

# **EXTENTION TO THE PRINCE OF WALES MUSEUM**

## **Renovations to the East Wing**

Constructed in 1936, The East Wing of the Museum underwent changes well into 1973. For several years it housed the Inscriptions Gallery and to this day continues to house the Natural History Section on the ground floor.

The Museum decided to renovate its 25,000 sq. ft to create an exhibition area that would meet with world standards for climate control, enabling Mumbai to host International Exhibitions that require precisely such conditions.

The plans were developed with M/s Rahul Mehrotra Associates, Architects along with M/s Shirish Patel Associates, Structural Engineers. M/s Construction Technique were assigned the implementation of the renovation. The renovation has been completed in three years.

It was agreed that the extension needed to be better integrated with the gallery spaces and that a more public usage of this space would assist in making this wing popular with the visitors. Additional gallery space was created within this structure to make the internal circulation more flexible and allow for flexibility between the new galleries.

The renovation plan has also focused on enhanced lighting, air-conditioning, security systems and other services. There is a distinct attempt at creating gallery and museum facilities that would meet with international standards. India can now confidently look at hosting travelling exhibitions in the Premchand Roychand Gallery of the renovated East Wing.

## **The Verandah and Gallery Spaces**

The extended verandah on the ground level and gallery spaces above, enjoy a detailing that combines modern materials and local basalt stone. The in-fill arches neatly bolted on the sides to the pier, facilitate the continuum of the Indo-Saracenic design on the façade of the Main Building; the piers ingeniously conceal the actual load bearing steel columns.

In-filled within these columns are floor-to-floor vertical louvres fabricated in mild steel and adjustable for light and airflow with a mechanism in stainless steel. A free-standing railing designed with stainless steel sections and teak wood adds to the protective skin for physical security at the upper levels.

## **The Central Stairwell**

An existing light and services shaft above a storeroom at the ground level is rejuvenated into a stairwell connecting the exhibition galleries on the first and intermediate levels offering numerous permutations and combinations in which different spaces can be used in conjunction with each other. This staircase plays a crucial role as the only internal circulation area in the Annex Block and is in fact the circulation thread that connects the different spaces in this section.

An existing skylight capping the store at the ground level is retained and effectively reused as diffused light is allowed to filter through the gaps between the staircase.

## **The Skylights**

A system of skylights is added at the roof level to illuminate the galleries at the peripheries and the central stairwell. The smaller skylights lighting up the galleries allow diffused light into the peripheral gallery spaces. Thus, while these skylights are invisible architectural elements at the macro scale to a viewer on the street, they play a crucial role in illuminating the movement corridor and the galleries.