

### Ganesh/Ganesha/Ganapati

Ganesha is the elephant-god, one of the best-known and most popular deities in the Hindu pantheon. He is instantly recognisable from his elephant head and pot-belly. His 'vehicle' is a mouse, and he is normally described as a bachelor. Ganesha is traditionally held to be the son of Shiva and Parvati. Every Indian child learns the story of how Ganesha got his elephant head. Parvati asked him to guard her while she bathed, then Shiva (whom Ganesha had not met) appeared and chopped off his head when barred from entering. Parvati explained to Shiva that he had just decapitated his own son, and a distraught Shiva gave him the head of a passing elephant. Ganesha is also known as **Vighneshvara**, the 'Lord of Obstacles', and is worshipped as a remover of obstacles, though traditionally he also places obstacles in the paths of those who need to be stopped. There are Ganesha temples in many parts of the country, and he is often also venerated at Shiva temples. His image can also be seen in millions of homes across India. As Ganapati, he is particularly venerated in the western state of Maharashtra.



Ganesha, the elephant-god, son of Shiva, is usually shown with a large belly and his trunk turned to his left.

### Kartikeya

Kartikeya, or **Skanda**, is the war-god, and son of Shiva and Parvati. He is also usually identified with the popular south Indian god **Murugan** (also known as **Subramaniam**). Kartikeya is normally shown holding a spear and riding a peacock. He once was a popular god in north India, but there are now almost no temples devoted to his worship. As Murugan in southern India, though, he is one of the most popular deities.

### Hanuman

Hanuman is the popular and characterful monkey-deity who plays a central role in the *Ramayana*, helping to rescue Sita (see p. 53) from the demon-king Ravana. Because of his role in the *Ramayana*, he is most closely associated with Rama. There are Hanuman temples throughout India.

### Indra

Indra is the early Vedic god of war and weather, and probably the most important god in early Hinduism. His role has diminished in recent centuries, but images of Indra are seen in many early rock-cut temple carvings. He is normally shown carrying a small hand-held weapon called a *vajra*, and his mount is an elephant.

### Agni

The early Vedic god of fire, Agni normally has two heads and several arms, and rides a ram.

### Surya

Surya is the early Vedic sun-god. He is normally shown with a high crown and being pulled in a chariot led by seven horses. Three of India's most important and beautiful temples—at Konarak in Orissa, Modhera in Gujarat, and Martand in Kashmir—were dedicated to Surya, but none of them is still in use as a place of worship. However, millions of Indians perform the *Surya Namaskar*, or 'sun salutation' prayer, every day, some of them doing it as a yogic exercise.

## GODDESSES

### Lakshmi/Laxmi

Goddess of wealth and the consort of Vishnu/Narayan (see p. 51), Lakshmi is typically portrayed with four arms and seated or standing on a lotus flower. Her 'vehicle' is an owl, but this is rarely depicted in painting or carvings. She often has gold coins spilling from one of her hands and is sometimes surrounded by elephants. Lakshmi is a very popular god throughout India, and seen as a bringer of good fortune. There are several Mahalakshmi (Great Lakshmi) temples, the most famous of which is in Mumbai.

### Parvati

Parvati is the consort of Shiva (see p. 52) and, according to some Hindu texts, the gentle form of the **Shakti**, the divine feminine force, of whom **Durga** and **Kali** are more ferocious forms (see *overleaf*). She is normally portrayed bare-breasted, with two arms when at Shiva's side, though when alone she is sometimes shown with four arms. In the south she is known as **Meenakshi**, the fish-eyed goddess, and the famous Meenakshi Temple in Madurai is dedicated to her.

### Saraswati

The goddess of knowledge and art, Saraswati is also the consort of Brahma (see p. 53). She is usually shown with four arms, playing a stringed musical instrument called the *veena*. Paintings of Saraswati often depict her beside a river, as a reference to the River Saraswati. Referred to in the earliest Hindu texts, the disappearance of this ancient river has long puzzled archaeologists.



The mid-16th-century tomb of Isa Khan, one of the finest examples of funerary architecture built in the style of the late Sultanate period.

### Arab Sarai

The Arab Sarai is now used as the name for the walled compound beyond the garden with the Afsarwala Tomb and Mosque, but it probably originally included the garden. This is thought to be where 300 Arabs who recited the Koran at Humayun's graveside stayed. It also appears to have been a marketplace, and the compound is divided up into a number of smaller rooms. There is also a fine gateway that local residents (with specially-issued passes) use to get in and out of the tomb complex.

## BUILDINGS NEAR THE HUMAYUN COMPLEX

The area around the tomb complex has a number of other interesting buildings, including two that have become Delhi landmarks because they are next to major roads. The **Sabz Burj** is a small early Mughal tomb, with a tall stretched blue-tiled dome, in the middle of the roundabout near the entrance road to Humayun's Tomb. The large **Khan-i Khanan** is

a tomb that stands next to the Mathura Road, which runs between the Humayun's Tomb complex and Nizamuddin. It is an impressive early 17th-century mausoleum, built for a Mughal nobleman and poet, but which was stripped of external decoration and stonework, allegedly for the construction of Safdarjung's Tomb. Its shape and design represent a mid-way stage between Humayun's Tomb and the Taj Mahal, and some experts believe that the latter building was consciously based on the Khan-i Khanan Tomb.

Slightly harder to find, but also very interesting, are the **Nila Gumbad** (blue-domed tomb), with its fine mosaic tilework, which is to the east of the main tomb complex, and some tombs in the Scouts' camp and nursery gardens to the north of Humayun's tomb. These include the unusual **Bara Batashewala**, an early 17th-century tomb, consisting of a sunken burial chamber with eight interlinked chambers beneath a flat roof. Also notice the fine plasterwork decoration on the small **Sundarwala Burj**, a tomb inside the government nursery.

## NIZAMUDDIN

The area known as Nizamuddin is named after Sheikh Nizamuddin Aulia, a Muslim saint who died in 1325, and was a disciple of the branch of Sufi Islam founded by Moinuddin Chishti of Ajmer in Rajasthan. Like the Sufi *dargah*, or shrine complex, in Mehrauli, the grave of Sheikh Nizamuddin Aulia has been a place of pilgrimage for many centuries. Around the Nizamuddin *dargah* there are many other tombs and mosques dating from the 14th to the 20th centuries.

The *dargah* is still an important place of pilgrimage, and not only for Muslims. It attracts visitors of all faiths, and Thursday is thought to be the most auspicious day to pay homage to Nizamuddin. Every Thursday after sunset, *qawwali* musicians play music and sing in the central courtyard of the shrine. Visitors are welcome at the performance.

### Approaching the *dargah*

The *dargah*, in the area known as Nizamuddin West, is approached along a broad bustling road, with lots of street vendors. The road narrows as it nears the entrance to the *dargah*. To the left, through a Mughal gateway, a quick detour takes visitors to the 17th-century **Chausath Khamba Mausoleum**, a fine white-marble pillared hall built by the son of the Mughal nobleman Atgah Khan, whose tomb is inside the *dargah*. Chausath Khamba means '64 columns', for once an accurate count. Next to the Chausath Khamba is the **tomb of Ghalib**, the great 19th-century Delhi poet who was an eloquent witness to the death of the Mughal Empire in 1857 and the rise of imperial Britain. On returning to the main road, it is possible to take another quick detour to the right to the ruins of the 13th-century **Lal Mahal** (Red Palace), which is probably the oldest building in the Nizamuddin area. Beyond the Lal Mahal is the 15th-century **Barah Khamba Tomb**. The name Barah Khamba means '12 columns' and is presumed to be a reference to the number of double columns around the central chamber. It is not known who was buried here.



of marching soldiers and military vehicles pass by in front of enormous crowds. The rest of the time the centre of Delhi—one of the most populous cities in the world—is remarkably empty, except for a few picnickers near India Gate. It feels very different from the rest of Delhi.

### LUTYENS

Best known for designing British country houses and their gardens, and with little experience of town planning, Edwin Lutyens (1869–1944) was a surprise choice for the building of New Delhi. He was, however, married to the daughter of a former British viceroy and this may have swung the decision in his favour. Lutyens was famously stubborn—particular over architectural matters—and well known for irritating puns, such as giving a friend of his called Monty the nickname Carlo.

### MAIN BUILDINGS & DISTRICTS

The most important buildings of New Delhi—the President's Palace, the Central Secretariat and Parliament—are in daily use and not normally open to the public. They are architecturally interesting, particularly as an attempt to mix Indian and European design styles, and so are still worth a close inspection from outside. There are several museums that should be visited in this area, as well as the 20th-century commercial centre of New Delhi, still widely known as Connaught Place. New Delhi also has a few interesting pre-British structures that survived the building of the new capital: they include the 18th-century observatory known as Jantar Mantar, a very fine step-well and a 14th-century hunting lodge.

### Rajpath

This avenue is the main axis around which the rest of New Delhi was planned. It runs from the old National Stadium in the east to Raisina Hill in the west, where the presidential palace now sits. It is actually aligned at its eastern end with the northernmost wall of the early Mughal Purana Qila, or Old Fort, but this view is normally hidden by trees and the stadium. Rajpath itself is a broad ceremonial avenue, more than 3.5km in length, with well-kept lawns and ponds on either side of the tarmac.

### India Gate

Towards the eastern end of Rajpath is the monumental gateway known as India Gate, originally called the All-India War Memorial Arch and modelled on arches of ancient Rome and the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. Unlike the Arc de Triomphe, however, India Gate has no statuary and is topped by a small flattened dome on its roof—the only indigenous architectural feature on the building. The early drawings of the arch show

ters in the early 16th century, and the main church was originally built in this period. However, Old Goa soon became the Portuguese capital, and the area around Panjim declined in importance. In the 18th century, partly because of epidemics affecting Old Goa as well as the silting up of the Mandovi, key government offices, including the viceregal residence, were moved to Panjim. It became the official capital of Goa in 1843, and the headquarters of Portugal's empire in Asia.

**Orientation:** The city has a long waterfront on the Mandovi estuary, some of it on reclaimed land. Inland is a high ridge running north–south, which separates the western part of the city, with the main government buildings, from the eastern part, which contains the old Portuguese residential quarter known as Fontainhas. The museum and the bus station are in the most easterly part of Panjim, on the other side of the Ourem Creek, and are close to the two bridges over the Mandovi that lead to the beaches and towns of north Goa. Panjim is an easy city to walk around, and the best place to start is probably the former State Secretariat, overlooking the Mandovi River.

## CENTRAL PANJIM

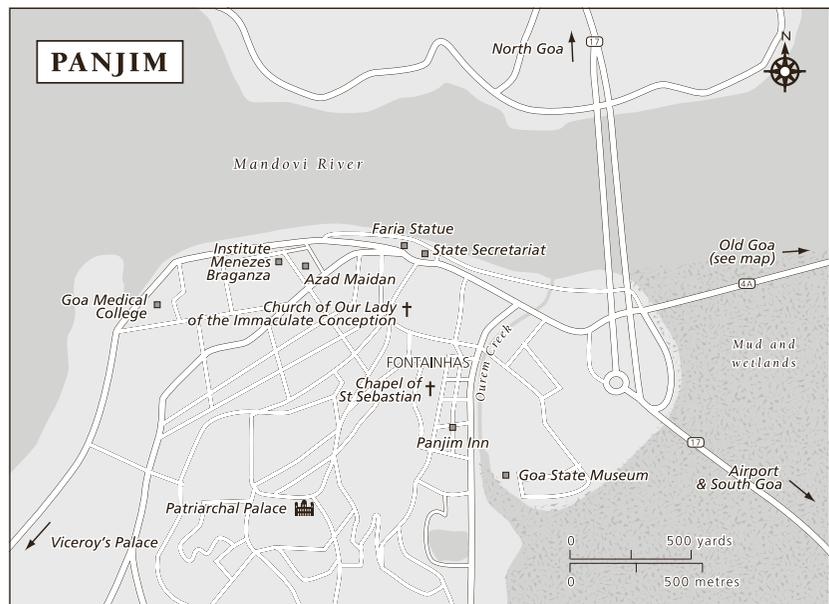
### State Secretariat

The former State Secretariat (mainly late 18th century) is a long whitewashed two-storey building with an arched stone entrance, close to the Mandovi River in central Panjim. It was built on the site of a 15th-century palace erected by the Bijapur sultan, Yusuf Adil Shah, and which was known by the Portuguese as *Idalcão's Palace*—a corruption of the name Adil Khan, one of the sultan's titles. Under the Portuguese, it served successively as the viceregal palace, then the central government office, or Secretariat, and it is still used now as an office by a number of government departments.

Head inland from the State Secretariat for a large square, which has a monumental column (1898) that once supported a bust of Vasco da Gama—placed here on the 400th anniversary of his landing in India—now replaced by a copy of Ashoka's lion capital, which serves as India's national emblem. Head to the eastern end of the square for an excellent view of Panjim's most important church, described below.

### ABBÉ DE FARIA

Next to the Secretariat is an unusual bronze statue (1945) of the Goan priest Abbé de Faria hypnotising a young girl. José Custódio de Faria was one of the founding fathers of hypnotism as a therapeutic treatment. Born of mixed-race parents in northern Goa in 1756, he trained to be a priest in Europe, fought in the French Revolution and became a professor of philosophy in France. He died in Paris in 1819. Alexandre Dumas' fictional priest of the same name in *The Count of Monte Cristo* was based on de Faria.



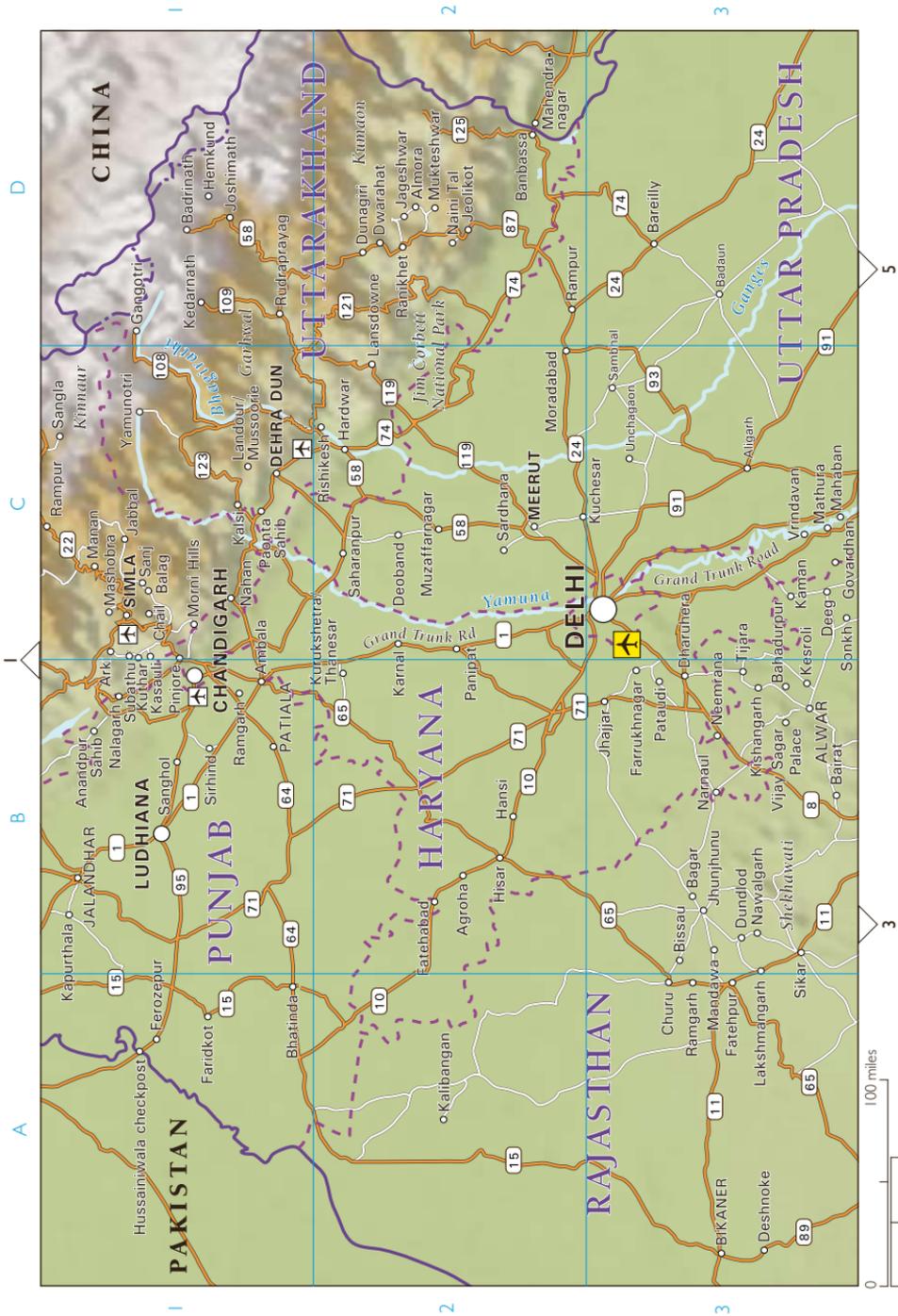
### Church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception

This church (1540; rebuilt 1619) stands high on a ridge overlooking the western part of Panjim and is the city's best-known landmark (*officially open to visitors 10–12.30 & 3.30–5.30, but often open at other times as well—try the side door on the left*). It has impressive double flights of staircases built out of red laterite, with whitewashed balustrades that lead uphill from the street. There are two side towers, with a high bell tower, the huge bell of which once hung in the Augustinian church in Old Goa. Note the bell ropes hanging down the exterior of the building, with a notice-board imploring people not to ring them. The interior is less impressive but has a richly gilded main altar, and gravestones set into the mosaic floor. Behind the church, on top of the hill behind, is a small cross.

To the south of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception is a road that leads to Fontainhas, and beyond that a road leads up to the imposing two-storey **Patriarchal Palace** (1894), on the summit of the hill known as *Altinho*, which is the home of the archbishop of Goa. Nearby is the less imposing but heavily guarded residence of Goa's chief minister.

### WEST OF THE SECRETARIAT

A little to the west of the Secretariat, towards the sea and 100m from the river, is another smaller square (known as *Azad Maidan*, or *Freedom Square*) with memorials to those who died in the 'freedom struggle against Portuguese colonial rule in India'. On



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