

A University stands for humanism. For tolerance, for reason, for the adventure of ideas and for the search of truth. It stands for the onward march of the human race towards ever higher objectives. If the Universities discharge their duties adequately, then it is well with the Nation and the People.

The symbol is a graphic statement which stands for international academic exchange and onwards search of knowledge for the betterment of the human being.

The overlapping circular segments of the design denote global interaction, creating a flame emitting enlightenment, this flame emerges out of the traditional Indian 'diya' (lamp)-a source of Light, Understanding and Brotherhood.

The design is also representative of the rose-bud closely associated with the name of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.

JNU News is a bimonthly journal of Jawaharlal Nehru University. It serves to bridge the information gap and tries to initiate constant dialogue between various constituents of the University community as well as with the rest of the academic world. Views expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily of JNU News. All articles and reports published in it may be freely reproduced with acknowledgment.

In Conversation with.....

An Interview with Prof. Asis Datta, Former Vice-Chancellor Professor Emeritus

Shubhra: You have had a long association with JNU. Tell us about your journey here, from Assistant Professor to becoming the VC.

Prof. Datta: I joined JNU after my return from the USA in 1973. JNU was just being set up. School of Life Sciences was established. I joined as an Assistant Professor and went on to become professor in 1978. And I remember when I became the rector of JNU. I was abroad when the new VC, Prof. Y.K. Alagh had joined. At a tea party, he asked me to meet him in his office. In the meeting, he expressed his wish to appoint a Rector with a 'science' background. It was clear that he considered me as a potential candidate. Three years later, he transferred all responsibilities of the University on my shoulders. During this phase I awaited the appointment of the new VC but nothing seemed to proceed. Then one evening, the Registrar dropped in informing me that my name along with four others have been sent to the 'President' for consideration for the post. Next day, the news of my appointment arrived.

In the early days, JNU was a huge tract of land, bereft of trees and enormous boulders strewn all over. The foothills of the Aravallis captured my heart at the very first sight. However, there were practical problems in the campus that gradually came to my notice, for instance, scarcity of water. On my random walks, I happened to descend into the ravines and one day was pretty surprised to see some signs of water. I became certain of a subterranean water source nearby. Dr. U.R. Rao, the ISRO Chairman at the time, proved my assumption true using satellite imaging facilities with his small team. But the catch was that we needed to construct several check dams to contain the underground water, on this sloppy terrain. It was an expensive proposition but with help of MCD, we managed to make it happen in a short time. The water crisis was duly solved and as one can see today, the eleven hundred acres of land is well watered, full of trees and the roadsides and open landscape full of life. Subsequently, funds were directed to the University for construction of the much needed hostel facilities- Tapti I and II, Mahi, Mandavi, Yamuna, Lohit, Chandrabhaga and Koena.

I have always believed in the ethics of mutual responsibility, to check the erosion of civil rights, as well as to help promote research that helped further the cause of humanity. School of Information Technology, Centre of Molecular Medicine, Centre for Study of Law and Governance, Centre of Sanskrit Studies, Centre of Philosophy and Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Advanced Studies were all created during my tenure, my goal being to further JNU's capabilities across disciplines and facilitate interdisciplinary academics. School of Life Sciences, which I helped establish, got recognition as a Centre of excellence by UGC during my Deanship. Also, the School of Arts and Aesthetics and the Centre for Studies in Science Policy were revived. The Economics Library and the History Library were built to facilitate teachers and students to carry out their work smoothly.

A few other contributions were made to provide improved access to telephone facility, computer terminals with internet and Housing facilities and Activity Centre to the Faculty. The Computerized Railway Reservation Centre, a new building for Health Centre, Sports Complex and the auditorium in SAA, and the renovation of Library were initiated. However, I must acknowledge the dedicated services of my Rectors in

accomplishing these tasks. The three Rectors appointed made an efficient team and worked towards the advancement of this university and meet the foremost goals.

Shubhra: JNU is one of the pioneering institutes in scientific studies and your contribution in that direction has been notable. NIPGR is your brainchild too. Tell us about this journey.

Prof. Datta: The seeds of the idea had already been sown in when I took over the post of Vice Chancellor of JNU. The project of NIPGR (earlier NCPGR) was submitted to the Government of India for requisite financial aid. A blueprint of the Institute was developed to create an infrastructure including manpower and advanced facilities for NIPGR to work in the areas of 'genomics and proteomics'. It is now a premier autonomous Institution on plant genomic research which aims to contribute to the understanding of the structure, expression and function of the genes, arrangement of genes and manipulation of plant genes/genomes to improve varieties of food and industrial crop yield.

Shubhra: What kind of work is being done by the Institute?

Prof. Datta: The objective is to help in social development through means of ethical research work. NIPGR is doing a lot of good work in producing transgenic of different crops. These transgenic crops will prove to be an enormous boost to increase agricultural production at low costs. The kind of research that is being done at the Institute can also be gleaned from the fact that at present more than hundred research scholars are working in the Institute and many papers have been published in reputed international journals like PNAS (USA), Plant Cell, Plant Physiology, Nucleic Acid Research, Journal of Biological Chemistry, Plant Journal, Journal of Proteomic Research and Molecular Cellular Proteomic and so on.

Shubhra: What is your vision for the Institute? And what would be the message you would like to send out to prospective research scholars in the area?

Prof. Datta: To encourage research endeavors that are consistent with the scientific and physical development of our country are the major objectives of the Institute. NIPGR is an institute unique in itself. We wish to provide maximum facilities for research and development here to the extent that students need not step out of the country due to inadequate infrastructure. In addition, there should be enough incentives for students to come back to the country since our ultimate goal is to make India an emerging resource of materials, knowledge and technologies in the areas of functional, structural, evolutionary and applied genomics of plants including crop plants. I wish NIPGR to continue to be a frontline Institution of international eminence in genomic research through such ethical and relevant research inputs.

Shubhra: On a rather grievous note Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam passed away recently. He has written a foreword for your Memoir too. Would you like to share a few words on your association with him?

Prof. Datta: I had a very cordial association with Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam. Our familiarity could be traced back from the days when he served as the Chief Scientific Advisor to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of DRDO. I was the Vice Chancellor of JNU and the Chairman of NCPGR at that time. In the context of the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) for Science and Technology, it was decided to constitute a Steering Committee on Science and Technology. Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam was the Chairman of that committee and I was a member. We had close interactions during that time.

Later he became the 11th President of India and I took over as the Director of NIPGR. Subsequent to formal meetings on various issues regarding academics, research or administration, gradually our relationship graduated to an amicable and friendly bonding. His auspicious presence graced the hallowed portals of

NIPGR (then NCPGR) as he dedicated this Institute to the nation in 2005. In 2004, as the President of the Indian Science Congress, I had personally invited Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam to initiate a Children's Science Congress, on a similar note to existing Indian Science Congress. He had accepted the invitation. The congress was initiated from Chandigarh and is still continuing as a separate body.

Our proximity is also reflected in a wonderful Foreword that he had penned down for my memoirs, 'Remember the Songs that I Sang' written in two languages. I portray Dr. Kalam as an indomitable spirit-personified, a scientist par excellence and a down to earth human being. He was ahead of time in his thoughts, principles and values. His demise is no doubt an irreparable loss to the nation and to me, personally.

Movements & Appointments

New Appointments/Deans/Directors/Chairpersons

- Dr. Satish Chand as Professor in the School of Computer and Systems Sciences.
- Dr. Dwaipayan Bhattacharya as Professor in the Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences.
- Dr. Rajeev Kumar as Professor in the School of Computer & Systems Sciences.
- Dr. S. K. Ishtiaque Ahmed as Associate Professor in the Centre for Persian & Central Asian Studies, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies.
- Dr. Ubaidur Rahman as Associate Professor in the Centre for Arabic & African Studies, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies.
- Dr. Rakhee Bhattacharjee as Associate Professor in the North East India Studies Programme, School of Social Sciences.
- Dr. Nonica Datta as Associate Professor in the Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences.
- Dr. Rakesh Batabyal as Associate Professor, in the Centre for Media Studies, School of Social Sciences.
- Dr. Pradeep Kumar Choudhury as Assistant Professor in the Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences.
- Dr. Papia Sengupta Talukdar as Assistant Professor in the Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences.
- Dr. Brahma Prakash Singh as Assistant Professor in the Theatre & Performance Studies, School of Arts & Aesthetics.
- Dr. Md. Akram Nawaz as Assistant Professor in the Centre for Arabic and African Studies, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies.
- Dr. Priyada Shridhar Padhyee as Assistant Professor in the Centre for German Studies, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies.
- Dr. Jubilee Shangrei as Assistant Professor in the Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences.
- Dr. Jangkhomang Guite as Assistant Professor in the Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences.

Administration

- Shri Praveen Kumar Bhati as Medical Officer in Health Centre.
- Shri Pramod Kumar as Senior Assistant in Evaluation Branch – I.

Retirements & Resignations

- Dr. Rashmi Sawhney, Associate Professor, School of Arts and Aesthetics.
- Shri J. P. Gaur, Assistant Registrar, Finance & Account Department.
- Dr. Sudip Mitra, Assistant Professor, School of Environmental Sciences.
- Shri S. C. Pokhriyal, Semi Professional Assistant, Centre Library.
- Smt. Usha Chauhan, Senior Assistant, Academic Branch – I.
- Md. Mehfooz Alam, Senior Technical Assistant, School of Life Sciences.
- Shri Harendra Singh Rawat, Assistant, Administration Branch – II.
- Smt. Balwinder Kaur, Assistant, Legal Cell.

- Smt. Sindhu Joshi, Technical Assistant, School of Biotechnology.
- Shri Naipal Singh Tonver, Technical Assistant, School of Biotechnology.
- Shri Kaleem Ullah Khan, Stenographer, Centre for the Study of Regional Development, School of Social Sciences.
- Shri Bijai Singh, Junior Assistant–cum–Typist (Caretaker), Sabarmati Hostel.
- Shri B. Ramesh Chand, Junior Assistant–cum–Typist (Caretaker), Academic Staff College.
- Shri Brahm Prakash, Office Attendant, Accounts Section.
- Shri Jhansi Sah, Khalasi (Civil), Engineering Branch.
- Shri Ram Lal, Security Guard, Security Branch.
- Shri Tilak Ram, Mess Helper, Gomti Guest House.
- Shri M. Bahadur, Mess Helper, Brahmaputra Hostel.

Joining of Dr. Budha Singh in Damodar Hostel, following will be the portfolio assigned to the wardens of the Damodar hostel till 31.01.2016, subject to the provisions of the Hostel Manual.

Dr. Dinesh Mohan Senior Warden, Health & Recreation

Dr. Buddha Singh Mess, Sanitation & Maintenance

Corrigendum

In the movements & appointments section of JNU News (2015-1), page no. 5 it was published that Shri Trilochan Singh has retired as Technical Assistant from CIS where as he retired as Senior Technical Assistant from CIS.

The error is regretted.

Achievements/Awards

- **Prof. C. Upender Rao**, Chairperson, Special Centre for Sanskrit Studies has been awarded Samskrita Seva Samman from Delhi Sanskrit Academy, Government of Delhi, Delhi and also awarded Vidya Sagar Award from Indian Institute of Oriental Heritage, Kolkata, 2015.
- **Prof. B. R Deepak**, Centre for Chinese and Southeast Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi has been honored by the China Publishing Group Corporation (CPG) for making outstanding contribution to the CPG's books going global. CPG has 40 publishing companies including Zhonghua Shuju, Commercial Press, People's Publishing House etc. leading publishers and imprints with 96 subsidiaries that produce over 10,000 titles every year.

According to the reports in Chinese media, first ever translation of the Analects of Confucius in Hindi is being done by the eminent Sinologist and India-China relations expert Prof. B R Deepak. The book is being published by the Prakashan Sansthan, New Delhi, and would be released during the World Book Fair to be held in January 2016 in New Delhi. China would be the Guest of Honor and would be represented by the CPG and many other leading publishers from China. The copyright agreement of the title was signed during the sidelines of Second International Communication Forum on Chinese Culture, and the International seminar on 'One Belt One Road' Initiative and Publishing held on 23-24 August 2015 in Beijing Convention Centre.

Prof. Deepak has been honorary 'One Belt One Road' China expert and founder advisor of the China Translation Research Centre established in 2014. Earlier in 2011, Prof. Deepak became the first Indian to be awarded China's Special Book Prize by the Chinese government. According to Prof. Deepak in order to understand the Chinese psyche, it is extremely important to understand Confucius and Confucianism, the philosophy that influenced China for the last 2,500 years, and has become even more important as China continues to flex its soft power across the globe, Prof. Deepak plans to bring out the entire collection of Four Books of Confucius philosophy in Hindi that consists of the Analects, the Great Learning, the Doctrine of Mean, and the Mencius.

- **Dr. Ramesh C Gaur**, Librarian, "Reaching the Unreached: Ensuring Equal Access to Visually Impaired Faculty and Students for inclusive Education" has been chosen by our esteemed judging panel as a highly commended winner of the 2013 Emerald South Asia LIS Research Fund Award, by Executive Publisher/ Emerald Group Publishing (India) Private Limited, New Delhi.
- **Mrs. Damayanti V Tambay**, Arjuna Awardee, the former In-Charge and Deputy Director, Physical Education (in the Sports Office), JNU was conferred with another National Award the 'Vayoshreshtha Samman' by the Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Mrs Tambay received the award from the President of India, Hon'ble Shri Pranab Mukherjee on 1 October, 2013 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. She is also the first Senior Citizen to receive this award in the sports category (female) for her contribution to sports. The award carried a scroll, a silver plaque and a cash award of Rupees Two and Half Lakhs.

JNU Students represent India in the world debate championship in Doha, Qatar

A JNU team comprising four students of the center of Arabic and African studies, SLL&CS, trained by Prof. Basheer Ahmed, participated in the 3rd International Universities Arabic Debating Championship organized by Qatar Foundation in Doha, Qatar, from 26 – 29 April, 2015, in which 67 universities participated representing 33 countries including 14 non- native countries. The JNU team was appreciated by Arab Scholars for its wonderful performance in this championship as it won two rounds and has been rated one of the best non native teams. All the students who participated in the debate are studying in B.A. Second year and third year at the CAAS/SLL&CS. Dr. Md. Qutbuddin, Assistant Professor at the centre accompanied the students' team as their official coach.

From left to Right: Mr. Azharuddin, Mr. Nematullah, Dr. Md. Qutbuddin, Mr. Aadil Affan and Mr. Osama Afkar giving a group pose after one of the sessions.

Five students of CAAS/SLL&CS represent India in the UN

In a remarkable feat, five students of Arabic from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) represented India at the United Nations General Assembly in New York and expressed their ideas on Sustainable development.

The students took part in 'Many Languages One World' (MLOW) International Student Essay Contest which was part of an initiative by United Nations on sustainable development agenda with the imperative of linguistic and cultural diversity post 2015. The 5 students from JNU were among the 70 winners from 42 countries.

The contest was conceived, created and was jointly managed by ELS Educational Services and the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI).

University students (graduate and undergraduate) from all around the world were invited to write and submit an essay examining the UN's global development agenda in the official languages of the United Nations viz Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Five students Asif Iqbal Khan, Irfan Ahmed, Mohd Mahboob Alam, Mukhlesur Rahman and Hanna Beckhan from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) [CAAS/SLL&CS] qualified among winners in Arabic Language who were later invited to attend the Many Languages One World (MLOW) Global Youth Forum in Garden City, New York at Adelphi University from the 20 – 26, 2015. All the students are studying Arabic in JNU.

From left to Right: Mahboob Alam (M.Phil), Mukhlesur Rahman (Ph.D), Asif Iqbal (M.Phil), Hannah Beckhan (M.Phil) and Irfan Ahmad (Ph.D) CAAS/SLL&C/JNU holding their participation certificates.

- **Ummul Kher**, M. Phil student of Center for Russian and Central Asian Studies, SIS was selected for the prestigious 16th Duskin Leadership Training Program for Youth with Disabilities in Japan for 10 months from September 2014 to June 2015. Since the inception of the Leadership program in 1999, there were just three Indians selected till date. The selection of Ummul Kher is an achievement and matter of rejoice not just for Persons with Disabilities but for the university as well.

Campus Activities

JNU signs MoU for disaster management centre

The Jawaharlal Nehru University has signed a MoU with the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) for establishing a Centre for Excellence in Disaster Research and Resilience Building at the varsity. The memorandum of understanding was signed on Thursday between Santosh Kumar, NIDM Executive Director, and Prof. S.K. Sopory, JNU, Vice-Chancellor, in the presence of the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Kiren Rijiju.

According to the MoU, the NIDM will provide financial assistance of Rs. 4.14 crore to JNU over a three year period to start M.Phil and Ph.D programmes in disaster management a first in the country.

“The objective is to initiate research, teaching, capacity and manpower development within a trans-disciplinary framework, which brings science to communities in a manner that it is made usable and understandable to communities in fragile eco-systems.”

The MoU will look to build community resilience through better preparedness, legal and governance reforms, enhanced capacity for early detection and warning systems, absorption of indigenous wisdom in administrative systems, resonating vulnerabilities of various kinds, remote sensing and GIS (Geographical Information System) based mitigation efforts and environmental capacity enhancement of local governance.

“Academically, the collaborative nature of this programme would bring the focus to local communities and resource conservation at the grassroot level. The NIDM will move a step forward towards its goal of becoming a deemed university with this collaboration.”

The Hindu

Report on Digital India Week for JNU News

Communication & Information Services (CIS), JNU organized the Digital India Week programme on 3 – 4 July, 2015. The objective of this programme was to disseminate the information & promotion of Digital Strength, ICT initiatives of the university and knowledge sharing of digital resources.

The session was inaugurated by Prof. Prasenjit Sen, JNU Rector followed by the welcome address by the Director, CIS. Director-CIS delivered a lecture on Digital Strength and ICT initiatives of JNU where he highlighted the ICT Key Focus Areas at JNU a part of Digital Strength. Digital technologies are being increasingly used by us in everyday lives. It helps us to connect with each other and also share information on issues and concerns faced by us.

A dedicated website (<http://www.jnu.ac.in/digitalstrength/>) was developed for the Digital India Week.

Shri Rajesh Awasthi, Head-Professional Services, NetIP gave a lecture on “Information & Literacy with Cloud Services”. He explained about cloud. What is private, public and hybrid cloud? He also highlighted the points regarding challenges in using Cloud. Shri Rajesh Hasija, Country Head, Quantum, talked about “Big Data Analytics Research and Innovations”. He talked about how to store data like text, picture, audio, video, genome, oil etc.

Dr. Muktesh Chander, IPS, Special Commissioner of Police, Delhi talked about “Cyber Security”. His talk was very innovative and informative. He showed how hackers hack the machine through email attachments. He talked about cyber vulnerability and spear phishing.

Day2 was technical and interactive sessions, which focussed on: “Cloud Computing Framework and Demo of the university's applications running on Public and Private Cloud”, “showcase of e-Thesis Tracing Software”, “Mobile Apps Design and Development”, “Online Courses with Moodle MOOC Platform” and showcase of eOffice applications implemented at JNU. Programme for the day ended with a demo session for “Hindi on use of ICT”. Shri Vikram Singh, Central Hindi Training Institute gave the demo session which was very useful for the participants to use Hindi using ICT in their regular work. He showed how to use Hindi easily in Microsoft word.

The programme was very well attended by the staff, students and academicians of the JNU. Rector, Registrar, and Librarian were among others who attended all the sessions.

**Ritu Nidhi, Webmaster
Communication and Information Services**

Report of the Aerobics camp held from 4 to 12 August, 2015

Sports Office organized Aerobics camp at the sports office foyer from 4 to 12 August, 2015. There were 69 participants in all who took part in the camp and found the camp very useful and improved their fitness level to a great extent. Variety of techniques were used for classes held in Aerobics, Boxercise, Zumba fitness, Pilates and yoga cum Pilate (high and low impact) on slow and fast music followed by core muscle strengthening and stretching and relaxation in cooling down session.

Vikram Singh
Assistant Director, Physical Education

Sanskrit Week 2015 on Yoga: Theory and Practice

The special centre for Sanskrit studies organized a five-day long Sanskrit week programme on the theme “Yoga - Theory and Practice”. The celebrations began on 25 August, 2015, Tuesday at the seminar hall in SCSS with the traditional lightening of the lamp and a svastivaachan, following the auspicious tunes of the Śivasāṅkalpasūkta sung by the students of the centre. After the felicitation of the guests, the convener of the session introduced the acclaimed guests of the day and Prof. C. Upendra Rao, Chairperson, SCSS delivered his welcome address with a hint of the age old yoga tradition in India and how the word Yoga has added to its meanings over time such as kriya yoga, bhakti yoga, gnana yoga and raja yoga. In the inaugural address Prof. S. K. Sopory, Vice-chancellor, JNU expressed his happiness in being a part of the celebration at the centre along with how gladly he looks forward for the advancing sessions. He further discussed about Kashmir Śaivism and Yoga.

Thereafter, Prof. P. N. Shastry, Vice-chancellor, Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan and chief-guest of the session addressed the audience briefly in Sanskrit along with the gist of the main points in English. He basically discussed how yoga has evolved and the change in perspective over the period of time. Ms. Veena Joshi, Joint Secretary, IGNCA, who was the guest of honor, gave a very profound talk on yoga guru BKS Iyengar. The keynote address, given by Swami Anant Bharati, Director, Swami Keshvanand Yoga Sansthan, Delhi included a brief life history beginning from a Gurukul in Ayodhya.

Ven. Geshe Dorji Damdul, Director, Tibet House as the main speaker delivered his speech on Buddhist Yoga : Theory and Practice . The guest of honour for the day was Ms. T. Anamika, Advocate, Supreme Court, who gave her beautiful speech on how to practice yoga in real life, another guest Pravrajika Divyanandaprana, Ramakrishna Sharada Mission presided over the session and presented profound speech on yoga.

On the third day of the celebration week the topic was Jain Yoga : Theory and Practice. Dr. Manendra Prasad Singh, Member Secretary, ICPR discussed the relation between theory and therapy and the contribution of India to the world. Following him, the speaker of the day, Samani Malli Prajñā ji, Professor, Department of Yoga & Science of Living, Women's College, Ladnun (Rajasthan) gave an elaborate and detailed concept of Jain yoga, its philosophy and practice with few demonstrations which can help every individual in the daily life. In the afternoon session, an inter-university extempore Sanskrit elocution competition was organized. Dr. Sandeep Chatterjee, Registrar, JNU was the chief-guest and Chairperson Prof. Rao delivered welcome address. Students of M.A. (Sanskrit) from different universities spoke on various aspects of Yoga. On the fourth day, Mr. Malay Mishra, Former Indian Ambassador in Hungary spoke on Yoga in Contemporary Times. The session was chaired by Prof. Narayan Prasad, Dept. of Economics, IGNOU. Another guest from the ministry of AYUSH Dr. Rakhi shared her insights and experiences with yoga and Ayurveda.

In the valedictory session, Mr. S. Vasudev Rao, IPS, Special Commissioner of Police, New Delhi, who was the chief guest, highlighted the need of modification and inter linkages between Sanskrit, yoga and others. Dr. Ashok Kumar Mukhopadhyay, Prof. & Head, Dept. of Laboratory Medicines, AIIMS delivered a speech on Yoga: Inward Olympics with the puzzle of consciousness as the main speaker. Swami Padmaprakash Jnana Thapaswi, Santhi Giri Ashram, New Delhi graced the occasion as guest of honour. He shared the importance of guru in life. Thereafter, another guest of honour Dr. Jeet Ram Bhatt, Secretary, Delhi Sanskrit Academy discussed the various aspects of yoga philosophy. Prof. Ramesh Kumar Pandey, Vice-chancellor, SLBS Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, New Delhi gave his concluding remark as the chair of the session.

Then, prizes inter-university extempore Sanskrit elocution competition were distributed. The session and celebration concluded with a vote of thanks followed with Śāntipāṭha.

Satyamurti
Associate Professor
The Special Centre for Sanskrit Studies

Community Corner

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Seminars/Conferences

International Interdisciplinary Conference on Language, Culture and Values: East and West

A three-day International and Interdisciplinary Conference on 'Language, Culture and Values' was organized by the Centre of Arabic and African Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. It was inaugurated by the Rector, Prof. Sudha Pai, on 16 December, 2014 at 9.30 am at the JNU Convention Centre, JNU which continued till the evening of 18 December, 2014.

The inaugural session began with the Director of the Conference, Dr. Rizwanur Rahman and the coordinator, Shiv Prakash, welcoming the Indian and foreign delegates taking part in the conference. The Dean of the School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Prof. Vaishna Narang, while addressing the participants, appreciated the effort of the Centre of Arabic and African Studies to organize such a conference on interdisciplinary studies which broke all interdisciplinary boundaries. Participants from almost all the disciplines of social science and humanities took part in the three-day long deliberations. Director of the Society for Indian Religion and Philosophy (USA), Prof. Chandana Chakrabarti, presented the theme of the conference and expressed her desire to come again and again to such an institution which so generously supports interdisciplinarity. Prof. Ahmad Al Qadi, Professor of Al Azhar University, Cairo, also spoke on this occasion and stressed the need for dialogue among various disciplines and especially dialogue among religions and cultures. The presidential address was delivered by Prof. Sudha Pai. The inaugural session ended with vote of thanks by the Chairperson of the Centre of Arabic and African Studies, JNU, Prof. Mujeebur Rahman.

In the keynote address Prof. Kishore Kumar Chakrabarti, Director, Institute of Cross Cultural Studies, USA, focused on the 'Nature of Obligation in Politics' and argued how it took different course of action in the East and West with quotations from ancient and medieval Indian texts.

Three parallel sessions were held in the afternoon on 16 December, 2014 in different halls of the JNU Convention Centre. One session was chaired by Prof. Elaine Padilla of New York University where Xiaofan Ho and Pavlao Smytsyn of Oxford University, Patrik Laude of Georgetown University and Sangeeta Krishnan of Birbek University (UK) presented their papers. This session focused on social values and morality in the light of oriental scriptures in historical period. Prof. Sangeeta also mapped the history of morality in the East. Prof. David Waterman of University de La Rochelle, France, chaired another parallel session where four scholars read their papers. Elelna Bagchi of UK traced the history of western feminism in Indian scriptures and shed light on changing values across the region of south Asia in modern times. Two separate sessions were also held in Urdu and Persian languages where scholars from India and Iran discussed various issues from Medieval Indo-Iranian History and History of Literatures.

Some of the papers in the conference addressed history in a very scientific manner. Dr. Navras Jat Afreedi of Gautam Budha University, India, focused on Bengali Muslims in contemporary West Bengal and their culture and rituals. Dr. Arshdul Qadri of the University of Lucknow discussed the role of Persinate Culture in peace building society in Bengal in the colonial period. Miss Nahid Murshidlu from Jawaharlal Nehru University delineated Amir Khusro as a bard of Indo-Persian tradition. Dr. Anti Aruotsala of the Centre of Excellence of Finnish Academy, Helsinki, read his paper on Franciscans in the Mongol Empire (1245-1370) and discussed the history of religions in Mongolia. Li Xiao Dong of North East Normal University of China

in his paper titled “East and West” discussed the history of changing values in the East and the West. The last session of 17 December chaired by Prof. Zubair Ahmad Farooqui focused on values and morals as depicted in the history of modern India and the West.

In sessions on Urdu, twelve papers on novel, short story and poetry were presented. Since the theme of the conference was 'value and culture' so all the papers mainly focused on values. Dr. Umar Raza of Aligarh Muslim University in his paper discussed how Indian values are engraved in the Urdu prose literature. Dr. Kafeel Ahmad of Bihar Central University Gaya also highlighted almost the same issues. This session was chaired by Prof. Anwar Alam of the Centre of Indian Languages.

All the sessions of 17 December were devoted to discussion on culture and values in Arabic literature. Prof. Fallahi and Ibrahim of Baghdad analyzed the social values in the Arabic literature. Dr. Tarek Sabit of the University of Batna, Algeria, read his paper on cultural dimensions in the Haj travel of Muhammad al Jazaeri. Dr Amin Mesrani of Talisman University of Algeria evaluated the ethics and culture in the poetry of Abd Al Wahhab Al Bayati. Total 22 papers were presented in Arabic in five sessions which were attended by a large audience, who also took part in discussions and question answer sessions.

The sessions on 18 December mainly focused on topics of history and sociology, which included history of disciplines, religion, and question of identity in oriental and occidental perspectives. Valedictory session was held in evening of 18 December and was chaired by Prof. Mujeebur Rahman where participants from India and abroad gave their feedback about the conference.

This international conference was attended by 117 delegates from 23 countries including various parts of India.

Rizwanur Rahman
Director of the Conference &
Associate Professor,
Centre of Arabic and African Studies, SLL&CS

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Equal Opportunity Office JNU Hosted Conference to Promote Access to Higher Education

The Equal Opportunity Office, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi organized a one of its kind two-day national conference on 'Access to Higher Education: Overcoming Challenges' to foster thought and discussion on the obstacles faced by students belonging to SC, ST, OBC & Students with Disabilities in spaces of higher education. The conference featured lectures and discussions on a variety of challenges faced by students belonging to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC) and those with disabilities and provided a rare platform to a spectrum of stakeholders, including representatives from student bodies, university administrations and governmental authorities, as also eminent scholars and activists, to converge in a constructive debate to promote learning and cohesion in action. Speaking at the event, Prof. Manu Mittal, Chief Advisor, EOO, JNU said, "Enforcement of the State's responsibilities requires continued commitment and change in the society, and in this endeavor, the strongest liberating and empowering force is that of education." The meet, which witnessed a wide participation, inter alia included sessions on law and policy, workshops on enforcement of rights and remedies, strategy-formulation for models to traverse barriers to access and in communication, and an appraisal of available technology to enable access to information and infrastructure. Professor SK Sopory, Vice Chancellor, JNU emphasized that it was also important to maintain the quality of the education to which access is available and to provide opportunities thereafter, and shared the University's efforts including those towards making the campus a barrier-free zone. Professor N Sukumar, University of Delhi spoke on the need for an equal sense of responsibility amongst every strata of the society - across communities, professions and families - to strive for an inclusive society, and how there remained much to be achieved in this regard. "Inclusion of students with disabilities in education is very low - roughly only 1.2% of the 3.6 lac youth with disabilities are in Universities," said Shri Lov Verma, Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment who pressed for innovative policy making, better data gathering and use of technology for empowerment. Shri SK Rungta, Senior Advocate and Activist spoke on legal provisions and remedies, and raised the issues of grave lack of awareness of rights, and severe lapses in implementation of the laws. Dr GN Karna also delivered an informative talk on the use of such legal provisions by students. Professor Manu Mittal added, "Gatherings such as these are rare, and this conference was therefore of particular importance to education in the country in general. It is important for every university to have an EOO, and through the conference we sought to encourage more initiatives and share our own experiences while learning from those of the others so we can all work together instead of working separately and struggling to re-invent the wheel."

**Manu Mittal, Chief Advisor
Equal Opportunity Office**

The first Dr. K. R. Narayanan Memorial Lecture

The first Dr. K. R. Narayanan Memorial Lecture was delivered on 3 August by Shri Kailash Satyarthi on 'Child Labour: A Human Rights Violation and An Impediment in Economic Growth'. Instituted in the memory of Dr. Narayanan, the lectures are aimed at seeking to move the concerns of the common man to the centre of social and political affairs.

A step in that direction was the lecture delivered by Shri Satyarthi who is one of India's leading children's rights and education advocate and is now a global voice on the issue. The introductory speech for Shri Satyarthi was delivered by Shri S.N. Sahu, a former student of JNU. In his lecture, outlining the three decades dedicated to social work, Shri Satyarthi asserted the need to root out child trafficking and child labour, and ensure education as a fundamental right of every child. The lecture was helpful in reassessing the extent and impact of child labour and trafficking and emphasised the need to continue work in this direction.

A large number of invitees, including Mrs. Satyarthi, faculty members and students attended the lecture. A vote of thanks was delivered at the end, which declared the lecture a resounding success.

**Shubhra Dubey, Ph.D Scholar
Centre for English Studies, SLL&CS**

Report of the Seminar on 26 June, 2015, jointly organised by CESP, JNU and Tax Justice Network

The seminar on 'Black Economy in India, its Global Dimensions and Impact on Policies', jointly organised by CESP, JNU and Tax Justice Network, London was held on 26 June, 2015 in JNU. It was attended by people from all walks of life. Prof. Arun Kumar introducing the subject argued that there is a need to devise policies that could check the spread of the black economy given its impact on society.

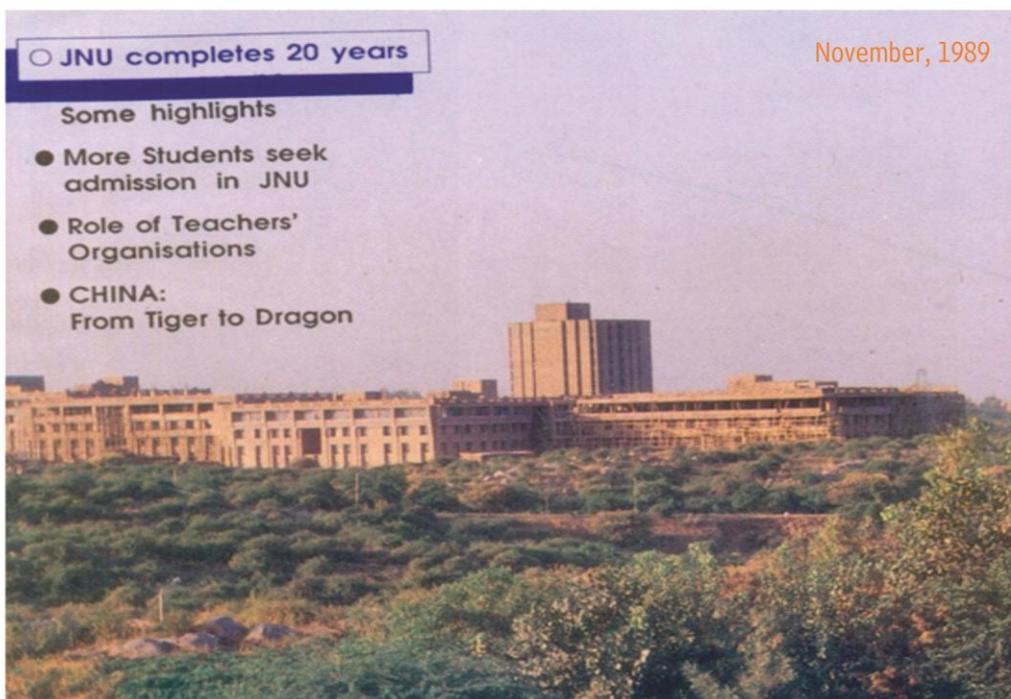
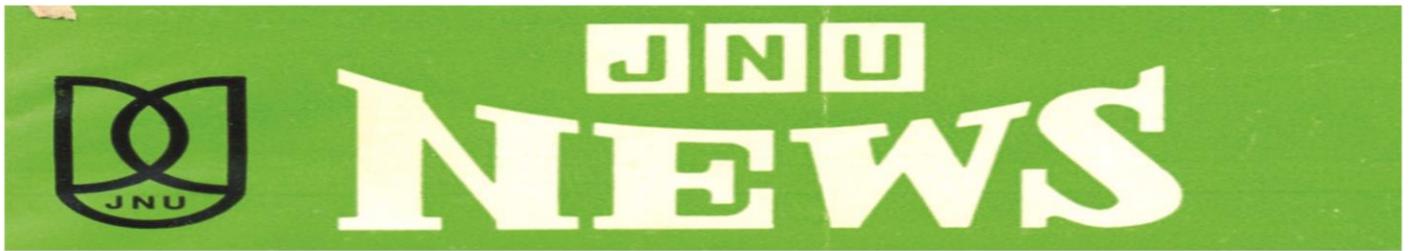
The paper from Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) pointed to the continuing impact of money power in Indian elections because of expenditures before the elections and by parties on behalf of candidates. Mr. Bishwajit Bhattacharyya, former ASG, argued that governments have not been serious about tackling black money or bringing it back from abroad. Ashok Panda, senior lawyer, highlighted that the Supreme Court has complicated matters by changing its earlier stance as in the Azadi Bachao and the Vodaphone cases. Dr. Kavita Rao and S Kumar of NIPFP presented an estimate of tax not collected from the corporations and suggested that there is no tax terrorism. R N Biswas, researcher JNU, presented a study of 144 scams between 2005 and 2008 and pointed out that they result in the under estimation of national income. Prof. Arun Kumar, JNU, presented a way of estimating the size of the black economy and showed that by 2012 it had become 55% of GDP and that recently it has been growing at about 20% annually.

Mr. Ashok, JNU, showed the high level of prevalence of corruption in the education system on the basis of his survey in some states of the country. Dr. Vivekanand Mukherjee, Jadavpur University, argued that competition among bureaucrats is not a guarantee of lower levels of corruption. Paranjoy Guha Thakurta, independent journalist, highlighted cronyism as the cause of corruption in allocation of natural resources, like, 2G, coal, mines, land and so on. Mr. Prafulla K. Prushty, IRS, discussed the misuse of the Settlement Commissions to circumvent provisions of Income Tax act due to the unethical nexus between businessmen, politicians and bureaucracy. Mr. Prasana K Dash, Election Commission, argued that while muscle power has been controlled, use of black money is growing and is the root cause of corruption in elections but the Election Commission is helpless since it does not have the power to derecognize parties. Krishna Raj Panta, Researcher from Nepal, pointed to failure of decentralization due to massive corruption and elite capture in local bodies. Prof. Saumen Chattopadhyay, JNU, presented an estimate of illegal financial flows from India and showed that the loss to the country between 1948 and 2012 works out to between \$1.2 and 1.8 trillion.

The sessions were chaired by Prof. Sunanda Sen, Mr. Anil Divan, lawyer, Prof. Amit Bhaduri, and Mr. A K Bhattacharya, Editor. The seminar closed with a vote of thanks.

Ashok
Assistant Professor
Centre for Economic Studies and Planning
SSS

From Our Archive



Our Publications

- **“Consumer Redressal System and Consumer Protection in India”** (An Inter-disciplinary Study of Issues, Challenges and Opportunities) by Prof. M.C. Paul, Group of Adult Education, School of Social Sciences Published by Kalpaz Publications (2015) ISBN-10: 9351280942
- **“Fundamentals of Polymer Physics and Molecular Biophysics”** edited by Prof. H. B. Bohidar, School of Physical Sciences, Published by Cambridge University Press (5 January 2015) ISBN: 9781107058705
- **“The Dalai Lama's Little Book of Buddhism”** foreword by Robert Thurman, edited by Dr. Renuka Singh, Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, his Holiness the Dalai Lama, published by Brilliance Audio, ISBN-10: 1501223631

An interview with Ms. Utpala Mukherjee, Restaurateur

Shubhra: How and when did your association with JNU start? What was your first impression of the campus?

Ms. Mukherjee: It was in 1978 that I was on a visit to Delhi and staying with my cousins at Vasant Vihar. They knew people in JNU so we came to look around the campus since I was planning to apply for an M. Phil the year after. For a student who had experienced only the very sheltered cocoon of a convent school (Loreto Convent, Shillong), a missionary-run college (Loreto College Darjeeling), and a fledgling university in Shillong (NEHU), JNU was a huge culture shock – but fortunately I was able to take away the positive aspects. I loved the vibrancy of the campus.

Shubhra: What has been the trajectory of your career since you left JNU?

Ms. Mukherjee: I joined the Steel Authority of India as a Management Trainee, and after 16 years of handling steel scrap imports for the country's secondary steel sector, I left to start my own venture doing something that I am passionate about. Turned out scrap metal was not my passion! After a series of not-so-successful ventures in industries ranging from herbal shampoos to supplying seafood sourced from Orissa and Gujarat to five-star hotels in Delhi, I decided to truly follow my heart and opened my first restaurant in 1996: a Chinese restaurant named Haowin in Mayur Vihar, where we live. Today I am running three restaurants and a catering business that services both corporates and private parties—a far cry from the M. Phil I had set out to achieve.

Shubhra: Tell us about the role JNU has played (if at all) in developing your thought process, and eventually your choice of career.

Ms. Mukherjee: Leaving a cushy government job after 16 years was not easy, but JNU gave me the confidence to try to do things differently and the intellectual acuity to think rationally about the new economic opportunities that were opening up around me in the early 1990s. I think JNU helped to hone the sensibilities my mother passed on to us, and has made me a better employer by making me keenly aware of the many small social injustices we perpetrate in our daily dealings with others, and this has helped me to look at problems from not just mine, but my employees' points of view as well. In terms of influencing my career choice, I think the confidence gave me the strength to understand that a blessed place to be in is to do what you enjoy doing, and today I am exactly in that position.

Shubhra: What are the most rewarding and the most challenging aspects of your profession?

Ms. Mukherjee: The most rewarding aspect is that I have been able to provide a decent livelihood to at least seventy households. Also, from a personal point of view, I am the master of my own time and ultimately responsible for my successes and failures—I would not trade that feeling of independence for anything else. The most challenging aspect is dealing with the corruption in our system without succumbing to it and seeking the easy way out. I think JNU has taught me to fight back in such circumstances as well!

Shubhra: With regard to the kind of work you do, and your life experiences so far, is there any message you would like to convey to our readers, in particular the student community of JNU?

Ms. Mukherjee: I think the majority of JNU students know that they are privileged to be in an institution of this nature, but they should also understand the responsibility that comes with this privilege, and try to make a positive difference in whatever they choose to do.

Remembering Kalam: Visitor, Jawaharlal Nehru University

(25 July 2002 – 25 July 2007)

“If a country is to be corruption free and become a nation of beautiful minds, I strongly feel there are three key societal members who can make a difference. They are the father, the mother and the teacher.”

“Creativity is the key to success in the future, and primary education is where teachers can bring creativity in children at that level.”

“When we tackle obstacles, we find hidden reserves of courage and resilience we did not know we had. And it is only when we are faced with failure do we realise that these resources were always there within us. We only need to find them and move on with our lives.”

“To succeed in your mission, you must have single-minded devotion to your goal.” **A.P.J. Abdul Kalam**

OBITUARY

- Prof. S. Dey, Professor Emeritus, Centre of Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Latin American Studies, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies, Passed Away on Thursday, 3 September, 2015.

We extend our condolences to the bereaved family.

JNU News welcomes contribution about Alumni Achievements/Awards. Please write to pro@mail.jnu.ac.in OR

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