



PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
(Research Unit)
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Government of India



National War Memorial

(Ministry of Defence)

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“The National War Memorial will be a perfect tribute to our brave soldiers who have given their lives for the nation.”

[-Prime Minister Narendra Modi](#)

Introduction

The [National War Memorial](#)¹ stands testimony to the sacrifices made by the gallant soldiers since Independence. Inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 25 February 2019, the National War Memorial complex includes a central obelisk, an eternal flame, and six bronze murals depicting famous battles fought by Indian Army, Air Force and Navy. It represents the culmination of the collective aspiration of a grateful nation to pay a fitting tribute to the martyrs.

National War Memorial: Significance

The iconic India Gate was constructed in 1931 by erstwhile British empire to commemorate the Martyrs of India during World War I as well as Third Anglo-Afghan War. Out of over 83,000 Indians who laid down their lives, India Gate bears only 13,516 names, etched on the monument.²

Post-1947, our country has been involved in many conflicts of different magnitudes and participated in innumerable operations both inland and overseas. Since-Independence, more than 26,000 soldiers of the Indian Armed Forces have made the supreme sacrifice to defend the sovereignty and integrity of the country. Our country continues to engage in counter-terrorism operations and proxy war from across the front resulting in number of battle casualties. While a number of area/battle specific



¹ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1566141>

² <https://nationalwarmemorial.gov.in/about-memorial>

memorials are built across the country, but no memorial existed that was all - encompassing.³

In January 1972, the Amar Jawan Jyoti was installed under the Arch of India Gate to commemorate India's victory in India - Pakistan War of 1971 and as the Nation's tribute to the brave soldiers who laid down their lives. However, their names were not inscribed on the monument.⁴

Inaugurated in January 2019, National War Memorial (NWM) is a testimony to the sacrifices made by the Indian Soldiers during various conflicts like United Nations Operations, Humanitarian Assistance, and Disaster Response Operations since Independence. the names of all the Indian soldiers, who laid down their lives fighting for the



motherland in different operations since 1947 to 2020 Galwan valley clash and thereafter, are inscribed on the Memorial.⁵ The NWM thus represents the gratitude of a nation to its Armed Forces, and showcases rich military traditions of India's Armed Forces as a shining example of selfless service to the nation. The Memorial will help strengthen the sense of belonging, high moral values, sacrifice and national pride in the citizens.

Genesis to Completion

The proposal to construct a National War Memorial had been under deliberation since 1961. The consideration gathered momentum after 2014 and after due deliberations, the Union Cabinet on 07 October 2015 approved its construction. An area East of the India Gate was considered to be suitable for the purpose. A two stage



Global competition was then held to select a suitable design for the Memorial.⁶ While designing this monument with immense emotional and patriotic sentiments, the architect intended to

³ <https://nationalwarmemorial.gov.in/about-memorial>

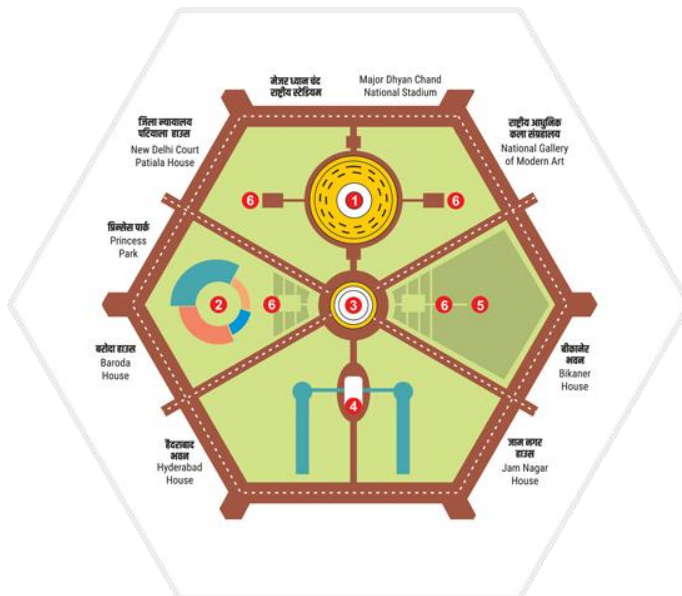
⁴ <https://nationalwarmemorial.gov.in/about-memorial>

⁵ <https://newsonair.com/2022/01/21/indian-armed-forces-veterans-welcome-the-decision-to-merge-the-flame-of-amar-jawan-jyoti-with-national-war-memorial/>

⁶ <https://nationalwarmemorial.gov.in/about-memorial>

create a Memorial where the immortality of the spirit of a soldier is celebrated while we offer our homage and respect to their indomitable courage. Layout of four concentric circles signifies a characteristic feature of the War Memorial with each layer representing the journey of a soldier from birth to martyrdom.⁷ Finally, the monument was inaugurated and dedicated by the Nation to the Armed Forces of India on 25 February 2019 by the Prime Minister.

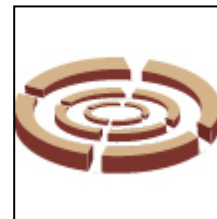
Layout of the National War Memorial⁸



The memorial complex is in harmony with the existing layout and symmetry of the majestic Rajpath and Central Vista. Apart from the main memorial, there is dedicated area for busts of soldiers who have been conferred with ‘Param Vir Chakra’, the nation’s highest gallantry award. The memorial has a distinct scheme of concentric circles:

1. **Rakshak Chakra** “Circle of Protection”

The outermost circle made of rows of trees in the Rakshak Chakra is a reassurance to the citizens of the country about their safety against any threat, with each tree representing the soldiers who ensure the territorial integrity of the Nation, round the clock.



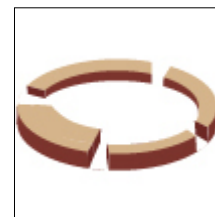
2. **Tyag Chakra** “Circle of Sacrifice”

The circular concentric walls of honour, which symbolise the ancient war formation 'Chakravayuh'. The walls are clad with granite tablets where an independent granite tablet is dedicated to each soldier who has made the supreme sacrifice. Each name on the tablet is etched in golden letters.



3. **Veerta Chakra** “Circle of Bravery”

This circle depicts the Bravery of Indian forces in the form of a covered gallery that exhibits six murals crafted in bronze depicting valiant battle actions of Indian Armed Forces.

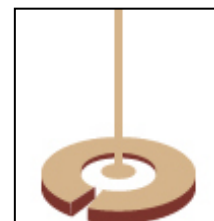


⁷ <https://www.ids.nic.in/national-war-memorial.php>

⁸ <https://nationalwarmemorial.gov.in/about-memorial#conceptLink>

4. Amar Chakra “Circle of Immortality”

The innermost circle, it has an obelisk with the eternal flame. The flame symbolises immortality of the spirit of a soldier with an assurance that the Nation will never forget their sacrifices.



Merging Amar Jawan Jyoti with the National War Memorial

On 21 January 2022, in a befitting solemn ceremony, the flame at Amar Jawan Jyoti was merged with the eternal flame at National War Memorial with full military honours.⁹



The names inscribed on the India Gate are of only some martyrs who fought for the British in the World War I and the Anglo Afghan War. The Amar Jawan Jyoti was a tribute to the soldiers who sacrificed their lives in the 1971 war, but did not have their names inscribed. The National War Memorial, on the other hand, houses the names of more than 26,000¹⁰ Indian martyrs from all the wars, including 1971 and wars before and after it.¹¹ The NWM will thus serve as a memorial for all soldiers who have either laid down their lives or will do so in the future in the service of independent India.

Since its inauguration, all homage ceremonies are being conducted only at the National War Memorial, including those on National Days.¹² Further, every day the Next of Kin of martyrs are felicitated in a ceremony at NWM.¹³ In view of the above circumstances, the merging of the two flames felt appropriate.

Ceremonial Functions at National War Memorial:¹⁴

- Republic Day
- Independence Day
- Kargil Diwas
- Vijay Diwas
- Army, Air Force, Navy Days
- Visits of senior dignitaries

⁹ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1791535>

¹⁰ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleseDetail.aspx?PRID=1786640>

¹¹ <https://newsonair.com/2022/01/21/amar-jawan-jyoti-flame-merged-with-flame-at-national-war-memorial/>

¹² <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1791535>

¹³ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1790772>

¹⁴ <https://nationalwarmemorial.gov.in/about-memorial>

- Regimental/Corps Days



Routine Activities at National War Memorial:

- Retreat Drill just before sunset on daily basis.
- Change of Guard Ceremony and band display before Retreat Drill every Sunday.
- Band displays at Public Plaza on important occasions.
- Public / Routine Visitors.
- Organised visits by Scout & Guides, NCC Cadets, Schools, National Integration Tours, Colleges etc.

Augmenting the reach of the National War Memorial to a Wider Audience

After dedication of National War Memorial, it was felt that there is an imperative need to enhance the digital appeal of the prestigious monument for the visitors, dignitaries & public at large.¹⁵

An initiative was taken by MoD for Enhancement of Digital Appeal at National War Memorial for a wholesome experience to the visitors, and four digital screens have been installed. Besides providing information to visitors, the digital screens have facilitated paying of virtual tribute at the National War Memorial with Augmented Reality (AR) feature which incorporates provision of virtual photograph with Battle Casualties, interactive screens to search Roll of Honour of 26,275 Battle Casualties and OTP-based registration of visitors. NWM Website / Mobile App showcase the Memorial history, significance, concept and details of the Battle

¹⁵ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1786640>

Casualties. The features incorporated in the website / app include multilingual interaction in 21 regional languages to facilitate easier comprehension for visitors from all over the country.¹⁶

References

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¹⁶ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1786640>