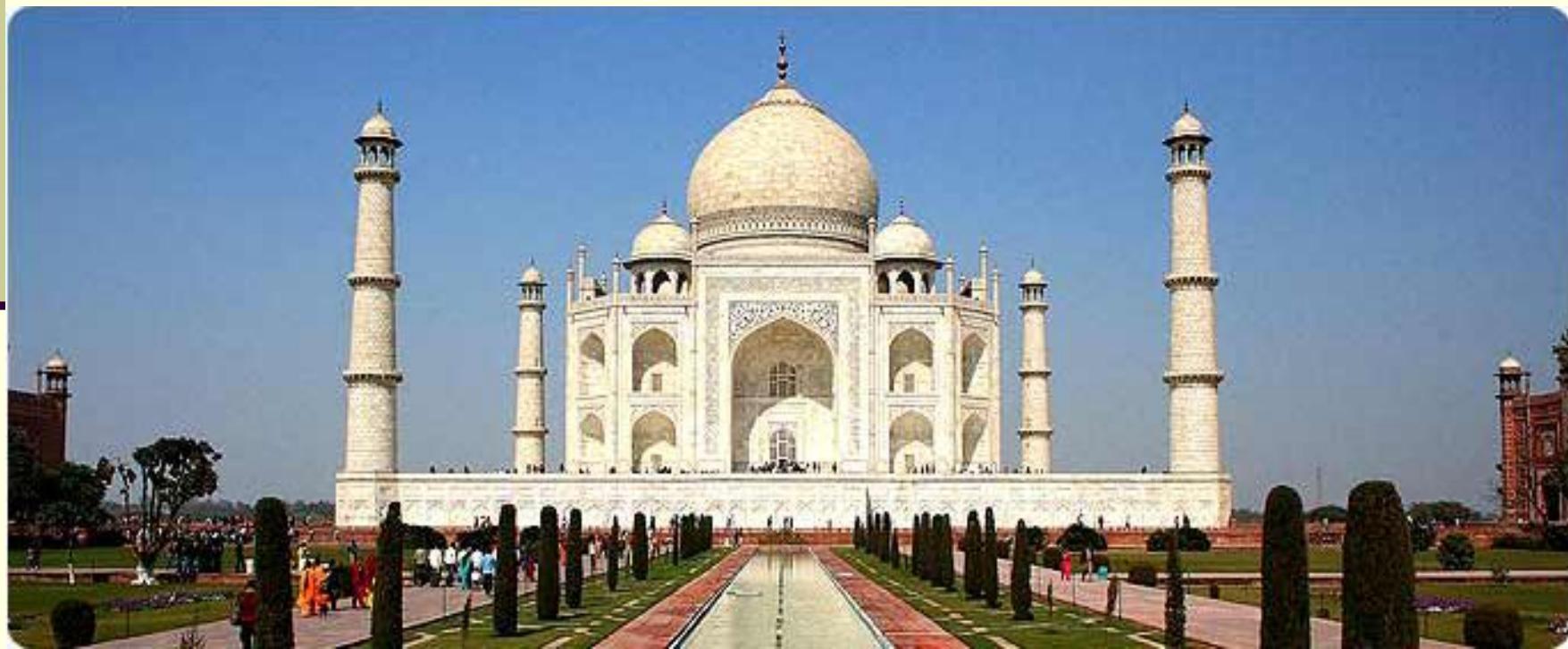

Monuments of Northern India

Taj Mahal

- The Taj Mahal incorporates and expands on design traditions of Persian architecture and earlier Mughal architecture. Specific inspiration came from successful Timurid and Mughal buildings including; the Gur -e Amir (the tomb of Timur, progenitor of the Mughal dynasty, in Samarkand), Humayun's Tomb, Itmad-Ud-Daulah's Tomb (sometimes called the *Baby Taj*), and Shah Jahan's own Jama Masjid in Delhi. While earlier Mughal buildings were primarily constructed of red sandstone, Shah Jahan promoted the use of white marble inlaid with semi-precious stones, and buildings under his patronage reached new levels of refinement.



Agra Fort

- Agra Fort was originally a brick fort, held by the Hindu Sikarwar Rajputs. It was mentioned for the first time in 1080 AD when a Ghaznavide force captured it. Sikandar Lodi (1488–1517) was the first Sultan of Delhi who shifted to Agra and lived in the fort. He governed the country from here and Agra assumed the importance of the second capital. He died in the fort at 1517 and his son, Ibrahim Lodi, held it for nine years until he was defeated and killed at Panipat in 1526. Several palaces, wells and a mosque were built by him in the fort during his period.



Itmad-ud-Daulah

- **Itmad-ud-Daulah**, also known as the ‘Baby Taj’, is the first monument in India built entirely in marble.
- The tomb was built between 1622 and 1628 by the Queen of Jahangir, Nurjahan as a memorial to her father, Mirza Ghiyas Beg. Mirza Ghiyas Beg, an Imperial Officer, was bestowed with the title of Itmad-ud-Daulah (Pillar of State) by his Emperor Jahangir.
- The mausoleum rests in a walled garden close to the Yamuna River, approximately one and a half kilometers upstream of the Taj Mahal, Agra.
- This tranquil, small, garden was to inspire the construction of the Taj Mahal in the later years.



India Gate



- The India Gate is the national monument of India. Situated in the heart of New Delhi, it was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.
- The monument is inspired by the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, which in turn is inspired by the Roman Arch of Titus.
- It was built in 1931. Originally known as the All India War Memorial, it is a prominent landmark in Delhi and commemorates the 90,000 soldiers of the British Indian Army who lost their lives in World War I and the Third Anglo-Afghan War.
- It is composed of red and pale sandstone and granite.

Red Fort



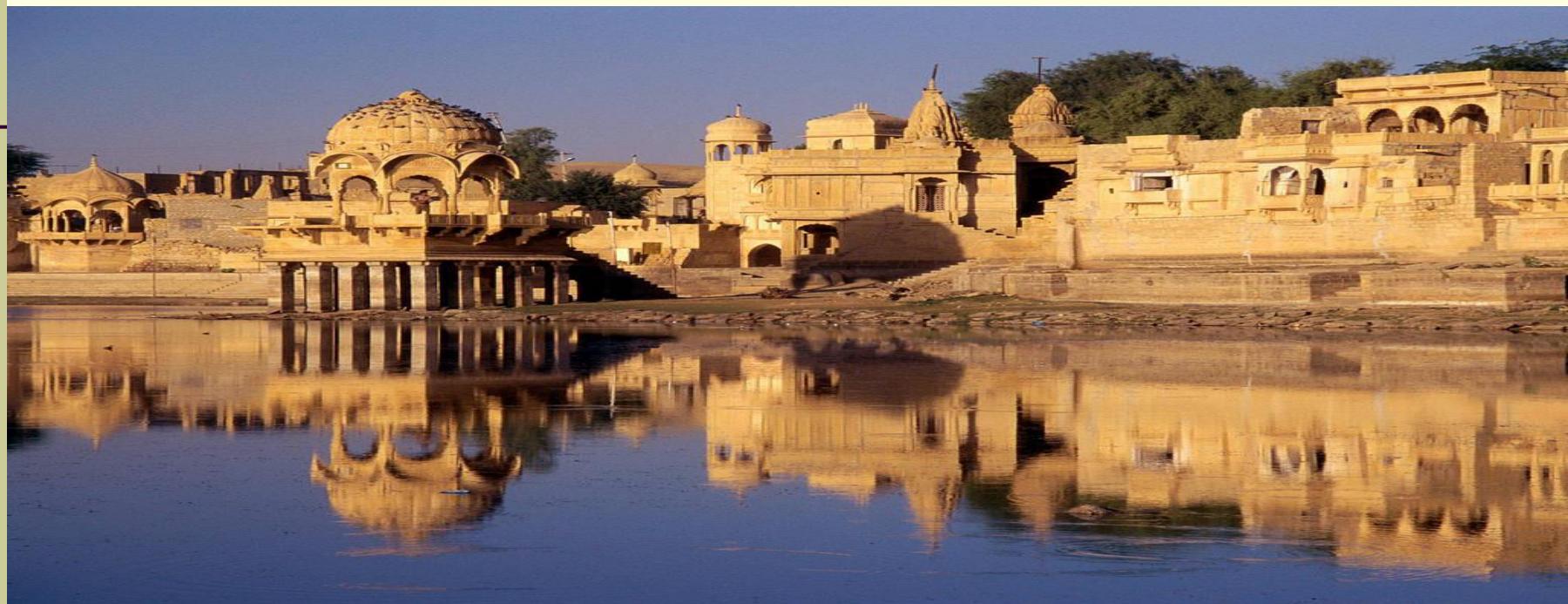
- The **Red Fort** (usually transcribed into English as **Lal Qil'ah** or **Lal Qila**) is a 17th century fort complex constructed by the Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan in the walled city of Old Delhi (in present day Delhi, India) that served as the residence of the Mughal Emperors.
- The fort was the palace for Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan's new capital, Shahjahanabad, the seventh city in the Delhi site.
- He moved his capital here from Agra in a move designed to bring prestige to his reign, and to provide ample opportunity to apply his ambitious building schemes and interests.
- It served as the capital of the Mughals until 1857, when Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar was exiled by the British Indian government.

Qutub Minar



- The tall and ever **attractive monument of Delhi** which can be seen from most parts of the city is called the Qutab Minar.
- Every body has the same question when one sees the structure for the first time. The question that is often being put up is "Why the monument is that big?" or "Was there any specific reason to build such a tall building or it was just a wish of the person who built it?" Well, the exact reason is assumed to have something related to commemorating the victory.
- Mughals used to build victory towers to proclaim and celebrate victories. Some say the minaret was used to offer prayer but it is so tall that you can hear the person standing on the top.
- Also, the minaret is not joined on to Qutuddin's mosque and the Iltutmish's mosque.

Gaisalmer Fort



- **Jaisalmer Fort** is one of the largest forts in the world. It is situated in Jaisalmer city in the Indian state of Rajasthan.
- It was built in 1156 AD by the Bhati Rajput ruler Rao Jaisal, from where it derives its name. The fort stands proudly amidst the golden stretches of the great Thar Desert, on Trikuta Hill, and has been the scene of many battles.
- Its massive yellow sandstone walls are a tawny lion color during the day, fading to honey-gold as the sun sets, thereby camouflaging the fort in the yellow desert.
- For this reason, it is also known as the "Golden Fort". This fort, popularly known as the 'Sonar quila' by the locals, is located in the very heart of the city, and is one of the most breathtaking monuments in the locality.

Amer Fort



- About 10 miles northeast of Jaipur lies the imposing Amber Fort.
- The name "amber" derives from the goddess Amba Mata (Mother Earth) worshiped by local tribes at the site prior to the building of the fort complex.
- It was established as a citadel in 1529 by Man Singh I on the remains of an 11th century fort, and much of its architectural beauty derives from later additions made by Jai Singh I.
- The Kachhawaha Rajputs (one of the three ruling warrior dynasties in Rajasthan) maintained the Amber Fort as their capital until moving to Jaipur in 1727.
- However, the fort retained its ceremonial value, as the rajas came to the Shila Devi Temple on religious occasions to pay their respects to the Mother Goddess.
- The Kachhawaha Rajputs maintained their control of the region in part due to savvy alliances with the ruling Mughuls (most notably, Akbar) and the pleasure palaces within the fort reflect the Islamic influence.