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Sahapedia

**My City  
My Heritage**

**MY PRAYAGRAJ**



## My City My Heritage

### MY PRAYAGRAJ

Initiated by Sahapedia in partnership with the InterGlobe Foundation, the 'My City, My Heritage' project is focused on rediscovering the culture and heritage potential of Indian cities. The project entails exploration, documentation and dissemination of varied heritage and cultural aspects of 10 locations in India, including through the publication of these booklets. As a part of the project, a number of heritage walks, museum tours, baithaks and engaging educational activities for school students and general audiences were organised between 2020 and 2022. The locations covered in the first year were Ahmedabad, Indore, Prayagraj, Goa and Shillong and the locations covered in the second year were Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Nashik.

This booklet documents a mix of well-known as well as offbeat subjects from among Prayagraj's cultural heritage. We hope you enjoy the articles, self-guided walks, museum listings and listicles within and that they enrich your experience of this remarkable city.

### More about the project

The My City, My Heritage project caters to a wide user group, including but not limited to children with disabilities and from financially and socially marginalised backgrounds, culture enthusiasts, scholars, heritage professionals and tourists. The project aims at creating opportunities, building interest and capacity of young local scholars through collaborative research, documentation and mapping. An equally important and compelling goal is to create fresh avenues for residents, local administration and local businesses to re-engage with their cities' living cultural heritage and renew old as well as create new relationships of participation, community and ownership within these places. This booklet is a small step in that direction.

More detailed versions of all pieces covered in this editorial and more information about each city can be found on our website. This specially crafted cultural mapping portal features an interactive map, through which you can explore many other locations and themes documented by Sahapedia over the years. Scan this QR code to visit our portal and get access to our entire encyclopaedia.



# **My City My Heritage**

# **MY PRAYAGRAJ**

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# FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that we present to you this compendium of booklets showcasing some of the lesser known and lost treasures of select cities in our country.

InterGlobe Foundation is committed to protecting and restoring the heritage and culture of India. We started this journey about seven years back by supporting the restoration and upkeep of the famous Khan-i-Khanan or Rahim's tomb in New Delhi. Since then, we have taken on a few more large and small restoration projects, which, while directly reviving these monuments, also contribute to the lives of craftspeople and neighbouring communities. Another project we have supported is the documentation and dissemination of a lost dance form.

'My City, My Heritage' is the first large project that we have launched to promote the intangible heritage of our country. We are fortunate to have found an able partner in Sahapedia. As part of My City, My Heritage, we endeavour to curate content and activities around both tangible (like museums) and intangible cultural heritage (like food, music, people, dances, fairs and festivals).

We also hope that in each of the project cities, a group of concerned citizens, institutions and government will come together to carry forward this beautiful curation of their city's history.

The recent disruption of our lives by the COVID pandemic has further brought to light the importance of the outdoors and local economies. This project will ably contribute to both.

We hope these booklets will entice you to discover these cities and their treasures and share it with others. We welcome more organizations, individuals and researchers to build on the repository created here.

I am grateful to Sahapedia and my colleagues at the InterGlobe group of companies for making this project a reality.

With best wishes,

Rohini Bhatia  
Chairperson | InterGlobe Foundation

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To access Sahapedia's cultural mapping portal, visit [map.sahapedia.org/home/](http://map.sahapedia.org/home/)

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# PRAYAGRAJ

## प्रयागराज

Prayagraj, the seventh largest city in the state of Uttar Pradesh, has had many names, from Prayag to Allahabad. Today, it is best known for its proximity to the Triveni Sangam, or the confluence of the three holy rivers of Yamuna, Ganga and Sarasvati, and the major Hindu pilgrimage of the Kumbh Mela.

Archaeological findings at the nearby sites of Jhusi and Kosambi reveal inhabitation as far back as the Iron Age, corroborated by the region's mention as the ancient city of Prayag in the holy Hindu scriptures, the Vedas, dating to 1200-1000 BC. The city was given its more recognisable name of Allahabad in the Mughal era, when the emperor Akbar founded the 'new' city, and it went on to become a pivotal stepping stone in cementing colonial rule in India following the Treaty of Allahabad, signed in 1765 and subsequently, a hub of revolutionary activity. It was officially renamed as Prayagraj in 2018.

Prayagraj's rich history is particularly exemplified through notable built heritage including the Allahabad Pillar, belonging to the age of the Mauryas, Gharwa Fort from the Gupta Period, Khusrau Bagh from the Mughal era and Thornhill Mayne Memorial and the All Saints Cathedral in the Indo-Saracenic style of architecture.

While the Kumbh Mela, named an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 2017, occurs every twelve years in the city, an annual version called the Magha Mela takes place between January and March, both characterised by large crowds, fairs and ritual dips in the holy river. Prayagraj has also inherited a rich heritage of writers and poets such as Akbar Allahabadi, Firaq Gorakhpuri, Sumitranandan Pant and Harivansh Rai Bachchan. Moreover, the Allahabad University is one of the oldest modern universities in the country, having even been called the 'Oxford of the East', and boasts a long list of notable alumni, including Chief Justices of India, presidents and other ministers of state.

Prayagraj holds a venerated position in Indian history; from its first mention in the ancient holy Hindu scriptures to being the birthplace of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, the mere mention of the city brings to mind an array of instances that have catapulted the city to fame.

Khusrau  
Bagh

Garhwa Fort



Senate Hall

Anand  
Bhawan

Indian  
Press

Bhardwaj  
Ashram

The Allahabad  
Museum  
Thornhill Mayne  
Memorial

Hindi Sahitya  
Sammelan

Chowk

Old Naini Bridge



Photo by Vaibhav Maini.

The Bharadwaj Ashram houses temples, a park and a statue of Rishi Bharadwaj.

## Bharadwaj Ashram

Colonelganj Rd, near Anand Bhawan

Located in Colonelganj and a short walk away from Anand Bhawan, the Bharadwaj Ashram complex is known for its mention in Tulsidas's poem *Ramacharitmanas* and Vidyapati's *Bhu-parikramanam* as the spot where the Hindu god Lord Rama stayed on his way to exile in Chitrakoot. The complex houses several temples, a park and a huge statue of Rishi (sage) Bharadwaj. Although there exists no evidence of the original construction of the temple, it maintains contemporary relevance in the form of a single stone with the inscription 'Renovated in 1968 by Birla Jan Kalyan Trust'.

Sage Bharadwaj, a sage of the *Vedic period*, was one of the *Saptarishis* or Seven Rishis. His *gurukul* or school, then covering a radius of 2.25 miles and surrounded by thick forest, was considered a great centre of learning, with over 10,000 students enrolled, and a confluence of scholars taking place annually during the *Magh Mela*. Today, a *lingam* is installed beside the main structure, known as Bhardwajeshwar, with a sandstone idol of Bharadwaj placed next to it.

Excavations by Dr B.B. Lal unearthed idols of Hindu religious figures, including Goddess Durga, Ganesh, Atri, Anusuya, Eklavya, Goddess Annapurna, Agastya, Bhrgu, Vashistha, Dhan Kuber etc., dated to the medieval period. Moreover, there are several legends associated with the

Established:  
1968 (Renovated)

ashram. The most well-known, from the Hindu epic *Ramayana*, professes that the ashram served as a resting place for Lord Rama, his wife Sita and his brother Lakshman. Another claims that after goddess Ganga agreed to descend to the Earth in the form of a river, Sage Bharadwaj prayed to Lord Shiva to catch Ganga's flow before she fell onto the Earth to avoid devastating floods.

A larger than life copper statue of Sage Bharadwaj on the main road marks the exact location of his ashram. Behind the statue, a well-maintained park has recently been renovated with murals depicting life at the Bharadwaj Ashram, as described in Hindu mythology.



Photo by Vaibhav Maini.

A statue of Maharishi Shri Bharadwaj.

■ SAMIKSHA BAJPAI | NAYANTARA SINGH

# Chowk

Chowk, Malviyanagar

Chowk is one of the oldest continuously populated settlements in the city of Prayagraj. The neighbourhood, though best-known for its bustling market housing well-loved shops and eateries, is also renowned for being the birthplace of leading Indian political figures, including Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, and residence to freedom fighters like Puroshottam Das Tandon, apart from the flautist Hariprasad Chaurasia.

The neighbourhood was a milestone on the ancient Grand Trunk Road during the Mughal era linking Delhi to eastern territories. As a result, the city rose as an important trading centre. The expansion of colonial rule in India in the mid-nineteenth century linked Allahabad (Prayagraj) to other political and economic hubs like Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras by rail, spurring commercial activity in the city. The neighbourhood retained its traditional charm despite colonial rule changing the landscape of the city, particularly the Chowk Bazaar or market, which dates to the early 1800s and preserves its popularity as a junction for meeting and trade.

The clock tower, built in 1913 in the Indo-Saracenic style and locally known as Ghantaghar, defines the focal point of Chowk, along with the market's most frequented street, Loknath Gali. This street is home to old, established street food stalls serving delicacies like masala samosa, chaat, kulfi and paan, as well as textile shops, spice and vegetable markets.

Other old institutions line the roads of Chowk, including the old residence of Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya, which houses a small temple; Chowk Church, established in 1840; Jama Masjid, a 17th century mosque belonging to the Mughal era; and the first branch of Allahabad Bank, begun in 1865 and the oldest public bank in India.

The neighbourhood of Chowk has withstood the test of time in Prayagraj's complex history, passing from Mughal hands to colonial ones, and now to modern post-Independent democratic rule, remaining the busiest area in town all the while.

■ NAYANTARA SINGH



Photo by Vaibhav Mami



Photo by Vaibhav Mami



Photo by Vaibhav Mami

Above: Focal point of the chowk, the clock tower built in 1913 locally known as Ghantaghar.

Middle: Food stalls serving chaat, kulfi and paan at the Chowk Bazaar.

Bottom: Inside Bharti Bhawan bookstore.





इलाहाबाद संग्रहालय  
ALLAHABAD MUSEUM





A Colt Model 1903 Pocket Hammerless semi-automatic 0.32 bore pistol belonging to the freedom fighter Chandrashekar Azad.

## Chandrashekar Azad's Pistol and Allahabad Museum

Chandrashekar Azad Park, Kamla Nehru Rd

**Timings:** Tue-Sun | 10:30am to 4:30pm

**Established:** Established 1863 and re-established in 1931

Housed within the Chandrashekar Azad Park (previously known as Alfred Park), Allahabad Museum, initially established in 1863 by William Muir and re-established in 1931 through the efforts of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, is one of five national-level museums under the Indian Ministry of Culture today. Today, it serves as a leading centre of research for scholars, archaeologists and historians. The Museum depicts India's journey from prehistoric times to modernity, housing an array of collections from around the country. One of its most famous possessions, however, is tucked away inside a bulletproof enclosure: a Colt Model 1903 Pocket Hammerless *semi-automatic* 0.32 bore pistol belonging to the freedom fighter Chandrashekar Azad.

One of the central figures of the Indian freedom struggle, Chandrashekar Azad was born on July 23, 1906, in Madhya Pradesh. Disappointed with Mahatma Gandhi's call to end the *Non-Cooperation Movement* in 1922, he joined the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA). After his involvement in the infamous Kakori train robbery to help fund the activities of the HRA,

Azad came under the police's radar. On February 27, 1931, the Colonelganj Police Station received a tipoff on Azad's presence in the then Alfred Park. SSP John Reginald Hornby Nott-Bower and his team reached the scene and a battle ensued; but after single-handedly keeping a large police force at bay for a long time, Azad eventually died.

According to another version of the story, based on Azad's vow to not be captured alive by the British, Azad shot himself to death when his capture became imminent. Although a post-mortem examination proved this to be incorrect, Azad's Colt was taken to Britain by Nott-Bower, who had the utmost respect for Azad. However, Hemavati Nandan Bahuguna, during his tenure as the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, met Nott-Bower and requested him to return the Colt, promising him anything he wanted in return. Nott-Bower apparently asked for twelve photographs of "the bravest man he had ever seen" in return for the pistol.

A statue of Azad at the Chandrashekar Azad Memorial marks the exact location where Azad lost his life fighting the British.

**Facing page:** Allahabad Museum is housed within the Chandrashekar Azad Park.

■ SAMIKSHA BAJPAI | NAYANTARA SINGH



Photo by Leiden University Library, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

A relief at Garhwa Fort in British India.

## Garhwa Fort

Chak Arazi Garhwa, Uttar Pradesh

Tucked away in the Shankargarh district of Uttar Pradesh, the Garhwa Fort is located a short fifty kilometres south of Prayagraj. The Fort, which is structured in the form of a fortified temple complex, dates back to the *Gupta period* (3rd century–543 CE), and is home to a number of temples, tanks and sculptures, many of which are considered valuable archaeological finds from early medieval India.

The site, now managed by the Archaeological Survey of India, occupies a two kilometre periphery and takes the rough shape of a pentagon, containing within it *bastions*, tanks, and a pillared temple. The fortifications around the temple complex were added much later in the eighteenth century by Raja Vikramaditya, the Baghel chief of the nearby town of Bara. Sir Alexander Cunningham, the first director of the Indian Archaeological Survey, was of the opinion that it was these additions that lent the site the name of Garhwa, which means fort. Moreover, inscriptions found in the temple denote its location as 'Bhattagrama'; the neighbouring village is also called Bhatgarh to this day, leading archaeologists to believe that the site's original name was indeed Bhattagrama or Bhatgaon.

The complex itself contains a variety of excavated material such as a large figure depicting the full set of Lord *Vishnu's* ten

Timings: Daily | 6:00am to 6:00pm

Established: Third to Fifth CE

reincarnations, references and images of *Parasurama*, images of the lesser known and relatively new Hindu solar divinity Revanta, dating to the *Gahadavala Dynasty* of the twelfth century and several inscriptions from the time of *Kumaragupta* and *Skandagupta* recording donations and grants. Although the temple is Brahmanical in nature, one of its pillars was found to include a *Buddhist railing*, which led archaeologists to believe that the earlier structure that the pillars belonged to may have been a Buddhist *vihara* (temple).

Conservation plans for Garhwa were drawn up by the ASI in 2013, with the intention of restoring the site to its 'original composition.'



A carving of *Kurmavata* (tortoise incarnation of *Vishnu*), from Garhwa.

■ NAYANTARA SINGH

Photo by Joseph Beglar, 1875, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.



The Hindi Sahitya Sammelan is devoted to popularising the Hindi language.

## Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

2, Sammelan Marg, South Malaka

Established:  
1910

The *Hindi Sahitya Sammelan* is an institution devoted to popularising the Hindi language throughout and beyond India. Located in the South Malaka area in Prayagraj, it acts as a major repository of Hindi and Sanskrit literature. The Sammelan traces its roots to pre-Independent India, having been born out of a late-eighteenth-century movement in North India that strove to legitimise Hindi as the official language for administrative and educational purposes.

This movement in the then United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) was led by the *Nagari Pracharini Sabha*, which also harboured the aim of becoming the first to find, collect and house manuscripts in Hindi. Thus was created the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, which subsequently became one of the first institutions to establish a *pustakalaya* (library) and *sanghralaya* (archive) for these artefacts.

The first session of the Sammelan was held on May 1, 1910, in Varanasi, and was chaired by the prominent freedom fighter Madan Mohan Malaviya. Although the initial intention was to shift the location of the conference from city to city, it was decided after the second session at Prayagraj in 1949 to permanently locate it there. By the time India attained independence in 1947, the Sammelan had emerged as a major mouthpiece for the demand to make Hindi India's national language.

The Sammelan remains relevant today as a vast reservoir of Hindi textual resources, and as an academic institution offering courses in the language for Classes 10 and 12, as well as an undergraduate course. The Sammelan has functioned as a self-supporting institution since 1996, following the discontinuation of government grants to it. The institution houses the archive or the 'Hindi Museum', as it is called, which was famously inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi in 1936. It acts as an important research centre, containing over 45,000 printed booklets, 3,500 daily newspapers, 15,000 monthly magazines and 1,850 bound files of the *Gazette of India*. A few feet away is the library, which houses 1,83,000 books in total.



Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, a vast reservoir of Hindi textual resources.

■ NAYANTARA SINGH



Photo by Vaibhav Maini.

Established in 1884, the Indian Press is now housed within a colonial-style building.

## The Indian Press

36, Panna Lal Road

Established:  
1884

Chintamani Ghosh, an erstwhile dispatch clerk for the English newspaper *Pioneer* used his savings of Rs 12 to purchase a *treadle printing machine* for his new venture, the Indian Press, in Prayagraj. Established in 1884, the Indian Press started the Hindi magazine *Saraswati* in 1900, which published articles by authors and statesmen like Premchand, Nirala, Nehru and Lala Lajpat Rai; the magazine was a great influence on the development of standard Hindi, and brought about a renaissance in its literature. Soon after, the press opened another arm in Kolkata called Indian Publishing House; here, an admirer of the famed Bengali author Rabindranath Tagore approached him with an offer of publishing his works. Tagore, already impressed with their Bengali publication *Prabasi*, as well as their typesetting and printing standards, signed an agreement with them in 1908.

Over the next fifteen years, the Indian Press published eighty-seven works by Tagore: forty-seven books of prose and the rest of poetry, including the Nobel-prize-winning *Gitanjali*. Other famous titles included *Chokher Bali*, *Gora*, *Galpaguchchha* and *Katha o Kahini*. Moreover, Tagore gave the Indian Press rights to publish all his books and the firm was the first to print an illustrated edition of his works in 1909;

apart from a collection of 130 poems with seven illustrations by Tagore himself. Further, the Press, a then-pioneer in *lithographic* works, served as the place where Tagore and the esteemed painter Jamini Roy first met, sparking a friendship between the two, where the latter even influenced the former's painting style. However, after Tagore founded Visva-Bharati University in Santiniketan in Bengal, he transferred the copyrights of all his books to the Visva-Bharati publishing department for a sum of Rs 84,000.

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...the Press, a then-pioneer in *lithographic* works, served as the place where Tagore and the esteemed painter Jamini Roy first met, sparking a friendship between the two...

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Today, the Press is situated on Pannalal Road near the famous Azad Park and walking distance from Muir Central College, housed within a colonial-style building which is now managed by the fifth generation of the Ghosh family. The Press continues to publish books on a wide variety of subjects in several languages.

■ SAMIKSHA BAJPAI | NAYANTARA SINGH



Left: Tomb of Prince Khusrau. Right: Inside Prince Khusrau's tomb.

## Khusrau Bagh

Lukerganj, Prayagraj

Tucked away in the bustling Khuldabad *mohalla* (neighbourhood) near the Prayagraj railway station lies a reminder of the bygone Mughal Empire. This is the 40-acre mausoleum-complex nestled within a walled garden complex called Khusrau Bagh. The set of three mausoleums holds within it the remains of the Mughal emperor Jahangir's son and Akbar's grandson Khusrau, his mother and his sister.

**He was then buried beside his mother and sister at the eponymous Khusrau Bagh mausoleum in Prayagraj.**

Prince Khusrau, the eldest son of Jahangir, was born in 1587. Although he was his grandfather Akbar's favoured heir, he was incarcerated upon Jahangir's ascension to the throne on account of apprehensions regarding his ambitions and ultimately killed in 1622 on the orders of his brother, Shah Jahan. He was then buried beside his mother and sister at the eponymous Khusrau Bagh mausoleum in Prayagraj. The mausoleum also made more recent history in 1957, when Maulvi Liaquat Ali declared the independence of India from colonial rule at the site.

The entrance of Khusrau Bagh features a palm tree-lined pathway leading first to the

tomb of Khusrau's Hindu mother, Man Bai, which was commissioned by Jahangir in 1606 and designed by Aqa Reza as a simple white marble, three-storeyed *trabeated* structure decorated with sandstone screens. It also features Arabic inscriptions carved by Mir Abdullah Mushkin Qalam, Jahangir's court calligrapher.

The next tomb along the pathway is that of Khusrau's sister, Nithar Begum, built in 1624-25. This is an elaborate two-storeyed structure of red sandstone, with the upper level containing some of the finest *frescoes* from the Mughal period, and the interior resembling a jewellery box. However, Nithar Begum was not buried in it and the *crypt chamber* is empty.

The last tomb, belonging to Khusrau, is a single-storeyed red sandstone structure, built as a typical *nine-grid mausoleum*. Frescoes and carved inscriptions in the name of Allah and the *Shahada* (an Islamic oath) are prominent decorative motifs while the burial chamber underground has elaborate plasterwork.

Today, this monument of national importance is not just a heritage site and a green space, but is also considered to be a precursor to the transformation of the garden into a funerary complex, like the subsequent Taj Mahal.

Timing: Mon to Sat | 6:00am to 9:30pm,  
Sun | 6am to 7pm

■ SAMIKSHA BAJPAI







The Thornhill Mayne Memorial is built in a Scottish Baronial style.

## Thornhill Mayne Memorial

Allahabad Public Library, Chandra Sekhar Azad Park

The Thornhill Mayne Memorial was established in the year 1864 and is housed in the 133-acre Chandrashekhar Azad Park, previously known as Alfred Park. Funded by the then Commissioner of Allahabad, Francis Otway Mayne, at a cost of approximately Rs 94,222 or £25,000 when completed in 1878, it was opened as a memorial to his friendship with Cuthbert Bensley Thornhill, Magistrate of Banda.

Built in a *Scottish Baronial style* by Sir Richard Roskell Bayne (1837–1901), the memorial initially served as the seat of the Legislative Assembly in the British era when Prayagraj (known as Allahabad at the time) was the capital of the North Western Provinces.

Presently the *Rajkeeya* (Government) Public Library, also known as the Allahabad Public Library, is housed in the Thornhill Mayne Memorial building. The Library is the largest and oldest in the state of Uttar Pradesh, and features elaborate construction in granite, marble and wood. The Library, built on a square plan, has arched *cloisters* around the courtyard, with an octagonal *spire* supported by a *porte-cochère*. Some of the emblems and insignia visible on the

**Facing page:** The Allahabad Public Library is housed inside the Thornhill Mayne Memorial.

Timings: Mon to Wed | 8:30 am to 5:00 pm,  
Fri to Sun | 8:30 am to 5:00 pm

Established: 1864

building are initials of Francis Otway Mayne (FOM) and Cuthbert Bensley Thornhill (CBT). The most prominent insignia is *Virtuti Fortuna Comes*, Latin for 'fortune is the companion of virtue'.

The present-day library has over 1.25 lakh books on a variety of subjects. It also has a collection of 40 magazines 28 newspapers in Hindi, English, Bangla and Urdu and 21 Arabic manuscripts. Some of the oldest newspaper collections available in the library are *Leader* and *Patriot* from 1854, *Pioneer* from May 1868, *Statesman*

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Presently the Rajkeeya (Government) Public Library, also known as the Allahabad Public Library, is housed in the Thornhill Mayne Memorial building.

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from 1875 and *The Hindu* from 1878 to their last or latest editions. Other prized possessions of the library include an original copy of Firdausi's *Shahnameh* and certain works of Prince Dara Shikoh, the son of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan.

■ KAVITA GUPTA



Photo by Vaibhav Maini.

The Senate House houses the Senate Hall and several administrative offices.

## Senate Hall

Allahabad University, Malviya Nagar

Allahabad University, established on September 23, 1887, is the fourth oldest university in India. However, it was only in 1909 that the present site of the main campus, also known as the Senate House campus, was selected for the Library, the Senate Hall and the Law College. The Senate House, which is the administrative building of the university and houses the office of the Vice-Chancellor of the university, among others, has a main auditorium called the Senate Hall designed by Sir Samuel Swinton Jacob. The terms Senate Hall, Senate Hall building and Senate House are often used interchangeably.

The construction of the Hall was approved in 1910, with its foundation stone being laid by Sir John Hewett, the then Chancellor of the University. The Hall was completed by 1915. The Senate Hall (auditorium) is a large open-floor hall constructed with brick and stone masonry designed in the *Indo-Saracenic style*. The building's architecture consists of multiple domes, *cupolas*, *chhatris* (dome-shaped pavilions) and *chajjas* (eaves), reflecting the building's Indian and Mughal roots. Its red polished floor is embellished with *mosaic* patterns, while the first floor has numerous arches that open up into *jharokhas* (enclosed balconies) with

Timings: Mon to Fri | 8:00am to 5:00pm  
Established: 1864

*lattice* stone railings overlooking the hall. The ceiling, decorated with carved woodwork, is a perennial source of light due to the numerous skylights placed below it. The Senate House building also features a clock tower of about fifty feet, housing a clock modelled on London's Big Ben. Manufactured by J.G. Bechtler Son & Company, the clock has not been functional since 1999.

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The ceiling, decorated with carved woodwork, is a perennial source of light due to the numerous skylights placed below it.

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Over the last century, the Senate Hall auditorium has not only hosted academic events, convocations and conferences, but also cultural events of national repute. The All India Music Conferences of the 1930s and 1940s were held at the Senate Hall with performances by a then 11-year-old Kumar Gandharva and a 14-year-old Bismillah Khan. The Hall has been graced by stalwarts such as Pt. Ravi Shankar, Sarojini Naidu, Ustad Allaaddin Khan, Ustad Faiyaz Khan and Omkar Nath Thakur, among others.

■ KAVITA GUPTA





The Old Naini bridge connects Howrah to New Delhi.

## Old Naini Bridge

Mutthi Ganj, Prayagraj

The Old Naini Bridge at Prayagraj, also known as the Old Yamuna or Old Jumna Bridge, is one of the oldest and longest bridges in India, connecting Howrah to New Delhi. As a rail and road bridge, it is part of India's vast railway network, an enduring legacy of the East India Company (EIC). The EIC proposed a great trunk line from Kolkata to Mirzapur as an extension of the same trunk to Delhi, with branches from Mirzapur to Jabalpur and other important points. Acting as a crucial middle link in the line directly connecting the River Hooghly to the River Yamuna, the old Yamuna Bridge was a part of the same plan. Before the bridge was built, passengers coming from the west would have to be ferried across the river with their luggage. However, after the bridge was completed, the city began to experience increased rail traffic and eventually saw its borders being redefined.

The EIC surveyed the area in 1855; work progressed in 1859 and a double-decked, sixteen-pillared steel *truss bridge* was constructed by 1865. The project consisted of an arched bridge on the Prayagraj end near the fort, and a *plate girder bridge* on the Howrah end. It was conceived by James Meadows Rendall who was a civil engineer for East India Railway, and at the time, cost the sum of Rs 16,16,335 to make.

Established:  
1859

The first train moved on the bridge on July 15, 1865, and the first load testing was done on August 8, 1865. The bridge, which completed 150 years of existence in 2015, has proved sturdier than those built post-Independence, with major repairs required only once, during the years 1926–27 when the girders on the UP track were replaced. The bridge even survived heavy flooding in 1978 despite many areas in the city getting submerged.

Today, a two-lane road lies below the train tracks and is still in use. However, a New Yamuna Bridge was constructed in 2004 to partially ease the load on the older bridge and allow a smoother flow of traffic.



A two-lane road lies below the train tracks and is still in use.

■ KAVITA GUPTA

Indira & Feroze  
इंदिरा और फिरोज





The Anand Bhawan museum was built in the late 1920s.

## Anand Bhawan

Motilal Nehru Rd

**Timings:** Tue to Sun | 10:00am to 5:30pm

**Established:** 1970

**Entry Fee:** Ground Floor: Rs. 20

First Floor: Rs. 70

Foreign Nationals: Rs. 200

**Facilities:**

Museum Shop, Restroom • Drinking Water  
• Garden/Picnic Area, Workshops/seminars/  
lectures • Library and archives services

**Services:** Conservation lab

Anand Bhawan, was built by Motilal Nehru in the 1927 and served as a residence to the Nehru-Gandhi family for four decades since 1929.

The building was designed by Motilal Nehru himself and a specialist architect sent by the Tatas. It was donated to the Indian Government in November 1970 by Indira Gandhi, the first woman Prime Minister of India.

Anand Bhawan was a prime centre of the Indian National Congress during India's freedom struggle and now serves as a home museum exhibiting the personalia of the Nehru-Gandhi family. The residence is also famous for hosting Mahatma Gandhi several times during his visits to Prayagraj, previously known as

**Centre:** Large scale image of Indira Gandhi on display. Photo by Prashant Mishra. Facing page: A record of lives of Indira and Feroze Gandhi.



Allahabad. To acquaint visitors with the lives of Anand Bhawan's politically influential residents, all the rooms of the mansion have been preserved and restored to be authentic to pre-Independence times.

Interesting exhibits include the museum's library containing over 8000 books, the memorabilia of Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru, the antique household items and the room of Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi.

In 1980, Indira Gandhi inaugurated a planetarium in the museum premises that hosts six night sky watching shows throughout the year. Every year, lectures and memorial functions held at the museum commemorate the importance of Anand Bhawan in India's historical legacy and are attended by several visitors.

■ PRASHANT MISHRA

# DIY Heritage Trail

## A walk through colonial built heritage

After the mutiny of 1857, the capital of the North-Western Provinces was shifted from Agra to Allahabad (now Prayagraj), and the British established residential quarters as well as civil and administrative buildings here. This trail will acquaint you with four heritage structures that act as legacies of Prayagraj's colonial past.

**Starting Location:** Chandrashekhar Azad Park

**Ending Location:** Allahabad High Court

**Distance:** 4.2 km

**Time taken:** 3-4 hours

**Walk requirements:**

Please bring comfortable shoes and water.

### ALLAHABAD PUBLIC LIBRARY

**Chandra Shekhar Azad Park**

Allahabad Public Library was initially built as the Thomhill-Mayne Memorial in 1864 by the then commissioner of Allahabad, Frances Otway Mayne. The structure was designed by the British architect Richard Roskell Bayne, in the Scottish Baronial and Gothic Revival style.

### ALLAHABAD HIGH COURT

**Nyaya Marg, Canton, Dhoomanganj**

The Allahabad High Court building was inaugurated by Charles Hardinge, the then viceroy and governor-general of India on November 27, 1916 after the old building was deemed inadequate.

### ALL SAINTS' CATHEDRAL

**Sarojini Naidu Marg, Civil Lines**

The construction of this Anglican cathedral was completed in 1891 after it was commissioned on land granted by the then lieutenant-governor of the North-West Provinces, Sir William Muir.

### CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD PARK

**George Town**

Initially named Alfred Park, this 133-acre park containing memorials to Queen Victoria and other British officials was established in 1870 to commemorate the visit of Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, to Allahabad.



# DIY Food Trail

## Street food delicacies of Prayagraj

In addition to the city's spiritual and cultural significance, visitors can experience Prayagraj's spirit through its delicious street food. This trail is designed to introduce you to four spots in the Civil Lines area of Prayagraj that have been serving unique food items everyday for the past several years.

**Starting Location:** Kamdhenu Sweets

**Ending Location:** Netram Moolchand Sweet Shop

**Distance:** 2.9 km

**Time taken:** 2-3 hours

**Walk requirements:** Please bring comfortable shoes and water.

### HIRA HALWAI

Thornhill Rd, Vivek Vihar Colony, Civil Lines

Hira Halwai is most famous for it's ultra-soft and spongy gulab jamuns that are made using a decades-old traditional recipe and hence taste better than all other variants available in the market.

### NIRALA CHAAT WAALA

22-A, Sardar Patel Marg, Civil Lines

Nirala Chaat Waala is famous for its chaat and sweets that together comprise a delicious combination unique to Prayagraj. Their *dahi soonth ke batashe (gol gappe)* and *papri chaat* as well as their milk preparations such as *rabri*, *kulfi* and *khurchan* are a must try.

### KAMDHENU SWEETS

01, Eligen Road, Civil Lines

Kamdhenu Sweets was established in the year 1989 and since then, has been a favourite amongst Prayagraj residents for its sweets and *kulfi faluda*.



Sahapedia's award winning program, India Heritage walks, offers guided walks across India. Visit [www.indiaheritagewalks.org](http://www.indiaheritagewalks.org) for more.

# 5

## IMPORTANT FIGURES OF HINDI LITERATURE

Over the years, Prayagraj has attracted writers, poets and scholars who have created novel, complex and relevant literature and immortalised the city as the birthplace of the 'Golden Age of Hindi literature'. Here is a list of five such writers of Hindi literature who have had deep associations with Prayagraj.

### Mahadevi Verma

Mahadevi Verma's writing was influenced by the ideas of political liberty and feminism. She was the moving spirit behind the first ever Mahila Kavi Sammelan (women poets' conference) that was held in 1933.

She also established the Prayag Mahila Vidyapeeth in Prayagraj during India's struggle for independence.

### Munshi Premchand

Dhanpat Rai Srivastava 'Premchand' was born in Lamhi village, Benares in 1880. Known as the king of Hindi fiction, Premchand's stories acted as a mirror to the ailments of working class life, but also of an India on the cusp of modernity.

### Subhadra Kumari Chauhan

Subhadra Kumari Chauhan became the first woman to join the non-cooperation movement in India's struggle for Independence and became an inspiration for women writers and artists.

### Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala'

Born in pre-Independence Bengal, Suryakant Tripathi Nirala spent a significant portion of his life in Prayagraj writing stories, essays, poetry and translating others' works. Tripathi was most famous for his neo-romantic poetry.

### Dharamvir Bharti

Dharamvir Bharti was born in Prayagraj in 1926 and spent his entire life engaged in literary pursuits and the preservation of Khari Boli (a Central Indian dialect) in Hindi Literature.

# 5 POPULAR FORMS OF PERFORMING ART

The performing arts of Uttar Pradesh combine elements of devotion, celebration, entertainment and artistic expression, surviving as a part of Prayagraj's cultural heritage. Here are five such art forms that can be witnessed in the city to this day.

## Ramlila

Ramlila is performed by narrating episodes from the epic poem *Ramcharitamanas* through dialogues, songs, narrations and dance performances. Regional troupes performing their own interpretations of the mythological epic stage several performances in the days preceding the festival of Diwali and Dussehra.

## Rasiya

Rasiya is a form of music traditionally from the region of Braj in Uttar Pradesh, typically representing the playful romances of Lord Krishna.

## Nautanki

A Nautanki is a musical play which has a mixture of dialogues and songs sung by a chorus. Several Nautanki groups in and around Prayagraj have been recognised and promoted to aid the preservation of the art form.

## Chaar Bayt

Performed to the beat of a percussion instrument called 'duff', Chaar Bayt is a sequence of four-line verses believed to have originated from the Arabic poetic form *Rajeez*, which reached India in the 18th Century when Indian kings employed soldiers from Persia and Afghanistan.

## Swang

Swang is a form of dance-theatre which incorporates songs and mimicry with dance and dialogue. A group of ten to twelve performers enacts stories inspired by religious mythology or folk tales in an open air theatre surrounded by the audience.

# CALENDAR

## Festivals and Cultural Events

### KUMBH MELA AND MAGH MELA

#### Triveni Sangam

Organised every 12 years at the confluence of the rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati, the Kumbh Mela is a month-long fair with cultural performances, religious discourses and celebratory processions. On the other hand, Magh Mela is held every year on dates which are considered astrologically auspicious and is a display of both community and commerce, with various social and cultural activities taking place over the course of a month.

JAN

### GUAVA FESTIVAL

#### Jalsa Ghar, Civil Lines

Organised by Sanchaari, Prayagraj's Guava Festival is a unique event held to commemorate the producers of the region's much-loved guavas. The festival puts up several varieties of guavas on display along with products such as guava jelly, guava cheese, guava candies and guava cake. Visitors also have the opportunity to engage in several fun activities and get a taste of folk music.

FEB



Facing Page: Dussehra, Photo by Vijay Barot, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Above: Kumbh Mela, Photo by Ninara from Helsinki, Finland, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons



## DUSSEHRA

Procession starts from  
Bhardwaj Ashram,  
Colonelganj Road

The occasion of Dussehra is an opportunity for Prayagraj's residents to engage in dance and drama in the form of *Ramlila*, or enactments of scenes from the mythological epic Ramayana.

'Ram Dal' processions are organised at various parts of the city and people descend to the streets in large numbers to participate in the festivities. The colourful processions are believed to be more than 400 years old.

## THE GANGA WATER RALLY

Organised by the Boat Club of Prayagraj, this rally begins in Prayagraj and takes its participants to Varanasi through Mirzapur and Chunar. The river Ganga's enthralling passage through Uttar Pradesh is explored by tourists as well as adventure enthusiasts from all over the country in kayaks, canoes and row boats.

MAR

## MAHASHIVRATRI

According to Hindu mythology, the festival of Mahashivratri is the day on which *Kalpwasis* - those who adopt asceticism for the holy month of Magh - take their last holy bath. It is a day dedicated to Lord Shiva, the god of the ascetics and hence the streets resound with chants of his name. The last publicly organised Maha Shivratri saw more than one crore people attend the festival on the banks of Prayagraj's rivers.

OCT

## INDIRA MARATHON

Anand Bhawan to Madan Mohan Malviya Stadium

Started in 1985 in memory of India's first woman prime minister, Indira Gandhi, the marathon is held every year on her birthday. The 42-kms long race track starts from Anand Bhawan, her ancestral home in the city and covers areas like Teliarganj, Mayo Hall Crossing, Prayagraj Agricultural Institute, Yamuna Bridge and Hanuman temple.

# Glossary of Terms

## Bharadwaj Ashram

Ramcharitmanas: A significant sixteenth century poem written by Tulsidas and based on the Hindu epic Ramayana, becoming enduringly influential on Hinduism for its deified portrayal of the main characters.

Vedic Period: That period of Hindu history when the Vedas, the oldest texts of Hinduism, were being composed. This period (1500 - 500 B.C.) corresponded with the Vedic Civilisation, based in northern and north-western India.

Saptarishi: A Sanskrit term referring to the seven 'rishis' or sages who appear frequently throughout Vedic and Hindu texts, and are important figures in Hinduism and Yoga philosophies for their fantastical abilities and powers.

Magh mela : An annual festival with fairs held in the month of Magha (January/February) near river banks and sacred tanks near Hindu temples.

Lingam: An aniconic representation of the Hindu god Shiva, symbolising generative power and found in Shaivite temples and Hindu shrines.

Ramayana: An epic Indian poem composed in Sanskrit, describing the journey of Lord Rama and his fight for goodness over evil against the demon-king Ravana.

## Chowk

Grand Trunk Road: One of the oldest and most important roads in Asia, dating to as far back as the Mauryan Empire (322-185 B.C.) and running through parts of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

Mughal Empire : The Mughal Empire at its zenith commanded resources unprecedented in Indian history and covered almost the entire subcontinent. From 1556 to 1707, during the heyday of its fabulous wealth and glory, the Mughal Empire was a fairly efficient and centralised organisation, with a vast complex of personnel, money, and information dedicated to the service of the emperor and his nobility.

Indo-Saracenic style: Also referred to as the Indo-Gothic style, it was a style of architecture used by British architects to merge British and Indian architectural elements, particularly after 1858, in order to dispel the divergence between the identities of the colonial and the colonised.

Samosa: A fried or baked pastry filled with lentils, potatoes, vegetables or meat, depending on the region; though originating in the Middle East and Central Asia under the

Persian name sanbosag, samosas are now popularly consumed across South and West Asia and Africa.

Chaat: Literally translating to 'lick' in Hindi, chaat is a savoury snack popularly consumed as street food, appearing in many forms and primarily involving some version of fried dough, curd and spicy chutneys.

Kulfi: A frozen Indian dessert resembling ice-cream and liberally flavoured with nuts and cardamom.

Paan: A delicacy made of betel leaves and tobacco and flavoured with fruit, often consumed for its stimulatory effects on the body.

## Chandrashekhar Azad's Pistol and Allahabad Museum

Semi-automatic: Partially automatic and partially manually operated.

Non-Cooperation Movement : Unsuccessful attempt in 1920-22, organised by Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi, to induce the British government of India to grant self-government, or swaraj, to India. It was one of Gandhi's first organised acts of large-scale civil disobedience (satyagrah).

## Garhwa Fort

Gupta: A dynasty ruling over much of northern, western and central India from the fourth to the sixth centuries AD, thought to represent a 'classical' Indian age due to much progress in the fields of literature, mathematics and philosophy.

Bastion: An architectural element of fortification consisting of two flanks and two faces, allowing defenders to fire at the enemy from a position of relative safety.

Vishnu: A major Hindu deity, forming the Holy Trinity with Shiva and Brahma, and known for his ten avatars or incarnations and incorporation of lesser deities, including Rama and Krishna.

Parasurama : One of the ten avatars (incarnations) of the Hindu god Vishnu.

Gahadavala dynasty : One of the many ruling families of north India on the eve of the Muslim conquests in the 12th-13th century.

Kumaragupta : Gupta emperor (c. 415-455)

Skandagupta : Gupta emperor (c. 455-467)

Buddhist railing: A stone barrier resembling a timber fence, with the horizontals running through vertical posts, usually surrounding a stupa.

# Glossary of Terms

## Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

Nagari Pracharini Sabha : Society for Promotion of Nagari, also known as Kashi Nagari Pracharini Sabha, was an organisation founded in 1893 at the Queen's College, Varanasi for the promotion of the Nagari script, mostly used to write Hindi today.

## Indian Press

Treadle printing machine: A foot-operated machine using a lever to do letterpress printing.

Gitanjali: Rabindranath Tagore's most famous work, appearing in the form of a collection of poetry modelled on Indian songs of devotion.

Lithograph: A method of printing using a stone or metal plate, based on the immiscibility of water and oil.

## Khusrau Bagh

Trabeated: A building system where a horizontal member is placed on top of two vertical members.

Fresco: A method of painting involving watered-down paint applied in thin layers to still-wet plaster, often used to make murals.

Crypt chamber: A partially or wholly below ground structure, usually located below churches.

Nine-grid mausoleum: A mausoleum plan often employed by the Mughals for tombs or pavilions in the early sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, based on the nine-fold eight paradises plan, involving a square plan divided into nine spaces.

Shahada: The first of the five Pillars of Islam and the Muslim profession of faith invoking the words: "There is no god but God; Muhammad is the Prophet of God."

## Thornhill Mayne Memorial

Scottish Baronial style: An architectural style emerging in 19th century Scotland as part of the Gothic Revival, reminiscent of medieval castles and featuring elements like turrets.

Cloister: A quadrangular structure featuring walkways on all four sides and open space in the middle, most often attached to a church or monastery.

Spire: Elongated structure usually tapering towards its end and used to cap structures.

Porte-cochere: Translating to 'coach door' in French, referring to a doorway or entry point large enough to accommodate a carriage through it.

## Senate Hall

Indo-Saracenic: Also referred to as the Indo-Gothic style, it was a style of architecture used by British architects to merge British and Indian architectural elements, particularly after 1858, in order to dispel the divergence between the identities of the colonial and the colonised.

Cupola: A small dome placed on a circular or square base, usually topping a bigger dome or a roof.

Chhatra: A domed pavilion occurring as a canopy above tombs, found commonly in Rajasthani and Indo-Islamic architecture.

Chajja: A projected element just above a window, usually to reduce the sun's glare and the rain.

Mosaic : A picture or pattern made by placing together small pieces of glass, stone, etc. of different colours.

Jharokha: A type of overhanging, enclosed balcony used often in Rajasthani and Indo-Islamic architecture.

Lattice: Open framework consisting of a criss-cross pattern.

## Old Naini Bridge

Truss bridge : A bridge with its load-bearing structures composed of a series of wooden or metal triangles, known as trusses.

Plate girder: A steel beam widely used in the construction of bridges.

## Bibliography

To get access to bibliography for all the pieces in this booklet visit:



## Notes

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## Notes

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# About Us

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InterGlobe Foundation (IGF) - [www.interglobe.com/foundation](http://www.interglobe.com/foundation) is the CSR arm of the InterGlobe Group of companies.

The key focus areas of IGF include Heritage Conservation, Promotion of Livelihoods and Environment Conservation including Waste Management. The Heritage projects cover both the tangible and intangible aspects of heritage. The environment projects support development and protection of Natural Resources thereby increasing the green cover and ground water recharge. It also includes work on Waste Management. The livelihood projects support income enhancement of marginalized groups, especially women through environment friendly projects. By partnering with leading NGOs of the country, IGF has been able to impact more than 600,000 lives.

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Raj kachori with sev, Photo by Dheerajk88, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Mughal tomb in the Khusru Bagh garden at Allahabad in India around 1860, Photo by Leiden University Library, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons. Photos by Vaibhav Maini

A stylized, light gray map of a city grid, likely Prayagraj, serves as the background for the top and bottom sections of the page. The map shows a network of streets and blocks, with some areas highlighted in a darker gray.

This booklet documents various well-known and offbeat treasures of Prayagraj's living heritage and culture. Designed as a guide to navigate the city's better kept secrets, the publication spans themes such as built heritage, people and communities, institutions of cultural importance, and literature and the arts.

Other editions include: Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Goa, Hyderabad, Indore, Kolkata, Nashik, Shillong



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