

Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. They are our touchstones, our points of reference, our identity.

Recognising the importance of the rich and varied culture that we as proud Indians inherit, NSS SVC organised a “**Heritage Walk cum Survey**” in **Safdarjung Tomb** and Lodhi Garden on **27th January, 2020**. One of the last reflections of Mughal architectural style, Safdarjung Tomb is surrounded by an ambience of calmness. This walk was undertaken so that the students get familiar with the profound power that our heritage beholds. In conscience with the same, a heritage survey in combination with some youth engaging activities were also organised.

The **Heritage Survey** was aimed at knowing about how well people visiting this tomb are aware about it. Along with that, the survey also helped people to pause and think over ways through which they can preserve their heritage. Our NSS members took responses of 100 people . The questions of the survey revolved around the following:-

1. General information (Name, Age, Nationality, City/State)
2. Is the monument clean?
3. Is it maintained properly according to you?
4. Do you like to explore heritage?
5. What do you like the most about this heritage?
6. Do you know anything about the history of this heritage?
7. Do you know about the INTACH club?
8. What steps do you think we should take for maintaining this heritage?
9. Are there any ghostly stories surrounding this heritage?
10. Any special remarks

The survey got responses mostly from youngsters aged between 20 to 25 years. Mostly there were Indians but people from Germany, Spain and Austria who came as foreign tourists were also surveyed. Almost half of the respondents thought that the monument was clean. More than fifty percent of them thought that the place was not maintained properly. More than ninety percent of them were the ones who loved these heritage places and were keen travellers in exploring them. According to the respondents, the architectural style of the tomb was the main reason behind its tourist attraction. Along with that, the lush green gardens add to the sanctity and serenity of the place. People had vague ideas about the history of the tomb. Most of them knew that it was the last piece of Mughals. No one knew about the INTACH club. But the interesting thing is that people had a lot of suggestions to give to improve the surrounding of the place. Firstly, most of them urged the need for proper maintenance of the tomb such as fixing cracks. They suggested that the protection of the heritage should be increased by the government through deploying more security guards and by installing CCTV cameras. Scribbling on walls should be fined and punished. A check on these kind of vandalism ought to be strictly imposed and ultimately

be banned. There must be water in the ponds area since that will give the whole arena a more beautiful and complete look. It was observed that very few people visited this monument, as such many people suggested that something attractive can be done in the gardens so that more and more people get attracted towards visiting this tomb.

Apart from this, some interviews were also conducted with the workers and care takers of the monument. It was found that there were some workers who have been working at this place for the past 34 years. Their working timings are from 9AM to 5PM. They are given a salary of around ₹13,000 per month but many of them complained about the delayed payments which often extends up to 3 months. However, they also admitted that regular check up of the monument is done by the officer of the area concerned. According to these workers, Safdarjung tomb is a less popular monument in terms of the tourists visiting the place because most of the foreigners like to visit Red fort, Qutub Minar and Humayun's tomb. At the same time, they said that visitors who came at the place were not annoying and behaved nicely with them. Instead, they maintained the decorum inside the premises of the monument. This survey was followed by a team lunch and photograph.

Truly, it was a wonderful day for all the NSS members. Not only did everyone enjoy but it was also a great chance for all to get in touch with ground realities of Delhi's heritage. It was a great walk to sensitize everyone in order to preserve their beautiful heritage.

It is rightly said that cultural heritage defines the uniqueness of individuals. Hence we all must appreciate the cultural diversity of our nation and work towards sustaining it forever.







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