

# ROLE OF PAKISTAN ARMY MUSEUM

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## 1. Introduction

The Pakistan army museum was established in 1961 to collect, preserve and display material related to the Pakistan Army and British Indian army. Initially it was housed in ware-house accommodation to meet the requirement. The museum was formally inaugurated by Late Gen. Muhammad Musa on 12th April 1963. In 1963, it was felt that an improvised ware-house accommodation is not suitable for the care, maintenance and display of exhibits of historical/military value. Started in 1986, the construction work on the present building was completed in 1993. It is located on the Iftikhar Junjua Road which runs from General Headquarters to Fatima Jinnah Women University. The museum is open to the general public throughout the week except Tuesday and gazetted holidays.

## 2. Building

It is an interesting combination of significant architectural school, classical Graeco with columns presenting hybrid of Corinthian and Hellenistic period, complete with entablature and cornices, in simplified lines. Local tradition of brick face with a central open courtyard/atrium. Modernistic approach with large show cases, windows and use of contrast in colour and surface treatment of exterior elevations.

## 3. Sources of Acquisition

The material related to the history of Pakistan Army was scattered over the country and in some cases was to be found in other countries of the world. A general request through the press and radio was made to the public. Retired personnel of the British Indian Army who had served in the South Asian subcontinent were also approached. The response from all concerned was generous. The regimental centres and formations donated a large number of exhibits. The following former rulers of ex-princely states also donated exhibits.

- a. Nawab of Amb
- b. Nawab of Kalat
- c. Nawab of Bahawalpur
- d. Mir of Hunza
- e. Wali of Swat
- f. Mir of Nagar

Provincial Museums and Department of Archaeology and Museums also contributed in this museum.

## 4. Collections

Whether its collections cover many fields of knowledge or are limited to one specialized area the role of museum remains the same, i.e. "To provide through its exhibits a graphic presentation of

some period of history". In this respect the role of a military museum is not dissimilar from that of any other museum. Its general subject area is warfare and military science and its artefacts are the weapons, techniques and equipments employed by the serviceman as he experienced in the incidents of military history. Army museum highlights certain themes, which are essential to the study of science of warfare through ages. Various galleries of the museum bring to the viewer the historic significance of momentous event and personalities, which had a bearing on the elevation of a nation's military history.

## **5. Display of Exhibits**

A military museum in its organization and display of exhibits has a discipline of its own. Its edifice is a standing monument to the memory of wars and victories, heroes and leaders of its glorious past. Viewed against these perspectives, a military museum in all its essentials has a great role in the cultural development of a nation. It is a source of information education and inspiration for all those who visit its galleries. For a scholar and student it presents the study of military history in an enjoyable way. To a soldier it is a memorial to visit again and again for inspiration, enthusiasm and morale.

## **6. Glimpse of some rare collection displayed in the museum are:**

### **a. Narwhal Tusk**

Narwhal tusk, a sea unicorn of the whale family had a long horn like tusk projecting forward from the head which is some time equal to the length of the entire animal 5' to 35". The ivory is of a good quality but owing central cavity is suitable for the manufacturing of small objects. The tusk is holding a double edge blade with lion in relief on one side and two elephant on the other side. Its overall length is 4' 5".

### **b. German Machine Gun**

Machine Gun known as Spandau was captured by Sep Ali Haider V.C. of 6th FF Rifle in the battle of Senio Italy on 9th April 19.

### **c. Percussion Lock Musket**

This musket is decorated with floral designs and inscription in Arabic which reads as:

The proud possessor of this musket was killed by 14 Ban 12 FF rifle unit. While defending one of the 3 peaks north west of Durgrai Malakand Agency. The Musket was captured by the Bin in a Skirmish with a tribes north west of Dargai.

### **d. Persian Battle Axe**

Persian battle axe made by Ahmad Bin Isa for Syed Muhammad Fartabi. This was sometimes owned by Amir Khan Pindari, who fought against the British. It is a fine specimen of Persian workmanship and it is decorated with inlaid work, floral designs, hunting scene and Persian inscriptions.

**e. Gauntlet Sword**

Indian gauntlet sword from Oudh state. The pommel is in shape of a tiger head which covers whole of the hand and arm. The blade is flexible and double edge commonly used as a sports sword on happy occasions. Length of the blade is 3' 1" overall length is 4' 2".

**f. Bow and Arrows**

Hunting bow and arrows of Sultan Tippu Shaheed, ruler of Mysore Steel bow is painted with inlaid gold work at the grip and ends. The arrows have hollow spade shaped heads which are attached to the wooden shaft by means of long ornamented rings. The notches for receiving the string is of ivory and the heads of the arrows show traces of the gilding between rows of feathers.

**g. Chumak Operation**

In the Infantry Gallery the famous action "Naveed Top" by sling operation in Siachin in 1984. Painted by Pakistan artist is also on display.

**h. Bow and Arrows of 11th Century**

Bow and Arrows of 11th Century of Hindu period are of special interest.

**i. Blunder Buss**

Blunder Buss of French origin used by the armies of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh against the British Army.

**j. Afghan Artillery Gun**

18th century muzzle loader gun manufactured in Afghanistan. Persian inscriptions are inscribed which read as:

**k. Sher Shah Suri's Artillery Gun**

16th Century Artillery gun used by Sher Shah Suri against the Ghakhars.

**l. Ming Vases**

Two Ming vases dated back to period 1368-1644 when the Ming dynasty ruled China. These vases were obtained in 1860 from the temple of Heaven in Peking (now Beijing).

**m. Sword of Shah Abbass Safavid**

Presented to Mughal emperor Noor-ud-din Jehangir during his exile period in Persia. It remained in Delhi Fort till 1857 when it fell in the hands of freedom fighters. Its hilt was originally made of stage's horn. However, on being worn-out it was subsequently replaced with a metallic hilt. The inscription read as under:

**n. Sword of Nadir Shah**

Sword of Nadir Shah Durrani of Afghanistan, presented by Nawab Ihsan Ali Khan of Malir Kotla.