



International Conference on Dialogue of Civilizations – IV (8th – 15th October, 2017)

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The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Ministry of Culture, Government of India, in collaboration with National Geographic Society is hosting an international conference on “Dialogue of Civilizations – IV” from 8th – 15th October, 2017 at Delhi, Gandhinagar and Dholavira. This conference is fourth in this series of ‘dialogues’ initiated by National Geographic Society in 2013 with an objective to encourage scholarly and public discourse about the five ancient, literate civilizations of the world, i.e. Egypt, Mesopotamia, South Asia, China and Mesoamerica and how the study of the past can share our present and future towards the right direction. The first conference of this series was inaugurated in Guatemala in 2013 followed by Turkey in 2014 and China in 2015. The present conference is the fourth in this series, with the final dialogue planned in Egypt.

The inaugural function of the conference held at 4.30 PM on 8.10.2017 at the Banquet Hall, The Ashok, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi. Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Hon’ble Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Culture & Minister of State for Environment, Forest & Climate Change will inaugurate the opening ceremony in the presence of Smt. Rashmi Verma, Secretary (Culture & Tourism), Dr. Alexander Moen, Vice President, Explorer Programs, National Geographic Society, Smt. Usha Sharma, Director General, Archaeological Survey of India and Prof. Monica Smith, Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, Los Angeles.

The inaugural function was followed by a lecture by Prof. B.B. Lal, Padma Bhushan awardee on ‘Harappan Civilization’, which introduced the earliest civilization of South Asia to the scholars working on other ancient civilizations and others. The lecture of Prof. B.B. Lal traced the Harappan Civilization and its history of discovery, and highlighting on town planning, agriculture and animal husbandry, art objects, crafts, trade, both internal and external, script, disposal of dead, religion, political set up. He gave a brief account of all these aspects.

Besides, Prof. Lal also briefed on some of the new breaking news, and some unique features which are not found from other parts of the world. For example, he highlighted on the earliest ploughed field from Kalibangan in Rajasthan; evidence of earliest datable earthquake from Kalibangan (Rajasthan); earliest dockyard of the world which was found at Lothal (Gujarat); unique water management system that have been found at Dholavira (Gujarat).

Prof. Lal also talked about the evolution of Harappan Civilization and traced its history to the indigenous cultures only and not from any external influences. Prof. Lal tried to emphasize on the authorship of the Harappan civilization and he presented evidences related to, and while stating this he concludes that it is high time that the Aryan Invasion Theory has to be written off. He also traces the legacy of the civilization and quotes many of the customs and traditions of modern times having its roots to the Harappan civilization.

This lecture was followed by a Panel Discussion moderated by Dr. B.R. Mani, Director General, National Museum, Delhi. The panel discussion was attended by Prof. B.B. Lal (Harappan Civilization), Dr. Francisco Estrada-Belli (Mayan Civilization), Prof. Augusta McMahon (Mesopotamian Civilization), Dr. Anna Latifa-Mourad (Egyptian Civilization) and Prof. Xinwei Li (Chinese Civilization). In the panel discussion, various aspects of five civilizations were discussed and the common aspects and commonality were addressed.



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