



DR. G. J. SUDHAKAR ENDOWMENT LECTURE

REPORT ON “SCIENCE MEETS HISTORY”

The Dr. G. J. Sudhakar Endowment Lecture, a prestigious academic event, was successfully organised by the Department of History, Loyola College, Chennai, on **5th December 2024** at **Y.D. Hall**. This event marked the **first-ever interdisciplinary activity** conducted by the Department of History, highlighting the growing emphasis on collaborative research and academic exchange. The event featured an insightful lecture delivered by **Dr. Ms. Giri Rengasami, Dean, Vinayaka Missions Research Foundation**. The distinguished lecture, titled **"Science Meets History"**, explored the intricate relationship between science and history, drawing significant parallels and demonstrating how the two disciplines complement each other. The event was a grand success, attracting scholars, students, and academicians from various fields, fostering a profound understanding of the intersection between scientific progress and historical inquiry.

The event commenced with a formal welcome address delivered by **Dr. A. Arputha Selvi, Head of the Department of History**. In her address, she highlighted the importance of the **Dr. G. J. Sudhakar Endowment Lecture** in promoting academic dialogue and encouraging interdisciplinary research. She also extended her gratitude to the guest speaker, faculty members, and students who had gathered to witness and engage in the session.

Mr. Timothy Ajay J, Associate Cultural Secretary of Loyola History Association (LHA), introduced the chief guest. He expressed his enthusiasm about the unique theme of the lecture and acknowledged the contributions of **Dr. Giri Rengasami** to academia. His words set the stage for an enlightening discourse on the interwoven narratives of science and history given by Dr. Giri Rengasami.

Dr. Giri Rengasami, a renowned academician with **over 50 years of experience**, delivered an engaging and thought-provoking lecture that captured the audience's attention. She began by discussing the **fundamental role of science in shaping historical events** and vice versa. Through her in-depth analysis, she presented the ways in which history has recorded, preserved, and influenced scientific advancements across centuries.

Key Highlights of the Lecture:

1. **Scientific Contributions to Historical Understanding:** Dr. Rengasami spoke about the advancements in various scientific fields, such as **carbon dating, forensic anthropology, and space research**, which have played a crucial role in historical discoveries. She explained how modern technology has helped historians verify historical claims, uncover ancient civilizations, and understand past societies more accurately.

2. **Interdependence of Science and History:** She discussed how science and history are deeply interconnected, citing examples from **archaeology, astronomy, and medical science**. She highlighted how historical texts, records, and inscriptions provide valuable data that aid scientific research, and conversely, how scientific advancements help historians uncover, verify, and reinterpret historical events.
3. **Significance of the Two Disciplines:** Dr. Rengasami emphasised the necessity of a **multidisciplinary approach** to learning. She argued that history is incomplete without understanding the scientific context of different eras, and science cannot fully progress without taking historical precedents into account. She provided instances where technological advancements have helped historians unearth historical artifacts and reconstruct ancient civilizations.
4. **Personal Experiences as an Academician:** Drawing from her own journey as a scholar and educator, **Dr. Rengasami shared her experiences spanning over five decades**. She spoke about the challenges she faced as a woman in academia and the perseverance required to make a lasting impact in the field of research. Her anecdotes served as a source of inspiration for the students and young researchers in the audience.

Interactive Q&A Session

The lecture was followed by an engaging **Q&A session**, where students and faculty members had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss further on the topics covered. The questions ranged from **specific scientific breakthroughs to the role of technology in preserving historical data**. Dr. Rengasami provided **insightful and well-articulated responses**, encouraging students to explore **interdisciplinary research** and think beyond traditional academic boundaries.

The event concluded with a **Vote of Thanks** delivered by **Mr. Ramakrishnan, Associate Secretary of Loyola History Association (LHA)**. He expressed his heartfelt gratitude to **Dr. Giri Rengasami** for delivering such an insightful lecture and thanked all the dignitaries, faculty members, and students for their enthusiastic participation. Special appreciation was given to **Dr. I. Princes, Assistant Professor, Department of History**, who served as the **Convener of the Programme** and played a pivotal role in the successful organisation of the event.

The **Dr. G. J. Sudhakar Endowment Lecture on "Science Meets History"** was an enlightening and thought-provoking session that successfully bridged the gap between two seemingly distinct disciplines. The lecture reinforced the **importance of interdisciplinary studies** and inspired students to view history and science as complementary fields rather than isolated areas of study. The event left a lasting impact on the attendees, encouraging further exploration into the dynamic interactions between scientific and historical advancements.

The seminar not only highlighted the invaluable contributions of scientific methodologies to historical research but also underscored the **importance of collaboration** between historians and scientists in understanding the past and shaping the future. As the **first-ever interdisciplinary activity** conducted by the **Department of History**, the event marked a

significant academic milestone in fostering a holistic approach to learning at **Loyola College, Chennai**.





