NEWS LETTER

Quarterly, Jan-Mar, 2025

Issue 08

Greetings from the Bihar Museum!

Museums generally focus on preserving, showcasing and documenting archaeological and historical artefacts. However, we believe a museum should not just be a storehouse of objects but also be an experiential space. With this vision, since its inception, Bihar Museum has combined the preservation of artefacts from various periods, traditions and cultures with a range of creative programmes and activities. As a result, the museum has seen a growing interest from artists, art enthusiasts and the general public.

The current issue of the Newsletter (October to December) provides details about the activities held at Bihar Museum over the last three months. We are delighted and proud to be hosting a retrospective exhibition of the renowned contemporary artist, Mr Subodh Gupta, which will run until 15th February 2025. Originally from Bihar, Mr Gupta is a graduate of the College of Arts and Crafts, Patna. He is a globally acclaimed artist, famous for his installations made from everyday steel items like lunch boxes, cookware and tin containers. His creativity spans multiple mediums, including stainless steel, bronze, stone, brass, wood, clay and fibreglass. Mr Gupta is one of the rare artists who explore the transformative power of ordinary objects. This edition of the newsletter features an in-depth look at his exhibition.

Additionally, this issue highlights the exhibition Shunyata by Abhay K. and the photography exhibition Light Stories by Takshak Parmar, both organised at Bihar Museum. It also includes details about events such as Back to Superheroes, the Udyotsav and Nayi Dhara Writing Award, book launches, lectures and various cultural activities.

I would like to thank Bihar Museum's Additional Director and this newsletter's editor, Mr Ashok Kumar Sinha, for his unwavering dedication, which forms the foundation of this publication. Special appreciation also goes to designer Suraj Sawant, research associate Adeeba, photographer Ranjit Kumar and Priyanka, whose contributions have brought this newsletter to life.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue and wish you all a very happy New Year 2025!

Anjani Kumar Singh
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The Way Home : Subodh Gupta



The exhibition of contemporary artist Subodh Gupta's artworks was inaugurated at the Bihar Museum on 9th November 2024. Curated by Anjani Kumar Singh, Director General of Bihar Museum, this exhibition will remain open to the public till 15th February 2025.

Subodh Gupta is an internationally renowned artist, born in Khagaul, Bihar. He completed his Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts from Patna Art & Craft College in 1988. During his stay in Delhi in the 1990s, he was influenced by prominent artists such as MF Hussain, Francis Newton Souza and Swaminathan, and initially worked as a painter before becoming active in sculpture. Today, Subodh Gupta is recognised as a distinctive sculptor, known for using steel utensils in his creations, which has become his signature style.

The exhibition is titled "The Way Home" which is an artistic representation of everyday life. At the inauguration, Ashok Kumar Sinha, the Additional Director of Bihar Museum, welcomed the guests. He said that this exhibition of Subodh Gupta's works at the Bihar Museum showcases a collection of his outstanding works from the past 30 years. He also mentioned that Subodh Gupta has brought a unique recognition to Bihar, and his art has enhanced the state's reputation. It is a matter of pride and joy for all of us to welcome him. Subodh Gupta expressed his emotional connection to the exhibition, stating that this is the first time such a large exhibition of his works is being held in his home state of Bihar. He mentioned that all his works over the past 30 years are displayed in this exhibition.

The inauguration was held in two sessions. The exhibition in the temporary gallery was inaugurated by Padma Shri awardee, Mithila artist Dulari Devi, while the exhibition in the multi-purpose gallery was inaugurated by Padma Shri awardee, Mithila artist Baua Devi. In his address, Anjani Kumar Singh, the curator of the exhibition and Director General of Bihar Museum, discussed Subodh Gupta's art,



his craftsmanship, style and language that make his works unique, and effectively convey the stories of common people. Gupta's works predominantly reflect Indian culture and the pain of migrant life. Mr Anjani Singh also mentioned that Bihar Museum, by inviting prominent contemporary artists alongside folk artists, is offering the public a direct experience of their art, while also preserving and enriching art forms in daily life.

Subodh Gupta expressed his gratitude to Bihar Museum and its Director General, Anjani Kumar Singh, for providing him with such a prestigious platform for his exhibition. He praised the grandeur of the museum, calling it a masterpiece of art. He also mentioned that holding this exhibition at Bihar Museum was a long-held wish that has now been fulfilled.

During the program, a film directed by Harshit was also screened, which captured various aspects of Subodh Gupta's art. After the screening, the audience had the opportunity to ask both the filmmaker and the artist questions.

The exhibition at the Bihar Museum's temporary gallery displays more than 10 installations and paintings. Many of his installations incorporate everyday household items like kitchen utensils. The exhibition includes Subodh Gupta's works from 1999 to 2024. His first painting from 1999, titled Bihari made using cow dung, acrylic, handmade paper and sequins is also being exhibited. In 2016, he created an installation titled I Supper, using aluminum, frost, cooling systems, marble and stainless steel. Other installations on display include School from 2008, Rainbow made from PVD-coated stainless steel in 2024, Bioscope, Garhi Neeind, Small Village, Weather, Bunch, Anahata (the spontaneous sound we feel), Tiffin System, Breathing Pot, and many others that reflect various aspects of our lifestyle.



Subodh Gupta: An Artist Expressing the Emptiness in a Glistening World

Among India's contemporary artists who have gained worldwide recognition, Subodh Gupta is one of the most prominent names. In the 1960s and 70s, there was a similar sentiment regarding M.F. Husain. Subodh Gupta is also called Delhi's 'Damien Hirst.' Damien Hirst had also created a sensation in the 1990s. Between 2005 and 2008, Gupta's works experienced an incredible 5000% increase in value.

Gupta's works have become part of prestigious galleries, museums and biennales worldwide. His solo exhibitions have been organised in globally renowned galleries for contemporary art.



Gupta turned sixty this year. The Bihar Museum is hosting his retrospective exhibition from November 9 until February 15 of next year. This retrospective exhibition is titled 'The Way Home.' Art enthusiasts in Patna are getting the opportunity to see Gupta's work collectively.

The exhibition includes twenty life-size sculptures and ten paintings. All these works are from between 2003 and 2024. It has been curated by Bihar Museum's Director General, Mr. Anjani Kumar Singh. Much has been written about his journey from the backstreet town of Khagaul to his dominance in the international art world.

At the Bihar Museum, Gupta's massive circular installation 'Yantra' is viewed daily. Gupta created this using washing machines, iron and other electronic materials.

From these seemingly ordinary materials, Gupta creates something so magical that viewers experience a sense of seeing something new, of witnessing the previously unseen. Gupta transforms the scattered elements of our surrounding life into art. He makes the ordinary the focus of his art. The scale, grandeur and uniqueness of Subodh Gupta's work appear to be a visual expression of small-town life in new India.



In 'The Way Home,' works in various mediums including oil paintings and installations can be viewed. From massive platters to small implements, Gupta's usage is visible here. While Gupta predominantly uses stainless steel, there are also works made of bronze, stone, brass, wood, clay and fiberglass. He constructs a different, unfamiliar and modern world from everyday familiar materials. The images that emerge in this exhibition are prevalent images of small-town life. Like a boot polisher's bag, the image of milk containers loaded on motorcycles. Gupta's works are made from household utensils like plates, spoons, bowls, tiffin boxes, etc.

Gupta was born in Khagaul, ten kilometers west of Patna. His initial artistic activity began through theater. Khagaul has several theater groups where regular theater happens. The influence of his early connection with performing arts like theater can be seen in his later works. Each of his installations appears as a theatrical scene, a composition presentation.

When Gupta came to Patna Art College, these were also the initial years of the college offering B.F.A (Bachelor of Fine Arts) degree. His batch at Patna Art College was 1983-88. In 1996, his work featuring 29 plates were displayed at Japan's Fukuoka Museum and were highly praised. This work is included in this exhibition under a different title.



In 1999, Gupta created his self-portrait covered in cow dung in 'Bihari.' The canvas was coated with dung, mud, etc. On it, he wrote the Devanagari word 'Bihari' in neon light. He inscribed 'Bihari' on his portrait in such a way that emphasis falls on each syllable like bi...ha...ri... The neon light was placed so that each letter glows one by one. This famous work is included in this exhibition.

His work includes images of public life from his small town. The notable 2013 installation 'Two Mechanised Cows' is made of brass and chrome-plated brass, showing the image of milk containers being carried on two Royal Enfield Bullets. Brass is molded into different shapes and then reassembled. This Bullet is considered a symbol of power in rural settings. The installation shows how traditional methods of selling and distributing milk adapt to new circumstances.

A unique work from 2015 is 'Portrait.' It's made using a shoe polisher's tools. In 'Portrait,' the cobbler is absent but his presence resonates more than his absence.

Another installation is 'Transit' marked 2013. It uses luggage trolleys found at airports. Gupta made this from brass and aluminum - the trolley in brass and the luggage in aluminum.

Among the crowd of installations, Gupta's three paintings appear tranquil. Done in watercolor on handmade paper in 2018, all three paintings beautifully depict roses blooming amidst destruction and ruin. Instead of a title, the artist has placed these lines by famous poet Rumi in English: "Come out here, where roses have opened. Let the soul meet."

The 2012 fiber installation 'Theek Paas Mein' shows a platter with kneaded flour, half-covered by a colored towel. This is a reference to an ordinary scene. Flour is typically kept like this at sweet shops. This is a common sight in small towns.

Gupta has made everyday household vessels found in Indian kitchens beautiful by giving them a dazzling shine that mesmerises the eyes.

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EXHIBITION

'Shunyata'



On 1st October 2024, Shunyata, a painting exhibition by poet-artist and diplomat Abhay K., based on Buddhist philosophy was inaugurated in the Multipurpose Hall of Bihar Museum. The exhibition was inaugurated by Bihar Museum's Director General, Mr. Anjani Kumar Singh.

During the inauguration, Mr. Singh remarked that Abhay K. is not only a poet, editor, translator and diplomat but also an accomplished artist. He noted that while Abhay K. has exhibited his paintings in many countries worldwide, this was his first exhibition in his home state, Bihar. Hosting Shunyata at Bihar Museum, Patna, was a moment of pride. Mr. Singh explained that Abhay K. has beautifully visualised Shunyata (emptiness) in his artwork. When viewed closely, forms emerge in the paintings, but as one moves away, those forms disappear, leaving only Shunyata.

Speaking about the exhibition, Abhay K. said, "It is a matter of great pride for me to display my artworks in my home state Bihar at the prestigious Bihar Museum. I am deeply grateful to the Bihar Museum, especially its Director General, Mr. Anjani Kumar Singh." Abhay K.'s exhibition showcased over 60 paintings centred on the concept of Shunyata, offering a philosophical exploration of life. Each painting depicted emotions, stages and sensations of life with intricate detail. His work portrayed human expressions during moments of absence, sadness, hope, despair, joy and happiness.



Notably, Abhay K. is a poet, editor, translator, artist and diplomat. He has authored several poetry collections and edited six books, including *The Book of Bihari Literature*. His poems have been published in over 100 literary journals worldwide, and his Earth Anthem has been translated into more than 160 languages. He received the SAARC Literature Award in 2013 and was invited to record his poems at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., in 2018. His translations of Kalidasa's Meghaduta and Ritusamhara earned him the KLF Poetry Book of the Year Award (2020-21). Additionally, his translation of the Magahi novel Phool Bahadur was published by Penguin Random House, India, as a modern classic.

Abhay K. has exhibited his paintings in Russia, India, France, Brazil and Madagascar. The Shunyata exhibition, which began on 1st October, ran until 10th October 2024 and drew a large number of visitors.



EXHIBITION

"Light Stories"



On 15th October 2024, Takshak Parmar's photography exhibition, Light Stories, was inaugurated in the Multipurpose Hall of Bihar Museum. The event was inaugurated by Bihar Museum's Director General, Anjani Kumar Singh.

In his inaugural address, Anjani Kumar Singh praised Takshak Parmar as a talented young photographer whose work showcases the diversity of art, photography and nature. He commended the exhibition for beautifully capturing the essence of landscapes, wildlife and nature through Takshak's lens. Speaking about his work, Takshak Parmar shared, "I travelled across the country and abroad, capturing these photographs without initially planning for an exhibition. This collection of 49 photographs embodies emotions that I hope viewers can connect with. I invite everyone to see these images with the feelings they evoke." The inauguration ceremony was graced by distinguished guests, including Ravi Manubhai Parmar, Chairperson of the Bihar Public Service Commission, Ashok Kumar Sinha, Additional Director of Bihar Museum, Ganesh Khetiwal, businessman and photographer, Dr Bijoy Kumar Choudhary, former Director of the Bihar Heritage Society, Bijay Kumar Jain, senior photographer from Patna, and Avadhesh Aman, an art critic.

The exhibition remained open for public viewing until 24th October 2024 and received an overwhelming response from visitors, who highly appreciated the stunning display of photographs.





MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

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Workshop Organised on Children's Day



On the occasion of Children's Day, Bihar Museum hosted a two-day workshop titled Back to the Superheroes: From Reel to Real on 13th and 14th November 2024. The aim of the workshop was to encourage children to move beyond fictional superheroes like Spiderman, Captain America and Chhota Bheem, and focus on real-life heroes from history whose contributions are well-documented.

Historical figures such as Mauryan Emperor Ashoka, Gupta ruler Samudragupta, Sur Emperor Sher Shah Suri and freedom fighter Veer Kunwar Singh were highlighted as true superheroes who left a lasting impact on society through their visionary actions.

Emperor Ashoka is remembered for his message of peace and non-violence, symbolised by the four lions on the Ashokan Pillar, which continues to feature on Indian currency. Samudragupta, often called the "Napoleon of India," established lasting authority through his conquests of Uttarapatha and Dakshinapatha, revived the ancient Ashvamedha Yajna, and issued gold coins to commemorate his victories. Sher Shah Suri revitalised the Grand Trunk Road to enhance trade and introduced the silver Rupiya and copper Paisa, denominations that remain integral to Indian currency. Veer Kunwar Singh, at the remarkable age of 80, actively participated in the 1857 rebellion, contributing significantly to India's fight for independence. These historical icons were presented to children as the real superheroes through engaging stories. 55 children from Kilkari Bal Bhavan, Patna and various schools participated in the two day workshop.



On 13th November, the participating children interacted with museum staff and shared their thoughts about their own superheroes. The session concluded with an activity where children created superhero masks and weapons under the guidance of artists from Kilkari. The session on 14th November began with the launch of Bihar Museum's children's publication, Know Your History (Apne Itihas Ko Jane). The book was jointly launched by the Director General of Bihar Museum, Mr. Anjani Kumar Singh; Mr. Deepak Anand, Secretary, Labour Resources Department; and renowned singer Dr. Nitu Kumari Nootan. After the launch, an educational session was conducted with all 55 participants. The children listened to stories about historical superheroes narrated by storytellers from Kilkari and also participated in puzzle games. The two-day workshop concluded successfully, leaving participants with a deeper understanding of India's real heroes and their inspiring contributions to history. The workshop was organised by Dr Vishi Upadhyay, Curator, Bihar Museum.

Dr Vishi Upadhyay

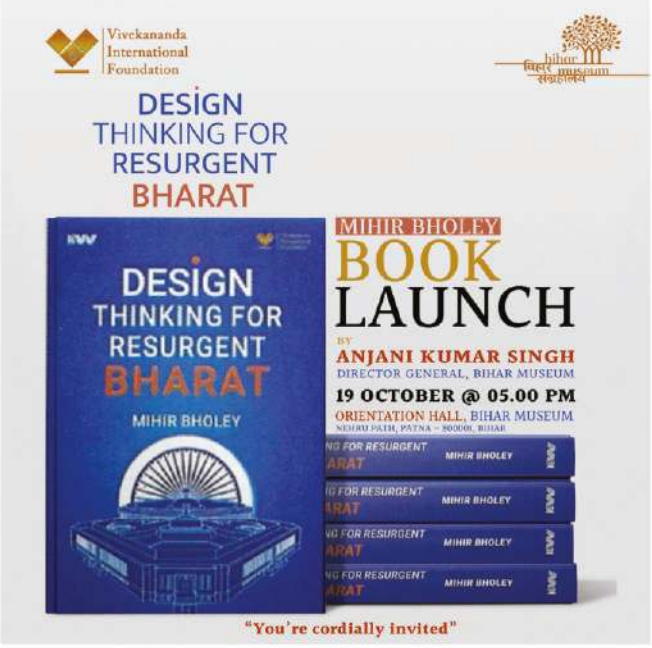




MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

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Book Launch of "Design Thinking for Resurgent India"



On 19th October, Bihar Museum hosted the launch of the book "Design Thinking for Resurgent Bharat" authored by Dr Mihir Bholey, former professor at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad. The book was unveiled by the Director General of Bihar Museum, Mr Anjani Kumar Singh. This programme was organised by Bihar Museum and plays a key role in preserving and promoting Bihar's art, culture and intellectual heritage on both national and international platforms.

The event was attended by Dr Jitendra Narayan, former Dean of Lalit Narayan Mithila University, Darbhanga, alongside numerous intellectuals, designers, writers and other distinguished guests.

Dr Mihir Bholey who is originally from Bihar, has been involved in teaching, researching and writing on design and design thinking for a long time. The book has been published by the renowned policy think tank Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) based in Delhi. Former NITI Aayog CEO and G20 Sherpa Mr Amitabh Kant and member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council Mr Sanjeev Sanyal have shared their insights on the book. It is also worth noting that the foreword of the book has been penned by Dr Arvind Gupta, former Deputy National Security Advisor and Director of VIF.

Speaking at the launch, Dr Bholey explained that design is often misperceived as merely an expression of art and beauty. In reality, design is a systematic and creative approach to solving problems. He emphasised the growing discourse around "Design Thinking," a human-centred, solution-oriented process based on creativity and innovation. His book explores how "Design Thinking" can address the developmental challenges of a rising India, particularly focusing on urbanisation challenges in Bihar and India from the perspective of citizens, with an aim to develop accurate solutions through design thinking. It discusses transformative national policies such as Make in India, Smart Cities, Ayushman Bharat, Swachh Bharat, Digital India, National Electric Mobility Mission and Gati Shakti in the context of India's "Amrit Kaal." The book holds special significance for Bihar as it calls for a new perspective and creativity to tackle its complex developmental challenges, where "Design Thinking" can play a crucial role.

Mr Anjani Kumar Singh, Director General of Bihar Museum, highlighted that as India emerges as a global power, its underlying "Design Thinking" must be understood by its citizens. He credited the ecosystem of technology, innovation and design for helping India overcome developmental challenges in recent years. Technology has empowered us, innovation has led to the discovery of new methods, and design creativity has transformed them into products that benefit individuals, society and markets. Dr Mihir Bholey's book delves into these themes, explaining the real meaning of design to general readers and discussing its role in India's rise as a leading nation.

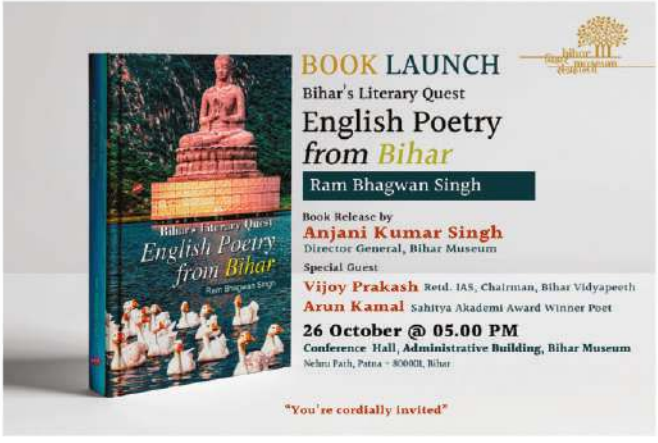
Vijay Prakash, retired IAS officer and head of Bihar Vidyapeeth, remarked that with the help of technology, innovation and design, India has made its mark in various fields like automobiles, modern railway systems, digital public infrastructure, agriculture, healthcare and space. He emphasised the need for a wider discourse on design's contributions and potential for national development. Dr Mihir Bholey's book provides an in-depth discussion on India's resurgence through technology, innovation and design.

Dr Jitendra Narayan also addressed the audience during the event. The welcome speech was delivered by Ashok Kumar Sinha, Additional Director of Bihar Museum, and the event was attended by a large number of intellectuals and artists. Professor Niharika anchored the programme.



MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

Launch of "English Poetry from Bihar"



On 26th October, Bihar Museum hosted the launch of the poetry anthology, *English Poetry from Bihar*, a collection edited by the renowned litterateur Prof. Ram Bhagwan Singh. The event saw the participation of distinguished personalities, including the editor himself, retired IAS officer Mr. Vijay Prakash, acclaimed poet Arun Kamal, professors and students from various colleges.

Prof. Ram Bhagwan Singh shed light on the works of the poets featured in the anthology. During the launch, Bihar Museum's Director General, Mr. Anjani Kumar Singh, described the book as a historic creation. He mentioned that this is the first compilation dedicated to English poets from Bihar, with notable features such as the exploration of historical poetry and the works of contemporary poets from the region.

Mr. Singh also referenced the patriotic poems of Babu Awadh Bihari Lal, a poet from the British colonial period. In his Address to India, Awadh Bihari Lal urged the people of the country to awaken from their slumber, reclaim their lost glory and strive for freedom from colonial rule. His poetic descriptions celebrated Bihar's natural beauty, festivals and lifestyle, expressed across four cantos. His poetry reflected a deep sense of social welfare, evident in works like The Virgin Widow's Lament, which showcased his sensitivity to societal issues.

As a guest of honour, Mr. Vijay Prakash praised the editor and called the book a milestone. He expressed joy at the discovery of so many English poets from Bihar and observed that while the Hindi poets of Bihar gained national recognition over the last century, the contributions of English poets from the region remained neglected. This anthology, he said, is a crucial step in bringing their works to light.

Poet Arun Kamal also praised the book and brought focus on the artistic competence of Bihari poets in the broader context of Indian literature. He remarked that some Bihari poets have earned international acclaim, and their works hold a rightful place in the realm of world literature.

The event was graced by several prominent figures, including Mr. Ashok Kumar Sinha, Additional Director, Bihar Museum, Patna, Mr. Sameer Kumar Sharma, Registrar, Nalanda University, Mr. A.M. Prasad, Retired IAS, Chairperson, Human Rights Organisation, Bihar, Mr. Anil Kumar Prasad, Retired Officer, Middle East and Africa, Mr. Kumar Binod Chaudhary, Retired Inspector General of Police, Bihar.

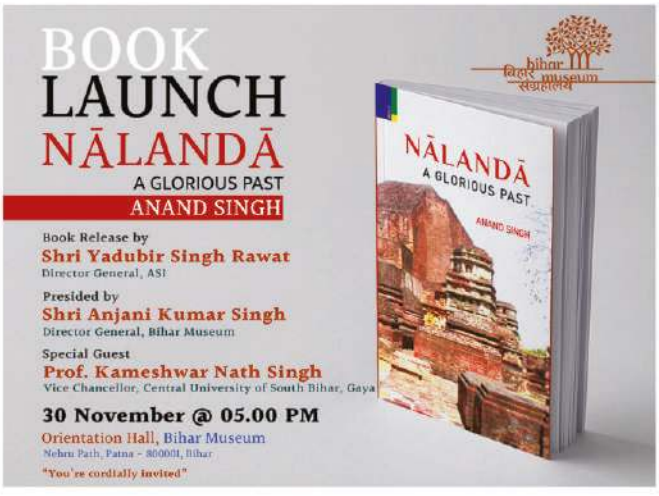
Several poets featured in the anthology, including Mr. Anil Kumar Prasad, Mr. Kumar Binod Chaudhary, Mr. Samar Pratap Singh, Ms. Agranishree and Ms. Mridula Prakash, were present to mark the occasion. Professors and students from universities across Bihar also attended, appreciating this literary achievement.

The event also facilitated a discussion on the rich heritage of English poetry in Bihar, its significance, and its evolution over the years. With the active participation of esteemed guests and literary enthusiasts, the book launch was a success. This event marked an inspiring step forward in recognising and celebrating the contributions of English poets from Bihar.



MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

Nalanda: A Glorious Past – Launch Event



Nalanda is not only a sacred site for Buddhism, it has been the foremost center of India's rich intellectual heritage for centuries. The great educational traditions initiated at Nalanda created a unique knowledge ecosystem in Indian history. These were the words of Shri Yadubir Singh Rawat, Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India, at the launch of the book "Nalanda: A Glorious Past" written by Professor Anand Singh. The event took place on November 30, 2024, in the Orientation Hall of the Bihar Museum, with Shri Anjani Kumar Singh, the former Chief Secretary of Bihar and Director General of Bihar Museum, presiding over the event. Professor Anand Singh, an expert in Buddhist education and philosophy and Head of the Department of Historical Studies and Archaeology at Central University of South Bihar, Gaya, was the author of the much-discussed book.

The Chief Guest of the event was Shri Yadubir Singh Rawat, Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India, and the special guest was Professor Kameshwar Nath Singh, Vice Chancellor of Central University of South Bihar, Gaya. The event began with a welcoming speech by Shri Ashok Kumar Sinha, Additional Director of Bihar Museum. The book launch was followed by a meaningful and concise discussion on the key topics and dimensions presented in the book, attended by the city's intellectual audience and students.

Professor Yadubir Singh Rawat called the book an important historical document regarding the rise and fall of Nalanda. For a thousand years, Nalanda stood as a flag bearer of the knowledge tradition in India. Nalanda was a significant center for studying and teaching diverse fields such as epistemology, metaphysics, grammar, astronomy, medicine, Buddhist education and literature, water management and finance. Nalanda Mahavihara was one of the oldest international knowledge centers in the world during its time. Nalanda had dense academic and cultural connections with countries like Java-Sumatra, China and Tibet. Anand Singh's book provides an authentic account of various aspects of Nalanda's history, including its foundation, naming, geographical expansion, rise as a center for Buddhist knowledge, philosophy and literature, its role as a meeting point for diverse cultural streams, and the history of the decline of this glorious heritage.

After the book launch Professor Anand Singh mentioned that this book is the result of years of hard work and extensive research. He shared that the book spans over 600 pages and details events from the early days of the ancient Nalanda University to its decline. Professor Kameshwar Nath Singh, Vice Chancellor of Central University of South Bihar, Gaya, also described the book as a historical masterpiece and elaborated on the important chapters.

In his address, Shri Anjani Kumar Singh, Director General of Bihar Museum, stated that from the 5th century BCE to the 12th century, when most of the world was in the darkness of ignorance, the sun of knowledge was shining bright at Nalanda in Bihar. The fame of Nalanda University spread worldwide. People from foreign lands came to Nalanda in search of knowledge and considered themselves blessed to have received an education there. It was believed that education was incomplete without studying at Nalanda University. Professor Anand Singh has beautifully narrated the glorious history of this ancient university in his book "Nalanda: A Glorious Past." Shri Anjani Kumar Singh further added that through in-depth research and study, Professor Anand Singh has presented several new and surprising facts, which will be valuable to researchers interested in Bihar's history and archaeology.



MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

Launch of Ashok Kumar Sinha's Book "Padma Shri Brahmadeo Ram Pandit: From Bhorambag to Bhayandar"



On 21st December 2024, the biography "Padma Shri Brahmadeo Ram Pandit: From Bhorambag to Bhayandar" written by Ashok Kumar Sinha, the Additional Director of the Bihar Museum was launched at the Bihar Museum's orientation theatre. The book was published by the Bihar Museum and was jointly unveiled by Padma Shri Brahmadeo Ram Pandit, Padma Bhushan Rajeev Sethi, Hon'ble Deputy Chairman of the Bihar Legislative Council, Prof. (Dr.) Ramvachan Rai, Padma Shri Prof. Shyam Sharma, Bihar Museum Director General Anjani Kumar Singh and the author Ashok Kumar Sinha.

While introducing the book, Ashok Kumar Sinha explained that Brahmadeo Ram Pandit has been a source of pride for Bihar and remains active even at the age of 76. The book attempts to capture his personality and accomplishments. Originally from Bhorambag, Nawada (Bihar), Brahmadeo Pandit currently resides in Bhayandar, Mumbai. At the age of 12, he left home and stayed away from Bihar for nearly 50 years. Although physically distant, he maintained a deep connection with his homeland. In 2012, during the International Trade Fair at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, he visited the Bihar Pavilion, which became a turning point in his life, reconnecting him with his roots.



Ashok Kumar Sinha shared how Brahmadeo Pandit returned to Bihar in 2013 to attend Bihar Day celebrations in Patna upon their invitation. Around the same time, it was announced that he would receive the Padma Shri award. Ashok Kumar Sinha noted that success is never an overnight achievement–it requires discipline, perseverance and continuous effort. The book touches upon the struggles and milestones of Brahmadeo Pandit's journey which will inspire readers with lessons of determination and resilience.

Prof. (Dr.) Ramvachan Rai remarked that Brahmadeo Pandit's story proves that those connected to their roots can achieve greatness. He compared Brahmadeo Pandit's discovery by Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) to how Ram Manohar Lohia identified MF Husain's talent. Just as JP recognised Brahmadeo Pandit's potential, Lohia introduced Husain to the world of art. Prof. Rai emphasised that preserving such heritage figures like Brahmadeo Pandit is crucial.



Director General of Bihar Museum, Anjani Kumar Singh, praised Ashok Kumar Sinha's dedication to documenting the lives of artists, documenting their life and work. Mr. Singh expressed admiration for Brahmadeo Pandit's energy and discipline at his age, stating that he focuses solely on three things–work, eating and sleeping–and dislikes gossip. He also took that moment to mention Brahmadeo Pandit's generosity, such as donating ₹10 lakhs and his artworks to an ashram in Sekhodewra.

Renowned designer and India's first scenographer, Rajeev Sethi, commended Brahmadeo Pandit's transformation of traditional art into studio art. Sethi mentioned that Brahmadeo's works have been displayed in prestigious art galleries like Jehangir Art Gallery and Triveni Kala Sangam and are part of collections by eminent art patrons, including Ebrahim Alkazi and Firoza Godrej. Sethi acknowledged Anjani Kumar Singh and Ashok Kumar Sinha's efforts in connecting Pandit back to his roots and enhancing the Bihar Museum's identity.

Padma Shri Prof. Shyam Sharma praised the book for its simple and engaging narrative of an artist's struggles and achievements. He commended Pandit's unique craftsmanship and innovation, noting that his art reflects a balance of tradition and modernity, making the book both informative and collectible.

In his speech, Padma Shri Brahmadeo Ram Pandit thanked Ashok Kumar Sinha for documenting his life. He credited his mentors, including Ajgaonkar Sir, for teaching him essential skills and discipline. He also acknowledged his learnings from Rajeev Sethi and the inspiration provided by Anjani Kumar Singh to understand market dynamics. Brahmadeo Pandit shared how his dedication to experimenting with materials like ceramics and working tirelessly helped him achieve success, with his works now in high demand.

The event was hosted by renowned theatre artist Anish Ankur. The audience included veteran artists like Anand Prasad Badal, acclaimed poet Alok Dhanwa and numerous writers, intellectuals and artists. Sunil Kumar Jha, Deputy Director of Bihar Museum, delivered the vote of thanks.



MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

'Nayi Dhara' Udyotsav Program at Bihar Museum

Ashok Kumar Sinha, Ramkishore Upadhyay and Alka Sinha honoured with 'Rachna Samman'

"In literature, nothing is hidden or forgotten. It does not allow any pain to remain concealed. Literature ensures justice with time. What life loses, a writer immortalises on the pages of literature, in stories, images and melodies, breathing life into the heart's barren lands," said the renowned storyteller Mamta Kalia. She delivered the Udayraj Singh Memorial Lecture on "Contemporary Challenges and Literature" on 1st December 2024 at the 'Udyotsav' event organised by the Nayi Dhara magazine in collaboration with the Bihar Museum. The event was chaired by the Director General of the Bihar Museum, Anjani Kumar Singh, and moderated by Dr. Shivnarayan, editor of Nayi Dhara.

In her lecture, Mamta Kalia remarked that it is impossible to write masterpieces at all times. She said, "In the past three decades, time's pace has become sharp like an arrow. Society today is in a relentless race, with everyone trying to outdo one another. Those who move slowly get trampled. At this critical juncture, literature and writers step in to narrate the tales of the marginalised, the oppressed and the ordinary. The tension of time persists, where realism contends with existentialism." She also shared her memories associated with Nayi Dhara.

During the event, Mamta Kalia was honoured with the Udayraj Singh Memorial Award 2024, which included a shawl, a certificate of merit, a memento and a cash award of ₹1 lakh, presented by Anjani Kumar Singh. Additionally, Dr. Pramathraj Sinha, the chief editor of Nayi Dhara, presented the Nayi Dhara Rachna Samman to Ashok Kumar Sinha, Ramkishore Upadhyay and Alka Sinha. Each recipient received a ceremonial shawl, a certificate of merit, a memento and ₹25,000 in cash.

In his welcome speech, Dr. Pramathraj Sinha mentioned that this year marks the 75th anniversary of Nayi Dhara's uninterrupted publication, its Amrit Mahotsav. He added that this literary flow would never cease, as it represents not just a magazine but a celebration of India's cultural consciousness, a responsibility passed down by their forefathers.

In his presidential address, Anjani Kumar Singh praised Nayi Dhara's uninterrupted publication and its contribution to cultural awareness in the Hindi literary world. He added, "Museums are often seen as places tied to the past, but today, their role extends to keeping cultural movements alive, which is why the Bihar Museum partnered with Nayi Dhara for this event." Editor and renowned poet-critic Dr. Shivnarayan shared the magazine's 75-year history, reminiscing about its illustrious editors and patrons like Raja Radhikarman Prasad Singh, Ramvriksha Benipuri, Shivpujan Sahay and Udayraj Singh. Dr. Shivnarayan has been editing the magazine for the past 35 years.

Accepting the Nayi Dhara Rachna Samman, satirist Ramkishore Upadhyay shared, "My mother tongue is Kauravi, my father imbued me with the flavour of Urdu, and I pursued an MA in English Literature. Yet, I chose Hindi as the language for my satire. No language is untouchable to me, and untouchability has no place in literary and cultural discourse."

Prolific writer and biographer Ashok Kumar Sinha spoke of his passion for writing that began during his school days and flourished during college. "My inquisitive nature made me a biographer. To date, I have written biographies of over fifty writers, artists and political thinkers."

Noted Delhi-based author Alka Sinha shared her love for diary writing, a passion she credited to Nayi Dhara. "A diary is so dear to me because it mirrors my emotions and strengthens my inner resolve. Nayi Dhara inspired me to find and document moments of creativity amidst routine life."

The festival began with a discussion on the autobiographical book Madam Sir by Manjari Jaruhar, Bihar's first female IPS officer and daughter of Udayraj Singh. In an engaging conversation with journalist-author Dr. Dhruv Kumar, Jaruhar shed light on women's struggles and identity. The event concluded with a vote of thanks from storyteller Dr. Ruby Bhushan. Writers and artists from across Bihar and Patna graced the occasion with their presence.



MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

International Conference on the Monastic Institutions and Secularity from the Gupta Period to the 15th Century



An international conference, jointly organised by Bihar Museum, Hamilton College (New York) and Mie University (Japan), on the Monastic Institutions and Secularity from the Gupta Period to the 15th Century was conducted at the Bihar Museum, Patna. The two-day conference was held on the 13th and 14th of December and was inaugurated with a welcome address by Mr Ashok Kumar Sinha, Additional Director of Bihar Museum. This was followed by an introduction to the event's framework and objectives by Dr Abhishek Singh Amar, co-convenor from Hamilton College.

Prof. Taiken Kyuma, Director of the Vihara Project from Mie University, shared a detailed layout of the research conducted on various vihara (monastic institutions) around the world under this project. He explained that Jain, Hindu, Buddhist and Christian viharas were studied as part of this initiative.

On the first day of the workshop, a total of seven research papers were presented. John Eldevik from the USA presented his research on Christian viharas. Prof. Max Deeg from Cardiff University, UK discussed the religious and secular aspects of early medieval Buddhism. Brain Hatcher from Tufts University, USA presented a paper on Dashanami viharas in 18th-century Bengal. Prof. Anil Kumar from Visva-Bharati, Kolkata shared findings from his research on the archaeological site of Mandar in Bihar, focusing on the patronage provided by regional kings to Hindu temples excavated there. Ryuta Kikuya from Koyasan University, Japan explored Buddhist tantric texts in detail. Prof. Umakant Mishra presented his research on the characteristics of sculptures excavated from Ratnagiri Vihara in Odisha, such as those of Jamthal, Vasudhara and Jamthal Mandala. John Eldevik also shed light on the development of Christianity and Christian monastic institutions in Rome and Greece during the 7th and 8th centuries, discussing the challenges of integrating Christian monks with the classical civilisations of Rome and Greece. Prof. Max Deeg provided additional insights into the state of Buddhist viharas in early medieval Bihar. Prof. Daniela De Simone from Ghent University, Belgium presented a paper on Vajrayana Buddhism, which developed in Eastern India. The first day concluded with the presentation of these seven research papers.





On the second day, the session began with a paper by Dr Vishi Upadhyay, co-convenor and curator of Bihar Museum. She discussed the excavation of several Buddhist viharas at the archaeological site of Sirpur, Chhattisgarh, dating back to the 7th-8th centuries. These viharas were found to have religious connections with Magadha (Bihar) and Kalinga (Odisha). Dr Upadhyay also shed light on the role of Queen Vasata, who was married to King Harshagupta of Sirpur and was the daughter of King Suryavarman of Magadha. On the second day of the international conference, a total of eight research papers were presented, with five focusing on Buddhist viharas in Bihar. Prof. Rajat Sanyal from University of Calcutta discussed regional patronage of Buddhist viharas in South Bihar, based on inscriptions found on Buddhist sculptures.

MUSEUM ACTIVITIES



Prof. Anura Manatunga from Sri Lanka explored the historical and modern traditions surrounding the Bodhi tree planted in Anuradhapura by Ashoka's son and daughter, Mahendra and Sanghamitra, which is a sapling of the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya. Mr Bijoy Kumar Choudhary, former director of Bihar Heritage Development Committee, presented a paper on the historical connections between archaeological sites like Tetrawa, Kurkihar and Telhara in Bihar.

Safur Rahman and Swadhin Sen from Bangladesh shared their findings on Buddhist relics excavated from Mainamati Lalmai Hills. Swadhin Sen also presented a paper on the water management practices implemented by Buddhist monasteries. Prof. Hori (Japan) presented research on the intellectual activities of Buddhists in 15th-century Bihar. The final paper of the session was presented by Dr Abhishek Singh from Hamilton College, New York. He spoke about the connections between Nalanda Mahavihara and nearby archaeological sites such as Rukmini Sthan, Jafardih, Tetrawa and Kurkihar, discussing their integration with the larger monastic network. The session concluded with a roundtable discussion. Over the two-day seminar, a total of 15 research papers were presented.



MOBILE EXHIBITION

Bihar Museum Exhibition at BIPARD, Gaya



A two-day workshop was organised on 7th and 8th October 2024 at the Bihar Institute of Public Administration and Rural Development (BIPARD), Gaya, Bihar. The event was attended by several esteemed guests, including Justice Gita Mittal, former Acting Chief Justice of Delhi High Court and Chairperson of the Supreme Court-appointed committee on Manipur violence, and former Judge Asha Menon. Other prominent attendees included B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, CEO of NITI Aayog; B.K. Singh, Special Chief Secretary of Punjab; Jitendra Kumar Sinha, Chief Secretary of Tripura; Vineet Joshi, Chief Secretary of Manipur; Amrit Lal Meena, Chief Secretary of Bihar; K.K. Pathak, Director General of BIPARD; B. Rajendra, Principal Secretary of the General Administration Department; Prem Singh Meena, Commissioner of Magadh Division and other dignitaries.On this occasion, the Bihar Museum organised a temporary exhibition on the first floor of the administrative building (Rajendra Bhawan) at BIPARD, Gaya. The exhibition showcased replicas of key artefacts from the Bihar Museum and artworks by four Padma Shri awardees: Shri Shivan Paswan, Smt. Dulari Devi, Smt. Baua Devi, and Shri Ashok Kumar Biswas, along with a national award-winning artist, Smt. Asha Devi. The displayed artworks were based on the life of Goddess Sita. The exhibition was viewed by the guests attending the workshop, who appreciated the efforts of the Bihar Museum.

Sonepur Mela



For the second time, the Bihar Museum, under the Department of Art, Culture and Youth, Bihar, organised a temporary exhibition at the world-famous Sonepur Mela in Saran district, Bihar. The exhibition was inaugurated on 19th November 2024 by Shri Vijay Kumar Sinha, Honourable Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Art, Culture and Youth Department, Bihar. The event was also attended by the local MLA, Shri Ramanuj Prasad and Shri Dayanidhan Pandey, Secretary of the Art, Culture and Youth Department, Bihar.

On this occasion, Shri Nand Gopal Kumar, Deputy Director of Bihar Museum, briefed the Honourable Deputy Chief Minister and other dignitaries about the details of the exhibition. The pavilion features eight replicas of artefacts from the Bihar Museum and photographs of eight contemporary paintings. Additionally, the pavilion included exhibitions by Bihar Lalit Kala Akademi, Patna and the Mithila Art Institute, along with the Bihar Museum.

This 32-day-long fair provided an opportunity for the public to connect with the rich history and art of Bihar. The exhibition attracted a large crowd and visitors praised this initiative.

Nand Gopal Kumar





MOBILE EXHIBITION

Bihar Museum's Participation in the Indian International Trade Fair



The Indian International Trade Fair, the largest platform for trade and culture, is held every year from November 14-17, 2024, at the India Habitat Complex (Pragati Maidan) with a different theme. The theme for the trade fair in 2024 was Viksit Bharat @ 2047. In this context, the Bihar government's Department of Industries constructed the Bihar Pavilion under the theme Vikasit Bharat. The main entrance of the pavilion was designed as the 'Sabhyata Dwar', and its fascia featured the Vikasit Bharat logo with a 'Rising Sun', representing five key areas of Bihar: art, culture, industry, tourism and women empowerment. The exterior wall of the pavilion beautifully displayed a 3D printing of the new Nalanda University and glass bridge in Rajgir.

The entire Bihar Pavilion showcased the key arts of Bihar, such as Madhubani Painting, Manjusha Painting and Tikuli Painting, which depicted scenes of Vikasit Bharat through hand-painted artwork.

The main attraction of the Bihar Pavilion was the Mini Bihar Museum, which displayed over 30 major artefacts, including replicas of relics from the Maurya, Gupta and Shunga periods. In addition to the replicas, Bihar's folk arts, such as Mithila Painting, Tikuli Painting, Sujani Art and Ceramic Art, were also showcased. These artworks were created by Padma Shri Ashok Kumar Biswas, Padma Shri Godawari Dutta, Padma Shri Shivan Paswan, Padma Shri Brahmdev Ram Pandit and state awardee Asha Devi. The Bihar Pavilion was awarded a Gold Medal this year for its excellent display. On November 27, 2024, during a grand ceremony organised by ITPO, the Nodal Officer from the Bihar Department of Industries, Nikhil Dhanraj Nippanikar, and Ashok Kumar Sinha, Additional Director of Bihar Museum, jointly received the award.





MOBILE EXHIBITION

Kazakhstan

"A Triptych of Humanity, Monuments, and Nature," is a visual and contemplative journey that transcends time, exploring the intertwined stories of humanity, monumental heritage and the power of nature. The exhibition encourages people to draw connections between the portraits of people, the monumental structures they build and the natural environments that surround them. This interplay invites contemplation on the transience of life, the endurance of cultural legacies and the symbiotic relationship between human endeavours and the ecosystems that nurture them. In the exhibition "A Triptych of Humanity, Monuments and Nature," we aim to foster a sense of collective responsibility for the narratives we craft, the monuments we build and the environments we shape.



This exhibition was Bihar Museum's first ever endeavour in foreign land. This exhibition is achieved with the collaborative effort from the Presidential Centre of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR), New Delhi, Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Astana, Kazakhstan, Embassy of India, Astana and Bihar Museum team. Curated by Moumita Ghosh, the exhibition brings together the Bihar Museum Contemporary Art collection alongside works by forty accomplished artists and four distinguished photographers. The exhibition featured a total of fifty five stunning artworks, including paintings, sculptures and photographs, each exploring the themes of humanity, cultural heritage and the natural world. This exhibition comes at a significant moment in our global discourse, where questions of identity, heritage and sustainability resonate with more urgency than ever.





The exhibition A Triptych of Humanity, Monuments and Nature was inaugurated on 30th October 2024 at the Presidential Centre of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The inauguration was graced by the presence of several distinguished guests. Dr. T. V. Nagendra Prasad, the Ambassador of India to Astana, Kazakhstan, honoured the event with his presence. Mr. Temirbolat, Director of the Presidential Centre and Mr. Sanjay Vedi, Director of the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre (SVCC), also attended the inauguration, alongside other prominent dignitaries and art enthusiasts. A catalogue of the exhibition was also published by Bihar Museum on this occasion.

Bihar Museum and Presidential Centre of Republic of Kazakhstan has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to exchange experience and information on different issues, holding joint events, exhibitions, excursions, seminars, webinars, round tables, conferences, exchange of experience between employees of the Parties. The exhibition ran till 10th January 2025 and offered visitors an extraordinary opportunity to engage with its rich themes of Indian Comtemporary anf Folk art and stunning artistry.

Moumita Ghosh

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Issue 08
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I Am Bihar and Kalopsia





On the evening of 5th October 2024, Bihar Museum hosted two events. The first event, organised by Advantage Services, was titled "Main Hoon Bihar" (I Am Bihar) under its fourth episode, "Meri Dharohar, Meri Kala-Sanskriti Bihar Ki"(My Heritage, My Art and Culture of Bihar). This was a dialogue session featuring Bihar's Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha as the chief guest. The panelists included the Director General of Bihar Museum, Mr. Anjani Kumar Singh, Chief Postmaster General Mr. Anil Kumar, Padma Shri Shovana Narayan, poet Manzar Bhopali, renowned Dr. Satyajit Singh and moderator Mr. Rahul Sharma.

Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha stated that if we keep revolving around history alone, we cannot shape the future. While our past is undoubtedly golden, it is our responsibility to take inspiration from that glorious history to brighten our future. He underlined that two-thirds of the country's population consists of youth, who hold the key to transforming the state and the nation. He recalled a 19th-century saint's prophecy that the 21st century would belong to India, and now that time has arrived. He suggested that a unifying song titled "Main Hoon Bihar" should be created to celebrate Bihar's linguistic diversity.



The Director General of Bihar Museum, Mr. Anjani Kumar Singh, spoke about the infrastructural developments in Bihar over the past one and a half to two decades, such as roads, electricity, water, hotels and safety, which have led to an increase in foreign tourists visiting and staying in Bihar. Renowned dancer Shovana Narayan spoke about Bihar's richness in cultural heritage. Chief Postmaster General Anil Kumar, Dr. Satyajit Kumar Singh, Manzar Bhopali and Khurshid Ahmad collectively recognised Bihar as a golden land of potential for cultural tourism.

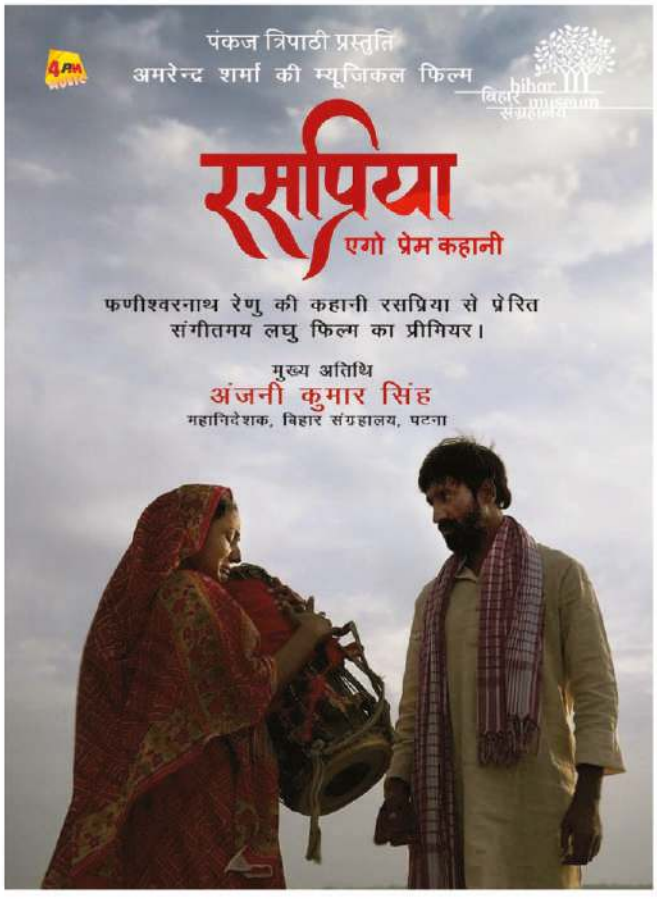
Following the dialogue session, a music and dance program titled "Kalopsia", organised by the Patna Literary Festiva took place in the Ampitheatre at the museum. The event featured a mesmerising performance by Croatian ballerina Nikolina Nikoleski and renowned Iranian percussionist Fakhruddin. Their collaborative presentation of ballet and contemporary dance was extraordinary. The harmony between the body movements and the rhythm of the beats created a stunning visual and auditory experience. It seemed as though music and dance were conversing with each other, responding intuitively to one another's cues.



CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

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Raspriya Premiere at Bihar Museum



The premiere of the musical film Raspriya , presented by Bollywood actor and Bihar's pride Pankaj Tripathi, and directed and produced by Amrendra Sharma, took place on 25th October 2024 at the Orientation Hall of Bihar Museum, Patna. The event was attended by Bihar Museum's Director General, Mr. Anjani Kumar Singh, Additional Director Mr. Ashok Kumar Sinha, in-charge Additional Director Mr. Ranbeer Singh Rajput and actor Pankaj Tripathi.

Raspriya is based on the most popular story collection 'Thumari' by the post-independence experimental writer and ground-breaking figure, Phanishwar Nath Renu. All the stories in this collection seem to create a melody through the harmony of words. The first story in this collection, Raspriya, is an extraordinary tale of folk melodies and the beauty of love. Phanishwar Nath Renu's Raspriya tells a unique love story, echoing the bittersweetness of unfulfilled love found in the famous Hindi story *Usne Kaha Tha* by Chandradhar Sharma Guleri. This love story, woven with notes, lyrics and rhythms, is more musical than narrative. Whether it's union or separation, it is the melody that flows.

Amrendra Sharma, who was part of the team that created Raspriya, made a fantastic music video around this story. The video encapsulates the entire tale through a song. In the film, Amrendra Sharma and Dhani Gupta have portrayed the sorrow of unrequited love beautifully.

Actor Pankaj Tripathi, addressing the audience, mentioned that Raspriya is a story by Renu that showcases love, sacrifice, devotion and the fading traditions of folk art. In his speech in Bhojpuri, he said, "Whenever I come to Bihar, I get emotional and can't speak much." He praised the film, stating it was Amrendra's project, and that he had done a great job. Amrendra Sharma shared that the story is so close to his heart that he decided to make the film at his own expense, with Pankaj Tripathi taking the responsibility of presenting it. The film was entirely shot in Champaran. Though short, the film is impactful. Later, the anchor had an in-depth conversation with Amrendra Sharma about his film and life. Amrendra mentioned that Raspriya is not just a story but a feeling that can only be experienced. He also mentioned receiving immense support from actors like Manoj Bajpayee and Pankaj Tripathi.

Pankaj Tripathi also toured the Bihar Museum's Orientation Gallery and praised the museum's upkeep and maintenance.



CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Santoor and Flute Duet at Bihar Museum

On 13th October 2024, a cultural programme, Dharohar, which is a part of the Patna Literary Festival was hosted in the Ampitheatre of the Bihar Museum. The highlight of the event was a duet performance by Santoor maestro Pandit Tarun Bhattacharya and flute maestro Pandit Ronu Majumdar, accompanied on the tabla by Mithilesh Kumar Jha.

The event began with young artists presenting a Tabla Tarang and Kathak performance. On tabla, Guru Ajay Kumar Thakur, along with Rishabh Kumar, Lucky Kumar, Tony and Talanjay, gave an impressive performance, while Mithu, Nandini Ghumali, Tibra and Nrityangana showcased their grace in Kathak. This was followed by the much-anticipated duet by Pandit Tarun Bhattacharya on santoor and Pandit Ronu Majumdar on flute. Their stunning collaboration, which they titled Ekatman (Unity), mesmerised the audience, who applauded enthusiastically. The tabla accompaniment by Mithilesh Jha further enhanced the performance.

The event was graced by several dignitaries, including the Chief Guest, Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Bihar Museum's Director General Anjani Kumar Singh, Dr. Satyajit Kumar Singh and Faizan Ahmad, among others.



Naina More Taras Gaye



On November 17, 2024, a musical program titled "Thumri Dadra Mahotsav - Naina More Taras Gaye" was held at the Orientation Hall of Bihar Museum by Navras School of Performing Arts in tribute to the legendary Thumri artist Ustad Maujuddin Khan. The entire hall was packed with an eager audience. The program began with Bihar Museum's Director General, Anjani Kumar Singh, paying tribute to the Nightingale of India, Sharda Sinha. Dr. Ajit Pradhan, Secretary of Navras School of Performing Arts, welcomed the guests.

Renowned singer Ivy Banerjee began her performance with songs like "Jao Balam Nahi Bolo Aur Balamwa Tum Kya Jano Preet." As her songs unfolded, the audience began humming along with her. Her renditions of "Zara Dheere Se Bolo Koi Sun Na Le," "Rangi Saari Gulabi Chunariya Re," "Saiyan Rooth Gaye Main Manati Rahi," "Ka Karun Sajni Aaye Na Balam," and "Hamari Atariya Pe Aaja Re Sanwaria" had the audience swaying and clapping in rhythm.

After Ivy Banerjee, Ramakant Gaikwad, associated with the Patiala and Kirana Gharanas, performed a Thumri in Raag "Peelu Mein Kate Na Virah Ki Raat". His performance of Pandit Jagdish Prasad's "Aao Aao Chhaila Tohay Madwa Pilai Doon" received loud applause. Both artists concluded the evening by performing the historic Bhairavi Thumri "Ras Ke Bhare Tore Nain". The singers were accompanied by Pandit Vinod Lele on Tabla, Pandit Vinay Mishra on Harmonium and Aneesh Mishra on Sarangi.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Celebrating Bhikhari Thakur

On 18th December 2024, Bihar Museum and the Bhikhari Thakur Rangmandal Research Centre jointly celebrated the 137th birth anniversary of Bhikhari Thakur who is often referred to as the "Shakespeare of Bhojpuri." The event featured a successful staging of the play Gabarghichor, written by Bhikhari Thakur and directed by Jainendra Dost, at the museum's Ampitheatre.

Addressing the audience, Bihar Museum's Director General, Anjani Kumar Singh stated that Bhikhari Thakur is a part of Bihar's heritage, and it is our duty to preserve his art and pass it on to future generations.

Before the play, a lecture session focused on Bhikhari Thakur was held, with discussions from the museum's Additional Director, Ashok Kumar Sinha, Jainendra Dost and Pramod Kumar. During the lecture, Ashok Kumar Sinha stated that Bhikhari Thakur was an artist who awakened social consciousness. He noted that even 53 years after his passing, scholars continue to research his work. Mr. Sinha explained that Thakur remains alive in the songs of farmers working in fields and around fires, as though he is still among us. He added that Thakur's unique ability was to create dialogues spontaneously, tailoring them to the audience's reactions and the atmosphere. His characters could enter scenes unpredictably to satirise societal flaws through costumes and dialogues. Thakur was a master at connecting with the common people in their own language.

Pramod Kumar spoke about Bhikhari Thakur's connection to the diaspora and described Gabarghichor as one of his most popular folk plays, serving as a sequel to Bidesia. He explained that the musical play begins with the issue of displacement and focuses on the struggles of a wife abandoned by her husband. The story stands out for its advocacy of a woman's right over her child, centring on themes of feminism. The play challenges patriarchal notions, and sheds light on the importance of motherhood. It incorporates various regional dance and music styles, such as Doha, Chaupai, Vilap Geet and Nirgun Geet.

The play Gabarghichor, directed by Dr. Jainendra Dost, revolves around a woman and her son, Gabarghichor. The story begins when the husband leaves the woman shortly after their marriage to earn money in the city. Fifteen years later, he learns about his son, Gabarghichor. The plot takes a turn when a villager claims to be the boy's father. In the end, the village head declares in favour of the mother's love and grants her custody of her son.

The performances by all the actors were outstanding. The portrayal of Gabarghichor and his mother was especially remarkable. Director Jainendra Dost kept the audience captivated with his role as the village head. The musicians added life to the play with their brilliant accompaniment, contributing significantly to its impact. The portrayal of the pain of migration left the audience deeply emotional.



CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Sharda Sinha remembered at Bihar Museum

A programme titled 'Bhojpuri ke Swar Sharda' was organised in memory of folk singer Sharda Sinha at Bihar Museum on 22nd December 2024 by Akhar Sanstha. The event was held in two sessions. The first session featured discussions and lectures, while the second session included a musical tribute by folk singers Chandan Tiwari and Aditya Rajan, accompanied by the Misri Band.

Chandan Tiwari, along with Aditya Rajan and the Misri Band, performed several songs, including "Jagdamba Ghar Mein Diyarwa..." and "Kahe Tohse Sajna...". Other notable performances included "Pahile Pahile Hum Chhath Kaile..." and "Dukhwa Mitaiye Hey Chhathi Maiya...". On this occasion, a coffee table book titled 'Jagdamba Ghar Mein Diyarwa...', containing nine of Sharda Sinha's songs, was also launched.

The event's chief guest, Harivansh, Deputy Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, spoke in Bhojpuri, bringing focus on how Sharda Sinha's songs united Bihar. He praised her music for being family-friendly and called for serious efforts to protect Bhojpuri music from obscenity. Harivansh acknowledged Sharda Sinha's contribution to popularising Chhath songs worldwide. Sharing his personal experience, he mentioned that he first heard her perform in Patna and continues to enjoy her songs in solitude.



Her music, he added, captures the pain, consciousness and history of eastern Bihar by portraying themes such as migration and the struggles of indentured workers. Former Legislative Council member and critic Prem Kumar Mani described Sharda Sinha as a symbol of Bihar's identity who is renowned for her devotional, cultural and Chhath songs. He discussed the richness of eastern Bihar's culture and urged the Bihari community to preserve her legacy. He also proposed establishing a cultural institution in Sharda Sinha's name.



Bihar Tops Eastern Zone at State Museum Conclave

Bihar emerged as a leader in the Eastern zone at the State Museum Conclave held in Bharat Mandapam New Delhi from August 1 to 3, 2024. The prestigious event, titled 'Yuge Yugeen Bharat Museum', was organized by the Ministry of Culture and saw enthusiastic participation from all 28 states and 8 union territories of India. Three Museums from Bihar, Bihar Museum, Patna Museum and Bodhgaya Museum were selected for Presentation. Bihar in the leadership of Rahul Kumar, the Director, Directorate of Museum, Bihar, along with Dr. Ravi Shankar Gupta, Curator, Bihar Museum & Arvind Mahajan, Curator, Gaya Museum won the Best Presented Award for the eastern zone, a testament to the state's remarkable efforts in preserving and showcasing its cultural heritage.The eastern zone comprises culturally rich states like Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand, making Bihar's achievement even more significant. This recognition highlights the state's dedication to maintaining its historical artifacts and ensuring that its museums are accessible, engaging, and educational for visitors. The award signifies Bihar's excellence in museum presentation, curation, rich and unique collection and overall management.

The three-day conclave, 'Yuge Yugeen Bharat Museum', was a platform for states and union territories to display their innovative museum practices, share knowledge, and learn from one another. It aimed to promote collaboration and exchange of ideas in the field of culture and heritage preservation. 150 participants from all state Participated in this conclave. Bihar's presentation stood out among other states in the eastern zone, showcasing its unique approach to combining modern techniques with traditional methods in museum curation. The event served as a remarkable opportunity for museum professionals to understand and appreciate the diversity and richness of India's cultural legacy.

Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, inaugurated the event. Secretary Govind Mohan & Joint Secretary Mugdha Sinha were also present at the occasion. Several senior officials, cultural experts, and museum professionals were in attendance, adding to the significance of the conclave. The event provided a space for dialogue on preserving India's diverse cultural heritage and improving museum experiences across the country. It also underscored the importance of innovation, technology, and public engagement in modern museum practices.Bihar's recognition at the conclave reflects the state's ongoing commitment to revitalizing its museums and making them centres of learning and inspiration. Over the years, Bihar has made significant strides in museum development, with efforts to digitize collections, improve visitor engagement, and adopt sustainable practices. The state's museums house invaluable artifacts that narrate the rich history of the region, from ancient civilizations to medieval dynasties and beyond. These efforts have placed Bihar at the forefront of cultural preservation in India.

Dr Ravi S Gupta



VISIT

Visit of the Governor of Uttar Pradesh to Bihar Museum

On October 30, 2024, the Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Smt. Anandiben Patel, visited Bihar Museum. She was warmly welcomed at the museum's entrance by Director General Anjani Kumar Singh, who greeted her with flowers. Following this, Anjani Kumar Singh provided an introduction to the museum's construction and an overview of India's ancient history.

The Governor first visited the Orientation Gallery, where a detailed explanation was provided about the chronological display of the artefacts at Bihar Museum. She was then shown a 12-minute documentary film on Bihar, which was shown in the Orientation Hall of the museum.

Afterward, the Governor was taken through History Gallery 'A,' where she observed artefacts related to the earliest known civilisation of India, the Indus Valley Civilisation, also known as the first urban civilisation. She also viewed artefacts from the Mahajanapada period, and those associated with Buddhism and Jainism, as well as relics from the ancient Maurya Empire. In History Gallery 'B,' the Governor was shown the techniques of coin minting from the Gupta period. She even participated in an audiovisual demonstration where she personally minted a gold coin.

The Governor also visited the museum's Regional Art Gallery, Bihar's Diaspora Gallery and the Contemporary Gallery. During the visit, there were several moments when she praised the museum's maintenance. After the visit, she remarked that Bihar Museum is the most beautiful and well-organised museum in the country.

Smt. Anandiben Patel spent nearly one and a half hours exploring the museum. During her tour, she was accompanied by Anjani Kumar Singh, the Director General, along with Ashok Kumar Sinha, Additional Director of Bihar Museum and Ranbeer Singh Rajput, Deputy Director cum Additional Director (I/C).



Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Smt. Anandiben Patel

Asian Women's Hockey Championship Trophy Reaches Bihar Museum

As part of the awareness campaign for the Women's Asian Hockey Champions Trophy, that took place for the first time at the International Sports Complex in Rajgir from 11th to 20th November 2024, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar flagged off the Gaurav Yatra and unveiled the trophy on 14th October. The trophy was scheduled to travel through Haryana, Punjab, Odisha, Jharkhand and all districts of Bihar from 14th October to 10th November.

On 15th October 2024, the trophy arrived at the Bihar Museum, where it was warmly welcomed by a large crowd of spectators. Addressing the players and visitors participating in the Gaurav Yatra, Bihar Museum's Director General, Mr. Anjani Kumar Singh, expressed his pride in Bihar hosting the Women's Asian Hockey Championship in Rajgir. He attributed this achievement to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's commitment to strengthening the state's sports infrastructure. Mr. Anjani Singh underlined that on 29th August, the Chief Minister had inaugurated the International Sports Academy and an Astro Hockey Ground equipped with modern facilities at Rajgir Sports Complex.

Also present at the event were Bihar Museum's Additional Director, Mr. Ashok Kumar Sinha, along with Deputy Director cum Additional Director (I/C) Ranbeer Singh Rajput and Suraj Sawant.



Director General Anjani Kumar Singh with the trophy and players.

VISIT



Amitabh Kant, India's G20 Sherpa



Japanese youtuber, Mayo



Shri Ramachandran Kadannappalli, Minister for Registration, Museums, Archaeology, Kerala. Shri Ahammad Devarakovil, MLA, Shri Anoop Jacob, MLA, Shri Antony Raju, MLA and Shri E.T Taison Master, MLA



Mr. Fahmi Prayoga, Minister Counsellor from the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in New Delhi,



Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Minister of Culture, Government of India



The delegation of Mekong-Ganga Dhammayatra from Thailand

MUSEUM INFORMATION

Visiting Hours

Tuesday–Sunday: 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM

Evening Visiting Hours: 5.00 PM to 7.00 PM

Monday is weekly Off

Tickets

Indian Adult–	100 INR
Indian Children– (5–12 Years Old)	50 INR
Foreigner Adult –	500 INR
Foreigner Children – (5–12 Years Old)	250 INR
School trips–	25 INR

Evening Tickets

Indian Adult–	50 INR
Indian Children– (5–12 Years Old)	25 INR

Facilities

Wheel Chairs
Ramp
Elevator
Child Care Room
Volunteer Guides
Cafeteria
Amphitheatre
Museum Shop
Library

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