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# Arts fest showcases Bengal's rural heritage

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**Kolkata:** The Kolkata Centre for Creativity (KCC), in collaboration with the Indian Museum and the Museum Association of Bengal, launched an exhibition celebrating the cultural wealth of rural traditions in urban settings. As part of the 5th edition of the AMI Arts Festival 2024, the month-long event is designed to bridge the rural-urban gap through a mix of exhibits, workshops, performances, and discussions.

The exhibition features a diverse array of artefacts and archival records that highlight Bengal's rural history and artistry. Key displays include protohistoric artefacts dating back to 2000 BCE from excavations at Asurdanga (Birbhum), provided by the University of Calcutta's archaeology dept, and 15 archival records related to the archaeological heritage of rural Bengal, curated by the directorate of state archives, dept of higher education.

Richa Agarwal, chairperson of KCC, emphasised the festival's role in fostering connections between intellectual and popular culture. "The exhibition underscores empathy and inclusivity, bringing together artisans, academics, and experts to ignite meaningful dialogue."

## WHAT'S ON DISPLAY



The exhibition features a diverse array of artefacts, archival records that highlight Bengal's rural history



- ▶ Protohistoric artefacts dating back to 2000 BCE from excavations at Asurdanga (Birbhum)
- ▶ 15 archival records related to archaeological heritage of rural Bengal
- ▶ Sholapith artefacts, eco-friendly utensils from sugarcane byproducts & areca leaves by Indian Museum & Botanical Survey of India

The event also features contributions from 25 museums across Bengal, with each showcasing archival treasures that bring a fresh perspective to rural narratives. Sachindranath Bhattacharya, president of Paschimbanga Sangrahalaya Samiti, said, "artefacts are time capsules that narrate the economic, political, and social practices of bygone times. Preserving these is crucial for understanding our roots."

A D Chowdhury, director of the Indian Museum, underscored the overlooked vibrancy of India's rural communities. "Amid urban

sprawl, rural communities hold a treasure trove of cultural richness that deserves safeguarding and celebration," he said. Sayan Bhattacharya, deputy director of the Indian Museum, added, "This collaboration provides a vital platform for communities to celebrate their distinctive identities."

In addition to artefacts, the exhibition offers engaging workshops, thought-provoking film screenings, live performances and panel discussions. These activities aim to foster a deeper understanding of rural traditions and their relevance in contemporary times.