

INVITATION

*Dear Sir / Madam,
Greetings!*

We are glad to inform you that under the auspices of the ICHR grant to raise the quality of teaching and research on the contribution of the first Home Minister of Independent India, the Post Graduate & Research Department of History, Govt. Arts College (Autonomous), Kumbakonam is going to organize a National level Seminar on **NATIONAL INTEGRATION AND EMPOWERMENT - LEGACY OF SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL**. This Seminar will provide an important forum for the interaction wherein the distinguished Academicians and Professionals will participate in the deliberations. We invite you and your colleagues to kindly contribute the Research Papers on the core theme / Sub themes.

THE COLLEGE

The Government Arts College (Autonomous) known as The Cambridge of South India is one of the oldest Indian Educational Institutions. It was started on 19(th) October, 1854. It is situated on the banks of River Cauveri and it has produced eminent scholars and professionals of no mean stature. The great mathematician, Ramanujam, Rt. Hon. V.S. Srinivasa Sastry, the Silver tongued orator, tamil savant Thiyagaraja Chettiar and his successor to the Tamil Chair, Dr. U.V. Saminatha Iyer, Principals Biderbeck, Gopal Rao and a long line of them are ever in the niches of the memory of this College. This College was formerly named as Government Arts College. Considering the need for providing higher education to women on an equal footing, the State Government declared it as a co-educational institution and renamed it as Government Arts College in 1996. In 1987, it was granted the Autonomous status and since then it is known as Government College (Autonomous)

THE DEPARTMENT

History was one of the subjects for Pre-University course in 1864. UG History course along with Maths and Physiology was started in the year 1867. The importance of History was realised and starting of a history course at a historically important place was justified with ceaseless efforts. In 2005-2006, the UG and PG programmes in history were started by the efforts of Dr. S. Thirunaukkarasu, the then H.O.D of History. In 2013-2014, both M.Phil., and Ph.D., (Full and Part time) Research Courses were introduced in the Department. Research initiatives pertaining to current trends in history have been under taken by our Department to explore new knowledge and technology with the proper guidance of the reputed Historian Dr. N. Rajendran, former Vice-Chancellor, Alagappa University, Karaikudi and with the able leadership of our former HOD Dr. R. Sadhasivam. At present, our Head, Dr. B. Sagadevan leads the department with vision and expertise, academic rigor and research. Around 300 students are enrolled in the different courses offered by the department.

THEME OF THE SEMINAR

Vallabhbhai Patel, India's first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister had played a pivotal role in the country's integration and empowerment. This two days national level seminar attempts to delve into his legacy and exploring its relevance in contemporary India. We organisers propose a national level seminar to bring the scholars, researchers, and experts from across India to discuss and reflect on Patel's contributions to national integration, social empowerment, and economic development.

Vallabhbhai Patel, affectionately known as Sardar Patel, was a pivotal figure in India's struggle for independence and subsequent integration. Born on October 31, 1875, in Nadiad, Gujarat, Patel grew up in a middle class agricultural family. His early life was marked by hard work and determination, which eventually led him to study law in England.

Patel's academic journey began at N. K. High School in Petlad, followed by law studies at Inns of Court, London. After completing his education, he returned to India and established a successful law practice in Ahmedabad. However, a meeting with Mahatma Gandhi in 1917 changed the course of his life, and he dedicated himself to the Indian Independent Movement.

Patel's contributions to the movement were multifaceted. He organized peasants in Gujarat, led the Bardoli Satyagraha, and played a crucial role in the Quit India Movement. His leadership and strategic thinking earned him the title of Sardar, meaning "Chief" in Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, and Persian.

After India gained independence, Patel became the first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister. He successfully integrated over 565 princely states into the Indian Union, creating a unified nation. Patel also played a key role in establishing the All-India Services, which provided a strong infrastructure for the country.

Sardar Patel's legacy extends beyond his political achievements. He was a strong advocate for social reforms, including the prohibition of untouchability and casteism. Patel's commitment to national unity and integration earned him India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna, in 1991. His Birthday, October 31, is celebrated as Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, or National Unity Day. The Statue of Unity, the World's Tallest Statue, was dedicated to him in 2018.

Sub Themes

1. Unifying India:
Patel's Role in Integration of Princely States.
2. Nation-Building and Governance:
Patel's Vision and Legacy.
3. Empowerment of Marginalized Communities:
Patel's Initiatives.
4. Patel's Leadership and Legacy:
Lessons for Contemporary India.
5. Patel's Impact on Indian Politics and Society.
6. The Iron Man of India :
Patel's Legacy in Modern Times