



# Indian History Congress

Room No. 29, Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh,  
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## OBITUARY

**Professor Shereen Ratnagar**  
**(1938 – 25th May 2026)**

The Indian History Congress records with profound grief the passing of Professor Shereen Ratnagar, one of India's most distinguished archaeologists and historians of the early historic period. She breathed her last on 25th May 2026 at 23:23 hrs at the BD Parsee Hospital in Mumbai, following a long illness bravely borne.

Born in 1938, Professor Ratnagar dedicated her life to the study of the Harappan Civilisation, reshaping our understanding of Bronze Age economies, trade networks, and urbanism through rigorous, evidence-based scholarship. A student of the legendary archaeologist H.D. Sankalia, she earned her doctorate from the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, and later taught for many years at the Centre for Extra-Mural Studies at the University of Mumbai.

Her seminal works include *Encounters: The Westerly Trade of the Harappan Civilisation* (1981), *Understanding Harappa: Civilization in the Greater Indus Valley* (2001), and *Trading Encounters: From the Euphrates to the Indus in the Bronze Age* (2004). In her later career, she wrote incisively on agrarian relations, state formation, and the historiography of Indian archaeology.

Professor Ratnagar had been long associated with the Indian History Congress, which she frequently attended, and her contributions to its annual sessions were always marked by intellectual rigour and deep engagement. She was fiercely secular and a known critic of the Hindutva revisionism of Indian history. Beyond her scholarship, she was a fearless public intellectual who advocated for secularism, critical thinking, and the responsible use of history in contemporary politics.

Over her long career, she served as a member of the Indian Council of Historical Research and was a beloved mentor to generations of students. The Indian History Congress counts her among its most respected life members.

Professor Ratnagar is survived by her family, colleagues, and a wide community of scholars who will remember her sharp wit, her uncompromising honesty, and her unwavering commitment to the truth of the past.

The Indian History Congress conveys its deepest condolences to her loved ones. In her passing, Indian history has lost a luminous and principled voice. A memorial session in her honour will be announced at the forthcoming annual Congress.

**Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi**  
**Secretary**  
**Indian History Congress**