

Media Release



HER ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCESS MAHA CHAKRI SIRINDHORN VISITED ASIAN CIVILISATIONS MUSEUM TO VIEW TREASURES FROM ASIA'S OLDEST MUSEUM

Singapore, 14 August 2015 – Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn visited the *Treasures from Asia's Oldest Museum: Buddhist Art from the Indian Museum, Kolkata* exhibition at the Asian Civilisations Museum this afternoon. For more pictures on the visit, download from this [link](#).

The exhibition takes place in the 50th year of Singapore's independence, while also celebrating the 50th year of diplomatic relations between the Republic of India and the Republic of Singapore.

Casting the spotlight on some of India's most notable Buddhist art, the *Treasures from Asia's Oldest Museum: Buddhist Art from the Indian Museum, Kolkata* exhibition is the product of a collaboration with the Indian Museum in Kolkata – Asia's oldest – and is sponsored by the Indian government. Chronicling the evolution of Buddhist art from the 2nd Century BC, the exhibition presents important sculptures and paintings tracing the Jataka stories (past life stories of the Buddha), scenes from the life of the Buddha, and symbols used to represent Buddhist concepts.

The exhibition features over 80 rare objects which trace the cultural shifts and changes in style as Buddhist art progressed, from the Shunga dynasty, to ancient Gandhara, through the Gupta Empire, and the Pala Empire.

The exhibition begins even before one enters the museum, with a marker of the longstanding relationship between Singapore and Kolkata. Just outside the ACM, there is an obelisk, erected in 1850 to commemorate the visit to Singapore by Marquess Dalhousie, British Viceroy of India, recognising Singapore's status as a port city under British rule through the government of India.

In the exhibition which ends this Sunday, 16 August 2015 provides visitors the opportunity to view dramatic sculptures, such as a 1.2-metre-tall sandstone Standing Buddha from Sarnath, dating to the 5th Century; a Buddha Preaching, seated cross-legged, from Gandhara (present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan), which shows the influence of Mediterranean classical art.

Later sculptures show stories from the Buddha's life and various bodhisattvas. Among them is a 10th-century carving from Nalanda of Queen Maya giving birth to the Buddha; an 11th-century Pala sculpture of the Avalokiteshvara; and a fearsome rendition of Samvara, the deity of protection, with fangs bared, garlanded with skulls, and engulfed in flames.

Treasures from Asia's Oldest Museum: Buddhist Art from the Indian Museum, Kolkata is open to the public from 16 June, 2015 to 16 August, 2015. Admission is free.

###

For media enquiries, kindly contact:

Ms Sharinita Ismail
Assistant Director
Asian Civilisations Museum
DID: 6332 7592 **Mobile:** 9670 2037
Email: sharinita_ismail@nhb.gov.sg

About the Asian Civilisations Museum

The Asian Civilisations Museum is dedicated to exploring the rich artistic heritage of Asia, especially Singapore's ancestral cultures. Through a collection of works of art and a varied exhibition programme, we hope to deepen understanding of Southeast Asia, China, South Asia, West Asia, and the Peranakan world. Rare among museums in Asia, the ACM connects audiences with many cultures.

About the exhibition

Treasures from Asia's Oldest Museum: Buddhist Art from the Indian Museum, Kolkata

Exhibition Dates : 16 June 2015 to 16 August 2015
Venue : Asian Civilisations Museum
1 Empress Place, Singapore 179555
Website : www.acm.org.sg
Enquiries : 6332 7798 / nhb_acm_vs@nhb.gov.sg
Admission charges : Free admission for Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents
Opening hours : Monday to Sunday: 10am to 7pm (to 9pm on Friday)
Getting There : By MRT – Raffles Place
By Bus – 75, 100, 107, 130, 131, 167
By Car – Parking is available at Parliament House, The Fullerton Hotel, One Fullerton, and Six Battery Road