



Foundation for Indian Historical & Cultural Research

"धर्मार्थकाममोक्षाणाम् उपदेशसमन्वितम्
पूर्ववृत्तं कथायुक्तम् इतिहासं प्रचक्षते ॥"

*Annual Newsletter · Year 2
2025-26*





The Intellectual Core of FIHCR



DR. VIKRAM SAMPATH
Founder-Director

Civilisations endure not merely through memory but through institutions that safeguard it. In a country as ancient and layered as India, history is not an academic abstraction; it shapes how generations understand themselves and their place in the world. Writing of history requires rigour, discipline, and the courage to privilege evidence over ideology. It was from this conviction that the Foundation for Indian Historical & Cultural Research (FIHCR) was established in 2024. It was conceived as a long-term institutional commitment to nurture an evidence-based, primary-source-driven history of India that is intellectually honest, academically rigorous, and accessible to wider society. In just two years, that belief has taken structured form through fellowships, research collaborations, publications, youth engagement initiatives, and archival preservation – each initiative reflecting a clear and enduring intellectual purpose.

Conceived by a historian deeply engaged with questions of India's past and its public understanding, the Foundation was established to create a structured ecosystem for evidence-based research, one that privileges primary sources, methodological rigour and intellectual independence. Guiding this vision is an eminent Advisory Board whose scholarly depth and professional experience anchor the Foundation's direction.



Shri Rameesh Kailasam

Shri Amit Paranjape

Shri Anuraag Saxena

Shri Awanish Awasthi

Shri Bhavish Aggarwal

Shri TV Mohandas Pai

Shri Raghvendra Singh



Admiral R. Hari Kumar

Prof. Heeraman Tiwari

Shri Manoj Pochat

Prof. Margaret Barrett

Prof. Abhay Singh

Smt. Smita Prakash



Dr. Nanditha Krishna

Dr. Niraj Rai

Dr. Nimesh Bolia

Shri Ricky Kej

Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde

Prof. Subhash Kak

The Fellowship Programme

The Fellowship Programme is FIHCR's flagship initiative, one-year book fellowships named after two pioneering figures of Indian historiography, supporting rigorous, evidence-based research on India's past, from ancient civilisations to contemporary histories.

Sir Jadunath Sarkar's meticulous scholarship illuminated India's empires, setting an enduring standard of archival rigour through his pioneering work on Mughal and Maratha history. G.S. Sardesai, his lifelong friend and collaborator, reconstructed a millennium of India's historical narrative through the Marathi Riyasat and his editing of the Peshwa Daftar records.

The programme carries this legacy forward through two fellowships, the Sir Jadunath Sarkar Fellowship for Indian History, which encourages original research reflecting the depth and discipline exemplified by Sarkar's work, and the G.S. Sardesai Fellowship for History of Indian Archives, which supports scholars in preserving, and interpreting India's archival heritage.



The Sir Jadunath Sarkar Fellowship for Indian History

The Sir Jadunath Sarkar Fellowship for Indian History is a one-year, fully funded programme supporting historians, researchers, and writers in producing original, book-length monographs on Bharat's history. The fellowship places special emphasis on exploring lesser-engaged archives and amplifying voices from Bharat's diverse regions, languages, and communities. Fellows receive financial support alongside structured mentorship, peer engagement, and milestone-driven guidance throughout their research journey.



Batch 1 (2024-25) - Graduation Ceremony

The first cohort of the Sir Jadunath Sarkar Fellowship completed its year-long programme and graduated at a ceremony held in New Delhi, graced by Hon'ble Union Minister of Education Shri Dharmendra Pradhan and Dr. Shamika Ravi, Member, EAC to the Prime Minister. The graduation marked not just the close of a cohort, but proof that independent, serious historical research can be institutionally sustained.

NATION 04

Jadunath fellows complete rigorous research program

FOUNDATION FOR INDIAN HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESEARCH Sir Jadunath Sarkar Fellowship for Indian History 2024-25

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The first batch of Sir Jadunath Sarkar Fellows for Indian History graduated on Tuesday, completing a year of rigorous research aimed at reviving India's historical and cultural heritage.

The graduation ceremony was held in the national Capital which was a landmark event for the Foundation of Indian Historical and Cultural Research (FIHCR), which partnered with the OLA Foundation for this initiative. The fellowship is FIHCR's flagship program, a non-profit, non-governmental effort to counter colonial-era frameworks by fostering research rooted in indigenous perspectives.

Its goal is to create an authentic, inclusive, and nuanced story of India's civilization. Union Minister of Education, Dharmendra Pradhan, graced the event as Chief Guest. He was joined by special guests including Dr Shamika Ravi, a member of the PM's Economic Advisory Council, and economist Sanjeev Sanyal. In his address, Pradhan emphasized history's role as a "mirror" that illuminates the past to guide the future.

हम इतिहास को मिटाना नहीं, सटीक तस्वीर पेश करना चाहते हैं : धर्मेंद्र प्रधान

जागरण संवाददाता, दक्षिणी दिल्ली: इतिहास एक उज्ज्वल भविष्य के निर्माण का मार्ग प्रशस्त करता है। हम किसी इतिहास को मिटाना या उसकी उपेक्षा नहीं करना चाहते, बल्कि एक सटीक तस्वीर प्रस्तुत करना चाहते हैं।

केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेंद्र प्रधान ने इंडिया इंटरनेशनल सेंटर में मंगलवार को भारतीय ऐतिहासिक एवं सांस्कृतिक अनुसंधान संस्थान (एफआईएचसीआर) की ओर से सर जदुनाथ सरकार फेलो के पहले बैच के दीक्षा समारोह में बतौर मुख्य अतिथि संबोधित करते हुए यह बातें कही।

इस दौरान विशिष्ट अतिथि रूढ़ि आर्थिक सलाहकार परिषद की सदस्य डा. शमिका रवि ने कहा

एफआईएचसीआर की ओर से सर जदुनाथ सरकार फेलो के पहले बैच के दीक्षा समारोह में उपाधि देते केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेंद्र प्रधान ● जागरण

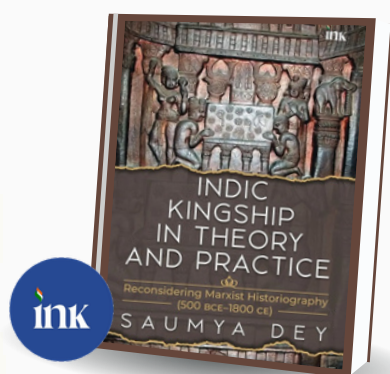
कि इतिहास केवल अतीत के बारे में नहीं है, बल्कि इसे हम समाचार पत्रों और टीवी न्यूज के माध्यम से प्रतिदिन जीते हैं। एफआईएचसीआर के संस्थापक-निदेशक डा. विक्रम संपत ने कहा कि यह समारोह अकादमिक उपलब्धि से बढ़कर सांस्कृतिक बदलाव का प्रतीक है।

Scholarships That Become Books

From research proposals to published books, the journey of our inaugural fellows reflects the fellowship's commitment to rigorous, source-based scholarship. We are proud that their works are being published by leading publishers, including HarperCollins, Penguin Random House, Westland Books, BluOne Ink and more. Several more titles are scheduled for publication through 2026, further enriching the growing body of research emerging from the fellowship.

About The Author

Dr. Saumya Dey is an author, historian and Head of Research at FIHCR, and formerly served as Professor of History at Rishihood University. He did his PhD at the Centre for Historical Studies, JNU, Delhi. His chief research interests are cultural and intellectual history and the politics of colonial India. His prior books are *Becoming Hindus and Muslims: Reading the Cultural Encounter in Bengal, 1342–1905* (Munshiram Manoharlal, 2015), *The Cultural Landscape of Hindutva and Other*

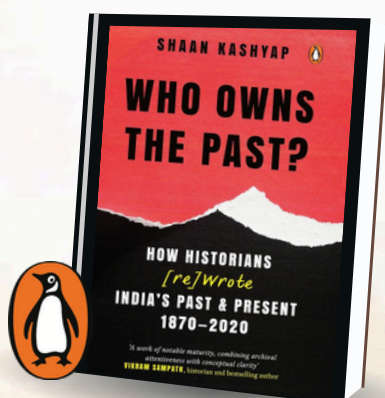


About The Book

Indic Kingship in Theory and Practice examines the scriptural, political, and administrative dimensions of Indic kingship from its early historical origins to the advent of British colonial rule. In doing so, it challenges prevailing Marxist historiography, which portrays kingship as a predominantly repressive and class-exclusive institution.

About The Author

Shaan Kashyap studies and writes about Modern History. Having studied and researched the subject at BHU (Varanasi), JNU (New Delhi), and Ravenshaw University (Cuttack), he has witnessed the miscellany and medley of educational and political debates in India. He has presented his research to diverse audiences at venues ranging from IIC, New Delhi, to Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.



About The Book

A gripping, deeply researched account of how India's history has been written, rewritten, contested, and politicized from the colonial era to the age of social media. This is not just a book about the past—it's about the power struggles that define the present.

The Sir Jadunath Sarkar Fellowship : Batch 1



Mr. Chandrachur Ghose
Author, Columnist, Public speaker

Research Title:

From Renaissance to Communist Takeover: A Brief History of the Contest of Ideas in Bengal and the Creation of a Bengali Identity



Dr. Lakshmi Arya
Dean-Research and Professor of History at RV University

Research Title:

The essential Religious Practice in Indian Jurisprudence:
The Limitations of the Constitutional Framework



Mr. Nabaarun Barooah
Postgraduate Diploma in Sino-Indian Border Management, Ashoka University

Research Title:

Ashtalakshmi: the Land of Eastern Light



Dr. Saumya Dey
Head of Research, FIHCR, Former Professor of History, Rishihood University

Research Title:

The Theory and Practice of Indic Kingship: Reconsidering Marxist Historiography



Mr. Shaan Kashyap
Historian and Translator

Research Title:

Histories of Textbook Controversies in India, c. 1870-2005



Dr. Pratishtha Mukherjee (Junior Fellow)
Assistant Professor, Rishihood University

Research Title:

Indian Temples as Custodians of Bharatiya Culture

A Milestone Moment at BITS Pilani

Mid-Term Presentations of Batch-2



In March, our Batch-2 fellows took centre stage at BITS Pilani, Rajasthan, presenting their mid-term research findings before an esteemed jury. It was a significant milestone not just as an academic checkpoint, but as a moment of reckoning, where months of reading, thinking, and questioning came together into a coherent body of work. Spanning a wide range of themes and historical inquiries, the presentations reflected the depth and diversity of scholarship that the fellowship stands for, and the jury's engagement was a testament to the quality of research underway.

The Road Ahead for Batch-2

With their mid-term behind them, our Batch-2 fellows are now in the final stretch of their fellowship journey, set to conclude in September 2026. We look forward to celebrating their completed research and the stories they will have to tell.



The Sir Jadunath Sarkar Fellowship: Batch-2



Mr. Adwait Bhushan Athawale

Research Assistant at Gavishti Foundation

Research Title:

Encounters with Modernity: Intellectual Responses of Tilak, Ranade, and Agarkar in Late 19th-Century Maharashtra



Mr. Amritanshu Pandey

Co-Founder, BODHA

Research Title:

The Emergence of Dharma in India's Civilizational History - Memory, Metaphor, and Materiality



Ms. Aruni Chauhan

MA (History), University of Delhi

Research Title:

The Andaman Archives: A Brief History of Select Revolutionaries, Their Thought, and the Legacy of Colonial Incarceration



Mr. Ganesh Puthur

Writer & Researcher

Research Title:

Bloodbath for Khalifa: The Moplah Rebellion of 1921



Dr. Hindol Sengupta

Professor of International Relations, O. P. Jindal Global University and Director, Jindal India Institute

Research Title:

Goddess: A Global History



Dr. Rouhin Deb

Chief Economist, Chief Minister's Secretariat, Assam

Research Title:

Trading Frontiers: Northeast India and the History of Border Economies

The Sir Jadunath Sarkar Fellowship: Batch-2



Mr. Rudra Vikrama Srivastava

Archaeologist & Epigraphist

Research Title:

From Hero to Deity: History and Antiquity of Rāma Worship



Mr. Kushagra Aniket

Economist and Sanskritist

Research Title:

From Hero to Deity: History and Antiquity of Rāma Worship



Dr. Sanchi Rai

Assistant Professor, Faculty of International Studies, South Asian University, New Delhi

Research Title:

Reflections from the Past: Exploring the Origins of Indian Foreign Policy in the Foundational Years after Independence, 1946–1949



Ms. Srishti Jha

Writer, Journalist, Editor and Translator

Research Title:

India's Nightingale's Forgotten Daughter: Padmaja Naidu – The Other Side



Dr. Tilaka M Rao

Senior Fellow, Sanskrit Studies, Foundation for Study of Indian Culture (FSIC), Bengaluru

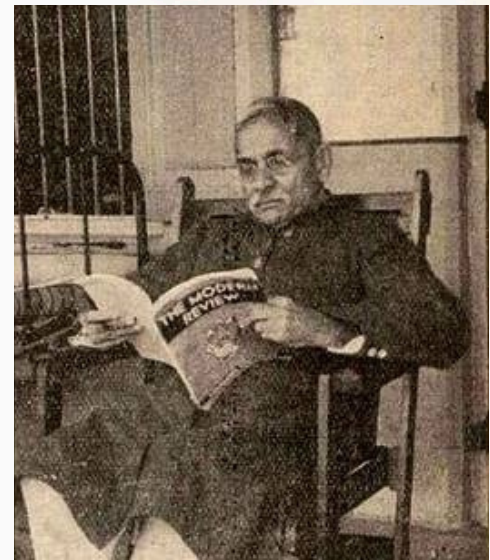
Research Title:

Colonial Encounters with Sanskrit: Challenges and the Reconfiguration of Tradition

Selections for Batch 3 are currently underway, and we are excited to announce the incoming fellows very soon. Each new batch carries forward the spirit embodied by Sir Jadunath Sarkar: rigorous inquiry, intellectual curiosity, and a deep commitment to the pursuit of knowledge.

G. S. Sardesai Fellowship for History of Indian Archives

This a dedicated initiative announced this year to encourage rigorous archival research across India's vast and underexplored repositories. The fellowship seeks to support scholars working closely with primary documents, manuscripts, and regional records, bringing to light lesser-known sources that deepen and diversify our understanding of India's past. By strengthening archival scholarship, the programme aims to reinforce the foundations of evidence-based historical writing. The inaugural batch of G.S Sardesai fellowship will be announced soon



For FIHCR, the legacy of G.S. Sardesai extends beyond historical writing to the vital work of preserving archives as living repositories of India's civilisational memory. The archives established by Sardesai at Sitamau in Madhya Pradesh, stand as a remarkable example of this vision, transforming scattered records into an organised and enduring knowledge resource. During our work on the Ahilyabai Holkar project, Team FIHCR had the opportunity to visit Sitamau and engage with this rich archival legacy firsthand. Inspired by such institutions and their enduring value, the **G.S. Sardesai Fellowship** seeks to encourage scholars and archivists committed to preserving and studying India's archival heritage for future generations.



Expanding the Frontiers of Research

Over the past two years, FIHCR's Research Division has focused on building institutional collaborations to ensure that scholarship does not remain isolated, but dialogic and interconnected. We aim to do research that speaks across disciplines and institutions.



Somnāth: The Unconquered Soul of Bhārat



FIHCR, in collaboration with the Shree Somnath Temple Trust and Brhat, organised a national symposium titled "Somnāth: The Unconquered Soul of Bhārat" in May 2026, at the sacred Somnath temple complex. The event brought together leading scholars and public intellectuals from across India to engage with one of the most significant sites in the country's civilisational landscape. The symposium formed part of the larger Somnath Swabhiman Parv, commemorating two major milestones: one thousand years since the first recorded destruction of the temple by Mahmud of Ghazni, and the 75th anniversary of its Prana Pratishtha in independent India.



The proceedings unfolded across four sessions: *Antiquity and Archaeology*; *The Event: Destruction, Resistance, Reconstruction*; *Modern India and Somnath*; and *The Falsehood of Left Historiography*. Each session built upon the last to construct a layered, evidence-based portrait of the temple and its place in Bharat's memory. The symposium was honoured by the presence of Dr. Anand Ranganathan, Shri J. Sai Deepak, Dr. Neerja A. Gupta, Prof. Kapil Kapoor, Shri Raghava Krishna, and Dr. Vikram Sampath, representing a convergence of academic scholarship and public intellectual engagement.

At a time when historical narratives are increasingly contested, the symposium sought to build an evidence based inquiry while acknowledging the role of memory in shaping civilisational identity. Proceedings from the symposium have been published and are available on the FIHCR website.

 [Watch on YouTube - Somnath: The Unconquered Soul of Bharat | National Symposium/@FIHCR](#)

Kadambas and the Making of Karnataka



FIHCR, in partnership with Sri Sathya Sai University of Human Excellence (SSSUHE), is undertaking a research project titled Kadambas and the Making of Karnataka. The Opening Symposium held in February 2026 marked the first step in this landmark academic initiative, which seeks to critically reassess the historical significance of the Kadamba polity in shaping Karnataka's early political, cultural, and intellectual landscape. The project consciously moves beyond conventional political narratives and foregrounds interdisciplinary approaches spanning archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics,

environmental history, linguistics, and historiography. By situating the Kadambas within wider Deccan processes, from Sātavāhana and Chutu antecedents to Early Cālukya transitions, the deliberations seek to reconstruct patterns of early state formation and trace the emergence of regional identity in Karnataka.

The symposium was graced by the presence and guidance of **Chancellor Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai**. The keynote address was delivered by noted **historian Dr. Laxmeesha Hegde Sonda**. Academic sessions were chaired by eminent scholars **Prof. R. M. Sadaksharaiah, Dr. Smita Surebankar, and Dr. Lakshmi Arya Thathachar**. Research papers were presented by **Prof. R. M. Sadaksharaiah, Prof. Basavaraja Kodagunti, Dr. Smita Surebankar, Dr. Arjun Rao, Dr. Gautam Jantakal, Harsha M., Mansij Pal, and Arindam Chaturvedi**.

The proposed study emerges from the need to revisit and reconstruct the early historical landscape of Karnataka, with a focus on the Kadamba dynasty and its cultural, political, and epigraphic milieu. While the Kadambas are often credited with laying the foundations of an independent Kannada-speaking polity, much of their historiography remains fragmented, under-theorised, or embedded in uncritical dynastic narratives. As part of this sustained initiative, FIHCR and SSSUHE have committed to producing both rigorous academic research and accessible popular scholarship on the Kadamba legacy, with outcomes including publications, collaborative research projects, and public-facing engagements, culminating in a well-researched book.



Lokmata Ahilya Bai Holkar Research Project



FIHCR in collaboration with the **Directorate of Culture, Madhya Pradesh** has undertaken a study of Devi Ahilya Bai Holkar's visionary leadership, life and legacy as the 18th-century ruler of Indore. Known for her effective governance, social reforms, and revival of cultural and spiritual heritage, her reign offers timeless lessons in administration and nation-building.

The project began with a comprehensive survey of literature and the mapping of historical documents across Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Researchers accessed vital primary and secondary sources at the State Archives in Bhopal, the Natnagar Shodh Sansthan in Sitamau, and the Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal in Pune, providing critical insights into Ahilya Bai's unique administrative style.

Fieldwork included visits to Indore and Maheshwar to document cultural practices, such as the Sahastra-linga Archana and traditional Maheshwari saree weaving. Having completed the material analysis, the project has now transitioned into its final phase of drafting and editing the chapters for the final narrative. The outcome of this project will be a well-researched book on her life and leadership. An article written by Rasika Bhale who is leading the project on behalf of FIHCR was published in Dainik Jagaran on the birth anniversary of Devi Ahilya Bai Holkar.



Research Projects with Odisha Research Centre



The collaboration which is slated for formalisation with **Odisha Research Centre (ORC)** marks the beginning of a long-term academic and research partnership aimed at strengthening scholarship, documentation, and public engagement on Odisha's rich historical and cultural heritage.

The first phase of collaboration prioritises three key initiatives - Buddhism in Bharat, District-wise Profiling of Odisha and Odisha Knowledge Digitisation Initiative. While several of these initiatives will be undertaken in stages over the coming months, the collaboration began with the Buddhism in Bharat Field Visit – Odisha Chapter. As part of this initiative, a field research and documentation visit was undertaken across important Buddhist sites in Odisha.

The field visit brought together a multidisciplinary team comprising: Dr. Kaushalendra Singh, Prof. Umakant Mishra, Officers from the Bhubaneswar and Puri Archaeological Survey of India and Dr. Saumya Dey and Satyajee Ojha from FIHCR Team. The partnership also aims to build sustainable structures for preserving knowledge, strengthening archival culture, and creating wider public engagement with Odisha's rich historical legacy.



Buddhism in Bharat

FIHCR, in collaboration with Nalanda University, is undertaking a major research and documentation project on the history of Buddhism in India. This comprehensive study, grounded in an in-depth examination of primary sources in Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit, Tibetan, and other languages, seeks to address and dispel numerous myths and misunderstandings surrounding this significant subject. Adopting a multidisciplinary approach, the project brings together expertise in history, Buddhist studies, philosophy, archaeology, and linguistics.

The project is being carried out with the guidance and participation of distinguished scholars, including **Prof. Pooja Dabral**, **Dr H. R. Meera**, **Prof. K. S. Kannan**, **Dr Pranshu Samdarshi**, **Dr Tosabanta Padhan**, **Dr Kaushalendra Singh**, **Dr Vandana Sharma**, **Dr Shreekant Jadhav**, and **Prof Umakanta Mishra** whose expertise enriches the project's academic depth and interdisciplinary scope. Scheduled for completion in July 2026, the project will culminate in a series of scholarly articles, journal publications, and books, which will be released subsequently.



History of the Jaipur Royal House



FIHCR signed an MoU with the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum Trust, Jaipur, marking the beginning of a focused and long-term research collaboration on the Kachhwahas of Jaipur. The project was firmed up in a meeting at Jaipur between FIHCR & **Smt Diya Kumari**, Hon'ble Deputy CM of Rajasthan & **Shri Padmanabh Singh**, scion of the royal house. The partnership seeks to explore their historical contributions, cultural stewardship, and enduring legacy, with a particular emphasis on how the Jaipur Royal House preserved Hinduism, rebuilt temples, and protected sacred sites in the wake of Islamic subjugation. The collaboration will culminate in a deeply researched and accessible publication, bringing this remarkable royal history to both scholars and wider audiences.



Hindu History of Kashmir



Kashmir, often referred to as the ‘Abode of Rishis,’ holds a unique and rich place in the historical, spiritual, and intellectual heritage of India. While the region has long been associated with its scenic beauty and geo-political importance, its pre-Islamic Hindu past, including its religious, philosophical, literary, and political contributions remains underrepresented in contemporary academic discourse. This research aims to critically document, analyse, and revive understanding of Kashmir’s Hindu past, to preserve historical truth and to contribute to the larger project of cultural continuity and reconciliation.

The project is being carried out by **Dr. Vikram Sampath**, in collaboration with **Vatsala Hali**.

Indic Leadership Models

The Indic Leadership Models project studies leadership traditions rooted in India's philosophical and governance frameworks, drawing from historical texts and indigenous practices. By examining statecraft, ethics, and public administration, the project seeks to offer civilisational insights relevant to contemporary governance and institutional leadership. The project is being undertaken jointly by FIHCR and Brhat, with **Dr Saumya Dey** and **Dr. Sauradeep Nath** from FIHCR and **Dr Srinivas Jammalamadaka** and **Dr Anurag Shukla** from Brhat leading the scholarly work. In the next phase, the project will incorporate inputs from management



experts, bringing together civilisational scholarship and contemporary institutional thinking to produce a resource of enduring relevance for leaders, educators, and policymakers.

Through stories of King Shibi's sacrifice for a dove, Yudhishtira's compassion for a stray dog, and the punishment of Pandu for killing a deer, the research highlights how the epic challenges anthropocentric worldviews and upholds an ethic of interdependence between humans and nature. Dr. Khangai's work aims to demonstrate the contemporary relevance of Dharmic thought for environmental policy, offering insights into sustainable and holistic ways of living rooted in India's civilisational heritage.

The Aryan Migration Project is meant to bust the myth of the Aryan invasion, based on recent research. We have a dynamic, interdisciplinary team led by author podcaster **Kushal Mehra** and comprising linguist **Dr. Koenraad Elst**, geneticist **Kartik Mohan**, archaeologist **Disha Ahluwalia** and Sanskrit scholar **Dr. H.R. Meera** who will work together on this multi-disciplinary project. The expected outcome of this project is an informative book which is easy for the laymen to understand.

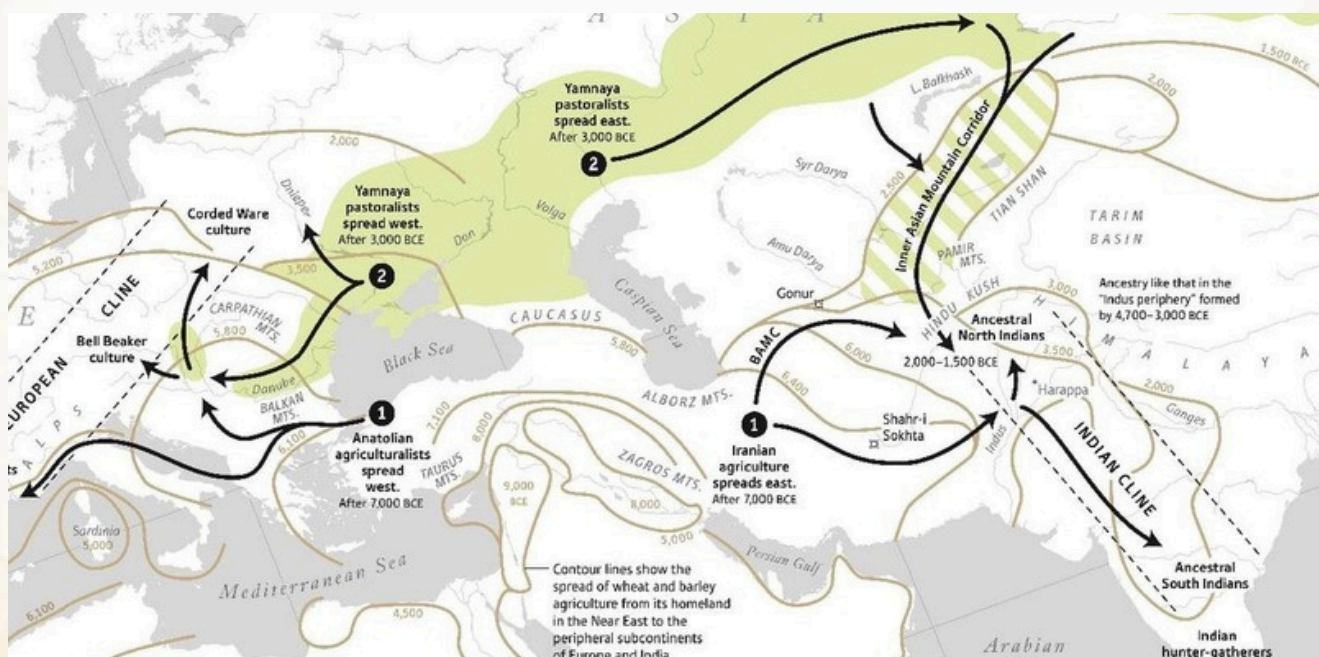
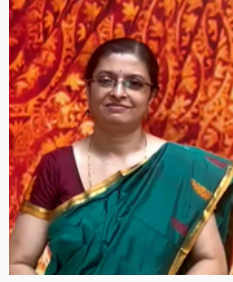


Image Source: scroll.in/article/874102/aryan-migration-everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-new-study-on-indian-genetics

Research Consultants



Dr. Asif Iqbal
Persian Language Scholar



Dr. H.R. Meera
Sanskrit Scholar



Disha Ahluwalia
Archaeologist, Columnist, and
Heritage Consultant
Affiliated Institution: Maharaja
Sayajirao University of Baroda.



Ven. Dr. Pooja Dabral
Assistant Professor,
School of Buddhist Studies, Philosophy
and Comparative Religion.
School of Languages and
Literature/Humanities, Nalanda
University



Prof. K. S. Kannan
Former Director of Karnataka
Sanskrit University, Bangalore and
holder of the Sant Rajinder Singh Ji
Maharaj Chair at IIT-Madras



Dr Ravi Khangai
Associate Professor and Head of the
Department of History and
Archaeology at the Central University of
Karnataka.



Kartik Mohan
Molecular Biologist and Geneticist



Dr. Pranshu Samdarshi
Assistant Professor,
School of Historical Studies &
School of Buddhist Studies, Philosophy &
Comparative Religions, Nalanda
University



Dr. Koenraad Elst
Oriental Philologist and Historian



Dr. Tosabanta Padhan
Archaeologist and Teaching
Fellow at Nalanda
University.



Kushal Mehra
Author and Podcaster



Vatsala Hali
Program Director – CXXO, Kalaari
Capital & Founder-UrzuV

Research Consultants



Dr. Srinivas Jammalamadaka
Director - IKS Research



Dr. Gautam Jantakal
Independent Researcher, Eminent Numismatist, and Academic Member (Karnataka) for the Heritage Society



Dr. Kaushalendra Singh
Assistant Professor in the Department of Buddhist Studies at Satyawati Evening College, University of Delhi



Dr. Vandana Sharma
Assistant Professor Department of Philosophy at Zakir Husain Delhi College



Dr. Laxmeesha Hegde Sonda
Historian and Author
Principal of Royal College, Bengaluru



Dr. Shreekant Suresh Jadhav
Adjunct Professor at K J Somaiya Institute of Dharma Studies



Prof. R.M. Sadaksharaiah
Archaeologist and retired Professor of History and Archaeology at Karnatak University, Dharwad



Dr. Anurag Shukla
Director - IKS Education & Public Policy



Dr. Smita P. Surebankar
Former Principal & Head, Dept. of History, Rani Parvati Devi College, Belgaum, Karnataka



Prof. Basavaraja Kodagunti
Director, Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysuru



Prof. Umakanta Mishra
Associate Professor, History, Ravenshaw University



Taking Scholarship to Young Minds

YUVA

Established with a definitive goal to transform Indian history into an engaging and accessible discipline for young learners. YUVA prioritises creating a structured environment for thoughtful inquiry into the country's civilisational journey

The YUVA Book Series



A major milestone was the release of first original book series for young readers. Written by acclaimed authors, the series introduces carefully researched stories from India's past in an age appropriate, illustrated format.

Authored by Mala Kumar, Dr. Pradeep Chakravarthy, Vijender Sharma, and Harini Srinivasan YUVA books bring engaging factbased, youth-friendly books each crafted to bring Bharat's past alive for young readers. Read more about the books at:

<https://fihr.com/yuva-books-series/>



The launch event was graced by an esteemed panel of guests: **Smt. Sudha Murty**, celebrated author and Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha); **Shri Yaduveer Wadiyar**, Scion of the Mysore Royal Family and Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha, Mysuru & Kodagu); and **Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai**, Founder Chancellor of SSSUHE. Their presence highlighted the national significance of this initiative in shaping the future of historical literacy in India.

These books were translated into six Indian languages—Hindi, Marathi, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, and Malayalam—in collaboration with **NAAV AI**, an AI-assisted, human-refined translation platform. Marking a first in Indian publishing, the English editions were released alongside translations in multiple Indian languages, making these works accessible to young readers across India's diverse linguistic landscape.



History Education Survey



FIHCR undertook an extensive study of history education in Indian schools, combining a comprehensive internal review of existing history syllabi across four major educational boards with on-ground school visits. The team engaged with students and teachers to understand their perspectives on history. The research integrated a quantitative survey of **2,100 students** and **55 teachers** with focus group discussions involving parents and students across schools, with a focus on **Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra**.



The survey offered a layered view of how classroom realities align with the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, and where the gaps remain. While the NEP 2020 advocates for critical thinking, history education in classrooms remains restricted to the memorisation of facts and chronological timelines. A comprehensive content analysis found significant variation across educational boards, with the integration of IKS remaining largely implicit and fragmented across all of them. Both teachers and students expressed a need for supplementary aids to make the subject more engaging, while many teachers admitted they had never received formal training to upskill. Student interest in history peaks in Class 7 but declines sharply in higher grades, and most students remain unaware of career paths beyond traditional roles. While the NEP and NCF mandate that history education should promote empathy, critical thinking, and an appreciation for Indian heritage and knowledge systems, classroom reality continues to fall short of these aspirations. The findings recommend a transition toward inquiry-driven pedagogy and assessment reforms that prioritise evidence-based reasoning over factual recall. These findings have directly informed YUVA's shift toward interactive learning tools and narrative-driven content.

Curriculum Development and Institutional Partnerships



YUVA, in partnership with Vagdevi Vilas Institutions, Bengaluru, will design history textbooks for Grades 6-8. The textbooks will explore the depth and diversity of Indian history, highlighting lesser-known narratives and building a comprehensive understanding of the nation's past beyond mainstream accounts. This partnership marks a strategic step in YUVA's mission to move beyond supplementary reading and directly influence the core classroom experience. By bringing our commitment to unbiased research and narrative depth into the school curriculum, this project aims to replace rote memorisation with historical reasoning and a nuanced understanding of India's civilisational past.

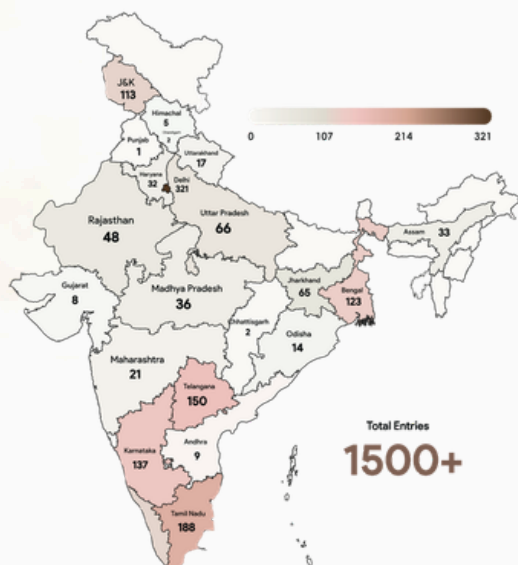
History Beyond Books

History has also been taken beyond the page. Curated heritage walks and engagement initiatives have transformed monuments and archives into living classrooms, enabling experiential engagement with the past. By integrating immersive and technology-enabled storytelling formats, and initiating conversations around curriculum strengthening, FIHCR is contributing to a deeper, more enduring engagement with history among young citizens.



Sri Aurobindo National History Essay Competition

A cornerstone of YUVA's outreach strategy has been the Sri Aurobindo Annual History Essay Competition, designed to build original inquiry and curiosity among students in grades 6 – 9.

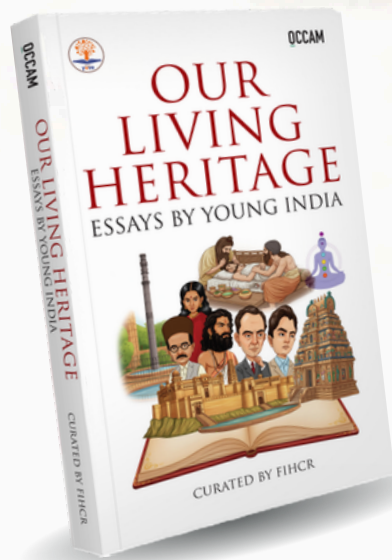


The inaugural edition (2024-25) received over 1,500 entries from 320 schools across 21 states. Notable participation was recorded from regions such as J&K, Assam, and Jharkhand. The Jury consisted of authors like **Mala Kumar** and **Chandrachur Ghose**, the head of Pondicherry Literature Festival, **Alo Pal** and Senior Professor **Heeraman Tiwari**. The Jury Chairs were eminent authors, **Amish Tripathi** and **Ashwin Sanghi**.

The prize distribution ceremony was held in Bengaluru attended by Hon'ble Member of Parliament **Shri Tejasvi Surya** and OLA Foundation Chairperson **Rajalakshmi Aggarwal**. Winners received cash prizes for excellence in research, unique topics, and creative expression.



National Anthology: Our Living Heritage



The culmination of the inaugural Sri Aurobindo Annual History Essay Competition 2024-25 has taken shape in 'Our Living Heritage: Essays by Young India', a major new anthology featuring exceptional work from school students across the nation. Curated from over 1,500 entries spanning more than 320 cities, this collection showcases original, youth-led research and fresh, evidence-based perspectives. Moving beyond rote memorisation and mainstream narratives, these student-written essays demonstrate a profound engagement with India's historical and cultural legacy. By reflecting Sri Aurobindo's enduring vision of fostering deep inquiry, critical thinking, and a nuanced understanding of our civilisational past, this compilation offers readers inspiring insights from the next generation.

The second edition (2025-26) expanded its reach to over 400 participating schools. The topics were curated to encourage students to look beyond general narratives. The Jury included eminent personalities like Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar recipient, **Nandini Sengupta**; Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar recipient, **Ganesh Puthur**; and **Dr Lakshmi Arya Thathachar**, Dean, Research and Professor of History at RV University, Bengaluru.

Grade 7



Agrim Sinha
1st Prize



Suviya Tandon
2nd Prize

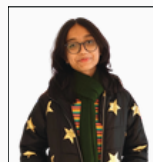


Anvi Udainiya - Special Mention

Grade 8



Armay Jena
1st Prize



Aadrika Das
2nd Prize



Shreshtha H - Special Mention

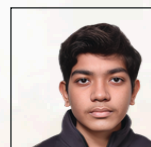
Grade 9



Rafiya Sayed
1st Prize



Romaa Yogeesh
2nd Prize



Jayaditya Singh - Special Mention

YUVA EXPLORERS



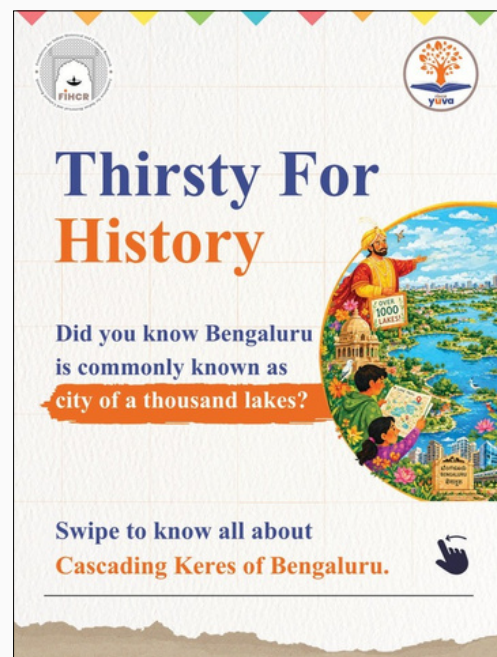
YUVA Explorers is a vibrant e-magazine designed to bring the past to life for students and teachers alike. Every issue is packed with engaging thematic articles, interactive activities, fun games, and 'news reports from ancient times' that transform dry dates and battles into thrilling narratives. For educators, our dedicated Teacher's Corner offers practical strategies, ideas, and resources to make history immersive and engaging in the classroom.

Committed to making historical learning accessible to all, Issue-2 has been translated into English, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, and Odia. Powered by NAAV AI the Indian language editions and immersive audio help bring history to more young explorers than ever before. Access the e-magazine at: <https://fihcr.com/yuva-magazine/>

Thirsty for History

Ancient Water Wisdom for Young Minds

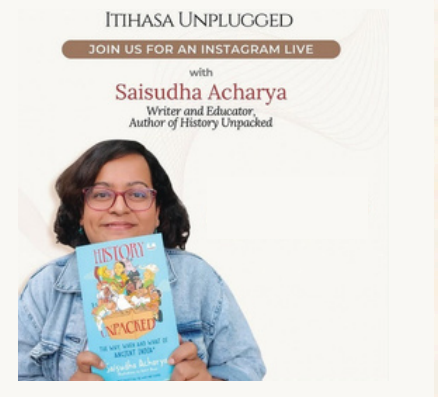
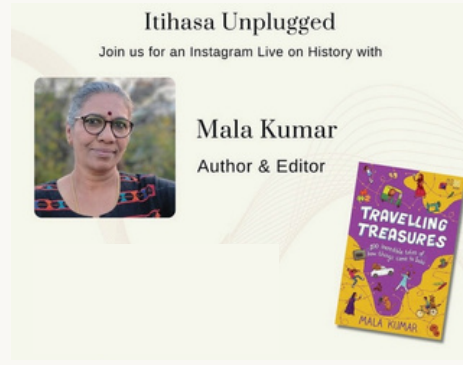
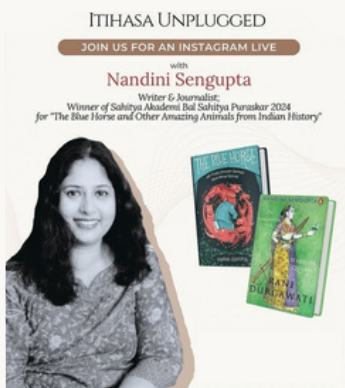
Thirsty for History is a digital engagement initiative exploring the remarkable water management traditions of ancient Bharat. The series opened with a closer look at Bengaluru's own past, revealing that long before modern urban planning, the city was home to a thousand lakes, each a testament to the sophisticated hydraulic thinking of its builders. Subsequent episodes covered the Indian subcontinent, uncovering ingenious water systems in Dholavira, the Kanheri caves, the drought-prone plains of Gujarat and Rajasthan, the water heritage of Kashmir and Pune, and the lake networks associated with Kempegowda's Bengaluru. Through these stories, the initiative seeks to show young minds that sustainability is not a modern invention but a civilisational inheritance, sparking curiosity and a deeper engagement with India's extraordinary past.



Through these combined efforts, YUVA continues to build a community that values serious inquiry, factual research, and a profound connection to our civilisational roots.

Itihāsa Unplugged

YUVA's online series where we interacted with authors and historians like **Dr Vikram Sampath, Chandrachur Ghose, Mala Kumar and Nandini Sengupta**, among others to share stories that are often missing from school books.



The Celestial Dance Astronomy of the Panchanga



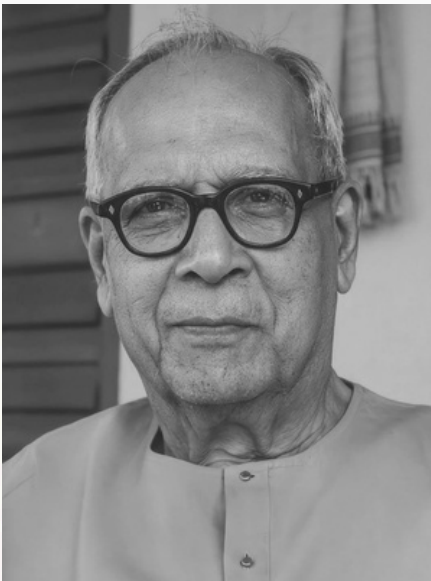
In collaboration with the Ola Foundation, we hosted a specialised session titled “The Astronomy of the Indian Calendar”. This event brought together young enthusiasts to explore the sophisticated astronomical principles that underpin the traditional Bharatiya calendar. The session highlighted how the Panchanga serves as a precise scientific tool, meticulously tracking celestial movements and their relationship with time, seasons, and ecological cycles.



The talk was designed to bridge the gap between ancient observational science and modern understanding to make history more engaging for the next generation. Attendees explored the mathematical rigour of the Panchanga and its relevance in documenting India's civilisational continuity. Please scan the QR Code to watch the event on the official YouTube channel of *Bangalore International Centre*.



FIHCR Annual History Prizes

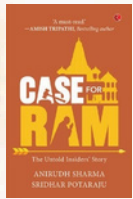


The Annual History Prizes, named in honour of R. C. Majumdar, S. L. Bhyrappa, and Anant Pai, celebrate excellence in historical research and civilisational storytelling while paying tribute to the enduring legacy of these towering figures in India's intellectual and cultural life.

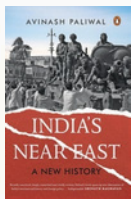
Shortlists Announced!

Shortlists were announced in May 2026. A panel of eminent jurors is evaluating the shortlisted works through a credible and merit-driven selection process. The winners will be announced at a public ceremony in New Delhi in the second half of August 2026.

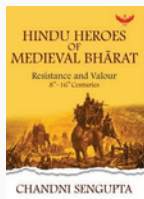
THE R. C. MAJUMDAR PRIZE Indian History



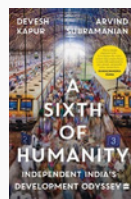
Anirudh Sharma & Sridhar Potaraju
Rupa Publications



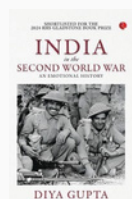
Avinash Paliwal
Penguin Random House



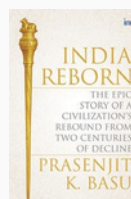
Chandni Sengupta
Garuda Prakashan



Devesh Kapur & Arvind Subramanian
HarperCollins



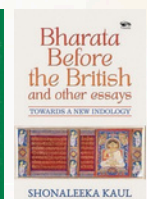
Diya Gupta
Rupa Publications



Prasenjit K. Basu
BluOne Ink



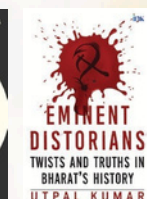
Sam Dalrymple
HarperCollins



Shonaleeka Kaul
Vistara Publishing



T.C.A. Raghavan
Juggernaut Books



Utpal Kumar
BluOne Ink



THE S.L. BHYRAPPA PRIZE Indian Historical Fiction



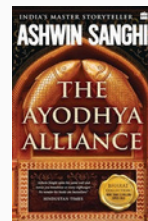
Amish Tripathi
HarperCollins



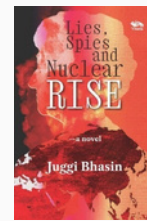
Anjana Varma
Vistara Publishing



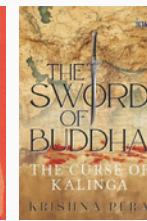
Arun Krishnan
Ebury Press



Ashwin Sanghi
HarperCollins



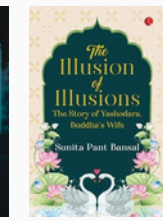
Juggi Bhasin
Vistara Publishing



Krishna Pera
BluOne Ink

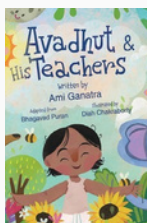


Sandeep Balakrishna
BluOne Ink



Sunita Pant Bansal
Rupa Publications

THE ANANT PAI PRIZE Indian Historical Writing for Children (Authors Category)



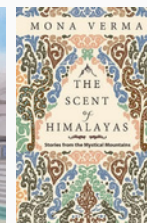
Ami Ganatra
BluOne Ink



Harini Srinivasan
BluOne Ink



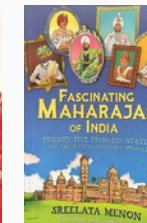
Mala Kumar
BluOne Ink



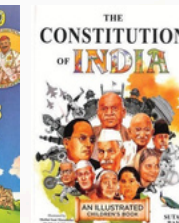
Mona Verma
Readomania



Sanjeev Sanyal
HarperCollins



Sreelata Menon
Penguin Random House



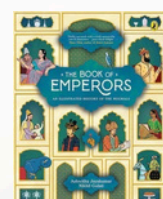
Sutapa Basu
Wonder House



THE ANANT PAI PRIZE Indian Historical Writing for Children (Illustrators Category)



Eva Sánchez Gómez
Artist



Nikhil Gulati
Penguin Random House



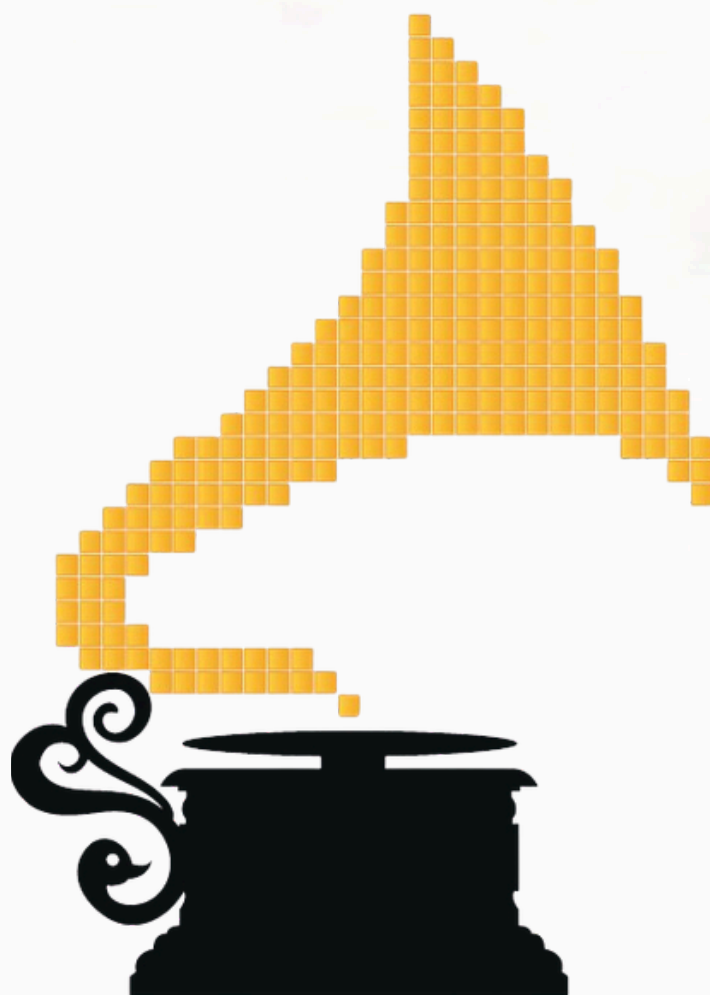
Megha Vishwanath
BluOne Ink



Taposhi Ghoshal
Artist



Yamini K
Room to Read India



Archive of Indian Music (AIM)

India's First Digital Sound Archive

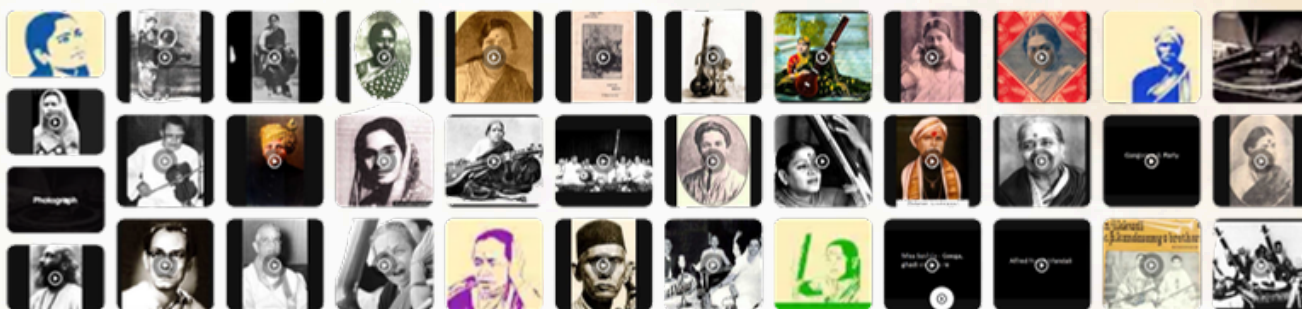
Archive of Indian Music

There was a time when music in India lived only in memory—travelling from guru to shishya, from mehfil to courtyard. The arrival of the gramophone in the late nineteenth century changed that forever. For the first time, a voice could outlive the body, preserving performances that might otherwise have faded with time.



Recognising the fragility of this sonic heritage, the Archive of Indian Music was founded with the support of Mr. TV Mohandas Pai to intervene in that fragility - to preserve, digitise, and make accessible Bharat's early recorded heritage. Freely accessible to the public via SoundCloud, the Archive of Indian Music rescues, restores, and digitises rare recordings dating back to 1902, ensuring that these invaluable traces of India's musical and cultural past remain available to future generations. Please Scan QR Code: SoundCloud: <https://soundcloud.com/archive-of-indian-music>.





The collection includes extraordinary treasures: the first recording of M. S. Subbulakshmi at age nine, India's first commercial recording by Gauhar Jaan, an early rendering of Jana Gana Mana by the Visva-Bharati chorus, and rare voices of Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, and Subhas Chandra Bose, alongside theatre and early cinema recordings across multiple Indian languages. Over 2,000 tracks have been restored, engaging more than 4.5 lakh listeners – ensuring that history is not only written, but heard. **We now have a vision of digitising about a lakh records.**

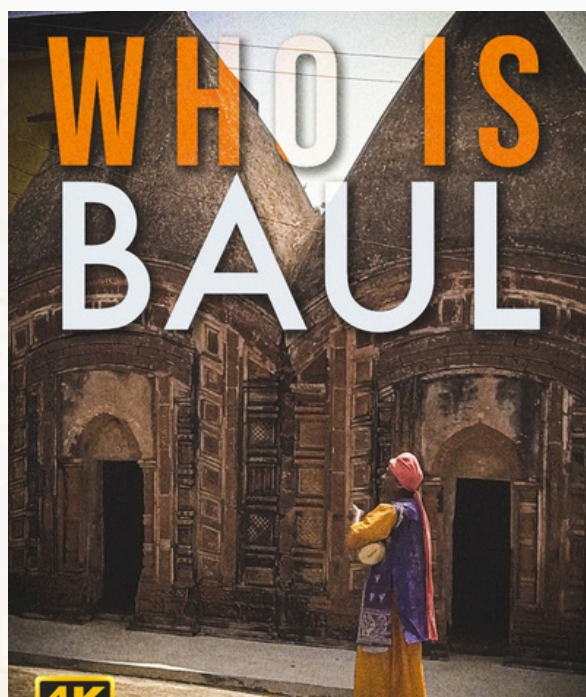
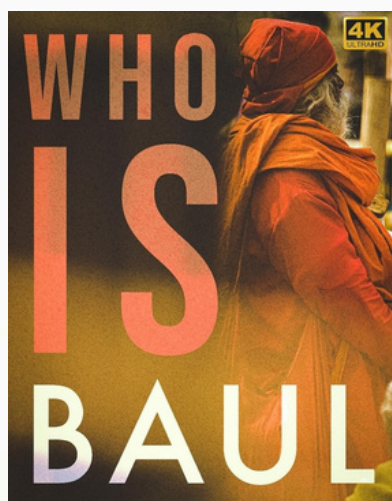


FIHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with PARAM Foundation for the preservation of FIHCR's archival holdings. This partnership ensures that the Foundation's growing repository of historical materials is safeguarded for future generations of researchers and scholars.



The Archive has also begun documenting endangered indigenous musical traditions at risk of extinction. In a pilot project, internationally renowned multi-Grammy award winner **Ricky Kej** and scholar **Rajib Sarma** collaborated to document the mystical **Bauls of Bengal** – a UNESCO-recognised Intangible Cultural Heritage tradition that expresses spirituality through music. The resulting documentary, directed by **Sairam Sagiraju**, has been showcased at international film festivals and is now available on YouTube.

An epic documentary film on the mystic music traditions of over a 1000 years of the Bauls of Bengal. Bauls are a nonconformist sect having gurus (mentors) but no dogmas, rituals, religious institutions or scriptures. Their path to God or spirituality is defined through music. The Bauls of Bengal have kept their philosophies alive for over a 1000 years, but modern demands threaten their simple, enlightened lifestyles.



Our Team

Meet our dedicated team working across Bharat to build rigorous scholarship, preserve heritage, and strengthen our civilisational confidence.



Dr. Vikram Sampath, FRHistS
Founder, Director

Historian & Author of eleven acclaimed books; Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, UK



Tathagata Basu

Head - Program Management Office

15+ years of driving impact across education, health, culture, and people development



Shilpi Srivastava

Head - Marketing Communications

15+ years of international experience spanning FIFA, banking, healthcare, and education.



Dr. Saumya Dey

Head - Research

20 years of experience in research and teaching including the Indian council of historical research in 2007, author of 7 books



Anuradha Srinivasan

Head - YUVA

Over 19 years of experience in multinational corporations and non-profit organisations



Souradeep Nath

Senior Researcher

4+ years of combined experience in higher education, research, museum studies, and heritage documentation.



Satyajeet Ojha

Program Manager: Fellowships

Over 7 years of experience across higher education, social development, and startups



Rasika Bhale

Associate Program Manager: YUVA

Previously worked with prominent UK-based publishing houses



Namisha Bothra

Program Coordinator, Fellowships

Project coordination and management with experience in content review, and outreach



Maalavika Nair

Research Associate, YUVA

Archaeology and Heritage Management PG, published co-author, and heritage researcher



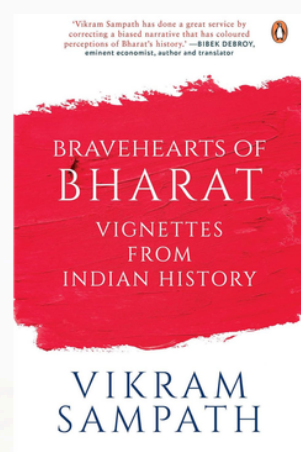
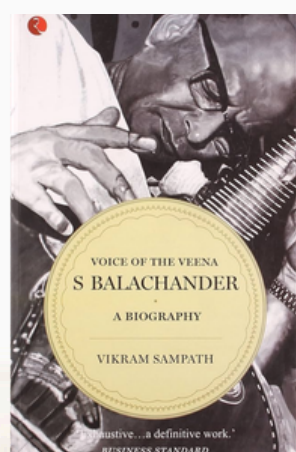
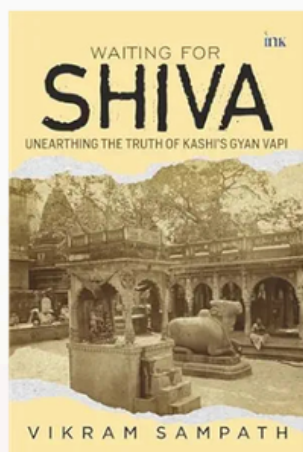
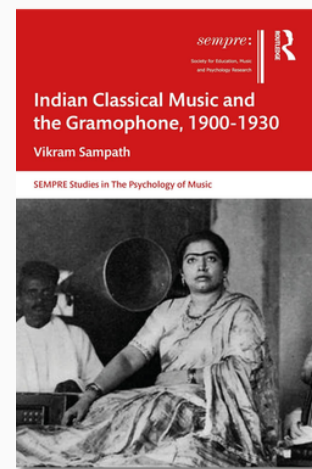
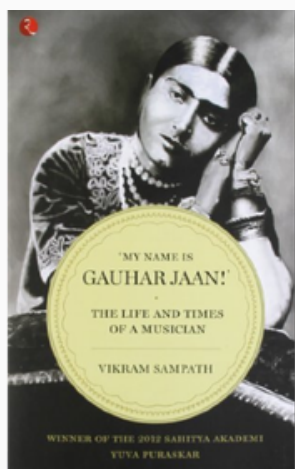
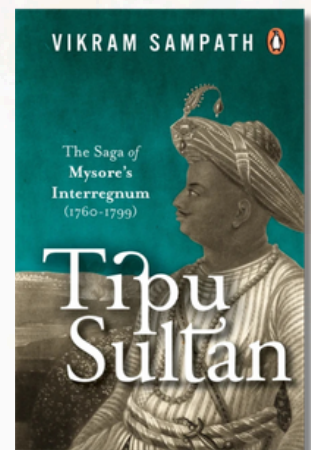
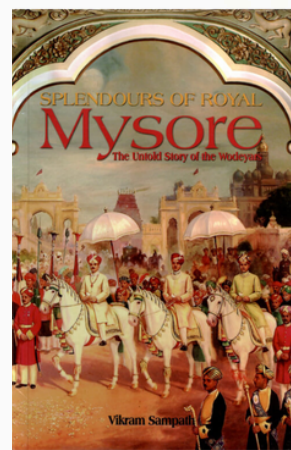
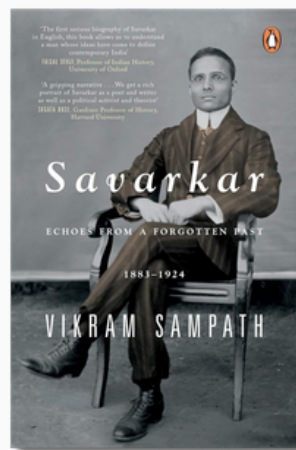
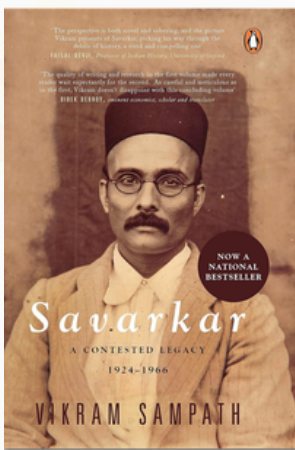
Daksha Derebail

Research Associate

M.A. Archaeology graduate and heritage researcher and Bharatanatyam dancer

Books by Our Founder

Dr. Vikram Sampath, FRHistS has authored several celebrated books, including *My Name Is Gauhar Jaan!*, the bestselling two-volume biography of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, *Bravehearts of Bharat*, *Waiting for Shiva*, and *Tipu Sultan*. A Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Yuva Puraskar, Dr Sampath continues to advance historical research, scholarship, and public engagement through his writing and institutional initiatives.



With Gratitude



Bhavish Aggarwal
Founder & Chairman - OLA



Rajalakshmi Aggarwal
Chairperson - OLA Foundation



Devesh Varma
Head, OLA Foundation

Much of what we have achieved so far has been made possible by the trust and support of those who believed in this vision from the beginning. We are grateful to Bhavish Aggarwal, Rajalakshmi Aggarwal, and the Ola Foundation, whose generous support allowed us to shape several key initiatives. We also thank Devesh Varma for his constant support and encouragement .

Support Us

We thank our donors for their continued trust and encouragement in advancing the study and understanding of India's past. Your contribution supports research, scholarship and publications. Scan the QR code to make a donation. Contributions are eligible for tax benefits under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act.



Scan here!

Our Partners



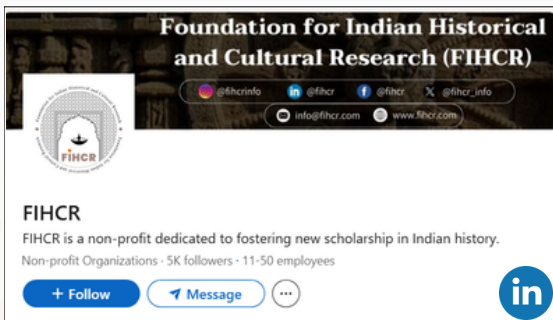
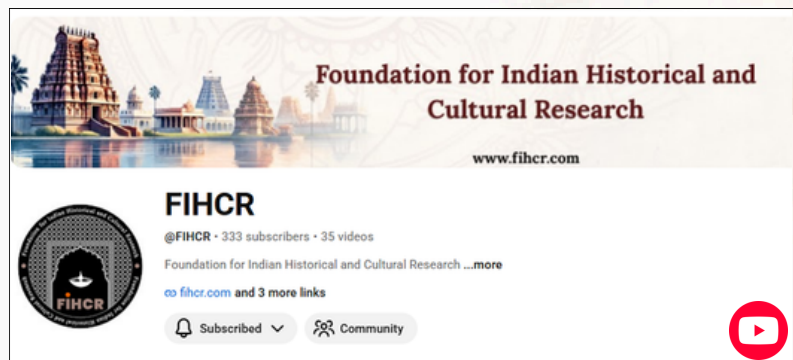
YUVA Outreach Partners



Stay Connected

Over the past two years, FIHCR has witnessed a significant growth across all its social media channels—a testament to the relevance of our work and the enthusiasm of audiences seeking deeper engagement with India's history, heritage, and civilisation. This steady growth has been organic, built through thoughtful posts that consistently earned strong impressions and engagement.

We are always building, learning, and listening. If you would like to follow our work, stay updated on new initiatives, or simply see how the journey unfolds, we invite you to stay connected.



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FIHCR

Visit our website:

www.fihcr.com

Building Towards 2030...

60+

Multi-disciplinary,
collaborative research
projects initiated

10+

Prestigious prizes awarded to
recognise historical scholarship
and civilisational storytelling

50+

Research Fellows
graduated

150+

Schools & educators
engaged with

5,00,000+

Children reached through YUVA

10+

Knowledge sharing
and public
engagement events

1,00,000+

Vintage gramophone records rescued & digitised







Fellowships • Research • Youth Engagement • Archives • Public History

