



Report on

“Exploring Our Heritage: An Academic Journey to the Qutub Complex”

Date: Tuesday, 04th February 2025

Venue: Qutub Minar, Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque, Seth Sarai, Mehrauli, New Delhi

Event Type: Academic Visit (**Experiential Learning**)

Mode of Activity: Offline

Target Group: Students of B.A. Programme , B.A. hons. Chinese

Coordinators: Dr. Aditi (Assistant Professor), Dr. Biatrisha Mukhopadhyay (Assistant Professor), & Dr. Kartika Saharan (Assistant Professor)

Organized by: School of Humanities

Number of Participants : 15 Students + 3 (Faculty members)

Introduction

On Tuesday, 04th February 2025, School of Humanities organized an academic visit titled *Exploring Our Heritage: An Academic Journey to the Qutub Complex*. This visit aimed to provide students with an immersive experience in studying and appreciating India's rich cultural and architectural heritage. The Qutub Complex, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, offers a unique opportunity to explore the historical evolution of Indo-Islamic architecture, understand its socio-cultural significance, and examine its contribution to India's historical narrative. The trip was designed to complement classroom learning by offering firsthand exposure to medieval Indian architecture, inscriptions, and historical narratives.

Objective

- To provide students with a firsthand experience of India's rich historical and cultural heritage.
- To analyze the architectural styles, inscriptions, and historical significance of the Qutub Complex.
- To understand the socio-political context of its construction and its influence on later architectural developments.
- To enhance experiential learning through direct engagement with historical structures.

Methodology

- Pre-visit briefing on the historical background and architectural significance of the Qutub Complex.
- Guided educational tour facilitated by an expert on Indo-Islamic architecture.
- Interactive Q&A session encouraging students to critically engage with the monument's features.
- Post-visit discussion to analyze architectural elements and historical contexts.

Content

The guided tour covered various aspects of the Qutub Complex, including:

- **Qutub Minar:** The towering minaret built by Qutb-ud-din Aibak in 1193, showcasing intricate carvings and Indo-Islamic design.
- **Iron Pillar:** An ancient metallurgical marvel from the Gupta period, known for its rust-resistant properties.
- **Alai Darwaza:** A grand gateway built by Alauddin Khilji, displaying Persian and Indian architectural influences.
- **Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque:** One of the first mosques built in India, reflecting early Indo-Islamic architecture.
- **Tomb of Iltutmish:** A significant structure illustrating the architectural advancements of the Delhi Sultanate.
- **Alai Minar:** An incomplete tower envisioned by Alauddin Khilji, representing his ambition to surpass Qutub Minar.
- **Smith's Cupola:** A small pavilion added by the British during colonial times, later removed to preserve the monument's authenticity.

Outcome

The academic visit provided students with valuable insights into India's architectural and cultural history. Key outcomes included:

- A deeper appreciation of Indo-Islamic architectural fusion.
- Enhanced analytical skills in identifying historical and artistic elements in monuments.
- Broadened perspectives on cultural heritage and conservation efforts.
- Encouragement for further research on historical monuments and their socio-political significance.

Conclusion

The visit to the Qutub Complex was an invaluable educational experience, bridging theoretical knowledge with practical exploration. The exposure to historical structures fostered a greater appreciation for India's architectural heritage, emphasizing the importance of historical preservation.

Further Scope

- Organizing visits to other UNESCO World Heritage Sites for comparative analysis.

- Conducting research projects on specific architectural features of Qutub Minar and its surrounding structures.
- Hosting post-trip seminars and presentations to encourage student-led discussions.

Pictures:



Photo 1: Students and faculty at Qutub Minar.

Photo 2:
Glimpses of
Qutub
Complex.





Photo 3: Group picture near the Qutub Complex.



Photo 4: Group Picture



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Students at the Qutub Complex