

MUSEUM



INTRODUCTION

A Judicial Museum for the Country was first conceived in 1994, by Hon'ble Shri M.N. Venkatachaliah, the then Chief Justice of India. The foundation stone of the building was laid by Hon'ble Shri A.M. Ahmadi, the then Chief Justice of India in 1997 and the building housing the Museum was completed in 2001.

The Supreme Court Museum was set up with a view to preserve, protect and display rare objects, artefacts, manuscripts, old documents, files, photographs depicting our legal heritage and growth of our Justice Delivery System. It was inaugurated on 6th April 2004 and thrown open for general public as a unique centre of informal learning of our judicial heritage.

The Museum is located within the premises of the Supreme Court of India on northern side and entry of visitors to the Museum is from Mathura Road side. From architectural angle, it is a single pillared round building, consisting of two galleries of 5000 square feet built up area on each floor. The first gallery depicts the history of evolution and development of judiciary in India from ancient time to British period, while the other gallery portrays the development of Federal Court and Supreme Court through unique items of that period. The Museum is attracting large number of visitors from all walks of life.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

With a view to create greater awareness of our struggle for freedom particularly among the young generation and to inculcate feeling of nationalism and patriotism in them, the Museum decided to organize a series of exhibitions on historic political trials, involving our freedom fighters. An exhibition on “Alipore Bomb Conspiracy Case – A pre- Independence Trial” was organized as the first in the series, in the year 2006, to create awareness about this famous trial. The Exhibition was indeed a great success if viewed from overwhelming response from the visitors. Encouraged by the success of the Exhibition on “Alipore Bomb Conspiracy Case”, another exhibition on the “Trial of Bhagat Singh” was held in the Supreme Court Museum from 27 September 2008 to 31 March 2009. The exhibition has been a huge success and attracted a large number of visitors from all sections of our society.

FILM SHOWS

The Supreme Court Museum regularly projects the documentary films titled “50 years of Supreme Court and the evolution of law in India” and “Supreme Court of India” for the visitors, to give them a brief idea of judicial history of India.

DESCRIPTIONS OF SOME OBJECTS, ARTEFACTS AND DOCUMENTS

1. **Deed of Spiritual Succession** dated back to 16th Century A.D. - I, whereby Syed Shah Ali Qutub – i - Sani, appointed his son Syed Shah Abdul Hasan - i- Husaini, as his successor to hospice and vice regency. It declares that all the assets and chattels pertaining to the aforesaid hospice and vice regency shall thereafter vest in his successor. 11th of Rabi - ul - Awwal 925 A.H. (14th March 1519).

2. **Mace** - It is symbol of authority of the house. The practice of carrying mace was started during British time and adopted from the House of Commons of England.

3. **Oars of Admiralty Courts** - The East India Company obtained a letter from king Charles II in 1683 which empowered the Company to establish Courts of Admiralty in India .The main purpose of these courts was to curb the activities of other foreign and independent traders to try them for committing various crimes on the high seas, and to safeguard the trading

interests of British Company in India. The Court was empowered to hear and determine all cases concerning maritime and mercantile transactions, and also to deal with all cases of forfeiture of ships, piracy, trespass, injuries and wrong, guided by the laws and customs of merchants as well as the rules of equity and good conscience. The Court of Admiralty Jurisdiction was established at Madras on 6th July 1686. The Oars displayed in the Supreme Court Museum belong to Madras Maritime Court.
