



RASI - IFRAO NEWS

THE TWELFTH CONGRESS OF ROCK ART SOCIETY OF INDIA, SULTHAN BATHERY, WAYANAD, KERALA-2007: A REPORT

The twelfth Congress of Rock art Society of India (RASI) was hosted by the Shreyas Training and Research Center, Sulthan Bathery, Wayanad in Kerala in collaboration with Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS), Bhopal and Malabar Institute of Research and Development (MIRD), Vadakara from 26 to 28, October 2007.

The major theme of the Congress was Rock and Archaeology of South India. The Congress was attended by 81 delegates from 11 states of the nation. The Congress was inaugurated by Shri P. Krishna Prasad, M.L.A., Sulathn Bathery, the Chief Guest of function. Fr. Dr. Eldho Puthenkandathil, Executive Director, Shreyas welcomed the Guests and delegates of the Congress. Prof. K.K. Basa, Director, IGRMS, Bhopal and Prof. K.K.N. Kurup, Director, MIRD, Vadakara also welcomed the delegates of the Congress and expressed the commitment of their institutes for promotion of Indian Heritage including rock art. Prof. R.C. Agrawal,

President, RASI and Dr. Giriraj Kumar, Secretary of RASI delivered their welcome and visionary addresses. The Purakala, Vol-17 was released by the Chief Guest and other dignitaries. Dr. M. Nambirajan, Superintending Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India, Thirure Circle, Dr. Hemachandran, Director of State Archaeology, Kerala, Shri P.M. Joy, Block Panchayath President and Shri Babu Pazhupathar, Bathery Panchayah President, also addressed on the occasion and thanked RASI for choosing Sulthan Bathery to hold the RASI congress. A Photo exhibition on Monuments of Kerala was also organized by ASI, Thirure Circle. Mr. Z. Francis, Programme Officer, Shreyas offered vote of thanks to all the guests, delegates and invitees of the Congress.

A condolence meeting was held to give tribute to late Dr. S.P. Gupta, the renowned and beloved archaeologist of the fraternity.



Fig. 1. Inaugural Function of the Congress: Prayer recitation.



Fig. 2. Fr. Dr. Eldho Puthenkandathil delivering his welcome address in the function.

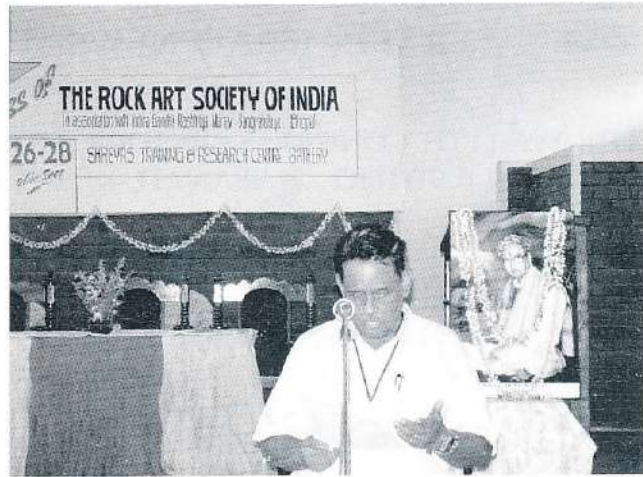


Fig. 5. Prof. M.G.S. Narayanan delivering Dr V.S. Wakankar Memorial lecture.



Fig. 3. Inauguration of the 12th RASI Congress.

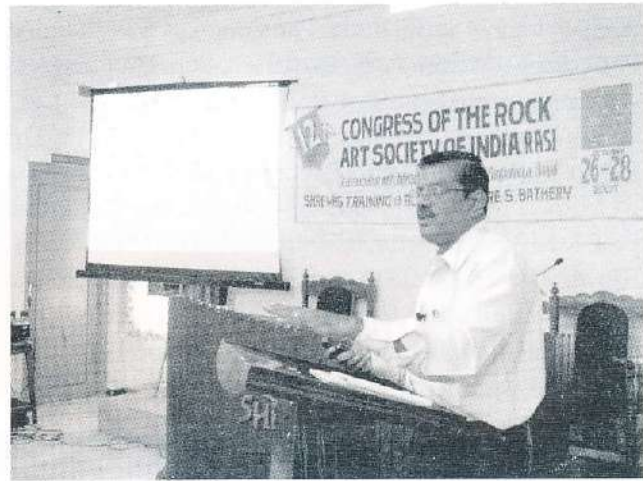


Fig. 6. Prof. K. Rajan delivering Keynote Address of the Congress.



Fig. 4. The Chief Guest releasing Purakala, Volume 17, 2007, the journal of RASI.

Prof. M.G.S. Narayanan, Former Chairman, Indian Council of Historical Research delivered the twelfth Dr. V.S. Wakankar Memorial lecture on "Great Artists of Pre-historic India". Prior to it Prof V.H. Sonawane gave a touching introduction of late Dr. V.S.Wakankar, the founding father of Rock Art Discipline in India.

Prof. K. Rajan delivered the Keynote Address of the Congress on Rock Art in South India. Shri Muhammed K.K., Superintending Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India, Bhopal Circle delivered a special lecture, 'Relevance of prehistoric World Heritage Monument Bhimbetka', and explained the audience in Malayali language for the benefit of the local people. He also gave a gist of other lectures in Malayalam.



Fig. 7. Delegates of the Congress enjoying the academic sessions

Thirty research papers were presented in five academic sessions, that were chaired by Prof V.H. Sonawane and Prof K. Rajan (Session-I), Prof. R.C. Agrawal and Prof V.H. Sonawane (Session-II), Prof M.G.S. Narayanan and Prof K.S. Mathew (Session-III), Prof K. Rajan and Dr Somnath Chakraverty (Session-IV), Prof S. Pradhan and Shri S.B.Ota (Session-V).

All the delegates were taken to the Edakkal Cave, the famous Neolithic-Megalithic petroglyph site in Kerala for discussion on the site. It was followed by a special session on Edakkal cave, which was chaired by Fr. Dr. Eldho, Prof M.G.S. Narayanan and Dr. M. Nambirajan. A panel discussion on Rock art research and young generation was chaired by Prof. K.K.N. Kurup, Fr. Eldho Puthenkandathil, Prof. K.K. Basa, and Muhammed K.K.

The cultural programmes of the Edakkal festival in the evenings were superb and special treat to the delegates. These were specially organized by the IGRMS, Bhopal on this occasion.

The RASI Executive Committee and General Body Meetings were held in the evening on 27 October, 2007. These were presided by Prof R.C. Agrawal, President, RASI. In the meeting the academic activities of RASI were appreciated and unanimously recommended to continue such activities. A resolution was passed requesting Archaeological Survey of India, Thirure Circle to organize a thorough survey and scientific study of the rock art and associated archaeological remains in Kerala, specially in the surrounding region of Edakkal Cave. Efforts should also be made to get the Edakkal Cave declared as centrally



Fig. 8. Discussion going on in the tea break.



Fig. 9. Congress delegates with Fr Dr Eldho on the way to Edakkal Cave.



Fig. 10. Congress delegates preparing to enter the Edakkal Cave.

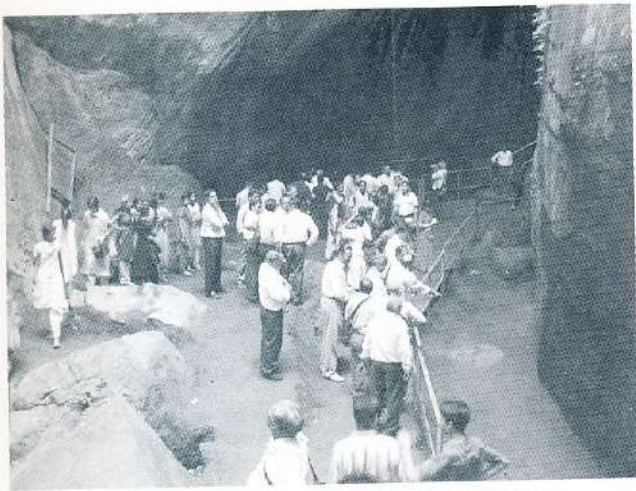


Fig. 11. Congress delegates visiting the Edakkal Cave.

protected monument and later on as World Heritage Site by the UNESCO. Shreyas will extend its full support to the ASI in this endeavour.

The valedictory function of the congress was held on 28 October 2007. The delegates were overwhelmed by the cordial hospitality and affectionate behaviour of the organizing team of the host in the leadership of Fr. Dr Eldho and Mr. Z. Francis. The Congress was a grand success and all the delegates have sweet memories of it. The authorities of Rock Art Society

of India personally and on behalf of all the delegates expressed their heartfelt thanks to the hosts, especially Fr. Dr. Eldho, Mr. Z. Francis and Prof K.K.N. Kurup for their cordial and affectionate hospitality. They requested them to convey their feelings to the members of the entire organizing team and Hon'ble guests of the Congress. They are also thankful to Prof K.K. Basa, Dr. Ashok Tiwari and the team of IGRMS, Bhopal for their support and collaboration in organizing the RASI Congress and cultural programmes in the Edakkal festival. The Congress deliberations, news and resolutions were given a wide publicity, both in print and electronic media. RASI authorities thanked the media persons and their agencies for their strong support and wide publicity of the Congress. The last, but not the least, the President and Secretary of RASI extend their thanks to all the delegates for their participation and contribution to make the congress successful.

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Fig. 12. Group Photo of the Congress delegates in the premises of the Shreyas.