The Odisha State Maritime Museum was inaugurated on 1st April, 2013 by Hon’ble Chief Minister of Odisha Shri Naveen Patnaik. The museum is one of its kind in the State. It spreads over a vast area of about 6.5 acres situated on the south bank of the river Mahanadi. The Odisha State Maritime Museum has 11 nos of galleries along with its ancillary components, as required in a modern museum. This location, popularly known as Jobra Workshop has a beginning around 1869 and has the unique distinction of being the only workshop, which catered to the irrigation requirement of three provinces of Bihar, Bengal and Odisha under the Bengal Presidency of British India. It was set up by the then PWD department of British administration through the efforts of one Scottish Engineer Mr.G.H.Faulkner immediately after the great famine of 1866 in Odisha, known as “Naa Anka Durviksha”. The British administration took up the work of excavating the Coast Canal, Taladanda Canal and other irrigation projects to counter the effects of drought. This workshop was mainly catering to the need of anicuts, dams, canals and most important inland water transport system. At that time the access to Calcutta from Cuttack was only through a journey on the river Mahanadi to the False Point near Paradeep and on sea up to Calcutta or from Chandabali to Calcutta.

**Introduction Gallery**

The introduction gallery gives information about the location of the museum and its past history. This Gallery has three sections. The first section depicts the establishment of the workshop
and its conversion to the Museum through visuals and some original objects, plan and photographs. The second section displays the original objects related to the workshop and its activities, particularly the navigation equipments found in the workshop. The third section gives information on the Museum and it also has audio visual system screening short films on maritime heritage of Odisha.

Maritime History Gallery

The large number of ports, forts and trading centres along the coastline of the country bear testimony to the maritime history of India. The archaeological evidences found in Indian excavated sites and other such sites in outside countries indicate the cultural interaction between India and other countries in ancient and medieval periods of Indian history.

The maritime relation of Kalinga had left its strongest impact in countries like Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. The Hindu culture of the Island State of Bali in Indonesia has great similarity with Odia culture. The life and culture of Balinese and Odia people have strange coincidences in the sphere of language, dialect, religious practices, performing arts, crafts and architecture.

The findings of Roman pottery, coin, and terracotta objects from excavated sites of Sisupalgarh indicate the trade relation with ancient Roman Empire. Similarly the discovery of roulleted ware, knobbed ware from sites of Odisha such as Radhanagar, Sisupalagarh, Kuruma, Manikapatna, Brahmavana, Khalkatapatna etc. and their discovery in sites of Bali, Java, Kalimantan in Indonesia and Malaysia prove the ancient overseas connection among these regions. The findings of Chinese porcelain, ceramic, Arabic stone ware and Ceylonese coins from Odishan sites prove ancient maritime relation of ancient Odisha with China, Sri Lanka and Arab countries.

This Gallery depicts the maritime history of India as well as Odisha with appropriate illustrations, maps, charts and objects.

Boat Building Gallery

Boat building is as old as sailing on water by man. Man learnt to cross water bodies from very early times. In the beginning logs of wood were probably found suitable to use as these floated easily on water. In due course pieces of logs were joined to make rafts which could balance the people on board. Gradually boats were made after use of metal by early men.

In India reference to boats and ships are found even in Vedic literature. In later times specific treatises or Silpasastras on boat building were made and different categories of boats were accordingly prepared.

Without a boat or ship building industry it is impossible to think of trans-oceanic voyages and maritime trade for a region or people. In Odisha one finds many boat building centres even now producing both riverine boats and small seafaring vessels.

This gallery portrays the boat building activities of ancient Odisha as gleaned from various sources through photographs, charts, dioramas.
and models. In this gallery it is aimed to educate the interested visitors on the different parts of an actual boat, which are still made in few centres of Odisha and the related process of building a boat and the rituals.

While boats play on rivers, lakes and other large water bodies, Ships were the means to sail across high seas. Literary references as well as depiction of boats and ships in sculpture, painting, coins, terracotta figurines and clay seals give us an idea about the types of vessels used earlier by people of the Indian sub-continent. Before the Vedic age the Harappan culture had developed and mastered the art of sea voyage as evident from the excavation at Lothal in Gujrat where a dock-yard has been exposed.

In due course different boats and ships and navigational skills were developed and we find traditional Silpa texts prescribing the construction of different types of boats for both inland and sea voyages. These are listed below.

In this gallery an attempt has been made to present different types of boats and vessels of earlier period as found in visual art forms and contemporary ones now being used both in inland waters and high seas.

**Jobra Workshop Gallery**

The Jobra Workshop at Cuttack was conceived by the then British Government after the great famine of A.D. 1866. One George Faulkner, an Engineer of Scottish origin, was put in charge of the workshop. An iron Plaque found in the workshop indicates that the foundation stone of the Jobra Workshop was laid on 01.01.1869 by Mrs. Faulkner.

Originally the workshop was meant for fabrication of sluice gates, building of boats and other requirements for use in irrigation canals, surface water transport and anicuts on rivers. It was also catering to the need of the then Bihar and Bengal regions under the then Bengal Province.

Machineries such as Lathe, Drillers, and Cutters etc were brought from England and fixed in the workshop. As per the then Commissioner of Odisha Province John Beams the workshop was able to provide anything from small boats to big boats and from nut-bolts to machine parts under the able guidance of the Engineer In-charge George Faulkner.

This Gallery depicts the machines dating back from 18th century to 20th century, both from England and India. Most of these machines are embedded to the floor and are in their original position.

The Gallery also has the old pulley system, first run by steam and later switched over to electric power, which facilitated the operation of machines. The old Crane placed on the rail was used for movement of heavy iron plates, bars etc. for specific work to a specific machine as well as shifting the products from the machines.

Each machine is presented with a short description for easy understanding of the visitors. In all, this Gallery houses 33 numbers of machines and tools.

**Maritime Rituals Gallery**

The maritime tradition and rituals are very popular throughout the state of Odisha. From archaeological evidences and literary sources, it is evident that ancient Odisha, known as Kalinga, was a great maritime power from about 7th C.B.C to 13th Century A.D. It had overseas trade relations with ancient countries like Greece, Rome, Java, Sumatra, Brahmadesa, Simhala, Bali, Malay etc. The ancient Kalinga coast had famous ports like Tamralipti, Palur, Baruva, Che-Li-ta-Lo etc which were referred to by
Geographers and Travelers like Ptolemy, Pliny, Fahien, Hieun Tsang or Ywan Chwang and others.

It seems the ancient Odia traders were overshadowed by the Arab traders in maritime trade after 13th-14th century and the overseas trading of Odia merchants almost came to an end. This is apparent from the allusions of the proverb “Aa ka ma bai-Pana gua tho” found in the Mahabharata of Sarala Dasa, written in the 15th century A.D.

Rituals play an important role in the life of Indian people without any distinction of creed. In early times before embarking upon trans-oceanic voyages people followed elaborate rituals for consecrating the ship to be sailed on, the guardian deities of water, protection of voyages and so on. These rituals are even found now followed by boat builders and sailors alike in different forms. The Silpasastras on boat building also prescribe for consecration of Boats/Ships before use. The rituals are found in varied forms in the coastal regions of the country and inland water bodies with regional differences.

The rituals of sea voyage have been transformed in due course into traditions and are to be seen in folk forms of performing arts and festivals of the region. In Odisha. We have different folk forms and festivals which carry the traditions of ancient sea voyages by Odia people.

Some such rituals performed during different festivals in Odisha such as Khudarakuni Osha, Chaitighoda, Kartika Purnima and Dagabhasa etc are presented in this Gallery through photographs, illustrations, dioramas and objects used in these festivals and performances.

Navigation Gallery

Navigation is important for a vessel on high seas to chart its course properly. Sailing on high seas is almost coeval with the civilizations and ancient cultures. From very early times men took to sea voyages. Accordingly navigational skills were slowly developed. In the beginning the stellar bodies like the Sun, the Moon, the Stars and particularly the Polar Star or the North Star (Dhruva Tara) in Indian context were the guiding coordinates for Navigation on high seas. In due course the compass, the latitudes and longitudes, the meridian and tropical lines were invented and used by Navigators.

In this gallery an attempt has been made to depict the history of navigation through objects, charts, photographs and models.

Monuments on Odishan Coast Gallery

Present state of Odisha has a coastline of 480 kms starting from Balasore on the North to Ganjam on the South. Ancient Odisha, then known as Kalinga and Utkala, had a bigger coastline extending from Tamralipti to Kalingapatnam of the present states of West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh respectively. Many monuments are located on this vast coastline or very close to the coastline which includes forts, temples, sculptures and remains of old port area.

Some of these monuments not only acted as landmarks for navigation but also were places of rituals related to boat making tradition as well as sea voyage. The forts on the coastline or nearer to the sea-shore acted as strongholds for maritime trade and related activities. There were also later trade centres of European travelers like the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danish, the French and the British. The European sailors referred to the temples of Jagannath at Puri and Sun temple at Konark as White pagoda and Black pagoda respectively.

The architectural features of these monuments and the sculptural style noticed on important sculptures found on Odishan coastline
clearly indicate the outside influence on Odishan art and architecture such as Balinese, Indonesian, European and Colonial.

The influence of Bengali and Chola architecture and art style is also evident from these monuments. This Gallery depicts the monuments of Odishan coast through photographs.

**Boat Shed Gallery**

The original shed found on the south end of the complex, opposite to the Workshop has been converted into open Gallery housing different types of boats from Odisha and other parts of the country. The boat names indicated against each are as per local usage and some following the old names found from literary sources. This boat shed houses a total number of eight Boats along with two old trucks of British period.

**Saw-Mill**

One of the main functions of Jobra Workshop was repair and manufacture of boats, particularly used by Govt. Departments. Since timber and wood are essential for use in boat making a Saw-Mill was established in the Workshop with machines dated in 1870’s. The location of the Saw-Mill is near the waterfront or boat jetty where boats after building used to sail through the water body to Taladanda canal and from there to other places. Similarly boats brought in for repair were hauled through the water body near the Saw-Mill. This Saw-Mill is preserved in its original form.

**Boat Repairing Jetty**

Boat making and boat repairing have been two important industries associated with maritime history through ages. Even in contemporary period these are vital to shipping and inland water transport. The Jobra Workshop, the site of the present Museum, had played an important role in repair of boats during the 19th and early part of 20th Century. This was the place where all the boats of different Government Departments were being repaired and maintained.

A section of the Workshop was specifically devoted for the purpose and with the saw-mill; workshop, mini foundry and the repairing dockyard the workshop undertook boat repairing work as one of its major activities.

**Cannons at Jobra**

Cannons were brought to Jobra Workshop for repair and sometimes to melt the damaged ones and use for other purposes. There are four Cannons installed in the museum which date back to AD 1856, of which two cannons are fixed on both sides of the main entrance and other two cannons are installed near the boat repairing jetty.

Beside, these galleries the Open Air Amphitheatre, Multi-Media Hall, Temporary Exhibition Hall are meant for cultural functions, exhibitions, meetings, workshops, seminars and such purposes and the Museum Library and computer section are exclusively for research work. The Souvenir shop of the museum showcases different items with museum impression for selling. Different food items are available in the museum cafeteria for the visitors.

To encourage the children upto age 10 years drawing materials provided to them by the museum free of cost for drawing activities and prizes are given to them for best drawings through lottery system in the end of each month. The museum has also introduced a lottery system for the visitors and every month prize is given to a visitor through lottery system. Thus this Museum is a unique Museum in the country showcasing and preserving different valuable materials related to the rich Maritime trade of Odisha for the visitors as well as the research scholars.

Dr. Adweta Kumar Sahoo, Odisha State Maritime Museum, Jobra, Cuttack-753007.