

**Ms. Hillary Clinton visited the historic Lokmanya Tilak Garden (Victoria Gardens)
re-developed by Torrent Group's UNM Foundation.**

Ahmedabad 5th February, 2023

Former US First Lady Ms. Hillary Clinton visited Ahmedabad to pay her tribute to SEWA founder Late Elaben Bhatt who had inspired Ms. Clinton during her first visit to Ahmedabad in 1995. UNM Foundation along with AMC has made a small memorial in honour of Elaben as a tribute to her service at the historical Lokmanya Tilak Garden.

It was back in 1972 on 12th April that group of few women met Elaben in this historical park and together they formed Self Employed Women's Association SEWA. To celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the formation of SEWA, Elaben had visited the garden on 12th April, 2022 and also planted a Banyan Tree planning for the next 50 years. Ms. Clinton during her visit to the garden today, offered her homage at this memorial to Elaben. The Garden has been recently re-developed and currently maintained by Torrent Group's UNM Foundation under the "Pratiti" initiative. The garden which has over a century old history has added to the architectural and cultural landscape of our heritage city.

Spread over approx. 34000 Sq Yards, the Lokmanya Tilak garden underwent a complete makeover. The garden spaces have been enlarged so that more people can use the park. Now there is place for people of all ages, this includes a modern play zone for children of all ages and for the first time for the differently abled children as well. The Park also encompasses an enclosed volleyball play court and a city plaza for visitors to relax. New walkways including a forest walk and a maze garden have been created for a refreshing pleasure while walking. Besides these, facilities like clean toilets and drinking water have been added for the comfort of all. The water bodies have been revived, all the old trees retained and many more added along with a new band stand at the main lawn quadrangle. More than 500 trees and close to 40,000 plants and shrubs have been planted in the garden as a part of the makeover. The Mehta family of the UNM Foundation has ensured that the historic Lokmanya Tilak garden brings forth the serenity of nature and is an apt tribute to Ahmedabad, India's first UNESCO World Heritage City.

The Historic Significance of Victoria Garden

In 1897, a group of civic-minded citizens together thought to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. On May 31st, 1897, Mr. Wadia, Barrister at Law in his eloquent speech proposed to construct the Victoria Diamond Jubilee Garden. The proposal was seconded by Mr. Ramanbhai. Taking the idea forward, the jail garden yard across the then jail was converted into the Victoria Garden. On January 7th, 1910, the marble statue of Queen Victoria, sculpted by the renowned artist Mr. H. G. Mhatre was unveiled at the garden in the honour of Queen Victoria. Since then this garden has been a witness to the city's history and is a marker of time. On December 14th, 1917, it saw a huge celebration, as the city recovered from a deadly plague.

In case of any enquiry / clarification, please contact Mr. Jayesh Desai on +91 9824501396

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In 1929, Shri Mohandas Gandhi unveiled a statue of Lokmanya Tilak at the Victoria garden made at the cost of Rs 15000. This statute was sculpted by well-known sculpture artist, Shri M. K. Kolhatkar. The Park also saw installation of a memorial to commemorate the Mahagujarat Movement of 1956. Starting from 1906, a band played once a week at the Park's Bandstand.

In the early days, the garden had a shooting range, rockeries, and also one of the first public radios. From a radio shack, the news and music were played that was amplified through speakers all over the park for people to listen.

Pratiti an initiative of UNM Foundation

UNM Foundation, the outreach arm of the of the Torrent Group, has for decades done notable charity work in the areas of Community health care, education and knowledge enhancement, and Arts Culture and Wellbeing.

The UNM Foundation along with LEAF, the research arm of Prabhakar B. Bhagwat, formed a group 'The Park's People' which also included many like-minded designers of the city. UNM Foundation and The Park's people in association with the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation started Pratiti. 9 parks have been developed so far and are maintained by Torrent Group. They are located in varied economic and social cross sections of the Ahmedabad city. 3 more parks are also under development in the city of Surat.

UNM Foundation

"Think of others also, when you think about yourself". With this philosophy of our Founder, Late Shri U. N. Mehta, the "UNM Foundation", a not-for-profit organisation has been established by the Mehta Family, who also are the promoters of Torrent Group. The Foundation carries out Social and Philanthropic activities of the Torrent Group, with a focus on Community Healthcare, Education & Knowledge Enhancement and Arts Culture and Wellbeing. By constantly refining its approach, the UNM Foundation strives to ensure that the aggregate power of its initiatives brings about lasting improvements in society.

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