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Jamnagar Museum of Antiquities

F. 1946.

Hist. The Museum of Antiquities at Jamnagar was created in 1916 by the former Nawanagar State. It is housed in a building called Lakhote. It is now under the Bombay Government.

Scope & Coll. It is mainly an archaeological Museum with the following sections: (a) Sculpture, (b) Epigraphy, (c) Numismatics, (d) Manuscripts, (e) Paintings, (f) Prehistory, (g) Natural History, (h) Crafts, and (i) Geology.

The sculptures are mainly collected from important sites in the old Nawanagar State like Ghumli, Gop, Pinders, Gandhavi, Bharna, Pachhatar and Bed, and represent Hindu and Jain pantheons, architectural and decorative pieces, memorial sculptures, etc. The epigraphical section contains stone inscriptions and copper-plates. Important ones of the former are some Jain inscriptions of the 13th century from Bed, Bharna and Amran and Persian inscriptions from Ghumli and of the later the copper plate grants of the Saindhav King of Bhutanbilika, dated in the 6th century of the Gupta era, and of Bashkaldeva surnamed Kunkumalola of Bhutanbilika dated in the year 1015. The Numismatic section consists of Kshatrapa, Gupta (Kumaragupta), Gadhiva, Muslim (Mughals and Sultans of Gujarat) and local coins as well as seals of the Kshatrapa period. The Picture Gallery contains Rajput paintings depicting episodes from Shiva Purana and Mughal paintings representing Nurjahan and other royal figures. There is a large painting representing the battle of Bhucharmori fought in 1591 by the army of Akbar and that of the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar. The entire ceiling of the gallery is covered with paintings of hunting scenes of Jam Shri Ranamalji and the Raslila of Krishna. The Manuscript section of the Museum contains books dating back to the 16th century and some of them are good specimens of calligraphy in Nagari and Persian. In the Prehistory section there are excavated potsherds, terracottas, beads, conch, bangles, polished red ware, black and red and buff ware explored from several old sites in Halar and Sorath districts, northern black painted ware from Bairat (near Jaipur, Rajasthan) and Mahesvar (Madhya Bharat) and painted pottery from Mahesvar collected in the Narmada Valley expedition under the leadership of Dr. H. D. Sankalia. The Natural History Section which is just being built up has a head of deer and two skulls of rhinoceros. In the Craft Section folk art is displayed. A new addition in the Museum is the Children's Section with toys, stuffed animals, etc. received from Junagadh.

Ed. Act. There is a small library consisting of 750 books pertaining to Sanskrit, Hindi and Gujarati literature, history, art, architecture and

archaeology. The library is only for departmental use. There is a specially arranged lecture hall provided with charts, maps and photographs of exhibits for illustrating them to the students and explanatory talks are given to the illiterate visitors. Students from the local and outside schools and colleges are taken round the Museum and explained the exhibits. Post-graduate students are also given facilities for the study of art, history and epigraphy. The Curator visits the primary and secondary schools with photos, charts, maps, etc. and explains various cultural aspects in simple non-technical language. Adequate labels are provided in the galleries in English and Gujarati.

In order that the Museum can play its role as a cultural centre by imparting aesthetic and cultural education to the masses, a cultural week was celebrated in the Museum in 1952 from 29th September to 3rd October, 1952 ending on Sharat Purnima when local scholars were invited to give lectures on different cultural subjects like iconography, ancient world geography according to *Puranas*, medicine in ancient India, ancient educational systems and importance of archaeology. Besides students several others attended the lectures. The cultural programme consists of folk songs, dances, etc. "*Mushayavo*" and short dramas were arranged at night during the week and thousands of men and women enjoyed these and celebrated the *Sharat Purnima* in right earnest having a cultural peep into the living past.

Pub. Nil.

Working hrs. Open from 9-30 A.M. to 12-30 P.M. and 2 to 6 P.M. on all days except on Sunday and Saturday afternoons.

Adm. Free.

Gov. body. The Museum is under the Bombay Government.

Staff. Curator—Shri J. M. Nanavati M.A., Clerk, four peons and chowkidar.

Fin. Annual budget provision is Rs. 9,462.

Rem. The Museum is suitably situated in the vicinity of the town. The average number of visitors per day is 200 and in the year 72,000. There is a larger number of visitors on *Maha Shivaratri*, *Holi*, *Shravani*, Mondays, *Janmashtami*, *Ramzan* and *Bakri Id.* The Museum building is suitable for the existing material and storage space is also available for reserve collections. Except a representative selection of coins exhibited in the coin cabinet the rest are kept in an iron safe. The source of collection is exploration and excavation. The Museum is not recognised for treasure trove finds. It is an institutional member of the Museums Association of India.