



INTRODUCTION

National Museum, New Delhi, the premier museum of India, houses an impressive collection of artefacts from across the country and the world. The Museum was established on 15th August, 1949 at the Rashtrapati Bhavan with artefacts that were first exhibited at Burlington House, London. The present building of National Museum was opened on 18th December 1960.

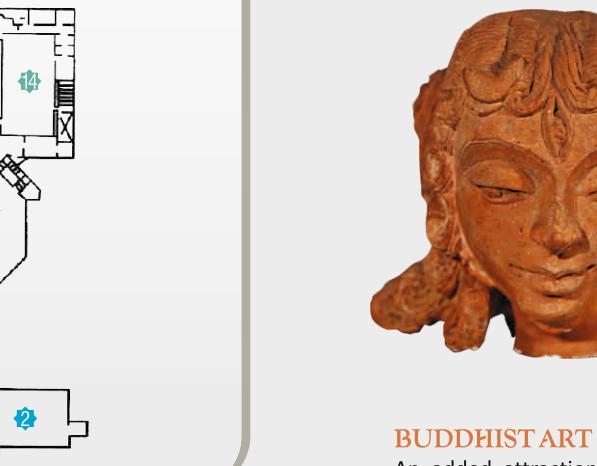
Today, National Museum has over 2,10,000 art objects representing 5,000 years of Indian art and craftsmanship. The collection includes sculptures in stone, bronze, terracotta and wood, a large collection of miniature paintings and manuscripts, coins, arms and armour, jewellery, textile, costumes and anthropological objects. Antiquities from Central Asia and Pre-Columbian artefacts form the two non-Indian collections in the Museum. The Museum is the custodian of the treasure trove of India's multilayered history and multicultural heritage.

The Museum has separate branches of Publications, Hindi, Education, Library, Exhibition, Display, Modelling, Photography, Security and Maintenance, Administration etc. A well equipped Conservation Laboratory not only provides restoration to all the art objects but also training facilities to the students and deserving professionals.

GALLERIES

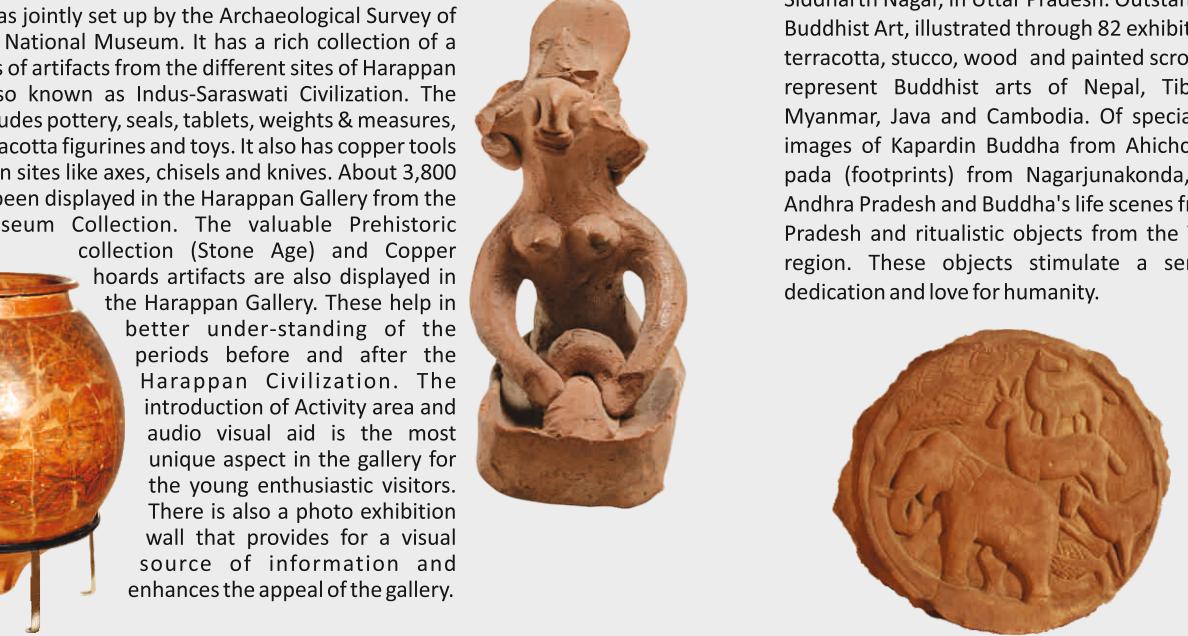
GROUND FLOOR

- 1 Entrance Hall
- 2 Library
- 3 Auditorium
- 4 Harappan Civilization
- 5 Maurya, Shunga & Satavahana Art
- 6 Kushana (Gandhara, Mathura & Iksavaku Art)
- 7 Gupta Art
- 8 Gupta Terracotta & Early Medieval Art
- 9 Bronzes
- 10 Late Medieval Art
- 11 Buddhist Art
- 12 Indian Miniature Paintings
- 13 Gallery of Indian Scripts & Coins
- 14 Decorative Arts-II
- 15 Decorative Arts-I
- 16 Jewellery Gallery



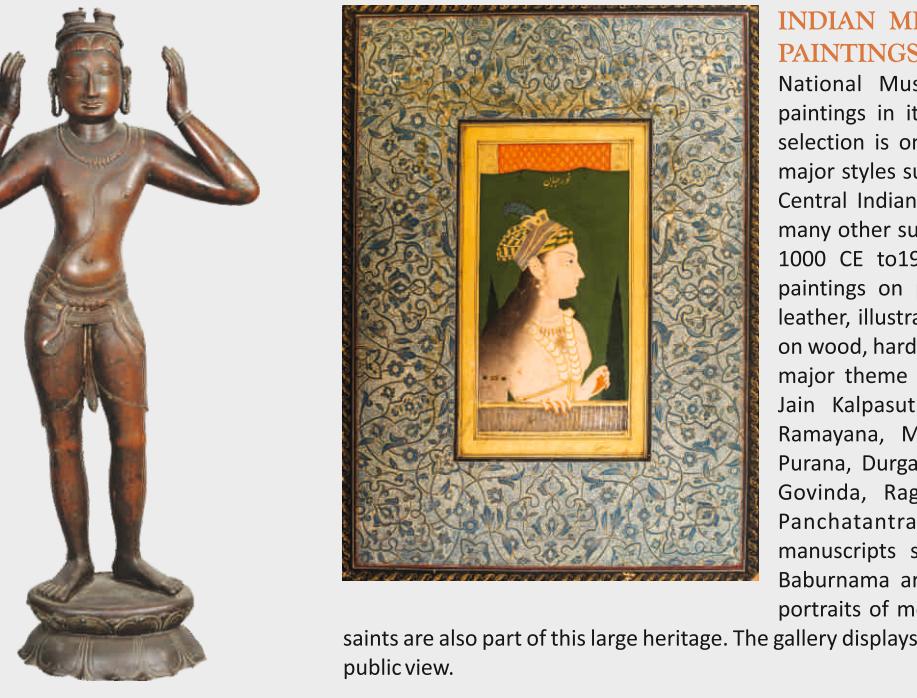
HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION

This gallery was jointly set up by the Archaeological Survey of India and the National Museum. It has a rich collection of a large numbers of artifacts from the different sites of Harappan civilization also known as Indus-Saraswati Civilization. The collection includes pottery, seals, tablets, weights & measures, jewellery, terracotta figurines and toys. It also has copper tools from Harappan sites like axes, chisels and knives. About 3,800 objects have been displayed in the Harappan Gallery from the National Museum Collection. The valuable Prehistoric collection (Stone Age) and Copper hoards artifacts are also displayed in the Harappan Gallery. These help in better understanding of the periods before and after the Harappan Civilization. The introduction of Activity area and audio visual aid is the most unique aspect in the gallery for the young enthusiastic visitors. There is also a photo exhibition wall that provides for a visual source of information and enhances the appeal of the gallery.



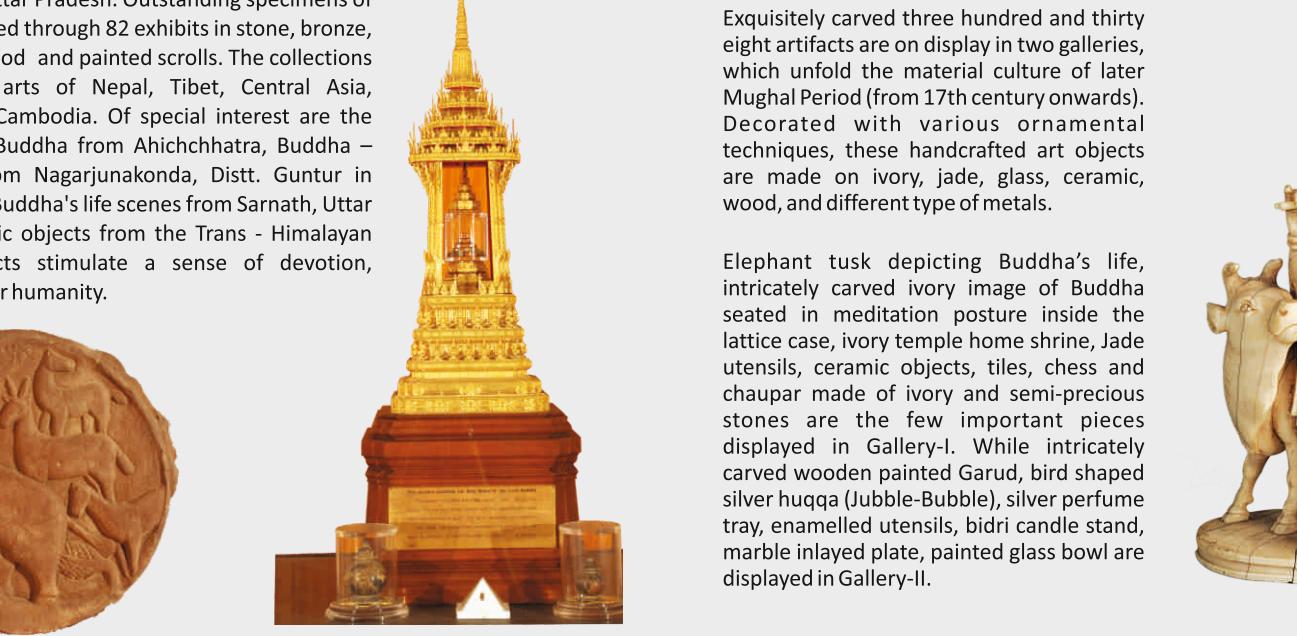
ARCHAEOLOGY

A prestigious collection of approximately 853 sculptures have been displayed in the Archaeological Galleries on the ground floor, the rotundas on the ground, first and second floors and around the Museum building. The sculptures displayed are mostly in stone, bronze and terracotta, dating from the 3rd century BCE, through the 19th century CE, representing all major regions, periods and schools of art. Maurya, Gandhara, Kushana, Iksavaku, Gupta, Early Medieval, Bronze are the main galleries of attraction.



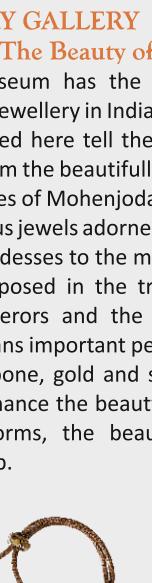
BUDDHIST ART

An added attraction in the Museum is the Buddhist Art Gallery. On display are the Relics of the Buddha (5th - 4th century BCE) unearthed from Kapilavastu-Piprahwa, Distt. Siddharth Nagar, in Uttar Pradesh. Outstanding specimens of Buddhist Art, illustrated through 82 exhibits in stone, bronze, terracotta, stucco, wood and painted scrolls. The collections represent Buddhist arts of Nepal, Tibet, Central Asia, Myanmar, Java and Cambodia. Of special interest are the images of Kapardin Buddha from Ahichchhatra, Buddha-pada (footprints) from Nagarjunakonda, Distt. Guntur in Andhra Pradesh and Buddha's life scenes from Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh and ritualistic objects from the Trans-Himalayan region. These objects stimulate a sense of devotion, dedication and love for humanity.



INDIAN MINIATURE PAINTINGS

National Museum has over 17000 paintings in its collection of which a selection is on view. These belong to major styles such as, Mughal, Deccani, Central Indian, Rajasthani, Pahari and many other sub styles from the period 1000 CE to 1900 CE. It also includes paintings on palm leaf, cloth, wood, leather, illustrated manuscripts, covers on wood, hardboard and *thangkas*. The major theme of these miniatures are Jain Kalpasutra, the epics such as Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavata Purana, Durgasaptasati, Jaideva's Gita Govinda, Ragamala, Baramasa and Panchatantra. A few Indo-Islamic manuscripts such as Shahnama and Baburnama are also noteworthy. The portraits of medieval kings, rulers and saints are also part of this large heritage. The gallery displays selected 352 exhibits for public view.



EVOLUTION OF INDIAN SCRIPTS AND COINS

In the gallery, 26 large-sized well-lit glass transparencies are on show narrating the wonderful story of the development of various Indian scripts from Brahmi and coins.

DECORATIVE ARTS GALLERIES

Exquisitely carved three hundred and thirty eight artifacts are on display in two galleries, which unfold the material culture of later Mughal Period (from 17th century onwards). Decorated with various ornamental techniques, these handcrafted art objects are made on ivory, jade, glass, ceramic, wood, and different type of metals.



TEMPLE CHARIOT (near the entrance gate of the museum)

Displayed with a new look near the entrance of the museum the octagonal temple chariot made of saal wood is dedicated to Lord Vishnu, belongs to Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu, South India. This mid 19th century temple chariot has six wheels, around four hundred twenty-five carved panels, brackets, angles and has 2,200 kgs of weight. Outer walls of this five tiered chariot is decorated with intricately carved small panels, which illustrates different forms of Lord Vishnu, Laxshmi-Narayan (Lord Vishnu with his consort), incarnations of Lord Vishnu like Ram, Narasimha and Krishna and life scenes of Krishna etc.



GALLERIES

FIRST FLOOR

- 1 Special Exhibition
- 2 Manuscripts
- 3 Manuscripts
- 4 Central Asian Antiquities-II
- 5 Central Asian Antiquities - I
- 6 Coins
- 7 Thanjavur Paintings
- 8 Maritime Heritage
- 9 Ajanta Paintings

