

Newsletter

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Nehru Centre



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Worli, Mumbai - 400 018.
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40245400

Annual Subscription Rs. 100

HOMAGE

Nehru Centre will pay homage to late Shri Rajni Patel, founder member and former General Secretary of the Centre on his 42nd death anniversary.

All are requested to join.

Date: **Friday, 3rd May 2024**

Time: **11.00 a.m.**

Venue: **Ground Floor,
Discovery of India Building**

Events At a Glance...

CULTURE WING

SUMMER CAMPS

Workshop on Flute

**Workshop on Acting &
Theatre Appreciation**

Workshop on Lavani

Workshop on Kathak

When: 13th-17th May 2024

Details on page 5

LIBRARY

SUMMER BOOK CLUB

Enjoy the cool summer mornings with a bevy of authors @Nehru Centre Library

When: 27th May - 1st June

Details on page 8

Constituent Assembly Debates Draft Constitution (contd.)

On 23rd November 1949, the Constituent Assembly met to further discuss the Draft Constitution.

Shri Alladi Krishnaswamy Aiyar

Sir, in supporting the Motion of the Honourable Dr. Ambedkar for the adoption of the Constitution, I crave the indulgence of the House for a short while. The Constitution as it has finally emerged, truly reflects the spirit of the Objectives Resolution with which this Assembly started its work and the Preamble of the Constitution which is mainly founded on the Objectives Resolution.

The Assembly has adopted the principle of adult franchise with an abundant faith in the common man and the ultimate success of democratic rule and in the full belief that the introduction of democratic government on the basis of adult suffrage will bring enlightenment and promote the well-being of a common man. The principle of adult suffrage was adopted with the full realisation of its implications. If democracy is to be broad based and the system of government that is to function is to have the ultimate sanction of the people in a country where the large mass of the people are illiterate and the people owning property are so few, the introduction of any property or educational qualifications for the exercise

of the franchise would be a negation of the principles of democracy. This Assembly deserves to be congratulated on adopting the principle of adult suffrage and it may be stated that never before in the history of the world has such an experiment been so boldly undertaken.

Realising that the communal electorate and democracy cannot co-exist and that communal electorate was a device adopted by the British imperialists to prevent the free growth of democracy on a healthy and sound basis, this Assembly, under the leadership of our Prime Minister and Sardar Patel, has done away with them while making some special provisions for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes on the basis of joint electorates for a temporary period. As Sardarji has rightly pointed out in his memorable speech on the occasion, we have to demonstrate to the world, to the class of people who have flourished and who have been nurtured on communal claims, our genuine faith in the fundamental principles of democracy and in the establishment of a secular state without distinction of caste, creed or class.

The Constitution has accorded proper place to the Judiciary as it should be in a written and especially in a Federal

Constitution. The Supreme Court in India under the Indian Constitution has wider powers than the highest courts in any other known Federation including that of the USA. The Supreme Court is a court of appeal in all civil cases from every High Court. It is the ultimate arbiter in all matters involving the interpretation of the Constitution. It has very wide revisory jurisdiction over all tribunals even if they be not courts in the strict sense of the term. It has original jurisdiction to issue prerogative writs throughout the length and breadth of India. It is an inter-statal court competent to decide questions *inter sé* as between States. Even in regard to criminal matters, the Supreme Court is in a position to grant special leave and can also exercise criminal appellate jurisdiction.é

Mr. President, on the subject of Fundamental Rights, while religious freedom is guaranteed to every individual and every religious persuasion, the State does not identify or ally itself with any particular religion or religious belief. There is no such thing as State religion in India.

Altogether it may be claimed that the Constitution gives sufficient scope for the achievement by the Indian Republic of all those great objectives which are contained in the Preamble to the Constitution. The Constitution contains within itself the necessary elements of growth, flexibility and expansion. To a large extent, any Constitution depends upon the people who work it. It is the human element that, after all, is the most important in the working of any Constitution.

Begum Aizaz Rasul

I would like to congratulate Dr. Ambedkar and members of the Drafting Committee on their wonderful work and to thank you, Mr. President, for the patient and efficient manner in which you have conducted the proceedings of this House. The Secretariat staff of the Constituent Assembly also deserve our thanks for their hard work and incessant labour.



I have full faith that this secularity will always be kept guarded and unsullied, as upon it depends that complete unity of the people of India without which all hopes of progress would be in vain.

Then, Sir, being a Democratic Republic, the Constitution provides for all citizens, individually and collectively, the best fruits of democracy and ensures to them those basic conditions and freedoms which alone make life secure, significant and productive. Even though these Fundamental Rights are hedged in by various conditions and provisos, yet, to my mind, they guarantee to the citizen that measure of liberty which is necessary for a free and full development of his total personality. These are also justiciable which is an essential corollary to the theory of Fundamental Rights which are incorporated in a Constitution to ensure the principle that man has certain rights independently of the Government under which he lives and a

court of justice is there to see that these rights are not infringed by any of the governmental bodies - the Legislature or the Executive.

Sir, the women of India are happy to step into their rightful heritage of complete equality with men in all spheres of life and activity. I say so because I am convinced that this is no new concept which has been postulated for the purposes of this Constitution, but is an ideal that has long been cherished by India, though social conditions for some time had tragically debased it in practice. This Constitution affirms that ideal and gives the solemn assurance that the rights of women in law will be wholly honoured in the Indian Republic.

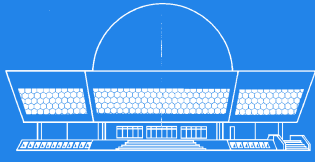
Sir, what a thrill of pride we felt on reading that the Prime Minister had referred to and quoted from the Constitution of India when he addressed the Parliament of the mightiest democracy of the modern world. By this gesture of his, we feel that the seal of authenticity has been placed on the democratic nature of our Constitution. A Constitution is judged by the spirit in which it is worked. It is judged by the manner and method of its implementation. Then, again, the ultimate aim of all Constitutions is to increase human happiness, human well-being and weld together the various elements in a country into one nation. Ours is a great country with a great destiny stretching before her. I hope and pray that the implementation of this Constitution will be such as to enhance the prestige of our motherland and make her a dynamic force that will bring together all nations of the world within the orbit of an enduring peace.

Sir, I support Dr. Ambedkar's motion.

What Nehru said....

If my mind was full of pictures from recorded history and more-or-less ascertained fact, I realized that even the illiterate peasant had a picture gallery in his mind, though this was largely drawn from myth and tradition and epic heroes and heroines, and only very little from history. Nevertheless, it was vivid enough.

... from Chapter 3, *The Quest, The Discovery of India*.



NEHRU PLANETARIUM

Tel: 91-22-24920510
Mobile : 9892890510

SKY SHOW : COSMIC LIFE

12 noon (Hindi) 1:30 p.m. (Marathi)
3:00 p.m. (English) 4:30 p.m. (Hindi)

(MONDAY CLOSED)

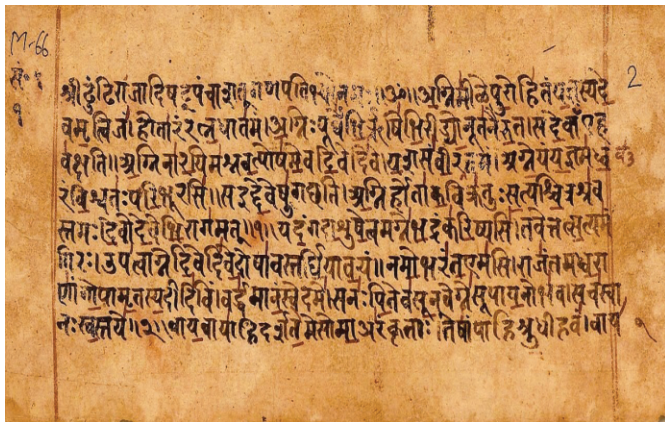
Tickets will be available online and at the Booking Counter.
Visitors are expected to strictly follow Covid-19 norms.

Email: managernpmumbai@gmail.com

Astronomy in Ancient India - 1

The earliest reference to astronomy in the Indian subcontinent is during the Vedic period in the Vedāᅅga Jyotish, which was an astronomical auxiliary to the Vedas (see box). Sage Lagadha (c. 1180 BC), about whom we know little, is credited with authorship of the Vedāᅅga Jyotish. Initially, like any other knowledge, astronomical knowledge too was passed orally from one generation to the next. He documented the several centuries of astronomical knowledge in Vedāᅅga Jyotish.

Vedāᅅga Jyotish appears in Rigveda and Yajurveda dated 1500–1000 BC and 1200 - 800 BC respectively. Rigveda has 36 verses related to Vedāᅅga Jyotish and Yajurveda has 43 verses. These verses were primarily intended to be a manual for determining the correct time for rituals to be performed.



A page from the Rigveda manuscript

The importance given to the study of astronomy in Vedic literature is evident from the following Shlok or verse (35th in Rigveda and 4th in Yajurveda)

यथा शिखा मयूराणां नागानां मणयो यथा ।
तद्वद् वेदांगशास्त्राणां ज्योतिषं मूर्धनि स्थितम् ॥

Meaning

Like the combs of peacocks and the crest jewels of serpents, *Jyotish* (see box) stands at the head of the Veda's auxiliaries.

Most of the verses of Vedāᅅga Jyotish are common in both the Rig and the Yajur Veda. However, as the knowledge of astronomy improved with time, the verses from the Rigveda were appropriately changed or updated in the Yajurveda.

According to Vedāᅅga Jyotish, the universe was divided into three parts: *Prithvi* (the Earth), *Antariksh* (the Firmament), and *Dyaus* or द्यौष् (the Heavens). The Sun was the most important heavenly body and its (apparent) path in the sky, called the *Kranti Vrutta* or ecliptic in English was considered sacred. People were aware of the sequential changes of seasons and the time needed for agricultural activities such as sowing or reaping.

Vedic astronomers/mathematicians knew that two equal phases of the Moon lasted for 29/30 days from a full moon night (*Poornima*) to the next full moon night or from a new moon night (*Amavasya*) to the next new moon night. This period was *māsa* (मासः) or one month. A month was divided into two *pakshas* or parts, with each *paksha* having 15 *tithis*. These were called *Shukla* and *Krishna paksha* respectively. *Shukla paksha* began with the first sighting of the Moon after *Amavasya* above the western horizon till *Poornima* or the full moon. *Krishna Paksha* lasted from the full moon to the new moon.

The verses of Vedāᅅga Jyotish gave the instructions to find the times of the first and last sighting of the Moon and when the monthly rites like *Darshapurnamas* (दर्शपूर्णमास) when a group of seven sacrifices were made and *Chaturmasya* (chatur (चतुर), 'four,' and *māsa* (मासः), 'month' took place.

Vedic astronomers also noted that the Moon is always seen close to the Ecliptic, the imaginary line on the sky that marks the path of the planets rotating around the Sun. To denote these days, the Ecliptic was divided into 27 parts of 13 and 1/3 degrees each. Each part was identified by a prominent celestial object, such as a bright star or an asterism (a group of a few stars). This star, or a group of stars, was called *Nakshatra*. For example, *Rohini* and *Krutika* are both *nakshatras*, but *Rohini* is a single star and *Krutika* is a group of seven stars.

In Chinese and Arabic astronomy, the sky is divided into equal divisions of 27 parts named *xiù* and *manzil* meaning lunar stations. But 'the method and the manner adopted by the Vedic priest unmistakably point to their originality'. (Ref: *Indian Astronomy: A sourcebook. A Nehru Centre Publication.*)

The early Vedic astronomers considered one year equal to 12 months each of a duration of 30 days and a total of 360 days. By the time of the Yajurveda (1200 - 800 BC), it was discovered that one year was actually five to six days longer than 360 days. Thus, one year was taken to be 365 days and a fraction more. The 5th century AD astronomer Aryabhatta is credited with having calculated this extra fraction of a day.

Vedic astronomers defined the first day of the year as when the Sun moves from the southern hemisphere to the northern hemisphere. The *Nakshatra* which is closest to the Sun indicates this position. The day is called *Vasant Sampat*, the vernal or spring equinox. Later literature indicates that the spring equinox started when the Sun was close to *Krutika* (Pleiads) *Nakshatra*, about 2300 BC. Vedic sage Atri (one of the great seven sages of *Saptarishis*) and his family specialised in time calculations and observations of solar and lunar eclipses.

Vedāṅga Jyotish continued to be used till about the 5th century AD. However, other astronomical literature was also composed and written during this period. This new class of astronomical literature was the *Siddhantas* (Doctrine) or *Samhita* (from *sam* meaning together and *hita*, past participle of *dadhāti*, which represents a collection of rules, mantras, hymns, prayers, etc.). The *Siddhantas* gave rules or methods in order to arrive at a solution to a particular problem in astronomy. *Surya Siddhant* is one such example. *Romika Siddhanta*, meaning 'The Doctrine of the Romans', is based on the astronomical learning of the Byzantine Empire, also called the Eastern Roman Empire.

We also observe that various authors and composers of *Siddhantas* or *Samhitas* started associating their



Statue of Sage Atri at Atreyapuram village of Andhra Pradesh

names with their work. For example, the astronomical treatise *Aryabhatiya* was composed by Aryabhata.

We will discuss some of these in the coming issues.

Vedas and Vedāṅgas

Vedas are a collection of verses, poems and hymns believed to have been transmitted orally by sages to their disciples. The Vedic age lasted from 1500 to 600 BC. There are four Vedic Samhitas (collections of verses, poems, hymns etc.) i.e. Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda.

The Vedāṅgas, or auxiliary texts, are very important to study and understand the Vedas. Vedic scholars have used six Vedāṅgas to bring out the essence of the Vedas. They are phonetics (*śikṣā*), ceremonial texts (*kalpa*), prosody (*chanda*), grammar (*vyākaraṇa*), etymology (*nirukta*), and astronomy and astrology (*jyotiṣa*). Mathematics (*ganit*) and astronomy (*jyotish*) were synonyms.

PHOTO EXHIBITION

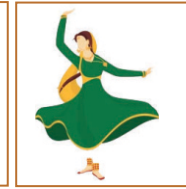
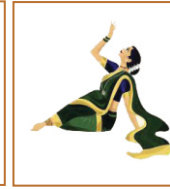
To commemorate the 40th anniversary of the First Space Flight by an Indian Cosmonaut, Wing Commander Rakesh Sharma on 3rd April 1984, a unique photographic exhibition about his historic space flight is on display on the first floor of Nehru Planetarium.

Mr. Aleksei V. Surovtsev, Consul General of the Russian Federation in Mumbai inaugurated the exhibition on 11 April 2024.

The exhibition will be open to the planetarium's visitors until 31 May 2024.

Culture Wing

SUMMER CAMPS @ THE CULTURE WING (13th May to 17th May 2024)



Continuing since the past 22 years, Nehru Centre is again happy to announce SUMMER CAMPS in the Culture Wing in various art forms like dance, drama and music.

Flute

by Pandit Sunil Kant
Gupta

11.00 am to 2.00 p.m.
Hall of Harmony
Ground Floor



Acting & Theatre Appreciation

by Abhijeet Zunjarrao

3.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.
Hall of Vision - A
Second Floor



Lavani Majhi Sakhi

by Maya Jadhav,
Kavita Koli, Vijaya Palav,
Sachin Gajmal

5.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.
Hall of Vision - B
Second Floor



Kathak Darpan

by Vidushi
Saswati Sen

11.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m.
Nehru Centre
Auditorium



Entry by registration only. The forms are available from the Nehru Centre's Culture Wing or can be downloaded from the website: nehru-centre.org

For more details, contact: Shri Prakash Pawar on 022-40245400

Extn: 119 and also Whatsapp: 9324857186

GRAND FINALE

Do join us for the Grand Finale show - to be performed by all participating students of the various summer workshops. All participants, participant's parents, relatives, guests and general public are welcome.

Date: Friday, 17th May 2024

Venue: Nehru Centre Auditorium

**PABITRA SAHA
APURBA BISWAS
CHINMOY KARMAKAR
CHANDAN ROY
GAURANGA BESHAI
SOVAN DAS**

This group of six artists will exhibit their artworks in mix media.

**Tuesday 30th April 2024
to Monday 6th May 2024
(AC Gallery)**

RAJ MAJI

Raj Maji will display figurative compositions in acrylic on canvas.

**Tuesday 30th April 2024
to Monday 6th May 2024
(Circular Gallery)**

S. JAGANNIVASAN



S. Jagannivasan, the founder of 'Matex Net' an e-commerce company, expresses his artistic talent in oil and acrylic media on canvas.

**Tuesday 7th May 2024
to Monday 13th May 2024
(AC Gallery)**

AJIT MATE

Ajit hails from Ratnagiri. His figurative compositions are in acrylic on canvas in various subjects.

**Tuesday 7th May 2024
to Monday 13th May 2024
(Circular Gallery)**

DR. MAYA BHALERAO



Dr. Maya Bhalerao is a consultant anaesthesiologist from Pune. She will exhibit water colour paintings on nature.

**Tuesday 14th May 2024
to Monday 20th May 2024
(AC Gallery)**

**PRAKASHCHANDRA
VISHWAKARMA**

Prakashchandra is an eminent artist from Uttar Pradesh. His paintings are compositions of human figures.

**Tuesday 14th May 2024
to Monday 20th May 2024
(Circular Gallery)**

MAHARASHTRA ART FAIR

A group of artists, sculptors and photographers from different professions will showcase their art in this show.

**Tuesday 21st May 2024
to Monday 27th May 2024
(AC Gallery)**

**SAYLI KOTHEKAR
SITARAM RAUL
ANIKET THOPATE
OMKAR AROSKAR
KAVITA DUDI
SWARUP PATADE**



Sayli Kothekar

This group of six artists will exhibit their artworks in mix media.

**Tuesday 21st May 2024
to Monday 27th May 2024
(Circular Gallery)**

**RAMESHWARI DEOKAR
CHETAN VAITY**

Rameshwari's paintings depict the beauty of nature.

Chetan's work is influenced by the sculptures of Shri Vinayak Karmarkar.

**Tuesday 28th May 2024
to Monday 3rd June 2024
(AC Gallery)**

RANG PRATISHTHAN

Twenty five artists participating in the show will showcase their artworks.

**Tuesday 28th May 2024
to Monday 3rd June 2024
(Circular Gallery)**

RAMSAR WETLAND SITES IN INDIA

16. Mizoram

Pala Wetland

Pala Wetland is the largest natural wetland in the state of Mizoram. The site includes a relatively deep lake (over 16 metres deep on average) and its surrounding forest catchment area which reaches almost 600m above sea level. Pala wetland also known as Palak wetland, is located at about 360 kms from Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram. Pala Wetland falls under the Phura Forests Range.

The Pala Wetland is revered by the local Mara people and has a deep connection with their history. The lake is fed by two main streams from the nearby mountains. Its drainage is through a small river called Pala Lui. This drainage area creates a stretch of valley, which remains the main agricultural area of the Mara people.

It is the major source of freshwater and fish for the villages as also of irrigation water for wet rice cultivation, horticulture and other forms of agriculture. The lake is very rich in biodiversity as it is surrounded on the edges by many hydrophytes and swampy areas with profusion of herbaceous vegetation and grass, as also various species of beautiful orchids. A total of 75% of the catchment area is covered with forest areas and 25% covered with woody forest interfaces with bamboo plants.

There are reports of over 640 species of birds in Mizoram and the aquatic avifauna number about 14 species, mostly from Palak Lake in southern Mizoram. Confirmed reports comprise one species each of the lesser whistling duck, red-wattled lapwing, common sandpiper, and little grebe all of which are of nearly endangered species and the near threatened Oriental darter. There are two species of swamp hen and they show a stable population.

There are four species of the large waders of herons reported in Mizoram, of which the white-bellied heron is considered to be critically endangered.

Deforestation, shifting cultivation and collection of minor forest produces in the catchment area has caused soil erosion resulting in increased lake siltation. The problem is further aggravated by the prolific growth of floating weeds mainly water hyacinth.

The Pala Wetland was designated as a Ramsar Wetland site on 31st August 2021.

Further Reading at Nehru Centre Library:

- *State of our Union: Mizoram by P. Lalnithanga, Publications Division (Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Government of India), 1997, Call no.915.4166/Lai, Barcode: 1196*



Pala Wetland



Pala Wetland Reserve



White Bellied Heron

NEHRU CENTRE PUBLICATIONS

Books for Sale

Nehru Revisited
 India's Defence Preparedness
 Nehru and Indian Constitutionalism
 Internal Security in India
 Constitutionalism and Democracy
 in South Asia
 मुंबई: काल आणि आज
 Mumbai: Past and Present
 India and Central Asia
 Witness to History
 India-Russia Relations
 India-China Relations
 Remembering Einstein
 Challenges to Democracy in India
 Rule of Law in a Free Society
 Science in India
 Exploring The Universe

Colourful art catalogues for sale

- (1) GOPALRAO DEUSKAR (1995)
 - (2) VINAYAKRAO KARMARKAR (1996)
 - (3) MITTER BEDI (1997)
 - (4) S. L. & G. S. HALDANKAR (1998)
 - (5) BALAJI & HARISH TALIM (1999)
 - (6) D. G. KULKARNI (DIZI) (2001)
 - (7) NARAYAN L. SONAVADEKAR (2003)
 - (8) NAGESH B. SABANAVAR (2004)
 - (9) SAMAKALEEN (2005)
 - (10) VINAYAK S. MASOJI (2006)
- and many more...

ART FUSION catalogues

2007 / 2008 / 2009 / 2010 / 2011 / 2012 /
 2013 / 2014

Set of five assorted gift cards
 Designed by differently abled children

SANSKRUTI - CD ROM :
 An aesthetics of Indian culture

DISCOVERY OF INDIA (VCD)

Set of ten greeting cards
 Based on Discovery of India Exposition

Available at:
 Book Stall, Ground Floor,
 Discovery of India Building,
 Nehru Centre, Worli, Mumbai - 400 018.



Let's Read Together - 2024

Let's Read Together @ Nehru Centre Library is back again from 1st May to 15th June 2024. The Summer Book Reading Club invites you to join authors from 27th May to 1st June 2024.



1. Learn about Sustainable Development Goals with Katie Bagli & Pooja Gupta Mahurkar
Monday 27th May and Friday 31st May



2. Read about the life of a butterfly with no colour with Shanaya Sethi
Tuesday 28th May



3. Explore the garbage dump called Kachua Beach with Nandita da Cunha
Wednesday 29th May



4. Travel the journey of a paper plane with Bharti Singh
Thursday 30th May



5. Manage your money with Kunjal Shah & Janhavi Langad
Saturday 1st June



Time: 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. (on all days)

Poetry Evening - In Celebration of Rabindranath Tagore

Dr. Paramita Mukherjee Mullick will be in conversation with Multilingual Poets, who will recite Tagore's translated poems.

Date: Saturday, 18th May, 2024
 Time: 4:30 p.m. Venue: Who Are We Hall
 Register: nehrucentrelibrary@gmail.com



nehru-centre.org/library.html nehrucentrelibrary.blogspot.com
nehrucen-koha.informindia.co.in www.facebook.com/NehruCentreLibrary
www.twitter.com/nehrucenlib

10.00 a.m. to 5.45 p.m.
On all working days

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