

A Brief Note On Museum Development In Nepal

—Janak Lal Sharma

Nepal, situated between India and China, is the only holy religious Hindu Kingdom of the world. It is not only known as the home of gods and goddesses but also full of antiquities and relics of the past.

Though, it is a country of mystery and it has extremely rich cultural heritage, the history of museum development in Nepal is very short. Its history begins with the establishment of Silkhana Museum (Arsenal Museum) in 1926 A.D. which is popularly known as Chauni Silkhana. The museum building was built by Prime Minister General Bhimsen Thapa in the year 1819 A.D. to house the Arsenal. This classical building at Chauni on the western side of the river Visnumati has a beautiful setting against the hill background. This Chauni Silkhana was given the name Nepal Museum in 1938 and was opened to the public on February 1939. At present, it is known as Nepal National Museum.

National Museum

The National Museum has four sections. The main museum building, the art gallery, Mahendra Memorial Museum (named after late King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah) and a children's section. The Art Gallery, which has a separate building was opened in 2000 B. S (1943 A.D.).

National Art Gallery

National Art Gallery of Bhaktapur District is another important museum in Kathmandu Valley which was established in 2017 B. S. (1960/61 A. D.). It has only collection of paintings. This gallery is housed in the new wing of the ancient Bhaktapur Palace.

National Wood Work Museum

This small museum was established in 2019 B. S. (1962 A. D.) at Bhaktapur District. It was opened to the public in 1967 A. D. It is also housed in the old wing of the Bhaktapur Palace.

Tribhuvan Memorial Museum

This museum is named after the late King Tribhuvan. It was established in 2025 B. S. in Hanuman Dhoka Palace which is situated in the heart of Kathmandu.

National Numismatic Museum

This museum was opened in 1962 A. D. in the old Hanuman Dhoka Palace.

National Bronze Museum

National Bronze Museum is housed in the old Palace of Patan District. It was established in 1962 and opened to the public in 1969 A. D.

Archaeological Garden

This is an open-air museum located at Patan District in an ancient garden of the old Palace. It was established in 1962 A.D. but not yet opened to the public. It has a large collection of stone sculpture.

Archaeological site Museum of Kapilvastu

It was established in 1962 A. D. at Kapilvastu in Taulihawa District of Western Nepal. It has a large collection of antiquities excavated in Buddhist areas in Lumbini Zone.

Regional Museum

Nepal is divided into five development regions from the administrative point of view. His Majesty's Government has planned to establish museums in each Regional Development Centre. Among the three regional museums to be opened within sixth five year plan period the museum buildings of Pokhara and Dhankuta are already completed but not yet opened. In Surkhet, new museum building is under construction. In near future the government is going to establish another regional museum in the Far Western Regional Development Centre at Dipayal.

Swayambhu Vikas Mandal Museum

It was established in 1972 A. D. at Swayambhu Hill by Swayambhu Vikas Ma-

ndal, a private organization.

Nepal Natural History Museum

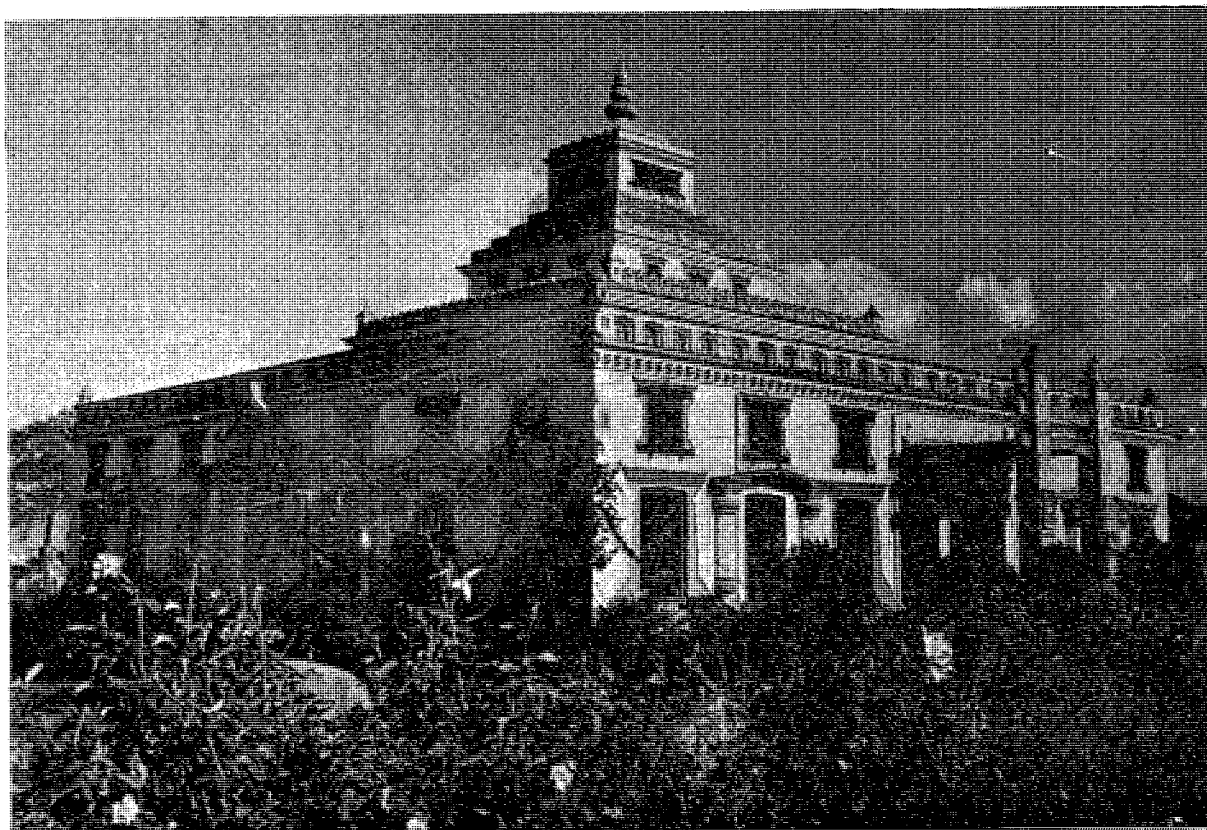
It was established in 1975 A. D. at Swayambhu Hill and is managed by Tribhuvan University. The latest addition to this museum is the fossil of a tooth of Butawal Ramapithecus, considered to be the oldest human species in Asia.

Philatelic or Postal Museum

It was established in 1972 A. D. under the Department of Postal Services. It has an excellent collection of Nepalese Stamps.

Besides these, in near future, H.M.G., Department of Archaeology of Nepal is going to establish a museum at Bhaktapur consisting of so many things which exhibit the religious, cultural and traditional procedure of Nepal and the Nepalese. But not a single image will be collected in this museum.

At present, the idea of museum development as an important aspect to introduce Nepal to the world as a culturally rich country as well as the thinking of the museum as an educational institution is becoming more strong. Under the Royal patronage and dynamic leadership of His Majesty the king Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, it is hopeful to say that the future of museum development in Nepal is bright and the idea of museum as an educational institution will become popular.



Art Gallery, National Museum