



# MPSC

## State Civil Services

**Maharashtra Public Service Commission  
(Preliminary & Main)**

**General Studies**

**Paper I – Volume 3**

**Ancient History, Art & Culture of  
India & Maharashtra**



# MPSC

## ANCIENT HISTORY, ART & CULTURE OF INDIA & MAHARASHTRA

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## Basic Introduction

- Indian heritage = Art + Architecture and literature
- Culture = all way of life, economic, political, religious, other aspects.

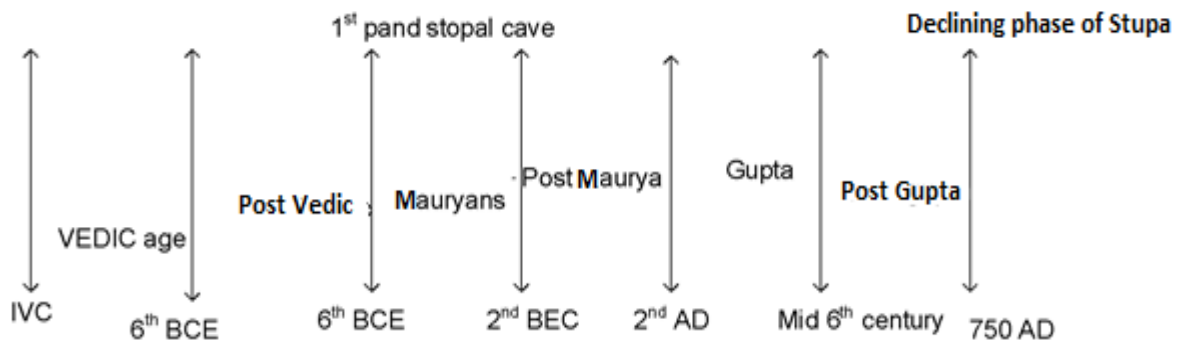
Ancient	Medieval	Modern	Contemporary
2500 BC.	750 A.D	18 <sup>th</sup> century	Mid of 20 <sup>th</sup> century

### What to read and from which period?

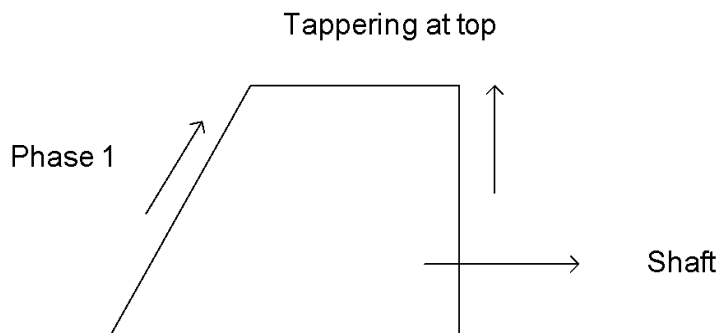
- Independent stone pillars (only ancient)
- Stupas Architecture (only ancient)
- Cave Architecture (Ancient & Medieval)
- Temple Architecture (Ancient + Medieval)
- Sculpture (Ancient + Medieval)
- Painting (All three)
- Dance, Drama, Music (Ancient + Medieval, all three, all three)
- Religious and Associated Development (Philosophical system of India, in ancient + medieval)

	Independent Stone Pillar	Stupa	Cave	Temple	Sculptures	Paintings	Dance	Drama	Music
Ancient	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Medieval	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Modern	X	X	X	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓

### ANCIENT:

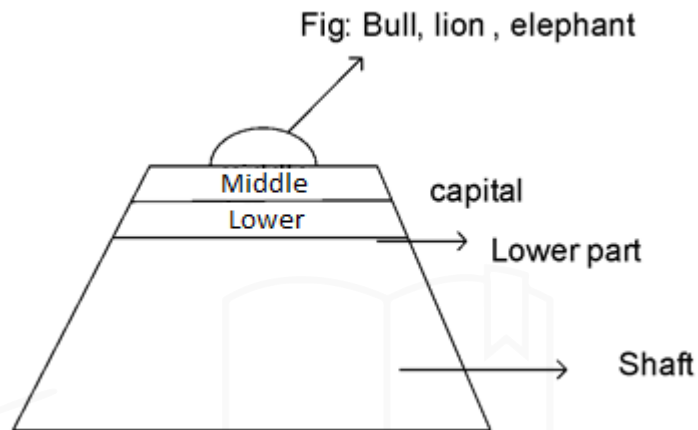
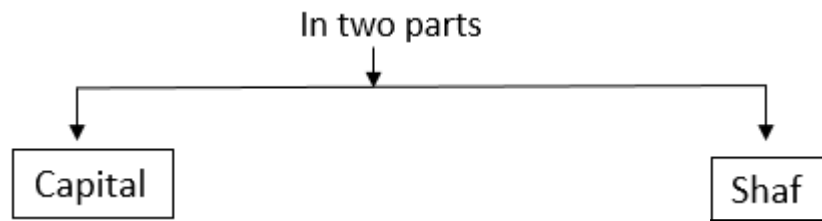


## ANCIENT- Independent stone pillars



- Pillars height = 30 to 40 ft.
- No engraving found
- No boss is made to support the pillar, so MAURYAN art is free standing pillars.
- Width of shaft is not uniform because of tapering at the top
- All Mauryan pillars are made of single stone and hence called Monolithic
- General height of the pillar is 32- 40 ft.
- Shaft is round in form to support that construction and the weight of the pillar
- Sculpture or engravings are absent in the phase one of the Mauryan art of first phase is considered before the rule of Ashoka The Great
- No ornamentation is on the Ashokan or Mauryans stone pillars but they are polished

## PHASE – 2 of Mauryan Art:



### Lower part= inverted Lotus sign made

Whole capital above the lotus from the pillar of Sarnath is taken as the national emblem.

Other characteristics of phase 2:

- Capital is added by Ashoka in Mauryan art
- Lower part of capital consists of inverted Lotus taken from a Chamanian empire made of (Iron)
- Animal figure at top of capital
- On stone pillars engraving started in 2nd phase commonly known as Inscriptions
- 2nd phase also independent stone pillars were Monolithic

### Purpose of engraving:

- **King used to speak about his policies and conditions of the period:** King Ashoka is also called the first ruler communicator of India, due to large number of inscriptions spread throughout India.
- It **shows the authority** of the King that provided power to issue inscription

## STUPA - BUDDISHM

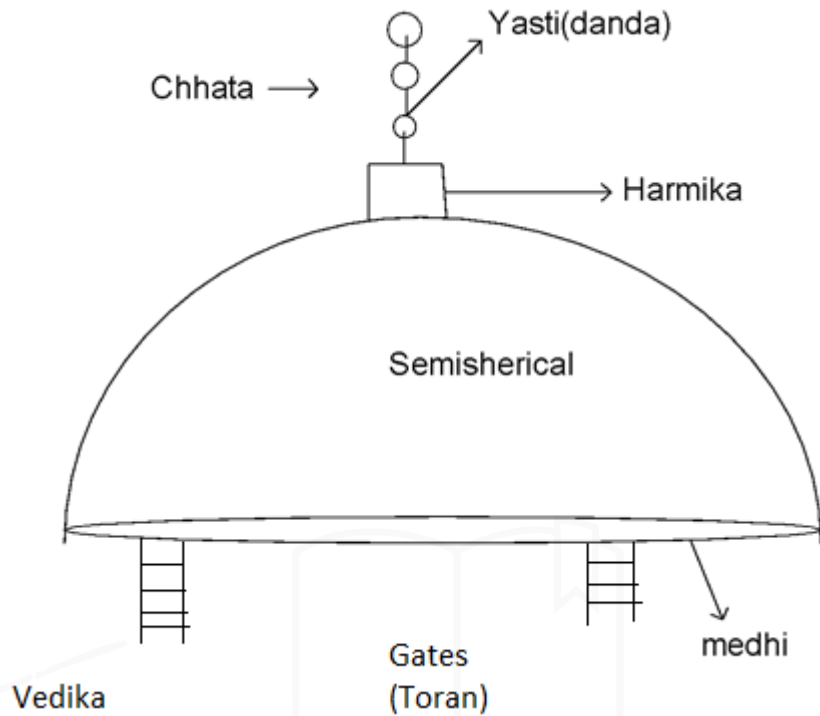
- **Chaityas:** In folk tradition; where the people used to bury the dead and created the 'Mound' over that and they also planted the trees nearby that. This whole structure was fenced by the people and are known as chaityas. They were sacred spots for the common people.

This construction was adopted by Buddhism, after the death of Gautam Buddha. Thereafter it became associated with Buddhism.

- **Mound:** Semi circle structure constructed on the surface of the earth on the spot of Buried people.
  - Chaityas become the precursor of stupa Architecture in India.



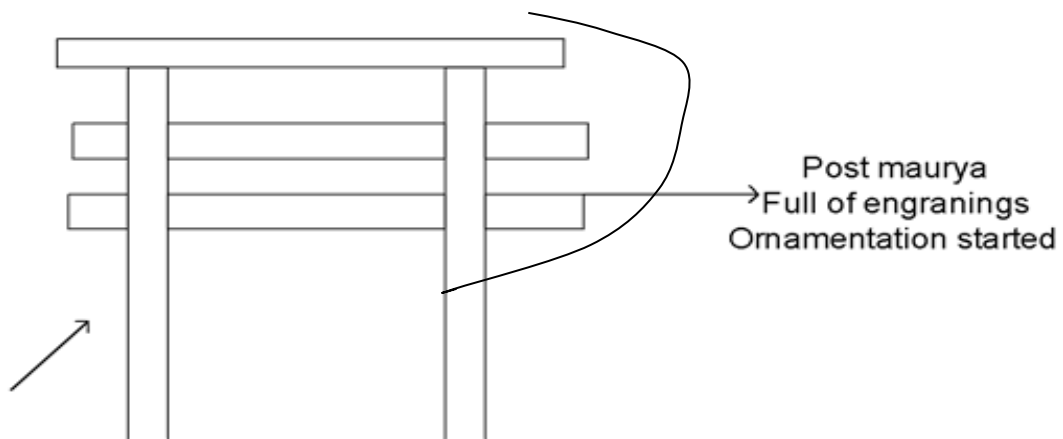
## ANCIENT-Stupa



1<sup>st</sup> Stupa constructed by Ashoka at

### Sanchi - (Madhya Pradesh)

- Medhi – Cylindrical in shape
- Vedica – Out ward fencing like wall
- Place between Medhi and Vedika is known as Pradakshina pad.
- Toran is the entry gate constructed for all four sides.



During Mauryan(Ashoka)  
 No engraving  
 No ornamentation



- During the Mauryan period; Vedika and Toran were made up of wood.
- Internal structure made of sandstone. (Varanasi & Mathura).
- From post Mauryan period, all structures were made up of stone and Bricks.
- **Purpose of stupa:** Repository of ashes of Gautama Buddha.  
Symbolizing death of Buddha.

### **Engravings on stupa:**

- About the Gautam Buddha himself (Different types of pictures)
- About the “**Bodhi Satvas**” – a bodhisattva is any person who is on the path towards Buddhahood
- From the Jataka stories (about the previous life of Buddha)
- Scenes from the life of Gautama Buddha.

### **How Stupas developed:**

- It developed from the folk tradition of Chaitya of and subsequently became related with Buddhism.
- At Sanchi stupa constructed by Ashoka is referred as Stupa-1 or great stupa because subsequently different stupas were created at Sanchi by Sunga rulers during post Maurya phase.
- Kaniska, created a stupa at Peshawar (200BC-200AD).
- Bahnut stupa(MP) by a post Maurya Sunga Kings depicts about (Queen Mahamaya Dream).
- Amravati(AP)- by Satvahana rulers during post Maurya.
- Nagarjun Kondo- by Ikshavaku ruler after Satvahana in Andhra region.

**Q.** Discuss the evolution of Stupa architecture in Ancient India?

### **Hint:**

- After post Maurya Stupa architecture and during post came to end
- Stupas were constructed by rich trader's merchants Kings or in support of the King.
- Decline in Stupa architecture symbolize decline of Buddhism especially Hinayana that primarily worshiped stupa only
- Even there are variation in Stupa architecture while the most consistent form has been 'anda' (Circular Dome) itself.

# Maharashtra Culture

## Culture

### **Maharashtra Arts & Crafts**

Maharashtra is a state that boasts of rich cultural heritage and legacy. Infact, its culture represents an amalgamation of different communities, religions, castes, and the like. Apart from that, there is another thing that reflects the vivacious spirit of the state and that is nothing but, its exquisite arts and crafts. Be it the cave paintings of Ajanta and Ellora or the beautiful jewelry of Kolhapur, the handicrafts of Maharashtra truly reflect the rich past of the state. So, if you want to know about the historical legacy of the state, start by exploring its arts and crafts. To help you with this, we have provided information about the major handicrafts of Maharashtra below:

### **Jewelry**

Kolhapur is a growing city situated in the southernmost part of Maharashtra. Apart from being renowned as the 'seat' of Goddess Mahalaxmi, the city is known for being home to artisans that make excellent jewelry. Infact, it has an entirely different style of jewelry making, known as Kolhapur jewelry.

### **Kolhapuri Chappals**

Kolhapur is one of the few cities in Maharashtra that are renowned for being home to rich arts and crafts. Amongst its most popular crafts are its beautiful jewelry and extremely comfortable chappals (slippers). The chappals and sandals produced in the city are handmade.

### **Mashru and Himroo**

Amongst the main districts of Maharashtra that are known for exquisite handicrafts is Aurangabad. The most famous crafts of the city comprise of Bidriware, Mashru and Himroo crafts. Talking about the Mashru and Himroo crafts, both of them are fabrics that are made of cotton and silk.

### **Sawantwadi Craft**

Sawantwadi is the name of a small taluka in the Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra. The taluka is mainly known for being associated with the craft of lacquer ware, popularly known as the Sawantwadi craft. The craft was introduced in the Sawantwadi somewhere around the end of the 17th century.

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## Narayan Peth

Narayan Peth saris are the traditional sarees of Maharashtra. They are made in the Sholapur region of the state and are popular throughout the country. The fabric used for making this sari is silk. Narayan Peth saris have a zari border, usually with 'rudraksha' motifs, and are woven exquisitely.

## Ajanta Paintings

Ajanta caves, situated near the Aurangabad city of Maharashtra, are known for their beautiful paintings across the world. The paintings seen there have been found to belong to the fused art style of China and Japan. They were painted by Buddhist monks who used to dwell inside the caves and revolve around the Buddhist themes only.

## Warli Paintings

Warli art is one of the famous and easily identifiable traditional art forms of Maharashtra. Warli paintings got their name from the Warli tribe which is one of the largest tribes found in Thane district. The word 'warli' comes from the word 'warla', meaning a piece of land or a field. The art displayed on the walls of the village houses depicts the social and daily life of the Warli tribesmen. The social life of the community is documented using a circle, square, triangle and the short wall paintings often surrounded the themes of fishes, trees, hunting, dances and animals. Traditionally, these paintings were made by women during wedding rituals, using a straw and rice paste which were then smeared on the wall of their huts. These days Warli paintings are also done on paper and sold all over India. They have become quite famous all over the country and are sold as prints on tiles, cloth, sarees and wall paintings.

## Sawantwadi Crafts

Sawantwadi got its name from a quiet town located in the district of Sindhudurg known for its scenic beauty and lacquer crafts. This art form was introduced into Sawantwadi around the end of 17th century and various schools of this craft started during the 18th and 19th century. This kind of craft is used to paint motifs of flowers and leaves on the surface of mythological figures and objects. The painting of mythological figures depicts three distinct styles: Chitrakatha, Ganjifa and Temple. Presently, this lacquer craft is used for the creation of beautifully crafted lacquered furniture and light fittings. Sawantwadi crafts are sold across the country and has gained a lot of international attention.

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## **Chitrakatha or the Paithani Paintings**

The nomadic Chitrakatha Community tells stories from the Puranas, legends and mythological folklore through vibrant paintings on leaves. It consists of 20 or more paintings portraying one story kept in a bundle known as "pothi". Resembling the puppets, the Chitrakatha or Paithani paintings reflects the expressions and the stories of the region from which the storyteller hails from. Chitrakathi is mainly performed on special occasions in the temples of the Konkan region in the state of Maharashtra. The oral stories inspired from the famous epics like Ramayana, Puranas and Mahabharata, are performed in a kirtan style using folk instruments like the veena, dholki along with the hand-made paintings depicting the events and characters from the transcripts.

## **Bidriware**

One of the ancient crafts, Bidriware is made from an amalgamation of copper and zinc. Involving intricate workmanship of pure silver which is either embossed, inlaid or overlaid on the metallic surface, Bidriware items are famous as souvenirs, paan holders and hookahs. They are available in different shapes and sizes all over the country. Thus, Bidriware is another well-known craft of this state which takes a lot of time and skills in preparation. These days lot of modernization is adopted by the artists, and a huge variety of contemporary designs have been developed.

## **Food**

The staple diet of Maharashtra includes wheat, rice, jowar, bajri, vegetables, lentils and fruit. Meat was not eaten much in Maharashtra until recent times. Their diet is rich in carbohydrates as initially they were occupied in labour intensive jobs like farming. The Food of Maharashtra is from sweet to mildly spicy to spicy. Some of the dishes like vada pav, pav bhaji, missal pav and pooranpuri have become famous throughout the world. Shrikhand, yet another popular dish has have said to be originated in Maharashtra.

## **Attire**

The traditional attire of Maharashtra required the men to wear a dhoti (a long garment wrapped around the waist and legs), kurta or a cotton shirt, pheta (head wear or topi) and waistcoat or bandi which was optional.

Women wear choli or blouse on the top and a 9-yard long saree called 'lugade' or 'nauwarisaadi'. They usually wore open sandals or chappals as their footwear. In the 21st century, most of the people have started wearing western clothes or a fusion of Indian and western wear. The traditional attire is worn by very few but is worn by many during any religious event or Marathi festival. Occupation Traditionally, the occupation of the majority of Maharashtra was agriculture.

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Folks near the coastal region were involved in fishing activities. But over the years, many places have been developed and industrialised, giving rise to various business and job opportunities to the people.

## **Tourism**

With Gateway of India, Sea link, Siddhivinayak, Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus and Marine drive in Mumbai, Sai Baba Temple in Shirdi, Mahalaxmi Temple in Kolhapur, Triambakeshwar Shiva Temple in Nashik, Mahabaleshwar (hill station), historical monuments in Aurangabad and many more places to visit, Maharashtra has indeed become a tourist destination. The hotel industry in Maharashtra is vast and booming.

## **Festivals**

Some festivals like Nag Panchami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Gokul Ashtami, Makar Sankranti, Gudi Padwa, Bhau Beej, Ellora Festival Narali Pomima and Shivaji Jayanti have originated in Maharashtra. Nag Panchami is devoted to the Snake God. The Snake God is prayed to get rid of the 'Nag Dosh' Ganesh Chaturthi is an eleven-day long festival of Lord Ganesh. The people of Maharashtra celebrate other festivals also like Diwali, Christmas, Eid, and New years. In most places, people celebrate all major festivals irrespective of their religion and honestly, that just shows the unity and brotherhood among them.

## **Museums in Maharashtra**

People travel to Maharashtra for adventure, business and peace, but there is one category of travellers, called the history buffs, who have constantly been coming to the state to find an enriching experience and find some solace in the museum. Maharashtra has witnessed the rule of many leaders, and rulers; evidently here one can find many museums that are still their voices, even after so many years of their rule out. A visit to the long-established museums can be a great way to know about art and traditions and even offer eye opening insights into Maharashtra's artistic heritage.

With so many things to see that recalls thousands of years of Indian history and creativity, these museums are visited by people of varied interest. They have even caught the attention of many numismatics as the state has three out of four coin museums of India. At the Alkesh Dinesh Mody Institute (Mumbai University), Indian Institute for Research in Numismatic Studies Museum (Nasik), and RBI Monetary Museum (Mumbai), numismatics can see how the Indian currency has made headway and evolved over many years, and offers a fascinating glimpse into the world of money. If the travellers have a curiosity to know about the royal personage of

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ancient India and their way of life, then they should visit the Central Museum at Nagpur and New Palace Museum in Kolhapur.

Reckoned as one of the oldest museums in India, Central Museum in Nagpur exhibits archaeological artefacts, handicrafts and articles from the ancient India. Also, this museum has seized the attention of many botanist and ecologist as its noteworthy collection of plants. History lovers can also visit the Dinkar Kelkar Museum (Pune), Prince of Wales Museum (Mumbai), Chhatrapati Museum (Kolhapur), and Mani Bhavan Museum (Mumbai).

Little is to wonder that the art of Maharashtra, especially its tribal paintings, are quite reputed in the world. And the best places to see such insightful and exquisite art has to be Jehangir Art Gallery (Mumbai) and Town Hall Museum (Kolhapur). The history and history buffs are not the only ones who love the museums of Maharashtra, but kids enjoy their trips too. Children of all ages love to visit the National Maritime Museum and Taraporewala Aquarium as here they can see the vibrant coastal life.

From aquarium to art galleries to heritage centres to science, there are multiple museums in Maharashtra that guarantee to entertain and educate all at once. All those who wish to peek into the history, culture, and traditions, make a point to visit the museums of Maharashtra.

### **Popular museum in maharashtra town hall museum kolhapur**

Hop, jump and skip away from Chhatrapati Pramilaraje Rughalaya (cities civil hospital) stands the iconic Town Hall museum. Due to museum's magnificent building, which was built by Major C. Mant, a British engineer, it is easily visible to tourist. The museum came into existence when Dr. H. D. Sankalia and Dr. M. G. Dikshit from Pune carried out the excavations on a hillock called Brahmapuri. When both of them started the unearthing process, they came across relics; however wasn't able to find a place to store them due to lack of space. That's how the museum came into existence.

Presently, the museum is classified into seven precise sections, namely portraits, paintings, archaeological, sculpture, metal, weapons, and miscellaneous. In the museum, one can find two impressive 18th-century cannons, ivory and sandalwood made idols, dices, decorative pots, terracotta musical instruments dating back to 1888; and paintings of Kala Maharshi Baburao Painter.

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## **Chhatrapati shivaji vastu museum mumbai**

Formerly known as the Prince of Wales Museum, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) is a must visit for all the history lovers. The cornerstone of the museum was laid by the Prince of Wales when he visited the city in 1905. During World War I, the museum served as the military hospital. Later in 1923, it was formally inaugurated by Lady Llyod, wife of Governor General Llyod. The museum, now renamed Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya has galleries spread over three floors, which displays more than 50,000 exhibits: Indus Valley Civilization artifacts, and other relics from the time of the Guptas, Mauryas, Chalukyas, and Rashtrakuta. But it's not only the exhibits that capture the attention of tourists the most but the Indo-Saracenic museum building, which was designed by George Witter.

The vast collection of the museum is divided into different galleries: Sculptures, Pre and Proto-History, European Paintings, Natural History, Miniature Paintings, Jehangir Nicholson Collection, Chinese and Japanese Antiquities, Numismatics, Textiles, Decorative Art and Prints Gallery. On the ground floor, one can see sculpture, Pre and Proto-History Gallery and Natural History section. The first floor houses miniature paintings, decorative arts, Nepalese and Tibetan art and Premchand and Roychand galleries. The second floor has European paintings, arms and armors.

## **Mani bhavan Mahatma Gandhi museum Mumbai**

Located on Laburnum Road in Mumbai, Mani Bhavan was Mahatma Gandhi's headquarters between 1917 and 1934. Mani Bhavan was the place where Mahatma Gandhi orchestrated most effective non-violent freedom struggle in the history of mankind like Satyagraha against Rowlatt Act; opposing Indian Press Act; learning carding and spinning; starting Khadi movement and Hindu-Muslim University, and issuing manifestos to rally people's support for the government. It was from this house, the first phase of non-violent freedom struggle was launched. In fact, his historic fast to restore peace in Mumbai was started in Mani Bhavan on 19th November 1921.

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## **Mani bhavan is divided into following parts**

**Library:** Here one can see more than 40,000 books & periodicals on Gandhism and Indian independence movement.

**Auditorium:** On the first floor of the museum, one can find an auditorium, where speech recordings of Mahatma Gandhi are played on request. Meetings, seminars, discussions and various competitions for school and college students are organized in auditorium on daily basis.

**Gandhiji's Room:** It was once the living room and working place for Mahatma Gandhi. It has been maintained much as he left and contains some personal items like mattress, worktable, spinning wheels and a pair of slippers.

**Picture Gallery:** In this section of the museum, one can see photographs depicting the important events of

**Mahatma Gandhi:** Photostats of some significant letters, articles, and documents written by Mahatma Gandhi are exhibited in the picture gallery as well.

**The Terrace:** The bronze plaque on the terrace with inscription marks the place where Mahatma Gandhi was arrested in January 1932. Mahatma Gandhi used to sleep and hold his prayers on this terrace.

## **Central Museum Nagpur**

Established in 1862 by Sir Richard Temple, the then chief commissioner of Nagpur, Central Museum, popularly known as Ajab Bangla, is counted amongst the oldest museums of India. The museum was created by the efforts of Sir Richard Temple, who not only gave his personal collection but also convinced the royal families to donate their rare artifacts as well. Collection in the museum was sourced from Chattisgarh, Vidarbha, Madhya Pradesh and even some parts of Western Maharashtra. Rare antiquities, ancient inscriptions, sculptures, coins, paintings and prehistoric artifacts are amongst the enviable collection of the museum.

The museum is spread over eleven galleries, each with different themes. But the most visited amongst them is the natural history, which has a rare collection of antlers, reptiles, fish and invertebrates specimen. Other galleries in the museum exhibit the rare collection of arm and armor, which were once used by the Mughals, Marathas and British rulers. Also, there is a tribal gallery, where one can see personal objects used by tribals like boomerangs, tobacco boxes, etc. A special

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gallery dedicated to the history of Nagpur is also designed in the museum. Here, tourists can see antiquities from the chalcolithic sites of Sarasvati-Indus and Kaundinyapura excavations, megalithic sarcophagus, stone and copper plate inscriptions, coins of different ages, and metals, etc. Along with other galleries, the museum also has a library.

### **Raja Dinkar Kelkar Museum, Pune**

Exhibiting the 20,000 rare objects that date back to the 14th century, Raja Dinkar Kelkar Museum of Pune is a delight for the visitors. All the exhibits displayed in the museum are painstakingly collected by Dinkar Kelkar (who died in 1990). The quirky collection of the museum includes hookah pipes, lamps, toys, kitchen utensils, furniture, puppets, betel-nut cutters and an amazing gallery of musical instruments. Dinkar Kelkar, the founder of the museum, toured the remotest parts of the country to add to this interesting collection of items. Most interesting part of the museum is the Gujarat Gallery, which has typical wooden interiors that are quite typical of the houses of Gujarat. Sitar shaped like a peacock, crocodile veena, Kadamba tree Lamp, vessels, textiles, spice boxes and puppets, some of the finest examples of superb craftsmanship, are amongst the must-see exhibits in the museum.

Apart from the all these collections, the biggest attraction of the museum remains the 'Mastani Mahal'. According to the historical facts, the businessman, who was the owner of Mastani Mahal, invited Dr. Kelkar to restore the place, which was then completely in ruins. Then, Dr. Kelkar took one room that was intact, completed the restoration process and created a grand museum around it.

### **RBI Monetary Museum Mumbai**

Mumbai has been the financial capital of India for many generations now. Due to the presence of BSE and financial institutions main headquarters, it has been always the centre of gravity for the people of the finance sector. Along with all these hubs, Reserve Bank of India's headquarters is also located in Mumbai on Pherozeshah Mehta Road. Next to the RBI's main building, there is RBI Monetary Museum, which often remains crowded with students, numismatics, and curious bypassers.

One of its kind in Mumbai, RBI Monetary Museum exhibits a collection of over 10,000 Indian coinage, paper currency, financial instruments and monetary curiosities.

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