

Symposium on Biographical Museums in Promoting Economic Sustainability
(11/02/2017)

A symposium on *Biographical Museums in promoting Economic Sustainability* was organized by Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Barrackpore on February 11, 2017 at its premises. The symposium was organized in order to discuss in detail the challenges faced by biographical museums which includes economic hurdles as a major problem and proposals for possible solutions. The Directors/ Curators of several museums of West Bengal attended the symposium for exchange of valuable opinion. The museums included Rabindra Bhavana Museum, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata, Bankim Bhavan Gaveshana Kendra, Kanthalpara, Naihati, Raja Rammohun Roy Memorial Museum, Kolkata, Bhaskar Bhavan Museum, Narendrapur, Gurusaday Museum, Joka, etc. The Keynote Address was delivered by Professor Atul Chandra Bhowmick, Former Professor, Department of Museology, University of Calcutta. He stressed in his speech that in present times it was absolutely necessary for museums to devise ways and means to sustain themselves as it is not always possible to get financial support from the government. He outlined the significance of involvement of museums in selling mementoes based on the collections of the museums. And also other means such as dolls and toy making and marketing them in collaboration with NGOs, selling publications of all kinds etc. The representatives of all the museums subsequently put forward their views on the theme of the symposium giving valuable and many a times unique suggestions. Finally the Valedictory Address was delivered by Professor Tapati Mukherjee, Adhyakha, Rabindra Bhavana, Director, Culture and Cultural Relations, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. She emphasized on the fact that the lives of great personalities serve as icons for the present generation as they embody the ideal virtues and philosophy of life. So it was not enough for biographical museums to remain as stories of life but to involve themselves actively in community development. There was valuable exchange of opinion and every participant was of the opinion that it was absolutely necessary for all the biographical museums to come on a common platform and form a forum.

