

# INDIA'S FIRST CONSTITUTION MUSEUM AT JGU: A TRIBUTE TO THE WORLD'S LARGEST DEMOCRACY

India's emergence as the world's largest democracy is deeply rooted in its constitutional values, which have guided the nation since the adoption of its written Constitution in 1949. Seventy-five years later, a historic initiative has been realized with the establishment of India's first Constitution Museum at O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU). The brainchild of JGU Chancellor, industrialist and parliamentarian Shri Naveen Jindal, and Vice Chancellor and ace legal scholar Prof. (Dr.) C. Raj Kumar, this pioneering museum serves as a treasure house of knowledge, offering visitors an immersive exploration into the origins, evolution, and enduring impact of the Indian Constitution. As its full name indicates - The Constitution Museum and The Rights & Freedoms Academy - this is more than a museum, as it also fulfills the role of a specialized academy not just for JGU students, but for students, scholars, researchers and legislators from across India and the world, who have come to appreciate this unique blueprint of this planet's largest democracy.



Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State for Law and Justice, inaugurating the Constitution Museum.



Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State for Law and Justice, with Shri Naveen Jindal, Jindal family members and Professor (Dr.) C. Raj Kumar.

O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) has long been at the forefront of academic excellence in India. Founded with a mission to provide world-class education and foster intellectual growth, JGU has built a reputation for its focus on innovation, interdisciplinary learning, and global perspectives. The establishment of the Constitution Museum aligns perfectly with the university's vision to promote legal scholarship - which is one of its key strengths - and deepen understanding of India's constitutional values.

Under the leadership of its Founding Chancellor Shri Naveen Jindal and Founding Vice Chancellor Prof. (Dr.) C. Raj Kumar, JGU has consistently emphasized the importance of social responsibility and civic engagement. However, the university's role in creating the Constitution Museum takes this social responsibility to new heights, demonstrating its broader mission to contribute to India's democratic discourse and to foster informed citizenship among its students and the wider public.

A significant component of the museum is the 'Wall of Busts', which features sculpted busts of the 300 Constituent

Assembly members. They give life to the figures behind the Constitution, providing a deeper connection with the history of the creation of the Republic.

One of the most engaging sections of the museum is dedicated to interactive displays and multimedia presentations, allowing visitors to learn about the social, political, and cultural forces that influenced the drafting of the Constitution. This section features short films, documentaries, and interviews with prominent historians and legal scholars, creating an immersive experience that brings history to life.

The museum also features a dedicated space for contemporary legal and political issues, where visitors can learn about the current debates surrounding the interpretation of the Constitution, and how it continues to evolve in response to India's changing political landscape. This space fosters critical thinking and dialogue about the role of the Constitution in modern India.

## AN INAUGURATION BEFITTING THE INSTITUTION

The museum was inaugurated in November 2024, marking the 75th



anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of India. This significant occasion was graced by key dignitaries, including Shri Om Birla, Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State for Law and Justice, and Shri Naveen Jindal, Chancellor of JGU and Member of Parliament. 7 Sitting Judges of the Supreme Court of India graced the occasion and participated in the

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National Convention on the Constitution of India. Shri Bandaru Dattatraya, Hon'ble Governor of Haryana, also participated in the grand event.

#### THE ARCHITECTS BEHIND THE MUSEUM

The establishment of this museum is the result of the efforts of two visionary leaders - Shri Naveen Jindal and Prof. (Dr.) C. Raj Kumar. Chancellor of JGU and Member of Parliament Shri Naveen Jindal has been a strong advocate of democracy and education, and played the most pivotal role in



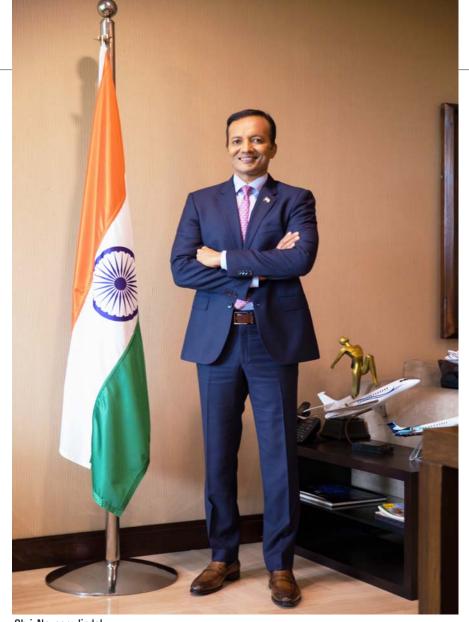
bringing this idea to fruition.

His contribution to the creation of the Constitution Museum stems from his unwavering belief that the Constitution is the foundation upon which India's democracy stands. Through this initiative, he aims to ensure that the legacy of the Constitution is preserved for future generations.

Naveen Jindal's commitment to public service is evident not only through his role at JGU but also in his philanthropic efforts aimed at creating a more informed and equitable society. By establishing the Constitution Museum, he has added a new dimension to his lifelong pursuit of social justice and human rights. He believes that the museum will serve as an educational lighthouse, guiding young minds toward civic engagement.

Prof. (Dr.) C. Raj Kumar, a Rhodes Scholar educated at both Oxford and Harvard, and the founding Vice Chancellor of JGU, is known internationally for his contributions to legal education. Prof. (Dr.) Raj Kumar spearheaded the conceptualization and realization of the museum, ensuring that it stands as an everlasting tribute to India's constitutional legacy.

A highly respected academic and legal scholar, Prof. (Dr.) Raj Kumar's efforts in promoting legal education and research in India have earned him recognition across the country. He has long championed the idea of creating a space dedicated to the study and appreciation of the



Shri Naveen Jindal



Constitution, believing it to be essential for understanding the country's democratic ethos.

Under his guidance, JGU has grown into an institution that not only provides academic excellence but also emphasizes social responsibility and the values enshrined in India's Constitution. His tireless efforts to make the Constitution Museum a reality are a testimony to his leadership and his deep understanding of the significance of the Constitution in contemporary Indian society.

Prof. (Dr.) Raj Kumar emphasizes that the Constitution Museum is also a tribute to the visionaries who drafted India's Constitution, particularly Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the chief architect of this comprehensive and timeless document.

Together, the vision of Shri Naveen Jindal and Prof. (Dr.) Raj Kumar has



Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State for Law and Justice, with Shri Naveen Jindal, Jindal family members and Professor (Dr.) C. Raj Kumar.

been translated into the Constitution Museum, which is poised to become an academic and cultural hub for students, educators, legislators, and citizens seeking to deepen their understanding of India's democratic principles.

# EXPLORING THE MUSEUM: A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY AND DEMOCRACY

The museum is not just an archive but a dynamic space for learning, encouraging future generations to engage with the rights, freedoms, and responsibilities enshrined in India's Constitution. Spread across three floors, the Constitution Museum provides a multi-dimensional experience, allowing visitors to engage with India's constitutional journey through interactive exhibits, multimedia displays, and historical artifacts. The museum is designed to be an experiential space, where visitors can not only learn but also feel the spirit of the Constitution.

## A REPLICA OF THE FOUNDING DOCUMENT

At the heart of the museum lies a photolithographic reproduction of the original Constitution of India, one of the rare copies that bear the signatures of the founding members. This exhibit highlights the artistic brilliance of Prem Behari Narain Raizada, who calligraphed the document, and Nandalal Bose, who illustrated it.

Interactive touchscreens allow visitors to explore the historical context of various constitutional articles, providing insights into the thought processes of the Constituent Assembly members.

## CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY DEBATES: THE MAKING OF THE CONSTITUTION

A dedicated section showcases audiovisual recordings and dramatized reenactments of key moments from the Constituent Assembly debates. Visitors can witness the passionate speeches of

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, thus bringing history to life.

### TRIBUTE TO THE WOMEN OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The museum highlights the oftenoverlooked contributions of female members of the Constituent Assembly. Animated presentations and interactive installations tell the stories of remarkable women like Sarojini Naidu, Hansa Mehta, and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, who shaped India's constitutional framework.

#### PROF. ANJCHITA B NAIR: BEHIND THE MUSEUM'S CURATORIAL EXCELLENCE

The Constitution Museum owes much of its curatorial excellence to Prof. Anjchita B. Nair, Professor of Practice & Director, Centre for Culture, Heritage and Museum Studies, JGU, and curator of the museum who has played a pivotal role in shaping the museum's vision, exhibits, and educational initiatives, under the guidance of Shri Naveen Jindal and Prof. (Dr.) Raj Kumar. A



seasoned museum professional with extensive experience in curating historical and educational exhibitions, Prof. Anjchita B Nair has brought her expertise in both design and scholarship to the Constitution Museum.

Prof. Anjchita B Nair's commitment to presenting the Constitution in an accessible, engaging, and educational way is evident throughout the museum. Drawing on her background in history and museum studies, she has carefully selected and organized the artifacts, documents, and multimedia resources to ensure that each exhibit tells a compelling and cohesive story about

India's democratic history. Under her guidance, the museum has created a space that goes beyond traditional exhibits, transforming the visit into an interactive learning experience.

Prof. Anjchita B Nair has worked closely with legal scholars including Prof. (Dr.) Raj Kumar, historians, and designers to create a space that is as much about education as it is about emotional and intellectual engagement. Her thoughtful curation has transformed the museum into a living testament to India's Constitution, showcasing its past while also highlighting its continuing relevance in the present and the future.



Shri Om Birla, Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha and Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State for Law and Justice with Shri Naveen Jindal



Prof. (Dr.) C. Raj Kumar

### EVOLUTION OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

One of the most engaging exhibits in the museum focuses on Fundamental Rights, which form the backbone of India's democracy. This exhibit traces the evolution of India's Fundamental Rights, from their roots in the freedom struggle, to landmark Supreme Court cases that have shaped their interpretation.

This section traces the evolution of these rights from the time of the British colonial rule to the present day, highlighting the shifts in legal, political, and social thought that have influenced the development of these rights. This exhibit explores how these rights have



Prof. Anjchita B Nair



expanded over time, with particular focus on landmark judgments and legislative changes that have expanded protections for various marginalized groups. This section includes visual timelines that trace key moments in the evolution of fundamental rights, from the Right to Equality to the Right to Education.

#### JUDICIAL REVIEW THROUGH LANDMARK JUDGMENTS

A section dedicated to Judicial Review provides insight into the crucial role the judiciary has played in interpreting and safeguarding the Constitution. This section explores the power of judicial review in India and highlights key judicial decisions that have influenced the application of constitutional principles.

Visitors can explore cases such as the Kesavananda Bharati case of 1973 that established the Basic Structure Doctrine. Also on display are celebrated cases like Maneka Gandhi vs. Union of India (1978), a ruling that expanded the interpretation of personal liberty, and the Justice K.S. Puttaswamy case (2017), that recognized the Right to Privacy as a fundamental right.

#### THE CONSTITUTION AVENUE AND GARDENS: A LIVING MONUMENT

Adjacent to the museum is The Constitution Avenue (Samvidhan Marg), a symbolic walkway lined with

sculptures and murals representing constitutional values. The Constitution Gardens, spanning 16,000 square feet, features sculptures like 'We, The People of India' and 'Echoes of Liberty', which depict India's constitutional journey. A hologram exhibit of Dr. BR Ambedkar, allows visitors to hear his thoughts on democracy and justice, while an art installation dedicated to the Preamble, emphasizes the core principles of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity.

#### INNOVATION MEETS HERITAGE: THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

A highlight of the museum is that it integrates cutting-edge technology to make history accessible. There is a unique robotic tour guide named S.A.M.V.I.D. (Smart Assistant for Museum Visitors and Interactive Displays), developed in collaboration with IIT-Madras, providing real-time information on exhibits.

An AI based interactive installation allows visitors to step into a historical moment and experience oath-taking as a Constituent Assembly Member at the stroke of midnight on August 14, 1947. Also, a digital archive of interviews with legal experts helps visitors understand the contemporary relevance of constitutional principles.

#### A HUB FOR EDUCATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Beyond being a museum, the institution serves as an academic hub under the banner of the 'The Constitution Museum

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and The Rights & Freedoms Academy'. The academy hosts workshops, debates, and conferences on constitutional law and democratic governance. Legal literacy programs for students to engage with issues of human rights and social justice are provided, and there is even a Children's Corner, where young visitors can learn about constitutional concepts through games, quizzes, and graphic pamphlets.

The Constitution Museum at JGU is not just a static collection of artifacts; it is a dynamic resource aimed at educating and inspiring the next generation of legal professionals, scholars, and lawmakers. For students, the museum provides an invaluable resource for learning about the Constitution's history, the principles it enshrines, and its relevance in



contemporary India. It serves as a rich repository of knowledge, offering students a hands-on experience with the original documents, debates, and materials that shaped India's legal system.

For law students, in particular, the museum offers a unique opportunity to engage with the Constitution in a way that goes beyond textbooks. The interactive exhibits and multimedia presentations allow students to engage with key legal concepts and understand their application in real-world scenarios. Through guided tours, workshops, and seminars, students can deepen their understanding of constitutional law and its role in shaping governance and public policy in India.

For legislators and policymakers, the museum serves as a space for reflection and learning, encouraging them to engage with the foundational values of India's democracy. The museum's exhibits and resources offer valuable insights into the history and interpretation of the Constitution, helping lawmakers understand the importance of their role in upholding constitutional principles and ensuring the rule of law in India's diverse society.

## THE ROLE OF ART IN CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

The Constitution Museum at JGU is also home to an extraordinary collection of

art inspired by the Indian Constitution. Artists such as Debashish Mukherjee, Valay Gada, Megha Joshi, and Pradeep B. Jogdand have contributed sculptures, murals, and mixed-media works, showcasing the blend of history, law, and artistic expression.

## A LEGACY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The Constitution Museum at O.P. Jindal Global University is more than a repository of historical documents; it is a living institution that reflects India's past, present, and future. It stands as a glowing tribute to the democratic ideals enshrined in the Constitution, inviting citizens to engage, reflect, and participate in the nation's ongoing constitutional journey.

Through the visionary leadership of Shri Naveen Jindal and Prof. (Dr.) C. Raj Kumar, and the curatorial excellence of Prof. Anjchita B. Nair, the museum offers an unparalleled opportunity to appreciate the rich legacy of India's Constitution.

As visitors step out of the museum, they leave not just with knowledge, but with a renewed sense of responsibility towards upholding the principles that define India. This landmark institution is ensuring that the spirit of the Constitution will continue to inspire the generations to come.