

HOMAGE TO THE SPIRIT OF FREEDOM

Cellular Jail

PORT BLAIR

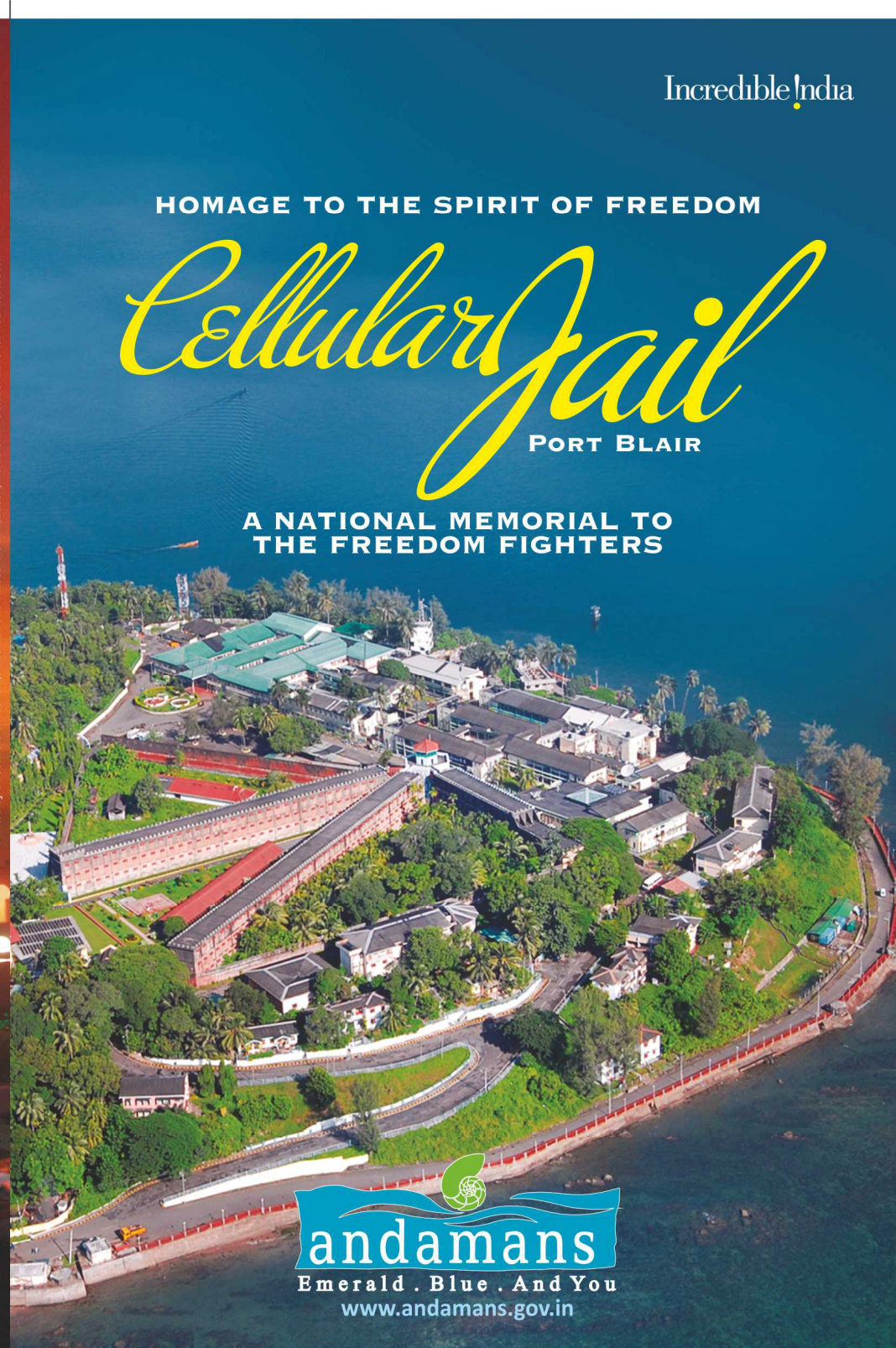
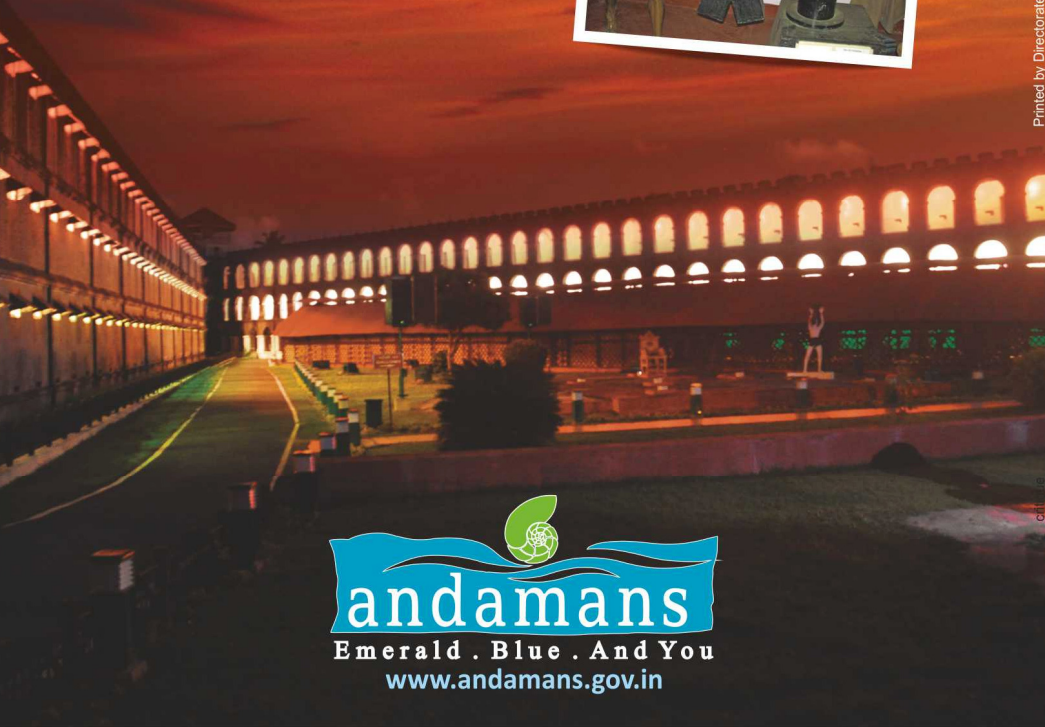
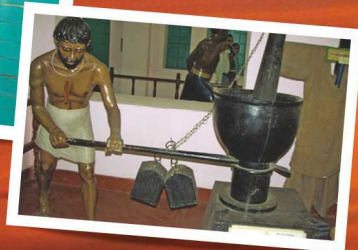
A NATIONAL MEMORIAL TO THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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Today the entrance block of the National Memorial houses, Freedom Fighters Photo and Exhibition Gallery in the Ground Floor. The first floor of the building has an Art Gallery, Netaji Gallery and a Library on Freedom Movement. Gallery on First War of Independence and Old Photographs Gallery have also been set up in the premises of the National Memorial.

An eternal flame of Freedom-Swatantrya Jyoti has been erected in the vicinity of the Cellular Jail in memory of all the Freedom Fighters and Martyrs.

An added attraction in the National Memorial is the programme of Sound and Light (Son-et-Lumiere). This spell-binding show, centered around the wandering spirit of the Cellular Jail, draws your memories back to those years of freedom struggle. It's a show that never fails to bring a lump to your throat.



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FROM A MUTE WITNESS TO A NATIONAL MEMORIAL

Cellular Jail, completed in the 1906, was so named because it is entirely made up of individual cells (measuring 13.5 ft. x 7 ft. with an iron grill door) meant for the solitary confinement of prisoners.

This massive puce colored building was once a seven-pronged structure with honeycombed corridors and a central tower serving as its fulcrum. Currently only three of its seven prongs are intact. And from being a mute witness to the tortures meted out to Freedom Fighters the Jail has become a hallowed place of pilgrimage for all freedom loving souls.

At the main entrance of the jail stands the double-storeyed Administration Block. There's another two-storeyed building on the left side near the entrance of the jail which served as a jail hospital. On the plinth of this building now stands the Martyrs' Column. Near the compound wall to the right of the main entrance were the gallows, capable of hanging three persons simultaneously with a separate door in the outer compound wall for removing the corpses. Adjacent to the gallows were kitchens with Hindu and Muslim sections. A well was dug in the yard between two sections for the supply of sweet water.



What makes this Jail a sacred spot is the fact that some of India's most distinguished freedom fighters were incarcerated here. The list includes the Savarkar brothers, Motilal Verma, Babu Ram Hari, Pandit Permanand, Latha Ram, Ullaskar Dutt, Barin Kumar Ghosh, Bhai Parmanand, Indu Bhushan Roy, Prithvi Singh Azad, Pulin Das, Trailokyanath Chakravarty, Gurumukh Singh, among others. Group of revolutionaries charged in the Alipore Bomb case, Nasik Conspiracy Case, Lahore Conspiracy Case, Chittagong Armoury Raid case, Inter-Provincial Conspiracy Case, Gaya Conspiracy Case etc were brought to the Cellular Jail for long terms of imprisonment. It's the association of these names that makes this Jail a truly National Memorial.

