

The logo for 'Conference Report' features the word 'Conference' in a large, bold, black font, with 'Report' in a smaller, bold, black font to its right. The text is overlaid on a graphic of several overlapping, light gray squares of varying sizes, creating a layered effect.

Report on the International Webinar on “History of Science” held on July 27-28 2020

A Two-Day International Webinar on “History of Science” was held on July 27-28 2020 and it was organized jointly by the Department of Chemistry, Shri Shikshayatan College, Kolkata and Institute of Science, Education and Culture in collaboration with Indian Chemical Society. This online seminar was a grand success.

On the first day, about 140 attendees were there in this International webinar indicating the success of this webinar. There were one Keynote Address and five Invited Lectures. A total 55 abstracts was accepted for presentation in the Contributory Article category after the review process.

On the opening day of the Webinar, in the Inauguration Ceremony, Heads of the organizing institutions graced the occasion. Dr. Aditi Dey, Principal, Shri Shikshayatan College, Kolkata gave the Welcome Address, while Padmashri Professor G.D. Yadav, President, Indian Chemical Society and Professor Anil Kumar Ghosh, President, Institute of Science, Education and Culture made Inaugural Speech.

The Inaugural Session is followed by Technical Session 1, and Prof. Dr. Dulal Chandra Mukherjee, formerly President and Honorary Secretary of Indian Chemical Society, chaired this Session. In this session, first, the Keynote Address was delivered by Prof. Dr. Syamal Chakrabarti, Professor, Department of Chemistry, University of Calcutta, on the topic of the webinar. Next, the first Invited Lecture was presented by Padmashri Prof. Dr. G.D. Yadav, President, Indian Chemical Society, on the broad area of History of Science. After this lecture, a Vote of Thanks was given by Smt. Sohini Chakrabarti, Head of the Department of Chemistry, Shri Shikshayatan College, Kolkata.

After the lunch-break, Technical Session 2

started. First, Dr. Kaushik Bharati, an Advisor to the Science Advisory Board, Arlington, Virginia, USA and then Prof. Dr. Santanu Das, Professor and Head, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Kalyani Government Engineering College, Kalyani delivered Invited Lectures. Dr. Kaushik Bharati deliberated on “History of Coronaviruses- Prelude to the Covid-19 Pandemic”, and Prof. Dr. Santanu Das spoke on “A Brief History on the Development of Cutting Tools”.

These lectures were followed by six contributory oral presentations by members of faculty, scientists or scholars from different organizations in Technical Session 3. Technical Session 2 and 3 were chaired by Dr. Swapna Mukherjee, Vice President, ISEC and former Director, Geological Survey of India, Government of India. After this session, a Vote of Thanks was given by Dr. Agnita Kundu of the Department of Chemistry, Shri Shikshayatan College, Kolkata.

In the second day of the webinar, two Invited Lectures were arranged in Technical Session 4 that were delivered by Dr. Supratim Ghosh, Associate Professor, Food and Bioproduct Sciences, College of Agriculture and Bioresources, University of Saskatchewan, Canada and Dr. Manas Pratim Das, Programme Producer, All India Radio, Akashbani Bhawan. “History of Food Science” was the topic on which Dr. Supratim Ghosh discussed, while Dr. Manas Pratim Das deliberated upon “Debiprasad Chattopadhyay and the Emphasis on Method of Science”.

In Technical Session 5, there were five presentations. A paper presentation competition was also conducted in one parallel technical session for post graduate students while there were also two other parallel sessions conducted simultaneously. All the talks were much enriching

and informative, inspiring interest to work on different perspectives of the history of science. Technical Session 4 and 5 were chaired by Prof. Dr. Syamal Chakrabarti, Professor, Department of Chemistry, University of Calcutta. After this session, a Vote of Thanks was given by Dr. Madhulika Ghose of the Department of Chemistry, Shri Shikshayatan College, Kolkata.

After the lunch-break on the last day of the International Webinar, there were three Parallel Sessions. In Parallel Session 1, there were nine papers presented under Competitive Session and five papers presented under Non-Competitive Session. Dr. Saurabh Das of the Department of Chemistry of Jadavpur University, Kolkata chaired the Parallel Session 1, and also acted as the Judge in the Competitive Session to determine the positions acquired by the presenters. Dr. Bandana Barman of the Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering, Kalyani Government Engineering College, Kalyani and a Member of Executive Council, ISEC chaired the Parallel Session 2. In this session, eleven papers were presented. Parallel Session 3 consisted of twelve paper presentations with Dr. Kaushik Bharati, an Advisor to the Science Advisory Board, Arlington, Virginia, USA and a Member of Executive Council, ISEC, in the Chair.

At the end of the two days of deliberations on different aspects and areas of the history of science, Results of the Competitive Session of paper presentation were declared. The prizes were sponsored by Dr. Swapna Mukherjee, Vice-President, Institute of Science, Education and Culture in memory of her loving mother, late Mrs. Jaya Mukherjee.

The First Prize went to Ms. Ritutama Ghosh, who is pursuing her Ph.D. degree under Dr. Nand Kishore in the Department of Chemistry, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. Her presentation was on “Physicochemical Insights into Mode of Action of Inhibitors on Protein Misfolding and Fibrillation/Aggregation”. The Second Prize went to Ms. Soching Luikham of Department of Chemistry, National Institute of Technology, Nagaland who is a research scholar of Dr. Jhimli Bhattacharyya. Article of their paper

reads: “Diversity, Indigenous and Sacred Values of Medicinal Plants of Nagaland/ North-eastern India- A Study Correlating History of Tribal Medicine with Recent Commercially Available Drugs”. The Third Prize went to Ms. Smiritimayee Sharma of Kokrajhar Govt. College, Assam, who is conducting her research in the Department of Statistics under Dr. Bandana Sharma of Cotton University, Guwahati, Assam. Their paper was on “A Comparative Statistical Study between Spanish Flu and Covid 19”.

The history of science is multifaceted and is quite interesting, and in the current academic scenario, where students and members of the faculty have to finish a certain set syllabus within a fixed time, the scope to discuss historical development of science is generally limited. Examinations and marks largely dominate over knowing the history of a scientific topic. This webinar was an attempt to bring the background history on the development and advances of science and technology to the front. Knowing the contribution of different individuals and communities towards the development of science would help one understand the advancement of various scientific topics better. It would also help propagate science to benefit a large section of people in the society. Another aspect of this webinar was to bring close together scientists, researchers, academicians and students who work in varying and segmented areas of science as science and technology have become highly multi-disciplinary in nature, although there is a strong need for joining hands together in many areas of research such that Interdisciplinary research activities get promoted to usher in new advancements in science and technology. It is sure that this webinar was able to keep a humble foot print in this direction, and hence, its success.

Detailed report of this event is also published online in Bengali in the 6th Edition of the weekly news magazine, “The Fourth Lane”, in the YouTube Channel. One may follow this report by surfing <https://youtu.be/xnlwQNFxErc>.

Santanu Das

Secretary ISEC and

Member of Organising Committee of the International Webinar on “History of Science”