

# Short Term Course cum Workshop on History, Science and Technology of Stone Beads

Bilkulonline.com, Ahmedabad, Aug 10: The Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar established Archaeological Sciences Centre in December 2012 with the objective of forging a synergy between archaeologists and scientists in understanding the past. The relevance of archaeology in the modern era is substantial as all modern technologies have their beginnings in remote past.

In order to understand our past with the aid of a multi-disciplinary approach, IIT Gandhinagar has started several initiatives. Under one such initiative of making the best teaching and training program available to most potential students and researchers, IIT Gandhinagar is conducting a Short Term Course cum Workshop on History, Science and Technology of Stone Beads from 10-14 August 2015. It aims to train manpower in how to study and analyse (in classrooms, in field, in laboratory and with the craftsmen) the stone beads which has gained a reputation of being one of the important markers in understanding our past contacts, technology and trade, besides our mastery over material culture and procurement. This will showcase our cottage industry of stone bead making and the workers (which is a 5000 years old Indian tradition and dominance) to rest of the world in its true historical, ethnographic, scientific and technological sense.

This course cum workshop aims to discuss the development of stone beads through the ages, literature/epigraphic references, typology, techniques and sciences involved in their study to interpret the past technology with the help of the best available experts and scholars (seven International and 10 Indian) who are either archaeologists or scientists working in archaeology and allied disciplines. In addition to Resource Persons, traditional craftsmen from Khambhat will be demonstrating their skills during the workshop. All of these resource persons will conduct the sessions in form of writing, lecture, analyses and hands-on experiments. It is aimed to publish a handbook on how to study and analyse stone beads during the workshop. Around 80 participants (young students, scholars, interested faculty members and staffs dealing with archaeological and anthropological study of beads, ancient technology, crafts and tourism) are selected from various universities, Institutes and museums holding important stone beads of India in particular and South Asia in general for this course cum workshop. This includes participants from almost all states of our country from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Thailand, Japan, Iran, UK and USA.

This course cum workshop will be an experience of a lifetime for the participants. They will meet eminent personalities of the subject in India and abroad who have excelled in their fields and are today role models to emulate. They will also be exposed to various scientific analyses of stones, selected videos, amongst the invited craftsmen in the village of bead makers which has been making beads for the world for last 5000 years, besides taking up hands-on experiments and analyses themselves. They will get a peep into the ongoing projects in the Institute, and get a feel of "Archaeological Science and the holistic approach for interpreting the past".

Our country needs well trained and motivated archaeologists and anthropologists to face the challenges in the future, which by all predictions are going to be complex and urgent. To realize this, the Archaeological Science Centre (ASC), Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar (IITGN), has been conducting highly motivated and integrated workshops twice a year. These courses cum workshops have been successful in directly benefiting over hundred graduate, post graduate students and research scholars by providing them an excellent opportunity to develop their personality and get a more meaningful exposure to archaeological science by interacting with leading professionals of the subject and Institutions. The students for these workshops have come from different Institutes / Museums / Universities across the country, both Government and Private, and are amongst the best as nominated by their Institutes and will act as the ambassadors of our profession in the community at large in the times to come.