EDUCATION (1950) DEPARTMENT.

MS. SERIES.

(b)

Ms 1-13, 17-23, 27 a, 8 nil 3.

Ms 31-32 + A

: closed
Ms

G.O. No. 808.

DATED: 11-3-'50.

(DESPATCH : ASSIRGT)

Museums — Govt. Museum — Madras — loan of Specimens of bronzes to the National Museum at New Delhi. Papers recorded.

D.A SC
2312

S.C
Rept. to be sent to Govt. of India

No.F.10-3/49-A1,
Ministry of Education,
Government of India,
New Delhi 3, the 9/8 July, 1949.

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM
20 AUG 1949
MADRAS

From

Dr. Tara Chand, M.A., D.Phil.,
Secretary to the Govt. of India.

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
EDUCATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
18 AUG 19

To

The Chief Secretary
to the Government of Madras,
Fort St. George, MADRAS.

C. S. (Tappal)
E.&P.H.D 1546/49
11/8/49
MMR
11.8.49

61976

Subject:- National Museum of Art , Archaeology & Anthropology .

Sir,

For a number of years we have had under consideration the question of establishing a National Museum of Art, Archaeology and Anthropology. But it was not possible to arrive at a decision earlier owing to the financial situation in India. In 1944, the question was revived by the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal with the full support of the Anthropological Society of Bombay. Thereafter a scheme for the setting up of the Museum was prepared by the Director-General of Archaeology in India and it received the approval of the Standing Committee of the Legislature. Later, a small Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Maurice Gwyer, Vice-Chancellor, Delhi University, considered the question and submitted a report on the administration, staff, functions, site and building of the National Museum.

2. Along with their plans for the post-war educational development of the country the Government of India accepted the principle of the scheme, but decided to go slow in view of the then prevailing financial stringency, although it was decided that necessary steps should be taken to establish the Museum at as early a date as possible. In pursuance of this policy during the last few years they have been acquiring the outstanding items of Art which have come up for sale from time to time in the country.

3. An essential preliminary to the establishment of the Museum was the question of a suitable site. In view of the fact that all the foreign Embassies accredited to India are located at Delhi and the Parliament of India, whose deliverations atract a large number of visitors from India and abroad, has its permanent meeting place here, Delhi's claims are undisputed. The Government of India have accordingly decided to earmark one of the sites at the Kingsway Queensway Carfax in New Delhi

PTO

for the proposed Museum. But the construction of the building of the Museum has been postponed till funds are available.

4. Considering the vital role which the National Museum must play in the spread of culture in the country it has been decided that the nucleus of this Museum should come into being immediately. Under the original plan the Museum was to consist of 5 Departments, viz., Art, Pre-Historic Archaeology, Historic Archaeology (Budhist, Jaina, and Islamic), Numismatics and Epigraphy and Anthropology. The Nucleus Museum, however, will consist of Art, Anthropology and Archaeology sections and the remaining sections will be added as and when finances and accommodation permit.

5. None of the existing buildings in Delhi is suitable for locating the Museum. As an interim measure it has been decided by the Government of India that the Museum should start functioning in a part of the Government House which His Excellency the Governor General has been gracious enough to place at their disposal.

6. In connection with the Indian Exhibition arranged by the Royal Academy in London, the

~~Lucknow and Mathura Museums~~
Government Museum, Madras/~~Patna Museum~~
~~State Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda~~
~~Rajasthan Museum~~

were good enough to send on loan the exhibits mentioned in the enclosure to this letter. These exhibits are now in India and as the Provincial Government you are no doubt aware they were also displayed at the Exhibition held recently at the Government House. The exhibits are unique in character and the visitors to the Exhibition have had a rare opportunity to appreciate through their display the wonderful artistic heritage of India. It is but proper that this opportunity should be made available to as many people as possible so as to secure the widest understanding of India's Art by the people of India and of other lands.

7. I am accordingly directed to request that the Museum concerned may be moved to allow the Government of India to retain these exhibits and to receive such other outstanding exhibits as may be in the Museums concerned for the National Museum, which is obviously the most suitable place for their display. These articles may either be transferred permanently to the National Museum or if, for any reasons, it is not possible, at least the

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National Museum may be allowed to have these exhibits on loan. The Government of India will take good care to announce that these exhibits have been donated or loaned by the Museums concerned. Considering that these exhibits will attract the attention of an ever-growing number of visitors from India as well as abroad and materially enhance the reputation and glory of India, the Government of India earnestly hope that the Museums would be able to accede to the request contained in this letter and allow the exhibits to be shown in the Museum.

Yours faithfully,

Chand

(T. Chand)
Secretary to the Govt.
of India.

(GD)23/7/49.

Govt.

Education and ~~Public Health~~ Dept.
Endt. No. 61946-1C2.Edu., dated, 14-8-49.
Referred to the Superintendent, Government Museum, for remarks.
(By order)
V. Ramaswami
Assistant Secretary to Govt.

To
The Superintendent,
Government Museum.

4

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM MADRAS

Stone Sculptures:

1. Worshipper (2630)
2. Dakshinamurti (70/37)
3. Uma Mahesvara (65/37)
4. Warrior and Chauri-bearer (2524)
5. Mother and child (75/37)
6. Dancing lady with two attendants (2520)
7. The Divine pair (? Ram-Sita)

Wooden Sculpture :

8. Figure of Dvarpalaka. Ramnad.

/- Bronze Sculptures:

9. Siva Natesa (3)
10. Siva Natesa (5)
11. Rama (1)
12. Hanumana (1)
13. Parvati standing. (11)
14. Siva as Vishvapalaka (1)
15. Siva as Natesa
16. Siva as Kankalamurti
17. Kannappa Nayanar (1)
18. Seated Buddha, from Negapatam.
19. Bodhisattva , gilt (56)

Paintings :

20. Thirteen miniatures of animals from a Persian manuscript (2464)
21. Krishna-lila with Telegu inscription (2472)
~~22. Portrait of a Tanjore Raja (659)~~

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From
Sri A. Aiyappan, M.A., Ph.D.,
Superintendent,
Government Museum,
Egmore, MADRAS-8.

To
The Secretary to Government,
Education and Public Health
Department,
Fort St. George, MADRAS-9.

No. 1440/47-27

Dated the 22nd September 1949.

Sir,

Sub: National Museum of Art - Archaeology and Anthropology - Loaning or giving away of exhibits from the Madras Museum - Remarks- p. 3 ante

Ref: Government Endorsement No. 61976-102 Edn. dated the 17th August 1949.

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With reference to Government Endorsement cited, I have the honour to offer the following remarks:-

In the letter cited, the Ministry of Education, Government of India, requires the Government of Madras to loan or give away for the proposed National Museum 7 stone sculptures, 1 wooden sculpture, 11 bronzes and 2 paintings (in all 21), which were loaned from Madras for the art exhibition arranged by the Royal Academy in London from November 1947 to March 1948. Twentytwo objects were sent to London, for the exhibition, and as soon as the exhibition was over, the exhibits were taken to New Delhi for a repetition of the exhibition in that town. When the exhibition in New Delhi was over in April 1949, I wrote to the Ministry of Education and the reply received is enclosed herewith (Encl. 1). p. 15 infra

In enclosure (2) to this I have given detailed remarks indicating why, without hopelessly impoverishing this Museum, the objects asked for cannot be loaned or given away, except four of them (items No. 5, 8, 13 and 21). The remaining seventeen are the cream of the collections in this Museum and the pride of this Province in the field of art and culture. The bare minimum valuation given to these objects for Insurance purposes when they were shipped to London was over Rs. 3,00,000. Even if this or more was paid to us by the Government of India for these unique objects, such a wonderful series as we have been able to collect in the Madras Museum is impossible to bring together again in one place. pp. 17-23 infra p. 5 ante

When the Hon'ble the Premier of Madras recently

paid a visit to the Madras Museum, I mentioned to him about the request for the loan of these which was expected. The Hon'ble the Premier reflected the feeling of the people of this Province when he remarked to me that correspondence at a Governmental level should be carried on for the return of these precious specimens.

The opposition in this Province to the proposal made by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, is not based on mere sentiment. It has deeper educational and cultural reasons as well. To study South Indian sculpture and architecture or even to get a mere idea of these, visitors to India from abroad will perforce have to come to South India. The collections of sculpture and architectural pieces in the Madras Museum are a preliminary and introductory series to the study of the actual monuments in Southern India. The Madras Museum, fortunately, possesses a good series of these sculpture, which are better arranged, catalogued and described than any other Museum in India. The Government of India's request would mean the breaking up of the series, and removal of the best and most significant objects from Madras to the proposed National Museum in New Delhi. These few pieces in New Delhi would never form an adequate series to be of educational use, but would at best be grand drawing room pieces, isolated, and unintelligble, amidst miscellaneous pieces from elsewhere. The New Delhi Museum can never do for South Indian Art what the Madras Museum can and has been doing. The removal of the unique pieces from Madras to New Delhi would be an irreparable loss to the former without being of commensurate benefit to the latter.

The foreign visitors, chiefly for whose benefit the Government of India are planning the Museum at New Delhi, will none of them, consider their visit to Hindu India complete or even begun without visiting the South Indian temples. These foreigners, unless they happen to be very highly influential people, will not be allowed to see the temple images. The only place where they can study these images is a Museum; this service for foreign visitors is rendered at the Madras Governme

Museum. Even from the foreigner's point of view, the unique specimens of bronze images of the Madras Museum should not be disturbed.

The Government of India want from us not only the 21 unique objects mentioned in their list, but also "other outstanding exhibits" if any, "for the National Museum "which is the most suitable place for their display". This raises very important questions. Whenever, in the past, Museums asked for Government of India's support, they used to say that Museums being a provincial subject, the Centre cannot do anything The Government of India had no major museum, but the Indian Museum, though managed by the Board of Trustees, constituted by a special Act, was a de facto National Museum, to which the best things from the provinces flowed during the last 100 years and more. From the Madras Museum, the best Amaravati sculptures went to the Indian Museum, and excellent sculptures from this province have also gone there. In the Indian Museum, the Government of India's Departments of Zoology, Anthropology, Archaeology, Geology, Botany and Art are running museum sections, which contain vast collections, over-crowded for want of space. The proposal for a National Museum at New Delhi amounts to a duplication of some sections of the Indian Museums. The province of West Bengal gets a large museum financed mostly by the Govemment of India while this province gets almost nothing from the Centre, but is asked to give the latter our best. If the provinces were consulted before the Government of India launched on the project of the National Museum at New Delhi, this anomaly would have been pointed out to them.

Calcutta has been the cultural capital of India even after Delhi became the administrative capital ~~of India~~. For Delhi to be important culturally and educationally as Calcutta, Bombay or Madras is a distant prospect. There is no need however to worry about this cultural backwardness of Delhi, since so far as museums are concerned, Washington, the capital of United States of America and Canberra the federal capital of

Australia cannot boast of anything like the great museums of the states, such as New York or Sydney. To injure provincial museums in order to give inflated importance to the capital is not a matter of compelling necessity, even according to American or Australian standards. India can compare herself in this respect only to larger countries, but not to small nations of Europe, such as England where the capitals concentrate everything. India with her vast provinces and local languages, culture etc., is too vast for any single National Museum to house all her glorious art objects.

For the Government of India's collections in New Delhi, the Government of Madras might consider presenting some excellent specimens of bronzes, which, while not ~~so~~ being so unique as the ones now asked for, would yet be objects of art of the highest quality. South Indian temples have in their reserve collections superb bronzes, some said to be better than the best in the Madras Museum, which the Government of India may appeal for to the Trustees. Private collectors, such as Shri Sarabhai of Ahmedabad and others mentioned in the enclosures to this letter have excellent bronzes which can be purchased by the Government of India, with their relatively greater resources compared to a Provincial Museum.

I shall conclude by repeating that none except items 5, 8, 13 and 21 in the list enclosed to the reference cited, can be spared to the Government of India, as the remaining 17 items are the most precious things in this Museum, and nowhere else are they likely to be better appreciated, loved and cherished.

Yours faithfully,

A. Aiyappan

Superintendent.

Encl: 1. Copy of letter from Dr. N. P. Chakravarti
2. Detailed remarks
3. Letter, original, from the Ministry of Edn., Govt.

Enclosure No. 1

"True Copy"

Office of the Director General
of Archaeology in India,
New Delhi, the 23rd August 1949

D.O. No. 25/9-2/49-255

Dear Sir,

RETURN OF EXHIBITS LENT FOR THE ROYAL ACADEMY EXHIBITION.

I am just waiting for the allocation of funds to cover the freight and some additional staff for this purpose from Government. As soon as this is sanctioned which I hope will be forthcoming within this month, I shall arrange for their despatch.

Yours sincerely,

N.P. Chakravarti.

The Superintendent,
Government Museum, Madras.

"True Copy"

A. Aiyappan
Superintendent.

Government Museum,
Egmore, MADRAS-8.
Dated the 22nd September 1949.

Enclosure No. 2.

SPECIAL REMARKS ABOUT THE VARIOUS ITEMS IN THE LIST.

(1) Worshipper.- This is a unique Pallava piece, showing a seculiar character in sculpture. Along with other Pallava exhibits in a special bay, in this Museum it forms a series, while on the lawns of the Government House in New Delhi, the figure becomes just a garden ornament and is nearly lost unless the Ministry of Education of the Government of India gather together a series of sculptures of the Pallava period this isolated piece will remain an unintelligible curio in New Delhi. It is doubtful if the Government of India can ever get anything like a series that we have here in this Museum. Removal of this piece from Madras, while breaking our series, will not be of any use in New Delhi.

(2) Dakshinamurti.- Its association with Chola-maligai, one of the residences of the Chola Kings, invests this image with great local and historical interest. It should not therefore be removed.

(3) Uma Mahesvara(Nolamba).- This specimen is an inscribed one, the characters being Telugu of the 10th Century A.D. It is also one of a very small number of Telugu sculptures of the early medieval period.

(4) Warrior and Chauri-bearer.- (from near Mysore). This is another secular sculpture, showing a warrior with his long rectangular shield. This is of the 12th Century and is of interest to students of South Indian History(we have no means of getting anything like it from Mysore whereas the Government of India can easily get any number through their Archaeological Department). It may mean nothing to casual visitors to the proposed National Museum in New Delhi.

(5) Mother and Child.- This small piece, we got in exchange for bronzes, from the Indian Museum. If we can get a similar piece, from the Indian Museum, there is no objection to this sculpture being given away. But here again, there are several pieces of this school

of sculpture in the Indian Museum and it is somewhat difficult to see why we should give away one of a group of sculptures of the Bengal School, which was given away to us from the surplus in the Calcutta Museum.

(6) Dancing Lady with two attendants.- (Hoysala) This is a broken, headless, image, though of good workmanship. The remarks under 4, apply to this also.

(7) The Divine pair. Same as for item No.(3), but uninscribed.

(8) Figure of Dvarapalaka (wood).- There is no objection to this being given away.

(9) Siva Natesa (3) from Velankanni.- This image has a prabha and is the only complete figure of Dancing Siva of the early Chola style. This, along with Siva Natesa of Tiruvelangadu (item 10) and Natesa of Kurram (item 15) of the Pallava period forms a series beginning with the last.
There are very good Nataraja images with the private collectors (Mr. S.Y. Krishnaswami, I.C.S., Sri S.V. Ramamurthi) and Mutts (e.g. Dharmapurāādhīnam, Tanjore) which the Government of India can get by mere asking. It will be difficult for us to fill in gaps in this Museum.

As the most complete Dancing Siva image in this Museum, it cannot leave Madras without making our collections very poor.

(10) Siva Natesa (No. 5).- This is the world-famous Siva image, praised and made famous by the French sculptor, Rodin, who was of the opinion that nothing equal to it has been produced in any other part of the world. For several decades now, the world of art in this country and abroad has been calling it the Madras Museum Natesa. The public of Madras, if consulted, would never agree to this image leaving Madras.

(11) & (12) Rama & Hanuman.- Rama images are very rare. These images of Rama and Hanuman form part of a unique group of four. This group should not be split.

13. Parvati standing.- There is no objection to this being given away. But the Archaeological Department of the

Government of India have already got on view in Government House much better images of Parvati, which they should acquire.

(14) Siva as Vishapaharana.- This is also a unique one of its kind, highly valued by all Saivites for its grandeur, among the Saiva metal images in our bronze gallery.

(15) Siva as Natesa.- This image of dancing Siva, which we got from a private collector, in exchange for a number of larger bronzes, is the earliest Dancing Siva image in our collection, as it belongs to the Pallava period. It is therefore of more historical than artistic interest and is very valuable to scholars and students here who are desirous of studying the earliest phases of South Indian Art.

(16) Siva as Kankalamurti.- We have only one of this type so it cannot be spared.

(17) Kannappa Nayanar.- (from Tiruvelangadu) It can be understood only against the background of South Indian Saivism which should be studied in the south. Its significance will be lost in New Delhi while in Madras, it will be looked on and studied with reverance and understanding. It is of the early Chola period and may be even a portrait sculpture.

(18) Seated Buddha (from Negapatam.).- This was a part of a big find of 246 images, of which the Indian Museum (which contains Archaeological collections loaned to the Trustees of that Museum by the Government of India) has got a good number. It is not at all clear why the Government of India should ask for the Madras Museum specimen, instead of using the specimen in their collection at Calcutta.

(19) Bodhisattva.- Also not an isolated piece here, but one of a series that illustrates the transition from the Pallava to Chola style of art. From the point of view of the

history of Buddhism in South India, this image provides an important documentary evidence. In New Delhi, this image will not be anything more than a mere curio.

(20) Thirteen miniatures of animals from a Persian manuscrip The Government of India's collections and the collection in the Indian Museum have a very large number of such small paintings from Persian and other Manuscripts. Several North Indian Museums have much larger collection in this line, and the Government of India's action in asking us to give away the only set we have in this Museum, is difficult to understand. My feeling is that the list has not been scrutinised carefully. The Government of India's request is not a reasonable one. This single set should not be lost to this Province.

(21) Krishna Lila with Telegu inscription.- There is no objection to this being given away, as we have another picture very much like it.

A. Aiyappa

Superintendent.

Government Museum,
Egmore, MADRAS-8,
Dated the 22nd September 1949.

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the wealth of the regional museums. The problem will be more complicated with the ... of the States, which are natu... art treasures.

Delhi so that the capital may possess a representative museum. But before such an institution is esta...

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From
Sri A.Aiyappan, M.A., Ph.D.,
Superintendent,
Government Museum, Madras.

To
The Secretary to Government
Education and Public Health Deptt.
Fort St.George, M a d r a s.

Letter No.1440/47-28

Dated 11th October 1949.

Sir,

ASST. SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT EDUCATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH DEPTT. 11 OCT 1949

Subject:- National Museum of Art- Archaeology and Anthropology- Loaning or giving away of exhibits from the Madras M Museum- Remarks.

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In continuation of my letter No.1440/47-27 dated 22nd September 1949 I have the honour to forward herewith the paper cuttings of the Hindu dated 6th October 1949 relating to the formation of a National Museum in Delhi.

pp.7-13 ante

P.27 infra

Yours faithfully,

G. Aiyappan
for SUPERINTENDENT.

ADM/11.10.

NATIONAL MUSEUM IN DELHI

NEED TO RECONSIDER PROPOSAL

POSITION OF REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

A national cultural memorial like the National Museum under contemplation in Delhi needs cautious approach, for, it will be a symbol, not only of our culture, but also of our national efficiency and powers of understanding. And anything that is attempted must be in proper style.

As long ago as 1935, Messrs. Markham and Hargreaves issued an admirable report on the working of the museums in India. As Secretary of the Empire Museums Association, Mr. Markham was associated with the surveys of museums in the British Isles, Canada, S. Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Malaya and Ceylon. Mr. Hargreaves was a former Director-General of Archaeology in India and head of a Department which is responsible for the administration of some of the museums in India. Thus the views of these two experts are entitled to respect and consideration. As a result of their investigations into the working of the museums in India, the two experts came to the conclusion that the museum movement in India was in a sorrowful plight and some of the Provincial museums were better representatives of the museum movement in India than the Indian Museum, which is administered by the Central Government. It must, however, be admitted that the Indian Museum is bound to figure for several years to come as one of the, if not the national museum of India. The experts came to the conclusion that in collection, exhibition, interpretation and organisation, some of the provincial museums like the Prince of Wales Museum and the Madras Government Museum, which have limited facilities, scored over the Indian museum, which has better resources at its disposal. And the position does not seem to be very much different to-day. Are we going to duplicate the Indian Museum in the formation of a National Museum, without any of the virtues of the provincial museums, but with all the defects of the Indian Museum? The whole question deserves close study.

It is presumed that the loan collections from the provincial museums would form the nucleus of the National Museum. In other words, antiquities will be taken out of their context and out of the museums with well-established traditions and reputation and placed in an institution which is yet to make its future.

The question arises as to what is a National Museum and where it should be located. India is a vast country. If one wants to study the Pallava and Chola antiquities against the background of the existing Pallava and Chola architecture—and that alone is true study—it will only be the Madras Government Museum which will furnish the materials. Such a study will be a fitting introduction to the great temples like those in Mahabhalipuram, Kanchipuram, Tanjore and the like, which represent all periods in temple architecture. If one is to study the art of the Chalukyas and the Andhras against the background of the Chalukyan and Andhra architecture one would go to the Prince of Wales Museum. If one wished to study the Mauryan art, one would go to the museums of Patna, Mathra and Sarnath. Thus each of the museums is distinctly a national museum with a distinct ideology and any attempt to remove their best collections and take them to New Delhi will defeat the very purpose of these museums. No antiquity can be removed from them without disturbing their essential national character.

REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS SUGGESTED

The question may be viewed from a slightly different point of view. In order that these museums, with well-established traditions and associations, may not be one-sided and nurture provincial or regional spirit, they need to be strengthened with duplicates—and not, of course originals—from other regions. The ideal before these museums should be a broad cultural outlook representative of the national culture of India to serve as background for intense regional study. Considering the vastness of the country and the wealth of archaeological materials, it is impossible to form a really national museum—national in the strictest sense of the term—with a few Mauryan, Sunga, Pala, Pallava, Chola, Chalukyan or Andhra antiquities and thus depleting the wealth of the regional museums. The problem will be more complicated with the integration of the States, which are naturally jealous about their art treasures. Thus one has to think of many regional museums functioning as national museums. This regional arrangement is necessary. On account of the vastness of the country, it is impossible to have a composite view of the culture of the different regions of India.

It would be a pity if, without properly considering all the aspects of the question, pressure from the top is brought to bear on the provinces to part with their art treasures. The Provinces must guard against this tendency. If there is to be created a National Museum and antiquities distributed it must be the result of a well considered policy laid down by museums experts and the Provincial and State Governments who are the national guardians of these art treasures, uninfluenced by political forces.

It is rumoured that the Department of Archaeology is sponsoring the National Museum movement. Archaeology in India is not the same for every one. It is a composite subject and the point of view taken by an individual very often depends upon the branch in which he has specialised. Thus there is inevitable one-sidedness. Some of the provinces are eager to have their own Archaeological Departments.

LOCATION OF MUSEUM

There are other aspects too to be considered. The proposal seems to be that the National Museum should be located in New Delhi. The unique art treasures of India should not be concentrated in the capital which in times of war is liable to be attacked. The results of the last war amply prove that this danger is not fanciful. Further, New Delhi is predominantly bureaucratic in its atmosphere. A National Museum would be out of place there. Again, India is a vast country and every region should be made equally attractive for tourist traffic. One of the important attractions for the tourist is the museum.

It is reported that the Central Government are going to finance and create a Trust to administer this National Museum. This might tend to create a vested interest, which cannot but be inimical to the high idealism in which culture can flourish. The existing Governmental machinery in the Centre, the Provinces and the States, can co-opt experts from time to time and can do much more satisfactorily all the things that this Trust is expected to do. The National Museum must be the result of legislative enactment simultaneously by the Centre and the Provinces based on actual expert deliberation of a National Council representative of the Central, Provincial and States Governments, representatives of the principal museums of India and other experts engaged in museum work.

A National Museum cannot be created in a day. It cannot come about as the result of a few loan collections from the Provinces. It would be far easier to enlarge one of the existing museums into a National Museum than to create one from almost nothing. It seems just and fair that New Delhi should slowly develop a museum of the type of the Prince of Wales Museum or the Madras Government Museum. All the Mauryan antiquities from Lucknow Muttra, Sarnath and Patna may be easily gathered there in the first instance. It must establish a tradition and outlook by degrees and grow, in course of time, into a fullfledged National Museum. Otherwise, it will become a national emporium instead of a National Museum with odd pieces without a background.

Editorial

A National Museum

THERE will be general agreement that a National Museum should be built in the political capital of this country. Delhi is itself historic and the old city is an ancient monument in its own right. The Government of India is naturally anxious that the art treasures of India should be housed in an appropriate setting at Delhi so that the capital may possess a representative museum. But before such an institution is established, the various regional and provincial museums should be consulted. The importance of not taking any hasty action in regard to the collection of art treasures from the Provinces is pointed out in an article printed elsewhere. Apprehension has been stirred in the Provinces by the Government of India's retention of the exhibits which were recently sent to the Indian Exhibition in London. These great sculptures and works of art are now being kept in and it is feared in the Provinces that some of the best examples will be selected for the projected National Museum. It is scarcely necessary to point out that, if such indeed is the idea of the sponsors, it is a policy which will produce grave dissatisfaction in the Provinces from which the works of art originated. It should be clear that a work of art is also a local object which derives considerable meaning from its own environment. It has to be looked at and appreciated against the background of the culture of which it is a significant part. For example, the great figure of Nataraja is a Saivite symbol which is of intense significance to the life of the peoples of South India and its exile from its proper home would be resented. There is no need to press the point too far. A National Museum must undoubtedly contain samples of sculpture and painting from all over the country. But this can very well be done without taking out of their context the greatest treasures of the provincial museums or exhibits uniquely characteristic of a local culture as it developed through the ages.

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Edn. & P.H.Dept.(C2)

Letter/Ref.No. 61976-2C2.Edn., dated, 25-11-49.

To

The Secretary to the Govt. of India,
Ministry of Education, New Delhi.

Sir,

Subject: National Museum of Art, Archaeology and Anthropology.

I am directed to invite a reference to your letter No. F.10-3/49-A1, dated July 1949 on the above subject and to state that except the exhibits in items 5, ~~8~~, 13 and 21, the remaining 17 exhibits referred to are the cream collections and the pride of the province in the field of Art and Culture. ~~and~~ The bare minimum valuation given to these objects for insurance purposes when they were shipped to London was over Rs 2,00,000 and even if this or more was paid by the Government of India for these unique objects, such a wonderful series cannot be brought together in one place and that nowhere else are they likely to be better appreciated, loved and cherished than at the Madras Museum. This Government therefore consider that the removal of these unique pieces from Madras to New Delhi would be an irreparable loss to the former without being of commensurate benefit to the latter. In the circumstances I am to state that this Government can only spare items 5,8,13 and 21 in the list of exhibits referred to by the Government of India to the National Museum, New Delhi. As regards the question of transferring to the National Museum such of ~~the~~ outstanding exhibits in this ~~Province~~ Museum, this Government will consider presenting some excellent specimens of ~~bronzes~~ which, while not being so unique as the ones asked for, would yet be objects of art of the highest quality. A copy of the S.G.M.'s letter No. 1440/47-27 dated 22-9-1949 is enclosed for information.

Yours faithfully,

Edn. & P.H. (C2)

From the Govt. of India, Ministry of Edn., No.F.10-3/49-A1 dated 9-8-1949.
From the S.G.M. No.1440/47-27 dated 22-9-49.
From the S.G.M. No.1440/47-28 dated 11-10-49.

...

Sub: National Museum of Art - Loaning or giving away of exhibits from the Govt. Museum, Madras.

The Govt. of India have decided to establish a National Museum of Art, Archaeology, Anthropology and for want of a suitable building, they Museum is to be ~~stated~~ as an interim measure in a part of Govt. House, New Delhi. In this connection they request that the exhibits mentioned on p.5 c.f. sent on loan to the India Exhibition arranged by the Royal Academy in London ~~now in New Delhi~~ and lent on at Delhi, may be retained by them and that such other outstanding exhibits in the museume may be sent to theirr as the national museume which is ~~the most~~ more suitable for ~~place for~~ their display. If it is not possible to spare theirr permanently, they request that they may at least be allowed to have these exhibits on loan.

2. The S.G.M. who was consulted on the request of the Govt. of India, has given his views on pages 7-13 c.f. The Govt. of India's request for the proposed National Museum consists of 7 stone sculpture, 1 wooden sculpture, 11 bronzes and ~~12~~ 2 paintings (in all 21) and the details of the exhibits are pp17-23 c.f. The S.G.M. states that the exhibits in items 5,8,13 and 21 may be loaned ~~xxx~~ or given away without hoplessly impoverishing this Museum and the remaining 17 are the cream of the collections and the pride of the Province in the field of Art and Culture and the bare minimum valuation given to these objects for insurance purposes when they were shipped to London was over Rs.3,00,000 and even if this or more was paid by the Govt. of India for these unique objects such a wonderful series cannot ~~to~~ be brought together in one place and that no where else are they likely to be better appreciated, loved and cherished ~~than~~ at the Madras Museum.

PTO

d.No. 61976 C2

32

Submitted that the arguments put forth by the S.G.M. ~~14-7-134~~ against the giving away to the National Museum, Delhi the remaining ~~17~~ ~~14~~ objects in question seem convincing and we ~~we~~ may reply to the Govt. of India on these lines. The file may be circulated for orders to H.M. (E & L) and H.Pr.

4 vide P.94

5-11-49

S

(H.M.(E&L))

We cannot be sympathetic to the method of building up a national museum by robbing provincial museum of their old and valuable exhibits. We may reply on lines suggested by note above S.G.M's and enclose copy of the ~~question~~ note

~~14-7-134~~ X

14.11 (E & L)

14.11

8/11

X1

9/11

6/11

5-11-

X above.

A draft letter is submitted for orders whether a copy of letter should be sent to India as well as in accordance the gist of this letter is the draft.

A copy of the draft letter may be sent to S.G.M.

14-11-49

S

14-11-49

~~The~~ S.G.M's letter need not be sent

25

X1

(Stamp: ASST. SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT 4 - FEB 1950 EDUCATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH DEPT.)

No. F.10-3/49-AI(C)
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.

NEW DELHI 3, the 3rd February, 1950.

From

Ram Lal Esq., M.A.,
Under Secretary to the Government of India.

To

The Secretary to the Government of Madras,
Education and Public Health Department,
Fort St. George, MADRAS.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ART, ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY.

. . . . . .

Sir,

I am directed to refer to your letter No. 61976-2-C2Edn dated the 25th November, 1949 on the subject cited above and to state that the Government of India accept with thanks the offer of the Madras Government to present the four sculptures mentioned in your letter to the National Museum. The Director General of Archaeology has been asked to return the remaining 17 exhibits as early as possible to the Madras Museum. As regards the proposal of the Provincial Government to present specimens of bronzes to the National Museum, I am to add that the offer is appreciated. The Director General of Archaeology has been requested to correspond direct on this subject with the Madras Museum.

Yours faithfully,

(RAM LAL)
Under Secretary.

8412

P.29 ante

From
Sri A. Aiyappan, M.A.,Ph.D.,
Superintendent,
Government Museum,
Egmore, MADRAS-8.

To
The Secretary to Government,
Education and Public Health
Department,
Fort St. George, MADRAS -9.

No. 1445/47-28

Dated the 9th February 1950.

Sir,

ASST. SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
13 FEB 1950
1123
EDUCATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH DEPT.

Subject: Loan of bronzes etc - to the Royal Academy Exhibition - Return from New Delhi.

Reference: Memo. No. 69220-C2/46-4 Edn dated 2-4-1947 (A)/29.7.7 No. 61976-2 C2 Edn. dated 25th Nov.1949 to the Govt. of India, Ministry of Education.

-ooOooo-

In inviting the attention of Government to their reference cited, I have the honour to enquire when orders in the matter may be expected. The bronzes etc. have not yet been returned to us.

Yours faithfully,

A. Aiyappan 9.2.50

Superintendent.

E. & P. H.
C2

Memo. No. 8412-1C2. Edn., dated, 22-2-50

Museums — Govt. Museum, Madras — Loan of Specimens of bronzes to the ~~Royal Academy~~ National Museum at New Delhi.

Ref: From the S. G. M., No. 1445/47-28, dated, 9-2-50

With reference to his letter cited, a copy of the letter from the Govt. of India, Ministry of Education, No. [illegible] the subject mentioned, is communicated to the S. G. M. for information.

21/2/50

S/ 22/2

Order No 808 dated. 11.3.50

Museums — Govt. Museum — Madras — Loan of Specimens of bronzes to the National Museum at New Delhi — Papers recorded.

Cr

P. 33 ante

Cr
After some, all the bronzes should be retained for future reference

21/3/50

To
The S. G. M.
(with copy of letter on page [illegible])

P. 34 ante

18/2/50.

36

From
Sri A. Aiyappan, M.A., Ph.D.,
Superintendent,
Government Museum, Madras-8.

To
The Director General of
Archaeology,
New Delhi.

No.1445/47-29, dated 10-4-1950.

Sir,

MUSEUMS - Government Museum - Madras - Loan of specimens of bronzes to the National Museum at New Delhi.

In enclosing herewith a copy of the letter No.F.10-3-49, AI (C), dated 3rd February 1950 from the Government of India, Ministry of Education, I have the honour to request you to let me know when I may expect the return of the Madras Museum exhibits referre to therein. I have in this connection, to state that after taking into consideration, 4 sculptures xx given as gift to Government of India, there are 18 exhibits of this Museum to be returned to u and not 17 as stated in the Government of India's letter. An earl xxip reply in the matter is solicited.

Yours faithfully,

Sd. A. Aiyappan,
Superintendent.

dv.

Copy to the Secretary to Govt., Education Department, Fort St. George, Madras-9 for information, with Reference to Government Memorandum no 8412-1 C2 Edn dated 28nd February 1950

dv
13/4/50.

Edn.
May be filed E with the papers at ⊗.
13/4/50

A. Aiyappan
Superintendent.

From
Sri A. Aiyappan, M.A., Ph.D.,
Superintendent,
Government Museum, Madras-8.

To
The Director General of
Archaeology,
NEW DELHI.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY
16649
16 JUN 1950
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Sir,

No.1445/47-30, dated 10-6-1950.

Sub: Museums - Government Museum, Madras - Loan of specimens of bronzes to the National Museum at New Delhi.

Ref: 1. My letter No.1445/47-29, dated 10-4-1950.
2. Government of India, Ministry of Education, letter No.F.10-3-49-AI(c), dated 3-2-1950.

I have the honour to invite your attention to my letter cited and to enquire when I may expect the return of the Madras Museum Exhibits referred to therein. An early reply in the matter is solicited.

Yours faithfully,

Sd, A. Aiyappan,
Superintendent.

dv.

Copy to Secretary to Government, Education Department, in continuation of my letter No.1445/47-29, dated 10-4-50.

May be filed with (P).

A. Aiyappan
Superintendent.

A. AIYAPPAN, M.A., Ph.D.,
Superintendent.

Government Museum,
Egmore, Madras-8.

D.O.No.1445/47-31, dated 27-7-1950.

Dear Mr. Vats,

Sub: Museums - Government Museum - Madras - Loan of specimens of bronzes to the National Museum at New Delhi.

Ref: (1) Govt. of India, Ministry of Edn., Letter No.F.10-3/49 A-1(c) dated 3-2-1950.
(2) My letter No.1445/47-29, dated 10-4-50.
(3) My Registered Reminder thereon No.1445/47-30, dated 10-6-1950.

May I invite your attention to the references cited above and enquire when I may expect the return of the Madras Museum Exhibits referred to therein. My letter dated 10-4-1950 in the matter and my reminder thereon sent by registered post are still remaining unanswered. I therefore request you to look into the matter personally and expedite the despatch of the exhibits.

An early reply will be very much appreciated.

I am very sorry I could not meet you when I was in Delhi last week.

Yours sincerely,
Sd. A. Aiyappan,
Superintendent.

no. 1445/47-32 dt/27.7.50

Copy to the Secretary to Governmen Edn., Department in continuation of my letter No.1445/47-30, dated 10-6-1950.

A. Aiyappan
Superintendent.

42

EOW CB

May be filed with (B).

2.8.50.

4.8.50.

5/2/8

43

29480

ASSISTANT SECRETARY
26 SEP 1950
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

From
Sri A. Aiyappan, M.A., Ph.D.,
Superintendent,
Government Museum, Madras-8.

To
The Secretary to Government
Education Department,
Fort St. George, Madras-9.

No.1445/47-32, dated 20-9-1950.

Sir,

Museum - Government Museum - Madras - Loan of Specimens of bronzes to the National Museum at New Delhi - Return.

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p41 (2) In continuation of the Copy of my D.O. No.1445/47-31, dated 27-7-1950 to the Director General of Archaeology. I enclose herewith a copy of his reply for the information of Government.

Yours faithfully,

A. Aiyappan

Superintendent.

- - - - - - - - - - PB 22/9 - - - - - -

dated 11-9-1950.

Copy of letter ~~No.~~D.O.No.25/9-2-50/2402,/from the Director General of Archaeology in India to the Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras-8.

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p41 (2) Kindly refer to your letter No.1445/47-31-dated 27th July 1950. The antiquities in question are being packed and will be returned to you some time in November next.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd) Madho Sarup Vats,

/True Copy/

A. Aiyappan
Superintendent,
Govt. Museum.

PB 22/9.

Con(2)

44

May be filed with ②.

29850

21050

64/51 5,