



ARCHIVE OF IIT MADRAS

ANNUAL REPORT



JULY 2021 – JUNE 2022

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1. Introduction

The Archive of IIT Madras is stepping into its fourth year of the project phase. This annual report covers the details of activities carried out during the third year starting from July 2021 to June 2022. The Archive team accomplished one of the main objective, the *Detailed Survey* assigned by the Principle Investigator Prof. Roland Wittje. The survey covered the 38 core units and 17 Advanced Research Centres of IIT Madras. A total volume of 18855 bundles measuring around 7000 cubic feet of records were inspected and a database created with details of quantity, topics and condition. The Archive project started the *Appraisal, Organisation and File level Description* process of the records from the Director's Office, organised the international conference *Archiving the Contemporary: Memory, Technology, and People* and participated in the International Archive Week seminar organised by the Milli Network at the NCBS, Bengaluru. The team attended to the request of Mr. S. Chandrasekaran of the 2nd batch of student to digitise a high quality photographs of the first three batch students from their application file and completed the Record Retention Schedule (RRS) for all the 38 units and a draft RRS for the entire institute.

The Archive of IIT Madras continues in its project phase starting from July 2019. The library basement has been found unsuitable for the Archive storage and the stilt floor of the New Academic Complex 1 has been chosen as the new location. The Archive of IIT Madras is scheduled to open as a permanent unit of IIT Madras for public by mid-2023 provided the Archive premises are ready by then. The Archive team is currently concentrating to keep the records ready, by completing all the archival processes, to move to the permanent storage in the newly allocated Archive space. However, given the change in the space allocation, the permanent archive premise will take time to get ready.

2. Activities covered in the third year

The Archive of IIT Madras as a permanent unit of IIT Madras with climate controlled storage, conservation laboratories (physical and digital), visiting facilities and appropriate finding aids will facilitate access to the physical records of permanent nature to the administration, researchers, alumni and the general public.

In order to accomplish the above objective, the Archive team has undertaken the following activities during the third year:

1. The detailed survey of archival records were completed in 38 major units and 17 Advanced Research Centres.
2. The survey information is further organised at **collection** and **series** level. Every unit of IIT Madras forms as a collection. Each collection, has records organised as bundles (inactive records are tied as bundles in most of the units at IIT Madras) which forms the series. So far, 38 major units (collection) comprising 18855 bundles (series) of records have been surveyed. Bundle level information helps to carry out the appraisal, acquisition, organisation and cataloguing procedures.
3. Immediate conservation of the records are assessed and the Archive team is in discussion with specialist conservators.
4. A new Record Retention Schedule (RRS) is prepared based on the information gathered through the survey (records with various topics), RRS used by other archives (mainly educational institutions) and the Indian government regulations pertaining to archival records.
5. The appraisal process has been completed at the Director Office records (currently stored at the Archive office), Type A and B categories segregated and marked for permanent preservation in the archive. Type C1, C3, C5 and C10 type of records are marked for omission.
6. Description for the A and B type records, from the Director Office, has been started and the same is entered in Excel with appropriate Meta data format. The excel data will be imported directly to the AtoM (Access to Memory is a web-based, open

source application for standards-based archival description and access in a multilingual, multi-repository environment for the online catalogue).

7. The International conference “*Archiving the Contemporary: Memory, Technology, and People*” was organised jointly with the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Madras, French Institute of Pondicherry and ITEM, Institut des Textes et Manuscrits Modernes, CNRS/ENS, Paris, France.
8. Dr. Ponnarasu, represented the Archive of IIT Madras in the “Milli Archive Collective” 2022 Session held at NCBS, Bengaluru during the International Archive Week.
9. The Archive of IIT Madras website and social media pages have been updated and new information has been posted.
10. A guideline for donating personal papers with transfer form is prepared to facilitate the collection of records from people associated with IIT Madras (Faculty, Staff and students).

3. Activities planned for the current year

The following objectives are scheduled for the fourth and current year July 2022 - June 2023. The Archive team plans to

1. Complete the *appraisal* of records from all the units, by assessing the value of the records based on the appraisal guidelines, record retention schedule (RRS) and input from the concerned staff and faculty of IIT Madras
2. Start the acquisition procedures of the selected records which is permanent in nature
3. Prepare the records for transferring to the Archive of IIT Madras (organising, packing and labelling)
4. Carry out the cleaning (removal of pest and dust) process of all selected records after the anoxic (nitrogen chamber) treatment

5. Segregate the permanent records which needs special attention of the conservators (deacidification treatment, repair work and binding)
6. Work with the consultant architect to design the building and obtain the approval from IIT Administration
7. Work with the Engg. Unit in the tender process for the construction of Archive premises
8. Work with the consultants in the tender process for the procurement of the infrastructure facilities for the Archive
9. Prepare Disaster recovery plan - detection and effective suppression of man-made and natural disasters
10. Public presence for the Archive - the Archive of IIT M plans to organise the following events
 - A workshop on Access to Memory catalogue application jointly with Jindal Global University Library, NCBS Archives and IISc Archives (Bengaluru) to a wider audience
 - An exhibition of important records to showcase the rich history of the institute jointly with the Heritage Centre of IIT Madras
 - A course on archives, heritage and history for B.Tech and Humanities students at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, to be developed jointly with Heritage Centre; this course will be offered at the earliest in the second half of 2023.

4. Archive team and committees

At the project stage, the Archive of IIT Madras functions at three levels, the Archive team, the Archive Planning Committee and the Archive Design Committee. The Archive team works on the objectives of the project, while the Archive Planning Committee oversees the progress of the work and directs the team wherever necessary. The Archive Design Committee, which was set up recently, looks into the different aspects of the construction, equipment and furnishing of the Archive.

A. Archive team

Dr. Roland Wittje, Principal Investigator

Prof. R. Nagarajan, Co-Investigator

Dr. Ponnarasu Subramanian, Project Leader

Ms. Raveena Sree, Project Associate (from 7-6-2022)

Ms. Ananya Deka, Project Associate (from 1-8-2022)

B. Archive Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Role
Dr. Roland Wittje	Department of Humanities and Social Sciences	Chair of the Committee and Principal Investigator
Prof. R. Nagarajan	Department of Chemical Engineering	Co- Investigator
Mr. Kumaran Sathasivam	Heritage Centre	Secretary
Prof. Koshy Varghese	Dean Administration, IIT Madras	Member
Prof. Mahesh Panchagnula	Dean of Alumni & Corporate Relations, IIT Madras	Member
Prof. P. Sriram	Department of Aerospace Engineering	Member
Mr. G. Sundar	Director, Roja Muthiah Research Library, Chennai	External Member
Mr. Venkat Srinivasan	Archivist, NCBS, Bangalore	External Member

C. Archive Design Committee

Name	Affiliation	Role
Dr. Roland Wittje	Department of Humanities and Social Sciences	Chair of the Committee and Principal Investigator
Prof. R. Nagarajan	Department of Chemical Engineering	Co- Investigator
Prof. P. Sriram	Department of Aerospace Engineering	Member
Prof. R.G. Robinson,	Chairman, Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Prof. Sannasiraj	Co-Chairman, Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Dr. Mahendra N Jadhav	Librarian, Central Library, IIT Madras	Member
Mr. Kumaran Sathasivam	Heritage Centre	Member
Mr. Soundarraaj	Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Mr. Ravichandran	Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Mr. Rizwn Ali K,	Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Mr. Ajay Krishnan	Engineering Unit, IIT Madras	Member
Mr. G. Sundar	Director, Roja Muthiah Research Library, Chennai	External Member
Mr. Venkat Srinivasan	Archivist, NCBS, Bangalore	External Member
Dr. Ponnarasu Subramanian	Project Leader, Archive of IIT Madras	Member

5. Record collection

The Archive of IIT Madras will preserve the records from *two different sources*, first official records produced by the various units of the institute from its inception, and second records received from private donors as students, faculty, employees, and other people associated with IIT Madras.

The survey of official records produced over the last six decades by the various units of IIT Madras is completed. The team has started the process of appraisal and acquisition of administrative records.

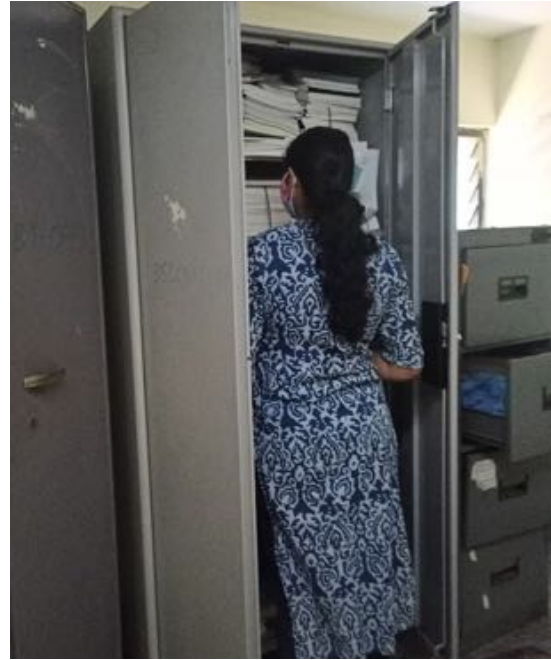
For the private paper collection, the Archive acquires historical records of faculty, staff, alumni and other individuals who were connected to IIT Madras and its history in the broader sense. The team has started collecting records from former faculty, which includes question banks, teaching materials, experiments, etc. We hope to bring in more variety of records and make it available on the Archive website.

6. Work accomplished during the third year

A. Survey of records

The Archive team surveyed 18855 bundles, comprising 6943 cubic feet of records from 38 major units of IIT Madras. Based on the information fetched from the survey, the team assessed the quantity, topics and the condition of the records. Using the topics obtained through the survey, the Archive team prepared a common Record Retention Schedule for whole of IIT Madras. The same topics are used for preparing the preliminary catalogue. To preserve and protect it from further deterioration the records are recommended for different levels of conservation based on the survey information. Most common causes for deterioration include termites, silverfish and other insect attacks, and acidification of paper and other damages caused by poor storage conditions.

Photographs of the survey conducted by the Archive team at various locations of IIT Madras and showing the varying condition of records



Archive team (Rashmi & Minnu Ann Mathew) during the survey

Source: Archive team (January 2022)



Semi - organised records *Source: Archive team (October-November 2021)*



Source: Archive team (January 2021)



Semi - organised records *Source: Archive team (September-October. 2021)*

B. Plan and execution of the Archive premises

As instructed by Prof. Bhaskar Ramamurthi, Director (Former), IIT Madras, the Engg. Unit monitored the refurbished Library basement during the monsoon in 2021 for seepage and dampness, before taking further steps on the building and infrastructure activities. This initiative turned out to be very valuable as the basement showed dampness in the side walls of some parts and ground water emerged in certain part of the floors. Based on the assessment by Prof. Ligy Philip the Director decided that *the Library basement is not suitable for the Archive*.

In February 2022, Prof. Roland met the current Director, Prof. V. Kamakoti along with Prof. Ligy Philip, following the recommendation of Prof Ligy the Director decided that the archive will be located in the stilt floor of the New Academic Complex 1 (NAC-1), where now the Centre for Innovation (CFI) is currently located. The CFI is scheduled to move to a new building opposite to the campus café by the end of this year. The Engineering Unit of IIT Madras will take up refurbishment work after the CFI moves to the new building. The Archive team works with the Engg. Unit to determine the size and bearing capacity of the stilt floor.

The construction of the Archive facility is being carried out by the Institute's Engineering Unit. The work is scheduled to start by the beginning of next year (January 2023). The Archive will appoint a consulting architect to work with the Archive team and the Archive Design Committee (ADC) on the design of the Archive facility based on professional archive standards. The Archive facility will consist of an entrance cum record receiving area, a records sorting & cleaning room, physical & digital conservation lab, climate controlled storage area, office space, reading room, and exhibition area.



Proposed space of the Archive facility *Source: Archive team (March 2022)*



Archive facility - Interior view - *Source: Archive team (March 2022)*

C. Public presence for the Archive: workshops, conferences, visits

I. International conference

The International conference “*Archiving the Contemporary: Memory, Technology, and People*” at IIT Madras, 6 to 8 April 2022, was jointly organised by the Archive of IIT Madras, the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences IIT Madras, the French Institute of Pondicherry, and the ITEM, Institut des Textes et Manuscrits Modernes, CNRS/ENS, Paris, France. The conference received a grant of 3 lakhs Rs from the Indian Council of Social Science Research; the payment of the grant is, however, as of 31 July 2022 still pending. The very successful conference brought together more than 30 archivists and researchers from the human and social sciences from India and Europe to discuss the complex and living nature of contemporary archives, how to preserve and represent memory, technology and people, and how to make these accessible.



Banner designed for the conference



Chief Guest of the programme was **Thiru, Har Sahay Meena, I.A.S.**, Principal Secretary / Commissioner of Archives and Historical Research, Government of Tamil Nadu, Egmore, Chennai along with **Prof. V. Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras**.



Welcome address delivered by Prof. Roland Wittje

II. Milli Archive Collective 2022 Session:

Milli is a consortium of individuals and communities interested in the nurturing of archives which enable diverse stories. It facilitates discussions among the community around issues of diversity, archival standards, conservation, physical and digital access, pedagogy, privacy and the development of inclusive description standards. The digital platform for Milli will allow the public to find, describe and share archival material and stories.



Participants of Group 1 - Track 1 and 2 - during one of the session

The international Archives week was organised by Milli network at NCBS, Bengaluru from Jun 8-10-2022. Various people involved in the archives such as Archivists | Designers | Lawyers | Activists | Developers | Curators | Academics | Community Organisers | Artists | Writers | Students.... attended the third season. Archive of IIT Madras is one of the contributing partner in the Milli Network. Dr. Ponnarasu represented the Archive of IIT Madras in the third season.

Milli Archives Collective 2022 Advertisement



The advertisement features a light orange background with a white sun and a white moon at the top. Below the sun and moon are two stylized wooden bridge structures. The word "Milli" is written in a large, purple, stylized font. Below it, the text "MILLI ARCHIVES COLLECTIVE" is written in a smaller, purple, sans-serif font. The advertisement is divided into three main sections: "2022 SESSIONS", "MILLI WORKSHOPS", and "Workshop participants". Each section contains a list of participating organizations, a QR code, and a link to the event. The bottom of the advertisement features social media handles and a website link.

MILLI ARCHIVES COLLECTIVE

2022 SESSIONS www.milli.link

ARCHIVES SHOWCASE

Archives of Abu Abraham | Bihar State Archives
Budakattu Tribal And Folk Archive | CEPT Archives |
Goa State Archives | The Kabir Project | Kirloskar
Archives | People's Archive of Rural India | SBI
Archives | South Asian American Digital Archive |
Wipro Archives and Resource Centre | Zubaan

June 9, 5:30 - 7:30pm IST | https://bit.ly/Archives_showcase

MILLI WORKSHOPS

Archival training | Ethics | Outreach | Milli
collective charter | Pedagogy | Standards | Digital
tools management | Archival standards

June 8-10, 10am - 5pm IST | <https://bit.ly/Milli-workshops2022>

Workshop participants

Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology, AIIS |
Archives, NID Ahmedabad | Archive And Access | Archives at NCBS |
Archive of IIT Madras | Centre for Public History, SMI | CMS,
Leeds University | Curating for Culture | Design Beku | DHARTI |
French Institute of Pondicherry | HistoryPublics | IISc Archives |
Keystone Foundation | Milli Tech | PCM Archive and Museum, ISI
Kolkata | QAMRA Archival Project at NLSIU | Sound & Picture
Archives of Research on Women | TOPHI Project

#IAR2022
#ARCHIVESAREYOU

Milli is a collective of individuals and
communities interested in nurturing and
connecting archives

@ArchivesMilli | Milli Archives Consortium | milli.link

D. Draft Record Retention Schedule (RRS) for the 38 core units:

The Archive team has prepared the RRS for each unit based on Indian and International models. The same was shared with each unit to obtain the correction based on their practice. Some of the units are responded with their corrections and other units are still working on it. However, based on the corrections received from the units a draft RRS pertaining to all the units are prepared by the archive team.

Archive of IIT Madras
Record Retention Schedule for the 38 units surveyed so far
 Topics - under which the records are organized
 Sub-topics - are the various types of records found at the various units of IIT Madras

Topics	Sub-topics within the topic	Retention period	Remarks
Administration	General correspondence	05 years	
	Correspondence with Govt. Institutions, IIT Madras	05 years	
	Office orders and circulars	Permanent in the case of departments issuing the rules, orders and instructions	
	Land Records, Maps	Permanent	
	Equipment list	Permanent	
	Office rules & regulations	Permanent in the case of academic issuing the rules, orders and instructions	
	Academics matters	1 year after final disposal	
Registers	General Registers (General Index)	05 years	
	Stock ledger (Purchase & procurement procedure)	05 year	
	Administrative registers: Attendance register , Leave & Half day transfer and Li , Monthly compliance and corrective action , connection action , leave & preventive action	Content will determine the appropriate retention period	

* All the data points (*) mentioned here are suggestions in the document schedule that the corresponding retention period has to be sufficient with the content and

Draft RRS for all the 38 core units of IIT Madras is prepared

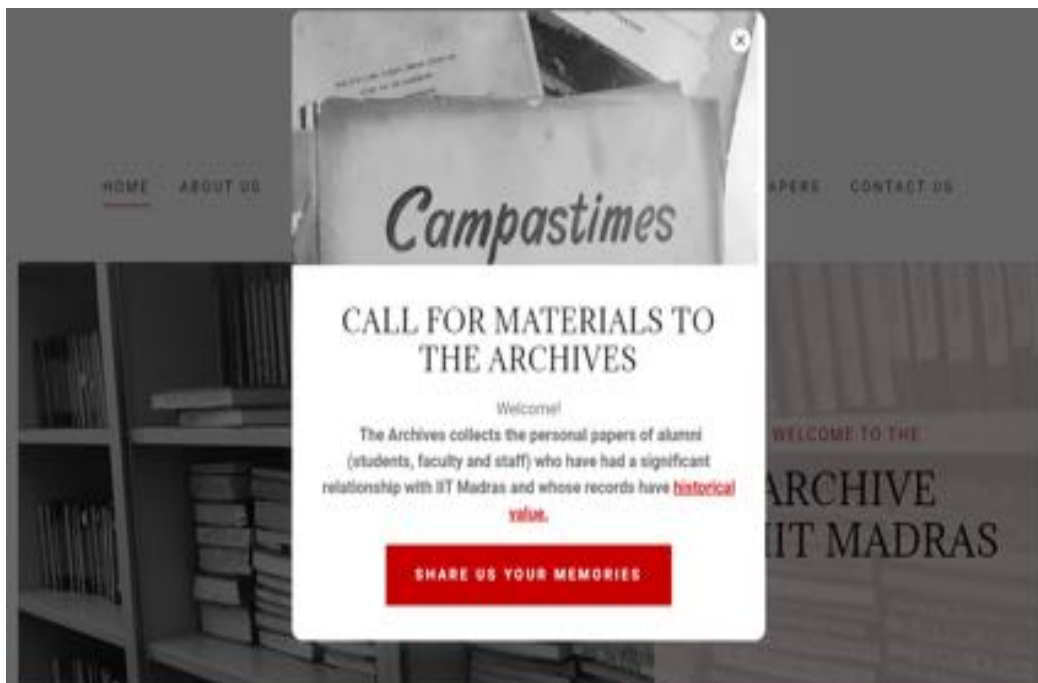
E. Social media presence of the Archive

As we are in the digital world, social media plays a vital role in providing and updating information about the Archive project and various events and services conducted by the team, which can be accessed through the social media accounts of the Archive on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

I. Call for papers on the website

The Archive of IIT Madras started collecting the personal papers of alumni (students, faculty and staff) who have had a significant relationship with IIT Madras and whose records have historical value (Photographs, letters, magazines, etc.). The post was put up in the website.

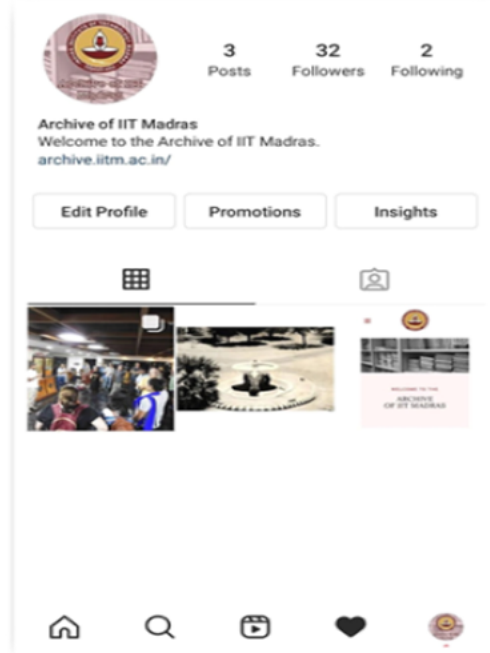
Upon receipt of the donated materials, an Acceptance of Gift form will be signed by the donor and the Archive, transferring ownership and legal rights from the donor to the Archive of IIT Madras.



Archive of IIT Madras announcement to collect the personal papers



**Archive of IIT Madras on
Twitter**



**Archive of IIT Madras on
Instagram**

F. Guidelines for the donation of Private Papers

The document “Guidelines for Donating Private Papers” was drafted with separate sections for faculty, alumni, student, and staff organisations along with the agreement form.

G. Digitisation of records

Mr. Chandrasekaran Subramanian, [1960 batch of IIT Madras], requested to obtain good quality scans of the passport size photographs affixed in their application form for the students from batches of I,II,III (1959,1960,1961).

The archive team searched the records based on the query and we could find the passport size photographs of the students of from the Student files which were stored in the big storage room in the ground floor of the dean students building. Given the fragile nature of the files, digitisation was done by the project associates in the Archive office and the outcome is shared with Mr. S. Chandrasekaran.

Digitisation process at the Archive office



H. Survey of Advanced Research Centres

The survey of the Advanced Research Centres (ARC) was taken up after many email correspondence with them. There were delays in obtaining appointments with these units. Finally the survey done in the month of May and June 2022. Most of the ARC's are recently established units and do not have many physical records as all the records are born-digital. The few records which we found in these units are mainly the printouts or financial records; bills, vouchers, which have a retention period of only 5 years which are kept in their office in their cupboards which need no immediate conservation.



Minnu and Raveena surveying the records of an Advanced Research Centre



I. Queries received and attended by the Archive of IIT Madras

Sl.No	Who	What is the query about	Query received date	Action taken	Action taken date
1.	Dean Academic courses	Query related to new courses offered over the years	15-5-2020	List of files found through the survey is shared with the office	16-5-2020
2.	Dean Academic	Locating a B.Tech student file from the big records room at the Dean Students building	2-8-2021	File was identified using the preliminary database of the survey	3-8-2021
3.	Dean Students	Location of the Shaastra and Saarang file from the collection of Director office	12-9-2021	Records were found and shared with the Dean Student office	21-9-2021
4.	Mr. Chandrasekaran. S	Good quality digital copy of the 2 nd batch students passport size photographs	12-10-2021	Record pertaining to that was found in the big records room at the Dean Students building. These photographs were digitized at the Archive of IIT Madras office by the team and digital copies were shared with Mr. Chandrasekaran. S	6-12-2021
5.	Hema Tanikella	Course catalogue from 1998-2002 for a Civil Engineering Bachelor's degree	23-9-2021	After searching the database and contacting Civil Engg. Department. We have replied to her stating that the particulars are not available	13-10-2021
6.	Ramya Lakshmanan	Previous exam question papers of Non-Teaching staff recruitment. (Junior Superintendent, Junior Assistant and Assistant Registrar)	7-9-2021	Archive does not have information pertaining to the query. May be during the Appraisal phase we might find such question papers.	7-9-2021
7.	Aarati Akkapeddi	Descendant of a late IIT professor (grandfather), Ramji Rao Ramavarapu	27-6-2022	Ponnarasu received them and answered their questions agreed to contact them once the Archive find records pertaining to her grandfather.	28-6-2022
8.	Frederike Lausch	Communication Centre of Scientific Knowledge for Self-Reliance (CCSK). S. Radhakrishna as member of the Special Advisory Panel of the CCSK. Special Advisory Panel was the expert on water quality at IIT Madras A. Shastri.	6-7-2022	After searching the database Ponnarasu replied stating that no files found on the topic. But requested him to visit the Archive office during his stay in Chennai. Still he is working on his visa and fellowship, he will contact once that is confirmed	14-7-2022