

Dear All

Last week I visited the Dubai Expo. It was an interesting experience that made me look at the concept of the Expo and this is what I learnt:

1. The Expo is a 170-year-old concept. It is held every five years. The first expo was held in Crystal Palace, London in 1851, a steel and glass building constructed to showcase the product of the Industrial revolution and then led by Prince Albert.
2. The idea of the Expo was to connect nations and showcase progress. There have been 34 Expos so far, and an Expo duration is typically of 6 months. The original theme has now been extended to connects nations and finds solutions for global issues and challenges.
3. The last Expo was held in Milan and the next Expo will be held in Osaka, Japan in 2025.
4. The Expo has given the world many innovations that were showcased in the Expo – Television, Telegraph, Nylon , Heinz ketchup, X ray machine, Talking movies were all shown at the Expo first to the public.
5. The Ferris wheel was shown at the Chicago expo in 1893 and vowed the public who couldn't stop taking the ride.
6. When an Expo is held, much like the Olympics, a full township develops. Buildings and new structures come up. In Dubai, the Expo is held over 1000 acres and a new suspended dome has been built without any support structure.
7. The Eiffel Tower was built in 1889 for the Paris Expo. Parisians were so unhappy with the structure that they wanted it dismantled after the Expo. Paris has held the Expo 6 times, Brussels has held it 4 times, London twice, Milan twice, Chicago twice and Barcelona twice.
8. Dubai is the first one in the Middle east and Asia has hosted it four times so far, not counting Dubai.
9. This expo had more than 200 countries talking part and each country pavilion was an innovation in itself.
10. Countries which had a rich heritage of innovation and progress showcased their scientific and technological progress. These were countries like Germany, Japan, Russia etc. Countries which were new focused on the cultural heritage more than scientific achievements. Culture formed such an important aspect of how the pavilion was made and the way the display items were chosen. Finland had very little to show without the presence of Nokia. Every country had a theme around sustainability. I think sustainability and the UN development goals will get awareness and commitment with this Expo.

I think a number of people will challenge the notion of a 5-year expo in a world that's changing every month. I think a future expo will have culture and breakthrough ideas that people will want to tap into.

It was a good, tiring day at the Expo. Feedback welcome.

Wr  
shiv