

## 8. Port Blair—A Dreamland

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### Worksheet 1

#### COMPREHENSION

Harsh ka Teela is the popular name used by the locals of Thanesar–Kuruksheetra, while referring to the Archaeological Survey of India managed complex. The vehicle moves through slow-moving traffic and congested roads. After a series of turns, all of a sudden the complex looms in the form of a high wall. Flanked on two sides by a row of unremarkable, supposedly ‘modern’ houses, the walled structure looks almost Martian amidst the surrounding chaos.

But the origin of the main structure within the walled complex is Mughal rather than Martian. This is the madrasa and tomb of the Sufi saint Abdur Rahim, better known as Sheikh Chilli. The saint is believed to have been the spiritual teacher of the Mughal prince Dara Shikoh and while this is not confirmed, the design, elegance and ornamentation of the tomb suggest a patron of considerable wealth. The tomb is believed to have been built around 1650 ad which is the time Dara’s star was in the ascendant. Having said that, it is remarkable that the tomb survived the pillages of Aurangzeb who detested everything his brother Dara stood for.

Sheikh Chilli’s tomb and madrasa have survived and in great style at that. The complex is entered into by an arched gateway much like one would enter a small citadel. Within, a person finds himself in an open courtyard flanked on all sides by a quadrangular madrasa. Each side of the quadrangle has nine cells, each of which is entered into via a high-arched gateway and now house an ASI museum and offices. A stairway from a corner of the madrasa leads to the tomb which is built on a raised platform. The tomb platform is ringed by chhatris on all sides with a small pavilion at one end. In the exact centre of the platform rises the actual tomb—a slender octagonal structure made of yellow buff stone with a nearly white bulbous dome at the top. The place has been heavily restored but that does not take away from the effect.

Driving away from the place back through Thanesar’s chaos, it is hard to imagine a Mughal prince patronising the place or a king of the stature of Harsha ruling much of India from here. But then, imagination is what history is all about.

[From: Sufi Island at Thanesar — Arjun Kumar]

#### **A. Read the given passage and answer the following questions.**

1. What is Abdur Rahim’s tomb popularly called?
2. Which organisation manages the tomb complex?
3. What is believed about Abdur Rahim?
4. Describe the actual tomb.
5. Why do you think the author says that it is difficult to imagine a prince patronising this place or Harsha ruling from here?

**B. Fill in the blanks with suitable words mentioned in the passage.**

1. The vehicle moves through \_\_\_\_\_ traffic and \_\_\_\_\_ roads.
2. The origin of the main \_\_\_\_\_ within the \_\_\_\_\_ complex is Mughal.
3. The \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of the tomb suggest a \_\_\_\_\_ of considerable \_\_\_\_\_.
4. An open courtyard is \_\_\_\_\_ by a \_\_\_\_\_ madrasa on all sides.
5. The place has been heavily \_\_\_\_\_ but that does not take away from the \_\_\_\_\_.

**C. Explain what is meant by the following.**

1. The structure looks almost Martian.

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2. The platform is ringed by chhatris.

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3. The place has been restored.

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4. Imagination is what history is all about.

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# Worksheet 2

## GRAMMAR

**A. Say which are the types of following conditional clauses most likely (I), unlikely (II), less likely (III) and impossible (IV).**

1. If I could be God for one day, I would organise the world differently.
2. If they were well off, these people would not be sleeping on pavements.
3. If he does not follow the rules, he will be disqualified.
4. If I had wings, I would fly across the sky.
5. If you don't get oxygen for some time, you will die.

**B. Make sentences of your own using the following as dependent clauses.**

1. if I were you \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. as it was raining \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. because he is generous \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. where he had left it \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. although he is not rich \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. what he wants \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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# Worksheet 3

## VOCABULARY AND WRITING

**A. The Help Box contains some Latin and Greek word roots. Place the correct root with the word groups.**

Gravis (L. heavy)   Polis (G. a city)   Centum (L. hundred)  
Spiro (L. I breathe)   Pathos (G. feeling)

1. cent; century; centipede \_\_\_\_\_
2. pathetic; sympathy; empathy \_\_\_\_\_
3. police; policy; metropolis \_\_\_\_\_
4. aspire; inspire; expire \_\_\_\_\_
5. gravity; grief; grievous \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Explain what the underlined idiom in each sentence means.**

1. He wanted to achieve his goal by hook or by crook.
2. It is silly to meet trouble halfway.
3. She turned a deaf ear to my advice.
4. The inquiry brought to light some new facts.
5. He invited me to dinner, but I had to foot the bill.

**C. You have lost a book from your schoolbag. You want to put up a 'Lost Property' notice on the board. Write a notice asking for anyone finding the book to return it to you or your class teacher, putting in all the necessary information.**

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