

India Overload

Walking downtown in New Delhi is an experience and probably not the best idea for Westerners on their own but we needed some exercise. The moment we left the sanctuary of the hotel onto the busy streets, we become an instant target for tuk-tuk and taxi drivers and all sorts of people offering to show us somewhere or warn us where not to go. 'There's monkeys on that street, packs of dogs and beggars who will pester you'; all true of course but not enough to stop us from spending an hour soaking up some of the atmosphere. Constant attention and finally being surrounded at Connaught Place, we had to relent and grab one of the ubiquitous three-wheeler transports to take us back (the driver did take an unsolicited detour stopping at a friend's store to offer us the chance to buy souvenirs). And not before we had a chance to feel first-hand the dual mass of energy and poverty that makes India such a wondrous dichotomy. Soon to surpass China as the most populous country on earth, India has a massive educated middle class working hard to take on the world in business but still carries a huge underclass of poor living openly on the streets. While their economic engine is roaring it will be interesting to see how far down the benefits trickle.

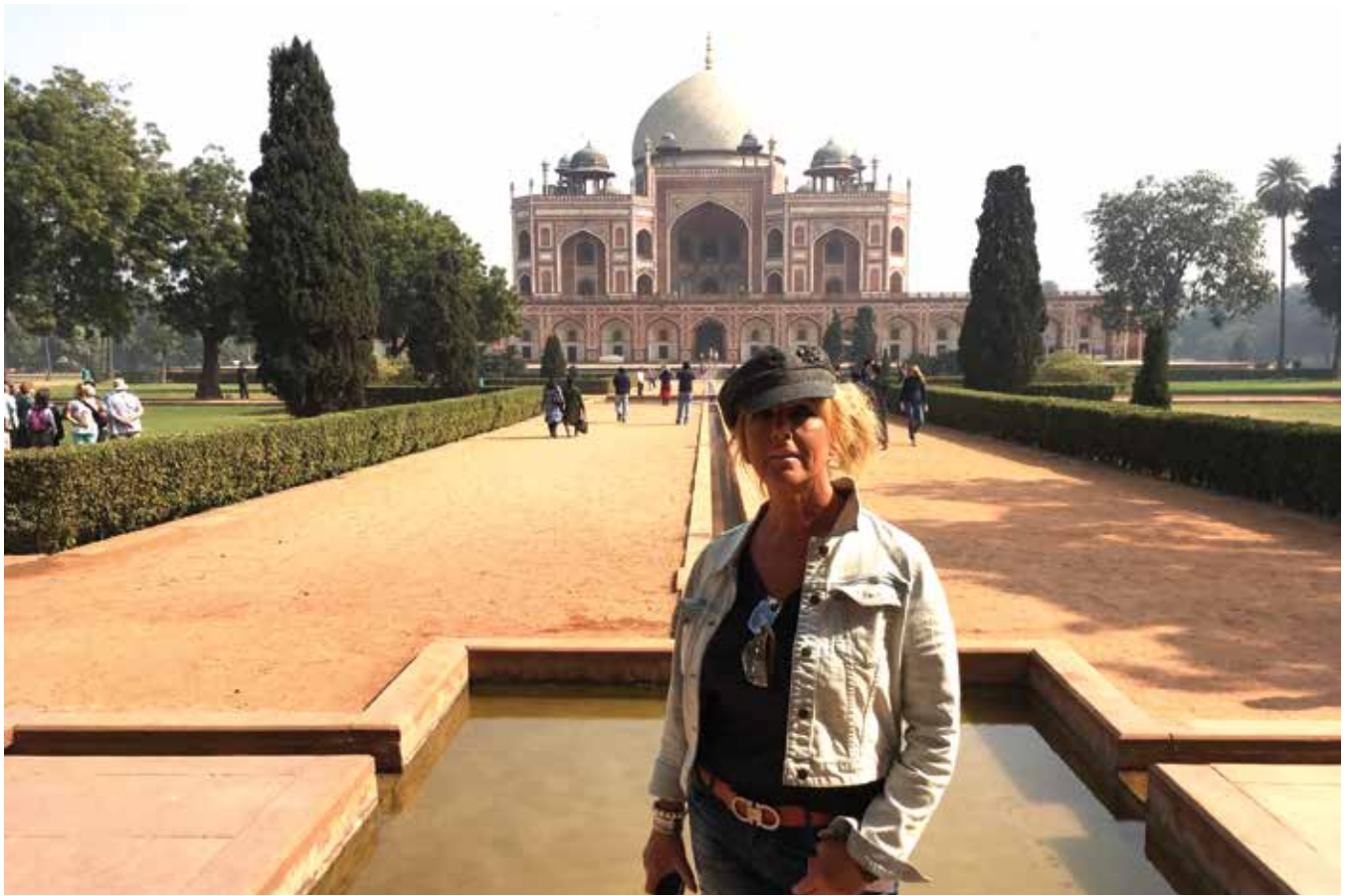
New Delhi sprawls over a vast area and has history and architecture second to none. Ranging from the earliest empire of the Mughals to the most recent of the British Raj, it is well worth exploring. We spent time at Chandni Chowk, one of the oldest markets in New Delhi built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan (who also built the Taj Mahal) and dating back to the 17th century. Everything on earth is available but it is a nightmare to maneuver with hawkers clawing at you and traffic crawling by. Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in India is a sprawling complex and still in active use – we had



Entrance to the Tomb of Isa Khan in Delhi

to visit twice after arriving during prayer and being refused entrance on the first occasion. The Jantar Mantar complex has an incredible collection of thirteen sundials and celestial instruments called yantras which can accurately measure the position of the sun and other heavenly bodies – all dating back to the 1700s and a clear demonstration of the ancient knowledge developed here before the West. The Isa Khan tomb complex (shown above) is a walled area adjacent to the World Heritage

site of the tomb of another Mughal Emperor, Humayun (shown below). It is the resting place of Isa Khan Niyazi, a noble of influence at the court of Sher Shah Suri. Dating back to 1547, the mosque and octagonal tomb are enclosed in a walled complex and is still in amazing condition but must have been simply spectacular when first built. Humayan's tomb is reported to have been the inspiration for the Taj Mahal. Even to this day, the gardens are a haven of peace and serenity.



Mughal Emperor Humayan's Tomb in Delhi

Incredible India they call it, with due reason, and New Delhi is only one city. We'll be back for more.

Rotomolding Surging

The first stop on Orla's 2018 World Rotomolding Tour was New Delhi for the annual StAR rotomolding conference. With 132 attendees from 80 companies and a healthy 20% from overseas, it was nice to be able to catch up with a lot of old friends and make some new ones while finding out about the latest on rotomolding activity in the region. The talks were impressive and varied and a credit to the organizers who continue to attract international presenters for every event. Seminars on process fundamentals and materials were well presented and complemented by two full days of talks from robotics to additives to product opportunities. There is a palpable energy

about the industry as molded products are starting to evolve beyond water tanks and demand for industrial products for international OEMs continue to grow rapidly. Recent threats from blow molding for smaller water tanks have not threatened to take over the market completely but appear to have help push some of the more progressive molders into diversifying and rethinking old methods.

The rotomolding industry is still relatively young and small compared to the general scale of India (there are reported to be around 100-120 reasonable sized companies active and many more small ones in a population of 1 billion+) but it has the general support of the largest company in India, Reliance. They are promoting material and the process as plans for enormous infrastructure development spread across the entire sub-continent: a great prospect

for rotomolding with all the tanks, connectors, piping and treatment systems that are ideally suited for the process. It is also entering an interesting phase as the second generation of the founders of molders and suppliers are now returning to their family businesses having been educated abroad, returning with ideas, contacts and the drive to take the process in new directions. This wave of new blood is a potential turbo-charge to an industry which appears to be reaching a critical mass in terms of sophistication and market opportunities. The buzz is clear and the next few years will be interesting to watch as Indian molders rise with the internal structural growth of the country and at the same time seek new opportunities in markets beyond their shores. Time for international molders and suppliers to revisit their Indian connections... **R**