

## **Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**

22 - 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2010

The HSS Department Day was inaugurated on the bright and sunny morning of 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2010 by Prof. Sanjay G. Dhande, Director, IIT Kanpur. He was joined by Prof. Lilavati Krishnan, Head of the Department, and Prof. Prashant Bagad, the Event Coordinator, in welcoming the guests.

The main events included a symposium entitled 'The Future of the Humanities and Social Sciences', an autobiographical session and an interactive session between present and former PhD students and faculty members.

The symposium was coordinated by Prof. Achla M. Raina with the able assistance of research scholars, and with Mr. Niranjan Uppoor and Ms. Smriti Srivastava as the rapporteurs. A panel of six former faculty members presented their views on the envisaged future of Humanities and Social Sciences in the country. The symposium was chaired by Prof. Rajendra Prasad, the founder Head of the Department. The professors who shared their views in the symposium included Prof. Janak Pandey (Psychology), Prof. Kamta Prasad (Economics), Prof. D. N. Dhanagare (Sociology), Prof. P. N. Rastogi (Sociology), Prof. Vinod Jairath (Sociology), Prof. Prema Rajagopalan (Sociology), and Prof. Rajendra Prasad (Philosophy).

Following lunch, an Autobiographical session was held in which former faculty members spoke about their experiences during their stay at IIT Kanpur, and the work they were engaged in since they left the Institute. The session was coordinated by Prof. Praveen Kulshreshtha, with the assistance of Mr. Muneer Babu, a research scholar and was chaired by Prof. Mohini Mullick (Philosophy). What followed was a very interesting combination of nostalgic narratives and a presentation of academic contributions.

The former and the present research scholars shared their experiences in the interactive session,. There were frank comments from some research scholars on the difficulties faced in the PhD program, but also some encouraging words from former research scholars. One former research scholar, Dr. Premlata Varma, pointed out that she realized how much she had learned from the PhD program that had a very significant role to play in her present profession as a teacher. Essentially, it was pointed out that a

PhD student might face many problems, but in the end, most students find that going through the program was a worthwhile experience.

The hectic two-day celebrations came to a close` with a short valedictory note in the afternoon of 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2010.