

## NEWS

### INDIAN HISTORY CONGRESS PANEL ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN INDIA'S PAST – A REPORT\*

The 68th session of Indian History Congress (IHC) was organized during on 28-30 December, 2007 at the University of Delhi, Delhi. The Congress was attended by over 1500 scholars from all over the country and a few from abroad and a large number of papers were presented on various sessions alongwith a few special lectures by renowned scholars on different themes like i) *DD Koshambi's birth Centenary Celebrations on Reason in History*, ii) *60 years of Indian Independence*, and iii) *Forms of Anti Colonial Resistance to British Rule*.

The remarkable feature of this congress was a special panel devoted to *Science and Technology in India's past*. This two day session (29-30 December 2007) was organized by the Aligarh Historian Society (AHS) and was personally supervised by Professor Emeritus Irfan Habib, , AMU, who is also the Chairman of the AHS. Professor Habib's effort was greatly appreciated by the scholars for designing this special panel under the auspices of IHC to inculcate wide interest in India's rich scientific and cultural heritage. The panel was divided into four sessions and were chaired by renowned historians like Professors Suraj Bhan, Sabyasachi Bhattacharya and J V Nayak.

The following seventeen papers were presented and discussed in different sessions in which seven INSA Project Investigators also contributed research papers:

1. Prehistoric Technology in India by Professor K Padayya, Pune.
2. The Drainage Systems at Mohenjo-Daro and Nausharo : A Technological Breakthrough or a Stinking Disaster by Professor Shereen Ratnagar , Mumbai.
3. Bronze Age Craft Tools and Transfer of Technologies by Jaya Menon, Aligarh
4. Ayurveda : Origins and Evolution by Professor Rajesh-Kochhar, Chandigarh.
5. Land Measurement in Medieval Tamilnadu, Ninth to Fourteenth Centuries by Professor Y Subbarayalu, Pondichery.

---

\* Prepared by **Shabnam Shukla**, INSA

6. Statistics in Medieval Texts : Presentation and Use by Professor Shireen Moosvi, Aligarh.
7. Indian Textile Technology: Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries by Professor Irfan Habib, Aligarh.
8. Minting Technology in Mughal India by Dr. Najaf Haider, Delhi.
9. Applying Industrial Archaeology to Medieval India : Paper and Indigo Manufacture by Dr. S Nadeem A Rezavi, Aligarh
10. Pre-Modern Indigo Processing Technology by Dr. Ishrat Alam, Aligarh.
11. Bengal Textile Industry and the Question of Technological Innovation by Professor Sushil Chaudhary, Kolkata.
12. Technology Transfer and the Evolution of Ordnance Establishment in British India: 1700-1859 by Dr. Kaushik Roy, Kolkata.
13. Botanical Explorations and the East India Company: Revisting ‘Plant Colonialism’ by Professor Deepak Kumar, New Delhi.
14. An Inclusivist Vision of History of Science: Readings from our Pioneers in the late 19th and early 20th century by Dr. S Irfan Habib, New Delhi.
15. Bacteriology in Colonial India with special reference to Communicable Diseases by Dr. Srabani Sen, Kolkata.
16. Development of Mathematics in India in the Twentieth Century by Professor M S Narasimhan, Bangalore.
17. Science and the Freedom Movement by Dr. J N Sinha, New Delhi.
18. Research on Epilepsy in Modern India by Dr. A K Sethi, New Delhi.

Besides above, a few more papers were also presented on History of Science in other panels of History Congress.

Prof. J V Naik in his concluding remarks appreciated Professor Habib’s effort for giving a chance to the historians for gathering scientific knowledge from India’s past which is a growing interest among scholars of history.

Professor Irfan Habib extended his vote of thanks and expressed great satisfaction over the success of this panel and was pleased over the interest and enthusiasm of a large number of participants who took part in the lively discussion besides the science historians.

The proceedings will be edited by Prof. Habib and will be published as a book.