

Shastri News - April 2009

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Earlier deadline for major grants

[Millennium Development Goals Research Grant](#)

Application deadline: August 31, 2009.

Our service/communications survey results indicate that most of you prefer applying for grants during the summer months. In response to this feedback we will be revising the deadlines for our grants in 2009-2010. Please stay tuned as many deadlines will be coming earlier than in previous years. Upcoming grant details and application forms will be posted on our website by the end of May. Please feel free to contact our offices throughout the application process if you have any questions or concerns. At this time all grants are still subject to the approval of our budget.

IIT Bombay hosts Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet

“We have much more to offer each other, sharing economic opportunities, investment links, and research collaborations in this great global marketplace we share with all its potential for partnerships. As both India and Canada deal with the urgent challenges of global recession, let us not lose sight of this tremendous potential that lies ahead, and the opportunity to strengthen our partnerships.” ~ Kevin Lynch

On March 19, 2009, The Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay hosted Mr. Kevin Lynch, Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet, who provides non-partisan advice and support to the Prime Minister of Canada. Mr. Lynch was accompanied by his wife, the Consul General Mr. Gary Luton and other consulate staff.

During his time at IIT Bombay, Mr. Lynch met with the Director, Professor Devang Khakhar, the Deputy Director, deans, faculty members and student leaders. In his address at round table

discussions, Mr. Lynch noted that, “one of the challenges India and Canada share is how to continually ramp up the quality of our academic institutions and the excellence of their research capacity to meet the fierce competition of the global market-place.” He sees much promise for Indo-Canadian collaboration and stresses that, “we have much more to offer each other, sharing economic opportunities, investment links, and research collaborations in this great global marketplace we share with all its potential for partnerships. As both India and Canada deal with the urgent challenges of global recession, let us not lose sight of this tremendous potential that lies ahead, and the opportunity to strengthen our partnerships.”

IIT Bombay already holds several Memorandums of Understanding with Canadian Universities, and looks forward to building stronger connections.

For a more detailed account of Mr. Lynch’s address at IIT Bombay, please [click here](#).

Student field school in India - Simon Fraser University

Simon Fraser University (SFU) invites students from across Canada to participate in its field school in India on Contemporary Arts this fall. Students will discover a mix of cultures rich with history and tradition as they engage India’s theater, visual arts, music, film, and dance. Based in Delhi, the students will travel throughout Northern India from India’s holiest city to the epicenter of Indian film. The programme promises to be anything but the ordinary for students pursuing a truly non-traditional learning experience.

Field School Director: **Professor Patricia Gruben, School for the Contemporary Arts**

Application Deadline: **May 26, 2009**

For course information, timelines, cost, and funding opportunities, please see the [field school brochure](#) or visit [SFU’s Website](#).



Lester Pearson lecture series draws crowd at UDSC

On April 24, 2009, the University of Delhi held its 15th annual Lester Pearson Lecture at the South Campus in New Delhi. Dr. V. K. Vasal, Director of the Center for Canadian Studies, introduced the Lester Pearson lecture series as the most prestigious event amongst the multiple activities organized by the Center throughout the year. Prof. Malashri Lal, Joint Director of the University of Delhi South Campus (UDSC), delivered the welcome



address and, as per traditions of the Center, H. E. Mr. Kenneth Macartney, Acting High Commissioner of Canada in India, read a citation in honor of Mr. Lester Pearson, former Prime Minister of Canada. Prof. Dinesh Singh, Director of UDSC, delivered his presidential address and invited the speaker Mr. Pavan K. Varma, Director General of the Indian Council for Cultural Relation (ICCR) of the Government of India.

Mr. Varma spoke on the topic 'Culture, Identity and Globalization.' After an exposition of key terms, he highlighted the important role of culture in determining the identity of a person. In this regard, he emphasized the need to preserve culture. Mr. Varma sparked discussion by proposing that increasing globalization potentially challenges the survivability of ancient cultures, such as that of India, and thereby the identity of a person.

Over 100 diplomats, bureaucrats, academicians, researchers, students and community members attended the lecture.

The Center for Canadian Studies at the University of Delhi would also like to recognize the team of gifted students from Lady Shri Ram College for Women who won the Centre's eighth Pierre Trudeau Memorial Debate this February. This year's debate grappled with the idea that, 'the rise in Fundamentalism is a sure sign that a melting-pot approach is preferable to a multicultural one.' We at the Shastri Institute would also like to offer our congratulations.

Publisher/Distributor seeks Indo-Canadian author to write on the Komagata Maru incident

Formac Lorimer Books is seeking an Indo-Canadian author to write a 120 page account of the 1914 Komagata Maru incident. The work would be part of a series of non-fiction books for teens dealing with events in Canadian history where the government based its policies, decisions and actions on racist or cultural prejudices. For each book they have contracted authors from the cultural background of the historical victims.



In 1914, 376 immigrants from Punjab, India, set sail from Calcutta to Vancouver aboard a Japanese steamship named the Komagata Maru. The government of Canada refused to allow the immigrants to land and they were forced to return to India where conflict and fatalities ensued.

The desired work will have a high interest/low vocabulary style, aiming at about a grade five reading level but a grade 8-12 audience. The work should include an account of the situation of Indian immigration into Canada prior to the Komagata Maru incident and a narrative of what happened to some of the passengers aboard the vessel. Ideally, the author will also be able to relate the impact of these experiences to subsequent generations. The book will close with an outline of Indian immigration policies since 1914, discussing how the government apology and reparations came about.

All interest/queries should be directed to:

Pam Hickman

Children's Acquisitions Editor

pamhickmankidsbooks@formac.ca

Impact of the economic crisis on Asian developing economies

Mr. Rajat Nag, Managing Director General of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), is currently the most senior Canadian serving in one of the Bretton Woods international financial institutions. He visited the University of Ottawa on April 23 to lecture on Asian developing economies and the impact of the current global economic crisis. The session attracted over 80 professors, senior University of Ottawa professionals, diplomats, Canadian government officials, members of the NGO community and students.



The main message conveyed by Mr. Nag was that the financial meltdown in the West has led to a sharp recession of the real economy in Asia and the Pacific, which will last at least until 2010 or early 2011. As a result of the recession millions of people are unemployed and have slid back into poverty. The ADB supports national governments' credit and fiscal stimulus packages to prevent the rise of social unrest, which can then feed political instability.

For the last three decades, rapid growth in Asia and the Pacific has led to a drastic reduction of poverty from 1 among 3 to 1 among 5 Asian citizens. This has been unprecedented and not achieved in other regions such as Africa and Latin America...

The current global crisis has led in 2008-09 to a sharp decline in growth impacting people's lives, especially the lives of the poor. The crisis will keep more than 60 million people in developing Asia—including 14 million in China and 24 million in India—trapped in absolute poverty this year, and nearly 100 million more in 2010. These are people in Asia who would have otherwise been freed from the shackles of poverty had economic growth continued at pre-crisis levels...

A recent ADB/UNESCAP/UNDP study suggests that economic growth reduces both income and non-income poverty, although its impact on the latter is weaker. If these relationships hold, a 3 percentage point reduction in the region's GDP growth rate in 2009 translates into about 10 million more undernourished people, over 56,000 more deaths of children under 5 years, and 2,000 more mothers dying at childbirth. This also implies a delay of one year in achieving [United Nations Millennium Development Goal targets](#) relating to infant mortality and hunger. The ADB emphasizes the need for protecting social expenditures during these years of economic crisis.

To read all of Mr. Nag's speech, please [click here](#).

The University of Ottawa is already arranging to have Mr. Nag give a follow-up lecture this fall. In the meantime, the University is continuing a productive dialogue with ADB's Washington office on developing cooperation and linkages with the School of International Development and Global Studies (SIDGS).

If you are an academic (Indian or Canadian) whose research has the potential to impact Millennium Development Goals, we strongly encourage you to consider applying for our [Millennium Development Goals Research Grant](#).

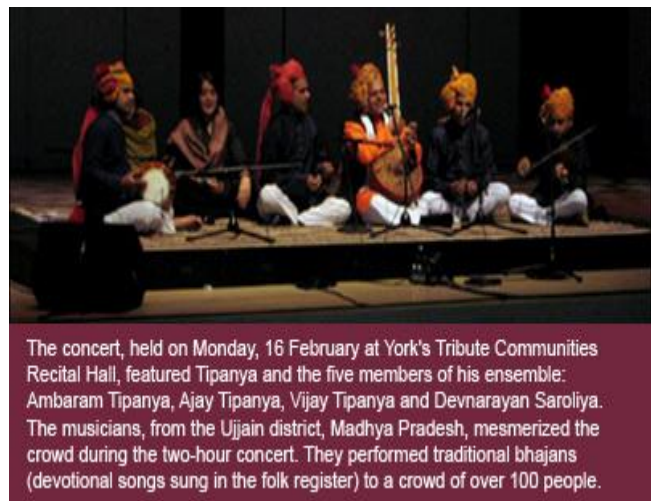
York welcomes filmmaker, musicians from India for celebration of poet-saint Kabir

The poet-saint Kabir was once again inspiring a new generation at York University in March when the South Asian Studies Programme and the York Centre for Asian Research hosted the 'Journeys with Kabir' event series. It featured Indian filmmaker Shabnam Virmani and award-winning Indian vocalist Prahlad Singh Tipanya and his ensemble. Three films and a concert were highlights of the visit, which also included visits to undergraduate classes. The events were held on 16-17 March 2009 at York University.

Kabir, one of India's great religious poets, lived in Varanasi in the fifteenth century and remains extremely popular within and beyond the large Hindi-speaking areas of North India today. Over the centuries the body of work attributed to Kabir has grown, due to the dynamic and fluid nature of oral tradition. In far-flung regions, Kabir is sung in different dialects and local musical styles among various communities.

Kabir was unclassifiable as Hindu, Muslim, or yogi, though he bore marks of all these traditions. He belonged to a family of Muslim julahas (weavers of shudra caste status) and is believed by many to have been the disciple of the Hindu guru Ramanand. Fiercely independent, he has become an icon of speaking truth to power. Often abrasive and uncompromising, he exhorted his listeners to shed their delusions, pretensions, and orthodoxies in favour of an intense, direct confrontation with the truth.

The tour arose from the Kabir Project, a Ford Foundation-funded project that began in 2003. It brings together the experiences of a series of journeys in quest of this 15th century mystic poet in our contemporary worlds. For more information, visit <http://www.kabirproject.org>.



The concert, held on Monday, 16 February at York's Tribute Communities Recital Hall, featured Tipanya and the five members of his ensemble: Ambaram Tipanya, Ajay Tipanya, Vijay Tipanya and Devnarayan Saroliya. The musicians, from the Ujjain district, Madhya Pradesh, mesmerized the crowd during the two-hour concert. They performed traditional bhajans (devotional songs sung in the folk register) to a crowd of over 100 people.

The stop at York University was one of three Canadian stops on a two-month North American tour organized by Professor Linda Hess of Stanford University. Hess is also the subject of one of Virmani's Kabir films, Chalo Hamara Des: Journeys with Kabir & Friends, which unfolds through the interwoven narratives of two people from two very different countries – Dalit folk singer Prahlad Tipanya and Hess. Three of the four documentaries that Virmani wrote, produced and directed for the Kabir

“Most importantly, we had an excellent community turnout,” said Nijhawan. Positive media coverage means that interviews with the tour members have and will be shown across Ontario and North America.

Project were shown to enthusiastic audiences with lively discussion.

The event would not have been possible without the support provided by the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, Scotiabank, Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost, Department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics, Faculty of Fine Arts, Faculty of Social Science and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Himachal Pradesh welcomes Canada Research Chair

The Centre for Canadian Studies Development Programme (CSDP) in Shimla was happy to welcome Dr. Henning Bjornlund, Canada Research Chair in Water and the Economy at the University of Lethbridge, Alberta, during his recent visit to northern India. Dr Bjornlund is an internationally recognized authority on irrigation water management who specializes in the use of economic instruments. He has published widely in this field and is currently editing a new book entitled 'Incentives and Instruments for Sustainable Irrigation.'



During Dr. Bjornlund's visit, the CSDP Centre in Shimla arranged for him to lecture at the Dr. Y. S. Parmar University of Forestry and Horticulture in Nauni, Solan. Dr. Bjorn spoke on 'Sustainable Irrigation – Lessons from the past' with dignitaries on the Dias including Professor K. S. Verma, Vibeke Bjornlund and Professor K. K. Kaushik, Director CSDP Shimla.

In his presentation, Dr. Bjornlund discussed how a number of early irrigation systems in the world have proven sustainable for thousands of years. Some of them are still sustainable today, but many have not survived the confrontation with modern irrigation technologies, while others are currently under threat. Dr. Bjornlund provided examples from Oman, Bali, and Iraq and led a discussion on the lessons that can be applied to today's irrigation challenges.

Following their stay in Shimla(April 21-25, 2009) Dr. Bjornlund and Mrs. Bjornlund flew to Oman where he is currently conducting a research project funded by the Royal Geographical Society in London.

New appointment for Ratna Ghosh

Professor Ratna Ghosh, current recipient of a Shastri Institute Millennium Development Goals Research Grant, has been elected to a three year term by the [Comparative and International Education Society \(CIES\)](#) of the United States. She will be Vice-President, President-Elect through 2010 and President in 2011. We would like to offer our congratulations as we continue to support Professor Ghosh in her world-class research initiatives.

CIES was founded in 1956 to foster cross-cultural understanding, scholarship, academic achievement and societal development through the international study of educational ideas, systems, and practices. The Society's members include more than 2000 academics, practitioners, and students from around the world.

