

## **K. K. Muhammed**

**Karingamannu Kuzhiyil Muhammed** (born 1 July 1952), better known as K. K. Muhammed, is an Indian archaeologist. He was the Regional Director (North) of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), and is currently serving as Project Archaeological Director in Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

### **Early life and background**

KK Muhammed was born in Calicut, Kerala in a middle-class family to Beeran Kutty Haji and Mariyam. Muhammed is second amongst five siblings. After completing his schooling from Government Higher Secondary School, Koduvally, he obtained his Master's Degree in History (1973–75) from Aligarh Muslim University, and his Post Graduate Diploma in Archaeology (1976–77) from the school of Archaeology, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, India.

### **Career**

After completing education from Aligarh Muslim University, Muhammed served as Technical Assistant and then as Assistant Archaeologist in the department of History at Aligarh Muslim University. Muhammed was later selected as Deputy Superintendent Archaeologist in Archaeological Survey of India.

He was initially posted at Madras in 1988 and later transferred to Goa in 1991. In 1997, Muhammed was promoted as Superintendent Archaeologist and subsequently, served in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi. During this period, he also served as a tour guide to historic monuments for prominent foreign guests such as Pervez Musharraf and Barack Obama. In 2012, Muhammed Retired as Regional Director (North) from Archaeological Survey of India.

### **Major archaeological discoveries**

Excavated Ibadat Khana, the structure where Akbar the Great proclaimed the formation of Composite religion known as Din-e Ilahi (Nursery of Indian Secularism)

Discovered the first Christian Chapel of North India built by Akbar at Fatehpur Sikri

Excavated the Buddhist Stupa of Kesaria built by Emperor Ashoka[2]

Discovered and excavated Buddhist Stupa in Rajgir

Excavated the Buddhist archaeological site in Kolhua, Vaishali

Located and Excavated a number of rock cut caves, Umbrella Stones, Cists and Dolmens in Calicut and Malapuram districts of Kerala

### **Dantewada temples**

KK Muhammed conserved the Barsoor and Samlur Temples in Dantewada District near Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh. This area is known to be the seat of Naxal activities in the region. In 2003, KK Muhammed was able to convince Naxal activists and with their co-operation, conserved the Temples to its present day state.

### **Bateshwar Complex restoration**

Main article: Bateshwar, Morena

Bateshwar, Morena is a complex of 200 ancient Shiva & Vishnu temples situated 40 km away from Gwalior. These temples were built between 9th and 11th century during the Gurjara-Pratihara Dynasty, 200 years before Khajuraho. The area was under the control of Nirbhay Singh Gujjar and Gadariya Dacoits. KK Muhammed successful in convincing the dacoits to let him restore these temples. He was able to restore 60 temples during his tenure in the region. After the dacoits were eliminated by the police, the area was encroached by the mining mafia.

## **Facelift of Delhi's monuments**

KK Muhammed was appointed as the Superintending Archaeologist of Delhi Circle, Archaeological Survey of India in 2008. His primary task was to carry out a major facelift activity at 46 monuments for the Commonwealth Games of 2010.

## **Museum - Masterpieces of Indian Art**

KK Muhammed conceived and executed the idea of building a Museum that contains the replicas of statues and stone carved sculptures across India. The museum, popularly known as the Replica Museum or the Children Museum is situated outside the Siri Fort Sports Complex, behind Siri Fort Auditorium in Delhi.[6][7][8]

## **Awards and honors**

### ***International awards***

SAARC Environmental Award for Conservation of Bateshwar temples by Foundation of SAARC writers and Literatures, 2009-2010

Sri Lanka Maha Bodhi Society Award, 2010 for "Invaluable contribution and effort in resurrecting the ancient Buddhist heritage of Mahabharath."

The Reach Foundation Award, 2010

### ***National awards***

National Award for maintaining Sanchi Stupa as the Best Maintained & Tourist Friendly Monument by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. Of India 2006-2007

National Award for maintaining Qutub Minar as the best Maintained & Tourist Friendly monument 2007-2008

National Award for The First Barrier Free Monument(Qutub Minar) 2007-2008

National Award for Maintaining Humayun's Tomb as the Best Maintained & Tourist Friendly monument 2008-2009

Citizen Journalist Award - Be the Change given by Network18 (CNN IBN) 2009-2010 for running Slum School initiative

National Award for maintaining Red Fort as the Best Maintained & Tourist Friendly monument 2009-2010

12th Annual Rajiv Gandhi Global Excellence Award, 2011

The Chishti India Harmony Awards, 2014 by India Harmony Foundation

### ***State awards***

Madhya Pradesh Government Award for Tourist Friendly Archaeologist 2009-2010.

## **Personal life**

KK Muhammed married Rabiya, a native of Calicut, on 29 July 1983. They have two children, Jamshedh and Shaheen.

## **Autobiography**

In 2016, KK Muhammad's Malayalam-language autobiography Njan Enna Bharatiyan ("I an Indian") was released. The book attracted controversy due to his claim that the Marxist historians sided with the extremist Muslim groups and derailed attempts to find an amicable solution to the Ayodhya dispute. According to him, archaeological excavations at Ayodhya clearly indicated the presence of a temple below the mosque, but the leftist historians dismissed these, and even tried to mislead the Allahabad High Court.