

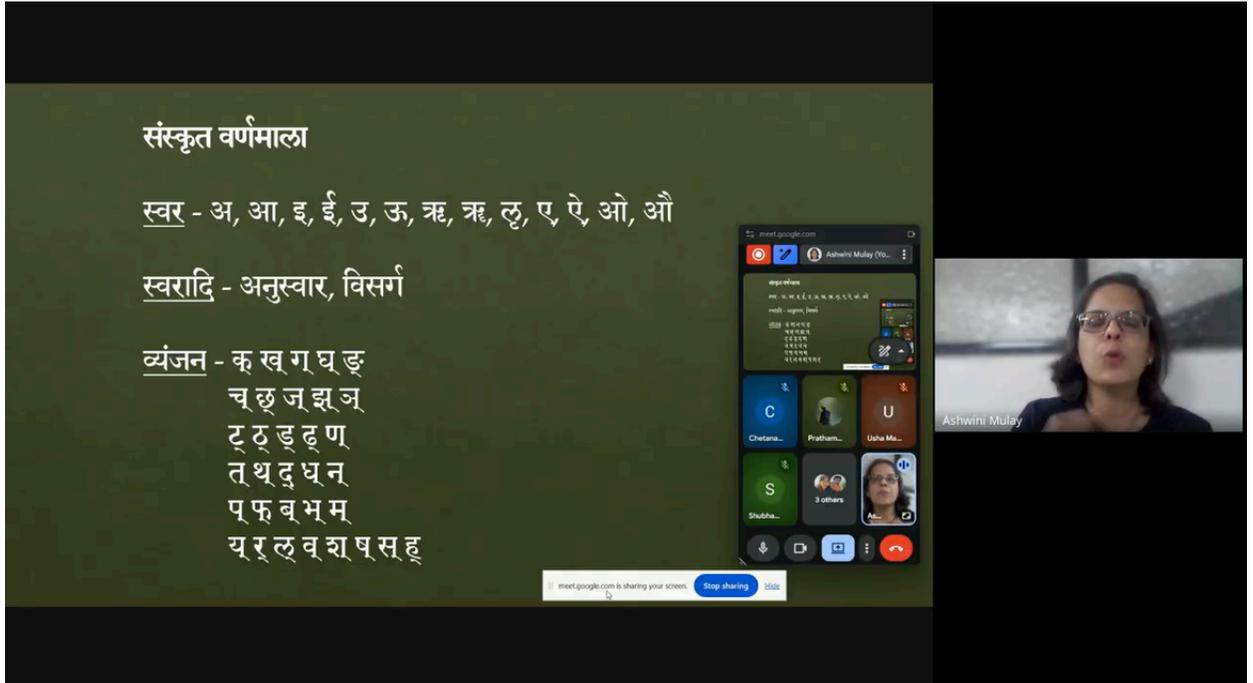
Online Certificate Course in Sanskrit Language

December 6 , 2025 onwards

Mode - Online

As part of its ongoing academic and outreach initiatives, Sambhasha Foundation is conducting a **Preliminary Online Certificate Course in Sanskrit Language**, aimed at introducing learners to the fundamentals of Sanskrit through a structured, accessible, and academically grounded approach.

The course is designed for beginners and interested learners from diverse backgrounds, offering a step-by-step introduction to **basic Sanskrit grammar, prose and poetry reading, and textual comprehension**. Emphasis is placed on learning through clear explanations, guided examples, and gradual progression, enabling participants to develop both confidence and clarity in engaging with Sanskrit texts.



Certificate Course in Introduction to Ancient Indian Temple Architecture

January 5 to March 15, 2025

Mode - Online

The **45-session certificate course** titled *Introduction to Ancient Indian Temple Architecture* commenced on **3rd November** and is currently ongoing. The *Online Certificate Course in Introduction to Ancient Indian Temple Architecture* is an academically oriented programme designed to introduce participants to the fundamental concepts, symbolism, and architectural

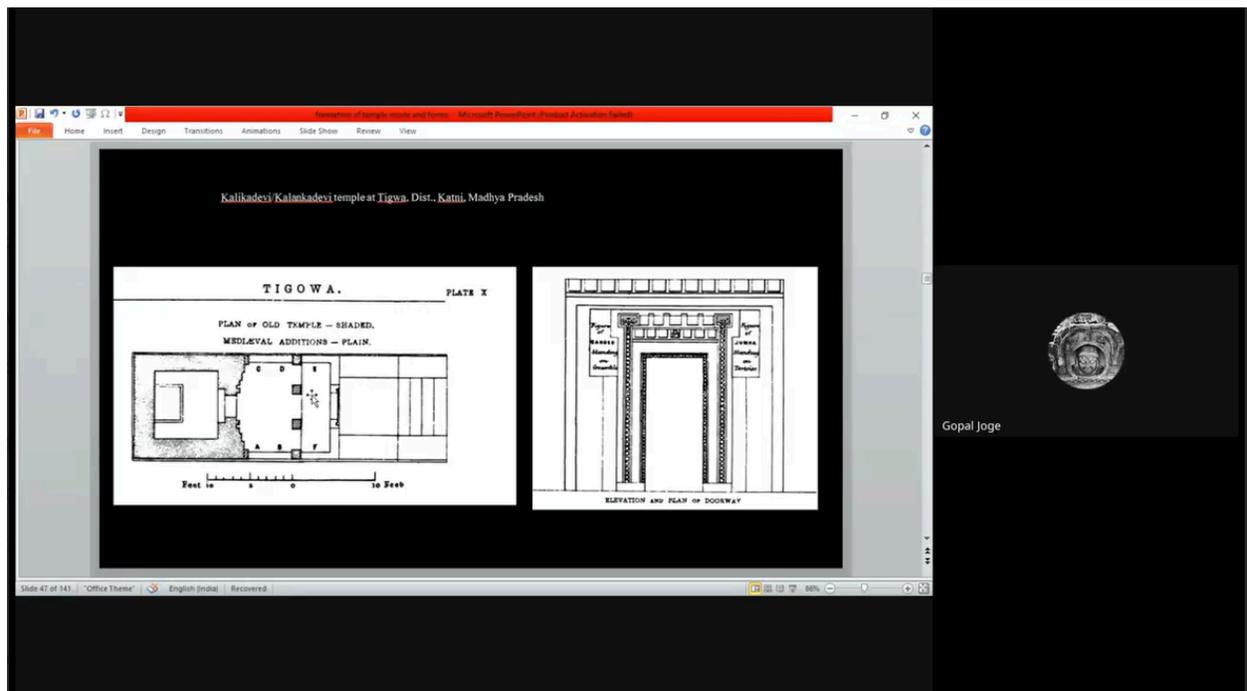
principles that shaped ancient Indian temple traditions. The course aims to build a strong foundational understanding of temple architecture through a chronological and regional approach, situating temples within broader historical, cultural, and religious contexts.

Conducted by Sambhasha Foundation in collaboration with Gandhigram Rural Institute, the course brings together an interdisciplinary perspective by engaging scholars and practitioners from the fields of art history, archaeology, architecture, and cultural studies. The collaborative framework strengthens the academic outreach of the programme and enables meaningful knowledge exchange across institutions.

Course Objectives:

- To familiarise participants with the key concepts, symbolism, and foundational principles of ancient Indian temple architecture.
- To outline the historical origins, evolution, and regional developments of temple-building traditions across India.
- To provide an overview of major ancient Indian temple styles and their defining structural and aesthetic features.

Sessions are being facilitated by a diverse faculty comprising senior scholars, researchers, and practitioners from across India, allowing participants to engage with multiple methodological and interpretative approaches bridging the gap between academic scholarship and common understanding.



Art Deco- Heritage Walk

January 18, 2026

Mode - Offline - On site

Sambhāṣā Foundation organised an Art Deco heritage walk in old Pune to explore the history, evolution, and everyday impact of the Art Deco architectural style. The walk traced the movement from its global origins—its cultural backdrop, reasons for emergence, and spread—to its arrival in India, focusing particularly on Pune as an early centre of adaptation. Participants observed how the city adopted this international design language while blending it with local aesthetics, resulting in buildings that feature Indian traditional motifs, cultural symbols, and regional materials within the Art Deco framework. The walk also highlighted the visual harmony between Pune’s older wada architecture and later Art Deco structures, showcasing a unique urban landscape where heritage and modernity stand side by side.



The Museum in a Box- *Ghumta Pitara*

January 20, 2026

Mode - Offline

As the pilot of “*Ghumta Pitara- The Museum in a Box*” initiative, we engaged with Grades VI to VIII students at a Shyamrao Shripati Barate PMC School, Digambarwadi, Warje, Pune with the objective of making museum-based learning more inclusive and accessible, recognising that not all learners have the opportunity to visit museums. By bringing curated objects directly into the classroom, the activity enabled students to touch, observe, and meaningfully engage with replicas of stone tools, Indus seals, Tārā and Padmapāṇi figurines, masks, jewellery, Shivrai coins, and prints of miniature paintings. Students were encouraged to explore the objects

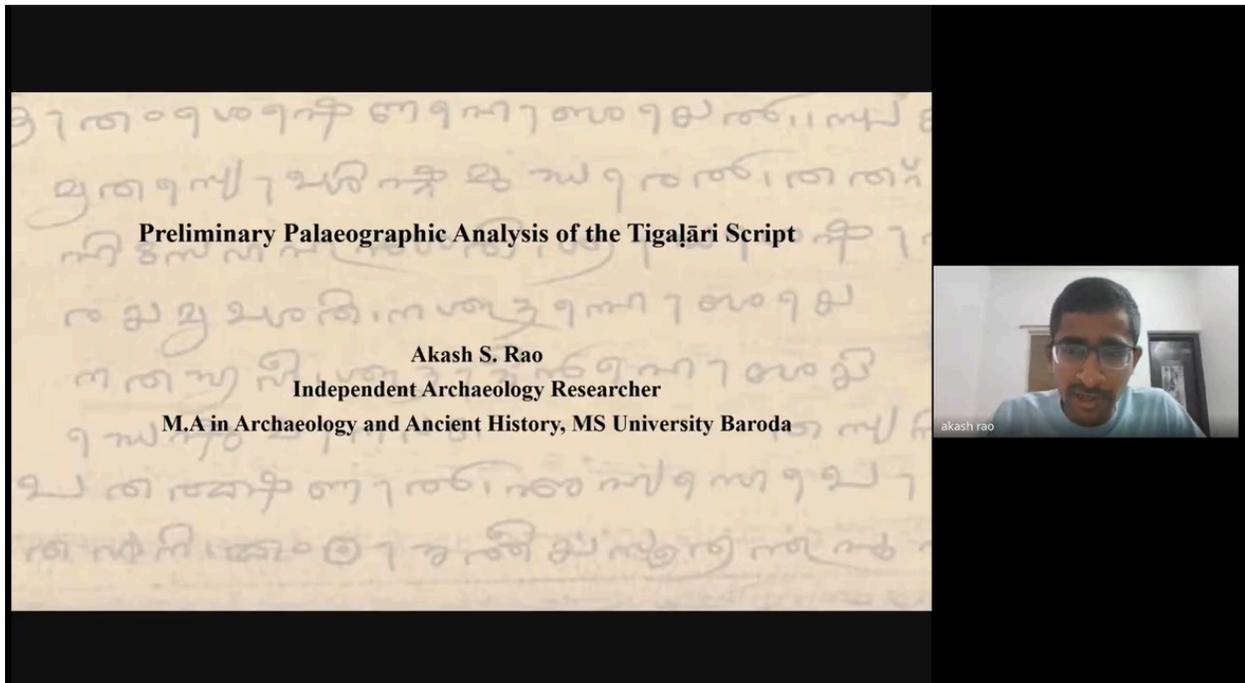
independently and form their own observations before being introduced to the historical contexts and stories associated with them. This approach not only fostered curiosity and critical thinking but also reflected a community-oriented educational effort to ensure equitable access to cultural heritage and experiential learning.



Study Group
January 23, 2026
Mode - Online

This month’s study group session, conducted by **Akash Rao**, focused on “*A Preliminary Overview of the Palaeography of the Tulu-Tigalari Script in the Context of Southern Indian Scripts.*” The session explored the palaeographical development of the Tigalari script, situating it within the broader Grantha script group while examining its relationship and mutual influences with other southern scripts such as Old Kannada and Vattezhutthu. A distinctive aspect of the study was its fresh methodological approach, wherein concepts from type design were applied to analyse letter forms, scribal habits, and structural variations across scripts. The discussion also extended to contemporary scribal trends and the visibility of Indic scripts in public spaces, encouraging participants to think beyond manuscripts and inscriptions.

The session aligned closely with our organisation’s social thought and betterment work by promoting awareness of lesser-studied regional scripts, fostering sensitivity towards linguistic diversity, and encouraging informed engagement with India’s written heritage. By bridging academic palaeography with contemporary design and public usage, the study reinforced the importance of cultural continuity, accessibility, and responsible heritage representation in modern society.



Walk- Deccan College

January 24, 2026

Mode - Offline

Sambhasha Foundation hosted a special Museum Story Walk at the Deccan College Archaeological Museum, designed to introduce participants to India's deep past through an engaging, narrative-led experience. The walk was conducted by Mr. Oshin Bamb, whose expertise in archaeology added exceptional clarity and depth to the session.

Instead of a conventional tour, the walk unfolded as a story across time, guiding participants through the museum's galleries, from the earliest traces of human activity in the Prehistoric Gallery, to the lived experiences of Chalcolithic communities at Inamgaon, the funerary traditions of the Megalithic period, and the urban and cultural developments of the Early Historic era. Mr. Bamb wove together artefacts, excavation stories, and cultural insights, helping participants understand not only *what* these objects were, but *how* they reveal everyday life, beliefs, and technological shifts in ancient India. The walk also covered the museum's specialised galleries on Art and Architecture, Epigraphy and Numismatics, and Ethnoarchaeology, showcasing how inscriptions, coins, sculptures, and contemporary ethnographic parallels help archaeologists reconstruct the past with greater nuance.

Participants responded enthusiastically to the story-based approach, engaging with questions, reflections, and observations throughout the session. The experience made archaeology accessible, relatable, and enjoyable, particularly for first-time museum visitors.





Lecture Series- History of Indian Musical Instruments

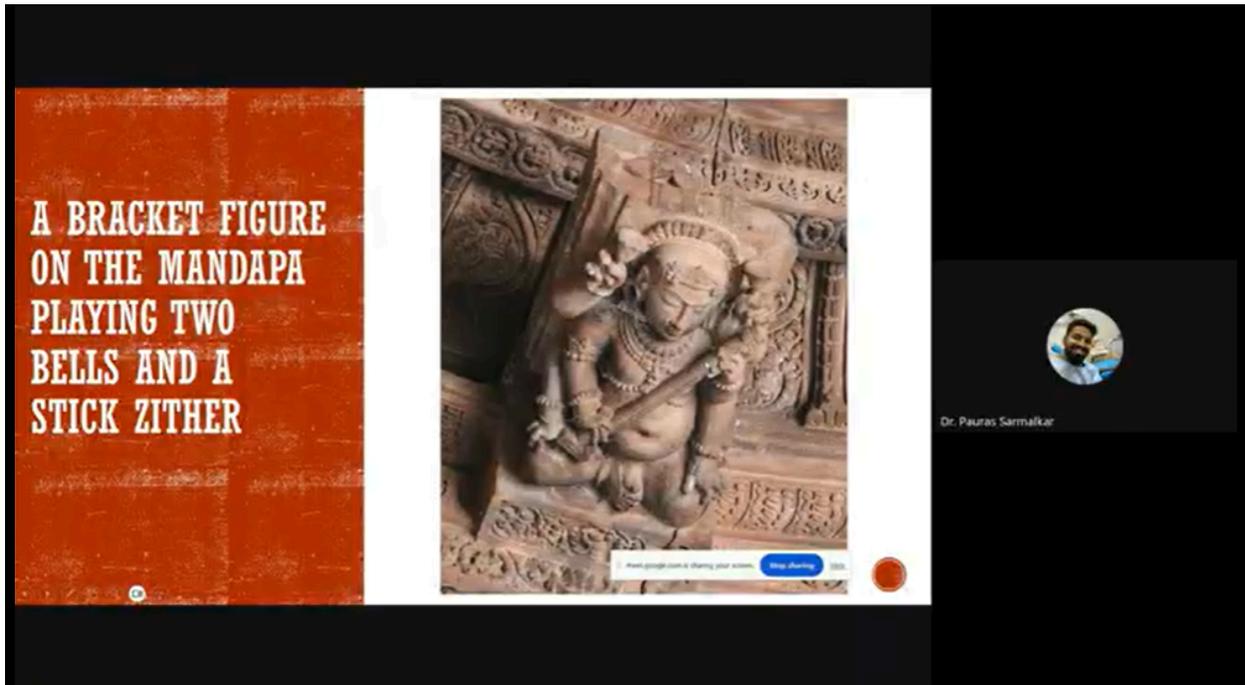
January 30, 31 and February 1, 2026

Mode - Online

The Online 3-Day Lecture Series on History of Indian Musical Instruments was successfully conducted from 30 January to 1 February, offering participants a comprehensive historical understanding of Indian musical traditions through the study of instruments. The sessions explored the origins of music from prehistoric times and highlighted the crucial role of musical instruments in ritual, religious, and cultural contexts. The lecture series examined the evolution of Indian instruments—tracing how some transformed over time, some became extinct, and others travelled beyond regional and national boundaries.

The series was delivered by Pauras Sarmalkar through PPT-based presentations on Google Meet and was structured into three thematic lectures: *Tata Vadya* (string instruments), *Avanaddha Vadya* (percussion instruments), and *Sushira and Ghana Vadya* (wind and struck instruments). Each session addressed historical development, structural features, playing techniques, mythological associations, archaeological evidence from sculptures and paintings, traditional practices, and the present status of the instruments. By bringing together academic research, visual and textual sources, and cultural narratives, the lecture series reflected SAMBHĀSĀ

Foundation's continuing effort to create meaningful connections between scholarship, cultural heritage, and wider community engagement.



Research Projects

PGKM School Project based learning programme 'Exploring Maharashtra' Grade V

Building on the success of the previous year's project-based social science learning programme conducted with Grade VI students of PGKM school, this ongoing initiative aims to explore the impact of early experiential learning in shaping foundational social science understanding among younger learners. Observations from earlier programmes have indicated that introducing students to the study of their surroundings and their formation through activities, interaction, and storytelling significantly enriches the overall learning experience.

In response to this, Sambhasha Foundation has designed a customised curriculum titled "**Exploring Maharashtra**," developed specifically for Grade V students, conducted with Grade V students of PGKM school. The programme adopts a project-based learning framework that connects key concepts of social science with students' lived experiences, thereby emphasising the relevance of historical and geographical knowledge in their immediate surroundings.

The programme is being implemented in close alignment with the school's monthly interdisciplinary themes to ensure that learning remains both meaningful and integrated. By linking social science concepts with other subjects such as environmental studies, language, and

art, *Exploring Maharashtra* seeks to create a holistic and contextually rich educational experience for young learners.



Oral History Documentation Project

1. Ms. Athale Documentation

This month, Sambhasha Foundation continued its oral history documentation project through detailed conversations with **Ms. Athale**, a century-old woman whose life journey spans the pre-independence, independence, and post-independence periods of Indian history. A degree holder in Political Science, she emerges as a well-informed and politically aware citizen whose observations offer a valuable, impartial lens into India's evolving socio-political landscape.

Ms. Athale hails from a family that actively supported reformist ideologies, which shaped her worldview and civic engagement from an early age. Her life experiences are further enriched by her residence in multiple regions across India, owing to her husband's service as an army doctor. This geographic mobility allowed her to witness regional variations in social practices, political awareness, and everyday responses to national events, all from within domestic and community spaces.

The project involves in-depth conversations not only with Ms. Athale but also with her daughters, enabling a layered understanding of her life, values, and intergenerational perspectives. These narratives collectively offer insight into how political ideas, national

movements, and social reforms filtered into everyday household life rather than remaining confined to public or institutional domains.

This documentation aligns with what historian **Gerda Lerner** described as “the history of the majority”—the histories of representative individuals whose lived experiences, though not extraordinary in a conventional sense, collectively shaped social consciousness. Ms. Athale’s testimony reveals how political ideologies were understood, negotiated, and practiced within domestic spaces, offering an essential counterpoint to elite or event-centric historical narratives.

2. Nitsure Life Documentation

The *Balkrishna Nitsure Life Documentation Project* focused on recording the life, craft practice, and philosophy of Balkrishna Nitsure, an independent woodcraft practitioner based in Pune. Trained in basic technical skills during his schooling and professionally engaged as a typist for several decades, Nitsure represents a rare example of a self-taught artisan who consciously chose to practise craft solely for personal fulfilment, rather than commercial gain.

The documentation captures his transition from professional life to full-time engagement with woodcraft after retirement, highlighting his sustained commitment to hand-crafted processes, patience-intensive carving techniques, and the use of found or reclaimed wood. The *Balkrishna Nitsure Life Documentation Project* is being undertaken using an oral history-based documentation methodology, as Balkrishna Nitsure is no longer alive. To reconstruct his life, practice, and philosophy, detailed conversations are being conducted with his family members, friends, former students, associates, and neighbours, allowing for a multi-vocal understanding of his personality, creative process, and everyday life.

In addition to oral testimonies, the project includes site-based documentation, with a visit to his former residence and workspace, where observations were recorded regarding his working environment, tools, spatial organisation, and the material traces of his craft practice. e. The documentation contributes to preserving the legacy of a non-commercial, self-motivated craft practice and demonstrates the value of oral history in recording intangible cultural heritage.

Documentation of Old Talims in Pune

Sambhāṣā Foundation has initiated a new project to document the old Talims of Pune, many of which were established during the Peshwa period. These Talims are not merely wrestling schools but historic institutions that nurtured physical discipline, moral values, and social leadership. They significantly shaped community identity and played an important role in Maharashtra’s social and political awakening. However, with rapid urban change, modernization, and declining patronage, many traditional Talims face the threat of transformation or disappearance. This makes systematic documentation crucial to preserve their histories, practices, and cultural relevance for future generations.



On the Job Training (OJT)

The On-the-Job Training (OJT) initiative by SAMBHĀṢĀ Foundation is conceived as a step towards strengthening the capacity of the social sciences field itself by nurturing informed, skilled, and socially sensitive young researchers. By engaging students in ongoing research, heritage initiatives, and field-based projects, the programme contributes to building a sustainable knowledge ecosystem grounded in practice and critical inquiry. Through hands-on exposure to fieldwork, documentation, market research, and data interpretation, students not only develop individual competencies but also contribute to the long-term capacity building of the field by addressing current gaps, emerging needs, and methodological challenges. Guided mentorship and interaction with experts enable participants to bring fresh perspectives and innovative approaches, thereby reinforcing the academic and societal relevance of social science research.

As part of training and guidance a session on Research Methodology, Ethics, Literature review and Bibliography was engaged with the OJT candidates.

1. Ravivaar Peth Art Deco

As part of On-the-Job Training (OJT) at Sambhāṣā Foundation, candidates are engaged in a research and documentation project focusing on Art Deco architecture in the Raviwar Peth area of Pune. This project involves studying the historical background, evolution, and local adaptation of the Art Deco architectural style, tracing its global emergence and examining how it was interpreted within the urban and cultural context of Pune.

The work includes field documentation of Art Deco buildings in Raviwar Peth, with careful observation of architectural features such as geometric forms, streamlined facades, decorative motifs, balconies, and material usage. Particular attention is given to identifying how international Art Deco elements were blended with Indian traditional motifs, regional symbols, and locally available materials, resulting in a distinctive architectural expression unique to Pune.

The project also examines the coexistence and visual relationship between earlier wada architecture and later Art Deco structures, highlighting the layered urban fabric of the area. Through systematic documentation, photography, architectural observation, and contextual research, this project contributes to understanding Raviwar Peth as an important site reflecting Pune's transition into architectural modernity while retaining its cultural continuity.

2. Documenting the Talims of Pune

Sambhāṣā Foundation has engaged students as part of an ongoing research project, **Documentation of the Talims of Pune**—traditional community spaces that historically functioned as centres for physical training, social interaction, and cultural exchange. Through guided field visits, oral history interactions, and archival exploration, students are actively documenting the architectural features, historical backgrounds, intangible traditions, and present conditions of selected Talims. These spaces, once central to wrestling (kushti), martial arts training, and local socio-political life in pre- and post-independence Pune, are being studied to trace their evolution and assess their relevance within contemporary urban contexts. By involving students in recording these narratives, the project not only builds research capacity but also contributes to preserving an often-overlooked dimension of Pune's cultural identity before it fades from collective memory.

4. Documenting the Sugandhis (Attar Makers) of Pune

This research project focuses on documenting the Sugandhi community of Pune—the traditional artisans engaged in attar (natural perfume) making. For generations, these families have preserved the delicate art of distilling and blending fragrances using natural ingredients such as sandalwood, rose, jasmine, and vetiver.

The project aims to explore the cultural, historical, and sensory dimensions of attar-making in Pune, tracing its journey from temple rituals and ceremonial use to everyday life, festivals, and contemporary markets. Through interviews, field documentation, photographic records, and tool documentation, students will capture the craftsmanship, oral traditions, trade practices, and lived experiences of the Sugandhis. By preserving these narratives, the project highlights an important form of intangible heritage that connects memory, identity, and Pune's old factory and artisanal culture.

5. Chronological Mapping of Indian History

Understanding history through a chronological framework is fundamental to comprehending the evolution of cultures, political systems, and artistic traditions. This project focuses on developing accurate and comprehensive chronological timelines of Indian history, ranging from broad national narratives to region-specific and theme-based studies.

Students will work on creating a general timeline of Indian history as well as more focused timelines such as the Timeline of Maharashtra, Timeline of Ancient Indian Art and Architecture, and period-specific timelines covering phases like Prehistoric, Mauryan, Satavahana, or Maratha history. The project involves extensive research to identify accurate dates, dynasties, events, and cultural milestones, supported by reliable academic sources and site-specific examples.

Through this exercise, students will gain a deeper understanding of India's historical chronology while learning to analyse, verify, and visually represent historical data. The project also introduces timelines as interpretive tools that help connect political, cultural, and artistic developments across time.