

BRIEF : NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL



A PEEP INTO HISTORY

•**India Gate**: The iconic India Gate in Delhi was constructed in 1931 to commemorate the Martyrs of India during World War I and the Third Anglo - Afghan War. Of over 83,000 Indians who laid down their lives, India Gate bears 13,516 names, etched all over the structure. It has been a must visit monument for tourists to New Delhi.

•**Amar Jawan Jyoti**: An inverted bayonet with a helmet structure was installed under the arch of India Gate in January 1972 to commemorate India's victory in the India – Pakistan War of 1971 and as the Nation's tribute to our brave soldiers who had laid down their lives. Wreaths have been laid at Amar Jawan Jyoti ever since by various dignitaries including foreign dignitaries on befitting occasions.

•**Post Independence Era Sacrifices by Armed Forces**: After our independence, Indian Armed Forces have been involved in many conflicts and participated in a number of operations. India continues to engage in counter-terrorism operations due to the Proxy War being waged from across the borders where a number of our soldiers have laid down their lives in the line of duty. To recognise these sacrifices, some memorials are built across the country. But no memorial at the national level had been dedicated to the sacrifices of men and women of the Armed forces. Thus arose the need for a memorial at the National level.

•**Genesis**: The requirement to construct a National War Memorial had been under deliberation since 1961. After due deliberations the Union Cabinet on 07 October 2015 approved its construction. An area East of the India Gate around the Canopy at 'C' Hexagon in New Delhi was considered to be suitable for construction.

•**Building Process**: Global competition to select a design for the Memorial was held in 2016-17. Shri Yogesh Chandrahasan of WeBe Design Lab Chennai won the competition and was appointed Project Consultant. Necessary sanctions from statutory authorities were taken. A Detailed Project Report was prepared and M/s NCC Ltd was awarded the contract. The Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) steered the project on behalf of the Ministry of Defence. The monument was dedicated to the Armed Forces on behalf of the nation by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 25 February 2019.

THE MONUMENT AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

• **War Memorial:** A war memorial is a building, monument, statue or an edifice to celebrate a war or victory or to commemorate those who died or were injured in war. It provides an opportunity to the visitors to develop a conscious connect with the site, with the institution and people in whose memory the structure is built. The memorial attempts to invoke a deep and moving experience and serves as symbol of inspiration for future generations.

• **Significance:** Since-Independence, more than 26,000 soldiers of the Indian Armed Forces have made the supreme sacrifice to defend the sovereignty and integrity of the country. The National War Memorial thus represents the gratitude of a nation to its Armed Forces. The Memorial will help strengthen the sense of belonging, high moral values, sacrifice and national pride in our citizens. It shall stand testimony to the sacrifices made by our soldiers during various conflicts, United Nations Operations, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response Operations since Independence. It showcases rich military traditions of our Armed Forces as a shining example of selfless service to the nation.

CONCEPT

The memorial complex is in harmony with the existing layout and symmetry of the majestic Rajpath and Central Vista. Solemnity of the ambience is maintained with an emphasis on landscaping and the simplicity of architecture. Apart from the main memorial, there is dedicated area for busts of soldiers who have been conferred with 'Param Vir Chakra', the nation's highest gallantry award. The design of the main memorial exemplifies that supreme sacrifice made by a soldier in the line of duty not only makes him immortal but also depicts that the spirit of a soldier remains eternal. The memorial has distinct scheme of concentric circles:

Rakshak Chakra:

Circle of Protection : The row of trees in the Rakshak Chakra is a reassurance to the citizens of the country about their safety against any threat, with each tree representing the soldiers who ensure the territorial integrity of the Nation, round the clock.

Tyag Chakra:

Circle of Sacrifice : The circular concentric walls of honour, which symbolize the ancient war formation 'Chakravyuh'. The walls are clad with granite tablets where an independent granite tablet is dedicated to each soldier who has made the supreme sacrifice where his name is etched in golden letters.

Veerta Chakra:

Circle of Bravery: A covered gallery that exhibits six murals crafted in bronze depicting valiant battles actions of our Armed Forces.

Amar Chakra:

Circle of Immortality: This has an Obelisk with Eternal Flame. The flame symbolizes the immortality of the spirit of fallen soldiers with the assurance that the Nation will never forget their sacrifices.

PARAM YODHA STHAL

The Param Yodha Sthal is dedicated to the nation's highest gallantry award 'Param Vir Chakra' (PVC) recipients and designed with well laid out pathways, landscaping, individual busts in bronze of all 21 recipients till date.

NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL: HIGHLIGHTS

- **Location** : East of India Gate, spread over 40 acres across three lawns of 'C Hexagon' in New Delhi.
- **Elements** :
 - Rakshak Chakra landscaped with trees.
 - Tyag Chakra with inscribed granite tablets.
 - Veerta Chakra with six bronze murals.
 - Amar Chakra with the Obelisk and Eternal Flame.
 - Solitary statue of an eternally vigilant soldier.
 - Param Yodha Sthal comprising 21 busts of Param Vir Chakra recipients.
- **Other parts** :
 - North Complex with Souvenir Outlet, Gallery and conveniences.
 - South Complex with National War Memorial office and conveniences.
 - Public Plazas as waiting bays with public utilities.
 - Urban Corridor with footpath and benches around National War Memorial.
- **Theme lighting to accentuate the concept of National War Memorial.**
- **Facilities and aids:**
 - 'Persons with Disabilities' friendly.
 - Parking for Persons with Disabilities on Tilak Marg Radial
 - Wheel chairs.
 - e Rickshaws.
 - Urban corridor.
 - Walkways.
 - Benches.
 - Drinking water.
 - Conveniences.
 - First Aid.
 - Help Desk.
 - 'Smarika' a Souvenir Outlet.
 - Mobile App to help trace specific inscribed granite tablet at Tyag Chakra.
 - Digital Interactive Information Panels.
- **Entry is free.**

- **Timings :**
 - Open daily.
 - Entry restricted on certain days / timings.
 - Nov – Mar 9 am - 7.30 pm (Last admission 7 pm)
 - Apr – Oct 9 am - 8.30 pm (Last admission 8 pm)
 - Drop off and Pick Up zones.
- **Daily footfall:** Approx 5000-10000 on weekdays, 10000-20000 on weekends.

ACTIVITIES AROUND THE YEAR

- **Ceremonial wreath laying to commemorate important days.**
- **Wreath laying by senior dignitaries from foreign countries.**
- **Routine Activities :**
 - **Retreat Ceremony daily in the evening.**
 - Traditionally symbolized end of the fighting and closure of work for the day.
 - Entails lowering of flags with the bugle call of 32 seconds.
 - Those present within the earshot of bugle call to please get up if sitting, come to attention and be silent.
 - **Wreath Laying by one Next of Kin of a martyr** just before Retreat ceremony ie 30 mins before Sunset, **daily.**
 - **Change of Ceremonial Guard** 45 minutes before Sunset (duration 20 minutes), **every Sunday.**
 - Organised visits by Scout & Guides, NCC cadets, National Integration Tours, students of Schools & Colleges etc.
- **Do's**
 - This is a solemn place; please display dignified and respectful conduct.
 - Walk on the designated pathways only.
 - Keep mobile phones on 'Silent' mode.
 - A flower may be placed at the base of Tyag Chakra walls.
 - Pay appropriate respect at Amar Chakra. While entering Param Yodha Sthal. People in uniform to salute.
 - Take care of accompanying children.
- **Don'ts**
 - Do not make noise or talk loudly.
 - Smoking and consumption of alcohol / intoxicants are strictly prohibited.
 - Kindly do not touch the Murals, Busts and Honour Walls.
 - Lighting candles / diyas (lamps) are not permitted.
 - Do not carry eatables, bags or suitcases.
 - Do not use tripods/ professional photograph stands.
 - Demonstration and sticking of posters or graffiti is prohibited.

