

Report of Activities (2016-17)

On 2nd February 2016 Prof. T.K.V. Subramanian delivered a lecture on the topic 'History Today'. On 12th February the department of History organised a one-day History Annual Meet, "Chrono 16". The annual lecture was presented by Prof. A.G.K. Menon, Convenor of INTACH, Delhi chapter, on the topic, 'Delhi being Nominated as the UNESCO World Heritage City'. Prof. Menon also released the department newsletter- "Chronicle". The audio-visual lecture was followed by an interactive open session among the artist, poet and photojournalist Pratyush Pushkar (founder of Delhi Art Foundation) and the students. Quiz (Jashn-i-Dilli), Dastangoi, story telling competition (on the theme monuments) and other competitive activities were organised in the second half of the festival. A number of colleges participated in it. One of the highlights among the competitions was the online photography competition "Riwayat".

In the month of February-March (29th Feb-28th March 2016), the department organised a 'Heritage Awareness Workshop', in collaboration with INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) for the students belonging to different disciplines. The workshop constituted of six sessions, commencing with a heritage walk to the Lodhi gardens, followed by a lecture by Dr. Swapna Liddle on 'Synthesis of Indo-Islamic architecture: Qutub Complex'. The third and the fourth session were dedicated to "Conservation of Material Culture", especially paintings. Mr. R.K. Gupta of National Museum, Delhi addressed the students on the various aspects of conservation of paintings. The lecture was followed by practical demonstration of methods of painting conservation of stalwarts like Raja Ravi Verma, etc. The fifth and the last session was on 'Tangible and Intangible Heritage' where Padamshree Dr. Sentella Yanger, Convenor, INTACH enlightened students about its significance and preservation. Few documentaries on subjects like River Ganges, Tillajootis of Fazlika, etc. were also screened. This was followed by a lecture by Prof. Narayani Gupta on 'Modern Delhi.' The last session was followed by a valedictory session, and the chairman of INTACH Major General (Retd.) LK Gupta gave away certificates to the students on successful completion of the workshop.

In the month of March, two feature films, *Gladiator* and *Mother India* were screened for the final year students of History Department. A heritage walk to Qutb Complex was also organised for the students of the course "Delhi: Medieval" by Dr. Archana Ojha. On 31st March, Prof. R Mahalakshmi of JNU presented an audio-visual lecture on the topic 'Independent Deity, Divine Consort: Iconography of the Brahmanical Goddess in Early Medieval India'. A formal closing of the History Society was organised on 12th April where the students of all three years were present, along with the faculty members.

The academic session July-December 2016 began with the Orientation Programme organised by the Department of History on the 28th of July 2016 for the new batch of first year History (Hons) students. The students were made aware of the various activities of the department. Later in the month of September an informal interaction of the students of all three years was also organised by the newly elected student members of the History Association. On 5th of August, the activities of the History Society, Chrono began with the inaugural lecture of renowned Labour Historian Dr. Dilip Simeon on 'History, Politics and Truth' where he highlighted how history has been crucial to politics. The department also organised an audio-visual lecture by Prof. Radhika Singha of JNU, on 11th August 2016 on the topic "Putting India 'in' the Great War: Reframing a Global Conflict,

1914-1920". The highlight of this presentation was the rare photographs of Indian soldiers who fought abroad during the First World War for the Britishers. Prof. Singha aptly wove it in her narration.

Another highlight of the lecture series was Dr. Jon Wilson's (Kings College, London) talk, 'Rethinking the Rise and Fall of British Raj' based on his new book *India Conquered: Britain's Raj and the Chaos of Empire* on 16th August 2016. The department also invited Prof. Vijaya Ramaswamy of JNU in the last week of September to deliver a lecture on "Medieval Woman Saints". Besides lecture series, the faculty members also organised a local trip for the 'Delhi: Medieval' paper students to Chandani Chowk, Red Fort, Jama Masjid, Qutb Complex and for the first year History (Hons) students to the National Museum. The students of SEC (Museum and Archives) and second year History (Hons) also visited National Archives and Qutb Complex to have an insight about the documentation of records and Indo-Islamic Architecture.

On 19th January, 2017, our students attended a Youth Volunteer Workshop by INTACH, on heritage awareness and its conservation. The workshop comprised of lectures and a heritage walk to the Lodhi Garden, with Dr. Swapna Liddle. Prof. A.G.K. Menon spoke on nominating Delhi as a heritage city. Dr. Narayani Gupta talked about the intricacies of heritage preservation. This workshop provided students a first-hand insight into paintings and textiles restoration. They also saw an in-house Art conservation Laboratory of INTACH.

Our second edition of "Chronicle", the Annual Newsletter of the Department of History, was released on the College Day, 21st February, 2017. This featured articles written by our students titled, "Food history of Medieval India", "Witchcraft in Medieval Europe", "Medieval Clocks", "Significance of Eyeglasses in Medieval Times", and "The Twentieth Wife". Chronicle also carried Historical Fun Facts and a report on Departmental activities.

Our annual departmental festival Chrono was held on 28th March, 2017. The session began with the screening of a documentary film by our faculty Mr. Naresh Kumar, titled "Singers Sans Sight". It focused on the visually challenged singers and musicians at the Gurudwaras, documenting not only their success but also issues related to their education, musical training, their social acceptance.

This was followed by an annual lecture by Prof. Madhavan Palat, on "History and Memory". His lecture was a welcome initiation into the essential principles of history writing. He made the distinction between memory and history. He discussed the practice of historians as the process of creating constituted memory based on evidence. History is deployed for memory but is more than a recollection of the past, as it has to delineate continuity with the present and possible futures.

We also had a Band performance by a group called Common Thread. Inter-college debate competition on "Should freedom of expression be absolute" and Poetry Slam- Lit Riot, were conducted as well.

Our academic year came to an end with a farewell for the third year History (Hons.) students on 25th April, 2017.