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On

Museum in motion: ideas, issues and challenges

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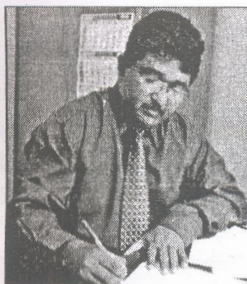
Department of Museology, University of Calcutta

&

**Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis Memorial Museum & Archives,
Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata**

Venue

**Platinum Jubilee Auditorium
Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata
203 Barrackpore Trunk Road, Kolkata 700 108**



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International Politics, foreign policies and museums in Asia

The present paper is meant for drawing attention to how international politics and foreign policies influence on museums with special reference to current world politics and museums in Asia. As a preamble, some historical examples related to international politics played by Asian museums will be discussed in this paper. The emphasis of the paper goes to Western politics in post colonial Asia and contemporary Asian politics as reflected in museums of different countries. The establishment of museums, opening of new galleries, arrangement of exhibitions, conducting research projects, support for human resource development, granting financial and technical support, and various other activities of Asian museums have been influenced by international politics and policies of foreign countries throughout the history. Thus, some of the 'National Museums' of Asia are in fact being 'foreign museums' reflecting some other country's interests rather than national interests. In this paper, role of foreign diplomatic missions, NGO's and some other institutes and associations will be critically evaluated. Legislatures, conventions, bilateral agreements will be considered as valuable sources for this study. Role played by the UNESCO, ICOMOS, ICOM and other international bodies, which are related to museums and culture will be examined. For this research, I am relying only on public documents and visible evidence, but, well aware that there are many unseen and invisible policies behind international politics yet alone museums. This is an attempt to understand the scenario in broad perspective and to show how far culture, heritage, and museums are politicized and working on an agenda beyond mere academic and scientific interests.

Keywords: Museums, Asia, International politics, Foreign policy