

MUSEUM AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

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18th May is a memorable day for us. We celebrate International Museum Day on this date. The world today is moving ahead on the strong currents of globalisation and informatisation that demand a drastic change in lifestyles; creative and intellectual powers have become the major source of knowledge and wealth. For this we call the 21st Century as 'the Century of Culture'.

Culture has become the national competitiveness itself. Museums serve as the yardstick to measure the cultural wealth of Nations. At present new Museums are coming up to preserve and enhance our cultural heritage. They are initiating new programmes to get closer to the public to help them become aware of the great value of their cultural aspects.

Our society is dedicated to creating a beautiful world with the advancement of Culture and arts which constantly provide passions, dreams and new visions to the people of all area. We are making continued efforts to develop museums as it endeavours to enhance our cultural competitiveness and to play its part in advancing the global cultural horizon.

The 32 session of UNESCO's general conference has approved the International Convention for the safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003 to encourage the survival and vitality of the world's living, local, national and regional cultural heritage in the face of increasing globalization. I call upon the distinguished scholars not only to document intangible cultural heritage but also to encourage to presentation, preservation, protection and transmission as they are the living human treasure system. I also call upon all to preserve local cultures facing annihilation and extinction amidst industrialisation. Let us affirm and agree that civilizations do not clash, but are dependent upon each other and that they are living organism which can prosper in harmony and co-existence.

The theme of International Council of Museums for 2004 Seoul Conference' has rightly been chosen as Museums and Intangible heritage. In a regional plenary session, we appropriately deliberated on intangible heritage in Indian and Orissan Context in Orissa State Museum pn 18-4-2004. As you all know our country is a land of cultural galore since time immemorial. Similarly, Orissa anciently Utkal is a land of Artistic Excellence both tangible and intangible. If we behold Konark verily a poem in stone, we notice the glimpses of both the mediums of heritage. The intangible forms of danseuses

carved out on the temple walls with celestial cymbal players, drummers and slender indolent damsels are in fact remarkable cultural reflection of Orissa.

Let us utilise the global network such as the ICOM and Internet to discover afresh the hidden intangible heritage of ethnic minorities and share them as common assets of the mankind.

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View of National Seminar on “Museum and Intangible Heritage” in Orissa State Museum on 18-5-2004