

# University of Mumbai

Press Note

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## Mumbai's iconic Rajabae Clock Tower reopens after renovation

### Heritage walk once in week- Dr. Rajan Welukar

Mumbai- University of Mumbai and Tata Consultancy Service, today announced the restoration of the iconic The University Library and Rajabae Clock Tower in coordination with Indian Heritage Society. Vice Chancellor Dr.Rajan Welukar and Tata Consultancy Services CEO and MD N. Chandrasekaran were present at an event here this evening to mark the occasion.

On this occasion Dr.Rajan Welukar Vice Chancellor of University of Mumbai announced that, once in week there will be Heritage walk for all visitors, also look forward to award gold medal on the name of Premachund Raichand who was donated Rs.3 Lakh for this iconic Tower.

Speaking on the occasion N Chandrashekar said, The restoration of iconic Mumbai Landmark the Rajabae Tower is a matter of great pride for all of us at Tata Consultancy Services. It has been privilege for us to play a part in the effort to restore it to its original grandeur and glory and extend our support to this initiative” he added.

The architectural restoration was undertaken by Somaya and Kalappa Consultant.It involved structural services (Stoning, restoring woodwork, water-proofing, electrical work and fire alarms) Interior works along with ensuring the longevity of the building for future generations.

The Rajabai Clock Tower, an iconic 280-ft structure located on the University's Fort campus, was undergoing restoration since June 2013. Indian Heritage Society, headed by Anita Garware, has been pursuing the restoration project since 1995. It got off the ground when Mumbai University roped in city-based architecture firm Somaya and Kalappa for the project in 2012. The project needed to adhere to the Ancient Monuments and Architect Act and Ancient Monuments Preservation Act. It got a shot in the arm once TCS pledged the funds. Along with the Clock Tower, the adjacent building housing the library also went under repairs. The foundation stone of the Rajabae Tower, modelled on London's Big Ben, was laid in March 1878. The construction was completed in November 1878. Phase one of the restoration - total repairs of these two magnificent heritage buildings - has been completed, while phase two, which involves repairs of the furniture and the electrification, will start soon.

The buildings were designed in ornamental French style of the 13th century. However, the Tower also shows influence of the Campanile of the Florence Cathedral, designed by Italian

painter Giotto di Bondone. Sir Gilbert Scott sent his designs to India without actually visiting the country. His brief was to design 'an ornament to the city' and have 'bells of joy within it'.

Managing director of the architectural firm, Brinda Somaya, said, "The structure had to be strengthened first, followed by restoration of weather-beaten sections and cleaning up of tiles and stones. The firm went to great lengths to find the exact Minton tiles laid in several of the Parquet surfaces in the building." The exterior facade of the building depicts 24 dressed Statues that represent the different castes of western India. An elaborate scaffolding structure was installed to ensure that all elements of the building were dealt with utmost care. In fact, a workshop was set up at 196 feet for restoration purposes, Garware said. For this auspicious occasion Ex Pro Vice Chancellor Dr.Naresh Chandra,BCUD Director Dr.Rajpal Hande and Registrar Dr.M.A.Khan were Present.

Leeladhar Bansod,Deputy Registrar (PR)