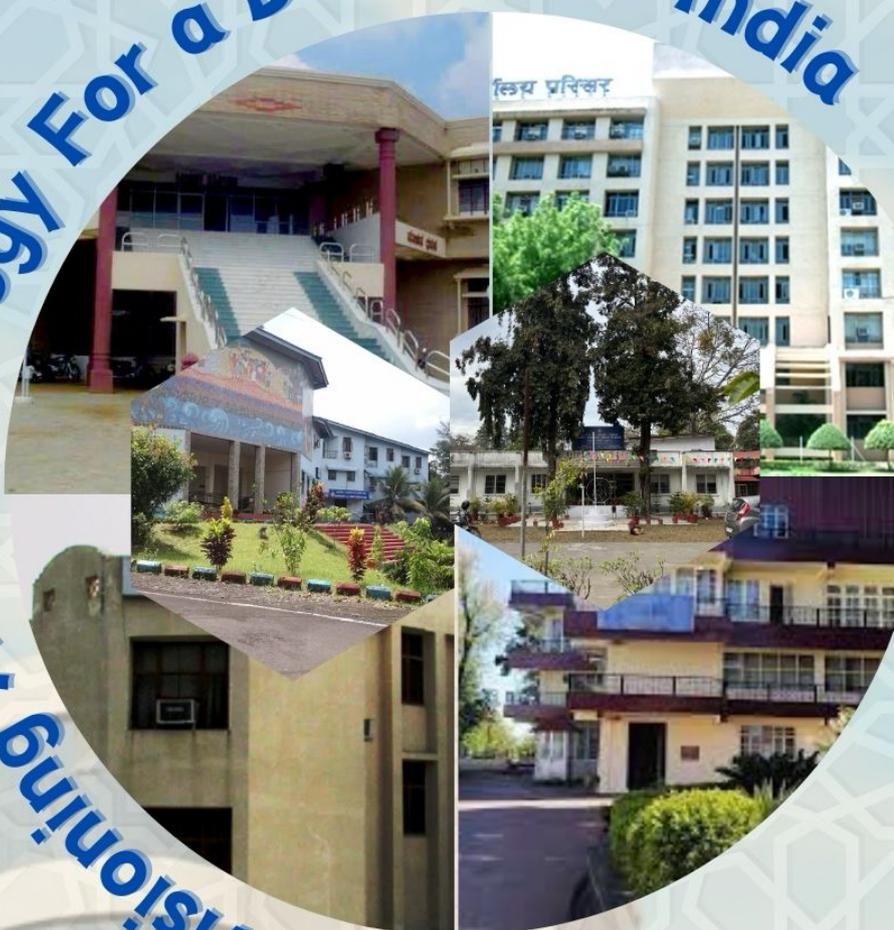


# INDIAN ANTHROPOLOGY CONGRESS 2025

## Book of Abstracts

# Envisioning Anthropology For a Developed India



Organised by



Anthropological Survey of India  
Ministry of Culture, Government of India

In collaboration with



Indian National Confederation and Academy of  
Anthropologists

With support from

Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sanghralaya  
&  
Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts



इन्दिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय कला केंद्र  
INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS



# About

## **Indian National Confederation and Academy of Anthropologists (INCAA)..**

INCAA has emerged as the apex organization of the profession in March 2004. It is registered under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act XXVI of 1961 (registration number S/1L/20556 of 2003-2004, dated March 12, 2004), with its registered office at 225, Kadam Kanon, Jhargram 721507, India. Currently, it has about 211 Founder Members, 709 Life Members, and 6 Institutional Members representing almost all States/Union Territories of the country. INCAA's primary role is to promote the cause of Anthropology and Anthropologists, particularly those associated with India.





## *From the Chairman's Desk....*

It is with immense pleasure. I state that Indian Anthropology Congress 2025 is being organised by the Anthropological Survey of India at Kolkata from 21st to 23rd February 2025 on the theme "Envisioning Anthropology for a Developed India" in collaboration with INCAA and supported by Indira Gandhi, Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi. I'm given to understand that they are about 300 papers, including posters to be presented by scholars, young and old in the Congress. Besides some pre-Congress workshops, book discussion and ethnographic film shows are being organised. For this August occasion, a volume on abstracts is being brought out containing the thrusts of papers and posters. Considering the quality and diversity of various subthemes within the broader theme of the Congress, I sincerely hope that the volume on Abstracts and posters will be useful for researchers, social scientists and policy makers.

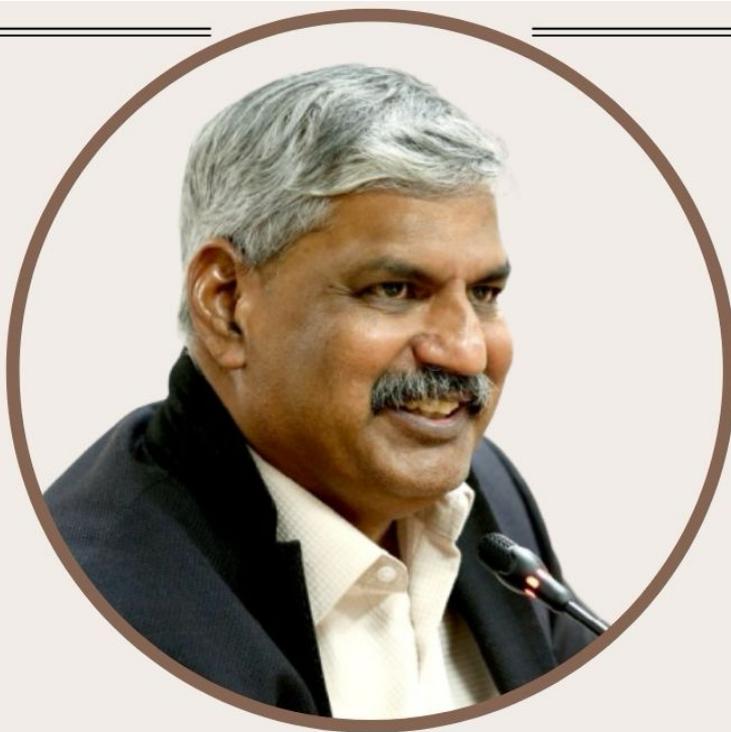
I wish the Indian Anthropology Congress 2025, all success.

**Prof. Kishore K. Basa**  
**Chairperson, INCAA**



## About Anthropological Survey of India..

Established in 1945, AnSI is headquartered in Kolkata and operates under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. It has seven Regional Centers, One Sub Regional Centre and Three Field Stations spreading across the country. The AnSI is a premier research organization that conducts comprehensive research covering all branches of anthropology. The published papers, monographs, manuals and the unpublished reports stand in testimony to the research contribution of AnSI to the field of anthropology. Its work has helped shape an understanding of India's diverse human landscape and also for informed policy decisions related to cultural preservation and socio-economic development. In the field of Cultural Anthropology, AnSI's research focus has been ethnographic accounts of different communities and institutions, examination of interethnic relationships and also evaluation research with implications for policy and programmes for health care, the spread of formal education, resettlement of rehabilitation of displaced communities, biodiversity and sustainable development, etc., The research in Physical anthropology is similarly both basic and applied in nature, with studies on growth and development, human genetics, human variation, food and nutrition, etc. Its collaborative research in the field of paleoanthropology resulted in substantial insights into human migrations and evolution. (please visit [www.ansi.gov](http://www.ansi.gov) for details on research studies by AnSI). AnSI partners with reputed national and international institutions for the fulfilment of its research endeavours.



## Director's note....

*I am immensely pleased that this year, Anthropological Survey of India is hosting the Indian Anthropological Congress -2025. This is actually the second time that AnSI is hosting IAC after a gap of about 14 years. As many of the readers of this abstract book would be aware, established in 1945, AnSI has accomplished its glorious 80 years and is embarking on the essence of Sahasra Chandra Darshan which symbolise the witnessing the cycle of 1000 full moons in one's lifetime. For an institution, the completion of 80 years may feel relatively short, but for us the completion of 80 years truly signifies the maturity of vision and depth in understanding which commensurate with the theme of IAC-2025 that is "Envisioning Anthropology for a Developed India".*

*Focussed on its motto, 'न मनुष्यात श्रेष्ठतरम हि किञ्चित', sourced from a verse in Mahabharata which literally translates to 'There is no creation higher than the Human being, AnSI endeavours to study human being in its entirety. AnSI is engaged in a holistic and multi-disciplinary approach, and focusses on research relating to both the biological and cultural domains of all ethnic communities in India, including the janjati communities which truly add to the cultural diversity of this country.*

AnSI has to its credit number of published papers, monographs, manuals, atlas etc. as the research outcome. Its publications like 'People of India', and studies relating to 'Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups', Genomic Diversity among People of India and many others serve as reference material for many purposes. Report on 280 De-Notified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic Communities which has been more recently submitted to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and NITI Aayog under the project, would similarly be an important reference material in future.

The studies launched in the last year and this year on different areas like Gut Microbiome studies among the PVTGs, Rural Livestock Markets, Study on Interstate Borders, Study of Himalayan border vilalges, Impact assessment of Jal Jeevan Mission etc., similarly will receive laurels in academic circles as well as policy makers. AnSI is committed to collaborative research in the field of palaeoanthropology and will soon come with cutting edge research in this field.

As Ruth Benedict aptly said, "The purpose of anthropology is to make the world safe for human differences." We in AnSI strive to contribute to this goal of achieving 'vasudhaira kutumbakam' with a commitment for quality research that informs policy and programmes for development of this great country.

IAC-2025 would enable our researchers to connect with the scholars and academicians working in the field of anthropology. Overwhelming response of the participants for this congress deepens the importance of IAC, for the role it plays in bringing the ideas and current researches together and bridge the gap between the amateur and experts through face-to-face interaction. Margaret Mead's words brightly highlight the spirit of IAC, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed individuals can change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has."

*My best wishes for the success of the Congress.*

**PROF. B.V SHARMA**  
Director, AnSI

# Keynote Address



## *Integrating Anthropology for a Resilient, Inclusive and a Developed India*

**Prof. Anjal Prakash**

This address explores the critical role of anthropology in shaping a vision for a Developed India. With a focus on water, climate change, urban resilience, and gender and social inclusion, it highlights how anthropological insights can inform and transform our development strategies. By examining socio-cultural dynamics, policy frameworks, and environmental challenges, we can develop holistic solutions that are adaptive, equitable, and sustainable. The address elaborates on the significance of water resources in the face of climate change, drawing from my experiences with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). It emphasises the pressing need for culturally informed and resilient water policies. In the urban context, anthropology offers valuable perspectives for designing inclusive cities that reflect the experiences of all social strata, fostering urban resilience. Additionally, the address stresses the importance of gender and social inclusion, advocating for policies that empower marginalised communities. Technology and innovation, when integrated with traditional knowledge, can drive sustainable development, and anthropology can guide this integration by ensuring cultural relevance and acceptance. Education and capacity building emerge as foundational elements for sustaining development, calling for anthropology to be embedded in educational frameworks. Policy implications are also discussed, underscoring the need for interdisciplinary collaboration to design adaptable and evidence-based solutions. The address encourages a balanced approach that respects cultural heritage while embracing innovation, urging a collective effort to build a resilient and inclusive India.



# **INCAA**

## **MEMORIAL ORATIONS**



### Professor B.M. Das Memorial Oration



#### Thoughts on Time and Tools: Key Issues in the South Asian Lower Palaeolithic

Shanti Pappu

Here, we discuss key issues in the South Asian Lower Palaeolithic, drawing on our evolving research trajectories at sites in northern Tamil Nadu. We discuss the implications of our research at the sites of Attirampakkam and, currently, Sendrayanpalayam in terms of debating nomenclatures, hominin behaviour, palaeoenvironments and geochronology. We situate this within the context of changing dynamics in academic interactions between archaeologists, anthropologists and other palaeoscientists in South Asia. These interactions have influenced interpretations of geomorphological processes, issues in site taphonomy, debates on hominin adaptation to Quaternary palaeoclimates, with occasional emphasis on ‘extreme environments’ and theories on population migrations. We also discuss trends in ethnoarchaeology through time in interpretations of the Palaeolithic record and issues therein. We conclude by discussing the urgent need for public awareness programs for the sustainable conservation of rapidly vanishing prehistoric sites in India.

### Professor S.C. Dube Memorial Oration

#### Views on ‘The Third World Anthropology’ and S. C. Dube’s Range of Involvement with the Issues Generated

Rajat K Das

Shyama Charan Dube, a pioneer sociologist-cum-anthropologist of the 1960s, 70s, 80s, and even 90s, has contributed significantly on a wide range of topics including tribe, village, nation, community development, modernisation, change management, tradition and cultural heritage. My intention here is not to undertake a complete review of his works to ascertain their relevance in the contemporary situation, which is a stupendous task and has already been attempted up to a point by different scholastic bodies and persons in their individual capacities. Here I would rather focus on an area with which Dube was either directly or indirectly connected. The reason why I have picked up this area is because Dube’s nature of involvement with it has produced some positive responses. Incidentally, the state of the Third World Anthropology during his time had kept him engaged, and he even made attempts to see the outcome of it from the larger social science perspective. Just as the Third World countries, even after their liberation from the clutches of the colonial power, could not avoid the dominating influence of the First World in the sphere of political economy, the traditional cultures, even where they could manage to survive, have come under the gripping impact of Westernization and Globalization bringing about significant changes in their society. From a national perspective, all these issues could be the source of many contradictions and complexities. If one looks at them from S. C. Dube’s point of view, it might very well reveal the underlying tension reflected in the conflict of interest between appreciating the value of anthropological-sociological approach to understand society and culture at the grassroots, and at the same time abiding by the provisions of the nation as drafted by the state. Can there be a purposeful blending between the two?





# **Prof. Vinay Kumar Srivastava MEMORIAL LECTURE**

## Tribes in India: Development and Realities at the Grassroots

Premananda Panda

Desire to understand the realities around is a distinct attribute of human relationships. The silhouettes of realities of development of tribes in India at the grassroots is certainly an elusive and multi-dimensional phenomenon. We all know that culture - the product of man nature interaction, conditioned human existence and organized life became largely a product of nature – culture interfacing. The facts that empirical scientists observe and experience through their fieldworks are crucial in their own rights exhibit unique sociocultural tenets for interpretation.

Social transformation has been the subject of conflicting explanations and ideologies in development studies. The development of ‘tribes’ in India led, through passage of time, to the development of ‘polity’ as distinct from society, The development of tribes in India means different things for different people. However, all depend on the platform from whose perspective the development is conceptualized and comprehended. The objectives of development of the tribes may vary according to the perception of the social scientist and the development personnel. The angle of vision for development of tribes varies across the concerned categories such as planners, bureaucrats, research institutes, national and international funding agencies, non-government organizations and the activists. They all advocate for the rights of the tribal people, who *hitherto* remained subjected to historical injustice. The policies, regulations, programs, and constitutional safeguards for tribes to develop are expected to assume as an integrate entity in nation; the things did not happen as desired. Promises are made and loyalty shifted has been evidenced in many frontiers. The development realities we encounter are not what we envisaged in our five-year plans. A few scholars are engaged in Indian civilizational approach to study India’s people and natural resources. It has been a recent rise in academics who are of opinion that once the dominant Euro-centric modernity approach has now been challenged due to rise of multiple sources of modernity such as Japanese modernity, Chinese modernity and Indian modernity and so on to unmask the grassroots realities. The civilizational consciousness is in rise. Whether *Adivasis* have ever been treated as ‘other society having distinct culture’ in our traditional texts has been a big question. A few of the realities, where the shoe pinched, led to development failures are our present discussion even though possibilities on tribal development hold promises to happen.

Possibilities of transformation to positive output and outcome could be materialized, by using ethnography as a research method. On this basis, the field anthropologists can offer productive advocacy to Government and act as facilitators for development of the *adivasis* it is expected that supervisory practice could be enhanced by being aware of the overlapping spaces between personal identity and the professional role, between developers and beneficiaries, and between both *adivasi* individuals and their cultural worlds. Transactional analysis, with its focus on interactions, can yield opportunities for mutual cultural reflexivity and also for effective development interventions for transformation.



# INCAA Round Table

*"Anthropology, Anthropocene and  
Ecosystem"*



## The Concept Note:

*Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the term 'Anthropocene' has gained attention among scholars across natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and arts. Prior to it, terms like Anthropozoic (1873) and Anthrocene (1992) failed to gain attention among the scholars.*

*Anthropocene addresses how human activities are altering the Earth's ecosystems over time and space. Such alterations have profoundly affected the earth's restoration capabilities and have implications for human survival and existence. As the scale and pace of human interactions with Earth systems have intensified in recent decades, understanding human-induced alterations in the past and present is critical to our ability to anticipate, mitigate, and adapt to changes in the future. Thus, it becomes crucial to examine how human activities influence the resilience of the planet Earth on one hand and, on the other hand, how knowledge-driven (including traditional knowledge) scientific and technological innovations and societal transformations based on sustainable principles can restore the Earth's vitality.*

*Some scholars are critical of the term Anthropocene; they find it problematic since it overemphasizes human mastery or erases differential human responsibilities, including imperialism, capitalism, racism, and the new form of technocratic governance. Recently, geologists have denounced Anthropocene as a geological epoch owing to its overemphasis on irreversible human impacts on the planet. Others argue that the Anthropocene helps draw attention to disastrous environmental change, inspiring reinvigorated attention to the world's ontological unruliness, multiple temporal scales, and intertwined social and natural history.*

*This Round Table Meeting aims to provide a platform to debate on ecosystem-based adaptation, ecosystem health, ecosystem governance, ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction, as well as on topics that harness biocultural diversity and traditional knowledge for achieving Sustainable Developmental Goals.*

## Panellists & Abstracts

### **a) Epochs of Change: The Human Mark on Earth's Future**

*Abigail Lalnuneng*

The question of whether human beings have permanently altered the planet is central to current discussions on the Anthropocene, a proposed geological epoch marked by significant human impact on Earth's systems. This roundtable lecture will explore the Anthropocene timeline, tracing humanity's imprint from the emergence of *Homo* species to the 2000 proposal by Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer that human activities have ushered in a new geological epoch. Additionally, the lecture will address the ways in which human actions have transformed ecosystems and contributed to global climate change.

Anthropology, with its focus on the complex relationship between humans and their environment, provides critical insights into these transformations. Situated within an interdisciplinary framework, the lecture will explore how anthropological perspectives highlight the long history of human-environment interactions and their cumulative effects aiming to foster a deeper understanding of the Anthropocene as a pivotal concept that bridges disciplines and invites reflection on humanity's capacity for both destruction and stewardship.

**b) Situating Cultural Sites of Pleistocene in Anthropocene: A Study of Human Vandalism of Prehistoric Sites in Kuliana, Odisha, Eastern India**

*Basanta Kumar Mohanta*

The origin of human cultural evolution occurred during the Pleistocene and the evidence is found in various places of the world, including Kuliana in eastern India. The prehistoric site of Kuliana has been ascribed as the first lower palaeolithic site to be excavated in India. Since the 1940s, different types of archaeological evidence have been reported from various regional locations and even if the area is rich in cultural evidence, justification has not been given to these sites during the Anthropocene. Most of the sites are under destruction either because of the expansion of the village or conversion into the agricultural field, extraction of soil, laterite and sand for construction of roads and houses, expansion of NH, construction of pond, check dam and canals, deposition of plastic and other unused materials, transportation of pebbles and nodules along with stone artefacts for construction purpose or other anthropogenic factors. In this paper, an attempt has been made to discuss the current situation of these prehistoric sites and their state of preservation.

**c) Palaeoculturaldiluculum and its Sequel: Reflections from India's Easternmost Territories**

*Dwipen Bezbaruah*

India's easternmost territories consisting of Assam and adjoining states have a remarkable geocultural context across time and space. Flanked by international boundaries almost all around, the region presents undulating high altitudinal terrains intercepted by low riverine plains. The Brahmaputra and the Barak River systems form the two most wide alluvial plains marking the formation of early state and organised production-based activities. Towards the north of the Brahmaputra river lies the Himalayan belt with less traces of earliest consumption-based culture while the non-Himalayan belt south of the Brahmaputra river has indicated preponderance of the same. This non-Himalayan belt is also considered to have a spatial continuity with the highland massif of southeast Asia termed as zomia by contemporary scholars. The low alluvium plains have major evidences as archaeological remains for state and craftsmanship but little evidences about its antecedent culture perplex the whole genesis and development of early cultural processes of the region. The consumption-based economy and cultural evidences also present a scenario that needs alternative explanation different from the chrono-cultural context of the mainland understanding. Rudimentary megalithic stone structures in the hills and foothills with socio-ideational connotations are replaced by worshipping spaces initiated on stone blocks of magical and religious values culminated in due course to established shrines and temples of architectural grandeur. The present discussion tries to highlight these aspects of palaeo-cultural and further anthropo-historical development in the region.

**d) Agrarian Organizational Transformation and Rural Transitions: An Empirical and Theoretical Analysis Based in Jharkhand**

*Hari Charan Behera*

The study focuses on the features of transformation that is taking place in various kinds of peasants and other agrarian organizations in a developing state like Jharkhand in the wake of new farm policies and modern institutional interventions. It examines the challenges and opportunities resulting out of the agrarian organizational transformation through new farmer producer organizations (FPOs), informal or formal contract farming, etc. It also features the rural (institutional) transitions and their repercussions for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development. The study is founded on ground realities through empirical and theoretical insights. The selection of the state - Jharkhand represents the geographical regions with predominantly agrarian features, plateau-centric or dry-land farming, heterogeneous caste, class and ethnic compositions, relatively underdeveloped infrastructure and slow rural transitions. It covers parts of the districts in Palamu, Chhotangapur, Santal Pargana and Kolhan divisions covering a wide range of geographical regions, administrative and socio-demographic compositions in Jharkhand. The study is based on extensive field work with use of mixed methods and stakeholders' discussion in the selected regions.

Agrarian organizational transformation in Jharkhand is unique due to its predominantly plateau-centric dry land farming system and peasants features that is coexisting with economic transitions in primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. The transformation is featured in the nature of agrarian structure, which was traditionally founded on land (tenure) relations and operations, both as the means and mode of production. It poses a serious question of agrarian transition, which is manifested in the form of commercialization, while affecting the nature of traditional relations in the peasant farming. It also reflects non-symmetric and inequitable progress in mechanizations, access to institutional support system and profiteering. The Farmers Producer Organizations (FPOs) that are relatively new in the state have posed both as challenges and opportunities` to transform existing agrarian system with primary motive to enhance profit and induce income growth for masses. However, this motive and objective for inclusive economic growth has turned out to be futile where there is low level of literacy, lack of infrastructure, market access and lack of economic or livelihood diversifications. There are apparent features of primitive accumulation, forced and involuntary rural transition and greater heterogeneity, inequality and invisible conflicts in under-developed regions, where a large section of farmers are peasants with low level of literacy and also featured with complex caste-class heterogeneity and inequality.

Agrarian organizational transformation in Jharkhand further invokes neoliberal economic discourse to address some critical challenges that are being surfaced or those are deeply rooted to provide a space for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

**e) An analysis to understand the complex relationship between gut microbiota, epigenetics, and human health in Anthropocene**

*Mithun Sikdar*

The Anthropocene, a proposed geological epoch, have recognized humans as the dominant geological force on the planet. The term coined by Eugene F. Stoermer in the 1980s got popularized by Paul Jozef Crutzen in 2000. Although the Neolithic Revolution and the 1960s

are among the two suggested beginning dates for the Anthropocene, the changes in the environment caused by humans have been more visible since the 1900s. Since the last one hundred years, humans tried to be recognised as ‘ultimate ecosystem engineers’. They not only changed their external environment but also tried to change their own internal environment through the change in the diet and the usage of antibiotics. The changes in the internal environment altered human gut microbial diversity, which in turn affected human health. One of the pathways of interaction between the human gut microbiota and health outcomes is through epigenetics. The present discourse will attempt to examine the complex interaction among anthropogenic activities, reduction in the diversity of gut microbiota, DNA methylation and human health. Further the scenario will be discussed in the light of environmental shock hypothesis that is akin to thermal shock theory of thermodynamics.

#### **f) Culture, AI and Indian Anthropology: What to do?**

*M.P.Damodaran*

In anthropological terms, culture is the "total way of life". India is popular for her spectacular culture, and that too regarded as *plural culture*. People live all over India, and follow their unique customs, and traditions. The availability, access, and distribution of resources to people are still unequal. Education, and literacy of her people have a huge gap, and these disparity is evident among the tribal, the rural, and the urban populations. Cities, and towns are the paradises of modernity, and other areas lack such facilities. Urban areas, and its settlers have easy access to all but, the same were unavailable to the tribes, and villagers. Under such circumstances, the knowledge, acquaintance, and use of *Computation*, and *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) were remaining unknown, unnecessary, and out of the reach of many sections of our society, who have been living in the tribal, and rural setups.

*What to do?*

We should think of a new way of inclusive development, *egalitarian development* that annihilates social inequalities, and other disparities. This ‘anthropological strategy of development’ should govern, and roots in equity, social justice, and have a human face. Along with this, a scientific, *anthropological* “egalitarian outlook” should be essentially developed among each, and everyone’s attitude, vision, and everything.

This is the time to say *adieu*, from the half-hearted approach to anthropology! See, we should wholeheartedly embrace anthropology; must learn, know, and practice anthropology! Indian anthropology should evolve into a vibrant, potential, public-oriented discipline, Public Anthropology, engaging with communities, and sharing insights that extend beyond academic circles.

#### **g) Emerging Human, Animal, and Environmental Assemblages in the Anthropocene: Conceptual and Methodological Considerations**

*Nanda Kishore Kannuri*

In the last few decades in Telangana, human-induced changes in the landscape, push towards market-based crops, and modernisation resulted in a decline in crop diversity and an increased paddy and cotton cultivation. Another key factor for this shift is human and animal conflict in

this region, particularly, the wild boar menace. These emerging new assemblages of humans, animals, and plants have accentuated the distress faced by the small and marginal farmers in this region. Additionally, climate change and rising temperatures are expected to worsen agrarian distress by negatively impacting crop yields. I argue that these factors collectively contribute to "ecologies of suffering," adversely affecting bio-cultural diversity, livelihoods, food security, health, and overall well-being. Drawing on my fieldwork and secondary literature, I seek to explore the necessity for inclusive, more-than-human conceptual and methodological approaches. These approaches may help unpack the hidden dimensions of Anthropocene and its impacts on the rural population.

#### **h) Natural disasters as determinant of child growth and development: the case of Sundarban Aila Study (2017-20)**

*Raja Chakraborty*

The Humans evolved in compelling coordination with the global environments and its periodic changes over millions of years. However, after evolving by combating with numerous folds of environmental perturbations, it has ultimately began to exert significant and potentially irreversible influence on the ecosystem, environment, living processes and biodiversity. Human activities have been playing the most effective role in the adverse climate change and also led to frequent occurrence of natural disasters (ND) including moderate to severe cyclones. Recent research has begun to pay attention on the effects of ND on human biology, including prenatal maternal stress (PNMS) and its consequences on postnatal growth and development of children. Such studies have provided opportunities to understand the random effects of PNMS on child growth and development. In the backdrop of a few studies worldwide on the effect of PNMS due to severe ND, the Sundarban Aila study was the only study except the preceding ones in the US and Australia. This presentation in the Round Table discussion shall discuss how ND can exert a long-term effect on human biology in light of the recent findings from the Sundarban Aila Study 2017-2020.

#### **i) Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Anthropocene: Bridging the Two Cultures of Science and Humanities**

*Sarvendra Yadav*

The concept of the Anthropocene originated in the natural/hard sciences, emerging from the recognition that human activities have significantly impacted the climate and ecosystems. This idea was first articulated by climate scientist Paul Crutzen and marine biologist Eugene Stoermer. Over time, the narrative was adopted by the liberal arts, with social scientists theorizing its effects on cultural, social, and geopolitical systems. Alternative terms, such as Capitalocene (Malm & Hornborg, 2014), Plantationocene, and Chthulucene (Haraway, 2015), have been proposed in an attempt to capture the complexity of human-environment interactions. However, these perspectives differ significantly in their approach to the problem. Drawing on C.P. Snow's 'two cultures' (1959) argument, this panel will explore how interdisciplinary boundaries can be bridged to offer a more holistic understanding of the Anthropocene. We will critically assess whether some concerns about climate change, raised

by scientists, may be exaggerated, and consider how anthropological tools such as eco-centrism could provide potential pathways for addressing environmental crises.

**j) Anthropocene and the Challenges for agriculture, Farmers and Food Security**

*Surya Prakash Upadhyay*

While the anthropocene is seen as a shift into a new geological era, the extent however is not limited to global warming and climatic changes. This approach does not discuss shifts in knowledge systems which is accompanied by the claims of modern science and technology and the contemporary advances in IT, AI and ML. Perhaps, anthropocene is much an outcome of political economy steered by capitalocene (Moore 2017, Nae 2023). This talk will delve into the plight of farmers, the future of agriculture and food security under increasing urbanization vis-a-vis continuous reduction of area under agriculture. The anthropocene as well as capitalocene challenge traditional farmers. At the same time, it also draws attention towards the fetish abilities of technology-led agriculture, emphasis on organic farming which inevitably increases the cost of food items. Therefore, the future situation is a serious challenge for the poor who will be challenged with food insecurity, hunger, malnourishment and related crises to lead a dignified life.

**k) Sacred Groves and Resource Conservation: A Study of Change and Continuity of the Khasi Belief System**

*Valerie Dkhar*

Indigenous ecological knowledge is increasingly acknowledged as one of the mechanisms for addressing sustainability issues. By attributing them as abodes of ancestral spirits and deities, communities have managed and conserved vast tracts of forested land home to numerous endangered species. The Law Kyntang or Sacred groves exemplify the conservation practices of the Khasis of Meghalaya, which not only aids in retaining biological diversity but also contributes to climate change mitigation. They are renowned for their rich diversity of native flora and fauna, significantly contributing to resource conservation and serving numerous ecological services. Consequently, this presentation will address issues surrounding the sustainability of sacred groves, and the governance frameworks associated with them among the Khasis of Meghalaya.



# AnSI Round Table

*"Developing a Scale to Distinguish  
Tribal Populations from Caste-  
Based and 'Mainstream'  
Communities"*



*This round table is an initiative for developing a standardized scale to differentiate tribal populations from caste-based and mainstream communities in India, addressing gaps in policy and resource allocation. Historical insights from the Dhebar Commission (1961), Lokur Committee (1965), and Xaxa Committee (2014) emphasize the importance of preserving tribal cultural identity while tackling socio-economic challenges. The rationale behind is to understand the persistent difficulty in defining and distinguishing tribal populations due to cultural diversity alongwith the need for a systematic tool to ensure accurate classification and targeted policy formulation for the communities.*

*The proposed framework is to help elaborate tribal features across domains, including Geographical and social isolation, Linguistic and economic practices, Social institutions, rituals, and material culture and Health and demographic characteristics. The proposed concept will utilise the methodologies of Compilation of ethnographic studies, Engagement with academics and tribal representatives and Piloting and refining the scale. A robust tool for ensuring tribal rights and effective policymaking and contribution to the holistic development of tribal populations through informed resource allocation is expected to be significant outcomes. This initiative aligns with constitutional mandates and will assist tribal research institutions (TRIs) in preparing ethnographic reports for policymaking.*

**Chairperson: Shri Nirupam Chakma, Hon'ble Member, NCST**  
**Convenor: Prof. B.V Sharma, Director, AnSI**

**Speakers:**

1. Prof. Sarit K. Chaudhuri, Vice Chancellor, Alipurduar University
2. Prof. Akhil B. Ota, Emeritus Professor, Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences
3. Prof. S. N Rath, Retd, Professor, Sambalpur University
4. Prof. Sabita Acharya, Vice Chancellor, Utkal University
5. Prof. S. M Pattanaik, Professor, University of Delhi
6. Prof. Rahim K. Mondal, Professor(Retd), North Bengal University
7. Prof. S.B Chakrabarti, Retd. Deputy Director, AnSI
8. Prof. P.C Joshi, Professor (Retd.), University of Delhi
9. Prof. Jibon Kumar Singh, Professor, Manipur University
10. Prof. Ram Gambhir, Professor(Retd), University of Pune
11. Prof. R. Siva Prasad, Professor, University of Hyderabad
12. Prof. P.V Rao, Professor, University of Hyderabad
13. Prof. Geetika Ranjan, Professor, NEHU
14. Prof. Premananda Panda, Director (Socioeconomics), World Consultancy Services
15. Prof. N Sudhakar Rao, Professor, University of Hyderabad
16. Dr. M Sasikumar, Joint Director, AnSI
17. Dr. P. Kalyan Reddy, Director, NCST
18. Shri. R.K Dubey, Deputy Director, NCST
19. Shri Manish Raj, Senior Investigator, NCST

# **PANELS**

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<b>PANEL 01</b>	
<b>HEALTH FOR ALL: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN PROMISE AND REALITY</b>	
<i>Convenor: Koel Mukherjee</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Dilip Kumar Barik	Socio-Demographic Indicators of Dietary Diversity and its Association with Undernutrition and Nutritional Anemia: A Study among Women of Reproductive Age (15-49) in the Bonda PVTG of Malkangiri District, Odisha
Malvika Yumnam & Sanjenbam Yaiphaba Meitei	Association of Serum Vitamin D Status with Urolithiasis: A Case-Control Study among the Meiteis of Manipur
Jeena Wahengbam	Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome among the Meitei Women of Manipur, Northeast India
Priyanka Khurana & Sasmita Sahu	Nutritional Status of under 5 Children among the Bondo tribe: A Case Study from Badbel Village of Manlkangiri District, Odisha, India
Sanjenbam Yaiphaba Meitei	Food Habits and Urolithiasis: A Case-Control Study among the Meiteis of Manipur

## **Socio-Demographic Determinants of Dietary Diversity and Its Association with Undernutrition and Anemia: A Study among Women of Reproductive Age (15-49) in the Bonda PVTG of Malkangiri District, Odisha**

*Dilip Kumar Barik*

Nutritional intakes are the key components of good health and well-being. Undernutrition and anaemia are the major health concerns among the tribal population, especially among women. The aim of the study is to assess the dietary diversity and prevalence of undernutrition and anaemia. A cross-sectional study was conducted among the Bonda PVTG of Malkangiri district of Odisha. This study involves a total of 180 women of reproductive age (15-49). The study participants were interviewed to access data on sociodemographic characteristics. Anthropometric measurements and haemoglobin concentrations were recorded, and data on dietary patterns were accessed by using the 24-hour dietary recall method. FAO's Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W) was used to assess dietary diversity. This study includes a chi-square test and multivariate logistic regression analysis to examine the factors associated with different variables. The result showed a mean dietary diversity score of  $4.58 \pm 1.49$ . More than half of the women (57.2%) exhibited a lower diverse diet (MDD-W < 5), 47.1% were undernourished, and 61.6% were anaemic. Factors including lower educational background, low family income, larger family size, and frequent alcohol intake among the women were significantly associated with lower dietary diversity ( $p < .05$ ). Furthermore, women with MDD-W < 5 had seven times higher odds of undernutrition (OR: 7.01, 95% CI: 3.66-14.74, P: .005) and twice the odds for anaemia (OR: 2.02, 95% CI: 1.01-4.02, P: .05). This study highlights that low dietary diversity, impacted by different socio-demographic variables such as education, income, family size, and alcohol intake, is significantly associated with undernutrition and anaemia among the women of reproductive age in the Bonda tribe. A community-specific intervention program is required to improve the dietary pattern and overall health and well-being of the Bonda community.

## **Association of Serum Vitamin D Status with Urolithiasis: A Case-Control Study among the Meiteis of Manipur**

*Malvika Yumnam & Sanjenbam Yaiphaba Meitei*

**Introduction:** Hypercalciuria, excess urine calcium, is an identifiable metabolic risk factor that causes several complex disorders. It is multifactorial, and genetic and environmental factors are involved in high urine calcium. One of the important risk factors is calcium metabolism. Studies suggest that there is an association of hypercalciuria with serum calcium. Considering the significance of blood calcium being absorbed into urine calcium, the present study was conducted to find the association of serum calcium with urine calcium.

**Methods:** A total of 413 Meitei individuals (272 females and 141 males) in the ages of 19 and 60 years were included in the study. Serum calcium and urinary calcium-creatinine were measured using Erba Chem 5x biochemical analyser. One-way ANOVA, chi-square test and multinomial logistic regression were used for statistical analysis.

**Results:** It was found that 18.64% have hypercalciuria and 23.49% are in the risk of having hypercalciuria. Random urine calcium and creatinine were significantly different among hypercalciuria, risk and normal groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). The chi-square test shows a significant association between age group and hypercalciuria; similarly, significant difference between serum calcium and urine calcium was also found ( $p < 0.05$ ). Multinomial logistic regression shows that higher age groups (40-49 and 50-60) are 2.8 and 4 times more likely to suffer from hypercalciuria than lower age group. Furthermore, hypocalcaemic and hypercalcaemic individuals are 3.5 and 2.1 times more likely to have hypercalciuria than normocalcaemic individuals. However, the respondents' sex shows no significant association.

**Conclusion:** Hypercalciuria may seem to be a minor disorder; however, its possible impact on the health and quality of life is significant. Considering its importance, it is always advisable to pre-determine the risk factors of hypercalciuria to minimise the possible consequences.

### **Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome among the Meitei Women of Manipur, Northeast India**

*Jeena Wahengbam*

Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) is one of the most common endocrine disorders leading to poor fertility in women of reproductive age. The worldwide prevalence of PCOS in women varies between 2.2% to 26%. Risk factors include menstrual irregularity, obesity, not enough physical exercise, and a family history. Most studies in India report prevalence of PCOS as 9.13% to 36%. Moreover, the prevalence of PCOS is increasing at a rapid pace leading to long-term reproductive health and metabolic complications. Therefore, in the present study, an attempt was made to assess the prevalence and phenotype of PCOS among the Meitei Women of Manipur. This cross-sectional study was conducted among 300 women aged between 16 and 40 years to identify women at risk of developing PCOS. An interviewer-administered questionnaire was utilized to screen PCOS based on menstrual history and clinical manifestations of hyperandrogenism. Information was also gathered on sociodemographic and anthropometric characteristics, family history of PCOS, physical activity, and dietary intake. The responses were analyzed statistically for correlation of influencing parameters and manifestation of the disorder. Understanding the harmful effects of PCOS and providing proper screening and management to those women who are at high risk of PCOS is necessary to address the associated health consequences of PCOS. Early screening is needed to prevent lifelong complications.

### **Nutritional Status of Under-Five Children among the Bondo Tribe: A Case Study from Badbel Village of Malkangiri District, Odisha, India**

*Priyanka Khurana & Sasmita Sahu*

**Background:** Accurate assessment of malnutrition is essential to quantify the true burden of malnutrition in vulnerable tribal populations and inform targeted interventions.

**Objective:** To determine the prevalence of malnutrition and its associated determinants among children younger than 5 years in the Bondo tribe of Malkangiri, Odisha.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional survey using was conducted among 90 mother-child pairs from a village in Kairput block of Malkangiri district Odisha. Anthropometric measurements and key maternal and child characteristics were recorded.

**Findings:** According to Z-scores, the prevalence of underweight was higher than stunting and wasting. CIAF revealed that 68% of children exhibited at least one form of anthropometric failure, while 40% had multiple manifestations. Children of illiterate parents had 1.8 times higher odds of anthropometric failure, while those with a birth weight >2.5 kg had lower odds. Early initiation of breastfeeding was associated with a 1.5-fold increase in odds of anthropometric failure, though this association lost statistical significance after adjustment for covariates.

**Conclusion:** The high prevalence of anthropometric failure underscores an urgent need for both immediate and sustained interventions. Short-term measures should address acute undernutrition, while long-term strategies must focus on enhancing maternal literacy and awareness to prevent and manage malnutrition effectively.

### **Food Habits and Urolithiasis: A Case-Control Study among the Meiteis of Manipur**

*Sanjenbam Yaiphaba Meitei*

Urolithiasis is one of the common health issues in Northeast India. As it is multifactorial, various factors contribute to the aetiology of urolithiasis. The association of food habits, including drinking water, with urolithiasis cannot be overlooked, as certain food habits can relate to the development of Kidney stones. Of the different types of kidney stones, calcium oxalate stone is reported to be the most common. The present study was designed to understand the risk of certain food habits in the development of kidney stones among the Meiteis of Manipur through a case-control study. The food habits data were collected from the cases and age-sex matched controls, and the food habits are categorised based on the frequency of consumption in a week. The study reports that those who consumed meat 4 times a week are 2.43-fold risk of Urolithiasis. Likewise, consuming eggs, fruits consumption, and drinking milk less than 3 times are 2.13, 4.29-, and 3.00-folds risk, while pulses consumption less than 4 times a week is 7.72 folds risk of Urolithiasis. Water consumption of less than 2 litres a day is also a 3.82-fold risk to kidney stone development. The present study brings forth important concerns about controlling food habits in managing Urolithiasis.

<b>PANEL 02</b>	
<b>ON DECOLONIZATION OF COLLECTIONS: REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSIVITY IN MUSEUMS OF INDIA</b>	
<i>Convenor: Banita Behera</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Shantilata Jena	Revitalizing Cultural Heritage: The Role of Technology on Enhancing Engagement, Accessibility, And Preservation in The Museums of Odisha
Lipika Nath	Envisioning Living Museum for Preserving Tamang Material Heritage
Kanika Mondal	Danmal Mathur Museum: In Search of Innovative Approaches
Gitu Yaikhom	Rethinking Community Engagement In The Zonal Anthropological Museum, Sri Vijaya Puram, Andaman And Nicobar Islands

## **Revitalizing Cultural Heritage: The Role of Technology in Enhancing Engagement, Accessibility, and Preservation in The Museums of Odisha**

*Shantilata Jena*

Odisha, a state in eastern India, is home to a rich cultural heritage that spans over 2,000 years. However, the preservation and dissemination of this heritage face significant challenges, including limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of engagement among younger audiences. This study explores the transformative role of technology in revitalizing Odisha's cultural heritage, focusing on its potential to enhance engagement, accessibility, and preservation in the state's museums.

Through a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys, interviews, and case studies, this research investigates the current state of technology adoption in Odisha's museums and identifies opportunities for innovation. The findings highlight the potential of digital technologies, such as virtual reality and mobile apps, to create immersive and interactive experiences, increasing visitor engagement and accessibility. Moreover, technologies like 3D scanning and digital preservation facilitate the conservation and protection of fragile artifacts, ensuring their availability for future generations.

This study provides recommendations for museums in Odisha to leverage technology and enhance their role as cultural hubs. By embracing technological innovation, Odisha's museums can revitalize their cultural heritage, promote cross-cultural understanding, and contribute to the state's economic development through cultural tourism. The study's findings have implications for museum professionals, policymakers, and cultural heritage stakeholders seeking to harness the power of technology to preserve and promote cultural heritage.

## **Envisioning Living Museum for Preserving Tamang Material Heritage**

*Lipika Nath*

Material cultural heritage can be defined as 'community's expression of living' that is traditionally carried down through generations. However, certain interventions of modern exogenous practices have a detrimental impact on the socio-cultural traits of many communities across the world. The purpose of this article is to explore the community-based initiatives and actions in developing 'living-museums' dedicated to preserving the material heritage of the Tamang community, a scheduled tribe living in different parts of Darjeeling, West Bengal, India. Unlike traditional museums, a community-based living-museum provides a dynamic environment where their culture is not only exhibited but actively practiced, allowing for a more immersive experience. It is a more inclusive initiative to decolonize the classic idea of museum collections and reexamining the practice of acquisition, curation and representation by the community members by themselves. After conducting ethnographic fieldwork and based on the data collected through several participatory methods, an anthropological discourse has been made to trace the host-guest engagements with Tamang artifacts, crafts, rituals, and daily practices that appreciates the significance of Tamang heritage within a contemporary framework. By centering the community's participation, the study aims to foster a sustainable cultural ecosystem, connecting Tamang traditions to modern cultural

preservation. Such a model offers a platform for the community to revitalize their identity, pass down knowledge to future generations, and counter the pressures of cultural homogenization. This paper also outlines the need, methodology, and potential impact of a living museum, emphasizing its role in promoting cultural resilience and intergenerational continuity within the communities like Tamang.

### **Danmal Mathur Museum: In Search of Innovative Approaches**

*Kanika Mondal*

Visitor engagement and experience are at the core of a museum's existence. Whether a museum is traditional or modern in its practices, to remain relevant and function effectively, it becomes vital to adapt to the changing needs of its audiences in innovative ways through co-production. Taking the example of Danmal Mathur Museum, Mayo College, Ajmer, the presentation discusses its current initiatives under the museum digitisation project. Titled as the 'Digimuseum', the project is a student led initiative to digitise every object in the museum. The Danmal Mathur Museum is a unique school museum which was set up during 1948-49 with the sole aim to create a learning resource inside the campus for the students of Mayo College. Since its establishment, the museum continues to be actively used as a learning tool for integrated, object-based and curriculum linked learning sessions for pupils. However, in order to navigate a constantly changing environment, the museum has always attempted to diversify its approaches to learning, adopting new means and practices, to cater to the tech savvy needs of the student population of Mayo College.

### **Rethinking Community Engagement in the Zonal Anthropological Museum, Sri Vijaya Puram, Andaman and Nicobar Islands**

*Gitu Yaikhom*

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands are globally recognized for their breathtaking beauty and cultural significance. These islands are home to six tribes, including five Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs): the Jarawas, Great Andamanese, Sentenelese, Shompen, and the Nicobarese as a scheduled tribe. Museum nowadays goes beyond being a mere repository of artifacts by actively engaging visitors. It focuses on showcasing the diverse societies and cultures, with a specific emphasis on the hunter-gatherer communities. However, due to the restrictions imposed by the Andaman & Nicobar Administration for the purpose of safeguarding the life of these tribes such as Protection of Aboriginal Tribes (PAT) rules (1956) and its consequent amendments, community engagement becomes challenging for the tribes. Despite this, the Zonal Anthropological Museum in Sri Vijaya Puram (formerly Port Blair) strives to establish meaningful connections between the museum and the source community. By fostering dialogue, participation, and a sense of ownership over their cultural heritage, the museum seeks to bridge the gap and create a stronger bond between the tribes and their cultural legacy.

This paper is the result of the museum and community engagement at the Zonal Anthropological Museum, Port Blair. It highlights the museum's efforts in engaging with the Nicobarese and documents the outcomes of their interactions.

<b>PANEL 03</b>	
<b>STUDIES ON PREHISTORIC ROCK ART</b>	
<i>Convenor: Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo; Co-Convenor: Minakshi Sharma</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Sukrita Tirkey, Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo, Ajaya Watti, & Santosh Gatpalli	Rock Art Heritage of Bastar of Chhattisgarh, India
Ganga Nath Jha & Minakshi Sharma	Early Evidence of Man: Anthro-archaeological Studies of Rock Arts in Jharkhand
Manas Ranjan Pattnaik & Ranjana Rani Singh	Human-Animal Relationship in Odisha: Gleaned from Faunal Remains of Rock Art Sites and Neolithic-Chalcolithic Period Sites.
Sukrita Tirkey & Bhenu	Shamanism in Rock Art: An Ethno-archaeological Approaches

## **Rock Art Heritage of Bastar of Chhattisgarh, India**

*Sukrita Tirkey, Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo, Ajaya Watti & Santosh Gatpalli*

Bastar, a district in the southern part of Chhattisgarh, India, is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, and ancient rock art. The rock art in Bastar offers a unique glimpse into the lives, beliefs, and environment of its ancient inhabitants. These artworks, etched or painted on cave walls and rock shelters, are an invaluable part of India's archaeological and cultural history. This research paper is a fieldwork based research work where fieldwork is conducted in different rock art sites of Bastar Division of Chhattisgarh. The rock art provides evidence of human settlement in the region dating back thousands of years, possibly from the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) period. These artworks document the evolution of human creativity, tool use, and interaction with the environment. They reflect the daily lives, hunting practices, rituals, and beliefs of early humans. The continuity of similar motifs in contemporary tribal art in Bastar shows the lasting influence of these ancient traditions. Bastar's rock art contributes to understanding prehistoric art and culture across India, complementing findings in regions like Bhimbetka (Madhya Pradesh), Gudahandi (Odisha) and other parts of Central India. Depictions of men and women engaged in activities like hunting, dancing, and rituals. Figures often carry bows, arrows, or spears, highlighting the significance of hunting. Commonly depicted animals include deer, cattle, wild boars, and birds. The animals are sometimes shown in hunting scenes, showcasing the dependence on wildlife for sustenance. Spirals, circles, and linear patterns are frequent, possibly representing rituals or symbolic meanings. Some artworks depict group activities, possibly related to spiritual or community events. The motifs in Bastar's rock art often mirror those found in tribal art forms like Gond, Abhuj Madia, Madia, Muria and Dhokra art. This continuity emphasizes the deep connection between ancient and modern cultural expressions in the region. The rock art of Bastar is not merely a historical artefact but a living testament to the region's enduring cultural legacy. Preserving and promoting this heritage is vital for understanding India's prehistoric art and fostering pride in Bastar's unique contributions to cultural history.

## **Early Evidence of Man: Anthro-Archaeological Studies of Rock Arts in Jharkhand**

*Ganga Nath Jha & Minakshi Sharma*

The rock arts are important early evidences of man in the region and inter-disciplinary studies of rock art facilitate to understand the life of early man and the complex whole of culture. This research paper covers the studies of two rock arts of Jharkhand. The first, a newly discovered rock art site near the village Hesalong of Ramgarh District in Jharkhand, India which dates Mesolithic to the historic periods. The second, Isko Rock Art in Isko village of Hazaribag District in Jharkhand, India which dates back to last phase of the Pleistocene or early Holocene period. Through an anthro-archaeological survey of these sites, this study investigates the various patterns and significance of rock art in the region, and their cultural continuity with the surrounding tribal area. The paper features a variety of polychrome paintings depicting anthropomorphic figures, hunting scenes, geometric designs, patterns, and

symbolic representations, including human-animal interactions in both the rock art sites. These artistic expressions offer insights into the subsistence practices, spiritual beliefs, and social structures of the early inhabitants of the region, primarily focusing on a hunting-gathering economy. The paper also addresses the threats to the preservation of these sites, including natural weathering, animal interference, and human activities such as ritualistic offerings and nearby coal mining or development initiatives. Despite these challenges, the site's significance is underscored by its historical and cultural relevance, with potential connections to the early prehistoric to historic periods. This research aims to fill gaps in the chronological understanding of rock art in Jharkhand and highlights the need for conservation efforts to protect these fragile cultural assets. The findings suggest that further archaeological investigation, including excavation and comparative studies with neighbouring sites, could provide crucial data for determining the site's precise chronological placement and broader cultural implications.

### **Human-Animal Relationship in Odisha: Gleaned from Faunal Remains of Rock Art Sites and Neolithic-Chalcolithic Period Sites**

*Manas Ranjan Pattanayak & Ranjana Rani Singh*

Animals play an important role in man's life. The human-animal relationship has a complex but interesting history. Since the prehistoric period to the present society, the relationship has a long history. From earlier period, man depends upon animals primarily for food and subsistence. These include animals of the wild and domesticated varieties, fish, insects, etc. Needless to say, the hunting-gathering mode of subsistence gave way to settled agriculture and emergence of farming communities during Neolithic-Chalcolithic period. The state of Odisha is a rich store house of rock art in Eastern India. The state has recorded more than a hundred rock shelters. Dating from late Pleistocene period onwards, both paintings and engravings of human signatures have been discovered which include symbols, lines, dots along with animal paintings. Figures have been found executed in monochrome and bichrome paintings. During the last three decades a number of explorations and excavations have been undertaken in Odisha highlighting the Neolithic-Chalcolithic phase. In Neolithic-Chalcolithic period the animals were represented in forms like bone remains, bone tools, figurines, ornaments and in context of burials. In this paper an attempt has been made to enhance our understanding in relationship between the man and animal from representation of animals in rock art and Neolithic-Chalcolithic period in Odisha. The present paper has two sections, a short account of the rock art sites and excavated Neolithic-Chalcolithic sites of Odisha followed by a descriptive account of animal remains in various forms. Towards the end, an attempt is made of different man-animal relationship of these phase of Odisha.

### **Shamanism in Rock Art: An Ethno-archaeological Approaches**

*Sukrita Tirkey & Bhenu*

Rock art is a unique artistic activity that is found all over the world. Using hematite, lime, charcoal and other minerals, ancient man created those paintings on the rock surfaces.

According to many scholars, rock art is a mystery and holds multiple secrets behind it. There are number of issues with interpretation, identification, dating and many other things related to rock art. Rock art studies in recent decades have relied strongly on ethnographic data. Ethnography or Ethnoarchaeological approaches help to understand and recreate the story behind paintings and engravings. Ethnic data helps in revealing tangible as well as intangible aspects of rock art studies, and shamanism is one of the important examples of the intangible part. Some archaeologists and art historians point to specific examples of rock art as signs of shamanism. Most of the rock art show unique styles, structures, and decorations of human figures, along with symbols and themes of some supernatural elements that do not appear normal in any way. These kinds of figures indicate some set of ritualistic, religious, or supernatural practices of the hunter-gatherer community of ancient times. The term Shamanism comes from South African rock art studies. Shamanism is loosely defined as a practice involving a figurehead that gets into an altered state of consciousness to enter the spirit world. This type of practice can still be seen in many tribal communities. Especially the communities from Bastar division of Chhattisgarh state are popular worldwide and known for their Shaman, Shamanism, or Shamanistic practices. It is also based on the hypothesis regarding the paintings similar to different parts of the world. This research paper will consist of an analysis established on the shamanist hypothesis and the interpretation of rock art through ritualistic practices of shamanism. This paper will try to present the beliefs or intangible culture behind the paintings of various tribal groups of Bastar in present day. It will also help to correlate and carry out comparative analysis of the other unnatural figures with shamanism hypothesis worldwide.

<b>PANEL 04</b>	
<b>ENSURING PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH DOCUMENTATION AND DIGITIZATION OF DIVERSE CULTURE</b>	
<i>Convenor: Nilanjan Khatua</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Mitrajit Saha	Digital Reach and Youth Perception: A Study on A Selected Village In The South 24 Parganas District Of West Bengal
Moumita Dhar	Boat Festivals of India: Preserving Maritime Traditions Through Digital Documentation
Swarup Bhattacharyya, John P Cooper & Zeeshan A Shaikh	Chhot Boat And ‘Stapled’ Boatbuilding Tradition of Bengal: A Project on Digitization
Shivangi Bahadur	The Role of Social Media and Tourism and Heritage Preservation in Puri, Odisha
Nang Pinni Mein	Digital Domains and Religious Practices: The Role of Technology in Theravada Buddhism Among the Tai-Khamti Monks of Namsai District, Arunachal Pradesh

## **Digital Reach and Youth Perception: A Study on a Selected Village in the South 24 Parganas District of West Bengal**

*Mitrajit Saha*

In the recent times, the pervasive integration of computer studies and the omnipresent use of the internet have reached unparalleled heights, casting their influence across an expansive spectrum of human activity. Prior to delving into the profound implications and multifaceted effects of this technological revolution, it is imperative to acknowledge its profound significance within the discipline of anthropology. This research embarks upon a scholarly exploration of the emergent field of cyber anthropology, narrowing its focus to illuminate specific dimensions within this vast and dynamic domain. Digital anthropology, a pioneering branch of socio-cultural anthropology, delves into the intricate relationship between humanity and technology in the digital age. As the world progresses with relentless speed—both on global and local scales—it becomes essential to investigate the extent to which rural populations, village communities, and marginalized groups, particularly the youth, are exposed to and have adapted to the use of computers and the internet. This exploration seeks to uncover the attitudes, perceptions, and worldviews of these communities toward digital technologies and internet-based tools. This research is meticulously designed to evaluate the availability, accessibility, and acceptability of computer and internet usage within a specific geographical and socio-economic context. As the global landscape accelerates its transition into the digital age, it becomes vital to understand how these technological advancements resonate within localized settings. By exploring the habits, perceptions, and adaptations of technology among villagers, rural populations, and economically disadvantaged groups, the study seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the interplay between technological progress and societal structures. Focusing on the youth population of a selected village in the South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, the research adopts an anthropological perspective to analyze the complex dynamics of digital engagement within this distinct cultural and regional framework. The findings reveal that, in addition to economic challenges, these youth of the area lag behind their urban counterparts due to limited access to education, a lack of awareness, and insufficient infrastructural support for utilizing computers and the internet.

## **Boat Festivals of India: Preserving Maritime Traditions Through Digital Documentation**

*Moumita Dhar*

India's maritime heritage has been integral to its trade and cultural exchanges since the 3rd millennium BCE, with a coastline of 7,517 km connecting diverse communities across the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and the Bay of Bengal. Boat festivals, deeply rooted in these maritime traditions, continue to play a significant role in the cultural practices of various communities. These festivals are not just rituals; they are intangible cultural expressions that preserve the memory of India's ancient trade routes and connections to the broader world. This paper explores the cultural and historical significance of three major boat festivals in India: 'Vallamkali' from Kerala, 'Balijatra' from Odisha, and 'Bera Utsav' from West Bengal. These festivals, while representing different regional traditions, share a common theme of celebrating

maritime heritage. Through these festivals, communities commemorate their connection to water-based transport, trade, and sea voyages that have shaped their social and cultural landscapes. The paper emphasizes the importance of digital documentation in preserving these vibrant traditions. Using audiovisual tools, ethnographic studies, and digital platforms, we can ensure that these cultural practices are documented and accessible to future generations. This digital preservation serves not only as a tool for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage but also provides valuable insights into India's maritime history and the role of trade in shaping its diverse cultures. By focusing on digital documentation, this research contributes to the growing discourse on the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, showcasing how modern technologies can safeguard traditions that are under threat from globalization, environmental changes, and cultural homogenization.

### **Chhot Boat and 'Stapled' Boatbuilding Tradition of Bengal: A Project on Digitization** *Swarup Bhattacharyya, John P Cooper & Zeeshan A Shaikh*

We have documented a boat building procedure which is unique in Bengal (India). The typological name of the boat is chhot. A smooth skinned, rabbeted, and stapled boat of Bengal with 'v' shaped cross section and prominent keel. Project took place in Dehimondalghat of Haora district on the bank of river Rupnarayan. Digitization of the entire process of boat building was undertaken on this EMKP, UK project. Panchanan Mandal and his four sons created the full-scale boat of 35 feet in length and 9.5 feet in cross beam. Documentation of chhot is important as the boat type is no longer use in the river. Skill of chhot boat building will disappear in near future. It is the first project on digitization of a boat in India.

### **The Role of Social Media and Tourism in Heritage Preservation in Puri, Odisha** *Shivangi Bahadur*

Cultures continually change as they pass through passages of time. However, certain elements of culture are central to its existence. Such elements form the heritage that marks the identity of a people. Thus, it becomes important to preserve these aspects using the sustainability approach. In the present time, many methods and tools are being implemented for cultural preservation. Equally significant is the proper dissemination of knowledge about the heritage and its cultural significance. Social media has emerged as a powerful tool for dissemination of information through visuals. The visuals are widely circulated over the world attract people to the places of their interest. Social media is therefore also acting as a facilitator for cultural preservation, which in turn, is boosting tourism. As a multifaceted phenomenon, tourism is often associated with the commercialization of culture. However, if practiced responsibly, tourism may also act as a significant contributor to the heritage preservation. This was observed in the case of Puri, a famous heritage and tourist destination in the coastal part of Odisha where *mathas* (monasteries), rivulets, ponds, and many other heritage areas have been preserved. This paper studies the contribution of tourism to this preservation and restoration of the natural and cultural heritage areas of the city. It also highlights the role of social media in facilitating cultural preservation.

## **Digital Domains and Religious Practices: The Role of Technology in Theravada Buddhism Among the Tai-Khamti Monks of Namsai District, Arunachal Pradesh**

*Nang Pinni Mein*

The increasing influence of digital technologies on religious practices has become a significant area of study, particularly in the context of Theravada Buddhism. This research explores the role of digital domains in the religious practices of monks among the Tai-Khamti community in Namsai district, Arunachal Pradesh. The objective of this study is to understand how digital tools are perceived and utilized by Theravada Buddhist monks in their daily rituals, teachings, and spiritual engagements. The research methodology is a combination of participant observation, in-depth interviews, and surveys. The study involved fieldwork in key monasteries of villages under Namsai district namely Chongkham, Lathao, Momong, Kherem, Gunanagar, Memai, and Tengapani, where the researcher actively participated in religious activities to gain insight into the monks' practices. In-depth interviews were conducted with senior and junior monks to understand their perspectives on the integration of digital tools like smartphones, laptops, and Buddhist apps into their spiritual lives. Additionally, survey questionnaires were administered to gather broader community feedback on the monks' engagement with digital media. The findings suggest that while traditional practices remain central to the religious life of the Tai-Khamti monks, digital technology is increasingly seen as a valuable tool for education, dissemination of Buddhist teachings, and community engagement. Monks reported using digital platforms to access scriptures, teachings, and meditation guides, bridging geographic and temporal gaps in their spiritual practice. However, concerns over the potential erosion of traditional practices were also highlighted. The study concludes that the digital domain, while enhancing certain aspects of religious practice, requires careful integration to maintain the sanctity of Theravada Buddhist traditions.

<b>PANEL 04- A</b>	
<b>CONSERVATION OR DEVELOPMENT: WHAT SHOULD BE THE FUTURE APPROACH FOR TRIBES</b>	
<i>Convenor: Akhil Bihari Ota; Co-Convenor: Banita Behera</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Dipak K Midya	Politics of Development: Tribe, Rising Disparity and (mis)trust
S B Roy	Should Anthropologists Facilitate Systemic Approaches to Conservation-Based Development?
Mundayat Sasikumar	Empowering Marginalized Voices: Challenges and Prospects for Tribal Development in India
Rachna Atri-Saksena	Conserving Tribal Heritage for Preserving Tribal Identity- Anthropological Perspective on Existing Realities and Emerging Prospects

## **Politics of Development: Tribe, Rising Disparity and (mis)trust**

*Dipak K Midya*

Policy of tribal development in post-Independence phase started with a hangover with the policy of isolation of the British colonial administration, and it has always been entangled with the assimilation vs. isolation controversy of Ghyure and Elwin. Since then, two major developments regarding the field of tribal development may be noticed. First, anthropologists, who pro-claimed themselves as authority to decide upon the future of tribes, remain engaged on whether the tribes would adapt to the larger societal dynamics or to remain unchanged museum specimen. Second, national polity is found to revolve around unearthing and possessing of natural resources which are hugely deposited under the regions traditionally occupied by the tribes across the country in general and the red corridor zone of the country in particular. All these phenomena resulted into rising disparity in accessing resources between the tribal and non-tribal peoples and also among the tribals since a creamy layer have emerged among themselves, which are enjoying the benefits of so-called State-sponsored development agenda, on the one hand, and of the reservation policy over generations, on the other. As a whole, controversies surrounding development for tribes lead to such consequences like growing (*mis*)trust, culminating sometimes into violence as found among the so-called Naxalites, among the tribes on the State development policy as well as on 'development' itself.

## **Should Anthropologists Facilitate Systemic Approaches to Conservation-Based Development?**

*S B Roy*

Development to be sustained requires the perpetual growth and conservation of natural resources to meet our physiological needs first, as mentioned by Malinowski.

But are we getting pure air, water, and healthy food?

### **What is the situation - Social Institution, Public Policy & Institutions**

The society has to have some social structure and institutions to maintain the harmony (Radcliff Brown). That means institutions and culture (Tylor) of conservation and non-destructive harvesting got eroded. Although there is a policy- Biological Diversity Act 2002, FRA 2006. If there is a lack of compatibility between public policy- institutions and Social institutions there will be conflict.

### **Does it require a bilateral Matching Institution?**

Why So? Something in maintaining the social and political institutions has gone wrong.

Today, humans have polluted air to breathe in, contaminated water to drink, chemical-mixed unhealthy food, diminishing herbal medicine, and depleted forests that provide not only air but forest food, herbs, firewood, and logs.

Development is at a doldrum without conservation.

### **What other implications?**

Lack of conservation has not only caused impure food and water but also impacted our health. Recent research by WHO has mentioned that the depletion of forests and biodiversity has not

only reduced our resources but caused the emergence of many zoonotic diseases. Human become more of drug resistant,

One Health approach refers to the relationships and interdependencies between animal, human, and environmental health and is an emerging research field that aligns with Indigenous views of health.

### **What should be the Approaches?**

**Socio-ecological Approach** - Understanding the interconnectedness of all five social institutions and cultures, public policies with ecological system and their interdependency which form the socio-ecological system. How forest- Agricultural fields, livestock water bodies are interdependent habitats to form an ecosystem with humans as an important part

It requires a systemic approach to conservation. None of them can be conserved in isolation, ignoring others. The functioning of the ecosystem depends upon conservation and that would determine the sustainability of food production as one of the ecosystem services. The knowledge, attitude, and socialization (Totemism) of the community determine the nature of conservatism-based food procurement, NTFP collection and farming practices they would adopt to produce crops.

### **Empowering Marginalized Voices: Challenges and Prospects for Tribal Development in India**

*Mundayat Sasikumar*

The tribal communities in India make up around 8.6% of India's population, totaling around 104 million people. These communities face unique challenges, including poverty, social exclusion, cultural erosion and the misappropriation of benefits intended for them through 'positive discrimination' by more advantaged segments of society. Effective Tribal Development Administration is crucial to address these challenges and promote overall development. This paper examines the reasons why well-planned tribal development initiatives in areas such as education, healthcare, livelihoods and cultural preservation have not achieved their desired outcomes, even after 75 years of planned development. The study also explores the challenges faced by the administration including inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, insufficient capacity building and the leakage of benefits due to various factors. To strengthen tribal development administration, it is crucial to implement affirmative action, design and carryout targeted interventions, and ensure community participation in planning and decision-making processes.

### **Conserving Tribal Heritage for Preserving Tribal Identity-Anthropological Perspective on Existing Realities and Emerging Prospects**

*Rachna Atri-Saksena*

The paper is a case study on the GI tagged tribal Products and 'Tech for Tribal' initiative of TRIFED. It delves into the mechanism of 'the notions for the development of the tribal craft' by looking at the effects of GI tagging and capacity building, up skilling on the tribal community. This work looks at the fairs and mechanisms of skilling as the site to explore the meanings attached to these marketing and training processes as understood by the makers of

the products and consumers and other actors. The value placed on the technologies of production and the process of the crafts and the practice of up skilling of tribals visa vis the appreciation of tribal technologies and their knowledge system.

**Methodology:** The data for the paper was collated through Mixed methods. The primary data has been gathered by observation of the interaction between the makers of the crafts, consumers and the other actors at the site and having an immersive experience of the fairs corroborated by secondary data analysis of the existing literature and resources on GI Tagged products and Tech For Tribal.

**Result:** The paper makes a case for the embeddedness of tribal identity in its ways of living and the merits of acknowledging, appreciation and valuing of tribal knowledge system itself as part of heritage conservation and identity.it poses a query on what should be the thrust area-tech for tribal or an appreciation of tribal tech and taking that forward to co-create relevant technological solutions.

<b>PANEL 05</b>	
<b>GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS AND THE PEOPLE ON THE MARGINS</b>	
<i>Convenor: Urfat Anjem Mir, Prashant Khatri</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Pranjali Joshi & Chakraverti Mahajan	Impact of Climate Change on the Rural communities of Lower Himachal Pradesh
Shalvi & Abhik Ghosh	Water and Society: Anthropological Insights into Indigenous Water Management Practices in Spiti Valley
Toshi Pandey & Prashant Khattri	Floods and the People on the Margins: Exploring Lives of Dalit Communities in Flood Prone Areas of Bahraich District of Eastern Uttar Pradesh
Georgin T. Chalumkara	De-Personalizing the Language of Experience, and Personalizing the Language of Science: Reflections on Climate Change Perception through Bertrand Russell
T Jyoti Rao	Effects of Climate Change on Public Health: A Holistic Approach in Kalahandi District of Odisha.

## **Impact of Climate Change on the Rural Communities of Lower Himachal Pradesh**

*Pranjali Joshi & Chakraverti Mahajan*

The past decade has seen an alarming increase in climate change and environmental degradation, affecting different rural communities across the world. The Himalayan regions are among the most threatened regions of the world to climate change. This ethnographic study takes us to the villages of lower Himachal Pradesh where people are struggling with declining agricultural productivity due to water scarcity, frequent weather changes, and human-animal conflict. Along with the problem of the already severe water scarcity, the construction of Pong Dam and the Central University of Himachal Pradesh has led to large-scale clearing of forests, forcing the wild and stray animals into the nearby farms where they destroy the crops.

Collecting the narratives of the villagers using in-depth interviews, this paper tries to understand climate change and its impact on the local community of the Lower Himalayan region from the villagers' perspective, examining how they have experienced these changes over the decade and how they affect their livelihoods.

The findings indicate that forced to constantly guard fields or face ruined harvests, many farmers have started abandoning cultivation altogether preferring to leave their farms barren than face constant failure. The younger generations, particularly the males, are now seeking employment in industrial areas to provide for their families. This migration has not only further led to the decline of agriculture as the primary livelihood (labor shortages) but have also made some sections of the community more vulnerable especially the women and the elderly. The women and the elderly have to bear the responsibility to manage the farms as well as look after their families and livestock on their own.

## **Water and Society: Anthropological Insights into Indigenous Water Management Practices in Spiti Valley**

*Shalvi & Abhik Ghosh*

Indigenous knowledge, shaped by cultural experience, extensive observations, lessons and skills of the locals has been a key factor in sustainability of natural resources. It works because of long standing association and understanding of the locals of their environment and how it functions. This paper examines the traditional water management system in Rangrik village (Spiti Valley, H.P.), where communities have relied on snowmelt, glacial water, and intricate irrigation practices for centuries. The major objective of this paper is to discuss the traditional rules governing water distribution and conservation in this arid environment and to assess the impacts of change to this traditional system on water systems and society. Using qualitative data from interviews with 30 residents of Rangrik village, the study highlights how local communities have adapted to limited water resources through intricate systems of irrigation, water-sharing agreements, and community-based management. It also underscores the socio-cultural importance of these practices, emphasizing communal cooperation, local governance, and indigenous knowledge. However, pressures such as climate change, migration, and modern infrastructure projects are eroding these traditional systems, challenging both water security and social cohesion. The paper calls for a reimagining of water management that combines

traditional wisdom with modern solutions to protect the region's ecological balance and cultural identity.

### **Floods and the People on the Margins: Exploring Lives of Dalit Communities in Flood Prone Areas of *Bahraich* District of Eastern Uttar Pradesh**

*Toshi Pandey & Prashant Khattri*

*Udhaar ki zindgi me sab mol ka hai.* (These words can be loosely translated as -In a life of debt, everything has a price). These words can be very simple but coming from a lady who is living in flood prone areas of *Bahraich*. Dalit communities have faced various forms of discrimination in society, one of which is their right to land. Which is explored by M. N. Shrinivas as spatial discrimination. Dalit people remain far from securing their land rights because the land they do receive is often located far from the main village. During disasters like floods, when their land gets eroded or washed away, their lives revolve around loans and survival. In such situations, women like Lajwanti, who are left behind as the sole caregivers in abandoned homes, face even greater vulnerability.

This paper employs a holistic methodology, combining qualitative interviews, focus group discussions, and ethnographic field observations to capture the lived experiences of Dalit communities and policy analysis to critically evaluate gaps in land reform and disaster management frameworks, providing a comprehensive understanding of the intersection of land rights, caste-based discrimination, and vulnerability during disasters.

### **De-personalizing the Language of Experience, and Personalizing the Language of Science: Reflections on Climate Change Perception through Bertrand Russell**

*Georgin T. Chalumkara*

International and national research papers published on climate change perception, awareness, and resultant behavior patterns among different community groups, bring forward a clear trend that points towards a gaping lacuna between, the scientific, impersonal, data-centric communication of climate change, and the actual, concrete, subjective experience of the phenomenon. In pursuit of exploring this gap, a study was conducted in the rural village of Indrapura, Rajasthan, among college students, school teachers, and farmers. In-depth interview technique and focus group discussion method were used to record the existing, dominant narratives, discourses, and the perceptions of climate change phenomenon. The results from the field were assessed to locate the distance of social perceptions from the scientific communication of climate change. This paper, takes the results from Indrapura and places them under the lens of the British philosopher Bertrand Russell, specifically through his work titled "Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits". Perceptions of any element of any reality directly influences the individual's socio-psychological construction of the world. This reality construction then and thus directs the individual's attitude, emotions, and behavior towards the said reality. The inconsistency of individual perception, combined with the inadequate reception towards scientific communication of climate change, posits a scenario where the required, and desired mitigation against rapid climate change keeps on delaying. The end result,

might be uncontrolled collapse of various sectors of human social and physical institutions, causing rampant damage to human welfare in the coming years.

### **Effects of Climate Change on Public Health: A Holistic Approach in Kalahandi District of Odisha**

*T Jyoti Rao*

Climate change has become one of the intervening issues in the last few decades. It can severely affect the way community is living, prominently the developing countries. Climate change brings out wide ranging effects on water resources, agriculture, human health and biodiversity. This study explores the effects of climate change on public health in Kalahandi, Odisha. The aim is to understand how climate change hazards exacerbate the vulnerability of populations, particularly in rural areas of Kalahandi and to analyze the complex interactions between these factors. Disruptions to agricultural systems caused by climate change have a direct impact on food security and consequently, public health. The study highlights the need for an integrated approach between the health and agriculture sectors to improve the resilience of populations. Dietary diversification and the adoption of suitable agricultural practices are identified as essential levers for preventing diseases linked to malnutrition. In addition, partnerships between governments, NGOs and local communities are crucial to mobilising the necessary resources. Interdisciplinary research, including public health, agronomy and climatology, is presented as driving force for innovative solutions adapted to local specificities. Finally capacity building at all levels is recommended, with particular emphasis on training local players and awareness raising campaigns. In this context, public health must be seen as a central pillar of adaptation to climate change in order to improve collective resilience in Kalahandi, Odisha.

<b>PANEL 06</b>	
<b>HEMOGLOBINOPATHIES: A GLOBAL CHALLENGE IN GENETICS AND HEALTH</b>	
<i>Convenor: Roumi Deb, K.N Saraswathy</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Saheli Dey, Anushka & Suniti Yadav	Hemoglobin E and Anemia: A Study on Young Adults of Delhi-NCR, India
Oishi Choudhury, Kallur Nava Saraswathy & Naorem Kiranmala Devi	A Study Protocol for Population-based Beta Thalassemia Trait Screening among Young Adults in Delhi-NCR, India
Nidhi Bhandari & Vaishnavi Madhav Satpute	Addressing Health Disparities in Bastar: The Role of Anthropology in Tackling Tuberculosis, Malaria, and Sickle Cell Disease
Basanta Kumar Bindhani	Sickle Cell Trait: Beyond a Benign Condition – Insights from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Populations in Odisha, India
Suniti Yadav & K. N. Saraswathy	The Sickle Cell Disease in India: Current Initiatives, Emerging Challenges, and Future Directions

## Hemoglobin E and Anemia: A Study on Young Adults of Delhi-NCR, India

*Saheli Dey, Anushka & Suniti Yadav*

**Background:** Hemoglobin E (HbE) is a common hemoglobin variant caused by a point mutation in the HBB gene, primarily found in Southeast Asia and parts of India. It is clinically significant, especially when co-inherited with  $\beta$ -thalassemia. Globally, HbE prevalence is highest in Southeast Asia, particularly in Thailand, Cambodia, and Bangladesh, where it can reach up to 50% in certain communities. In India, overall HbE prevalence ranges from 3% to 10%, with the highest frequencies in northeastern states such as Assam (up to 50%), West Bengal (3%–10%), and parts of Odisha and Jharkhand.

This study aimed to assess the prevalence of HbE in both anemic and non-anemic participants while evaluating its risk factors.

**Method:** The present study is a cross-sectional study among 3481 college-going young adults between the age group of 18-35 years residing in Delhi and NCR region, were screened. After taking informed consent, 3 ml of blood was drawn and serum was separated. HbE prevalence was determined using high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) and genetic testing.

**Results:** The prevalence of the HbE trait was found to be higher among age group >19 years (66.7%). Females showed a higher prevalence of the HbE trait (55.6%). Sex stratified distribution showed that females with anaemia had a higher prevalence of HbE (70%) than females without anaemia (30%).

**Conclusion:** In this study no significant sex-based differences were observed, however, females had a marginally higher prevalence of HbE. Anemic females were more found to have HbE trait. These findings highlight the importance of targeted screening programs, particularly in high-prevalence regions, to enable early detection and genetic counseling to prevent severe hemoglobinopathies like HbE- $\beta$  thalassemia.

## A Study Protocol for Population-based Beta Thalassemia Trait Screening among Young Adults in Delhi-NCR, India

*Oishi Choudhury, Kallur Nava Saraswathy & Naorem Kiranmala Devi*

**Background:** Beta thalassemia is one of the most common monogenic blood disorders. Globally the prevalence of beta thalassemia carriers is 1.5%. India contributes to 10% of the incidence of beta thalassemia major, and 3.74% of the Indian population are carriers. Given the heterogeneity of the Indian population, characterized by a diverse gene pool and varied socio-cultural practices, significant challenges persist in implementing widespread beta-thalassemia trait (BTT) screening, despite the efforts of governmental and non-governmental initiatives. Hence a replicable protocol for a large scale diverse genetic and socio-cultural set-up is essential towards management of thalassemia burden in India.

**Objective:** This study aims to provide a detailed study protocol to conduct population-based BTT awareness, screening, and counselling among young adults in Delhi-NCR, India.

**Methods:** The study recruited 3600 individuals aged 18-25 years, who were residing in Delhi-NCR, India. Blood samples were collected from the participants in EDTA vacutainers by

trained phlebotomists. The samples were analysed for BTT, using CBC analysis followed by HPLC and molecular characterization, which included ARMS PCR, and gene sequencing.

**Results:** The study revealed that the most ideal cut off to identify beta thalassemia carriers using blood parameters is  $4\% \leq \text{HbA2} \leq 9\%$  and  $\text{MCV} < 80\text{fl}$  and  $\text{MCH} < 27\text{pg}$  and for borderline carriers is  $3.1\% \leq \text{HbA2} \leq 3.9\%$  and  $\text{MCV} < 80\text{fl}$  and  $\text{MCH} < 27\text{pg}$ . Meanwhile the most frequent mutation was IVS 1-5 among the studied population, followed by Cd 8/9, and Cd 41/42. Few silent mutations were also identified that potentially elevate HbA2 levels.

**Conclusion:** HBB gene sequencing is the most accurate test for BTT but remains unaffordable for large-scale screening in resource-limited settings. Cost-effective techniques for carrier identification, combined with awareness promotion among youth, offer a practical and efficient strategy to prevent and control the growing burden of beta-thalassemia in developing countries.

### **Addressing Health Disparities in Bastar: The Role of Anthropology in Tackling Tuberculosis, Malaria, and Sickle Cell Disease**

*Nidhi Bhandari & Vaishnavi Madhav Satpute*

Bastar, a region in central India, faces significant health challenges, particularly in the form of Tuberculosis (TB), Malaria, and Sickle Cell Disease (SCD). These diseases, exacerbated by factors such as limited healthcare access, poverty, and poor living conditions, highlight the intersection of health disparities and socio-cultural factors. TB remains a major public health threat, while Malaria, endemic to the region, thrives during seasonal monsoon rains, which foster ideal conditions for the proliferation of Anopheles mosquitoes. Additionally, SCD, a genetic blood disorder prevalent among the region's tribal populations, complicates healthcare management due to its chronic effects like anemia, pain crises, and increased vulnerability to infections such as malaria.

The coexistence of TB, Malaria, and SCD in Bastar presents unique challenges for healthcare delivery, particularly in terms of overlapping symptoms, which make diagnosis and treatment more difficult. This complexity calls for an integrated healthcare approach that not only improves diagnostic infrastructure but also enhances access to quality healthcare and implements targeted public health interventions. Educating the community on disease prevention and the importance of early diagnosis is critical in reducing the impact of these diseases.

This sub-theme highlights the importance of an anthropological perspective in addressing health disparities in Bastar and similar regions, integrating cultural contexts to develop effective, sustainable healthcare strategies and policy interventions.

### **Sickle Cell Trait: Beyond a Benign Condition – Insights from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Populations in Odisha, India**

*Basanta Kumar Bindhani*

This study examines the physical health, mental health, and quality of life (QOL) of sickle cell carriers among the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) populations of Odisha. A total of 382 individuals (182 sickle cell carriers and 200 controls), aged 30–58 years, were

recruited for the study. Sickle cell carriers were identified through the sickle cell slide technique. Standard protocols were used to collect somatometric, physiological, and biochemical data. Mental health and QOL were assessed using Beck's Depression Inventory (BDI) and the WHOQOL-BREF tools, respectively. Case studies were conducted to explore the health and socioeconomic challenges faced by carriers. Findings revealed that sickle cell carriers were less prone to overweight, obesity, and hypertension. However, significant alterations were observed in hemoglobin levels, SpO<sub>2</sub>, blood sugar, and pulse rate. A notably higher prevalence of depression was recorded among carriers (17.03%) compared to controls (4.5%) ( $p < 0.001$ ). Overall QOL scores were significantly lower in carriers than in non-carriers ( $85.89 \pm 10.5$  vs.  $89.18 \pm 11.13$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Case studies highlighted comorbidities and social challenges, including priapism, anemia, hypotension, hypoglycemia, low BMI, retinopathy, paralysis, neonatal deaths, and stigma related to diagnosis and marriage prospects. Issues of clinical negligence and consanguineous marriages further aggravated the impact. This study highlights that the HbS carrier state is not entirely benign, as it significantly affects physical health, mental well-being, and QOL. Targeted interventions are needed to address these challenges effectively.

### **Sickle Cell Disease in India: Current Initiatives, Emerging Challenges and Future Directions**

*Suniti Yadav & K.N. Saraswathy*

**Background:** Sickle cell disease is a severe genetic disorder that leads to abnormal red blood cells and chronic anaemia, with high prevalence in malaria-endemic regions, reflecting Darwin's principle of natural selection. In India, traditional marriage customs such as gotra, surname, and village exogamy influence the inheritance of the sickle cell allele, while the country's genetic and cultural diversity complicates large-scale screening and counselling efforts.

**Methods:** This study reviews the distribution of the sickle cell disease, evaluates government programs for disease control, and identifies implementation challenges.

**Results:** In India, the overall prevalence of Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) and Sickle Cell Trait (SCT) has been observed to be 1.17% and 5.9%, respectively. According to the Global Burden of Disease (2021), there has been a 29% increase in SCD cases from 2000 to 2021. The disease is most prevalent among Dravidian-speaking tribal communities in Southern and Central India. Despite availability of significant data on gene distribution, many at-risk populations remain outside the reach of healthcare initiatives. Key barriers include population diversity, lack of awareness in remote areas, traditional marriage practices, and limited healthcare infrastructure. Additionally, emerging research suggests that sickle cell carriers (heterozygous individuals) may experience overlooked health issues, highlighting the need for broader healthcare support. To strengthen disease control, efforts should focus on increasing screening to all at-risk populations, integrating culturally relevant community programs, bridging the gap between data collection and policy action, increasing public awareness, enhancing rural healthcare services, and addressing the health concerns of carriers.

**Conclusion:** Sickle cell disease remains a significant public health challenge in India, particularly among tribal and certain regional populations. While government initiatives have made progress, there is a critical need for more inclusive, data-driven, and culturally sensitive approaches to effectively control and manage this genetic disorder. By addressing the gaps in current programs and focusing on comprehensive healthcare strategies, India can make significant strides in reducing the burden of sickle cell disease.

<b>PANEL 07</b>	
<b>FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY: AN IMPORTANT TOOL IN APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY</b>	
<i>Convenor: Diptendu Chatterjee</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Adrita Mukherjee, Dibyashree Goswami & Biswarup Dey	A Study on the Sexual Dimorphism of the Cheilosopic Traits in Forensic Application from the Bengali Linguistic Population of West Bengal
Sonal Jain & Prashita Dabas	A Cross-Sectional Assessment of Quantitative Epidermal Melanin and Erythema Indices among North Indians
Sakshi Rajkumar Fulke	Estimation of Age from Dental Structure of Female Contai Skull of West Bengal: A Case Study
Sitikantha Panda, Priyanka Das & Monali Goswami	Foot Dimensions and Body Mass Index: A Study among the Bhumij Tribal Population of Northern Odisha, India
Meenal Soni, P.R. Mondal & Sonal Jain	Analysis of Minutiae Patterns in the Hypothenar Region of Palm Prints among the Bhil Tribe: A Forensic and Anthropological Perspective

## **A Study on the Sexual Dimorphism of the Cheilosopic Traits in Forensic Application from the Bengali Linguistic Population of West Bengal**

*Adrita Mukherjee, Dibyashree Goswami & Biswarup Dey*

The scientific observation of lip linings is termed Cheiloscopy. The lines which are observed on the surface of the labial mucosa are not true lines. Those are formative depressions and are pointed as grooves. The sixfold classification is used globally based on the structural variation of grooves across the lip. Type IA, IB, II, III, IV, and V are well documented and can be used for personal identification in forensics. Like the finger minutiae, the fork or bifurcation is observed in a minute observation of type II patterning in the groove structure. As the fork count in dermal ridges can determine a person's sex-based and individualistic identification, the present attempt will try to determine the potentiality of fork-type grooves and their count to determine personal identification. Further, the human lip has a well-known sexual dimorphic variation. therefore, the present attempt also did a comparative study on lip length and lip breadth. To solve the purpose, the cheilosopic prints of 100 adults (49 males and 51 females) were incorporated from the Bengali linguistic population of north 24 Parganas. All the prints were obtained using the lipstick and tape method. The results revealed that the breadth of lips is not significantly different, but the length of the lips is significantly different for males and females. Regarding the number of grooves, the females have a higher number than the males. However, in the distribution of fork-type grooves, males make up a higher number than females.

## **A Cross-Sectional Assessment of Quantitative Epidermal Melanin and Erythema Indices among North Indians**

*Sonal Jain & Prashita Dabas*

**Background:** The remarkable diversity of skin tones among Indians ranging from pale pinkish to dark brown appears to be an ideal choice for assessing skin pigment variation.

**Aim:** The present study was designed to assess the variation observed in melanin and erythema indices among north Indians.

**Material and Methods:** Skin reflectance data (n=574) were collected from six diverse populations in north India using a Derma Spectrometer (DSM II ColorMeter) and statistical analysis to investigate the impact of geographical location and gender on constitutive skin pigmentation.

**Results:** The melanin index (MI) varied between 17.93 and 56.92 (Mean ( $M$ )=35.80±6.26) whereas the erythema index (EI) varied between 4.92 and 18.82 ( $M$ =10.48±2.68). Females' MI and EI were significantly lower than males ( $P<0.001$ ). Geographical location is significantly associated with MI and EI ( $P<0.001$ ). Furthermore, we have noted a positive correlation between MI and EI ( $P<0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** The study has refined our understanding of skin pigmentation variation among north Indians in terms of significant association with geographical location {MI:

$F(5,568)=31.07, P<0.001$ ; EI:  $F(5,568)=73.37, P<0.001$ } and gender {MI: $t(386)=-4.06, P<0.001$ ; EI:  $t(386)=-11.96, P<0.001$ } and rendered opportunities for further studies.

### **Estimation of Age from Dental Structure of Female Contai Skull of West Bengal: A Case Study**

*Sakshi Rajkumar Fulke*

Dentition undergoes numerous alterations during growth before reaching maturity. Teeth typically withstand post-mortem destruction. Therefore, a reconstructed identity significantly relies on teeth. Age can be estimated from the teeth from various methods. The present study deals with age determination of Contai adult (female) skull using Gustafson's method. The estimated age of skull based on the structure of teeth ranges from 44.28 and 51.54 years.

### **Foot Dimensions and Body Mass Index: A Study among the Bhumij Tribal Population of Northern Odisha, India**

*Sitikantha Panda, Priyanka Das & Monali Goswami*

**Introduction:** Human foot morphology is greatly influenced by the combined effect of heredity and living style determinants that govern the size and shape of the feet. Foot morphology is likely to correlate with height and weight and has been used in many forensic and medical domains. Thus, the present study is an attempt to study the relationship between foot dimensions and body mass index (BMI) among the adult Bhumij tribal populations from Mayurbhanj district of Northern Odisha.

**Methodology:** This study included 202 (Male -89, female - 113) Bhumij tribal populations aged 18 years and above. Anthropometric measurements like height, weight and other measurements on foot morphology i.e. foot length, foot breadth at ball (BBAL), foot breadth at heel (BHEL), and length of the foot from each toe (T1, T2, T3, T4, and T5) were recorded as per the standard procedure. Body mass index (BMI) was calculated and were segregated in three different weight categories. Various statistical tests like t-test, Pearson's correlation and ANOVA were performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 18).

**Results:** The present study reveals no significant sex difference in different foot dimensions measures, height and BMI except weight. All the foot dimensions variables showed significant sex differences (ANOVA) in three different weight status (underweight, healthy and overweight) among males and only ball breadth and T5 among females. Significant ( $p\leq 0.05$ ) positive correlation was observed in all the foot dimension measures with BMI among males and ball breadth, heel breadth, T3, T4 and T5 among females.

**Conclusion:** The present study evinces that weight affects the foot structure. The morphological differences in the foot dimensions according to the weight category highlights that overweight participants have larger feet than their healthy weight and underweight counterparts.

## **Analysis of Minutiae Patterns in the Hypothenar Region of Palm Prints among the Bhil Tribe: A Forensic and Anthropological Perspective**

*Meenal Soni, P.R Mondal & Sonal Jain*

Palm print identification has gained significant importance alongside fingerprint analysis because palm prints are also often found at crime scenes. Minutiae are distinctive features along the ridges or friction ridges, contributing to the uniqueness of each print. While fingerprint analysis is widely used in criminal investigations, earlier research has indicated that expanding palmprint databases could enhance their effectiveness in identification.

This study reviews the distinct characteristics of the hypothenar region and various types of minutiae present in the hypothenar region of palmprints. A total of 80 palmprint samples were collected from individuals aged 18-50 years, 48 male prints and 32 female prints of the right hand, from the Bhil tribe in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. The minutiae classification system employed in this research was adapted to include 15 distinct types of minutiae characters. The frequency of each minutiae type was recorded, and the differences between the sexes were analysed using the chi-square test. Additionally, the relationship between different minutiae types was assessed through Pearson's correlation test. During the analysis, the least common types of minutiae found are namely, Y or M (11.3%), Dock (11.5%), Trifurcation (23.1) and Crossbar (32.5%). The sex wise distribution denoted that in females, the least common type of minutiae found is opposite bifurcation (23.1%) and in males it is bifurcation (46.3%) and Dot (46.7%). The present study contributes to a deeper understanding of palmprint minutiae, potentially improving their use in personal identification and forensic applications.

<b>PANEL 08</b>	
<b>ANCIENT DISEASES: A PALEOANTHROPOLOGICAL ENIGMA</b>	
<i>Convenor: Abhishikta Ghosh Roy, Gyaneshwar Chaubey</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Snigdha Konar & Niraj Rai	Promise of Ancient DNA Research: What Can We Learn about Microbial Borne Diseases in the Past
Abhishikta Ghosh Roy	Understanding Ancient Disease: A Palaeopathological Dialogue
Himani Patel, Snigdha Konar, Preety A. Trivedi & Niraj Rai	Archaeological and Geochemical Analysis of Megalithic Human Remains Suggest Tooth Filling Practices in Vidarbha Region of Central India

## **Promise of Ancient DNA Research: What Can We Learn about Microbial Borne Diseases in the Past**

*Snigdha Konar & Niraj Rai*

Ancient DNA (aDNA) analysis has revolutionized the study of ancient diseases by offering direct insights into the pathogens and health conditions of past populations. In India, aDNA studies can uncover evidence of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, leprosy, and malaria, which significantly impacted ancient populations. The osteological signatures of these diseases have been identified in skeletal remains from archaeological sites like Balathal, Harappa, and Rakhigarhi, also providing a future prospective for molecular understanding of ancient health challenges. Additionally, aDNA studies reveal the evolutionary history of pathogens, epidemic events, human immunity, and the role of migration in spreading diseases. This presentation explores how aDNA has advanced our understanding of ancient diseases in India, highlighting key discoveries and their implications for the fields of archaeology, bioanthropology, and medical science.

## **Understanding Ancient Disease: A Palaeopathological Dialogue**

*Abhishikta Ghosh Roy*

The present paper explores the anthropological and palaeopathological findings from Madhya Pradesh, dated to the 2nd–3rd century BCE or earlier. Initial excavation was conducted in 1939, with skeletal remains being re-examined at the Anthropological Survey of India. The study utilized advanced anthropological methodologies to analyse 26 skulls and 33 long bone boxes, accounting for skeletal remains from 57 individuals. The research aimed to conduct new observations, particularly in paleopathology, absent in earlier studies. Key observations included cranial and post-cranial metrics, dental morphometry, age-sex determination, and pathology assessment. Standard frameworks such as Brothwell (1981), Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994), and Martin-Saller (1957) were employed. Equal representation of males and females, with most individuals falling in middle and older age categories. Observed conditions include Osteoporosis, arthritis, trauma, and new bone formations. Enamel hypoplasia, caries, abscesses, and antemortem tooth loss were also observed. The population demonstrated good overall health, with age-related pathologies dominating the findings. Trauma cases showed signs of well-healed fractures, indicating adequate recovery processes. Dental anomalies such as Stafne's bone defect were documented without associated pain. The skeletal population reflects a healthy early historic community with minimal developmental anomalies and well-managed physical injuries. The findings emphasize the potential for comparative studies and highlight the importance of re-evaluating archaeological collections using modern methodologies.

**Archaeological and Geochemical Analysis of Megalithic Human Remains Suggest Tooth Filling Practices in Vidarbha Region of Central India**

*Himani Patel, Snigdha Konar, Preety A. Trivedi & Niraj Rai*

The ancient practices of medical and dental in India through archaeological data have not been thoroughly explored yet and there is a dearth of ancient DNA and chemical analysis available in India for archaeologically significant human burials from prehistoric context. This paper presents a thorough examination of a fragmented human tooth sample along with associated filling material from a megalithic burial site in Ubali, Maharashtra, Central India. The bead-like structure lodged in the tooth exhibits distinct characteristics from the enamel, giving the impression of being a tooth filling. To ascertain the chemical properties of tooth filling, we conducted XRD, Raman Spectroscopy, and FESEM-EDS analysis. We deduced from the genetic study that the natives employed sophisticated dental ceramics as tooth fillings during the megalithic period of the Vidarbha region. Furthermore, we have analysed the ancient DNA of the tooth dentine, which confirms the ancestry of the individual to be of Indian origin.

<b>PANEL 09</b>	
<b>INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES</b>	
<i>Convenor: Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Paramananda Naik & Sanghamitra Sethi	Kapdaganda: A Cultural Marker of Dongria Kandha Identity
Sukrita Tirkey, Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo, Sakshee Nag, Kusum Mandavi & Divya Gummadi	Traditional Health Care Practices among Madia Tribe of Bastar: An Anthropological Study
Bartika Banerjee	Situating Visible Therapy within Indigenous Healing Practices: A Sociological Perspective
Partha Sarathi Sarkar	Using the Indigenous Knowledge Base for the Rural Upliftment: Comparative Study on Tripura & West Bengal Tribe

## **Kapdaganda: A Cultural Marker of Dongria Kandha Identity**

*Paramananda Naik & Sanghamitra Sethi*

This study explores the indigenous knowledge system of the Dongria Kandha tribe in Odisha, India, and its contribution as a cultural marker is an emblem of the Dongria Kandha's unique cultural identity. The finely woven Kapdaganda is an embroidered shawl. Their artistic skill and close affinity with nature are reflected in this traditional textile, which features striking, vibrant colours and distinctive motifs. This emblemizes their unique cultural customs, which is a source of pride. The primary objective is to examine how indigenous knowledge expresses social practices, rituals of Dongria Kandha, and sustainable contributions to their unique identity. The research aims to highlight the role of indigenous knowledge in the preservation of their cultural heritage and resistance against external pressures. The methodology employed includes qualitative research techniques such as ethnographic fieldwork, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews with community members. The analysis incorporates a comparative framework to assess the impact of modernisation on indigenous practices and identity. The findings reveal that indigenous knowledge serves as a vital cultural marker for the Dongria Kandha, fostering community cohesion and resilience. The preservation and transmission of this knowledge through generations reinforces their cultural identity. This research contributes to the discourse on indigenous knowledge systems as essential components of identity, cultural preservation, and sustainable development in indigenous communities.

## **Traditional Health Care Practices among Madia Tribe of Bastar: An Anthropological Study**

*Sukrita Tirkey, Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo, Sakshee Nag, Kusum Mandavi & Divya Gummadi*

The Madia tribe, an indigenous community in the Bastar district of Chhattisgarh, India, has unique health and healthcare practices deeply rooted in their traditional beliefs. Their understanding of health often attributes illnesses to supernatural causes, such as malevolent spirits or the wrath of deities. Traditional healers, including Sirah, Gunia, and Badde (religious heads and medicine men), play a vital role in diagnosing and treating these ailments through rituals and natural remedies. The tribe predominantly relies on deities, herbal medicines, with healers utilizing locally available plants and traditional knowledge to address various health issues. However, the remote and rural nature of their settlements poses challenges in accessing modern healthcare facilities. This limited access can delay timely medical interventions, particularly for severe illnesses or emergencies. In recent years, efforts have been initiated to bridge the gap between traditional and modern healthcare systems. These initiatives include training traditional healers in basic medical practices and improving access to modern healthcare infrastructure. Despite these advancements, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, low awareness of modern healthcare practices, and communication barriers persist, hindering the effective delivery of medical services to the Madia tribe. It is imperative to promote and preserve the indigenous scientific healthcare practices of the Madia tribe while identifying sustainable solutions to integrate these practices with modern healthcare systems.

This approach can ensure better health outcomes for the community while respecting their cultural heritage.

### **Situating Visible Therapy within Indigenous Healing Practices: A Sociological Perspective**

*Bartika Banerjee*

Modern therapy faces a significant challenge in perception and accessibility. Even among literate populations, therapy is often stigmatized or misunderstood as a crisis intervention tool rather than a proactive or reflective process for emotional well-being. Many perceive it as a distant, clinical practice that fails to resonate with their personal or cultural contexts. This gap is even wider across cultures that do not have the same access to resources and development among various communities.

By contrast, indigenous healing practices offer faith-driven, symbolic, and experiential approaches that deeply resonate with cultural frameworks and external emotional environments. Rituals such as milk pouring, chanting, and fire ceremonies provide immersive and sensory experiences that allow individuals to externalize pain, foster catharsis, and mark emotional milestones. These rituals do not demand the same level of emotional articulation or cognitive awareness that traditional therapy assumes, making them particularly accessible to populations who connect with faith and sensory intensity as pathways to healing. However, these practices, while emotionally powerful, are insufficient on their own to address the depth and breadth of mental health challenges.

This paper proposes Visible Therapy, a framework that situates modern psychotherapy within the immersive settings of indigenous rituals. It reimagines therapy as an experiential, culturally resonant process that blends the structured methodologies of modern therapy with the symbolic and sensory power of ritualistic traditions. By integrating the immersive and communal aspects of indigenous healing with structured psychotherapeutic techniques, Visible Therapy seeks to bridge the gap between accessibility and effectiveness in mental health care.

### **Using the Indigenous Knowledge Base for the Rural Upliftment: Comparative Study on Tripura & West Bengal Tribes**

*Partha Sarathi Sarkar*

This study investigates the application of indigenous knowledge in the rural development of tribal communities in Tripura and West Bengal, focusing on its integration into key sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, education, and environmental conservation. Indigenous knowledge, deeply rooted in the cultural heritage of these communities, serves as a vital resource for sustainable practices and socio-economic development.

**Objectives:** The research aims to compare how tribal communities in Tripura and West Bengal utilize indigenous knowledge for rural upliftment. It seeks to identify commonalities and differences in their traditional practices, assess the effectiveness of these practices in fostering development, and explore the challenges faced in mainstreaming indigenous knowledge into formal development frameworks.

**Methodology:** The study employs a qualitative approach, utilizing in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations to gather data from tribal community members, local leaders, and development practitioners. Comparative analysis is used to highlight regional variations in the application and outcomes of indigenous knowledge.

**Results/Findings/Outcomes:** The findings reveal that indigenous knowledge plays a significant role in enhancing agricultural productivity, promoting health and well-being, preserving biodiversity, and strengthening community cohesion. In both Tripura and West Bengal, traditional practices have shown resilience and adaptability, contributing to rural development. However, challenges such as the erosion of knowledge due to modernization, limited documentation, and inadequate integration into formal policies hinder its full potential.

**Conclusions:** The study underscores the need for policy interventions that recognize and incorporate indigenous knowledge into development planning. It recommends creating platforms for knowledge exchange, enhancing community participation, and developing educational curricula that value traditional knowledge systems. By doing so, tribal communities can achieve sustainable and culturally relevant development outcomes.

<b>PANEL 10</b>	
<b>SHIFTING LANDSCAPES: THE IMPACT OF CHANGING AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES ON HEALTH BURDEN</b>	
<i>Convenor: Abhishikta Ghosh Roy, Subhra Sankha Barik</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Anjali Sharadrao Nikam, Reddy Narasimhan Naidu, Sanjay Gajbhiye, Kiran Uttaravalli, Joy Das	Understanding Health Burden among the Tribal Farmers in Vidarbha Region: Agro-Chemicals and Associated Issues
Priya Dey, Pranjali Ramteke & Ganesh Ramteke	The Progression of Agricultural Techniques and the Increasing Prevalence of Different Health Issues: A Study in the Yavatmal District of the Vidharbha Region
Nabanita Goswamy & Somenath Bhattacharjee	Changing Agricultural Practices among Rabhas of Rajabhatkhawa, Alipurduar, West Bengal
Daya Ram Singh	Modern Agriculture and Health
P. Srinu	Global Environmental Practices and Marginal Farmers: Organic and Fair-Trade Coffee Farming in Araku Valley

## **Understanding Health Burden among the Tribal Farmers in Vidarbha Region: Agro-Chemicals and Associated Issues**

*Anjali S. Nikam, Reddy Narasimhan Naidu, Sanjay Gajbhiye, Kiran Uttaravalli, Joy Das*

India experienced a significant transformation in agricultural production during the Green Revolution between the 1960s and 1970s. It led to the adoption of new high-yielding varieties (HYV) of crops, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and modern agricultural techniques. However over the years excessive use of agrochemicals caused soil and water pollution which affected the overall fertility of soil. Pesticide consumption varies significantly across India with Maharashtra ranking second after Uttar Pradesh. Latest data indicates that the consumption of chemical pesticides in Maharashtra reached 8718 Metric Tons in the year 2023-24. This article aims to understand the evolution of policies regarding the use of pesticides and fertilizers in India. It also discusses the current use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers in cotton producing areas of Yavatmal district, Maharashtra, and explores their impacts on the health of tribal farmers.

## **The Progression of Agricultural Techniques and the Increasing Prevalence of Different Health Issues: A Study in the Yavatmal District of the Vidharbha Region**

*Priya Dey, Pranjali Ramteke & Ganesh Ramteke*

**Aim:** This study critically examines the repercussions of evolving agricultural practices on certain health conditions in the Yavatmal district, of the Vidarbha region. The focus is on the extensive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, assessing their direct impact on the health of the farming community.

**Material and Methods:** A comprehensive, structured questionnaire was employed to collect data on socio-economic demographics, types of agricultural practices, and the specifics of chemical fertilizers and pesticide usage, including their names, chemical compositions, and quantity. The study systematically documented the progressing health conditions experienced by individuals exposed to these chemicals.

**Results:** The findings reveal a direct correlation between the intensified use of chemical inputs and a surge in severe health issues. Predominantly reported conditions include persistent headaches, dizziness, debilitating body and joint pain, burning and excessive watering of the eyes, skin irritation and peeling, respiratory distress, and recurring fevers. These conditions are alarmingly frequent among farmers and laborers with prolonged exposure to agricultural chemicals. The study underscores the critical health risks posed by unregulated chemical use and the lack of protective measures, calling for immediate intervention to safeguard the well-being of the agrarian community.

## **Practices among Rabhas of Rajabhatkhawa, Alipurduar, West Bengal**

*Nabanita Goswamy & Somenath Bhattacharjee*

Rabhas are one of the indigenous people belonging to Indo Mongolian group and is linguistically belonging to Sino-Tibetan group. They are considered to be part of large Bodo or

Mech community. They mostly occupied in the North Eastern part of India, particularly in Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura. But their main concentration is found in the Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal, and the various places of Assam state. Some groups of this community also live in the eastern part of Alipurduar district of North Bengal. The area of study is Garo Basti, a small village, within RajaBhatkhawa, a small town situated just outside the Buxa Tiger Reserve in the Alipurduar district of West Bengal. They have their own unique ways of day to day life which has contributed significantly upon their culture and tradition as well as their practice of rituals. In order to study about their changing economy and relationship with forest the paper has been prepared taking in General information at the family level, Demographic information at the individual level and Information on economic subsistence at the individual level. And the results have revealed a very changing agricultural practise of this ethnic community. Under the impact of modernization and cross-cultural mixing certain changes in agricultural practices are also found among this ethnic group in the present day.

### **Modern Agriculture and Health**

*Daya Ram Singh*

Modern agriculture has played a significant role in shaping global food systems, economic stability, and health. As agriculture becomes increasingly industrialized and technologically advanced, its impact extends beyond just food availability to include its quality, safety, and nutritional content. This research paper explores the complex relationship between modern agriculture and human health, discussing both its benefits and challenges. On one hand, modern agricultural practices have been successful in increasing food production, addressing food security, and improving access to nutrition worldwide. On the other hand, the excessive use of pesticides, antibiotics, and genetically modified organisms (GMOs) has raised concerns about long-term health effects. Additionally, environmental issues related to agriculture, such as soil erosion, water pollution, and climate change, is also contributing to health risks. The paper further analyzes the chronic diseases associated with processed foods, which are products of modern agricultural practices. Ultimately, sustainable agricultural practices like organic farming and regenerative agriculture are seen as solutions to reduce health risks and promote environmental and public health. The paper aims to highlight that the effects of modern agriculture are a double-edged sword, requiring a health-sensitive and balanced approach that prioritizes both human health and environmental sustainability.

### **Global Environmental Practices and Marginal Farmers: Organic and Fair-Trade Coffee Farming in Araku Valley**

*P. Srinu*

Organic farming and fair-trade certifications have been rising rapidly in the last decade, particularly under the spread of neoliberal globalization. Organic farming focuses on the overall development of land, soil fertility, and production, while fair trade aims to establish direct consumer-to-producer relationships and eliminate open market dynamics. Both

certifications seek to protect the environment and enhance farmer well-being by providing premium rewards for their commodities, ultimately increasing farmers' income and livelihoods. However, attaining these certifications involves complex processes and high costs, requiring multiple inspections, audits, and third-party certifiers, which pose challenges for small and marginal farmers. Additionally, these certifications demand significant social and cultural capital in the form of networks, promoter organizations, and government support. This intricate process pushes farmers to be more rigorous, selective, and conscious of their activities at both the farm and organizational levels to reap the benefits of organic and fair-trade certifications. Thus, the interaction of organic and fair-trade certifications with grassroots social and economic issues is important, raising the question of how these certifications re-embed social, economic, and cultural aspects. Additionally, it explores how dual certification affects the farmers.

At this juncture, the current study explores the environment friendly propagated practices (certified organic and fair trade) of coffee farmers in the Araku Valley. The majority of the coffee farmers in the Araku Valley are tribal, small and marginal farmers. By conducting qualitative research and using household schedules, semi-structured interviews, interviews, and focus group discussions. The study reveals various socio-economic changes and some future challenges for the tribal and small coffee farmers in Araku Valley.

<b>PANEL 11</b>	
<b>BORDERS STUDY IN INDIA</b>	
<i>Convenor: Sekh Rahim Mandal, Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Pranjali Ramteke, Likhan Chandra Doley, Rambabu Marla, Sujan Bera & Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo	Socio-Cultural Changes and Adaptation of Ethnic Communities in Bordering Districts of Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha
Likhan Chandra Doley, Rambabu Marla, Pranjali Ramteke, Sujan Bera & Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo	Socio-Economic Profile of the Ethnic Communities Residing in the Border Village of Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha
Ratnakar Palei, Rajakishor Mahana, Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo, Shiv Kumar & Praloy Das	The Issue of Identity and Development among the South-Western Border Tribes in Odisha and Chhattisgarh
Kanike Veerashekar	Transforming Himalayan Border Villages: The Impact of the Vibrant Villages Programme on Lachung

## **Socio-Cultural Changes and Adaptation of Ethnic Communities in Bordering Districts of Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha**

*Pranjali Ramteke, Likhan C Doley, Rambabu Marla, Sujan Bera & Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo*

The evolution of a society's social structure and culture is a constant process known as cultural change. Numerous internal and external variables may contribute to its gradual onset. The process of acclimating to a new culture's ideals, social mores, and traditions is known as cultural adaptation. It entails comprehending and negotiating how your new culture differs from your own in terms of expectations, habits, and communication methods. Understanding their culture, indigenous knowledge, tribal language, meeting their needs, cultural change, and adapting to it are the objectives of this paper. Structured household, village, and key informant schedules were used to gather the data. Additionally, during the field, qualitative data gathering techniques were used, such as focus groups, observation, case studies, audio and video recording, etc. 49 villages, 39 grampanchayats, 12 blocks and seven bordering districts of Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha were the sites of the study. It was discovered that the effects of contemporary lifestyles and financial limitations are clearly seen in the transmission of cultural behaviors and life cycle rituals. Tribal languages are being lost as a result of the younger generation using more mainstream languages in schools and workplaces, which highlights the push to assimilate. According to the current study, there is an urgent need to assist communities with political empowerment, economic security, and tribal education, among other things.

## **Socio-Economic Profile of the Ethnic Communities Residing in the Border Village of Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha**

*Likhan C Doley, Rambabu Marla, Pranjali Ramteke, Sujan Bera & Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo*

Ethnic communities living in the neighboring states of Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Odisha have a complex socioeconomic situation; some are developing, while others are still in an underdeveloped state. Their primary sources of income are wage labor and agriculture. They lived a hand-to-mouth existence. This paper's main goals are to present the communities' actual situation on the ground in terms of infrastructure, healthcare, education, poverty alleviation, cultural preservation, and the promotion of ethnic crafts.

The research was carried out in seven adjacent districts of Chhattisgarh, which include 49 villages, 39 gram panchayats, 12 blocks. These districts are in Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Odisha. Structured household, village, and key informant schedules were used to gather the data. Photography, videography, voice recording, and telephone conversations, qualitative methodologies were also used during the field study for data collection.

The communities in the examined area work in the primary sector, which includes agriculture, and wage labour. Thus, it was discovered that the vast majority of the villages were impoverished. They lacked in education, infrastructure, healthcare and other basic amenities of livelihood. They were also lacking in promoting their community crafts and preserving their culture to raise the socioeconomic standing of the communities.

## **The Issue of Identity and Development among the South-Western Border Tribes in Odisha and Chhattisgarh.**

*Ratnakar Palei, Rajakishor Mahana, Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo, Shiv Kumar & Praloy Das*

The south-western border tribes of Odisha and Chhattisgarh share deep ecological, cultural, and linguistic ties traditionally sustained through marriage alliances, economic exchanges, and shared social practices. However, the formation of state boundaries has disrupted their fluid movement and cultural cohesion, leading to identity dilemmas. While some tribes have adapted to new political affiliations, others struggle with the loss of traditional lifestyles. Cross-border migration for better opportunities has further complicated tribal identities, particularly regarding Scheduled Tribe (ST) status. Migrants from Chhattisgarh to Odisha face administrative challenges in retaining their ST recognition, unlike those who remain in Chhattisgarh. This disparity, caused by differing state policies, creates a sense of injustice and threatens the shared cultural heritage of these communities.

This paper explores the challenges of maintaining tribal identity amidst shifting political and administrative landscapes, emphasizing the need for policy reforms to ensure equitable ST recognition and inclusion across both states. Such measures are crucial to preserving the socio-cultural identity of these tribes while addressing their development needs.

## **Transforming Himalayan Border Villages: The Impact of the Vibrant Villages Programme on Lachung**

*Kanike Veerashekar*

“Unless the first village of the country is developed, a developed India cannot be created”

-Shri Narendra Modi, Honorable Prime Minister of India

The philosophy behind the Vibrant Village Programme is that India's border villages should be viewed not as peripheral or final outposts but as the first villages of the nation. By prioritizing infrastructure development and ensuring the availability of basic amenities, the Vibrant Village Programme aims to reduce the migration trend historically observed in border regions due to a lack of infrastructure facilities. This strategy is instrumental in achieving the broader vision of a *Vikasith Bharat* (developed India) by 2047, premised on the inclusive development of all its regions. The Government approved the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP) as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on 15th February 2023, with a financial outlay of ₹4800 crore for FY 2022-23 to 2025-26, for the comprehensive development of 2967 villages in 46 blocks across 19 districts along the northern border (Sino-Indian border) in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, and the UT of Ladakh. Out of these 2967 villages, 662 have been identified for priority coverage in the aforementioned states and UT. The villages of Lachung and Lachung Forest Block in Sikkim are among the 46 selected villages prioritized for development. The objective of the programme is comprehensive development of these villages to improve the quality of life of people & thereby reversing outmigration. This development initiative aims to repopulate frontier regions, expand state presence, and attract tourists, thereby strengthening India's territorial claims.

The VVP has been conceived as an outcome-oriented programme with outcome indicators at three levels- village, household & individual beneficiary. The key outcomes expected in these villages are connectivity with all-weather road, drinking water, 24x7 electricity – Solar and wind energy to be given focused attention, mobile and internet connectivity, tourist centers, multi-purpose centers and health and wellness centers. To assess the comprehensive development of Lachung village, a Village Development Index has been created, focusing on three levels: village, household, and individual. It consists of nine key domains related to the overall development of Lachung village, each with corresponding indicators. This paper presents a detailed assessment of the key development domains for Lachung village, attempts to score the village, and identifies gaps for its comprehensive development using the Village Development Index based on progress achieved during the implementation of the VVP.

<b>PANEL 12</b>	
<b>ETHNOGRAPHIES OF MENTAL HEALTH</b>	
<i>Convenor: Khirod Chandra Moharana, Chakraverti Mahajan</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Kavya Pal	Impact of Yoga Practice on Mental Health among Girls during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Cross-sectional Study
Meenakshi	Prevalence and Interconnections of Depression, Anxiety, and Loneliness in the Meghwal Community of Rajasthan
Khirod Chandra Moharana	Notions of Mind and Mental Health: Ethnographies of Healing among Tribes and Caste Society
Urfat Anjem Mir	Ethnography of Mental Health with Reference to Jammu and Kashmir: A Critical Perspective on Subjectivity and Reflexivity
Sapna Dudeja	Construction of Portrayal of Madness and Mental Illness in Literature with Reference to Indian Society

## **Impact of Yoga Practice on Mental Health among Girls during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Cross-sectional Study**

*Kavya Pal*

COVID-19 has come into our lives both as a boon and a bane. It has disrupted many lives and because of it, many brought good changes in their lifestyles to boost both energy and immunity by doing Yoga and performing some daily exercises. Since the medieval age Indian culture has been practicing Yoga and spreading its benefits worldwide. During the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, it spurts again and everyone started practicing it and gaining benefits from it. The present study tries to understand the role of yoga in the lifestyle during COVID-19 and how it benefits the mental health of the young generation, especially girls who are pursuing higher education. For the data collection, purposive sampling was applied and girls from different colleges of Lucknow city were interviewed. The data were collected from the respondents who practiced Yoga two to three times a week and the others who did not perform Yoga at all. For the socio-demographic profile, descriptive analysis was done. To check the significance between yoga, depression, anxiety, and stress chi-square was applied, which showed that there was an insignificant association seen between depression (Chi-square value = 0.40, df = 1, and p-value = 0.842), Anxiety (Chi-square value = 0.299, df = 1, and p-value = 0.585), and stress (Chi-square value = 0.655, df = 1, and p-value = 0.418). Despite yoga's perceived benefits, it did not show a measurable impact on these mental health outcomes in our sample. While yoga is traditionally valued for its health benefits, this study suggests that its impact on mental health during the pandemic warrants further investigation.

## **Prevalence and Interconnections of Depression, Anxiety, and Loneliness in the Meghwal Community of Rajasthan**

*Meenakshi*

**Background:** Mental health issues as depression, generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), and loneliness, have been increasingly recognized as significant public health concerns globally. In rural communities in India, cultural and socio-demographic factors can influence the prevalence and experience of mental health disorders. The Meghwal community in Rajasthan, known for its unique cultural practices and socio-economic conditions, may face specific mental health challenges that are yet to be fully explored. Understanding these challenges is crucial for developing culturally sensitive interventions.

**Objective:** This study aims to explore the prevalence and interconnections of depression, generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), and loneliness within the Meghwal community of Rajasthan, India. It also examines the influence of socio-demographic variables on mental health outcomes.

**Methodology:** A cross-sectional study was conducted among 131 participants aged 18-70 years from three villages- Dheekli, Merta, and Debari. Data collection involved structured interviews using standardized psychological tools: PHQ-9 for depression, GAD-7 for generalized anxiety, and the UCLA Loneliness Scale. Socio-demographic factors such as age,

gender, marital status, and family structure were documented. Statistical analysis, including Chi-square tests and logistic regression, was performed using SPSS.

**Results:** The study found that 35.12% of participants experienced depression, 32.06% showed signs of generalized anxiety, and 47.3% reported high loneliness. It shows highly significant relation between loneliness, anxiety and depression which shows in comparison to normal individuals, depressed and anxious individuals have higher loneliness. Nuclear family structures, lower income levels, and literacy rates were identified as socio-demographic correlates of mental health issues.

**Conclusion:** These findings highlight the community's mental health challenges and the urgent need for culturally sensitive interventions.

### **Notions of Mind and Mental Health: Ethnographies of Healing among Tribes and Caste Society**

*Khirod Chandra Moharana*

Psychiatry is a branch of modern medicine based on scientific tradition which can be traced back to Cartesian Body-Mind dualism. The dualism regards mind as supernatural and equates it with soul or spirit, the Western equivalent of Indian *Atman*. This led to separation of the mind from the body as something which is beyond the purview of empirical investigation. The mind, being supernatural, was replaced by the brain as the site of enquiry by Western Psychiatry and modern medicine. However, in India we have varying positions regarding what 'mind' and 'mental health' are. The dominant healing traditions of India distinguish the mind from the *atman* or soul and regard it as part of the natural realm. The mind is considered as material but very subtle and it is kept within the category of nature or *prakriti* along with the body. The present paper explores various notions of mind and mental health by investigating healing traditions such as Ayurveda, Tribal Healing and Christian Faith Healing practices. Ethnographic method such as observation, interviews and case studies were used to collect data from tribal healers, Christian Faith healers and Ayurvedic practitioners. The paper hopes to contribute to the knowledge about various notions of mind and mental health in India in different cultural settings. The paper argues that Cultural understandings of mind, mental health and mental illness can contribute to promote mental health and prevent mental illness. Collaboration between modern psychiatry and local traditions can significantly aid in understanding and promoting mental health.

### **Ethnography of Mental Health with Reference to Jammu and Kashmir: A Critical Perspective on Subjectivity and Reflexivity**

*Urfat Anjem Mir*

This research paper explores the construction of mental health in conflict and violence-prone areas through the lens of ethnographic methods. By critically examining the role of subjectivity and reflectivity in the understanding of mental health in these regions, the paper aims to shed light on how local meanings, narratives, and social realities shape mental health experiences. Drawing on ethnographic studies and critical theoretical perspectives, the paper discusses the

complexities of mental health in conflict settings, highlighting the importance of context, cultural sensitivity, and reflexivity in mental health research and intervention. The paper argues that mental health construction in such settings is not merely a medical or psychological issue but is deeply embedded in social, political, and historical factors that must be critically understood through ethnographic approaches.

This paper further explores the construction of mental health in J&K through an ethnographic lens, emphasizing the importance of subjectivity and reflexivity in understanding the lived experiences of individuals in this context. By critically examining how mental health is understood and experienced in this conflict zone, this paper aims to illuminate the complexities surrounding mental illness and challenge dominant paradigms of psychological distress. It further discusses how ethnography, as a research methodology, can provide more nuanced insights into mental health by engaging with the subjective realities of individuals while reflecting on the researcher's role in interpreting these experiences.

### **Construction and Portrayal of Madness and Mental Illness in Literature with Reference to Indian Society**

*Sapna Dudeja*

The portrayal of mental illness and madness in literature reflects the socio-cultural realities of the time and space. In this background, the aim of this paper is to do an analysis of selected works of Indian authors such as R. K. Narayan, Kamala Das, and Arundhati Roy, and survey the contribution of Indian literature to the discourse on mental health and the social realities that stigmatize madness in Indian society with a special focus on the intersection of gender, identity, and mental health.

In brief, while drawing from the theoretical contributions of Foucault's power-knowledge concept to psychoanalysis and postcolonial theory, this paper will examine the construction and portrayal of madness and mental illness in Indian literature.

<b>PANEL 13</b>	
<b>CARE OF OLDER ADULTS IN INDIA: SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS AND CHANGING REALITIES</b>	
<i>Convenor: Anakha Ajith</i>	
<b>Speakers</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Debaarati Chakrabarti & Shivani Chandel	A Review on Psychological Wellbeing among the Older Adults of India
Ashok Kumar Mahakuda & Jay Singh Kshatri	Understanding Frailty among Urban Older Adults: An Anthropological Exploration of Perceptions, Experiences, and Support Systems
Anakha Ajith	Evolving Roles in the Care of Older Adults: Insights from Home-Based Caregiving in Kerala, India
Bappa Hazra & Priya Dhibar	The Changing Landscape of Eldercare in Rural India Using Interpretative Ethnography Method
Ankita Ray & Subhamay Kisku	Beyond the Binary: The Influence of Gender Norms and Disparities on Elderly Well-Being
Rakhi Kumari, Mithun Sikdar & Harashawaradhana	Impact of Low L2 Abilities on Healthy Aging of Adult Migrant Population

## **A Review on Psychological Wellbeing among the Older Adults of India**

*Debaarati Chakrabarti & Shivani Chandel*

The psychological well-being of older adults is a critical aspect of healthy ageing which is a less investigated area in India. Understanding of Psychological well-being in older adults is imperative for developing effective interventions and policies. The present study aimed to review the state of psychological well-being, through the light of multifaceted determinants including socioeconomic status, social support, and health conditions among older adults in India. The study covered articles from different peerreviewed indexed journals. In India, 20-25% of older adults suffer from depression and other mental health issues. In Mumbai and Delhi, 23 % of older people in urban areas are more depressive than 18% of urban-rural older people. Mental health care for older adults remains less funded and underprioritised, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. Mental health issues are widespread in satisfied older adults, particularly in rural areas where access to healthcare facilities is limited. Social support systems have a significant protective role in promoting psychological well-being. Social isolation is a major risk factor for mental health deterioration in older adults which results in lower levels of happiness and increased symptoms of depression. Financial insecurity, chronic illness, and societal stigma also have an impact on mental health. The present study suggests a need for comprehensive mental health services for older adults with a focus on improving social connectivity, mental health issues awareness and expanding access to mental healthcare in underserved regions. It also provides a foundation for future research on the psychological well-being of older adults in India including policy development.

## **Understanding Frailty Among Urban Older Adults: An Anthropological Exploration of Perceptions, Experiences, and Support Systems**

*Ashok Kumar Mahakuda & Jay Singh Kshatri*

**Background** The unprecedented rise in human life expectancy and the resultant population ageing pose several challenges for health systems worldwide. Frailty is a recent addition to the lexicon of age-associated health issues. Frailty among older adults is a growing concern due to its association with adverse health outcomes, including increased vulnerability to illness, reduced quality of life, and higher healthcare costs.

**Objectives** This study aims to explore perceptions, lived experiences, coping strategies, and the role of family and community support in managing frailty among older adults. Additionally, it will assess the acceptability and feasibility of a targeted healthcare intervention for frailty and multimorbidity.

**Methodology** A mixed-method study was conducted in urban areas of Bhubaneswar (Mixed population), Odisha. A total of 137 older adults (aged 60 and above, both male and female) were recruited from diverse community settings. Participants were evaluated using the Frailty Assessment Screening Tool (FAST) for indicators such as mobility, fatigue, and cognitive status. Based on the screening, participants were categorized into frail or non-frail groups. Following the screening, 3 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and 21 In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) were conducted to gather qualitative insights.

**Result** This study revealed that older adults perceive frailty as a multidimensional challenge encompassing physical decline, emotional distress, and social isolation. Among the 137 participants, 38% were identified as frail, with 60% of the frail participants being female. Additionally, 57.14% of frail individuals reported living with more than two comorbidities. Coping strategies varied, with many participants relying on resilience, self-care practices, and spiritual beliefs. However, others faced challenges due to inadequate resources. Family and community support played a critical role in mitigating the effects of frailty, with more than 50% of participants financially dependent on their families.

### **Evolving Roles in the Care of Older Adults: Insights from Home-Based Caregiving in Kerala, India**

*Anakha Ajith*

In contemporary India, the challenges posed by an aging population are reshaping the caregiving sector, calling for a nuanced understanding of geriatric care practices. With its unique socio-cultural and demographic profile, Kerala provides an insightful case study for examining the interplay between familial and professional care arrangements. This paper investigates the multifaceted dynamics of caregiving in Kerala, drawing on in-depth interviews with 150 caregivers and 76 care receivers. It analyzes the diverse and evolving roles of home-based caregivers, who go beyond the traditional responsibilities of administering medication, managing wound care, and assisting with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). These caregivers also fulfill critical emotional and social needs, developing meaningful bonds with aged patients and offering companionship amidst the challenges of aging. The research findings highlight that while the rise of nuclear families has not uniformly driven the demand for home-based care, these services are becoming increasingly prevalent, reflecting shifting societal expectations and transformations in family dynamics. The research explores the complexities of caregiving relationships, addressing the emotional, logistical, and cultural dimensions that shape these interactions. It also examines the challenges caregivers and care receivers face, underlining the need for more effective and culturally sensitive support systems for families employing home-based care services. By emphasizing the significant contributions of caregivers and the dual imperative of addressing their well-being alongside the needs of aging individuals, this study contributes to the broader discourse on the care of older adults in India. It calls for collaborative efforts between policymakers, practitioners, and researchers to develop sustainable caregiving frameworks that honour the caregivers' essential roles and the dignity of care receivers.

### **The Changing Landscape of Eldercare in Rural India using Interpretative Ethnography Method**

*Bappa Hazra & Priya Dhibar*

Elder care in rural India is firmly grounded into traditional family values. Notwithstanding to paucity of age-appropriate public infrastructure including healthcare facilities, older adults continue receiving care and assistance from younger members within family. Unfortunately,

the situation has changed in modern times owing to loss of traditional value in modern times and lack of adequate human assistance due to rural-urban migration. It is therefore imperative to understand how the need for elder care giving is addressed. We conducted a mini-ethnography among older adults (aged 60 years and above) in Hensla Gram Panchayat of Purulia to appraise their perception and experience of receiving care. The respondents (n=30) are home-based older people. We assessed their functional capacity, their (un)met needs for assistance, and their experiences of receiving care and assistance from younger members. Data is collected through interviews, observations, and simple anthropometric measurements. The study highlighted changing pattern of elder care giving in rural areas that has implications on intergenerational conflicts, familial dissents, abuse and injuries, experiences of embodiment, empathy, and self-care. The findings from the study are interpreted against the larger context of political economy of aging, and the changing social morality towards elderly. Nuances that emerge from this exploration indicate the need to restructure elder care beyond the traditional framework.

### **Beyond the Binary: The Influence of Gender Norms and Disparities on Elderly Well-Being**

*Ankita Ray & Subhamay Kisku*

**Background:** Global demographic shifts toward an aging population highlight the importance of understanding the intersection of gender and aging in gerontological research. Gender norms and roles often intensify disparities in health, financial security, and social participation among the elderly. These societal expectations shape the experiences of older adults, influencing caregiving responsibilities, financial independence, and access to social networks.

**Objective:** This study explores the impact of traditional gender roles and gender-based inequalities on the well-being of the elderly in urban, peri-urban, and rural areas of West Bengal, India.

**Methodology:** Employing an ethnographic approach, data were collected through case studies and in-depth interviews with 60 participants aged 60 and above. The study examined their daily activities, self-perceptions, roles in decision-making, social support, psychological well-being, resource access and so on. A pre-tested questionnaire gathered socio-demographic data, and thematic analysis was conducted on transcribed audio recordings.

**Findings:** Findings indicate that elderly women bear disproportionate burdens due to gendered expectations, including caregiving duties, economic dependence, and social support. In contrast, elderly men face societal pressure to maintain financial and social autonomy, negatively impacting their mental and physical health. Gender disparities in access to healthcare and social services exacerbate these challenges, leading to more adverse outcomes for one gender over the other. The intensity of these effects varies across urban, peri-urban, and rural contexts.

This research highlights the profound impact of gendered roles and systemic inequality on the health and well-being of older adults, underscoring the need for policies and interventions that

challenge traditional gender norms, promote gender equity, and ensure equal access to resources, to foster healthier aging for all genders.

### **Impact of Low L2 Abilities on the Healthy Aging of Adult Migrant Population**

*Rakhi Kumari, Mithun Sikdar & Harashawaradhana*

The rapidly aging population in modern Indian societies is becoming more and more ethnically diverse. Increased mobilisation over the last few decades has resulted in large portions of migrants who settled in new environment for economic, political, personal or other reasons to age in an environment that differs not only culturally, socially, but also linguistically from their home environment. Studies on aging and migration often note a ‘language barrier’ for older migrants when communicating in a second language (L2) in health seeking context. Yet how a limited L2 proficiency impacts the aging process of migrant adults has, so far, not been systematically investigated. This question is important given that having a limited L2 proficiency may pose immediate drawbacks on one's ability to maintain independence. Through qualitative interviews on the basis of structured schedules this study investigates under which circumstances a ‘language barrier’ may be detrimental for the aging process.

<b>PANEL 14</b>	
<b>GUT MICROBIAL METAGENOMICS STUDIES: A SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN INDIA</b>	
<i>Convenor: Alekhya Ponnada &amp; Barnali Waugh</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Debasree Das & Arup Ratan Bandyopadhyay	Understanding the Insights of rs17822931 in ABCC11 in Human Population Diversity2. The Axillary Microbiome as a Reflection of Gut Health: Insights from Earwax Type and Bacterial Associations
Bimal Khanra	The Core Gut Microbial Profile: A Comparative Analysis between Lodha and Birhor of India
Alekhya Ponnada, B. P. Urade, Manjulika Gautam, I Pongen, Narasimhulu T, KV Dzuwichu, C. S. Roy & N. Bhattacharya	Genomic Exploration of Unique Gut Microbiome among Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in Central and Southern India
Ankita Ghosh & Sahid Afrid Mollick	Metagenomic Characterization of Subsistence-Specific Variation in Human Gut Microbiome
Venugopal P.N., Sahid Afrid Mollick, Gin Khan Khual, M. Nani Babu, Mitrayee Mitra, Arna Chatterjee, Mithun Sikdar, B. P. Urade & Harashawaradhana	Unearth the Traditional Gut Microbial Landscape: Special Reference to South Indian PVTG's

## **Understanding the Insights of rs17822931 in ABCC11 in Human Population Diversity2. The Axillary Microbiome as a Reflection of Gut Health: Insights from Earwax Type and Bacterial Associations**

*Debasree Das & Arup Ratan Bandyopadhyay*

**Background:** Human microbial ecosystems are intricately linked, with the gut microbiome, axillary microbiome, and earwax type forming part of a broader gut-skin-axis. While the gut microbiome plays a key role in digestion, immunity, and metabolism, the axillary microbiome influences body odour and skin health. Genetic factors, such as the ABCC11 gene, contribute to variations in earwax type, which in turn affect sweat composition and microbial diversity in the armpits. Individuals with wet earwax, characterized by lipid-rich sweat, tend to host a more diverse axillary microbiome, potentially due to the availability of nutrients for microbial growth. Additionally, gut-derived short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs) may influence sebum production and microbial interactions, further shaping the axillary microbiome. This suggests a bidirectional relationship, where the gut health and microbial metabolites impact skin microbiota and body odour. **Objectives:** In this background, the present work has attempted to investigate the relationship between earwax types and the types of microbes surviving in the axillae in a sample of Bengalee Hindu women. **Results:** This study observed significant associations between specific bacterial species and the wet earwax type, suggesting that individuals with wet earwax, characterized by more abundant and lipid-rich sweat, support a more diverse microbial community. **Discussions:** Understanding these interactions can provide deeper insights into microbial ecology, personalized health, and dermatological conditions, highlighting the need for further research into the genetic and microbial factors that govern these complex systems.

## **The Core Gut Microbial Profile: A Comparative Analysis between Lodha & Birhor of India**

*Bimal Khanra*

The microbiome study has significant implications for human health, disease prevention, and environmental sustainability. The advancement in microbiome research, is poised to play an increasingly central role in shaping the future of medicine, public health, and biotechnology. The present study explores the core gut microbial profile of two Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) of the Eastern region - the Lodha and the Birhor.

The study attempts to compare the taxonomic profile of the Lodha of West Bengal and Birhor of Jharkhand, India. The Lodha and Birhor are both hunter-gatherers and strongly depend on forest resources. Though they differ in their geographical locations, both consume forest foods like roots, tubers, and wild animals, and drink fermented beverages according to their respective culture, traditional lifestyles, and primary economic activities. The Lodha focuses on collection and selling forest products, while the Birhor of Jharkhand emphasizes hunting, gathering, and rope-making as their livelihood. Microbial genomic DNA was extracted from the faecal matter of 40 individuals of both the communities. High throughput shotgun metagenomics sequencing was done by Illumina Novaseq-6000. Alpha diversity (It measures

the variety of species within a particular sample reflecting the number of different species present using the Observed index and Shannon index) revealed an insignificant difference between the two communities. In the case of Beta diversity (the differences in microbial communities), there is also an insignificant difference between the two communities. The major dominant Phyla are *Firmicutes*, *Bacteroidetes*, *Proteobacteria*, and *Actinobacteria*, and at Species level *Collinsella\_aerofaciens*, *Slackia isoflavoniconvertens*, *Senegalimassilia\_faecalis*, *Bifidobacterium\_longum* are abundant which is similar in both communities, it is because 'gut' of both communities is accustomed to the carbohydrate and polysaccharide-rich diet along with fibers and have similar ways of life.

### **Genomic Exploration of Unique Gut Microbiome among Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in Central and Southern India**

*Alekhya Ponnada, B. P. Urade, Manjulika Gautam, I Pongen, Narasimhulu T, KV Dzuovichu, C. S. Roy & N. Bhattacharya*

There are trillions of gut microbiota in human albeit some are harmful, and many of them are beneficial to humankind. The gut microbiome is an integral part of human biophysiological system. They are associated with human health and disease. These microbes thrive with the adaptive potential to different lifestyles. The composition of these microbiota varies in health of individuals those are with colorectal cancer, inflammatory bowel syndrome and several gastrointestinal disorders, apprising the importance of understanding the determinants of variations in this microbiota. These variations may be driven by factors including host genetics, ethnicity and many of which are tied to geographic region which are attributed to food habits. To explore the microbiome composition and functional diversity that links the culture and their geographical location - a study is conducted among the particularly vulnerable tribal groups of different regions in India. These tribal groups are still dependent on the nature for their subsistence though there is a transition in their lifestyle in the recent past. This study is conducted among the population of Chenchu of Telangana, Savara of Andhra Pradesh, Kolam and Katkari of Maharashtra to identify the composition and functional diversity of these microbes. These populations are still following hunting and gathering as their traditional occupations and are consuming diet rich in fibres and animal protein available from their ecosystem. DNA was extracted from the faecal samples and Whole Genome sequencing was carried out through Next Generation Sequencing technology. The present study characterized and compared the taxonomic and functional profiles of the microbiota highlighting intra and inter community variations, key differences in microbial diversity, composition and potential metabolic functions among different populations of distinct geographical niches. The study identified signature microbiome and discriminated metabolic functions which could be associated with the community-specific consumption of food, changing lifestyle practices along with certain special ethnic characteristics and ecological features of these four communities. The present study reveals that Firmicutes was the most abundant phylum followed by Bacteroidetes, Proteobacteria, and Actinobacteria. At Species level *Segatella copri* (*Prevotella copri*), *Eubacterium rectale*, *Faecalibacterium prausnitzii*, *Blautia wexleria* etc. were found to be a core microbiota in all four communities. *Treponema*, an active microbe for

complex polysaccharide diet degradation, was depleted in current more cultured communities due to access to relatively advance lifestyle and habits, it was still found in these primitive groups. Overall, present study revealed considerable diversity of the gut microbiome and enriched biochemical pathways among the studied communities.

## **Metagenomic Characterization of Subsistence-Specific Variation in Human Gut Microbiome**

*Ankita Ghosh & Sahid Afrid Mollick*

**Background** The human gut microbiome is a complex and dynamic ecosystem that has co-evolved with humans, playing a crucial role in health and disease. Recent research highlights significant variation in gut microbial composition across populations, influenced by subsistence strategies, ethnicity, and environmental factors. Traditional subsistence groups, such as hunter-gatherers, agriculturalists, and fishing communities, harbor distinct microbial profiles shaped by their dietary habits and lifestyle, which differ markedly from those of industrialized populations. Understanding these subsistence-specific variations is essential for elucidating the microbiome role in disease susceptibility, metabolic adaptations, and potential therapeutic applications.

**Materials and Methods:** A comparative metagenomic analysis was conducted using shotgun sequencing of fecal samples collected from diverse populations representing traditional subsistence strategies (hunter-gatherers, agriculturalists, and fishing communities) and industrialized societies. Paired end shotgun DNA sequence was retrieve from ENA Browser (European Nucleotide Archive), followed by, the raw sequencing reads were subjected to quality filtering and host-DNA removal before taxonomic and functional profiling. Bioinformatics analyses were conducted using MetaPhlAn to identify microbial taxa. Statistical comparisons were performed to assess significant differences in microbial diversity across subsistence groups.

**Results:** The analysis revealed significant differences in microbial diversity and composition between traditional subsistence groups and industrialized populations. Hunter-gatherers and fishing communities exhibited higher alpha diversity and an abundance of fiber-degrading bacteria, such as *Prevotella* and *Segetella*, which were relatively low in industrialized individuals. Agriculturalists displayed an intermediate microbiome profile, with a higher prevalence of *Bacteroides* and *Firmicutes*. Industrialized populations showed a marked reduction in microbial diversity, an increased abundance of *Bacteroides*, and a loss of certain beneficial taxa associated with complex carbohydrate metabolism. **Conclusion:** The study underscores the profound influence of subsistence strategies on gut microbiome composition. Traditional dietary patterns support a more diverse and functionally resilient microbiome, whereas industrialized lifestyles are associated with reduced microbial diversity. These findings highlight the need for microbiome-targeted interventions that consider population-specific dietary and environmental factors to promote gut health and disease prevention. Future research should further explore the evolutionary and health implications of these microbial adaptations across different subsistence groups.

## Unearth the Traditional Gut Microbial Landscape: Special Reference to South Indian PVTG's

*Venugopal P.N., Sahid Afrid Mollick, Gin Khan Khual, M. Nani Babu, Mitrayee Mitra, Arna Chatterjee, Mithun Sikdar, B. P. Urade & Harashawaradhana*

The human gut microbiome plays a critical role in maintaining host health, with its composition being influenced by a complex interplay of diet, environment, and lifestyle. Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India, characterized by their unique cultural practices, subsistence patterns, and geographical isolation, offer a valuable opportunity to study the microbiome in a less industrialized context. This study employs shotgun metagenomics sequencing to perform taxonomic profiling of the gut microbiome at the species level in three Indian PVTGs, aiming to uncover microbial diversity, functional capabilities, and potential adaptations to distinct ecological and dietary conditions.

Fecal samples were collected from 103 members of three PVTGs (36 samples from Kurumba of Kerala, 36 from Irula of Tamil Nadu, and 31 from Jenukuruba of Karnataka) from South India. Following strict ethical guidelines and processing using high-throughput DNA extraction and sequencing workflows. Shotgun metagenomics data were analyzed using bioinformatics pipelines, including quality control, assembly, and alignment against comprehensive microbial reference databases. The taxonomic profiling revealed a unique microbial signature in each group, with notable enrichment in certain bacterial taxa, such as *Segetella*, *Prevotella*, and *Bacteroides* species, likely shaped by traditional diets and environmental exposures. Comparative analyses highlighted significant differences in microbial diversity and the prevalence of core species, underscoring the impact of lifestyle transitions on gut microbiome. This study provides critical insights into the gut microbiome composition of underrepresented tribal populations, contributing to a deeper understanding of human microbiome diversity. Furthermore, the findings emphasize the importance of preserving traditional practices and ecosystems, as they are vital in shaping microbiome health. This research has implications for microbiome-based interventions and the development of personalized nutrition strategies tailored to specific populations.

<b>PANEL 15</b>	
<b>REIMAGINING MUSEUMS AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE</b>	
<i>Convenor: Surya Kumar Pandey, Ashok Vardhan</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Abir Lal Mazumdar	The Kursura Submarine Museum and the TU-142 Aircraft Museum: Exhibition Anthropology Taking Off in India
Sarabjeet Singh	Deconstructing Decolonization, and Display Politics in Museums of India
Saloni Panda & Jayanta Kumar Nayak	Liveraging Digital Media to Sustain the Cultural Traditions of the Koya Tribe in Malkangiri, Odisha
Sarah Zaki Ansari	Preliminary Investigation for the Feasibility and Applicability of the Ecomuseum Model in the Himalaya
Abira Bhattacharya	Digitization Of the National Museum's Elwin Collection: Challenges and Prospects

## **The Kursura Submarine Museum and the TU-142 Aircraft Museum: Exhibition Anthropology taking off in India**

*Abir Lal Mazumdar*

This October I was in the city of Vishakhapatnam and while walking on Ramakrishna Beach I encountered two open-air museum sites. One being the inside tour of the Sub Kursura and the other the TU-142 War jet. These museums do not reflect the medieval past commonly associated with Indian society. Yet, they are active representations of the modern nation, and a tangible reminder of territorial space associated with the nation-state. Exhibitionist Anthropology investigates the social-cultural locus of how people relate to objects on display. The submarine and the aircraft are both examples of a gaze mixed with touchable and non-touchable sections inside the body of the machines. The gaze also extends to the object likened to a prop in photographs and video reels of visitors. This paper using the observation method and some snippets of discussion with fellow visitors is a reflection on of how people consume narratives of nationalism as they are on display in these modern museum spaces. The paper also reflects on the difficulty of the gaze and how touchability is securitized often with guards manning these spaces. The paper therefore asks, can we look into exhibitionism as an exercise in anthropologizing Indian nationalism?

## **Deconstructing Decolonization, and Display Politics in Museums of India**

*Sarabjeet Singh*

Colonial roots in India dates back to British Colonialism, which began with economic interest of the British through the East India Company, which entered Indian territories in early 1600s. They (the British) were not the only Europeans who colonized India, Dutch, Portuguese and the French also colonized some parts in India. In the year 1756, at the battle of Plassey, they defeated the French, and consequently they gained control over Bengal and this battle proved to be a decisive turning point in the British colonization of Indian sub-continent. Gradually, by 1857, the company had control over most of the subcontinent. This colonization resulted in great economic exploitation of the resources of India and it also gave everlasting trauma/stigma in terms of lives lost in the most tragic event that took place in post colonization phase- ‘the partition of India’.

Through the early part of twentieth century, it was archaeology that was springboard for museum making (2015, Madhuparna Roychowdhury, *Displaying India’s Heritage*). Large number of archaeological relics were excavated from all over the country, some were transferred to National Museum and in some cased site museums were developed. During the colonization phase, besides collection of archaeological relics, some of the British anthropologists/ethnographers also attempted to map the cultural resources of the country which not only included zoological or botanical specimens, but also included vivid exotic cultural specimens collected from the length and breadth of the country and it resulted in formation of assemblage of cultural heritage and ultimately altogether led to the formation of the Indian Museum. This paper will attempt to give descriptive account of decolonization and its effect on museum movement in Indian context.

## **Liveraging Digital Media to Sustain the Cultural Traditions of the Koya Tribe in Malkangiri, Odisha**

*Saloni Panda & Jayanta Kumar Nayak*

The Koya tribe of Malkangiri district in Odisha exemplifies a rich and vibrant cultural legacy, deeply embedded in traditional practices and a close affinity with nature. The Koyas, inherently musicians and poets, compose songs that narrate their history, mythology, and spiritual beliefs, ensuring their transmission across generations with thoughtful adaptations over time. Through a combination of in-depth interviews, participant observation, and immersion in the daily lives of Koya community members, we unravel the intricate web of traditions that form the cornerstone of Koya identity and social cohesion. In Malkangiri, modern and digital platforms have become instrumental in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Koya tribe. Government documentation, books, articles, magazines, audio-visual recordings, fairs, festivals, museums, workshops, and exhibitions have collectively contributed to showcasing and safeguarding their traditions. This study delves into how these initiatives in Malkangiri enable the preservation and transmission of the Koya tribe's cultural identity, blending traditional knowledge with contemporary tools to sustain their heritage in a rapidly evolving world.

## **Preliminary Investigation for the Feasibility and Applicability of the Ecomuseum Model in the Himalayas**

*Sarah Zaki Ansari*

This study explores the potential of the ecomuseum model in fostering sustainable development in the fragile Himalayan ecosystem. The inspiration for this project emerged from my postgraduate diploma in Museology, where I studied Ha Long ecomuseum of Vietnam. A literature review revealed that community engagement, environmental sensitivity, and the integration of economy and ecology are pivotal for implementing an ecomuseum. From April 2022 to November 2022, I undertook ethnographic research<sup>1</sup> in Breswana, a remote Himalayan village, while volunteering as an English teacher at a local school. Living as an integral part of the village, I gathered insights into their practices, challenges, and aspirations, and observed a strong sense of community engagement alongside aspirations for modern development. The Gujjar and Bakarwals, for instance, are transitioning from transhumance to permanent settlements to provide better education for their children, indicating contemporary lifestyle shifts. Locals expressed concerns about changing weather patterns, the erosion of traditional ecological knowledge, and the struggles of younger generations balancing aspirations for urban lifestyles with rural realities. This investigation strengthens the case for ecomuseum principles as a tool for sustainable development in Himalayan communities. I propose developing a dynamic digital exhibition featuring community stories, potentially showcased on the IGRMS platform with their consent. A hill curriculum tailored to children's needs, rooted in ecomuseum principles, could help preserve local heritage while addressing modern educational aspirations. Fundraisers and community input could support development projects, and if

feasible, a physical gallery could be established with IGRMS's assistance. AI could be leveraged to generate sensitivity around climate change and its disproportionate effects on indigenous communities.

*In the Himalayas, fragile and grand,  
an ecomuseum idea took its stand.  
With culture to save,  
And the climate to brave,  
Sustainable futures are planned!<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Methodology  
<sup>2</sup> generated using ChatGPT*

### **Digitization of the National Museum's Elwin Collection: Challenges and Prospects**

*Abira Bhattacharya*

This paper provides an in-depth exploration of the Elwin Collection of Northeast India, which is housed in the National Museum in Delhi. The collection is named after the renowned British anthropologist Verrier Elwin (1902-1964). Elwin held various administrative and official positions related to the development of tribal communities across different regions of India and actively contributed to the process of nation-building. The National Museum acquired this collection in 1964-65, which includes a variety of objects that are well-documented in Elwin's anthologies from his expeditions throughout India. The Northeast Indian collection is particularly noteworthy, especially when compared to similar collections housed in Western museums, which were acquired through expeditions during India's colonial period. Today, these collections are well-organized and documented, providing valuable insights for a comparative study with the Elwin Collection at the National Museum. Such a study could open new avenues for further anthropological investigations.

This paper undertakes a nuanced exploration of such a significant collection, emphasizing its anthropological and museological value. It meticulously examines the diverse array of artifacts within both the museum's reserve collection and those on public exhibition. A primary focus is on the transformative role of provenance research and decolonized methodological frameworks, alongside the impact of digitization. These elements have facilitated a reevaluation of the collection, leading to the re-conceptualization and redesign of the gallery dedicated to Indigenous art and culture from Northeast India. By employing contemporary methodologies and incorporating diverse perspectives, the initiative has fostered the creation of new thematic exhibitions grounded in anthropological insights and art historical contexts. This paper underscores the critical role of interdisciplinary collaboration, enabling a comprehensive investigation of the collection, much of which had previously remained undocumented or was exclusively interpreted through a colonial framework.

The critical analysis of metadata's role within current global museum practices serves as a cornerstone for expanding the reach and comprehension of the anthropology collection. This

paper advocates for the engagement of scholars from various disciplines, fostering a collaborative environment through workshops, research projects, and curated exhibitions. Such efforts aim to deepen the understanding of this remarkable collection, enriching the narratives surrounding the Indigenous cultures of Northeast India and celebrating their artistic and lifestyle heritage.

<b>PANEL 16</b>	
<b>CHALLENGES IN THE PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE</b>	
<i>Convenor: Somenath Bhattacharjee</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Joyraj Kalita & Somenath Bhattacharjee	The Healing World of the Dimasas in Dima Hasao, Assam
Sunita Soren	Sustaining Cultural Heritage: The Enduring Tradition of Santhali Marriage Attire and Natural Dyeing Practices
Dilip Kumar Oraon & Sirista J. Meenz	The Khaddi: A Cultural and Environmental Celebration of the Oraon Tribe
Helena Mutum	Kinship Obligations at the Time of Marriage in Meitei Society
Smita Chakraborty	Spiritual Authority and Health: Indigenous Healers as Stewards of Cultural Heritage in Belpahari

## **The Healing World of the Dimasas in Dima Hasao, Assam**

*Joyraj Kalita & Somenath Bhattacharjee*

The traditional healing practices of the Dimasas, dwelling in the Dima Hasao of Assam, are deeply rooted in their sociocultural beliefs and customs. The Dimasas, belonging to the Mongoloid group and Tibeto-Burman linguistic family, uphold a tradition of healing centred on the tri-polar concept of body, mind, and soul. Traditional healers diagnose ailments, administer remedies derived from plants, animals, and minerals, and restore health through knowledge shaped by their environment, believed to be inhabited by benevolent deities and malevolent spirits.

Systematic rituals are performed to propitiate deities for welfare and appease spirits to prevent suffering. These practices reflect the community's faith in their indigenous methods and remedies as essential to health and well-being. The Dimasa worldview also encompasses the concept of *damra*, or life after death, where the land of the dead mirrors earthly existence but in reverse.

This study explores the expertise and practices of Dimasa traditional healers, their rituals, and their cultural perceptions of health, disease, and treatment, highlighting their vital role in preserving community identity and traditional knowledge.

## **Sustaining Cultural Heritage: The Enduring Tradition of Santhali Marriage Attire and Natural Dyeing Practices**

*Sunita Soren*

The Santhali community, indigenous to the eastern region of India, possesses a vibrant and rich cultural heritage that is prominently reflected in their traditional attire, especially during significant occasions such as marriage ceremonies. This study delves into the intricate and distinctive dress patterns that characterize Santhali clothing, along with the traditional natural dyeing practices that accompany them. A particular emphasis is placed on the use of raw turmeric, a natural dye that holds both practical and symbolic significance within this community.

This study seeks to uncover the deeper meanings behind traditional attire in Santhali marriage ceremonies through comprehensive ethnographic research and participant observation. It explores how these garments serve not only as a form of expression but also as a vital link to cultural identity, history, and community values.

Furthermore, the preparation and application of raw turmeric as a dye are examined in detail. This process not only highlights the technical skills involved in traditional dyeing but also underscores the cultural importance of using natural materials sourced from the environment. This reflects the community's connection to nature and their age-old practices.

This research ultimately demonstrates how the Santhali community's unwavering commitment to maintaining these traditional practices serves as a powerful mechanism for preserving and celebrating their cultural heritage. By continuing to utilize natural dyes and uphold traditional dress patterns, the people are ensuring that their unique cultural knowledge, stories, and values

are transmitted to future generations, thus fostering a sense of continuity and identity within their community.

### **The Khaddi: A Cultural and Environmental Celebration of the Oraon Tribe**

*Dilip Kumar Oraon & Sirista J. Meenz*

This study explores the Khaddi, known as *Sarhul festival*, a significant cultural and religious event celebrated by the Oraon tribe in Jharkhand, India. Rooted in the tribe's animistic beliefs, Sarhul serves as a key expression of their deep connection to nature and cultural heritage. Amid the challenges posed by modernization, the festival continues to play a vital role in the preservation of Oraon traditions, emphasizing ecological conservation, social cohesion, and the spiritual significance of the Sal tree worship in sacred groves (Sarna Sthals). This research aims to examine the historical, cultural, and ecological importance of Sarhul, its rituals and preparation, and the impact of modernization on its practice.

The study utilizes a mixed-methods approach, incorporating secondary data from existing literature, historical records, and anthropological studies to contextualize the festival within its cultural and environmental dimensions. Non-Participant observation is employed to observe the rituals and ceremonies of Sarhul in real-time, providing an in-depth view of the festival's role in the community. This method allows for an exploration of how these traditions have persisted and adapted in the face of urbanization, the spread of Christianity, and other modern influences on tribal society.

The research highlights the effects of modernization on the Sarhul festival, noting how urbanization and the rise of Christianity have influenced the practice of traditional rituals and ceremonies. Despite these changes, the study emphasizes the resilience of the Sarhul festival in retaining its cultural and ecological significance. Through observation and analysis, this study sheds light on the ongoing relevance of Sarhul in promoting environmental stewardship, social unity, and the preservation of indigenous cultural practices in an ever-evolving modern world.

### **Kinship Obligations at the Time of Marriage in Meitei Society**

*Helena Mutum*

Humans have always been social beings, living and surviving in groups since immemorial. These groups provide individuals a sense of belonging, social security, and protection, alongside emotional, physical, and economic support. It enables members to survive and face against the odds. These very groups are mostly made up of relatives. No doubt, Kinship plays an essential role in a person's life. However, the degree differs according to society, culture, economic conditions, etc. In almost all societies, marriage is one of the most significant social institutions, extends kinship ties and serves as an essential rite of passage in an individual's life. Certain kinsmen from both the bride's and groom's sides hold specific rights and obligations during the marriage ceremony. This is also true in Meitei society, where kinship plays a key role during marriage sacraments. At the time of marriage, kinship ties are reinforced through various ceremonies, rituals, and obligations that involve close and extended family members.

Each kinsman has specific roles to play, from offering blessings to fulfilling ceremonial duties, reflecting their position and significance within the kinship network. The data for the present paper is primary and qualitative, collected using case studies, interviews and observations. The paper will contribute in the in-depth insight of the kinship roles and obligations at the time of marriage in Meitei society and to a broader understanding on how kinship continues to shape and influence traditional practices in the modern world.

### **Spiritual Authority and Health: Indigenous Healers as Stewards of Cultural Heritage in Belpahari**

*Smita Chakraborty*

Vine Deloria Jr. underscores the idea that knowledge is deeply intertwined with cultural practices, spirituality, and social relations, rather than merely a collection of facts. To comprehend the contemporary dynamics of healthcare, it is imperative to investigate the historical foundations of health practices. In India, despite significant advancements in biomedicine, many communities continue to rely on traditional indigenous healthcare systems, often experiencing marginalization within biomedical contexts. This marginalization drives individuals to seek out faith healers, who serve as alternative sources of health support. Faith healers hold considerable spiritual authority within their communities and act as crucial pillars of health security, particularly for marginalized populations. The present study aims to explore the socio-cultural legitimacy of faith healers in the rural context of Belpahari, located in the Jhargram district of West Bengal. By using discourse analysis, the research investigates the roles that these spiritual healers play in the health and well-being of community members. The key research questions that guide this study are: How are indigenous healing practices recognized and integrated into modern healthcare systems in Belpahari? What challenges do these healers face in preserving their cultural knowledge amid the forces of modernization and globalization? The anticipated findings will offer valuable insights into how indigenous healing practices can complement traditional biomedical approaches, emphasizing the importance of cultural identity in promoting health and well-being. Ultimately, this study aims to enhance understanding of the significance of cultural heritage in health practices and the essential role of indigenous healers in fostering community resilience. The study will try to locate if encouraging dialogue between traditional and modern healthcare systems can better understand the complex interplay of cultural and medical knowledge in shaping holistic health outcomes.

<b>PANEL 17</b>	
<b>ANTHROPOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF LIVESTOCK MARKETS IN INDIA</b>	
<i>Convenor: Dalibandhu Pukkalla &amp; Narayana Rao Bonthu</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Asif K Mulla, Sunita Soren, Shrutu Hiremath, Monark Sharma, Asha Sute, Jyoti Paul Ramlingam, Raj Kishore Mahato, Bhim Raj Hansdah, Gangarapu Sandhya, Sudarshan Vaidya & Nilanjan Khatua	A Woman around the Cattle - A Case Study on Women Empowerment from Amravati District of Maharashtra
T. S. Janaki Ramaraju	Rooster Rearing in Rural Andhra Pradesh: An Ethnographic Study of Socio-Economic Strategies and Livelihood in Godavari District
Bhim Raj Hansdah	Livestock Market in Life of Rural Populations: A Deep Dive through an Anthropological Lens
Gangarapu Sandhya, Sagar Kodi	Bonds and Bargains: Understanding the Social Fabric of Alamanda Cattle Market in Andhra Pradesh
Amitava Dinda, B. R. Hansda, R.K. Mahato, S. K. Behera, A. P. Jha, Adil Pallikkadan, Asif K. Mulla, Indrani Choudhuri & S. Kushwaha	An Anthropological Study of Economic, Social and Cultural Facets of Rural Livestock Markets: A Case Study of Jayantagiri, Baligaon and Doraguda Livestock Markets of Koraput District, Odisha
Kankana Basu	Socio-Religious Beliefs, Practices and Morals Among the Diverse Population in Rural Livestock Market, Jaipur, Rajasthan

## **A Woman around the Cattle- A Case Study on Women Empowerment from Amravati district of Maharashtra**

*Asif K Mulla, Sunita Soren, Shruti Hiremath, Monark Sharma, Asha Sute, Jyoti Paul, Ramlingam, Raj Kishore Mahato, Bhim Raj Hansdah, Gangarapu Sandhya, Sudarshan Vaidya, & Nilanjan Khatua*

This paper studies the trailblazing contribution of a Woman Livestock Trader from Morshi, Amravati district, Maharashtra. Since time immemorial, cattle have been at the core of rural livelihoods, providing essential resources for milk production and transport, and acting as economically important commodities. They also support the livelihoods of many communities that aren't traditionally Pastoral or Crop growing agricultural communities.

The study was conducted in Chandur Bazar livestock market, 160 km from Nagpur, during January-March of 2024. This weekly market that takes place on Sunday is famous for the trade of bulls, buffaloes, goats, and sheep, but notably not of cows. Traders from neighboring regions to Distant States participate in this Market with great enthusiasm, which boosts the local economy tremendously. Here, the focus is on a woman from the Dhangar community, whose members have historically been shepherds, cattle breeders, and blanket weavers. Born into an OBC (Economically and Educationally Backward Class) family, she overcame challenges by balancing her upbringing with the insights of her community to make a mark in livestock trading. Urged to pursue her education and develop an independent daredevil spirit by her late father, she first became a journalist, but later switched to livestock trading. Her journey is a testament of a Woman overcoming gender discrimination in a male-dominated field of Livestock Trading. She has not only emerged as a Role model but also organizes seminars and workshops to teach young women to establish themselves as Livestock traders. This paper emphasizes the social and economic implications of Women's participation in Rural Livestock Markets and the blending of traditional knowledge with modern economic practices.

## **Study of Socio-Economic Strategies and Livelihood in Godavari District**

*T. S. Janaki Ramaraju*

This anthropology study explores the cultural and economic significance of rooster-rearing practices in rural areas of Godavari districts in Andhra Pradesh. It delves into how local traditions and livelihoods intersect with the rearing practices. The research aims to understand the socio-economic contributions of the rearing practices, including its role in cockfighting and supplementary income sources for households in rural areas. Unlike the previous studies, this study looks into the role of women in this phenomenon. Ethnographic fieldwork was conducted in selected villages, employing participant observation and semi-structured interviews to capture the manifold perspectives. Ethnographic fieldwork reveals that roosters are primarily raised for cockfighting, a practice associated with notions of masculinity and prestige, but that is changing. Findings suggest that rooster rearing is a rich and deeply embedded practice shaped by various factors such as the economy, culture and rituals in rural areas. Economically, roosters play a significant role by contributing additional and supplementary income for households and serving as a gift exchange between communities. Additionally, the practice

strengthens community bonding and social networks through cooperative breeding and syndicates during the Pongal festival. Nevertheless, the study also highlights the various challenges people face in rearing, such as disease outbreaks, thefts and legal tensions between traditional practices and modern animal welfare rights activities such as legal bans. Overall, the analysis highlights how rearing practices are more than a cultural practice; they serve as an economic strategy for rural people adapting to changing sociopolitical landscapes while preserving their original culture and knowledge. This study paves the way for worthy discussions on the intersection of culture, capital and power in traditional practices.

### **Livestock Market in Life of Rural Populations: A Deep Dive through an Anthropological Lens**

*Bhim Raj Hansdah*

This research paper explores the intricate dynamics of rural livestock markets in India, particularly focusing on the Baligaon Guru Haata in Koraput district, Odisha. With approximately 69% of the Indian population residing in rural areas, where 'guru-gaay' livestock rearing plays a crucial economic role, the study highlights the multifaceted contributions of livestock to rural livelihoods, including self-employment for the rural populace and a significant contribution to rural household income, as well as to the national GDP. The paper examines the symbiotic relationship between 'chasi' farmers and livestock, emphasizing the role of livestock as a source of financial security and agricultural productivity through manure provision. It also sheds light on the transformation of the local Dombo community, historically marginalized, into prominent traders within these markets, thus underscoring the markets' dual significance as centres of economic activity and social interaction. Utilizing primary data gathered from observations, interviews, and case studies, alongside secondary sources, the analysis reveals the essential interdependence between farmers and de-notified communities facilitated by these markets. The paper concludes with recommendations for regulatory frameworks that ensure the sustainability of these markets while preserving the socio-economic stability of both farmers and the de-notified communities.

### **Bonds and Bargains: Understanding the Social Fabric of Alamanda Cattle Market in Andhra Pradesh**

*Gangarapu Sandhya & Sagar Kodi*

Rural livestock markets are the platform for farmers, traders, intermediaries, and other participants to sell, purchase, and exchange cattle. These markets are small, typically informal, with limited regulations and infrastructure, and dominated by local farmers. They provide livelihood support, food security, and access to resources, and they act as centres for agricultural economies, social networks and relationships, and information exchange. Social networks and relations are common in markets as individuals from diverse backgrounds, often from different villages and regions, have a common interest in livestock markets and cattle transactions, which allows them to have natural conversations, and these repeated interactions strengthen their relationships and foster trust. This paper highlights how regular participation in the livestock market helps people build and maintain social networks and relations and make successful cattle transactions. It also analyses the importance of the social identities of

individuals in social networks and how they influence market-related transactions, building, strengthening and widening their relationships in the Alamanda Rural Livestock Market, Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh.

**An Anthropological Study of Economic, Social and Cultural Facets of Rural Livestock Markets: A Case Study of Jayantagiri, Baligaon and Doraguda Livestock Markets of Koraput district, Odisha**

*Amitava Dinda, B. R. Hansda, R.K. Mahato, S. K. Behera, A. P. Jha, Adil Pallikkadan, Asif K. Mulla, Indrani Choudhuri & S. Kushwaha*

Livestock markets perform major exchange functions of animals in India. These markets play a considerable share in the economic gain of farmers. But they are largely unorganised and dominated by informal traders. The structural base of livestock markets determines the sales pattern and the major price value of animals is bagged by intermediaries. The major constraints regarding the livestock markets are the lack of facilities and unawareness of knowledge among the sellers and buyers. Many animals are part of the religious life of the people of many communities in India, as sacrifices of different animals are prescribed for the life cycle rituals and also during magico-religious healing. The social dimensions are also important to study in connection with the local live markets for multiple reasons. These markets are enablers for establishing and expanding social networks and forming social groupings cutting across caste, religion and such other factors. The fact that these local markets have sustained for generations in India without stringent regulations also calls for understanding these markets' cultural facets. The presented paper is based on a study on Jayantagiri, Baligaon and Doraguda livestock markets of Koraput district, in which an attempt has been made to study the anthropological exploration of economic, social and cultural facets of rural livestock markets.

**Socio-Religious Beliefs, Practices and Morals among the Diverse Population in Rural Livestock Market, Jaipur, Rajasthan**

*Kankana Basu*

Rural livestock markets are prevalent throughout India, serving as a vital source of livelihood for many individuals. Livestock holds significant religious and cultural importance in various communities. This paper presents findings from a study conducted by AnSI, Western Regional Centre, at the Pashu Hatwara livestock market in Jaipur, Rajasthan, one of the largest livestock markets in the state. The market attracts participants from diverse sociocultural backgrounds, creating a complex web of social networking. These participants also hold varied cultural beliefs and practices regarding livestock. The paper explores these beliefs and practices as observed in the Pashu Hatwara market and examines their impact on livestock transactions. Additionally, it briefly discusses the morals that guide the functioning of the market, highlighting this aspect of the transactions.

<b>PANEL 18</b>	
<b>TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE OF COSTAL AND HIMALAYAN COMMUNITIES</b>	
<i>Convenor: K. Ram Mohan</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Dalibandhu Pukkalla	Tangible and Intangible Knowledge among the Marine Fishing Communities
Tailyang Nampi	Rituals as a Living Archive of Indigenous Knowledge: A Study of the Kaalam Festival among the Nocte Tribe of Arunachal Pradesh
M. S. Mahendrakumar	Vanishing Art Forms of the Karimpalan Tribes of Kannur District in Kerala
Nada Aku	Nang Khwon Khaw: The Tai-Khamti Agricultural Ritual and its Cultural Significance
Chunaram Kisku	Ethnomedicinal Practices of the Santals of Basaburu Village, Purulia District, West Bengal
Sajib Ghosh	Echoes of Tradition: The Dzumsa System - A Customary Political System of Border Himalayan Villages

## **Tangible and Intangible Knowledge among the Marine Fishing Communities**

*Dalibandhu Pukkalla*

In recent years, there has been a greater significance in documenting the various social and cultural aspects of communities by several organizations or institutions. These organizations/institutions document the communities' knowledge and their uniqueness by understanding the importance of social and cultural significance. This paper explicates how we can promote cultural heritages and enrich the documentation of tangible and intangible heritages by integrating community knowledge from marine fishing communities. In this context, this paper also explores how marine fishing communities use their cognitive knowledge to execute different fishing strategies to explore livelihoods for their well-being. Further, Government organizations must prioritize the research and development of museums and strengthen research institutes to collect cultural heritages and tangible and intangible dimensions that foster the cultural identities of the marine fishing communities.

## **Rituals as a Living Archive of Indigenous Knowledge: A Study of the Kaalam Festival among the Nocte Tribe of Arunachal Pradesh**

*Tailyang Nampi*

Indigenous knowledge systems play a crucial role in preserving cultural heritage, with rituals serving as vital mechanisms for transmitting traditions across generations. This study examines the Nocte tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, focusing on the Kaalam Festival, an agricultural and spiritual event marking the New Year of the Nocte. By analysing the festival's rituals, this research highlights their significance in maintaining ecological balance, cultural continuity, and indigenous identity. The research aims to document the Kaalam Festival and its associated ceremonies, exploring their spiritual, ecological, and social relevance. Using a qualitative research approach, data was collected through in-depth interviews with village chiefs and elders (both men and women), as well as participant and non-participant observation in natural ritual settings. The Nocte worldview centres on Ka-Sha Huaba, a supreme deity, along with spirits governing natural elements. Ritual specialists like LePha (diviner) and Ramnyu (eldest woman of the clan) play key roles in executing and preserving rituals. Key ceremonies include Kaalam Paku, Nok Nyak, LeTaTho, Kaa Rok, and Muili Hin (Sa Pan), each emphasizing agricultural and spiritual harmony. Findings indicate that these rituals function as living archives of indigenous knowledge, ensuring the continuity of traditional wisdom while adapting to modern socio-cultural influences. The study underscores the importance of documentation to safeguard these traditions for future generations.

## **Vanishing Art Forms of the Karimpalan Tribes of Kannur District in Kerala**

*M. S. Mahendrakumar*

The Karimpalans are one of the Scheduled Tribes of Kerala inhabiting in Kannur, Wayanad and Kozhikode Districts of Kerala. They were practicing shifting cultivation for a long time and that was one of their major traditional occupations. In the words of Thurston (1909), “the

Karimpalans are a small hunting and cultivating forest tribe in [erstwhile] Malabar. They are punam (shifting) cultivators, hewers of wood, and collectors of wild pepper.” They had stopped shifting cultivation around 70 years ago according to the old generation. At present, they are cultivating some vegetables and cereals for their own consumption. Ravindranath (in Singh K.S., 2002) says that, “their traditional occupations are hunting and gathering, charcoal (kari) making, basket making and plantation labour.” Among the Karimpalans, with regard to the Punam krishi (shifting cultivation), there were a lot of songs and dance forms and the elder generation are still maintaining their songs and dances such as Keeripattu or Vithukilapattu, Koithupattu, Valikkalipattu, Naattipattu, etc. At present, the youngsters are not interested in their traditional dance and songs and the older generation are not showing interest in their traditional art forms, which highlights the relevance of study and documentation of these traditional tribal dances and songs of the Karimpalans of the studied area. The present study was conducted among the Karimpalans of the Ulikkal Grama Panchayat in Kannur District of Kerala State and the Ulikkal Grama Panchayat is located in the boarder area of Kerala and Karnataka States. The study shows that the dance and songs with regard to Punam cultivation (shifting cultivation) are vanishing and therefore it has to be documented urgently with audio-visual tools.

### ***Nang Khwon Khaw: The Tai-Khamti Agricultural Ritual and its Cultural Significance***

*Nada Aku*

This paper explores *Nang Khwon Khaw* the agricultural ritual performed after the completion of harvest by the Tai-Khamti people of Arunachal Pradesh. The ritual, centered on inviting the deity *Nang Khwon Khaw* from the fields to the granary, reflects the community’s deep spiritual and agricultural traditions. The researcher employs a qualitative ethnographic approach, incorporating participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. The Khamti people residing in the Namsai district of Arunachal Pradesh are well known for their rich cultural heritage. The present study discusses how this ritual serves more than religious practices and reinforces social cohesion and intergenerational transmission of cultural heritage. Through an exploration of its historical background, ritual process, symbolism, and cultural significance, this paper underscores the importance of preserving indigenous knowledge in the face of modernisation highlighting the challenges such as urban migration, economic shifts, and reduced youth participation which threaten its continuity.

### **Ethnomedicinal Practices of the Santals of Basaburu Village, Purulia District, West Bengal**

*Chunaram Kisku*

The Santals, numerically the third-largest Adivasi group in India after the Gonds and Bhils and primarily concentrated in the states of Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, Assam, and Tripura and also in the neighbouring countries Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar, typically inhabit forest-fringe villages and rely mainly on farming and animal husbandry for their livelihood. This research paper focuses on the ethnomedicinal practices of the community

living in Basaburu village of Purulia District, West Bengal. Closest to the village, there is a hill named Basaburu and also a dense forest, both of which contain varieties of plants having ethnomedicinal properties. Employing household survey, observation and interview methods the study reveals that the abundance of these plants within the vicinity of the village facilitates its inhabitants as well as the Ojhas or Janguru (traditional healers) to collect the ingredients to prepare medicines and to use them. The collection and selling of these plants in local market provide as the primary source of income to many. Despite the presence of a hospital and private medicine practitioners within the reach, the villagers treat themselves for common diseases and illnesses and in complex cases they visit the traditional healers. To the villagers, many of the ailments are caused by evil spirits or supernatural forces. The healers are believed to use their spiritual powers and ethnomedicinal expertise knowledge to cure them. Their healing practices often include the use of herbs, chanting of mantras, ritual offerings, and various ceremonies. Such a dependence on ethnomedicinal treatment over modern medical cure of the villagers is added to their financial constraints. It is inferred that in an attempt to improve the socio-economic status and health conditions of such forest-fringe communities, their ethnomedicinal practices and socio-religious beliefs should not be ignored.

### **Echoes of Tradition: The Dzumsa System - A Customary Political System of Border Himalayan Villages**

*Sajib Ghosh*

The Dzumsa system, of the Lachenpa and Lachungpa communities of North Sikkim, showcases a distinctive model of indigenous administration which is exclusively being practised in those two villages of the Greater Himalayan Region which is in close proximity to the Sino-Indian border. It was recognized during the Sikkimese kingdom and officially acknowledged by the Indian Government in 1985. The Dzumsa functions as a comprehensive institution of self-governance intertwining the cultural, religious and local administrative fabric of those communities. It not only manages resources and settles disputes but also plays a crucial role in preserving cultural identity through its engagement in religious and social activities. From organizing festivals such as the Cham/Mask dance to maintaining Gompas (monasteries), the Dzumsa significantly contributes to the cultural unity of this resilient community. This paper explores the various contributions of the Dzumsa, particularly its impact on promoting Tourism, which has emerged as dominant economic activity in that region aligning India's vision for Viksit Bharat 2047. Utilizing qualitative methods like ethnographic study, in-depth interviews of the localities and archival research, the study reveals how the Dzumsa operates as a participatory governance system led by Pipons (village heads) ensuring fairness and harmony within the community. Its holistic bottom up approach ensure shared growth and equitable development, which relies on consensus and traditional practices. Dzumsa emphasizes on the effective role of the Traditional indigenous knowledge systems in ensuring the sustainable development of people in the grass root level, which is at par with the contemporary Panchayati Raj system which is operational across the length and breadth of our Nation. The findings indicate that the Dzumsa aligns with the four pillars of Viksit Bharat 2047 ensuring Economic Prosperity-Through collective management of agro-pastoral resources, Social

Inclusivity- By encouraging community involvement in developmental activities and effective conflict resolution, Cultural Vibrancy- By organizing all-inclusive traditional rituals, festivals, and religious events and Environmental Sustainability- By applying traditional knowledge to manage delicate ecosystems. This paper asserts that, the Dzumsa system is a prime example of how indigenous knowledge systems governance can influence national development strategies. The Dzumsa effectively leverages the potential of our human capital for the growth of our nation by tying tradition and contemporary policies together, reinforcing the idea that cultural preservation and sustainable development are not mutually exclusive but are deeply interconnected for ensuring inclusive development.

<b>PANEL 19</b>	
<b>EXPLORING HUMAN GENETIC VARIATION AND DIVERSITY: INSIGHTS FROM EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY</b>	
<i>Convenor: Arup Ratan Bandyopadhyay, Chandana Basu Mallick, Sudeshna Chanda, Madhumati Chatterjee</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Shwetotpal Mrinal, Prashanth Suravajhala, Vijayaraghava Seshadri Sundararajan & Chandana Basu Mallick	HPDB: A Comprehensive Pigmentation Gene Database
Raj Pandit	A Mini Review on DNA Forensics in Wildlife: Techniques and Challenges
Debashis Bhattacharjee & K. N. Saraswathy	Prevalence and Associated Bio-Social Risk Factors of Hypertension: A Cross-sectional Study from Punjab, India
Tame Doro Tabang & Rai Ania	Human Genetic Variation and Diversity Opportunities for Natural Selection among Four Indigenous Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh: Insights from Crow's and Johnston-Kensinger Indices
Biswajit Mahapatra	Anthropometric Indices and their Association with Hypertension among Older Adults in India: Evidence from National Level LASI Data
Sumit Maitra	Exploring the Association between Chromatic Metrics and Serum Vitamin D among Diverse Populations in Jharkhand, India

## HPDB: A Comprehensive Pigmentation Gene Database

*Shwetotpal Mrinal, Prashanth Suravajhala, Vijayaraghava Seshadri Sundararajan  
& Chandana Basu Mallick*

The pigmentation of human skin, eyes, and hair is a polygenic, multifactorial, and heritable trait. The existing global variation in pigmentation is shaped by a fine tuning of natural selection and UV exposure. There is a pressing need to catalog the rising lists of discovered variants in pigmentation biology. Although there are many databases based on gene function, genetic phenotype, mouse coat color, and Mendelian disorders exist, there are no databases that explicitly focus on the human pigmentation genes. For this reason, the HPDB v 1.0 database has been created in which data from 105 papers have been included. Human Pigmentation Database (HPDB) is a web-based resource that contains an annotated list of 768 distinct human pigmentation genes with 4300 variants which can be accessed through genes and citations in search engines. This open access, uniprot mapped and user-friendly design makes it easy to browse using a variety of search engines which one can use to search by rsid, gene, author, keywords etc. With regard to the interoperability of biological data, information, knowledge, and computational resources, the database conforms to the minimal information about bioinformatics research (MIABi) requirements. This web interface will be useful for researchers in the field of pigmentation biology and beyond and is a valuable resource for researchers and clinicians and will help in comprehending the genetic architecture of pigmentation variation, pigmentation disorders, biological pathways and understanding its implications for public health. HPDB 1.0 is freely available and accessible at <https://bioclues.org/HPDB/>.

## A Mini Review on DNA Forensics in Wildlife: Techniques and Challenges

*Raj Pandit*

**Introduction:** The integration of molecular tools into anthropological research has revolutionized the study of primates. Techniques such as DNA extraction, PCR amplification, and RT-PCR are no longer confined to medical or metabolic studies but are now essential for understanding primate ecology, behavior, and adaptation.

For example, RT-PCR can help identify genetic markers linked to stress responses or microbial composition, while sequencing technologies can reveal the diversity of gut microbiota in wild versus captive populations. These findings have broad implications for primate conservation, as they help identify the physiological impacts of habitat loss, human interaction, and captivity. By bridging molecular biology with anthropology, researchers can develop interdisciplinary approaches to address complex questions about primate evolution, health, and behavior. This synergy is crucial for advancing primatology as a field and contributing to broader anthropological inquiries.

**Microbiota and Stress Marker Analysis:** The gut microbiota plays a critical role in primate health, influencing digestion, immunity, and even behavior. Recent studies have shown a strong link between gut microbial diversity and stress levels in primates. Stress—whether

caused by environmental changes, social dynamics, or captivity—can disrupt microbial communities, leading to physiological and behavioral changes.

By analyzing fecal samples, we can identify microbial populations and measure stress indicators, such as cortisol metabolites, to assess the relationship between gut health and stress. This molecular approach allows researchers to monitor primate well-being non-invasively, providing valuable insights into how environmental and social stressors impact primate physiology.

### **Prevalence and Associated Bio-Social Risk Factors of Hypertension: A Cross-sectional Study from Punjab, India**

*Debashis Bhattacharjee & K. N. Saraswathy*

**Background:** Hypertension is a major public health concern and a significant risk factor for cardiovascular diseases. The present study aimed to determine the prevalence of hypertension and identify its associated biosocial risk factors in the *Jatt* community of Punjab, India.

**Methodology:** The present cross-sectional study recruited 2367 individuals of both sexes aged between 18 to 75 years. Written consent was taken prior to data collection. Sociodemographic, obesity, and lipid variables were recorded to assess their associations with hypertension.

**Results:** The findings revealed a hypertension prevalence of 51.8% in this population. Increased age, male sex, and alcohol consumption significantly elevated the risk of developing hypertension. Among obesity-related variables, higher body mass index (BMI), waist circumference (WC), waist-hip ratio (WHR), and waist-to-height ratio (WHtR) were strongly associated with an increased risk of hypertension. Additionally, lipid profile analysis indicated that elevated triglycerides (TG) and low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C) levels were significant predictors of hypertension. However, when all variables were considered together, obesity-related factors demonstrated a stronger predictive value for hypertension than lipid variables.

**Discussion and Conclusion:** These findings underscore the critical need for targeted public health interventions to reduce the burden of hypertension in this population, emphasizing the importance of weight management, lifestyle modifications, and monitoring lipid profiles. Comprehensive strategies addressing obesity and associated metabolic risk factors may offer more effective hypertension prevention and management approaches. Further research is warranted to explore the interactions between obesity and lipid variables in the context of hypertension and to develop culturally tailored interventions for the *Jatt* community of Punjab.

### **Human Genetic Variation and Diversity Opportunities for Natural Selection among Four Indigenous Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh: Insights from Crow's and Johnston-Kensinger Indices**

*Tame Doro Tabang & Rai Ania*

Adi, Apatani, Galo, and Nyishi tribe inhabits the state of Arunachal Pradesh. These four tribes have been selected for the present study to assess the natural selection intensity with the objectives to estimate the intensity of natural selection among the Adi, Apatani, Galo, and

Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, and to evaluate how the pattern of natural selection intensity has changed from the past, and also to compare the result with other North Eastern population of India. A cross-sectional study consisting a total of 724 women aged above 35 were interviewed. Both Crow's index, and Johnston & Kensinger's index have been used for the present study. Results reveal that Crow's index for natural selection is found to be highest among the Nyishi tribe followed by Adi, Galo, and Apatani respectively. Johnston and Kensinger's index display similar pattern with Nyishi tribe found to be the highest, followed by Adi, Apatani, and Galo respectively. The contribution of fertility component is found to be higher than mortality component among the Adi, Apatani, and Galo. However, the mortality component is found to be higher than fertility component among the Nyishi tribe. Present study reveals that the total selection intensity among the Apatani and Galo tribe has decline overtime. It also reveals an inverse relationship between the contributions of the fertility and mortality components.

### **Anthropometric Indices and their Association with Hypertension among Older Adults in India: Evidence from National Level LASI Data**

*Biswajit Mahapatra*

**Background:** Obesity and obesity-related diseases are increasing globally, with hypertension being the third-most significant risk factor in South Asia. In India, most of the recent studies focus on hypertension and its associated risk factors, but very few studies focus on obesity-related indices. So, this study evaluates obesity-based hypertension in older adults in India using eight adiposity indices and examines their relationship to high blood pressure.

**Methods:** The present study used the national-level longitudinal ageing study in India (LASI) data, which was conducted from 2017 to 2019 in all states in India. The LASI is the first national-level survey in India that specifically targets the aging population. The present study included 57,237 people aged 45 years and older.

**Results:** In India, the prevalence of obesity varies from 29.2% (BMI) to 81.2% (CI-based) among studied older adults. The prevalence of hypertension was much higher in obese individuals, and it varied between 35.4% (CI-based) and 41.5% (BMI/PBF-based). State-wise, the prevalence of hypertension among older adults' ranges from 22.6% in Uttar Pradesh to 58.6% in Sikkim. India's older population experiences a 33.9% prevalence of hypertension, with eighteen states showing a higher prevalence compared to the national value.

**Conclusion:** The present study concluded that obesity significantly increases hypertension prevalence, with Sikkim having a higher prevalence of hypertension compared to other Indian states.

### **Exploring the Association between Chromatic Metrics and Serum Vitamin D among Diverse Populations in Jharkhand, India**

*Sumit Maitra*

**Introduction:** Vitamin-D is necessary for human health and is synthesised in the skin in the presence of ultraviolet B radiation (UVB). Skin colour has evolved throughout time to protect

against severe UV radiation while still allowing for cutaneous vitamin-D production. Furthermore, when isolated groups of individuals relocated into different climatic environments with extremely low or high UVB exposure, pigmentation phenotypes consistently arose as a result of unique genetic processes. Low serum Vitamin-D concentrations have been a major health concern throughout the Indian subcontinent. However, anthropological studies regarding the association of both skin colour and Vitamin-D levels have been underrepresented in India.

**Objective:** To disentangle the relationship between Vitamin-D, and other factors along with quantitative skin colour in different populations of Jharkhand, India.

**Methodology:** The current study was conducted among multiple populations from a cluster of villages in four separate districts of Jharkhand, India.

**Result:** The study also found that 94.6% of patients had low blood Vitamin-D concentrations. A lack of understanding, awareness, and consumption of Vitamin-D fortified foods, as well as socioeconomic situations, garment structures, sleep cycles, regularly skipping breakfast, and other cultural variables, might all contribute to this insufficiency and deficiency. However, no significant correlation has been identified between serum Vitamin-D content and several quantitative skin colour factors. Adequate sun exposure with low blood Vitamin-D levels but darker constitutive skin tone supports the melanin and Vitamin-D theory, which has yielded a wealth of information on human evolution.

<b>PANEL 20</b>	
<b>MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT: A CRITICAL DETERMINANT OF WOMEN'S HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</b>	
<i>Convenor: Reddy Narasimha Naidu &amp; Alekhya Ponnada</i>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Kohena Santra	A Review on the Premenstrual Symptoms and its Concomitants
Priya Dey	Menstrual Cycle Trends among Urban Female College and University Students in Kolkata
Arpita Richhariya & Sarvendra Yadav	Menstrual Health Knowledge and Policy Implication: An In-Depth Study of Konyak Naga Women in Mon District, Nagaland
Sima Das, Deepshikha Sarkar & Raja Chakraborty	An Exploratory Study on Menstrual Characteristics among the University Students Aged 18- 25 Years in Purulia
Ayushi Jain	Breaking the Silence: Addressing Menstrual Hygiene Challenges among Adolescent Girls of Dhobi Ghat Slums Area of Lucknow

## **A Review on the Premenstrual Symptoms and its Concomitants**

*Kohena Santra*

Premenstrual symptoms (PMS) have been one of the most exasperating problems in women's lives. These symptoms can impact both their physical and social lives, and the overall quality of life. The etiology of PMS is still not clear since it involves a complex interaction of bio-psychic/ bio-social factors. This review article aimed to provide a comprehensive framework in examining the concomitants of PMS. Literature on PMS was filtered using specific inclusion and exclusion criteria, and finally the concomitants were clustered into eleven groups. The most common cluster incorporates lifestyle, psychological and nutritional, followed by menstrual irregularities, dysmenorrhea and socio-demographic (age, socioeconomic condition, education, gender disparity) factors. Additionally, stress and perceptions toward menstruation were found to significantly influence the prevalence of these symptoms. The study concludes that future research should focus in examining the population specific etiology of PMS for the sake of public health.

## **Menstrual Cycle Trends among Urban Female College and University Students in Kolkata**

*Priya Dey*

**Aim:** The primary objective of the current research is to examine the menstrual patterns predominantly observed among young urban females enrolled in colleges and universities. Additionally, this investigation seeks to elucidate the extent to which various lifestyle factors influence specific menstrual characteristics.

**Material and methods:** The study comprised a total of 63 participants who were Bengalispeaking Hindu unmarried young adult women, all of whom exhibited regular menstruation, had not experienced conception, and had no diagnosis of diabetes. This research employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data. Measurements of waist-hip ratio were conducted, and a comprehensive questionnaire was meticulously designed to gather information on diverse variables. The amassed data were subsequently analyzed employing various statistical tools available in SPSS software.

**Results:** The average age of the study participants was recorded at  $22.7 \pm 1.91$  years. A significant 69.8% of the participants reported a duration of menstrual bleeding of  $\leq 5$  days. More than 57% of the subjects indicated a menstrual cycle length of  $\leq 28$  days. Furthermore, over 76% experienced medium to mild menstrual bleeding. Approximately 61.9% reported symptoms consistent with premenstrual syndrome. Moreover, over 68% of the individuals experienced dysmenorrhea during their menstrual periods. Notably, more than three-quarters of the study population (82.5%) were identified as obese, which appears to influence certain menstrual characteristics.

## **Menstrual Health Knowledge and Policy Implication: An In-Depth Study of Konyak Naga Women in Mon District, Nagaland**

*Arpita Richhariya & Sarvendra Yadav*

Menstruation, or Let-nyaipu in which 'Let' means 'month' and 'nyaipu' means 'coming out' or 'flow', is a normal biological process and an important indicator of women's reproductive health. Although in most of the societies, it is viewed as a taboo or shame. Several documents show that tribal population who live in remote areas are less aware about the menstrual hygiene practices in the absence of awareness and access to public health services. A mix-method study is used to understand the level of awareness about policies in Konyak Naga women in the selected villages of Mon district of Nagaland. 160 samples were collected including the demographic details and awareness about the policies related to menstrual health and hygiene. KAP approach is used to understand the difference between knowledge, attitude, and practice about the policies related to menstrual health and hygiene. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted to understand the different local social beliefs, cultural taboos and myths associated with menstruation. The findings revealed that maintaining menstrual health and hygiene is a strenuous challenge in remote areas like Mon, Nagaland, where affordability and availability of menstrual health care products are limited and the benefits of government policies are not reaching there because of the remote area. Moreover, government schemes and initiatives remain unknown to them or policies are failing to reach the grassroots level. As a result, menstrual health and hygiene remain a distant dream for tribal women in Mon.

## **An Exploratory Study on Menstrual Characteristics among the University Students Aged 18- 25 Years in Purulia**

*Sima Das, Deepshikha Sarkar & Raja Chakraborty*

This study investigated the menstrual characteristics (MC) among 151 under- and post graduate students at Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University in Purulia district in West Bengal, India. The participants belonged to different Hindu caste groups from mostly the rural and semi urban areas of the district. Information on socio-economic characteristics and MC, including age at menarche (AAM), were collected through personal interviews using pre-tested questionnaire. The mean (SD) age and AAM of the participants were 22.5 (1.3) and 13.1 (1.6) years, respectively. The common menstrual symptoms included leg cramps (60.8%), weakness (76.5%), fatigue (74.5%), pelvic pain (77.8%), and painful periods (73.2%). The study also highlighted diverse experiences regarding the quantity and nature of menstrual discharge. These results underscore the necessity for improved menstrual health education and support systems to help students manage menstrual symptoms effectively and maintain their academic performance and overall well-being.

## **Breaking the Silence: Addressing Menstrual Hygiene Challenges among Adolescent Girls of Dhobi Ghat Slums Area of Lucknow**

*Ayushi Jain*

Menstrual hygiene management (MHM) remains a critical yet overlooked public health issue, particularly among adolescent girls in low-income, marginalized communities. This study examines the multifaceted challenges of menstrual hygiene faced by adolescent girls in the Dhobi Ghat slum area of Lucknow, with a focus on accessibility to resources, knowledge dissemination, and socio-cultural constraints. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including in-depth interviews, observations, and group discussions, to explore menstrual health practices, awareness levels, and attitudes among adolescent girls in the area. The findings reveal pervasive barriers to effective menstrual hygiene management. Key challenges include restricted access to affordable sanitary products, insufficient availability of clean water and sanitation facilities, inadequate menstrual waste disposal systems, and limited access to menstrual health education. Additionally, entrenched socio-cultural taboos and stigma surrounding menstruation exacerbate these issues. Many girls reported reliance on unhygienic alternatives, such as reused cloth or locally available materials, due to the high cost and limited accessibility of sanitary products. The study also underscores a significant knowledge deficit, with many participants lacking awareness about essential menstrual health practices, the importance of hygiene during menstruation, and the associated health risks of improper management. Cultural norms and gender biases further hinder open dialogue on menstruation, perpetuating shame and social isolation among adolescent girls. This research underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions tailored to the unique challenges of low-resource urban settings. Recommended measures include comprehensive menstrual health education programs, the provision of affordable and accessible sanitary products, and the establishment of supportive, stigma-free environments within schools and communities. Addressing menstrual hygiene management is imperative not only for improving adolescent girls' health but also as part of broader public health and gender equity strategies.



# IGNCA Panel Discussion

*"Decolonising Indian Anthropology:  
A Civilisational Approach to the  
Inter-Relationship among Forests,  
Hills, and Plains People"*



## Concept Note

*The panel discussion titled "Decolonising Indian Anthropology: A Civilisational Approach to the Inter-Relationship among Forests, Hills, and Plains People" by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) and Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) addresses the historical and almost perverted misrepresentation of India's tribal communities by Western anthropology which had a colonial approach to the colonised people whom they regarded as the other people.*

*Anthropology as an academic subject originated in the civilised colonists efforts to understand "the other" people. Western Anthropology — out of which Modern Anthropology evolved in the 20th century — was originally the study by the colonisers of the "other" — the colonised people — who were first labeled tribes as "savages" "barbaric" "semi-barbaric" and "primitive,". The was later moderated it as "tribal" and "indigenous". But it nevertheless continues to be the study of the "other" — whatever be the label attached to the other.*

*Their work almost killed the foundational premises of the Western Anthropology namely that colonists are the civilised people and Indians are the other uncivilised or less civilised people. This must have put a full stop to applying the colonial anthropologic principle to India. But even after Edward Pockoke and Monier Williams finding the colonists would not give up their colonial anthropological approach to Indians.*

*The theory of the superior Aryans civilising the natives of India expounded post Monier Williams soon met with another big challenge when Harappa was uncovered. In the initial findings of Harappan symbols there was no Vedic civilisational trace — though later thanks to the work of an internationally acknowledged Indus Valley expert and Vedic-literate epigraphist, linguist and archeologist Iravatham Mahadevan is now accepted or at least not disputed, that Indus Valley was an amalgam of Vedic and pre-Vedic civilisations.*

*Anthropology which was the colonial instrument to study the colonised people — savages — as the other people turned into the study of the forests and hills people in India — which was founded on the colonial western view that forests are antithetic to civilisation and are therefore backward and those living in forests and hills are not civilised people.*

*There is undoubtedly a paradigm difference between colonial Anthropology which regards forests as backward and ancient Indian view which regards forests as places of enlightenment and scientific engagement with nature. In the Indian civilisation plains people have moved to forest for pursuit of higher knowledge — known as Vanaprasta — and forest people to have moved to plains.*

*There was continuous civilisational intercourse between forest and plains which is illustrated by Indian philosophy, Vedic literature and the several Puranas, principally the Ramayana and Mahabharata. In Ramayana Shri Rama embraces Guha, the Monkey kings and the tribal lady Sabari as his equals. In fact, Rama, in the Ramayana says, ignored the Vedic rishis, to give importance to the tribal lady Sabari, and ate the fruit which she had bitten and found tasty to be offered to him! He considered her as more superior to the learned Vedic Pandits. The western idea that forest and hills people are less civilised was alien to the India civilisation. This was because, in Indian civilisation, the idea of who was civilised and who was not, was founded on the quality of evolution of the human mind and not where one lived, forest, hills, or plains, or lived in huts or bungalows, or wore good or bad dress.*

*In India, those living in forests and in plains had a common history and social and cultural interface unlike in no other part of the world. This forest-plains civilisational relations has been highlighted in the UN Debar Commission Report in early 1960s on forest and hills people. The forest-plains social and civilisational intercourse was stopped by the colonists by segregating the forest people as the other people based on their anthropology and thus creating an artificial divide which never existed in the Indian civilisation. The colonial period pictures of most plains people would look as if they are the forest people as well.*

*The panel advocate extensive research to uncover the social capital of traditional communities and to establish their Indian narrative through an objective interpretation of empirical data. And propose a civilizational approach to understanding the historical, cultural, and social dimensions of these communities, which have been integral to Indian civilization.*

## **Speakers**

- 1. Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi, Member Secretary, IGNC*
- 2. Shri. Raghvendra Singh, Senior Fellow, VIF*
- 3. Prof. Sabita Acharya, Vice Chancellor, Utkal University*
- 4. Prof. T.V. Kattimani, Vice Chancellor, Central Tribal University Andhra Pradesh*
- 5. Prof. Deepak Kumar Behera, Vice Chancellor, KISS, DU*
- 6. Prof. K. Anil Kumar, HoD, JS Division, IGNC*
- 7. Prof. P.C. Joshi, Former VC, DU*
- 8. Prof. S.M. Patnaik, Head Dept of Anthropology, DU, Former VC, Utkal University*
- 9. Prof. P. Venkata Rao, Former Dean HCU*
- 10. Prof. M. Romesh Singh, HoD, Anthropology, UoH*
- 11. Prof. K. R. Rama Mohan, Head Dept of Anthropology, Sikkim University.*

# SESSIONS

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<b>SESSION 01</b>	
<b>STUDIES IN URBAN ANTHROPOLOGY</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Uttam Singh	Liminality is an Urban Form: A Case Study of Dharamshala, India
Subham Kumar Darpan	Urban Slums and the Dynamics of Marginalization: A Study in Varanasi
Ishdeep Kaur Bhandari	Digital Anthropology in India: Bridging Tradition and Modernity
Ayananshu Chakrabarti	Geo-Social Networking (GSN) Application and Digital Intimacy: Perception and Experience of Unmarried Youth Sexual Minority Men
Shreyashee Pandey	Landmines and Lives: The Impact of Trauma on Women in Jammu and Kashmir

**Liminality is an Urban Form: A Case Study of Dharamshala, India**

Uttam Singh

This paper outlines the urban form that emerges in-between the neat binaries of legal-illegal, authorized-unauthorized, formal-informal and planned-unplanned. It explores how these binaries interact, sit together relationally, negotiate, improvise and produce activities, practices and structures in the city. It argues that Indian cities have been burgeoning in-between binaries, where the state, its organizational structure and mechanism coexist and co-function with the practices of people which gives a form to the city which termed planned, legal and authorized. Along with this city also grows spontaneous responses of people that emerge from changing political and economic structure of society. Such responses are discussed as unplanned, illegal and unauthorized. In-between these two antitheses of binaries create a situation of ambiguity in the regulatory framework that lacks to map the boundaries between legal-illegal and planned-unplanned. The interplay between these binaries creates a space where cities function and grow, spatially, and morphologically, to produce an urban form. This paper incorporates liminality— a methodological, theoretical, explorative and analytical toolkit to engage not only single binaries but in-between binaries. Liminality as an urban form touches multiple dimensions composed around material structures and physical spaces having social, economic, legal, and political modes.

**Urban Slums and the Dynamics of Marginalization: A Study in Varanasi**

Subham Kumar Darpan

Urban Anthropology explores the transformative journey of human success in shaping cultural landscapes. This anthropological study explores the socio-economic and cultural dynamics of urban slums in Varanasi, focusing on Nariya and Bajardiha areas. The research examines the rapid urbanization and unplanned development that have catalyzed the proliferation of slums, with rural-to-urban migration and governance inefficiencies as major contributors. Through anthropological tools—surveys, interviews, and analysis of municipal records—the study evaluates the socio-economic and health conditions of slum dwellers including their housing, health, literacy, and economic status. Findings reveal a dual narrative: slum dwellers as essential contributors to the urban economy and as marginalized victims of systemic neglect. The research highlights poor infrastructure, inadequate sanitation, limited educational opportunities, and health vulnerabilities, exacerbating their socio-economic struggles. Recommendations emphasize preventive and curative measures, including participatory urban planning, socio-economic reforms, gender-sensitive approaches, and sustainable slum rehabilitation. The study also calls for integrating NGOs and private-sector roles in improving living conditions and fostering inclusive urban growth. By addressing the challenges of slum proliferation and urban poverty, this study underscores the importance of a holistic approach to urbanization, aiming to achieve socio-economic equity and environmental sustainability. It contributes to the broader discourse on urban anthropology by analyzing the interplay between migration, poverty, and urban planning in developing cities.

## Digital Anthropology in India: Bridging Tradition and Modernity

Ishdeep Kaur Bhandari

The rapid proliferation of digital technologies in India has created a dynamic intersection between tradition and modernity, offering new avenues for cultural preservation and transformation. While digital technologies offer opportunities to preserve and celebrate India's diverse heritage, they also pose challenges such as cultural homogenization, misinformation, and the digital divide. This paper is based on the secondary sources which explores the emerging field of digital anthropology in the Indian context, examining how digital platforms, tools, and practices are reshaping the way traditions are sustained, reimagined, and transmitted across generations. It delves into the digitization of cultural heritage, the promotion of traditional arts and crafts through e-commerce, and the role of social media in fostering cultural hybridization. The paper identifies transformative opportunities, including the empowerment of artisans, the use of virtual reality for immersive cultural experiences, and the promotion of inclusivity and regional diversity through localized digital content. By critically analyzing these intersections, the paper argues that digital anthropology can serve as a powerful tool to bridge tradition and modernity in India. It concludes by proposing pathways to ensure that digital technologies are leveraged inclusively and ethically, ensuring the preservation and revitalization of India's cultural legacy in the digital age.

## Geo-Social Networking (Gsn) Application and Digital Intimacy: Perception and Experience of Unmarried Youth Sexual Minority Men (Smm)

Ayananshu Chakrabarti

**Introduction:** Around the world, SMM are facing widespread stigma and discrimination, and they are subjected to physical, mental, and sexual violence. GSN applications have become important socialization contexts for the SMM. Despite their popularity, because of subject's sensitivity and some cultural boundaries, there is limited research carried out in South Asian countries, especially in India. **Objective:** The exploratory study attempts to elucidate the perception of unmarried youth SMM (15-29 years) and the evaluation of their involvement and experiences regarding the usage of GSN applications. **Methods:** A pretested questionnaire, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions have been employed to collect the data. The generated responses were analysed through thematic content analysis along with simple quantitative extents for different variable groups. **Results:** The study was conducted with a total of forty-two SMMs (gay and bisexual) who have had an account the on Grindr app as a GSN application. Findings show app users do not only use the app for the satisfaction of lust but also to make friendships, casual dates, and time pass. Results also reveal that the app is a useful tool for SMMs to easily connect and communicate with their community; though sometimes users have experienced incidents of sexual discrimination, harassment, and unwanted intimacy. **Conclusion:** This study constitutes the unique attempt to sample the patterns of dating app use in sexual encounter arrangements among SMMs in Kolkata. Results will enhance existing programs on sex education, safe sex, and the encouragement of safer

practices in app usage and sexual activities. This paper not only draws an academic attention on perception and involvements to virtual dating real meetings in the Indian context; but also highlights the need for further empirical research.

**Landmines and Lives: The Impact of Trauma on Women in Jammu and Kashmir**  
Shreyashee Pandey

This paper explores the lived experience of a young woman from a border village, whose life was profoundly affected after losing her leg due to a landmine explosion. Drawing on Rebecca Lester's framework of a critical anthropology of trauma, this study examines how trauma is not merely an individual psychological event but also a socially mediated experience. Her narrative sheds light on how trauma unfolds in the everyday life, reshaping her sense of identity, relationships, and aspirations. By situating this personal narrative within the anthropological literature on trauma, the study contributes to discussions on healing, agency, and resilience in conflict zones. This narrative also highlights the gendered social expectations and personal grief, which further amplifies the effects of trauma. Through in-depth qualitative analysis, the paper discusses the broader implications of trauma on psychological well-being, social support, and identity reconstruction. It argues that understanding trauma in borderlands necessitates attention to the dislocated social fabric and processes of reconnecting to community and meaning-making.

<b>SESSION 02</b>	
<b>HIDDEN CHALLENGES OF HEALTH CARE: THE CHRONICALLY III, THE DIFFERENTLY ABLED AND THE SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Amulya Kalangi	From Hope to Healing: The Lived Experiences of Kidney Transplant Patients in Telangana
Avanish Kumar Tripathi & Udai Pratap Singh	Need of an Inclusive and Accessible Transgender Healthcare in India
Chandrima Chakraborty	A Study On Socio-Economic And Health Status Of Beggars Of Religious Places Of Greater Kolkata
Athira Kamal	Risky Genes and Uncertain Futures: Implications of BRCA Gene Testing in Kerala
Sila Jana & Dipak K. Midya	Elder Abuse and Functional Disabilities: A Comparative Study of Tribal and Non-Tribal Older Adults in Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal, India
Gulshan Saklani	Psychological Impact of Covid-19 on Healthcare Workers: Analysing Anxiety, Depression, and Resilience During and Post-Pandemic

## From Hope to Healing: The Lived Experiences of Kidney Transplant Patients in Telangana

Amulya Kalangi

**Introduction:** This anthropological study investigates the lived experiences of kidney transplant patients in Telangana, emphasizing their emotional, social, and cultural adaptations following transplantation. Utilizing a qualitative methodology that includes semi-structured interviews and case studies, the research delves into the personal narratives of patients, revealing the complexities surrounding their coping mechanisms post-surgery. Kidney transplantation is often perceived as a symbol of hope and renewal; however, it can also introduce a range of psychological challenges. This study aims to understand these challenges through the lens of the patients' lived experiences. **Methodology:** The research employs a qualitative approach, conducting semi-structured interviews with kidney transplant recipients. Participants were selected using convenience and snowball sampling methods, targeting adults aged 18 years and older, encompassing both male and female patients. This approach allowed for a diverse representation of experiences and perspectives. **Findings:** The findings indicate that while transplantation offers a second chance at life, it also brings ambivalence. Patients expressed gratitude for their new lease on life but simultaneously grappled with fears of graft rejection in the initial days post-transplant and anxiety, difficulties in dealing with other complications post-transplant. 1. Coping Mechanisms: The study highlights the significance of strong familial and community support systems in shaping these experiences. Patients often relied on close relationships to mitigate feelings of isolation, and find strength to stay strong. 2. Cultural Influences: Cultural beliefs and societal expectations significantly influenced coping strategies. Some participants reported finding solace in spirituality, while others utilized online resources to better understand their condition, to be prepared and stay strong to face the situations. 3. Trust in Healthcare Providers: A subset of patients emphasized the importance of trusting their medical team as a key element in their coping process. **Conclusion:** By illuminating the intricate dynamics of lived experiences, this study advocates for a holistic approach to patient care that integrates emotional well-being alongside medical outcomes, ensuring that kidney transplant patients receive the support necessary for successful adaptation and recovery.

## Need of an Inclusive and Accessible Transgender Healthcare in India

Avanish Kumar Tripathi & Udai Pratap Singh

Transgender individuals face severe discrimination and structural barriers while accessing healthcare needs for their survival in the 21st century. The constitution of India bans all forms of discrimination among citizens and allows equal access of resources to every individual. Healthcare stereotype threat (HCST), the fear and threat of being perceived negatively based on identity related prejudices, is a major self-barrier in attaining healthcare access by the trans individuals. **Objective:** In the view of the above the present paper aims to find out the barriers in accessing health care by the trans gender community for inclusive healthcare facilities in

India. **Methods:** The researcher conducted a survey through interview schedule for collecting first hand data regarding personal experiences of transgender individuals in healthcare facilities, the discrimination they face and the reason behind the discrimination. The data was analysed using various tool and technique. **Result:** Majority of transgender individuals reported experiencing discrimination at healthcare facilities and by healthcare service providers. The major reasons for the discriminatory behaviour towards the community was (i) social prejudice (ii) lack of trans health literacy (iii) lack of medical and health infrastructures (iv) homophobia (v) insurance and administrative challenges. **Conclusion:** It is noted that exists wide healthcare disparity and inequality among transgender community. It is need of the hour to reform the medical and public health curriculum to build a work force aware of the community needs. The policy and structural barriers should be eliminated to develop an inclusive health care environment in India.

### **A study on socio-economic and health status of beggars of religious places of greater kolkata**

Chandrima Chakraborty and Subir Biswas

**Introduction:** The present study is done on the Beggars of religious places like Dakshineswar Kali Temple, Kalighat Kali Temple, Hanuman Temple (Dumdum) , Syed Shah Baba Mazar, Bagdadi Shah Baba Mazar, Satti Peer Mazar. There is no central law in India that criminalizes begging, though there are 20 states and 2 union territories have their own ‘anti-begging’ law and West Bengal is not among those 20 states. The most common and well known ‘anti-begging’ law after Independence is “The Prevention of Begging Act, 1959” (Bombay). **Objectives:** This study includes the following objectives, I. To study Socio-economic status of Beggars of greater Kolkata, especially who are begging in religious places. II. To study health and nutritional status of Beggars of greater Kolkata, especially who are begging in religious places. **Materials and Methods:** This study was a cross sectional study conducted on adult Beggars; their number was 505. As the population was adult BMI was used to evaluate their nutritional status; for socioeconomic condition data on educational status, marital status, income per month were also taken. **Results and Discussion:** In the case of BMI, both the sexes have highest percentage in the Normal category (20.0-24.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup> ). Some people found among ‘overweight’ group. In case of educational Status, highest percentage is found among the persons not having formal education. The widow and widower group are found in a large number.

### **Risky Genes and Uncertain Futures: Implications of Brca Gene Testing in Kerala**

Athira Kamal

The testing for BRCA1&2 genes has taken the developed nations by storm over the past two decades. Although limited laboratory facilities and the high cost of testing limit Indian citizens’ access to genetic screening, oncologists in Kerala are increasingly referring second-generation breast cancer patients for BRCA gene testing. Caught between the need for knowledge and anticipatory anxiety over potential cancer presentations, Malayali breast cancer patients find

themselves navigating the difficult terrain of genetic predisposition and individual responsibility to self and family. On the one hand, in the age of preventative medicine and targeted gene therapy, the knowledge of BRCA mutation equips healthcare providers to customize treatment regimes. On the other hand, women have a harder time accepting not only that they might have to undergo prophylactic procedures but also the possibility of the mutation being present in their family members.

Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork among 35 breast cancer patients and survivors in Kerala, I depict how breast cancer patients who are mothers of young, unmarried daughters are particularly cautious about undergoing the test for BRCA mutation. This paper will also show the vulnerabilities of women who have tested positive for the mutation and how they construct an illness narrative that balances anticipatory anxiety and intergenerational responsibility.

### **Elder Abuse and Functional Disabilities: A Comparative Study of Tribal and Non-Tribal Older Adults in Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal, India**

Sila Jana & Dipak K. Midya

With the massive increase in the older population worldwide, elder abuse is now recognized as a significant public health concern. The present study attempted to examine the association of functional limitations and elder abuse among the tribal and non-tribal communities in West Bengal, India within a comparative framework. Using a pretested questionnaire for data collection, the present cross-sectional study was conducted among 220 older adults in Paschim Medinipur district. Activity of Daily Living (ADL) and Vulnerable to Abuse Screening Scale (VASS) were employed to assess the level of functional impairments and mistreatment. The study showed that tribal older adults (20%) were less abused compared to their non-tribal counterparts (44.5%). Substantially, 58.1% of older people with functional impairment were victims of abuse. Additionally, 83.8% and 38.8% of non-tribal and tribal older people with functional impairment suffered from abuse respectively. Furthermore, non-tribal older adults were 0.07 times more likely to suffer from abuse (AOR: 0.07; CI: 0.023-0.217) than their tribal counterparts. Similarly, respondents who have functional impairments were 0.055 times more likely to be abused compared to their counterparts (AOR: 0.055; CI: 0.015-0.204). Non-tribal older adults with functional impairments were higher odds to suffer from abuse (AOR: 0.041; CI: 0.011-0.155) compared to the tribal older adults with no functional impairments. However, being widow (AOR: 0.415; CI 0.172, 1.005) and having no formal education (AOR: 0.033; CI 0.003, 0.382) and with education up to upper primary level (AOR: 0.07; CI 0.006, 0.824) were also found to be significant predictors of mistreatment among older adults. The study concluded that non-tribal older people with functional dependency were in a vulnerable state of being mistreated. Preventive measures should be taken to protect older people from being mistreated.

### **Psychological Impact of Covid-19 on Healthcare Workers: Analysing Anxiety, Depression, and Resilience During and Post-Pandemic**

Gulshan Saklani

The COVID-19 pandemic placed enormous pressure on global healthcare systems, with frontline healthcare workers (HCWs) experiencing severe mental health consequences. The COVID-19 pandemic posed unprecedented challenges to healthcare workers (HCWs), leading to significant psychological distress, including anxiety, depression, and burnout. Studies worldwide reported increased prevalence of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and burnout among HCWs. This paper investigates the short-term and long-term psychological impact of pandemic on HCWs and examines the prevalence and factors influencing these mental health outcomes, with a focus on resilience strategies employed by HCWs in mitigating adverse effects during and after the pandemic. A systematic review and meta-analysis of peer-reviewed studies were conducted, highlighting key psychological stressors, coping mechanisms, and long-term implications including studies published between January 2020 and December 2023 using databases such as PubMed, ScienceDirect, and The Lancet. The review of studies highlights an increased distress among younger HCWs, female workers, and those in emergency or intensive care units along with the significant psychological burden of COVID-19 on HCWs, emphasizing the importance of resilience strategies. It is reported that countries with well-integrated mental health programs, such as Australia and Canada, reported lower distress levels. The findings emphasize the need for systematic psychological support for HCWs. Policymakers should prioritize HCW mental health by implementing robust support frameworks to prevent long-term burnout and psychological distress. Findings also suggest that targeted interventions, policy support, and mental health resources are crucial for sustaining healthcare workforce well-being in future public health crises. Future pandemic preparedness must include structured mental health interventions for HCWs.

<b>SESSION 03</b>	
<b>SUSTAINING SOCIO-CULTURAL HERITAGE</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Dhritisnata Saikia & Sudip Dutta	Echoes of Rain: Understanding Frog Marriage (Bhekulir Biya) as A Symbolic and Agricultural Practice in Assam
Amit K. Maiti & Dipak K. Midya	Waying Out of Debt: Ceremonial Exchange and Reduction of Economic Burden among the Bhumij Tribe of Jhargram, West Bengal
Catherine Thuam Ngaih Nem	Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Cultural Practices of the Zo People: A Study of Spirituality and Community Dynamics
Dibyajyoti Das	The Importance of Paang to the Noctes of Arunachal Pradesh in the Midst of Social Change in Modern Times
Preeti Sagar	Modernization and its Impact on Indigenous Knowledge Systems: Strategies for Cultural Preservation among the Musahars
Krishna Kant Manas & Sonia Kaushal	Street Art in Kolkata: An Anthropological Study of Artistic Expression and Resistance
Gangotri Bhuyan	Traditional Cultural Heritage, Digital Preservation and Community Participation in Mayong, Assam

## **Echoes of Rain: Understanding Frog Marriage (Bhekulir Biya) as A Symbolic and Agricultural Practice in Assam**

Dhritisnata Saikia & Sudip Dutta

The main focus of this paper is to explore the cultural practice of Bhekulir biya (frog marriage) In Assam, Northeast India, as a native solution to agricultural challenges caused by unpredictable weather. Among the Assamese community, which is rooted deeply in agrarian lifestyle, during drought time this unique ritual is celebrated with the indigenous belief that the croaking of frogs can invite rainfall by appealing rain God. This study aims to get an insight of this ritual's symbolic aspect, focusing on how this practice serves not only as a call for rain but as a means of human-nature relationships and strengthening community identity. The objectives of the present study are as follows: i. To examine frog marriage as a unique cultural occurrence that reflects the Assamese community's dependency on ritual to influence natural forces and animistic beliefs. ii. To recognise frog marriage as a practical response to ecological challenges in a rustic society. iii. The paper will disclose the meanings associated with the animal symbolism in indigenous agricultural folklore through searching the symbolic use of frogs. The study observes how rituals like frog marriage shows a native understanding of environmental cycle and showcase communal efforts to support ecological balance for a successful harvesting. Through this study, researcher aim to enlighten, how frog marriage, as an indigenous response to agricultural challenge, reveals the Assamese community's belief systems and their twisted ties to both cultural heritage and agricultural sustainability. This research aims to come up with broader anthropological discussions on the intersection of environment, cultural practice and rural livelihoods in rustic indigenous societies.

## **Waying Out of Debt: Ceremonial Exchange and Reduction of Economic Burden among The Bhumij Tribe of Jhargram, West Bengal**

Amit K. Maiti & Dipak K. Midya

This present paper explicates the nature of indebtedness among the Bhumij tribe living in Jhargram district of West Bengal and attempts to ascertain how reciprocity contributes to reduce the economic burden. The data collected through ethnographic method reveals that limited resource, skill and access to resource because of marginalized human capital leads to debt situation among the study population. The structure of debt among them is surrounded within the neighbor group and their closed relatives; although financial institutions sometimes contribute to satisfy their debt requirement. Although the study population relies on a number of coping mechanisms to get rid-off the debt at their household level, reciprocity and ceremonial exchange remain important strategies to overcome the burden of household debt.

## **Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Cultural Practices of the Zo People: A Study of Spirituality and Community Dynamics**

Catherine Thuam Ngaih Nem

This research investigates the Indigenous knowledge and practices of the Zo people, emphasizing the intricate relationship between their pre-Christian beliefs and socio-cultural dynamics. The study reveals how traditional concepts, rituals, and spiritual beliefs were deeply embedded in the Zo community's way of life before the arrival of Christianity. It highlights the significance of animistic practices, reverence for Tung Pathian (God), and ancestral worship, illustrating how these elements shaped their worldview and community behavior. Through a multidimensional analysis, the research examines the profound socio-religious transformation that occurred with the transition to Christianity, exploring the nuanced interplay between pre-Christian elements and the new faith. The study employs qualitative methodologies, drawing from diverse sources such as oral narratives, tribal recognition policies, and folk cultures to comprehensively understand the Zos spiritual landscape. Furthermore, the research contextualizes Zo religiosity within broader anthropological frameworks, shedding light on how their customs and practices reflect their Indigenous spirituality. It underlines the resilience of their cultural identity amidst external influences, revealing the continuity of traditional beliefs in contemporary practices. Ultimately, this investigation contributes valuable insights into the rich tapestry of Indigenous knowledge systems, enhancing scholarly discourse on the interplay between religion, culture, and social cohesion in Indigenous communities. The findings deepen the importance of preserving and understanding Indigenous practices as vital components of cultural heritage and identity.

### **The Importance of "Paang" to the Noctes of Arunachal Pradesh in the Midst of Social Change in Modern Times**

Dibyajyoti Das

The establishment of youth dormitories, referred to locally as "Paan" or "Paang," is part of the rich cultural legacy of the Noctes, an indigenous tribal tribe in Arunachal Pradesh. These dormitories have long been an important part of Nocte youths' social, cultural, and educational lives. In the Nocte society, the name "Paang" refers to the social institution or dormitories. From the beginning to the present, this social institution has been essential to the tribe's social life. Among the Noctes, it is the hub of the village government, where all issues pertaining to village life are started and concluded. Additionally, it serves as a hub for learning about the tribe's traditional culture. The goal of this study is to shed light on the dormitory system maintained by the Nocte tribe in Borduria village, which is located in the Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh, India. However, the conventional design and purposes of these dorms are changing significantly as a result of modernization, globalization, and urbanization. The Noctes' youth dormitory is an example of cultural resilience in the face of swift societal change. Nocte identity and community cohesion are still influenced by the old Paang system, despite its decline. The institution's existence in a society that increasingly values globalization above regional cultures depends on striking a balance between tradition and modernity. The ethnographic fieldwork conducted in the Borduria village of the Tirap area in 2024 served as the basis for this paper. The purpose of the paper is to identify the importance, its function and significance of its existence in the contemporary society.

## **Modernization and its Impact on Indigenous Knowledge Systems: Strategies for Cultural Preservation among the Musahars**

Preeti Sagar

Modernization, the process in which modern scientific knowledge is introduced in the society has significantly impacted indigenous knowledge, thus affecting the indigenous communities' cultural, social, and economic structures. This study examines the effects of modernization on the Musahar community in Ballia district, Uttar Pradesh, with a focus on the degradation of their indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices. Musahars who were primarily dependent on traditional occupations such as agricultural labour and rat-catching are now facing challenges from industrialization, migration, and caste-based discrimination. Traditional livelihoods have become obsolete as a result of these changes, and cultural customs such as distinctive festivals, rituals, and eating habits have declined. As per data collected through focused group discussions and in-depth interviews, Musahars frequently reside in remote hamlets where they struggle financially and have little access to education. Many neighborhood people continue to be kept out of mainstream development prospects, even if some work in low-paying vocations like selling handmade leaf plates or labouring in brick kilns. Though still existing, cultural customs such as worshipping deities like Sevariya Mai are becoming less common in contemporary environments. The paper highlights the necessity of maintaining the indigenous knowledge system of the Musahars in the face of modernization. Using traditional skills to promote sustainable livelihoods, recording oral traditions, and integrating indigenous knowledge into educational systems are important approaches. Policies that deal with socioeconomic concerns and empower the community are also essential for cultural preservation. The study emphasizes how essential it is to achieve a balance between modernization and the preservation of indigenous knowledge, and it provides helpful recommendations to guarantee that groups like the Musahars maintain their identity while embracing modernity.

## **Street Art in Kolkata: An Anthropological Study of Artistic Expression and Resistance**

Krishna Kant Manas & Sonia Kaushal

Street art and graffiti are integral parts of urban landscapes, with rich historical roots and diverse artistic styles. In Kolkata, these forms of visual expression have played a significant role as both artistic and political mediums since the 1970s, particularly during the Naxalbari movement. Street art has the power to transform urban spaces, challenge societal norms, and offer new perspectives on socio-political issues. The proposed paper focuses on the role of street art and graffiti in Kolkata by examining their influence on the city's social, cultural, and political fabric with the help of the anthropological lens. For the present study, the data was collected through qualitative research methods—including interviews and observations to investigate the various forms of street art and graffiti in Kolkata, their spatial distribution, and the motivations driving their creation. The findings reveal that street art and graffiti are not just the visual artefacts but are embedded in the life experiences of urban communities. It represents

a form of visual voice where people and different groups share the collective memory, struggles and resistance. The study also highlights the challenges associated with the legality and safety of street art and the artists. These challenges underscore the tension between street art as a form of cultural expression and its perception as a disruption to the urban order.

### **Traditional Cultural Heritage, Digital Preservation and Community Participation in Mayong, Assam**

Gangotri Bhuyan

Cultural heritage is an expression of ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, which includes practices, customs, objects, things of artistic values and expressions. The preservation of the past is necessary as it helps in recognizing the things which would tell and validate the story of the past to the future. The object of past can be preserved in the form of digitizing (through digital media) as well as in museums or research centres. Communities act as traditional repositories of heritage – be it tangible or intangible. With the development of digital media, digital technologies can be tools for preservation, local story telling as well as virtual off-sites. The study aims to understand community participation in the preservation activities of traditional cultural heritage in relation to the identification of appropriate tools or initiatives which can facilitate the process. The research was conducted among the community inhabiting Mayong in Morigaon district of Assam. Mayong is known as a land of black magic, witchcraft, sorcery and tantric practices, spiritual healing and indigenous medicinal systems since medieval times. Data collection was done through interviews and case studies. The present paper is based on preliminary survey that was carried out to assess the awareness among the community in relation to usage of digital media and their involvement in preservation of traditional heritage like objects, manuscripts, texts etc.

<b>SESSION 04</b>	
<b>Cultural Symbols and Identities</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Ayantika Bhattacharjee	Sarnaism: A Transformative Journey of Commingling Tribal Religious Identity in Jharkhand
Banita Behara	Reimagining Lesedi Cultural Village of South Africa: Intangible Heritage for A Sustainable Future
Pinky Sisa & Jayanta Kumar Nayak	Death and Afterlife: A Comparative Study of the Funeral Practices of Bonda and Koya Tribes in Odisha
Karung Hoineikham Kom & Mayanglambam Manibabu	Household Ritual Practices: A Case among the Koms of Manipur
Subeno Kithan	Beyond Celebration: The Complex Dynamics of Cultural and Religious Identity around the Hornbill Festival in Nagaland.
Satchidananda Dash & Paramananda Naik	Intergenerational Transmission of Food Culture: A Study of the Sounti Community of Odisha

## **Sarnaism: A Transformative Journey of Commingling Tribal Religious Identity in Jharkhand**

Ayantika Bhattacharjee

The tribal communities of Jharkhand, India, are increasingly advocating for a distinct religious identity known as the "Sarna code." This movement took its baby step when the Jharkhand state government recognized Sarna as a separate religion in 2020. However, the Central Government has not tried to legitimize 'Sarna' as a code in the Census form. So, the vital election 2024 of our country, both at the state and central levels, greatly impacted tribal religious identity. During campaigning, political parties utilized this issue to attract voters, while grassroots activists emphasized the slogan "*Code Nehitoh Vote Nehi*" (No code, no vote). A group tribal population faces significant pressure regarding the 'delisting' of their Scheduled Tribe (ST) status, which is often affected by conversions to other religions. The tribal groups in the region are primarily divided into three groups: firstly, the Sarna followers, then the converted Christian tribals, and the Hindu-influenced tribals, leading to tensions and confusion regarding their cultural and religious identity. Most of the Sarna followers do not consider converted Christians as part of their tribal group, complicating the push for a unified tribal identity. This paper explores the Sarna movement and its political implications, drawing on Ted Gur's relative deprivation theory to understand the socio-economic challenges faced by the tribes, alongside Homi Bhabha's idea of a third space to examine the complexities of tribal religiopolitical identity. The findings indicate a growing assertiveness among the tribal communities in Jharkhand regarding their identity and rights, with political representation enhancing their ability to manifest a distinct presence in the broader society.

## **Reimagining Lesedi Cultural Village of South Africa: Intangible Heritage for A Sustainable Future**

Banita Behera

Cultural villages have arisen as important locations for promoting intangible heritage and cultural tourism. These villages are famous tourist attractions in South Africa; however, they are frequently criticized for how they depict culture and identity. Critics contend that cultural villages frequently promote myths rather than true cultural narratives, portraying identities and customs in a static, ahistorical, and essentialist manner, as if frozen in time. These criticisms pose an important question, to what extent do these cultural and identity representations help to develop an inclusive and coherent national identity? This question is especially important when redesigning museums and intangible heritage for a sustainable future. Cultural representations, such as cultural villages, serve as reflections of how communities perceive themselves and their interactions with others. They have the capacity to impede or assist efforts to create new, inclusive identities in diverse cultures. This study examines the correlative contributions of Lesedi cultural village to forging a cohesive national identity reflecting it as case study. It investigates how these places might go beyond static depictions of history, instead embracing dynamic and participative techniques that represent the daily realities of culture and

identity. This study reimagines the role of Lesedi cultural village in protecting intangible heritage.

### **Death and Afterlife: A Comparative Study of the Funeral Practices of Bonda and Koya Tribes in Odisha**

Pinky Sisa & Jayanta Kumar Nayak

The concepts of death and the afterlife have deep cultural significance, often shaping funeral practices that reflect a community's beliefs, values, and traditions. This study undertakes a comparative analysis of the funeral practices of the Bonda and Koya tribes of Malkangiri district of Odisha, two indigenous groups with distinct cultural identities. While both tribes share animistic beliefs and a reverence for nature, their funeral rites differ regarding rituals, symbols, and their interpretation of the afterlife. The Bonda emphasize ancestor worship and elaborate rituals to ensure the departed soul's peaceful transition to the spirit world. In contrast, the Koya's focus on community participation and symbolic practices that highlight the cyclical nature of life and death. This study explores the socio-religious underpinnings of these practices, emphasizing their significance in maintaining tribal cohesion and identity. It also examines the role of oral traditions, ritual objects, and the ecological context in shaping these funeral customs. By delving into the narratives of the afterlife among these tribes, the research highlights the diverse ways in which death is understood and commemorated within tribal societies. Furthermore, the study discusses the impact of modernization and external influences on these traditional practices. This comparative analysis aims to contribute to the broader understanding of tribal cosmology, death rituals, and the preservation of cultural heritage in a rapidly changing world.

### **Household Ritual Practices: A Case among the Koms of Manipur**

Karung Hoineikham Kom & Mayanglambam Mani Babu

This paper tries to explore the beliefs, practices and rituals surrounding the household individuals amongst the Kom community of Manipur. The fact that the Kom rituals practiced during bygone pre-Christian days has had symbolic correlation of the traditional principle. The traditional house in terms of its structure and space were intertwined with symbolic values as well as with the multiple layering of the rituals' perception, giving rise with the performance of ritual surrounding the household deities. Main household rituals among the pre-Christian ancestral Kom includes; worshipping of clan God/ household God (*kasha Pathen kamuk*) in paddy harvesting ceremony (*thaiterlom*), child naming (*Ai-khisōk*), worshipping of deity in non-domestic house (*inrui pathen kamuk*) after harvesting, *future checking of new couple* (*hmeiringahkhanmeh*). This paper briefly highlights some of the traditional life cycle rituals that are connected with the biological crises of life concerning with the household members following birth, initiation, marriage, etc, and tries to bring out the symbolic dimensions and meaning of household rituals through Clifford Geertz theory of cultural analysis.

### **Beyond Celebration: the Complex Dynamics of Cultural and Religious Identity around the Hornbill Festival in Nagaland**

Subeno Kithan

The Hornbill Festival of Nagaland, which celebrated its 25th edition in December 2024, has successfully attracted global attention to Naga culture, drawing thousands of tourists and enhancing the visibility of Naga culture both nationally and internationally. This event provides a vibrant showcase of cultural celebrations, captivating attendees and anthropologists alike. However, the paternalistic attitudes of anthropologists—who once regarded preservation efforts as a “gift” to Indigenous peoples, often without consulting them or considering their evolving needs—have faced criticism from Indigenous scholars. In recent decades, there has been a growing acknowledgement of the agency of Indigenous peoples in determining which aspects of their culture should be preserved and how. The Hornbill Festival marks a significant proactive step at the state level to safeguard Naga culture; nonetheless, it has also generated resentment among various groups and individuals within the community. Concerns have emerged regarding the “exoticisation” of Naga traditions, leading to a consumer-driven promotion of cultural practices that some perceive as distorting the authentic Naga lifestyle and even as anti-Christian. The cultural and religious identities of the Nagas are intertwined in complex and sometimes contradictory ways. On one side, a strong call for cultural preservation drives the state government for such an elaborate festival, wooing both domestic and international tourists. On the other side, many from within the community have expressed increasing discontent with the festival, viewing it as threatening the ‘Christian Naga’ way of life. This paper uses empirical data to explore the internal and external tensions surrounding the festival, exploring issues of cultural commodification and consumerism and the complexities of Naga identity, which intertwines age-old traditions with Christianity. It further examines the benefits and challenges posed by the global spotlight on Indigenous traditions, as exemplified by the Hornbill Festival.

### **Intergenerational Transmission of Food Culture: A Study of the Sounti Community of Odisha**

Satchidananda Dash & Paramananda Naik

Indigenous tribes rely heavily on their culinary traditions to preserve their ecological knowledge and cultural history. This anthropological research looks at how the Sounti tribe of Odisha passes down food-related customs from one generation to the next, with an emphasis on the methods used to preserve and pass down culinary knowledge. A thorough examination of the Sounti tribe's culinary customs, including native ingredients, cooking techniques, and their sociocultural and ecological relevance, is part of the study's scope. It also discusses the threats to the continuation of traditional eating habits posed by urbanisation, socioeconomic shifts, and outside food systems. Documenting Sounti food practices, examining the role of elders in passing down culinary knowledge, evaluating the effects of globalisation and modernisation on these customs, and emphasising the value of preserving indigenous food systems for cultural preservation and sustainability are the main goals. The study highlights how seniors are the main keepers of traditional foodways, which include growing native crops

like millets, gathering wild foods, and cooking meals that hold cultural significance. With qualitative research techniques, such as participant observation and in-depth interviews, this study investigates the ecological and social settings in which the Sounti community transmits food knowledge. It shows how eating habits can be used to promote social cohesiveness, cultural values, and environmentally friendly behaviors in addition to providing a means of subsistence. Younger generations interact with these customs in ways that reflect the demands of modern life while preserving essential aspects of tradition, according to the study, which also looks at the effects of modernization, migration, and the growing influence of globalized food systems on these traditions. The results highlight the critical role that elders play in helping to preserve culinary knowledge in the face of outside threats like urbanization and economic change. The study emphasizes how important it is to thoroughly document and protect indigenous food systems, both as a means of preserving culture and as a possible tool for tackling global issues like food security and sustainability. For indigenous food traditions to survive in the face of changing global dynamics, the study promotes policies that encourage their revival and generational transmission.

<b>SESSION 05</b>	
<b>Anthropology and Gender Studies</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Geetanjali Panda	Unravelling Gender Injustice among Fisherwomen: The Impact of Migration
K Rajan & Sunil John J	Gender Relations in the Polyandrous Households of Thiyyas of Malabar
Sreeparna Banerjee, Manoranjan Pal, Subir Biswas & Premananda Bharati	The Quality of Life of Women in India: Exploring Regional Realities
Aarshi Jahan	Experiences of Researching with Women of Oraon Tribe Decoding Gendered Complexities and Subjectivities in Rural Jharkhand
Saubhagya Laxmi Singh	Land or No Land? Case of Adivasi Women in Odisha
Debjani Bhattacharya & Abhijit Das	“We Are Here, We Are Enjoying Ourselves!”: An Ethnographic Exploration on Gender Equity through Adventure Sports in A Summer Camp at Rinchenpong, Sikkim, India
Sujan Bera & Sumahan Bandyopadhyay	When Living Is a Persistent Struggle: Livelihood, Vulnerability and Disparity in the Female-Headed Households in Junglemahal

## **Unravelling Gender Injustice among Fisherwomen: The Impact of Migration**

Geetanjali Panda

Migration has increasingly become a global phenomenon. While the access of the whole family declines, that of women declines more than that of men. It has gender-biased effects, where the fisherwomen are suffering a lot from the impact of migration. They are no longer practicing fishing but a complete livelihood transformation occurred. Fishermen are migrated to nearby cities because of low fishing production and changing occupations.

Despite being industrious, Fisherwomen face challenges in finding alternative employment, leaving them unable to contribute financially to their families. This study focuses on three villages along the coastline in the Kendrapara district, adopting an exploratory approach. Data were collected through primary sources, including discussions with villagers, complemented by secondary sources such as literature, studies, articles, and news for comparison.

The findings highlight how migration driven by reduced fishing yields and occupational shifts has disrupted traditional livelihoods. The women from migrant families bear significant burdens, transitioning from monotonous roles to multifaceted and diversified responsibilities. These changes impact their health, food security, and societal status, both directly and indirectly.

This paper explores the losses women face due to the migration of their male counterparts and suggests policy measures to address these challenges. It also discusses the need for improved rights to health, food security, and economic opportunities for women, emphasizing the importance of inclusive planning to ensure sustainable livelihoods and social equity.

## **Gender Relations in the Polyandrous Households of Thiyyas of Malabar**

K Rajan & Sunil John J

Parts of the erstwhile Cochin state and British Malabar ---presently forming the Ottappalam and Pattambi taluks of Palakkad district and the Ponnani taluk of Malappuram ---were noted for the widespread prevalence of polyandry among the Thiyyas, the most numerous of the backward castes in Kerala. The authors have undertaken extensive field studies for recording ethnographic data in order to understand the gender relations that had prevailed among the Thiyyas, also known as Thandans in the study area. The study revealed that anthropological and sociological studies have so far been focused on the polyandrous women of the Nayar households. Unlike the Nairs of Kerala, whom anthropologists the world over have recognized as practitioners of polyandry, the Thiyyas and the allied backward communities had been practicing fraternal polyandry in a manner comparable to similar systems that had once prevailed in the regions such as Sri Lanka and Tibet. It was revealed in the course of interviews done with the survivors of polyandrous marriages and children from such marital ties that even after the social awakening among the people and legislations banning polyandry, the system had continued to be practised. Historical records, including the early modern European notices, confirm that polyandry had existed in Kerala for several centuries. Our study could clearly establish that polyandry among the Thiyyas had posed a great burden on women, who had to be betrothed to multiple husbands at the age of 12 or 13. Though the survivors of such marriages

are not always forthcoming to disclose the sexual role performed by women, it has been possible to delineate features which convey that polyandrous marriages in some cases had reached a breaking point due to the rivalry among the brothers, who often ranged upto 5 or 6, for their turn as sexual partners. There were many property disputes among the children of polyandrous marriages and judgements nullifying women's claims as party to polyandrous mothers.

### **The Quality of Life of Women in India: Exploring Regional Realities**

Sreeparna Banerjee, Manoranjan Pal, Subir Biswas & Premananda Bharati

This study explores the determinants of the quality of life (QoL) of married women in India, focusing on regional and socio-economic factors using data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5). The survey includes 581,337 women aged 15 to 49, but due to significant missing data, the study focuses solely on married women, resulting in a final sample size of 5,132. The study reveals that empowerment, education, economic security, and geographic location significantly impact QoL. Women with greater control over household decisions report better QoL. Regional disparities exist, with women in the South and North East having higher QoL compared to those in the Central region, due to differences in infrastructure and healthcare. Urban women have better QoL due to more autonomy and resources, while rural women face challenges due to gender norms. Women who are heads of their households also report higher QoL. The study recommends policies to expand educational and vocational training, address regional disparities, and improve access to healthcare and employment opportunities for women.

### **Experiences of Researching with Women of Oraon Tribe Decoding Gendered Complexities and Subjectivities in Rural Jharkhand**

Aarshi Jahan

This paper attempts to unwrap the experiences of being with women in the field, using a gendered theoretical framework. Here, the idea of 'being with women' hints upon the relationships built during the timeline of fieldwork (2017-2025), not limited to women who have been the 'subject of the study', but also the women who became a part of the research. With this paper, I try to problematize my own experiences, and positionality, situated at a particular socio-cultural context of being a muslim researcher in the field, that further became a methodological hindrance in the process of data collection and relationship building. Gendered experiences, and challenges related to field mobility, power dynamics, hierarchy, accessibility, and rapport building can significantly determine one's research finding. Hence, to recognise these challenges, it is imperative to analyze them theoretically and conceptually. This paper looks at these varied collective experiences of the researcher, during the field study on tribal customary practice known as Dhuku in the Oraon tribe of Jharkhand. Researchers' field narrative analysis is used as methodological reflexive practice. , The primary field engagement remained with the women of the tribe and also those outside the tribe. While the researcher tries to navigate through the socio-cultural tensions that this practice stimulates in

the community, it also attempts to unwrap the gendered aspects of researching with women in the field.

### **Land or No Land? Case of Adivasi Women in Odisha**

Saubhagya Laxmi Singh

To understand the complexity of the land rights of Adivasi women, a sample of one hundred Kolha households from the Kesdhia Gramme Panchayat in the Mayurbhanj region of Odisha was selected. The study shows that the land rights is largely influenced by socio-cultural customs, practices and the patriarchal ideology embedded into the Adivasi society in course of time through its contact with the dominant non-tribal culture. Thus, the ownership of women over land is insignificant and so also the control over the land which many a time proved to be a threat to their livelihood and lives. Moreover, the unrecognition of non-recorded land by the state also adds woes to their misery. Adding to it, they do not have an exit option like men due to lack of modern skills, education and other required eligibility to enter the non-farming sector. Therefore, their productive role in agriculture and lack of alternate livelihoods is the fundamental reason for giving women the assurance of land ownership. Having said that, it should also be recognized that giving land to women is necessary but not sufficient.

### **“We Are Here, We Are Enjoying Ourselves!”: An Ethnographic Exploration on Gender Equity through Adventure Sports in A Summer Camp at Rinchenpong, Sikkim, India**

Debjani Bhattacharya & Abhijit Das

Like western countries, summer camps are becoming popular day by day in India with passing years. These summer camps usually take place in Northern and North-eastern India, mainly in Himalayan regions and usually consist of adventure sport activities along with some leisure time plays and art activities. The prime objective of the present study is to understand how adventure sports along with other leisure activities in summer camps create a place for gender equity. The present ethnographic study was conducted at *Rinchenpong* in Sikkim, India. Intensive interviews along with some intensive observations were carried out from the campers of various age groups and also from the trainers, including the researcher self as one of them. The result shows that adventure activities along with different leisure activities when conducted in a conscious manner create a place for gender equity in the camp under study. The study also shows the scope of studying gender equity in the domain of sports and allied areas in future for particular strategies of youth development planning.

### **When Living Is a Persistent Struggle: Livelihood, Vulnerability and Disparity in the Female-Headed Households in Junglemahal**

Sujan Bera & Sumahan Bandyopadhyay

The paper investigates the livelihood conditions of female-headed households in comparison to male-headed households, focusing on their livelihoods, socio-economic security, educational attainment, possession of resources and vulnerability. This micro-study was

conducted in a multi-ethnic village locating in JUNGLEMAHAL region of Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal, India. The study was carried out among a number of female as well as male headed households selected using random sampling method. Both qualitative and quantitative data has been collected administering various methods and techniques, viz., structured schedules, observation method, semi-structured and unstructured interviews, case study and group discussions. Numerous researchers reveal that female-headed households seem to encounter significant challenges in maintaining their daily life due to some economic and social. These conditions eventually drive them towards disparities adversely affecting their socio-economic wellbeing as a whole. This appears to be an important issue of concern in a serious note and many studies in contemporary strived to address these issues to understand the underlying factors for this dismal and to carving out the solutions. The present study highlights that the female-headed households are facing challenges and problems with regard to the possession of resources and insecure income options forcing them towards marginalization and economic insecurity. Besides having impact on economic aspect, the female-headed-households-condition (FHHC) also influences the educational attainment, occupational engagement, social security and their way of living as a whole. With an overall reflection of the scenario, the study thus tried to attracted ministration's attention to drive into these cases into consideration and initiate effective measures to address the issues of concern, that may lead to socio-economic development of the female-headed households in a more equitable and rational way.

<b>SESSION 06</b>	
<b>Through an Anthropological Lens: Deciphering the Meanings</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Shipra Verma and Keya Pandey	Some Observations on Institutional Death in Kashi: Mumukshu Bhawan
Upasana Pandey And Sankha Priya Guha	Proxemics In Inscribed Space: An Empirical Study on Migrated Bihari Community Living in Ward 15 Of Dum Dum Municipality, West Bengal, India
Vijayanand P	Invoking The Dead; Exploring the Indigenous Wisdom of Karimpalan Tribe in Kerala, South India
Sini. M	Anthropological Insights on Science of Sculpture: A Study
Svetlana Ryzhakova	Remembered India: Ethnographic Observations and Memories of Prof. Sergey Arutynov during Indian-Soviet Anthropological Expedition, 1970-80
Indulekha KC	Embracing Resilience: Unpacking the Eco-Cultural Adaptations of the Karimpalan Community in Kannur District, Kerala

## **Some Observations On Institutional Death In Kashi: Mumukshu Bhawan**

Shipra Verma & Keya Pandey

This study explores the phenomena of institutional death in Kashi, with a particular focus on Mumukshu Bhawan, a hospice-like institution dedicated to providing individuals the opportunity to achieve a "sacred death" (moksha) in the Hindu sacred city. Traditionally, Kashi is viewed as a destination for Hindus seeking a sanctified death, as it is believed that passing away here leads to moksha. The religious institutions have assumed a formalized role in managing end-of-life rituals, a process termed as "institutional death." This structured approach standardizes the experience of death, overseeing rituals and rites that were once more personal and family-led. "Those who wish to attain moksha and the place where they will stay will be known as Mumukshu Bhawan" said by the manager of Mumukshu Bhawan. Using qualitative methodology, including interviews with institutional staff, caregivers, and priests and with residents of Mumukshu Bhawan, ritual observations were documented using simple random sampling. The study investigates the motivations driving individuals to Kashi in pursuit of liberation and how Mumukshu Bhawan embodies and adapts traditional beliefs and rituals to modern context. A thematic analysis reveals that institutional involvement, while preserving essential rituals amidst high demand, redefines traditional practices, shifting death from a personal journey to a regulated process. Findings suggest that institutional death not only ensures access to sacred rites but also reshapes the deeply familial experience of passing into a service based, spiritually aligned approach. Ultimately, this study concludes that institutional practices in Kashi blend tradition with modern structure, offering pilgrims a dignified end-of-life experience that aligns with Kashi's sacred mission. This study contributes in understanding how sacred geography, ritual practices, and modernity intersect in the context of death in Kashi, offering insights into the evolving relationship between spirituality and institutional care.

## **Proxemics In Inscribed Space: An Empirical Study On Migrated Bihari Community Living In Ward 15 Of Dum Dum Municipality, West Bengal, India**

Upasana Pandey & Sankha Priya Guha

The subject of Proxemics has become relevant in today's world particularly for communities which have undergone spatial shift leading to cultural reproduction in an altered inscribed space. Proxemics refers to people's use of space as an aspect of culture and Inscribed space represents the relationship between human and their surrounding environment be it physical or social-cultural. Migration is an important phenomenon of demographic change that leads to proxemics within new Inscribed space where a migratory community accommodates themselves through new cultural production. This study examines the economic and social changes within a migratory community, focusing on how communities produce and interpret space as a cultural phenomenon. The study is an outcome of first-hand Anthropological fieldwork conducted in Ward 15 of Dum Dum Municipality in North 24 Parganas in West Bengal. The present study is based on interpretive approach, a predominant tool in qualitative research. The distinct techniques which have been used for data collection include direct intensive observation, interview, collecting case histories and filling up of objective related

schedules which result in the collection of information relating to the objective of the study. The study reveals the dialogue between proxemics and inscribed space borne out of migration or spatial shift which has gradually led to cultural reproduction amongst the studied community.

### **Invoking The Dead: Exploring The Worldview Of The Karimpalan Tribe Of Kerala**

**Vijayanand P**

Religion and Worldview plays a vital role in the socio-cultural life of the tribal people. These are deeply rooted in their life ways. Rituals and ceremonies are part of their life. There are various tribal groups in Kerala and Karimpalan is one of the tribal groups practicing different rituals and ceremonies. Honouring the dead is an important part of the religious life of the Karimpalans of northern Kerala. They observe ancestral worship. Their funeral rituals, particularly the penakettal ceremony, a sacred journey to guide the departed soul into the afterlife, offer a fascinating glimpse into their spiritual world. As part of this, the community ceremonially constructs a temporary shrine, honouring the deceased with offerings of food and drink. As they perform specific chants and dances, they believe they are appeasing the spirits and preventing them from causing any harm to the living. Beyond these rituals, the Karimpalan people erect memorial pillars, a tangible symbol of their reverence for the departed. These pillars serve as a bridge between generations, connecting the living with their ancestors. This study not only sheds light on the specific beliefs and customs of the Karimpalan community but also contributes to a broader understanding of spiritual world with regards to the death rituals among the tribes in India. It highlights the pliability of tradition and the ways in which indigenous communities continue to shape their relationship with the natural world and the spiritual realm. This study examines the nuances of the practices and customs and the worldview of the Karimpalan community of Kerala.

### **Anthropological Insights On Science Of Sculpture: A Study**

**Sini. M**

Stone craft tradition is one of India's richest traditions, strongly tied with art and architecture, and dates back to the Indus Valley civilization. India has an intricate tradition of crafting stone sculptures. Every Indian traditional art form possesses an aesthetic sensibility. One of the earliest forms of visual art is stone art, which is highly pertinent to anthropological research. India's centuries-old stone-art pattern has a unique origin story. There are several intricate ways that art and crafts have been used in anthropological studies. The study focuses primarily on the stone craft community, known locally as Kakkottys, which is part of the Viswakarma or Kammala community. The Viswakarma community comprises of five sub-groups: goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters, bell-metal craftsmen, and stone masons. In some locations, Viswakarma is considered a subgroup of the Brahmanical division known as Viswa Brahmins. Viswakarma is a recently established community title that refers to all of these castes. Previously, the title Kammala was commonly used. The term Kamma is derived from the Tamil words Kannalar or Kannanan. All of these castes trace their origins back to Lord Viswakarma

of the Hindu pantheon. Viswakarma is the god of architecture and the Shilpa shastra. Shilpa Shastra is a knowledge base that includes techniques and measures for stone cutting, carving and sculpting. Shilpi was believed to be the ancestor of the stone craft community. The study presents a picture about the Shilpa Shastra of the Kammala (Kakkotty) of Kannur District in Kerala.

**Remembered india: ethnographic observations and memories of prof. Sergey arutynov during indian-soviet anthropological expedition, 1970-80<sup>th</sup>.**

**Svetlana Ryzhakova**

This paper analyzes the unpublished materials, personal ethnographic observations and memories of the Russian scholar, Prof. Sergey Arutynov (1932-2023), one of the greatest Russian anthropologist and a member of the joint Indian-Soviet anthropological expedition of the 1970-80s. The core of the project started by the author with late S. Arutynov is an ethnographic study of the broad masses of the middle strata of the rural and partly urban population of India, those who can be united within the framework of the concept of “deep India”, the largest segment of Indians, whose socio-normative and life-supporting practices have certain similarities (while maintaining a number of ethnic and status differences), and whose life values largely create the integrity of the Indian nation in the socio-political sense of the word. According to our findings, one of the essential features of “deep India” is the tendency to endogamy and for social segmentation and building a social hierarchy, as well as self-reproduction through the socialization of children in the norms and traditions of a given community and determining the circle of possible marriage partners. As an outcome, we consider the concept “deep India” could be looked at from three points of view: as an object, as a subject, and as a locus of research. It is a socio-cultural phenomenon with a segmental structure, covering broad strata, united in different communities of India, largely guided in the structure of their lives and everyday life by traditions, value norms and established ideas. In this paper the results of the critical analysis of the archival texts, photographs and new ethnographic material (fieldwork which included repeated visits to places explored by our colleagues in the 1970s and 80s, and the study of individual rural (and partly urban) loci and communities categorized as “deep India”) will be presented. The author suggests that the ethnographic material of those expeditions as well as new findings can be understood within the framework of phenomenology of anthropology with memory as a crucial methodological instrument.

**Embracing Resilience: Unpacking The Eco-Cultural Adaptations Of The Karimpalan Community In Kannur District, Kerala**

**Indulekha KC**

In the heart of Kannur district, Kerala, lies the Karimpalan community, a testament to the remarkable resilience of indigenous cultures. This ethnographic study embarks on a journey to unravel the intricate relationships between the Karimpalan people and their environment,

revealing how their unique cultural practices and traditions have become a lifeline for adaptation and survival. Through the lens of eco-cultural adaptation, this research delves into the community's subsistence strategies, social institutions, and religious traditions, exposing the intricate web of relationships that bind them to their environment. By centering the voices and experiences of the Karimpalan people, this study shines a light on the vital importance of indigenous knowledge systems and traditional practices in maintaining ecological balance and promoting sustainability. Ultimately, this research seeks to amplify the stories and struggles of the Karimpalan community, highlighting their remarkable capacity for resilience and adaptation in the face of environmental uncertainty.

<b>SESSION 07</b>	
<b>Livelihoods: Struggles and Strategies</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Angana Goswami	Feeling of Deprivation and Tribal Identity Crisis among the Sarania Kachari Tribe of Assam
Rajnarayan Mohanty, Basanta Kumar Mohanta	Forest And Lodha Livelihood: A Study in Suliapada Block of Mayurbhanj District
Uma V	The Case study on Nomadic Tribes Cholaga and the Quest for Social Equity
Rambabu Marla, Sujan Bera, Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo	The Agariya: Ancient Iron Smelter Tribe in Central India
Sujan Bera, Rambabu Marla, Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo	The Iron Smelters' Legacy: Paradigm Shift in The Occupation of The Agariya Tribe in Chattisgarah
Sunita Barik, Basanta Kumar Mohanta	Factors Effecting the Decline of Traditional Craftmanship: A Case of The Mahali Tribe of Mayurbhanj District, Odisha

## Feeling Of Deprivation And Tribal Identity Crisis Among The Saraniakachari Tribe Of Assam

**Angana Goswami**

This paper presents the experience a sense of deprivation and a tribal identity crisis among the SaraniaKachari tribe of Assam that is rooted in the long history of similar tribal movements in north-east India. SaraniaKacharis have been enumerated as a separate tribe since colonial times, but the 1971 census dropped their name from the scheduled tribes list and caused an identity crisis. Due to this incident, tribe certificates were no longer issued by the government agencies, and neighbouring communities began questioning their tribal identity. Their fight for tribal status continues despite many initiatives aimed at protesting and demonstrating, which have been very peaceful, silent, and without any agitation. Today's volatile situation in the north-east region of India, however, makes it imperative to examine the causes of ethnic assertion in detail and compare it to theoretical positions. **Methodology:** As part of my PhD research, I conducted fieldwork in the Tamulpur district of Assam, and this paper examines the causes and affirmation of identity among this group within the broader social change of Assam. A study of cultural similarities and differences among ethnic groups has been conducted by employing a qualitative approach in order to better understand the impact of ethnic identity assertion. **Findings:** In the study, it was found that Assamese society as a whole, government agencies, historians, writers, academicians and scholars have neglected the unique and historically glorious culture of SaraniaKacharis, which underlies these overt causes of identity assertion and deprivation.

## Forest And Lodha Livelihood: A Study In Suliapada Block Of Mayurbhanj District

**Rajnarayan Mohanty & Basanta Kumar Mohanta**

The livelihood of the Lodha tribe is interconnected to the ecological niche surrounding them. Traditionally, the Lodhas are dependent on a subsistence economy that includes hunting, gathering, and small-scale agriculture practices. With the persistence of permanent settlement among the community, agriculture has become their primary mode of occupation. The present study focuses on the livelihood patterns of the Lodha Community in the Suliapada Block of Mayurbhanj district in Odisha. The study found that the Lodha community in the studied area is mostly dependent on the forest for various products including collection of firewood, medicinal plants, honey, fruits, and timber. These resources play an important role not only in their daily sustenance but also in their economy. The collection of forest products has long been an important source of income for the Lodhas, and they trade or sell these products in local markets. The objective of the study focuses on the dependence of the said community on the surrounding forest for their livelihood. The present study indulges on the primary data thus collected using various methods of data collection from two villages of Suliapada Block in Mayurbhanj district. A total of 60 households had been taken for study, considering 30 households from each village, which are selected by simple random sampling method. The researcher found that the livelihood of all the studied sample households from both villages is entirely dependent on the forest surrounding the community.

## **The Case Study On Nomadic Tribes Cholaga And The Quest For Social Equity**

**Uma V**

A limited number of families, which do not constitute a substantial voting bloc, are frequently disregarded and not acknowledged as members of society in the birth and death census. Their community has remained unrecorded since the post-independence period in India. Efforts by NGOs and regional development organizations to include them within the nomadic tribes of India are lacking, regardless of regional disparities. The National Commission is primarily concerned with documenting only those communities that are already present in official records. At present, no governmental entity, political party, or anthropology department is addressing the challenges faced by the 1% of excluded nomadic tribes in the current administrative setup. It is essential to integrate these communities into society through a dedicated reservation policy for nomadic tribes, as they have been marginalized for the past 70 years due to the absence of documentation regarding their caste and culture, which have been profoundly altered by their varied lifestyles. **Methodology:** This study adopts the case study method to analyze the cohesive unit of the nomadic tribe community within Morai Panchayat. The focus is on a community that has been largely disregarded. Information obtained from community members is crucial for understanding the nature and scope of the difficulties they face, particularly regarding the lack of community certificates. The case study unit is both cohesive and homogenous in nature. This qualitative approach allows for a thorough examination of the issues, revealing significant insights into the community's behavioral dynamics. **Result:** The outcomes of this research provide a critical perspective on prevailing assumptions. The case study offers a platform for initiating actions that could lead to problem resolution. This paper suggests a novel direction for incorporating marginalized communities into policy development and budgetary processes.

## **The Agariya: One Of The Ancient Iron Smelters Tribe In Central India**

**Rambabu Marla, Sujan Bera & Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo**

Chhattisgarh, located in central India, is home to a significant tribal population with diverse and distinct cultural practices. Among the 43 tribal communities residing in this region, the Agariya tribe stand out due to their unique tradition of iron smelting. Historically, the Agariya people have been engaged in the process of extracting and smelting iron from naturally occurring ore in the region. They would travel across regions in search of iron ore deposits, and once they identified a viable source, they would establish their settlements near these sites. Near these habitats, the Agariya would extract iron from the ore and trade a variety of tools and implements for hunting and gathering, later which were supplied to neighbouring farming communities.

This study explore into the socio-cultural aspects of the Agariya community, examining their traditional practices, economic systems, and social organization. The data for this research was collected through a combination of structured schedules, interviews, and focus group discussions, providing a comprehensive understanding of the community's lifestyle and

challenges. The study highlights the unique iron smelting skills of the Agariya and their invaluable contribution to local economies through their craftsmanship. However, it also sheds light on the significant challenges the community faces, particularly in the areas of education and access to government schemes. One of the primary obstacles is the lack of domicile certificates, which prevents many Agariyas from accessing education beyond certain levels or qualifying for governmental support and welfare programs. In conclusion, the Agariya community, despite its historical significance, faces modern-day challenges that hinder their full integration into mainstream development.

### **The Iron Smelters' Legacy: Paradigm Shift In The Occupation Of The Agariya Tribe In Chhattisgarh**

**Sujan Bera, Rambabu Marla & Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo**

The Agariya, an artisan tribe of Central India, predominantly inhabiting in the states of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and parts of Jharkhand and Odisha possess exceptional and unique proficiency in extracting iron from ore and shaping it to varied tools and implements. This outstanding knowledge, specialized skill and technique transmitted from one generation to another, have assisted them to maintain the ironworks their way of life. However, this incredible legacy of craftsmanship has gradually faded over time as the people diversified and more explicitly shifted their occupation in modern times. The study hence strives to explore the driving factors of the occupational shift among the Agariya people, understanding the implicit causes of these changes. It also examines the impact of this diversification of occupations on their livelihoods. The study was carried out among the Agariya tribe scattered across several districts of mostly in northern and few in southern parts of Chhattisgarh. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected administering various methods and techniques, such as structured schedule, observations, key informant interviews, case studies, group discussions, genealogical method, photography and recording, etc. The study obtained numerous factors impacting in the declination of the iron crafting. These include government restrictions on the collection of iron ore from open mines, the rapid expansion of modern technology in the agricultural sector, rise of large tools manufacturing companies and a dwindling demand for hand-crafted products. Consequently, these factors forced them to pursue other economic activities for their sustenance, primarily engaging in daily wage labour work in both farm and non-farm-based sectors. This shift inevitably affected their way of living as well as their cultural heritage so far. The study finally advocates that government bodies take this issue in a serious note provide financial and logistical support to sustain this marvellous ancient tradition.

### **Factors Effecting To The Decline Of Traditional Craftmanship: A Case Of The Mahali Tribe Of Mayurbhanj District, Odisha**

**Sunita Barik & Basanta Kumar Mohanta**

The Mahali, an artisan tribal group in eastern India, have long been highly accomplished craftsman who were vital to their socioeconomic existence through their bamboo crafts,

weaving, and woodworking. But these trades have seen a downturn because of a number of interrelated issues. One major change in the cultural and economic environment of the area is the collapse of traditional handicraft among the Mahali tribes in the Mayurbhanj District of Odisha. This study looks at what is causing the elaborate artisan traditions of the Mahali tribes, which have long been essential to their identity and way of life, to disappear. The advent of modern industrialization, coupled with the increasing availability of machine-made alternatives, has led to a reduced demand for handmade artifacts. Additionally, the younger generation's migration to urban areas in search of better opportunities has contributed to the decline of traditional knowledge and skills. The influence of globalization, with its emphasis on mass production and consumerism, has further undermined the value placed on indigenous crafts. Furthermore, the lack of proper institutional support and marketing avenues for Mahali craftsmanship has left artisans economically vulnerable. This study highlights the socio-economic impact of this decline, the loss of cultural heritage, and the role of policy interventions that could revitalize traditional craft practices of the Mahali's of studied area. By examining the decline of Mahali craftsmanship, this case study seeks to provide insights into the broader challenges faced by indigenous communities in preserving their unique cultural heritage in the face of modernity and globalization.

<b>SESSION 08</b>	
<b>Health Studies</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Priyanka Das, Diptendu Chatterjee and Arup Ratan Bandyopadhyay	Ergonomics and Health: Assessing Work-related Musculoskeletal Disorders in Auto-Rickshaw Drivers
Madhu Kumari	Prevalence of non-communicable diseases and related risk factors among the Oraons of Odisha
Debasmita Kar and Subho Roy	Relative contribution of Menopausal Status, Socio-demographic, Reproductive and Lifestyle Characteristics on Central Obesity and Blood Pressure levels of Middle-aged Women
Arindam Biswas and Argina Khatun	Low birth weight and its associated factors among ICDS beneficiaries of North Bengal, West Bengal, India
Chandan Ku. Das and B.K. Srinivas	An Anthropological Assessment of Nutritional Status among the Adolescents of Lodha community of Mayurbhanj District, Odisha, India
Thang Min Lun	Maternal Health Care and Menstrual Practices Among the Karimpalan Tribe In Kannur District, Kerala
Arkopala Bose	Genetic insights into Skin Pigmentation: analysis of single variant allele (rs1426654) of SLC24A5 among representative cohort of Bengalee Population

## **Ergonomics And Health: Assessing Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders In Auto-Rickshaw Drivers**

**Priyanka Das, Diptendu Chatterjee & Arup Ratan Bandyopadhyay**

Vehicle drivers are at a heightened risk of Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WRMSDs) due to prolonged sitting, repetitive movements, poor ergonomics, uneven road condition and exposure to environmental and physical stressors. **Objective:** This study aimed to assess the prevalence of WRMSDs and identify associated risk factors among professional auto-rickshaw drivers, a vulnerable group in the informal transport sector. **Materials and Method:** A total of 170 drivers from Sodpur, North 24 Parganas, were selected based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. Sociodemographic and work-related information were collected, and standardized tools such as the Nordic Musculoskeletal Questionnaire (NMQ) and WHOQoL-BREF were utilized to evaluate WRMSDs and quality of life (QoL), respectively. **Results:** Results indicated a high prevalence of WRMSDs (61.5%) in the past year. Key risk factors significantly associated with WRMSDs included age, body mass index (BMI), prolonged working hours, awkward postures, cabin congestion, and working in physical illness ( $P < 0.05$ ). Despite the high prevalence of WRMSDs, no significant association was found between reported WRMSDs and QoL scores. **Conclusion:** These findings highlight the urgent need for targeted ergonomic interventions, health promotion programs, and improved working conditions to mitigate health risks and enhance the occupational well-being of vehicle drivers.

## **Prevalence Of Non-Communicable Diseases And Related Risk Factors Among The Oraons Of Odisha**

**Kumari Madhu**

Existing evidence suggest that India has been going through an epidemiological transition with an increase in the proportion of disease burden attributable to non-communicable diseases(NCDs). NCDs are responsible for 61.8% of all death in India. Though studies have been conducted in urban and rural areas, data related to tribal communities is limited. Therefore, the present study was conducted in some villages inhabited by Oraon tribe in Sambalpur district, Odisha to find out the prevalence of NCDs and their risk factors. An interviewed scheduled adopting Revised Udai Pareek Scale for understanding the socio-economic status and modified WHO STEPS method for collecting data on behavioural risk factors, physical measurements and bio-chemical test was used. The study examined 886 participants aged above 20 years of both sexes. The study result reveal that overall prevalence of hypertension and diabetes among the studied tribe was found to be 17.6% & 4.9% respectively along with other risk factors. This is a serious area of concern which is affecting the health of the population.

## **Relative Contribution Of Menopausal Status, Socio-Demographic, Reproductive And Lifestyle Characteristics On Central Obesity And Blood Pressure Levels Of Middle-Aged Women**

**Debasmita Kar & Subho Roy**

Menopause signifies the continuous decline in ovarian reserve and a drop in the levels of estrogen and progesterone hormones, marking the end of the reproductive phase of women. This phase is characterized by adverse changes in body fat distribution, glucose and lipid metabolism, and endothelium dysfunction; all of these increase the risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD). Out of the five major risk factors of CVD, central obesity and hypertension are the most significant. Previous studies have reported that the menopausal transition and postmenopausal status have been associated with CVD risk factors, but researchers often contended that the development of CVD risk factors involves a complex interaction of biological, socio-cultural, chronological aging and environmental factors. Thus, there is a dire need to explore these associations distinguished by age, menopause, and modifiable factors among midlife women, especially in developing countries, where the burden of CVD is increasing and the menopausal age is advancing. **Objectives-** The present study attempted to examine the contribution of menopausal status, socio-demographic, menstrual, reproductive, and lifestyle characteristics in predicting the central obesity and blood pressure levels of peri and postmenopausal participants. This cross-sectional study was conducted in the Howrah district of West Bengal, India. A total of 230 urban-living Bengali-speaking Hindu caste participants were recruited for this study (116 perimenopausal and 114 postmenopausal). Data on central obesity, blood pressure levels, socio-demographic, menstrual, and reproductive characteristics and lifestyle variables were obtained following standard protocols. A hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the factors contributing to central obesity and high blood pressure levels. Menopausal status appeared to be a significant predictor of central obesity and mean arterial pressure (MAP) in the first model of hierarchical regression. After adding the socio-economic score and reproductive characteristics in the second and third models, respectively, menopausal status exhibited a significant association with central obesity. Menopausal status did not show a significant association with central obesity after adding the lifestyle variables and age in the fourth and final models, respectively. In the case of MAP, menopausal status only remained significant in the first model, while after adding socioeconomic, reproductive, and lifestyle variables and age, menopausal status did not exhibit a significant association with MAP. The present study summarizes the complex interaction of multiple factors in the occurrence of CVD risk factors beyond the dynamic hormonal alterations accompanying the menopausal transition. Future cross-cultural studies are required to identify the ethnic-specific risk factors associated with menopause, enabling policymakers and health planners to establish measures that effectively support mid-life women and facilitate a smooth transition from the reproductive to the post-reproductive phase.

## **Low Birth Weight And Its Associated Factors Among Icds Beneficiaries Of North Bengal, West Bengal, India**

### Arindam Biswas & Argina Khatun

Low birth weight (LBW) is one of the major factors affecting child morbidity and mortality worldwide. It is considered a universal threat for developing countries that creates an obstacle to child development. According to WHO, low birth weight was defined as weight at birth of children <2500 grams. A cross-sectional study was conducted among 1240 preschool children (boys 625 and girls 615) randomly selected from 48 ICDS (Integrated Child Development Scheme) centres in Jalpaiguri district, West Bengal, India to assess the relationship between birth weight and anthropometric and sociodemographic variables. For the present report, two anthropometric variables were measured such as height and weight, one derived variable such as BMI was calculated and some socioeconomic variables were collected by pre-tested questionnaires. The present investigation reported that the preschool children of Jalpaiguri had an overall mean birth weight of  $2.79 \pm 0.48$  kg and an overall prevalence of low birth weight of 26.37%. There were significant differences in height and weight in both sexes in all age groups for low birth weight and normal birth weight children. Significant age variation was found in all anthropometric variables except BMI of boys in normal birth weight children. Binary Logistic Regression shows that boys have a greater chance of having low birth weight than girls. Ethnicity, child's birth order, father's occupational status, source of drinking water, family income category, maternal height and maternal weight have a greater chance of low birth weight children compared to reference categories. Socioeconomic and demographic variables and maternal characteristics were significantly associated with birth weight. The anthropometric variables will be indicators to identify the relative risks of low birth weight children and socioeconomic demographic and maternal characteristics may be utilized as determinants of birth weight.

### An Anthropological Assessment Of Nutritional Status Among The Adolescents Of Lodha Community Of Mayurbhanj District, Odisha, India

#### Chandan Ku. Das & B.K. Srinivas

The Lodha community, one of the thirteen Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in Odisha, is primarily inhabited in the forest fringe areas of Morada and Suliapada blocks of Mayurbhanj district. Peculiar by nature, they are skilled hunters and gatherers having a traditional lifestyle that is closely tied to the forest ecosystem. **Objectives:** The objectives of the study were to (i) assess the nutritional status among the adolescents of Lodha community, and (ii) to identify the factors those are associated with nutritional status. **Methodology:** To meet the objectives of the study, a cross-sectional study has been carried out in Morada and Suliapada block of Mayurbhanj district. A total of 356 adolescents (204 males, and 152 females) aged between 10 to 19 years have been recruited in the study. Anthropometric measurements, dietary habits (dietary diversity score), and socio-economic status were assessed using a semi-structured schedule. Nutritional status has been evaluated using the z-score analysis (below -2 SD) of low height-for-age (Stunting), low weight-for-height (Wasting), and low weight-for-age (Underweight) along with MUAC (mid-upper arm circumference), Head Circumference, and CIAF (composite index of anthropometric failure).

**Results:** The study has revealed a high prevalence of stunting, wasting, and underweight among the adolescents of Lodha community. Females are found to be more undernourished than males. Multivariate analysis showed that age, sex, education of parents, and occupations of parents were significant predictors of nutritional status. **Conclusion:** The study highlights the poor nutritional status among the adolescents of Lodha community in Mayurbhanj district, Odisha which is a major public health concern. The findings suggest that targeted interventions such as nutritional awareness among adolescents and focus on income generation of parents to improve the nutritional status of this vulnerable population.

### **Genetic insights into Skin Pigmentation: analysis of single variant allele (rs1426654) of SLC24A5 among representative cohort of Bengalee Population**

Arkopala Bose

**Introduction:** Skin pigmentation is one of the most distinctive features of human phenotypic diversity controlled by underlying genetic variations. The A allele of a non-synonymous substitution viz. rs1426654 of SLC24A5 accounts for lighter skin in Europeans. Previous studies in different caste and tribal populations of India suggested this variant also contributes significantly to skin pigmentation variation among Indians. **Objective:** To assess the quantitative measurement of skin pigmentation and its association with rs1426654 in a cohort of Bengalee caste population. **Methodology:** Skin pigmentation was quantitatively assessed in 82 individuals using a tristimulus colorimeter from photo-exposed and photo-unexposed skin area. Individual Typological Angle has been calculated using L\*(lightness), a\*(redness), b\*(yellowness) parameters. Genomic DNA was isolated from their saliva samples and genotyped for rs1426654 by PCR-RFLP method. To understand the association of SNP with skin pigmentation linear regression, chi square and T-test was performed. **Result:** Examination on genotyping revealed derived allele frequency of A as 0.73. Subsequent analysis discerned significant ( $p < 0.01$ ) association between rs1426654 and constitutive pigmentation. Furthermore, based on ITA value, the participants were categorized into three categories i.e., brown, tan, and intermediate. A significantly biased distribution ( $p < 0.01$ ) of A and G allele was found among these three groups with the least frequency of ancestral G allele in the intermediate group (comparatively fair). Analysis of the difference of ITA values between photo-unexposed and photo-exposed skin colour unravelled significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) between AA genotype and other (AG and GG) genotypes. The present study corroborates with the earlier studies among the Indian population reported wide presence of the derived-A allele and strong association of rs1426654 with constitutive skin pigmentation.

<b>SESSION 09</b>	
<b>Studies in Physical Anthropology</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Pranay Pramod Deotale	Comparing the accuracy of TMI and BMI in Predicting Nutritional Status in Tribal Adolescents (9-16 years) of Paroja tribe, Odisha
Erika Pebam, Sanjembam Yaiphaba Meitei	Assessment of Vitamin D Levels Among the Meiteis Of Manipur
Raktima Kar Chowdhury, Subho Roy	Is Sitting Height Index of Build a better measure of nutritional status for adolescents than Body Mass Index?
Husne Afrin and Raja Chakraborty	The Association of Age at Menarche with Socio-economic Characteristics among the Indian women: A Scoping Review
Satyabrata Nayak, Digi Mani Murmu, Priyanka Das & Monali Goswami	Association of Nutritional Status with Sociodemographic Variables: A Study on the Bhumij Adolescent Children of Mayurbhanj, Odisha

## **Comparing The Accuracy Of Tmi And Bmi In Predicting Nutritional Status In Tribal Adolescents (9 To 16 Years) Of Paroja Tribe, Odisha**

**Pranay Pramod Deotale**

Undernutrition is a global concern, and India ranks 105th on the Global Hunger Index, highlighting the severity of the issue, with high levels of undernourishment and child mortality. Assessing nutritional status among children and adolescents is crucial for understanding health disparities, especially in vulnerable tribal populations. This study examines the comparative effectiveness of Tri-Ponderal Mass Index (TMI) and Body Mass Index (BMI) in assessing health status through their associations with Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) among children and adolescents aged 9 to 16 years from the Paroja tribe in Odisha, India. Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted in six villages of Nabarangpur District, Odisha, involving 300 adolescents using a stratified random sampling method. Both BMI and TMI were measured, with MUAC used as a reference for nutritional status. Pearson correlation and regression models were employed for data analysis. Results: The study found that BMI and TMI were significantly correlated with MUAC ( $r = 0.85$  for BMI,  $r = 0.48$  for TMI). TMI showed a lower correlation compared to BMI in predicting undernutrition, with BMI providing higher prediction accuracy in both male and female adolescents. Conclusion: BMI is a more accurate predictor of undernutrition in tribal adolescents than TMI. These findings suggest that BMI should remain the primary tool for assessing nutritional status, though further research is needed to explore age- and gender-specific models.

## **Assessment Of Vitamin D Levels among The Meiteis Of Manipur**

**Erika Pebam & Sanjembam Yaiphaba Meitei**

Vitamin D is one of the micronutrients whose deficiency can pose a serious threat to our health. It is primarily obtained from the skin, where it is created in the presence of ultraviolet-B (UVB) radiation from the sun, though it can also be ingested through food in small amounts. However, many people have insufficient levels due to limited sunlight and sun exposure. Vitamin D plays a critical role in maintaining overall health, including bone metabolism, immune function, and metabolic regulation. Despite its critical functions, Vitamin D deficiency has emerged as a global health issue, particularly in populations with limited sun exposure and inadequate dietary intake. This study will assess the status of Vitamin D levels among the Meitei population of Manipur. The objective is to evaluate the prevalence of Vitamin D insufficiency. A cross-sectional study was conducted among 310 adult Meitei population aged 18-65 years. Serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25(OH)D] levels were assessed to determine vitamin D status, and participants were categorised into – deficient, insufficient, sufficient and toxic groups according to the Vitamin D cut-off. The study revealed the high prevalence of Vitamin D deficiency with 52.9% of the individuals having deficient level of Vitamin D, and 14.2% of the population have insufficient level, while only 31.9% have sufficient level of Vitamin D. Older individuals above 45 years had higher deficiency rates compared to younger

participants. Additionally, women were more prone to Vitamin D deficiency than man. These findings highlight the need for targeted interventions including age-sex specific strategies.

### **Is sitting height index of build a better measures of nutritional status for adolescents than body mass index?**

**Raktima Kar Chowdhury & Subho Roy**

BMI, despite of the wider acceptability as an adequate indicator of body composition, affected by both relative leg length and stature and it cannot differentiate between lean body mass and body fat mass. Sitting height index of build can provide a more precise estimation of nutritional status among the early adolescents because it is independent of relative leg length, which grows rapidly during this phase. Since the assessment of nutritional status is linked to mortality and morbidity in a population, it is thus essential to establish a reliable tool for the assessment of nutritional status. In Indian context, studies using SHIB as an indicator of nutritional status is scarce. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate whether SHIB can be used as an alternate indicator of nutritional status for adolescents. This cross-sectional study was conducted among the young adolescent school-going boys (n=145) and girls (n=155) of the state of West Bengal, India. Anthropometric measurements like height (cm), sitting height (cm) and weight (kg) were measured following standard protocol. Anthropometric indices like, BMI and SHIB were calculated following standard formulae. The entire data was analyzed with the help of statistical package for social science version 20.0 (IBM corporation, 2011). Our study confirms that the SHIB is a better index for estimating the nutritional status among the group of studied adolescents than the BMI. SHIB does not show any significant correlation with age irrespective of sex and where girls showed a higher SH compared to the boys, and the incidence of obesity was also found to be higher among them. This indicates that percent body fat should correlate more strongly with SHIB, than BMI. Since, BMI is so well entrenched in clinical practice and in public mind, it may be appropriate to record both BMI and SHIB together in research reports.

### **The Association Of Age At Menarche With Socioeconomic Characteristics Among The Indian Women: A Scoping Review**

**Husne Afrin & Raja Chakraborty**

Menarche is the beginning of menstruation and as a matter of fact, the reproductive life in human females. The age at menarche (AAM) varies across populations depending on several biological as well as socio-economic factors. The frequent trend revealed that AAM is negatively correlated with higher socio-economic status (SES). However, the association of SES parameters with AAM remained controversial based on the available scientific evidence. Aim: The present study aimed to review the up-to-date findings on the association between AAM and different socioeconomic factors in India. Methods: This scoping review was conducted following the requirements from the PRISMA ScR (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Review). Initially a pilot searching strategy was adopted to randomly search scientific literature databases on the topic

of interest to identify key SES factors which were indicated to be associated with AAM in India. To conduct a comprehensive review, we searched for articles through the search engines of the available literature from 2000 to 2023 using PubMed, Research Gate, and Google Scholar databases. Several relevant Key words were used in different combinations with the help of Boolean operator terms (AND/OR). In total, 54 articles, out of 9809 articles found, contained data relevant to our study. Only Indian full papers have been taken in the years 2000 to 2023. The results indicated a significant lowering of age at menarche in Indian girls that has continued as a predictable trend through time until the present, paralleling recent socioeconomic changes. AAM was significantly associated with different socioeconomic factors among different populations. However, the relationship between AAM and SES, as observed in included studies, was not uniform.

### **Association Of Nutritional Status With Sociodemographic Variables: A Study On The Bhumij Adolescent Children Of Mayurbhanj, Odisha**

**Satyabrata Nayak, Digi Mani Murmu, Priyanka Das & Monali Goswami**

Nutrition is the cornerstone of socioeconomic development and a fundamental pillar of human life. Adolescence is the transitional phase of physical and mental development between childhood and adulthood and is characterised by immense hormonal changes. Undernutrition among the adolescent remains a global public health problem and is considered a principal cause of ill health resulting in chronic morbidities. The present study was an endeavor to assess the nutritional status and find out its association with sociodemographic variables among the Bhumij adolescent children of Mayurbhanj District of Odisha. **Materials and methods:** The present cross-sectional study included a total number of 146 Bhumij adolescent children (boys-64; girls-82) aged between 11 to 19 years. The sociodemographic data were collected by the interview method using a pretested standard structured schedule. All anthropometric data were measured by the standard protocol. **Results:** The present study reveals that height, weight, mid upper arm circumference (MUAC), hip circumference (HC), Bicep skinfold (BSF) and Tricep (TSF) differed significantly between the boys and girls' participants. 45.3% of the adolescent boys and 24.3% of the girls were from the underweight group (BMI < 18.5 kg/m<sup>2</sup>) but no significant difference was observed among them. Waist Hip Ratio (WHR) differed significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the boys and girls participants. The results of linear regression shows that various sociodemographic variables were significant predictors of different anthropometric measures. **Conclusion:** The present study reveals the undernutrition status of the Bhumij adolescent children. It is therefore necessary to develop effective nutritional intervention techniques to combat the intergenerational effect of undernutrition especially among the future mothers. Nutritional education and health awareness programs are to be initiated and, consequently education and employment opportunities are to be generated to improve their socio- economic status.

<b>SESSION 10</b>	
<b>Sustainable Development</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Vinod S	Wayanad's Fragile Balance: Exploring Landslides at the Intersection of Nature and Human Impact
Chudamani Singh, Vaishnavi Madhav Satpute	Anthropology For Sustainable Development: Bridging Public Policy, Cultural Heritage, And Biodiversity
Utkarsh Srivastava	An Anthropological Perspective on Ecology and Sustainable Development Amongst the Baiga
Laxmi Priya Rabha, Jinty Handique	Shifting Cultivation as an Environmental sustainability: An Anthropological insight among the Wancho Tribe of Purnia Village of Arunachal Pradesh
Swagata Sarkar, Jesurathnam Devarapalli	Preserving Traditional Ecological Knowledge: A Study of Ethnomycological Practices in Kurmi-Mahatos, West Bengal
Ritesh, Anil Kishore Sinha	The Ghaggar's Story: An Anthropological Vision for Sustainability of Intermittent Rivers

## Wayanad's Fragile Balance: Exploring Landslides At The Intersection Of Nature And Human Impact

**Vinod S**

Preserving Wayanad's landscape is not just an ecological imperative but a cultural and historical responsibility. The region's intricate tapestry of hills, rivers, and human narratives must be safeguarded for the generations to come. Wayanad, nestled amidst the undulating hills and mountains of Kerala, has long been recognized for its distinctive geography. Historically referred to as the "Hill Country" in colonial records, this region receives significantly more rainfall than most parts of Kerala, making it a fertile cradle of springs and water sources. Rivers such as the Kabani and its tributaries have been lifelines for local communities, particularly the tribal groups whose rituals and livelihoods have intertwined with these waterways for generations. These rivers, originating in the Wayanad hills, hold cultural and ecological significance. However, the landscape has undergone profound changes, challenging the preservation of such vital water networks. The historical and cultural significance of Wayanad extends beyond its natural features. The arrival of Jain communities in the region marked a pivotal shift in its societal and agricultural dynamics. Jains, migrating from South Canara during the Middle Ages, introduced a structured agricultural system in harmony with nature. Their settlements initially concentrated in southern Wayanad and later spread across the region. The Jains, advocating a philosophy of minimal environmental disturbance, practiced natural farming techniques, refraining from tilling or ploughing the soil. Their sustainable agricultural practices contrasted sharply with the traditional shifting cultivation methods of local tribal communities, such as the Kurichyas and Kurumas. Over time, some tribal groups adopted permanent agriculture under Jain influence, altering their traditional ways of life. This societal transformation was, however, double-edged. While a few tribal communities integrated into the evolving agrarian economy, others were displaced or marginalized, losing access to land and resources. The encroachment of external influences disrupted the indigenous people's unique cultural practices, their deep connection to the forests, and their self-sustaining lifestyles. The steady alienation of tribal communities from their ancestral lands reflected broader patterns of ecological and social upheaval. By the late 20th century, Wayanad began experiencing noticeable climatic changes. The once cool and dry region saw a gradual rise in atmospheric temperatures and increasingly erratic rainfall patterns. This shift adversely affected traditional crops like paddy, pepper, and coffee. While global climate change is a factor, local practices have also played a significant role in the environmental degradation of Wayanad. The extensive use of chemical fertilizers and the large-scale cultivation of horticultural crops such as tea, coffee, cardamom, rubber, and gourds have significantly impacted soil health and water availability. The Madhav Gadgil-led Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP) report highlighted these unsustainable agricultural practices as a primary cause of drought and ecological instability in the region. Unfortunately, most of the panel's recommendations were ignored, and alternative, less comprehensive measures were implemented following the Kasturirangan report. The devastating 2018 floods in Kerala underscored the growing vulnerability of regions like Wayanad to natural disasters. Studies

conducted in the aftermath of the floods revealed a troubling pattern: 90% of landslides occurred in the southern parts of Wayanad, particularly in areas like Vythiri. A combination of factors, including heavy rainfall, steep terrain, and unscientific construction practices, contributed to these disasters. Key drivers of landslides include: i. Excessive Rainfall: Prolonged and intense rains weaken the soil structure on steep slopes; ii. Unscientific Construction: Poorly planned roads, buildings, and other infrastructure near streams and hills destabilize the terrain; iii. Human Interventions: Extensive deforestation and indiscriminate land use have exacerbated the fragility of Wayanad's slopes. A study by the HUME Centre for ecology and Wildlife biology emphasized that much of the damage could be traced to human interference in ecologically sensitive areas. Building structures on steep hills without adequate safeguards and altering natural drainage systems have significantly heightened the risk of landslides. To mitigate these challenges, it is crucial to adopt a multi-pronged approach that integrates traditional knowledge, sustainable practices, and modern science. Restoring natural vegetation, enforcing stricter regulations on land use, and rethinking agricultural practices are essential steps. Implementing efficient early warning systems and raising public awareness is another key aspect of mitigating landslide risks. Additionally, implementing the actionable recommendations from ecological reports like the Gadgil panel can guide Wayanad toward a more sustainable future. Preserving Wayanad's landscape is not just an ecological imperative but a cultural and historical responsibility. The region's intricate tapestry of hills, rivers, and human narratives must be safeguarded for the generations to come.

### **Anthropology For Sustainable Development: Bridging, Publicpolicy, Cultural Heritage, And Biodiversity**

#### **Chudamani Singh & Vaishnavi Madhav Satpute**

As India navigates the challenges of the 21st century, the role of anthropology in shaping sustainable development becomes increasingly crucial. This research examines how anthropological insights can inform public policy, preserve cultural heritage, and promote environmental sustainability, offering a comprehensive approach to India's growth. Incorporating the principles of Anthropology and Public Policy, the study explores how anthropological frameworks can enhance policy-making, especially in the context of health, development, and social welfare. By aligning with Health, Medicine, and Anthropology, it emphasizes the importance of understanding local health systems and cultural contexts to design inclusive healthcare policies. The study also delves into the Preservation and Transmission of Cultural Heritage through Digital Media, highlighting how new technologies can be harnessed to protect indigenous knowledge and cultural practices in a rapidly changing world. As Gender, Development, and Society intersect, the research analyzes the role of anthropology in addressing gender inequalities, fostering empowerment, and ensuring that marginalized voices are heard in the development process. By focusing on Indigenous Knowledge and Practices, the paper investigates how traditional knowledge systems can be integrated into modern development strategies, ensuring the protection of biodiversity while supporting sustainable livelihoods. Finally, under the sub-theme of Environmental Sustainability and Anthropology, the research examines the contribution of anthropological

studies to climate change resilience, conservation, and the promotion of eco-friendly practices. Using a case study of Kanger Valley National Park in Chhattisgarh, India, the paper demonstrates how anthropology can help maintain a balance between cultural heritage and environmental preservation, offering insights for sustainable development in ecologically rich areas. The findings underscore the need for a holistic, community-centered approach to development that respects indigenous cultures, fosters inclusivity, and ensures ecological integrity.

### **An anthropological perspective on ecology and sustainable development amongst the baiga.**

**Utkarsh Srivastava**

Environmental sustainability refers to the ability to maintain the qualities valued in the physical environment (Sutton, 2024). This concept aligns closely with the traditional way of life of the Baiga community in Madhya Pradesh, often referred to as “Dharti Putra” or “sons of the earth.” The Baiga are an indigenous forest-dwelling group with a profound connection to nature and their surroundings. The forest has always been an integral part of their cultural identity and livelihood. This study examines the indigenous practices of the Baiga in the Dindori district of Madhya Pradesh, focusing on their relationship with environmental sustainability. With minimal connection to the outside world, their lives revolve around their community and the habitat they inhabit. Historically, they lived in small hamlets; however, over time, they have transitioned to settled villages while maintaining close-knit community structures. To account for population distribution, random sampling was selected for the research to ensure a representative understanding of the Baiga community. The findings reveal that the Baiga's indigenous practices and traditional knowledge inherently support biodiversity conservation, emphasizing their symbiotic relationship with the environment. Modernization has significantly influenced the younger generation, leading to changes in lifestyles and perspectives. Nevertheless, they continue to maintain a deep-rooted connection to their cultural heritage and traditional values, preserving their identity amidst evolving circumstances. These practices are vital for fostering biodiversity and achieving long-term ecological balance, offering valuable insights into contemporary sustainability approaches.

### **Shifting Cultivation As An Environmental Sustainability: An Anthropological Insight Among The Wancho Tribe Of Pumao Village Of Arunachal Pradesh**

**Laxmi Priya Rabha & Jinty Handique**

The study explores the traditional farming practices of shifting cultivation among the Wancho tribe in Arunachal Pradesh, emphasizing its implication for environmental sustainability and resource management. Using methods such as non-participant observation, unstructured interviews and archaeological exploration, the research documents the agricultural practices and resource management strategies of the Wancho people. The Wancho community's primary agricultural method is shifting cultivation, locally known as jhum. They follow a jhum cycle of 10 to 12 years, carefully balancing cultivation and fallow periods to maintain ecological

equilibrium. They also practice animal husbandry and fishing, diversifying their subsistence strategies. To ensure food security, they utilize food preservation methods, including drying, fermentation and smoking. The use of mud stoves, firewood and natural materials in daily life reflects a sustainable lifestyle deeply rooted in their connection to the natural environment. While modern tools have been incorporated into their practices, the Wancho skillfully integrate these with traditional methods, showcasing resilience, adaptability and a strong commitment to cultural heritage. This study highlights the Wancho tribe's sustainable and resourceful way of life, grounded in traditional practices and a deep to their environment. Their integration of prehistoric agricultural techniques with modern practices reflects their ecological awareness and adaptive survival strategies.

### **Preserving Traditional Ecological Knowledge: A Study Of Ethnomycological Practices In Kurmi-Mahatos, West Bengal**

**Swagata Sarkar & Jesurathnam Devarapalli**

The Kurmi population in Dumurkata is mycophilic inclination. The highest level of consumption of forest products is mushrooms, during the season. It contains a high amount of protein, and vitamin D, which helps to abolish malnutrition of Backwards people in Dumurkata. Through an anthropological lens to document the Traditional Knowledge of Kurmi-Mahatos related to mushrooms and how it ensures the equilibrium of the sustainable development of their livelihood. The survey has been conducted in the Dumurkata area, a Lower backward community-based area covered by wild forest in Paschim Medinipur, in West Bengal, which is tropical forest and rain-fed with very little irrigation and mixed with dominated forest "Sal". A combination of ethnographic data methods was taken from 25 members, primary data was collected through an interview method, during the rainy season. Structured, unstructured, semi-structured questionnaires, focus group discussion, and observation methods are used to explore the potential alignment of the involvement of those communities in mycophilic activities. Paradoxically, Mushroom related activities of lower backward communities help to understand their traditional knowledge about wild mushrooms, the Transmission of their ethnomedicinal knowledge with, local nomenclature, their culinary usages and these cultivation techniques whether they are cultivating now or not, which have greatly contributed to the environmental sustainability in recycling the forest ecology. Previous research shows the bioactive compounds of mushrooms and their usage. The traditional and ethnomedical practices of the Dumurkata area people have practice, related to local and traditional resources and beliefs. Even this knowledge is transmitted to a new generation with a strong translation process. However, the research paper is about livelihood practices, by highlighting the interplay between Ethnomedicinal knowledge and sustainable development.

### **The Ghaggar's Story: An Anthropological Vision For Sustainability Of Intermittent Rivers**

**Ritesh & Anil Kishore Sinha**

Rivers are vital for achieving nearly half of the 17 UN SDGs, supporting ecological balance and societal well-being. However, intermittent rivers and ephemeral streams (IRES) are increasingly threatened by industrial discharge, agricultural runoff, land-use changes, and climate change, disrupting their ecological and hydrological functions. The Ghaggar River, once a socio-ecological and cultural lifeline, has deteriorated into a polluted waterway. This study aims to assess the ecological decline of the Ghaggar River and its socio-cultural implications by integrating scientific analysis with local knowledge. Using an **ethnohydrology framework**, it explores how traditional ecological knowledge aligns with scientific assessments. The research employs a **mixed-methods approach**, combining **qualitative interviews** with around 90 local residents and **physicochemical analysis** of water samples from multiple locations. The findings reveal high fluoride and nitrate levels exceeding BIS, WHO, and EU standards, validating community reports of discoloration, turbidity, and foul odours. Despite environmental degradation, the river remains central to cultural identity, with pollution leading to the erosion of river-centric rituals and practices. The study highlights community awareness of key pollution sources—industrial discharge, urban expansion, and agricultural intensification—while identifying governance failures as a critical barrier to sustainable management. By bridging hydrological science with community-driven insights, this study provides a model for addressing the dual challenges of environmental degradation and socio-cultural disconnection. The findings contribute to sustainable water management discourse, emphasizing the need for policy reforms and participatory conservation strategies to restore degraded river ecosystems.

<b>SESSION 11</b>	
<b>Ethnomedical Practices</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Vaishnavi Madhav Satpute, Kishan Kumar, Anita Laxman Balawan	Health, Medicine, And Anthropology: An Anthropological Study of The Muria Tribe in Bastar, Chhattisgarh
Tushar Srivastava	Indigenous Knowledge and Ethnomedicines of The Buxa Tribe in Bijnor District Of Uttar Pradesh, India
Ganesh Ramteke	Ethnomedicinal Practices of The Gond and Madia (Madiya) Tribes in Gadchiroli District of Maharashtra
Sushree Atmaja Pal	Faith, Forests and Healing: The Sacred Balance of Indigenous Medicine Among Sabara Tribe of Jamujhari Village, Odisha
Chou Indamang Manchey and Radhe Amung	Healing The Fever: Indigenous Malaria Remedies of The Tai Khamti Tribe
Smaranika Das	Studies On Ethnomedicinal Plants Used in Handia – A Traditional Rice-Beer Prepared by Tribes of Shimilipal, Mayurbhanj And Its Nutritional Evaluation
Sandhya Bhatt	Record And Remedy: Oral Traditions and Ethnobotanical Practices Among The Bhotia Of Uttarakhand

## **Health, Medicine, And Anthropology: An Anthropological Study Of The Muria Tribe In Bastar, Chhattisgarh**

**Vaishnavi Madhav Satpute, Kishan Kumar & Anita Laxman Balawant**

Health is a crucial aspect of human life, encompassing physical, mental, and social well-being, as defined by the World Health Organization. India's diverse tribal communities, including the Muria tribe of Bastar, rely heavily on traditional knowledge for healthcare. This study explores the ethno-medical practices of the Muria tribe, a sub-group of the Gond tribe, focusing on Kothiaguda village in Chhattisgarh. The Muria community, classified as a Scheduled Tribe (ST) under the Indian Constitution, has a deep-rooted connection with nature, reflected in their health practices. Traditional healers and shamans play a vital role in treating illnesses through herbal remedies, rituals, and spiritual interventions. This research also investigates the Muria tribe's dietary habits and preventive health strategies, which emphasize the use of locally available resources. Using anthropological methods such as surveys, interviews, observations, and case studies, this study documents the community's unique healthcare system. It highlights the relevance of their practices in preserving cultural heritage while addressing health challenges. This research contributes to a broader understanding of indigenous healthcare systems, advocating for their integration into public health policies for sustainable and culturally sensitive healthcare solutions.

## **Indigenous Knowledge And Ethnomedicines Of The Buxa Tribe In Bijnor District Of Uttar Pradesh, India**

**Tushar Srivastava**

According to World Health Organization, For centuries, traditional and complementary medicine (T&CM) has been an integral resource for health in households and communities. One hundred seventy countries reported on the use of traditional medicine and many developed countries have also begun recognizing and integrating traditional medicine into their healthcare systems. There are considerable economic benefits in the development of indigenous medicines and in the use of medicinal plants for the treatment of various diseases. Plants have been used in the making of traditional medicines for several thousand years. With the increasing demand of sustainable development, there has been an increasing interest in the study of medicinal plants and their traditional use in different parts of the world. Documenting this indigenous knowledge, ethnomedicine and traditional healers, Researcher focus on the importance of traditional medicinal system of Buxa community. Traditional Healers among the Buxa community known as Siyana or Siyana who have knowledge about all the ethnomedicine and traditional way of treatment using chanting and Physical activities. Nowadays, due to the influence of modern medicine, people believe more in modern doctors than the traditional healer(siyana). But some poor and rural Buxa relied on them and used their traditional medicinal system. In this regard, the present Study provides an understanding of the ethno-medical and traditional healers with reference to indigenous knowledge and ethno-medicines systems how it impacts the society and its individual as a whole.

## **Ethnomedicinal Practises Of The Gond And Madia (Madiya) Tribes In Gadchiroli District Of Maharashtra**

**Ganesh Ramteke**

Ethno medicinal specialists in the tribal villages of Gadchiroli district are dominated by two tribal groups such as Gonds and Madia. The medicinal values of different plants are used for curing various diseases in the locality. Their Local names, and the parts used as the mode of curing of different diseases. This paper aims to find out their concepts, beliefs, practices and patterns of these behaviours related to health and usage of traditional medicines. **Materials and Methods:** Data was collected by using key informant Interviews, including participate observation, questionnaires, documentation on ethno-medical practitioners. Gonds and Madia's perception regarding health, has conceptualized healing with health indicators. The ethnomedical specialist, traditionally known as makul, siyakan/ vaidu, uses medicinal plants to cure or to treat the diseases. Among the health care providers of traditional medicine bhagat plays an important role in this community, there are 7 to 9 bhagats in this community. **Result:** The major diseases found are -Dull face, Body pains and weakness, If a person is not able to get up from bed for a few days, then that person is considered to be ill in that community. The ethno medicinal plants are mostly used to treat Snake bite, Itching, wounds, Hepatitis, Fractures of bones, skin disease, kidney stone, gastrointestinal disease, cold, cough, dysuria etc. In some tribes, the ethno medical specialists are different from religious healers. But when the study was conducted among Gonds and Madia tribes, the ethno medical specialist and religious healers both were the exact same person.

## **Faith, Forests And Healing: The Sacred Balance Of Indigenous Medicine Among Sabara Tribe Of Jamujhari Village, Odisha**

**Sushree Atmaja Pal**

Indigenous medicine plays a vital role in tribal communities, serving as a bridge that links spirituality, natural resources, and healing methodologies to sustain the well-being and cultural integrity of these groups. The present study explores the interconnection between faith, forests, and healing among the migrated tribe of Sabara in Jamujhari Village, Odisha, highlighting the role of indigenous medicine in their health and cultural practices. The migrated Sabara tribes, exemplifies this, relying on sacred grooves, traditional herbs, and spiritual practices for holistic healing. The research aims to document medicinal plants, explore how the community integrates natural resources and spiritual beliefs into their healthcare system, and analyze their relevance in modern medicine. Methodologies included immersive fieldwork, census study, participant observation, interviews with medicine men and traditional healers, and case studies. Results reveal that the Sabara tribes rely on the rich biodiversity of nearby forests for herbal remedies. Research documented over 35 medicinal plants to treat ailments ranging from skin infections to gastrointestinal issues, with notable examples like Nettlespurges (*gaba*) used for stomach aches and relive from delivery pain and Solanum nigrum (*lunikoli*) for mouth ulcers. Remedies often involve intricate preparation and most of their remedies are deeply intertwined with magico-religious practices to invoke healing. Despite the availability of modern healthcare facilities, the community's reliance on traditional practices demonstrates their

cultural resilience and the enduring importance of nature and spirituality in their lives. However, due to the growing influence of modern practices, the younger generation shows a steep decline in engagement with these practices which pose significant challenges to preserving this heritage. The findings underline the cultural resilience of the Sabara tribe and emphasize the importance of preserving their practices as sustainable alternatives to contemporary medicine.

## **Healing The Fever: Indigenous Malaria Remedies Of The Tai Khamti Tribe**

**Chou Indamang Manchey & Radhe Amung**

The Tai Khamti community of Arunachal Pradesh continues to rely on traditional medicinal practices despite the availability of modern healthcare. A key repository of this indigenous medicinal knowledge is *Paap Ney Yaa* (The Book of Traditional Medicines), which documents remedies for various ailments, including malaria. This study explores the indigenous treatments of malaria among the Tai Khamti to understand their composition, preparation, and perceived efficacy in treating *Plasmodium Vivax* (pv) and *Plasmodium Falciparum* (pf) malaria. Using an ethnographic approach, interviews with *Chau Yaa* (Indigenous Medicine Practitioners) and community elders, field observations of the preparation process, and botanical identification of medicinal plants were conducted. Findings reveal that *Yaa-Maha-Moan* or *Yaa-Mak-Loung Shom*, is a primary remedy for pv malaria, while *Yaa-Nгаа Phung Shi*, formulated with *Aristolochia assamica* as a substitute for wild bear bile, is used for pf malaria. These remedies are prepared through controlled boiling and filtration and stored as concentrated medicinal tea. Another effective treatment, *Yaa-Paohom*, is derived from *Nyctanthes arbor-tristis* and *Mikania micrantha*, while additional herbal treatments like *Andrographis paniculata* (*Kamtok*) and *Phlogacanthus thyrsoiflorus* (*Cholom*) are traditionally consumed as teas. The study highlights the integration of traditional knowledge and ecological wisdom in disease management, emphasizing the cultural significance and accessibility of these treatments. While scientific validation is necessary, these indigenous remedies remain essential as complementary healthcare alternatives in the region.

## **Studies On Ethnomedicinal Plants Used In Handia – A Traditional Rice-Beer Prepared By Tribes Of Shimilipal, Mayurbhanj And Its Nutritional Evaluation**

**Smaranika Das**

Odisha occupies a unique position in the ethnographic map of India for having the largest variety of tribal communities. The Mayurbhanj district of Odisha has highest Scheduled tribe population with 1479576 inhabitants. Rice-beer or *Handia* holds a sacred place in cultural practices and is intertwined with cultural identity of the tribal communities. Handia is an alcoholic beverage made from fermented rice plays significant role in social, cultural as well as economic lives of these ethnic groups. There are 17 different plant parts are used along with rice powder for making Ranu or Bhakhar tablets. The purpose of this study is to document the traditional knowledge of the tribal people regarding *handia* making and its nutritional evaluation with respect to nutrient content and microbes present as probiotic at 10 different

sample locations of Shimilipal, Mayurbhanj district. The right amount of Ranu tablets is used as starter culture and are mixed with boiled rice during fermentation for a certain amount of time. The medicinal properties of plant parts in ranu tablets make *Handia* a cherished drink for ethnic groups. The biotic organisms involved are mostly *Lactobacillus* and Yeast. The pH of the drink is  $4.303 \pm 0.54$ , slightly sour in taste. The low alcohol ( $1.22 \pm 0.97\%$ ) level and high amount of carbohydrate ( $1.3 \pm 0.24\text{g/l}$ ) and protein ( $0.677 \pm 0.2\text{g/l}$ ), moisture (6.672%) make this drink a healthy option with a affordable price of Rs 7 per litre. The drink also helps the hard-working laborious tribal people to revitalize and protects them from dehydration especially during summer.

### **Record And Remedy: Oral Traditions And Ethnobotanical Practices Among The Bhotia Of Uttarakhand**

**Sandhya Bhatt**

This paper explores the relationship between oral traditions and ethnobotanical practices, highlighting the interaction between indigenous cultures and plant life, dealing with transmitting knowledge, beliefs, and traditions. The transhumant, Bhotia communities of the Himalayas in India, share a harmonious and symbiotic relationship with their natural world, having traversed its challenging geography, hold a rich repository of indigenous knowledge in the field of ethnobotany and traditional medicines. Ethnobotany studies how different communities utilize and manage plants for medicinal, nutritional, cultural and spiritual purposes, embedded within their cultural narratives and practices. Oral traditions here play a vital role in transmitting this knowledge through narratives, storytelling, songs, rituals and verbal teachings. These provide a framework for understanding the flora around them giving detailed information about characteristics, identification, location and preparation of the plant resources, as well as cultural prescriptions and proscriptions related to their use. Orality in these communities serves as an adaptive and dynamic tool ensuring the relevance and continuity of ethnobotanical practices while fostering connections between people and their environment. It reinforces cultural identity through symbolic and spiritual meanings associated with plant resources. It becomes a method of knowledge transmission influencing its storage and sharing, shaped by human memory systems. In the face of modernity, environmental pressures, and the decreasing number of native language speakers, this dynamic knowledge system faces the threat of vanishing and calls for concerned efforts to preserve it. This paper attempts to understand the interplay of orality and indigenous knowledge in safeguarding these practices and the cultural systems that sustain them.

**SESSION 12**

**Studies on Community Based Organizations and Tribal Societies**

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Kasi Eswarappa	Women's Leadership and Voluntary Institutions: An Anthropological Perspective from Andhra Pradesh
Niten Chhetri And Somenath Bhattacharjee	Change and Continuity of the Chhetri community in Jumla, Nepal: An emic perspective
Jagyan Kalpita Pradhan	Impact of Development Programmes on the Lives of Tribal Girls of Kanyashram, Mayurbhanj, Odisha
Prasant Kumar Sahoo	Preserving The Living Cultural Heritage: A Study on Ethno-Sports of The Hill Khadias
Deepak Kumar	The Ethno-medicinal study of Halbi Tribal community of Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra
Subhra Devi	Documenting Textile Motifs of Assam: An Attempt for Safeguarding Traditional Cultural Expressions
Ambedkar Kumar Sahu	थारू जनजाति की स्वदेशी भाषा, परंपरा, एवं स्कूली ज्ञान निर्माण: थरूहट स्कूल का एक नृवंशवैज्ञानिक अध्ययन
Vijay Kumar	Preservation and Documentation of Cultural Heritage: Exploring the memorial traditions of Bastar

## **Women's Leadership And Voluntary Institutions: An Anthropological Perspective From Andhra Pradesh**

**Kasi Eswarappa**

The Government of India's initiative, to improve the condition of the rural masses, has paved the way for the emergence of Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDP). As part of the IRDP, successive governments have initiated numerous development initiatives. These initiatives have given rise to the foundation of local institutions, such as Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) and Self Help Groups (SHGs), and became pillars for rural Indian women's economic and social empowerment. With consistent help and support from the government and non-government agencies, these programs have been successful and became a boon to rural Indian women. The paper draws its inferences from both primary and secondary sources of data. In our paper, an attempt is made to bring out two such successful cases, with multi-site ethnography, from the rural areas of Andhra Pradesh. Our study focuses on two cases from the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. The cases were identified as part of our ethnographic fieldwork in the area during the intermittent periods of 2012-2014; 2017-2019 and 2023-2024. The cases are *Rythu Sangam* (Farmers Club, Chittoor) and Village Organization (Anantapur). The paper investigates how the members of these groups have emerged as leaders in their vicinities through these local institutions. How these institutions have become pillars for the women's economic and social empowerment in the study areas. How these members, in turn, paved the way to improve the lives and livelihoods in their villages? To conclude, the paper has shown that the local institutions or voluntary groups have strengthened rural women's social and economic position in the study areas of Andhra Pradesh, India.

## **Change And Continuity Of The Chettri Community In Jumla, Nepal: An Emic Perspective**

**Niten Chhetri & Somenath Bhattacharjee**

The Chettri community, native to the Himalayan region, has a rich cultural heritage rooted in nature worship and animal sacrifice. From nature worshipping to Buddhism and later Hinduism, their traditions have been influenced and changed over time by outside forces, such as sanskritization and transculturation. These changes have caused the community to lose much of its original culture. This study focuses on the Chettri community in Jumla, a district in Nepal's Karnali Province considered the cradle of Chettri culture. Using Jacques Derrida's idea of deconstruction, the research looks closely at how the community's traditions and beliefs have been shaped, changed, or erased over time. By working directly with the community, the study aims to understand their culture from their perspective and document their remaining practices and traditions. The study also explores whether their original culture still survives or has blended with other traditions. It examines how government policies support the Chettri people, who face economic struggles, social challenges, and psychological pressures in Jumla. This research is the first to focus on the culture and traditions of the Chettri community in

Jumla. The study incorporates both primary and secondary data sources. Interviews, focus group discussions, and case studies for unique narratives will be employed. Transcription of the response from the respondent will be analyzed using thematic analysis. It will underscore the enduring relevance of tradition and culture in times of crisis and call for further exploration and preservation of these practices. It aims to preserve their heritage and provide insights into how cultures change, adapt, and survive over time.

### **Impact Of Development Programmes On The Lives Of Tribal Girls Of Kanyashram, Mayurbhanj, Odisha**

**Jagyan Kalpita Pradhan**

The word education originated from the Latin word which means “to bring up” or “to nourish”. In Odisha, there are 705 Ashram schools, from all the district Mayurbhanj have the highest number of ashram schools, and it is a key component of the state’s education system. Especially for the tribal population who lived in remote and rural areas, these institutions are designed to provide education to marginalised tribal communities, while also offering accommodation, meals, and other necessary support to ensure that the students have a safe and conducive environment for learning. The present study highlights how the development programs influence their life in the ashram school in the studied area of Mayurbhanj district. Investing in girl’s education is one of the most effective ways to accelerate development. Research shows that when girls receive quality education, it leads to significant improvements in various development initiatives. Here are some major development programs and initiative applied to ashram schools. These are like state tribal welfare programs, infrastructure development programs, skill development and vocational education, health and nutrition programs, programs for empowerment of adolescent girls (Sakhi), pre-matric and post-matric scholarship to SC & ST students. Development programs in these ashram schools are multi-faceted and aim to address the challenges faced by tribal communities. In essence, the development programs in an ashram school seeks to create well rounded individuals by nurturing their intellectual, physical, moral, and spiritual growth, preparing them to contribute meaningfully to society and lead a balanced life.

### **Preserving The Living Cultural Heritage: A Study On Ethno-Sports Of The Hill Khadias**

**Prasant Kumar Sahoo**

Preserving one’s cultural heritage is pivotal in context of globalization due to an accelerated rate of disappearance of local and traditional cultural elements. Most importantly, to preserve the intangible or the non-material living cultural heritage becomes indispensable in era of salvage anthropology, the practice of garnering tangible and intangible cultural traditions that are facing extinction. In this valued background, the present paper explores the ethno-sports or indigenous sports, of the Hill Khadias of Mayurbhanj, Odisha in the eve of their gradual invisibleness and vanishing from the community’s cultural and leisurely space. The paper finds that the Hill Khadias, a semi-nomadic tribe of the Mundari group living around the Similipal forests, possess healthy collections of indigenous sports. Employing Alexy Kylasov’s

theoretical model of ethno-sports, the research examines the contribution of ethno-sports towards community unity, egalitarianism, sharing and caring, brotherhood etc. that set the Hill Khadia culture apart from the plethora of diverse communities. Their traditional games not only consolidate and strengthen the group identity but also identify them who they are. Ethnography and other qualitative data collection tools were used for garnering first hand data along with data from secondary sources. Festivals like Makar and Raja Sankrati are the best moment when they often showcase their ethno-sports to wider audience. The research argues that with the process of homogenization, the indigenous sports are being appropriated by mainstream (western) communities. The paper concludes that their indigenous sports need to be preserved, conserved, documented and even celebrated and replicated widely so that the vibrant elements of a culture can thrive and sustain.

### **The Ethno-Medicinal Study Of Halbi Tribal Community Of Gadchiroli District, Maharashtra**

**Deepak Kumar**

Food and shelter are the two things that humans need at the earliest to survive, and maintaining good health is also quite crucial. It has been known since antiquity that knowledge and use of herbal remedies for optimum health maintenance were also present in prehistoric societies. In recent times, the usage of modern medicines is replacing the use of traditional treatment methods. However, the use of ethnomedicines and ethnomedicinal practitioners are still present in tribal populations and are still used on a daily basis. According to the World Health Organization, 80% of people practice traditional healing method across the globe. There are 461 tribal communities in India, and the Halbi tribe is one of them. The Halbi tribes are located in a Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra. They use various products from the forest like bamboo, achar, tendu leaves and others for their livelihood and medicinal uses too. This paper attempts to examine the Halbi tribe's traditional healing practices, method and preservation of ethnomedicine. This study is based on qualitative research approach for the data collection comprising case studies of the ethno-medicinal practitioners, some interviews supporting the respective beneficiaries. The etiological factors responsible for the ailments described by the Halbi tribe will be noted as well. It has been found that Halbi tribe efficiently make use of ethno-medicine for treating illnesses in their day-to day life and it is important to document this information as their one of the vital material cultures.

### **Documenting Textile Motifs Of Assam: An Attempt For Safeguarding Traditional Cultural Expressions**

**Subhra Devi**

Traditional Cultural Expressions including textile motifs are part of community memories and significantly associated with and dependent on the surrounding environment--- both socio-cultural and geographical. Indigenous ethnic communities have their own unique ways of safeguarding these heritages. However, with tremendous pressure of fast socio-cultural changes, these are slowly forgotten over the years. Assam in the north Eastern corner of Bharat

has a rich heritage of traditional textiles with varied motifs and designs. These traditional textile designs are at the risk of extinction and at the same time under the threat of appropriation by other regions and commercial agents if not properly documented. The objective of this study is to understand the method of safeguarding the textile motifs of Assam in the multicultural and multi-lingual scenario of Assam and the role of documentation in the whole procedure of safeguarding. It is attempted to outline the problems faced during documentation of textile motifs of Assam and try to find out ways to overcome those. This paper proposes to examine how documentation can be effectively used in the multicultural and multilingual setting of Assam. For this purpose, field visit to different ethnic communities practicing textile weaving were performed and samples preserved in various museums were surveyed. It is noticed that in a significant number of cases, the motifs do not belong to a specific community in particular and has a shared inheritance. Some motifs have a significant variation across time and space. Thus, documentation of Assamese traditional motifs is not a very straight forward and linear act. It needs a very careful understanding of the local socio-cultural milieu and of course the handloom technology.

## थारू जनजाति की स्वदेशी भाषा, परंपरा, एवं स्कूली ज्ञान निर्माण: थरूहट स्कूल का एक नृवंशवैज्ञानिक अध्ययन

अम्बेदकर कुमार साहु

सार:

प्रस्तुत शोध आलेख स्कूली ज्ञान निर्माण के माध्यम से वर्तमान शिक्षा प्रणाली, अधिगम,

पाठ्यक्रम और परीक्षा परिणाम में स्थानीय भाषा, संस्कृति और परंपरा की उपयोगिता की जांच करता है। शोध यह तर्क देता है कि थारू जनजाति की स्वदेशी भाषा एवं परंपरा कैसे स्कूल की संस्कृति को प्रभावित करता है जिसका प्रभाव कक्षा कक्ष में बच्चों का लर्निंग एवं स्कूल द्वारा प्रदत्त ज्ञान में दिखाई देती है। प्रस्तुत शोध एक नृवंशवैज्ञानिक अध्ययन है जिसे बिहार के पश्चिम चम्पारण स्थित थरूहट क्षेत्र में संचालित किया गया है। स्कूल में शिक्षकों का केस स्टडी, बच्चों से बातचीत एवं कक्षा का सहभागी अवलोकन विधि से राजकिय मध्य विद्यालय गोबरहिया स्कूल में तथ्यों का संकलन किया गया। शोध का मुख्य उद्देश्य यह पता लगाना था कि बच्चों के घर की भाषा, संस्कृति एवं परंपरा जिसमें विशिष्ट सामाजिक मूल्य व प्रतिमान निहित होते हैं स्कूल में ज्ञान निर्माण को कैसे निर्धारित करती है? तथा शिक्षक इस समस्या को कैसे देखते हैं? आलेख तीन खंड में विभाजित हैं। निष्कर्ष बताते हैं कि मुख्यधारा की शिक्षा प्रणाली थारू स्वदेशी संस्कृति एवं परंपरा के प्रतिकूल है तथा स्कूल की शिक्षण शैली बच्चों के ज्ञान निर्माण में सबसे बड़ी बाधा है, क्योंकि जिस ज्ञान को स्कूल में सिखाया जाता है प्रायः बच्चें उस ज्ञान का इस्तेमाल दैनिक क्रियाकलाप में नहीं कर पाते हैं। शोध में पाया गया प्रमुख समस्याओं में शामिल स्कूली पाठ्यक्रम एवं शिक्षण विधि का स्वदेशी भाषा में नहीं होना है जिसका प्रभाव ज्ञान मूल्यांकन की औपचारिक परीक्षा परिणाम में अंतर्निहित है।

## Preservation And Documentation Of Cultural Heritage: Exploring The Memorial Traditions Of Bastar

Vijay Kumar

The memorial traditions of Bastar, a region rich in cultural diversity and tribal heritage, represent a significant aspect of India's intangible cultural heritage. These traditions, deeply rooted in the socio-religious practices of the indigenous communities, serve as a testament to their unique worldview and collective memory. However, the rapid pace of modernization and cultural homogenization poses a severe threat to these traditions, leading to their gradual erosion. This research aims to explore the cultural and historical significance of the memorial traditions in Bastar, examining their symbolic meanings, rituals, and artistic expressions. It also seeks to identify the challenges associated with preserving and documenting these practices in the face of changing societal dynamics. By employing ethnographic methods, archival research, and community participation, this study will propose sustainable strategies for the preservation and documentation of Bastar's memorial traditions. The research aspires to contribute to broader efforts in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, ensuring that the rich legacy of Bastar's tribal communities is passed on to future generations.

<b>SESSION 13</b>	
<b>Preventive care and Hygiene Cultures</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Jeetendra Kabeerpanthi and Rajesh K. Gautam	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Regarding COVID-19 Vaccination: A Cross-Sectional Study
Nivedita Som	Knowledge And Attitude Towards Sanitation and Hygienic Practices: A Study on Rural Women in West Bengal
Immon Ghosh, Gulrukh Begum	Are Behavioural Risk Factors Responsible for The Prevalence of Hypertension and Diabetes More in Males Despite Females Being More Obese?
Kalyani Sahal	Transforming Schools: A Study of Effectiveness of The Swachh Bharat Swachhi Vidyalaya Campaign
K. Grace Kom	Traditional Knowledge of Childbirth and Its Change in The Practices AmongtThe Kom Of Manipur, India
Abhishek Chauhan, Jagdeep Oraon, and Alok Kumar	Bridging The Healthcare Gap: Challenges and Innovations in Rural and Tribal Communities
Shreyosi Mitra	Ailments And Immunization: A Comparative Study Among the Hindu Caste and Tribal Population Of West Medinipur, West Bengal

## **Knowledge, Attitudes, And Practices Regarding Covid-19 Vaccination: A Cross-Sectional Study**

**Jeetendra Kabeerpanthi & Rajesh K. Gautam**

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges to global public health. Vaccination is a critical tool in mitigating the spread and severity of the disease. However, the success of vaccination campaigns depends significantly on the population's knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) toward vaccines. Understanding these factors is crucial for addressing vaccine hesitancy, improving acceptance, and ensuring widespread immunization coverage. The study aimed to assess the knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding COVID-19 vaccination among individuals through an online survey. This research highlights the level of awareness, perception, and behaviors toward vaccination. A cross-sectional study was conducted using a structured online questionnaire disseminated through Google Forms. A total of 122 participants voluntarily responded. The questionnaire included sections on sociodemographic details, knowledge about COVID-19 vaccines, attitudes toward vaccination, and practices concerning vaccine uptake. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize findings and identify patterns. The study revealed that most participants were aware of the availability of COVID-19 vaccines, vaccine safety, and efficacy. Along with this, some measures to prevent COVID-19, such as social distancing, the habit of wearing masks, and a balanced diet to boost immunity, were used extensively. Regarding practices, 76.2% of the participants reported that they have been vaccinated, while 23.8% expressed reluctance or have not yet decided. The findings indicate a moderate level of knowledge and a positive attitude about COVID-19 vaccination among the respondents. However, vaccine hesitancy due to misinformation and safety concerns remains a significant barrier.

## **Knowledge And Attitude Towards Sanitation And Hygienic Practices: A Study On Rural Women In West Bengal**

**Nivedita Som**

To understand the concerns (knowledge and attitudes) and practices towards drinking water use, urination, defecation and menstrual health management among women. Methods: The present study was conducted in rural areas of Purulia and Howrah districts of West Bengal. Data collected on socio-demographic profile, toilet/latrine usages and practices, water facilities/usages and associated issues and menstrual hygienic practices using a pre-tested schedule. Results: In Purulia, all tribal households had toilet/latrine facility, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of them had water sources for use, while the caste households mostly remained without facilities of water sources, latrine/toilet. Majority of caste participants went behind hut for urination and defecation, never used water for cleaning the places after urination and defecation; used water from nearby pond for drinking; used clothes during menstruation; washed those clothes into ponds/ nearby places. Majority of tribal participants went nearby ponds for urination and defecation, used to clean private parts daily, used water for cleaning places after defecation, used water from tube well for drinking; disposed sanitary pads properly. In Howrah, each household had latrine/toilet facility and water sources nearby or within premises. Majority of

caste participants went to household toilets, nearby pond and behind the hut for urination and defecation, never used water for cleaning the places and private parts after urination. All the participants used water for cleaning the places and private parts after defecation. The participants mostly used water from both tube well and nearby ponds for drinking. The participants mostly used sanitary pads during menstruation and changed absorbents during menstruation twice a day, used to dispose sanitary pads into ponds/ nearby places. Conclusion: The study reflects that there are conspicuous differences in sanitation coverage between Purulia and Howrah. Simultaneously, a distinction in knowledge and attitude towards sanitation and hygienic practices was noticed among rural women of these two locales.

### **Are behavioural risk factors responsible for the prevalence of hypertension and diabetes more in males despite females being more obese?**

**Immon Ghosh & Gulrukh Begum**

The aim of the study is to assess the role of behavioural risk factors in the sexual disparity in the prevalence of hypertension and diabetes among the adult Hindu Bengali population of Brahmaputra valley, Assam. Materials and methods: Data has been collected from two districts (Kamrup and Hojai) of Assam. A total of 473 individuals volunteered out of which 352 are females and 121 are males belonging to the age 20 years and above. A structured schedule was used to collect data for behavioural risk factors such as age, sex, socio-economic status, tobacco usage, alcoholism and sedentary lifestyle. NCD data has been collected using WHO STEP wise method which basically included systolic and diastolic blood pressure and random blood glucose. The prevalence of behavioural risk factors (tobacco products usage and alcohol) are significantly high among the studied population. But it is more among men (58.67% & 43.80%) as compared to women (34.94% & 13.63%) respectively. Prevalence of hypertension and diabetes mellitus is also extremely high in the population. The binary logistic regression analysis revealed that sex is a statistically significant predictor of the systolic hypertension ( $p = 0.013$ ). Specifically, males were 1.831 times more likely to exhibit the outcome compared to females (OR = 1.831, 95% CI: 1.136–2.952). This indicates that being male increases the odds of the outcome by approximately 83%. In case of diastolic hypertension males were 1.647 times more likely to exhibit the outcome compared to females (OR = 1.647, 95% CI: 1.082–2.506). This suggests a 64.7% increase in the odds of the outcome among males. For diabetes, males were 1.823 times more likely to exhibit the outcome compared to females (OR = 1.823, 95% CI: 1.114–2.982). However, for obesity males were found to have 39.1% lower odds of exhibiting the outcome compared to females (OR = 0.609, 95% CI: 0.397–0.936). Conclusion: The findings of the study emphasize the importance of behavioural risk factors as the determinants of NCD. Despite women being more obese, it is seen that men tend to have more risk for developing hypertension and diabetes. It, therefore, becomes very crucial to determine the impact of behavioural risk factors on the sexual disparity in the incidence of NCDs.

## **Transforming Schools: A Study On The Effectiveness Of The Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya Campaign**

**Kalyani Sahal**

The Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya (SBSV) program, launched in 2014 as a key initiative under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), aims to ensure a clean and hygienic environment in schools across India. This study evaluates the fulfilment of the program's objectives, focusing on its impact on awareness about the sanitation facilities and behaviour to promote hygiene among the students in schools. The primary objectives of the SBSV program include the construction of separate toilets for girls and boys, provision of safe drinking water, promoting sanitation and hygiene education, and fostering behavioural changes among students and staff. Through a mixed-method approach data was collected by using questionnaire surveys and interviews of the primary respondents (principals/ Head Teachers and parents/ guardians) of the selected schools of 8 states and 2 UTs in the year 2022-2023. This paper assesses the effectiveness of hygiene education and the program's role in cultivating a culture of cleanliness. The findings reveal significant progress in infrastructure development but highlight challenges in sustaining hygienic practices, ensuring consistent maintenance, and addressing regional disparities. This study concludes by offering policy recommendations for improving the implementation of the SBSV program and enhancing its long-term impact on educational institutions across the country.

## **Traditional Knowledge Of Childbirth And Its Change In The Practices Among The Kom Of Manipur, India**

**K. Grace Kom**

Childbirth is such an experience that is interpreted by different cultural communities and is surrounded by different customs. Even though it is just a biological phenomenon, it has profound cultural, social, and spiritual meaning as the experience of giving birth is important on a personal, familial, and social level throughout all cultures. Thus, cultural traditions, spiritual beliefs, and a comprehensive understanding of the body, community, and environment are all profoundly ingrained in indigenous knowledge of childbirth and its customs. Given this, the present paper will focus on the Kom tribe of Manipur's traditional understanding of birthing and how their customs have changed as a result of the introduction of Christianity and contemporary medical knowledge. The Koms are one of the 33 recognised tribes of Manipur that were animists until becoming Christians in the late 18th century as a result of colonial control. The interview method was used to gather data from four Kom villages: Khoirentak Khuman and Upper Kom Keirap in Churachandpur district, Thayong in Kangpokpi district, and Kakching Mantak in Chandel district. Using the snowball technique, the village pastor, midwives (naisupi), and community elders who shared indigenous knowledge were chosen as key informants. The study found that despite the encroachment of modern medical practices, the Kom people continue to uphold and adapt their traditional birth knowledge, blending it with contemporary healthcare and Christian approaches to ensure the well-being of mothers and children. Essentially, Kom birth practices affirm the community's dedication to preserving life

at its most sacred phases by integrating spiritual beliefs, cultural values, and a profound understanding of the human body and nature.

## **Bridging The Healthcare Gap: Challenges And Innovations In Rural And Tribal Communities**

**Abhishek Chauhan, Jagdeep Oraon & Alok Kumar**

Healthcare in rural and tribal India faces challenges such as geographic isolation, socioeconomic inequalities, cultural barriers, and inadequate medical facilities. Tribal communities are particularly affected by high rates of anemia, malnutrition, and genetic disorders like Sickle Cell Disease (SCD). Limited awareness, poor infrastructure, and a shortage of trained professionals exacerbate these issues. Efforts are underway to address these disparities, with the government focusing on infrastructure, workforce development, health education, and policy reforms. Innovative solutions like telemedicine, community health workers, and culturally sensitive programs are making a positive impact. Collaborative efforts among government, NGOs, and private stakeholders are also contributing to improved healthcare delivery. Successful initiatives, such as the Arogya Plus Project in Chhattisgarh and the Kudumbashree Tribal Special Project in Kerala, demonstrate the effectiveness of community-led approaches. These programs integrate healthcare with local resources, empowering communities to improve awareness and access. Similar efforts by SEWA in Gujarat highlight the potential for holistic solutions to transform tribal healthcare in India.

## **Ailments And Immunization: A Comparative Study Among The Hindu Caste And Tribal Population Of West Medinipur, West Bengal**

**Shreyosi Mitra**

**Introduction-**Immunization is a key part of primary health care and is considered one of the best health investments. Vaccines are available to prevent more than 20 life-threatening diseases, including diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, influenza, and measles. Immunizations are administered by a variety of healthcare professionals, including medical assistants, nurses, nurse practitioners, physicians' assistants, physicians, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacists. India's immunization programme, UIP (Universal Immunization Programme), is one of the world's most extensive public health programmes. **Methodology-**The present study aimed to get an insight of the child immunization process in the rural and urban areas of West Medinipur, West Bengal. **Methodology-**For doing this a total number of 948 (356 urban Hindu caste, 347 rural Hindu caste and 245 Lodha) children were encountered along with their mothers. The optional and compulsory process of immunization was studied along with their common ailments. The data were collected using a pre-tested structured questionnaire. The mother-child dyad who were voluntarily participated to the study were considered as the participants. **Results-**The results shows that there were significant

differences ( $p=0.001$ ) in cases of completed duration of optional immunization and places of immunization and the mean duration of the ailments among these three groups of children. Conclusion-It can be concluded from the present study that more and more awareness programmes by the governmental and non-governmental organization could reinforce the practice of immunization. Essentially, the government health workers can penetrate effectively.

<b>SESSION 14</b>	
<b>Community Studies</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
M. Amsathwani	Arunthathiyar Community: Analyzing the Historical Oppression and Continued Marginalization In Tamil Nadu
Akash Kr. Srivastava and Vinita Chandra	Foodways At the Margins: Unfolding the Food Behaviour of Baigas and Their Indigenous Identity in Central India/Akash Kr. Srivastava and Vinita Chandra
Binoy Paul	Art, Cultural Values of Tribal's Special Reference to The Dimasa Community of The Barak Valley, Assam, India
E.Tamilselvan & M.P Damodaran	Anthropology of Irular Rite-De-Passage: A Case Study
Reetimoni Hazarika	Tuloni Biya: Puberty Ritual Practice of Assamese Hindu Society of Baligaon In Jorhat, Assam
Jambey Chotton	From Pride to Prohibition: The Decline of Tattooing Among the Apatani Tribe Of Arunachal Pradesh
Deepshikha Sarkar & Raja Chakraborty	Socio-cultural Practices and Taboos concerning Menstruation: A Study among Bauri and Kurmi Adolescent Girls in Purulia District, India
Abhishek Singh	नट समुदाय की आर्थिक स्थिति एवं विकास का एक अध्ययन (पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश के सन्दर्भ में)

## **Arunthathiyar Community: Analyzing The Historical Oppression And Continued Marginalization In Tamil Nadu**

**M. Amsathwani**

The Arunthathiyar community, often referred to as "Dalits among Dalits," has faced centuries of systemic oppression, social exclusion, and economic marginalization in Tamil Nadu, India. Despite the implementation of internal reservations a policy aimed at promoting social equality the community continues to encounter deep-rooted discrimination, insufficient representation, and limited access to social justice. This paper examines the cultural context of the Arunthathiyar community, highlighting their persistent struggles against caste-based oppression. An analysis of the current representation and socio-economic conditions of the community reveals ongoing inequalities and unmet commitments. This research employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data. Data was collected through in-depth interviews and a review of existing literature. The present study asserts that the current reservation system, although established with good intentions, has failed to effectively empower the Arunthathiyar community, leading to their leaders being reduced to the status of mere "rubber stamps." To rectify these injustices, this research emphasizes the urgent need for a fundamental transformation in societal attitudes, genuine representation, extensive economic and social empowerment of the Arunthathiyar community.

## **Foodways At The Margins: Unfolding The Food Behaviour Of Baigas And Their Indigenous Identity In Central India**

**Akash Kr. Srivastava & Vinita Chandra**

A community's foodways tradition expresses the sociocultural systems that permeate its members' daily existence and showcase their unique identity. Along with their food behaviour, the Indian tribal people seem similar in that they have developed their method of using food to reflect on their history and sense of self. In the Indian subcontinent, the Baiga community is one of the prominent indigenous groups that shares a close affinity with the region's early settlers. They reside in the hilly terrain of central India and have a distinct way of living and a hereditary manner of food consumption. The present study aims to shed light on subsistence patterns, culinary crafts, places, and practises in order to address the whole range of foodways of this autochthonous people, which set them apart from other inhabitants of central India. The biocultural approach adds to the theoretical framework of this study because food is not just to nourish our bodies. Instead, it is also a means to understand who we are. Additionally, the paper uses an archaeologist lens to draw attention to the food behaviour of people who are on the cusp of the past and present and who have maintained many aspects of their ancestral customs. Here, data is acquired via ethnographic research in a few regions of central India, especially in the Maikal Hills area. In this way, the paper illustrates the information regarding the foodways of one of India's native communities and tries to understand how dietary habits reflect on a group's indigenous identity.

## **Art, Cultural Values Of Tribal's Special Reference To The Dimasa Community Of The Barak Valley, Assam, India**

**Binoy Paul**

The Dimasa people, the largest tribal group in Assam, are renowned for their rich cultural diversity. They are part of the Bodo stock and belong to the Tibeto-Burman linguistic family. The term "Dimasa" translates to "son of big river" in their language, with "Di" meaning water, "Ma" meaning big, and "Sa" meaning son. It is believed that the Dimasa people consider themselves descendants of the Brahmaputra. Some scholars suggest that the Dimasa people are descended from Hidimba, a princess of Kamrupa who married Bhima, the 2nd Pandava. The Dimasa culture is deeply rooted in the practice of weaving, which is evident in their folksongs, folklore, and folktales. Weaving is a fundamental craft for Dimasa women, with all materials and equipment traditionally sourced from their natural surroundings. However, in recent years, the art of weaving has undergone rapid transformation. Changes can be observed in the materials used, dyeing techniques, motifs, patterns, and overall weaving process. This study aims to emphasize the importance of traditional weaving practices and explore the potential long-term impacts of the changes occurring within Dimasa culture. The research involved visiting various Dimasa villages in the Cachar district to document the weaving process. The gathered information is then analyzed in conjunction with the current state of the textile industry at both regional and national levels to gain insight into the evolving trends within the field.

## **Anthropology Of Irular Rite-De-Passage: A Case Study**

**E.Tamilselvan & M.P Damodaran**

The Irular is one of the prominent, and second largest tribal communities of Tamil Nadu. They are scattered over the state, and classified as one of the Scheduled Tribes, as well as PVTGs of Tamil Nadu. Traditionally, the Irular living in Nilgiri District of Tamil Nadu, followed foraging but have been forced to alter economic activities for various reasons. We have observed changes touch almost every element of their life, and culture, especially the rituals, and life-cycle rituals. Life-de-Passages had a great deal in one's life, celebrated elaborately earlier but drastically reduced to a few now. The rituals related to birth, puberty, marriage, and death are altered a lot. Tribal endogamy and clan exogamy became versatile. Marriage ceremonies are conducted like neighbours. The recent practice of dowry is rising. Burial continued as the mode of disposal of the dead body but, changes were noticed in the preparation of burial pits, and the method of putting the body into the burial pit. Contact with neighbours, and others catalyse those changes. Development, and modernisation also bring changes.

## **Tuloni Biya: Puberty Ritual Practice Of Assamese Hindu Society Of Baligaon In Jorhat, Assam**

**Reetimoni Hazarika**

Based on empirical study this paper tries to delve into the changes and continuity of a puberty ritual in Assamese Hindu community of Baligaon in Jorhat district of Assam. *Tuloni Biya* is the rite to passage ritual performed when young girls attain menarche. Besides rituals and taboos, it also involves celebration inviting friends and relatives. This ritual has been practiced from time immemorial and passed down from generation to generation. To understand various perspectives related to this ritual and its changes qualitative data was collected employing semi-structured interview schedule from both male and female of different age group. However, the target population of the study was women. Finding of the study further give insight of the various rites and rituals associated with this liminal phase which starts from the first day of attaining menarche and ends with a celebration after seven days. Throughout the process of *Tuloni Biya*, women play significant role as compared to men. With the advent of modernization, various changes and adaptations are coming into the practices related to this puberty ritual. Taboos related to this ritual and menstruation have been changing with time to avoid hinderance in overall development of an adolescent girl. However, *Tuloni Biya* still plays a significant role in celebrating womanhood in Assamese society.

### **From Pride To Prohibition: The Decline Of Tattooing Among The Apatani Tribe Of Arunachal Pradesh**

**Jambey Chotton**

This paper examines the tattooing tradition of the Apatani Tribe, which is one of the major tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Tattooing was once a symbol of identity and pride among the Apatani tribe especially among the men, symbolising their affiliation with the Tani tribe, and a form of beauty and adornment for women. Tattooing was deeply rooted in the tribe's social, cultural and ecological contexts. Various myths and oral history is associates with the tattooing tradition among the Apatanis. However, the practice was prohibited from the year 1970 by the Apatani Youth Association (AYA) for various reasons. The purpose of the paper is to investigate and comprehend the causes of the collapse of this tradition. Further, the paper will also discuss the perspective of the Apatani tribe concerning tattoo tradition and on its prohibition. With ethnographic approach, the study was carried out in the Ziro valley, the district Headquarter of Lower Subansiri Arunachal Pradesh. The study followed semi-structured interview schedule and has interviewed traditional knowledge holder including significant case studies from different age group.

### **Socio-cultural Practices and Taboos concerning Menstruation: A Study among Bauri and Kurmi Adolescent Girls in Purulia District, India**

**Deepshikha Sarkar and Raja Chakraborty**

Menstruation, a natural biological process in women, is deeply influenced by socio-cultural norms and beliefs, often associated with notions of religious purity and ceremonial cleanliness. These perceptions are linked with various taboos that shape women's attitudes and behaviours during menstruation. This study aimed at identification, prevalence and implications of

menstrual taboos among the Bauri and Kurmi adolescent girls in Purulia district, West Bengal. Primary data was gathered using personal interviews, case studies, and focus group discussions. The findings revealed distinct patterns in the two communities. Bauri adolescent girls adhere more strictly to religious and ceremonial taboos, while their Kurmi counterparts exhibited a comparatively lenient approach in these domains. Common practices such as daily bathing and the use of sanitary pad and old cotton cloths as menstrual absorbents were observed in both communities. Besides, taboos like restricting temple entry and refraining from social or ceremonial participation was observed. Key challenges included inadequate access to proper menstrual product disposal facilities for Kurmi girls, whereas, Bauri girls were not practising proper disposal method due to social taboos in spite of having waste bin near residence. Although some taboos seemed to promote good hygiene practices, some of those were acting to strengthen stigma and restrictions in women's participation in social and religious activities. It showed the need for culturally sensitive approaches to address these challenges. Intervention efforts should include culturally sensitive approaches to address these challenges and focus on improving menstrual health by providing better access to resources, and breaking harmful norms. The present study clearly indicated the importance of understanding the connection between culture and menstrual health to bring about positive changes in society.

नट समुदाय की आर्थिक स्थिति एवं विकास का एक अध्ययन (पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश के सन्दर्भ में)

### Abhishek Singh

यह अध्ययन पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश में स्थित विमुक्त और अर्ध खानाबदोश समुदायों पर केंद्रित है, जिसमें विशेष रूप से नट जाति की आर्थिक स्थिति का विश्लेषण किया गया है। नट जाति पारंपरिक रूप से गायन, रस्सी नृत्य और बाजीगरी में संलग्न रही है, लेकिन आधुनिकता और तकनीकी विकास के कारण इन पारंपरिक पेशों का आर्थिक महत्व घट गया है। वर्तमान समय में नट जाति की सामाजिक और आर्थिक स्थिति बहुत दयनीय हो गई है। पहले यह समुदाय सड़क कलाकारों के रूप में काम करता था, जो इनकी आय का मुख्य स्रोत था। इस अध्ययन में नट जाति के आर्थिक स्थिति एवं विकास के विभिन्न पहलुओं जैसे आय, व्यय, संपत्ति, रोजगार, शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, आवास और सामुदायिक विकास का मूल्यांकन किया गया है। इस शोध में प्राथमिक डेटा, फोकस समूह चर्चा और फील्ड अध्ययन पद्धति का उपयोग किया गया है। नट जाति में शिक्षा का अभाव है, जिससे परिवार के मुखिया अकसर निरक्षर होते हैं। आजकल यह समुदाय मुख्य रूप से मजदूरी, मनरेगा, ईट भट्टों, और रिक्शा चलाने जैसे कार्यों में संलग्न है। इनकी मासिक आय ₹5000 से ₹11,000 के बीच होती है। कुप्पुस्वामी पैमाना (Kuppuswamy Scale) के अनुसार नट जाति को 'उच्च निम्न वर्ग' (Upper-Lower-Class) में स्थानित किया गया है। यह समुदाय गरीबी, अशिक्षा और सामाजिक भेदभाव का सामना करता है, हालांकि कुछ सरकारी योजनाओं के माध्यम से सुधार के प्रयास किए गए हैं, लेकिन योजनाओं की अपर्याप्त कार्यान्वयन और जागरूकता की कमी ने उनके प्रभाव को सीमित कर दिया है। नट जाति की सामाजिक-आर्थिक स्थिति में सुधार के लिए व्यापक प्रयास और जागरूकता की आवश्यकता है।

<b>SESSION 15</b>	
<b>Maternal and Child Health</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Roshani Patel	Reproductive and Child Health Practices Among the Gond Tribe in Kadta Village, Sagar, District, Madhya Pradesh
Shreyasi Podder, Dipashna Banerjee, Shubham Roy, D. Sun, Subhra Shankha Barik, Koel Mukherjee	Assessment Of Nutritional Status of Khasi Children of Meghalaya: Exploring Ground Realities
Aksita Sarangi, Shyama Mohapatra	"Effects of socioeconomic status and cultural beliefs on Maternal and Child health outcomes: A study among the ethnic tribes of Chudanggarh Area, Cuttack, Odisha
Subhra Shankha Barik, Koel Mukherjee, Pinuma Baruah, D. Sun, Shubham Roy, Dipashna Banerjee Taman Hazarika, Shreyasi Podder, Animikh Chanda and Supriti Mallick	Exploring Health and Hygiene Challenges among Mothers and Children of the Khasi Community of Meghalaya
Mohima Roy, Salma Khatun and Raja Chakraborty	Age at menarche and anthropometric characteristics among the Bengali Hindu young adults in Purulia, West Bengal
Divjot Kaur, Harvinder Kaur, Praveen Kumar, Savita Verma Attri, Devidayal	Auxological Outcomes at Adolescence in a Follow-up Cohort of Small for Gestational age Neonates

## **Reproductive And Child Health Practices Among The Gond Tribe In Kadta Village, Sagar District, Madhya Pradesh**

**Roshani Patel**

Reproductive and child health encompasses practices, services, and interventions to ensure the well-being of mothers, infants, and children. The primary objective of this study is to assess reproductive and child health care practices among the Gond tribe of Kadta Village, Sagar District, Madhya Pradesh. A cross-sectional study was conducted with 100 female participants across the Menarche to Menopause age group. Primary data were collected through interview scheduled and focus group discussions (FGD), covering socio-demographic details, reproductive and child health, antenatal and postnatal care, delivery practices, family planning methods, menstrual hygiene practices, and vaccinations. The findings reveal significant gaps in awareness about HIV, AIDS, STIs, and RTIs. Early marriages (ages 12-15) were prevalent (63.5%), and a high percentage of mothers had not received antenatal check-ups (56.73%), tetanus injections, or iron and folic acid tablets (59.61%) during pregnancies. Furthermore, 59.63% of deliveries took place at home, with 59.61% being attended by untrained traditional birth attendants (Dai). Malnutrition was common among children. Poor maternal health, low antenatal care uptake, high rates of home deliveries, and traditional practices, such as applying grounded clay mixed with water to the umbilical cord, are linked to low socio-economic status, high illiteracy rates, lack of awareness, and inadequate healthcare access. This study highlights the urgent need for improved reproductive health education and better healthcare access in these communities.

## **Assessment Of Nutritional Status Of Khasi Children Of Meghalaya: Exploring Ground Realities**

**Shreyasi Podder, Dipashna Banerjee, Shubham Roy, D. Sun, Subhra Shankha Barik & Koel Mukherjee**

India, a diverse country has variable malnutrition among children. Malnutrition of children is a global issue now a day. Malnutrition commonly affects all groups in a community, but infants and young children are the most vulnerable groups because of their high nutritional requirements for growth and development. Keeping this in view, the present study has attempted to understand the current nutritional status of the children of the Khasi Community, Meghalaya. Comprehensively 301 Khasi households have been surveyed which include 233 children (including boys and girls) from the age group of 0-59 months in the villages of Mawpat and Mawsynram Block, East Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya. In this study, anthropometric measurements including height (cm.), weight (kg.) and serological variables like Haemoglobin has been taken following standard protocol. Out of 233 children, 104 children from Mawpat Block and 129 children from Mawsynram Block. The prevalence of underweight, stunting and wasting in Mawpat Block is 7.69%, 3.87% and 16.32% whereas the prevalence of underweight, stunting and wasting in Mawsynram Block is 14.73%, 35.94% and 12.5% respectively. Also, the present study reflects that 17.07% and 47.32% of children suffering from mild and severe anaemia respectively in Mawpat Block whereas 21.54% and 4.61% of children suffering from

mild and severe anaemia respectively in Mawsynram Block. To address this, the study aims to understand the nutritional status among the children in Meghalaya which would prove to be a comprehensive model that caters the cultural, social and geographical specifics of Meghalaya as a diverse ethnic group.

### **Effects Of Socioeconomic Status And Cultural Beliefs On Maternal And Child Health Outcomes: A Study Among The Ethnic Tribes Of Chudanggarh Area, Cuttack, Odisha**

**Aksita Sarangi & Shyama Mohapatra**

The maternal and child health outcomes are influenced by an interplay of cultural, social, economic and demographic factors. Maternal health behaviours include antenatal, delivery, postnatal, childcare practices. This study uses participant observation, sample survey and in-depth interview to gain insight on the significant impact of socio-economic status, cultural belief, educational status and lack of access to health care on maternal and child health. The study conducted among the Santal, Kohlo, and Ho tribes focused on mothers with children under age of five. A sample size of 60-70 mothers in the reproductive age group between 15-49 was taken. The study shows 85% of the women belong to the age group between 15-30 years and about 70% of them conceived between 15-20 years of age. Around 45% of the women are illiterate and 45% have received up to secondary education. The menstrual profile of the mothers shows 70% had a regular menstrual cycle. For antenatal checkup 60% women have preferred Government facilities with only 20% having regularity in checkup. Almost 70% have consumed food suggested by local religious practitioners and family elders. 80% of the mothers had normal delivery with 50% opting for home birth assisted by family. Only 40% have received medical care within 24 hours post delivery by medical professionals. 50% of the neonates have received medical care and 45% have been fed with colostrum while the rest were restricted because of cultural beliefs. Immunization of children under the age of five is 55%. The study is conducted on a limited sample of the women's belonging to Santal, Ho and Kohlo tribe, further extensive study is required to understand socio-economic and cultural determinants of Maternal and Child health care practices

### **Exploring Health And Hygiene Challenges Among Mothers And Children Of The Khasi Community Of Meghalaya**

**Subhra S Barik, Koel Mukherjee, Pinuma Baruah, D. Sun, Shubham Roy, Dipashna Banerjee, Taman Hazarika, Shreyasi Podder, Animikh Chanda & Supriti Mallick**

Maternal and child health is a global priority which is influenced by several interrelated factors. Providing proper nutrition and health care facility during pregnancy, child birth and post natal period will have satisfying results. Moreover, incidence of malnutrition among children under 5 years of age curbs their body growth and mental development, posing a threat to the nation. Additionally, proper sanitation and hygiene plays a vital role in preventing diseases, thus strengthening life satisfaction. The NFHS-5, affirms that malnutrition is more severe in North East India than the national average. In view of the above, the present study aims to delineate to assess current status of health, hygiene and sanitation practices among mother and

children of the Khasi community, Meghalaya as a regional project at Anthropological Survey of India, North East Regional Centre, Shillong. Altogether 301 Khasi households have been surveyed extensively in villages of Mawpat and Mawsynram Block, East Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya till date. The present study revealed that the average height of females aged 15 to 49 years was 147.13 cm, with an average weight of 49.52 kg. The mean BMI for mothers was recorded as 22.80. Additionally, the mean haemoglobin levels for both mothers and children were reported as 11.78 g/dl and 10.28 g/dl respectively. Therefore, the study is anticipated to generate substantial findings concerning maternal and child health concerns within the Khasi tribal community of Meghalaya, providing insightful perspectives that can assist policymakers in crafting policies and interventions tailored to the specific ethnic and regional needs.

### **Age At Menarche And Anthropometric Characteristics Among The Bengali Hindu Young Adults In Purulia, West Bengal**

**Mohima Roy, Salma Khatun & Raja Chakraborty**

**Background:** Menarche is an important incident during girls' puberty and has a significant impact on their physical and sexual health. It is the major indicator of female maturity. **Objective:** The present cross-sectional study was conducted to estimate the association of age at menarche with anthropometric parameters among the Bengalee Hindu university students in Purulia, West Bengal. **Methods:** This cross-sectional study was conducted among 153 female students, aged between 18 and 26 years, recruited from Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University campus, Purulia. Descriptive statistics of frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were reported and Pearson correlation coefficient and partial correlation analyses were performed to investigate associations between menarcheal age and anthropometric indices. The significance differences in anthropometric indices between the earlier- ( $\leq 11$  years) and later menarcheal ( $> 11$  years) age groups were analysed by t test and ANOVA. **Results:** The findings of the study showed that the mean age at menarche was  $13.2 \pm 1.6$ . The mean age at menarche among the earlier menarcheal group was  $10.3 \pm 0.6$  years and among the later menarcheal group was  $13.5 \pm 1.3$  years. The menarcheal age showed a positive correlation with height acromion and negative correlation with weight, BMI, elbow breadth, waist circumference, hip circumference and supra iliac skin fold ( $p < 0.05$ ). BMI and hip circumference ( $p < 0.05$ ) were significantly higher in early menarcheal group than late menarcheal one. **Conclusion:** Based on the finding of the study, our study indicated that earlier age at menarche was negatively associated with body weight, mass, trunkal adiposity measures and with body frame size, whereas positively associated with linear component.

### **Auxological Outcomes At Adolescence In A Follow-Up Cohort Of Small For Gestational Age Neonates**

**Divjot Kaur, Harvinder Kaur, Praveen Kumar, Savita Verma Attri, & Devidayal**

Small for gestational age (SGA) babies are at greater risk of growth faltering as well as developing metabolic alterations and short stature, subsequently. This study examines the

growth trajectories and gender-specific differences among adolescents born SGA and Appropriate for Gestational Age (AGA), illuminating the enduring impact of early growth restriction within an anthropological and developmental framework. **Methodology:** This longitudinal cohort study, initiated at the Child Growth & Anthropology Unit, Advanced Pediatric Centre, PGIMER, tracks 100 SGA and 100 AGA neonates born at full-term between 2006 and 2008. Infants with birth weights between the 10th and 90th percentiles of intrauterine growth curves were classified as AGA, while those with weights below the 10th percentile at birth were classified as SGA. Participants were assessed for three years post-birth and are now being re-evaluated during adolescence. Anthropometric parameters such as height, weight, BMI, waist and hip circumferences, and skinfold thickness at multiple sites were recorded. Statistical analyses were performed using descriptive statistics and Mann-Whitney tests, with significance set at  $p < 0.05$ . The findings presented here represent initial results of the adolescent follow-up phase. **Results:** SGA individuals demonstrate persistent deficits in growth and altered fat deposition compared to AGA peers, with pronounced gender-specific trends. SGA adolescents remain shorter and lighter than AGA counterparts, with significant height differences persisting into late adolescence (e.g., SGA males: 170.55 cm vs. AGA males: 173.95 cm,  $p < 0.0001$ ). Weight disparities also widen over time, with SGA males and females weighing significantly less by 17–18 years. Fat distribution patterns reveal that SGA females exhibit greater fat accumulation, particularly in the subscapular (27.10 mm vs. 15.84 mm,  $p = 0.004$ ) and triceps (20.95 mm vs. 11.40 mm,  $p = 0.002$ ) regions, compared to SGA males. Obesity and overweight are more prevalent in AGA individuals, while underweight status is more common among SGA females. These findings underscore the long-term impact of being born SGA on both body size and fat distribution, emphasizing the importance of early and targeted interventions to address long-term health disparities.

<b>SESSION 16</b>	
<b>Reproductive Health Practices</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Shreya Mukherjee and Sovanjan Sarkar	Obstetric Health Problems: A Rural - Urban Comparative Study Among the Women of Puruliya, West Bengal
Asia Siddiqua	Understanding Menopause in Paraja Tribal Women: Insights into Health, Perceptions, And Cultural Influences
Millo Pubyang and Md Asghar	Folk Healing Practices and Reproductive Well-Being Among the Monpa of Tawang
Inotoli L Assumi, Dipashna Banerjee, Shreyasi Podder, D. Sun, Wanpli Synnah, Shubham Roy, Subhra Shankha Barik, Koel Mukherjee	Exploring Maternal and Child Health Care among the Khasi Community of Meghalaya
Suchismita Swain and Jayanta Kumar Nayak	Exploring Food Practices and Taboos among Paraja Tribal Women during Various Stages of Reproductive life in Koraput District of Odisha

## **Obstetric Health Problems: A Rural - Urban Comparative Study Among The Women Of Puruliya, West Bengal Name Of The Authors And Affiliation**

**Shreya Mukherjee & Sovanjan Sarkar**

The objective of the present study was to compare the obstetric health outcomes and reproductive health care practices between rural and urban women during antepartum, intrapartum, and postpartum periods of their reproductive life. A total of 800 study participants have been selected by purposive sampling method. All the data were collected by using pretested schedule and universally accepted methods and techniques. The results of this study show a comparatively lower age at marriage, lower education levels and less employment than their urban counterparts. Significant differences in age distribution or household expenditure were not found. Both groups primarily consult their husbands for pregnancy confirmation. Rural women receive tetanus injections at primary health subcentres, while urban women go to government hospitals. While antepartum morbidity is common irrespective of study groups, especially vomiting, urban women were found to eat special diets during pregnancy. Delivery experiences are found to be almost similar across groups, with most deliveries in government hospitals and minimal postpartum complications. However, urban women reported slightly higher rates of painful urination. Menstrual health indicators reveal more or less similar ages at menarche and flow duration, while use of sanitary pads was more prevalent among the urban women.

## **Understanding Menopause In Paraja Tribal Women: Insights Into Health, Perceptions, And Cultural Influences**

**Asia Siddiqua**

Menopause, defined as the phase following twelve consecutive months of amenorrhea, occurs due to the cessation of ovarian function. It results in infertility in women accompanying by a range of physiological or somatic symptoms such as hot flashes and joint pain, along with psychological and urogenital symptoms. The change not merely involves physiological condition of a woman rather psychological wellbeing has affected too. The present paper therefore aims to explore the status of menopause, postmenopausal health problems, impact of this change on the quality of life, and perceptions related to menopause among the Paraja tribal women of Padeiguda village, Koraput district, Odisha. A cross-sectional study was conducted using simple random sampling. Data collection tools included a self-designed menopause-specific schedule and the Menopause Rating Scale (MRS) to assess severity of symptoms, supplemented by in-depth interviews, observation methods, and case studies. Data were analysed using Microsoft Excel. The findings revealed that the mean age of menopause among Paraja women is  $43.16 \pm 6.5$  years, with 12.5% of cases categorized as premature menopause and 30% as early menopause. All the women were nonliterate. Women who consume alcohol and tobacco (chewing form) tend to experience menopause at an earlier age. Somatic symptoms were the most prevalent (31.9%), followed by psychological and urogenital symptoms. A significant gap in knowledge about menopause was identified, and menopausal health

problems were rarely reported in hospitals. The study highlights the urgent need for awareness programs about menopause among tribal communities to improve health outcomes and quality of life.

### **Folk Healing Practices And Reproductive Well-Being Among The Monpa Of Tawang**

**Millo Pubyang & Md Asghar**

This paper explores the intricate relationship between folk healing practices and reproductive health among the Monpa community of Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh, through the lens of indigenous knowledge and practice. The research aims to investigate the cultural interpretations of illness and reproductive health, particularly focusing on conditions like infertility and sexually transmitted infections, while analysing the role of traditional healers, such as monks and herbalists, in addressing these challenges through spiritual rituals, herbal remedies, and socio-cultural counselling. Rooted in a rich cultural heritage, the Monpa approach to health intertwines spiritual, physical, and social dimensions, reflecting a holistic understanding of well-being. Traditional healers, address reproductive health challenges through spiritual rituals, herbal remedies, and socio-cultural counselling, promoting harmony between body and spirit. The rituals surrounding infertility and sexually transmitted infections deep respect for the natural processes of life and the community's reliance on shared wisdom passed down through generations. Through qualitative interviews with women, monks, village clergy and traditional healers, this research underlines the socio-cultural significance of folk medicine in addressing reproductive health issues. This paper contributes to the anthropological discourse by demonstrating how indigenous knowledge systems provide not only therapeutic value but also reinforce the cultural identity of the Monpa community.

### **Exploring Maternal And Child Health Care Among The Khasi Community Of Meghalaya**

**Inotoli L Assumi, Dipashna Banerjee, Shreyasi Podder, D. Sun, Wanpli Synnah, Shubham Roy, Subhra Shankha Barik & Koel Mukherjee**

Maternal and child health is one of the parameters which indicates the wellbeing of a healthy community and the progress of a society. The present study is a part of the undergoing regional research project of the Anthropological Survey of India, North-East Regional Center with an empirical study on the maternal and child health of the Khasi community. The study explores the existing health care facilities pertaining to pregnant and lactating mothers and children (under 5 years) from the government and how the community respond to this health care facilities. Under the West Khasi Hills district, a total of 44 pregnant, 136 lactating mothers, and 237 children under the age 3 was studied with the help of anthropological research methods such as observation, schedules, and interview. The study reveals an intriguing insight on the Khasi community of Meghalaya on the aspects of maternal and child health which is the practices of both available modern medical facilities and the traditional practices (in child delivery, beliefs on pre-lacteal medicine, and birth spacing etc.) including individual perceptions (in children's vaccination). The prospect of the study amplifies into the health and

wellbeing on mother and child health which is useful for understanding the community's perception on health and implementing policies for the stakeholders and policy makers.

### **Exploring Food Practices And Taboos Among *Paraja* Tribal Women During Various Stages Of Reproductive Life In Koraput District Of Odisha**

**Suchismita Swain & Jayanta Kumar Nayak**

Food is not merely sustenance; it embodies cultural, social and symbolic meanings that profoundly influence tribal women's health and identity. Their traditional food practices, rooted in cultural beliefs and indigenous knowledge, shape their nutrition and reproductive experiences. Food taboos during reproductive phases reflect the interplay of cultural norms, religion, and health considerations. **Objectives:** (I) To identify the food practices and food taboos among *Paraja* women across different reproductive life stages in the Koraput district of Odisha. (II) To find Women's Dietary Diversity Score (WDDS) to understand the probability of micronutrient adequacy of the diet of tribal women. **Methods:** The study was conducted among 130 *Paraja* women of reproductive age group (15-49 years). These 130 women are again listed under three phases of reproductive life from which 90 are Menstruating adolescent girls, 20 are pregnant women and 20 are lactating mothers. The study is cross-sectional in nature and the data was collected through semi-structured schedule and open-ended questions. **Results:** The regular food practices of *Paraja* tribe are very much similar among all the age groups except the infant category. Pregnant women consume a light, nutritious diet, including rice, dal, vegetables, fruits, and ragi drinks, avoiding certain foods due to taboos linked to health fears. Post-delivery, restrictions increase, guided by elders, though doctor recommendations are gaining acceptance. Adolescent girls follow minimal dietary restrictions during menstruation. Tribal women favor plant-based foods over non-vegetarian ones. WDD scores are above average for pregnant (4.45) and menstruating girls (4.18) but drop postnatally (3.8) due to food taboos.

<b>SESSION 17</b>	
<b>Anthropology and Social Justice</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Poonam Tripathy	Justice Beyond Boundaries: Anthropological Perspectives on Inclusive Development In Uttar Pradesh
Taman Hazarika	Lost Wisdom: Documenting the Decline of Traditional Snake Handling Knowledge Among the Sapera
Suman Maity, Sumahan Bandyopadhyay	Following the forefathers: The present livelihood conditions of the migrant sweeper community in Midnapore Town
Mopada Nani Babu, Rambabu Marla	The Socio-Economic and Developmental Challenges of The Sakunapakshollu Community In Andhra Pradesh
Karan Mohan Thakur	Impact of Lockdown on Gonds: Few Reflections from Barkhera Mahent Village of Sagar, Madhya Pradesh
Suchandra Ghosh	Religion, Gender, and Law in a secular democracy: A Sociological Exploration of Civil Marriage Law in India

## **Justice Beyond Boundaries: Anthropological Perspectives On Inclusive Development In Uttar Pradesh**

**Poonam Tripathi**

This research paper critically examines the inclusive development in Uttar Pradesh, focusing on its marginalized communities, including Dalits, tribals, and women, across various districts. The paper focusses how development policies intersect with local realities in Uttar Pradesh, a state known for its socio-economic disparities and complex caste and gender dynamics. The primary objective is to explore the effectiveness of state-led development initiatives in addressing social inequality in districts like Sonbhadra, Mirzapur, and Pilibhit, and how these initiatives have impacted the rights, resources, and social status of these communities. The study adopts an integrated research approach, combining qualitative fieldwork in select districts with quantitative data from government reports and surveys. Primary data was collected through interviews, focus group discussions, and participatory observation involving local community members, government officials, and social activists. The research investigates the challenges faced by marginalized groups in accessing basic services such as healthcare, education, land rights, and employment opportunities. It also evaluates how caste, gender, and tribal identity shape developmental outcomes in rural and semi-urban areas across Uttar Pradesh. The findings reveal that while some districts have seen progress in inclusive development through targeted welfare programs and social justice initiatives, significant barriers remain. Institutional challenges, including corruption, bureaucratic inefficiency, and exclusionary practices, continue to hinder equitable distribution of resources. Additionally, local resistance to state interventions and the persistence of social hierarchies complicate the effective implementation of development policies. The paper concludes that inclusive development in Uttar Pradesh must go beyond economic growth to address the historical and structural inequalities that perpetuate marginalization. This study advocates for policies that integrate anthropological insights, emphasizing community-led solutions and a more participatory approach to development, which recognizes the voices of marginalized communities in Uttar Pradesh.

## **Lost Wisdom: Documenting The Decline Of Traditional Snake Handling Knowledge Among The Saperas**

**Taman Hazarika**

*Saperas* are a semi-nomadic community remarkable for their snake charming practices. Their lives and livelihoods start and end with snakes and are deeply associated with their identity, life, respect and dignity. They are found in different parts of the country such as Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh (Bhattacharya, 2008, pp. 849-851). Equivalently they are masters in healing from snake bites cases, collecting wild roots for ethno-medicinal purposes. In contemporary times, snake charming has become a dying profession. The aim of this paper, to illustrate the changes in socio economic status of the *Sapera* community people faced due to the intervention of

government policies like, 'The prevention of cruelty to Animals Act 1960' and 'The wildlife protection Act 1972'. The present study was conducted on four districts of Uttar Pradesh and two districts of Bihar. Altogether 232 households consisting of a total 1169 individuals (male-600, female- 569) were covered. Primary data collection methods were used for collecting the data which include surveys and questionnaires, interviews, observational methods, focus groups, and case studies. Secondary data was also collected from sources like government reports, newspapers, books, research papers etc. In the case of analysis of the data content analysis and thematic analysis were used. The study reveals that *Sapera* communities are commonly subjected to humiliation, threats, harassment and violence by the police, forest, department and functionaries of animal rights groups in the name of implementation of the two laws. They are also treated as criminals because they traditionally possess, inherit, train and exhibit snakes. As a result, a gradual shift towards other sources of livelihoods, such as gig workers, wage laborers, from their traditional occupation can be observed and have been victims of stigmatisation due to their social as well as geographical marginalisation. Despite the strict enforcement of the law, many continue to depend on snake charming to survive, practicing their craft even after serving jail sentences or paying fines. It is a threat to the indigenous knowledge system followed by the Sapera community towards snake catching, treating ailments from venoms etc.

### **Following the forefathers' footsteps? The present livelihood conditions of the migrant sweeper community in midnapore town**

**Suman Maity & Sumahan Bandyopadhyay**

Over the last one hundred years or more, a few families migrated to Midnapore town from various states of India, namely Odisha, Andhra Pradesh (now Telangana and Andhra Pradesh), Tamilnadu and were primarily engaged as various cleaning or scavenging workers whom in more technical or sophisticated way is being termed as sanitation workers nowadays. The job of these people included a wide variety of cleaning works in private and public establishments ranging from sweeping of roads, cleaning of drains, scavenging and disposal of other solid wastes. The number of their families subsequently grew manifold with further migrations and increasing of the sizes of families. As the demand of their works with the growing need of the town as a seat of district administration increased, their consolidation and specialization for the sweeping or scavenging works got more manifest. They appear to be an occupational group of sweepers in the town despite of their different nativity or irrespective of their actual involvement in this type of work. At present, they are spread over almost 11 settlements or para numbering 460 families approximately. The present ethnographic exercise undertakes a case study on these people residing at Khoyra Para, Nimtala Chalk in Midnapore Town municipality area (ward no- 14) in Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal, India to know about their present livelihood conditions particularly with the change in the legislations for them in the recent years. The study has adopted the questionnaire schedule, interview, case study and observation etc. methods. It has attempted to provide a background of the history of migration, and to present information of their socio-economic conditions, occupational shifts,

and the issues of the social exclusion and inclusion of this group of people. The particular focus is on their present generation to see the persistence of occupation of the first migrants and how much things have been changed in social and economic levels.

### **The Socio-Economic And Developmental Challenges Of The Sakunapakshollu Community In Andhra Pradesh**

**Mopada Nani Babu & Rambabu Marla**

Sakunapakshollu were nomadic in nature and have now gradually settling in the villages over the years. The etymological meaning of Sakunapakshollu indicates that Sakuni refers to a person who is believed to bring either a good or a bad omen, while Pakshollu refers to the people who wander around the villages in the early morning hours. Further, this meaning also closely refers to birds that keep chirping in the early hours of the day. This paper provides an understanding of the vulnerability and marginality of communities where development is still far for them. The emphasis of the paper explores how these community members have been facing livelihood difficulties and economic challenges in contemporary society. Further, it also discusses the living conditions, sanitation facilities, and shifts in occupational patterns, as well as the implementation of development programs for the community's socio-economic upliftment and developmental aspects. This study has been conducted in Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, West Godavari, Krishna, Prakasam, and Nellore in Andhra Pradesh.

### **Impact Of Lockdown On Gonds: Few Reflections From Barkhera Mahent Village Of Sagar, Madhya Pradesh**

**Karan Mohan Thakur**

The COVID-19 pandemic was a unique and challenging event that had significant impacts on individuals and communities around the world. The devastating scenario of the pandemic can be observed in almost all the regions of the world but here we are going to mention about an indigenous community 'Gonds' of Madhya Pradesh, India. The study aims to investigate the effects of the lockdown on these indigenous people of Barkhera Mahent village in Sagar district, Madhya Pradesh. These communities often face challenges, including isolation from modern healthcare and educational systems, which can make them particularly vulnerable during a crisis like a pandemic. To gather our data, we conducted a survey among 100 respondents from the village using a questionnaire and a random sampling technique. Our findings suggest that the indigenous people of Barkhera Mahent village were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 lockdown, particularly in terms of access to livelihood, healthcare and education. However, they were able to rely on government schemes, such as the Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Yojna (PMGKY) and the Public Distribution System (PDS), to help them survive the pandemic in form of aid from the government during the crisis.

### **Religion, Gender, And Law In A Secular Democracy: A Sociological Exploration Of Civil Marriage Law In India**

**Suchandra Ghosh**

Family law, a state institution, assigns rights and responsibilities to its citizens, forging power relations between men and women. The identity question remains central to the Special Marriage Act. Following the enactment of the religion-neutral civil marriage law, sanctioning the marriage of individuals conjugating according to the 'rites of conscience', a debate ensued projecting the 'native' society in anxious turmoil over marriage and kinship. This dichotomy between the state and society persists. Despite uniform civil marriage law founded with the promise of modernizing marriage practices, questions such as the consent and autonomy in 'personal' matters, gendered expectation in family relationships, and individual's belongingness to caste, class, community, and space expressed in the jural and administrative documents, were overlooked. While accounts on the law's genesis exist, such accounts are legal and structural. Popular debates and scholarship highlight the gendered social logic of interreligious conjugality but miss out on the procedural part. Questions like: How do agency and consent in marriage assume meaning beyond the binary, ensconced between community and individual rights? How does one's belongingness to a social stratum and a geographical space shape his/her tryst with the authorities and contention with social legitimacy in embracing inter-faith marriage? Drawing on a comparative reading of cases along the social axes, with a focus on jurisprudential and quotidian practices, and engaging with a corpus of court cases from the apex court, the paper will contribute to the sociological debates on gender, community, and law in a postcolonial secular democracy by grappling with the anthropology of social justice.

<b>SESSION 18</b>	
<b>Environment and Sustainability</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Ishan Dutta, Hari Charan Behera, K. Anil Kumar	Faith In Action: Driving Biodiversity Conservation Through Tribal Religiosity: A Study Among the Mundas Of Ranchi, Jharkhand
Kevikiebi-I Nakhro, Somenath Bhattachrjee	Culturescapes And Heritage Preservation: A Study of Traditional Practices and Human Impact in Jotsoma Village, Nagaland
Basundhara Dahal, N Atungbou, Madan Chettri	A Symphony of Sustainability: Exploring the Intersections of Indigenous Knowledge,Cultural Practices, and Environmental Stewardship among the Lepcha tribe of Dzungu, Sikkim
Najma Begam A	Living Conditions and Lifestyle Challenges: A Study on the Fishing Community of Ennore, Tamil Nadu
Debasmita Sendha & Basanta Kumar Mohanta	Forest, Tribal Economy and Food Security: A Sustainable Approach of Mankirdia Tribe of Mayurbhanj District of Odisha, India
Ramesh Sahani	Millets: Miracle And Low-cost Solution for Health and Environmental Issues

## **Faith In Action: Driving Biodiversity Conservation Through Tribal Religiosity: A Study Among The Mundas Of Ranchi, Jharkhand**

**Ishan Dutta, Hari Charan Behera & K. Anil Kumar**

Tribal communities are significantly known for their dependence on the forest and also for protecting the natural resources. In recent days they are unknowingly contributing in the conservation and management of the environment or biodiversity with their cultural practices. As a home to many tribes, Jharkhand stands out with its unique main festivals like Sahrool and Karma Puja in which trees are worshiped. Amid globalization and urbanization, these individuals continue to follow their traditional practices, safeguarding a wide range of natural resources. The objective of the study is to empirically reveal the relation/connection between the sacred religious practices and sustainable development goals. This study has been conducted in the Ranchi district of Jharkhand, India, among the Munda tribe. The authors seek to explore the associated sacred rituals which are directly considering some particular plant species and indirectly other associated species, which leads to achieve the 15th sustainable development goal about the protection of biodiversity and life on land. The study is based on analysis of data collected through unstructured/semi-structured interviews, participants/non-participants field observations. The analysis also includes photos, tables and diagram/figures encompassing data on specific floral species and their significance to communities. From this study, it is found that different rituals associated with plant species compel people to protect/vegetate those particular species, thereby providing a habitat to other floral and faunal species. And according to them, nowadays because of integration, migration they are losing their core traditional practices, which they used to perform in the past in a rural setting. If government bodies or NGOs can somehow influence people and raise awareness among other communities about the importance of these practices, only then will they continue to silently protect and preserve nature and biodiversity.

## **Culturescapes And Heritage Preservation: A Study Of Traditional Practices And Human Impact In Jotsoma Village, Nagaland**

**Kevikiebi-i Nakhro & Somenath Bhattacharjee**

Culture scapes are areas with imprints of patterns of culture. The study of culturescapes identifies the appearance of ideas to understand the processes/factors that are affecting a landscape and meanings in the human features of the landscape. This research focuses on documenting the formation of culturescapes, while highlighting their cultural importance. It also explores the ways in which human activities have influenced and transformed these culturescapes. With these objectives, the study was conducted in Jotsoma village, a village of the Angami tribe of Nagaland. For the present study, purposive sampling of key informants was done. Narrative analysis was used, taking a set of data like interviews and reducing it to Abstract findings. Fourteen key informants, age ranged from 55 to 87, were interviewed. The study highlights the rich culturescapes of Jotsoma village, shaped by both traditional beliefs and human-made structures. While some culturescapes have changed due to development and shifting values, they remain culturally significant and well-maintained by the community. The

preservation of these landscapes is crucial, as they connect people to their ancestral heritage and can serve as a foundation for heritage tourism. However, modernization and the decline of oral traditions pose a threat to their survival. The study highlights the need for continued documentation, preservation, and community involvement to maintain these cultural legacies amidst evolving environmental and societal pressures.

### **A Symphony Of Sustainability: Exploring The Intersections Of Indigenous Knowledge, Cultural Practices, And Environmental Stewardship Among The Lepcha Tribe Of Dzungu, Sikkim**

**Basundhara Dahal & N Atungbou, Madan Chettri**

Dzungu is a valley located in the northwestern part of Sikkim, India. Indigenous peoples (IP) often face marginalization and lack access to resources that are readily available in the mainland regions of the country, that creates some form barriers to their well-being and development. However, by embracing a holistic and self-reliant approach to living, grounded in traditional knowledge and practices, indigenous peoples can thrive in their native environments, even in the face of external challenges. This study documents the indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices of the Lepchas of Dzungu, Sikkim, focusing on their unique agricultural and architectural techniques, rituals and conservation practices. The study determined the existing livelihoods in the region which were mainly based on agriculture and farming practices. The sustainable agricultural practices of the Lepchas include, shifting cultivation, seed-saving, organic farming and exchange practices. The Lepcha community's cultural practices exhibit a pronounced orientation towards environmental conservation, underscoring the symbiotic relationship between humans and nature. The Bongthings and Muns, revered as faith healers, play a pivotal role in promoting the worshiping of nature and offering guidance on sustainable practices to the Lepcha community. This spiritual reverence for the natural world reflects the Lepchas' environmental ethos, influencing their day-to-day activities and decisions. The study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon. Data collection involved in-depth interviews and participant observation to gain a deeper understanding of the social dynamics and environmental interactions. The study further provides recommendations for future research and action to support the Lepcha community's indigenous knowledge and practices.

### **Living Conditions And Lifestyle Challenges: A Study On The Fishing Community Of Ennore, Tamil Nadu**

**Najma Begam A**

Ennore Creek is a coastal backwater of the Kosasthalaiyar River located on the North-east of Chennai. It is home to numerous fishing communities and serves as a buffer against floods and sea level rise. After the 1950s, it was rezoned for red category-heavy polluting industries and a port. The rapid industrialisation and urbanisation in India over the past few decades have

resulted in severe environmental destruction and loss of traditional livelihoods, as well as worsened economic and social inequalities. This research employs interview and survey methods to collect empirical data and utilize existing secondary sources. The study reveals that fishermen are one of the few significant occupational communities who succumb and suffer from unfavourable environmental changes. Dwindling fish catches have created an artificial demand for jobs, thereby resulting in formerly independent communities being completely enslaved to the development paradigm and also become socially, economically, educationally disadvantaged and lack financial resources in fulfilling their basic needs. This paper tries to present the deleterious impacts of urbanisation on the socio-economic status and health-seeking behaviour of fisherfolk of Ennore. Also, it tries to highlight the impact of intersectionality of human-nature interaction, as marginalized fishermen face disproportionate challenges.

### **Forest, Tribal Economy And Food Security: A Sustainable Approach Of Mankirdia Tribe Of Mayurbhanj District Of Odisha, India**

**Debasmita Sendha & Basanta Kumar Mohanta**

**Objectives:** 1. To understand the role of forest resources in livelihood sustainability of Mankirdia tribe. 2. To examine the impact of forest-based livelihood on food security of Mankirdia residing in Mayurbhanj district. **Methodology:** This study is based on qualitative research approach which is based on the analysis of information received from the respondents. Primary data was collected through i. Participant Observation, ii. Group Discussion, iii. Individual Interview, iv. Case Study, v. Ethnographic Survey. **Findings:** The Mankirdia are forest dwellers & their economic activities are closely related to the forest. Forest collection and Siali (*Bauhinia vahili*) creeper rope making constitute the main source of their economy. They also they also make small baskets, halter used for tying cows & buffaloes from Siali bark. Now they are not allowed to collect Siali bark frequently because of the forest act but they have still not given up their traditional occupation of rope making and nowadays they are also making plastic ropes from cement & rice bags. Though forest produces are still the primary source of their income, in agricultural time they were starting to engage themselves as labourer in agricultural fields of others. They also started working as wage labourer for extra income. To bring development in their living condition, Hill Kharia and Mankirdia Development Agency (HKMDA) giving training of leaf plate making, poultry farming, basket making with Sabai rope (*Eulliopsis binate*).

### **Millets: Miracle And Low-Cost Solution For Health And Environmental Issues**

**Ramesh Sahani**

The year 2023 was declared as the International year of Millets due to its important roles in terms of food security, maintaining good health by providing quality nutrition and even controlling/managing some of the metabolic syndrome and other benefits. The main aim for declaring the same were: i. Raise awareness about the nutritional benefits of millets, ii. promote millets as a key part of the food basket, iii. encourage investments in research and development

(R&D) for millets, iv. support farmers' livelihoods and incomes, v. help eradicate poverty, especially in regions affected by climate change, vi. expand markets for millets, vii. increase food and nutrition security. Govt. of India also had taken initiative at multiple level to promote millets as major food to address the issue of malnutrition and environmental challenges. In the context of India, millets are still used in some of the pockets as major grains, but, after green revolution its use is gradually decreasing. **Objectives:** The main objective of this presentation is to explain the advantage of millets as i. food grains and its other benefits, ii. how millet is able to easily address the food security in changing climate. **Methodology:** Available literature related to Millets and its benefits in terms of Nutrition and health will be used to analyse and also advantage and disadvantage to cultivate the same. How Govt. policy is impacting its popularity for usage and advantages for growing the same. **Anthropological Significance:** As Anthropology deals with every aspect of human, in this presentation how anthropologist will be helpful for promoting the millets among masses to manage malnutrition and health problem where millets have some positive impacts.

<b>SESSION 19</b>	
<b>ANTHROPOLOGY, WOMEN AND CHILDREN</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Suman Rawat	Women Between Two Medicinal Worlds during Childbirth: Fear of Illness Across the Threshold in Eastern Uttar Pradesh
Madhuja Bhattacharya	Women and the Field: Understanding the Implications of Gender and Spatiality on Fieldwork
Chhandita Basu	Recognizing Children's 'Voices': The Practice and Relevance of Child-Centred Ethnography in Anthropological Researches
Prerna Verma	Embodied Encounters: Conducting Fieldwork on Public Toilets and Beyond
Vageesh Vishnoi	Workplace Of Gig Economy: Ethnographic Reflections on Organisation of Gig Work on Roads
Shakina T.	The Theyyam Performance of North Kerala and The Need for The Preservation of Its Cultural Heritage

## **Women Between Two Medicinal Worlds During Childbirth: Fear Of Illness Across The Threshold In Eastern Uttar Pradesh**

**Suman Rawat**

Besides various government health intervention initiatives targeting maternal and child healthcare in India, traditional healing practices are prevalent in addressing illnesses. Particularly in the context of childbirth, women navigate between the realm of biomedical healthcare and indigenous medicinal knowledge. This negotiation is physically and symbolically marked by their movement across the threshold of the house, locally referred to as 'dehri.' The act of crossing this threshold represents more than a mere geographical shift; it signifies their transition from a deeply embedded traditional system of healing to the structured domain of institutionalised medical care. This study deals with the contact of two medicinal worlds— local traditional medicine and biomedicine— where women stand at the periphery, where these two domains contact each other. Positioned in this peripheral space, they act as carriers of their age-old local understanding of the illnesses and their healing methods imparted by the traditional healers and the elderly women (the knowledge keepers); simultaneously, they are exposed to biomedical treatment in the medical institutions during childbirth, making them subjects of medicinal usage patterns. Drawing upon ethnographic data from the Raebareli and Pratapgarh districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh, this paper illustrates that the fear of losing reproductive capacity and child loss motivates women to engage with both medicinal systems for their and their children's well-being. With a detailed case study and the narratives of elderly women, the paper advances a medical discourse of latent anxiety and tension regarding illnesses and healing methods, which persists among women in socio-cultural and medical spaces where they find themselves grappling with ambiguity regarding the utilisation of healing methods and discussions on it.

## **Women And The Field: Understanding The Implications Of Gender And Spatiality On Fieldwork**

**Madhuja Bhattacharya**

Fieldwork, in social research, is of utmost importance. The field aids to ground a research in a socio-cultural context, along with strengthening the repository of knowledge the research has sought to problematize. Based on the observations and relations formed in the field, a researcher collects data to substantiate their argument. However, a researcher's gender identity often posits a problem in accessing physical spaces, people and things during fieldwork. The present research draws on the method of autoethnography, following anthropologists like Berna Kurt, to enable the researcher to provide a reflexive and in-depth interpretation of how inequitable power relations based on gender, sex and age manifest itself across various physical settings of the field. The central aim of the paper is to further explore and analyse the female experience during fieldwork in a working-class migrant neighbourhood in Kolkata—the challenges faced by female researchers, the strategies they develop to navigate and negotiate with the problems they have faced, and the impact of it on the research. In order to do so, the paper focusses on two spaces – tea-stalls and queues at the

municipal water tap.

## **Recognizing Children's 'Voices': The Practice And Relevance Of Child-Centered Ethnography In Anthropological Researches**

**Chhandita Basu**

The concept of childhood and the approach for understanding children has changed substantially across ages and disciplines. Previous academic theories, such as Western developmental psychologists and socialization theories, have labelled children as 'vulnerable', 'immature', 'innocent', 'naïve', 'dependent', 'irrational' — characterized by certain levels of physical, behavioral, and cognitive maturation, chronologically belonging to specified number of years of one's life and indicating the stage of gradual development into adulthood. This idea of considering childhood as socially different from adulthood and children as 'yet to-be in the stage of becoming an adult' was later vehemently countered by *New Sociology of Childhood* and *Anthropology of Childhood*. Being grounded on social constructivist paradigm, *New Childhood Studies* identify children not merely as passive recipients of socialization process, but as active agents capable of shaping the social environments and are themselves simultaneously shaped by the same. This prioritises the need for child-centred ethnography, facilitating researchers to dwell deeply on children's personal histories, experiences, and multiple layers of constructed meanings — influencing different forms of childhoods, diversified at various levels of social intersection and prevailing socio-cultural contexts. Documentation of children's narratives embarks on critical-reflexive journey and reorients ethnographers' positionality, entailing researchers to build confidence with children and taking up a 'least-adult role' which enables them to gain partial access to children's conceptual worlds while provisioning children to share their thoughts, feelings, interests, and curiosities. Challenges, however, lies in executing them in practice, requiring researchers to get rid of situational constraints, persistently reshuffling the data collecting methods and framing an ethically-grounded manner of communication, which may vary depending on the nature of research and scope of research questions.

## **Embodied Encounters: Conducting Fieldwork On Public Toilets And Beyond**

**Prerna Verma**

Fieldwork forms a crucial phase in the quest to answer research questions formulated by the researcher, yet, it extends beyond its functional objective. The experiences, anxieties, and ethical dilemmas on the field, often constitute a transformed reality for the researcher in the aftermath of the data collection. The spatio-temporal nature of the field, the processual state of being and becoming on the field, the complexities of gender in the social setting, the local politics of establishing connections with resource persons, and the overlapping relationship between the researcher and the participant serve as the covert tenets that base the actual processes of writing, knowledge construction and narrativisation of the field. This paper presents a reflective account of my fieldwork on the everyday realities of women's mobility,

contextualized against the backdrop of the poor state of public toilets in Patna, Bihar. It explores the blurring of objective binaries of inquiry, the challenges of conducting field study on a discursive space, i.e., the toilet in public setting, the gendered transactions within the stipulated geography, the ethical questions surrounding fair return. The paper also examines the role of kinbased caste relations in shaping network access and trust in social interactions within the field. Focusing on the *'doing'* part of my fieldwork, it highlights the everydayness of being on the field and the performative improvisations made to researcher's character, in order to investigate and navigate the socio-cultural dimensions of the field. Through these reflections, the paper not only contributes to the broader discussion on methodological adaptations, coping mechanisms, and ethical conundrums, but also recognizes the embodied field experiences of a woman researcher in a contested urban setting, offering critical insights for future researchers working in similar contexts.

### **Workplace Of Gig Economy: Ethnographic Reflections On Organisation Of Gig Work On Roads**

**Vageesh Vishnoi**

Meteoric rise gig economy has resulted in the formation of novel urbanscapes around the world. A sea of literature has emerged on documenting the working conditions of gig workers and labour process of gig economy. However, a little has been explored about the relationships gig workers share with their workplace, i.e. The Road itself. Probing this can clarify the novel dynamics which are at play in the gig workplace and how they depart from the way workplaces are understood in traditional sociology and anthropology of work.

For data collection author enrolled as a gig worker in a popular food delivery platform in New Delhi (India) to uncover otherwise opaque aspects of the labour process. Multisited ethnographic methods were utilised to document the mobile and fluid realities of the emerging gig economy. It required the author to move from different sites of analysis which included – roads, delivery locations and the restaurants to understand the distinct function each one of them serve in the labour process of the platform. These ethnographic insights were also informed and refined by 67 in-depth interviews and accompanying gig workers to their delivery locations to bring forth their perspective.

Paper uncovers the narratives of hostilities, hierarchy and solidarity which are experienced and cultivated while delivering orders. Thus, understanding how roads function as *class construct* for ever increasing gig workforce in Delhi. Paper also analysis role of roads as a *means of production* in generating surplus value in the labour process of platform mediated gig work.

### **The Theyyam Performance Of North Kerala And The Need For The Preservation Of Its Cultural Heritage**

**Shakina T**

The Theyyam is a ritual performance practiced in the temples of North Kerala. There are two types of Theyyam performances in terms of the annual performance and performance once in

twelve years. But both performances are pertaining to worshipping and it is a blend of arts, rituals, music, dance and cultural heritage. The annual performance of Theyyam is known as *Kaliyattam* or *Thira*. The Theyyam performance practiced in every twelve years is known as *Perumkaliyattam*. The Theyyam is not only a performing art but also it is a part of the belief system in North Kerala. The Theyyam performance representing the myths, legends and the oral history of the local communities. The oral history of the Theyyam stories is transferred through Theyyam performances. There are hundreds of Theyyam performance existing in North Kerala, particularly, Kannur and Kasaragod Districts of Kerala. The annual Theyyam performances are continuing without much changes and problems whereas the Theyyam performance conducted once in twelve years are facing problems and there is an example of delaying the Theyyam performance up to 45 years due to various factors. The *Perumkaliyattam* performance was not conducted due to the high expenditure for organising the festival. This is a case of the *Perumkaliyattam* performance of the Chirakkal Chamundi Kottam in Kannur District of Kerala. In Mathamangalam Temple of Kannur District, the *Perumkaliyattam* performance delayed up to 19 years. In essence, the long term Theyyam performances are facing various problems and therefore it has to be documented with audio-visual tools for the future generation and also for maintaining the cultural heritage of North Kerala. The present paper is an attempt to study the *Perumkaliyattam* Theyyam and its problems.

<b>SESSION 20</b>	
<b>STUDIES ON GERIATRIC CARE</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Ashok Kumar Yadav and Rajesh K. Gautam	Prevalence and Factors associated with Hypertension in the Geriatric Population in rural Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh/Ashok Kumar Yadav, Rajesh K. Gautam
Rangulu Keyho and Somenath Bhattacharjee	Assessment of Nutritional Status Among Older Adults and Elderly Population of Phek Village, Phek District, Nagaland
Saloni Uniyal and Mithun Sikdar	Scope of elderly care in Smart Cities of India
Shivani Ghosh	Understanding Alcohol Addiction and Temporalities as a Lived Experience
Preeti	Morbidities, Functional Limitations and Depressions Among the Elderly People of India: A Review

## **Prevalence And Factors Associated With Hypertension In The Geriatric Population Of Rural Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India**

**Ashok Kumar Yadav & Rajesh K. Gautam**

Hypertension, often termed the "silent killer," is a leading risk factor for cardiovascular morbidity and mortality worldwide. Among the geriatric population, the burden of hypertension is compounded by aging-related physiological changes and lifestyle factors. This study investigates the prevalence of hypertension and its associated risk factors among the elderly population residing in rural areas of Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India. A cross-sectional study was conducted among 700 geriatric male and female individuals aged 60 years and above from rural settings in Varanasi. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling, ensuring adequate representation of socio-demographic variables such as gender, education, and income levels. Data were collected through structured interviews, clinical assessments, and physical examinations. Hypertension was diagnosed based on the Joint National Committee VI (JNC) criteria, considering systolic blood pressure  $\geq 140$  mmHg and/or diastolic blood pressure  $\geq 90$  mmHg.

The findings revealed a high prevalence of hypertension, affecting 74.9% of the studied population. Gender-specific analysis indicated that males (41.5%) had a slightly higher prevalence compared to females (33.4%). The study identified significant associations between hypertension and various socio-demographic, lifestyle, and clinical factors. Advancing age, sedentary behavior, high body mass index (BMI), and family history of hypertension were strongly correlated with elevated blood pressure levels.

In conclusion, the study underscores the substantial burden of hypertension among the elderly in rural Varanasi and identifies critical risk factors that require immediate attention. By addressing these determinants, policymakers and healthcare providers can mitigate the adverse impacts of hypertension, ultimately improving the quality of life for the aging population. These findings contribute valuable insights into geriatric healthcare in rural India and provide a foundation for further research and policy formulation.

## **Assessment Of Nutritional Status Among Older Adults And Elderly Population Of Phek Village, Phek District, Nagaland**

**Rangulu Keyho & Somenath Bhattacharjee**

Malnutrition, whether undernutrition or overnutrition, is inappropriate to our normal health condition. Malnutrition can afflict people of any age. However, people with inadequate nutrition knowledge, older people, those with disabilities, are perhaps more likely to run the danger of becoming malnourished. This study explores the nutritional status of the elderly population, who are particularly vulnerable due to varying factors like decreased appetite, energy expenditure, weight loss, and changes in taste. This study additionally seeks to increase our knowledge of some of the factors which influence the nutritional status of elderly people. We conducted the current study in Phek Village, a Chakhesang Naga village in Phek District,

Nagaland, India, using a cross-sectional design. A total of 152 older and elderly people, aged 50 to 100 years, participated in the study. Anthropometric assessments, diet-related questionnaires, the Mini Nutritional Assessment (MNA), and the Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) were used in the study. According to the World Health Organization's 2010 BMI classification, 53% of the elderly participants had a normal BMI, 29% were in the overweight category, 10% belonged to the underweight category, and 7% belonged to obese class 1, while the least number, 1%, constituted the obese class 2 category in the present studied population. Similarly, according to the MNA, 64.47% of the elderly have normal nutritional status, 33.55% are at risk of malnutrition, and 1.97% are malnourished. In addition, this study demonstrates a significant negative correlation between BMI and MNA ( $r = -0.284$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Furthermore, this study demonstrates how sociodemographic variables such as marital status, level of education, and frequency of meals can influence elderly people's nutritional status.

### **Scope Of Elderly Care In Smart Cities Of India**

**Saloni Uniyal, and Mithun Sikdar**

The scope of elderly care in smart cities involves utilization of cutting-edge technologies such as IoT sensors, artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics to provide proactive, personalized healthcare monitoring, support independent living, enhance accessibility in public areas, and link seniors to essential services, while enhancing their general well-being and quality of life in their familiar surroundings. While the key aspects like remote health monitoring, personalized care plans, fall detection and response systems, medication reminders and management, cognitive support technologies, accessible infrastructure, social connection and community engagement, smart transportation solutions, elderly-friendly smart home design, improved quality of life, reduced caregiver burden, early intervention, cost-effective care etc. can potentially optimize resource allocation and reduce healthcare costs but there are challenges too like data privacy concerns, digital literacy gap, infrastructure development etc. As India is progressing towards Smart initiatives, we have to consider certain points while delivering best of our policies to our public. The present paper will deal with the current trends of optimisation of smart city concept in India and how Anthropological tools can provide solutions to these issues.

### **Understanding Alcohol Addiction And Temporalities As A Lived Experience**

**Shivani Ghosh**

Alcohol addiction is a rising issue on a global level, which has a seeming lack of understanding as a phenomenon. Apart from the mainstream sense of addiction, there are other ways of understanding it, such as how individuals talk about their chores and the order of daily lives that are affected. The studies based on gambling can be used as an example, where individuals express their everyday experiences and practices which provide objective evidence for building characteristics of having an addictive behavior in daily practices. To understand addiction away

from an individual perspective and to bring a phenomenological view to it, it is necessary to evaluate the relation with temporality. This will focus on the inner structure of time passivity as a repetitive pattern and its effects on the addicted individual. The observation takes space, as it is not simply as how the individual lives but how time is experienced by the individual and how time constitutes the individual as the addicted subject. A phenomenological analysis is preferable to expand the documentation related to the addicted individual and the lived time. The theoretical understanding of lived time, or temporality, is explored with particular reference to the theories of Heidegger. The objective of this study is to deepen the knowledge regarding the time and addiction, how addiction is perceived by the individual. Based on the description given by the addicted individual about the lived temporality as objective imposed time and the other dimension of time where the subjective perceived time is drawn out, there are contrasts present in the narratives. In this dimension of analysis, the individual confronts themselves over the metric of time, subjective or objective. By utilizing the framework of temporality, addiction can be defined as a failure of the balancing act of time cycles, where the individual struggles to align their needs with social expectations. This framework helps to not solely associate roots of addiction in individual psychologies or physiologies.

## **Morbidities, Functional Limitation And Depression Among The Elderly People Of India: A Review**

**Preeti**

India is facing a demographic transition at a very fast pace leading to increase in elderly population from 103 million in 2011 to 316 million by the end of 2050. As a person ages, he/she encounters a pool of health problems, per say, physical health problems such as Osteoporosis, Hypertension, Diabetes, Asthma, Chronic cough, Sensory Impairment, Arthritis, Respiratory problems; mental health issues such as Depression, Anxiety, Loneliness, Dementia etc. Older adults face one or more morbidities at same time which, in turn, leads to functional limitation in activities making them dependent on the others. These cumulative events or morbidities lowers their self-esteem, decreases their quality of life, makes them feel alone or lonely that increases the risk of depression among them. Various studies have found association between physical health problems, functional limitation and depression which are more prominent in people above 60 years of age and elevates as the age increases. Health care system plays a vital role in managing the burden of disease which can help to improve the quality of life of the older adults by addressing their needs by properly assessing their problems and managing their health with proper care and medication. Specialized health care services are required with trained community help which is easily accessible and affordable for the older people. This article provides an insight on association of functional limitation and depression progressed from physical health problems faced by older adults and strategies to manage the same.

<b>SESSION 21</b>	
<b>STUDIES IN DIGITAL ANTHROPOLOGY</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Roma Das, Wanpli Coelho Synnah, Jijo C.V., Manash Jyoti Chutia, Soma Bhowmik, Umesh Kumar	The Oral-Digital Bridge: Cultural Heritage Preservation Among The Garos Of Meghalaya
Hareenran P	Digitalizing Traditions: Experiences And Responses to The Documentation of Cultural Practices Among the Ravula (Adiyan) Of Kerala, South India
Komal Sanjay Saraf	Beyond Recreation: Acculturation Experiences Among RDR2 Gamers
Debalina Roy	Digital Entrepreneurship and Neo-Market Practices: The New Aesthetic
Romi Anand	Bridging the tradition and technology: The Digitization of Bangle Making in Madhubani
Sanjoy Akhum and Haobijam Vokendro	Popularising The Periphery: The Case of The Manipuri Documentary 'Kwatha Pham Kaba'

## **The Oral-Digital Bridge: Cultural Heritage Preservation Among The Garos Of Meghalaya**

**Roma Das, Wanpli Coelho Synnah, Jijo C.V., Manash Jyoti Chutia, Soma Bhowmik & Umesh Kumar**

Garo Cultural heritage is the core value of a community which is transmitted through generations; it helps promote and preserve both tangible and intangible aspects of culture and strengthens the community's identity in totality. This paper focuses on the transmission and preservation of culture through digital media among the Garo community of Meghalaya. The Garo who predominately inhabit the Garo Hills of Meghalaya possess a rich culture, language and dialects, beliefs, customs, rituals, material culture, arts, architecture, handicrafts, songs, dance, traditional institutions, signs and symbols, which has been passed down through oral narratives and practices from generation to generation but in the recent past the community and its culture has been documented in print media and even in audio-video. With the advent of the digital age and the accessibility to online content through the burst of the dotcom bubble, cultural and traditional content has been disseminated and archived, through and on social media platforms. This paper also investigates the usage and impact of digital media on cultural heritage preservation through social media platforms of popular content creators; the means and ways in which the present generation is bridging the gap and addressing the limitations related to cultural heritage preservation of living and dying cultural markers of the Garos.

## **Digitalizing Traditions: Experiences And Responses To The Documentation Of Cultural Practices Among The Ravula (Adiyan) Of Kerala, South India**

**Hareenran P**

This paper engages with the experiences and responses to the documentation of cultural traditions through digital means among an indigenous community in Kerala, South India. It is evident that the digitalization of cultural documentation facilitates the efficient storage and management of cultural expressions in electronic documents. This technological advancement is an effective means of transcending cultural expression and transforming the mechanisms of its continuity in modern times. The paper is based on a study conducted among the Ravula (Adiyan), a Scheduled Tribe inhabiting in the border-sharing areas of Kerala and Karnataka in South India. The study aimed to document the cultural practices in the ritual domain of this indigenous community using digital technologies. It focused on important ritual practices such as *Koottam*, *Thera*, and *Gaddika*. Data were collected through various qualitative methods commonly used in social sciences, supported by digital devices and technologies. The study revealed that the digitalization of documentation facilitates the continuity of traditions. It opens up new avenues to textualize cultural practices, enhancing people's engagement with these practices across generations and cultures. The responses from the community indicate a strong interest in documenting their vanishing traditions in digital form. This digital documentation serves to present their culture and transfer knowledge and skills across generations.

## **Beyond Recreation: Acculturation Experiences Among Rdr2 Gamers**

**Komal Sanjay**

From the time infinite, we humans have had an insatiable thrust for entertainment. While passing the time happily, many forms of entertainment have successfully taught us invaluable life lessons. The present backdrop aims to reveal the potential of the popular genre of entertainment: video games. Red Dead Redemption 2 is the Blockbuster and critically acclaimed game introduced in 2018 by the Rockstar company set in the late 19th century when America was slowly getting colonised, and the wave of industrialisation was dawning. This paper investigates the evidence of acculturation within the RDR2 player's community by dissecting its immersive storyline, richly detailed semi-colonial settings and vast open-world gameplay that rise above the recreational limitations to acculturate and enhance individuality. The data was collected using the review of literature, participant observation, and non-participant observation with Audio and visual aids. By employing the methodologies of narrative analysis, context analysis and visual analysis, the study jumps into the game's version of late 19th-century America that generates affinity with freed slaves, marginalised groups, and Native Americans, shaping and reshaping our morality, developing an obligatory acknowledgement towards life values such as loyalty, individualism and vindication. This research tries to explore the game's probability of inducing cross-cultural awareness by merging chronological precision with dynamic role-playing. In the expanding field of video game studies, this exploration highlights the capacity of digital platforms to inculcate norms and mores and even to offer cultural transmission and introspection.

**Digital Entrepreneurship And Neo-Market Practices: The New Aesthetic****Debalina Roy**

The economic arrangements surrounding marriages are expanding exponentially, especially in post-1990 India. The digital platforms play a crucial role in organizing such functions which includes elaborate venues, intricate attire, themed rituals, and extravagant celebrations. The service providers such as wedding planners, decorators, caterers, photographers, make-up artists, and entertainers operate remotely and efficiently through online platforms for execution of such functions. This shift reflects the expansion of the informal economy, as individuals, often lacking formal employment opportunities, are increasingly seeking work in the growing service sector. The privatization of various sectors and the rise of digital entrepreneurship have transformed the marriage market into a highly commercialized space. Digital platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and personalized websites enable service providers to advertise and brand their services, creating a market for tailored, desirable marriage experiences. In this context, the present paper aims to understand how the digital platforms create this new aesthetic by looking into the spectacles of consumption being produced and deployed. The paper attempts to understand how service providers bank on the requirements of the clientele and construct the notion of a desirable marriage ceremony thereby contributing to the platform economy. This paper, through content analysis of various social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and personalized websites used by the service providers attempts to see how the modes of advertising, promotions, branding and portrayal serve as a site to understand

the informal economy associated with the digital entrepreneurship embedded in the marriage market too. Such service providers generate business by attempting to construct an idea of desirable marriage thereby emphasizing their increasing demand in the marriage market, especially in the post-reform period. Lastly, the paper explores the consumerist ethos often marketed in correspondence with the execution of an ideal marriage event by these several service providers.

## **Bridging Tradition And Technology: The Digitization Of Bangle Making In Madhubani**

**Romi Anand**

The Lahkaar (bangle-making) community of Bihar represents a rich yet often overlooked facet of India's cultural heritage. Renowned for their intricate craftsmanship and traditional techniques passed down through generations, this community faces multiple socio-economic challenges that threaten its sustainability. The modern forces of globalization, changing market dynamics, and the diminishing interest in traditional crafts have led to a gradual erosion of this unique cultural identity. This study explores the current status of the Lahkaar community in Bihar, focusing on the importance of documenting and digitizing their cultural practices to ensure their preservation for future generations. Using qualitative research methods, including field interviews and ethnographic observations, this research highlights the need for integrating digital tools to archive oral histories, techniques, and artisan stories. Digitization can create global outreach, facilitate e-commerce opportunities, and protect endangered heritage. This paper also examines policy frameworks and community-based strategies to foster sustainable livelihoods while preserving traditional knowledge. By creating comprehensive digital documentation, this initiative aims to bridge the gap between heritage conservation and modern innovation. Ultimately, this study calls for greater collaboration between government bodies, NGOs, and cultural institutions to protect and promote Bihar's rich artisanal legacy.

## Popularising the periphery: the case of the manipuri documentary '*kwatha pham kaba*'

Sanjoy Akhum & Haobijam Vokendro

**Introduction:** Kwatha is a small isolated village near the Indo-Myanmar border in Tengnoupal district of Manipur, inhabited by a small *Loi* population. It is generally accepted that the *Loi* community is a part of the wider *Meetei/Meitei* community of Manipur. However, mainstream Meetei society has historically viewed the Loies as 'peripheral' people owing to a number of differing customs and traditions and other factors. In modern times, this 'distance' between the two has narrowed down due to more intermixing and modern ways of exchange brought about by changing mindsets and technology. Recently, a documentary titled '*Kwatha Pham Kaba*' (The Great Kwatha Accession) based on a traditional ceremony in Kwatha became hugely popular among the Meeteis. A folk song in the documentary also became a local hit. This paper looks into how the documentary came into being, and also critically analyses its impact on Manipuri society. **Objectives:** i. To bring out the manner in which the documentary was made and the possible motives behind its making, ii. To critically analyse the impact of the documentary in Manipur (especially on the wider Meetei society). **Methodology:** A review of published academic literature was done to gather information on parameters like culture and traditions of the *Loi* people, the use of documentaries in cultural preservation, cultural appropriation, etc. Public reactions to *Kwatha Pham Kaba* in the media and interviews and interactions with villagers and team members associated with the project were also analysed to fulfil the study objectives. **Results:** The documentary overall can be seen as a wholehearted attempt on the part of its makers to bring to light rituals and ceremonies of the Loies of Kwatha, in the process offering a window into the past of wider Meetei society in general as well. The positive impacts of the documentary include the preservation and popularisation of a 'culture from the margins' and strengthening of Meetei community identity during the present Manipur conflict. The negative impact mostly pertains to issues regarding cultural appropriation and possible exoticisation.

**SESSION 22**

**HEALTH AND HYGENE STUDIES**

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Susmita Medak and Mimam Borang	Health Seeking Behavior Practiced among the Nyishi's of Basar Nallo, Papum Pare District, Arunachal Pradesh
T Pavan Kumar	Organ Donation: An Anthropological Study Among the People of A Metropolitan City, India
Paramita Das, Diptendu Chatterjee, and Suwendu Maji	Exploring The Family History Of Autism And Maternal Health
Barasha Rani Baishya	An Analytical Study Of Population And Health Status Of Scheduled Caste In Assam
Nairrita Bhattacharjee, Baidyanath Pal, Suwendu Maji, Monali Goswami	Influence Of Body Composition Variables On Foot Anthropometric Measures: A Study On The Lodha Tribal Community Of Paschim Medinipur District, West Bengal
Titas Ghosh, Baidyanath Pal, Suwendu Maji, Monali Goswami	Contributory Factors In Predicting PCOS: A Study Among The Hindus And Muslims Community Of Kolkata, West Bengal
Atriya Neogi	Impact Of Hemoglobin Levels On Skeletal Muscle Mass And Body Composition In Female Hockey Athletes
Bikram Keshari Mohanty	The Epidemiological Profile Of Metabolic Syndrome Among Indian Tribes: A Systematic Appraisal And Meta-Analysis Of Observational Studies
Anuradha Chakraborty	The Science Of Osteoporosis: Causes, Mechanisms, And Therapies

## **Health Seeking Behavior Practiced Among The *Nyishi's* Of Basar Nallo, Papum Pare District, Arunachal Pradesh**

**Susmita Medak & Mimum Borang**

Health Seeking Behavior is any activity undertaken by individuals who find themselves with a health-related problem that aims to seek the appropriate treatment. All individuals will need some form of health care at one point or another in their lifetime. The study aimed to identify the health-seeking practices, the interplay between traditional practices and modern healthcare systems and the most preferred form of treatment. A community-based, cross-sectional study was conducted among the 11 sub-villages of *Basar Nallo, Papum Pare* district of Arunachal Pradesh to study health-seeking behavior. In *Basar Nallo*, health care resort to one of four main avenues as a first point of call for addressing their health issues; seeking medical care at a government health facility, medical care at a private health facility, traditional/herbal medical care, and faith-healing. Socio-cultural beliefs, economic constraints, and limited access to healthcare facilities shape their health-seeking decisions. While traditional practices remain integral due to their accessibility and cultural alignment, modern healthcare is often approached with skepticism, hindered by mistrust, language barriers, and logistical challenges. This study investigates the community's reliance on traditional healers, herbal remedies, and rituals, alongside their interactions with formal healthcare institutions. It also underscores the importance of culturally sensitive healthcare policies and interventions to bridge the gap between indigenous practices and modern medicine, ensuring equitable healthcare for the *Nyishi* community.

## **Organ Donation: An Anthropological Study Among The People Of A Metropolitan City, India**

**T Pavan Kumar**

Organ transplantation is a life-saving technology that prolonged and improved a life of a people worldwide and a shining symbol of human solidarity. It is a result of relentless efforts of dedicated health professionals and the generosity of organ donors. Nevertheless, despite advancements in medical, pharmacologic, and surgical techniques, the scarcity of organs remains a pressing public health issue that demands attention and resolution. There is a need to understand the social circumstances, attitudes and philosophies around the organ donation. This study is aimed at to know the awareness about aspects of organ donation; to elicit the diffusion of knowledge through various communication channels; and to analyze the factors responsible for acceptance and barriers for rejection. The study is conducted among the citizens of in and around the city of Hyderabad, Telangana. Anthropological tools and techniques such as observation, case studies and group discussion were employed to collect the data. The data is collected at avenues of hospitals, temples, mosques and churches where the awareness camps are conducted. The present study points out that the donor's motivating factors to donation include the concept of dana, rebirth, and the gift of life. The barriers include that the body belongs to God and must return to him as it is in the next birth, and there is no right to change

god's wish, and alongside of socio-cultural perceptions. Medical fraternity, mass media, social media, marathons, awareness walks, green corridors and religious places are acting as a source of information. The public are less aware about the knowledge on legal, ethical and medical aspects of organ transplantation.

## Exploring The Family History Of Autism And Maternal Health

**Paramita Das, Diptendu Chatterjee & Suvendu Maji**

**Background:** Autism, or Autism Spectrum disease (ASD), is a developmental disease that impacts social communication, interaction, behaviour, and interests (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders, 5th edition: DSM V, 2013). It is a neurological disorder that often manifests in early childhood, impacting people with variable degrees of severity. A familial history with autism elevates the likelihood of an individual manifesting disorder (Gaugler *et al*, 2014; Sandin *et al*, 2014). Studies indicate that mother health during gestation significantly influences the development of autism in children (Kogan *et al*, 2007; Kolevzon *et al*, 2007; Gardener *et al*, 2009; Elsabbagh *et al*, 2012; Sandin *et al*, 2016). The study of family history is conducted due to evidence indicating a significant genetic component associated with the condition of the disease. Examining maternal health during gestation might facilitate the identification of prospective therapies and preventative measures to mitigate the risk of autism in offspring. **Objectives:** 1. To explore the familial history of the autistic children, 2. To understand the maternal health conditions during pregnancy. **Materials and Methods:** The study is based on the interviews of fifty mothers whose autistic children are currently under intervention program from different centres in Kolkata. In-depth interview guided by pre-tested questionnaire was employed aiming towards objectives. **Data Analysis:** Depending on the data structure standard statistical tests were used. **Results:** It was unravelled that there is an association between family history and maternal health condition with autism.

## An Analytical Study Of Population And Health Status Of Scheduled Caste In Assam

**Barasha Rani Baishya**

Health and disease are indispensably related to bio-cultural spectrum of a community in a particular environment. Medical history of man can only be understood through a study of the different Socio-Cultural systems of human being. A Culture of Health is broadly defined as one in which good health and well-being flourish across geographic, demographic, and social sectors. Allopathic medicine became popular in the later part of the nineteenth century and from then it started causing flaccidity in the interest of Socio-Cultural importance of health. In different countries people devise numerous mechanisms for ensuring health and eliminating disease. Each culture has its notion of health and has various methods to cope with the diseases. In pristine societies, people believe that evil spirits, black magic, taboos, witchcraft, sorcery, etc. might lead a person to illness. Therefore, the pattern of behavior and belief of the people relating to the health and disease to be accounted for the study of the health. This study intends

to discuss the impact of food culture, folk beliefs, social customs of the Scheduled Caste Community of Assam. They have their own concept of health, disease and curative measures. Some of these are inherited from their fore-fathers while the others are gained through different agencies like education, weekly market, health organization, social media, etc. This paper is a modest appraisal of collecting specially belief in relation to their religion and supernatural aspects. Data for the present study have been collected through intensive field and population related information has been collected from the Census 2011 report.

### **Influence Of Body Composition Variables On Foot Anthropometric Measures: A Study On The Lodha Tribal Community Of Paschim Medinipur District, West Bengal**

**Nairrita Bhattacharjee, Baidyanath Pal, Suwendu Maji & Monali Goswami**

Individual weight is an important determinant in the development of distinct foot types since the main purpose of an arched foot is to distribute the load from body weight to different sections of the foot during different stages of the walk cycle. Hence, a healthy foot structure is crucial for efficient posture and ambulation. Any alteration from normal or healthy foot structure can influence the gait and lead to different injury patterns. There is insufficient evidence to support the influence of selected body composition measures on foot anthropometric parameters, indicating a lack of data for adults. Data on foot anthropometric measurements like height of medial malleolus, lateral malleolus, ankle, Toe 1, bimalleolar breadth, circumference/ girth of ankle, heel-ankle, calf, instep, and ball and selected body composition variables like body mass index, percent body fat and skeletal muscle percentage were obtained from 442 healthy Lodha males and females aged 18 years and above using standard procedure from Paschim Medinipur district, West Bengal. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 26.0. In males, there was significant variation ( $p < 0.05$ ) only in toe 1 height across Body Mass Index and Body Fat Percentage categories, while in females, it differed significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) across Body Fat Percentage and Skeletal Muscle Percentage categories. In males, bimalleolar breadth showed significant variation among Body Mass Index categories only whereas all girth measurements differed significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) between Body Mass Index and Body Fat Percentage categories respectively, but in females, they differed significantly across all three body composition measures ( $p < 0.05$ ). Thus, selected body composition measures had an extensive impact on foot anthropometric measurements, particularly toe 1 height, and all breadth and girth measurements. The present research findings will allow for more sensitive comparisons between communities, the establishment of population-specific standards, and increased awareness of foot health, and this will also contribute to new knowledge of public health.

### **Contributory Factors In Predicting Pcos: A Study Among The Hindus And Muslims Community Of Kolkata, West Bengal**

**Titas Ghosh, Baidyanath Pal, Suwendu Maji & Monali Goswami**

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is one of the most common endocrine disorders that affects women irrespective of all age groups globally in an epidemic manner. **Objective:** The present study aimed to examine the main contributory factors in predicting PCOS in the two different communities the Hindus and the Muslims of Kolkata, West Bengal. **Materials and methods:** This cross-sectional study included 723 (371 Hindus and 352 Muslims), Bengali women aged between 15 to 30 years. The PCOS participants were selected using Rotterdam criteria and data on socio-economic status and menstrual characteristics were collected using a standard structured questionnaire. All anthropometric measurements were recorded following the standard procedures. The entire data was analysed with the help of statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 26.0. An artificial neural network was conducted for predicting the most important factor contributing in developing PCOS. **Result:** Results of the Artificial neural network shows that, in the case of Hindu participants, Cycle type is the highest factor contributing to predicting PCOS, followed by BMI (Body Mass Index), MET score, and Percent body fat and for Muslim participants percent body fat (PBF) is the highest factor contributing to predicting PCOS, followed by waist circumference (WC), blood glucose level, acne score, and haemoglobin level. **Conclusion:** Therefore, though coming from the same geographical area, Muslim and Hindu women have differing PCOS burdens and manifestations because of their ethnic backgrounds and cultural contexts. Health education and screening for PCOS need to be incorporated in Adolescent Education Program and an assessment of target groups by simple menstrual history could detect possible PCOS during early adolescence to facilitate early appropriate intervention.

## Impact Of Hemoglobin Levels On Skeletal Muscle Mass And Body Composition In Female Hockey Athletes

**Atriya Neogi & Snehunsu Adhikari**

Hemoglobin plays a crucial role in oxygen transport and overall health, potentially influencing body composition and athletic performance. Understanding the relationship between hemoglobin levels and body composition parameters can provide insights into optimizing physical conditioning in female hockey athletes. **Methods:** This study examined 38 female senior hockey athletes from East India, with an average age of  $18.4 \pm 1.44$  years, an average height of  $158.5 \pm 6.22$  cm, an average weight of  $50.5 \pm 6.1$  kg, an average skeletal muscle mass of  $19.5 \pm 1.59$  kg, and an average hemoglobin level of  $11.6 \pm 0.6$  g/dl. Hemoglobin levels and body composition parameters, including skeletal muscle mass, body fat percentage, and lean body mass, were assessed. Pearson's correlation analysis ( $p < 0.05$ ) was used to determine the relationship between hemoglobin levels and body composition parameters. **Results:** The analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.4106$ ,  $p = 0.01045$ ) between hemoglobin levels and skeletal muscle mass, indicating that higher hemoglobin levels are associated with increased muscle mass in these athletes. No significant correlations were found between hemoglobin levels and other body composition parameters. **Conclusion:** These findings suggest that hemoglobin levels may play an important role in muscle development among female hockey athletes. Optimizing hemoglobin levels could be beneficial for

improving athletic performance and training outcomes. Further research is needed to establish causal relationships and explore additional factors influencing body composition in this population.

### **The Epidemiological Profile Of Metabolic Syndrome Among Indian Tribes: A Systematic Appraisal And Meta-Analysis Of Observational Studies**

**Bikram Keshari Mohanty, Sitikantha Panda, Priyanka Das & Monali Goswami**

Metabolic syndrome (Mets) is a constellation of interconnected physiological, biochemical, clinical and metabolic factors that directly increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes mellitus and all-cause mortality. It is constituted by abdominal obesity, insulin resistance, hyper tension, and hyperlipidaemia. The transition from traditional to urban lifestyles in tribal communities has increased susceptibility to lifestyle risk factors like metabolic syndrome, yet research on this issue remains limited. This review aims to understand metabolic syndrome prevalence, lifestyle-related diseases, and cardiovascular risk factors among Indian tribal populations. **Methodology:** This paper reviews the prevalence of metabolic syndrome among Indian tribal populations using PRISMA guidelines. It uses online databases like Google Scholar, PubMed, and JSTOR to search for articles related to non-communicable diseases, hypertension, diabetes, substance use, obesity, socio-demographic profile, and tribals in India. The review covers cross-sectional studies from 2000 to 2024. **Result:** This review study reveals that Metabolic syndrome that carrying at least three risk components, like hypertriglyceridemia, obesity, dyslipidaemia, and high blood pressure, significantly enhances the risk of CVDs. Undernutrition, smoking, and a low intake of fruits and vegetables in the Indian tribal population are the main risk factors for managing Mets associated CVDs. Mets can be influenced by genetic and environmental factors, and healthy habits like a balanced diet and exercise should be introduced from a young age to prevent progression. **Conclusion:** Functionally upgraded primary health centres and special IECs programs can help combat Mets-associated CVDs. Strengthening public healthcare systems and focusing on prevention, early identification, and treatment using medical and social interventions can help manage metabolic risk factors.

### **The Science Of Osteoporosis: Causes, Mechanisms, And Therapies**

**Anuradha Chakraborty**

The biological cause of osteoporosis, a metabolic bone disease, is osteoclastic bone resorption that isn't offset by osteoblastic bone synthesis. This makes bones brittle and feeble, which raises the possibility of fractures. The emphasis of traditional pathophysiological theories of osteoporosis was on endocrine processes, such secondary hyperparathyroidism and deficiencies in oestrogen or vitamin D. But research over the past few decades has yielded fascinating new insights into pathways that contribute to osteoporosis onset that go much

beyond this. The gut microbiota, cellular senescence, and the relationship between bone and the immune system are some of the mechanisms that are addressed in this article. A summary of the osteoporosis pharmaceuticals now on the market, such as antiresorptive and bone-forming medications, is also given, along with a prediction for possible future treatments.

<b>SESSION 23</b>	
<b>STUDIES IN PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Kaustuv Debsarma	Distribution Of ABO Blood Group and Their Incompatibility Among Toto Tribe Of Alipurduar District, West Bengal, India
Aheibam Robertson Singh, Sanjenbam Yaiphaba Meitei	Association Of Serum Calcium with Hypercalciuria Among the Meiteis of Manipur
Tiwari Pratima and Singh Udai Pratap	Unveiling Hypertension:- Insights into Measurement, Risk Factors, and Effective Management Strategies/Tiwari Pratima, Singh Udai Pratap
Sudipta Ghosh	Hypoxic Ventilatory Response in Relation to Hypobaric Hypoxia among the Tawang Monpa From Eastern Himalayan Mountain
Ritwik Banerjee, and P. Venkatramana	Sexual Dimorphism Explored: Comparing 2D:4D Ratio and Geometric Morphometric Hand Analysis
Surabhi Verma	Study of Anthropometric Measurements to Assess the Physical Growth Patterns of Tharu Children at the Age of Two to Twelve Years: A Tribe from Lakhimpur Kheri District, Uttar Pradesh, India
Shyama Mohapatra, and Reesita Mohapatra	Comparative Analysis of Anthropometric and Hemodynamic Parameters among the Bhumij Tribe of Balasore District, Odisha
Mondal Dipti, Adhikari Snehunsu, Bandyopadhyay Arup Ratan & Chatterjee Diptendu	A Comparative Study on Anthropometric and Physiological Parameters of National and State Level Female Sepaktakraw Players of North East India

## **Distribution Of Abo Blood Group And Their Incompatibility Among Toto Tribe Of Alipurduar District, West Bengal, India**

**Kaustuv Debsarma**

Toto is one of the particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTG) of West Bengal. According to the Census of India 2011 total population of the tribe is 1387 people including both the genders and children. The present study was conducted among 114 couples who were genetically unrelated. Blood samples were collected and analysed by standard techniques by professional in Government authorized laboratory at Alipurduar, West Bengal. Structured research schedule was used to collect data by personal interview method. In result it can be seen that most of the people have B blood group and O blood group has lowest number of people among the studied population. Depending on the mating among the people of different blood groups an analysis was done and compared with the death rate among offspring due to the ABO incompatibility. I conclusion it was seen that among the studied population although there are couples with ABO compatibility and incompatibility, but it did not affect their fertility or the mortality status.

## **Association Of Serum Calcium With Hypercalciuria Among The Meiteis Of Manipur**

**Aheibam Robertson Singh & Sanjenbam Yaiphaba Meitei**

Hypercalciuria, excess urine calcium, is an identifiable metabolic risk factor that causes several complex disorders. It is multifactorial, and genetic and environmental factors are involved in high urine calcium. One of the important risk factors is calcium metabolism. Studies suggest that there is an association of hypercalciuria with serum calcium. Considering the significance of blood calcium being absorbed into urine calcium, the present study was conducted to find the association of serum calcium with urine calcium. **Methods:** A total of 413 Meitei individuals (272 females and 141 males) in the ages of 19 and 60 years were included in the study. Serum calcium and urinary calcium-creatinine were measured using Erba Chem 5x biochemical analyser. One-way ANOVA, chi-square test and multinomial logistic regression were used for statistical analysis. **Results:** It was found that 18.64% have hypercalciuria and 23.49% are in the risk of having hypercalciuria. Random urine calcium and creatinine were significantly different among hypercalciuria, risk and normal groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). The chi-square test shows a significant association between age group and hypercalciuria; similarly significant difference between serum calcium and urine calcium was also found ( $p < 0.05$ ). Multinomial logistic regression shows that higher age groups (40-49 and 50-60) are 2.8 and 4 times more likely to suffer from hypercalciuria than lower age group. Furthermore, hypocalcaemic and hypercalcaemic individuals are 3.5 and 2.1 times more likely to have hypercalciuria than normocalcaemic individuals. However, the respondents' sex shows no significant association. **Conclusion:** Hypercalciuria may seem to be a minor disorder; however, its possible impact on the health and quality of life is significant. Considering its importance, it is always advisable to pre-determine the risk factors of hypercalciuria to minimise the possible consequences.

## **Unveiling Hypertension: Insights Into Measurement, Risk Factors, And Effective Management Strategies**

**Tiwari Pratima & Singh Udai Pratap**

Hypertension is a global public health challenge, contributing significantly to the burden of cardiovascular diseases, stroke, and kidney failure. This study examines the risk factors, measurement techniques, and management strategies for hypertension, emphasizing the need for effective prevention and control. The research objectives were to identify the primary and secondary risk factors associated with hypertension, evaluate current blood pressure measurement methods, and assess the efficacy of various management options, including lifestyle changes and pharmacological treatments. A review methodology was employed, analyzing data from peer-reviewed clinical studies, guidelines, and meta-analyses. Databases such as PubMed, Cochrane Library, and Google Scholar were utilized to gather relevant literature. The research focused on understanding the role of genetic predisposition, dietary habits, physical inactivity, smoking, and comorbid conditions like diabetes and obesity in the development of hypertension. Furthermore, the study explored advancements in blood pressure measurement techniques, including oscillometric devices, home blood pressure monitoring, and 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring, which have enhanced diagnostic accuracy. The results indicate that hypertension is most effectively managed through a combination of lifestyle modifications (such as weight reduction, dietary changes, and regular physical activity) and pharmacological treatments (including ACE inhibitors, beta-blockers, and diuretics). Early detection and adherence to prescribed treatments significantly reduce the risk of hypertension-related complications. The study concludes that a multi-faceted approach involving both prevention and management is crucial in combating hypertension, with further research needed to optimize patient compliance and explore new therapeutic avenues.

## **Hypoxic Ventilatory Response In Relation To Hypobaric Hypoxia Among The Tawang Monpa From Eastern Himalayan Mountain**

**Sudipta Ghosh**

An increase in ventilation with low ambient oxygen pressure is a physiological response to high altitude hypoxia to deal with the decline of arterial blood oxygen saturation (SaO<sub>2</sub>). Such an adaptive measure to maintain the required level of arterial blood oxygen saturation at high altitude is known as Hypoxic Ventilatory Response (HVR). Generally, on acute exposure to hypobaric hypoxia, new comers reveal high level of HVR. However, one might expect somewhat different adaptive mechanism for those who have been living at high altitude for generations, i.e. high altitude native people that are chronically exposed to hypobaric hypoxia. Interestingly, previous studies suggest that Andean high altitude natives have a low (blunted) HVR and low ventilation as compared to the new comers. Therefore, it might be academically informative and interesting to know whether Indian high altitude native populations follow the same trend or do they have a complete different pathway of maintaining required level of arterial blood oxygen saturation under hypobaric hypoxia. Unfortunately, such data from

Indian high altitude native populations are hugely lacking for comparison with other high altitude native populations. With this information in mind, the present study is an exploratory one in nature in exploring the hypoxic ventilatory responses among the Tawang Monpa from Eastern Himalayan Mountain of Arunachal Pradesh with special emphasis on the factors influencing such physiological adaptive measure of this population. Interestingly, unlike Andean high-altitude natives ( $0.71 \pm 0.05$  L/min<sub>1/100</sub>) Monpa show high level of HVR ( $3.097 \pm 1.79$  L/min<sub>1/100</sub>) and resting ventilation.

### **Sexual Dimorphism Explored: Comparing 2d:4d Ratio And Geometric Morphometric Hand Analysis**

#### **Ritwik Banerjee & P. Venkatramana**

Geometric morphometrics employs multivariate statistical techniques to analyse and compare shapes while maintaining the geometric properties of landmark configurations. The current work examines and contrasts the effectiveness of a fully multivariate method employing geometric morphometrics for hand shape analysis with the 2D:4D ratio, a frequently used biomarker of sexual dimorphism, in differentiating between the sexes. The hands of 166 righthanded individuals (83 males, 83 females), aged 16 to 18 years, were scanned using a document scanner in a standardized position from the palmar aspect. For each scanned image, two-dimensional coordinates of 37 landmarks were recorded, and variability between configurations of landmarks between sexes was analysed using geometric morphometrics. Additionally, the 2D:4D ratios of each individual were recorded by directly measuring finger lengths with sliding callipers to compare the sex effect. A Procrustes-based statistic that uses the hand's entire shape information was found to be more sexually dimorphic than the commonly used 2D:4D ratio using linear discriminant analysis. This approach provides a more comprehensive characterization of shape variation, something not achievable by simply taking a ratio of finger lengths. The study concludes by showing that, compared to the 2D:4D ratio, geometric morphometric techniques provide better definition of hand shape as a biomarker of sexual dimorphism.

### **Study Of Anthropometric Measurements To Assess The Physical Growth Patterns Of Tharu Children At The Age Of Two To Twelve Years: A Tribe From Lakhimpur Kheri District, Uttar Pradesh, India**

#### **Surabhi Verma**

This study focuses on the Anthropometric assessment of growth patterns among Tharu children, specifically in the age group of two to twelve years. The Tharu community, an indigenous Scheduled Tribe of the Tarai region of Uttar Pradesh, has been selected for this research to understand the physical growth dynamics in an underrepresented population. **Methodology-** The present cross-sectional study examines the physical growth patterns of Tharu girls from Lakhimpur Kheri district. The data, collected from 125 Kathoriya girls include standard anthropometric measurements of height and weight, as per Weiner and Lourie techniques (1969). The subjects were drawn randomly from various schools and Anganwadi

of Dhuskia Village of Palia Block of Lakhimpur Kheri district, Uttar Pradesh. The subjects ranged in age from 2-12 years. The ages of children were cross-checked from Anganwadi and school registers. Weight was measured to the nearest 0.1 kg using a portable weighing machine with the subject standing straight with minimum clothing and with head held in F.H. plane. Height was measured with the help of a standard anthropometer, following the technique of Weiner and Lourie (1969). Mean and standard deviation of height and weight were calculated using MS Excel. **Results-** The results indicate a general upward trend in both height and weight among Tharu Kathoriya girls as they age. When compared to other tribal communities in India, Tharu girls exhibit a relatively higher growth status. However, despite this, their growth measurements fall short of the standards set by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). **Conclusion-** The study revealed significant deviations in the growth patterns of Tharu children when compared to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) growth standards, with the majority of children measuring below the average in height and weight for their age. These findings suggest the presence of potential nutritional deficiencies and socio-economic factors that may be negatively impacting the overall health of the community. To mitigate these disparities and promote healthy development, targeted interventions focusing on improving healthcare access and nutritional support are recommended for Tharu children.

### **Comparative Analysis Of Anthropometric And Hemodynamic Parameters Among The Bhumij Tribe Of Balasore District, Odisha**

**Shyama Mohapatra & Reesita Mohapatra**

Hypertension is a growing health concern among tribal population in India. This study aims to conduct a comparative analysis of anthropometric and hemodynamic parameters among the Bhumij tribe of Balasore Keonjhar, and Sundergarh district, Odisha. The Bhumij tribes of Odisha, a primitive tribal group residing in the eastern part of India, have been largely understudied in terms of their health and nutritional status. A total number of 168 participants from the Bhumij tribe of Odisha were recruited for the study. Anthropometric measurements, including WHR and BMI, and primary hemodynamic parameters (blood pressure, heart rate) were assessed. The results showed that out of the total population 23% of the population were having high blood pressure and 21% population were having low blood pressure. Then after assessing the WHR result it is found that 42% of the population were at high risk category. Then after evaluating the BMI of the population it was found that 29% of the population were coming under the severely underweight category and 6.5% were overweight and 2.4% came under obese category. Contrary to expectations, the result showed no significant correlation between WHR, BMI and Blood pressure. The findings suggest that the relationship between anthropometric and hemodynamic parameters may be more complex than previously thought, and further research is needed to understand the underlying mechanisms. This study contributes to the limited literature on the health profile of the Bhumij tribes and highlights the need for more targeted health interventions in this population.

## **A Comparative Study On Anthropometric And Physiological Parameters Of National And State Level Female Sepaktakraw Players Of North East India**

**Mondal Dipti, Adhikari Snehunsu, Bandyopadhyay Arup Ratan & Chatterjee Diptendu**

Sepak takraw requires the player to master a variety of performance skills like jumping, blocking, diving or spiking that are related to the needs of strength, power, agility, and speed during the duration of the game. **Aim:** The present study was undertaken with the objective to compare the various anthropometric, body composition and physical fitness parameters for the young Indian female Sepak takraw players of state and national level. **Methods:** Total 44 (20 national and 24 state level) female Sepak Takraw athletes from Sports Authority of India, were chosen for the study. Data were collected on various anthropometric and physiological parameters. % of body fat, % muscle mass, Somatotyping, VO<sub>2</sub> Max, Maximum Power, Average Power were calculated following standard protocol. **Results:** Mean height, weight, trochanterian height, BMI & Muscle mass were found to be higher in national level female Sepak athletes except percentage of body fat but significant differences were found only in Muscle Mass ( $P < 0.05$ ). In somatotyping national significant ( $P < 0.01$ ) differences in mesomorph and ectomorph ( $P < 0.01$ ) were found when compared between the groups. In case of physiological parameters back strength, aerobic power, anaerobic power, Standing Broad jump and vertical jump found to be higher in National level female Sepak players except trunk flexibility. VO<sub>2</sub> Max ( $P < 0.01$ ) and Average Power ( $P < 0.05$ ) showed significant difference between two groups. **Conclusion:** From the present study it can be concluded that the most key parameters of national level female Sepak takraw players were higher muscle mass, aerobic power, average power.

<b>SESSION 24</b>	
<b>STUDIES IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Kalandi Singh	The Twin Temples of Gandharadhi (CHARISAMBHU): Exploring Boudh's Architectural Heritage
Garima Khansili	Archaeological Evidences related to Infant-Afflicting Gods in Ancient India
Basanta Kumar Mohanta	Situating Cultural Sites of Pleistocene in Anthropocene:A Study of Human Vandalism of Prehistoric Sites in Kuliana, Odisha, Eastern India
Manu Naik and Basanta Kumar Mohanta	Morphological Variability in Prehistoric Tools: An Analytical Study of Handaxes from the Kuliana Area, Northern Odisha/Manu Naik and Basanta Kumar Mohanta
Ranjana Rani Singh, and Manas Ranjan Pattanayak	Neolithic Potteries from the Excavated Site of Bang-Harirajpur, Coastal Odisha/Ranjana Rani Singh, Manas Ranjan Pattanayak
Sriya Ash, and Subrat Kumar Naik	Prehistoric archaeology of northern Odisha with reference to Raruan district, Mayurbhanj

## The Twin Temples Of Gandharadhi (Charisambhu): Exploring Boudh's Architectural Heritage

**Kalandi Singh**

The Twin Temples of Gandharadhi, located in Boudh district, Odisha, stand as a testament to the region's rich cultural and architectural heritage, reflecting the socio-religious dynamics of medieval India. These temples, believed to date back to the 10th-11th century CE, exhibit the Kalinga architectural style and are unique for their dual shrines dedicated to Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu. This anthropological analysis explores the cultural significance, architectural features, and the interplay of religious practices associated with the temples. The study delves into the intricate carvings and iconography adorning the temples, which include depictions of mythological narratives, floral motifs, and local folklore. These artistic elements not only showcase the craftsmanship of the era but also provide insights into the cultural ethos and value systems of the time. The dual deities signify the coexistence of Saivism and Vaisnavism, highlighting a harmonious blending of faiths and the inclusive religious practices prevalent in the region. The analysis also considers the temples' role as a focal point of social life, serving as sites of communal worship and cultural gatherings. Oral histories and local legends associated with the temples further enrich our understanding of their historical and cultural relevance. This research underscores the need for preserving such heritage sites, emphasizing their importance as repositories of anthropological knowledge. By integrating historical, cultural, and architectural perspectives, the study offers a comprehensive view of the Twin Temples of Gandharadhi, fostering a deeper appreciation of Odisha's temple traditions and their role in shaping societal structures.

## Archaeological Evidences Related To Infant-Afflicting Gods In Ancient India

**Garima Khansili**

While there are some archaeological records of *Vaidyashalas* in ancient India, the archaeological evidence regarding ancient diseases remains largely underexplored. This isn't due to a lack of data, but perhaps due to a lack of understanding about the concept of diseases during ancient times in India and lack of knowledge of the existing archaeological evidence. Ancient Indian Ayurved texts like the *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Samgraha*, and others describe harmful spirits, causing diseases —referred to as *Graha* and *Matr*. These *Graha* and *Matr* are collectively called *Balagraha* and are believed to afflict infants. The Ayurved texts outline various protective rituals and the deities associated with harmful spirits causing diseases. The proposed paper explores the connection between the ancient Indian Ayurved texts, particularly *Sushruta Samhita*, and the archaeological evidence in the context of fertility and infant protection rituals. Moving beyond the conventional classification of terracotta figurines as mere "mother goddesses," the study seeks to interpret these artefacts from the broader cultural and medical perspective of ancient Indian society, particularly in the middle Ganga Plains. The objective is to examine the socio-cultural significance of these figurines and

their connection to fertility practices, shedding light on the cultural and medical beliefs surrounding infant protection in ancient India.

### **Situating Cultural Sites Of Pleistocene In Anthropocene: A Study Of Human Vandalism Of Prehistoric Sites In Kuliana, Odisha, Eastern India**

**Basanta Kumar Mohanta**

The origin of human cultural evolution occurred during the Pleistocene and the evidence is found in various places of the world, including Kuliana in eastern India. The prehistoric site of Kuliana has been ascribed as the first lower palaeolithic site to be excavated in India. Since the 1940s, different types of archaeological evidence have been reported from various regional locations and even if the area is rich in cultural evidence, justification has not been given to these sites during the Anthropocene. Most of the sites are under destruction either because of the expansion of the village or conversion into the agricultural field, extraction of soil, laterite and sand for construction of roads and houses, expansion of NH, construction of pond, check dam and canals, deposition of plastic and other unused materials, transportation of pebbles and nodules along with stone artifacts for construction purpose or other anthropogenic factors. In this paper, an attempt has been made to discuss the current situation of these prehistoric sites and their state of preservation.

### **Morphological Variability In Prehistoric Tools: An Analytical Study Of Handaxes From The Kuliana Area, Northern Odisha**

**Manu Naik & Basanta Kumar Mohanta**

This study examines the morphological variability of handaxes recovered from the prehistoric site of Kuliana in Northern Odisha, a region known for its rich archaeological heritage. The area is famous for its archaeological significance and offers valuable insights into the morphological variability of prehistoric tools to understand their typology and functional diversity. Out of the total analyzed 71% comprises triangular, 24% are almond-shaped, and 5% are oval handaxes, all made of quartzite, a locally available raw material. These tools, attributed to the Lower Paleolithic period, exhibit notable variability in shape and design, reflecting adaptability to diverse tasks and environmental conditions. The predominance of triangular handaxes suggests a preference for specific forms, possibly linked to their efficiency in cutting and chopping activities, while the almond and oval variants highlight additional functional and stylistic variations. This morphological diversity indicates that, despite shared functional characteristics, the tools were prepared to meet a range of needs and were significantly influenced by raw material availability. The reliance on quartzite underscores its utility and durability, aligning with the technological and cultural practices of the period. The study of these handaxes not only enhances our understanding of prehistoric tool-making traditions in the Kuliana area but also contributes to the broader narrative of human adaptation and innovation during the Lower Paleolithic in Eastern India.

## **Neolithic Potteries From The Excavated Site Of Bang-Harirajpur, Coastal Odisha**

**Ranjana Rani Singh & Manas Ranjan Pattanayak**

Over recent decades, archaeological investigations in Odisha have significantly advanced our understanding of neolithic early farming communities marked by the transition from nomadic to agrarian way of life. Key sites like Golbai Sasan, Suabarei, Kuchai and Hikudi have revealed interesting insights into material cultures, subsistence practices and technological innovations, including pottery, stone tools and plant-animal domestication. Among these, the coastal site of Bang-Harirajpur has emerged as important with two excavation seasons unearthed a rich Neolithic assemblage of artifacts, including lithic tools, animal bones and particularly an extensive pottery collection. The excavated site is located in the Khordha district. It was excavated in the year 2012-13 and 2013-2014 and directed jointly by Prof. Kishor K. Basa and Prof. R. K. Mohanty. During the first season of excavation in 2012-13 the step trench method was followed by excavating five trenches each measuring 1.5m x 2m. During the second season in 2013-14, a trench measuring 5m x 5m was excavated. These potteries characterized by diverse forms such as globular pots, storage jars, bowls and dishes. Decorations including cord impressions, reed patterns and applique designs. The primary aim of this paper is to present a comprehensive and descriptive analysis of the Neolithic pottery yielded at Bang-Harirajpur. Through these findings within the broader archaeological narrative of Odisha and Eastern India. By examining the typological variations, manufacturing techniques and decorations of the potteries, this study seeks to reconstruct the daily lives, economic activities and cultural interactions of the inhabitants of site.

## **Prehistoric Archaeology Of Northern Odisha With Reference To Raruan, District Mayurbhanj**

**Sriya Ash & Subrat Kumar Naik**

Prehistoric exploration in Mayurbhanj, Odisha, has unveiled significant insights into the region's ancient human occupation and cultural evolution. Mayurbhanj, located in the north-eastern part of Odisha, holds significant potential for prehistoric archaeological findings due to its unique and varied topography. The region's diverse geography comprising hills, forests, rivers, and plains offers an ideal setting for prehistoric human activity. Earlier the adjacent areas of Karanjia and Jashipur have yielded good lithic evidences of microliths and ground stone artefacts during last three decades. However, the sites of Raraun in mayurbhanj district of Odisha are still pristine. As previously the work in the adjacent areas focussed around the Jashipur region (S. K Mishra 1987-88), Western margin of Simlipal massif (S Chakrabarti 1990) and Deo river (B. K Khillar 1997) however the present study laid stress on the locating new uncharted sites around river Baitarani, local streams, and gullies in the region. The findings from these sites provide a deeper understanding of the region's role in the broader context of South Asian prehistory especially northern Odisha, highlighting the adaptive strategies and technological innovations of the palaeo people along with it traces the origin of the past population through their relics recovered. The study incorporates the intensive exploration,

stray collection and grid collection methods. Evidences of the lithic assemblages also depicts the occupational strategies of the prehistoric denizens from the Pleistocene to the Holocene epochs in the study area. The exploration around the study area of Santabandha village in Raraun block of Mayurbhanj district, Odisha has resulted in the discovery of seven prehistoric sites and recovery of good amount of lithic assemblages depicting two major phases of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic stone age cultures. The present study trace the origin and development of the culture and determine the stages, periodization of time and all other artefact details related to prehistoric society. The frequent evidences of the Palaeolithic tools and Microliths during the field survey leads us to the conclusion that the Palaeo- population had exploited the region very well during their habitation.

<b>SESSION 25</b>	
<b>STUDIES ON IDENTITIES, AND GOVERNANCE</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title of Paper</b>
Anish Mazumdar	Negotiating Identity in Varanasi's EV Transition: Anthropological Evidences from E-Rickshaw Drivers, Governance, and the Role of Technoself
Minakshi Sharma	Tribal Self Governance: An Anthropological Discourse on Contemporary Perspectives in Jharkhand
Tlanglawmkim Hmar	Digitalization and Social Dynamics: An Anthropological Study of Public Libraries as Evolving Community Hubs among Youths
Rajdip Ghosh & Dipak K. Midya	The Lived Experiences of the Temple Beggars in Kolkata/Rajdip Ghosh & Dipak K. Midya
Siddhant Mishra	Resisting Dispossession: The Forest Rights Act 2006 and its Implementation in Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary, Chhattisgarh
Rishma Basumatary	Navigating Market and Non-Market Dynamics in the Handloom Sector
Shreya Chakraborty	Political Parties in Culture: Dynamics, Allegiances and Socio-Cultural Issues- An Ethnographic Study in North Dumdum of Kolkata, West Bengal, India

## **Negotiating Identity In Varanasi's Ev Transition: Anthropological Evidences From E-Rickshaw Drivers, Governance, And The Role Of Technoself**

**Anish Mazumdar**

The transition to electric vehicles (EVs) in Varanasi represents a profound socio-technological shift, influencing not only urban mobility but also the lives of those who depend on these vehicles for their livelihood. Among the most prominent actors in this transition are e-rickshaws, which have rapidly emerged as a vital mode of transport in the city. E-rickshaws are positioned as eco-friendly alternatives to traditional fossil-fuel-based vehicles, offering affordable mobility while aligning with broader sustainability goals. However, beyond their environmental significance, e-rickshaws have become a site of socio-political contestation, as governance mechanisms increasingly regulate their operation. At the center of this study are e-rickshaw drivers, who experience the EV transition not just as a technological shift but as a transformation of their professional and social identities. The paper examines how these drivers, navigating new regulatory frameworks such as the color-coded sticker system, find their movement, economic stability, and occupational identity redefined. While human-vehicle interactions form part of this evolving dynamic, the primary focus remains on the emergence of a hybrid identity that integrates both regulatory constraints and sustainability narratives. Drawing on unstructured interviews and focus group discussions, this study applies social and ecological identity theories alongside insights from Technoself Studies to explore how e-rickshaw drivers both conform to and contest the state-imposed categorizations that shape their mobility and work conditions. The findings suggest that their identity is being reconfigured in ways that go beyond occupational roles or ecological concerns. Drivers articulate a sense of belonging that is shaped as much by governance frameworks as by their role in providing sustainable urban transport. They increasingly find themselves categorized and regulated within an administrative structure that determines their access to mobility and economic stability. At the same time, they actively position themselves as essential service providers, reinforcing their alignment with sustainability while resisting policies that restrict their autonomy.

## **Tribal Self Governance: An Anthropological Discourse On Contemporary Perspectives In Jharkhand**

**Minakshi Sharma**

Tribal self-governance refers to the ability of indigenous communities to manage their own affairs, both culturally and administratively, while being within the broader national legal and political framework. In India, the Scheduled Areas, as defined under the Fifth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, are regions predominantly inhabited by tribal populations and are subject to special provisions for governance and administration to safeguard the rights of these communities. Jharkhand, a state in eastern India, formed in 2000 from the southern part of Bihar, has a substantial tribal population (26.21%) that is primarily concentrated in its rural and forested regions of the State. These areas are governed by specific provisions aimed at safeguarding the interests and autonomy of tribal communities under fifth schedule of the

Constitution of India. However, the effectiveness of these frameworks has been questioned due to systemic governance challenges, including political marginalization, economic exploitation, and administrative inertia. The paper explores the constitutional provisions, historical context, institutional arrangements, and contemporary perspectives related to tribal self-governance in Jharkhand. An anthropological discourse is taken on this issue in Mundari Khuntkatti Area of South Chhota Nagpur division of Jharkhand. It is found that the Jharkhand Panchayat Raj Act (Amended), 2010 introduced in the State has proved its potential to significantly alter the traditional system of tribal self-governance that existed in the State's tribal areas. It is concluded that the tribal communities in Jharkhand face numerous challenges, including displacement, cultural erosion, economic underdevelopment, and the marginalization of their political voices. An attempt to harmonize these traditional and contemporary systems of tribal self-governance models must carefully balance the preservation of tribal customs and the need for inclusive, modern democratic governance. The true implementation of tribal self-governance in Jharkhand would be incomplete unless the coordination between the traditional and contemporary systems of self-governance is achieved in the presently enforced Panchayat Raj Act and other legal provisions like PESA.

### **Digitalization And Social Dynamics: An Anthropological Study Of Public Libraries As Evolving Community Hubs Among Youths**

**Tlanglawmkim Hmar**

Traditionally, Public Libraries served as a repository of books and were considered “Museum of Books.” Today it is regarded as the “People’s University.” Library culture in Public Libraries is shifting from a traditional focus on solely storing books to becoming a dynamic community hub that provides various forms of social networks, especially amongst youngsters. It also serves as a space where individuals of all age groups, regardless of caste, creed, religion, or gender, come together, making it a vital hub in India's diverse cultural landscape. This manuscript aims to discover the changes in library culture trends in Public Libraries as an impact of digitalization. The study unit is selected using purposive sampling. Data was collected through semi-structured schedules, participant observation, FGDs, and in-depth interviews, and analysed using transcription and narrative content analysis methods. Some of the major findings of this research include that most of the young individuals accessing public libraries are from the age group of 16-30 years, a period focused on career building and job seeking, primarily using it as a space for preparing for competitive examinations. Public libraries have emerged as vibrant social hubs for young people preparing for competitive exams, fostering communities where social interaction, knowledge exchange, and emotional support help alleviate stress and anxiety and strengthen friendships that extend beyond the library space. Public Libraries are now reconceptualized in such a way that they are not only storage places of books and other materials, but rather places of action that promote interactivity, innovation, and social relationships serving as a potential tool to transform individuals, communities, and societies at large.

### **The Lived Experiences Of The Temple Beggars In Kolkata**

### **Rajdip Ghosh & Dipak K. Midya**

Begging is a conspicuous phenomenon specifically of religious centers (like temples, mosques, and churches) and the places of pilgrimage. It is very common in India and also practiced worldwide among developed countries as well. The present study examines the beggars' socio-economic disparities and their experiences of begging in different temples of modernday metropolis Kolkata, West Bengal. Drawing on ethnographic methods, including semi-structured interviews and observations, the research examines how these individuals navigate their everyday lives within the temple precincts, where spirituality intersects with socio-economic survival. The study further aims at unearthing the beggars' narratives on how they occupy a socio-religious space, where their presence is both tolerated and stigmatized. It is often viewed as integral to the religious experience yet marginalized within societal hierarchies. The study also delves into identifying the push and pull factors which are forcing them to beg due to the harsh realities of modernday life.

### **Resisting dispossession: the forest rights act 2006 and its implementation in Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary, Chhattisgarh**

#### **Siddhant Mishra**

The Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006 was introduced to recognize and vest rights over forest land and resources to Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest-dwelling communities in India. This study examines the implementation of the FRA in Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary, Chhattisgarh which is a home to several indigenous communities, including the Kondh, Saura, and Binjhar tribes. The main objectives of this research are to evaluate the effectiveness of the FRA in securing the land rights of these communities and to explore the challenges they face due to the conservation policies and bureaucratic obstacles. Methodologically, this paper utilizes qualitative research, gathering primary data through fieldwork, interviews with local community members, government officials, and conservationists, alongside the secondary data from government reports, legal documents, and academic studies. The findings highlight that, despite the significant progress in recognizing forest rights which may be the individual and community right, the implementation of the FRA in Barnawapara has been marred by several challenges. A high rejection rate of forest rights claims, the limited awareness of the FRA among local communities, and the resistance from forest and wildlife authorities, who prioritize conservation over indigenous rights, have contributed to continued land dispossession and exclusion from forest resources. As per the latest data records, Chhattisgarh had received over 900,000 claims under the FRA, of which more than 400,000 were rejected, demonstrating the significant gap between policy intention and its practical application. The study reveals that while the FRA offers a legal framework for addressing the historical injustices, its implementation has been hindered by a lack of political will, institutional inefficiencies, and the tension between environmental protection and indigenous land rights. With the vision of "Viksit Bharat 2047" in mind, the paper calls for a reimagined approach to inclusive development that harmonizes environmental sustainability with the rights and empowerment

of forest-dwelling communities. The paper concludes with the recommendations for improving the FRA implementation through enhanced community participation, streamlined bureaucratic processes, and policies that better the balance conservation goals with the rights of forest-dwelling communities.

## **Navigating Market And Non-Market Dynamics In The Handloom Sector**

**Rishma Basumatary**

This study explores the complex interplay between market and non-market dynamics within the handloom industry of the Bodo, emphasizing their integral roles in shaping production, distribution, and consumption behaviors. The Bodo people, primarily residing in the northeastern region of India, have a rich tradition of weaving that has been passed down through generations, embodying not only aesthetic beauty but also the cultural narratives and identity of the community. Employing an ethnographic research methodology, this study immerses itself within weavers of Bodo community to capture firsthand experiences, practices, and perceptions of artisans, middlemen, retailers and other stakeholders. Through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and engagement with local handloom networks, the research provides nuanced insights into how weavers navigate market pressures while preserving their cultural heritage. Market dynamics of Bodo handloom industry encompass traditional economic elements such as supply and demand, pricing mechanisms, and competition, which significantly influence the availability and pricing of handloom products. Conversely, non-market dynamics are grounded in cultural, social, and community factors, including the significance of indigenous expertise, traditional craftsmanship, and cooperative systems that support production processes. The duality of these dynamics reveals how market forces can exert pressure on traditional practices while simultaneously underscoring the resilience of non-market exchanges rooted in community bonds and cultural heritage. This interdependence highlights the need for a nuanced understanding of economic behavior in the handloom sector, where social relationships and mutual trust often drive transactions over monetary considerations. By recognizing the value of both market and non-market strategies, stakeholders can better navigate the challenges and opportunities facing the handloom industry, promoting sustainable practices and preserving cultural identity amidst contemporary changes.

## **Political Parties In Culture: Dynamics, Allegiances And Socio-Cultural Issues- An Ethnographic Study In North Dum Dum Of Kolkata, West Bengal, India**

**Shreya Chakraborty**

This study explores the socio-political dynamics of major political parties in North Dum Dum Municipality (NDDM), West Bengal, with a focus on their supporters, party systems, political symbolism, and the impact of social media on political culture. Using an anthropological approach, it combines fieldwork, interviews, case studies, and social media analysis to explore how political campaigns influence voter behaviour. Political parties in NDDM act as cohesive social units, fostering shared identities and community solidarity. Cultural symbols like the

hammer and sickle (CPI(M)), the lotus (BJP), and the flower and grass emblem (TMC) play a critical role in shaping party identities, mobilizing support, and legitimizing leadership. While traditional methods such as door-to-door canvassing and wall writings remain pivotal for voter engagement, particularly among CPI(M) and TMC supporters, social media has become essential for connecting with younger voters. The 2021 and 2024 West Bengal elections highlighted the strategic use of political slogans, visual campaigns, and grassroots mobilization in shaping public opinion and electoral outcomes. By blending traditional methods with digital strategies, political parties created a charged atmosphere that influenced political loyalties and voter behaviour, offering insights into evolving political engagement in North Dum Dum Municipality (NDDM) and broader electoral dynamics in India.

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## **People and Wild Animals: An Anthropological Study of The Dooars Region of West Bengal, India**

Somjit Dey

Dooars and the surrounding Terai region of North Bengal (From the far east, Sankosh River to the far west Teesta River) are home to various indigenous communities and wildlife. The area is surrounded by 5 National Parks (NP), 4 Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS), a Tiger Reserve, and 2 Forests. Due to frequent attacks of wild animals, mostly wild elephants, the peoples' lives became vulnerable. They also destroyed their agricultural land, and living houses, and also killed people. So, their lives became miserable day by day. Minimum effort has been taken from the Government level so the present paper focuses on the problems of humans living in surrounding areas of NPs and sanctuaries, and to find out the alternative way to secure their lives.

## **The Bansphor Community and their Indigenous Craft Tradition**

Sayantani Kundu

Bansphor, identified as a nomadic tribe in Bihar and Jharkhand and considered a sub-group of the Dom community, has historically been linked with the traditional occupation of bamboo crafting. The word Bansphor is a Hindi word, which is derived from two words '*bans*' (the bamboo) and '*phorna*' (making of hole or splitting). This community is known for its traditional occupation of bamboo work, which has been passed down through generations. This study primarily focuses on the indigenous practices of the Bansphor community of Bihar and Jharkhand. The research involved observation, group discussions, interviews, and photography within Bansphor households across multiple districts of Bihar and Jharkhand. The findings disclose a significant decline in the community's engagement with bamboo crafting, and their traditional occupation towards occupations such as scavenging, domestic work, driving, and daily wage labour. The younger generation predominantly seeks alternative livelihoods as they are offering immediate financial returns. While elderly members of the community continue to practice bamboo crafting, their engagement is largely seasonal, driven by local demand during festivals and marriage ceremonies. During these periods, artifacts crafted from bamboo are sold directly in local markets, providing additional income. They used to buy bamboo from the market and split those bamboos for knitting household items such as *supli*, *mouni*, *tokri*, *pankha*, *tokra*, *kulo*, *sup*, *dolu*, *dala*, *phuldali*, etc. The study highlights the gradual decline of bamboo crafting as a sustainable livelihood among the Bansphor.

## **A Comparative Study on the Life Cycle Rituals and Practices among the Muslim and Christian Communities of Sagar District, Madhya Pradesh.**

Megha Soni

**Introduction:** This research examines the life cycle ceremonies associated with birth, marriage, and death among the Muslim and Christian communities in Sagar district, Madhya Pradesh. It emphasizes the importance of these rituals in safeguarding cultural identity, embodying faith and tradition, and promoting socio-religious harmony within the region.

**Objective:** The primary objectives of this research are:- 1. To explore the birth, marriage, and death rituals of Muslim and Christian communities. 2. To analyze the cultural significance of these life cycle rituals. 3. To compare and contrast the similarities and differences between them. **Methodology:** The research employs a qualitative approach, including in-depth interviews with key informants, an interview schedule, probing sampling techniques, and group discussions, participant observations during rituals, and secondary data analysis.

**Result:** The results indicate that both communities possess unique life cycle rituals that are deeply rooted in their respective religious beliefs. The Muslim community adheres to Islamic customs, with practices such as Aqiqah, Nikah, and Janazah highlighting the importance of spirituality and community participation. In contrast, Christian rituals, including Baptism, weddings held in churches, and funerals, reflect a combination of Biblical teachings and regional adaptations that emerged during the colonial period. Although both communities demonstrate a strong commitment to their traditions, factors such as modernization, socio-economic changes, and increased interactions between communities are impacting these practices, resulting in subtle yet perceptible transformations.

### **Dress pattern as Culture Trait under Globalization: A comparative Study between Rural and Urban College Students of North 24 Parganas, West Bengal.**

Mandrita Sarkar

This study explores the dynamics of dress patterns as a cultural trait among rural and urban college students in North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, within the context of globalization. By employing a comparative approach, this research examines how traditional and modern dress patterns reflect and shape cultural identities, values, and norms among young adults in rural and urban areas. The study reveals that despite geographical differences, rural and urban college students exhibit almost similar dress patterns except some minor differences based on religion and economic status, influenced by globalization and the widespread availability of online shopping platforms. Social media also plays a crucial role. This homogenization of dress patterns challenges traditional notions of cultural identity and highlights the impact of globalization on local cultures. Through a mixed-methods approach combining ethnography, interviews, and observational methods, this study investigates how dress patterns influence cultural identity, social status, and relationships among rural and urban youth in North 24 Parganas, West Bengal. The findings contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of cultural change, identity formation, and globalization, offering insights into the ways in which young adults in rural and urban India navigate the complexities of traditional and modern cultural practices.

### **An Anthropological Study of Recurrent Flooding with Having Special Focus on Climate Change & Marginals**

Arunesh Kumar

Recurrent flooding refers to flooding which occurs annually and sometimes biannually as well. In most of the cases recurrent flood is caused by the overflow of riverine streams and it perpetuates a chronic cycle of poverty in affected areas. The present manuscript is an effort to understand, measure and analyze the impact of flooding on various margins of the society. The research is based on an anthropological study conducted in the marooned and meander flood zones of Deoria District, Uttar Pradesh, which is shaped by the course of the Rapti River. The

objective of the study was to understand, measure and analyze the impact of flooding on different margins of the society. The study employed various data collection methods, including interview schedules, semi-participant observation, structured and semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), audio-visual recordings, photography, library research, and secondary sources. The manuscript is written using transcription and descriptive methods, while quantitative data presented through tables, pie charts, and bar graphs. Key finding of the study is that the impact of flooding varies across different marginalized groups, particularly women, children, and the elderly. Socio-economically and ethnically vulnerable populations experience significantly greater suffering than more resilient groups within the flood-affected area. Moreover, changing weather patterns and the effects of climate change have made flooding increasingly unpredictable. This unpredictability has weakened the coping capacity and resilience of affected communities, as well as the effectiveness of local administrative responses.

### **The Role of Millets in Tribal Livelihoods: A Case Study of Millet Based Shifting Cultivation of Kurumbar community of Attappady, Kerala**

Mini.P.V.

The Kurumbar is one of the five Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of Kerala. They inhabit in the western Ghat area, Attappady taluk, Palakkad district. Traditionally the livelihood activities of Kurumbar are based on shifting cultivation, which they call as Panjakadu krishi, NTFP (Non Timber Forest Produce), animal husbandry, hunting and fishing activities. At the same time, they are expert gatherers and they collect different varieties of roots and tubers from the forests. The key features of shifting cultivation involve rotation of field at regular intervals for regeneration which involved the use of slash and burn techniques. A large variety of crops are grown under shifting cultivation. Among the Kurumbar, the predominant crops cultivated by them are millet and pulses. Millets have been a part of tribal cuisine for centuries, with various traditional dishes and recipes passed down through generations. Finger millet (*Eleusine Coracana*) is the staple food of the Kurumbar.

It has been observed that their livelihood pattern and health status have impacted due to a number of reasons like climate change, failure of shifting cultivation activities, dependence on public distribution system, introduction of community kitchen, etc. This paper is an attempt to examine the role of millet in the livelihood and health status of the Kurumbar and to identify the challenges and opportunities faced by them mainly on the millet based shifting cultivation. Methodological tools used here are interview and group discussions with community members and reference to secondary materials.

### **Navigating the Field: Education, Livelihood, and Cultural Identity Among the Konda Reddy Tribe of Andhra Pradesh**

Ravali Meduri

**Objectives:** This study examines the impact of formal education on the traditional livelihoods, socio-cultural practices, and everyday lives of the Konda Reddy tribe, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) in Andhra Pradesh. It explores how education influences livelihood choices, hygiene practices, and the negotiation between indigenous knowledge systems and modern educational frameworks. **Methodology:** The research is based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Busigudem, Rampachodavaram Mandal, East Godavari District. Using

participant observation and in-depth interviews, I engaged with members of the Konda Reddy community to document their narratives and perspectives. Reflexivity and positionality played a critical role in understanding the complexities of researcher-community interactions. **Results:** The study highlights the dual impact of education on the Konda Reddy community. Education expands livelihood opportunities beyond traditional occupations like Podu (shifting cultivation) and forest-based activities, enabling younger generations to explore diverse economic paths while still being deeply rooted in their cultural heritage. Growing up with traditional knowledge and skills, educated individuals are able to balance modern aspirations with ancestral wisdom, ensuring the continuity of their community's practices while embracing new opportunities. Educated individuals demonstrate increased awareness of hygiene and health practices; however, the lack of adequate infrastructure limits their ability to fully implement these changes. Furthermore, the research underscores the ethical and methodological complexities of fieldwork, emphasizing the need for reflexivity and a community-centered approach in documenting lived experiences.

### **Forest Dependency and Livelihood Dynamics: An Anthropological Insights from the Baiga Tribe of Chhattisgarh**

Subhandu Patra

Forest resources are crucial for sustaining the livelihoods of tribal communities across India. Their long-standing reliance on forest-based resources not only generates household income but also maintains a strong symbolic association with the socio-cultural life of tribal people. Chhattisgarh, one of the largest tribal-inhabited states with lush green tropical forests, exemplifies an exclusive man-nature relationship. The Baiga tribe, listed among the Primitive Tribal Vulnerable Tribal Groups, resides in forest fringe villages in central Chhattisgarh. Traditionally known as the 'Medicine Man,' the Baiga tribe extensively depends on nearby forests for their everyday livelihood. This study aims to examine the extent of the contemporary dependency of the Baiga tribe on forest resources to sustain their livelihood through an empirical analysis. Primary data for this paper was collected through intensive fieldwork in three villages situated in the deep tropical forest of the Gaurella-Pendra-Marwahi district, Chhattisgarh, using semi-structured questionnaires, direct observation, and formal interviews with informants. Key informants were selected purposely based on their understanding of forest resource extraction and usage. The study revealed that despite affirmative policies for tribal well-being, Baiga inhabitants in Chhattisgarh significantly depend on forest resources for income generation. The study analyses the Baiga's dependency on aspects such as food, disease treatment, income generation, and their symbolic relationship with the forest. The data shows that 90% of Baiga households are landless, making the forest their major source of livelihood. However, the concern remains that the transformation of traditional knowledge has yet to be properly documented.

### **Some Anthropological Aspects of Ethno-Medicinal Practices among the Santal Community in the Ajothya Hills Area, Purulia District of West Bengal**

Sohini Chatterjee

Ethno-medicine broadly refers to the traditional medical practices concerned with the cultural interpretation of health, diseases, and illness that address the health care process and healing

practices. India is inhabited by indigenous tribes with rich knowledge of wild flora and fauna to manage or cure diseases. Most rural people primarily depend upon medicinal plants found in their surrounding locality for the treatment of various diseases. This paper deals with the importance of the effect of ethno-medicine on tribal society, the time of use, and the type of medicinal plants used in the case of any disease. The present study shows that the medical plant is important in tribal health care. It also discusses the indigenous system of knowledge about the collection, preparation, and medicinal practices. A study was conducted among the Santal people in the village of Tahadungri, Purulia District, West Bengal. During this study, information was collected through interviews with the Santal tribal people of this village and Ojha, Kabiraj. The study reveals that different plant species were used by the Santal tribe to cure different diseases. While leaves were noted as the most used plant part, followed by roots, bark, the whole plant, and flowers. The efficiency of the medicine depends on the extent to which the healers properly followed the rules for the collection of medicinal plants, drug preparation, and application. Now, some people will learn this tradition for the future.

### **Effect of Patriliney and Matriliney on Children's Nutrition: A systematic review**

Shatasree Mazumdar

In India, the prevalence of malnutrition is very high among the tribal populations, especially so among the females. More than 40% of tribal children below five years suffer from stunting. United Nations System Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) reports that inequality against women enormously affects their ability to provide food and care for their family members, particularly their female children. Culture also affects who eats what and how much, by influencing intrahousehold food sharing. This review article aspired to define and critically analyze the contrasting effect of patriliney and matriliney on children's nutritional status. Relevant keywords were used to explore peer-reviewed articles using search engines like JSTOR, PMC, PubMed, and Semantic Scholar. Retrieved articles were rigorously filtered using specific exclusion and inclusion criteria. The review notes that most cultures often favour males, which harms female's access to food. Studies on the patrilineal tribes in India consistently reported that female children are the most vulnerable group in terms of undernutrition. Only in matrilineal tribes such as Khasi and Jaintia, are girls given equal or sometimes even better nutrition and consequently have a better nutritional status than boys. However, caregiver's characteristics (age, time demands, cultural beliefs), household food security, and socioeconomic aspects (employment, family income, level of poverty, type of dwelling, sanitary facilities, etc.) also have a significant influence on the nutritional status of children. Few studies worldwide have worked on matrilineal tribes but no other research articles explained how differently matriliney and patriliney affect the diet, lifestyle, and consequently the nutritional status of tribal children. This review is a suitable starting point to understand how different social structures affect public health differently. It can be utilized to construct more culturally fitted policies to eradicate undernutrition in children belonging to diverse cultural groups.

### **Stone Age Exploration Around Jhumpura Area, Keonjhar District, Odisha**

Pritizinda Behera & Subrat Kumar Naik

The paper deals with the Archaeological exploration conducted around Jhumpura area of Keonjhar District Odisha. The major aim of the study was to gather new information regarding the stone age culture of the region. It is believed that the stone age people mostly lived near the water bodies for their survival but time and again it has been disturbed due to natural and human activities. A thorough exploration of sites was conducted where nine numbers of sites belonging to various stone age cultures from Lower Paleolithic to Upper Paleolithic along with Mesolithic and Neolithic culture were reported. Earlier P. Mohanty (1983-1990) has reported 53 number of Mesolithic sites and also Prof. Ranjana Ray from Calcutta University has also reported some Neolithic and Chalcolithic remains from the District. During the survey it was found that the Mesolithic artifacts are dominating along with Paleolithic remains and the Neolithic also. The raw materials used were exploited from the nearby region and river bed and palaeo channel. During the whole process of survey, random collection was done, out of which 300 artefacts of different stone age culture were recovered. Thus, the findings indicate that the prehistoric person have also dominated the district and the neighbouring district of Mayurbhanj and has helped to establish the presence of palaeo human activities in the northern part of the State Odisha.

### **Crime Scene Complexity: The Need for Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Forensic Anthropology**

Shaina Parveen & Tamal Dutta

Forensic Anthropology, a sub-discipline of biological anthropology over the years has yielded a plethora of research work in developing and enhancing its methodologies. While many of these have immensely helped fasten the medicolegal procedures for investigation and identification, it still has some areas of opportunities which can be used by someone with greater knowledge of the discipline to alter the evidences or mislead the investigation. In recent times, it has been observed that many try to replicate murder scenes as shown in the various media platforms and several cases have not come to any conclusion due to scanty or unavailable evidences, one such being the very recent case at R.G. Kar in Kolkata. Furthermore, numerous methodologies have a number of limitations such as the fingerprints which might not be present more than four days in warm temperatures, or the absence of any pathological symptom to the skeleton or absence of marks of type of force used. Such peculiar events also bring light towards the existing law force system - whether or not there are such laws regarding tampered or limited evidences and the steps taken for it. Triangulation, a methodology of socio-cultural anthropology used during fieldwork to enhance the validity of the findings can be an effective way of looking at a crime scene in various other ways not known to all, by employing use of more techniques, involvement of more people and repetition of the same methods. This article is an epiphany of the probable misuses of the methodologies of the discipline and an attempt at understanding the same, shedding light on the importance in not only developing new techniques but to strengthen the existing methodologies, by the incorporation of techniques of other disciplines of anthropology.

### **Burnout in Ivory Tower: Understanding Student Stress**

Anshuman Mishra

This study is a qualitative analysis of stress experienced and its manifestations by first-year MBA students of one of the premier business institutes in India. It attempts to probe deeper into the different meanings and myriad struggles students face because of many factors. The work is based on seven in-depth interviews of first-year MBA students who have shared their lived experiences in the context of rigorous academic and external expectations. The transcript thus obtained has gone through the three stages of coding- open, axial, and selective- from which four broad themes have been identified and elaborated in the section “Findings & Discussion.” The final themes are- high-performing context, navigating uncertainty, time poverty, and the new ecosystem. Various theoretical frameworks have assisted in interpreting qualitative data obtained from the semi-structured interviews. One of the main theoretical frameworks used extensively in this work is Nichter’s Idioms of Distress, which is essential to capture students’ struggles and subjective manifestations of stress.

### **Tracing the journey of depression: A case-study from rural Haryana**

Priyanka Choudhary, Vineet Chaudhary, Mamta Sood, Nitish Mondal & Suniti Yadav

Despite the growing awareness regarding mental health issues, there is a casual attitude among the community members towards its serious implications, particularly in the rural context. The role of life events in the development of mental health and the significance of social support systems are inadequately addressed. The present study involves a case-study of a 32-year-old unmarried sports coach from rural Haryana. The study reflects upon his journey with a series of life events that contributed towards the onset and persistence of depression in his life. The first two life events highlight a constant need for companionship and attachment issues following experiences of being ghosted and left alone. The other two life events indicate experiences of grief and regret after the loss of near ones. These events with each event amplifying the other have led to depressive thoughts in his mind. The findings connect individual experiences of grief, loneliness, and social exclusion with broader cultural dynamics that often show a lack of acceptance of the seriousness of this issue. This leads to secrecy and silence around mental health, especially among males. But the main argument lies in the fact that he did not ask for help in the initial stage where he had identified the symptoms as present in his aunt 5 years back. His hesitation to seek help for mental health may be rooted in fear of being unheard, judged, or ignored. Therefore, this case study raises an important question for further exploration: Why do people fear?

### **वैश्विक मानसिक स्वास्थ्य पर एक मानव वैज्ञानिक अध्ययन**

प्रशांत कुमार(शोध छात्र)

**सार:** मानसिक स्वास्थ्य समग्र कल्याण का एक महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा है, जिसमें भावनात्मक, मनोवैज्ञानिक और सामाजिक पहलू शामिल होते हैं, जो यह निर्धारित करते हैं कि व्यक्ति कैसे सोचते हैं, महसूस करते हैं और व्यवहार करते हैं। यह इस बात में प्रमुख भूमिका निभाता है कि लोग तनाव से कैसे निपटते हैं, दूसरों के साथ कैसे संबंध बनाते हैं, और अपने दैनिक जीवन में निर्णय कैसे लेते हैं। हाल के वर्षों में मानसिक स्वास्थ्य का महत्व बढ़ती मान्यता प्राप्त कर रहा है क्योंकि इसका व्यक्तिगत और सामाजिक कार्यप्रणाली पर गहरा प्रभाव पड़ता है। यह सार मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के बहुआयामी स्वरूप का विश्लेषण करता है, जिसमें आनुवंशिक प्रवृत्ति, पर्यावरणीय प्रभाव और सामाजिक निर्धारक जैसे कारक शामिल हैं। इसमें सामान्य मानसिक स्वास्थ्य विकारों जैसे कि चिंता, अवसाद,

बाइपोलर डिसऑर्डर और सिज़ोफ्रेनिया पर चर्चा की गई है, और शुरुआती निदान और हस्तक्षेप की आवश्यकता पर जोर दिया गया है। इसके अलावा, यह मानसिक रोगों से जुड़े कलंक की समस्या पर प्रकाश डालता है, जो अक्सर व्यक्तियों को सहायता लेने से रोकता है, और ऐसे सहायक वातावरण बनाने की वकालत करता है जो मानसिक कल्याण को प्राथमिकता देते हैं। मानसिक स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं, नीति हस्तक्षेपों और सामुदायिक पहलों की भूमिका पर भी चर्चा की गई है, जो मानसिक स्वास्थ्य को बढ़ावा देते हैं। साथ ही, आत्म-देखभाल, माइंडफुलनेस और लचीलापन बढ़ाने वाले अभ्यासों के महत्व को रेखांकित किया गया है। यह सार मानसिक स्वास्थ्य पेशेवरों द्वारा सामना की जाने वाली चुनौतियों को भी उजागर करता है, जिसमें संसाधनों की कमी, सांस्कृतिक बाधाएं, और वैश्विक स्तर पर मानसिक स्वास्थ्य देखभाल की बढ़ती मांग शामिल है।

अंत में, यह सार मानसिक स्वास्थ्य को सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य ढांचे में एकीकृत करने, जागरूकता बढ़ाने और मानसिक स्वास्थ्य संसाधनों तक समान पहुंच को बढ़ावा देने की आवश्यकता पर बल देता है। मानसिक स्वास्थ्य की जटिलताओं को समझकर, समाज व्यक्तियों को एक संतोषजनक जीवन जीने और एक स्वस्थ और अधिक समावेशी दुनिया में योगदान करने के लिए सशक्त बना सकते हैं।

### **Scroll, Tap and Struggle: An ethnographic study on smartphone addiction and its impact on the mental health of the youth.**

Mrigango Biswas

The dependency on smartphone in daily life has been found to have several unwanted consequences on the mental health and everyday functioning of its users, becoming a growing concern worldwide. However, there has not been a consistent agreement on the categorization and diagnosis of smartphone addiction as a form of mental health disorder, among the medical researchers and professionals. Often described as forms of behaviour associated with compulsive and problematic smartphone use, its effects are most commonly observed among the youth and young adults. Building on this, the ethnographic study attempts to discuss 'excessive smartphone use' as a form of addiction among the youth in Kangra, primarily focusing on dependency for daily functioning and the psychological impact of their absence among the participants. The paper uses a mixed methods approach using the Smartphone Addiction Scale (SAS) for collecting quantitative data and compliments it with qualitative data on the lived experiences of 'excessive smartphone use' from two FGDs and In-depth interviews. The findings are based on the six parameters of the (SAS) and imply towards a relationship of smartphone dependency in everyday activity with experiences of emotional distress, feelings of inconvenience and issues with self-efficacy in its absence. Additionally, the paper highlights the role played by excessive use of smartphones in disrupting everyday functioning and daily routines of its users. By situating smartphone addiction in Anthropological discourse, the paper attempts to discuss their role as materialities that structure time and alter modes of interaction with the physical world.

### **Understanding the Experiences, Perceptions, and Challenges of Women with Common Mental Disorders (CMD) in the District Health Centre, Rewari, Haryana.**

Pratik Verma, Vineet Chaudhary, Mamta Sood, Nitish Mondal & Suniti Yadav

**Background:** Common Mental Disorders (CMD) are highly prevalent among women across all age groups, yet they often remain underdiagnosed and untreated. Various factors, including lack of awareness, societal stigma, and the burden of multiple roles, contribute to increased

stress levels and hinder access to mental healthcare. Therefore, this study aims to explore the experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by women with CMD.

**Methodology:** A qualitative study was conducted using in-depth semi-structured interviews with five female patients seeking treatment for CMD at the District Health Centre (DHC) in Rewari, Haryana. The collected qualitative data were transcribed, and key themes were identified for further analysis to gain deeper insights.

**Findings:** Women experiences of CMD were deeply influenced by their social environments, often expressed through culturally embedded narratives of physical and emotional distress. For instance, one woman described intense guilt over her perceived failure to manage multiple roles, leading to suicidal thoughts. Education status emerged as a crucial factor in the early recognition and treatment of CMD, as evidenced by its positive impact on two participants. In contrast, a non-educated participant attributed her mental distress to black magic, highlighting the role of cultural beliefs in shaping perceptions of mental health and illness. Nine themes resulted from the interviews including, interpretation of CMD, unawareness, identification of CMD, causes of CMD, factor influencing diagnosis, troubles with patients' adherence to medication, role of family, problems with health services and emotional burden of multiple role performance. **Conclusion:** Raising awareness through public education and targeted interventions, coupled with identification of early detection can significantly address the burden of depression in women. Further, comprehensive management strategies targeting awareness may help in reducing the stigma around CMD in women.

### **Youth Perception towards Common Mental disorders (CMDs): A Community Based Study from Rewari District, Haryana**

Mudit Mukul Dwivedi, Vineet Chaudhary, Mamta Sood, Nitish Mondal & Suniti Yadav

**Background:** Common Mental disorders (CMDs) such as stress, anxiety, and depression, are a major public health concern. Though CMDs are highly prevalent in males, their understanding and perception towards this varies due to various biological, social and cultural factors. This study has tried to identify the perceptions of male community members on CMDs in a rural setting, focusing on their understanding, coping mechanisms, and attitudes towards treatment. **Methodology:** A focus group discussion was conducted among 6 male participants in the age group 18-39 years from a rural community in Rewari district, Haryana. Open-ended questions were used to understand their perception and awareness on mental health. Themes were identified from the discussion.

**Results:** Participants perceived stress as a short-term and depression as more severe and long-lasting and these were often linked to life events such as academic pressures during childhood, unfulfillment of social responsibilities such as unemployment, marriage and family responsibilities. In some cases, severe depression is often accompanied by social stigma and labelled as "madness" (*pagalpan*). Loneliness was another common factor identified from the discussion leading to stress and depression especially in older adults. The perception of males on the coping strategies for CMDs were peer interactions, such as gathering with friends, playing cards, and informal discussions for their own group, while they believed women in the community relied more on spiritual practices, like visiting temples and reciting bhajans. Substance use, particularly consuming alcohol with peers, was mentioned as a temporary stress

reliever. Although some emphasis was given to medical treatment but due to limited awareness, preference was given to informal approaches over professional help.

**Conclusion:** The study highlights limited awareness regarding CMDs among male community members and social stigma which contribute to a preference for informal coping mechanisms over medical treatment. The findings suggest a need for mental health interventions and community-based awareness programs to encourage early recognition and professional help-seeking and also to reduce social stigma in the community.

### **Menstrual Hygienic Practices among Indian Adolescent Girls: A Review**

Swapnashree Das & Priyanka Das

**Introduction:** Adolescent girls' menstrual hygiene habits in low- and middle-income countries are serious public health concerns. In India, usage of sanitary practices during their menstrual cycle has improved over the last ten years, but there is still a long way to go. Menstruation usually happens once a month during the reproductive years, except during pregnancy. Menstruation involves a complex interplay of hormones including estrogen and progesterone. Good hygiene practices, such as the use of sanitary pads and adequate washing of the genital areas are essential during menstruation. Women and adolescent girls of reproductive age need access to clean and soft absorbent sanitary products, which in the long run will protect their health from various infectious diseases. Previous studies show that insufficient knowledge and lack of awareness were the main reasons for reproductive problems, like vaginal infection, reproductive tract infection, and bacterial vaginosis. The present review is conducted to explore the existing literature on menstrual hygiene practices among adolescent girls, specifically in India.

**Methodology:** The literature was searched from the database which was published between 2014 to 2024, focusing on menstrual hygiene practices and menstrual disorders among adolescent girls. Published literature was collected by using search engines like PubMed Central, ResearchGate, Google Scholar, PLOS ONE, and BMC. Some combinations of keywords like menstruation, hygiene, menstrual disorder, adolescent, and Indian were used for searching the literature. Only cross-sectional and community-based studies were incorporated. As exclusion criteria, the review study, the book chapter, the short article, and the letter to the editors were eliminated.

**Conclusion:** Menstruation is a natural and essential aspect of human biology. Understanding the physiological process characteristics and importance of menstruation can help promote menstrual health. The adolescent girls still didn't exercise proper hygiene throughout their periods. Emphasis on safe hygiene practices is crucial for improving their menstrual health and quality of life.

### **Menstrual experience, problems and Attitude of the women and adolescent girls: A study among the Santal community of Jagannathpur Village of Mayurbhanj District, Odisha**

Sangeeta Nayak

Menstruation is a natural biological process, yet it remains a topic of stigma and limited awareness in many societies. This study explores the menstrual experiences, problems, and attitudes of women and adolescent girls, focusing on their perceptions, challenges, and coping mechanisms. The research highlights common menstrual issues such as dysmenorrhea, heavy

bleeding, irregular cycles, and infections, which often go unaddressed due to cultural taboos, lack of education, and limited access to menstrual hygiene products. Adolescent girls, in particular, face significant difficulties due to misinformation, embarrassment, and inadequate facilities in schools, which can impact their education and mental well-being. Attitudes towards menstruation vary widely, influenced by cultural beliefs, family dynamics, and societal norms. In many communities, menstruation is still considered impure, leading to restrictions on daily activities and social participation. Such negative perceptions contribute to feelings of shame and secrecy among menstruators. However, increasing awareness through education, open discussions, and improved menstrual hygiene management has led to positive shifts in attitudes. Women and girls with better knowledge and access to menstrual products report higher confidence and improved menstrual experiences. The study underscores the need for comprehensive menstrual health education, affordable sanitary products, and supportive policies to address menstrual-related challenges. Efforts to normalize menstruation through school curriculums, community programs, and media campaigns can help dismantle stigma and promote menstrual equity. Understanding women's and adolescent girls' menstrual experiences is crucial in fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment. By addressing menstrual health holistically, societies can empower women and girls, improve their quality of life, and contribute to gender equality.

### **Multispecies Ethnography of Sundarbans- A known, but ignored context of human-animal interaction in the mangroves**

AbhishekBhowmick

**Background:** Ethnography as per bio-social parameters is particularly a human centric approach with different subjects. But what about other forms of life, and interactions with them established by humans? It is only human beings across any part of the world, where any specific ethnic group(s) having interaction with any particular non-human species, even endemic only to one particular region; the entire human societies across the world will come to know of it in the present day. The once cryptic Okapi; native to the Central African tropical forests, can now be found in zoos any part of the world. Axolotl, the rarest of Salamander, whose only natural habitat is specific a freshwater marshland of Mexico is now globally known. Human societies have always been in interaction with every animal or plant species discovered anywhere so far. Anywhere in the world, interaction of indigenous or non-local human beings with regionally common or distinctly different sets of any plant or animal species call for *Multispecies ethnography*. This presentation aims to portray human-animal interaction through catastrophic consequences that non-human species are subjected to. My concern is on the depleting endemic fauna of mangroves of *Sundarbans*.

**Objectives:** 1) Highlighting the overall vulnerability of the mangrove fauna 2) Concerns among local people on both conflict & conservation 3) Particular emphasis on the marine biodiversity with contrast to other marine environments

**Methodology(s):** Comprising direct interviews with knowledgeable local & working resource persons, on field specimen/instance-based photographs, related customs; secondary inputs.

**Conclusion:** 1) Level of awareness & concerns differ as per perspective & knowledge 2) Vulnerability is evident & varies as per interaction & importance of both species & habitats 3) Stringent policies & governance for overall climate, ecosystem & biodiversity.

## From Early Detection to Effective Treatment: Mental Health Care Continuum of Common Mental Disorders in Haryana, India.

Suniti Yadav, Pratik Verma, Priyanka Chaudhary & Mamta Sood

**Background:** Early identification and management of Common Mental Disorders (CMD) can lead to significant health benefits. CMD, including stress, anxiety, and depression, impact individuals across all stages of life, underscoring the urgent need for timely intervention to improve health outcomes. This study aims to explore the strategies employed by healthcare providers at Health Care Centers in Haryana, India. It focuses on the Mental Health Care Continuum comprising Screening, Diagnosis, and Management for the treatment of CMD among healthcare providers.

**Methodology:** A qualitative study was conducted using semi-structured in-depth interviews with one Clinical Psychologist and five general physician from the District Health Centre (DHC) and Community Health Centre (CHC) in the selected district of Haryana. The collected qualitative data were transcribed, and key themes were identified for further analysis to gain deeper insights into the screening, diagnosis, and management of Common Mental Disorders (CMD). **Findings:** Most non-specialist doctors face significant challenges in accurately identifying CMD, primarily due to the absence of standardized screening tools and limited awareness for initial diagnosis, especially among Primary Healthcare Practitioners. The study highlights several critical barriers, including inadequate resources for quality mental healthcare services, financial constraints, lack of integration with primary healthcare systems, and a severe shortage of CMD specialists across the district. Additionally, the insufficient training of general physicians in PHCs and CHCs further exacerbates challenges in Mental Health Care Continuum for CMD patients, making the situation critically alarming.

**Conclusion:** Our findings emphasize the need for effective training of non-specialist in screening and diagnosing CMD at the primary level to strengthen the health system and effective implementation of National and District Mental Health Program.

## Advancing Forensic Science: Mid-Phalangeal Hair as a Tool for Sex Determination through Medullary and Cuticular Analysis

Sahana Datta & Arup Ratan Bandyopadhyay

Sex determination is crucial in forensic investigations, especially in cases involving unidentified remains. While DNA analysis is the standard method for sex identification, it is not always feasible due to sample degradation or insufficient quantity. Mid-phalangeal hair, a commonly found forensic sample, has distinct structural features that could potentially aid in sex determination. This study investigates the morphological characteristics of mid-phalangeal hair, particularly medullary and cuticular patterns, to explore their forensic applicability. The aim of this study was to examine the medullary and cuticular variations in mid-phalangeal hair samples from males and females within the Bengalee population and to assess their reliability in sex determination. The analysis revealed significant sex-based differences in mid-phalangeal hair. Male samples exhibited a fragmented medulla and a smooth cuticle with an imbricate scaling pattern. In contrast, female samples generally lacked a medulla and displayed a spinous scaling pattern. Statistical analysis confirmed these differences to be significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that medullary and cuticular patterns can reliably distinguish male from female mid-

phalangeal hair. This study demonstrates that mid-phalangeal hair analysis, based on medullary and cuticular characteristics, can be a valuable tool for sex determination in forensic contexts. The significant morphological differences between male and female hair support its potential as an auxiliary method in cases where DNA analysis is not viable. The findings contribute to the advancement of forensic identification techniques and provide a cost-effective, non-invasive alternative for sex identification in criminal investigations and the identification of human remains.

### **Obstetric Health Care Practices, Fertility and Nutritional Status of the Hill Kharia Women: A Study among a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group of Mayurbhanj, Odisha**

Rachita Mohanta, Priyanka Das & Monali Goswami

**Introduction:** Human fertility is responsible for the biological replacement and maintenance of the human species. The quality of obstetric health care practices and nutritional status of the women has been a growing concern in recent years to achieve the sustainable development goal. Therefore, the present study is an endeavor to understand the obstetric health care practices, fertility and nutritional status of the Hill Kharia women, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Population of Mayurbhanj, Odisha, India.

**Materials and Methods:** A total of 160 women aged 15 to 49 years were included in the present study. A pre-structured schedule was used to collect data on obstetric health care practices and fertility performance. All Anthropometric measures were recorded using the standard protocol. The data was analyzed by SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) version 20.

**Results:** The present study revealed that the mean conception rate is 2.55, mean live birth rate is 2.43, and mean reproductive wastage rate is 0.12. The obstetric health care services unveil that 74.38 percent of women receive antenatal care, tetanus toxoid at least once, and Iron and Folic Acid (IFA) tablets. Maximum participants delivered in the hospital, and only 33.1% delivered at home mostly belonging to the older age group. It was also observed that 65% of mothers had breastfed their child within 2 hours and 94.3% of the participants breastfed their child for a period of 24 months and 77.1% of children were immunized. The mean Body Mass Index (BMI) of the Hill Kharia women was found to be  $17.7 \pm 2.20$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>. The study reflects that the extend of undernutrition among the females (64.4%) was very high, which indicates that the Hill Kharia Women are under serious nutritional stress.

**Conclusion:** Fertility performance is swayed by several socio-cultural norms and practices and nutritional status of the women. Hence, immediate appropriate nutritional intervention programs are needed for implementation and operation.

### **Understanding the Determinants of Maternal Mortality in Assam, India: Beyond the Three-Delay Model**

Shromona Dhara

**Background:** Despite global progress in maternal health, India shows regional disparities in maternal mortality ratios (MMR). For instance, the state of Assam reports the highest MMR (195), which is more than twice the national average.

**Objectives:** The study aimed to (1) examine the essential and underlying causes of maternal deaths (MD) (2) analyse the patterns of delay in maternal healthcare seeking, extending beyond the traditional three-delay model (3DM).

**Methodology:** The study was conducted in three districts of Assam namely Dhubri, Tinsukia, and Hailakandi. Using a multi-tiered, data-driven approach, one block from each district and 10 peripheral units were selected based on obstetric vulnerabilities. Semi-structured interviews and case studies were conducted on close relatives and/or neighbours of the deceased mothers, who died within six years prior to the date of the interview. Additionally, Frontline workers (FLW) and medical professionals associated with the catchment areas were also interviewed. The causes of death of the MD were identified following the 'Operational guidelines of maternal near-miss review' and 'Classification of dual causes of death'. The thematic analysis was performed using Atlas.ti.

**Results:** Teenage pregnancy, short birth intervals, and grand multigravidity were the primary risk factors, with haemorrhage, eclampsia, and sepsis as leading causes of death. Difficult geographic terrain, restricted outreach of FLWs, inadequate healthcare infrastructure, and sociocultural construction substantially impacted maternal care utilization. In contrast to 3DM, the study revealed four phases of delay in maternal care: decision-delay at home, transportation challenges, treatment delays after first medical contact, and an additionally identified fourth phase where families refused referrals to distant facilities due to logistical and financial constraints.

**Conclusion:** The vulnerability of maternal health in Assam could be explained by a multidimensional complex interactive model with individual, social, geographic, and systemic barriers. The findings highlight the importance for early diagnosis, quality of care, and culturally sensitive programs to improve maternal health outcome.

## Evolution Journey of Man from Cradle land of Africa to Eurasia with special focus on Homo Narmadensis

Anil Kumar Shrivastava

A comprehensive display of replicas on Human Evolution highlighting Human Journey from cradle land of Africa to Eurasia at large with principle focus on "CEREBRAL RUBICON" of Narmada Homo Cranium which, obtained updated status from Homo erectus to Early Archaic sapiens of Indian Sub continent have been highlighted. This only Homo Cranium of Indian Sub Continent has been defined of having vibrant Evolutionary Puzzle and may have probable role in the ancestry of modern man of Eurasia and Indian. Further projections have been made on the Eurasian foot prints of Archaic populations with special reference to Neanderthals and Denisovans linking Ancient South Asian Ancestry as reveal from molecular foot prints on recent population admixture in India. Under, Evolutionary trajectories along with the appearance of multiple or single transitions across 5 million years of Human lineage covering Early to Late Australopithecus, Homo erectus, Homo habilis, Homo nenderthals, Denisovans and the Archaic, Homo phylogeny, the panels under this exhibition will put focus extensively on much neglected Homo cranium of Homo narmadadensis the Narmada Man on all possible dimensions. Apart from hard evidence of Narmada Homo cranium (Right Calvarium) as

obtained from the upper part of gravel conglomerated bed, assemblage of a complete skull of bovid, Bos, Stagodom and numerous other middle Paleolithic fauna and hard axe, side scrapers, points with bifacial (Foliate) under Acheulean traditions have been focused as lithic cultural traditions from Africa to India.

### **The Representations of Dalits in Contemporary Cinema: An Inter-Textual Study of Selected Indian Movies as Reflection of Silenced Socio-Historical Underpinnings of Prevailing Caste System**

Ayantika Bag

Cinema as an art form records the dramatic changes in the way we see the world. Commodifying it within the debatable sphere of consumption and modernity, academic discussions revolving around the study of cinemas subsume to describe their role in influencing our perceptions through intersectionality between the aesthetics of art and social reality. Characteristically described as a cultural product and form of mass entertainment in Indian context, Hindi/Bollywood film industry and regional film industry shows explicit differences in the way lower caste (i.e., Dalits) issues are represented and conceptualized within the purview of caste and/or anti-caste discourses of these industries. Considering this, the present study attempts to explore the diversified versions of Dalit consciousness as distinctively represented in different categories of Indian cinemas (i.e., in correspondence to above-mentioned film industries), pertaining to questions of caste identities (especially Dalits), challenges of lower castes, caste indifference, hegemonic dominances of upper caste and anti-caste movements. Few celebrated Hindi, Tamil and Marathi films have been purposively selected, owing to internet availability and personalized interests and subsequently, examined in an inter-textual manner through repeated and regular ‘back-and-forth engagement’ between ‘*watching*’ or ‘*immersed participation and embodied learning of lived performances*’ of each film and ‘*reading*’ the critical literature of concerned cinemas—thereby, constructing the required analytical space for the study. Emergent thematic structure through narrative of these films, highlights the suppressed Dalit voices and representation of consciousness through distinctive screenplay, production, and ideologies, based on filmmakers’ subjectivities and respective caste identities, finally providing instances for emancipation, anti-caste discourses and casteless progressive consciousness

### **Groundwater Potential and WASH Inequities: A Comparative Study of Tribal Village Communities in Jhargram District**

Santu Jana1 & Dipak K Midya

Access to sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services is essential for public health and socio-economic advancement, particularly among the marginalized communities of Jhargram district, West Bengal. But the accessibility and excellence of these services are frequently affected by groundwater potentiality. This study examines the differences in WASH challenges among tribal communities between the villages situated in the regions with high and low groundwater potential zones (GWPZ), and the disparities in WASH access and infrastructure. The objective of this investigation is to identify specific groundwater potential zones and to assess and compare the sanitation infrastructure and its usage pattern in tribal villages across these zones. By employing a blend of geospatial methods (AHP Techniques), field surveys, and stakeholder interviews, the study uncovers notable differences in WASH

access and sustainability across various zones encountered by tribal communities. In regions with significant groundwater potential, challenges like contamination, excessive depletion, and aquifer degradation arise from improper use and insufficient regulation. On the other hand, regions with limited potential face significant challenges related to severe water scarcity, irregular distribution, and dependence on alternative sources, which complicates the pursuit of equitable WASH access outcomes for tribal populations. The results point out the necessity for specific strategies to improve WASH services, considering the distinct challenges presented by differing groundwater availability in tribal areas. This study adds to the wider conversation on sustainable WASH interventions equity among marginalized groups of Jhargram district, highlighting the essential importance of groundwater potential in developing fair and effective solutions.

### **Traditional Wisdom for a Sustainable Future: Indigenous Practices in Kerala's Tribal Communities**

Suresh K P

Indigenous knowledge systems play a vital role in sustainable development by offering time-tested, eco-friendly, and resource-efficient practices.

Objectives of the Study:

- **To** document the traditional practices and wisdom of Kerala's tribal communities, including agriculture, medicine, food, handicrafts, and ecological knowledge.
- To evaluate the role of Indigenous practices in promoting sustainable livelihoods and preserving biodiversity within tribal communities.
- To identify strategies for safeguarding tribal knowledge systems against cultural erosion and external influences.
- To explore ways to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into sustainable development policies and practices, ensuring environmental conservation and economic empowerment.

The data was collected through interviews, non-participant observations, and case studies from selected tribal groups in the region using an anthropological research approach. The findings reveal that traditional knowledge preserves biodiversity and promotes resilience to climate change. Key practices, such as agricultural methods, biodiversity conservation, and healing practices, demonstrate the potential of Indigenous knowledge to complement modern sustainable development strategies. This research underscores the need to integrate tribal wisdom into policymaking and development programs, ensuring the preservation of cultural heritage while addressing contemporary environmental challenges. The study concludes that Indigenous Knowledge can be a cornerstone of sustainable development when adequately supported and integrated. Key outcomes include recommendations for preserving traditional practices through documentation, creating value chains for tribal products, and fostering eco-tourism to promote cultural heritage. Collaborative research with scientific institutions to validate tribal medicine and ecological practices is suggested to enhance community resilience.

### **Migration, Identity and Marginality: A Study of Assam's Tea Tribes**

Amisha L Phukan

Embarking on a journey through time and struggle, this paper drawing from previous literature explores the migration journeys of Assam's Tea Tribes. This study aims to critically analyze the socio-historical trajectory and the prevailing conditions of the Assam Tea Tribes focusing on their migration, identity formation, socio-economic marginalization and the impact of various policies on their development. The Tea plantation workers of Assam, also known as the Tea tribes constitute the workforce of Assam's largest industry- the tea industry. The Tea industry in Assam has profoundly shaped the region's social, economic, and political landscape. The influx of laborers from various parts of India, motivated by hardship and the lure improved prospects, has resulted in a distinctive demographic blend within Assam's Tea estates. However, its growth has been marred by ongoing labor issues that continue to affect them and their families. The grim realities faced by plantation workers—such as inadequate living conditions, exploitation, and meager wages—have entrenched cycles of poverty for these individuals and their families. Educational disparities within the tea plantation worker communities can be traced back to colonial policies that restricted access to education, perpetuating generational cycles of poverty. According to the 2011 census, the percentage literate among the tea garden laborers are much lower in comparison to the state percentage. Literacy level among the community is only 46%, one of the lowest against Assam's 72% overall literacy rate. Even though the industry plays a crucial role in the economy and provides significant employment, deep-rooted problems like low educational levels and high school dropout rates among the children of workers impede the community's progress. Therefore, the study intend to explore how colonial policies led to the displacement of the community and the shifting nature of labour conditions, and to highlight the socio-economic difficulties the community continues to face owing to systematic deprivation. Additionally, it aims to evaluate the government policies implemented for their development.

### **Contested Identity and Crippled Development: Konda Reddy in the Border Regions in Malkangiri, Odisha**

Rajakishor Mahana, Ratnakar Palei, Badal Dhangdamajhiand & Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo

The classification of tribal communities in India has long been a contested terrain, shaped by historical exclusions, administrative arbitrariness, and political inertia. As of 2024, 139 communities in Odisha—despite exhibiting distinct socio-cultural and economic characteristics of tribal groups—remain denied Scheduled Tribe (ST) status and are instead classified under categories such as General, Other Backward Classes (OBC), Socially and Economically Backward Classes (SEBC), and even Denotified Tribes. Consequently, they remain excluded from constitutional protections, affirmative action policies, and welfare benefits meant for STs. The recent inclusion of 32 communities (with 44 subsets/synonyms) in the existing ST list and two new communities, including Konda Reddy, as of 20 February 2024, marks a significant yet insufficient step toward rectifying these exclusions. This paper critically examines the prolonged struggle for ST recognition through the case of the Konda Reddy community in Malkangiri district, Odisha. Employing a mixed-method approach, the study consisting of 100 Konda Reddy sample households, revealed that approximately 30,000 Konda Reddy people continue to endure systematic denial of constitutional rights despite their sustained demands for ST status over the last 25 years. The belated recognition of Konda Reddy

underscores the structural barriers that many tribal communities face in their quest for legal acknowledgment. Beyond their formal inclusion in the ST list, critical inconsistencies in implementation persist—where even within a single family, one sibling may receive ST recognition while another remains excluded. By situating the Konda Reddy case within the broader framework of tribal marginalization in India, this paper interrogates the epistemic violence of state classifications, the exclusionary nature of governance, and the implications of delayed recognition for socio-economic development. The study argues that the struggle of the Konda Reddy is emblematic of a larger crisis affecting numerous unrecognized tribal groups in Odisha and beyond. Addressing these exclusions requires a fundamental rethinking of tribal recognition criteria, a more transparent and accountable process, and proactive state intervention to uphold the democratic rights and development of indigenous communities.

### **Redefining Historical Narratives: The case for Multidisciplinary research for the study of 'Untouchables Castes' in India**

Priyadarshini. S

The early history of untouchable communities in India has long been shaped by traditional methodologies that primarily rely on exposition of ancient texts like the vedic and puranic literature, *dharmashastras* (religious law texts), and *smritis*. These texts, while essential for understanding the ideological framework of caste, often present a one-sided narrative that overlooks the complexity of lived experiences of marginalized groups. The prescriptive nature of these texts also tends to abstract caste into a rigid, unchanging system, rather than acknowledging its fluidity and regional variations over time. By focusing exclusively on these sources, historians have inadvertently reproduced the hegemonic narratives that perpetuate the marginalization of untouchables. This paper aims to challenge the limitations of such approaches by proposing a multidisciplinary methodology that combines disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology, and Indology to create a more inclusive and comprehensive history of untouchable communities. The objective of this research is to explore how integrating diverse methodologies can illuminate aspects of caste history that traditional textual studies obscure. The methodology involves an interdisciplinary review of primary and secondary sources, combining textual analysis with ethnographic studies, archaeological findings, and historical interpretations. By examining these varied data sources, the paper highlights the gaps in existing scholarship that have hindered a fuller understanding of untouchable communities. The results of this study suggests that a combined approach offers a richer, more nuanced understanding of caste history, revealing the agency, resistance, and resilience of untouchable communities throughout Indian history. Such a framework can help to challenge or validate the existing paradigms while also offering new perspectives. Future historical trends should move beyond the textual focus and engage with a wider range of sources, including oral histories, archaeological remains, and ethnographic studies, to construct a more inclusive history of caste.

### **Entangled in Debt: Financial Exclusion, Stigma, and the Reproduction of Sex Work in Chaturbhujsthan**

Baby Kumari

This study investigates the intricate relationship between debt and sex work in Chaturbhujsthan, focusing on how financial exclusion and socio-cultural stigmatization perpetuate a cycle of sexual exploitation. By exploring debt as a structural force, the research uncovers the ways in which economic marginalization and societal norms intersect to reproduce sex work, particularly through the commodification of young girls. Conducted between August 2024 and October 2024, the research utilizes ethnographic documentation and in-depth interviews to capture the lived experiences of female sex workers (FSWs). The qualitative data sheds light on their financial struggles, reliance on informal moneylenders, and the systemic barriers posed by societal stigma and documentation crises. Findings reveal that debt, while a survival mechanism, serves as a tool of systemic oppression. Financial exclusion from formal institutions forces sex workers to depend on informal moneylenders, who exploit their vulnerabilities through exorbitant interest rates and sexual demands. The study highlights how young girls are often used as collateral, reinforcing gendered norms and perpetuating generational cycles of exploitation. The societal stigma surrounding sex work and the lack of access to formal documentation further exacerbate these women's financial and social marginalization. The research concludes that addressing the financial vulnerabilities of sex workers requires an inclusive, context-sensitive approach. Existing microfinance and abolitionist interventions often fail to account for the socio-cultural realities of their lives, inadvertently deepening their challenges. To break this cycle of debt and exploitation, structural changes in -financial inclusion policies, alongside holistic support systems, are essential for enabling sex workers and their families to regain agency and reclaim their futures.

### **Challenging Power Hierarchies in Knowledge Production: A Decolonial Approach to Indigenous Research**

Asawari Chaturvedi

The burden of colonial legacy has long impacted Indian anthropological fieldwork through research methodologies, data interpretation, and knowledge dissemination. Research on this theme has been historically dominated by Eurocentric paradigms that marginalize and undermine Indigenous epistemologies, reinforcing power imbalances in knowledge production. Literature on fieldwork reflects the restrictiveness of traditional methodologies and highlights the need for an inclusive research process that emphasizes community perspectives over being researcher-centric. From deciding research questions and methodologies to conducting fieldwork, the process should be participatory, allowing Indigenous voices to be at the forefront of knowledge creation. Furthermore, academic gatekeeping, privileging Western epistemologies while dismissing Indigenous oral traditions and alternative knowledge systems, perpetuates systemic biases that must be challenged.

This paper critiques existing power hierarchies in research methodologies and argues for a shift towards Indigenous-led knowledge production. It explores how participatory research models, oral traditions, and community-based methodologies can challenge academic gatekeeping and foster ethical, reciprocal research relationships. By examining two case studies one from the Bhil tribe in India which is an ethnographic research and analysing the Māori Kaupapa research framework, this study highlights effective pathways for decolonizing fieldwork. Jhabua's Indigenous entrepreneurial models offer a compelling case for how knowledge

production can be locally driven, valuing traditional ecological knowledge, cooperative frameworks, and self-sustaining practices as valid academic contributions. The paper further advocates for co-authorship, community-led research agendas, and alternative dissemination methods to reframe the discourse around knowledge validation and ownership, urging academia to move beyond representation towards true collaboration with Indigenous communities.

### **Edible Remedies: An anthropological study of food as medicine in the Una district of Himachal Pradesh.**

Simranjeet Kaur and Anil Kishore Sinha

Food is bio-cultural construct that strengthen necessary functions of body and provides cultural insight into the ethnic background of an individual. Every society has classificatory system of description that organizes food as edibles based upon traditional knowledge, cultural beliefs, practices attached to it. The food culture plays major role in consumption and avoidance of different food items at every important stage of life. The present study put emphasis on the role of diet in preventing and managing diseases to improve health outcomes. Under domestic conditions, women play major role in shaping the dietary pattern of all members of household. Women are also considered as central locus for food provision that act as care-taker and nurturer. Thus, the collection of primary data is done through a self-designed schedule and interview methods from women of households of Ajouli village of Una district, Himachal Pradesh. The therapeutic power of food helps to examine the medicinal use of diet to prevent and cure diseases. The study also highlights the cultural significance of food and how it plays integral part in health practices by blending modern dietary pattern of consumption with the traditional knowledge.

### **Exploring Innovative Approaches to Interpret Ethnographic Collections in Indian Museums: Potentials and Future Directions**

Mridusmita Bhuyan

Anthropology collections in museums serve as an important means of representing the stories of humanity. An ethnographic museum is a type of institution that develops alongside its collection, which acts as a tangible record of cultural achievements of men and their innovations in material culture. These collections provide insights into the tangible and intangible heritage of different societies. Ethnographic specimens act as important representations of traditional practices, embodying the rich narratives associated with belief systems, living heritage, societal patterns, and cultural identity. Thus, it is vital to approach the presentation of these objects with careful consideration and insightful interpretation. By doing so, a museum can effectively convey the essence of a community and its identity, enhancing the audience's understanding and appreciation. The proposed research aims to critically examine and evaluate the interpretations of ethnographic specimens within museum collections, alongside contemporary practices that prevail in modern museum contexts. It seeks to investigate the relevance of concepts such as "rethink" and "reinterpretation" concerning anthropological collections in Indian museums, employing innovative methodologies and tools to enhance understanding and visitor engagement with these collections. By analysing the dynamic interplay between cultural representation and museum practices, this study aspires to contribute to the evolving discourse surrounding the ethical and effective curation of

anthropological artifacts. It seeks to constructively explore the current trends that Indian museums are adopting, particularly focusing on how innovative approaches can significantly enhance the interpretation of ethnographic collections. To address the inquiry: “In what ways can innovative strategies improve communication and audience engagement in museum environments?”. The research will employ a qualitative methodology that includes participant observations across multiple museums, complemented by relevant literary sources. In addressing the aforementioned research question, this study seeks to explore a new dimension in the reinterpretation of narratives surrounding men and their living traditions, particularly within the context of Indian museums. By examining these dimensions, the proposed study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how museums can effectively engage visitors and foster meaningful connections with their ethnographic collections.

### **Exploring Students Perceptions and International schools Practices: A Study on International Schools in Hyderabad**

Bandaru Pavani

Education is considered as an important tool for the human and nation development. Despite being students varied socio-economic and cultural conditions and the school systems, every child needs quality education and schooling for their education and personality development. In this context, the study was an examination of the international schools’ students’ perceptions about international schooling and the schools practices. Researcher also examined the decision-making process among families while choosing international school. The sample comprised fifty students from various international schools in Hyderabad and the participant’s lifestyle was observed in their natural settings. Data was collected using structured questionnaire and the participants were selected using snow ball sampling. Data was analysed using MS-excel. The study findings show that students perceive differently about parents’ education, diverse cultures, behaviours and viewpoints in relation to international schools. The perceptions are based on student’s socio-economic conditions and the practices adopted in the international schools and home. School practices are not affecting students in a similar way. For some students it is influencing in a negative manner and some positively. Therefore, schools need to focus on assessing the impact of practices on students thereby promoting students individual focus as it is significant for their education and personality development.

### **Caste, Gender, and Ethnography: Navigating Insider/Outsider Positionalities in Fieldwork**

Jenisha Singh

The paper examines the intersection of caste and gender within the ethnographic fieldwork experiences of a Dalit female researcher in the Darjeeling Hills. Drawing on the researcher’s positionality as an insider-outsider shaped by her hybrid caste identity and gender, the study explores the nuances of navigating social, cultural, and spatial boundaries. The fieldwork reveals that the researcher’s caste identity, as a daughter of an inter-caste marriage, simultaneously facilitates and complicates interactions with both upper and lower-caste communities. Gendered expectations further shape access to knowledge, with male gatekeepers often mediating interactions. The researcher experiences the complexities of performing fieldwork in a caste-conscious and patriarchal society, where the notions of habitus, social structures, and personal subjectivities interplay. The experiences in the field contribute to

broader discussions on feminist ethnography, insider/outsider dynamics, and the need for more inclusive and intersectional approaches to studying marginalized communities. By critically engaging with caste and gender, this paper advocates for a more nuanced understanding of ethnographic practices and their implications for knowledge production.

### **Birhor's Indigenous Knowledge System: A Primary Study of Ecological Wisdom and Cultural Practices**

Sukanya Guha Niyogi

The Birhor tribe, an indigenous hunter-gatherer community of Eastern India, exemplifies a profound understanding of biodiversity and resource management through their indigenous knowledge system. This study aims to document and analyze the Birhor's traditional ecological knowledge, exploring its role in environmental sustainability, cultural preservation, and adaptive strategies for survival. The research emphasizes the significance of their practices, including sustainable hunting, foraging for wild edibles, rope-making from forest fibers, and medicinal plant usage, which reflect a deep symbiosis with their natural habitat. The aim of this study is to explore and document the indigenous knowledge system of the Birhor tribe and assess its relevance in contemporary ecological conservation and cultural heritage preservation. The study is based on a primary research approach involving ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Birhor settlements across Purulia district of West Bengal. Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews with community elders, participatory observation of daily activities, and focus group discussions to understand their knowledge transmission processes. Field documentation of flora, fauna, and cultural practices was also carried out to map the biodiversity associated with their indigenous knowledge. The findings reveal that the Birhor's indigenous knowledge system is a comprehensive, sustainable framework for resource use and biodiversity conservation. However, the study also highlights the challenges of declining knowledge transmission due to habitat loss and socio-economic shifts. The research advocates for community-based conservation models that integrate the Birhor's ecological wisdom with modern scientific frameworks to promote sustainability and cultural preservation.

### **Decolonizing Museum Collections: Representation and Inclusivity in the Context of the Koya Community in India.**

Rina Madi

The Koya is an Indigenous tribal community primarily residing in Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Telangana in India. Identifying themselves as "Koitor," they speak Koya Bhasa, a Dravidian dialect. My observations at institutions such as the Museum of Tribal Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI), Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS), and the Odisha State Museum revealed a limited representation of Koya material culture. Traditional elements like attire, bamboo crafts, and practices related to animal husbandry are inadequately showcased, with a notable lack of Koya-specific artifacts. This underrepresentation raises important questions about the inclusivity of these cultural institutions. Addressing these gaps through cross-cultural analysis, academic research, and improved collection practices is crucial to safeguarding the Koya cultural identity. This paper explores the decolonization of museum collections, focusing on enhancing representation and inclusivity through a case study of the Koya community. It critiques historical and contemporary museum practices that reinforce unequal power dynamics and marginalize

Indigenous narratives. The research underscores the importance of integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), oral traditions, and lived experiences of the Koya people to develop more equitable and authentic museum practices. The study highlights the potential for museums in India to serve as platforms for cultural revitalization by presenting the tangible and intangible heritage of the Koya, including their material culture, folklore, craftsmanship, and rituals. It emphasizes the role of collaborative curation, advocating for the active involvement of the Koya community in decision-making processes to ensure accurate and meaningful representation. By addressing the challenges and opportunities of decolonizing museum collections, this research demonstrates how inclusive museology can foster cultural pride and identity among Indigenous communities. Furthermore, it seeks to enhance public awareness of India's diverse cultural heritage. The paper calls for transformative approaches to museum practices, advocating for the celebration of Indigenous voices and the creation of more inclusive and equitable representations of the Koya and other Indigenous groups in India's cultural institutions.

### **Estimation of age from 3D CT Scan evaluation of cranial suture using Acsádi and Nemeskéri Method: A Study in Bengali Population of Kolkata, West Bengal**

Sneha Dutta & Pranabesh Sarkar

Estimation of individual age is a crucial part of identification in forensic science. Cranial suture obliteration is one of the methods used for age estimation. The discrepancy of age determination through suture closure has been observed in terms of population variation and other associated factors. On this background, the objective of the study is to estimate age of the individuals from Bengali population through 3D CT scans evaluation of cranial suture obliteration. A Total number of 116 Bengali females CT scan images without cranial deformities were collected from The Bangur Institute of Neurosciences and Apex Club of Bally. Statistical analysis was done by SPSS version 25.0 software. Descriptive and inferential statistics (correlation and regression) were used in appropriate place. The mean score of coronal suture, sagittal suture, lambdoidal suture obliteration were increased with the advancement of the ages. Significant correlation ( $p < 0.05$ ) found between age and sagittal suture [S1 ( $r = 0.832$ )] which was also envisaged best prediction of coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.697$ ). Similarly, significant correlation was ( $P < 0.001$ ) found in between age and Coronal suture [CL1, CL2, CL3, CR1, CR2, and CR3] and lambdoidal suture [LL1, LL2, LL3, LR1, LR2, and LR3]. The present study identified that the sagittal suture closure could be used as one of the best criteria for accurate age estimation in Bengali population.

### **Women and their Physical Fitness Post Marriage: An Anthropological Perspective**

Saini Medha

Physical fitness is integral to overall well-being, yet societal and cultural constructs significantly influence women's ability to prioritize and maintain fitness. This study explores the cultural factors shaping the physical fitness of women post-marriage through an anthropological lens, with fieldwork conducted in an urban, residential campus of IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University), New Delhi. The campus is home to a diverse population of educated individuals, with many women having relocated from various states after marriage, often due

to their own or a family member's employment on campus. Using participant observation and in-depth interviews with 20 women, the research examines how cultural expectations, biological changes, and societal roles intersect to impact women's fitness levels. Findings reveal that women's engagement with physical activities is shaped early in life, often constrained by gendered expectations. Childhood for most participants was dominated by household responsibilities or academics, with limited encouragement to pursue outdoor activities or sports. These early patterns persist into adulthood, where marriage and associated cultural norms introduce new restrictions, responsibilities, and expectations. Biological milestones such as pregnancy and menstruation further compound the challenges to maintaining physical fitness. Through a detailed analysis of observed behaviors and personal narratives, the study highlights the multifaceted barriers women face in prioritizing their physical health. By uncovering these underlying cultural and social dynamics, the research provides critical insights into the broader implications of physical fitness for women navigating transitional life stages.

### **Nutritional status of children among the Galo tribe residing in the Tirbin village Lapa Rada district of Arunachal Pradesh**

Tadu Dandhin, Lina Gako

In the contemporary period, social planners fail to comprehend the necessity of nutrition intervention based on community specific among children, particularly based upon the lesser-known tribal communities of Arunachal Pradesh. In order to find out the present-day scenarios of nutritional status of children of people residing in Arunachal Pradesh, this present study was conceptualized to assess the nutritional status by anthropometric indices in Galo tribe residing in the *Tirbin* village *Lapa Rada* district of Arunachal Pradesh. In the present investigation of representative subjects of 253 children under the age of 5-15 male and female of Galo tribe residing in the *Tirbin* village, *Lapa Rada* district of Arunachal Pradesh of India. The international standards were used to collect height and weight data and height for age and BMI for age percentile were calculated. Observations from the study reveal that height, weight, and circumferences (such as mid-upper arm, waist, and hip) increase with age among both age group. Furthermore, breastfeeding practices of majority of children was studied. It may be due to the alteration of traditional food habits, consumption of regular fast food and increasing less socio- economic equity and higher inequality in the community. Therefore, under nutrition as well as over nutrition are prevalent among studied children perhaps correlated with rapid change in their food habits and lifestyle in the early age. This paper tries to highlight the nutritional status of the Galo tribe with reference to the change in their dietary habits.

### **Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of Menstrual Hygiene among the Mother-Daughter Duo of Borduria Village of Tirap District, Arunachal Pradesh**

Rubu Anu

One of a woman's most important biological processes and a major predictor of her reproductive health is her menstruation. In order to prevent numerous issues linked to

reproductive health, practicing of Menstrual hygiene among the girls and women becomes one of the most important attribute that they can give to themselves. Lack of knowledge among the adolescent girls and women can lead to unavoidable reproductive health issues. Using of sanitary pad in a hygienic manner and proper washing of the genital area during menstruation is extremely important. Understanding and comparing the Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of Menstrual hygiene among the mother and their respective daughter was the main objective of this study. A community based cross-sectional study was conducted among 130 individuals i.e. 65 mother-daughter pair. The data in this study was collected using random sampling wherein, different localities of Borduria village was targeted for gathering information about the knowledge, attitude and practices of menstrual hygiene among the mother and their respective daughters. A schedule was being used to facilitate the systematic collection of data. Educational qualification is seen as one of the factors affecting the knowledge about menstruation acquired by the mother and the daughters. The daughters comparatively had better knowledge regarding what menstruation is and also the knowledge transferred from mother to daughter is evident in the study and mother is the primary source of information on menstruation before the daughter even hit menarche. An attempt has been made in this research to ascertain the understanding of menstruation and menstrual hygiene practices of mother and their daughters of this study area.

### **Tracking Health, Bridging Gaps: An Anthropological Exploration of Technology Adoption for Maternal and Child Health among the Savara Tribe of Andhra Pradesh**

Neemkar Anoosha,

Technology-driven healthcare is evolving as the preferred choice of healthcare model in recent years in every country (Bagayoko CO et al. 2011). In India, the Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS) is an information system for tracking maternal and child health beneficiaries in the public health system and improving service delivery planning and outcomes. The integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to provide secondary and tertiary medical expertise available in suburban and rural India was thought of as early as 1997 (Ganapathy et al. 2009; Agarwal D et al. 2020). This system ensures that mother and child receive necessary healthcare during the phases of ante-natal, intra-natal and post-natal care, besides encouraging institutional deliveries. The present study undertakes an anthropological exploration of MCTS adoption, with a specific focus on bridging gaps in healthcare access and delivery. It examines maternal and child healthcare services, institutional arrangements, utilization and changes in reproductive health care and safe birthing practices among the Savara tribe. The study is based on fieldwork conducted at two e-sub-centres in the Seethampeta ITDA, Srikakulam district, Andhra Pradesh, for four months. A mixed-methods approach was adopted to collect data, employing anthropological research methods such as participant observation, case studies, schedules, structured interviews, and purposive and random sampling. The study highlights a decline in morbidity and mortality rates, accompanied by improved consumption of Iron Folic Acid tablets. The findings demonstrate that integrating technology with socio-cultural contextualization can enhance maternal and child health outcomes, leading to overall well-being.

## Prevalence of Anaemia and Associated Risk Factors among the Meitei and Muslim Lactating Women in Manipur

W. Penaosana Chanu, H. Sorojini Devi

**Background:** Anaemia is a significant public health issue among the lactating women. Nutritional deficiencies in terms of iron, B12 and B9 are main causes of anemia. **Objectives:** This study aims at examining the prevalence of anaemia and its associated risk factors among the Meitei and Muslim lactating women in Manipur. **Methods:** A community-based cross-sectional study was conducted among 200 lactating women (100 for Meitei and 100 for Muslim) from 13 villages in Kakching District, Manipur. Data on socio-demographic variables and height and weight were collected. Body mass index (BMI kg/m<sup>2</sup>) was calculated. Anaemia was assessed using Sahli's method. **Statistical method:**  $\chi^2$  and odds ratio of logistic regression were computed using MS Excel and SPSS. **Results:** The prevalence of anaemia is higher among the Muslim (63.0%) compared to Meitei women (59.0%). Low and middle income Meitei lactating women are significantly anaemic than high income group ( $\chi^2= 11.78$ ). Muslim lactating women having children >4 are significantly anaemic compared to  $\leq 4$  children ( $\chi^2= 8.01$ ). Significant difference is also found in gravidity among Muslim ( $\chi^2= 5.42$ ). Multivariable logistic regression analysis revealed that anaemia was significantly associated with number of children (>4) (OR = 1.72) and gravidity (>4 pregnancies) (OR = 3.72) among Muslim women. For Meitei women, anaemia was significantly associated with higher age, low and middle income (OR = 6.41) and high gravidity (>4 pregnancies) (OR = 2.38). **Conclusion:** In the present study, the prevalence of anaemia is higher among the Muslim lactating women (63.0%) compared to Meitei women (59.0%).  $\chi^2$  shows significant differences in anaemia in different income groups of Meitei women and for Muslim, in different categories of number of children. Odds ratio shows that age, number of children and gravidity are risk factors for anaemia in Muslim, while age, low and middle income and high gravidity (>4) are risk factors in Meitei lactating women.

## Being Queer, Being Alone: Negotiating Loneliness in Eastern India

Saptarshi Bairagi,

Loneliness among gender and sexual minorities (GSM) is not merely a personal or emotional experience but a condition shaped by systemic exclusion, social stigma, and economic vulnerability. Based on six years of ethnographic engagement with the Kothi-Hijra-Dhurani communities in Bengal, this study explores the lived realities of Punam Chanda, a 56-year-old transgender-Kothi person from Eastern India, whose profound loneliness is intensified by the erosion of social and economic networks. Once embedded within kinship and occupational structures that provided some degree of support, she now finds her home transformed into an oppressive space of isolation, encapsulated in her haunting lament, "*The house is going to eat me*" (*Barita Amay Gile Khay*).

In response to this isolation, Punam engages in acts of defiance and survival. Public clapping (\*Tali\*), a performative assertion of presence, becomes both a protest against erasure and a means of self-validation. Digital intimacy through social media allows her to maintain connections, negotiate desire, and resist invisibility despite physical seclusion. Additionally, her chosen kinship with other community members and animals, particularly her five cats, offers emotional companionship that counters the alienation imposed by human relationships.

These coping mechanisms challenge dominant narratives of queer ageing as mere decline, illustrating how GSM individuals actively construct spaces of belonging within marginality. By foregrounding loneliness as a central affective experience, this ethnographic inquiry highlights the complex ways in which ageing GSM individuals navigate their social worlds. Punam's story reveals not only the structural forces that produce queer loneliness but also the everyday strategies through which individuals reclaim agency, resist social erasure, and cultivate alternative forms of connection and care.

### **Resisting Margins: Gender, Disability, And The Quest For Inclusion**

Tajinder Kaur

The present study addresses the interconnections of gender, development, and society through the narratives of women with disabilities living in Delhi. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, the study highlights these women's lived experiences as they overcome structural constraints, societal stigma, and familial expectations in urban contexts. The narratives highlight a persistent struggle against deeply ingrained preconceptions that associate disability with helplessness and dependency. Women with disabilities experience discrimination based on both their gender and their physical disability. Their challenges include access to education, employment, and social participation. Despite government regulations and NGO interventions, these experiences highlight structural disparities amplified by inaccessible environments and discriminating societal attitudes. The study looks at alienation experiences such as disability stigma, familial conflict, and exclusion from public areas. These women are frequently compelled to confront preconceptions portraying them as burdens or incapable of making important contributions. However, these women are often forced to challenge stereotypes that label them as burdens or incapable of meaningful contributions. However, these narratives are also marked by resilience. The women employ strategies to redefine their identities and assert their independence. Gender intersects with other identities, such as class, caste, and disability, to create multilayer marginalization experiences in development contexts. In this research, I will look at the relationship between gender and disability. The study also emphasizes the importance of resilience in promoting empowerment and allowing disabled women to navigate and challenge accepted norms. The study contributes to the conversation on gender and disability by setting women with disabilities' daily difficulties within a larger framework of development, emphasizing the importance of inclusive policies and practices.

### **The Art Of Butter: Butter Sculptures In Buddhist Communities Of Ladakh**

Tsering Chosdon

The current research focuses on an uncommon intricate religious art practiced by some fraction of Buddhists worldwide, known as **Torma**. "Torma" is a ritualistic offering made of barley and colored butter, with religious significance attached to it and health beneficiaries. This paper begins with the Torma-making procedure, types, meanings, and changes around this art of work with time. It is an addition to this very less explored area, it aims to provide a basic introduction to this area of research. The data were collected using methods such as semi-structured interviews, observation, case studies, and visual methods to document the torma-making

process during fieldwork in Leh visually. Interviews were taken with the nuns residing in the Naropa Photang monastery cum nunnery in Shey village, some 15 km away from Leh. This research entails the data collected during my fieldwork and first-hand experience with the Torma makers of the monastery. This tradition of torma making has its roots in the Vajrayana sect of Buddhism and it unfolds the meanings and intentions of the finely shaped and decorated piece of work. This study also attempts to understand how Torma has undergone a series of transformations with time, in terms of its ingredients, designs, and intricacy. This study is also an effort to preserve and document the centuries-old rare practice of Torma making in monasteries of Leh.

### **Paroemia, chronology and cognition: An ethnographic study on folk proverbs on weather and events in the selected districts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh**

Sonal Pandey

**Objectives of the study:** Measurement of time is fundamental to human cognition. From times immemorial human beings have been trying to measure and place events in chronological order. However, measures of time reckoning are unique as expressions of time scheme are mediated by language and culture. Hence, we find multitude of calendar system developed cross-culturally. In this backdrop, the current study intends to gather folk proverbs on weathers and events among the agricultural communities of the Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

**Methodology:** Using purposive sampling, an ethnographic fieldwork was carried out in the districts of Prayagraj, Mirzapur and Sonbhadra (Uttar Pradesh) to gather folk proverbs on time reckoning and chronology. In-depth interviews and focused group discussions were the primary sources of data collection. Using an anthropological tenet of 'key informants,' local experts in literary history, academia and folklore, elderly and other knowledgeable individuals were specially consulted to elicit required information for the purpose of the data collection.

**Results and discussion:** The findings of the study highlight interesting insights on cognition and language among the non-literate agricultural communities. The selected districts abound in indigenous communities and their folkloric legacy is affluent and unparalleled. Being located in the Gangetic plains, agriculture is the primary means of sustenance. Since agriculture is the principal source of employment the local inhabitants have developed an elaborate knowledge of weather and lunar calendar as reflected in their folk proverbs. As most of the population was non-literate this knowledge base of seasons and events was transmitted in a form of folk proverbs across generations. However, advent of modern means of communication and internet has taken its toll on this intangible cultural heritage. These folk proverbs form an indispensable part of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) hence must be integrated into the school curriculum and disseminated to the future generations.

### **Relationship between fluctuating asymmetry in digits, height, weight, BMI and digit ratio: A study among the young adult Santals of Purba Bardhaman**

Avik Ray

In and around the last two decades multiple studies have been performed to explore the relationship between the biomarker: digit ratio (2D:4D) and other markers of pre and post-natal stress during development under the assumption that the former serves as a tentative proxy of

pre-natal androgen and oestrogen exposure. In the present study, fluctuating asymmetry (FA) in digits, height and BMI have been selected to serve as indicators of developmental stress and whether there is any association or correlation with digit ratio (2D:4D) or whether digit ratio is a sufficient predictor of said stress indicators. Methods: 254 Santal males were sampled randomly from various blocks of the Purba Bardhaman district of West Bengal, India to have their height, weight and digit lengths measured. First, significant asymmetries (at  $p < 0.05$ ) between all the bilateral traits were measured. Then all the variables were correlated with each other and regression models were constructed to predict a composite fluctuating asymmetry index (CFAI), designed from asymmetries of all digits and height from relevant significant predictors. Chi-Square tests with Bonferroni post-hoc correction were also performed to explore any association between categories of CFAI and digit ratio designed through quartile classification. Ordinal logistic regression was then performed to predict the probabilities of category membership of CFAI from categories of 2D:4D. Results: Among the digits, only the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, and digit ratios were found to have significant asymmetry from R-L. CFAI correlated positively with digit ratios of both hands and negatively with height at  $p < 0.05$  and  $p < 0.01$  respectively. Right 2D:4D was also found to be a better predictor of fluctuating asymmetry than left 2D:4D and both have a curvilinear relationship with fluctuating asymmetry. Very high digit ratios also seemed to be associated with very high CFAI and do predict higher fluctuating asymmetry while moderate digit ratios seemed to be significantly associated with low CFAI. Conclusion: FA can be used as a proxy for digit ratio to understand developmental instability although more studies need to be conducted to completely understand the entirety of the relationship between the two. Directionality in pre-natal steroid exposure can also be deduced from this study and seems to point to the fact that the right digits are more sensitive to fluctuating asymmetry than the left, the excess in the latter of which can be characterised as a biomarker of developmental perturbation.

### **Use of Artificial Intelligence for Personal Identification in Forensic Investigations from Anthropometric evidences: A Scoping Review**

Bijoy Bitan Saha, Raj Pandit, Diptendu Chatterjee

Being evidence driven field, Forensic science has to deal with lots of data for personal identification and build connection to the crime; thus, need to be assessed very carefully and meticulously. On the other hand, Forensic anthropology, a subfield of anthropology using different anthropometric techniques aids in personal identification through age estimation, sex determination and so on. However, in a crime scene, a lot of evidences are available from where the experts need to extract relevant data, which is a tedious job indeed. Artificial intelligence (AI) becomes relevant in this context as it has the ability to extract large sets of data and provides assessment if trained properly. *Aim:* This study tries to find out the relevant articles showing how Artificial intelligence (AI) can be used in Forensic investigation for personal identification using anthropometric data from crime scenes. *Method:* This study has incorporated scoping review approach for literature review of the articles, searched through Google Scholar using the keyword combinations. *Results:* Using PRISMA guideline, relevant articles have been extracted and analyzed. It has been found that AI have been incorporated for data extraction and analysis of anthropometric evidences pertinent to forensic investigation.

*Conclusion:* This study highlights the promising future for AI in forensic investigation by designing predictive models through the collaboration of Forensic anthropology, computer science and forensic science.

### **The Triple Threat: Sanitation, Marginalization and environmental Degradation**

Deepshikha Upadhyay

**Abstract:** A crucial and complex obstacle to attaining sustainable development is the interaction of environmental deterioration, marginalization, and sanitation. The following piece explores the "triple threat" that underprivileged communities face, where a lack of proper sanitation services and infrastructure increases health risks and perpetuates social injustices. These vulnerabilities are made worse by environmental degradation, which also depletes resources and further isolates these groups from prospects for advancement. The paper illustrates how poor sanitation leads to pollution and environmental degradation, generating a vicious cycle that disproportionately affects underprivileged communities, using some global and regional scenarios. The paper also emphasizes that combating this "triple threat" calls for a holistic approach that places a high priority on environmental preservation, fair access to sanitary facilities, and the participation of marginalized communities in decision-making.

### **Incidence of hypertension among the Hill Kharias: A Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Population of Mayurbhanj, Odisha**

Margadarsika Panda, Jeenana Jhanchy Behera, Dr. Priyanka Das, Dr. Monali Goswami

**Introduction:** Hypertension is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease and has lately been recognized as a global public health issue. The incidence of hypertension has increased among the ethnic populations as an effect of the large-scale urbanization in the last few decades which is found to be significantly associated with life style changes. Therefore, the present study is an endeavour to discern the prevalence of hypertension and its determinants among the Hill Kharia tribal population of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha, India. **Methodology:** This cross-sectional study was conducted among 140 (male-55 and female-85) Hill Kharia tribal population aged 18 years and above. A pretested structured schedule was used to collect data on socio-demographic variables and behavioral risk factors by interview method. All anthropometric measurements like height, weight, waist circumference, hip circumference, middle upper arm circumference were recorded using the standard procedures. Statistical analysis was done to analyze the data using SPSS version 21. **Results:** The study reveals that the prevalence of hypertension was higher among the men (29.1%) compared to women (23.5%). A significant association ( $p < 0.05$ ) was found between hypertension and alcohol consumption(women) and physical activity (men). , Pearson correlation analysis showed that systolic blood pressure showed significant positive correlation with waist height ratio and negatively correlation with skeletal muscle mass (whole body, arm, trunk) among women **Conclusion:** The prevalence of hypertension was higher among the men than the women counterparts among the Hill Kharia population. Recent studies reported an increasing trend of hypertension among the tribal populations due to the combined effect of increasing urbanization and lifestyle conditions. This study suggest that more attention

is required for the health care of the tribal populations who are vulnerable and marginalized section of the society. Therefore, health of these indigenous population groups needs to be looked into holistically, so that timely intervention can be made against this silent epidemic.

### **Unraveling Ancient Diseases: Insights from Archaeological Anthropology and Paleopathology in India**

Saurabh Tripathi, Mukti Singhai, Nandini Lahiri (Bhattacharya)

The spread of diseases in ancient times has been documented in literature; however, studying ancient samples directly can provide more detailed real-time information. This work aims to explore the anthropological dimensions of diseases from our distant past in India. Data collection was conducted through archaeology, paleopathology, and genetics. A revisit of historical pandemics, skeletal evidence, and studies of ancient DNA was carried out using various archaeological reports. This research focuses on identifying the causes of disease spread and how present-day society perceives the concept of contagious diseases in different regions of India.

Certain ancient diseases offer unique insights into human adaptation and interaction with the environment. Viruses, bacteria, and other pathogens are not always the primary cause of disease outbreaks. According to reviewed papers and articles, it has been revealed that factors such as food, climate change, and trauma were often responsible for these events among prehistoric populations. The paleo-pathogens causing these diseases influenced the social, political, and economic activities of ancient populations, driving them to migrate in search of new opportunities. In India, evidence of such migrations has been corroborated. We conducted a survey on reported disease pathology and identified a significant number of diseases from various sites. The authors thoroughly reviewed 25 articles on the prehistoric periods of the Mesolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic, and Indus Valley civilizations, primarily focusing on sites that produced human skeletons. Documents on paleopathology, the genetic configuration of ancient populations, and evidence of social and economic conditions were also considered. The current status of these paleo-pathogens in the Indian subcontinent was noted. The predominant disease reported was leprosy, keeping in mind the limitations of ancient samples in accurately identifying diseases. Tuberculosis was mainly found at specific sites, while dental diseases were identified at various others. We also examined the functioning of the pathogens and the environmental and dietary factors that contributed to disease outbreaks. The responses of ancient societies to these outbreaks, including burial practices, medical treatments, and changes in social organization, were critically analyzed.

### **Gender Disparities in Hypertension Prevalence among the Apatani Tribe of Arunachal Pradesh**

Nada Tido, Dr. Radhe Amung

**Objective:** This cross-sectional study seeks to evaluate the prevalence and determinants of hypertension among the Apatani tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, with a particular emphasis on gender disparities. The research involves a comparative analysis between urban and rural populations, investigating the influence of demographic and anthropometric factors such as age, body mass index (BMI), and waist-to-hip ratio (WHR) on the prevalence of hypertension.

**Methods:** A stratified random sampling technique was employed to collect data from urban and rural populations. The dataset comprised variables including age, gender, height, weight, hip circumference, waist circumference, and blood pressure readings. Data were obtained from 150 rural Apatani individuals residing in and around eight villages of Ziro Valley and 150 urban Apatani individuals living in and around the twin capital cities of Itanagar and Naharlagun. Descriptive statistical analysis, independent t-tests, chi-square tests, and binary logistic regression were utilized to identify significant differences and predictive relationships. **Results:** The study determined the prevalence of hypertension to be 40.66% in the rural population and 37.33% in the urban population. The mean age of the participants was 33.51 years (SD = 9.33). Independent t-tests revealed no significant difference in BMI between the urban and rural populations ( $p = 0.350$ ). However, WHR differed significantly between these groups ( $p < 0.0001$ ). Chi-square tests highlighted notable gender disparities in hypertension prevalence ( $p < 0.0000229$ ). Logistic regression analysis identified age (odds ratio [OR] = 1.07,  $p < 0.001$ ), gender (OR = 3.84,  $p < 0.001$ ), and BMI (OR = 0.999,  $p = 0.879$ ) as significant predictors of hypertension. **Conclusion:** The findings underscore considerable gender disparities in hypertension prevalence among the Apatani tribe, with notable differences observed between rural and urban populations. These results highlight the urgent need for targeted public health interventions to address the determinants of hypertension, particularly through gender-sensitive strategies and tailored approaches to mitigate the health impacts of urbanization.

### **Influence Of Cultural Norms On Career Choices Among Coaching Student: A Case Study In Prayagraj, India**

Rahul Kumar

**Introduction:** The youth receives guidance for a career from his family or society. In this case, the ideas of family or society are overwhelmed by cultural norms or moral rules. These cultural norms influence students or youth in career selection. For example, in some societies, a government job is more important. Still, the student wants to make a career in some other field, but due to the ambition of family or society, he changes his career to get a government job. This is influenced by the cultural norms of his society or family. **Objectives:** This study investigates cultural norms, family expectations, and socio-economic factors in the career choices of coaching students from Prayagraj, India. **Methods:** The study sample comprised 100 coaching students randomly selected from 18-35 years in the study area. Data were collected using a predesigned, semi-structured questionnaire method. The study was undertaken by conducting personal interviews with the selected study population, conducting direct observation, and conducting focus group discussions. At the same time, data analysis utilized MS Excel for trend identification and interpretation. **Results:** The study revealed that family, particularly parents, have the most significant influence on career decisions of coaching students, followed by teachers and social media. Respect in society was considered to be the prominent motivational variable behind careers, while economic stability and fame were given priority. The obstacles are social pressure, economic difficulties, and family problems. Most of the participants experienced stress or anxiety caused by career-related matters. **Conclusion:** The findings reveal the complex interplay of socioeconomic factors, family expectations, and evolving social norms in shaping students' career paths.

### **Comparative Evaluation Of The Demirjian And Kvaal Methods For Dental Age Estimation In The Bengalee Population: A Forensic Approach**

Sanjula Sarkar, Lina Bhoyar, Pranabesh Sarkar, Bhavya Srivastava

Forensic odontology, a specialized branch of forensic anthropology, plays a critical role in legal investigations by analysing dental evidence for biological identification, including age estimation. Dental age estimation methods are reliable as they are less influenced by external factors (environmental and nutritional variables). This study focuses on the accuracy of Demirjian and Kvaal in estimating dental age against chronological age in the Bengalee population, specifically among children and young adults aged 6 to 18 years. Digital orthopantomograms of 60 individuals were analysed using both methods. The Demirjian method showed minimal differences between estimated dental age and chronological age, ranging from 0 to 0.333 years for females and 0 to 1 year for males. In contrast, the Kvaal method presented larger discrepancies, with differences ranging from -15 to -1.25 years for females and -25 to 5 years for males. Statistical analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 27.0, revealing a significant positive correlation for the Demirjian method ( $r = 0.9786$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ), while the Kvaal method showed no significant correlation ( $r = 0.0025$ ,  $p = 0.7358$ ). The findings indicate that the Demirjian method is more accurate and reliable for dental age estimation in the Bengalee population compared to the Kvaal method. This study highlights the importance of population-specific validation of forensic age estimation techniques for enhanced accuracy in legal and investigative contexts.

### **Bridging Heritage and Progress: The Role of Anthropological Museums of the Anthropological Survey of India in India's Development.**

Siddhartha Shit, Sudarshan Vaidya

The Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) houses an extensive collection of ethnographic artefacts, including textiles, jewellery, tools, weapons, household items, musical instruments, ritual objects, weapons, art, and ethno-medicinal items. These artefacts are not merely historical or aesthetic treasures; they encapsulate centuries of traditional knowledge, craftsmanship, and the cultural and social essence of India's diverse Indigenous communities. AnSI museums serve as guardians of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, playing a vital role in national development through cultural preservation, education, and socio-economic initiatives. By exhibiting these artefacts, the museums educate the public about India's rich cultural diversity, promote national integration, and inspire sustainable development. They also act as platforms to highlight traditional crafts and indigenous technologies, raising economic empowerment for tribal and rural communities.

This paper explores the multifaceted contributions of AnSI museums in development cultural pride, facilitating intercultural dialogue, and shaping policies on heritage conservation and tribal welfare. It examines how artefacts, such as tools and weapons symbolizing self-reliance or tribal artefacts reflecting identity as well as cultural, social, and economic significance. The

challenges faced by these museums—modernization pressures, funding limitations, and proper depiction—are also discussed, with recommendations for enhancing their role in achieving holistic development.

By bridging heritage and progress, AnSI museums preserve India's past while shaping a culturally enriched, inclusive future, aligning with national goals of sustainable development and cultural resilience. This article underscores their crucial role in linking India's cultural heritage with its developmental aspirations.

### **Guardians of Green: A Critical Appreciation of an Elder-led Green Space Conservation Endeavour in Purulia**

Subham Kundu

Aging healthily largely owes to availability and accessibility to natural open green space. Unfortunately, loss of greenery due to 'unplanned' urbanisation is a peril to healthy aging. In an overwhelming enthusiasm to 'smarten' cities, urban planners and local administrators in India overlook the deep and intricate relationship between nature and older people. A critique to the Smart City Mission (SCM) in India is that it undermines the traditional value of older people as custodians of nature. This study focuses on the environmental stewardship of Dukhu Majhi, an octogenarian resident of Purulia. Popularly known as Gachh Dadu (the tree grandfather) for his lifelong commitment to reforestation and environmental campaign, Majhi received national recognition. However, his effort is evaluated as a mere environmental activism. We took a different approach to analyse his work in the light of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. We conducted in-depth interview with Dukhu to delve deep into his motivation, challenges and opportunities, affective and transcendental relationship with plants. The interpretations of his narrations reveal newer dimensions of environmental gerontology and eco-spirituality. Overall, the analysis points out the need to integrate green spaces in urban designs to favour age-friendliness and inclusivity. The study strongly upholds old people as environmental warriors—the 'guardians of green'.

### **Reproductive and Child Health Care Practices: A Study among the Bhumij Women of Mayurbhanj, Odisha, India**

Sujata Parida<sup>1</sup>, Priyanka Das<sup>2</sup> Monali Goswami<sup>3</sup>

**Introduction:** Reproductive health has emerged as a major issue in most emerging nations, including India, in recent years. The tribal women are more vulnerable in the society, and are more likely to experience averse reproductive outcome and health issues. The present study is an attempt to comprehend the reproductive and child healthcare practices of the Bhumij women of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha.

**Methodology:** This cross-sectional study included 93 Bhumij tribal women aged between 15 to 49 years. A pre-structured schedule was used to collect data on the reproductive and child health care practices and obstetric morbidities of the women.

**Results:** Our findings revealed that these women had a mean conception rate of 2.56, a mean live birth rate of 2.33, and a mean reproductive wastage rate of 0.23. The antepartum morbidities prevalent among the Bhumij women include headache (60.2%), burning sensation during urination (54.8%), and swelling of hands and feet (54.8%), intrapartum morbidities include obstructed and prolonged labour, and postpartum morbidities include lower abdominal

pain (77.4%) and retained placenta (75.3%). The average age at menopause was found to be  $43 \pm 2.6$  years. The maternity and child health care services portrays that 98.9% of women have received at least one tetanus toxoid (TT) vaccine and iron and folic acid (IFA) tablet. The child health care practices delineates that 68% of the mothers started breastfeeding within 2 hours of birth and around 60% continued for 2-3 years and majority of the children had received all recommended vaccinations.

**Conclusion:** The reproductive and child health care practices reflects that the average reproductive loss is 0.23 per woman, and the access to government maternal and child health services is predominant among the Bhumij women But, certain appropriate measures are to be incorporated to combat obstetric morbidities, empower them to make informed health choices, contributing to a healthier and more prosperous future.

### **Obesity and Lifestyle Patterns as risk factor for hyperglycemia among the Kabui tribes of Manipur**

Th. Rebika Devi, H. Sorojini Devi

**Background:** Obesity and unhealthy lifestyle have been significant risk factors for hyperglycemia globally.

**Objectives:** The study aims at determining the prevalence of hyperglycemia among the Kabuis of Manipur. The study was conducted among the Kabuis of Imphal east district, Manipur. The Kabuis is one of the 34 recognized scheduled tribes of Manipur.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted among 189 Kabuis of which 106 were females and 83 were males. Information on lifestyle factors, height, weight and random blood sugar were taken from each subject following standardized procedures. Body mass index (BMI  $\text{kg}/\text{m}^2$ ) was computed.

**Statistical methods:** Descriptive statistics,  $\chi^2$  and odds ratio of logistic regression were computed using MS Excel and SPSS.

**Results:** The prevalence of hyperglycemia is 21.7% in males and 24.5% in females.  $\chi^2$  indicates significant variations in the prevalence of hyperglycemia among various categories of BMI in males ( $\chi^2=8.31$ ) and females ( $\chi^2=10.48$ ) respectively. Odds ratio of binary logistic regression analysis revealed that inactive individuals had higher risk of hyperglycemia in males (OR=3.53) and females (OR=4.41), consumption of alcoholic was more likely to be hyperglycemic than non-alcoholics (males: OR=4.55,  $P<0.01$ ; females: OR=7.09,  $P<0.05$ ). Further, individuals with anxiety had a significantly higher risk of hyperglycemia than without anxiety (males: OR=4.43,  $P<0.05$ ; females: OR=4.80,  $P<0.01$ ). Increased BMI was also a significant risk for hyperglycemia among males (OR=1.21,  $P<0.05$ ) and females (OR=1.18,  $P<0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** The prevalence hyperglycemia is higher in females than males. Physically inactive, alcoholic, anxiety and BMI was significantly higher risk factors for hyperglycemia among the Kabuis of Manipur ( $p<0.05$ ).

### **Reproductive Behaviour of the Women: A Comparative study on the Tribal Populations of Mayurbhanj, Odisha**

Subhalaxmi Baral, Monali Goswami

**Introduction:** Reproductive health of the women has been a recent focal point in most of the countries since not only the health of the mother, but the health of the child is also involved. Though reproduction is a biological and universal phenomenon, socio-cultural norms and practices and physical environmental conditions are the influencing factors for determining fertility of a population. Thus, the present study is an attempt to examine the reproductive behaviour of the Santal and Lodha tribal women of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha.

**Materials and Methods:** A total of 83 ever married (Santal-46; Lodha-37) tribal women aged between 15 to 49 years were included in the study. A structured pretested schedule was used to collect data on socio-demographic variables and reproductive health indicators of the women. The data was analyzed by SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) version 20.

**Results:** The reproductive health indicators like age at marriage, age at first conception, age at first child birth, mean conception, and mean livebirth differed significantly between the Santal and Lodha tribes. The mean conceptions and livebirths were higher among the Lodhas than Santals. But, the Santals showed higher mean reproductive wastage (abortion and stillbirth) than the Lodhas whereas mean neonatal mortality (5.88) and child mortality (1.96) were found to be higher among the Lodhas. Both Santal and Lodha adopted different family planning methods. Results of linear regression analysis shows that various socio-demographic variables are the predictors of reproductive health indicators like mean conception and livebirths.

**Conclusion:** The present study reveals the reproductive behaviour of the women and its association with the socio-demographic variables. Further tribe-specific studies are warranted to review the policies and design them accordingly in ways that they become attuned to the needs of the marginalized communities.

## Stone Age Exploration Arround Jhumpura Area, Keonjhar District, Odisha

Pritizinda Behera, Subrat Kumar Naik

The paper deals with the Archaeological exploration conducted around Jhumpura area of Keonjhar District Odisha. The major aim of the study was to gather new information regarding the stone age culture of the region. It is believed that the stone age people mostly lived near the water bodies for their survival but time and again it has been disturbed due to natural and human activities. A through exploration was conducted and Nine number of sites of various stone age cultures were reported, i.e. from Lower paleolithic to Upper paleolithic along with Mesolithic and Neolithic culture. Earlier P. Mohanty (1983-1990) has reported 53 number of mesolithic sites and also Prof. Ranjana Ray from Calcutta University has also reported some Neolithic and Chalcolithic remains from the District. During the survey it was found That the mesolithic artifacts are dominating along with Paleolithic remains and the Neolithic also . The raw material used were exploited from the near by region and river bed and palaeo channel. During the whole process through survey and random collection was done out of which 300 artefacts of different stone age culture were recovered. Thus , the findings indicates that the prehistoric people have also dominated the district like the neighbouring district of Mayurbhanj and has helped to establish the presence of palaeo human activities in the northern part of the State Odisha.

## **Beyond Artifacts: Museums for a Sustainable Future**

Tina Dulom

This paper explores the evolving role of museums in safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage. It examines how museums can effectively preserve and represent ICH, while addressing ethical considerations such as the potential for misrepresentation or cultural appropriation when showcasing living traditions, while ensuring respectful community involvement. The paper also investigates the museum's role in promoting social, cultural, and environmental sustainability, including their potential to educate visitors and support community resilience through collaborative projects. The relationship between technology and community engagement is examined, taking into account the ways in which digital tools such as virtual exhibitions can improve visitor experiences, promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, and enable a wider understanding of culture. Based on museum studies, cultural heritage, and sustainability studies, this paper offers insights into the challenges and opportunities museums face in the 21st century. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how museums can adapt and remain relevant, ultimately empowering them to better serve their communities and contribute to a more equitable and sustainable future.

## **Customs, Culture, and Care: An Ethnographic Exploration of mental Wellbeing among South Bihar Tribes**

Karishma Singh

This study examines the relationship between cultural variation, health, well-being, and illness among indigenous tribes in the South Bihar region. Health and well-being being part of the Cultural aspect of the community, varies across societies. Among the tribes, the concept of health and well-being is defined by the ability to carry out daily activities without interruption. Affected individuals are considered ill, until or unless the individual feels incapable of doing normal work assigned to the respective age and sex in that particular culture. Health management practices can vary significantly compared to the general population, as they are influenced by culturally and socially rich traditions. Culture encompasses the unique lifestyles of various tribal communities, each with its own distinct healing practices rooted in their traditions and rituals. In tribal societies, health is approached from a functional perspective rather than a clinical one. Individuals in certain communities may exhibit violent behaviours during conversations. While this behaviour may be accepted within their community, it could be perceived as a sign of mental instability in broader contexts. This contrast highlights the culturally rich and diverse practices for managing health, which differ significantly from conventional approaches. Tribes often attribute illness to discord with supernatural forces, reflecting their unique healing methods passed down through generations. The research, based on field data from participant observations, interviews, structured questionnaires, and literature, highlights the impact of intersectionality—tribe, gender, class, and religious belief on the mental health of tribal individuals, particularly women who face societal isolation for exhibiting aggression. The findings reveal how societal stress contributes to mental health issues, such as dual personality disorder, and emphasize the need for understanding cultural norms in contemporary mental health perceptions.

## **The Sacred Market Place: Exploring the evolving roles of street vendors**

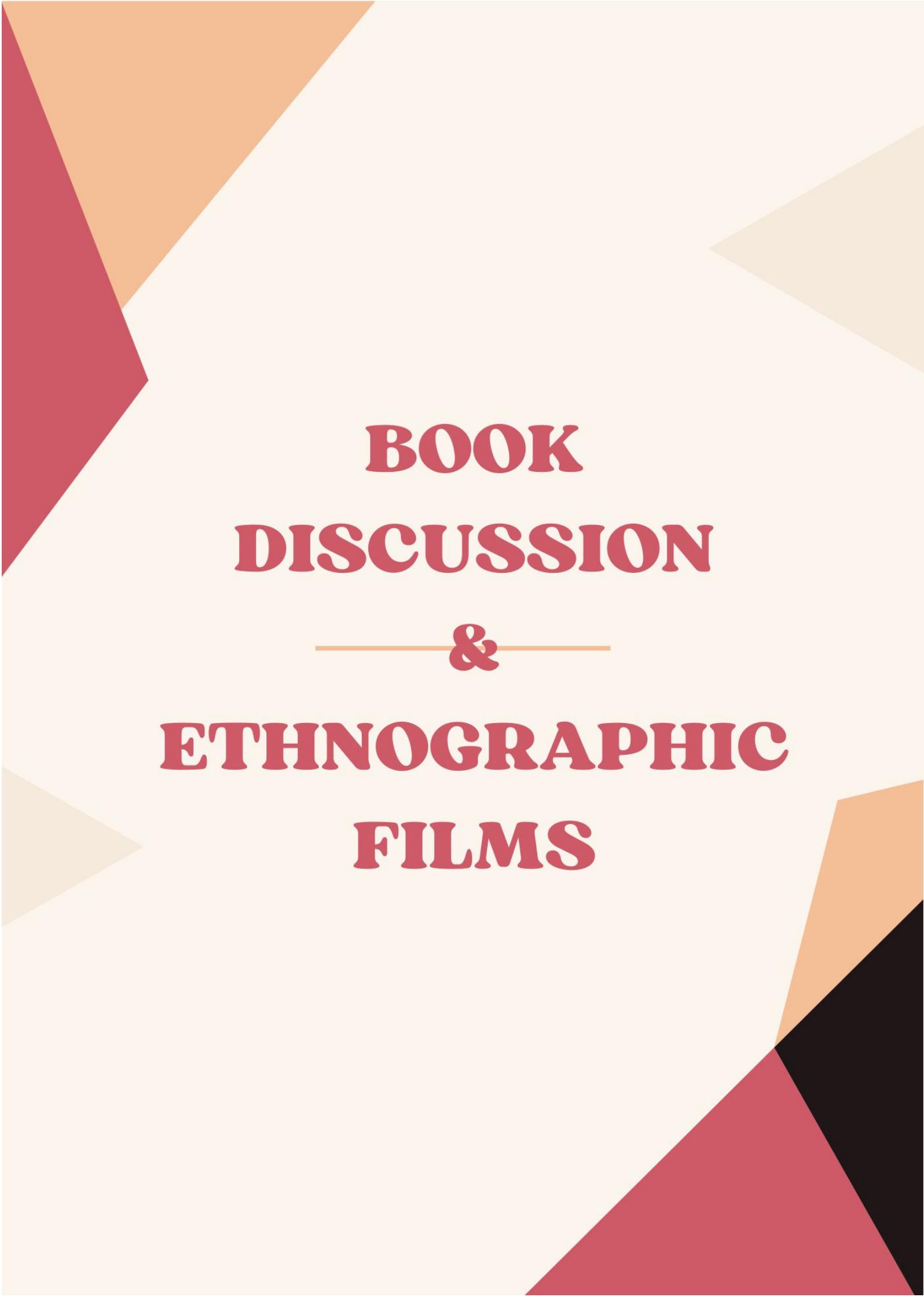
Shreshtha Chowdhury

Donations, viewed as acts of duty, altruism, and reciprocity, are often categorized as gifts rather than charity. Donations are not always limited to temple authorities or beggars; they are also often received by street vendors operating around temples and ghats. Donations come either from individuals or through small-scale organizations that facilitate street vending. These donations are vital for the sustenance and livelihood of street vendors in sacred spaces. However, despite the consistent flow of donations, many vendors seek alternative means to supplement their livelihood, revealing a nuanced dynamic between reliance on donations and the pursuit of financial independence. The study explores how donations mediate the interactions between street vendors and organizations, as well as the meanings vendors attach to both the donations and the act of receiving. The case study method will be used to gain insights into the relationship between small-scale organizations and street vendors and how donations contribute to their survival strategies. By analyzing this interplay, the research aims to provide a broader understanding of the socio-economic and cultural implications of donations in the context of religious economies.

## **Sustainable Digital Archiving: Strategies for Long-Term Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Indigenous Knowledge: A Systematic review of Literature**

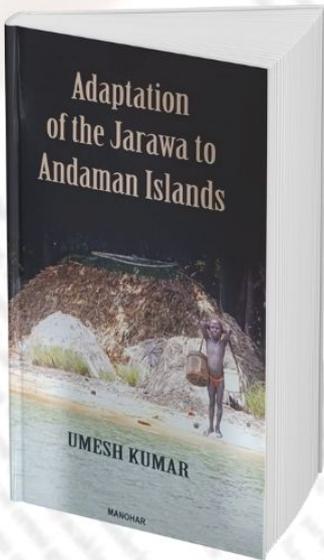
Akhil Unnikrishnan,

Digitization of heritage and cultures has a wide range of scope in the present global scenario. It helps the scholars, researchers and even tourists for knowledge production and guide on a particular culture of a community, society, or nation. Digitalization and documentation of communities has its benefits and disadvantages. Although there is vast information on tribal communities in India, but culturally specific information is less. The government repositories where information on communities is kept, are a few in India. Some websites where such information is disseminated do not respect the rights of the communities. Thus, documentation and digitization are necessary but keeping in mind the rights of the communities and following the ethics and principles is significant. There could be misinterpretations especially through social media platforms which is being controlled by private firms which has its own purpose. Some of the sites and repositories in the world are handled by the communities themselves but they still face a few issues. Thus, equal contribution in documentation and digitisation should be there. Policy formulations and support from the government are helpful but challenges such as lack of trust, expertise and low state of technology are experienced. Perceived notion or bias is experienced while documenting and reflexivity should be given importance. Further digitization is needed as it lasts long. This is a review of 34 papers related to the digitization of cultural heritage has been selected based on listing out key words and combinations and also using SPIDER method of systematic reviewing. The research gap and future possibilities of research has been highlighted.



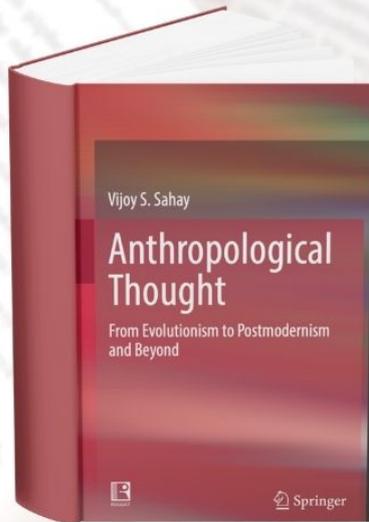
**BOOK  
DISCUSSION  
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ETHNOGRAPHIC  
FILMS**

# BOOKS



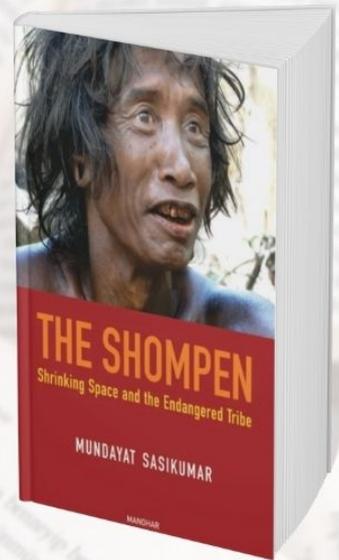
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Prof. Vijoy Kumar Sahay



*Discussant:*

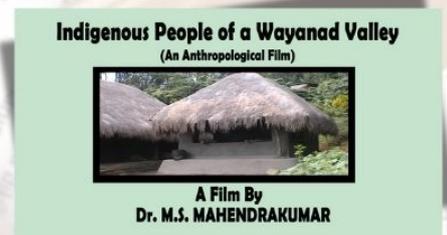
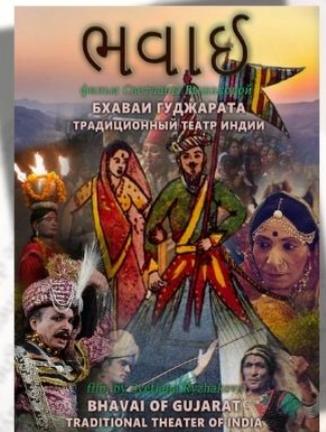
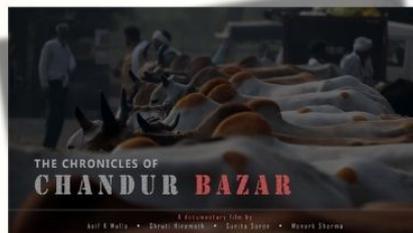
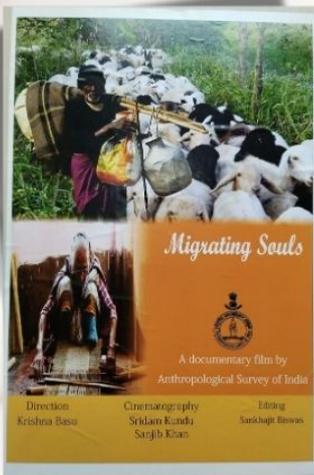
Dr. Poonam Tripathy



*Discussant:*

Dr. Kanchan Mukhopadhyay

# ETHNOGRAPHIC FILMS





# **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

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Sl. No	Prefix	Name	Designation	Affiliation	Nature of Participation
1.	Ms.	Aarshi Jahan	Ph.D Research Scholar	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Delhi	Scientific Session 5
2.	Dr.	Abhaya Mishra	IGNCA researcher	IGNCA, Delhi	IGNCA PANEL
3.	Mr.	Abhishek Bhowmick	Independent researcher	Nil	POSTER
4.	Dr.	Abhishek Chauhan	Assistant Professor	SBU, Ranchi, Jharkhand	Scientific Session 13
5.	Mr.	Abhishek Singh	Research scholar	Lucknow University, Uttar Pradesh	Scientific Session 14
6.	Dr.	Abhishikta Ghosh Roy	Superintending Anthropologist	AnSI	Panel 8
7.	Dr.	Abir Lal Mazumder	Independent Researcher	Independent Researcher	Panel 15
8.	Dr.	Abira Bhattacharya	Assistant Curator (Anthro)	National Museum, New Delhi	Panel 15
9.	Ms.	Adrita Mukherjee	PG student	Adamas University, Kolkata, West Bengal.	Panel 7
10.	Mr.	Aheibam Robertson Singh	Research scholar	Manipur University, Imphal	Scientific Session 23
11.	Ms.	Ahila E	PG student	Pondicherry University, Puducherry	PASSIVE PARTICIPANT
12.	Mr.	Akash Kumar Srivastava	Research scholar	IIT (BHU), Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh	Scientific Session 14
13.	Prof.	Akhil Bihari Ota	Former Director	Former Director of ST & SC Development Department, Odisha	RT-2; PANEL - 2 CHAIR; IGNCA PANEL
14.	Mr.	Akhil Unnikrishnan	Senior Research Fellow	AnSI	POSTER
15.	Ms.	Aksita Sarangi	PG student	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	Scientific Session 15
16.	Ms.	Alekhya Ponnada	Research Associate	AnSI	Panel 14
17.	Mr.	Ambedkar Kumar Sahu	Research scholar	Lalit Narayan Mithila University, Darbhanga	Scientific Session 12
18.	Ms.	Amisha L Phukan	Research Scholar	Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi	POSTER
19.	Mr.	Amit Kumar Maiti	Research scholar	Vidyasagar University West Midnapore, West Bengal	Scientific Session 3
20.	Dr.	Amitava Dinda	Assistant Anthropologist	AnSI	Panel 17
21.	Smt	Amsathwani M	Research Scholar	University of Madras, Chennai, Tamilnadu	Scientific Session 14
22.	Dr.	Amung Radhe	Assistant Professor	Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh	Scientific Session 11
23.	Dr.	Anakha Ajith	Independent Researcher	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	Panel 13
24.	Ms.	Angana Goswami	Research Scholar	University of Delhi, Delhi	Scientific Session 7
25.	Prof.	Anil K.	Professor	IGNCA, Delhi	IGNCA PANEL; RT -2; CHAIR PANEL 18
26.	Mr.	Anil K. Shrivastava	Director	Nagpur, Maharashtra	POSTER
27.	Mr.	Anish Mazumder	Teaching Assistant and SRF	Indian Institute of Technology (BHU), Varanasi	Scientific Session 25

28.	Ms.	Anjali Sharadrao Nikam	Research Associate	AnSI	Panel 10
29.	Ms.	Ankita Ghosh	Junior Research Fellow	AnSI	Panel 14
30.	Ms.	Ankita Ray	Research scholar	Calcutta University, Kolkata, West Bengal	Panel 13
31.	Ms.	Anoosha Neemkar	Research scholar	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	POSTER
32.	Mr.	Anshuman Mishra	PG Student	Indian Institute of Management, West Bengal	POSTER
33.	Ms.	Anuradha Chakraborty	Assistant Professor,	Centre for Woman Studies & CBPR Mentor of UNESCO Co-Chair Sangawari K4C Hub,at Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University,	Scientific Session 22
34.	Dr.	Anwesh. M	PDF	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	PCW
35.	Dr.	Appa Rao	Associate Professor	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	PCW; CHAIR
36.	Dr.	Aravind Gupta	IGNCA researcher	IGNCA, Delhi	IGNCA PANEL
37.	Mr.	Arindam Biswas	Research Scholar	University of North Bengal, West Bengal	Scientific Session 8
38.	Ms.	Arkopala Bose	Research Scholar	Calcutta University, Kolkata, West Bengal	Scientific Session 8
39.	Ms.	Arpita Richhariya	Research scholar	Garhwal University, Uttarakhand	Panel 20
40.	Mr.	Arunesh Kumar	Mentor	EDII Ahmedabad Gujrat	POSTER
41.	Prof.	Arup Ratan Bandyopadhyay	Professor	Calcutta University, Kolkata, West Bengal	CHAIR Panel 19, Scientific Session 23
42.	Ms.	Asawari Chaturvedi	PG student	Ambedkar University, Delhi	POSTER
43.	Mr.	Ashok Kumar Mahakuda	Project Scientist-I	ICMR-RMRC, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	Panel 13
44.	Mr.	Ashok Kumar Yadav	Research scholar	Dr. Harisingh Gour university, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh	Scientific Session 20
45.	Smt	Asia Siddiqua	Junior research fellow	AnSI	Scientific Session 16
46.	Shri	Asif K Mulla	Research Associate	AnSI	Panel 17
47.	Ms.	Athira Kamal	Research scholar	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	Scientific Session 2
48.	Ms.	Atriya Neogi	Performance Analyst (Anthropometry)	SAI, NSEC, Kolkata	Scientific Session 22
49.	Mr.	Avik Ray	UGC-NET SRF	West Bengal State University, Berunanpukuria, Barasat, West Bengal	POSTER
50.	Mr.	Avanish Kumar Tripathi	Research scholar	University of Lucknow, Lucknow	Scientific Session 2
51.	Mr.	Ayananshu Chakrabarti	PG student	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	Scientific Session 1
52.	Ms.	Ayantika Bag	PG student	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	POSTER
53.	Ms.	Ayantika Bhattacharjee	Research scholar	Garhwal University, Uttarakhand	Scientific Session 4

54.	Ms.	Ayushi jain	Research scholar	University of Lucknow, Lucknow	Panel 20
55.	Ms.	Baby Kumari	Research Scholar	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Delhi	POSTER
56.	Ms.	Bandaru Pavani	Research Schoalr	University of Hyderabad	POSTER
57.	Ms.	Banita Behara	Assistant Keeper	AnSI	Panel 2, 4A Scientific Session 4
58.	Mr.	Bappa Hazra	Field Investigator	Sidho Kandho Birsha Universty, West Bengal	Panel 13
59.	Smt	Barasha Rani Baishya	Assistant Professor	Guwahati College, Assam	Scientific Session 22
60.	Dr.	Barnali Waugh	Visiting Fellow	AnSI	Panel 14
61.	Ms.	Bartika Banerjee	Independent researcher	Nil	Panel 9
62.	Dr.	Basanta Kumar Bindhani	Assistant Professor	Central University of Odisha, Odisha	Panel 6
63.	Dr.	Basanta Kumar Mohanta	Associate Professor	MSCB Univeristy, Baripada, Odisha	Scientific Session 24
64.	Ms.	Basundhara Dahal	Research scholar	Sikkim Manipal University, Gangtok, Sikkim	Scientific Session 18
65.	Dr.	Bhenu	Guest Lecturer	SMK Vishwavidyalaya, Jagdalpur, Bastar, Chhattisgarh	Panel 3
66.	Dr.	Bhim Raj Hansdah	Assistant Anthropologist	AnSI	Panel 17
67.	Mr.	Bijoy Bitan Saha	Junior Research Fellow	Department of Anthropology, University of Calcutta	POSTER
68.	Mr.	Bimal Khanra	Junior Research fellow	AnSI	Panel 14
69.	Dr.	Binoy Paul	ICSSR Post-Doc Fellow	Assam University, Silchar, Assam	Scientific Session 14
70.	Dr.	Biswajit Mahapatra	Assistant Professor	Sambalpur University, Odisha	Panel 19
71.	Prof.	BV Sharma	Director	AnSI	IGNCA, RT-2
72.	Ms.	Catherine Thuam Ngaih Nem	Research scholar	Kannur University, Kannur, Kerala	Scientific Session 3
73.	Prof.	Challa Perumal	Professor	Pondicherry University, Puducherry	IGNCA, RT-2
74.	Mr.	Chandan Kumar Das	Research scholar	Central university of Odisha, Odisha	Scientific Session 8
75.	Ms.	Chandrima Chakraborty	Research scholar	West Bengal State University, Kolkata	Scientific Session 2
76.	Dr.	Chhandita Basu	Research scholar	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	Scientific Session 19
77.	Dr	Chou Indamang Manchey	Research scholar	Dept. of Anthropology, RGU	Scientific Session 11
78.	Ms.	Chudamani Singh	Director,	Kanger Valley National Park, Bastar, CG.	Scientific Session 10
79.	Mr.	Chunaram Kisku	Research Scholar	Vidyasagar University West Midnapore, West Bengal	Panel 18
80.	Mr.	Dalibandhu Pukkalla	Assistant Anthropologist	AnSI	Panel 18
81.	Dr.	Daya Ram Singh	Research Associate	AnSI	Panel 10
82.	Ms.	Debaarati Chakrabarti	Research Scholar	University of Delhi, New Delhi	Panel 13

83.	Ms.	Debalina Roy	Research scholar	Indian Institute of Technology Mandi, Himachal Pradesh	Scientific Session 21
84.	Mr.	Debashis Bhattacharjee	Research Scholar	Delhi University, Delhi	Panel 19
85.	Dr.	Debasmita Kar	PDF	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	Scientific Session 8
86.	Ms.	Debasmita Sendha	Research Scholar	Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanjadeo University, Odisha	Scientific Session 18
87.	Ms.	Debasree Das	Senior Research Fellow	University of Calcutta	Panel 14
88.	Ms.	Debjani Bhattacharya	Research scholar	West Bengal State University, Kolkata	Scientific Session 5
89.	Mr.	Deepak Kumar	Research scholar	Garhwal University, Uttarakhand	Scientific Session 12
90.	Ms.	Deepshikha Upadhyay	Research scholar	Department of anthropology, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh	POSTER
91.	Ms	Deepshikha Sarkar	Research Scholar	Dept of Anthropology, Sidho Kano Birsa Munda University	Session 14
92.	Ms.	Dhritisnata Saikia	Independent researcher	Nil	Scientific Session 3
93.	Dr.	Dibyajyoti Das	Assistant Professor	Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh	Scientific Session 3
94.	Ms.	Dilip Kumar Oraon	PG student	SBU, Ranchi, Jharkhand	Panel 16
95.	Mr.	Dillip Kumar Barik	Research Associate	AnSI	Panel 1
96.	Prof.	Dipak K Midya	Professor	Vidyasagar University West Midnapore, West Bengal	CHAIR SCIENTIFIC SESSION 7
97.	Ms.	Dipashna Banerjee	Senior Research Fellow	AnSI	Scientific Session 15
98.	Prof.	Diptendu Chatterjee	Professor	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	PANEL 7 CHAIR; CHAIR SCIENTIFIC SESSION 16
99.	Ms.	Dipti Mondal	Senior Consultant (Research)	Department of Elementary Education National Council of Educational Research & Training, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi	Scientific Session 23
100.	Mr.	Divjot Kaur	Phd scholar & research scientist	Deptt. Of Pediatrics, PGIMER, Chandigarh	Scientific Session 15
101.	Prof.	Dwipen Bezbaruah	Professor	Gauhati University, Jalukbari, Assam	RT-1
102.	Mr.	E. Tamil Selvan	Guest Lecturer	University of Madras, Chennai, Tamilnadu	Scientific Session 14
103.	Ms.	Erika Pebam	Research Associate	AnSI	Scientific Session 9
104.	Mr.	Ganesh Chandru Ramteke	Research Associate	AnSI	Scientific Session 11
105.	Dr.	Ganga Nath Jha	Assistant Professor	Vinoba Bhave University, Hazaribag	Panel 3

106.	Ms.	Gangarapu Sandhya	Research Associate	AnSI	Panel 17
107.	Dr.	Gangotri Bhuyan	Assistant Professor	Pragjyotish College, Guwahati, Assam	Scientific Session 3
108.	Dr.	Garima Khansili	PDF	Nalanda University, Rajgir, Bihar	Scientific Session 24
109.	Dr.	Geetanjali Panda	Lecturer	B. J. B., Bhubaneswar, Odisha.	Scientific Session 5
110.	Prof.	Geetika Ranjan	Professor	North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong	RT 2
111.	Mr.	Georgin T. Chalumkara	Junior Research Fellow	AnSI	Panel 5
112.	Shri	Gitu Yaikhom	Assistant Keeper	AnSI	Panel 2
113.	Mr.	Gulshan Saklani	Research Scholar	Arts, Commerce and Science College, Badnapur, Maharashtra	Scientific Session 2
114.	Prof.	Gyaneswar Choubey	Professor	Banaras Hindu Univeristy, Banaras, U.P	CHAIR PANEL 8
115.	Mr.	Hareendran P	Assistant Professor	Kannur University, Wayand, Kerala	Scientific Session 21
116.	Ms.	Helena Mutum	Research scholar	Manipur University, Imphal	Panel 16
117.	Dr.	Himani Patel	Research scholar	Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP), 53 University Road, Lucknow,UP	Panel 8
118.	Ms.	Husne Afrin	Research scholar	Purulia, West Bengal	Scientific Session 9
119.	Ms.	Immon Ghosh	Research scholar	Gauhati University, Jalukbari, Assam	Scientific Session 13
120.	Ms.	Indulekha KC	PG student	SUM College of Teacher Education, Kannur, Kerala.	Scientific Session 6
121.	Ms.	Inotoli L Assumi	Senior Research Fellow	AnSI	Scientific Session 16
122.	Mr.	Ishan Dutta	Research Scholar	Indian Statistical Institute, Giridih, Jharkhand	Scientific Session 18
123.	Dr.	Ishdeep Kaur Bhandari	Assistant Professor	Lucknow University, Uttar Pradesh	Scientific Session 1
124.	Smt	Jagyan kalpita Pradhan	Research Scholar	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	Scientific Session 12
125.	Ms.	Jambey Chotton	Research scholar	Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh	Scientific Session 14
126.	Ms.	Jeena Wahengbam	Research scholar	Manipur University, Imphal	Panel 1
127.	Shri	Jeetendra Kabeerpanthi	Research scholar	Dr. Harisingh Gour university, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh	Scientific Session 13
128.	Ms.	Jenisha Singh	PhD Research Fellow	School of Letters, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi	POSTER
129.	Prof.	Jibonkuamr Singh Singh.S	Professor	Manipur University, Imphal	CHAIR PANEL 7
130.	Shri	Joyraj Kalita	Research scholar	Nagaland University, Nagaland	Panel 16
131.	Ms.	K Grace Kom	Research scholar	Manipur University, Imphal	Scientific Session 13

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132.	Prof.	K K Basa	Professor	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	RT 1; RT 2; INAUGURAL; CG OR
133.	Prof.	K Rajan	Professor	Government Victoria College, Palakkad, Kerala	Scientific Session 5
134.	Prof.	K.R.Rama Mohan	Professor	Sikkim Manipal University, Gangtok, Sikkim	RT 2; CHAIR - SS; PA
135.	Dr.	Kalandi Singh	Research scholar	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	Scientific Session 24
136.	Dr.	Kalyani Sahal	Teaching Assitant	Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh	Scientific Session 13
137.	Ms.	Kankana Basu	Senior Research Fellow	AnSI	Panel 17
138.	Dr.	Kanika Mondal	Archivist	Danmal Mathur Museum, Ajmer, Rajasthan	Panel 2
139.	Shri	Kanike Veerashekhhar	Research Associate	AnSI	Panel 11
140.	Prof.	Kanu Charan Sathapathy	Professor	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	CHAIR Scientific Session 20
141.	Ms	Karishma Singh	Research Scholar	University of Allahabad Prayagraj	POSTER
142.	Dr.	Karung Hoineikham Kom	Guest Lecturer	Manipur University, Imphal	Scientific Session 4
143.	Dr.	Kasi Eswarappa	Assistant Professor	Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak, MP	Scientific Session 12
144.	Prof.	Kattimani T.V.	Vice Chancellor	A.P. Tribal Univeristy, Vizianagaram	IGNCA PANEL
145.	Dr.	Kaustuv Debsarma	Assistant Professor	Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Chhattisgarh	Scientific Session 23
146.	Ms.	Kavya Pal	Research scholar	Dr. Harisingh Gour university, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh	Panel 12
147.	Ms.	Kevikiebi-i Nakhro	Research scholar	Nagaland University, Nagaland	Scientific Session 18
148.	Prof.	Keya Pandey	Professor	Lucknow University, Uttar Pradesh	IGNCA PANEL
149.	Dr.	Khirod Chandra Moharana	Assistant Professor	University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh	Panel 12
150.	Dr.	Koel Mukherjee	Anthropologist	AnSI	Panel 1 CHAIR
151.	Ms.	Kohena Santra	Research scholar	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	Panel 20
152.	Ms.	Komal Sanjay Saraf	Research Scholar	Central University of Karnataka, Karnataka	Scientific Session 21
153.	Mr.	Krishnakant manas	Research Scholar	Dr Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh	Scientific Session 3
154.	Ms.	Laxmi Priya Rabha	Research scholar	Dibrugarh University, Assam.	Scientific Session 10
155.	Dr.	Likhan Chandra Doley	Research Associate	AnSI	Panel 11
156.	Ms.	Lipika Nath	Research scholar	University of Delhi, Delhi	Panel 2
157.	Dr.	M.P.Damodaran	Assistant Professor	University of Madras, Chennai, Tamilnadu	CHAIR FILM SCREENING 3

158.	Dr.	M.S. Mahendrakumar	Associate Professor	Kannur University, Kannur, Kerala	Panel 18
159.	Ms.	Madhu Kumari	PG student	Gangadhar Meher University, Sambalpur, Odisha -768001	Scientific Session 8
160.	Ms.	Madhujha Bhattacharya	Research Scholar	Jadavpur University, Kolkata	Scientific Session 19
161.	Dr.	Madhusudan Reddy	Scientist	CFDF, Hyderabad	PANEL CHAIR 14
162.	Dr	Madhumati Chatterjee	Assistant Professor	Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Govt. College	Panel 19
163.	Ms.	Malvika Yumnam	Research scholar	Manipur University, Imphal	Panel 1
164.	Mr.	Manas Ranjan Pattanayak	Research Scholar	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	Panel 3
165.	Ms.	Mandrita Sarkar	PG Student	West Bengal State University, Kolkata	POSTER
166.	Mr.	Manu Naik	Research scholar	Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University, Odisha	Scientific Session 24
167.	Ms.	Margadarsika Panda	Research scholar	Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanjadeo University, Baripada, Odisha	POSTER
168.	Ms.	Medha Saini	PG student	IGNOU Camous, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi	POSTER
169.	Ms.	Meenakshi	Research Associate	AnSI	Panel 12
170.	Ms.	Meenal Soni	PG student	Delhi University, Delhi	Panel 7
171.	Ms.	Megha Soni	PG student	Dr. Harisingh Gour university, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh	POSTER
172.	Dr.	Millo Pubyang	Research scholar	Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh	Scientific Session 16
173.	Smt	Minakshi Sharma	Assistant Anthropologist	AnSI	Scientific Session 25
174.	Dr.	Mini PV	Research Officer	Directorate of KIRTADS, Kozhikode, Kerala	POSTER
175.	Mr.	Mitrajit Saha	Research scholar	Nagaland University, Nagaland	Panel 4
176.	Ms.	Mohima Roy	PG student	Sidho Kandho Birsha Universty, West Bengal	Scientific Session 15
177.	Dr.	Mopada Nani Babu	Research Associate	AnSI	Scientific Session 17
178.	Ms.	Moumita Dhar	Research Officer	National Museum, New Delhi	Panel 4
179.	Ms.	Mridusmita Bhuyan	PhD scholar	National Museum, New Delhi	POSTER
180.	Mr.	Mrigango Biswas	Research Scholar	Delhi University, Delhi	POSTER
181.	Mr.	Mudit Mukul Dwivedi	PG student	Delhi University, Delhi	POSTER
182.	Prof.	N. Sudhakar Rao	Professor	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	PCW; RT-2; CHAIR PA;
183.	Ms.	Nabanita Goswamy	SACT	New Alipore College, Kolkata 53	Panel 10
184.	Ms.	Nada Aku	Research Scholar	Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh	Panel 18
185.	Mr.	Nada Tido	Research Scholar	Department of Anthropology Rajiv Gandhi University Arunachal Pradesh	POSTER

186.	Ms.	Nairrita Bhattacharjee	Senior Research Fellow (UGC NET)	Department of Anthropology University of Calcutta	Scientific Session 22
187.	Ms.	Najma Begam A	Research Scholar	University of Madras, Chennai, Tamil Nadu	Scientific Session 18
188.	Dr.	Nanda Kishore Kannuri	Associate Professor	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	RT 1; CHAIR SS -2
189.	Ms.	Nang Pinni Mein	Research scholar	Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh	Panel 4
190.	Dr.	Nidhi Bhandari	Doctor	District hospital, Jagdalpur	Panel 6
191.	Dr.	Nilanjan Khatua	Deputy Director	AnSI	CHAIR SESSION 14; PANEL 4
192.	Mr.	Niten Chhetri	Research scholar	Merry Villa Darjeeling, West Bengal	Scientific Session 12
193.	Dr.	Nivedita Som	Assistant Professor	Vivekananda College For Women, Kolkata	Scientific Session 13
194.	Ms.	Oishi Choudhury	Research Scholar	University of Delhi, Delhi	Panel 6
195.	Prof.	P. Venkata Rao	Professor	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	RT -2; IGNCA SP;
196.	Prof.	P.C. Joshi	Professor	University of Delhi, Delhi	IGNCA PANEL; RT -2; RT-1
197.	Dr.	Paramananda Naik	Assistant Professor	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	Panel 9
198.	Ms.	Paramita Das	Ph.D. Scholar Department of Anthropology	University of Calcutta	Scientific Session 22
199.	Shri	Partha Sarathi Sarkar	Research scholar	Tripura University. Agartala, Tripura	Panel 9
200.	Ms.	Payal Roy	Research scholar	University of North Bengal, West Bengal	CHAIR PA
201.	Ms.	Pinky Sisa	Research scholar	Central university of Odisha, Odisha	Scientific Session 4
202.	Dr.	Piyusa Ranjan Sahoo	Superintending Anthropologist	AnSI	Panel 3- PANELIST; Panel 9 CHAIR
203.	Dr.	Poonam Tripathi	Assistant Professor	University of Lucknow, Lucknow	Scientific Session 17
204.	Mr.	Pranay Pramod Deotale	Research scholar	Sikkim Manipal University, Gangtok, Sikkim	Scientific Session 9
205.	Ms.	Pranjali Joshi	PG student	Delhi University, Delhi	Panel 5
206.	Ms.	Pranjali Ramteke	Research Associate	AnSI	Panel 11
207.	Mr.	Prasant Kumar Sahoo	Assistant Professor	F. M. Autonomous College, Balasore, Odisha	Scientific Session 12
208.	Dr.	Prashant Khattri	Assistant Professor	University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh	PANEL
209.	Shri	Prashant Kumar	Research scholar	Allahabad university, Uttar Pradesh	POSTER
210.	Ms.	Pratik Verma	PG student	Delhi University, Delhi	POSTER
211.	Ms.	Pratima Tiwari	Research scholar	University of Lucknow, Lucknow	Scientific Session 23
212.	Ms.	Preeti	Research scholar	University of Delhi, Delhi	Scientific Session 20

213.	Ms.	Preeti Sagar	Research scholar	University of Lucknow, Lucknow	Scientific Session 3
214.	Prof.	Premanand Panda	Professor	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	OR; CHAIR SS; RT 1; RT 2
215.	Ms.	Purna Verma	Independent Researcher	Independent Researcher	Scientific Session 19
216.	Ms.	Pritizinda Behera	PG student	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	POSTER
217.	Ms.	Priya Dey	Junior Research Fellow	AnSI	Panel 20, Panel 10
218.	Ms.	Priyadarshini S	Research Scholar	CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru, Karnataka	POSTER
219.	Ms.	Priyanka Choudhary	Research Scholar	University of Delhi, New Delhi	POSTER
220.	Ms.	Priyanka Das	Research Scholar	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	Scientific Session 8
221.	Ms.	Pushpa Amulya Kalangi	Research scholar	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	Scientific Session 2
222.	Prof.	R.K.Das	Professor	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	Prof. S.C Dubey Oration Lecture
223.	Prof.	R.Siva Prasad	Professor	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	RT -2; CHAIR-OR; CHAIR-PA
224.	Ms.	Rachita Mohanta	PG student	Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanjadeso University	POSTER
225.	Ms.	Rachna Atri-saksena	Consultant		Panel 4-A
226.	Dr.	Raghavendra Singh	IGNCA researcher	IGNCA, Delhi	IGNCA
227.	Mr.	Rahul Kumar	Post Graduate Student,	Department of Anthropology, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj	POSTER
228.	Mr.	Raj Pandit	Research scholar	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	Panel 19
229.	Prof.	Raja Chakraborty	Professor	Sidho Kandho Birsha Universty, West Bengal	RT-1
230.	Dr.	Rajakishor Mahana	Associate Professor	Maa Manikeshwari University, Bhawanipatna, Odisha	POSTER
231.	Ms.	Rajdip Ghosh	Junior Research Fellow	AnSI	Scientific Session 25
232.	Prof.	Rajesh K. Gautam	Professor	Dr. Harisingh Gour university, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh	Participant
233.	Mr.	Rajnarayan Mohanty	Research Scholar	MSCB University, Baripada, Mayurbhanj, Odisha 757003	Scientific Session 7
234.	Ms.	Rakhi Kumari	Assistant Linguist	AnSI	Panel 13
235.	Ms.	Raktima Kar Chowdhury	Research scholar	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	Scientific Session 9
236.	Shri	Rambabu Marla	Research Associate	AnSI	Scientific Session 7
237.	Dr.	Ramdas D Gambhir	Emeritus Professor (Retired)	Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune	PCW; RT-2; CHAIR SS
238.	Dr.	Ramesh Sahani	Associate Professor	University of Delhi, Delhi	Scientific Session 18
239.	Ms.	Rangulu Keyho	Research Scholar	Nagaland University, Nagaland	Scientific Session 20

240.	Ms.	Ranjana Rani Singh	Assistant Professor	M.P.C. Autonomous College, Baripada, Odisha	Scientific Session 24
241.	Dr.	Ravindra Kumar Koshal	Anthropologist (Cul.)	AnSI	PCW
242.	Mr.	Ratnakar Palei	Research Scholar	Maa Manikeshwari University, Bhawanipatna, Odisha	Panel 11
243.	Ms.	Ravali Medari	User Experience Researcher	Gaian Solutions, RangaReddy Dist, Telangana	POSTER
244.	Mr.	Reddy Narasimham Naidu	Assistant Anthropologist	AnSI	Panel 20-PANELIST
245.	Ms.	Reetimoni Hazarika	Research scholar	Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh	Scientific Session 14
246.	Ms.	Rina Madi	Research Scholar	Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) DU, Bhubaneswar	POSTER
247.	Ms.	Rishma Basumatary	Research Scholar	Cotton University, Assam	Scientific Session 25
248.	Ms.	Ritesh	Research Scholar	Panjab University, Chandigarh	Scientific Session 10
249.	Mr.	Ritwik Banerjee	Research scholar	IGNOU, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi	Scientific Session 23
250.	Smt	Roma Das	Anthropologist	AnSI	Scientific Session 21
251.	Prof.	Romesh Singh	Professor	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	RT 2; CHAIR - SS 3
252.	Mr.	Romi Anand	Research Associate	AnSI	Scientific Session 21
253.	Ms.	Roshani Patel	PG student	Harisingh Gour Central University, Sagar	Scientific Session 15
254.	Prof.	Roumi Deb	Professor	Amity University, Uttar Pradesh	CHAIR Session 15, PANELIST-PANEL 6
255.	Mr.	Rubu Anu	Ph.D research scholar	Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills Doimukh, Papum Pare, Arunachal Pradesh	POSTER
256.	Dr.	Ryzhakova Svetlana	Professor	Russian Academy of Science, Moscow	Scientific Session 6
257.	Prof.	S.M. Pattnaik	Professor	University of Delhi, Delhi	RT-1, RT-2, IGNCA SPECIAL PANEL
258.	Prof.	S.N.Ratha	Professor	Sambalpur University, Odisha	RT-1, RT-2, IGNCA SPECIAL PANEL
259.	Prof.	Sabita Acharya	Vice Chancellor	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	RT1 AND RT 2
260.	Mr.	Sagar Kodi	Research Associate (Cultural)	AnSI	CO AUTHOR PANEL 17
261.	Ms.	Sahana Datta	Assistant Professor	Adamas University, Kolkata, West Bengal.	POSTER
262.	Ms.	Saheli Dey	Research Scholar	Delhi University, Delhi	Panel 6

263.	Shri	Sajib Ghosh	Research Associate	AnSI	Panel 18
264.	Ms.	Sakshi Rajkumar Fulke	PG Student	Government Institute of Forensic Science, Maharashtra	Panel 7
265.	Ms.	Saloni Panda	Research Scholar	Central University of Odisha, Odisha	Panel 15
266.	Ms.	Saloni Uniyal	Research Associate	AnSI	Scientific Session 20
267.	Ms.	Sandhya Bhatt	PG student	Delhi University, Delhi	Scientific Session 11
268.	Ms.	Sangeeta Nayak	Guest Faculty	m.p.c autonomous college, Baripada, Odisha	POSTER
269.	Ms.	Sanjula Sarkar	Independent Researcher	The West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences	POSTER
270.	Dr	Sanjenbam Yaiphaba	Assistant Professor	Department of Anthropology, Manipur University, Canchipur, Manipur,	Panel 1
271.	Mr.	Sanjoy Akoijam	Research scholar	Manipur University, Imphal	Scientific Session 21
272.	Mr.	Santu Jana	Research scholar	Vidyasagar University West Midnapore, West Bengal	POSTER
273.	Dr.	Sapna Dudeja	Assistant Professor	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Delhi	Panel 12
274.	Mr.	Saptarshi Bairagi	PhD Research Scholar	Department of Anthropology University of Delhi	POSTER
275.	Mr.	Sarabjeet Singh	Assistant Keeper	AnSI	Panel 15
276.	Ms.	Sarah Zaki Ansari	PG student	IGRMS, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh	Panel 15
277.	Prof.	Saraswathy K N	Professor	University of Delhi, Delhi	CHAIR PANEL 1
278.	Dr.	Sarvendra Yadav	Associate Professor	H.N.B. Garhwal University Srinagar, Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand	RT-1
279.	Mr.	Satchidananda Dash	PG student	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	Scientific Session 4
280.	Mr.	Satyabrata Nayak	Ph.D research scholar	MSCB, University of Odisha	Scientific Session 9
281.	Dr.	Saubhagya Laxmi Singh	Assistant Professor	Central university of Odisha, Odisha	Scientific Session 5
282.	Mr.	Saurabh Tripathi	PG Student	BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY, VARANASI,	POSTER
283.	Ms.	Sayantani Kundu	PG student	West Bengal State University, Kolkata	POSTER
284.	Ms.	Shaina Parveen	PG student	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	POSTER
285.	Dr.	Shakina T.	Assistant Professor	Kannur University, Kannur, Kerala	Scientific Session 19
286.	Ms.	Shalvi	Research Scholar	Panjab University, Chandigarh	Panel 5
287.	Prof.	Shanti Pappu	Secretary	Sharma Centre for Heritage Educaiton, Chennai	PROF. B.D DAS MENORIAL ORATION
288.	Ms.	Shantilata Jena	PG student	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	Panel 2

289.	Ms.	Shatasree Mazumdar	Research scholar	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	POSTER
290.	Ms.	Shereya Chakraborty	PG Student	West Bengal State University, Kolkata	Scientific Session 25
291.	Ms.	Shipra Verma	Research scholar	University of Lucknow, Lucknow	Scientific Session 6
292.	Ms.	Shivangi Bahadur	Senior Research Fellow	AnSI	Panel 4
293.	Ms.	Shivani Ghosh	Research scholar	IIT (BHU), Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh	Scientific Session 20
294.	Ms.	Shreshtha Chowdhury	Independent Scholar	University of Delhi, New Delhi	POSTER
295.	Ms.	Shreya Mukherjee	Research scholar	Vidyasagar University West Midnapore, West Bengal	Scientific Session 16
296.	Ms.	Shreyashee Pandey	Research scholar	Delhi University, Delhi	Scientific Session 1
297.	Ms.	Shreyasi Podder	Junior Research Fellow	AnSI	Scientific Session 15
298.	Dr.	Shreyosi Mitra	Lecturer	Vivekananda College for Women, Kolkata	Scientific Session 13
299.	Ms.	Shromona Dhara	Research scholar	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	POSTER
300.	Mr.	Shwetotpal Mrinal	Research scholar	Centre for Genetic Disorders, Banaras Hindu University	Panel 19
301.	Dr.	Shyama Mohaptra	Assistant Professor	Model Degree College, Rayagada, Odisha,	Scientific Session 23
302.	Dr.	Siddhant Mishra	Post- Doctoral Fellow	University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh	Scientific Session 25
303.	Mr.	Siddhartha Shit	Assistant Keeper	AnSI	POSTER
304.	Ms.	Sila Jana	Research scholar	Vidyasagar University West Midnapore, West Bengal	Scientific Session 2
305.	Ms.	Sima Das	PG student	Sidho Kandho Birsha Universty, West Bengal	Panel 20
306.	Ms.	Simranjeet Kaur	Research scholar	Panjab University, Chandigarh	POSTER
307.	Dr.	Sini.M	Associate Professor	Kannur University, Kannur, Kerala	Scientific Session 6
308.	Shri	Sitikantha Panda	Research Scholar	Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanjadeo University, Odisha	Panel 7
309.	Dr.	Smaranika Das	Assistant Professor	Shailabala Womens' Autonomous College, Cuttack	Scientific Session 11
310.	Ms.	Smita Chakraborty	Assistant Professor	RID Government Girl's College, Jhargam	Panel 16
311.	Ms.	Sneha Dutta	PG Student	W.B National University of Juridical Sciences, Kolkata	POSTER
312.	Ms.	Snigdha Konar	Research scholar	Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences, Uttar Pradesh	Panel 8
313.	Dr.	Snigdha Vishnoi	Assistant Professor	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Delhi	BOOK DISCUSSANT
314.	Ms.	Sohini Chatterjee	PG student	West Bengal State University, Kolkata	POSTER

315.	Dr.	Solomon Salve	Visiting Faculty	Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune	PCW RESOURCE PERSON
316.	Prof.	Somenath Bhattacharjee	Professor	Nagaland University, Nagaland	CONVENOR PANEL 16
317.	Dr.	Sonal Jain	DST Inspire Faculty	University of Delhi, Delhi	Panel 7
318.	Dr.	Sonal Pandey	Assistant Professor	Department of Anthropology, Tilka Manjhi Bhagalpur University	POSTER
319.	Mr.	Soumjit Dey	PG student	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	POSTER
320.	Dr	Sreenu. P	Research Scholar	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	Panel 10
321.	Ms.	Sreeparna Banerjee	Research scholar	West Bengal State University, Kolkata	Scientific Session 5
322.	Ms.	Sriya Ash	PG student	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	Scientific Session 24
323.	Dr.	Subeno Kithan	Assistant Professor	Tata Institute of Social Science, Guwahati, Assam	Scientific Session 4
324.	Ms.	Subhalaxmi Baral	Research Scholar	Department of Anthropology and Tribal Studies, MSCB University, Odisha, India	POSTER
325.	Mr.	Subham Kumar Darpan	Research Associate	AnSI	Scientific Session 1
326.	Mr.	Subham Prasad Sahoo	Research Associate	UTKAL UNIVERSITY, VANI VIHAR, BHUBANESWAR, DIST.-KHORDHA, ODISHA.	POSTER
327.	Mr.	Subhandu Patra	Research Scholar	Sidho Kandho Birsha Universty, West Bengal	POSTER
328.	Prof.	Subho Roy	Professor	Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata	MEMBER SECRETARY INCAA
329.	Dr.	Subhra Devi	Assistant Curator	Tezpur University, Tezpur, Assam	Scientific Session 12
330.	Dr.	Suchandra Ghosh	Assistant Professor	Rani Indira Debi Government Girls' College, Jhargram	Scientific Session 17
331.	Ms.	Suchismita Swain	Research scholar	Central University of Odisha, Odisha	Scientific Session 16
332.	Dr	Sudeshna Chanda	Assistant Professor	Bidhannagar Government College	Panel 19
333.	Dr.	Sudipta Ghosh	Assistant Professor	North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong	Scientific Session 23
334.	Ms.	Sujata Parida	PG Student	Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University , Takhatpur , Baripada, pin-757003, Mayurbhanj , Odisha	POSTER
335.	Mr.	Sujan Bera	Research scholar	AnSI	Scientific Session 5, Scientific Session 7
336.	Ms.	Sukanya Guha Niyogi	Research scholar	University of Delhi, New Delhi	POSTER

337.	Dr.	Sukrita Tirkey	Associate Professor	Saheed Mahendra Karma Biswabidyalaya, Bastar, Chattisgarh	Panel 3, Panel 9
338.	Mr.	Suman Maity	Research scholar	Vidyasagar University West Midnapore, West Bengal	Scientific Session 17
339.	Ms.	Suman Rawat	Research Scholar	Indian Institute of Technology (BHU), Varanasi	Scientific Session 19
340.	Mr.	Sumit Maitra	Research Scholar	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	Panel 19
341.	Ms.	Sunita Barik	Research Scholar	Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanjia Deo University, Odisha	Scientific Session 7
342.	Ms.	Sunita Soren	Research Assistant	C.U of Jharkhand, Ranchi	Panel 16
343.	Dr.	Suniti Yadav	Assistant Professor	Delhi University, Delhi	PANEL 6, POSTER
344.	Dr.	Surabhi Verma	Research Associate	AnSI	Scientific Session 23
345.	Mr.	Suresh K P	Research Assistant	Directorate of KIRTADS, Kozhikode, Kerala	POSTER
346.	Dr.	Surya Kumar Pandey	Assistant Curator	IGRMS, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh	IGRMS PANEL
347.	Dr.	Surya Prakash Upadhyay	Associate Professor	Indian Institute of Technology Mandi, Himachal Pradesh	RT-1, CHAIR PANEL 13
348.	Ms.	Sushree Atmaja Pal	PG student	Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	Scientific Session 11
349.	Ms.	Susmita Medak	Research scholar	Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh	Scientific Session 22
350.	Ms.	Swagata Sarkar	Research scholar	Pondicherry University, Puducherry	Scientific Session 10
351.	Ms.	Swapnashree Das	Research Scholar	Department of Anthropology and Tribal Studies, MSCB University	POSTER
352.	Dr.	Swarup Bhattacharyya	Exeter Associate	University of Exeter, UK	Panel 4
353.	Ms.	T Jyoti Rao	Research scholar	Maa Manikeshwari University, Bhawanipatna, Odisha	Panel 5
354.	Mr.	T Pavan Kumar	Research Scholar	University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana	Scientific Session 22
355.	Mr.	T.S.Janaki Ramaraju	Research scholar	Pondicherry University, Puducherry	Panel 17
356.	Mr.	Tadu Dandhin	Research scholar	Rajiv Gandhi University, papumpare doimukh, 791112, Arunachal Pradesh	POSTER
357.	Ms.	Tailyang Nampi	Research Scholar	Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh	Panel 18
358.	Mr.	Tajinder Kaur	Ph.D research scholar	Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi	POSTER
359.	Ms.	Taman Hazarika	Junior Research Fellow	AnSI	Scientific Session 17
360.	Mr.	Tame Doro Tabang	Research Scholar	Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh	Panel 19
361.	Ms.	Th. Rebika Devi	PhD Scholar	Dhanamanjuri University, Imphal West , 795001, Manipur.	POSTER

362.	Mr.	Thang Min Lun	PG Student	Kannur University, Kannur, Kerala	Scientific Session 6
363.	Dr.	Thanuja M	Professor	Pondicherry University, Puducherry	CHAIR SESSION 5
364.	Ms	Tina Dulom	PhD Scholar	Indian Institute of Heritage, A-19, Sector 32, Noida, UP	POSTER
365.	Mr.	Titas Ghosh	Research Scholar	Department of Anthropology, University of Calcutta, Kolkata	Scientific Session 22
366.	Ms.	Tlanglawmkim Hmar	Senior Research Fellow	AnSI	Scientific Session 25
367.	Dr.	Toshi pandey	Research Assistant, ICSSR Project	University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh	Panel 5
368.	Mr.	Tsering Chosdon	Ph.D research scholar	Delhi University	POSTER
369.	Mr.	Tushar Srivastava	Research Associate	AnSI	Scientific Session 11
370.	Dr.	Uma V	PG student	Tamilnadu Teachers Education University	Scientific Session 7
371.	Ms.	Upasana Pandey	PG student	Calcutta University , Kolkata, West Bengal	Scientific Session 6
372.	Dr.	Urfat Anjem Mir	Associate Professor	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Delhi	Panel 12
373.	Mr.	Utkarsh Srivastava	Research scholar	University of Lucknow, Lucknow	Scientific Session 10
374.	Dr.	Uttam Singh	Assistant Professor	Gujarat National Law University, Silvassa Campus	Scientific Session 1
375.	Mr.	Vageesh Vishnoi	Research Scholar	Indian Institute of Technology Delhi	Scientific Session 19
376.	Ms.	Vaishnavi Madhav Satpute	Community Coordinator	Kanger Valley National Park, Bastar, Chhattisgarh	Scientific Session 11
377.	Dr.	Venugopal P N	Assistant Anthropologist	AnSI	Panel 14
378.	Dr.	Vijay Kumar	Research Associate	AnSI	Scientific Session 12
379.	Mr.	Vijayanand P	PG Student	Kannur University, Kannur, Kerala	Scientific Session 6
380.	Mr.	Vinod S	PG student	Govt. of Kerala, Kerala	Scientific Session 10
381.	Mr.	W. Penaosana Chanu	RESEARCH SCHOLAR	DHANAMANJURI UNIVERSITY, IMPHAL-WEST, MANIPUR	POSTER

# RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

**THE GUT MICROBIAL GENOMIC STUDY AMONG THE PVTGs OF INDIA**



RESEARCH PROJECT BY

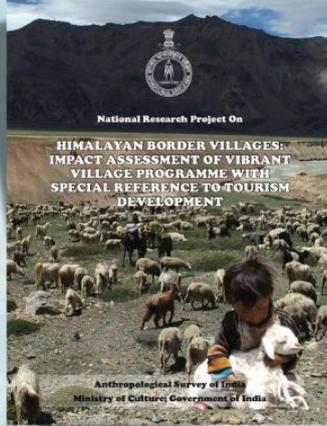


**ANTHROPOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA**  
Ministry of Culture, Government of India

In Collaboration With  
Birbal Sahni Institute for Palaeosciences, (An autonomous institute under Science and Technology, Government of India), Lucknow.  
DBT- Centre for Microbial Informatics, School of Life Science, University of Hyderabad. (Institute of Eminence), Hyderabad.

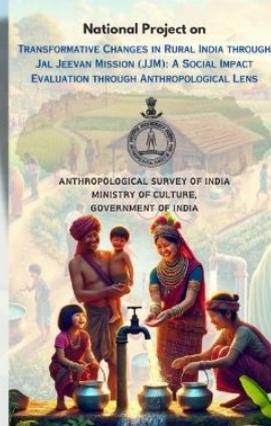
National Research Project On

**HIMALAYAN BORDER VILLAGES: IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF VIBRANT VILLAGE PROGRAMME WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**



Anthropological Survey of India  
Ministry of Culture, Government of India

National Project on  
TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGES IN RURAL INDIA THROUGH JAL JEEVAN MISSION (JJM): A SOCIAL IMPACT EVALUATION THROUGH ANTHROPOLOGICAL LENS



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National Research Project in Cultural Anthropology - 2023-2025

RURAL LIVESTOCK MARKETS IN INDIA, AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACETS

PARTICIPATING UNITS  
SOUTHERN REGIONAL CENTRE - MYSORE  
NORTH-WEST REGIONAL CENTRE - DEHRADUN  
WESTERN REGIONAL CENTRE - UDAIPUR  
CENTRAL REGIONAL CENTRE - NAGPUR




Region-Specific Research Projects  
**Anthropological Survey of India 2023-2024**



Anthropological Survey of India  
North East Regional Centre, Shillong  
Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India

Regional-specific research project  
by  
**Anthropological Survey of India 2023-2024**

Ethnic groups in Inter-State Borders of Chhattisgarh, India: Identities, Intra and Inter-ethnic relationships and Developmental concerns



Participating Units  
Sub-Regional Centre, Jaspalpur  
Central Regional Centre, Nagpur  
Eastern Regional Centre, Kolkata

**IMPACT OF CHANGING AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES ON RURAL HEALTH: A STUDY AMONG THE TRIBAL FARMERS OF VIDARBHA REGION OF MAHARASHTRA**

RESEARCH PROJECT BY  
**ANTHROPOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA**  
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