



THE EDICTS



Published by The Department of Communication and Journalism | University of Kerala

www.indianhistorycongress.com

ihcedicts@gmail.com

www.keralauniversity.ac.in

India's diversity has one identity: President

Col. Anand Kumar
Anandu R Nair

Kariavattom: President Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the 77th session of the Indian History Congress in a glittering ceremony at the Golden Jubilee Hall, of the Kariavattom campus, University of Kerala in a glittering ceremony.

The proceedings were attended by, Governor Justice P Sathasivam, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Minister for Education Prof C Ravindranath, Minister for Corporation and Tourism Kadakampally Surendran, Leader of the opposition Ramesh Chennithala and Mayor V.K.Prasanth.

Dr. P.K. Radhakrishnan, Vice Chancellor, UoK, Prof. Shireen Moosvi, General President, IHC and other noted historians, academicians, and delegates from across the country were also present on the occasion.

The President in his speech touched upon the need for maintaining the secular framework of our diverse culture. He stressed that there 'was one identity amidst the huge diversity and that identity was of being a secular Indian'. The President revisited

his student life wherein the syllabus of history was one that was made by the colonial rulers. 'Forty percent of the paper covered history of England and much of the balance was narrations of history by the then governor general of India' he recalled. 'The task of Indian historians is more complex than visualized. He has to employ an analytical mind and a scientific approach to the subject. It is therefore an exciting subject for academicians, he added. He complimented the Government of Kerala and the University for hosting the 77th session of the Congress. He praised the performance of the state for maintaining the top position in terms of human development index.

The Chief Minister released the proceedings of the Indian history Congress and presented it to the President amidst a tumultuous crowd. This was followed by the Chief Minister's address wherein he talked about the genesis of the history congress and its contribution since its inception in 1935. 'We must uphold the commitment to maintain the secular nature of the country and voice against authoritarian, fascist and communalist voices.



Pranab Mukherjee inaugurating the 77th session of Indian History Congress at the Golden Jubilee Auditorium, Kariavattom

I hope the few days here will give rise to meaningful discussions and shed new light on various facets of Indian history.' He called upon the young scholars of history to ask more questions as questions would lead to answers which will lead to more value education.

The Governor in his speech said that there has to be a scientific method and secular approach to history. 'History is not just biographies of great men but the real 'living man' whose

thirst for change made history. The real living man is to be placed in the centre of events' he clarified.

'Vested interests are trying to confuse between history and mythology, said Ramesh Chennithala in his speech which highlighted the secessionist tendencies to distort history. 'It will undermine the spirit of our nation and hence all like-minded people should come together in such forums to counteract communalization, he further

added. The Proceedings commenced at 12.30 pm by paying tribute to the National Anthem by all present. Professor Ishrat Alam, General Secretary, IHC welcomed the President and the dignitaries and called upon Dr. PK Radhakrishnan, Vice Chancellor to welcome the dignitaries and give the opening address.

The Vice Chancellor thanked the President and the dignitaries for having consented to grace the occasion.

Rajwade Award for Iravatham Mahadevan

Arunchith D S
Vidya Vijayakumar

Kariavattom: Noted epigraphist and Dravidologist Iravatham Mahadevan is the Rajwade award recipient of this edition of the Indian History Congress.

He is a former civil servant and a graduate in Chemistry, Science and Law. He was born in a village in the south of Madras, on the banks of river Kaveri. He joined the civil service at the age of 24 and took voluntary retirement from the service because of his strong interest in Indian Epigraphic research. He concentrated his attention in the Indus script



Iravatham Mahadevan receiving Rajwade Award from Pranab Mukherjee

and the Brahmi Script. He was awarded the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru fellowship in 1970 after which he published his first book titled

"Indus script: concordance and tables".

He played crucial role in deciphering several unknown inscriptions and was awarded

the honorary doctorate D.Litt. from Dravidian University Kuppam. Through his findings and assumptions he proved that Indus scripts deliver the

message of unity in diversity, rather than dividing the people with an unfounded claim of two distinct races.

The Rajwade Award was constituted in memory of Vishwanath Kashinath Rajwade by the Indian History Congress for lifetime service and contribution to Indian History. Vishwanath Kashinath Rajwade, was a prominent Maratha historian who popularly known as 'Ithihasacharya Rajwade'. His notable works include 22 volumes of History of Marathas, Biography of Shahaji and History of Indian Matrimony.

It's time for us to pause and assess historical writing: Sucheta Mahajan

Ardhana S P

Kariavattom: "The 70th year after 1947 is an appropriate moment to stop and assess the direction in which historical writing on independence and partition has been moving" said the most distinguished historian Sucheta Mahajan while presenting her paper at the 77th session of Indian History Congress.

She presented her paper 'Genealogies of the colonial and Anti-secular: Historical debates on the independence and partition of India' with an added emphasis on the themes of imperialism, nationalism and communalism. On the eve of India turning 70, she finds herself in the midst of a thicket of partition studies and hopes



Sucheta Mahajan

to find a path to independence among the many pathways to partition.

She complained that "In the present pre-occupation with partition, we often forget

India's twin Independence that it reflected the success and failure of the national movement. There is no answer to the question, who is responsible for partition.

The answer depends on the ideological positions of the writers. It's to be noted that historical writer's today, be it an imperialist, nationalist or leftist in their stance, adopt the positions taken by the principal political actor of that time.

Gandhi was confident that of the people didn't accept partition in their hearts and in the end we've to become one. But the double tragedy was that partition was became a reality and Gandhi was assassinated.

She had suggested a different approach to the central question, why the British decided to quit. The answers are best located in the long years of mass struggle against colonial rule. It wasn't Jinnah who wanted partition, and that congress wanted it, she mentioned.

Another shift from elite history towards subaltern history is 'history from above' to 'history from below'. And she quoted Pandey who charged historians with "the horror of partition, the anguish and sorrow, pain and brutality of the riots of 1946-47 has been left almost entirely to creative writers and filmmakers."

Partition was only seen as a constitutional arrangement and violence is said to accompany partition; whereas in history, partition is constituted by violence.

She is so optimistic that IHC help to move away from the jaded framework of continuity and change and transfer of power and recognize the revolutionary transformation marked by 15 August 1947.

ICHR: The Wardens of Indian History

Deepthi Renjith
Shehina S
Akshay Kumar V U

Kariavattom: History is about the achievements, challenges, failures and mysteries of life. It was on 27th March 1972 that the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) was established by the Government of India as an autonomous organization to encourage objective and scientific research in various aspects of our history. ICHR is one of the premier institutions in the field of historical studies. At present, historians focus on the context associated with people, events and issues in an effort to explain the human experience. One of the objectives of the ICHR is to bring historians together and to provide a forum for the exchange of views between them.

Prof. Yellapragada Sudershan Rao has served as chairman of ICHR from July 2014. Enhancing the academic standard of ICHR activities has been the foremost objective of the council. It has envisaged and commissioned new research projects in significant areas of historical research, like Environmental Studies, Development of Indian Science and Technology, Politics of Demography, Native India and Princely States, etc.

ICHR hopes for collaborative endeavours in academic programmes with foreign academic centres and professional associations so as to promote historical research. The official newsletter of ICHR provides a platform for the fraternity to express news and views regarding the latest historical finds and trends of modern historical writings.

Vox Deligati: Voice of the delegates

Athira M M
Geethu V Nair
Dhanya S Nair

NAMITHA BANERJI,

Assistant Professor, Rabindra Bharat University, West Bengal

My first IHC happened to be in Kerala in 2006, at Calicut. So it is my second time in Kerala. Participating in the IHC has always been a good experience.

It helps to get to know about scholars and to get knowledge about many areas in history. Yes of course, there are some drawbacks, but these are minor things which happen every year and it may happen everywhere

SHEIKH ANSAR ALI

Research Scholar, Sikkim University

I am attending the IHC for quite a long time, but this is my first visit to Kerala.

It very important for all us, and not just historians, to protect history. Our mission should always been the search for truth. And about this place? All facilities are available here and I just love the Malayali culture.

Prof.S.KOCHUKUNJU

Retd. Professor University College

The intellectual and ideological background for our Indian freedom struggle was led by the IHC. It's secular and scientific view



Sussane Rau



Sheikh Ansar Ali



Prof. S Kochukunju



Namitha Banerjee



Prof. C. B. Gupta

point became the foundation stone for the national freedom movement. That legacy still continues. The 77th session has maintained an intellectual standard.

SUSSANE RAU

Prof. University of Erfurt in Germany

I am attending the IHC for the first time. It is well organized and we are well accommodated. I believe the IHC will help me learn more, to make contacts and to go to other places next year and in the years to come.

Prof.C.B GUPTA

Gorakhpur University

I regularly participate in the IHC. The experience is quite good. The different sessions help us share our views. I used to write about

the relation between film and history. According to me film should be the secondary source for historical writing, after literature.

From Bangladesh with Love



The media cell received a surprise visit from Prof. M D Mazharul Hannan, a historian of repute from Bangladesh. He is the retired principal of Shahid Suhrawardy College, Khulna.

He was all praise for 'The Edicts' brought out by the Department of Communication and Journalism of the Kerala University. This is his 3rd IHC and his second one in Kerala. He says that he is very much comfortable with his stay and that he finds the people of Kerala to be very cordial and hospitable.

Cartoon Corner

Shahana A R



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Glimpses of IHC 2016



A Watchful Eye

Anila S | Jithu G A | Vivek G. Raj

Kariavattom: The second day of 77th Indian History Congress witnessed high security. The presence of the President of India and various other political figures posed a challenge to the security officials; a challenge to which they rose up to quite successfully.

The State Government provided high security in view of the President's arrival. Under the leadership of the Superintendent of Police, four Deputy Superintendents, four Circle Inspectors and 150 Policemen oversaw the security. There were also 50 women police officers in the security team.

The Bomb Detection Squad, the Dog Squad, the Fire forces well as ambulance services were on standby in case of an emergency. There was also a strict inspection at both the entry and exit points of the campus. Metal detectors were also installed at the main venue.

Separate counters were provided outside the main venue for the safekeeping of the belongings of the delegates as they were prohibited from carrying bags to the main venue. Even the flowers, bouquets and mementos were inspected before they were allowed to be taken inside. Mobile phones were instructed to be switched off inside the venue.

P.Prakash, Superintendent of Police thanked the delegates for their cooperation. 'The delegates made our job easier' he remarked.



The Police officials on duty near the main venue

IHC to Conclude Today

Midhula Sarma N
Aswathy Nair M A

Kariavattom: The valedictory function of the 77th session of the Indian History Congress (IHC) will be held at Golden Jubilee Auditorium, Kariavattom campus on Friday at 3.45pm.

Pro Vice-Chancellor of University of Kerala Dr. N.Veeramanikandan, General President of IHC Prof. Shireen Moosvi, Secretary Prof. Ishrat Alam, and Local Secretary Prof. Suresh Jnaneswaran will be present at the occasion. Mayor V.K. Prasanth will release the Souvenir of Indian History Congress in the closing ceremony.

Various Sessions were conducted as a part of the 77th History Congress which includes sessions on Ancient India, Medieval India, History of Countries other than India, Archaeology, Contemporary India and Modern India. Panel discussions along with exhibitions and cultural events were conducted as a part of the event. The Congress turned out to be a hub for the delegates from across the globe to express their thoughts and findings on different areas of History. The three day long Congress has left a mark in the memory lane since the University of Kerala had hosted the Congress after a long wait of 58 years.

Deciphering Ancient India

Meenu S Prasad
Pavithra D J

The first session of 77th Indian History Congress featured a presentation which focused on the decoding of ancient Indian history. The session titled "Ancient India" emphasized on the prehistoric culture and tradition that existed in ancient India.

The session was graced by the presence of the prominent historian Romila Thapar who is an expert in ancient Indian history. Romila Thapar mentioned that she was impressed by the quality of the papers presented.

She further suggested that more presentations like this should be conducted so that forgotten information about ancient India is remembered.

The whole session consisted of 10 subdivisions which were capable of providing an overview of the subject "Ancient India". Around 35 papers were presented during the session.

The paper presentations dealt with topics like Historical Geography, Economic History, Society and Culture, Women's History, Health and Medicine, Architecture, Sculpture, Epigraphy and Historical Method. Interpretations regarding Maurya dynasty and Chera dynasty were explicitly put forward by the presenters.

An overview on the origin and spread of Buddhism was also a topic of discussion.

The session witnessed a whole lot of participation from the audience who interacted with the presenters. This made the whole session much livelier.

Kariavattom (and its neighbours) through the Ages

The Kariavattom Campus of the Kerala University campus is a 15 minutes’ drive from the birthplace of Sri Narayana Guru (Chempazhanthi), the saint and social reformer who preached the message “One Caste, One Religion, One God”.

The campus locality, “Kariavattom” was perhaps a colony of “Kariakkars (temple employees). The shiva temple at “Kazhakkootam”, (Kazhaka-koottam meaning syndicate which administers the temple) was once a local government. The sea side is about 5 km from the campus. Puthenthope area in the coast has a unique Christian population which informally practices the matrilineal system. this is believed to be so because of the adoption of Nair women from local



Ashes that triggered a revolt: The burnt bench which is preserved at Oorrottampalam Govt. School

feudal families who were opposing the monarch of the times, Marthanda Varma.

Kazhakkootam town was once the site of a feudal family house. In the fight with

the king, the house was razed to the ground and a pond was dug on the site. It became a phrase in Malayalam language to refer to vendetta: “Kulam thonduka” (to dig a pond). Another site near the campus which might interest historians is the rock cut temple at Madavoorpara, about 6 km from the campus.

If one heads 20 kilometers south from the campus toward south, they will reach the historical Oorrottampalam Govt. School which witnessed ‘school entry’ proclamation. In 1914, Dalit leader Ayyankali took a Dalit girl, Panchami, to school,

Local Nugget
but was denied entry by the Govt. even though they had opened schools to all castes, over a decade ago. Ayyankali forcefully entered the school and seated the child in a bench in the class room. The upper caste reacted furiously by burning down the school. A bench from those days, believed to be the one in which Panchami sat, is still preserved at the school. Even after a century, the school still stands as a monument against caste-based oppression. Today the school gates are wide open to one and all. However a new problem has arisen- the school now faces acute shortage of students! It’s now high time for a new social reformation cycle to begin.

Religion has now become an instrument: Shireen Moosvi

“My hero in Indian politics has always been Jawaharlal Nehru - Who wrote against himself in a pseudo name when no one else was criticizing him.” – said Shireen Moosvi, who took over the charge as the General President of the 77th Indian History Congress from Professor K Paddayya this year. 68 year old Professor Shireen Moosvi has previously held the office of secretary of the Congress during the period of 1997-2000. Following are the excerpts from the interview with Prof. Moosvi

Asif Abdul Khalam

You were a faculty member in Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). There have been attempts to saffronise central universities like JNU. AMU has also been in the news for some time. How do you see this?

As far as AMU is concerned, it is the other way around. What is actually happening in AMU is not Saffronisation but “Greenisation”. They claim our University is a Madrasa and our students intolerant. And they say we are emphasizing on a religion and there are many more allegations, which are not true. What is going on is more like a reaction and a counter reaction. Perhaps nowadays there is sort of an air where reason is receding and belief is taking over. I don’t know why our younger generation has become materialistic. Everyone is afraid of what is going to happen to the world. Everyone is being over ambitious. Nearly all religions teach that we shouldn’t be ambitious.

Your views on Uniform Civil Code

I fully agree there should be one court for all. I have no problem with that. But what I am concerned about is how much humanistic and reasonable it is going to be? I am supportive of a civil code which is uniform in its nature. But the problem is that “uniform civil code” is not exactly what you actually want to achieve. What is uniform civil code? What rights are you going to give to women and the scheduled caste? Uniformity is not desirable. It is Equity that is desired. Because while I was reading about the hindu court bill, it was the RSS who said that the Hindu women shouldn’t get half of the share and if there is ever a uniform civil code, Muslims will insist for half their shares, then we will have to give half for our women too. Is this what we are aiming at? Uniformity is of no merit. Merit is in equity and equality.



Prof. Shireen Moosvi

How do you see the attempts made by RSS and Sangh Parivar powers to reinterpret history to their advantage?

“Vasthavic Ithihasa”, the alternative version of history they are putting forward is actually a myth. It’s more of a ‘wish list’ of theirs. Everyone knows that the word ‘Hindustan’ is of Iranian origin. ‘Istan’ is a suffix that goes with almost all Iranian words like ‘sea-istan’. Iranians started calling our region “Hindu-Istaan” and not “Hindustan” as we call it today. This is how they are twisting history. What we call “Sindh” was “hindh” to them. It’s a word made by them – not by us.

Despite all these, our society is unaware of the significance of studies in this area. Will we ever be able to tackle these malicious attempts?

Our society is dishonest. People only care about money, recognition, and position. They left the open field and they went to the children to poison their minds. RSS is poisoning children from a very young age from prep or from nursery up till class 10. And, if you look what they are offering in their syllabi, it’s not only anti-muslim but also anti-women and anti-harijan. We can’t repair this easily. It’s not just an individual we are talking about. They have been doing this to generations since 1948.

Their purpose is not religious. Their purpose is entirely political. Religion is just an instrument through which politics can be controlled. Do you really think Modi is honest about Hinduism or any religion? Religion is one thing that they will remember only during the election. So we should not befool ourselves by thinking they are honest about it. Religion to them is sort of an instrument to gain power. It is ‘the opium of people’ – as Marx said.

History Congress can act as a corrective force against all this if made good use of it. Today’s students are tomorrow’s teaches.

Only they can change the future. And we are thankful to the University of Kerala and the Kerala State Government for hosting this session of history congress; that too so beautifully.