





The British
Museum

The Port of Siraf:

The Power of

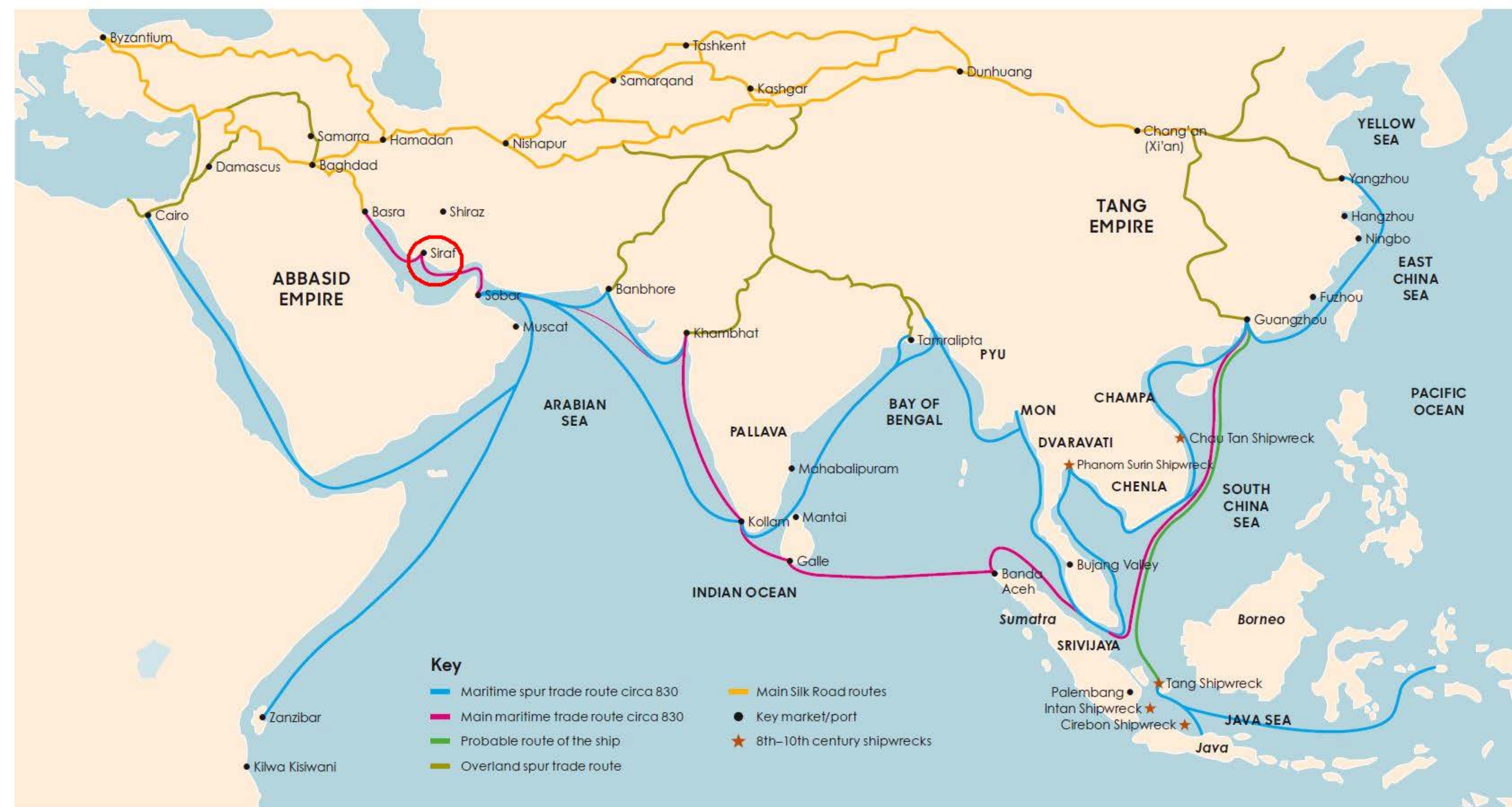
CONNECTION

14 August 2025

17:00 PM

Room 24

Organized by ITP Fellows 2025
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The carved plaster panel from the 11th century decorated a rich house in Siraf, a port city in southern Iran. It shows the high level of skill and beauty in the city's buildings. From the 4th century, Siraf became wealthy because of trade with other regions. Through sea routes, people brought goods, ideas, and art. This decorative panel is a sign of how much trade shaped life in Siraf.

Plaster panel

Siraf, Iran

Excavated by David Whitehouse, 1966–1973

Registration number: 2007,6007.15219

The Port of Siraf, The Power of Connection

Throughout history, prosperity often followed the flow of connection. In the case of Siraf, a thriving port in the Persian Gulf, wealth was shaped by its position along vital maritime trade routes linking the Indian Ocean to China, India, and the Arabian Peninsula. These connections brought luxury goods, architectural styles, and cultural ideas that transformed everyday life. Trade was more than commerce; it was a force that shaped homes, communities, and identities. Today, the remains of Siraf—its buildings, objects, and even underwater ruins—clearly show the impact of these far-reaching connections. They stand as evidence of a time when the sea linked distant cultures. Siraf reminds us that regional and global ties have long driven creativity, innovation, and power.