

Report on the Heritage Walk “Religious Edifices of Chandni Chowk and the Local Communities” organised by Centre for Community Knowledge, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi. [6th April, 2026]

The Centre for Community Knowledge, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi, organised a Heritage Walk at Chandni Chowk on 6th of April 2026. The walk was conducted by Dr. Anand Burdhan, in the gracious presence of Prof. (Dr.) Satyaketu Sankrit, Dean, Academic Affairs. It was titled ‘Religious Edifices of Chandni Chowk and the Local Communities’ that aimed at covering the religious heritage buildings of the area and their association with local communities.



Red Fort

The walk intended to cultivate awareness among the students regarding the significance of built heritages at religious shrines in maintaining community



Prof. (Dr.) Satyaketu Sankrit addressing the students

brotherhood, social amicability and cultural syncretism. The ‘religious edifices’ that were covered during a span of 3 hours were thoroughly explained in their historical, religious and socio-cultural contexts. With number of students and several professors approximately hundred, the on-site discussion proved its relevance and utility in the current academic scenario.

The trail commenced from *Digambar Jain temple* at 9 am, with the Red Fort in background. Prof. (Dr.) Satyaketu Sankrit addressed the students and teachers at the beginning. He emphasized on significance of on-site discussions on monuments. Rightly as he stated, activities like heritage walks and visits are significant sources of practical knowledge generating interest in living history among students.

At the Jain temple, various facets of Jainism were explained. The terminologies like *Jina*, *Jinendriya*, *Arhat* were talked about. The historical perspective of the development and spread of Jainism and its association with Mughal royalty was explored. Besides, the architectural features of Jain temples in India and those of the *Digambar Jain Temple* at Chandni Chowk were discussed. The most interesting part was to know about and witness the *ala-gila* paintings that adorned the interior walls of the temple.



Prof. (Dr.) Satyaketu Sankrit



On-site discussion

Dr. Anand Burdhan narrated the popular story of this historic temple related to the Mughal military camp (*Lashkar*) where the cult image of Tirthankaras installed and was worshipped by the local gentry of Jains of the Digambar community.

From *Digambar Jain Temple*, the group was led straight towards the Fatehpuri Mosque which stands at the end of the road. While moving towards it, the second stop was made at the *Gauri Shankar Mandir*, also known as *Maratha Mandir*. The current structure shows no major Maratha architectural features. The temple was established in 18th century by Appa Gangadhar Rao, a Maratha commander and a devotee of Lord Shiva. The current structure is a refurbished one, done in 1959 by Seth Jaipuria.

The next monument on the way was the *Gurudwara Sisganj Sahib*.

The historical context of the Gurudwara was explained by Dr.



Gurudwara Sisganj Sahib

Anand Burdhan at length, including its naming after the sacrifice made by Guru Tegh Bahadur at the spot. The Sikh military organization of *Misls*, *Khalsa*, *Dal Khalsa*, their leaders and ideologies were discussed comprehensively. The faith of Sikhism was also elaborated including its various tenets. The supreme sacrifice made by Bhai Mati Das, Bhai Sati Das and Bhai Dayala were talked



Gauri Shankar Mandir

about and Sikhism was elaborated as a religio-nationalist philosophy.

The group reached to Fatehpuri mosque that was constructed by one of the wives of Emperor Shahjahan. It is an architectural marvel created by a woman devotee.

The interesting story of Seth Chunamal who purchased the mosque from the British and handed over to the local Muslim community was narrated storilogically. The architectural features of the mosque were discussed.

The last monument was Central Baptist



Fatehpuri Mosque

Church. It was established by the Baptist Missionary Society of London in the early or mid 19th century. It is considered to be one of North India's oldest Baptist mission. The church features European style structure with thick columns and arched *verandahs*, with a peaceful atmosphere, in contrast to the busy market.



The walk ended at the *Central Baptist Church*, covering the built heritage of various faiths, all at the same geographical area. Not only were the features of the edifices talked about, but also their philosophies, historical contexts and socio-cultural meanings at present. Presence of such varied beliefs, rituals and ways of veneration, related to each shrine makes Chandni Chowk a unique heritagescape in Delhi. It turned out to be an informative one, promoting community bond and religious syncretism. Students and teachers **Dr. Rachna Choudhary**, **Dr. Ambika Ram**, **Dr. Nikita Jain**, **Dr. Vijay Yadav**, **Dr. Rubina Saiti**, **Mr. Prateek Yadav**, **Ms. Asra Akhtar**, **Ms. Khushi Pahuja** and others from various schools actively participated in the discussion. Masters students and PhD Scholars from School of Heritage Research and Management, **Mr. Sadhish Sharma**. and **Ms. Brishti Mitra** with their active participation in maintaining the discipline during the walk, helped in the convenient organization of the on-site discussion.

Dr. Anand Burdhan
Coordinator,
Centre for Community Knowledge,
Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi.