



We deeply regret for falling in arrears with the publication of our Bulletin and will try to catch up soon. This issue focusses on the Society's last Exhibition titled CALCUTTA'S COMMERCIAL LEGACY held earlier this year at the well-known exhibition gallery of the Government of West Bengal in the heart of the city of Kolkata. We remain indebted to the Dept. of Information & Cultural Affairs, Government of West Bengal, our members and well-wishers for making this event a grand success.



*Photograph of the Society's Founder,  
Prof. Nisith Ranjan Ray, at the  
Exhibition*



The three-day Pictorial Exhibition of the Society was held at the Gaganendra Shilpa Pradarshasala, Kolkata Tathyakendra and was inaugurated by Shri Debashis Kumar, Hon'ble Member, Mayor-in-Council (Parks-Squares & Urban Forestry), Kolkata Municipal Corporation.



The Exhibition in February 2020 focussed on old paintings and, predominantly, photographs of entrepreneurial entities that made Calcutta the seat of India's business and industrial enterprise in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It reminded viewers of the surge that had heralded the era of industrialization across the sub-continent. The pictorial exhibition provided a nostalgic look back at the city's illustrious history as India's commercial capital, enabling those of the present generation to feel pride in the past and also inspiration so that ways might be found for the city to regain lost ground.



*Views of the Exhibition as our Chief Guest, Shri Debashis Kumar (with scarf), takes keen interest*



The exhibits were subdivided into eight categories, viz. (i) 'Some early views' (including 'A Hindoo Bazaar', by B. Solvyns, (ii) 'Banians and Entrepreneurs' (including Ramdulal De and Nobin Chandra Das), (iii) 'Transport and Communication' (including Palanquins, Rickshaws, Howrah and Sealdah Stations and the General Post Office), (iv) 'Streets, Bridges and Markets' (including the Pontoon Bridge, Strand Road in 1904 and Prices of Commodities in Entally Market, May 1925), (v) 'Industries and Industrial Houses' (including Balmer, Lawrie & Co., Burn & Co., Titagarh Paper Mills and Britannia Biscuit Co.), (vi) 'Banking and Insurance' (including a Bank of Hindostan note, Calcutta Mint, Strand Road, Royal Insurance Company, United Bank of India and HSBC), (vii) Swadeshi Enterprises (including Bengal Immunity Co., Calcutta Chemical, Mohendra Lall Dutt & Sons., Sulekha Works Ltd. and Dasgupta & Co.), and (viii) 'Miscellany' (including Keventers, Army and Navy Stores, Whiteaway and Laidlaw, Bourne and Shepherd, Oriental Gas and Peliti's). Also on display was an old map of the city showing business establishments lent by a member of the Society for the Exhibition.

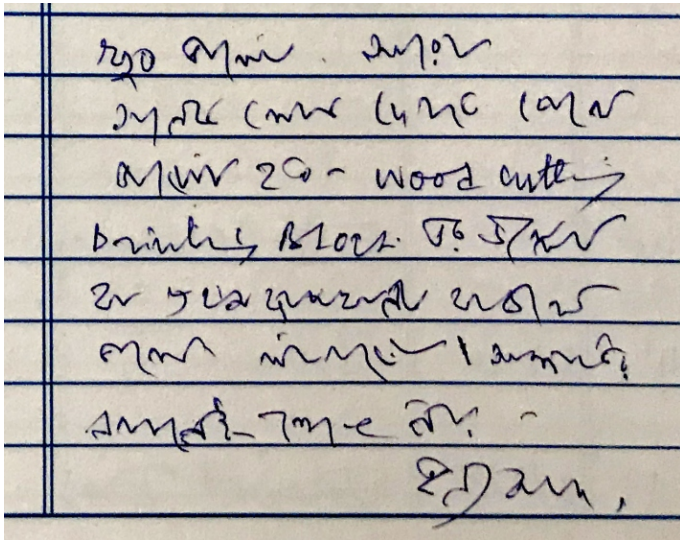


*Members of the Society await the arrival of the Chief Guest*



The Exhibition, the Society's first in over a decade, created quite a stir in Kolkata's cultural circles. There were steady streams of visitors including the younger generation on all three days who evinced keen interest in the exhibits and expressed their appreciation and gratitude in the Visitors' Book, also suggesting such exhibitions to be displayed elsewhere too, bringing out a publication, etc.

Handwritten 'VISITORS' BOOK' with columns for Serial No., Date of Visit, Name, Address, and Remarks. Entries include visitors like Arisek Dhwaja, Ranjana Banerjee, Souvik Pd, and Mr. Prithvina Datta.



We remain grateful to Mr. John Rodrigues, the eminent visualizer and our well-wisher, who travelled all the way from Goa to Kolkata to lend his assistance and give it the much-needed professional touch.

The Handout issued on this occasion is reproduced below.

Advertisement for the Society for the Preservation of Archival Materials and Monuments of Calcutta. Includes a list of sponsors (Shaw Wallace & Co., The Assam Company, etc.), a list of members, and contact information for the Kolkata Information Centre Campus.

Advertisement for 'Calcutta's Commercial Legacy: A Pictorial Exhibition'. Features a historical illustration of a street scene and text describing the exhibition's focus on Calcutta's commercial history, including early views, entrepreneurs, and industries.

**A recap of the previous exhibitions held between 1984 and 2007:**

24 February – 1 March 1984: Plans and Maps, heritage buildings, monuments, etc. (Calcutta Book Fair)

30 January – 10 February 1985: Kalighat Pats, Chitpore woodcuts, chromolithographs, Anglo Indian prints (Daniell, Solvyns, Fraser, D'Oyly) (Calcutta Book Fair)



*The Society's pavilion - a popular site at the Book Fair*

16 December 1998 - Radha Prasad Gupta, Adviser of the Society, takes H.E. the Governor of West Bengal, A.R.Kidwai through the Society's Exhibition inaugurated by H.E. at the Calcutta Information Centre

21 February – 12 March 1986: Kalikata Kamalalaya depicting Daily Life in the Bengali Town of Calcutta (18th and 19th centuries) (Banga Sanskriti Utsab, Calcutta Maidan)

1 March – 7 March 1989: Special Exhibition on Calcutta 1989 : Tercentenary Gift of a Museum cum Archives (Calcutta Information Centre)

24 August – 31 August 1996: A Pictorial Exhibition: Calcutta Then & Now, old street furniture, out-of-print books, old paintings and statues (Calcutta Information Centre)

28 August – 2 September 1998: Select Views of Calcutta – a photographic presentation (British Council, Calcutta)

16 December – 19 December 1998: A Pictorial Exhibition : Buildings and streets of old Calcutta, buildings no more, heritage buildings and monuments in peril, seats of learning, houses of worship, etc. (Calcutta Information Centre)

January 2000: Kolkata: A City of faiths (Ramakrishna Mission, Narendrapur)

24 August – 26 August 2001: Calcutta Then and Now : The Changing Face of the City ( Natmandir, Sovabazar Rajbati)

27 January – 30 January 2007: Business in Old Calcutta : A Pictorial Exhibition (Kolkata Tathyakendra)