R The Saler Jung Museur Its history, collections and future densionsment



The Corner Stone Laying ceremony of the New Building for the Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad (A. P.) on 23rd July 1963 by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India.

SOUVENIR



1963

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Cover :

Persian Painting in the illustrated manuscript "Rauzatu'l-Mohibbin " Bihzad School Signed Mahmood 1548 A. D.



NAWAB SALAR JUNG BAHADUR



Dr. S. RADHAKRISHNAN President of India



Shri JAWAHARLAL NEHRU Prime Minister of India



cbecca - Marble statue G. M. Benzoni (Italy) 1876 A. D



Bronze figure of Siva as Nataraj, Vijayanagar period, South India, 16th century A. D.



Fire works, Mughal School. Early 18th century A. D.

Foreword

Mir Yousuf Ali Khan Salar Jung III was a remarkable member of a remarkable family. He became Prime Minister to the Nizam of Hyderabad when he was only 23 and gave early evidence of both competence and devotion to duty. He did not however continue long in that office and the later years of his life were devoted to the building up of what many regard as perhaps the greatest one man collection in the world.

Salar Jung had a deep love for objects of art and antiquities. He was also a lover of books and manuscripts and devoted his great talents and considerable fortune in seeking out and acquiring every type of object pertaining to art, antiquities and scholarship. After his death in 1949, his collection was organised into a museum which was declared open to the public in 1951 by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. It is a happy augury that he has today consented to lay the corner stone of the building which will be the permanent home of the Museum. A special tribute of gratitude is also due to the members of the Salar Jung family for their generosity in donating the entire collection to the nation for building up the Salar Jung Museum as a National Museum of India.

The collections in the Salar Jung Museum are immense and cannot be displayed in all their wealth without a spacious building. This is now being constructed with the cooperation of the Government of India, the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Salar Jung Estate Committee. Hyderabad has in recent years thrown up a number of gifted architects, and it is our hope that the new building of the Salar Jung Museum will incorporate the latest ideas on museum service into the architectural traditions of India to provide a mansion that will be satisfying from the functional as well as the aesthetic point of view.

Introduction

As the Chairman of the Salar Jung Museum Board, it gives me very great pleasure to write a few words by way of introduction to this beautiful souvenir. It has been planned and produced by Shri V. L. Devkar, the Director of the Museum, to mark an important event in the development of the Salar Jung Museum viz. laying the corner stone of its stately new edifice by our beloved Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru.

Salar Jung Museum is unique in many respects. It is largely a one man collection, that of the late Nawab Mir Yousuf Ali Khan, the last of the Salar Jung family; it is international in its character and contents, consisting as it does, of art objects from almost all parts of the world; its popularity is well attested by the thousands who visit the Museum daily and the handsome annual income it gets by way of admission fees, perhaps one of the highest for any museum in the world.

In its vast and varied collections, there are many things to interest both experts and laymen, and in its present over crowded state, it is rather difficult to discern the good from the bad, the genuine from the fake, but, nevertheless, when they are carefully classified and re-arranged in the new building in a scientific way, they are sure to be of immense educational value to scholars, students and even to casual visitors.

I am sure that the new building with all its modern equipments, lighting and attractive appearance will not only be worthy of the rich contents it will house and display but will be a definite landmark in the development of a Modern National Museum in this country.

> S. M. SHRINAGESH Chairman Salar Jung Museum Board



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Shri L, N. Gupta, U.X. 8 Secretary to the Government of Audhra Pradesh, Education Deput- ment, Hyderabad.	>>

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A view of the first meeting of the Salar Jong Museum Board under the Chairmanship of Dr. Bhimsen Sachar the Ex-Governor of Andhra Pradesh. Prof. Humayun Kabir who attended the meeting by special invitation is seen next to the Chairman.



Gen. S. M. SHRINAGESH Governor of Andhra Fradesh & Chairman, Salar Jung Museum Board.



Dr. BHIMSEN SACHAR Ex-Governor of Andhra Pradeab & first Chairman, Salar Jung Museum Board 1961 - 1962,

THE SALAR JUNG MUSEUM ITS HISTORY, COLLECTIONS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

By V. L. DEVKAR Director, Salar Jung Museum

The Salar Jung Museum, which is well-known in India for its vast collection of art objects, has also gained a reputation as one of the greatest one-man collection of its kind in the world. The museum has therefore been recently declared by an Act of Parliament as "an Institution of National Importance."

When it is suitably housed in a well-planned, newly constructed building. and reorganised and developed as a full-fledged modern museum, it will rank high among the National Museums of Asia. It will, indeed, be a bright beacon of education and enlightenment for the community.

The story of a patient and painstaking accumulation of art objects which form the nucleus of the present museum, reads like a saga of aesthetic endeavour of a prince among art connoisseurs.

The principal actor in this drama, who spent a lifetime in collecting the bulk of the objects, on which pursuit he spared neither money nor effort, was the last holder of that illustrious title, Salar Jung. Unfortunately, he died in 1949 without realising his dream of seeing the museum as an accomplished fact. A bachelor, he concentrated his love and energies on seeking out and acquiring antiquities as well as invaluable books and manuscripts. The museum and the library are the outcome of his zealous, unremitting labours, and both constitute a glorious legacy to his motherland.

Mir Yusuf Ali Khan, Salar Jung III, succeeded Salar Jung II as head of the family when he was an infant. Born on 13th June 1889, he died on 2nd March 1949. He was 23 years of age when he assumed the office of Prime Minister to the Nizam and was the last of the family to hold that exalted office. As stated earlier, he spent a considerable portion of his wealth in collecting objects of art and other curios in staggering profusion. He was indeed a consummate dilettante and a shrewd connoisseur of everything pertaining to art and antiquities, as the exhibits in the museum testify.

On his death, the States Ministry of the Government of India, by virtue of a special ordinance, appointed an official committee to administer the affairs of his estate. Shri M. K. Vellodi, I. C. S. the then Chief Minister of the former State of Hyderabad, under instructions from the Union Minister of State, Shri Vallabhbhai Patel, first sounded Dr. James Cousins, for making a survey of this vast collections and submit a report to him. The latter, however, suggested the name of Shri G. Venkatachalam, the well-known art critic, for undertaking this task. After a close examination of the collections, Shri Venkatachalam recommended the creation of a museum by selecting the best possible pieces.

Accordingly, the services of Shri Venkatachalam were engaged and he set about the task with the zeal of an art lover, and took great pains in selecting suitable material out of the vast mass of art objects. Within a couple of years the old Dewan Devdi was transformed by his exertions into an attractive and most popular museum in the country.

The Salar Jung Museum, as a private institution, remained under the supervision and control of the Salar Jung Estate Committee until December 1, 1958. On December 2, of the same year, the successors of the late Nawab Saheb made a generous gift of these collections to the nation through the efforts of Nawab Mehdi Nawaz Jung, the present Governor of Gujarat. It was legalised through a compromise Deed submitted to the High Court of Judicature, Andhra Pradesh. From then on, until it was fully passed over to the Government of India on June 30, 1960, Shri K. N. Anantharaman, I. C. S. First Member of the Board of Revenue, Government of Andhra Pradesh, supervised its administration. Since then, the museum was administered unt.¹¹ June 30, 1961 directly by the Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, Government of India, with the assistance of Shri V. L. Devkar, the Director of the Museum and Picture Gallery Baroda and the Head of the Department of Museology, M. S. University of Baroda, whose services were obtained on loan for the modernisation and development of the museum.

By an Act of Parliament, known as the Salar Jung Museum Act, 1961 (No. 26 of May 19, 1961) the museum, together with the Library, were declared to be an 'Institution of National Importance'. Professor Humayun Kabir, the Hon'ble Minister for Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, who has been mainly responsible for framing the Salar Jung Museum Act, is taking a personal interest in the progress and development of the museum. Under the Act, the Government of India transferred the administration of the museum on July 1, 1961 to a Board of Trustees, with the Governor of Andhra Pradesh as ex-officio Chairman. The Salar Jung Museum Act has empowered the Board of Trustees, which is an autonomous body, not only to manage the museum efficiently, but also to plan, promote, organise and implement programmes for the proper development of the museum. Moreover, the Board has been fully authorised to take such measures as it thinks fit for providing instruction and research in activities bearing on museums and libraries, and for the advancement of learning.

Present arrangement of the Collections:

As at present constituted, the museum has four main sections, namely the Eastern, Western, the Children's Section and the Library.

I. Eastern Section:

The Eastern Section contains various kinds of arts and crafts from China, Japan, India, Burma, Persia, Egypt and other countries. The collections pertaining to each country are arranged in one or more rooms depending upon the nature and number of exhibits.

Chinese Section:

The Chinese Section contains a variety of very valuable and interesting exhibits. Some of the important exhibits are the gree Celadon of the Ming and Sung periods, Family verte and Fam.ly Rose of the Ming and Kang-hsi periods and blue China in a variety of forms. Besides, there are lacquer-painted furniture, inlaid-screens, tapestries, a beautiful bronze of Kwan-yin; figures of the Laughing Buddha, Laot-ze Shunt-ze, a choice collection of Chinese snuff bottles, several of which bear seals and signatures, and a fine collection of old ivory figures and carvings.

Japanese Section:

Likewise, the Japanese art collections consist of beautifully carved and lacquer-painted cabinets, inlaid screens and carved furniture from Nikko: finely glazed and painted pottery from Satsuma; richly enamelled procelain from Imari; a large collection of ivory pieces, a number of needle-work pictures in silk, a few water colour paintings, woodcuts, crayon and pastel paintings on paper and oil paintings on glass.

Persian Room:

The art of Persia is represented by a variety of miniature paintings, including paintings by Kachadorian, carpets, rugs and metal work. The carpet industry of Persia is well represented in separate Persian carpet rooms. Beautiful carpets of different looms and of different patterns and colours from different places like Kashan, Kirman, Bokhara, Tabriz, Shiraz, Isfahan and Herat enhance the richness of the museum.

The Oriental Manuscript Section:

The exhibits in the Oriental Manuscripts Section are unique. The rich array of Korans, and works of outstanding poets and authors by well known calligraphists like, Mir Ali of Herat, Sultan Ali of Meshad, and Imad of Qazwin, place this collection in a unique position. One of the best specimens of the Holy Koran is written in the Naskh style by Yaqoot-al-Mostasami. This Koran bears the autographs and seals of the Emperors Jehangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb.

An illustrated manuscript, named Rauzatu'l-Mohibbin is undoubtedly a rare piece of work. Most of the paintings in this manuscript are signed and belong to the Bihzad School. The outstanding feature of this work is that it is written by Mir Ali for his royal patron. Abdul Aziz Bahadur Khan, the King of Bokhara. Each and every page has the monogram of the Royal Library.

Indian Textiles and Costumes:

The Textiles Section has a variety of Kimkhabs from Banaras and Surat; Himroos and Mashroos from Aurangabad; and shawls and tunics from Kashmir of varying designs, colours and textures.

Indian Bronzes:

Indian bronzes are represented in the collection by a few south Indian bronzes, among which Somaskanda and Nataraja, are outstanding pieces. A number of small bronzes of the Chola and Vijayanagar periods are also displayed in this section.

Silver Room :

The museum has a fairly representative collection of European and Oriental silverware arranged in a separate room.

The table decorations consisting of tea sets, fruit dishes, wine decanters etc., are from the famous makers of England, France and Russia and show the art of European silversmiths at their best.

Amongst the oriental silver, there are beautiful examples of filigree work from Cuttack and Karimnagar (A. P.), embossed work from Tanjore and Burma beaten work from Delhi, Hyderabad and Lucknow and some good copies of Sassanian work.

The trappings for clephants, the horses and bullocks which were used by the Nawab on ceremonial occasions give a typical oriental charm and splendour to the collections.

Indian Miniature Painting Section:

Various schools of Indian painting, like the Indo-Persian, Mughal, Rajasthani and Pahari are found in the collection along with some of the finest examples of Deccani paintings. Selected examples of these have been classified and rearranged according to their respective schools.

Jade Room:

A superb collection of both Indian and Chinese jades is displayed in a special room, named the Jade Room. There are beautiful examples of carved Mughal jade handles of daggers and swords, encrusted with precious stones and gold. Besides, there are powder boxes, mirror frames, spice boxes etc., which provide a rich feast to the eye.

Two small bejewelled knives exquisitely carved and set with emeralds and rubies, are said to have been owned by Noorjehan and Jehangir respectively. In the same room are to be seen gold and enamel works of Jaipur, and an exquisite jade bowl of the Jehangir period.

There are a few swords and daggers associated with historical figures, like Aurangzeb, Tippu Sultan, Nizam I and the last Golconda ruler, Taneshah.

Ivory Room :

Ivory is well represented in the museum. If the Salar Jung Museum collection of the Chinese and Japanese ivory is considered matchless in India, the collection of European ivory f om Portugal, France and Germany is equally valuable and interesting.

Indian ivory is represented by beautiful examples from the late Mughal period down to modern times. The ivory carpet is considered unique and shows the superb workmanship of Indian craftsmen.

Armoury Room:

A comprehensive collection of offensive and defensive arms from different places have been brought together to form the



Krishna with Gopis Kangra School late 18th century A. D.



Farshi Huqqa Bottom Bidri Ware Bidar 19th century A. D. 'museum' Armoury Section. Kris from Malaya, Kattars from Bundi and Burhanpur, Abbasi swords from Persia, Jambia from Arabia, Sailapa from Turkey, constitute the nucleus of the Arms section. Moreover, a number of European swords Krich, fencing swords, Chinese spear, Persian and Indian shields of metal and hide have made the collection fairly representative in nature and content.

Bidri Ware Collection :

Bidri ware is an important industry of old Hyderabad State, and is in great demand in the market. The museum contains a large collection of old specimens of fine craftsmanship. Specimens from Lucknow and Murshidabad also find a place in the collection.

Modern Indian Painting Section:

The works of contemporary painters, like D. P. Roy Choudhury, Sarada Ukil, Raja Ravi Verma, Goganendranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, M. N. Roy, Manishi De, V. Venkataratnam and Abdul Rahman Chughtai, are represented in the gallery of modern paintings.

II. Western Section:

The Western Section is built around the art and industry of European countries. The collection in this section consists of Sevres porcelain, cut-glass, Wedgewood pottery, Chinaware etc., from England, France, Germany and other countries. In the light of the researches made in this field during the last year, it has been found that the museum houses a good number of original porcelain pieces manufactured in the Sevres factory of France bearing the factory's marks and some rare old Dresden ware. There are two interesting pieces, which belonged to the set of 744 pieces presented by Louis XVI to the Empress Catherine II of Russia.

Good copies of period furniture of the Bourbons of France, like Louis XV, Louis XVI and the empire furniture of Napoleanic period are of considerable interest to the visitors. The museum possesses a copy of the table of Louis XV prepared by Beurdeley, a master craftsman of that period, from the original in the Louvre museum. Examples of English furniture of the Queen Anne period, the Georgian and Victorian periods are well represented. Chippendale, Heppelwhite, Sheraton and Adam's furniture with veneering inlay and ormolu mountings are also there to give an idea of the furniture fashions of the days gone by.

European Painting and Sculpture:

A large number of European oil paintings are exhibited in the Western section. Among the originals, there are works of Landseer, G. F. Watts, T. S. Cooper, Godward, Turner, Leighton, Canaletto, Chardin, and other artists of renown, which have enhanced the richness of the collection of Western Art. Copies of masters like Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Titian, Velasquez, Botticelli and others are also exhibited.

There are a large number of marble statues, among which, the Veiled Rebacca, executed by G. M. Benzoni in the year 1876, is the greatest attraction for visitors. The statue reveals the technical skill and refined taste of the sculptor. Another remarkable statue is a wooden sculpture, made by an unknown Italian sculptor, showing two life-size figures, standing back to back; one figure representing Mephistopheles and the other Margaretta both being characters from Goethe's Faust. They symbolise Good and Evil.

III. Children's Section:

In order to interest young visitors and to develop their minds, the Children's Section has been enlarged and rearranged during the last two years. This is the largest and the most comprehensive Children's Section in India, and visitors have free access to this section. It contains toys of historical and artistic value, illuminated Dioramas of birds and animals, furnished doll houses, an Electric toy train and a collection of musical boxes which include humming birds, and the chirping canary.

IV. Library:

The Salar Jung Library forms an important separate unit of the museum. It has an admirable collection of Oriental Manuscripts and printed books. There is a unique collection of

7,000 rare and valuable Urdu, Arabic and Persian Manuscripts. Apart from these, there are 14,000 printed books in oriental languages and over 30,000 English books. A Reference Library has also been arranged for the benefit of the museum staff and research scholars. It consists of books on Art, Museology, Art History, Natural History etc., and is now being augmented by a number of valuable books, journals and periodicals. Several publications dealing with museology and museum work in other countries are also received on an exchange basis by the Reference Library. In addition, there is a Free Reading Room attached to the Library. It is open to the general public in the morning and evening. Thus, the library of the Salar Jung Museum serves the requirements of a wide variety of people, including Research scholars and Museology students.

Research and Publications:

The museum has an ambitious programme of research and publications. Inspite of the understaffed position of the museum, the following publications have been issued and distributed to various museums and educational institutions in India and abroad on an exchange basis.

1. A Catalogue of Urdu Manuscripts. 2. Two volumes of the Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts. 3. A Souvenir of the Salar Jung Museum. 4. A Catalogue of Bidriware. 5. A set of Picture Post Cards in colour and black and white.

Recently the museum has organised a well-equipped Photography section for the benefit of Research Scholars.

Educational Activities:

In view of the increasing popularity of the Salar Jung Museum, the Board has appointed trained guide lecturers to take round organised batches of visitors and parties of school children and explain to them important exhibits in the museum.

Periodical exhibitions are organised from time to time and artists are given necessary facilities to put up one-man shows for the benefit of the public and students. The museum week is a special feature of the Salar Jung Museum. It is celebrated every year in the first week of November to synchronise with the formation of the new State of Andhra Pradesh. It is well organised and publicised and brings in thousands of people to the museum every day.

Reorganisation of the Collections:

The existing collections of the Salar Jung Museum are enormous in quantity. But they vary in quality from good to bad and outright junk. The most urgent task before the museum is, therefore, to have these collections properly classified into exhibition and storage material before they are shifted to the new building.

The Director has already started this work with the help of the present inadequate staff. But as the size of the work is stupendous, it will be necessary to employ additional regular staff to register the objects scientifically. After this preliminary work, Indian and Foreign experts in the various fields of knowledge will have to be invited to determine the status and importance of the collections, so that their teaching and research value may be enhanced for the benefit of scholars and the visiting public.

As the Salar Jung Museum contains a large collection of surplus and duplicate material, arrangements are being made for Mobile Exhibitions to serve the educational needs of the people in the rural areas within a radius of 30 to 40 miles from the museum. Some of this material will also be given on loan for the education of children in the local schools.

The next important step in the reorganisation work will be the installation of selected exhibits in the new building according to the latest methods of museum display. The present countrywise arrangement of exhibits, or their grouping according to the nature of material, shall have to be maintained with such additions and alterations as may be considered necessary to bring the display upto-date from the educational point of view. Thus, while modernising the show, the individuality of the Salar Jung collections will be maintained. A few period rooms, such as the Salar Jung room, the Mughal room, the British and the French rooms are proposed to be organised with a view to lend variety and attraction to the new arrangement. And above all, realising that the Salar Jung Museum is today the most popular museum in India, and perhaps in the world, every effort will be made to maintain its popular appeal by showing a combination of educationally as well as aesthetically important exhibits in a presentable form.

Future Scope of the Salar Jung Museum:

We find that the people who constitute 80% of our daily visitors are illiterate and semi-illiterate adults and parties of school children. These people come to the museum more for entertainment than education. It is, therefore, the duty of the museum to organise the exhibits and galleries in such a manner that the people receive education while they enjoy their visit to the museum. This is the democratic concept of a modern museum. In India, the common man does not seem to understand much about art, or appreciate the scholarship in archæology. On the other hand, it has been found that suitable display of Natural History objects set in beautiful dioramas and habitat group cases has a much greater and wider appeal in the dissemination of scientific knowledge, and explaining the mysteries of Nature. Since there is no museum for the study of Zoology, Botany, Geology and Anthropology in Hyderabad and the surrounding areas, it becomes necessary to develop these sections in the new building to cater to the educational needs of our people in the modern age of science and technology. The Salar Jung Museum Board has, therefore made suitable provision for these sections in the plan of the new building.

In view of the aforesaid consideration, the scope of the Salar Jung Museum has now been defined to include Indian Art, Foreign Art, Archæology, and Natural History, comprising Zoology, Botany, Geology and Ethnology, Children's Section and Library.

The development of the new sections will not only increase the popularity of the Salar Jung Museum but convert it into a living centre for the education of the community. The organisation of some of the new sections, like Botany and Geology, shall have to be postponed for the time being, so that the Salar Jung Museum as one of the most popular National Museums of India may be developed as expeditiously as possible. It may be mentioned here that Dr. Bhimsen Sachar, who was the first Chairman of the Salar Jung Museum Board took a keen interest in the administration of the museum and during the short tenure of his office of one year, he laid the foundation for a full-fledged modern museum.

Training in Museology :

There is a great dearth of technically trained persons for the advancement of museums in our country. It has, therefore, been realised that if the Salar Jung Museum has to reorganise its collections on modern lines and to play a prominent role in spreading knowledge and enlightenment among the people, it is necessary to train a large number of students at the post-graduate level in modern museum methods or Museology.

Museology is a modern science which deals with every aspect of Museum administration and Museum technique.

The Salar Jung Museum Board have, therefore, started a short-term training course for the benefit of the employees of the Salar Jung Museum and also post-graduate students having special aptitude for museum work. Greater emphasis has been laid on the practical aspect of museum work, and the trainees are given an opportunity to deal with a wide variety of museum objects, their registration, indexing, labelling, preservation, exhibition, presentation, storage etc. Art students have to learn the scientific aspects of the conservation and preservation of delicate textiles, paintings, manuscripts etc. and science students have to make themselves familiar with the problems of classification, display and arrangement of exhibits. A conservation laboratory has been organised for scientific treatment and preservation of exhibits.

The advantage of this training scheme is to give a practical idea of the various specialized branches of museum work so that when properly trained candidates are employed in the Salar Jung Museum, and elsewhere they will become conscious of their duties and responsibilities and develop the collections under their charge in a scientific and efficient manner.

The New Building:

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The present building, the ancestral palace of the Salar Jung, is not at all suitable for a museum. A new building is an absolute necessity to house and preserve the collections properly for posterity. By the compromise deed, under which the museum has been nationalized, the heirs to the Salar Jung properties have donated a piece of land measuring 5.86 acres, situated on the south bank of the Musi river, along with an amount of Rs. 5 lakhs as their share for the construction of a new building. Apart from the donated land, additional land measuring 4.30 acres, has been acquired, bringing the site to 10.16 acres, so that the future development of this growing museum may not be impeded for want of adequate space. The Government of Andhra Pradesh have contributed another 5 lakhs of rupees. The Government of India have initially paid Rs. 10 lakhs as a grant to start the construction work. The plan of the building has been prepared by Shri Hashmat Raza, Ex-Architect, Government of Andhra Pradesh in consultation with Shri Jadhav, the Architect of the Government of Maharashtra. Since the new building is estimated to cost about one crore of rupees, the construction work has been taken up in three phases.

The Director of the museum, during his recent visit to the U.S.A., consulted leading museum experts who appreciated the museum plan and made some useful suggestions for its improvement. The construction of the building has been entrusted to the Public Works Department of the Government of Andhra Pradesh, who have started the work in right earnest. The corner-stone is now being laid by our beloved Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, who, it may be recalled, was graciously pleased to open the Salar Jung Museum on its present premises in 1951.

Issued by the

SALAR JUNG MUSEUM BOARD

on the occasion of the

CORNER STONE LAYING CEREMONY of the New Building for the Salar Jung Museum

by

Shri JAWAHARLAL NEHRU Prime Minister of India

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