



Museum: A Historical Treasure of Manipur

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Abstract: Museums are established for the preservation of our past. It served society by recording, preserving, communicating, narrating historical events, culture, traditions, both performing and visual arts thereby showcasing the rich heritage of the people. Museum play an important role in education as well as in research by helping in the collection of information and study materials for scholars and students. There are various type of museum, i.e. Art museum where includes paintings, sculptures, photography are included, History museum includes display and preservation of local, national and world documents, records, Natural History museum includes animals, plants and fossils, Science & Technologies includes new inventions, technologies and advancement of science on life, Archaeological museum which display artefacts' from past human culture, Ethnographic museum which shows arts traditions of specific communities and Military War museum which display the war weapons, uniforms and military history. The present study focuses on the importance of museums in preserving art and culture in Manipur and highlights the responsibility of the youth of the state in protecting this heritage.

Key words: Museum, preservation, communication, sculptures, photography, inventions and ethnographic

Museums are our storehouses that preserve our rich culture, traditions, identities. They narrate our past in a way that reflects meaningfully to young generations. The conservation of valuable objects turns museum into treasures of knowledge for learners, researchers and all interested people. There are various types of museums which are broadly classified into four major categories i.e. Art, History, Natural and Science/Technology. Art museum includes paintings, sculptures, photography are included, History Museum includes display and preservation of local, national and world documents, records, Natural History Museum exhibit animals, plants and fossils, Science & Technology Museum showcase new inventions, technological innovations and scientific advancement that influence human life. In addition, Archaeological Museum which display Artefacts' from past human culture, Ethnographic Museum which shows arts traditions of specific communities and Military war museum which exhibit war weapons, uniforms, and materials related to military history. Ancient and medieval period in India, literature used the words i.e. Alekhyagriha, Vithi and Citrasala means galleries housing painting, sculptures and terra-cotta. These are rural museum where ordinary people cannot access. The permanent and mobile exhibitions galleries were attached to the royal court known as Bhasa and naisadhivacarita of Sriharsa which belong to 12th century (Chandrasekaran, 2017). Some famous Indian museum are Victoria Memorial Calcutta (British period), Ravindranath Tagore Museum, Shantiniketan, Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, New Delhi, Fort St. George Museum, Madras and the Nehru Memorial Museum at Tinmurti Bhavan in New Delhi illustrate etc are the part of history and personalia museums, apart from archaeology museums. Our ancestors create our rich culture, traditions and the way of life. But in present we can feel all these things from museum, studies and records. It serviced for the society and development which acquired conserves, communication and exhibits that protect our rich heritage, environment and helpful for the educational purposes (Nasrin and Abduraheem, 2021). Museum is the window to the world that represented both past and present. This treasure speaks the language that can understood both literate as well as illiterate and every age groups. The university museum played a significant role in educational and social areas. The first university museum was established in Ashmolean Museum of Oxford University in 1683 (Museum Bulletin, 1987).

The modern museum movement in India was started from 1814 when the Indian Museum at Kolkata was established first time in India. The movement continued with the new phase during the time of Lord Curzon who was interested to preserve the archaeological monuments in the country. A museum reflects the cultural manifestation of the people. The available materials are portrayed in the selves of the museum and reflect our past, culture, traditions and historical backgrounds of the people and the geographic regions. It is the centre of learning and questioning that can feel, see the objects, read and understand the records and helps to grow a treasure of knowledge for the past events. Present generations have their own identity through their community, society, beliefs and traditions and there is largely due to historical facts and records preserved in museums. The level of society is significantly influenced by social changes which affect the human mind and contribute to the progress of human civilization. Therefore, it is essential to have knowledge about museum, as they reflect out past. The collected materials narrate our past history, culture, traditions, environments etc that we never seen before. They allow us to imagine what was happened and what life was like also appreciate the richness of our heritage and feel struggles of our forefathers. Thus, the museum act as a bridge between past and present and allows youth to connect with these tangible and intangible elements of their identity, understanding the story that has shaped the present. The Department of Art & Culture, Government of Manipur is responsible to manage the museums related to Art & Culture, whereas science related museums are managed by Department of Science and Technology and Central Museum in Manipur University is manage by Manipur University itself.

Functions of Museum:

- 1. Collection/Documentation:** Objects are collected by museum to display and collection are based on theme museum want to hold.
- 2. Exhibitions:** Exhibitions may be permanent or temporary, through which people are interact in different ways i.e. culture, communities, art, creativity and science of the people.
- 3. Conservation:** It means looking after, repairing and restoring of objects of the museum.
- 4. Research and Publication:** this includes a systematic arrangement of collected data according to historical context, materials nature and techniques.
- 5. Education:** It is the process of experience for learning, changes of human behaviour with knowledge, outstanding skills and attitude.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the importance of Museum in our culture and traditions.
2. To find the importance of museum in education and research study as the source of information.

Methodology: The present study is based on descriptive research which describe meaning, features, importance etc. about the museum and museums in Manipur. The required information are collected from secondary sources that is book, records and journals.

Museum in Manipur: In Manipuri, a museum is known as Manipur Pukei Langei Sanglen. Major museums in Manipur includes Manipur state Museum, The INA Museum, The Imphal Peace Museum, The Sekta Archaeological Living Museum, The Kangla Museum and RKCS Art Gallery Museum. Museums preserve and display ornaments, textiles, agricultural equipment, potteries, artworks and images, weapons from world-war II and historical memories. Royal valuable records are also preserved and exhibited for public knowledge. Manipur remains incomplete without information derived from archaeological sources.

The history of Manipur becomes clearer from the medieval period, particularly from the reign of Maharaja Garibniwaz, 18th century A.D. Historical sources may broadly be classified into archaeological and literary sources, many of which are preserved in museums. Inscriptions not only provide information about the religious life of the state but also give detailed accounts of state administration, royal proclamations, and land donations. These inscriptions are mostly engraved on stones, iron plates, and copper plates, written in archaic Manipuri and Bengali scripts. Modern and scientific preservation techniques are essential for protecting these valuable sources. From this information, we gain insight into how our forefathers lived during their time.



Fig.1: Manipur State Museum, Imphal : the museum is van institution displaying a collection of artistic, cultural, historical and Scientific artefacts



Fig. 2: Images from INA War Museum, Moirang. Collection of wartime relics like uniforms, arms, ammunition, and photographs, as well as documents and memorabilia related to the INA's role in India's independence movement.



Fig. 3: Archeological living museum, Sekta Manipur : is a protected archeological site in Sekta village, Manipur. It's known for secondary buril and artifacts from 14th and 15th century.



Fig. 4: Imphal Peace Museum



Fig. 5: RKCS Art Museum, Imphal: A private Art museum preserving masterpieces of RKCS, contemporary culture, art installations and movie posters.

The museums in the state mentioned above collect and preserve various materials related to culture, war, art and historical documents. These collections narrate historical events to visitors who are interested in learning about the past. The present generation derives its identity relating to community, society, beliefs and traditions from historical facts and records preserved in museums. Society has undergone significant changes over time, and these social changes influence the human mind and contribute to the development of human civilisation. Therefore, it is essential to have knowledge about museums, as they reflect our past. Every educational institution should ensure that students visit museums so that they can understand their identity and heritage. Moreover, museums attract tourists every year from different places, creating significant opportunities for revenue generation for the state. For new visitors who wish to learn about a place's history, culture and heritage, museums are the most appropriate sources of knowledge according to their interests.

Findings:

1. Museum preserved and protect our valuable objects related to our past.
2. Museum is very help to narrate history through records, documents and artifacts, making communication with the past possible.
3. Manipur has different type of museums which help interested people to gain knowledge in various field.
4. Modern and scientific methods of preservation are especially helpful for ornaments, scripts, stones, artistic works etc.
5. Museums are very useful for researchers, students and anyone interested in studying history.
6. Museum promote cultural heritage, identity and deep understanding of traditions and lifestyle.
7. Museum inspire many artists, visitors and students through exhibition and display.
8. Museum present history in a way that that can be understood by both literate as well as illiterate.
9. Exhibition and display help pass cultural knowledge from generation to another.
10. It represents the collective achievement, memories and experiences of society.

Suggestion

1. Awareness about the importance of museums should be increased among students.
2. A better management system is necessary to make museums more attractive to visitors.
3. Improved transport facilities are required to help people reach museum easily.
4. Young artists, both in visual and performing arts, should be encouraged to preserve their art forms for future generations.
5. Museum should be upgraded with modern science and technology and innovative ideas.
6. Museum should provide free learning zones for students, learners and researchers as centre of information.
7. different types of museums should be established according to different field.

Conclusion: Museum is a store house in which culture, traditions, communications, community identity, art works, scripts, written records and documents etc are included. These reflect the past events and make to understand the quite language both literate and illiterate. Museum narrate our rich history to every visitor and helps to reached every corner of the world. This is the major source of information to every needy people, students and researchers for their study. It is the ways of preserving our rich cultural heritage and development of tourism as a source of revenue for the place or the community or state or even the nation. It is necessary to encourage new artists both performing as well as visual to preserve their work, performance

and skill for future generation. Government is necessary to take initial steps for more development with new technologies for preservation of our rich cultural heritage that narrate our past.

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