

IGNCA Bharat Vidya Prayojana

WORKSHOP REPORT

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**Five Days NATIONAL WORKSHOP on “History of People of India from Epigraphs” from
October 23-27, 2017 at IGNCA**

Preamble

Keeping in consideration the fact that tens of thousands of inscriptions in India remain undeciphered or unpublished and thereby depriving the academic world especially the young minds of the nation from a substantial authentic source for the proper comprehension and appreciation of the country’s glorious history, the Bharat Vidya Prayojana of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi took an initiative to stoke the interest of students, scholars and young professionals in the important discipline of Epigraphy and conduct a five days national level workshop at IGNCA from 23rd to 27th October, 2017. The workshop was aimed at introducing the participants not only to get acquainted with the Indian traditional knowledge system enshrined in the epigraphs, but also to train them to deal with this significant and vast epigraphic material by way of proper knowledge of scripts, languages and most of all, their cultural context and impact.

Following were the thrust areas of the workshop:

1. To revive and encourage the discipline of epigraphy among young scholars.
2. To impart training in fundamentals in the disciplines of epigraphy, numismatics, archaeology, ancient history and Indology.
3. To train the young generation in reading the actual scripts.
4. To encourage young scholars to opt this field as a career opportunity.

Subject Experts

Following noted experts were invited as faculty:

1. Dr. R. Nagaswamy, Founder Director, Tamil Nadu Archeology Department.
2. Dr. T. S. Ravishankar, Director (retd.), Epigraphy Department, Mysore.

Inaugural

The Workshop was formally inaugurated on 23rd October, 2017 and Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member-Secretary, IGNCFA felicitated both the experts. Dr. Sudhir Lall, Project Director, Bharat Vidya Prayojana gave a brief introduction about the programme. In his short inaugural address, Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi dilated upon the rationale behind holding such a workshop at IGNCFA and also about the structure of the workshop. Dr. Nagaswamy emphasized on the dire need of developing a proper understanding of ancient Indian history and the crucial role played by epigraphy in the same. He also stressed not only in his inaugural, but, throughout the workshop that the culture of entire India has been one and that the history should be always read within the proper cultural context.

Participation

Twenty-four enthusiastic participants having research interest and expertise in the field of epigraphy, archaeology and ancient history got themselves registered for this workshop from different parts of the Country.

Methodology

During this Training programme following methods were adopted:

1. Lectures
2. Power Point Presentations
3. Group Discussions and other related activities
4. Interactive Q & A sessions and
5. Feedback session.

Participatory methods were woven into the training sessions to ensure the use of experiential learning model, for maintaining motivation and interest levels of the participants.

Topics Covered

- Signs and symbols
- Harappan age
- Vedic age
- Role of dharmashastras in State and among the people

- Village life and Assembly
- Judicial administrations
- Revenue administration
- Kingship
- Rights of women
- Economy
- Art and architecture
- Worship of dead
- Crime and punishment
- Indian life in South East Asia
- Music and dance etc.

Sources:

Presentations were mainly based on following sources:

- Epigraphia Indica
- South Indian inscriptions
- Mysore Archaeological reports
- Travancore Archaeological series
- Hyderabad Archaeological series
- Select inscriptions by D.C Sircar
- Inscriptions of Kamboja by R. C. Majumdar
- The History of Dharmasastra by P. V. Kane
- Ancient History of India by R.C. Majumdar and Prof. K. A. Nilakantasastrri
- Inscriptions of Chalukyas ,Gangas, Rashtrakutas and Pallavas

Materials and Training aids used during the workshop

Following materials/training aids were used during the training:

1. Laptop, Projector and Whiteboard
2. Training kit (including folder/writing pad/ pen)
3. Hard copies of some reference and research material were circulated.

Conclusion

The workshop successfully came to a close on 27th October, 2017 with a feedback session by the participants after the regular class, in which all the participants were invited to give their feedback. Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi, MS IGNCIA attended this session and listened to all the participants. Everyone agreed that the workshop had been a wonderful learning experience and they were happy to be able to develop the skill to read/write basic Brahmi script, in such a short period of time. Some participants felt that the duration of the course or the timing of classes per day should have been more. In his address, MS congratulated all the participants for having successfully completed the workshop. He also stated that within a short span of time, it was remarkable for Bharat Vidya Prayojana to have conducted such a serious and fruitful workshop, with Prof. Nagaswamy at the helm and Dr. Ravishankar ably and worthily following in his footsteps. He also assured everyone that there would be more such workshops at different venues all across the country, so that ultimately; a group of young enthusiasts is formed who are keen to delve deep into the proper study of epigraphy.