



National Museum to host mammoth exhibition on Indian Civilisation

- *Over 200 objects from British Museum, London and 20 museums and private collections from India on display*
- *'India and the World: A History in Nine Stories' offers insights into two million years of history*

Having all the trappings of an iconic showstopper, an ambitious and mammoth international exhibition is all set to be mounted at National Museum, which chronologically encapsulates the evolution of Indian civilization since antiquity and its interconnectedness with the outside world through a raft of exquisite artefacts from India and abroad.

The exhibition, *India and the World: A History in Nine Stories*, is an extensively collaborative effort of the British Museum, London; National Museum, New Delhi; and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), Mumbai and is actively supported by the Culture Ministry.

Planned as part of commemoration of 70 years of India's independence and a year of major cultural exchange between India and the UK (UK/India 2017), the nearly two-month-long watershed show at National Museum, which gets underway on May 5, is travelling to the national capital from Mumbai where it drew an enthusiastic response from critics and public alike at CSMVS.

Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Union Minister of State for Culture (Independent Charge), will inaugurate the exhibition at 5.00 pm on Saturday, May 5.

The exhibition is spread over nine sections, each representing a pivotal moment in history: Shared Beginnings (1,700,000 years ago to 2000 BC), First Cities (3000–1000 BC), Empire (600 BC – AD 200), State and Faith (AD 100–750), Picturing the Divine (AD 200–1500), Indian Ocean Traders (AD 200–1650), Court Cultures (AD 1500–1800), Quest for Freedom (1800–Present), and Time Unbound.

The trendsetting showpieces together over 200 objects and works of art not only from the collections of the British Museum, CSMVS and National Museum, but also from around 20 museums and private collections across India.

Beginning with the Indus Valley Civilisation and coming down to the present, the artefacts range from stone sculptures, terracotta, coins, tools, inscriptions and manuscripts to textiles, jewellery, Mughal miniatures and contemporary paintings, demonstrating the common threads of human history.

A striking feature of the show is not only its linear and chronological depiction of Indian civilization, but also its exploration of ideas across time periods, and a profound insight into confluence of the ancient and the modern. Essentially, it highlights the strong connections India has shared historically with the rest of the world, impacting each other through a gamut of activities that helped evolve a global culture.



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The nine-gallery exhibition is staggering in several respects: in the number of rare objects that it brings together, the time period and styles that it covers, the exquisiteness of each object and the rich stories that it tells us about our ancestors. Overall, there are 104 important works of art from the Indian subcontinent in dialogue with 124 iconic pieces from the British Museum.

“This is a phenomenal exhibition for the sheer number of artefacts, the profoundness of concept and the unprecedented extensive collaboration of Indian museums and private collections with the British Museum, London. It truly offers a brilliant exposition on the splendid Indian civilisation and its impact on the global civilizations of the yore,” says National Museum Director General Dr. B R Mani.

Conceived over a period of two years of intense planning and curatorial brainstorming, ‘India and the World’ has been jointly curated by a team in the UK and India. Curators Jeremy David Hill and Beatriz Cifuentes Feliciano, from the British Museum, joined efforts with Naman P Ahuja, Associate Professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi and his curatorial assistant, AvaniSood to develop this unique exhibition.

Dr. Hartwig Fischer, Director, British Museum, said it is a first of its kind project that establishes a dialogue between objects, cultures, institutions and the public to provide a new and rich perspective on moments in Indian history.

“The wider, global context of these moments is suggested by objects from the British Museum, including a head of the Emperor Hadrian, one of the most famous Roman emperors, and the contemporary Throne of Weapons from Mozambique which comments on globalisation and empire but is ultimately a symbol of reconciliation and peace. We are delighted that the show was seen by over 200,000 visitors in Mumbai and is now available to audiences in Delhi. The British Museum is committed to sharing its collections as widely as possible and to working in partnerships which help audiences across the globe understand the world and their place within it,” he added.

Mr. Sabyasachi Mukherjee, Director General, CSMVS, said, “The exhibition is a first of its kind experiment outside the US, the UK and European borders, and attempts to provide a model for museums to share their collections with people across the world, some of whom may otherwise never have access to them. The objects from the British Museum and from Indian museums and private collectors, together in conversation, unlock fascinating stories and histories, and help us understand how we relate to the wider world.”

Curatorial walks and talks, besides educational activities like stone tool, Harappan seal and bead making, currency design, scroll painting, clay moulding, blindfold photography and sculpture making will be held on the sidelines of the event. In addition, there will be theatre workshops, guided tours, thematic walks for kids and interesting events like treasure hunt and online weekly quiz on the event’s website (<https://www.indiaandtheworld.org>).

The exhibition, which is supported by the Ministry of Culture, Tata Trusts, the Getty Foundation and the Newton Bhabha Fund, will run till June 30 from 10 am to 6 pm, except on Mondays and public holidays.



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Venue: Special Exhibition Hall, First Floor.

Date of Inauguration: 05-05-2018, 6:15 PM

The exhibition will remain open for public viewing from 6th May, 2018 to 30th June, 2018 (10 AM to 6 PM) except all Mondays and National Holidays

Entry with museum ticket.