



Report of the Second Seminar held in Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi

The Second Annual Seminar and meeting of the Society for the History of Science Kolkata (SHSK) was held on 11-13 November 2024. This international event was organized in collaboration with the Department of History, Faculty of Social Sciences; Institute of Science; and Indian Institute of Technology; Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi. The seminar aimed to promote teaching and research in the history of science in India across various historical periods in consonance with its central theme, “Science Education in India through the Ages.” It encompassed topics related to technology, environment, and medicine, while also integrating diverse perspectives from the Social Sciences, tracing back to ancient times.



Image 1: Inaugural session

The three-day program involved participation from over 250 students, research scholars, both veteran and amateur and faculty members. Attendees represented esteemed institutions, including BHU, Kyoto University, Japan, Rabindra Bharati University, IIT-BHU, IIT-Indore, IIT-Kanpur, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Jadavpur University, K. R. Mangalam University, Babasaheb Ambedkar University, Ambedkar University Delhi, University of Delhi, Shiv Nadar University, West Bengal State University, University of Burdwan, as well as various other prominent colleges and universities of both national and international acclaim.

The welcome address was delivered by Professor Binda D. Paranjape, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, BHU. This was followed by an address by Professor Deepak Kumar, President of the

Society, the inaugural speech was delivered by renowned mathematician Professor Dinesh Singh, Chancellor of K. R. Mangalam University. Professor Sekhar C. Mande, Distinguished Professor at the Bioinformatics Centre of Savitribai Phule Pune University, delivered his address as the Guest of Honour. The inaugural session was chaired by Professor Ghan Shyam, Head of the Department of History, Faculty of Social Sciences, BHU.

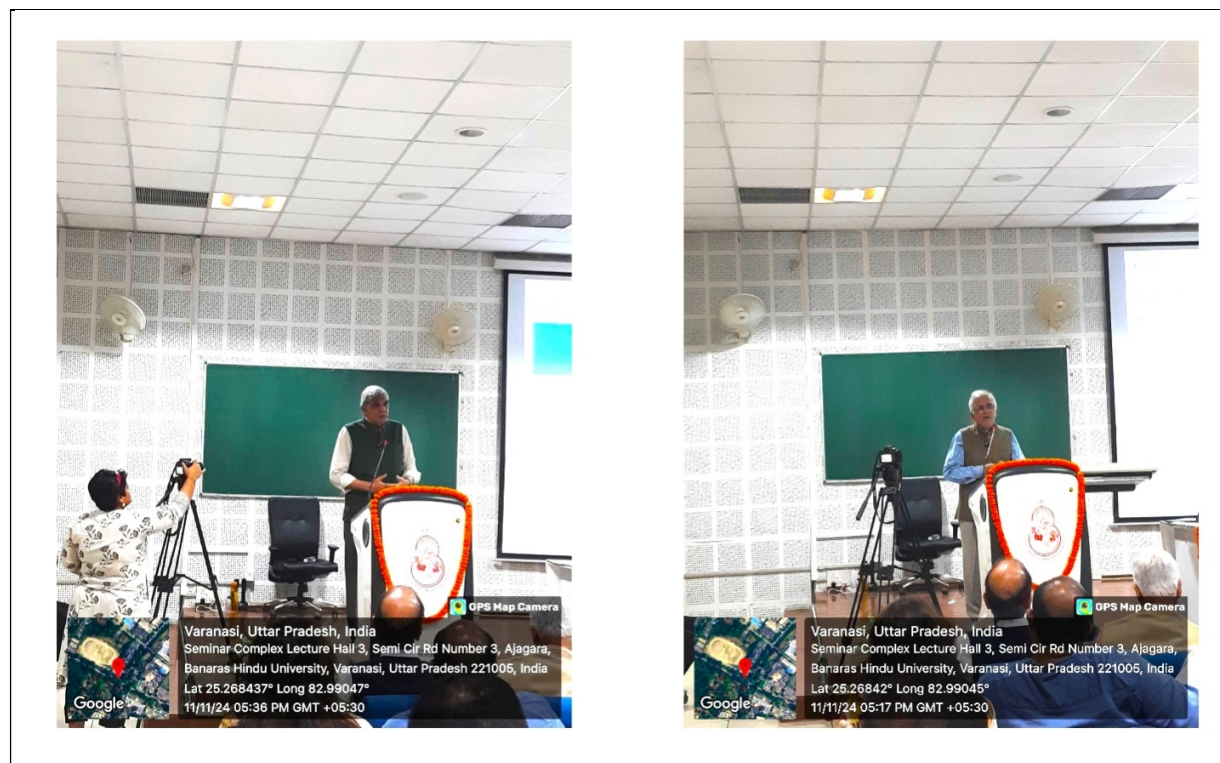


Image 2: Lecture by Professor Dinesh Singh (left) and Professor Sekhar C Mande (Right)

The program had the privilege of hosting nine invited lectures presented by esteemed professors and researchers, including Professor Prithvish Nag (Former Surveyor General of India & Vice Chancellor, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi), Professor Rohan D'Souza (Graduate School of Asian & African Studies, Kyoto University, Japan), Professor Y. Singh (Honorary Professor, Department of Physics, Institute of Science, BHU), Professor S. C. Lakhota (Distinguished Professor, Department of Zoology, Institute of Science, BHU), Professor Mallickarjun Joshi (Former Professor, Department of Geology, Institute of Science, BHU), Professor Rajiv Kumar Mandal (Department of Mines & Metallurgical Engineering, IIT-BHU), Professor Sukh Mahendra Singh (Department of Biotechnology, Institute of Science, BHU), and Dr. Amit Ranjan Basu (independent researcher). Furthermore, twenty research papers were presented by emerging researchers and junior faculty members from various regions across the country. A panel discussion entitled "Alternative Techne" was held and the speakers in this

session were Thamarai Selvan (Community Scholar, Society for the History of Technology), and K.V. Cybil (IIT-BHU).

The second day of the conference marked the formal release of the book, "Decolonising Science and Modernity in South Asia: Questioning Concepts, Constructing Histories" (Springer, 2024, Link- <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-981-97-1829-0>), which was edited by Sahara Ahmed and Suvabrata Sarkar, both of whom are affiliated with Rabindra Bharati University. Ahmed and Sarkar are respectively the Secretary and Treasurer of the Society. Professor Deepak Kumar, the President of the SHSK and a former Professor of History of Science & Education at JNU in New Delhi, chaired the book release event. The topic, background, themes, and contributors of the book were discussed by Professor Sreerup Raychaudhuri, Director of Bharat Kala Bhawan at BHU, and Professor Arun Bandopadhyay, former Nurul Hassan Chair Professor of History at the University of Calcutta and Vice-President of SHSK. After the book launch, the first Newsletter of the Society was formally published.



Image 3: Book Release

The “S.P. Banerjee Memorial Prize for the History of Engineering and Technology” was awarded to Dr. Sunayana Maiti for her research paper entitled, “Tracing the Historical Roots of Why Supply Exceeded Demand: Unemployment in the Engineering Profession in India, Circa 1940s-1970s.” Educated at University of Calcutta and Aarhus University, Dr. Maiti is a Guest Lecturer of History at West Bengal State University.



Image 4: Winner of the S.P. Banerjee Memorial Prize for the Engineering & Technology

The valedictory address was delivered by Professor Arun Bandopadhyay, the former Nurul Hassan Chair Professor of History at the University of Calcutta and Vice-President of SHSK. The event was chaired by Professor Ghan Shyam, Head of the Department of History, Faculty of Social Sciences, BHU.



Image 5: Release of Society's first Newsletter

The society expresses its sincere gratitude to the Sponsored Research & Industrial Consultancy Cell (SRICC) at BHU, the Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR), the Anusandhan National Research Foundation, the Science & Engineering Research Board (SERB), and the

Council for Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) of New Delhi for their generous financial support.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 underscores the significance of multidisciplinary within educational frameworks. Illuminating this pertinent thrust area, the seminar effectively showcased the interaction between the sciences and the humanities, an area that has become increasingly prioritized among esteemed national institutions such as the IITs, the IISERs, IISc. Bangalore, BHU, JNU, and the University of Delhi, among others. The collaborating institution, BHU, is renowned for its robust tradition of advancing teaching and research in the domains of Science, Technology, and Medicine (STM). In light of this esteemed experience, the society anticipates its forthcoming seminar harping on the theme of "Science Education in Deccan," scheduled for the year 2025 at Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad.

Sahara Ahmed

Secretary, SHSK