



Alumni

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HISTORY & MUSEUM SOCIETY
MAYO COLLEGE, AJMER



Us

The very first word that can be spelled from within the word 'museum'.

The last months have been challenging, and the immediate horizon is unclear. But the indomitable work ethic and innovative nature of my fellow writers, the great importance of collections and exhibitions, and the shared vision and goal to bring forth the new edition of the *Illuminati* have propelled us forward when many have slowed or quieted.

Following the challenges posed by Covid-19, plenty of important work had to be done in our Danmal Mathur Museum that required us to begin working together in new and creative ways. While many of the efforts happened behind the scenes, the staff made a herculean pivot to place our museum programmes and current digitalisation project of the artifacts first so that they can be admired from all around the globe.

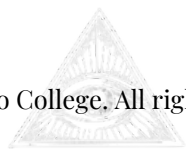
In particular, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of our Museum Team, headed by Dr Mohit Mohan Mathur, HoD, History & Museum;

Dr Kanika Mondal, Collection Manager and Archivist, has done a fantastic job of bringing our vision of the museum to life, and Ashok Ji who, with his valuable knowledge of the museum, helped keep the museum in tip-top shape. Their commitment to excellence is evident in the museum and magazine. I am truly grateful to be working with such a talented and dedicated team of individuals. They rarely receive enough credit for their innumerable efforts to give life to our cultural institution while their lives overflow due to the aftereffects of the pandemic. The collective story of "us" is not unique, but it is our story, so please join me in thanking all who have contributed to 'us' at your museum. We move forward and upward in the hope of a fantastic future!

Shaheem Aijaz Khan
Editor-in-Chief
Illuminati

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Akbari Kila, Ajmer

- Shubh Palod 8A

Akbar's Palace, an architectural Marvel in Ajmer, Rajasthan, India, was erected in 1570 AD by Emperor Akbar. Serving as his residence during visits and pilgrimages to Ajmer, the palace was fortified with formidable stone walls, rendering it virtually impregnable.

This historical landmark gained prominence as the site of a momentous encounter between Emperor Jehangir and Sir Thomas Roe of the British East India Company during British rule. It was later transformed into the 'Rajputana Arsenal,' repurposed as a munitions house.

In 1908, a palace section evolved into a captivating museum, housing an extraordinary collection of ancient stone sculptures, medieval armory, weaponry, and a striking black marble idol of Goddess Kali.

Delicate miniature paintings depicting the opulent Mughal and Rajput eras adorned its walls.



Situated conveniently near Ajmer's railway station, the palace beckons tourists and history enthusiasts alike. With its splendid architecture and well-preserved artifacts, Akbar's Palace stands as a testament to the city's romantic yet turbulent history.

Overall, Akbar's Palace is a treasure trove of cultural heritage, making it a must-visit destination for those seeking a glimpse into India's rich historical tapestry.

Mantrika Mysuru

- Ms Prianka Banerjee

For the longest time we associate Mysuru with Mysore Pak, Mysore Palace, Mysore Sandal Soap etc. but the city has a lot more to offer.

Mysore officially known as Mysuru is quite literally a hidden gem in Karnataka. Roughly 3 hours from Bengaluru, one's first impression of the city is of an old Indian movie set.

Long wide roads, big yellow-colored bungalows, smiling uncles, and aunties in perfectly pleated sarees, vintage-looking street lights and so much more.

Seat of the Wadiyar Dynasty, it boasts of the Mysore Palace which apparently has a larger footfall than the Taj Mahal on a daily basis. Only drawback is it has to be visited barefoot.

From the majestic Philomena Cathedral to the original works of Raja Ravi Varma at the Jagmohan Art Palace, the city is a visual treat.



Mysore is also a treat for history buffs. Mr Malgudi aka RK Narayan was from Mysore and his house has been beautifully restored and open to the public now as a museum.

And lest I forget, you get the BEST Mysore Masala Dosa and Chikmagalur Filter Coffee in Mysuru.

So the next time you are in Karnataka do visit Mysore.

Chandrayaan 3

- Divit Murarka 6D

Chandrayaan 3 is India's ambitious lunar mission following the footsteps of its predecessors Chandrayaan 1 and Chandrayaan 2. Chandrayaan 3 is India's 2nd successful attempt to achieve a soft landing on the surface of the moon. It is a project undertaken by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) to achieve a successful landing on the surface of the moon and deploy a rover to conduct experiments and gather valuable data. The mission is focused on studying the moon's geology, mineralogy, and exposure which will contribute to our understanding of the moon's origin and evolution. The mission objectives of Chandrayaan 3 are to demonstrate a safe and soft landing on the lunar surface, and for the rover to conduct scientific experiments. To achieve the mission objective several advanced technologies are present in the lander such as laser and RF-based altimeters, velocimeters, propulsion systems, etc. To demonstrate such advanced technologies successfully in piles of earth conditions, several lander special tests like integrated cold tests, integrated hot test and lander like mechanism performance test, have been planned and carried out successfully.



On 15 August 1947, India got freedom and just after 22 years 15th August ISRO was established. If I were a scientist, I would try to find life on the moon and research more about it. Chandrayaan 3 launched on 14 July at 2:35 PM and landed on the moon on 23 August at 6:04 PM.

WORKSHOPS ON CONSERVATION

- Dr Kanika Mondal

In order to address and meet the conservation needs of the collection in the Danmal Mathur Museum and in response to the growing interest of our boys in aspects of museum and conservation of museum collections, the Danmal Mathur Museum conducted two workshops on conservation in collaboration with various government organisations. The first six days' 'Workshop on Conservation' was held in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. A team comprising ten conservators from IGNCA who specialised in conservation of oil painting and sculptures conducted the workshop from 30th January to 4th February 2023. Around 20 boys participated in this event. They learnt the various steps in scientific conservation treatment of oil painting, such as removal of varnish, treatment of flakes and cracks, fixing of paint layer, process of backing and relining of canvas, step-by-step procedure of cleaning marble sculptures, documentation in conservation, how to make archival boxes and folders etc.



The second two-day 'Workshop on Preservation and Conservation of Biological Specimens' was held on 25th and 26th April. The workshop aimed to impart knowledge of the various wet and dry techniques adopted for conserving biological specimens. It was held in collaboration with the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), New Delhi, under the aegis of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. In this workshop, three conservators from various branches of NMNH - Dr Shakti Singh, New Delhi, Dr Manoj Sharma

Mr Mohammad Yunus with expertise in specific techniques of preservation such as preserving specimens in formalin (wet method) and taxidermy (dry method) and the dry preservation of insects and butterflies. Under the two day programme, day one included theoretical sessions on the topics and day two included hands-on practical sessions including cleaning of two 'tiger heads' and an insect trapping and mounting activity at the end. Around 35 boys participated in the workshop.

Both the workshops aimed to sensitise our students about heritage preservation, familiarising them with various techniques of scientific conservation, imparting knowledge about safe handling of artefacts, and explaining measures that can be taken to avoid vandalism in museums. The positive and overwhelming response from our boys and their curiosity to learn is an encouragement for us.



A group photograph with the Conservators from IGNCA

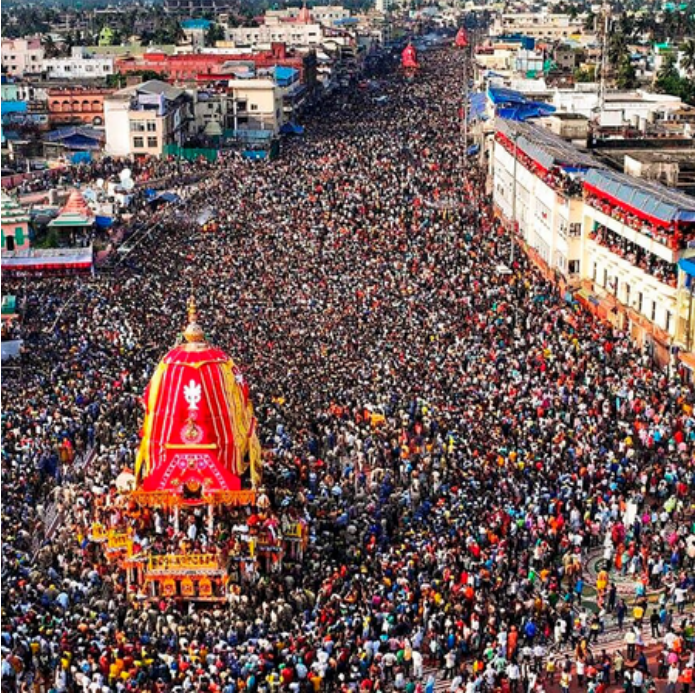
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जगन्नाथपुरी की रथयात्रा पर विशेष

डॉ मोहित मोहन माथुर



ओडिशा के पुरी का जगन्नाथ मंदिर भारत के चार-धाम तीर्थ स्थलों में से एक है, अन्य तीन धाम बद्रीनाथ, द्वारका और रामेश्वरम हैं। पौराणिक मान्यता है कि भगवान विष्णु जब चारों स्थानों पर बसे अपने धामों की यात्रा पर जाते हैं तो हिमालय की ऊंची चोटियों पर बने अपने धाम बद्रीनाथ में स्नान करते हैं, पश्चिम में गुजरात के द्वारिका में वस्त्र पहनते हैं, पुरी में भोजन करते हैं और दक्षिण में रामेश्वरम में विश्राम करते हैं। जगन्नाथ मंदिर की वास्तुकला ओडिशा के अन्य मंदिरों की तरह एक शास्त्रीय संरचना का अनुसरण करती है।

संरचनात्मक रूप से मंदिर में चार कक्ष हैं भोगमंदिर, नटमंदिर, जगमोहन और मंदिर का गर्भगृह जिसमें मंदिर के प्रमुख देवता हैं। मंदिर परिसर एक दीवार से घिरा हुआ है, जिसके प्रत्येक तरफ द्वार है। मंदिर का मुख्य शिखर आंतरिक गर्भगृह से ऊपर है। मंदिर एक ऊंचे स्थान पर बना है और इसके शीर्ष पर अष्टधातु से बना एक चक्र है।

मंदिर के चार द्वार हैं: पूर्वी सिंहद्वार, दक्षिणी अश्वद्वार, पश्चिमी व्याघ्रद्वार और उत्तरी हस्तीद्वार। इनमें से प्रत्येक पशु को प्रत्येक प्रवेश द्वार पर उकेरा गया है।

इतिहासकारों का मानना है कि इस मंदिर का निर्माण १२वीं शताब्दी ईस्वी में पूर्वी गंग राजवंश के राजा अनंतवर्मन चोडगंग देव द्वारा करवाया गया था। मंदिर की संरचना, कलिंग शैली की वास्तुकला का एक शानदार उदाहरण है और इस पर भव्य मूर्तियों उकेरी गई हैं।

वर्तमान में भारतीय पुरातत्व सर्वेक्षण विभाग इसकी देखरेख करता है। यहां केवल पारंपरिक हिंदुओं को ही मंदिर में जाने की अनुमति है। इस मंदिर से जुड़े कुछ विशेष तथ्य हैं जिसका जवाब शायद आधुनिक विज्ञान के पास भी नहीं है:

१. जगन्नाथ मंदिर के ऊपर स्थापित लाल ध्वज सदैव हवा के विपरीत दिशा में लहराता है।

२. यह भी आश्चर्य है कि प्रतिदिन सायंकाल मंदिर के ऊपर स्थापित ध्वज को मानव द्वारा उल्टा चढ़कर बदला जाता है।

३. मंदिर के पास खड़े रहकर इसका गुंबद देख पाना असंभव है। मुख्य गुंबद की छाया दिन के किसी भी समय अदृश्य ही रहती है।

४. पुरी में किसी भी स्थान से आप मंदिर के शीर्ष पर लगे सुदर्शन चक्र को देखेंगे तो वह आपको सदैव अपने सामने ही लगा दिखेगा।

५. सामान्यतः दिन के समय हवा समुद्र से जमीन की तरफ आती है और शाम के दौरान इसके विपरीत, लेकिन पुरी में इसका उल्टा होता है।

६. मंदिर के ऊपर गुंबद के आसपास अब तक कोई पक्षी उड़ता हुआ नहीं देखा गया। इसके ऊपर से विमान नहीं उड़ाया जा सकता।

७. मंदिर में प्रसाद कुछ हजार लोगों के लिए ही क्यों न बनाया गया हो लेकिन इससे लाखों लोगों का पेट भर सकता है। मंदिर के अंदर पकाने के लिए भोजन की मात्रा पूरे वर्ष के लिए रहती है। प्रसाद की मात्रा कभी भी व्यर्थ नहीं जाती।

८. मंदिर की रसोई में प्रसाद पकाने के लिए ७ बर्तन एक-दूसरे पर रखे जाते हैं और सब कुछ लकड़ी पर ही पकाया जाता है। इस प्रक्रिया में शीर्ष बर्तन में सामग्री पहले पकती है फिर क्रमशः नीचे की तरफ एक के बाद एक पकती जाती है अर्थात् सबसे ऊपर रखे बर्तन का खाना पहले पक जाता है।

९. मंदिर के सिंहद्वार में पहला कदम रखते ही, मंदिर के अंदर आप सागर द्वारा निर्मित किसी भी ध्वनि को नहीं सुन सकते। आप, मंदिर के बाहर से एक ही कदम को पार करें, तब आप इसे सुन सकते हैं।

१०. इसी तरह मंदिर के बाहर स्वर्ग द्वार है, जहां पर मोक्ष प्राप्ति के लिए शव जलाए जाते हैं लेकिन जब आप मंदिर से बाहर निकलेंगे तभी आपको शवदाह की गंध महसूस होगी।

हमारे पूर्वज कितने महान वास्तुकार और इंजीनियर रहे होंगे यह इस एक मंदिर के उदाहरण से समझा जा सकता है।

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