

**Report of One-day workshop on
Museology and Buddhist Collections
held on 24th February 2016
at UniGlobe College,
Kamaladi Ganeshthan, Kathmandu**

Introduction

The Museology is a systematic study of storage, display, conservation and preservation of the artifacts recovered from the archaeological sites and other sources. Buddhist Collections has been an important component of famous Museums of the world that display Buddhist art and artifacts related to Buddhist tradition and culture. Besides that there are enormous amount of Buddhist art and artifacts deposited in the Buddhist monasteries throughout the region which need systematic preservation and conservation for future generations. Museums preserve the antiquities which are the historical evidences that speak themselves about history, religio-cultural aspects of societies. Hence LBU is introducing Museology and Buddhist Collections which aims to produce experts on museum, Museology and museography who can work as museologists, managers, curators, art historian in public and private sectors. The objectives of the MA in Museology and Buddhist Collections are to impart students with specialized and technical knowledge on museology and museography with special reference with Buddhist collections in Nepal and abroad. After graduate in Masters' degree they shall have required skills and qualities to:

1. Undertake research and obtain Ph. D degree
2. Enter public and private service in the officer level as museologists, curators, managers and art historians
3. Work as consultants, advisors or researchers in Museums, Buddhist galleries and monasteries.
4. Serve as teachers in Universities and other institutes.

Aims and Objectives

This workshop was organized as a preparatory work for introducing the course on Museology and Buddhist Collections with the following aims and objectives.

1. To discuss on need for higher level of technical expertise in the field Museology in Nepal in present context and need for higher level manpower required for the country.
2. To discourse on relevance and significance of study of Museology in LBU
3. To discuss on proposed curriculum of MA in Museology and Buddhist Collections.

Expected Outcome

1. Clarity on context and purpose of introducing Museology and Buddhist Collections in LBU.
2. Realization of the relevance and significance of study of Museology and Buddhist Collections.
3. Identification of potential areas of contribution of LBU towards study of Museology in general and Buddhist collections in particular by producing higher level manpower to undertake Museology, conservation, museum management, studies on Buddhist collection, etc.
4. Inputs from subject experts to make the proposed curriculum of international standard.

Participants

The workshop was participated by Officials from Department of Archaeology (DoA), Department of National Archive, Museologist, museum managers, curators, cultural experts, art historians, teachers from Central Department of Nepalese History, Culture and Archaeology, teachers from Central Department of Buddhist Studies, retired teacher of Tribhuvan University.

Workshop procedure

The workshop was divided into two segments, the first segment was inaugural session presided by Prof. Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya, Vice Chancellor of LBU. Hon. Geeta Raj Joshi, Member of National Planning Commission inaugurated the workshop by lighting the traditional oil lamp and offering Khada to the image of Buddha. Other dignitaries present were Prof. A.K. Dass from Calcutta University, Dr. Christian Manhart, Country Representative of UNESCO, Ms. Katherine Hacker from Canada, Mr. Prakash Darnal, Chief of National Museum, the faculty of members of Central Department of Nepalese History, Culture and Archaeology (NeHCA). While delivering the welcome speech, Prof. Dr. Bajracharya highlighted the main objectives of the workshop as to discourse on relevance and significance of study of Museology subject under the academic programme of LBU. Delivering the concluding remarks, Hon. Joshi highlighted the potential role of Museum and Museology in sustainable educational development which is one of the major indicators in achieving the Millennium Development Goal by 2022 AD set by Government of Nepal.

The second segment of workshop was divided into four sessions. The first two sessions of were chaired by Dr. Christian Manhart, and Dr. Tri Ratna Manandhar respectively. Dr. Bharat Rawat and Mr. Jal Krishna Shrestha presented the outline of the course of study of four papers in Masters in Museology and Buddhist Collections followed by the floor discussion. In his concluding remarks, Dr. Manhart congratulated LBU on initiating the study of Museology and assured that UNESCO would be happy to support it.

Similarly later two sessions were chaired Prof. Dr. Saveetri Mainali the Head of Central Department of NeHCA and Prof. A. K. Dass, respectively. In former session, Dr. Rawat and Mr. Shrestha presented course outlines of yet another two papers while in the later session, Prof. Dr. Ramesh Shrestha and his colleagues presented outlines of course related to Science portion of Museology. Both the sessions were followed by floor discussions.

In addition to these two sessions, Prof. A. K. Dass delivered a lecturer on “Parameters of Museum” that extensively dealt with different aspects of museum.

Discussion

Following issues are apparently come out of the floor discussions subsequently held after the presentations of outlines of the curriculum.

- Since most of Universities phased out annual system, should LBU adopt semester system rather than stick in annual system?
- The curriculum is not yet in standard format
- References or Suggested Readings are not mentioned for all the subjects and whatever mentioned are not in standard referencing format.
- The optional group ie. Art Group and Science Group should be made compulsory subject.
- Basic Buddhism paper should be in the first year
- Intangible cultural heritage is missing, better to make it inclusive.
- Producing Tour guide in cultural tourism is not primary objective of the course hence should be omitted.
- "Buddhist collections" suffixed in the course title limits the scope of Museology or it may have some implications while getting reorganized by Public Service Commission.
- Better not to be concentrated on any sect of religion, keep open

During the floor discussion, above issues were thoroughly discussed and some of the issues were clarified in due course of discussion while most of issues raised were well received by the presenters as well as University authorities. At the same time the subject experts highly appreciated all the participants who contributed with their valuable suggestions and comments and assured that they will try to incorporate as much application suggestions and comments as possible/applicable to make the curriculum much more result oriented and of international standard.

Concluding Remarks

The LBU effort to introduce Museology and Buddhist Collections was overwhelmingly appreciated as a timely step as country is in need for experts of Museum, Museology and Museography. Moreover, bringing together experts from home and abroad including UNESCO on board to discuss on various aspects of museum studies prior to introduction of the course is highly appreciated by participants.