



Report on SHSK's First Seminar held in Kolkata

The first seminar and meeting of the Society for the History of Science Kolkata (SHSK) was held on 4 and 5 December 2023 in collaboration with the Asiatic Society, Indian National Science Academy (INSA), and the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM). This Society was formed in Kolkata in early 2023 to promote research and teaching in the fast-growing field of history of science, technology, environment, and medicine (HISTEM). It was attended by more than 200 research scholars and senior faculty members from Rabindra Bharati University, Jadavpur University, Bose Institute, The University of Burdwan, Indian Statistical Institute, University of Calcutta, Alliah University, Kazi Nazrul University, Asansol, Sidho-Kanho-Birsa University, Purulia, and IIT Kharagpur. Scholars came from other parts of the country as well (Banaras Hindu University, IIT Indore, and Symbiosis International University, Pune). As a science city, Kolkata has the privilege to house this Society and will continue to support its activities.

The seminar revolved round the theme of "Science, Technology, Medicine, and Environment: An Appraisal of Colonial and Post-Colonial Experiences of India". The inaugural lecture was delivered by Professor Projit Bihari Mukharji, Ashoka University and University of Pennsylvania and chaired by Professor Suranjan Das, Vice-Chancellor, Adamas University, Kolkata, and Former Vice-Chancellor of Jadavpur University and University of Calcutta. Sixteen research papers were presented by relatively young scholars and five special lecturers were given by the senior scholars at the seminar spread over two days. Professor K. Ramasubramanian (IIT Bombay), Professor Amartya Kumar Dutta (ISI Kolkata), Professor Arnab Rai Choudhuri (IISc Bangalore), Professor Syamal Chakrabarti (University of Calcutta), and Professor Nupur

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Dasgupta (Jadavpur University) delivered the special lectures. All of them are the Life Members of the Society. These papers emphasized the significance of historical research in an area hitherto unexplored, and which have contemporary relevance too. The contributors are encouraged to submit their revised papers to the *Indian Journal of History of Science* as per their style-sheet and norms.

The valedictory address was delivered by Dr Jagdish N Sinha, Formerly Department of History, Rajdhani College, University of Delhi, and chaired by Professor Arun Bandopadhyay, Former Nurul Hasan Professor of History, University of Calcutta and Vice-President of the Society.

The challenges of the twenty-first century can be met only by remembering the ideas and works of our forefathers who toiled under colonial conditions. It was widely felt that independent India should look at those pioneers in the near past, learn from them, and plan for the future accordingly. With this as background and also in view of the New Education Policy (2020), the theme of the next seminar meeting of the Society will be "Science Education through the Ages". This meeting will take place at the Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, on 11-12 November. The tentative details and call for papers would be put on our website in April.

The Society remains grateful to the Asiatic Society, Indian National Science Academy (INSA), and the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) for their encouragement and support.



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