



THE LAWRENCE SCHOOL, SANAWAR®

Exploring the Depths of Time: Our Visit to the Tethys Fossil Museum

In an exciting educational trip, the students of Lower 6 and Upper 6 Geography and Biology classes recently visited the Tethys Fossil Museum in Kasauli. This museum, founded by the renowned hydrogeologist Dr. Ritesh Arya, who has been featured on the Discovery Channel for his expertise in explaining the science behind the making of the Ram Sethu in "Legends of Ramayana," is also known for his Guinness World Record achievement in 2003 for exploring and drilling the highest artesian condition borewell in the world for the Indian Army, and he presented his groundbreaking findings at World Water Week in Stockholm in 2009.

Dr. Arya's inspiration for collecting fossils was sparked by learning about the ancient palm leaf inscriptions found in Kasauli. The museum's name, Tethys, is derived from the ancient Tethys Ocean, over which the mighty Himalayas were formed. This historical context set the stage for our exploration of the museum, which is constructed entirely from 20-million-year-old Kasauli sandstone without any use of wood. Adding to the uniqueness of our visit, the water we drank came from a borewell drilled into 40-million-year-old white quartzite sandstone, a marker bed that extends from Afghanistan to Myanmar.

The museum is divided into two sections: the Natural Environment and the Man-Made Environment. Our journey through time began with the oldest fossil on display, an astonishing 4.5-billion-year-old specimen from Ladakh. We marvelled at the fossils of stromatolites from Chitrakoot and were intrigued by the fossil remains of ancient jellyfish, shrimp, and oysters. The collection also included tortoise shells, an elephant's tusk and tooth, and coal samples from Bokaro. One of the most captivating exhibits was the dinosaur teeth, providing a tangible link to a prehistoric era.

In addition to these ancient wonders, we saw stone tools from Baddi, Nalagarh, and Barotiwala, as well as corals from Rameshwaram and minerals from the Deccan plateau. Each exhibit told a story of the Earth's rich and diverse history, connecting us to the geological and biological past in a profound way.

This trip was not only an educational experience but also an eye-opener. We learned that as historic as our Lawrence School Sanawar is, the Kasauli hills hold an even deeper historical significance. The fossils and artifacts displayed at the Tethys Fossil Museum underscored the rich geological history of our region, extending far beyond human history into the very formation of the Earth itself. This experience has inspired us to appreciate and preserve the geological treasures that lie beneath our feet.

Preet Gupta UVI A

Tethys Fossil Museum



