



PRESIDENCY
UNIVERSITY
KOLKATA

Presidency University

*Newsletter
August, 2026*

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SCHOOL OF ASTROPHYSICS

WEEKLY COLLOQUIUM

The School of Astrophysics hosted Prof. Arka Santra from the Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics (SINP) on August 5 for a colloquium titled “Towards the Detection of Breit-Wheeler Tunneling Positrons in E320 at the FACET-II Accelerator.” He discussed SLAC’s Experiment 320, where intense laser pulses interact with high-energy electron beams to produce electron-positron pairs through the nonlinear Breit-Wheeler process. The talk highlighted challenges in detecting these rare particles amid significant background noise and explained the use of radiation-hard pixel detectors and advanced tracking algorithms. Preliminary 2024–25 results indicate promising progress toward statistically significant detection in the deep-tunneling regime.



WEEKLY COLLOQUIUM

On August 12, Prof. Prantik Nandi (Indian Centre for Space Physics, Kolkata) visited SoA to discuss "Understanding AGN Variability Through Long-Term Monitoring of Their Optical to X-ray Emission." Prof. Nandi presented multiwavelength observations showing how the accretion rate drives AGN variability, shaping the central corona and triggering spectral state changes. His work models a compact, dynamic corona within a stable accretion disc, offering clues to changing-look AGNs and quasi-periodic signals.

LECTURE SERIES

On 19th August, the School of Astrophysics hosted a talk titled “How Did We Learn About 400 Compact-Binary Mergers?”, highlighting the landmark achievements of the LIGO–Virgo–KAGRA collaboration in detecting around 400 gravitational-wave signals from compact-object mergers. The session by Dr. Pratyusava Baral, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA explored the observational techniques behind these discoveries and examined why binary black holes dominate the catalogue over neutron-star mergers. It also introduced the GstLAL matched-filtering pipeline used to identify faint gravitational-wave signals amid detector noise and Bayesian parameter estimation for determining astrophysical properties. Notable O4 detections and the future prospects of next-generation gravitational-wave observatories were also discussed.



DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

WHERE FERROELECTRICITY MEETS MAGNETISM?

The Department of Physics hosted a talk on “Where Ferroelectricity Meets Magnetism?” on 5 August 2026, delivered by Prof. Saurav Giri, IACS, Kolkata. The talk explored ferroelectricity, ferromagnetism and multiferroic materials, focusing on magnetoelectric coupling and the mechanisms underlying these properties. Prof. Giri also discussed potential applications of multiferroics in ultra-low-power electronics, high-sensitivity sensors and energy harvesting.



MY TRIALS, TRIBULATIONS AND SUCCESSES WITH DENSITY FUNCTIONAL THEORY

The Department of Physics hosted a talk on “Density Functional Theory: Applications and Experiences” on 12 August 2026, delivered by Dr. Molly De Raychaudhury, West Bengal State University. The talk provided an overview of Density Functional Theory (DFT), highlighting its role in simplifying many-electron quantum problems while reducing computational costs. Dr. De Raychaudhury also discussed her research experiences applying DFT to molecules, biomacromolecules, strongly correlated systems and topological materials.



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

THE 6TH SUBODH KUMAR MUKHOPADHYAY MEMORIAL LECTURE

The sixth Subodh Kumar Mukhopadhyay Memorial Lecture was organized by the department of History on 6th August 2026 at the P C Mahalanobis Auditorium. It was jointly delivered by Professor Rohit De, Department of History, Yale University and Dr Ornit Shani, Associate Professor, Department of Asian Studies, University of Haifa on the creation of India's constitution. The lecture revolved around their recently released book *ASSEMBLING INDIA'S CONSTITUTION: A NEW DEMOCRATIC HISTORY* (Cambridge University Press, 2025). It was very well received by faculty and students, who attended it in large numbers. The lecture was followed by an interactive session and concluded with a vote of thanks.



INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON HISTORY, IDEAS, AND INDIA-ISRAEL RELATIONS

The Department of History, Presidency University, Kolkata, organised an international seminar on "History, Ideas, and India-Israel Relations" on 17 August 2026 at the P.C. Mahalanobis Auditorium. Dr Tomer Persico, Senior Fellow, Shalom Hartman Institute and Senior Research Scholar, University of California, Berkeley, discussed his book *In God's Image: How Western Civilization Was Shaped by a Revolutionary Idea*, examining the influence of the idea of humanity being created in God's image on Western civilization. Professor Khinraj Jangid explored India's unofficial engagement with Israel in the 1950s, including visits, correspondence and perspectives of Indian leaders and public figures. The seminar drew enthusiastic participation from students and faculty.



ANNUAL SUSOBHAN CHANDRA SARKAR MEMORIAL LECTURE

On 19 August 2026, the Department of History organised the Annual Susobhan Chandra Sarkar Memorial Lecture in collaboration with Paschim Banga Itihas Samsad. This year's lecture was delivered by Professor Sujata Mukherjee (Retired) of Rabindra Bharati University on Rabindranath Tagore's thoughts on science against the backdrop of colonial and nationalist discourse of science.



"NONE EXISTS ALONE: THE BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY OF INTERDEPENDENCE"

The Department of History in collaboration with 108 Peace Institute, Belmont, MA, USA organized a lecture on the topic "None Exists Alone: The Buddhist Philosophy of Interdependence" by Venerable Geshe Lhakdor Director, Library of Tibetan Works & Archives and Honorary Professor, University of British Columbia on Monday, 24th August 2026 at 2 pm at A K Basak Auditorium. He spoke on how embracing the Buddhist philosophy of Interdependence corrects our mistaken perception of independent existence, helping us overcome social conflicts and environmental crises by replacing attachment and ignorance with compassion, dialogue, and a sense of shared responsibility. The lecture, attended by students and faculty members of the department of History in overwhelming numbers, was followed by an interactive session with the audience and concluded with the vote of thanks.



DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

CELEBRATION OF THE 165TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF ACHARYA PRAFULLA CHANDRA RAY

The Department of Chemistry, Presidency University, commemorated the 165th birth anniversary of Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray on 3 August 2026. The programme began with the garlanding of his statue by the Head of the Department and eminent faculty members. A special programme at the Department Lecture Theatre (CLT1) featured insightful addresses by Prof. Arnab Halder, Head of the Department, Prof. Bijan Das, faculty members, and students, highlighting Ray's life and contributions to science and education. Musical performances and student presentations further enriched the celebration, bringing together students, faculty, and non-teaching staff in a spirit of remembrance and inspiration.



DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

TALK OF THE MONTH

The English Department hosted Prof. Shuhita Bhattacharjee for its monthly seminar on 25th August, based on her monograph *Exploring the Non-Human and Religion in Nineteenth-Century Writing*. Focusing on the Victoria & Albert Museum and London Missionary Society Museum, she examined colonial curation of religious idols, contrasting their treatment as ethnographic/commercial objects with their staged sacred significance. The session explored Orientalist perspectives, cultural appropriation, affect and museum practices, followed by an engaging Q&A.



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

LECTURE ON “BINGE TO SCROLL AND BACK”

On 13 August 2026, the Institute for Public Administration and Professional Development hosted Dr Soumen Karmakar's invited lecture "Binge to Scroll and Back" at S N Bose Sabhagriha, Presidency University. Dr Karmakar, a psychiatrist from the Institute of Neuroscience, Kolkata, deliberated on how habits of "binge-watching" and "doom-scrolling" shape attention, emotion, memory and behaviour.



DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

TALK ON THE NARRATIVIZATIONS OF TIME: PAUL RICOEUR ON MEMORY AND HISTORY

On 19th August Dr. Nishad Patnaik's talk was an in-depth exposition of Paul Ricoeur's view on time. Ricoeur throughout his philosophical journey was engaged with the problem of time. One of the fundamental philosophical problems the talk addressed is how to understand the interrelation between cosmological and experiential aspects of time. Dr. Patnaik discussed Ricoeur's philosophy of time in relation to his view on memory and history. In his lecture, he discussed these issues by focusing on Ricoeur's book *Memory, History and Forgetting* (2004). The lecture was followed by very engaging question-answer session which was very beneficial for students and research scholars. The talk was well attended by students, faculty and research scholars.



DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS

LECTURE SERIES ON "THE INTRODUCTION TO QUANTUM MACHINE LEARNING: FOUNDATIONS AND FRAMEWORKS"

The Department of Mathematics at Presidency University organized a three-day course on 24, 25, and 27 August 2026 at MLT-1, titled "The Introduction to Quantum Machine Learning: Foundations and Frameworks". Dr. Rohit Sarma Sarkar, Director of Research (Quantum Division) at Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC), Barcelona, served as the key speaker. The course bridged quantum computing and classical machine learning, covering qubits, quantum circuits, variational models, quantum kernels, and quantum neural networks. Interactive hands-on demonstrations using quantum simulators allowed participants to explore real-world applications in data analysis, classification, and optimization.



AN INVITED LECTURE ON "HUMAN-INSPIRED AI FOR CLIMATE ACTION: UNDERSTANDING TIPPING POINTS AND DESIGNING INTELLIGENT INTERVENTIONS"

The Department of Mathematics hosted a seminar on "Human-Inspired AI for Climate Action: Understanding Tipping Points and Designing Intelligent Interventions" on 31 August 2026 at MLT-1, delivered by Dr. Ramit Debnath, University of Cambridge. The talk explored human-centric AI for climate challenges, focusing on social tipping points, multimodal analysis combining satellite and social data, and the development of responsible, context-aware AI aligned with human values for equitable climate action.



WEEKLY QED: "FROM INFINITE DESCENT TO HEIGHTS OF POINTS"

On August 31, 2026, the Department of Mathematics, Presidency University, hosted a special lecture titled "From infinite descent to heights of points" at MLT-1. The session was delivered by Dr. Souvik Goswami, Visiting Researcher at the Institut des Hautes Études Scientifiques (IHÉS), France. Dr. Goswami motivated Fermat's classical method of infinite descent to show how proving the non-existence of integer solutions in polynomial equations inspires the notion of height functions in modern number theory and algebraic geometry. Designed to be accessible to first-year undergraduates, the engaging talk seamlessly bridged foundational mathematical intuition with research-level concepts.



DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY

SEMINAR ON: LINKING LITHIUM, WATER AND POLICY: A CASE-BASED FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION

Dr. Sudeshna Basugupta, Associate Professor, Sustainable Resource Management, Department of Chemical Engineering, University College London (UCL) delivered an invited lecture on "LINKING LITHIUM, WATER AND POLICY: A CASE-BASED FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION" organized by Geological Institute on 5th August 2026 at Department of Geology.



DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY

ONSITE TRAINING PROGRAMME ON: “ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN THE AGE OF AI WITH TURNITIN”

The Presidency University Library organized an onsite training programme on “Academic Integrity in the Age of AI with Turnitin” on 13 August 2026 at the P.C. Mahalanobis Auditorium. Akshay Prasanna, Customer Success Manager, Turnitin was the guest for the event. The programme addressed academic integrity, responsible AI use, originality assessment and research ethics. Participants explored Turnitin’s features, AI-writing detection and originality reports through a live demonstration, followed by an interactive Q&A session, strengthening responsible academic and research practices.



CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL LIBRARIAN'S DAY

The Presidency University Library celebrated National Librarians’ Day 2026 on 21 August 2026 at the P.C. Mahalanobis Auditorium, commemorating the birth anniversary of Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, the Father of Library Science in India. The programme, themed “National Digital Library of India (NDLI): Empowering Teaching, Learning and Research in the Digital Era,” featured a keynote address by Dr. B. Sutradhar, Joint PI, NDLI, IIT Kharagpur, and an invited address by Prof. Nilanjan Dasgupta. The Best Library User Award was presented to Himaghna Bandyopadhyay and Gourab Mondal. Presentations on the Library’s NDLI initiatives and Internship Programme, an NDLI quiz, and a cultural programme further enriched the celebration.



LIBRARY USER ORIENTATION PROGRAM FOR NEW UG STUDENTS - 2026

Presidency University Library conducted a three-day orientation programme for newly admitted first-year UG students on 3, 4, and 10 August 2026. The programme was conducted to help new students to become familiar with the university library system and its resources. The Assistant librarians and Deputy librarian provided an overview of the library's collections and services explaining the procedures for using the library, its rules and regulations, and methods for searching and accessing required books and scholarly resources through the Library OPAC, online databases, and the web. The programme also included a guided physical tour of the Library, during which students were shown how to locate and browse books, borrow and return them, and effectively use the Library’s facilities and services.



EVENTS OF NSS CELL



CLEANLINESS DRIVE- SWACHHATA PAKHWADA

Swachhata Pakhwada, a cleanliness drive was undertaken by NSS Unit-2 under the guidance of Dr. Mery Biswas, Program Officer, NSS Unit-2, on 11th of August, 2026. The program began at 12 noon, where twenty two NSS volunteers took part in the cleanliness drive at the University main campus.

EVENTS OF NSS CELL

DANCE COMPETITION- HAR GHAR TIRANGA CAMPAIGN

As a part of Ghar Ghar Tiranga Campaign, on 12th August, 2026, a Solo Dance Competition was organised by the NSS Cell, Presidency University in collaboration with Presidency University Dance Forum (PUDF), where 7 students performed on songs that resonated with the celebration of Independence Day in the A.K. Basak Auditorium. The program ended with prize distribution in presence of 48 attendees who witnessed the colourful performances. Ms. Tejoswita Mullick, UG1, Dept. of Physics stood 1st, Ms. Debika Das, UG3, Dept. of Performing arts stood 2nd and Ms. Adishree Chakraborty, UG1, Dept. of Sociology got 3rd prize.



RECITATION COMPETITION - HAR GHAR TIRANGA CAMPAIGN

In continuation with the Ghar Ghar Tiranga Campaign, a Recitation Competition was organised by NSS Cell, Presidency University on 13th of August, 2026 at Manik Bandhopadhyay Hall. An overwhelming response was observed with 23 students, who participated in the competition reciting in Bengal, Hindi and English languages. Six students were felicitated with trophies for their outstanding performances. Total attendees were 32 students.

DEBATE COMPETITION - HAR GHAR TIRANGA CAMPAIGN

Debate Competition that was organised in collaboration with Presidency University Debate Society on 13th August, 2026 as a part of Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign at the Manik Bandhopadhyay Auditorium. The debate competition was open for students of 2nd year and upwards only. 12 students debated within themselves on the motion, "The house believes that commercial patriotism is a cynical exploitation of national sacrifice".



CREATIVE EXPRESSION FOR A FREE INDIA

Unit 1, NSS Cell, Presidency University, under the supervision of Dr. Jayeeta Deshmukh, Program Officer, organised a cultural event titled "Creative expressions for a free India" as a part of Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign, 2026 on 20th August, 2026 in Prasanta Chandra Mohalanobis Auditorium. The programme started with singing the national song of India followed by song and dance performance of the students. There was competition for recitation and poster making. 43 students participated in different events, including creative events such as poem writing and showcased their creativity and performance.

EVENTS OF NSS CELL

SWACHHATA PAKHWADA: "STAND-UP THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION"

As part of the nationwide observance of Swachhata Pakhwada, Unit III of the NSS Cell, Presidency University, organized a "Stand-up Thought and Discussion" session on 11th August 2026. The session brought together student voices to reflect on how such campaigns can be made more effective, participatory, and enduring beyond the fortnight itself. Student volunteers took the stage to share their perspectives, each addressing a distinct dimension of the larger theme spanning intensive sanitation practices, systematic waste management strategies, and the broader goal of environmental sustainability. The session drew an enthusiastic response, with more than 100 students in attendance.



NASA MUKHT BHARAT ABHIYAAN CAMPAIGN

In continuation of the Nasa Mukht Bharat Abhiyan Campaign, all the Units of the NSS cell participated in the Nation wide campaign on 2nd August, 2026. The NSS volunteers displayed posters highlighting the consequences of drug addiction and substance abuse and the measures to be taken to curb this drug abuse menace. They pledge towards drug addiction free society.

AWARENESS AND POTENTIAL STEM CELL DONOR REGISTRATION PROGRAMME

The event was organized by Unit III, NSS Cell, in collaboration with the DKMS Foundation India, under the guidance of Dr. Puja Ray (Program Officer). The programme aimed to help students understand the registration process of blood stem cell donation and how becoming a potential donor could give a patient suffering from blood cancer or other blood disorders, a chance, at a potentially life-saving transplant. The programme was conducted during 20 and 30 August 2026 where more than 500 students participated and 333 students registered as Potential Stem Cell Donors. The programme was a meaningful initiative that combined health awareness, social responsibility, and student participation, reinforcing the spirit of NSS.



AWARENESS PROGRAMME ON VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES

In view of the Kolkata Municipality's "Vector Control Drive", the Vector inspection squad and Vector control officers were invited to the Presidency University for survey and awareness talk by the NSS Cell (Unit-I/II/III). On 31st August, 2026 the Vector control inspection squad carried out the survey of the main campus and the adjoining boy's hostel. Ms. Suschismita Das from the NSS office guided them through out the campus, during the inspection.

On 3rd of August, 2026, Smt. Baishakhi Biswas, Vector Control Officer, Kolkata and Dr. Srimoyee Basu, Vector Control Officer, Kolkata delivered insightful power point presentations on the spread, control and management of urban vector-borne diseases such as Malaria and Dengue at teh A.K. Basak Auditorium to our students and staff.

CENTRAL EVENTS

- *On the occasion of India's 79th Independence, the National Flag was hoisted by Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Prof. Nirmalya Narayan Chakraborty and Registrar Dr. Debajyoti Konar at both the main campus and the Institute of Health Sciences, Presidency University, second campus.*



SPORTS EVENTS

- *The Department of History held its Football League from 24 to 25 August 2026. Organised by the UG-II batch, it brought together both UG and PG students and PhD research scholars. The tournament celebrated sportsmanship, participation and extracurricular excellence. Six teams—four men's and two women's—competed, with AgunKheko emerging as the men's champions and Mirchi Mafias as the women's champions. Continuing the tradition, UG-I students Pubali and Aarav Pradhan were honoured as Emerging Players. Reewang Sherpa (MA-II) was named Player of the Tournament, while Irfan Habib (UG-II) emerged as the top scorer. The tournament concluded with a prize-distribution ceremony, at which the prizes were distributed by Dr. Navras J. Aafreedi, the HoD.*



- *Dr. George Biswas, Assistant Professor of Geology, Presidency University, Kolkata, completed a 93 km cycling ride in and around Kolkata on 15 August 2026 as part of Freedom of Ride 2026. The event, organised by Runnfun Howrah, Cyclology, and D'Quest Adventure Sports Academy, was held to celebrate the spirit of India's Independence Day and promote patriotism, endurance, fitness, and the joy of cycling.*



SUCCESS STORIES

- *Dr Soumen Mukherjee, Assistant Professor, Department of History, has published an anthology of scholarly essays titled **Handbook of Indic Philosophy and Religion: Classical Past and Modern Histories** by Bloomsbury. Jointly edited with Dr Nirmalya Guha of the Indian Institute of Technology (BHU), Varanasi.*
- *Dr. George Biswas, Assistant Professor, Department of Geology, Presidency University, Kolkata, was honoured with the Durjoy Award for Outstanding Ultramarathoner (100 KM Category) by D'Quest Adventure Sports on 30 August 2026 at K. P. Basu Memorial Hall, Jadavpur University.*
- *Research teams from Geology Department, Presidency University have won the 1st. and 2nd. Prizes in poster presentation in the celebration of the IIT Platinum Jubilee Celebration-Technology Demonstration on 16.08.26 at the IIT, Kharagpur Research Park, New Town.*
- *Presidency University hosted a campus placement drive by Parul Prakashani, a well-known publication house, with an opportunity to pursue careers in the fields of content writing and editing. A total of 26 students from various departments of the University applied for the available positions. Six students successfully joined the organisation, marking a significant achievement for the participating students and the University's placement initiatives. Ayantika Mondal(English), Jyotirmoy Ram(English), Itisha Mandal(English), Tarun Roy(Political Science), Sampat Sen(Life Sciences)*
- *A quiz, themed “India and Independence” in a broader sense, was organised by the Presidency University unit of the Students' Federation of India on 20 August 2026 at Chemistry Lecture Theatre 1, to commemorate India's 80th Independence Day. Around 24 teams, comprising two participants each, took part in the preliminary round, with 48 participants in total. From the History Department, Abhas Kumar Saha–Smaranya Ghosh, Shreyash Banerjee–Srinjoy Paul, and Srabani Malakar–Ankit Ghoshal qualified for the finals, along with three other teams. Shreyash Banerjee and Srinjoy Paul secured the second position. The quiz was conducted by four quizmasters, including History student Sujatya Roy (UG IV).*



OBITUARY

Presidency University deeply mourns the passing of eminent historian and noted alumni Prof. Sumit Sarkar



Presidency University deeply mourns the sudden demise of young and dutiful staff Shri. Subhojyoti Karmakar.

