

On the occasion of International Museum Day on 18th May, 2020 IGRMS organised an Essay Writing Competition on the subject 'Impact of COVID-19 on Museums'. This competition received huge response from all over India.

The result of this competition is as follows:

- 1. Ms. Shikha Singh- first position**
- 2. Ms. Sakshi Ajmera- second position**
- 3. Mr. Tahir Khan- third position**

Participants securing first, second and third position will be awarded with the cash prize of Rs. 3000, Rs. 2000 and Rs. 1000 respectively. All the participants will be given digital certificates.

First position essay

Impact of Covid-19 on Museums- Ms. Shikha Singh

Registration Number: IMDMAY2020005

“A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment” - ICOM

There are over 55,000 museums in the world and more than 600 museums in India. Museums have always been a place of imparting education and be a centre of community and culture exchange. COVID-19 virus that emerged from china in December 2019 soon spread to the whole world affecting to the point where countries became standstill. Millions of people have died all over the world due to coming in contact of the virus. This Pandemic is not only affecting our present but our past too. With the country wide lockdown all the public places are closed, including museums across the globe. There has been a drastic impact on museums economically as well as culturally.

With closing of museums for visitors and government asking its citizen to stay inside and maintain social distancing a large number of museums have suffered economically. These include mostly the private run museums who main source of revenue is ticket sales. A lot of these private museum have laid-off their half of employees thus creating a grave situation. Not only private but Museums who receive grants and aids from government or other institutions in general too earn a chunk of their income through in-city visitors as well the tourist. In India, Museums were asked by the govt. to shut its doors for the visitors since 16th march 2020. Its been two months and the impact of the same has been grim not only on the source of income, and employment-contractual or freelance but also on the collection of the museum which requires daily maintenance and preventive conservation measures. With museum closing and employees being asked to work from home, it's the collection that is suffering the most, hence our past is being deteriorated with our present.

Due to this Pandemic, multiple Art exhibitions and Museum Biennale have been postponed indefinitely worldwide. For instance, in India Bihar museum was hosting India's first Museum Biennale showcasing collections from 14 public and private museums from March 25, 2020 till June 25, 2020 that today stands postponed till further notification. This Biennale was an opportunity for our country to showcase our identity, collections and real estate at an International level. Similarly, Kiran Nadar museum too postponed Indian contemporary art exhibition in Moscow till 2021. Calling off and rescheduling such exchanges and other pre-planned museum events definitely jolted human and economic resource of the museums. It seems there will be collateral damage since Indian Health Ministry has advised its citizen that we may have to live with this virus and WHO recommending that this virus may never go, it remains on the fence whether such largescale exhibitions and Biennale will be held again and if yes, when?

Since museums are Non-Profit organization that aims to educate and bridge the gap between communities & culture and everything under that umbrella per say, yet money remains an important economic resource needed to regulate these events. Moreover, with economy crashing all over the world, museums have always been at very low in the priority list of every government. Network of European Museum Organizations (NEMO) conducted an online survey on the Impact of COVID-19 situation on museums in Europe in April 2020 that submitted its report concluding there is drastic loss in the income of museums and they are trying to shift themselves into digital space. According to its report, Cambodia's Angkor Wat heritage site has lost 99.5% of its income in April compared to the same time last year. Meanwhile, restorations to the cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris came to an abrupt halt due to coronavirus just prior to the first anniversary of the fierce fire that damaged it. The NEMO survey also reported that more than 60% of the museums have increased their online presence since they were closed due to social distancing measures, but only 13.4% have increased their budget for online activities.

Similarly, Museums in India, too are now more present digitally, in forms of virtual tours and exhibitions, social media interactions with the visitor. People, trapped into their home seem more interested in knowing what goes into making an exhibition, curating collections. and different curators of different museums are now interacting with large audience through social media. For instance, Partition Museum, Amritsar, Indian Museum Kolkata did a virtual museum tour past month for the audience. Regular lecture series are being conducted by museums all around through webinar, Facebook and Instagram live. An independent survey in India found that last month there was a peak in museum visitors online. MET Museum, New York, CSMVS- Mumbai Partition Museum, Amritsar, National Museum, New Delhi etc are engaged in social media Q&As regarding museum and its work culture, thought process and procedures inside-out for the people. The museums that were not active digitally are now marking its presence and sensing the increased online visit. Ministry of Culture's project JATAN, started in 2017-18 already started the process of creating a digital repository of Museum collection on national portal. Presently there are 10 museums under Ministry of Culture that can be accessed digitally on their website. All the other museums have started to progress in the same direction.

With all the setbacks that COVID-19 brought for the museum, the heritage sector has already started working to preserve this Pandemic moment, predicting that future generation will need some documentary evidence, photographic archives and artefacts to understand this

period of future-history. The Smithsonian's National Museum of American History has assembled a dedicated COVID-19 collection task force and are already collecting objects including personal protection equipment such as N95 and homemade cloth masks, empty boxes (to show scarcity), and patients' illustrations. It will be interesting to think and see how this crisis reshapes visitor's experience in future. However, gazing the present scenario of this COVID-19 pandemic where social distancing is necessary and will be adapted by people in their lifestyle, visitor count post-lockdown seems to be fewer than the pre-pandemic period. It will now be the Museum's task to reach out to their Visitors at the comfort of their safety through Mobile Exhibitions or limited number of entries in the museum at a time.

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*Registration Number: **IMDMAY2020005***

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Second position essay

IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS ON MUSEUMS

OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE POSING A CALL FOR HELP

- *Ms. Sakshi Ajmera*

Registration Number: **IMDMAY2020067**

All through history, the most human lives have been taken by diseases caused by viruses, bacteria and parasites. The plague of Justinian killed 50 million people in the 6th century, the Black Death killed 200 million in the 14th century, Smallpox killed 300 million in the 20th century and the 1918 Spanish flu killed 50 to 100 million. COVID-19 has now taken over with the global death toll of 3,17,303 and counting. India has 97,577 cases of COVID-19 as of May 18, 2020. This is a startling situation for India and many other countries.

The world is facing a major breakdown due to the outbreak of COVID-19. All business activities have come to a standstill and nothing can be said about the end of this pandemic. The virus spreads through human-to-human transmission and has affected around 230 countries globally. Tourism industry, hotels, airlines, shopping malls, theatres, and restaurants have all been equally affected by the pandemic.

Cultural and creative sectors are among the most affected sectors and museums are no exception. Museums are a vital part of any economy. They are crucially important cultural and scientific institutions. Museums also support a lot many freelance workers in addition to staff. Looking at the current scenario, the future of the sector and its workers is bleak. Museums are facing manifold challenges and will continue to be a target for the years to come. The majority of museums globally are closed. The Vatican museums, Prado, Reina Sofia, Jewish Museum in Berlin, Palace of Versailles in France and many other famous museums have been closed.¹ The Indian government, initially decided to keep all museums shut until March 31st, which has now been extended until further orders.²

This physical closure hasn't stopped the enthusiasts from exploring the artefacts. Many people are now taking the virtual route to visit the exhibits and a prominent science museum in Kolkata, the

¹ Hannah Mcgovern and Nancy Kenney, *Here are the museums that have closed (so far) due to coronavirus*, THE ART MUSEUMS, (last updated 14 March, 2020) <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/here-are-the-museums-that-have-closed-due-to-coronavirus>.

² *All public museums and monuments including Taj Mahal, closed till March 31 as coronavirus spreads*, THE ECONOMIC TIMES, (last updated 17 March, 2020), <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/all-public-museums-and-monuments-including-taj-mahal-closed-till-march-31-as-coronavirus-spreads/articleshow/74667047.cms?from=mdr>.

Birla Industrial and Technological Museum (hereinafter “BITS”)³ has recorded a phenomenal rise in online viewers after the launch of its virtual gallery. The online gallery was created two years back, however the lockdown led to a sudden spurt in its viewers.

THE NATIONWIDE IMPACT

The lockdown of museums would cause losses that will permanently ruin the cultural landscape of many countries and communities. The current crisis would lead to significant budget shortfalls for the museum authorities. Thousands of museum professionals, mostly those in freelance and precarious employments, have either lost subsistence or would lose it in future. The immediate future of hundreds of independent charitable museums is also at stake. Prolonged closures would be disastrous for many organisations. Museums have highly committed but often low paid workforce. Loss of cultural resources, loss of jobs of staff workers and loss of opportunities for volunteers are the immediate effects. The closure of schools and colleges has led to cancellation of trips to the museums and would lead to loss of income. The artefact acquisition process and collection procedures have been kept on hold which would threaten the future of museums. Some museums have also suffered reputational risk when it was identified as a source of infection. False rumours have also caused havoc.

The medium and long-term effects need to be seen. The sector would be drastically affected by the travel restrictions. The domestic fallouts would add to the financial burden. Generally museums work with tight financial margins and the loss of income for more than two months would undermine their business model. The fact is that major activities cannot be resumed looking at the overall situation and the rising cases of COVID-19, thus the government needs to take precautionary steps to protect its staff, volunteers and visitors.

MEASURES TO COPE UP

The International Council of Museums (hereinafter “ICOM”) has applauded the creative solutions put in place by museums across the world in the form of virtual galleries to reach out to audiences and continue engaging diverse admirers. The Museums Association of UK⁴ has also deliberated upon the measures to mitigate the impact. Some of the ways in which the sector could be saved are as follows:

³ Corona impact: As museums shut shop amid lockdown, thousands go on a virtual tour to see art galleries, THE ECONOMIC TIMES, (last updated 3 April, 2020), <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/magazines/panache/corona-impact-as-museums-shut-shop-amid-lockdown-thousands-go-on-a-virtual-tour-to-see-art-galleries/articleshow/74962378.cms?from=mdr>.

⁴ Geraldine Kendall Adams, Coronavirus: how will it affect museums and what can be done to mitigate the impact?, MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION, (last updated 10 March, 2020), <https://www.museumsassociation.org/news/10032020-coronavirus-impact-museums-galleries>.

1. Workforce

The Government should take every step possible to safeguard the museum workers from health and economic impacts of the coronavirus outbreak. The Government should honour existing contracts with freelancers and should consider how to continue these relationships. A concrete plan of action needs to be drafted to support the physical and mental health of the workforce. Museum officials can also work from home, wherever possible. IT professionals could look for alternatives to ensure continuity of the operations of museums and its on-going projects.

2. Income

The Government should use the funds collected in Prime Minister's Citizen's Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund ("PM CARES") to extend loans to the Museum Authorities to cope up with the financial burden and liquidity issues. Certain tax waivers could also be allowed to the workers from this sector.

3. Raising Awareness

The museums could release document templates, stories and content to create awareness regarding public health. Old museums which have survived the Spanish Flu of 1918 and other earthquakes or disasters could suggest measures on how to cope up with the COVID-19 and could use their medical and science collections for the same. Rumours could prove to be fatal for the reputation of a museum and the spread of fake news should thus be controlled. A great way to engage public is citizen science and such work can lead to increased online traffic and will fill in the financial deficits by enticing visitors back to the sites.

4. Social Distancing and Sanitation

Once the lockdown is lifted, museums will have to adapt good sanitary practices. Museums should take steps to ensure staff and visitors, wash their hands before entering. They should also have free and accessible washrooms and hand washing facilities. Sanitising the galleries and equipment on a regular basis should be adhered to. Disinfecting touchscreens could further help.

Museums will open in a slow and gradual way. These are some of the measures that the museums need to take to tackle COVID-19. While museums are all grappling with the same set of challenges, their responses could be vastly different. All museums need to rethink strategies and deal with the pandemic in their own ways.

Third position essay

संग्रहालयों पर कोविड-19 का प्रभाव

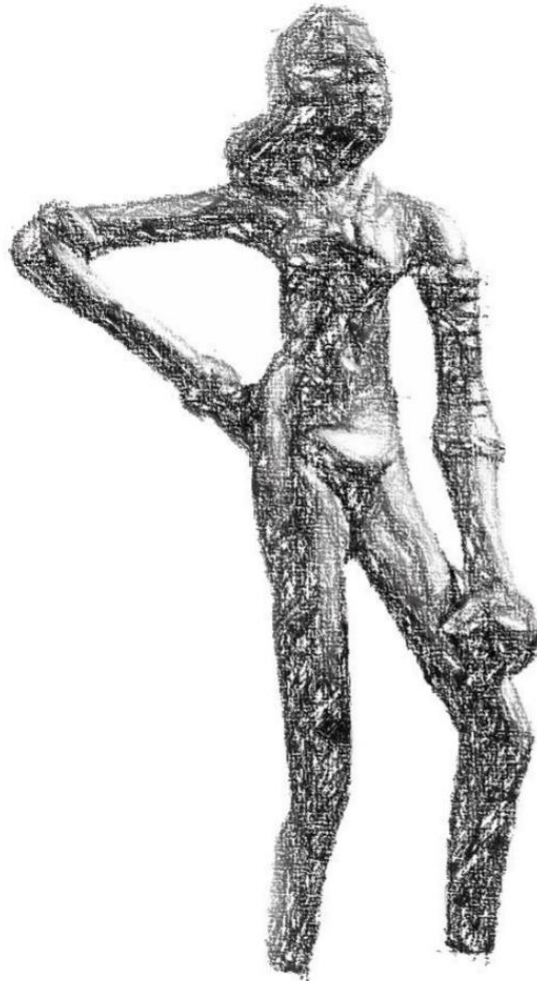
- Mr. Tahir Khan

Registration Number: IMDMAY2020095

अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय संग्रहालय दिवस
18 मई

International Museum Day
18 May

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NATIONAL MUSEUM

राष्ट्रीय संग्रहालय

New Delhi / नई दिल्ली

Japath / जनपथ

संग्रहालयों पर कोविड-19 का प्रभाव

ऐसे समय में जब विश्व में कोविड-19 का प्रभाव हर क्षेत्र में पड़ रहा है तब सांस्कृतिक रूप में हमें एकता का परिचय देते हुए मिलकर इस महामारी का सामना करने की जरूरत है। अचानक से आये इस वैश्विक संकट के दौर में दुनिया थम सी गई है, जिसके अंतर्गत सभी संगठित व असंगठित क्षेत्र आते हैं। कला तथा संस्कृति के संरक्षण का मुख्य केंद्र "संग्रहालय" पर भी इसका प्रभाव पड़ा है। संग्रहालय किसी भी राष्ट्र की सांस्कृतिक विरासत को सहेजने की सर्वोत्तम संस्था है। संग्रहालय अनौपचारिक शिक्षा प्रदान करने का सर्वश्रेष्ठ माध्यम है जहां आगंतुक किसी वस्तु को देख कर, उसके बारे में सुनकर, अनुभव करकर सीख सकते हैं। संग्रहालय एक ऐसी संस्था है जो कलाकृतियों, सांस्कृतिक, ऐतिहासिक या वैज्ञानिक महत्व की कलाकृतियों और अन्य वस्तुओं के संग्रह की (संरक्षण) देखभाल करती है। कई सार्वजनिक संग्रहालय इन वस्तुओं को प्रदर्शन के माध्यम से आगंतुकों को देखने के लिए उपलब्ध कराते हैं जो स्थायी या अस्थायी हो सकते हैं। इससे हमें अपने इतिहास व संस्कृति को जानने तथा समझने का मौका मिलता है।

कोविड-19 का प्रभाव

संग्रहालय एक स्थान है जहाँ छात्र तथा कला एवं संस्कृति प्रेमी अपने अपनी जिज्ञासा पूरी करने आते हैं। अब तो संग्रहालय की विजिट, विद्यालयों के पाठ्यक्रम का हिस्सा बन चुका है। इसका कारण संग्रहालयों के प्रति बढ़ी जागरूकता है। परन्तु इस वैश्विक महामारी के कारण 25 मार्च 2020 से भारत में लॉकडाउन की स्थिति बनी हुई है, इसके कारण अधिकांश सांस्कृतिक संस्थानों को प्रदर्शनियों, आयोजनों और प्रदर्शनों को रद्द करने या स्थगित करने के साथ अनिश्चित काल के लिए बंद कर दिया गया है। जिसका असर दोनों आगंतुकों और संग्रहालय पर पड़ रहा है। आगंतुक जहाँ अपने नियमित संग्रहालय दौरों से वंचित है वहीं संग्रहालय पर इसका व्यापक असर है जिसके अंतर्गत संग्रहालय पेशेवरों को अपना कार्य करने में कठिनाई हो रही है। विभिन्न कर्मचारियों को अनियमितता अपनानी पड़ी है। हर संग्रहालय के अपने उद्देश्य होते हैं वह अपने मिशन-विज़न अनुसार वार्षिक कार्यक्रम तय करते हैं। ऐसे में कई कार्यक्रमों को नए सिरे से आरम्भ करने

की चुनौती है । सबसे अहम यह है कि आगंतुकों की रुचि बनाए रखने के लिए नियमित गतिविधि आयोजित करनी होती है । संग्रहालय को सक्रिय रहने की चुनौती है । आगंतुक अभी संग्रहालय नहीं आ सकता, परन्तु संग्रहालय को आगंतुकों तक ले जाने के लिए डिजिटल प्लेटफार्म का उपयोग किया जा सकता है । इस दौर में, डिजिटल प्लेटफार्म पहले से कहीं अधिक रूप में उभर कर सामने आया है। विश्व भर के महत्वपूर्ण संग्रहालयों को डिजिटल प्लेटफार्म के माध्यम से पहले से ही अधिक से अधिक आगंतुकों तक पहुंचने के प्रयासों के कारण आधुनिक तकनीक से युक्त किया जा चुका है। जिसमें हर वस्तु और कलाकृति के बारे में उपयुक्त जानकारी उपलब्ध है। परन्तु भारत में अभी संग्रहालय उतने आधुनिक नहीं हैं इसलिए सीमित संसाधनों के साथ ही आगंतुकों के बीच रचनात्मक तरीके से ले जाना है। जिससे लोगों की रुचि बने रहे । संग्रहालय, समाज में बड़े पैमाने पर जागरूकता, मौजूदा संकट पर नियंत्रण और भविष्य में प्रतिक्रिया के तरीकों के लिए काम करने के लिए प्रयासरत होने चाहिए । जिसमें सार्वजनिक और आंतरिक कार्य प्रक्रियाओं दोनों के लिए आपातकालीन योजनाएं शामिल हैं। इस संकट से उबरने के लिए संग्रहालयों में नए काम करने के तरीकों पर विचार किया जाने के साथ, सामान्य तौर पर संग्रहालयों में अधिक लचीलापन अपनाना होगा ।



राष्ट्रीय संग्रहालय, नई दिल्ली (कोविड से पहले सामान्य दिनों में)

Thanks for visiting us. In view
prevailing COVID-19 situation in the
country, we are temporarily closed
till further advice.

However, you may like to see our
various activities and exhibits by
clicking the link below

[Museum@Home](#)

अवसर

कोविड-19 के कारण देश भर में संपूर्ण लॉकडाउन है, ऐसे में लोग इंटरनेट का अधिक उपयोग कर रहे हैं। इस मौके को अवसर में परिवर्तित करने का प्रयास किया जाए तो कोविड - १९ के बाद सांस्कृतिक विरासत में पर्यटन को लुभाने की क्षमता है। जनता के घर तक इंटरनेट के माध्यम से नियमित वेबिनार, व्याख्यान, वर्चुअल टूर द्वारा उन तक अधिक से अधिक जानकारी पहुंचाई जा सकती है। लोगों में नए विषय के बारे में जानने की उत्सुकता है। रचनात्मकता अपनाई जाए तो इस उत्सुकता को अपने ऑनलाइन प्लेटफार्म पर आगंतुकों की संख्या बढ़ाई जा सकती है। उन तक संग्रहालय के बारे में अधिक से अधिक जानकारी मुहैया होगी तो वह भविष्य में विजिट करने के इच्छुक हो सकते हैं। यह एक तरह का पब्लिक रिलेशन एवं मार्केटिंग स्ट्रेटिजी अपनाने का मौका है, क्योंकि संग्रहालय के लक्षित आगंतुकों में से बहुतायत संख्या में मोबाइल व कम्प्यूटर पर इंटरनेट उपलब्ध है। सोशल मीडिया पर जनता की आसानी से पहुंच है, तो सोशल मीडिया को ही मुख्य तौर पर लक्षित करने चाहिए। लाइव सेशंस के द्वारा ऑनलाइन प्रस्तुति दी जा

सकती है। संग्रहालय की पब्लिक रिलेशन विभाग को एक डेटा तैयार करना चाहिए कि कोविड से पहले उनकी ऑनलाइन कितने लोगों तक पहुँच थी तथा कोविड के बाद उसमें कितना परिवर्तन आया है। कितने ऑनलाइन विज़िटर बढ़े हैं या स्थिर हैं। अगर स्थिर हैं तो क्यों नए लोगों तक ऑनलाइन सामग्री नहीं पहुँच पा रही। और बढ़े हैं तो किन विषयों की लोगों में रूचि जाएगी है। इसके लिए ऑनलाइन ही सर्वे कराया जा सकता है। संग्रहालय पेशेवरों के बीच भी सर्वे हो सकता है कि उन्हें किस प्रकार के बदलाव की आवश्यकता है। किस चीज की आवश्यकता है जिससे वह संग्रहालय के ऑनलाइन संस्करण को अधिक से अधिक सक्रिय रख सकें। इसमें संग्रहालय विज्ञान के छात्रों को भी इंटरन के रूप में जोड़ा जा सकता है। क्योंकि युवाओं को सोशल मीडिया पर रिझाने के लिए युवाओं की ही मदद ली जाए तो मदद मिल सकती है। लॉक डाउन कारण उनकी उपलब्धता भी है जिसका सदुपयोग करके नए नए आइडियाज लिए जा सकते हैं। इस महामारी के समय संग्रहालय कर्मचारियों के साथ प्रदर्शन कलाकारों की प्रस्तुति नियमित रूप से हो तथा उनके व्यवहारिक कार्य में आने वाले कठिनाइयों के कारण क्षेत्र के वरिष्ठ पेशेवरों के अनुभव पर प्रकाश डालकर वार्तालाप स्थापित करने की आवश्यकता है।

भारत के कुछ प्रमुख संग्रहालय –

क्र.	संग्रहालय	शहर	प्रदेश
1.	इंडियन म्यूजियम	कोलकाता	पश्चिम बंगाल
2.	राष्ट्रीय संग्रहालय	नई दिल्ली	दिल्ली
3.	छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज वास्तु संग्रहालय	मुंबई	महाराष्ट्र
4.	गवर्नमेंट म्यूजियम	चेन्नई	तमिलनाडु
5.	सलारजंग म्यूजियम	हैदराबाद	तेलंगाना
6.	इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय मानव	भोपाल	मध्य प्रदेश

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