

**Minutes of the second meeting of Expert Committee for
Scheme of 'Financial Assistance for Setting up, Promotion
and Strengthening of Regional and Local Museums'
held on 15th September 2009**

The second meeting of the Expert Committee to consider applications submitted under the Scheme of 'Financial Assistance for Setting up, Promotion and Strengthening of Regional and Local Museums' for the year 2009-10 was held on 15 September 2009 under the Chairmanship of Dr. Vijay S Madan, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture. A list of participants is enclosed at **Annexure I**.

2. Chairman welcomed the members and briefed them about the action taken on the recommendations made the Committee in its First meeting held on 30 July 2009. He stated that the recommendation by the Committee to grant 10% of project cost (up to a maximum of Rs. 30 lakh) to an applicant museum for preparing a DPR is on a higher side and needs to be reviewed. He requested the members for their suggestions in this regard. He also stated that the format for the DPR has not yet been finalized and requested the members to provide assistance for its early finalization.

3. Shri Karni Singh Jasol suggested that there must be a fixed criterion to decide upon the percentage depending upon the size and scope of the project as the cost of DPR would depend on site, scope of work and the size of project. He further suggested that there could be a 'band' to decide upon the quantum of DPR that could be granted.

4. Dr K K Basa suggested that the percentage or band could be decided depending upon the type of project, whether it included an architectural planning or curatorial planning or both. As such, it needs to be seen on a case-to-case basis. He stressed that projects in the North East Region face difficulty in regard to finding suitable experts, particularly on curatorial aspect. It was also suggested that in respect of projects in North East, there is a need to allow for a 'mentoring process' to mitigate for inherent problem of finding experts.

5. Shri Sadashiv Gorakshkar suggested that the DPR should be done by a consultant who is actually going to be involved in the project, and the DPR must include information on visitor's profile, number of anticipated visitors, vision for the future, the current budget and the manner in which the museum is going to survive after the up-gradation.

6. Shri Yogendra Narain stated that through appropriate funding, it should be possible to encourage museum architecture. He also suggested that Ministry could request NID to start a museum design course, so that we can get enough professionals in the field in the medium to long term. Dr. Rautela stated that only curatorial design for a Museum Project will not help in development of Exhibition design. The design must be a holistic one.

7. Summarizing the issue, the Chairman stated that the percentage/ quantum of amount for DPR may be decided on a case-to-case basis taking into account the site specific difficulties, and the total amount may vary from 3-7% of the project cost, up to a maximum ceiling of Rs. 20 lakh. He recalled that the Committee had already agreed that DPR will not be counted as a separate item of work and that the amount spent on DPR must be subsumed in the total project cost.

8. As regards evolution of a transparent and effective appraisal mechanism, which could be the guiding factor to evaluate a proposal, it was noted by the Committee that this was important especially for projects that involve a substantial grant. It was decided that the applicant museums with project cost more than Rs. 1 crore may be requested to make a presentation, in order to provide an opportunity to the Committee to seek clarifications and to understand the project in greater detail.

9. Referring to the revision of the Scheme for Financial Assistance for strengthening/ up-gradation of Museums in 2008, the Chairman stated that the applicant museums could now apply only once in a ten year period. In view of this provision, it was necessary for the application museum to work out a long-term up-gradation/ modernization plan in order that the process of up-gradation/ modernization takes place on an ongoing basis rather than in 'fits and starts'. The amount of money to be disbursed would, however, depend on the specific elements that are supposed to be undertaken for up-gradation/ modernization by the applicant museums in that particular year. The long-term plan would permit other elements being taken up in subsequent years as part of the same application. This will also allow for a closer association with the applicant museums and a better monitoring of the expenditure incurred.

10. Shri Gorakshkar emphasized the urgent need for skill up-gradation and training facilities for curatorial personnel. It was noted by the Committee that such capacity building was required not only for curatorial staff but also in the field of conservation. Taking into account the fact that the Museum Scheme itself provides for financing of capacity building, the Chairman requested the Members to formulate proposals for holding of training workshops/ camps in their respective museums. It was decided that the first such training workshop/ camp may be organized in the Mehrangarh Museum. Shri Karni Singh Jasol, Director, Mehrangarh Museum Trust, agreed to submit a proposal in this regard.

11. Another complex issue that came up for a detailed discussion related to categorization of museums based on exquisite collections. It was noted that the Scheme permitted a higher ceiling of financial assistance in respect of museums with exquisite collections but did not clarify what constituted such 'exquisiteness'. It was noted that the determination of exquisiteness was essentially a subjective matter and needed to be considered on a case-to-case basis. The guiding principles for such consideration would be: (a) whether the collection has unique objects that are not available in other museums; (b) whether

the total profile of the collection was such that it covers an area of heritage in a unique fashion; (c) whether the collection has the potential to project a unique window into the heritage of the country through interactive or other means among the general public residing in the defined catchment area of the museum. It was noted that additional guiding principles could be added to the above list as the Committee gains more experience in categorization of collections based on their exquisiteness. It was also felt necessary to devise mechanisms for collection of information/ data from the field in order to verify the claims of uniqueness of the objects and/or the collections.

12. Referring to the broad parameters relating to construction related activities, Dr. Rautela, Director General, National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), stated that the various Science City/ Centre projects have been completed within a cost of Rs. 1000 - 1200 per sq. ft. including civil and electrical works. He stated that this could be kept in view while appraising the cost estimates submitted by the applicant museums. This was found acceptable by the Committee.

13. The Chairman briefed the Committee about the efforts being made by the Ministry to ensure that the collections available in various national-level museums are digitized and are made available through internet and other electronic media. He stated that it would seem desirable that the applicant museums under the Museum Scheme should also be required to do the same over a period of time and that all these digital details of collections of various museums be interlinked through a dedicated 'intra-net' network. For this to happen, it was necessary that the digitization effort of all the museums is undertaken on such formats as are compatible with each other. Director General, NCSM was requested to prepare a scheme/ proposal for development of such an intra-net with servers located in major museums in different regions on two compatible digital formats (Jatan and Dharohar). It was decided that the establishment of the intra-net will be funded under the Museum Scheme.

14. The Committee deliberated upon the merits of the 4 proposals presented before it by the respective applicants:-

- (i) The Committee appreciated the curatorial and architectural concept presented by the Gandhi Memorial Museum. The Museum is strategically located in the green area of the city that acts as a 'lung'. The collections available with the Museum are priceless. One of the most valuable objects in possession of the Museum is the piece of cloth worn by the Mahatma at the time of his assassination. This one object itself gives an edge to the museum to attract visitors. In any case, Madurai being a temple city attracts a large number of visitors and once this Museum is upgraded, the number of footfalls will increase enormously. The committee took note that the museum is capable of sustaining itself in the future. However, the museum has not presented details of items of work and cost estimates. In order to carry out a proper appraisal of the project, it was desired that the Museum be asked to submit a Detailed Project Report.

(ii) The Committee commended the effort of an individual/ family to obtain/ retain such a diverse and valuable collection of Naga Art, in the face of a situation under which a large number of objects having been lost or stolen away. The committee took note that collections in possession were of very high order. However, during the presentation, the curatorial and building concept was not adequately explained/ presented. Without a clear idea of what will be on display, and what storage spaces were being planned by the Museum, it was not possible to appraise the actual space requirements. The presentation did not include adequate details on the financial aspect also. The committee took note of the fact that the Museum being located in the North-East region, may possibly face difficulties in finding suitable museum experts to advise them on the curatorial aspect. Also, that dealing with consultants from distant places does entail additional expenditure.

(iii) The Committee appreciated the project presented by the Heritage Transportation Trust in respect of their proposal to set up a Heritage Transport Museum. The architectural and curatorial aspects of the Museum were commended by the Committee. The entire concept of the museum including curatorial concept, layout plans & design for the building, as also the display area, was highly appreciated. The concept is a unique one as per the industrial heritage of the country. Almost all the elements of the project were in accordance with the requirement under the Scheme, and the building plans followed the broad parameters relating to cost of construction as discussed in the meeting. Keeping in view the uniqueness of the concept, vision of the museum and the data of collections presented by the Trust, the Committee decided to categorize it a Category I Museum project. However, the Committee desired that the trust deed between Shri Tarun Thakral and the Heritage Transportation Trust be examined to ascertain the sustainability of the Trust and whether the Trust would have full control over the Museum. Accordingly, it was decided that the following aspects be looked into:

- a. The Trust must demonstrate the ownership of land, or long-term usage on lease by the trust.
- b. The Trust must demonstrate ownership of the collection.
- c. In the event that the Museum closes down within 25 years, the entire grant-in-aid (along with Interest) must be recoverable as the 'first charge'.
- d. Explore the desirability and possibility of a Government nominee on the Board of Trustee for the period up to completion of the project.
- e. The Committee may like to visit the storage to have a look at the collection.

- (iv) The idea of the Museum proposed by the BPS Mahila University is a good one, but the curatorial concept, as presented, was rather sketchy. It was noted that collections such as these can be found in any geographical area. The location of the Museum is proposed within the University campus, and the team could not explain as to how they plan to attract visitors, nor could they present the sustainability of the Museum. Fuller details about the collections, number of visitors, access and attractiveness of the Museum, a proper curatorial concept to show the uniqueness of the project etc. were considered necessary before an appraisal could be undertaken.

15. Based on the above, the Committee recommended as under:

- (i) An amount of Rs.7.5 lakh was recommended for release to Gandhi Memorial Museum, Madurai for preparation of a DPR.
- (ii) An amount of Rs.10.00 lakh was recommended for release to Naga Heritage Museum for preparing a DPR.
- (iii) K.K. Basa was requested act as a 'mentor' for the Naga Heritage Museum. He may co-opt an expert in the field, and guide the museum to prepare a DPR. It must be ensured, however, that with this mentoring process the pace of work is stepped up.
- (iv) Necessary clarification and/ or additional information and documentation may be obtained from Heritage Transportation Trust on items listed above.
- (v) Shri Goradshkar was requested to study the Trust deeds of the Naga Heritage Museum and Heritage Transport Museum and submit his report.
- (vi) The BPS Mahila University may be asked to develop a detailed concept of the proposed museum, based on the essential elements mentioned above, which were also indicated to them in the meeting.

16. Other applications for financial assistance could not be considered for want of time.

List of Participants

1. Dr. Vijay S. Madan, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture In Chair
2. Shri B.R. Mani, Joint Director General, ASI
3. Prof. Kishore K. Basa, Director, Indian Museum, Kolkata
4. Shri A. Nagender Reddy, Director (In charge), Salarjung Museum, Hyderabad
5. Shri G.S. Rautela, Director General, NCSM
6. Shri S.M.R. Baqar, Dy. Director , National Archives of India
7. Shri P.R. Meena, Director (E & C), Planning Commission, New Delhi
8. Shri Sabyasachi Mukherjee, Director, Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai
9. Prof. P. Chenna Reddy, Director, Deptt. of Acheaeology & Museum
10. Shri Sadashiv Gorakshkar, Expert member
11. Shri Karni Singh Jasol, Director, Mehran Garh Musum, Jodhpur
12. Shri Yogendra Narain, Member Secretary, INTACH
13. Dr. Meenakshi Jolly, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Culture
14. Shri N.P.Joshi, Under Secretary, Ministry of Culture