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IGNOU Regional Centre, Cochin

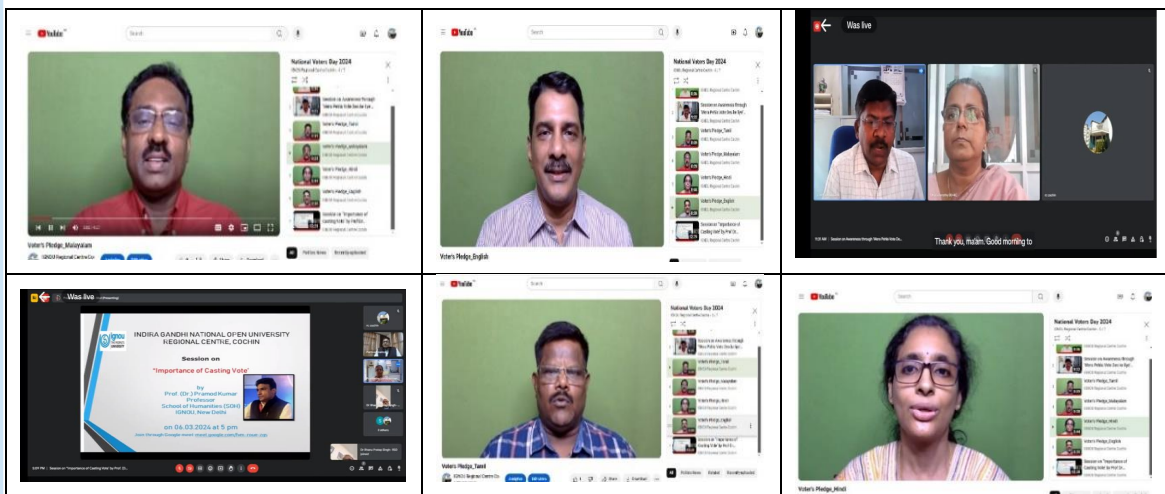
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OLIMPIC - A Newsletter covering Open Learning Innovations & Management Practices in IGNOU Regional Centre, Cochin

'Mera Pehla Vote Desh Ke Liye Campaign! – A Bird's Eye View!



The 'Mera Pehla Vote Desh Ke Liye' campaign was launched by the Ministry of Education (MoE) in collaboration with Ministry of Youth Affairs (MYA) from 28.02.2024 to 06.03.2024 (further extended till 14.02.2024) with an objective to ensure universal enlightened participation of youth especially first-time voters to come in huge numbers and vote for the Country and to celebrate the 'Chunav ka Parv' and join the campaign. The Campaign in a way symbolizes the importance of Election and urges the youth to take pride in voting for the largest democracy in the World.

As per D.O. letter dated 28.02.2024 from MoE, all Higher Education Institutions including IGNOU were directed to actively participate in the Campaign through various activities like conducting outreach programmes, taking voter's pledge, creating posters, organizing workshops/seminars, creating selfie points and encouraging wide use of social media for wider dissemination of information pertaining to the campaign.

IGNOU Regional Centre Cochin takes pride in actively participating in the campaign by conducting Voter's pledge in four languages namely Hindi, Malayalam, Tamil and English and conducting two Online sessions emphasizing the Importance of casting vote and to create awareness about the Campaign.

The recordings of the sessions are available under the Playlist 'National Voters Day 2024' and can be accessed through the link <https://www.youtube.com/@IGNOURegionalCentreCochin/playlists>. For more details/photographs, you may visit page no 7 of this Newsletter



37th Convocation of IGNOU

The 37th Convocation of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was held on 20th February 2024 and webcasted live from IGNOU Head Quarters, New Delhi from 9.30 am onwards. Sh. Jagdeep Dhankar, Hon'ble Vice President of India was the Chief Guest at the IGNOU Main Campus, New Delhi. The main Convocation function was held in the IGNOU Main Campus at New Delhi.

The Regional Convocation was simultaneously organized at various Regional Centres in the Country including Cochin at Municipal Corporation Town Hall, Near Railway over bridge, Ernakulam North. The Guest of Honour was Dr. Ambat Vijayakumar, Renowned Mathematician and Emeritus Professor, Cochin University of Science And Technology (CUSAT), Kerala



Sh. Jagdeep Dhankar, Hon'ble Vice President of India delivering the 36th IGNOU Convocation address through virtual mode on 20.02.2024



Dr. Ambat Vijayakumar, Renowned Mathematician and Emeritus Professor, Cochin University of Science And Technology (CUSAT) delivering the 36th IGNOU Convocation address through virtual mode on 20.02.2024

At IGNOU Regional Centre, Cochin, the Regional Director, Dr. J.S. Dorothy presented the Regional Centre report in which the activities and best practices of Regional Centre, Cochin were highlighted.

The Guest of Honour Dr. Ambat Vijayakumar, Renowned Mathematician and Emeritus Professor, Cochin University of Science And Technology (CUSAT), addressed the audience. In the address, the base for the establishment of IGNOU as a single mode Distance Teaching Institution and later becoming a dual mode institution was recalled. In-line with the NEP-2020, IGNOU having moved to be an online learning University so that multiple reach to suit



37th Convocation of IGNOU

the interest of the learners is facilitated to ensure their access into Programme of Study was also highlighted. The importance of the institution being as important as the interest to enroll for a Programme of Study and the successful completion of the programme being dependent on the sustained interest to pursue the education amidst the life challenges was emphasized by the Guest of Honour.

Around 469 Certificates were handed over by the Guest of Honour in face to face mode to the Learners. Dr. S. Vijayaragavan, ARD compered for the Programme and all the staff at IGNOU RC Cochin enthusiastically participated in the occasion.

37th Convocation of IGNOU

At Regional Centre, Cochin, 7198 learners of various academic programmes have successfully completed their Programme and awarded degrees in this convocation. Out of them, 469 learners attended in person to collect their Degrees. Sh. Tony Stanley from BSWG Programme was the Gold medalist from Cochin for this 37th Convocation who received the Gold Medal by attending at New Delhi.

The function ended with vote of thanks and the National Anthem. The recorded video of the live telecast from New Delhi is available under the playlist 'Convocation' of IGNOU RC Cochin YouTube channel available at the link: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-du1gIra7HJfJQgLxEc4zvhabqOHLijx>.



The Guest of Honour Dr. Ambat Vijayakumar, Renowned Mathematician and Emeritus Professor, Cochin University of Science And Technology (CUSAT) delivering the 36th IGNOU Convocation address through virtual mode on 20.02.2024



The Guest of Honour Dr. Ambat Vijayakumar, Renowned Mathematician and Emeritus Professor, Cochin University of Science And Technology (CUSAT) awarding Certificates to the students



Participants of 37th IGNOU Convocation with Guest of Honour at Regional Centre Cochin on 20.02.2024



Staff of RC Cochin, REC Cochin and Study Centre 14000 during the 37th IGNOU Convocation at Regional Centre Cochin on 20.02.2024



Innovation Club Activity

The Innovation Club at Regional Centre, Cochin was initiated under the encouragement of the National Centre for Innovation in Distance Education (NCIDE) of IGNOU. The sessions are being held at Regional Centre, Cochin with an objective to enrich and generate awareness amongst the learners of IGNOU on a wide range of topics ranging from *Career Management* to *Healthy Way of Living: Millet for Wellness* through which the learners were made aware about various issues and motivated to think innovatively, generate ideas and embark on a path which could lead to future development of the Nation.

As a part of the Innovation club activities at RC Cochin, the following events were celebrated.

- 1) National Startup Day on 16th January, 2024
- 2) National Startup Day on 16th January, 2024
- 3) International Women's Day Celebrations (8th March, 2024)

Innovation Club Activity

Four Online/Virtual monthly lecture identified as Open cum Enrichment Session was held at the Regional Centre, Cochin during this period on the topics My Startup Journey, Indian Youth: Opportunities for Empowerment, Importance of Nutrition among the Women and Young Girls and Gender Equality: Unfinished Tasks was held as part of Startup Day, Youth Day and International Women's day week celebrations and the same was coordinated/ administered by Dr. Praseetha Unnikrishnan, AD who is also the Nodal Officer for the Innovation club activities at Regional Centre, Cochin.

S. No.	Date	Resource Person	Topic of Presentation
1	12.01.2024	Dr. T.P. Sasikumar, Former Dy. Director, Cabinet Secretariat, New Delhi	Indian Youth: Opportunities for Empowerment'
2	16.01.2024	Shri. Krishna Gopal Singh, Co-Founder of VishvakSENah Agro and airy Pvt. Ltd. and Co-founder of VishvakSENah Herbs and Aromatic Pvt. Ltd.	My Startup Journey
3	13.03.2024	Prof. (Dr.) Deeksha Kapur, Professor, School of Continuing Education (SOCE), IGNOU, New Delhi	Importance of Nutrition among the Women and Young Girls
4	15.03.2024	Ms. Poonam Bhushan, Associate Professor, School of Education (SOE), IGNOU, New Delhi	Gender Equality: Unfinished Tasks

National Youth Day on 12th January, 2024

The National Youth Day was celebrated on 12th January on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda with an objective to inspire today's youth through the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda. The objective was to inspire today's youth through the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda towards making India a developed nation startups for which one Online session by Dr. T.P. Sasikumar, Former Dy. Director, Cabinet Secretariat, New Delhi was conducted on the topic 'Indian Youth: Opportunities for Empowerment'.



Screenshot of the Virtual/Online Open Session cum Enrichment Session addressed by Dr. T.P Sasikumar, Former Deputy Director, Directorate General of Security, Cabinet Secretariat, New Delhi On the topic Indian Youth: Opportunities for Empowerment on 12.01.2024



Screenshot of the Virtual/Online Open Session cum Enrichment Session addressed by Shri. Krishna Gopal Singh, Co-Founder of VishvakSENah Agro and airy Pvt. Ltd. and Co-founder of VishvakSENah Herbs and Aromatic Pvt. Ltd. On the topic My Startup Journey on 16.01.2024

National Startup Day on 16th January, 2024

The National Startup Day was celebrated on 16th January to encourage and motivate learners towards Innovation and startups for which one Online session by Shri. Krishna Gopal Singh, Co-Founder of VishvakSENah Agro and airy Pvt. Ltd. and Co-founder of VishvakSENah Herbs and Aromatic Pvt. Ltd. on the topic My Startup Journey was conducted.

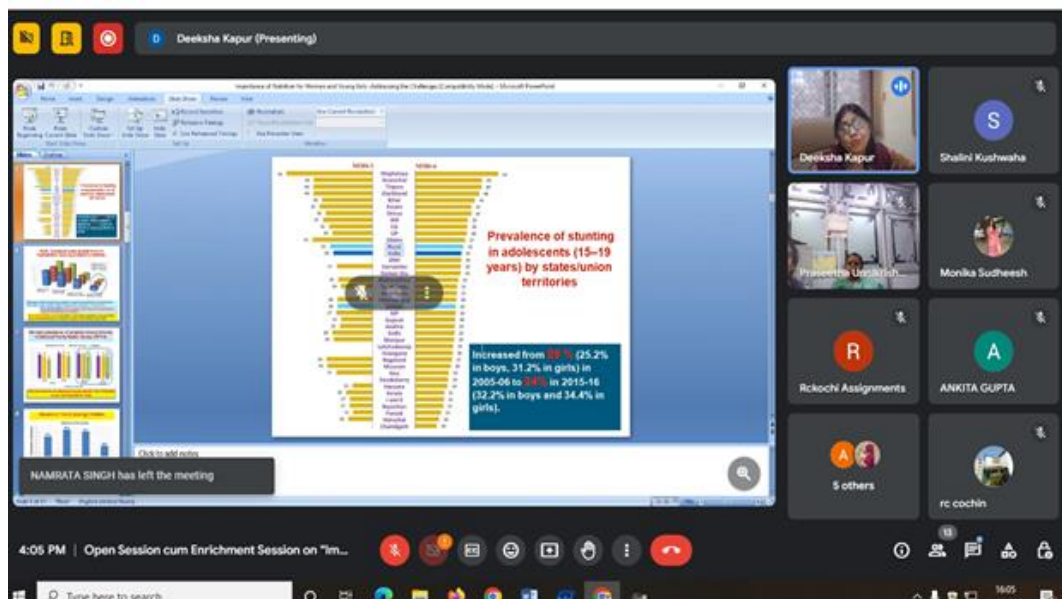


Innovation Club Activity

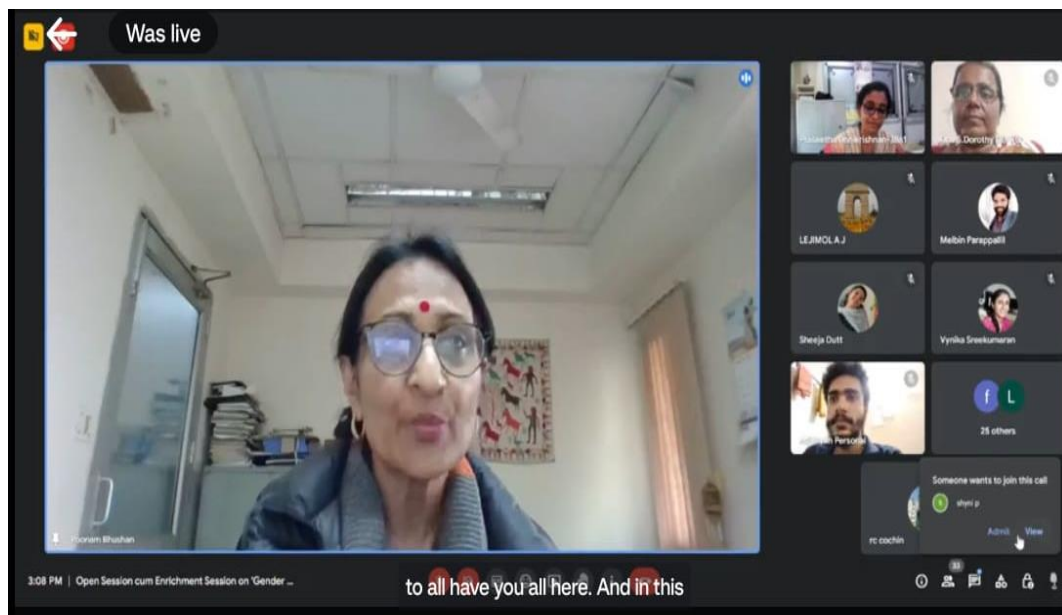
Innovation Club Activity

The recording of the Innovation club Open Session cum Enrichment Session is available in IGNOU Regional Centre Cochin official YouTube channel under playlist “The Innovation Club- monthly lecture identified as ‘Open Session cum Enrichment Session’ at the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9qQbtyYPZB8&list=P L-du1gIra7HJssHwGoeKPnpjZ K1 YZpMYs>. In all the Innovation club Open Session cum Enrichment Session, highlight about the availability of IGNOU Programme as courses, NEP PDP Programme in the SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) portal and life skills, soft skill education were also a constant event.

The technical assistance for uploading the recording Shri. Muhammad Ansar, AEDP and Ms. Reshma Suresh.



Screenshot of the Virtual/Online Open Session cum Enrichment Session addressed by Prof. (Dr.) Deeksha Kapur, Professor, School of Continuing Education (SOCE), IGNOU, New Delhi on the topic Importance of Nutrition among the Women and Young Girls on 13.03.2024



Screenshot of the Virtual/Online Open Session cum Enrichment Session addressed by Ms. Poonam Bhushan, Associate Professor, School of Education (SOE), IGNOU, New Delhi On the topic Gender Equality: Unfinished Tasks on 15.03.2024

International Women's Day Celebrations (8th March, 2024)

The International Women's Day is celebrated on 8th March, 2024 every year to celebrate the social, economic, political and cultural achievements of women. The theme for 2024 Women's day is 'Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress. IGNOU RC Cochin celebrated this day by organizing a lecture on the topic 'Gender Equality: Unfinished Tasks' by Ms. Poonam Bhushan, Associate Professor, School of Education, IGNOU HQ, New Delhi.



Promotional initiatives

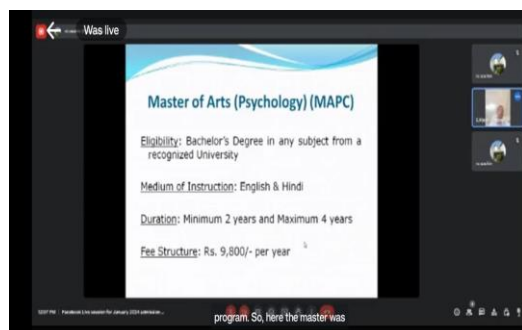
Online/Virtual Promotional Meetings, Campaigns and Events with a view to enhance the enrolment for January 2024 Admission cycle besides optimizing the awareness about IGNOU programmes were organized by Regional Centre, Cochin through various Study Centres and other Institutions to promote IGNOU programmes by reaching out to the unreached. Integrated mode of reach blending Face-to-face meetings and virtual meetings were utilized to promote/create awareness about IGNOU Programmes. Facebook Live sessions were also organized for the Learners/General public associated with Regional Centre, Cochin for sharing of information pertaining to IGNOU Admissions for January 2024.

Promotional initiatives

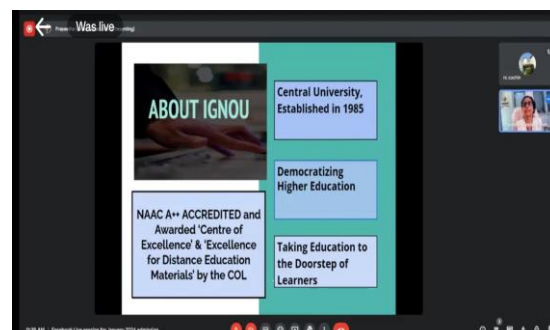
The Live Programmes using Regional Centre Cochin Official Facebook Page was given by the Academics of Regional Centre, Cochin. The Technical support for the Face Book Session Programme was rendered by Sh. Muhammad Ansar T A, AEDP, Regional Centre Cochin and Ms. Reshma Suresh, Outsourced staff.

The following six promotional sessions were organized by RC Cochin:

S. No	Date & Time	Meeting organized/ administered by	Participant	Purpose
1	03.01.2024	Dr. Praseetha Unnikrishnan, AD	The Facebook session has 313 views	Facebook Live Promotional meeting on the topic “Add-on Programmes of IGNOU for better job prospects” in Malayalam Language
2	09.01.2024	Dr. Praseetha Unnikrishnan, AD	The Facebook session has 305 views	Facebook Live Promotional Session on “Management Programmes of IGNOU” in English Language
3	10.01.2024	Dr. S. Vijayaragavan, ARD	The Facebook session has 297 views	Facebook Live Promotional Session on “Master Programmes offered by SOSS of IGNOU” in English by Language
4	11.01.2024	Dr. Praseetha Unnikrishnan, AD	The Facebook session has 1k views	Facebook Live Promotional Session on “Management Programmes of IGNOU” in English Language
5	16.01.2024 & 17.01.2024	Dr. L. Chandra Sekaran, PS & Sh. Sebastin D’Cruz, EDP	General Public	IGNOU RC Cochin was part of an two day Exhibition called ‘DISHA’ at Palakkad District from 16th to 17th January, 2024
6	27.02.2024	Dr. Praseetha Unnikrishnan, AD	The Facebook session has 293 views	Facebook Live Promotional Session on “Prospects of Computer related Programmes of IGNOU” in English language



Screenshot of Presentation presented by Dr. S. Vijayaragavan, ARD during the FB Live session on 10.01.2024



Screenshot of Presentation presented by Dr. Praseetha Unnikrishnan, AD during the FB Live session on 27.02.2024



Dr. L. Chandra Sekaran, PS and Sh. Sebastin D’Cruz, EDP at the Exhibition Stall of IGNOU at Disha Higher Studies Expo & Job Fest at Thrithala, Palakkad on 16.01.2024 and 17.01.2024



Exhibition Stall of IGNOU at Disha Higher Studies Expo & Job Fest at Thrithala, Palakkad on 16.01.2024 and 17.01.2024



Mera Pehla Vote Desh Ke Liye Campaign

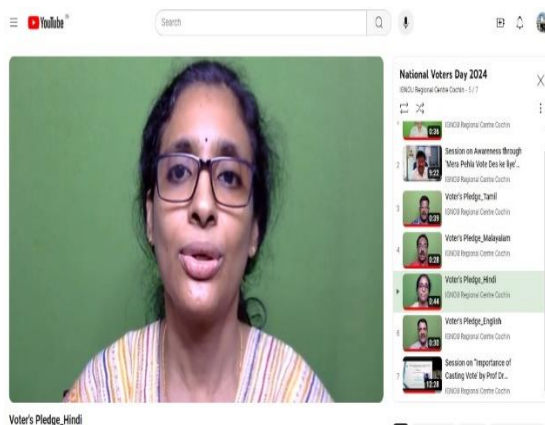
Other Activities at Regional Centre Cochin

1. Mera Pehla Vote Desh ke Liye' Campaign

As part of the Mera Pehla Vote Desh ke Liye' Campaign IGNOU Regional Centre Cochin conducted 2 Online Sessions to create awareness to the first time voters of our Country.

Additionally, Voters Pledge has been undertaken by the Academics/Staffs of RC Cochin and recorded videos of the Pledges has been made available or public viewing through YouTube channel of IGNOU RC Cochin.

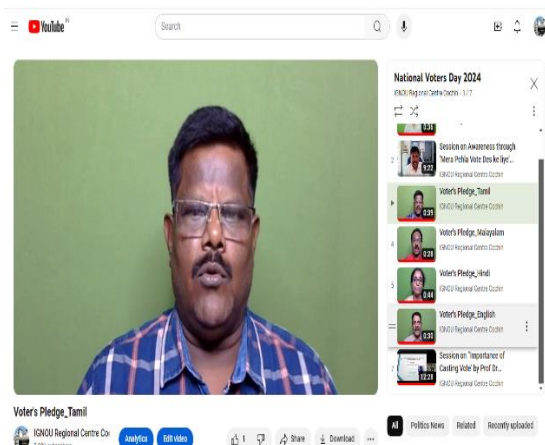
The entire virtual event has been recorded and is available in the Facebook page of IGNOU RC Cochin at <https://www.facebook.com/IGNOURegionalCentreCochin/> and YouTube channel of Regional Centre Cochin under the Playlist "National Voters Day 2024" which is available for public viewing.



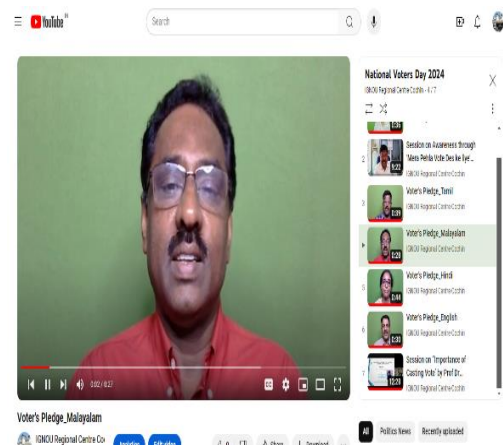
Voters Pledge was read by Dr. Praseetha Unnikrishnan, AD in Hindi language



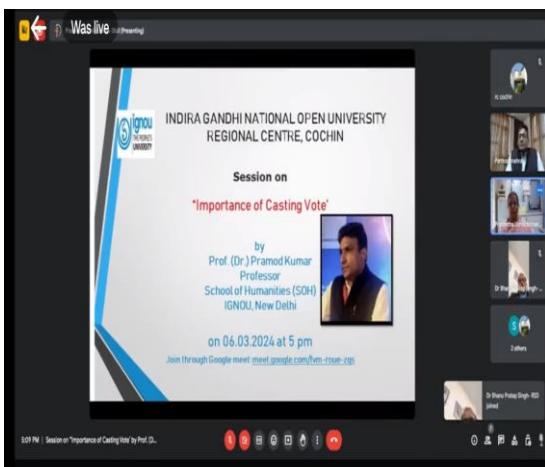
Voters Pledge was read by Dr. L Chandra Sekaran, PS in English language



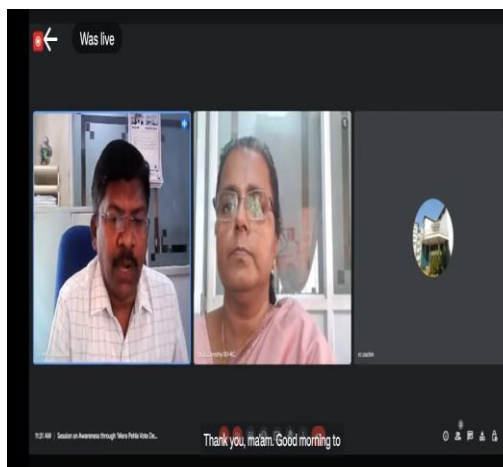
Voters Pledge was read by Sh. R Chinniah, ASO, Regional Evaluation Centre Cochin in Tamil language



Voters Pledge was read by Sh. K J Joseph, AR in Malayalam language



Screenshot of the Virtual/Online Open Session cum Enrichment Session addressed by Prof (Dr.) Pramod Kumar, Professor, School of Humanities (SOH), IGNOU, New Delhi on the topic 'Importance of Casting Vote' on 06.03.2024



Screenshot of the Virtual/Online Open Session cum Enrichment Session addressed by Sh. J. Thiru murugan, Deputy Registrar, Regional Evaluation Centre Cochin on the topic Awareness through Mera Pehla Vote Desh ke Liye Campaign 'on 06.03.2024



Other Activities at Regional Centre Cochin

3. Face-to-face session on the eve of inaugural ceremony of Semiconductor plant by Hon'ble PM, Govt of India on 13.03.2024

A Face-to-face session on the topic “Utility of Semiconductors in Scientific Research” by Dr. Roby Cherian, HOD & Assistant Professor, Physics Department, Sacred Heart College Thevara, Cochin on 13.03.2024 at 9.30 am has been conducted by Regional Centre Cochin on the eve of inaugural ceremony of Semiconductor plant by Hon'ble PM, Govt of India on 13.03.2024.



Dr. Roby Cherian, HOD & Assistant Professor, Physics Department, Sacred Heart College, Thevara, Cochin deliberating on the topic 'Utility of Semiconductors in Scientific Research' on 13.03.2024

Dr. J.S. Dorothy, Regional Director addressing during the session on 13.03.2024

A Face-to-face session which was also made as Facebook Live session (Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/IGNOURegionalCentreCochin/>) of Regional Centre Cochin was scheduled and held on the eve of inaugural ceremony of Semiconductor plant by Hon'ble PM, Govt of India on 13.03.2024 from 9.30 am to 10.20 am. This is the first event of Regional Centre Cochin in hybrid mode where the Face-to-face session was live relayed through Facebook Live session. The event was coordinated by Dr. Praseetha Unnikrishnan, AD.

Dr. Roby Cherian, HOD & Assistant Professor, Physics Department, Sacred Heart College, Thevara, Cochin served as the Resource Person and deliberated on the topic ‘Utility of Semiconductors in Scientific Research’. The resource person Dr. Roby Cherian was suggested by Fr. Nijo Antony, Coordinator of LSC 1402 housed at Sacred Heart College, Thevara, Cochin. The session was kept in interactive mode so that the basics related to the event are well reached. The Session highlighted the basics of Semiconductor and how the development of the nation is envisaged by the laying the foundation Stone of 3 Semiconductor Facilities, Chips for Viksit Bharat for 13th March, 2024 from 10:30 am onwards by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi. The session was also hallmark for deliberating a policy and expertise subject in layman language which is in line with NEP 2020 wherein policy/research/scientific expertise should trickle down to the public. The session was also witness for collaboration and cooperation between an Educational Institution from Conventional Educational System (CES) - Sacred Heart College, Thevara, Cochin and a Mega University – dual mode Distance Teaching Institution-IGNOU. Sh. J. Thiru murugan, DR, REC greeted the Resource Person with a Bouquet; Dr. Praseetha Unnikrishnan, AD compered the session; Dr. J.S. Dorothy, Regional Director welcomed, facilitated interaction, highlighted the significance of the session in hybrid mode, stressed the relevance of the session inline with NEP 2020 and acknowledged the role played by Sh. Muhammed Ansar T A, AEDP, Ms. Sujini Babu, Assistant and Ms. Reshma Suresh for their technical support developed through their self learning which was put into practice for the first time where Face-to-face session which was also made as Facebook Live session (Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/IGNOURegionalCentreCochin/>) was held as a hybrid mode of the event for the first time in the new normal post pandemic situation at RC Cochin; and Shri. K.J. Joseph, Assistant Registrar gave the vote of thanks.



Know Your Coordinator

In this edition of Newsletter, we introduce a new segment called 'Know Your Coordinator' in which we give a brief about the Professional journey of the Coordinator/Programme In-Charge of various Study Centres under IGNOU RC Cochin.

To begin with we introduce you to

Shri. Hari Unnikrishnan

Coordinator
St. Michael's College,
Cherthala (LSC 14187)



Meet an IGNOU Learner



Sh. Tony Stanley

Gold Medalist of BSWG
programme in 37th
Convocation

Know Your Coordinator and Meet an IGNOU Learner

Shri. Hari Unnikrishnan, Coordinator, St. Michael's College, Cherthala (2019 onwards)

Sh. Hari Unnikrishnan has been working since 2010 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Commerce at St. Michael's College, Cherthala. Before joining St. Michael's, Shri. Hari worked at Christ University, Bangalore, and SN College, North Paravoor. He completed his schooling from St. Aloysius High School, followed by Plus Two at Government Higher Secondary School, Chendamangalam. Shri. Hari completed his Under Graduate studies from SNM College, Maliankara, and pursued his Post-Graduation at St. Albert's College, Ernakulam and passed Post Graduation in the year 2005. Immediately after his Post-Graduation, Shri. Hari began his teaching career at Sree Narayana College, Kadamangalam, and later at Christ University, Bangalore. During his tenure at St. Michael's, Shri. Hari has undertaken various important administrative responsibilities, including being a College Level Academic Coordinator, Career Guidance and Placement Officer, IQAC Member and Criterion Head, Coordinator of the Walk with a Scholar Program, and NSS Program Officer. Since 2019, Shri. Hari has also been handling the role of Coordinator at the IGNOU Regular Study Center (SC 14187).

IGNOU Study Centre SC 14187 is functioning from the campus of St. Michael's College, Cherthala. It is a Regular Study Centre established under Regional Centre Cochin in the year 2019 with 43 students and has presently grown to 413 IGNOU students as on July, 2023. There are eight IGNOU programmes activated at this Study Centre which include Masters, Bachelors, PG Diploma, Diploma and Certificate level programmes. From December 2020 Term End Examination, St. Michael's College is also serving as an Examination Centre for IGNOU under the able Mentorship of Sh. Hari U.

IGNOU Regional Centre, Cochin appreciates Shri. Hari for his professional achievements and wishes him the very best in all his endeavors!

Sh. Tony Stanley, IGNOU Student

In this edition of "Meet an IGNOU Learner", we introduce you to Sh. Tony Stanley who has been awarded the University Gold Medal for securing first position in order of Merit in Bachelor of Social Work examination held in December 2022.

Sh. Tony Stanley has been awarded Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Award 2024 of Rs. 10000/- in cash for being the topper in order of merit in the Bachelor in Social Work. Sh. Tony Stanley is presently pursuing his higher education abroad. His profile was facilitated by Sh. Muhammed Ansar T A, AEDP for use in the Newsletter of IGNOU Regional Centre, Cochin.

In the words of Sh. Tony Stanley,

"In the year of 2020, January, I have enrolled for the course of BSW in the University of IGNOU. Definitely, I can say that it was really an unplanned path of journey which I had in my life. Initially I haven't had any idea of how to tackle this totally new method of learning which is different from our traditional way of learning, however I have been blessed with proper guidance and support especially through the respected faculties of Mar Bishop Vayalil Memorial Holy Cross College, Cherpunkal, Kottayam, Kerala. Eventually I learned how to deal with it and managed this journey of study successfully. Here I also express my sincere thanks to all the respected personalities in Delhi and Cochin Regional Centre who have helped a lot. It is always imperative to say big thanks to my beloved parents, siblings, friends and relatives who have exceptionally encouraged and motivated me in this journey."

IGNOU Regional Centre, Cochin appreciates his efforts and wishes Sh. Tony Stanley the very best in life and in all his future endeavors!



News at News

Water bird count throws up mixed results

115 species and 3,168 individuals counted during the two-day exercise; data generated to be submitted to BNHS and Wetlands International

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The 2024 Asian Waterbird Census has thrown up mixed results in Ernakulam district.

While the number of water bird species spotted during the exercise marginally went up this year, the number of individuals counted plummeted to half, according to the organisers.

This year, 115 species and 3,168 individuals were counted.

However, the 2023 exercise succeeded in recording the presence of 111 species and 7,653 individuals. There were 109 species and 4,931 individuals in 2022, they noted. A lesser number of Lesser Whistling Duck, a fairly common bird, was recorded this year.



Wetland wonders: (From left) Blue-tailed Bee Eater, Grey Heron, Black-tailed Godwit, and Oriental Darter

Climate change

The reasons for the reduced presence of the species need to be probed. Climate change and the general decline in the extent and quality of wetlands, pollution, hindrance in the free flow of water, sedimentation, and unhealthy agricultural practices such as use of pesticides and discharge of effluents and sewage into wetlands can affect bird population. Detailed studies on water quality and steps for the restoration of the health of wetlands are required, according to the organisers.

Some of the species that were spotted during the year included Garganey, Small Pratincole, Black-tailed Godwit, Baillon's

Crake, Slaty-legged Crake, Marsh Sandpiper, Lesser black-backed gull, Little Tern, and Great crested tern. Spot-billed Pelican, Booted eagle, Osprey, Glossy Ibis, Common Tern, Common Redshank, and Common Greenshank were also spotted, according to a communication.

The data generated during the two-day exercise will be submitted to the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and Wetlands International, the agencies that coordinate the Wetland Bird Census in the country and at the global level, said K. Vishnu Priyan Kartha, secretary of the Cochin Natural History Society.

The Census was jointly organised by the Kerala Sasthra Sahitya Parishad Varapuzha unit and the Cochin Natural History Society. Volunteers covered wetlands in Kadamakkudy, Dewaswompadam, Puthuvype, Nedumbassery, Thripunithura, Kandakkadavu, Karumalloor, Veliyathundu, Manjali, Neduhangad, and Aniyal, they said.

The Hindu- 20 January 2024

REPUBLIC DAY 2024

Why it is Celebrated on January 26? History & Significance Explained

The significance of Republic Day lies in the historical journey that transformed India from a British colony into a sovereign and democratic republic.

India will celebrate 75th Republic Day on January 26 (Friday). The day marks the pivotal moment when the nation formally adopted its Constitution in 1950.

This year, the Republic Day Parade at Kartavya Path will have the theme of 'Viksit Bharat' and 'Bharat - Loktantra ki Matruka'. French President Emmanuel Macron will be the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations.

The 75th Republic Day celebrations at the majestic Kartavya Path will largely be "women-centric" with the central theme of India's democracy and its resolve to become a developed nation. In a first, the parade will be heralded by 100 women artists with Indian musical instruments, Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane said on Friday.

WHY JANUARY 26 WAS CHOSEN?

The history of the date goes back to the pre-independence era when the freedom fighters were struggling for independence. During the Indian National Congress session held at Lahore in 1929, the party took the resolution of Poorna Swara or complete independence. Congress declared to observe January 26, 1930 as the total independence or Purna Swara Day.

Thus, on January 26, 1930, the Indian National Congress, led by Mahatma Gandhi, declared 'Purna Swara' or complete independence. This proclamation marked a significant moment in India's quest for self-determination and set the stage for a future that would be shaped by the principles of democracy and sovereignty.

REPUBLIC DAY: HISTORY

The Constituent Assembly was the body meant to draft the Constitution of India. It held its first session on December 9, 1946, attended by 207 members, including nine women. Initially, the assembly had 389 members, however after independence and the partition of the country, on August 15, 1947, the strength was reduced to 299.

The Drafting Committee led by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was one among the over 12 committees of the Constituent Assembly. The Drafting Committee's task was to prepare a Draft Constitution for India. The committee got rid of about 2,400 amendments while debating and deliberating the constitution, out of nearly 7,600 amendments tabled.

The last session of the Constituent Assembly ended on November 26, 1949, and that is when the Constitution was adopted. However, it came into effect two months later after the signatures of the 284 members on January 26, 1950, because of the significance of the day.

REPUBLIC DAY PARADE



For the first time, the parade will commence with music played using Indian musical instruments by 100 women artists, instead of the military band as was earlier, according to the defence secretary.

A 144-personnel tri-service women contingent would be participating in the parade this time for the first time with 40 personnel from each service. Also, the Indian Air Force's (IAF) latest induction, the C-295 medium transport aircraft, will make debut over Kartavya Path during the fly-past.

All the cultural performances will be by women, around 1,300, the highest number of performers ever. In addition, around 13,000 volunteers in various fields and those who excelled through various government schemes will be special invitees at the parade.

A 95-member marching contingent and 33-member band contingent from France will also take part in the parade. Along with the aircraft of the Indian Air Force, one Multi Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) aircraft and two Rafale aircraft of the French Air Force will participate in the fly-past, the Defence Secretary said.

WHEN AND WHERE TO WATCH?

The Republic Day Parade can be watched from the stands on Kartavya Path, New Delhi. The tickets can be bought online till 25 January 2024 at the Ministry of Defence's official website. The total seating capacity at the celebrations will be 77,000 out of which 4,000 seats are being reserved for the general public.

The parade will start at 10:30 hours and run for a duration of approximately 90 minutes. Those interested can tune into it live from the comfort of their homes on state-run channels such as Doordarshan and Sansad TV. Other regional and national news channels will also air the parade live.

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Kottayam CMS College, which has green open spaces, has been receiving a steady stream of visitors, including foreigners, either to explore the history and heritage of the campus or for academic purposes. Visitors may book slots on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays

Hiran Unnikrishnan
KOTTAYAM

Nowadays, the students and teachers of CMS College, Kottayam, are not the only ones who are discovering the joys that their grand old campus offers. The 200-year-old institution, a blend of colonial and traditional Kerala architectural style constructions, is now emerging as a major academic tourist destination with a steady stream of visitors, including foreigners, exploring its history and heritage and studying its transformative journey spanning over two centuries. The visiting public are also allowed to



A group of student visitors from Thiruvananthapuram at one of the heritage buildings of CMS College, Kottayam.

get a first-hand experience of the knowledge-based materials and other intellectual assets.

Varghese C. Joshua, Principal, says the campus, with its green open spaces, heritage buildings and other academic facilities, has also landed in the radar of a few international tour

agencies. "Over the past seven to eight months alone, the campus has received an average of 150-200 visitors every month. The majority of the foreign guests comes here as part of their academic projects. It is against this backdrop that we decided to blend these two concepts to launch an

academic tourism programme," he says.

Among the key attractions on the campus are a sprawling botanic garden comprising 1,650 plant varieties, seven heritage buildings that are two centuries old, a huge aquarium, a sculpture park, besides a museum that showcases the history of Indian printing technology.

The autonomous institution, founded in 1817, is one of the first colleges in India. Its first Principal, Benjamin Bailey, was instrumental in developing the Malayalam typeface that led to a modernisation of Malayalam script and universalisation of public instruction.

The college authorities have set up a group of student tour guides and staff coordinators. "The campus will be open to guests on all Saturdays and Sundays, besides public holidays. Individuals or groups who are keen on visiting the place may book their slots on the college website," adds Mr. Joshua.

Nina Thomas, a faculty member with the Mar Theophilus Training College in Thiruvananthapuram, who recently visited the college along with a 14-member group of BED students, says one of the main reasons why she would take in more student groups to the campus is its great

academic atmosphere. "We wanted the students to get a glimpse of an education system that existed in the past. What we found there, however, is a transition of the country's education system from the old to the modern that spans two centuries," she said.

Aleena Ann Saju, a teacher with NSM CMS Lower Primary School in Mooladam, recently led two student groups to the campus. It is not like taking the students to an anonymous destination - the students and staff of the college are friendly, she says. "For the children, everything on the campus is exciting - the aquarium, the old printing press units and even the green open spaces," she adds.

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