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Walk Into History

Aug 03rd, 2010 - Shruti Badyal (The Asian Age)



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The walk is gaining stronger stride. A growing number of groups in the capital are organising walks around various interesting pockets of Delhi to explore and know the capital better. Stepping out in sturdy boots for these paid walks are youngsters, foreigners and scholars. And the destinations range from the narrow lanes of Old Delhi, the bustling early morning flower bazaars, the ruins of palaces and mosques and a culinary tour of the Walled City. The walk is talking, and how. When Himanshu Verma, who has been organising interesting walks for the last one-year, recently planned the sharbat, kulfi and food walk in Old Delhi, many Delhiites turned up to make it a success. He says, "We started organising walks last year for the 'Monsoon Festival' in Delhi. In this last one year, we have organised walks to various places including flower markets and lakes. Our idea is to make walks a celebratory experience for those who participate. We plan to organise many new concepts of walks by October and November this year. For instance, we plan to take people through the lakes of Delhi, lakes which are artificial, and some, which have a spiritual significance."

Interestingly, these walks not only lure tourists, but also youngsters, especially from the fields of photography and architecture. Some groups are organising these walks to spread awareness. "Delhiites are waking up to the idea of walks. We started with 15 youngsters, today, the number is more than 200. We aim at organising a relaxed walk and also creating awareness about street children and ways in which we can help them. We also organised a blanket-giving walk last winter in backward areas. After the walk, you feel you have contributed," shares Priyanka from the NGO Jamghat, which organises a night walk every month to reveal the life of street children around Jama Masjid and Old Delhi.

And if you really want to take time out for a leisurely walk and explore the historical beauty, a group of volunteers organises walks to the lesser-known parts of the city. Reveals Kanika Singh of Delhi Heritage Walks, "Unlike regular heritage walks, we focus on exploring not-so-popular ones. For instance, there's a beautiful historical area around the Qutab Complex, which not many people know about."

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