CHAPTER ONE

ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF SITE MUSEUMS

The establishment of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1862 under General Cunningham gave a tremendous impetus to the rapid growth of museum movement in India. The genesis of the museum movement in India can be traced as early as 1784 with the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal at Calcutta by a brilliant scholar, Sir William Jones. The next seventy-five years witnessed the establishment of museums in many of the principal cities of India. The growth was mainly due to the initiative of European individuals, often patronized by the government. The impetus for the setting up of the museums in the fifties of the century was also provided by the Great Exhibition of Indian Art of 1851 in London. It is to be noted that these museums had no special bias for archaeology, which formed only a part of their total collection, the main emphasis being laid on geology and other natural sciences. The reasons are not far to seek. At that time, these museums were primarily research institutions, the modern concept of public museum had not virtually grown. Secondly, the organizers were motivated primarily by the ideas of assessing the natural wealth of the country. Thus, in a word, it can be said that the idea of archaeological museum in the modern
Plate 1. Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Governor-General of India (1899 – 1905), who patronized Indian archaeological researches.

Plate 2. Sir John Marshall, Director-General of Archaeology in India (1902–1928), who planned and established the site museums for the first time in India.
sense of the term, not to speak of local or site museum, had come up in that period.

Among the museums of this period, the one at Mathura (later on the Curzon Museum of Archaeology and now the Museum of Archaeology) started as early as 1874 by Mr. F.S. Growse, I.C.S., Collector of Mathura, stands as a landmark. This was the first museum that housed exclusively archaeological relics derived from a particular region or area and may, therefore, be regarded as the forerunner of the local museums, that became a conspicuous feature in the succeeding period.

The greatest impetus to the growth and development of museums with new vigour and inspiration in the succeeding century was due to the arrival of Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Governor General of India from 1899 to 1905 (Pl.1). No other Viceroy in India before or after him has shown so much devotion to the cause of archaeology. It was he who was successful in awakening an archaeological consciousness in the country. He had as well placed the Archaeological Survey of India on a sound and secure foundation for the first time. The keen enthusiasm and energy of Lord Curzon found its sincere support from Sir John Marshall who happened to be the Director General of Archaeology in India in 1902 (Pl.2). The immediate cause of establishing more and more
Plate 3. Sir Alexander Cunningham, the father of Indian Archaeology.
museums, specially archaeological museums during the time of Sir John Marshall was the result of a series of excavations at notable historical sites leading to the prolific discoveries of antiquities which had a great cultural appeal. The survey under his able leadership and guidance undertook excavations at many Buddhist sites spread all over the country such as Sarnath, Kasia, Sravasti, Rajgir, Nalanda, Vaishali, Sanchi, Takht-i-Bahi, Shahji-ki-Dheri, etc. Prior to this, the Archaeological Survey was, no doubt, well aware of the importance of the respective sites through the account of Chinese pilgrims and researches of earlier archaeologists of whom Sir Alexander Cunningham (Pl.3) was the pioneer. Marshall equally realized the archaeological importance of Taxila where his digging activities extended for more than twenty years.

With the prolific discoveries of archaeological remains, it was felt by the Survey under the leadership of Marshall to keep the small and movable antiquities, recovered from the ancient sites, in close association with the remains to which they belonged originally. This was attempted primarily "for the purpose of safeguarding movable antiquities and exhibiting them to the best advantage amid their natural surroundings".

Thus, a series of archaeological discoveries, liberal
patronage of Lord Curzon and great enthusiasm of Marshall resulted in the establishment of archeological museums at some excavated sites. The foremost of those was at Sarnath established in 1904, comprising of antiquities ranging in date from circa 3rd century B.C. to Circa 12th century A.D. The collections primarily consist of sculptures, bas reliefs, architectural pieces, inscribed slabs, objects of stone, metal, seals, beads, toys, terracotta figures and pottery. Another such museum of similar nature was at Pagan (Myanmar), also opened in 1904 to house the antiquities recovered at the site which could not be preserved in the site. The museum at Mandalay was opened in the year 1905 with the object of preserving antiquities connected with the Mandalay Palace. Similarly, the Archaeological Museum, Red Fort, Delhi, originated from a Municipal Museum, which was set up in the Town Hall in 1868 by P.H. Cooper, Deputy Commissioner of Delhi, and existed for nearly forty years with a growing collection of a variety of objects. In 1902, Lord Curzon took the initiative of transferring the Museum to the Archaeological Survey of India. Thus in the year 1909 the Delhi Museum of Archaeology was founded in the 'Nagar Khana' of the Red Fort and subsequently transferred to the 'Mustaz abad'. The Museum is entirely devoted to historical collections of the Mughal period in the Red Fort, besides inscriptions, coins, arms, old documents, maps, carpets, manuscripts and specimen of calligraphy and pictures relating to the Mutiny of 1857.
Plate 4. Archaeological Museum, Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh. Entrance gate of the former 'Open air' museum
In accordance with the policy of the Government of India to house the antiquities excavated at the site or the spot, Nalanda Museum was started in 1917. The collections consist of antiquities found both at Nalanda and Rajgir, such as stone sculptures, bronzes, terracotta figures, pottery, coins, seals and iron objects etc., ranging from circa 6th century A.D. to circa 12th century A.D.

This practice of the government was followed by the Indian States of Bhopal and Chhatarpur. The Museum at Khajuraho (old Chhatarpur State, Central Province) was opened in 1910 and came to be known as Jardine Museum after Mr. E.W. Jardine, the then political Agent in Bundelkhand (Pl.4). The Museum possesses a wealth of sculptures and architectural pieces, mostly Hindu and Jain, from the group of temples (dating from circa 950 A.D.) at Khajuraho. The archaeological museum at Sanchi (Bhopal State) was created by Sir John Marshall in 1919, by housing on the spot antiquities recovered during the excavation and conservation carried out at the site. The collections comprise of remarkable sculptures and other architectural pieces consisting of an Asokan lion-capital, fragments of gateway railings, monastic and household utensils of iron, copper and bronze from the Mauryan to the medieval times that could not be preserved in situ. These were arranged in the museum under the personal supervision of Marshall who made it over to the newly created Archeological Department of the Bhopal State.
Pl. 5: Archaeological Museum, Taxila (now in Pakistan).
General view of the museum building.

Pl. 6: Archaeological Museum, Taxila (now in Pakistan).
General view of the gallery.
Further, Marshall's assiduously continued excavations at Taxila between 1913 and 1934 lead to the discovery of large number of antiquities of great international significance from the three successive sites, Bair Mound, Sirkap and Sirsukh. The collections here consist of Hellenistic Gandhara School of art in stone and stucco, architectural fragments, coins, jewellery, seals, sealings, terracotta figurines etc. All these rich archaeological materials constituted the famous site museum at Taxila which came up in 1928 (Pl.5 and Pl.6). Soon afterwards, the whole attention of the Survey was concentrated on the epoch making discoveries of Harappa and Mohenjodaro in the Indus valley, revealing the bronze age urban culture of third to second millennium B.C. Continued excavations under Marshall's direction brought to light a highly sophisticated culture, symbolized by populated cities, carefully planned with all essential features. The prolific antiquities from these two cities paved the way for the foundation of site museums both at Mohenjodaro and Harappa in the years 1925 and 1927 respectively.

Thus, in the first quarter of the 20th century, we notice a spectacular growth in the number of archaeological site museums which outnumber the natural history museums of the earlier decade. It has been rightly pointed out by Markham, who wrote "In India there seems to be a comparable bias in favour of archaeology and historical material. This is quite common when we take into
consideration the glory that the cultural Indian takes in the
despite the ability of the country and the comparative prolific finds of
archaeological materials all over the country and ease with which
these can be secured. In fact, the extensive discovery of
antiquities with ease at various places caught the popular imagina-
tion and paved the way for the rapid growth of archaeological
museums in India.

One of the main drawbacks of these museums was that
there was no central authority to look after their scientific
development since they were under the administrative jurisdiction
of different circles under the Archaeological Survey. The attention
of the Government of India towards this short-coming was drawn
by Markham and Hargreaves in their report on the museums in India
in 1936. Noteworthy incident of this time was the coming of Sir
Leonard Woolly, the renowned Archaeologist, who was invited by the
Government of India to make a review of the entire archaeological
work in the country and to give his valued suggestions for future
plan of work. Sir Leonard Woolly's report proposed many sugges-
tions of which the closing down of most of the site museums was
an important item. Perhaps, Sir Leonard Woolly could not realize

1. Markham, S.F., and Hargreaves, H., Museums in India, London,
1936, p. 43.
2. Ghosh, A., 'Fifty years of the Archaeological Survey of
India', Ancient India, Vol. 9, p. 41.
the wider implication of the subject. Fortunately, considering
the cultural importance of the sites concerned and the possibili-
ties of fostering education through them, if rightly pursued, the
central Government decided to maintain them. Outbreak of World
War II temporarily suspended all archaeological activities in
this country.

Appointment of Dr. Mortimer Wheeler (later Sir), an eminent
British Archaeologist as the Director-General in 1944 marks a new
era in the growth of museums, particularly the reorganization and
rebirth of site museums of the present century. In 1946 a Museums
Branch was constituted under an Assistant Superintendent of the
Archaeological Survey, with its head-quarter at Central Asian
Antiquities Museum, New Delhi, which hitherto, had been under a
Curator directly responsible to the Director-General of Archaeo-
logy. Thus the recommendations of the Markham-Hargreaves report
that the museums of the Survey should be under one administrative
control was given effect to for the first time. This centralized
administration hastened all-round improvement of the Museums
Branch.

The partition of the country in 1947 brought some signifi-
cant but disturbing changes and as a result of formation of Pakis-
tan, three site museums viz. Mohenjodaro, Harappa and Taxila fell
to the share of West Pakistan. This loss was duly compensated by
those in the former princely states in India, later on incorporated within the Indian union. These include Sanchi, Khajuraho and Konarkpur. The last site was excavated, though on a limited scale as early as 1949 by the State Archaeological Department of the former Nizam's Government. The Museum was taken over by the Archaeological Survey to house the antiquities of the Sātavāhana period (c. 1st century B.C. to c. 1st century A.D.) in the year 1952.

In 1956, the vast and unique objects of the Central Asian Antiquities Museum, together with the attached staff, were made over to the National Museum, New Delhi, and rest of its staff was placed under the Superintendent of the Archaeological Section, Indian Museum, Calcutta. Thus, the new headquarter of the Museums Branch under to a whole-time Superintendent was formed. Subsequently, the Branch's strength was further enhanced with the addition of new museums numbering as many as twenty at various places of the country.

In order to have a better administrative control, the Museums Branch was further sub-divided in 1961 into four zones with zonal headquarters at Sarnath (Eastern Zone), Sanchi (Central Zone), Fort St. George, Madras (Southern Zone) and lastly at Nagarjunakonda (Nagarjunakonda Zone), each under a Zonal Officer designated as Junior Keeper which was redesignated later as Assistant Superintending Archaeologist for Museums.
In 1965, the Archaeological galleries of the Indian Museum, Calcutta was transferred to the Board of Trustees of the Indian Museum, Calcutta along with some staff members. Indian Museum was given the status of National Museum in the same year. The year was significant from another point as by this time two new museums, one at Goa and another at Konarak, Orissa were added in the list of site museums under the survey.

The above position continued till recently. But at present, the set up has been rearranged with the result of two broad divisions of the Branch, viz. Northern and Southern. This has been achieved by splitting the entire twenty museums of the Branch into above two zones under the Deputy Superintending Archaeologist for Museums with their offices located at Fort St. George, Madras and Purana Quila, New Delhi respectively. Many of the museums in both the Northern and Southern regions are under the control of the Assistant Superintending Archaeologist for Museums while a few are under the charge of the Technical Assistant in the same rank of Curator. Further, the strength of the Branch has been increased with the addition of two notable museums viz. Lothal and Taj (at Tajmahal, Agra). The headquarter of the Museums Branch is at Calcutta headed by the Superintending Archaeologist for Museums who is assisted by a Deputy Superintending Archaeologist for Museums. The new division into two units has no doubt minimised both the scope and jurisdiction of the museums concerned under the
administrative control of the Assistant Superintending Archaeologist resulting in close supervision of the museum or museums under his control.

A short description of the scope and collection of the museums is given below.

1. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, SANCHI, MADHYA PRADESH (1919)**

   The Museum, previously situated at the foot of the hillock upon which rises the famous group of stupas at Sanchi, is now housed in a modern building. The museum was built in 1919 by the Archaeological Survey of India on behalf of Bhopal State to house the rich treasures of excavated and explored antiquities. The Museum was opened to the public in 1966. The collections consist of antiquities from the Mauryan period up to the medieval times. The notable collections comprise of an Asokan Lion Capital, fragments of gateways and railings, household objects of copper, bronze and iron and a relic casket.

2. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, KHAJURAO, MADHYA PRADESH (1919)**

   The Museum at Khajuraho in the former Cbhatarpur State was at the beginning an open-air museum. The Museum was founded in 1919 by W.F. Jardine, the Political Agent of Bundelkhand. The collection consists of wealth of sculptures and architectural pieces, mostly Hindu and Jaina, from the group of ancient temples of the Chandella kings of Khajuraho, ranging in date, from the ninth to the thirteenth
centuries A.D. The plastic art of Khajuraho offers greater sophistication and sense of feelings and more complex profiles than that of contemporary Orissan art which was another great centre of temple architecture and art. The selective and representative objects in the Museum collection are the finest examples for a study of Khajuraho art tradition. In fact, the art treasure of Khajuraho occupies a place of distinction in the artistic history of northern India in the mediaeval period of Indian history. At present the collections are beautifully displayed in the new impressive modern museum building.

3. DELHI FORT MUSEUM, DELHI (1909).

Located since 1911 in the Mumtaz Mahal of the Red Fort, the Museum contains mostly historical collections of the Mughal period consisting of objects like inscriptions, sculptures, arms, old documents such as farmans, sanads, maps, relics of the rising of 1857, carpets and specimens of calligraphy etc. The Museum is noted for its huge coin collection numbering over 11,000 which represent the issues of the Delhi Sultans and the Mughal rulers. Very recently, this museum has drawn particular attention of the authorities concerned and a gallery known as the Bahadur Shah gallery has been thrown open to the public since January, 1973. A complete reorganization of the museum is in progress.

The site of Purana Quilla near Delhi is considered to have included the ancient site of Indraprastha, the capital of the Panḍavas of Mahāvāra. The site remained more or less in continuous occupation for a long time. This is attested by the result of recent excavations that unfolded the remains of several successive pre-16th century settlements. The site yielded painted Grey ware which has already been recorded at several sites associated with the Mahāvāra. The Purana Quilla was raised over the ancient mound which conceals perhaps the remains of the city of Indraprastha of Mahāvāra. The site appears to have been in occupation successively during Maurya, Sunga, Saka-Kushana, Gupta, Post-Gupta and Rajput periods, finally accommodating habitations of Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal era. As a result of the finds so far available, the antiquity of Delhi has been pushed back to the first quarter of the first millennium B.C. Very few capital cities can boast of such antiquity with continued occupation.3 A museum has been recently set up in an old School building. The museum, in fact, reflects the glorious and colourful history of Delhi that can be traced back to a very remote age.

The Quilla is irregularly oblong in plan, with bastions on the corners and in the western wall. Its ramparts cover a perimeter


of nearly 2 km. Further, there are three main gates on the north, south and west, the last one functioning as the entrance now. The gates are double storied, built with red sandstone and surrounded by Chhatris. It is presumed that Sher Shah left the Purana Quilla incomplete and it was completed by Humayun. There are few buildings still extant of which Qul 'a-i-bahna-Masjid (Mosque of the old fort) and Sher-Mandl, both built by Sher Shah in 1541, deserve mention.

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, SARNATH, UTTAR PRADESH (1914)

The museum houses antiquities excavated from the Buddhist site of the same name and adjoining area, ranging from the 3rd century B.C. to the 12th century A.D. The collections comprise of the Maurya, Sunga, Kushana, Gupta and medieval periods, of which the lion capital of Ashoka, Mauryan Buddha images, the colossal Bodhisattva of the Mathura school with its stone umbrella, railings of the Sunga period and inscribed Gupta images deserve special mention. The Museum, in fact, forms principally a centre for the study of Gupta art at its best. The Museum building is of modern style and consists of one rectangular central hall flanked by two wings.

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, FALAHURA, BIHAR (1917)

The Museum grew out to accommodate the excavated antiquities

found from the famous site of ancient Nalanda University and occasional finds from Rajgir. They consist of sculptures representing both Brahmanical and Buddhist faiths and belonging to Pala School of art. Other antiquities that deserve mention include inscriptions, coins, terracotta seals and sealings, pottery and metal objects. The periods represented by the antiquities range from the times of the later Guptas to the times of the Pālas of Bengal.

7. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, BODH GAYA, BIHAR (1956)

The Museum was inaugurated on the 28th December, 1956 by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The collections principally consist of metal and stone images mostly of the Pāla period and two stone Yakshis of the 1st century B.C. all found at Bodh Gaya and its vicinity. The Museum is housed in a modern building, the gateway of which resembles Chaitya Torana design.

8. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, KONARAK, ORISSA (1966)

The Museum houses sculptures and architectural fragments that once formed part of the monuments of Konarak. The Museum was thrown open to the public on the 30th October, 1968, by Dr. Triguna Sen, the then Union Minister of Education, Govt. of India. More than two hundred pieces of sculptures and architectural fragments have been displayed in its three galleries. The new Museum building is
Fig. 3. Plan: Archaeological Museum, Konarak, Orissa
not far from the famous Sun temple of Konarak. The collections primarily consists of a chariot-wheel reconstructed from the fragments of different wheels of Temple 1, a sandstone image of Surya, reconstruction of a part of the temple-wall, lotus-ceiling, animal-friezes, bracket-figures, human and divine heads, erotic couples, Gaja-Lakshmi panels, an incomplete panel with navagraha and a few slabs with animal motifs.

9. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, VAISALI, BIHAR (1971)

This is one of the recent site museums set up under the Museum Branch. Vaisali was the capital of the oligarchical Lichchhavis of North Bihar from the early times and the supposed birthplace of Lord Mahavira. It was identified with modern village of Basar in Muzaffarpur district. The fortified ruins have been excavated superficially from time to time in 1903-04 and 1913-14 by the Archaeological Survey of India and lastly by the Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna. The excavations revealed hundreds of antiquities ranging from pre-Christian times to the 6th century A.D. along with a stupa of the time of Asoka with relic caskets. Since 1945, a small Museum has been founded by Vaisali Sangha who sponsored the later excavations here with the co-operation of the Archaeological Survey of India. The entire collection of Vaisali Sangha has formed the nucleus of the present site museum of the Survey, which is now on its way to modernization.
Pl. 14A. Archaeological Museum, Nagarjunakonda, Andhra Pradesh.
A panoramic view of the former 'open-air' museum.

Pl. 14B. Archaeological Museum, Nagarjunakonda, Andhra Pradesh.
A view of the modern museum building.
10. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, NAGARJUNAKONDA, ANDHRA PRADESH (1949)

The present museum building, shifted from the low depths of the valley, now submerged under the waters of the Nagarjunasagar on to the Nagarjunakonda hill, is the only island museum in India. The Museum was formally opened by Sri V.C. Chagla, the former Minister of Education, Govt. of India, on the 23rd April, 1966. The Museum, in fact, shows representative collection of Prehistory, Protohistory and history of the whole region. The collection comprises of Prehistoric and Protohistoric objects, sculptures and architectural fragments from various Buddhist establishments coins of the Satavahana, Ikshvaku and the Vijayanagara kings, besides issues of the Roman empire with which South India had brisk trade in the early centuries of the Christian era, relic-caskets from the important stupas of Nagarjunakonda, inscriptions, medieval sculptures, ornaments and a variety of miscellaneous minor interesting antiquities.

11. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, AMARAVATI, ANDHRA PRADESH (1951)

The Museum presents a rich treasure of antiquities recovered in course of various operations primarily at the Mahā-chaitya site. The Museum also includes some surface collections from the ancient mound at Dharanikota. A few antiquities from some other Buddhist sites in Andhra Pradesh, viz., Gummadicurru and Alluru, in District Krishna and Lingarajapalli, District Vishakhapatnam are also on
display here. The exhibits, mostly in stone, range from the third century B.C. to about the twelfth century A.D. The exhibits are arranged in three different galleries, while the model of the reconstructed maha-chaitya, in its evolved stage, can be seen in the courtyard. The collections mainly are lotus-medallion with purana-kumbha motif, drum-slabs, dome-slabs, panels depicting jataka stories, images of Buddha, pillars, rail fragments, sculptured fragments, carved and inscribed pillars, friszees, medieval sculptures and minor antiquities including relic caskets, jewelleries, coins, beads, terracotta figures, neolithic tools, pottery etc. etc. from the famous Buddhist site of Amaravati and its neighbourhood. Incidentally, it may be mentioned here that the best pieces from this famous site are in the British Museum, London, and the Government Museum, Madras.

12. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, KONDAPUR, ANDHRA PRADESH (1932)

The archaeological site at Kondapur houses rich treasure of antiquities associated with the history of the Andhras (circa second century B.C. to third century A.D.) discovered by excavations at the Kondapur mound by the former Hyderabad Archaeological Department. The collection comprises of pottery such as rouletted and russet-coated wares, terracottas, beads, bangles, coins and iron objects etc. The culture represented here is almost similar to that of the other Andhra sites found in Deccan, viz., Brahmagiri, Chandrahalli
Plate 17. Archaeological Museum, Bijapur, Karnataka. A front view of the museum housed in the 'Nagarkhana'.
and Maski. Stone age tools collected from the neighbourhood are also on display here.

13. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, BIJAPUR, KARNATAKA (1912)

The Museum is located in the 'Sagarkhana' in front of the Gol Gumbuz and contains a wide miscellany of objects found in Bijapur and its neighbourhood of the Yadavas of Devagiri (the 13th-14th centuries A.D.) and AdilShahi dynasty (the 15th-17th centuries A.D.). These comprise mainly of stone inscriptions in different scripts and languages, Brahmanical and Jain sculptures, arms, weapons, manuscripts and ancient carpets.

14. FORT ST. GEORGE, MADRAS (1948)

The Fort St. George Museum was originally sponsored in 1946 by B.M. Reid of the Old Madras Guards for the exhibition of antiquities illustrating the historical evolution of the Madras Province since the days of the East India Company in the 18th century. Later on, the Archaeological Survey organised the Museum and had thrown it open to the public on the occasion of the fifth session of the Central Advisory Board of Archaeology held in Madras in 1948. The Museum is housed in an historic building which is itself a monument constructed in 1792 as the "Exchange", where the Company officers of the East India Company and local merchants met for trade agreement. The collections primarily consist of relics and antiquities pertaining to the Fort in particular and
the impact of British rule in Madras during the last three decades in general. These include weapons of war either belonging to the East India Company or captured by them in their battles against the rival European powers and local rulers in the latter half of the seventeenth century, and other important objects, such as the East India Company chinaware, colours of the King's Regiment and other British regiments disbanded from time to time, records of the St. Mary's Church, precious silverware, a picturesque model of Fort St. George and etchings of the famous artist Daniel, manuscripts, coins of the East India Company and early British rulers, textiles and other objects of great artistic value.


The Museum is yet in its formative stage and contains mainly the relics pertaining to the rise of Christianity in Goa and history of Portuguese occupation there, Brahmanical sculptures, hero and sati stones of the early and medieval times periods.


The Museum, in fact, grew out of the collections of sculptural fragments and architectural members of temples displayed near the temple of Hoysaleswara in the ancient capital of the Hoysalas.

The collections consist of sculptures, architectural pieces,
wood-carvings, etc. of the Hoyaala period collected from the
protected monuments of Halebid. A temporary Museum consisting of
a sculpture gallery has been organised in the "open-air" within
the compound wall of the Hoyalesvara temple, Halebid. Copper
plate inscriptions, coins, etc. are displayed in the nearby small
structure.

17. TIPT SULTAN MUSEUM, SRIRANGAPATNAM, KARNATAKA (1959)

The Museum at present is located in Tipu Sultan's pleasure
castle called Daria Daulat Bagh. The Museum contains some rare pain­
tings, sketches and copper coins of various denominations of the
time of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan. The Museum is still in its
formative stage.

18. ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, HAMPi, KARNATAKA (1953).

The Museum collections consist of sculptures, architectural
pieces, coins, copper plates, inscriptions and manuscripts from
Hampi on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra river in Bellary
District which represent the site of the great Hindu empire of the
Vijayanagara kings (circa 14th-16th centuries A.D.). While some of
the architectural remains of Hampi indicate Saracen features, the
stone and metal images of this place partake of Jaina and Hindu
characters, the latter being predominant owing to the patronage of
the kings who built temples in honour of the great Hindu deities,
Siva and Vishnu, and worshipped Virupaksha (a form of Siva) as
their family-god. The worship of trees and snakes as well as the
practice of sati-rites being very popular during the Vijayanagara people, these practices are also illustrated among the sculptures of Hampi. The variety of above antiquities were so long exhibited in nine halls of "Elephant's stables" and five varandas of the Guards quarters, both being protected monuments. The new museum building has been constructed near the city of Kamalapuram. The museum collection has already been transferred to this new building where reorganization is in progress. The construction of the new building near the above city has fulfilled a long-felt necessity for a museum in this area. The old museum located so long in a historic building and in a desolate area was not frequented by visitors.


The museum highlights the circumstances on record leading to the construction of the Tajmahal, one of the wonders of the world. The museum collection still in a formative stage consists of antiquities associated with Shah Jahan and Mumtaz and other objects of the Mughal rulers. The other objects to be included in the museum will comprise of manuscripts relating to the building of Taj, etching and drawings of Taj of the contemporary time from different views, contemporary plan of the Taj, varieties of stone used in construction, their quarries, miniature paintings of the time, arms and armour, porcelains, textiles, carpets etc, belonging specially to the reign of Shah Jahan.
The site of Lothal, a regional Harappan city-site, on the western end of Gujrat, has revealed rich treasures of antiquities. The long and continuous occupation of chalcolithic culture here has been subdivided into two periods A and B, having sub-phases in the former. Period A represents a mature Harappan culture in its heyday, while period B marks its later, somewhat decadent phase. Almost all the well-known features of the Harappan culture are available here. The interesting objects recovered here by excavation would be included in the newly set up museum. The collection will naturally consist of steatite and terracotta seals, personal ornaments, tools, weapons, toys and domestic objects, personal and ornaments of gold, copper, faience, steatite and terracotta, a variety of interesting typical Harappan ceramics like bowls, goblets, beakers, perforated jars, and dish on stand. Like other Harappan city sites, Lothal thus represents somewhat a planned city character. The most distinguishing feature of Lothal unlike in any Harappan site till known is a brick-built rectangular dockyard, complete with a spill-channel and a 7-3 wide inlet-channel. This highlights the place as a trading outpost.

The above list presents in brief the scope and collection of the museums, twenty in number, under the Archaeological Survey of India. The museums have been set up at the sites or very near to them with the purpose of preserving and displaying antiquities of
historical and cultural value recovered from the sites. Since these museums are close to the sites and rather associated with the sites, these are frequented by tourists and pilgrims who come to the sites. The antiquities present before us a wide range of the cultural patterns associated with the sites and unfold historical panorama. Further these museums create awareness and sense of pride among visitors of our country.
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