

## NEWS

### VIII<sup>TH</sup> HISTORY OF SCIENCE PROJECT INVESTIGATORS' MEET 2012 — A REPORT\*

The eighth Meet on History of Science projects was organized during April 12-13, 2012 at INSA, New Delhi followed by a joint meeting of the Research Council and Indian National Commission for History of Science. The objective of this Meet was to make a qualitative assessment and evaluation of progress reports of the existing projects and assessment of new proposals for financial support during the year 2012-13. A large number of scholars, local Fellows of the Academy, members of the Research Council and National Commission along with the project investigators attended the programme.

Dr. Krishan Lal, President, INSA and Chairman, National Commission presided over the Meet.

Professor Raghavendra Gadagkar, Chairman, Research Council for History of Science in his welcome address appreciated the presence of the learned audience and project investigators of the programme from different parts of the country. He desired that efforts should be made to widen the network of the community of historians of science, which is indeed very small in numbers. This can be achieved by including history of science as a discipline in schools and college. This will help generate interest amongst students at younger age towards the discipline.

The inaugural session of the two day event marked the release of monograph titled *History of Technology in India* Vol. II by President, INSA. Editor of the Volume, Professor Harbans Mukhia, JNU presented a brief account of Contents of the monograph and its significance. This volume adopted a liberal periodization for the contributions with time starting from 8<sup>th</sup> century and extending as late as 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Volume spreading over 900 pages covers articles in the areas of agricultural production, crafts,

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\*Madhvendra Narayan, INSA

mining & metals, navigation, civil engineering & communications, defence technologies and medieval therapies etc. The publication is based on sustained research, critical assessment of knowledge from several sources, with tables, photographs, sketches and references to sources and contributed by professionals.

Dr. Krishan Lal, President, INSA and Chairman, National Commission in his concluding remarks lauded the role of the Academy in running this History of Science program under a National Commission for over past 50 years. He appreciated the efforts and expertise of the Commission and its Council in evaluation and selection of research proposals for funding in the areas of History of Science. President appreciated the idea of convening the Project Investigators' meet which provides an opportunity to the community of Historians of Science to assemble at one common platform and discuss the diverse ideas, issues and problems facing this unique and nascent discipline. He hoped that the during the two days deliberations on minerals and metals technology; mathematics and astronomy; medicine and medical research; ecology & forestry; science & nationalism by the Project Investigators will be fruitful one. In his opinion, it is also an opportunity to unearth the vast cultural and tradition knowledge of our foregone past.

The President also appreciated the activity of the Commission for publication of *Indian Journal of History of Science* since 1956, only of its kind in India. The journal publishes original research papers on history of science & technology, concepts including translation and critical assessment of original technical sources. The broad areas covered are mathematics, astronomy, medicine, metallurgy, etc. He expressed satisfaction over the uninterrupted publication of Journal which is running to its 47<sup>th</sup> Volume.

The President expressed happiness over the release of the monograph *History of Technology in India* Volume II of Indian National Commission for History for Science the much awaited volume in the Medieval period. The Volume fulfills the much felt need of the scholars as it completes the three volume series on history of technology in India. According to him the expansive medieval period had witnessed remarkable major changes in technology, so durable indeed that some of them, like the geared *rahat* (Persian wheel) had been widely employed for irrigation in north India even as late as 1980s. The spinning wheel became a major symbol of India's

freedom struggle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. This period has seen enormous amalgamation of various streams, which led to a wholesome growth of Indian technology and economy. Up to the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, all of Europe engaged in fierce competition to come and purchase India's finished products like textiles and indigo etc. This document seeks to capture the dynamism of the era that is now long past. He expressed confidence that the three volume set on the history of technology in India will be of great value to scholars and general public to understand technological development in our country in a fairly long period. He expressed his deep gratitude to the authors and editor for their painstaking and scholarly contributions to this volume. He also acknowledged the guidance and support of the members of the Indian National Commission and the Research Council.

The presentations were made by the Project Investigators' in different sessions for evaluation by the members of Research Council and National Commission, which are as follows:

**Session I: Chair: Professor Raghvendra Gadagkar**

VibhaTripathi, BHU, Varanasi: An Ethno-Technological Study of Iron Working around Sonbhadra Region

Pranab K. Chattopadhyay, CASTEL, Kolkata: History of High Tin Bronze and Brass Technologies in Eastern India

V Selvakumar, Tamil University, Thanjavur: South Indian Metrological Traditions: A Critical Study

**Session II: Chair: Dr. A K Bag**

B S Shylaja, Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium, Bangalore: Stone Inscriptions as Records of Celestial Events

A Sripad Bhat, Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Tirupati: Edition with English Translation of *Siddhānta śekhara* of *Śrīpati* (11th century)

Somenath Chatterjee, Sanskrit Sahitya Parishad, Kolkata: *Brahma Siddhānta* - Text, Eng. Translation and Commentary

K Ramasubramanian, IIT, Mumbai: Preparation of Translation and Mathematical Notes of the works of Nīlakaṇṭha

Mala Bhattacharjee & Purabee Mookerjee: Gokhale Memorial Girls' College, Kolkata: The Pioneer Mathematicians and their role in Calcutta University during Nineteenth and Twentieth century

**Session III: Chair: Dr. B Rama Rao**

Sathyanarayana Bhat, Jeevanthy Trust, Bangalore: *Khagendra Maṇi Darpaṇa* (KMD) World's first complete Text on Ancient Toxicology

Senu Kurien George, College of Engineering, Thiruvalla: English Translation to *Jyotsnika*

Sreekumar Nellickappilly, IIT, Madras, Chennai: A study on the History of the Traditional Ayurveda Practicing by Parambarya Vaidyas in Kerala and their Unique Ethical Outlook

**Session IV: Chair: Professor (Mrs.) Vibha Tripathi**

Srabani Sen, The Asiatic Society, Kolkata: Communicable Diseases and Germ Theory in Colonial India: An Assessment

Sukta Das, Cancer Foundation of India, Kolkata: Multi-dimensional Concept of Preventive Strategies for Non-communicable Diseases with reference to Diabetes, Cardio-vascular disorders and Cancer – A Historical Overview

Pratibha Mandal, The Asiatic Society, Kolkata: The Garo Perception of Disease and Medicine: A History since the British Regime in the Indian Sub-continent

Jayanta Bhattacharya, Paschim Banga Vigyan Manch, Raiganj: A Historical study of Indian Medicine through Travellers' Accounts, with special emphasis on Anatomical and Surgical knowledge – 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century

**Session V: Chair: Dr. Ishrat Alam**

Baisakhi Bandyopadhyay, The Asiatic Society, Kolkata: Traditional Ecological Knowledge in India – An Assessment

Subhasis Biswas, Jadavpur University, Kolkata: Historical Evolution of Forestry Research in India (1861-2005) with a special case study of Forestry Research Institute, Dehradun

Vasudha Pant, Society for People Action and Research, Almora: Delineating the History of Plant Science and Agriculture Technology of India: A Multi-disciplinary Perspective

**Session VI: Chair: Professor S M R Ansari**

Probir K Bondyopadhyay, Rural World Telecommunications, Texas,USA: Mrs. Sara Chapman Bull's contributions to the dissemination of Prof. Jagadis Chander Bose's research work

B K Sen, Formerly INSDOC: Growth of Scientific Societies in India (1784-1947)

Usha Bajpai, University of Lucknow, Lucknow: A Study on Solar Passive Concepts used in the Avadh Architectural Buildings

C B Palit, Formerly Professor, Jadavpur University, Kolkata: Science and Nationalism in Bengal 1876-1947 Phase VII : Girish Ch. Bose and Modern Agronomy in India

Rajesh Kochhar, CSIR Emeritus Scientist, Chandigarh: Advent and Growth of Modern Science Education and Advances in Colonial India

**Session VII: Chair: Professor D Balasubramanian**

H Sharat Chandra, FNA, Bangalore: Ideas of evolution in Indian History and Culture and the impact of Darwin

Ashish Lahiri, Pavlov Institute and Hospital, Kolkata: The Scientific Achievements of Radhanath Sikdar and Science in Early colonial India

Saumitra Basu, The Asiatic Society, Kolkata: History of Neurodegenerative Diseases and its impact on Aged population in India: An Assessment

P Radhika, Centre for Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore: Mental Disorder and *Unmāda*: The organic and indigenous Histories of Psychiatry in National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), 1925-1974

P. Ram Manohar, Ayurvedic Trust, Coimbatore: English Translation with critical notes and indexing of *Pathyāpathya-viniścaya* a 16<sup>th</sup> century text on Ayurvedic Dietetics

Naveena K, Gujarat Ayurvedic University, Jamnagar: English Translation of  
*'Rasendracuḍāmaṇi'*

Niladri Sarkar, Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani: Study of  
the Indus Valley Scripts through Linguistic and Markov Chain  
Methods

Probir K. Bondyopadhyay, Rural World Telecommunications, Texas, USA:  
Capital Generated from Bengal, India, financed the Industrial  
Revolution in Great Britain (1757-1858) – A quantitative evaluation  
from the history of science and technology perspective

J N Sinha, Rajdhani College, Delhi: Indian National Congress and Science  
in Colonial India

Samir Kumar Saha, Formerly Jadavpur University, Kolkata: Prasanta Chandra  
Mahalanobis – A study of Development of Statistics & Statistical  
Organizations in India