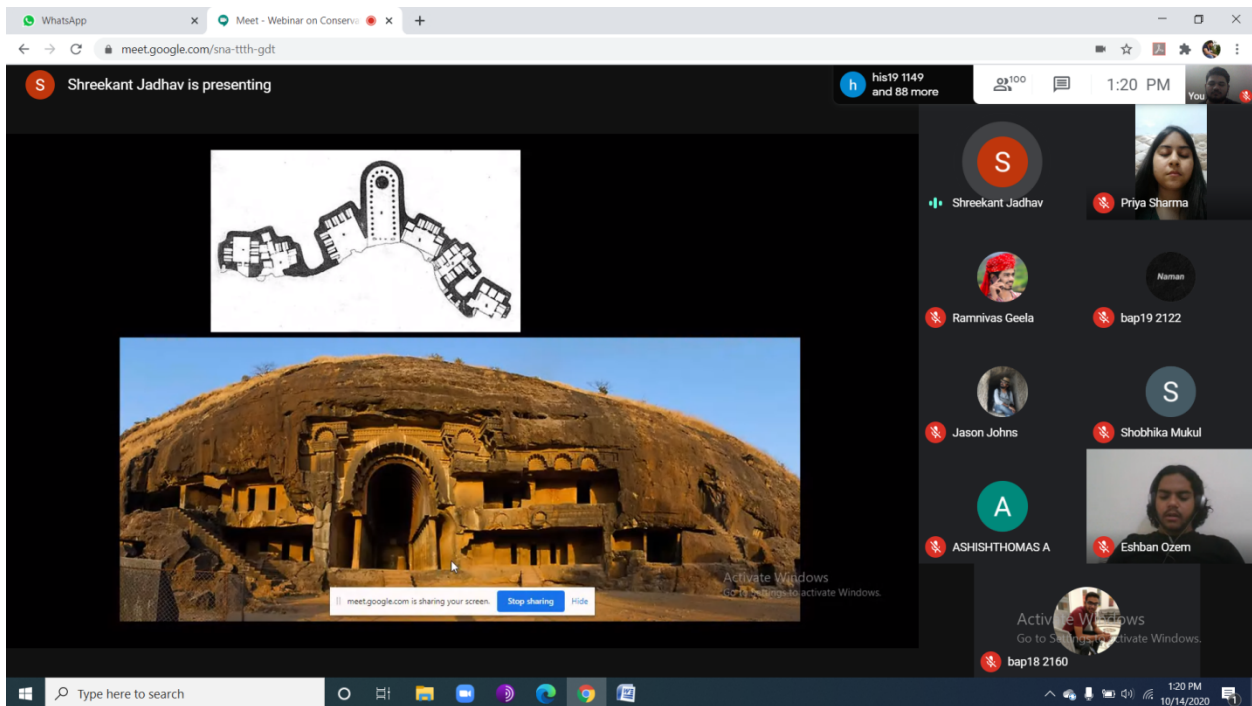
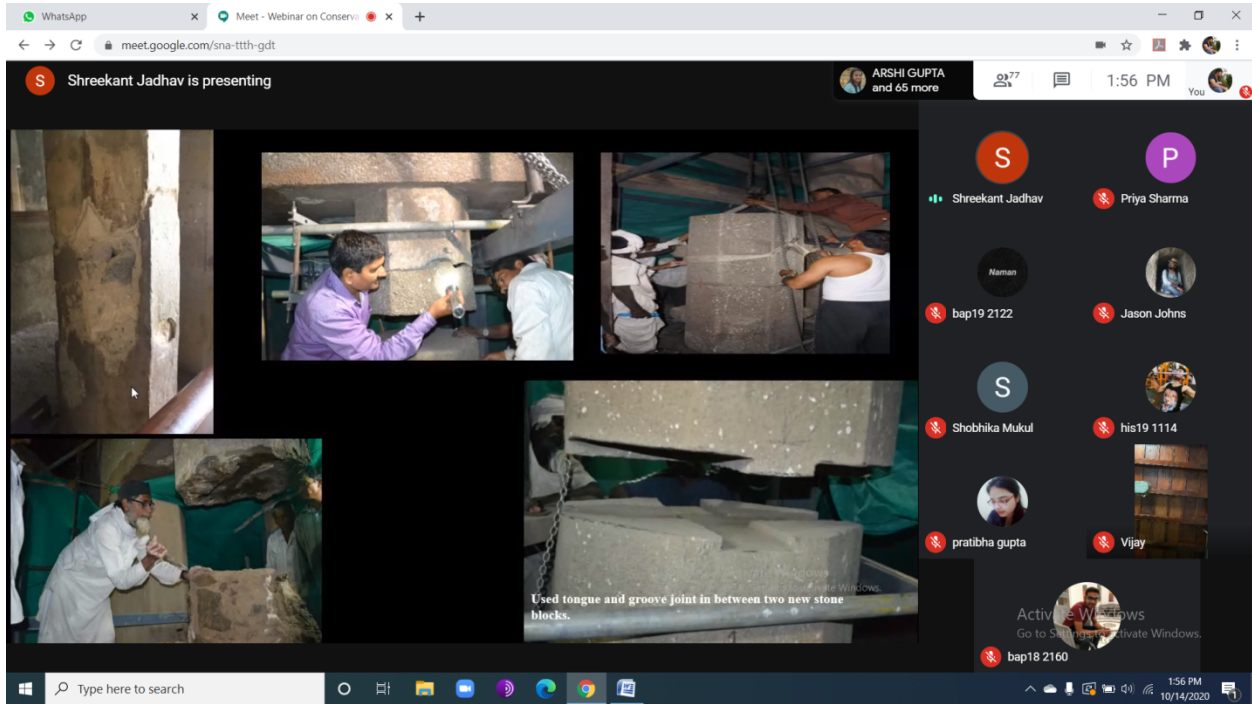


A Webinar was conducted by Virsa: The History Society on the topic of Conservation of Ajanta Caves. It was scheduled on 14th of October 2020 at 1 PM. Dr. Shreekant Jadhav, an archaeologist and a former officer for the Government of Maharashtra in the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums was invited to give a presentation on the same. Priya Sharma (Vice-president of Virsa) of third year introduced the guest to the students while Rafay Hussain (Secretary of Virsa) of second year introduced the faculty of the college to the guest.

Dr. Shobhika Mukul gave the key note address followed by our esteemed speaker Dr. Jadhav, who started by explaining the rock cut architecture and also mentioned the famous rock cut architecture sites around the globe like Naqsh-e Rostam, Petra, etc. After that he started mentioning the Indian rock cut caves and sites. There are around 1000-1200 rock cut architecture sites in India and most of them belong to the Buddhists. The first rock cut site was Dholavira. After giving a brief introduction to Indian rock cut sites, he then slowly came to the Ajanta caves. Before coming directly to the caves and its artefacts and architecture, he gave a background history of Ajanta caves and of the river which goes by the same name. The caves were made 2200 years back and were continuously inhabited for at least a thousand years by the Buddhist monks as well as Brahmanic priests. All the 30 caves were covered in the presentation as well as the restoration and conservation work commissioned by the ASI. Not all the caves have water systems in them, out of the 30 caves, only twelve have water systems. Caves 1, 2, 16 and 17 were full of wall paintings with high ceilings and gauntlets hanging from them, while cave 19 and 26 contained the Stupa of Buddha but the Cave 8 remained unfinished. Cave 19 also includes figurines of various Guardian deities associated with Hinduism, like Nagaraja and are considered as true masterpieces of the cave. Cave 1 is the King's cave while cave 2 is the Queen's cave. Caves 16 and 7 have Jataka tales in the form of paintings in them. The only cave that is double storied is the Cave 6. The site was majorly inhabited by Buddhist Monks and was a major pilgrimage site for the Hinayana Buddhism. The artwork in the caves includes paintings of Buddha, Kings, Jataka tales, Tridents, flora, fauna, human figurines, other deities as well as a painting of a Persian King offering something to an Indian King. The caves were under construction for 700 years, monasteries were being built, ceilings given a finish, idols, images and paintings being made intricately. The pillar replacement and the conservation of images in the cave was explained elaborately, including ASI's work to replace the fallen and severely damaged pillars in cave 10. The Nizam's unfortunate incident of throwing the images lying on the ground, all of which were later thrown in the nearby river was also mentioned, which counts as a tragic loss of heritage for the site. Mr R.K Sharma, the Convenor of the History department concluded the Webinar with a vote of thanks.

The whole session was enlightening for both the students and the faculty members of

the college. It was essential for the honors students of the second year as well as the programme students of the second year to learn about the site and its conservation works as it is a part of their syllabus. The webinar was not only attended by students of SGND Khalsa college but also by students from St.Xaviers college, Mumbai and other DU colleges as well. The program was a big success and the faculty members along with the society will continue to hold more programs like these again in the future.




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Shreekant Jadhav is presenting

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Shreekant Jadhav is presenting

Anshu Yadav and 80 more

1:45 PM



Shreekant Jadhav, Priya Sharma, Naman, bap19 2122, Jason Johns, Shobhika Mukul, his19 1114, bap18 2160, pratibha gupta, Simran Singh

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