to other great cities of the world. However, very few cities carry with them, to such an extent, the weight of several layers of continuous history.

In spite of this rich and diverse cultural heritage, Delhi is used only as a gateway for travelling to Jaipur, Agra and other cities of tourist interest. Though, Delhi has the highest number of tourist arrivals, as can be seen from the following table, it is only used as an
 Delhi as a Tourist Destination, with attractions to provide the visitors 2-3 night stays.

**Number of Foreign Tourist Arrivals in Northern India (Statewise)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Foreign tourist arrivals in Northern India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>1660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>62527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>22372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>101982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>12684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>605000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>712000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandigarh</td>
<td>9691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>1158355</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even if we analyse the traffic to Delhi portwise, the visitors to Delhi are the maximum. The table giving portwise tourist arrival for main ports in India is given below.

**Portwise Tourist Arrivals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry Points</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>8,06,001</td>
<td>7,99,099</td>
<td>8,42,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mumbai</td>
<td>6,77,400</td>
<td>6,96,299</td>
<td>7,48,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chennai</td>
<td>2,51,566</td>
<td>2,76,380</td>
<td>2,97,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcutta</td>
<td>1,27,537</td>
<td>1,28,336</td>
<td>1,32,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonauli</td>
<td>22,482</td>
<td>23,206</td>
<td>23,664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4,73,643</td>
<td>5,58,608</td>
<td>5,96,243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23,58,629</td>
<td>24,81,928</td>
<td>26,41,157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, Delhi is the most commonly used point of entry to the country.
Tourists, both foreign and domestic, before arriving here have a very traditional picture of Delhi in their minds. Delhi, the city of Pandavs, dating back to pre-BC era, Delhi of Moghuls and the Delhi of Lutyen.

However, some of the very monuments, which were the pride of Delhi, are in a very pathetic condition. Greening and beautification of the areas around the monuments, removal of encroachments, cleanliness and hygiene, lack of tourist infrastructure as per world standards, high rate of taxation are some of the prime concerns of the tourism industry. It is high time that the Delhi Government along with the Department of Tourism, Archaeological Survey of India and the private sector take serious measures in tackling these problems and develop Delhi as a Destination. Issues that merit active consideration of the Government are as follows:

8.9.1 Taxation

The Central and the State Governments have been constantly taxing the tourism sector; be it luxury tax, expenditure tax, sales tax, airport tax or the enhanced visa fee. Central Government even introduced service tax for the tourism industry. It is necessary that state taxation on tourism should be prescribed only after carefully studying the extent and implications of the central taxation. The need is to
promote tourism and generate greater revenue for the state in the long run.

Delhi has been outpriced in international tourist market with high tariff of Indian hotels and even with higher taxes levied by the Government on tourism industry. The result is that tourist are overflying India as the rates offered by other countries in South East Asia (in the form of hotel price and tours) are much cheaper than in India.

Delhi receives over 60% of international visitors, the highest in the country. However, stay in Delhi is too expensive and tourists content themselves by using it as a gateway for visiting other cities.

The Tax Rationalisation Committee set up by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India 1998 has also recommended that the overall tax rates in all the States be reduced and brought within 10 percent inclusive of all taxes. In India the total tax on hotels is as high as 40%. Rationalisation and harmonisation of the tax structure is therefore important. The overall revenue collection of the State will go up if taxes are reduced.
8.9.2 Marketing

The competitive tourism trade warrants a constant and consistent marketing of new and exclusive destinations, which include upgrading the existing ones. Aggressive marketing through electronic and print media and internet be given importance through professional agencies for best results. The following is suggested:-

(a) Tourism Promotion Board should be established in Delhi headed by the Chief Minister with representatives of other trade and industry organizations dealing with tourism. Delhi Government's Tourism Department should have separate divisions for international and domestic marketing and sufficient funds should be allocated for their budget.

(b) As a conscious policy the Delhi Government should consolidate resources with the Government of India and neighboring states while developing the strategy for promoting Delhi as a tourist destination.

(c) Awareness should be created about the lesser-known sites in Delhi so that visitors are encouraged to extend their stay.

(d) A Data Base/Archive both celluloid and printed should be created on the available promotional material prepared by various
agencies on Delhi tourism which could be made available to
tourists and tour operators.

(e) Rather than wasting efforts to start afresh for producing literature
and films, videos etc., it would be practical to collate the existing
literature and to use it for promotion.

8.9.3 Developing Delhi As A Tourist Destination

Travelers to Delhi get two cities for the price of one. ‘Old’
Delhi, the capital for Muslim India between the mid-17th and late 19th
centuries, is replete with formidable mosques, monuments and forts. It
is a lively area with colourful bazaars and narrow streets. In contrast,
New Delhi, the imperial city created by the British Raj, is composed of
spacious, tree-lined avenues and imposing government buildings.

For developing Delhi as a destination, the following is suggested:

(i) A marketing campaign and a USP for Delhi should be developed
as Kerala has developed by promoting Ayurveda and eco-tourism
and by portraying it as ‘God’s Own Country’.

(ii) Historical monuments which offer tourist attraction should be
identified and publicised them through printed literature and
electronic media by portraying their historical importance.
(iii) Delhi Government currently has a budget of Rs.5.2 crores for tourism. Out of this Rs.3 crore is being spent on setting up an institute of hotel management. Funds available with the tourism department are insufficient to make concerted efforts to project Delhi as a Tourist destination. States like Kerala and Rajasthan have sufficiently large budgets for tourism development and promotion. Kerala has currently a budget of Rs.55 crores and Rajasthan Government has allocated Rs. 10 crores plus Rs.55 crores from NABARD. The budget for Tourism Department of Delhi should be enhanced.

(iv) Delhi Transport and Tourism Development Corporation (DTTDC) is currently unable to concentrate on its core activity - i.e. "Developing tourism in Delhi", thus relegating tourism to the background. The Corporation should focus on developing new tourist centres, join hands with Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) for exploiting the tourist potential of existing monuments and organise more topical festivals. It is reported that currently 80% of its resources are spent on liquor sale, thus diverting it from its core activity. There is a need to create greater awareness regarding the existing projects of DTTDC such as Azad Hind Gram, Garden of Five Senses and other upcoming projects like
Mini India Heritage Complex among the tour operators and tourists.

(v) There is need to have single window clearance for tourism projects, under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Tourism), Delhi. The other representatives may be from ASI, tourism related associations, MCD, DDA, Railway Board (Northern Zone), Finance, Industry, Pollution environment, and Transport departments.

8.9.4 Projecting Delhi through its History

Delhi boasts of a history of more than 1000 years through its monuments. However, concerted efforts need to be made to render this as a tourist product. Some possible examples for maximising the tourist potential of Delhi include:

a) Standard Delhi itineraries consists of a half-day Old Delhi tour and a half-day New Delhi tour. To make visitors extend their stay, Delhi’s cultural heritage should be segmented into separately identifiable products such as, art tours, museum tours, lesser known monument tours, cuisine tours, temple tours, shopping tours, in-depth tours of particular monuments and so on. Once Delhi’s products are identified, they should be promoted accordingly with vigour.
b) Develop Delhi as a tale of 7 cities: the history of how Delhi was built seven times should be highlighted through brochures, CDs and its chronological order should be utilised for tourist itineraries.

c) The Tughlakabadd city should be protected and developed as a tourist site. Currently Tughalakabadd Fort is totally neglected and there is no awareness regarding its tourist potential.

d) Chandni Chowk as envisaged by the daughter of Mughal Emperor Shahjahan is not what it has become today. Beautiful, intricately carved facades of the buildings on the main centre road are withering away. There is utter confusion, congestion, traffic jams and pollution in this old bazaar and its famous historical Galis like Paronthawali, Dariba, billimaran, Kinari Bazaar and the others where business worth crores it transacted everyday. With Indian traditional food achieving popularity all over the world, such areas should be developed for tourism purposes where the tourists could be brought to taste the century old recipes. Efforts should be made to clean up the area, provide amenities and beautify the place.
e) Haveli of Mirza Ghalib – the place, where Ghalib lived is in a bad shape today. Under the High Court order, the respondents in the public interest litigation have been asked to ensure that the present set up is preserved in its original form. The Haveli needs to be given due attention by ASI and restored to its original ambience.

f) The glory of Purana Quila should be highlighted. The sound and light show being held at Purana Quila should be advertised in a better manner for attracting more tourists. Also, Purana Quila should be promoted as one of the prime tourist sites of Delhi.

g) The Red Fort, Shah Jahan’s elegant citadel in red sandstone, is one of the prime tourist attractions of Delhi. The conducted tour of Red Fort currently being undertaken, does not project completely the various highlights of the life of the Emperors.

Visitors are not permitted to see the Hammam, or the royal baths at the north of the Diwani-i-khas, where even the floor is covered with embroidery in stone. There are water channels and fountains inside, which can be activated and sustained as an ongoing activity.
ASI and DITDC may jointly invest to restore the different areas of the Red Fort and thereafter join hands to make this commercially exploitable, by charging a separate tariff for permission to enter this area.

8.9.5 Partnership between ASI and Delhi Government

Heritage gives us identify. Destruction of these would mean psychological alienation from our past. We have to preserve it for posterity, which is essential for a healthy and progressive nation. We should evolve policies and programmes for promoting partnerships between Archaeological Survey of India and Government of Delhi in the upkeep, management and marketing of monuments and museums.

8.9.6 Cleaner Area around Monuments

Most tourists to India, even those who otherwise feel ecstatic about the great country, would politely talk about the necessity of a cleaner ambience around the grand heritage products that we have. While most of our tourism products, unique in their own way, attract tourists in spite of the surroundings, it is possible that in course of time, such surroundings may be a deterrent factor. Appropriate maintenance and good upkeep of the vicinity of the monuments, can go a long way in conveying the sensitivity of the nation to its heritage and in
encouraging the tourists to enjoy them. Public-private partnership being the essence of future planning of tourism, private sector’s professionalism can perhaps be utilised for this purpose.

Monuments should be identified as per the Master Plan and thereafter efforts should be initiated to improve the environment within a definite time period. Also identification of the Agency should be done along with allotment of funds before handing over for the monument maintenance purposes. Local communities and the private sector, who benefit from tourist flows, can be made to take pride in maintaining them. Signages need to be placed depicting the importance of the site. Landscaping should be done in the area to enhance beauty of the site. Adequate parking spaces should be created. Existing structures should be repaired. Mineral water and snacks should be made available near the sites. Sulabh experiment may be implemented for providing public conveniences.

8.9.7 Entrance Fee to Monuments

The recent hike in entrance fee to monuments has affected tourist trade severely. Foreign tourists, who made advance bookings, are critical of this sudden increase without prior notice. The ASI should have given adequate prior notice.
It is suggested that ASI may consider evolving a combined entrance ticket to all the monuments in Delhi valid for a fixed duration and which should be available at a discounted rate.

It is further suggested that the tickets to the monuments be presented in the form of souvenirs by printing the photograph of the monument on one side of the ticket.

National Museum and National Rail Museum should be promoted more significantly as tourist sites. This will ensure that the conducted tours are more attractive to tourists.

Dilli Haat, a project set up by DTTDC, offers a good place for recreation, where the visitors get a rich combination of Indian culture. Often disposable earthen cups, leaf plates and coconut shells are found to be scattered all around the stalls. Attention should be paid to ensure that the environment around the food stalls are clean and hygienic. Apart from Delhi Haat there should be more places of recreation in the capital where the visitors can enjoy the rich variety of Indian art, craft, culture and cuisine. At the site of State Government Emporia on Baba Kharak Sing Marg, New Delhi, there are open spaces between the Emporia. These can be converted into entertainment places with ethnic
craft and food stalls. At these venues Melas like the Surajkund Mela should be organised every year.

8.9.8 Need for a City Centre

Connaught Place has been declared as a protected area and all other structures are supposed to be preserved in their original shape to maintain the colonial character of Lutyen’s Delhi.

However, there are not enough public facilities in the area. Managing of the public conveniences can always be handed over to private parties to maintain the same who in turn can charge money from the people using these as is the practice in many foreign countries. There should be proper signages indicating public facilities. The area should also be cleaned up of beggars and hawkers. Anyone found littering should be fined.

Buildings like Mohan Singh Place, Palika Bazaar, Chandralok Building, Super Bazaar etc. look shabby and no repairs or maintenance has been undertaken in these buildings ever since they were constructed. Revenue collected from the parking fee of Connaught Place, Palika parking and surrounding areas and the rent generated from Palika Bazaar, Mohan Singh Place, State Emporia buildings, Super Bazaar, Chandralok building etc. could be spent on the maintenance,
cleaning, and the painting of the city centre of our capital. There is need to maintain heritage on a regular basis by painting the structure regularly and also cleaning up the area.

8.9.9 Developing River Yamuna for Tourism

Many cities have grown adjacent to the river banks all over the world. Major cities such as London, Paris, Amsterdam, Venice, Budapest, Zurich etc. exist on riversides like Thames, Nile or the Rhine. We have Delhi on the banks of River Yamuna.

River banks of all these cities are a tourist’s delight, rather tourism flourishes around these places. They have organised cruising through these rivers and being on the banks is an enjoyable activity. The banks of river Yamuna in Delhi have history, religion, tradition and culture. It is a place of pilgrimage importance. A lot of potential exists to develop tourism at the banks of Yamuna, which needs to be exploited fully. DTDC may join the authorities to beautify or clean the surroundings around the ghats and banks of Yamuna. Parts of the bank of river Yamuna can be developed into beautiful tourist spots with clean, green areas around it. With sufficient potential to develop religious tourism, enough attention needs to be given to clean up the ghats and banks of the river. For example, the Kudsia Ghat which is used for taking a dip on special occasions, needs to be kept clean and
Beggars make it difficult to reach the ghat thus harassing pilgrims. This should be checked.

8.9.10 Delhi: The Garden City

Our planners provided Delhi, the gateway to India with beautiful parks and gardens, some of which were developed after independence such as, Buddha Jayanti Park on the Upper Ridge, Deer Park at Hauz Khas.

There are the famous Mughal Gardens at the Rashtrapati Bhawan (which opens from February to March every year) and the Nehru Park at Chanakyapuri and the Talkatora Gardens at Wellington Crescent. From history, we have the Roshanara Gardens and Lodi Gardens.

There is need to create awareness among the public to keep these parks neat and clean. The administration should ensure that they are well-maintained round the year. Depending on the budget, fountains should be set up and also wooden benches for the use of public and seasonal flowers and trees should also be planted in ample number.

8.9.11 Delhi Ridge

Bird watchers can enjoy a rich variety of birdlife in Delhi, especially in the Ridge and the green areas surrounding the historic
monuments. The forests of Ridge harbour more than 100 species of birds, from peacocks to predators.

It is a matter of concern that 70 per cent of the Ridge is still under encroachments. Even though some encroachments have been removed, the land is still to be retrieved, and where land has been retrieved no greening has been done. Several parts of the central ridge are being used as garbage dumps. There is also cattle grazing in the area.

The Government should ensure that greening activity is initiated even if the land has not been fully retrieved from the encroachers. The land retrieved from encroachers should be fenced. Patrolling of the ridge should be launched to ensure that no new illegal construction or garbage dumps come up.

8.9.12 Need to Promote Adventure Tourism

Tourists, apart from cultural and historical attractions, also are on the look out for adventure tourism. In order to give them a complete package of various activities, there is need to develop adventure tourism. Currently, private sector is unable to get rented area for promoting adventure tourism, such as para gliding, bungee jumping and balloon riding. Land, on rented basis should be made available for the same. Delhi being the gateway to India needs to be nurtured &
maintained by all possible means. It is felt that if the suggestions given above are adopted by the Government, a new chapter would unfold in the tourism promotion of Delhi. The Delhi can show its might provided we care for it.