Azim Premji University to launch Pushpa Mittra Bhargava Archive on Sep 19

Bengaluru, September 16, 2023— Azim Premji University will unveil on September 19 a wide selection of materials from the Pushpa Mittra Bhargava Archive that cover the acclaimed Indian scientist and administrator’s notable writings, research papers, correspondence with eminent personalities, rare paintings, postal stamps, matchboxes, mementoes, and other artefacts.

The Pushpa Mittra Bhargava Archive will be accessible at https://libraryarchives.azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in/ and will include 400 files that cover over six decades of his life from 1953 until 2017. This archive will be of particular interest to researchers, students, teachers, and users interested in science, the history of science, the administrative history of scientific institutions and science education.

An ardent promoter of scientific temper and an influential voice in contemporary science, Pushpa Mittra Bhargava was the founder of Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology in Hyderabad. The archived files available to the public will cover a range of themes: scientific temper, correspondence with the families of scientist JBS Haldane and artist MF Husain, religion and atheism, vaccines, the Indian Social Science Congress, and the Method of Science Exhibition.

PM Bhargava played a key role in the efforts of independent India to promote modern science among the public. In 1975, Bhargava was invited to curate an exhibition on the ‘Method of Science’ and for decades, he worked tirelessly to give it a permanent home. The PM Bhargava Archive contains 272 files on the ‘Method of Science’ Exhibition which include letters, financial budgets and statements, and exhibition materials such as drafts of curatorial texts, leaflets, feedback forms, and storyboards.

These records have been catalogued using Access to Memory, a web-based, open-source software adhering to international archival standards. The physical documents can be accessed at the Gulbanoo Premji Library, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru.

The archived materials will be officially released at 0900 IST at the Gulbanoo Premji Library. This will be followed by a panel discussion on ‘Method of Science’ at 1400 IST. The panellists will include Chandana Chakrabarti, scientist, writer and Joint Secretary of the Pushpa Mittra Bhargava Foundation, Gauhar Raza, former Professor at the Academy of Scientific and Innovative Research and Chief Scientist at the National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources, Gita Chadha, a sociologist working on critical science studies, Obaid Siddiqui Chair 2023-2024 at the National Centre for Biological Sciences. The discussion will be moderated by Yogesh Shouche, Gut Microbiome Division, SKAN Research Trust.

This event will also see an exhibition of paintings, matchboxes, and stamps from the collection and a selection of documents from the archive.

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About Azim Premji University

Azim Premji University was established under the Azim Premji University Act 2010 of the Government of Karnataka. Azim Premji Foundation, the sponsoring body set up the University as a fully philanthropic and not-for-profit entity, with a clear social purpose of contributing to the realization of a just, equitable, humane, and sustainable society.