



# NIAS Newsletter



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email <newsletter.nias@gmail.com>

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## **Members of the EEP Programme**

### *Faculty:*

Dilip R Ahuja  
(Programme Head)  
DP Sen Gupta  
TS Gopi Rethinaraj  
Shoibal Chakravarty  
Hippu Salk Kristle Nathan

### *Research Fellows:*

Anasuya G  
Akhila Prabhakaran  
Sravanthi Choragudi

### *Doctoral Students:*

Neesha Dutta  
Priyam Laxmi Borgohain  
Meera Sudhakar  
CS Vijay

## Featured Research Programme **ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT POLICY**

The Energy and Environment Policy Programme (EPPP) at NIAS engages in research and analysis of critical challenges facing India's energy sector and provides an independent platform for scholars and practitioners to propose practical policy solutions and recommendations that are in support of national energy security and environmental sustainability. While devoting to the study of efficiency, equity, and environmental concerns arising from the country's energy sector, EPPP strives to enrich India's energy policy discourse, dispel commonly-held myths, and enhance national capacity to deliver "sustainable" economic development in the context of growing concerns about national energy security, local environmental degradation, and global climate change.

Recently the Programme convened the First Specialists Group meeting on *Low Energy Nuclear Reactions (LENR): A Way Ahead for India Meeting* on April 8, 2015 under the chairmanship of Dr Anil Kakodkar to review recent developments and identify suitable opportunities for prioritizing national research in this field. About 30 distinguished scientists from various institutions within the country attended the meeting and generated a broad consensus to initiate work on experimental verification of LENR. Another recent course organised was the NIAS DST Training Programme with the core theme *Energy Security and Management*.





“The NIAS PhD Programme is a unique training programme in the country that fosters interdisciplinary research and teaching skills. In keeping with the vision of the institute’s founder JRD Tata and national skills development for building a better future, the NIAS PhD Programme encourages students to actively adopt a multidisciplinary approach to problem solving.

NIAS PhD students conduct their research and study in an environment free from the disciplinary constraints and get a broad exposure to ideas and research methods in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and engineering. This helps students to leave the institute as well-rounded individuals capable of working in a variety of professional and intellectual settings”.

**TS GOPI RETHINARAJ**  
**Academic Head**  
**NIAS PhD Programme**

## NIAS Doctoral Programme

### RECENT AWARDEES & THEIR IMPRESSIONS



**LAKSHMI KUCHIBOTLA** Thesis Topic: *Self and Well-being: A Qualitative Approach with Focus on the Mahabharata* Supervisor: Prof. Sanaeetha

“... a strong foundation initiated the research process when I joined the PhD programme at NIAS. Beginning with the Research Methodology Course and moving on to the School of Humanities and Foundation Courses, gave me a grip on first how to even begin writing and reading. Currently, I am a Counsellor, volunteering at Banjara Academy, Bangalore. My thesis subject, and more importantly, the research Process that I have gone through, have certainly made an impact and brought about a change in my own person and self. I believe, my research has contributed positively for others and myself. As I go deeper into the counselling, I am aware of changes in my approach from earlier pre-research stages, and feel that these changes are bringing about insights which are more effective in the people I interact with”.



**JAFAR K** Thesis Topic: *The Impact of Education-Led Growth on Human Development: A Case-Study of Malappuram District, Kerala.* Supervisor: Prof. Narendar Pani

“... the support and guidance encouraged me to engage with an entirely fresh research theme. By engaging with other disciplinary perspectives and researchers widened my understanding and approaches on various issues. Currently I am an ICSSR Post-Doctoral Fellow at Council for Social Development, Hyderabad. My post-doctoral research project focuses on issue related to local finance and tries to understand how remittances, culture and regional diversity influence the pattern of savings and borrowings. Some of the findings from my thesis engage with popular understanding around role of education in development”.

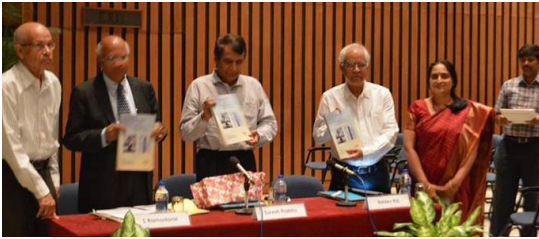


“... I had a good and productive time at NIAS when our Mathematics group was vibrant and active. In spite of the delay in submission, I managed to submit an excellent thesis and got awarded the NBHM post-doctoral fellowship by DAE based on my PhD thesis work. Currently I am a post-doctoral fellow at International Centre for Theoretical Sciences (ICTS) Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. My thesis has proposed a new method of mathematical modelling based on topological methods which find numerous applications in various interdisciplinary fields. Application to the field of theoretical mathematics and biomedical signal processing are justified in the thesis”.



**SAJINI ANAND** Thesis Topic: *Nonlinear Multidimensional Transformations and their applications to signal processing.* Supervisor: Prof. Prabhakar G Vaidya

## Recent News



## Foundation Day

NIAS recently celebrated its [Foundation day with significant lectures on June 20 and 21, 2015](#). The theme for this year was "Sharing Experiences of Communication on Important National Paradigms and Pursuits". Welcome address and introduction was given by Prof Baldev Raj, Director of NIAS. The Chairman of the NIAS Council of Management Mr S Ramadorai gave the opening remarks. Two books authored by NIAS faculty were released. Excellence Awards for a Research Intern and a Doctoral Student were given. [Click here to watch the video coverage](#)

The inaugural address was delivered by the Honourable Union Railway Minister of India Mr Suresh Prabhu.

Other eminent speakers included Bharat Ratna Prof CNR Rao, Dr K Kasturirangan, Dr MR Srinivasan, Dr Devi Shetty, Prof K VijayRaghavan, Mr Krishna Byre Gowda, Mr Chiranjiv Singh, Mr B Muthuraman, Prof Narendar Pani, Mr Anil K Gupta, Dr DP Biradar and Prof Anindya Sinha. The seminar was attended by NIAS council members, associates, faculty, students, staff and invitees. All the lectures were video documented and an edited volume is expected to emerge out of the proceedings.

## Workshop on Kerala Mural Paintings

The waning traditional art of mural painting depicts mythology and legends on the walls of temples and churches in South India, principally in Kerala. A joint effort by the Guruvayur temple authorities and artists was launched to preserve these skills, resulting in establishing the Guruvayur Devaswom Institute of Mural Painting.

With changing patronage and demands, these paintings are now rendered on portable canvases. In February 2015, we at NIAS were fortunate to share our campus for ten days with a group of very talented artists from this Institute. As Picasso said, "The purpose of art is washing the dust of daily life off our soul". It was indeed a soul-cleansing experience for us to watch graceful hands and masterful brush-strokes adding shape and colour to blank canvases, and witnessing patterns and forms gradually emerge. The artists first drew outlines, and then filled these with light diluted shades of yellow. They slowly increased the colour intensity to oranges and reds, before embellishing with blues and greens. Blurry pictures magically came into focus, as though the artists saw a form trapped within the canvas and lovingly painted until they could set it free.

Prof. S. Settar took the lead in organising this event, with the help of Indra Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRAMS). As a result, NIAS today has artwork produced during this workshop colourfully adorning the walls, giving us an opportunity to admire them and nourish our souls every day. The artists who participated in the workshop are: K.U.Krishna Kumar (Principal of the Institute), Devan, Tarun, Sreerag, Anuraj, Jithin, Raghuram, Vijith, Vishnu Sreedhar, Nithin, Adarsh, Jiju Lal, Shashidharan, Rajendran, Shaiju T.K., Rakesh, Ranjith, Sreeraj V.P. and Ashokan.



## Recent Meetings @ NIAS

### NIAS Wednesday Discussion Meetings

Dr John P John

Professor of Psychiatry, NIMHANS, Bengaluru  
*Schizophrenia as a Disorder of the Self*  
August 26, 2015

Prof DP Sen Gupta

Visiting Professor, NIAS  
*Rural Electrification in India: The Problems and Inadequacies: Is There a Solution?*  
August 19, 2015

Dr Vijay Manchanda

Former Head, Radiochemistry Division, BARC, Mumbai  
*Role of NGOs in power projects in India*  
August 12, 2015

Ambassador Saurabh Kumar

Adjunct Faculty, NIAS  
*The "India in the Chinese Media" Project*  
August 5, 2015

### Consultative Workshop on "The Schools of the Future" under the global series on *Future of Education*

was organised in collaboration with futureagenda on July 29, 2015.

Coordinators: Anitha Kurup and Shailaja D Sharma  
[Click here for Workshop agenda](#)



### Fourth K Subrahmanyam Memorial Lecture

Shri Shyam Saran

Former Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Nuclear Affairs and Climate Change  
*Climate Change and Energy Security: The Twin Challenges Confronting India*  
August 11, 2015



### Eleventh Raja Ramanna Memorial Lecture

Dr Ajay Mathur

Director General, Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Ministry of Power, New Delhi  
*Well-Trodden Highways and New Pathways: Finding the Best Roads for Accelerating Energy Efficiency in India*  
August 19, 2015

### Conference on "Indian Political Philosophy"

was organised in collaboration with School of Advanced Study, University of London and South Asian Studies, Yale University from 6-8 July, 2015. Speakers included Sasheej Hegde, Bhikhu Parekh, Gitanjali Surendran, Julia Stephens, Gurpreet Mahajan, Yogendra Yadav, Karuna Mantena, Ashis Nandy, Vasanthi Srinivasan, Rohit Dey, Raghuramaraju, Sundar Sarukkai, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, Chandan Gowda, and James Manor.

Coordinators: Narendar Pani and Anshuman Behera



## Upcoming Events

- NIAS DST Training Programme on *Policy for Science and Science for Policies*.  
16-20 November 2015  
Course Coordinator: Lalitha Sundaresan
- International Conference on *Consciousness, Cognition and Culture: Implications for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.  
December 9 To 11, 2015  
Conference Director: Sangeetha Menon  
[Click here for Conference Website](#)
- In-service Training Programme for All India Service Officers on *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Urban Development*  
January 2016  
Course Coordinator: Narendar Pani
- Thirtieth NIAS Annual Programme for Senior Executives  
January 18 to 23, 2016  
Course Coordinators: Sindhu Radhakrishna & Chidambaran Iyer



Photo courtesy: Sangeetha Menon, NIAS

## Ideas, Impact and Awards

- National Innovation Foundation - India (NIF) and National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) signed a memorandum of understanding at NIAS to collaborate and further efforts in the areas of intersection of science, technology and innovation, public policy, and social sciences. The agreement was signed by Prof. Anil K Gupta, Executive Vice chair, NIF and Prof. Baldev Raj, Director, NIAS in the presence of Dr Vipin Kumar, Director of NIF and scientists from Krishi Vigyan Kendras of Karnataka and faculty members and students of NIAS. [Read a media report](#)
- Prof Baldev Raj has been chosen for the HK Firodia Vijnan Ratna Award for excellence in science and technology, instituted by HKF Foundation.
- A Feature was published by P C Agarwal, Current Science May 10, titled B. V. Sreekantan: A versatile and humane scientist by P C Agarwal, Current Science May 10, 2015
- Prof S. Settar has been chosen for the Masti Award for 2015.

## Birds and Blooms

**RAJANI M B, Asst. Professor, NIAS**

A bright orange glow that we often see in several places within NIAS campus is the flower Ixora (or Exora). It is said that a few centuries ago one of the early Portuguese botanists, while recording flora in South India, encountered this plant and asked a native what it was. The native answered Isvara, the other name for the god Śiva, for whose worship this flower was used. The botanist recorded this as "Ixora" (in Portuguese 'x' is pronounced 'sh'), and the name stuck. It is also known as 'Jungle Flame' or 'Jungle Geranium', and is used for hedges and screens, foundation plantings, massed in flowering beds, or grown as a specimen shrub or small tree. It is dense, multi-branched, evergreen, and produces flowers almost around the whole year. There are about 400 species in the genus Ixora. There are numerous named cultivars, differing in flower colour (yellow, pink, orange) and plant size.

Botanical name: Ixora coccinea

Family: Rubiaceae

Origin: Tropical South-East Asia

Photo  
Courtesy:  
Ekta Gupta,  
NIAS



## Whirls of Words: The Writer's Space

**SHANKAR RAJARAMAN, Doctoral Scholar at NIAS**

A verse on Rain . . .

कालेऽस्मिन्नवनीलनीरदरवप्राये पतित्वा दिवो यावन्न द्रवतां प्रयान्ति करकाग्रावाण एते क्षणात् ।  
चित्वा तानिह तावदुत्सुकतया कुर्वन्ति गण्डद्वये गाढानन्दममी निमीलितदृशः पल्लीभुवो माणवाः ॥

*In these times when the directions resound with the thunder of fresh, dark blue clouds, the village boys eagerly collect hailstones falling from the heavens. And before the icy crystals quickly melt away, they bring them close to their cheeks and with eyes closed in deep ecstasy, feel the soothing touch.*

The verse, composed in the 19-syllable शार्दूलविक्रीडितं, belongs to a genre of Sanskrit poetry called जाति or स्वभावोक्ति. स्वभावोक्ति (literally 'natural or unadorned speech') is characterised by a minute detailing of (mostly) human or animal behaviors in varied situations. In this it compares most favorably with a miniature painting or a slow-motion picture.

The intention of a poet composing such verses is to make his/her readers pause at a given experiential moment in time and take notice of such details as may have escaped their attention.

Sanskrit poetry has had an unbroken tradition of such verses, most of which are found in such anthologies as the सुभाषितरत्नकोश of विद्याकर and the सदुक्तिकर्णामृत of श्रीधरदास.



While Rajani MB narrates the story of birds and blooms in NIAS, and the beauty of NIAS environs, Shankar Rajaraman shares a Sanskrit verse on the monsoon season.



**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
ADVANCED STUDIES**

Indian Institute of Science  
campus  
Bengaluru  
India 560012

**Phone**  
(080) 22185020

**Fax**  
(080) 22185028

**E-mail**  
[admin@nias.iisc.ernet.in](mailto:admin@nias.iisc.ernet.in)

## About NIAS



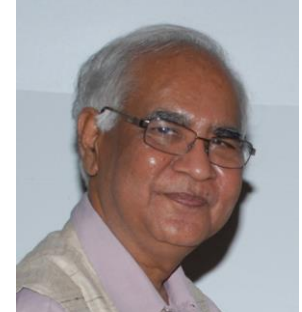
**Founder Chairman**  
JRD TATA

The National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) was conceived and established by the vision and initiative of the late Mr. J. R. D. Tata. Dr. Raja Ramanna, as the Founder Director, immensely



**Founder Director**  
RAJA RAMANNA

contributed to the growth and development of the Institute. In subsequent years, Prof Roddam Narasimha, Dr. K. Kasturirangan and Dr. V.S. Ramamurthy became the



**Current Director**  
BALDEV RAJ

Directors of NIAS. Presently Prof. Baldev Raj is the Director.

NIAS celebrates its Foundation Day on 20 June 2015

**NIAS Newsletter Team**

Sangeetha Menon  
(corresponding editor)  
Rajani MB  
Girija V



**Stay in Touch!**  
See us at:  
[www.nias.res.in](http://www.nias.res.in)



*From the NIAS Lily Pond – Photo courtesy: Sangeetha Menon*