MONTHLY SUMMARY OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY, 2020

1. Hon'ble Minister for Culture sent a video message for Inter Museum Festival organised by Russia in virtual mode from 27th to 30th May 2020.

2. Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has informed discovery of certain important finds:

   i. Historical site at Vadnagar in Gujarat, under excavation by ASI since 2014-15 has revealed seven periods of continuous occupation. The recent excavations near Amba Ghat area brought to light evidence of brick structures and associated artefacts, alongside damaged portions of fortification of Vadnagar datable to 11th - 14th century CE. Similarly, the excavation near railway track brough to light brick structures with possible associations with the Buddhist affiliation and associated artefacts datable to same period. A human burial seated in yogic posture is an interesting find from near the railway track.

   ii. ASI’s conservation work at My Son temple site complex in Vietnam, going on since 2016 has seen interesting developments this season. Temple A10 at My Son built in the 9th century under the reign of King Indravarman II has thrown up a magnificent Sivalinga during the course debris removal (at the depth of 2 mtrs) with 80cm in height and base stone measuring 2.31 m x 1.68 m, it is finely dressed and made up of soft sand stone and has both the Rudrabhaga and the yoni pitha sculpted and fused as one, i.e. as a monolithic block. Even though the yoni pitha remains the usual square pitha, the phallus-Rudra part is unique as it is delineated as a human phallus in erect position with the prominent Soma Sutra. Discussions with the My Son Management are going on for its restoration and placing it in its original position.

3. The National Council of Science Museum (NCSM) organized following activities:

   i. Online classes on 'COVID Katha - A Multimedia Guide for Mass Awareness', 'Making proper connections of a low cost drone', 'Device/software related project work', 'Technology Development for Facemask to improve the protection from any virus', etc. were conducted by the Innovation Hub of Birla Industrial & Technological Museum, Kolkata during the month.

   ii. Online interaction on 'SARSCov2', 'S Covid-19 What Can India Do' was organised by the Regional Science Centre, Calicut on 2nd May 2020 and
14th May, 2020 respectively. The events were webcasted live through YouTube channel.

iii. An Educational video titled ‘How to Kill the Coronavirus’ was uploaded on the Facebook Page and YouTube Channel of Science City, Kolkata on 9th May, 2020.

iv. Information video on the Cyclone ‘AMPHAN’ in association with Shri Rabindra Goenka, Weather Expert, was uploaded on Facebook Page and YouTube Channel of Science City, Kolkata on 20th May, 2020.

v. Webinars on ‘The Fury of Cyclone Amphan’ and ‘Space X: Maiden Astronaut Flight’ were organised by Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai through its official YouTube channel on 27th and 28th May, 2020 respectively.

vi. International Biodiversity Day was observed by various units of NCSM on 22nd May, 2020 by organising various online programmes.

4. The Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti (GSDS), New Delhi undertook the following activities during the period:

i. organized a Webinar "Need for Effective Dialogue for a Culture of Peace" on 2nd May, 2020.

ii. paid rich tributes to Nobel Laureate Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore on his 159th birth anniversary by organizing an online lecture on 7th May, 2020.

iii. started mask making at five different places in Delhi for free distribution in association with Healthy Aging India (HAI) run by doctors of AIIMS and CRPF.

iv. distributed 70000 masks made by GSDS Lupin Srijan training cum-production centre to District Administration, Dholpur.

5. Following activities were organised by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA):

i. An e-book on Padma Bhushan Prof. B.B. Lal, one of the most respected archaeologists of India, was released by Hon’ble Minister for Culture as part of his 99th birthday celebrations.

ii. An online version of IGNCA’s newsletter, Vihangama (January-February 2020) was launched on 13th May 2020.
iii. Release of a virtual exhibition on Dr. Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar, a distinguished academician also known as Pitamaha of Rock Art Studies in India as a part of centenary celebrations.


7. We are also planning to create e-Artistpedia and e-Heritagepedia for enlisting details of artists and new heritage under National Cultural Mission.