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To

Professor Junji Koizumi
President, IUAES
Osaka, Japan

Sub: The decision of the Staff Council of the Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi to reject the appeal of Professor Patnaik on behalf of IAA, and to collaborate with KISS in organizing the World Anthropology Congress 2023 – Reg.

Dear Professor Koizumi,

Greetings from the Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi

I invite your kind attention to the fact that the Staff Council of the department in its meeting held on 8th April 2021 has resolved to reject the appeal made by Prof. Soumendra Mohan Patnaik requesting the Department to support the Indian Anthropology Association (IAA) for organizing IUAES World Congress-2023. It may be mentioned here that officially, the Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi is the national head quarters of the IAA, ever since its inception.

Find below the extract of the relevant portion of the meeting of the aforesaid Staff Council for your kind perusal and reference.

The Head of the Department read out the letters received from

- (1) *Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, Kalinga Institute of Information and Technology (KIIT) and Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences(KISS), Odisha and Member of Parliament (LS) dated 30/3/2021; and*
- (2) *Prof. S.M. Patnaik, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi dated 8/4/2021*

Contd.

Both the letters sought collaboration with the Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi for organizing International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) “World Congress of Anthropology 2023” to be held in India.

The letters were discussed in the meeting and it was pointed out by the members that:

- *The Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) has been doing a yeomen service in educating the marginalized section, mainly the Scheduled Tribe communities in Odisha. There is a concerted attempt to malign their good work by some vested interests, who would not like an Indian organization to succeed in their endeavour. All the members had a word of praise for the noble work being undertaken by the KISS.*
- *Prof. S.M. Patnaik in his capacity as the President of Indian Anthropological Association (IAA) was the co-bidder along with three other co-bidders, KISS, Sambalpur University and Utkal University. Faculty members felt that IAA is not a representative body of Anthropologists in India. Faculty members expressed their resentment about the functioning of the Indian Anthropological Association. Serious questions were raised about its undemocratic functioning. All the members were critical about the existence of IAA and felt that the department should dissociate itself from the offer of the IAA.*

The Department Council members resolved to collaborate with the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), Odisha for organizing the “World Congress of Anthropology” as they were part of the original proposal for the conference to be held in India. After discussion, all the members of the staff council whole- heartedly welcomed the invitation extended by KISS and accepted their proposal, except Prof. S.M. Patnaik, who gave his dissent to be one of the collaborators for the prestigious event

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the chair.

Note: This above proceedings of the meeting of the Staff Council held on 8th April has already been approved by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Delhi.

I may further bring to your kind notice that Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi is now the lead Department in the country. As Head of the Department, it is my duty to bring to your attention that the IAA has lost its credibility even in the Department where it is located.

There has been a sharp reaction among anthropologists across India for the stance of IUAES Executive last year, on the basis of certain allegations, to dissociate with KISS in the organization of the IUAES World Congress 2023, in order ‘to avoid controversy’. That has led to the formation of United Indian Anthropology Forum (UIAF) which is now partnering with KISS for organizing the World Anthropology Congress 2023 in collaboration with Utkal University, Sambalpur University and University of Delhi.

Ironically, the IUAES Executive has been creating fresh controversies, - the very situation, which it claimed it wanted to avoid, by taking the earlier decision to dissociate itself with KISS, - by unwittingly promoting an Association, the credentials of which have been under question not only by the very Department where it is located, but also by a majority of senior anthropologists in India, who are its own Life Members.

The IUAES Executive is ending up with an entirely new set of decisions in contravention to the original proposal of the 2023 Congress, approved by the IUAES General Assembly held in 2018, at Florianopolis, Brazil, not only by dissociating with the main proposer/organizer (KISS) of the Congress, but also by dropping the original collaborators (Utkal and Sambalpur) as well, shifting the venue of the Congress from Bhubaneswar to Delhi, changing the theme and dates of the Congress, each decision to cover up the previous mistake. We are terribly disappointed and disillusioned by these decisions of the IUAES Executive, which have finally narrowed down its support to a dubious organization i.e. IAA, to organize the prestigious Congress in India, ignoring the hundreds of voices of the Indian Anthropological Fraternity.

We wish that wisdom may prevail upon the IUAES Executive, to correct its historic blunders and comes to terms with the ground reality and uphold the principles and ethics of Anthropology.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely



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(Prof. M.P. Sachdeva)

CC to all members of Executive Council of IUAES and Chairs of Commissions