



Visit to Mehrauli Village- Class 8

In the middle of the bustling metropolitan city of Delhi, lies the ancient village of Mehrauli. Being the first historical city of Delhi, it plays a great part in the seven cities that make up Delhi today. Mehrauli, originally named Mihirawali, meaning home of Mihir, was founded by Mihir Bhoja of the Gurjara Pratihara dynasty.

We were all very excited when we heard that class eight was going on a field trip to Mehrauli village. We all eagerly piled into the bus and started chit-chatting amongst ourselves. It was a 45 minute drive to Mehrauli, and on the way we saw the Qutab Minar, the historical minaret erected by Qutubuddin Aibak and Iltutmish. We thought we are going to stop there, but the bus driver kept driving on. On our enquiry, the teacher told us that we would be visiting another part of Mehrauli.

We stopped right outside the entrance to the bus terminal, and a great hexagonal monument loomed up in front of us. We crossed the hazardous road, with busses, cars, and people going in all directions and reached the monument that is called Adam Khan's tomb. After a little prep talk by Mr. Trivedi, we learnt that Adam Khan's tomb was also called Bhoor Bhullaiyan, which means maze. This monument was used as a guesthouse and then later on as a police station at that point of time. We were also told that we would be walking through the local housing complexes and markets. We were given sheets with some information on them about the historical sites and the places we would be visiting, along with a map.

We started walking and saw Yogmaya temple, a temple dedicated to the younger sister of Krishna, the seventh child of Devaki and Vasdeva. It is said that if you ask for any boon at this place with full devotion, then that boon will come true. We did not go inside to satisfy our curiosity, but we sure did satisfy our hunger with the delicious pedas we got as prasad!

We then started walking back to Adam Khan's tomb but soon left it behind, only to be greeted by the colorful sight of the fruit market. We carried on, and came to a tiny Shiva temple, which connected us to the local sabzi mandi, or vegetable market. Finally we entered narrow lanes lined with houses comprising of barely one room each. These, our teacher pointed out were probably the houses of the lower caste people, like the sutaputras. These narrow lanes gave way to an open ground. This, we were told was probably the recreational centre for the surrounding houses. Fairs and weekly markets would be held here. Also our teacher pointed out to us that the previous houses we had passed had an open drainage system, which needed much more advanced maintenance than closed ones, and also these were very well maintained systems. We resumed our march through the lanes, and noticed they had widened out and we guessed that these were the houses of the Baniyas, or traders, who were slightly richer than the occupants of the previous houses.

Now we saw a slight change in the housing system. The houses were in clusters, with a common courtyard in between, not very noticeable, but very much there. These were the houses of the potters. We saw a local potter family making and painting pots - the men making, and women painting them.

We then entered a rusty iron gate, which revealed an ancient step well, called Gandhak ki Baoli. It is five stories deep and is so called because of the distinct smell of Gandhak, or Sulphur in it. We sniffed the air, but now, all we could smell was dirty water. We were also told that people used to come here to bathe because of the healing powers of Sulphur. Village children used to jump into it from the uppermost storey to retrieve coins which people used to throw into the well to make a wish!

Soon it was time to eat samosas and oranges under the shadow of the great Adam Khan's tomb, and pile onto the busses again. As the bus started, we all started talking again, but with the sounds and sights of the ancient yet beautiful city still buzzing in our minds.

By Abijeet Singh Aulakh & Soham Kacker - Class 8-B