



Museums in Assam: A Survey

Prof. Alok Tripathi

Department of History, Assam University, Silchar

(Presently: Additional Director-General, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi).

Email: alok.asi@gmail.com

Priyanka Koiri

Department of History, Assam University, Silchar

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Abstract

Museums are changing with changing time and also their role in the society. Assam, the most prominent state in the northeast region, is known for its rich traditions, culture, flora and fauna. This diversity among people, cultures and natural resources, heritage of human kind, needs to be preserved for study and knowledge sharing. A number of museums established since 1940 have rich collection of objects of anthropological, archaeological, art and craft, ethnographic, film, forest, geological, industry, magic, personalities, railway, religious, scientific, zoological, nature. This article gives brief description of rich and diverse collections in these museums, located at different parts of the state.

Key Words: Museum, Assam, Northeast region, cultural heritage

Introduction



ICOM, in its 26th General Conference held at Prague, has redefined museums as “a museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society, that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.”

Assam, the most prominent state in the northeast region, which in a way was synonymous to this region, now covers an area of 78,438 sq. km. The state, popularly known as the land of Red River and Blue Hills, is bounded to the east by the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Manipur; to the North by the state of Arunachal Pradesh and the neighbouring country Bhutan; to the west by the states of Meghalaya and West Bengal and the neighbouring country Bangladesh; and to the south by the states of Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. The state has three physical regions, the Barak River Valley (Upper Surma River) in the south, the Brahmaputra River Valley in the north, and the hilly region between the Meghalaya to the west and Manipur and Nagaland to the east. It is famous for its tea cultivation, petroleum resources, traditional silk products and one-horned rhinoceros. Guwahati is considered as gateway to the Northeast Region and Silchar is the second most populous city and an important centre of business in Assam.

As far as early history of the region is concerned, not much written records are available. The Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta mentions Davaka, Kamarupa as frontier kingdoms of Gupta Empire. The kingdom was ruled by different dynasties from their capital in Pragjyotishpura. Pushya Varman of the Varman dynasty is said to be the first ruler of Assam. Kumar Bhaskar Varman (CE 600 - 650) was the last great ruler of the Varman dynasty (Tripathi 2002: 12). After the death of Bhaskar Varman, Salasthamba founded the Mlechchha dynasty. According to another view, it is believed that Salasthamba took the power from the descendents of Naraka. The Ahoms ruled the Assam for about 600 years from 1228 to 1826 (Acharya 1957: 56).

The Chutiya (1187 to 1673 CE), the Koch (1510-1581 CE), the Dimasa (13th century-1854 CE) and other regional powers also ruled in some parts of the region in different periods. The Mughals made seventeen attempts but all were forcefully resisted and failed. With treaty of Yandabo, with British in 1826, Ahom kingdom lost its control and the region was ruled by East



India Company. In the 20th century, British India was consisted of eight provinces, administered by a lieutenant-Governor or Governor, and Assam was one among them.

At the time of Independence, Assam had 13 districts which were Cachar, Darrang, Kamrup, Goalpara, Sivasagar, Lakhimpur, Nagaon, Lushai Hills, Garo Hills, Naga Hills, Jayantia Parganas, NEFA and Sylhet. Four princely states, Manipur, Tripura, Khasi State, Koch Bihar, were also included under the territory of Assam. Larger part of Sylhet district was given to East Pakistan. Naga Hills became Nagaland in 1963, and the Jayantia, Khasi and Garo hills were combined to form Meghalaya in 1972. NEFA became Arunachal Pradesh in 1986. Lushai Hills became Mizoram in 1986 and Koch Bihar became part of West Bengal. Tripura and Manipur are now two separate Indian states.

About one-third of Assam is covered with grasslands, woodlands, swamp forests, Pine forest, tropical evergreen and deciduous forests. Assam is rich in orchid species and home of variety of rare plants (Baruah. 2007: 7).

States also rich in wildlife and has the largest population of Wild Water Buffalo in the World. It has the diversity of mammal (190 species) and has the highest diversity of Birds in India (820 species with 946 sub-species), including numerous endangered species (Baruah. 2007: 8).

Assamese culture displays assimilation of different ethno-cultural groups. In the 15th century, the Vaishnava movement led by the Srimanta Shankardeva contributed towards cultural changes. Some of the unique cultural traits of Assam are visible in traditions, rituals and symbolic and traditional dresses.

Assam is rich in crafts using bamboo and cane, bell metal, brass craft, wood craft, iron craft, toy and mask making, cotton and silk weaving, terracotta work, pottery, musical instruments, jewellery making. Bamboo and cane crafts provide the daily life utilities ranging from domestic use to weaving accessories, furniture, fishing apparatus, musical instruments.

Museums in Assam

This great diversity of flora, fauna, culture and history is effectively collected, conserved and exhibited in a number of museums spread around the state. A number of museums are established and are being maintained in the state since 20th century. Types of museums include -



anthropological, archaeological, industry, forest, science, art and craft, personalia, religious, magic, railway, film, zoological, geological, ethnographic, etc. A brief description of these museums located at different places, and their collections is given here.

Arun Kumar Das Sangrahalaya, Amraghat

This multipurpose museum, located at Ganganagar, Cachar, was started in 1960's by a retired teacher. The museum has rich collection and objects on display include old books, coins, musical instruments, different types of tools and instruments, fossils, stones, weapons, old map, handicraft products, etc.

Barak Museum and Library, Bantarapur

The ethnological museum, located at Bantarapur was established in 2014. This museum, run by a Non-Government Organisation, has a rich collection of objects related to the tribes in Cachar specially Manipurians, such as variety of musical instruments, weapons, basketry, brass utensils, etc.

District Museum, Barpeta

This art museum at Barpeta was established in 1987. Collections in the museum include objects related to *Satras* such as wooden images, wooden masks, wooden images, musical instruments, manuscripts, metal images, brass utensils, ivory bangles, brass throne, textiles, coins, terracotta, basketry, palanquins, scarves *muga* silk, iron lamp stand, etc. (Choudhury and Roy 1993).

Bordowa Satra Mini Museum, Bordowa

This religious museum, situated near Akashiganga Lake, was established in 1985. Two *satras*-Narowa and Salaguri, were founded by the great saint Sankardeva about 1494 CE. He founded *Naamghar*, *kirtanghar* at Bordowa. The museum houses various types of religious and cultural objects, articles used by great saints Srimanta Sankardeva and Sri Mahavadeva, wooden statues, wall panels, weapons, objects of Ahom kingdom, etc.

Purnanada Memorial Rural Museum, Darrang

This personalia museum, located at Jhakuwapara, displays objects which describe the life-style of Sri Purnananda. The museum established at his residence houses objects used by him including valuable things, photographs, manuscripts, cassettes, clothes, etc.



District Museum, Dhubri

This multipurpose museum, located at the Boro Bazar, was established in 1988. It has collection of around 1,000 artifacts from nearby areas, depicting the history, socio-cultural, religious life of the people. The objects on display are image, painted *pata*, silver Koch coin of Lakshmi Narayan (1555 CE), etc.

Nilima Barua Folk Art Museum, Dhubri

This art museum, located at Gauripur, was established in 1997. Nilima Baruah, the youngest daughter of Raja Prabhat Chandra Baruah of Garuripur Zamindary Estate, was fond of folk art and devoted her life for preserving folk art and culture. The artifacts on display are traditional textile, cane and bamboo objects, wooden and metallic objects, jewellery, ivory, clay and terracotta objects, archaeological and anthropological objects, stone sculpture, etc.

Anthropological Museum of Indigenous Studies, Dibrugarh

This anthropological museum, located at Dibrugarh University, was established in 1966. The display in museum includes diorama, masks, models of temple, Naga hut, traditional furniture, cannon of Ahom period (17th century), traditional textiles, wooden articles of domestic purpose, agricultural implement, hunting and fishing apparatus, basketry, ancient coins, manuscripts, musical instruments of different tribes of Northeast, etc.

District Museum, Dibrugarh

This multipurpose museum, located at District Library building, was established in 1987. The museum displays the objects of Apatani tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, Buddhist idols, coins of different countries, brick of Ahom period, terracotta of 15th-16th century CE, agricultural tools, terracotta toys, sword of late Ahom period, Tai manuscripts, palm leaf manuscript, elephant tusk, weapons, ornaments, etc.

Malbhog Baruah Sangrahalaya, Dibrugarh

This personalia museum, located at the campus of Dibrugarh University, was inaugurated in 2018. He was the proprietor of Rajabheta Tea Estate. The artifacts on display are paintings, photographs of his family members, books, small sculpture, typewriter, gramophone, radio telephone, etc.

Oil Centenary Museum, Digboi



This industrial museum, located at Digboi Oil Refinery was established in 2002. The museum, established by Assam Oil Company, a division of Indian Oil, is located close to the first commercial well founded in 1889 in India. Museum shows the development of modern oil industry, displaying the hardware, pumps, equipments, models of plants, vintage oil machinery, scale models, archived materials, etc.

District Museum, Diphu

This multipurpose museum, located at Lumding Road, was established in 1986. The museum set up by Directorate of Museum has 487 artifacts of socio-cultural, archaeological and religious importance. These objects include hunting tools, fishing equipments, traditional attires of tribes, engraved door jambs, handlooms, jewellery, musical instruments, architectural members, etc. Another attraction for the visitors is ‘*Jambili Athon*’ of Karbi (Choudhury and Anam 1992).

Sri Surya Pahar Museum, Goalpara

This archaeological museum is located near protected monument at a sacred hill. The archaeological excavations were carried out between 1992 and 2001 by Archaeological Survey of India, and a museum was built to display artefacts discovered in excavations, such as sculptures, terracotta, tiles, pottery, utensils, etc.

Uncle Robins Children Museum, Golaghat

The children’s museum, located at Golaghat, was established in 2004. Founder of the museum was fond of children and always motivated them. He died in 2003 and his residence was then converted into museum, having photograph, paintings, toys, mementos, awards, dolls, etc. Some artifacts worth mentioning are horse made of turquoise, Naga head hunting basket, and documentaries from 1953 to 1998.

Ambari Archaeological Site Museum, Guwahati

This archaeological museum, located on ancient site Ambari, was established in 2004. The site was discovered in 1969, and was excavated between 1970 and 2003. Museum has a variety of objects excavated from this site, such as stone sculptures, terracotta, bust of a dancing female figure, inscription of 1232 CE, earthen lamps, beads, coins, potteries, such as rouletted ware (1st-2nd century CE), Celadon ware (10th-12th century CE) and green-glazed ware (16th-17th century CE), kaolin ware, red ware, buff ware, few grey ware, etc. The site would have been a production centre of sculpture (Dutta 2006; Phukan 2020: 1-8).



Assam State Forest Museum, Guwahati

This forest museum, located at south Kamrup Division, was established in 1979. The museum managed by Central Government, has forest products such as ivory objects, different kinds of bamboo, lacquer works, medicinal herbs, models of bridges and buildings, bamboo and cane crafts, animal specimen, fossilized wood, exotic ferns, plants, timber, etc. The museum also has a herbarium section.

Assam State Museum, Guwahati

This multipurpose museum, located in Dighali Pukhuri, was established in 1940 by the Kamarupa Anusandhan Samiti (Assam Research Society). Later it became Assam provincial museum, and now the State museum. It is the largest museum having a collection of objects displayed in several galleries - painting, ethnography, freedom fighters, manuscript, village life of Assam, arms and ammunition, pre and proto historic and terracotta, epigraphy, wood craft, textile, Northeast, natural history, numismatics, and sculpture gallery. In 1985 a library was established having a rich collection (Kalita 2017: 347-353).

Auniati Satra Museum, Guwahati

This religious museum located at North-Gauhati, has a collection of objects related to *satraculture* such as ornaments, articles of daily use by Assamese people, weapons, ivory works, royal attires, metal pots, *dola* (palanquin), manuscripts, brass plates, Rudraksha jewellery, musical instruments, old furniture, water pots used by Ahom king Gadhadhar Singha.

Bhupen Hazarika Museum, Guwahati

This personalia museum, located at the Samadhi Kshetra, Jalukbari, was inaugurated on his 7th death anniversary. The museum houses all the valuable memories of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, his personal belongings, photographs, etc.

Commercial Museum, Guwahati

The commercial museum, located at the Arts building of Gauhati University, was established in 1956. Exhibits include objects of art and crafts, coins, rocks and minerals, pictures, chemical products, industrial products, handicraft items, etc.

Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies Museum, Guwahati



The historical museum, located at Department of Historical and Antiquarian Research, was established in 1928. The museum has a rich collection of great historical value, such as old manuscripts, copper-plates, rare books, etc.

Ecological Museum, Guwahati

This ecological museum is located at the premises of Assam State Zoo and Botanical Garden. The museum exhibits various specimens of plants and animals, skeleton, etc. The museum gives information about the rich fauna of the state of Assam.

Ethnographic Museum, Guwahati

The ethnological museum, located within the premises of Assam Institute of Research for Tribes and Scheduled Castes, was established in 1971. The museum exhibits a variety of objects such as agricultural implements, fishing equipments, hunting tools, household articles of daily use, ornaments, musical instruments, dioramas of different tribes of Northeast region giving a glimpse of living style and traditions of these tribes, particularly Assamese.

Film Museum, Guwahati

This film museum, located near Panjabari Shilpagram, was established in 2013. Set up by Assam State Film Finance and Development Corporation, it is the first museum in Northeast region to preserve the film heritage of Assam. The museum reflects history of regional cinema and exhibits objects such as projectors, old editing machines, rare photographs, props used by actors, gramophones, costumes from various films, some still pictures of founder of Assamese Cinema. Visitors can also watch various Assamese films and get information on personalities of film industry.

Geological Museum, Guwahati

The geological museum, located at the department of Geological Science, Gauhati University, was established in 1950. The collection in museum includes gems such as pearls, topazes, moonstones, sapphires, rubies, polished blocks of rocks, the collection of petroleum products, fossils of plants and animals, a rich collection of minerals, etc.

Kamakhya Museum, Guwahati

This temple museum, located at the premises of Kamakhya temple, displays objects used in religious ceremonies, and gifts from devotees, such as stone sculptures, *trishuls*, lamp stands, old



doors, weapons, small temple made of wood, utensils, shells, copper and brass articles used for worshipping, *chhatra* of goddess Kamakya, Sri-yantra, etc.

Madhab Chandra Goswami Anthropological Museum, Guwahati

This anthropological museum, located at Gauhati University, was established in 1948. It has largest collection of Neolithic tools found in north-eastern region. Other collections include ethnographic collection, pre-historic and archaeological remains, weapons, metal objects, masks, *thankas*, textile, musical instruments, ornaments, basketry, hunting implements, agricultural equipments, etc.

Museum of Animal Husbandary and Veterinary Science, Guwahati

This science museum, located at the campus of Assam Agricultural University, was established in 1967. The museum displays different kinds of specimens related to veterinary science and animal husbandry. There is also a library and the museum organizes seminars, films shows, lectures, etc.

Planetarium, Guwahati

This planetarium, located at Uzan Bazar, was established in 1994. It is the center for the astronomical studies in the Northeast region. It shows planetary movements, viewing of solar eclipse, and sky watching. Planetarium has sky theatre sound system, star field projector, and also organizes seminars conferences, workshops, quiz and exhibitions.

Purbajyoti Sangrahalaya, Guwahati

This multipurpose museum, located at Batahguli, was established in 1990. The *kalashetra* includes a museum, children's park and library named *Sahitya Bhawan* which houses books and rare manuscripts, an exhibition centre named as Lalit Kala Bhawan where workshops, seminar, exhibition of art are done. There is an open air theatre for traditional dance, drama are performances. A Sahitya and Sangeet Natak Bhawan and an artist village. The village shows the life of village people of Assam with the statues and models of houses. There is a replica of Rang ghar. The main attraction of the kalashetra is the cultural museum which exhibits various traditional artifacts of the Assamese people and various tribes of Northeast region.



The Kalashetra is also having a Dr. Bhupen Hazarika museum which has a great collection of his pictures, clothes, awards, furniture, books, and musical instruments. A sound and light show is also organised in the complex.

Regional Science Center and Museum, Guwahati

This science museum, located at Khanapara, was established in 1994. Functioning under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, the center has fun science, butterfly corner, children corner, magic tap, head on a platter, etc. The large aquarium has a variety of fishes. In outdoor it has science park and pre-historic park. The Center regularly organizes seminars, workshops, educational programmes, shows 3D movies related to science and other activities giving the knowledge of science in a non-formal manner.

Treasured Wheels, Guwahati

This multipurpose museum, located at Tepesia Road Sonapur, was established in 2013. The gate of the museum is built with the war helmets. It has a collection of 50 cars and 25 bikes. Other collections include old clocks, telephones, cameras, old bicycles, parachutes, electrical appliance, weapons used in Second World War, etc.

District Museum, Haflong

This multipurpose museum, located at Haflong, was established in 1986. Objects in the museum are from Maibang, Zion, Kejurban, Songpijang, Chemkhor, N.C. Hills, Harangajao. It exhibits the stone sculpture, musical instruments, stone jars, ornaments, etc. (Hasnu 2012).

Vijnan Mandir, Hailakandi

This science museum, located at Lakshmiswar, was established in 1953. It was set up by Science and Cultural Affairs of Government of India. In 1963, it came under Government of Assam. The objects on display include rocks, sands, animals, fossils, clay sculpture, fishing equipments, etc.

District Museum, Jorhat

This multipurpose museum, located at Shiksha Bhavan campus, was established in 1989. The museum is under the Directorate of Museums, Assam. The collection includes musical instruments, cannon, mask, *kharau*, sculptures of Ahom period, utensils, paintings, silver coins, weapons of Ahom dynasty, ivory, statues, manuscripts, textiles, etc. The museum also promotes awareness programs, and study of museums among school students.



Gatani Museum, Jorhat

This multipurpose and numismatics museum is located at the last house of Golf green Jorhat. This private museum houses old telephone, domestic tools and instruments, Indian and foreign coins, antique cars, etc.

Heritage Museum, Jorhat

This multipurpose museum, located at Malow Ali, was established in 2009. It is a private museum displaying the first Assamese newspaper of 1924, copper and bronze utensils, objects of domestic use, different kinds of ancient mirrors, wall clocks, handwritten newspaper published during Assam *Andolan*, antique lamps, utensils used for religious purpose, medical equipments, etc.

Science Centre and Planetarium, Jorhat

This science museum, located near Rajmau Pukhuri, was established in 2013. Run by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of Assam, it has telescope, two meteorites, and also displays method of oil exploration, drilling and its type, refining process, product and process, natural disasters, off-shore survey, and various things related to science and scientific inventions. The children activity corner has various things, where children can play and learn the science.

Tocklai Tea Research Centre Museum, Jorhat

This industrial museum, located at Tocklai Tea Research Institute, was established in 1911. The collection of the museum includes specimens of common tea pest, insects and reptiles, etc.

District Museum, Kokrajhar

This ethnological museum, located at Bhavanipur, was established in 1986. The museum houses various ornaments, traditional attires of Bodos, Garos, Rabhas, agricultural and domestic implements, tribal headgears, statues, metal utensils, royal robe, boat, rhino shield, coins of Koch dynasty, etc. (Puthenpurakal and Sumer 2015: 16).

Science Centre and Planetarium, Kokrajhar



This science museum, located at Dimalgaon, was established in 2020. It exhibits objects and instruments related to science and technology and the facts about solar system. It also shows films in English, Hindi and Assamese.

Coal Heritage Park and Museum, Margherita

The industrial museum, located at North-eastern coalfields, was established in 2012. It is maintained by Coal India limited. The museum preserves materials related to the coal mine history of Assam, materials used in the coal mines, locomotives, empty bomb shells, the models of transformers, cap lamps, underground telephones, shovels, coal mining boots, models, and photographs of road constructions of Pangsau Pass, Stilwell road, Ledo airstrip.

District Museum, Mangaldoi

This multipurpose museum, located at Bhabarghat, was established in 1987. The museum under the Directorate of Museums, Guwahati, has around 600 objects collected through purchase and donation. The collection includes copper and silver coins, wooden sculptures, copper inscriptions of Ahom rulers, palm leaf and paper manuscripts of old Assamese and Sanskrit scripts, textiles, musical instruments, ornaments, household articles, stone sculpture of 18th century, etc.

Central Museum and Emporium, Mayong

This magic museum, located at Mayong, was inaugurated in 2002. The museum has various ancient texts and manuscripts, skulls, tools that were used for sacrifices in ancient times, old relics and ornaments used by magicians for performing black magic, stone statues, stone inscription, terracotta idols, arms and weapons.

Bamboo Museum, Nagaon

The art and craft museum, located at Fauzdari Patty, was established under the national Bamboo Mission. It displays artefacts of bamboo such as baskets, craft items, wall hangings, domestic articles, jewellery, etc. These artefacts show the richness of natural resources and their utilization.

District Museum, Nagaon

This multipurpose museum, at Nagaon has a rich collection. Exhibits include traditional attires of the tribes of Assam, articles of daily use, fishing apparatus, agricultural implements, tools, weapons, musical instruments, handicrafts, etc.



Purvabharti Museum, Nalbari

This multipurpose museum, located at Nalbari, was established in 1972. Museum run by Nalbari Sahitya Samaj has around 2000 objects, which include masks, pottery, domestic implements, copper-plate, tribal attires, musical instruments, manuscripts, anthropological objects, coins, weapons, jewelleryes, etc.

Nehru College Museum, Pailapool

This multipurpose museum, located at Nehru College, was established in 2003. It exhibits fish catching instrument, deer horn, basketry, watches, gramophone record, musical instrument, coins, etc.

Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi Memorial Museum, Raha

This personalia museum, located at Raha, was established in 1998. The museum housed in his residence has a rare collection of artefacts, his dress made of khadi, wrist watch, various awards, cap, letters written by Mahatma Gandhi to him, pictures and some articles used by his wife Surabala Bordoloi.

Anthropology Museum, Silchar

The anthropological museum located at Guru Charan College, was established in 2007. The exhibits in museum include basketry, household articles, musical instruments, skulls, human bones, traditional attires, weapons, handicrafts objects, traditional costumes, etc.

Assam University Museum, Silchar

This archaeological museum, located in the Department of History, Assam University, Silchar was established in 2012. Collection includes archaeological remains such as stone tools, pottery from Harappan period, PGW, porcelain, terracotta, besides ethnographic collection, textiles, clay objects, basketry, fishing equipments, musical instruments, handicrafts, etc.

Ahom Tai Museum, Sivasagar

The ethnological museum, located near Sivasagar tank, was established in 1992. The objects of Ahom period (13th-18th century) in the museum are goblets, *pandati*, brass and terracotta dragon, palanquin, cannon, bell metal pot, old Assamese ornaments, animal skins, manuscripts, utensils, musical instruments, weapons, fishing gears, basketry, pottery, traditional Assamese



attire, diorama of darbar, ivory and wooden sculptures, etc. The museum managed by the Directorate of Cultural Affairs, promotes various activities, seminars, lectures, research work on Tai literature and language.

College Museum, Sivasagar

This college museum, located at the campus of Sivasagar College, was established in 1958. It has collection on art and archaeology. The objects in collection are pottery of pre-Ahom period, ornamental brick, traditional Assamese utensil, swords, copper-plate, stone sculptures, manuscripts, sacrificial sword, currencies, utensils, ornaments, etc.

Uttaran Museum, Sivasagar

This multipurpose museum, located at Sivasagar, was established in 2003. It is a private museum displaying musical instruments, handicraft items, pottery, domestic tools and various kinds of *da*. A variety of animals, insects and mammals are also preserved in the museum.

District Museum, Tezpur

This archaeological museum, located near D.C. Office, was established in 1986. The museum under the Directorate of Museum, Guwahati houses a good collection of manuscripts, copper-plate inscription, cannons and crafts of Ahom period, wooden and stone sculptures, paintings, craft work of *satra* institution, coins, old bricks, wooden objects, traditional attires, artefacts of tea and ex-tea community, ornaments, etc. Stone sculptures of Ahom and pre-Ahom period are displayed at the entrance of the museum (Choudhury and Ahmed 1992).

Jyoti Bharati Museum, Tezpur

This personalia museum is located at the ancestral house of Jyoti Prasad Agarwala, built in 1874. A culture centre 'Jyoti Bharti' was set up in the premises of his house (Poki) in 1978. Museum displays bed, manuscript, wooden carving, cloth worn by him, old wooden piano, musical instruments, wooden almirah, palanquin, shoes, brass utensils, table lamps, suitcases and buckets, photographs of his family members and freedom fighters.

Railway Heritage Park cum Museum, Tinsukia

This railway museum, located at Tinsukia Railway Junction, was established in 2010. The museum focuses on the Northeast Frontier Railways. There are models, narrow gauge steam engine, variety of tools and instruments used by railways, skew gate lamp, watches, train letters,



fire extinguisher, dress of station master, photographs, trolley hut, vertical boiler. Museum also has Darjeeling Himalayan railway gallery, video hall on wheels, toy train, coffee corner, children's park, etc.

Conclusion

Development of museums in Assam, during last eight decades, since the establishment of first museum in 1940, has been impressive, keeping the location of the region in view. Initiative was taken by learned societies and educational institutions in this field. Pace of museum movement in first half has now increased many folds. Many individuals and private organisations are also playing an important role in collecting, conserving, and exhibiting cultural and natural heritage of the region, which otherwise would have been lost due to rapid development and nature of materials used in the region. They are not only preserving the heritage but also contributing substantially towards the development of society. Majority of collections are ethnographic but variety of types and spread of museums in state speak volumes about people's concern about their tradition and culture at one hand and progressive attitude and awareness on the other. Proposed museums would definitely attract more tourists making these institutions more accessible, inclusive, sustainable and relevant for knowledge sharing.

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