

Bismillah, Lata to perform at India Gate Aug 9

New Delhi - The India Gate lawns will reverberate with the sounds of music when legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar and shehnai maestro Ustad Bismillah Khan pay a musical tribute to the country's martyrs and freedom fighters on Aug 9.

Congress president Sonia Gandhi is to inaugurate the function, called India Gate Salutations 2006. President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, sitar maestro Ravi Shankar are among the eminent people expected to attend the event.

Year 2006 marks 75 years of India Gate, which was built in 1931 in memory of the World War I martyrs. Aug 9 is also commemorated as 'Quit India Movement' day as the British rulers were asked to leave India for the first time on this day in 1942.

A special postal stamp will be issued by the government on the occasion.

The event is being organised by New Delhi-based couple Neena Jha and Shivnath Jha, who have launched a movement to help eminent musicians.

For Bismillah Khan, 91, it will be a special occasion as he has time and again expressed his keenness to perform at the India Gate. He had performed on Aug 15, 1947, from the rampart of the Red Fort to mark the beginning of India's independence.

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