

# Shakti Sthala

Ar. Ravindra Bhan

Shakti Sthala-the abode of energy is a place where one experiences quieter moments to pay homage to one of the most remarkable woman that ever lived. It is a tribute to the life and ideals, the vision and the courage of Indira Gandhi.

The memorial evokes the emotional response of her innate strength and varied personality which combines strength and sensitivity, traditionality and progressive outlook and symbolises the charismatic impact of her personality.

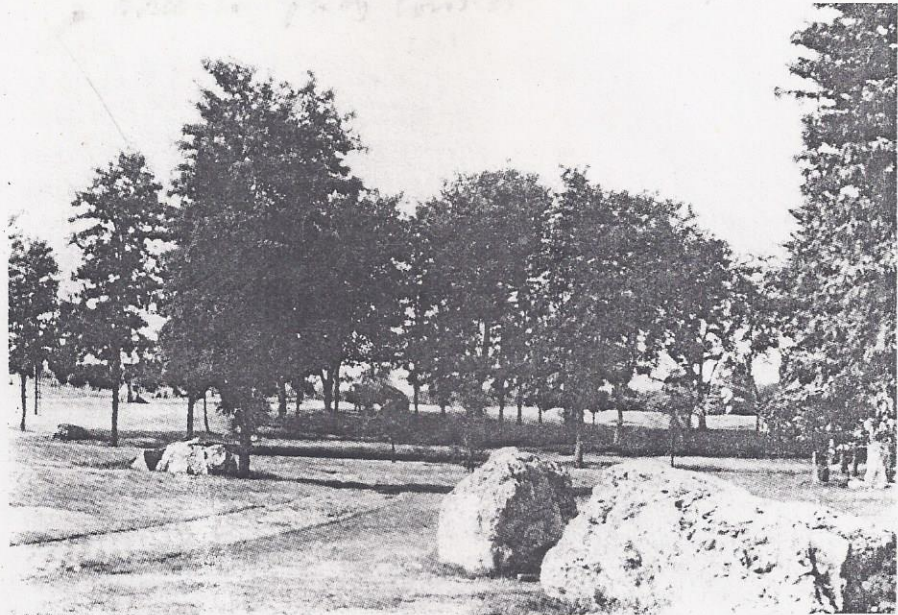
The design of Shakti Sthala reflects the love and concern of Indira Gandhi for nature. The concept has been evolved by using primordial elements of nature such as rocks, earth, water and trees. The understanding of interdependence of these design elements with each other has evolved a harmonious relationship bringing all the elements together forming a totality of every changing visual experience. — 136

### The Entrance :

The entrance forms a distinct landmark from the road inviting a visitor through a formal gateway into a distinct hard landscape with a central banyan tree which ultimately would, shade the place with its graceful spreading branches.

### The Approach :

The gradual transition from entrance to approach road is bridged by broad steps leading through a winding path, set into the folds of landscape. As the path leads it reveals ever changing vistas of the landscape, dotted with rocks placed carefully among indigenous trees, many of them the favourites of Indira Gandhi. Before the path turns it overlooks a



Samadhi Approach

shimmering lake which reflects the serenity of the environment. The interplay of meadows, woodlands and water is reminiscent of Kashmir, the land of Indira Gandhi's ancestors.

### Woodlands :

Large integral wooded areas symbolises Indira Gandhi's admiration for nature and her desire for the oneness of India and the world at large. Large rocks of various types numbering more than a thousand have been brought from every state of India and arranged in the rolling landscape, symbolising country's diversity and strength-while trees in the landscape represent continuity and change. The rocks have been arranged according to geological time scale making Shakti Sthala also World's first geological field museum. — 137

### The Samadhi :

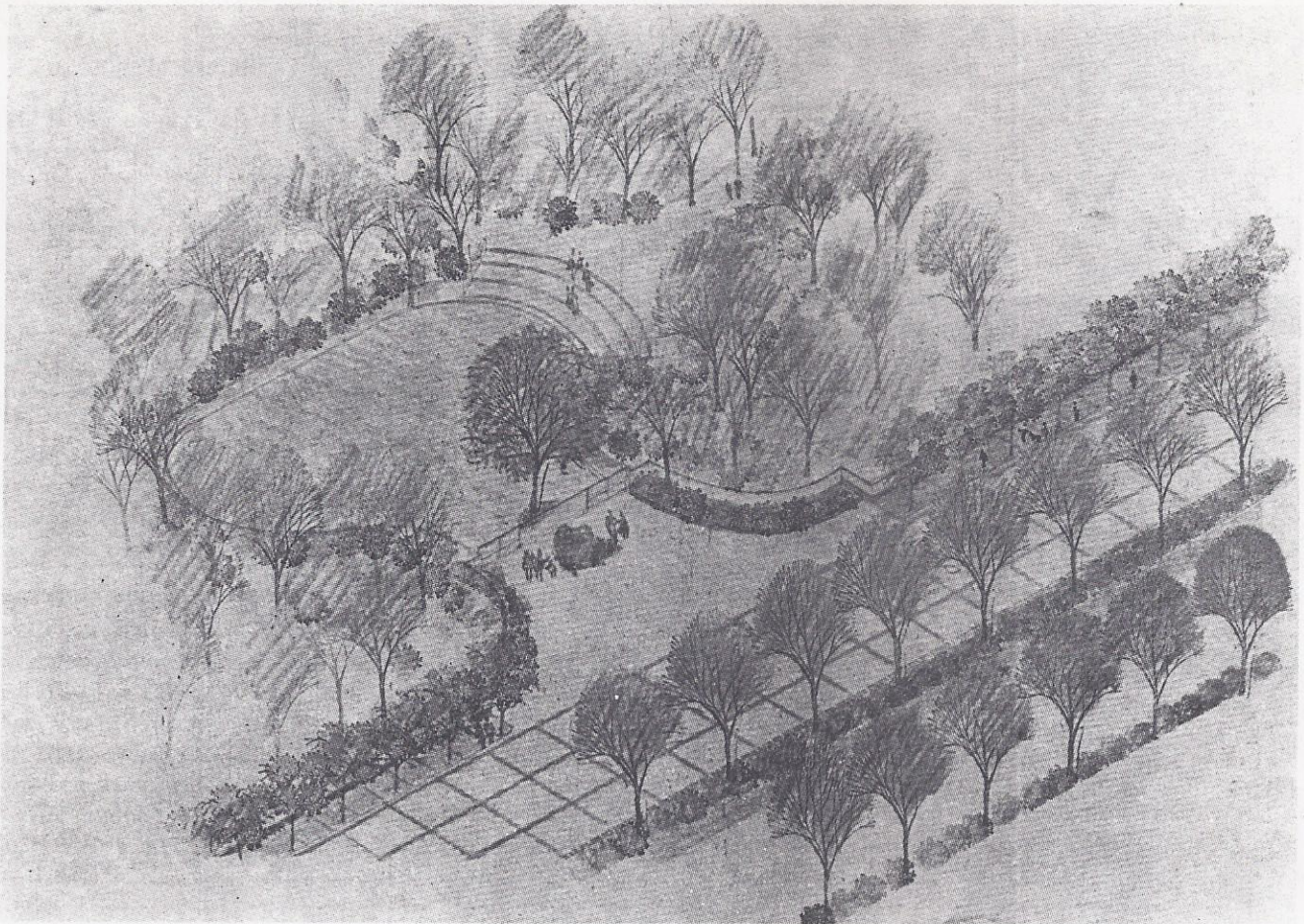
The visitor comes upon the Samadhi of Indira Gandhi almost unexpectedly. The monument stands in a cradle, shaped out of gently sloping sides. This is planted heavily with trees and wild ground covers of various kinds. Plants have been selected carefully so that every season of the year brings the change in the landscape enhancing the natural phenomena. — 138

The iron ore rock weighing fifty tonnes stands like a sentinel guarding the spot where Indira Gandhi was cremated. The spot itself is fully planted with green and rust ground cover. The rock symbolises her courage, fortitude and strength of purpose. The shape, colour and texture of the rock imparts a haunting beauty and radiance to the environment which is dramatic, but at the same time peaceful and serene and gives an aura that is almost like her presence.

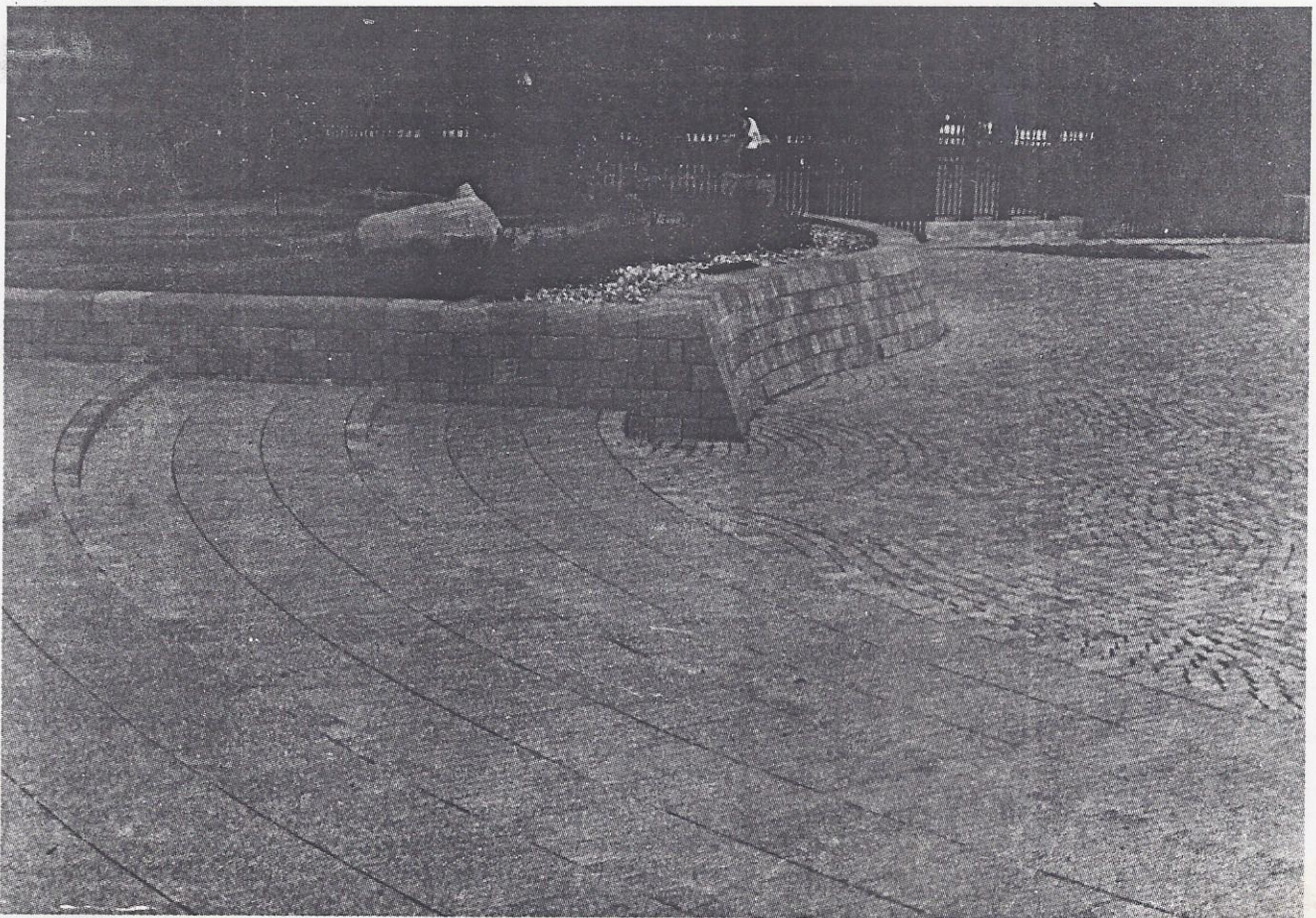
### PROJECT INFORMATION

Architect	: Ar. Ravindra Bhan
Project	: Shakti Sthala
Location	: New Delhi
Client	: CPWO New Delhi
Consultants	: Geological & Botanical Survey of India
Plot Size	: 60 Acres
Cost	: Rs. 3 Crores
Commencement	: September 1985
Completion	: May 1991





Sketch - Entrance View



Inside - Entrance View