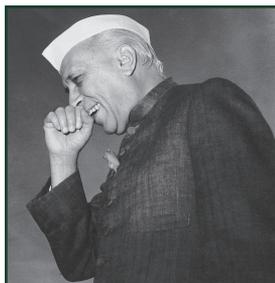




## Bimonthly Journal of Jawaharlal Nehru University



*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.*

*Jawaharlal Nehru*



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.

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## An Interview with Prof. B.N. Mallick, Dean, School of Life Sciences



**Mansi:** How were you introduced to JNU?

**Prof Mallick:** I did not study at JNU. My schooling was at one place, college at another and I did my Ph.D. at AIIMS. I was submitting my Ph.D. thesis in Oct 85. Every year

I used to go for Durga Puja to my paternal village in West Bengal. The Puja is my family's several centuries old traditional culture, the only one in my village. That year it was being celebrated around mid – October and for first time through my Ph.D. career I was taking a longer leave, but after submitting the thesis. Otherwise before that my annual leave used to be for about a week, -three days journey and 4-5 days stay at home, and that's how I had maintained it over the years. As I was in the final stages of preparing and submitting my thesis, I did not see the advertisement for the faculty-position at JNU. A Ph.D. student from JNU used to visit my next door hostel neighbor at AIIMS. He told me that there was an advertisement which would probably fit my profile completely. They required a candidate with M.Sc. Physiology having experience in Electrophysiology. I thought, I was just submitting my Ph.D. thesis; JNU is a big place - who would take me seriously? - I forgot about it.

As luck would have it, the next week the same well-wisher showed up and took out the employment news from my room and showed me the advertisement again; the deadline for application was over by then. He made an appointment for me with the then Vice-Chancellor Prof. P.N. Srivastava and insisted that I meet him; I did not have any other option but meeting him. When I knocked at his door and got in, Prof Srivastava stood up; shook hands with me to receive me and made me so easy. I cannot forget that scene and the day that the Vice-Chancellor of the JNU gets up from his chair to greet me and asked me to sit; it was a very humbling experience for me. I told him, Sir, I was submitting my Ph.D. thesis and subsequently I was not around, so I missed the deadline even though the profile suits me very well. Without mincing any words he asked for my CV wrote something on it and asked someone to just give me one application form. At AIIMS, I was a senior resident, and I was

teaching there. This meant I was an official candidate and I had to apply through official channel; so he asked me to submit the application officially. That's how I applied to JNU, followed by interviews, etc and that's how my journey here started.

**Mansi:** How would you describe your experience here over the years?

**Prof Mallick:** Fantastic. There will always be cribbing and many negative stuff going on around you. But, I think, every individual is different. You need to have a drive to work. I would not have been able to do much had I not been in this school, the School of Life Sciences (SLS). There will be problems everywhere, but in SLS the work culture is remarkable within our system. I can tell you a hundred problems at this place, but that would not lead us anywhere; we need to know problems and then overcome them. We get bogged down and get frustrated when we cannot tackle a situation and more so a solvable problem. We can debate what has been, what is and what will be- but SLS is a nice place, one of the most progressive schools anywhere in the country, within the university set up in particular. Academically, people from this school have excelled by earning most coveted positions and laurels in India. For example, Ph.D (SLS-alumni) and faculty members from SLS have been Vice-Chancellors at various recognized universities in the country; they have been members of the planning commission, Prime Minister's Scientific Advisory Committee, Indian Science Congress presidents, Padmashrees, Padmabhushan, members and fellows of various Nationally recognized Science Academies in the country, winners of several coveted academic awards in the country and all these match with publications in International journals, books, etc. In general I think this place is fantastic.

**Mansi:** What are the changes you see in JNU over the years you have been here?

**Prof Mallick:** Change is always welcome; stagnancy is never good for any system; however, change should not be for the heck of it. We are a community where discussions and debates are encouraged. But sometimes we indulge in changes for the sake of it, we end up taking things we don't follow ourselves. Sometimes we stretch

## In Conversation with....

discussions to the limit where no solution comes out of it and we are left in a limbo.

**Mansi:** You have been part of research and faculty at California, Harvard and France. How is JNU different from other institutions?

**Prof Mallick:** Objective analysis and interpretation. We may often be discussing things without any conclusion, although decisions and conclusions could be achieved. In my view we should be more objective and structured in taking decisions in an attempt to achieve academic excellence; discretion may also be there but those must be clearly documented; excellence needs to be nurtured. Also, we have to keep in mind what is practical, what we can achieve in the given framework and circumstances.

**Mansi:** How has the transition been from being a faculty member to being part of the administration?

**Prof Mallick:** Deanship is no credit for the person in me. Under our system everybody can be a Dean. I happen to be at one place for a certain period of time that's why I am Dean today. As a Dean one remains the same person, however, there is an added responsibility. It is an important administrative position; but it does not mean that a person who is not the Dean is any less important. The personality and one's maturity does not change suddenly, only the chair changes. Here in SLS as a Dean it is reasonably challenging to handle 300 plus students, 100 plus staff, 30-35 faculty members plus many scientists and other researchers. Many of the members of this SLS have been at various senior positions- one has to handle everything well. It is my duty and it has been a great learning experience so far. I expect that this Deanship is likely to prove to be a great learning experience for me by the end of my tenure, but one is still getting the hang of things; I request cooperation from all concerned.

**Mansi:** What are some of the goals for the school in the next few years?

**Prof Mallick:** I can only do something if I get cooperation from my students, faculty and staff. My attempts are and always will be in maintaining and improving the academic including research level of SLS in particular and the University at large.

**Mansi:** Any memory of JNU you would like to share with us?

**Prof Mallick:** When I joined in June 1985, in mid-July, late Prof Sipra Mukherjee told me, Biren you have to take a Ph.D. student. I had just finished my Ph.D., people around me and even I myself could barely recognize me as a faculty. I was twice stopped at the gate to show my i-card while exiting the SLS building in the late evening. I used to hang out with everyone, taking sometimes breakfast, lunch and dinner in canteens. So, I was almost shocked when I was asked to take a student and guide him/her to do a Ph.D. However, the reality is I had to take a student; the same student has become a full Professor at UCLA.

Another memory is when I was selected in JNU I had a Post-Doc offer, where I wanted to learn a technique which was available only in a few select labs in the world; including the lab I was to go and was not available in the country. After receiving the appointment letter, which itself took me to surprise, I came to Prof Srivastava for advice and told him that I would like to join the JNU and stay in the country but I wanted to learn the technique so I needed leave. In his usual style, without mincing words he said that people go abroad and usually do not return. However, if I promised him that I would return and would not ask for extending leave from abroad, he would give me leave for one year only but after I had spent one year in JNU after joining so that I was confirmed because that was administrative requirement. I told him that I had no intention of living abroad, would not extend leave and of course I would return. Prof. Srivastava kept his promise, so did I and I am fortunate that my post-doc mentor also allowed me to join his lab after a year.

Another memory I would like to share is that I got married after joining JNU. Then, I had to hunt for some apartment, because I did not get accommodation/wardenship on campus. To my surprise, there was barely money left from my salary to survive (forget about decent living) after paying house rent; I wish I could erase those memories.

**Mansi:** What is one message you would like to give to JNU students?

**Prof Mallick:** I am more of a student now, than I was back then. Students here are great. I respect them and I think they are matured enough to know what to do and what not. We are here for them, and we need them more; let us work together and improve (a continuous process) the standard of JNU in general and the SLS in particular.

# Movement & Appointments

## New Appointments/Deans/Directors/Chairpersons

- ◆ Prof. Rakesh Bhatnagar as Dean, School of Biotechnology
- ◆ Prof. Anuradha Chenoy as Director, Russian and Central Asian Area Studies Programme, School of International Studies
- ◆ Sh. Aparajit Chattopadhyay as Chairperson, Centre of Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Latin American Studies, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies
- ◆ Prof. P. A. George, Centre of Japanese, Korean and North East Asian Studies, Centre for Linguistics, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies as Advisor, Equal Opportunity Office
- ◆ Dr. Pradeep K. Das as Professor in Centre for Linguistics, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies
- ◆ Dr. Ankita Rai and Dr. Ved Prakash Gupta as Assistant Professor in School of Physical Sciences
- ◆ Dr. Khuraijam Bijoykumar Singh as Assistant Professor in North East India Studies Programme, School of Social Sciences
- ◆ Dr. Ghodajkar Prachinkumar Rajeshrao as Assistant Professor in Centre for Social Medicine and Community Health, School of Social Sciences
- ◆ Dr. Kaustav Banerjee as Assistant Professor in Centre for the Studies of Discrimination and Exclusion, School of Social Sciences
- ◆ Dr. Sudhir Kumar Suthar as Assistant Professor in Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences
- ◆ Dr. Bikramaditya Kumar Choudhary as Assistant Professor in Centre for the Study of Regional Development, School of Social Sciences
- ◆ Dr. R. K. Brojen Singh as Assistant Professor in School of Computational and Integrative Sciences
- ◆ Dr. Debashis Barik as Assistant Professor in School of Computational And Integrative Sciences
- ◆ Dr. Rosina Nasir as Assistant Professor in Centre for the Studies of Discrimination and Exclusion, School of Social Sciences

## Administration

- ◆ Sh. Yogesh Kumar as Senior Assistant in Administration Branch
- ◆ Ms. Ranjita Sahu as Assistant Archivist in Archives on Contemporary History, Central Library
- ◆ Sh. Bhavi Rudrappa as Security Assistant in Security Branch
- ◆ Sh. Anil Kumar as Junior Assistant-cum-Typist in Brahamputra Hostel
- ◆ Smt. Vimla as Office Attendant in Administration Branch-III
- ◆ Smt. Radha Bisht as Mess Helper in office of the Dean of Students, IHA
- ◆ Smt. Neelam as Safaikaramchari in Estate Branch

## Retirement & Resignation

- ◆ Prof. Varyam Singh, Centre of Russian Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies
- ◆ Mrs. Damayanti V. Tambay, Deputy Director Physical Education, Sports Office
- ◆ Sh. Prakash Singh Chahar, Assistant Registrar, Estate Branch
- ◆ Sh. S. S. Rawat, Private Secretary, Rector's Office
- ◆ Sh. Sadanand Gupta, Senior Technical Assistant, Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences
- ◆ Sh. Hayat Singh Negi, Assistant, Cash Section, Finance & Accounts Department
- ◆ Sh. P. Unnikrishnan, Head Mess Helper, Sabarmati Hostel
- ◆ Sh. Ram Kumar, Sanitary Guide, School of Physical Sciences
- ◆ Sh. K. Muthuswamy, Pump Operator, Engineering Branch
- ◆ Sh. Shri Kishan, Security Guard, Security Branch
- ◆ Smt. Chander, Safaikaramchari, Sanitation Department, Estate Branch
- ◆ Sh. Jagtap Ganesh Raosaheb, Stenographer resigned from the university service.

# Achievements/Awards



- ◆ **Prof. Surinder S. Jodhka**, Centre for Studies in Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, JNU received the Amartya Sen Award Instituted by ICSSR, New Delhi, for exceptional contribution to agrarian studies.



- ◆ **Prof. Gopal Narayan Guru**, Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences, has been chosen for the Malcolm Adiseshiah Award for Distinguished Contribution to Development Studies for 2013-14.



- ◆ Arya Pradeshik Pratinidhi Sabha and D.A.V. College Managing Committee, New Delhi have honored **Prof. Shashiprabha Kumar** with a Commendation Certificate (Manapatra) and an award of Rupees Thirty One Thousand only, for significant contribution to “Vedic Research and Propagation of Vedic Values”.



- ◆ **Mr. Mohammad Ahmad Abdullah, M.A (Arabic)** in the Centre for Arabic & African Studies, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies, was awarded the President of India Gold Medal for the General Proficiency for the year 2012.

The Centre for English Studies (CES) at Jawaharlal Nehru University has done it once again. The department has been adjudged as one of the top 100 English departments in the world by the QS World University Rankings 2013, released recently.

## The Pusa Horticulture Show, 2013

The Horticulture Branch participated in Pusa Horticulture Show. The Pusa Horticulture Show, 2013 was organized by the Delhi Agri-Horticultural Society, Division of Floriculture and Landscaping, Indian Agriculture research Institute (IARI) in the lawns of Genetics Division, IARI, New Delhi. This Competition was open to all exhibitors (Government or Non-Government Agency/ Institutions/ Private Organisations/ Embassies/ Hotels/ Clubs/ Nurseries/ Individuals) from all over Delhi and New Delhi. The Garden in front of Administration Block, Garden of Vice Chancellor's Lodge, Garden in front of Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, Garden of Aravali Guest House, Garden in front of Mahi-Mandavi Hostel, Garden in front of Dean of Students Welfare Office, Koyna Hostel WF-01 Private Garden and Garden at 160-UK, were inspected/ visited in the last week of February 2013 by a Judging Committee from IARI (Pusa). The Horticulture Wing was awarded the following Prizes at above Show, March, 2013-

1. D.A.H.S. Challenge Cup – for the Best Medium Private Garden in Delhi and New Delhi in a Government allotted Accommodation – To Vice Chancellor's Lodge
2. D.A.H.S. Challenge Cup – for the Best Mini Garden

Attached to Institutions, Embassies, Hotels and Clubs in Delhi and New Delhi – To Aravali Guest House

3. D.A.H.S. Challenge Cup – for the Best Small Public Garden in Delhi and New Delhi - To Centre for the Study of Law and Governance
4. D.A.H.S. Challenge Cup – for the Best Medium Garden Attached to Institutions, Embassies, Hotels and Clubs in Delhi and New Delhi – To Dean of Students Garden

The Horticulture Officer said that “the prizes are result of consistent effort of all the Malis under continued supervision of Horticulture Office, duly encouraged by Officers of Engineering Department. The sustained support of higher officers of the University was also very vital in the above fruitful effort.”

Prizes won by Private Gardens of JNU Campus

1. D.B.H.S. Challenge Cup – for the Best Small Private Garden in Delhi and New Delhi in a Government allotted Accommodation – To 160 – Uttarakhand
2. D.A.H.S Challenge Cup – for the Best Mini Private Garden in Delhi and New Delhi in a Government allotted Accommodation – To WF-1, Koyna Hostel.

# Campus Activities

## विशिष्ट संस्कृत अध्ययन केन्द्र का शैक्षणिक भ्रमण

संस्कृत अध्ययन केन्द्र के छात्रों का पाँच दिवसीय शैक्षणिक भ्रमण 30 मार्च से 3 अप्रैल सन् 2013 के मध्य केन्द्र के आचार्य डॉ. सुधीर कुमार जी के संरक्षण, निर्देशन में सम्पन्न हुआ। इस बार छात्रों ने राजस्थान के ऐतिहासिक, शैक्षणिक दृष्टि से महत्वपूर्ण तीन स्थलों – जोधपुर, माउण्ट आबू तथा उदयपुर का भ्रमण किया। जोधपुर में स्टीफन नॉर्बलिंग द्वारा निर्मित उम्मेद भवन तथा मेहरानगढ़ का किला दर्शनीय है जहां अस्त्र-शस्त्र तथा लिपि एवं अन्य ऐतिहासिक सामग्री को सहेजकर रखा गया है। इनके अतिरिक्त आदेश्वर तथा देलवाड़ा के जैन मंदिर, नक्की झील आदि भी दर्शनीय हैं। माउण्ट आबू पर्वतों से घिरा हुआ बहुत ही रमणीय स्थल है। यहां पर दादा लेखराज द्वारा स्थापित ब्रह्मकुमारी ईश्वरीय विश्वविद्यालय का केन्द्रिय परिसर है। माउण्ट आबू में इसके अतिरिक्त अबुर्दमहादेव जी का मंदिर, सरकारी संग्रहालय तथा आर्ष गुरुकुल महाविद्यालय है। सरकारी संग्रहालय में गरसिया जाति के लोगों की कला एवं संस्कृति के नमूने उपलब्ध हैं। आर्ष गुरुकुल का निर्माण सन् 1984 में धर्मानन्द सरस्वती द्वारा किया गया था। यहां के भव्य एवं विशाल पुस्तकालय में वेद, मीमांसा, साहित्य तथा अन्य भारतीय ज्ञान परम्परा के अमूल्य ग्रन्थों का संग्रह किया गया है। उदयपुर को झीलों की नगरी के नाम से भी जाना जाता है। झीलों के अतिरिक्त यहां मोहनलाल सुखाड़िया विश्वविद्यालय, राणा प्रताप

स्मारक, सरस्वती भवन सार्वजनिक मण्डल पुस्तकालय, पिछोला झील, सिटी पैलेस आदि मुख्य दर्शनीय स्थल हैं। मोहनलाल सुखाड़िया विश्वविद्यालय के पुस्तकालय में लगभग 10 लाख पुस्तकें संग्रहीत हैं। राणा प्रताप स्मारक में राजस्थान के वीर सपूत राणा प्रताप के जीवन की सम्पूर्ण घटनाओं का चित्रण उपलब्ध है। मोती नगरी में पंचधातु से निर्मित चेतक नामक घोड़े की मूर्ति है जो राणा प्रताप का प्रिय घोड़ा था। लगभग 125 वर्ष पुराने सरस्वती भवन सार्वजनिक मण्डल पुस्तकालय में 125 हजार के आस-पास पुस्तकों का संग्रह है तथा पाण्डुलिपियों का भी भव्य संग्रह है। एशिया का सबसे बड़ा महल यानी सिटी पैलेस में हल्दीघाटी के युद्ध के चित्र एवं राजपरिवार तथा रानियों से सम्बन्धित समग्र तथ्यों एवं घटनाओं का चित्रण है। इसके अतिरिक्त अन्य सांस्कृतिक, शैक्षणिक एवं इतिहास सम्बन्धी शोध की दृष्टि से महत्वपूर्ण सामग्री का संग्रह है।

इस प्रकार इन तीन महत्वपूर्ण स्थलों के सभी स्थलों का भ्रमण केन्द्र के छात्रों के लिए बहुत लाभदायक रहा। छात्रों ने हर स्थान एवं सामग्री का बारीकी से निरीक्षण किया तथा सभी ने भरपूर आनन्द लिया।

**सतरुद्र प्रकाश (एम.फिल. द्वितीय सत्र)**  
**विशिष्ट संस्कृत अध्ययन केन्द्र, जनेवि**

## ACM Mega Event



The Jawaharlal Nehru University ACM Student Chapter organized the Mega Event of ACM Delhi-NCR Chapter at Jawaharlal Nehru University on 6 April 2013. The event comprised of Computing Quiz, Inauguration of JNU ACM Student Chapter and an Invited Talk. The JNU ACM Student Chapter was inaugurated by Prof. S.K. Sopory, Vice Chancellor

of Jawaharlal Nehru University. Dr. Mukesh Mohania from IBM Research-India was the chief guest at the inauguration. Dr. Mukesh Mohania delivered a talk on “Cloud Computing and Data Management” at the Mega Event. Around 130 students participated in the Mega Event. These students were mainly from University of Delhi, IP University, South Asian University, Mahamaya Technical University and Jawaharlal Nehru University. Prizes and certificates were distributed to the first three winners of the Computing Quiz. Also, prizes for quiz conducted during the invited talk were presented. These prizes were given by Dr. Mukesh Mohania and Dr. T.V. Vijay Kumar, Faculty Event Coordinator. The Mega event was a success, as it was well appreciated by participants.

**Dr. T.V. Vijay Kumar**  
**Mega Event Coordinator**

# Campus Activities

## International German Alumni Summer School India on “Millennium Goals and Traditional Knowledge for Sustainable Development and Biodiversity Conservation in India”

The Georg-August University of Goettingen (Section for Tropical and Sub-tropical Agriculture and Forestry and the Department of Conservation Biology), Germany in collaboration with the School of Environmental Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi organized an International German Alumni Summer School on 'Millennium Goals and Traditional Knowledge for Sustainable Development and Biodiversity Conservation in India' at the JNU Convention Centre from the 18 - 24 of April, 2013. The opening ceremony on the 18 April, 2013 was graced by the Rector of the JNU, Prof. Sudha Pai, Dean of the School of Environmental Sciences, Prof. Arun K Attri and the International Programs Coordinator, JNU, Dr. S Chandrasekharan apart from representatives from DAAD and GIZ, New Delhi offices. Dr. N. Janardhana Raju (JNU) and Dr. Kamini Barua (Leuphana) were moderators of the inaugural function of the summer school.

This summer school was officially funded by the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) within the frame of the Quality Networks, Biodiversity, Module 2 Alumni Capacity Building Program. The summer school is primarily targeted at enhancing the capacity of the practicing German Alumni in multidisciplinary fields ranging from Ecology, Agriculture and Forestry to Economics, Sustainable Development, Natural Resource Management, University education, Pharmaceutical and tourism industry. The working theme of the alumni summer school tried to correlate to the current socio-economic scenario in the host country, India and specifically relevant to challenges like climate change, land-use changes due to agricultural and industrial development and urbanization consequently leading to loss of biodiversity, local knowledge and its values for society.

The contributors of this international meeting represented South and Southeast Asian countries like India (host country), Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Thailand, and Indonesia, including Mongolia (Central Asia) and Kenya (East Africa). The

participants were mostly the faculty members at Universities and higher educational and research institutes, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and Governmental representative organizations like the WWF. The panel of experts delivering the keynote addresses on diverse topics like community based nature conservation and importance of biodiversity and bottom-up ecological economics for promotion of sustainable development to traditional knowledge systems, sustainable agriculture and food security were mainly from Germany and India. In addition to the keynote lectures and oral presentations by the Alumni participants, there were thematic group work activities pertaining to agricultural biodiversity heritage sites, local knowledge systems for monitoring biodiversity, biopiracy and medicinal plants and community based nature conservation. As part of the field work activity, an excursion trip to the Ranthambore National Park in Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan was conducted so as to enable the participants to have an insight into the tiger conservation including issues concerning man-animal conflict and the role of ecosystem services and local communities living in the fringes of the protected area. The safari trips enabled the participants to have an overview of the floral and faunal diversity in this national park.

One of the major milestones of this International German Alumni Summer School program was to promote networking amongst the alumni and establish long-term research targets with German Universities and also to strengthen the functional alumni networks like the GAINBiNeT (German Alumni International Biodiversity Network), GAForN (German Alumni Forestry Network), GAfooN (German Alumni Food Network) and SEAG (Southeast Asia German Alumni Network). This German Alumni Summer School was an interesting and inspiring University event and anticipates further cooperation in research and education, as well as exchange of students and scientists between the School of Environmental Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and Georg-August University of Goettingen.

On the 24 April, 2013 of the Summer School, the valedictory session was chaired by Prof. Attri, Dean SES, JNU and Dr. Jolanta Slowik, Gottingen University. They distributed the participation certificates to the delegates. Dr. N. J. Raju, JNU and Dr. Kamini Barua, Germany coordinated the International German Alumni Summer School.

**N. Janardhana Raju**  
Associate Professor  
School of Environmental Sciences



# Campus Activities

## Annual Function of “Unnoticed”

“Unnoticed”, are they? Not anymore, we can proudly claim that. Today, Unnoticed has spread its wings and has taken its first baby steps towards fulfilling its pledge. Starting from organizing classes with student volunteers and getting the children of JNU construction workers admitted into nearby schools, Unnoticed has now moved on to organizing other activities as well for the overall development of the kids.



When the idea of Unnoticed was first conceived, our main aim was to give these underprivileged children a sense of belonging in the society. Their basic right as a citizen of India to have education, food and a healthy living was being denied. Unnoticed then took the pledge to bring them into notice and claim for them what is rightfully theirs. Thanks to the helpful support from all who came across the path of this noble cause, we are well on course.

This year Unnoticed took a pledge to bring in the lives of the kids warmth of love and affection by donating old winter clothes for the homeless staying near the JNU area (Narela, IIT and Munirka, flyovers).

## 2<sup>nd</sup> International Fascination of Plants Day Celebrations

Boosted by an overwhelming response from the young and not-so-young, alike, during the First International Fascination of Plants Day (FoPD) last year, the second edition of this global event was celebrated with much greater vigor and enthusiasm in all the six inhabited continents of the planet. Under the initiative of European Plant Science Organization, the 18th day of May was agreed upon in the year 2012 to be observed as the International Fascination of Plants Day with the stated objective of “getting as many people as possible around the world fascinated by plants and enthused about the importance of plant science for agriculture, in sustainably producing food, as well as for horticulture, forestry, and all of the non-food products such as paper, timber, chemicals, energy, and pharmaceuticals”. The role of plants in environmental conservation is also a key message.

The health condition of the kids as well as their parents is also being taken care of. On the 6th and the 19th of January, Unnoticed organized general health camp for the kids and their parents with the help of an organization named Society for Promotion of Youth and Masses (SPYM) who provided doctors and medicine for it. In February, Unnoticed organized another health camp for the kids and their parents where Rotarac club (youth wing of rotary) helped regarding doctors and medicines. In this camp, (a construction worker) Rajesh Chauhan was detected with blood cancer. Unnoticed extended its help towards his family and he is now getting medicine (through Novartis Oncology Access Program) Glivec 400mg Imatinib free of cost (for four months).

Unnoticed is not far behind in case of cultural events also. It organized its Annual Function on 27th of April in the Convention Center of JNU. It was a worthy try to bring out the hidden talents of the kids. In this cultural event the kids did various performances ranging from dance to drama. A thoroughly enjoyed program loved and blessed by all.

Thus this year Unnoticed has started walking in steady steps...but there is still a long way to go. In the words of Robert Frost “And miles to go before I sleep, and miles to go before I sleep.”

You can reach us at our Facebook page (Unnoticed: Children of JNU Construction Workers) and our blog at [unnoticedjnu@wordpress.com](mailto:unnoticedjnu@wordpress.com) or phone: 9999858754, 8860753869, 9873054037

**Unnoticed: The Children of JNU  
Construction Workers**

More than 670 institutions in 54 countries organized about 1000 events on 18 May 2013 with many universities, research institutions, botanical gardens, and companies opening their doors to the general public. The coordination of the events in India was managed again this year by the National Coordinator of FoPD, Prof. Neera Bhalla Sarin along with the Co-coordinator, Dr. Mohd Aslam Yusuf, from the School of Life Sciences (SLS), JNU. Several universities, colleges, and institutes from across the country organized various events to mark this day. At JNU, the target audience was young students, mostly from class eight to twelfth. The coordinators personally contacted the schools with an invitation for students. About 120 students from 14 different schools converged on a typically hot May morning, at the School of Life Sciences auditorium with a quest for knowing “more and new” about plants and as the

# Campus Activities



proceedings of the day unfolded, they were not to be disappointed. Prof. Neera Bhalla Sarin welcomed the audience that included children, few school teachers, couple of parents, and some faculty members of the SLS. She talked about the significance of organizing this event and a brief history and facts and figures associated with it. Prof. B. N. Mallick, the Dean of SLS while welcoming the guests on behalf of the school gave an overview of the kind of research activities being undertaken there. This was followed by the “talk of the day”- Prof. Sudhir Kumar Sopory, the Vice-Chancellor of JNU and a plant scientist par excellence, gave an enamoring lecture on “Insights into Plant Life”. He started off by posing a question that though most of us 'see' plants how many amongst us 'observe' them. Observation, he stressed, was crucial to understanding the nuances of nature. His talk then took the audience on a wondrous ride through the plant kingdom. The diversity in plant types- from small to huge, floating to flying, drought-managers growing in the deserts to those flourishing in ice- caught the fancy of the young kids. Further, he delved on the mechanisms

underlying this great repertoire of plant kingdom and the way in which the plants can 'see, talk, and hear'. He pointed that the understanding of physiology and growth habits of plants warrants ingenious research and could give several clues that are vital to the better comprehension of life. The excitement that his talk generated in the children was palpable in the jam-packed auditorium. After the lecture, children were divided into batches and given a guided tour of the plant tissue culture laboratories, glass-house, and nursery. They were shown the practical aspects involved in doing plant research. The children also penned down their thoughts in the feedback form about the experience they had during the day. Each student was presented a medicinal plant of Tulsi or Aloe vera and encouraged to decipher their beneficial properties as part of their take-home assignment. Overall, it was a day of great learning and activity for the children who dispersed, after having snacks, with the inspiration of becoming the future scientists of the country.

The support of Prof. Sopory, Vice Chancellor, JNU, Prof. Mallick, Dean of SLS, and Ms. Poonam S. Kudasiya, Public Relations Officer, JNU in organizing the event was duly acknowledged by Prof. Sarin. The proceedings were efficiently moderated by Dr. Mohd Aslam Yusuf, U.G.C., Dr. D. S. Kothari Fellow, SLS, JNU and the National Co-coordinator of FoPD. Members of Prof. Sarin's research group provided the necessary support by volunteering to take the students through the plant tissue culture labs and the glasshouse.

**Neera Bhalla Sarin**  
Professor  
School of Life Sciences

## Seminar/Conference

### International Conference Revisiting the Silk Road India and the Silk Road Regions Cultural Connections, Current Challenges

The Centre of Russian Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, organized a three-day International Conference 'Revisiting the Silk Road' on the theme: 'India and the Silk Road Regions – Cultural Connections, Current Challenges' at the Convention Centre, JNU. The conference was organised in collaboration with the Centre of Persian and Central Asian Studies, Centre of Arabic and African Studies, Centre of Indian Languages, Centre for Chinese and South East Asian Studies (School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies), Centre for Russian, Central Asian Studies, Centre for West Asia Studies, Gulf Studies Programme (School of International Studies), School of Arts and Aesthetics and the Academic Staff College.

This interdisciplinary International Conference was organised to facilitate contemporary dialogue on Silk Road region. It was an exciting event with lectures, symposia, oral and multimedia presentations, and focused group and interactive discussions covering the five Sections of the Conference: History and Civilisation, Culture and Language, Contemporary Social Concerns, Economic and Trade Cooperation and Geo-Political and Strategic Relations.

At the Inauguration, Prof. Meeta Narain welcomed the dignitaries and participants to the Conference.

Prof. Manu Mittal, Conference Director & the Chairperson of

# Seminar/Conference

the Centre of Russian Studies delivered the welcome address and introduced the guests to the Conference.

The Conference was inaugurated by esteemed Vice-Chancellor, JNU, Prof. S. K. Sopory, the Dean of SLL&CS, Prof. Mohd. Aslam Islahi, distinguished historian, Prof. Irfan Habib, and the guests of honour – the Ambassadors of the countries of the Silk Road Regions. Dr. Suresh Babu, Director, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), released the Souvenir.

In his Presidential Address Prof. S. K. Sopory, Vice-Chancellor, JNU said, that if we try to explore the subject of Silk Road in depth, we will realize that it is an excellent topic for debate and deliberations for pursuit of cultural exchanges and transmission of knowledge. He appreciated the initiative taken by CRS to revisit the Silk Road regions through dialogues, symposium, presentations, exhibitions, food festivals and cultural programmes.

Prof. Aslam Islahi, Dean, SLL&CS talked about the role of Silk Routes in establishing linkages between India and other countries of Silk Road.

Dr. Suresh Babu, Director, MEA, released the Souvenir. While addressing the audience he told them about the role of Ministry of External Affairs, India in developing the relations between the Silk Road countries.

Prof. Irfan Habib, Professor Emeritus, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) delivered the Keynote Address

The distinguished representatives from the Embassies of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic State of Afghanistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, People's Republic of China, Republic of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Iran and the Embassy of the Russian Federation and a number of foreign delegates from these countries who had come to participate in the deliberations of this conference from far and wide attended the inauguration of the conference.

Her Excellency, Ms Irina A. Orolbaeva, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic, while deliberating on the Great Silk Road and its importance to the new world, said that this International Conference is a next step in continuation of the efforts to make Central Asia and South Asia as regions of peace, stability and development through revival of the history and traditions of the Great Silk Road which did not only promote commodity exchange but also cultural and religious ideas. His Excellency, Mr. Parakhat H. Durdyev, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to India, in his address said that it is known from history that the scientific and cultural relations between Turkmen and Indian people began from the ancient times. Both found ways to various regions through the Silk Road in the past and made weighty contributions to the advancement of civilization. His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Hajiyevev, Ambassador, the Republic of

Azerbaijan in India, talked about the strengthening of friendship and cooperation between Azerbaijan and India. His Excellency Mr. Shaida M. Abdali, Ambassador of Afghanistan to India, said that Afghanistan is serving as a centre of international cooperation, bringing together almost all countries of the Silk Road to further the noble cause of peace in our country.

Prof. Purushottam Agarwal, Member UPSC and our old colleague from JNU, delivered the guest lecture.

More than 150 delegates from different parts of India and abroad attended the Conference. Around 100 of papers were received, out of which 74 papers could be presented during the packed three-day period with hectic and intense academic and intellectual activity.

Prof. Sattar Mazhitov, Prof, Laura Yerekeshveva, Prof. Mara Gubaidullina, Almaty, Kazakhstan, Dr. Khadicha M. Shambetilieva, Dr. G. Ibrahimova, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, Prof. Uladzimir G. Budai, Turkey, Prof. Alexander Bondarev, Moscow, Russia and many more from different countries chaired and read the papers on Silk Road.

Mr. Prakash Jha, the famous Hindi film Director also participated in the conference, and conducted a two-hour session, where he discussed about the films directed by him. Like a real intellectual he patiently answered interesting questions on his films and the present scenario of the cinema world.

The backbone of this International Conference were Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR), Ministry of Culture, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and our Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), who were the sponsors of the Conference.

A Cultural programme based on the Theme – “Wedding Traditions of Silk Road Countries” was prepared by the students of the Centre of Russian Studies, Centre of German Studies, SLL&CS, JNU and Delhi University.

The Valedictory Function was addressed by Mr. Ashok Sajjanhar, former Ambassador to Kazakhstan, Sweden and Latvia. The guests of honour were H.E. Ms. Irina A. Orolbaeva, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic, and H.E Mr. Ibrahim Hajiyevev, the Ambassador of Azerbaijan. The Report on the International Conference was read by Mr. Ajoy Karnati, Assistant Professor, CRS, SLL&CS.

In his speech, Mr. Sajjanhar said that the hard work put in by all of the organisers, as well as the sleepless nights that were spent in putting together the Programme were fully rewarded by the success of the Conference. All the participants enjoyed themselves immensely and also benefited enormously by listening to the presentations. Presentation of Cultural Programme every evening added a new flavour to the aca-

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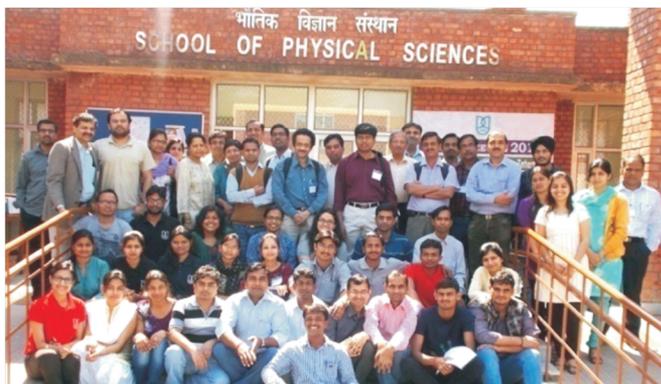
democratic proceedings of the conference. Results of the Conference have been truly impressive.

Prof. Sudha Pai, Rector, JNU distributed the Certificates to the participants of the Conference and the students- recipients of the Pande Gold Medal.

With participation of many eminent scholars and dignitaries, the event was a grand success.

**Kiran Singh Verma**  
Centre of Russian Studies, SLL&CS

## Two days conference, School of Physical Sciences



The School of Physical Sciences and the Special Centre for Nanoscience of Jawaharlal Nehru University organized a symposium during 7-8 March, 2013. The theme of the symposium was Nanoscience & Condensed Matter Interface. The meeting started with inaugural remarks by the Dean of the School. Many distinguished researchers from reputed National Institutes and Universities delivered invited talks sharing their research works on cutting edge areas in this subject. The

topics included in this meeting were Graphene, Nanostructures and assemblies, Self assembly systems in condensed matter, Polymer nanocomposites, Supramolecular systems and Molecular magnetism. Apart from the faculty members and research scholars of JNU, research students from different institutes situated at Delhi and outside participated. The significant part of this meeting was Poster Exhibition where the young research scholars of School presented their works on diverse topics. Though all the presented works were very interesting and stimulating, three students were given the "Best Poster Presentation Award". On a concluding note, the meeting provided a platform to discuss the very topical and challenging issues in condensed matter physics vis a vis nanoscience, and the outcome had been very successful.

**H. B. Bohidar, Professor**  
Special Center for Nanosciences and  
Ashim Pramanik and Tanuja Mohanty  
School of Physical Sciences

## 8<sup>th</sup> Kabir Memorial Lecture

The Kabir Memorial Lecture was delivered by eminent historian Prof. Harbans Mukhia, former Rector of JNU, on Thursday, 28 March 2013 in the School of the Arts and Aesthetics Auditorium of the University. The subject of his lecture was Subjective Modernities.

The lecture commenced with the welcome address given by Prof. Rambux, chairperson of the Centre for Indian Languages. Welcoming the speaker Prof. Mukhia, the Chief Guest Prof. Sadiqur-Rahman Kidwai, former Dean of SLL&CS, and the chair of the lecture Prof. M.A. Islahi, the Dean of SLL&CS, he elaborated on the significance of the naming of the lecture after the great saint poet Kabir, who is also hailed as a true embodiment of communal and linguistic unity. He introduced Prof. Mukhia and very briefly talked of the scholars, including Prof. Irfan Habib, who had delivered the Kabir memorial lecture on earlier occasions.

Prof. Mukhia's lecture may be summarized as follows. The notion of modernity, which was unquestionable until very recently, is under interrogation today from numerous angles



throughout the world. Its early use to demarcate the present from the past gave way to a value load of reason opposed to any sort of religion or religiosity. With positivism's privileging of science and technology, modernity evolved into an Abstraction, the approximation to which attested the degree of modernity of every society, institution, or even individual. Its paradigm was one of specific western 'rationality' and capitalist economy. In one powerful version, the approximation

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to this Abstraction in Asia, Africa and Latin America was mediated through colonialism and its discourse; in another, even as colonialism was contested, modernity was demonstrated through parallel and comparable indigenous developments even prior to the colonial intervention, thus valorizing the Abstraction. The movement of our ideas remains encircled by it. The circle is now being broken by postulates of alternative modernities, multiple modernities, Eurasian modernity, shared modernities, lost modernities and several other versions. The dual value-loaded hiatus that Post-Enlightenment had posited between the then present and the past in Europe and between Europe and the rest of the world is today under severe strain. It seems arguable that European modernity was not quite the exception either with reference to its own 'medieval' past or to the rest of the world: It is possible to envisage it as a continuous process and one that has evolved through multifaceted global interaction – economic, technological, cultural, ideational, or aesthetic. True, the pace of change since the 17th or especially the 18th century dictated by the idea of progress lends modernity special characteristics. Yet, both the idea of progress and the pace of change are conceivably cumulative

effects of global historical evolution and have universal, not Euro-specific validity.

So, in his opinion, perhaps it is time to abandon 'ancient, medieval, modern' and conceptualise value-neutral categories: early, recent, contemporary or simple demarcation by centuries.

The presidential address was delivered by Prof. Islahi. He also thanked the chairperson of the Centre and the convener of the lecture for inviting him to such an important lecture and presiding over it.

Prof. Mazhar Mehdi Hussain thanked the speaker, the chief guest, the Dean of the school, the audience and the National Council for the Promotion of Urdu Language, Ministry of Human Resources Development, sponsor of the memorial lecture, for making it a success.

**Mazhar Mehdi Hussain**  
**Professor and Convener**  
**Centre for Indian Languages, SLL&CS**

## “Indo-Swiss Capacity Building Programme on Himalayan Glaciology Level – 1”

Himalaya is the highest mountain range and most populated mountain system in the world. It has the largest bodies of ice and snow outside the polar caps. It is now considered as the third pole of the world. Recognizing the importance of scientific and technological inputs required for sustaining the fragile Himalayan Ecosystem, Department of Science and Technology (DST), has taken various measures to fulfil various gaps especially in the field of glaciology.

For the first time in the history of Indian glaciology, a joint training programme on capacity building on Himalayan glaciology of different levels was implemented under the Climate Change Programme (CCP), NMSHE mission, Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) of Climate Change and Development (CCD), Embassy of Switzerland. Capacity building training programme will directly contribute towards the fulfilment of one of the key objectives of the National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE). Establishment of network between various organization and institutions and enhancing human capacities for monitoring glaciers in the Indian Himalayas is an important component of NMSHE. NMSHE is one of the eight missions of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC).

The Indo-Swiss Capacity Building Programme on Himalayan Glaciology Level-1 was organised by JNU from 1 April to 27 April, 2013 under Prof. AL. Ramanathan, School of Environmental Sciences. The venue of the training programme was Convention Centre, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Course

coordinators of the training program were Prof. AL. Ramanathan (SES, JNU), Dr Markus Stoffel, University of Geneva and Dr Anil Kulkarni, Indian Institute of Sciences, Bangalore. The course curriculum was structured by the programme coordinators Dr. Markus Stoffel and Dr. Anil Kulkarni, and JNU and approved by DST and CCD. A list of resource persons was developed according to the course curriculum and with the availability of expertises in India and Switzerland. The aim of Level-1 training programme was to provide basic knowledge in the field of glaciology and its importance and to orient young researchers in the field of glaciology as their main career. The lectures delivered covered the basic to advanced / contemporary aspects of glacier research with thrust on the Himalayan glaciers, and its essential components like atmospheric process, climatic phenomenon, precipitation, glacial dynamics, mass balance of glaciers, avalanches and snow melt and runoff in the Indian Himalayas.

In response to the announcement of the programme a total of 61 applications were received by JNU for Level-1 training. 30 candidates were shortlisted based on approved criteria developed jointly between Indian and Swiss course coordinators for Level-1 programme. Ph. D. students and researchers who are working in glaciology and related areas with glacier experiences were given preference. Also it was ensured that candidates from various parts of India were represented with focus on Himalayan zone in the final selection of candidates. Out of 30 shortlisted participants 29 attended the training program. One candidate could not attend due to some personal

reasons. Students from different institutions and organisations attended the level-1 training programme.

On 1 April 2013, registration of the candidates was done at Convention Centre, followed by ice breaking session by coordinators Dr. Anil Kulkarni and Prof. A. L. Ramanathan. Expectation mapping was also conducted by IHCAP members. Participants were asked to write what they are expecting from the Level-1 training program; later coordinators happily announced that 80-85% of the expectations were going to be covered during the training program.

Opening ceremony of Indo-Swiss Capacity Building Programme on Himalayan Glaciology Level-1 was held on 2 April 2013. It was inaugurated by various eminent resource persons, H.E. Dr. Linus von Castelmur, Ambassador of Switzerland to India, Dr. T. Ramasamy, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology (DST), Dr. Akhilesh Gupta, Secretary, University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi, Prof. Sudha Pai, Rector of JNU, Prof. Arun K. Attri, Dean of SES, (JNU), Dr. Sanjay K. Mishra, Advisor / Scientist -G DST, Dr Nisha Mendiratta (in charge of this program, DST), organising committee members, coordinators and many other experts in the field of glaciology and the related areas. Switzerland is the first country with which India has collaborated for the institutional and human capacity building programme on glaciology.

H.E. Dr. Linus von Castelmur, Ambassador of Switzerland to India, in his speech said that "We are pleased to be the first country with whom India has jointly developed this collaboration. This programme provides an opportunity for strengthening capacities of Indian researchers and institutions involved in the research field of climate change and glaciology." He also mentioned that it was an opportunity to seek and identify areas of mutual interest for research.

Speaking on the occasion Dr. T. Ramasamy, Secretary, (DST), emphasised on the need to build human capacities for monitoring glaciers in the Indian Himalayas. He said "the Capacity Building Programme on Himalayan Glaciology directly contributes towards the fulfilment of one of the main objectives of the National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE)."

Speaking at the inaugural session, Prof. Sudha Pai, Rector, JNU, said "this programme hosted by JNU is recognition of expertise and capabilities developed in the university over the last two decades". She acknowledged "DST and SDC for identifying JNU as the host institution for training young researchers in the field of glaciology through this extremely important capacity building programme".

During the session a brief introduction to Climate Change Programme, National Mission for sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE), and an overview on Capacity Building Programme and warm wishes were given by Dr. Akhilesh Gupta, UGC, Dr. Sanjay Mishra, DST, and Dr. Nisha Mendiratta, DST. It was announced that capacity building training programme was going to be held for next two years and those

who were not selected for this program and for the next level in this training program will get priority in further training programs. Dr. Nisha Mendiratta also elaborated the procedure of selection and course content for different levels.

The four week training program was quite hectic and knowledgeable for the participants; the lectures were delivered by the best experts available from both the countries in various fields. It was six days per week training program. The timetable was from morning 9 a.m to evening 5 p.m. Lectures were delivered in the morning sessions by different resource persons with different backgrounds and in the afternoon various exercises (hands on training through on line data analysis and accessing global data bases for analysis and interpretations) were given. Participants were asked to send their respective exercises to the concerned resource person and a copy to Prof. AL. Ramanathan for their evaluation for Level-2.

There were a total of more than 26 resource persons during the training program who gave lectures and exercises. Among them 6 were from Switzerland and rest were from different institutions and organisation working on Glaciology in India.

On 26 April 2013 a written test was conducted based on whatever the resource persons has taught during the training program. The test was part of the evaluation process. Based on assessment of assignments, test, paper presentations and class performance a subset of these students were selected for Level-2 training programme. All the participants successfully completed the training program except one who left just before 5 days of completion due to some personal problem. Feedback from the participants was also considered, some suggestions were received based on evaluation processes but overall all the participants were contented with the Level-1 training program. Level-1 capacity building programme on Himalayan Glaciology concluded with distribution of certificate of participation to 28 participants. Around 10-15 participants will advance to Level-2 programme. Level-2 training programme will consist of classroom teaching and field exercises at a glacier. Chhota Shigri / Dokriani glacier in HP/ UK has been selected for field exercises, which will tentatively start from September / October 2013. It is being planned to conduct further advanced trainings for selected candidates from Level-2 programme in Alps and labs in Switzerland.

On 23 April 2013, a brainstorming session to explore potential areas for collaboration between India and Switzerland in the field of glaciology and related areas was also held by IHCAP at Convention Centre, JNU as a side event.

Indo-Swiss Capacity Building Programme on Himalayan Glaciology Level-1 was concluded with a sight seeing tour of Delhi on 27 April, 2013.

**AL. Ramanathan,  
Professor  
School of Environmental Sciences**

## Fourth Prof P N Srivastava Endowment Lecture on “Learning from the Minds on the Margin”

The School of Social Sciences, JNU organized the Fourth Professor P.N. Srivastava Endowment Lecture on 11 April, 2013 at the Auditorium of JNU Convention Centre. The Lecture titled “Learning from the Minds on the Margin: Towards a New Social Contract for Responsible Science” was delivered by Professor Anil K. Gupta. This lecture is organized annually by the university to pay tribute to Dr. P. N. Srivastava, former Professor of JNU and renowned scientist. Professor Mridula Mukherjee, Dean of SSS, in her welcome address welcomed Prof Anil K. Gupta. She then formally introduced the speaker.

Dr. Anil Kumar Gupta is a Professor at the prestigious Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Ahmedabad, and Founder of the acclaimed Honey Bee Network. He founded the Honey Bee Network in 1986-87 “to promote a fair and responsible knowledge ecosystem”, where innovators can benefit by sharing their ideas. In the 1990s, he set up the Society for Research and Initiatives for Sustainable Technologies and Institutions (SRISTI) and Grassroots Innovation Augmentation Network (GIAN). All three entities are partners of the National Innovation Foundation (NIF India), an autonomous body under the Department of Science and Technology. Prof Gupta has received a large number of awards and honours, including Padma Shri Award in 2004.

Prof Gupta started his lecture by introducing the experience of Honey Bee Network (HBN) in forging the linkages between formal and informal sector, particularly of science and technology but also other sectors. HBN has been engaged both with creative communities and also scientific institutions to build a bridge between formal and informal sector. He mentioned that formal sector had scientists who not only learnt from common people, but also acknowledged it. There lies his interest in documenting efforts of grassroots innovators. Most public institutions in India appreciate examples of creativity and innovation in informal sector. But, they don't feel empowered to take up projects interfacing informal sector for

validation or value addition to grassroots innovations. Later, National Innovation Foundation took this as their mandate and supports in bridging exercises.

HBN was one of first few open innovation platforms started 25 years ago. Now, even large corporations as well as small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) are taking interests in open innovation platforms for technology development and technical collaboration. Grassroots innovators have built up local open innovation platforms with strong community bondage and ownership. They develop frugal technologies for addressing their day-to-day practical problems. It helps them in contextualize their innovations in their local settings and knowledge reproduction from traditional knowledge. Grassroots innovation also helps in socio-economic empowerment of local communities.

In this connection, he mentioned how SRISTI synergises efforts of engineering students in addressing unmet technological needs of informal sector as well as MSMEs (micro, small and medium scale enterprises) through online platform Techpedia.in. Techpedia has archived about 1.5 lakh technological solutions from more than 500 institutions to problems faced by the informal sector and MSMEs.

In his lecture, he narrated anecdotes related to grassroots innovations he encountered in his journey of discovering them across the country. He concluded this lecture with four recommendations, which are: (a) every public institutions of R&D must allocate at least 10% resources for validating and value adding people's knowledge; (b) when validation is pursued, the conditions followed by the people must be carefully stimulated and abstracted, lest a good idea is invalidated because of bad protocol; (c) the criteria of evaluation should also be carefully developed keeping in mind that people make tradeoffs between accuracy, affordability and urgency all the time, and (d) enriching people's own capability to solve problems using modern scientific tools and techniques is necessary to democratise science, technology and innovations.

After his lecture, he interacted with JNU students in Q&A session. Prof S.K. Sopory, Vice-Chancellor of JNU, chaired this lecture session. The lecture concluded with vote of thanks given by Dr. Madhav Govind of Centre for Studies in Science Policy, SSS.



**Anup Kumar Das**  
Documentation Officer  
Centre for Studies in Science Policy, SSS

## JNU Seminar Series

The School of Physical Sciences, JNU organized the seventh lecture in the “JNU Seminar Series – Towards Inter-disciplinarily” on 11 April, 2013 at the Seminar Hall of School of Physical Sciences. The Lecture titled “Indian Science at the Crossroads: A Scientist's Perspective of an Emerging India” was delivered by Professor Siva Umopathy of Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. Professor Prasenjit Sen, Dean of School of Physical Sciences, JNU chaired the session. Prof Sen formally introduced the speaker. Dr. Umopathy is a J C Bose Fellow Professor at the Department of Inorganic and Physical Chemistry in Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and also holds an Honorary Professor position at the Department of Chemistry, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom. He is well known for his research work in the inter-disciplinary area of applications of laser spectroscopy to physics and medicine. He has received number of awards including the prestigious Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize in 2004.

In this talk Prof. Umopathy introduced how India's rapid growth in the post-liberalisation era of the economy has led to a considerable increase in funding for research and education, as well as, to the creation of a number of new educational institutions. But it remains a huge challenge to provide these institutions with the kind of modern high-tech world class infrastructure that would serve the educational and research needs of our population and sustain a vibrant research effort that is of international standards. He mentioned that 45% of Indian population is under the age of 25 years and 70% of them live in rural areas with limited access to technology. In this context, Prof. Umopathy gave example of challenges faced by new IITs and IISERs, particularly while they have shortage of qualitative faculty members at par existing IITs and IISc. Many globally well-placed researchers have initially shown interests in taking teaching positions in new IITs, IISERs and similar



institutions, but disillusioned by other factors including academic autonomy and considerable higher teaching load.

In his talk he touched upon scientific and sociological practices in Indian research in the context of a world that is highly competitive and rapidly changing. He also covered issues including the training of students with differing socio-economic backgrounds, diversity in the quality and quantity of manpower and faculty, nationalism and self-reliance in relation to international competitiveness, leadership and management, innovation, and science policy. He also addressed some "out-of-the box" solutions to meet the aspirations of a nation attempting to shed its colonial mindset.

The Lecture concluded with Chair's remarks and a vibrant interaction with the audience.

Earlier, in that week Professor Siva Umopathy delivered another lecture in JNU on “Challenges in Experimental Scientific Research” on 10 April 2013 at CSSS, SSS.

**Anup Kumar Das**  
**Documentation Officer**  
**Centre for Studies in Science Policy, SSS**

## CMS Lecture Series



The Centre for Media Studies (School of Social Sciences) hosted the first session of the CMS Lecture Series on 25 April 2013. The Series, intended to be a discursive engagement with the complex intersections between the media, the construction of our everyday social conduct, and the survival of our democratic institutions, was inaugurated with a talk by B. G. Verghese, eminent journalist and visiting professor, Centre for Policy Research, Delhi. Professor Verghese's lecture was a measured, incisive detailing of the Indian media's transition to a new status: 'the first estate'. While this transition has

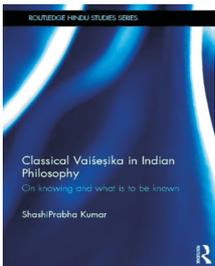
## Seminar/Conference

endowed the media with immense power to influence the trajectory of governance and public opinion, Professor Verghese pointed out that it must be understood by media practitioners as also invested with huge responsibility. The session wound up with a vibrant question and answers round,

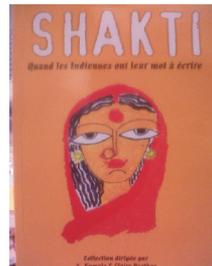
and ended with a vote of thanks delivered by the chair, JNU Rector Professor Sudha Pai.

**Deepak Kumar**  
Chairperson  
Centre for Media Studies

## Our Publications



“Classical Vaisesika in Indian Philosophy” by Dr. Shashi Prabha Kumar, Special Centre for Sanskrit Studies, publisher by DK. Printworld (P) Ltd.



“Shakti: Quand les Indiennes ont leur mot à écrire” by Prof. Kamala, Centre for French and Francophone Studies, School of Language Literature & Culture Studies, and Claire Barthez, published by Goyal Publishers.

### Book Release

“Understanding Bhagat Singh” a book by Prof. Chaman Lal was released at the Centre of Indian Languages. Prof. Chamanlal introduced the guests of honour on the occasion, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Vice-Chancellor Prof. S. K. Sopory and former JNU Prof. Sheila Bhalla.

There was also a panel discussion on the book. The speakers included historian Prof. Mushirul Hasan and political scientist Prof. Manoranjan Mohanty.



## Alumni Corner

### An interview with Prof. SK Dhar, Special Centre for Molecular Medicine



**Mansi:** How were you introduced to JNU and how would you describe your experience here over the years?

**Prof. Dhar:** I came to JNU in 1992 as a PhD student in School of Environmental Sciences. I did not know

much about research and all those things that time. But molecular biology was a big thing. I thought if I came to JNU I will be able to do molecular biology. I talked to Prof Bhattacharya, gave my interview and got the chance to work with her.

My experience has been pretty good. My PhD here was very successful, and I published a paper in Molecular and Cellular

Biology which is a very prestigious journal. For me coming from a state university, everything here was new-all the facilities and interaction with teachers, interaction with faculties from all over the world who came here and gave lectures. Coming from a small place, Burdwan, it was a really big opportunity for me. Overall the experience has been really good.

**Mansi: How does it feel to be a member of the faculty in your alma mater?**

**Prof. Dhar:** There are positive and negatives, but mostly positives. You know the place, you know the people. It is like a dream- you are student here, and then you become a teacher at the same place. I was really thrilled. In fact when I came to know I will be joining this centre, Center for Molecular Medicine which was earlier known as the Genetic Engineering unit, I was really happy that I was coming back to the same place I had graduated from. It happens, though, that if you have been a student at a place, you continue to remain a student for a long time. Slowly you overcome that. If you have your independence and if you have a new research area, which you haven't worked on before-neither at the graduation level nor at your post doctoral level, (I went to Harvard Medical school for my post doc)- you feel good. When that worked out then really you are independent and now I am on my own, doing my own research.

**Mansi: What are the changes you see in JNU over the years you have been here?**

**Prof. Dhar:** JNU has changed a lot. It was not that green back then esp. in the academic complex as you see now. That's a very good thing. A lot of new construction has taken place, so many new departments and courses have come. The number of students has increased a lot. But JNU is still JNU. People are much aware of the things here, more of outside world, which is good because you are more involved with things happening outside than just studies. Most people make a small shell around themselves and we have to break that.

**Mansi: You have been part of faculty and research at University of Virginia, Harvard Medical School and Bernard Nocht Institute for Tropical Medicine-how is JNU different from other places?**

**Prof. Dhar:** There are differences clearly but how do you understand that difference, how to react to them is important. JNU is one of the best places in India. You have the diversity of research not only in only life sciences, but biotechnology, molecular medicine, environmental science, social sciences, languages. There is the scope for a lot of interdisciplinary study and today that is much required. In that respect I don't feel we are lacking. We have a huge resource of scientists, linguistics, there is a lot of cross communication is happening more and more. A lot of publications are coming up-inter school and inter

disciplinary. After the creation of AIRF, Advanced Instrumentation Research Facility, we have in house huge infrastructure- crystallizing a protein to diffraction of that protein, physically characterize that protein, we have most of the facilities here.

Funding is the main area of concern. Based on the research that we do here, it's mostly extramural funding, so one has to often bring in their own money, which may be true for these big places. But one chemical costs more in India than it does abroad as we have to import it. If you look at any individual grant which a PI gets in USA or Germany it's not comparable. If we are doing the same research, with the lack of money (and untimely disbursement of fund) it often becomes very difficult.

We also lack in competitiveness, we are more secure here. All the places you mentioned, all the positions are tenured. You have to prove yourself from day one. We have a huge resource of students which they don't have. Government is paying for them; they are getting fellowships which is good. From Germany they come here to recruit students. Overall the quality and quantity of research in JNU over the last ten years has increased manifolds, which is reflected in the number of publications, quality of publications and patents. Appreciation of the work we do here, within India and abroad, has gone up. At the end, one has to be positive. If you only think of negative things you cannot work.

**Mansi: You have been awarded the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award recently. What are some of the research goals you have in mind individually as well as for the centre?**

**Prof. Dhar:** I would read from the letter that I received, and you would understand the kind of pressure it builds. It says, "It is a rare distinction conferred upon scientists who have demonstrated exceptional potential in science and technology... this recognition would encourage you and your group to scale new heights in the years to come. Now the nation will look upon you with high expectation." It is a good recognition, for our laboratory, for the center, the university because after a long time, in Biological sciences from the university, somebody has received such an honor. The research I'm doing now focuses on replication and cell cycle control of two medically important human pathogens-Plasmodium falciparum, that causes human malaria and Helicobacter pylori, that causes gastric ulcer and gastric adenocarcinoma. I will continue my research to understand the complexity of the disease and also the ways to counter them. Of course there are many ways to do so, but what our group is trying to understand is to see how these microorganisms multiply. If we understand how the genetic material or the DNA multiplies, then we can understand how to counter the disease and block the pathway for the multiplication of disease causing microorganism.

# Alumni Corner

At the center level, we have a lot of future plans. We are now going to start integrated M.Sc and PhD which is going to be unique in JNU and probably in the university system. The students who come to do M.Sc will continue to PhD. Right now, students come from various backgrounds and they start their PhD, we spend time a lot of time in their training. The idea is that if you can retain some of the talent and provide them with proper training, it will be beneficial for the students as well as for us. We then cannot blame others for not having trained students properly.

In addition, we are moving to our new building within a month or two, with state-of-the-art facilities and twelve labs. It is unique in JNU that within our establishment of twelve thirteen years, we have a new building and a new set up. We are also trying to find collaboration and tie up with some of the institutions and hospitals around here. Till now we were doing basic sciences, confined to the labs. But now we need to look at the application part of it, for which we need to collaborate with research centers, hospitals and institutes which do more transitional research.

We have six-seven new faculty members joining soon. Overall it is a very challenging and interesting phase and we have to see how it goes.

## Mansi: Any memory of JNU that stands out?

**Prof. Dhar:** When I came to JNU, the very first day in December it was very cold. We had to go through course work before the labs were allotted. I was not prepared for the Delhi winters. I had one half sleeve sweater and chappals, no shoes. The fellowship was stuck and at that time it used to take 6 months or so to come. So I went to my would-be supervisor's room, Prof Sudha Bhattacharya, I said I will work with you and I

have completed my course work. She looked at me and said do you have a jacket, I said no. She said do you have a pair of shoes, I said no. She gave me Rs500 from her pocket and asked me to buy a jacket and shoes first thing; otherwise I will not survive Delhi cold. She told me that you do that first and then come to the lab. I was borrowing money from friends to pay the mess bill, so eventually I went to the Tibetan market to buy my stuff. So that was the incident that touched me- the student and teacher relationship here is something that stands apart here in JNU. The person who had met me for the first time, who hadn't spent half a day with me, she was offering to help me. This is the beauty of JNU. I see how teachers go out of the way to help students and students also reciprocate with immense sincerity. If we are able to maintain this in JNU, this place will maintain its stature-not just academically, but even in terms of the human relationships that exist here.

## Mansi: What message would you like to give to the JNU student community?

**Prof. Dhar:** Work hard. That's the most important mantra and there is no substitute for it. You can say this place is frustrating, so many graduates are coming each here and there are not enough jobs, but I think if you are working hard and you are sincere, in most cases, things will fall into place. That's what I tell my students. You have to see what you have done-you have to evaluate yourself, if you are satisfied with your work at the end of the week and what is lacking. Self motivation is necessary. If I, coming from a small place, can make it- it is possible only because of JNU. It does not discriminate from where you are, or what your background is, or what your financial status is. It is a very free environment, very democratic. There are negatives of course. But this place helps you grow, but only if you are hard working and sincere.

**CORRIGENDUM** The Photocaption (no.7) in the last page (of JNU News 2013 – 1) “School of Life Sciences organized... faculty & others” may be read as School of Environmental Sciences organized International Humboldt Kolleg on “Management of Water, Energy and Bio-resources in Changing Climate Regime: Emerging Issues and Environmental Challenges” on 8-9 February, 2013. Photo shows: Vice-Chancellor, Prof. S.K. Sopory along with JNU faculty & others.

The error is regretted.

## OBITUARY



Shri J.S. Khanna, former Registrar passed away on Friday, 10 May, 2013



Shri Raghunath Singh, Semi Professional Assistant passed away on Thursday, 30 May, 2013

**We extend our condolences to the bereaved families.**

JNU News welcomes contribution about Alumni Achievements/Awards. Please write to [pro@mail.jnu.ac.in](mailto:pro@mail.jnu.ac.in), [pro@jnu.ac.in](mailto:pro@jnu.ac.in) or [poonamskudaisya@gmail.com](mailto:poonamskudaisya@gmail.com)

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# Photo Gallery



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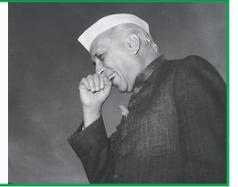
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1. A 36 Member Delegation sponsored by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs visited JNU on 4 May, 2013 to learn about various aspects of life and culture in India and the phenomenal transformation taking place in the country in various fields.
2. School of International Studies, in Cooperation with School of Computer & Systems Sciences, and Communication and Information Services (CIS), organized a lecture by Dr. Hamadoun I. Toure, Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union on 6 May, 2013. Photo shows: Prof. S.K. Sopory, Vice Chancellor, Prof. K. Kasturirangan, Chancellor and Dr. Hamadoun I. Toures, Secretary General, International Telecommunication Union.
3. A Function was organized to felicitate the participants of "Baisakhi 2013" on 6 May, 2013. Photo shows: (from left) Prof. Sudha Pai, Rector, Prof. S.K. Sopory, Vice Chancellor, Prof. Manjushree Chauhan, Centre for Japanese, Korean and North East Asian Studies, SLL&CS and others.
4. School of Life Sciences organized a Summer Research Programme from 28 May, 2013 to 28 June, 2013. Photo shows: Dr. Ashwani Pareek, School of Life Sciences, Prof. S.K. Sopory, Vice Chancellor, Prof. Swapan K. Datta, Deputy Director General, Crop Science, ICAR, New Delhi, Prof. Shyamal K. Goswami, School of Life Sciences, and Dr. Niti Puri, School of Life Sciences.
5. A Delegation from China Scholarship Council headed by Dr. LIU Jinghui, Director General of China Scholarship Council, visited JNU on 12 June, 2013. Photo shows: Prof. S.K. Sopory, Vice Chancellor, Prof. Harjit Singh, Chief Advisor, International Collaboration and Dr. LIU Jinghui, Director General, China Scholarship Council.
6. A four member Chinese delegation headed by Prof. XV Guobin, Vice President of the Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China, visited JNU on 18 June, 2013 and met Prof. Sudha Pai, Rector and signed an MoU with JNU. Photo shows: (from left) Dr. S. Chandrashekar, Coordinator, Evaluation, Prof. Sudha Pai, Rector, Prof. XV Guobin, Vice President, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, and Prof. Harjit Singh, Chief Advisor, International Collaboration.



विश्वविद्यालय की विशेषताएँ होती हैं; मानववाद, सहिष्णुता, तर्कशीलता, विचार का साहस और सत्य की खोज। विश्वविद्यालय का काम है उच्चतर आदर्शों की ओर मनुष्य जाति की सतत यात्रा को संभव करना। राष्ट्र और जनता का हित तभी हो सकता है जब विश्वविद्यालय ठीक से अपने दायित्वों का निर्वाह करें।

—जवाहरलाल नेहरू



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7. A new kiosk of Mother Dairy, set up at Paschimabad (near Paschimabad gate, opp. Vasant Kunj Mall) was inaugurated by the Hon. Vice Chancellor on 28 June, 2013. Photo shows: (from center) Prof. S.K. Sopory, Vice Chancellor, Prof. Sudha Pai, Rector and others invitees.
8. A delegation from Tallinn University of Technology (Estonia) visited JNU on 19 June, 2013. Photo shows: Dr. Sandeep Chatterjee, Registrar, Mr. Prashant Kumar Sharma, IIT Council Secretariat, Dr. S. Chandrashekar, Coordinator, Evaluation, Prof. Harjit Singh, Chief Advisor, International Collaboration, Prof. Sudha Pai, Rector, Prof. Peeter Muursepp, Vice Dean, International Affairs, School of Economics & Business Administration, Tallinn, Prof. Girijesh C. Pant, Dean, School of International Studies and Ms. Mari Peets, Head of India Relations.
9. Photo taken on the occasion of the visit of a Finnish delegation which visited JNU on 26 June, 2013 to explore possible areas of academic collaboration between JNU and Finland/Aalto University.
10. Photo taken on the occasion of the visit of a delegation from State Islamic Institute of Bengkulu (IAIN) and Informatics & Business Institute (IBI) Darmajaya, Indonesia, which visited JNU on 19 June, 2013 to discuss the possibility of cooperation in related fields.



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