

DR. G.J. SUDHAKAR ENDOWMENT LECTURE

ON

NATION, NATION STATE AND NATIONALISM IN INDIA

BY

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The Department of History, Loyola College, Chennai, organized the fifth Dr. G. J. Sudhakar Endowment Lecture on Nation, Nation State and Nationalism in India by Dr. Ramu Manivannan, on 4th December, 2018, at Lawrence Sundaram Hall, Loyola College at 11:30 AM. Students and faculty from the Department of History, the Department of Sociology, and special guests- Dr. Venugopal, former professor of the History Department, and Mr. Vasegaran, a History Department alumnus - attended this programme.

The programme began with a prayer song by the Department Choir. Dr. L. Selvanathan, Head, Department of History, welcomed the gathering and also highlighted how Dr. G. J. Sudhakar Endowment Lecture was being conducted since 2015, with each lecture highlighting a new topic and trends in history and its allied subjects. The fifth lecture was delivered by Dr. Ramu Manivannan, the chief guest of the programme.





Mr. Sabarish Kumaran, first year BA History student, introduced the speaker Dr. Ramu Manivannan as a “social activist and a social commentator for peace”. He also mentioned some of Dr. Ramu Manivannan’s achievements which include speaking at the United Nations and denouncing the genocide in Sri Lanka.

Dr. Yesubhakthan, Co-ordinator Shift II, honoured Dr. Ramu Manivannan with a shawl and Dr. Venugopal, former professor, presented Dr. Ramu Manivannan with a memento.

Then Dr. Ramu Manivannan delivered a lecture on ‘Nation, Nation State and Nationalism in India’. He started with a remark stating that “coming to Loyola College is like coming to a desirable academic and intellectual space”. He said that the endowment lecture was started with a vision of “speaking its actual ideas” and this lecture was not only for us, but to remember the values which Dr. Sudhakar stood for and stood by.

Dr. Ramu Manivannan, then, went on to explain the concepts of “Nation”, “Nation State” and “Nationalism” and stated that while these terms can be integrated, they also have to be understood as separate entities. He then went on to question if “India was a socio-economic, political or a cultural state?”

According to Dr. Ramu Manivannan, the idea of “Nation” is based on various identities such as language, religion, culture and ethnicity. “Nation State” is a multi-cultural state that consolidates power, force and consent. “Nationalism” is different

and ever-changing, and should not be static. It should be a joy and a celebration for a civil society. Dr. Ramu Manivannan highlighted the difference in the Western and Eastern concepts of a “Nation State”, by tracing the Western concept to the 16th Century Age of the Renaissance and Reformation, and the Eastern concept to the Pre- Historic Age and the Alexandrian invasions, to remove the prejudice associated with the idea of a “Nation State”.

While delivering his ideas, Dr. Ramu Manivannan presented them with Historical examples, which presented the audience with a clearer understanding.

Dr. Ramu Manivannan concluded the lecture by stating how, today, the idea of a “Nation” and “Nation State” is shaped by political borders and not natural barriers as it was earlier. He also stated Kaniyan Poongundranar’s popular saying “Yaadhum oore; yaavarum kelir” to emphasize the concept of “Universalization”.

The lecture was followed by a Question – Answer session and Dr. Ramu Manivannan shared his views on “International Citizens” and “Comparing today’s idea of a Nation State to the Sixteen Mahajanapadas”.



The programme concluded around 1 PM with the attendees well-receiving the lecture. The Master of Ceremony was Ms. Greshma Benny, Scholar of M. Phil History.