



অনুসন্ধান নেশনাল রিসার্চ  
ফাউন্ডেশন  
Anusandhan National  
Research Foundation

## International Seminar

# ***BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND MYRIAD OF CULTURES: THEIR INTERSECTIONS IN THE NORTH EAST INDIA***

25th-26th March, 2025

## Call for Abstracts

Sponsored by  
Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)  
&  
Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)

Organised by  
Department of Anthropology, Gauhati University

## Concept note

Humans are a part of, not apart from nature

NE India, a home of multitude of communities is endowed with natural and cultural diversities. The communities inhabiting in the entire region have an exquisite and myriads of cultures, traditions and practices. Each of these communities are unique in their own ways and, therefore, it is important to know their basic facets, preserve and protect their cultural heritage. Diverse cultural practices are always central to the management of biological diversity. The role of indigenous cultures and the application of their knowledge to ecosystems in conserving biodiversity is always paramount and are examples of adaptation to local contexts (or niche formation) and contribute to conservation of biodiversity. There exists a mutual feedback between cultural systems and the environment. Nature has always provided the setting in which cultural processes, activities and belief systems develop. Cultural practices therefore depend upon specific elements of biodiversity for their existence and expression. Ultimately, conserving diversity has to be foremost and no doubt is an act of caring. Biological diversity which refers to all living organisms, their genetic material and the ecosystems of which they are a part supports human and societal needs, including food and nutrition security, energy and living, which together underpin good health. It also supports economic opportunities, and leisure activities that contribute to overall wellbeing. It occurs at 3 different levels, namely, species diversity, genetic diversity and ecosystem diversity. A number of international legal instruments that deal with biodiversity and cultural diversity separately already exists. But a holistic approach is required to jointly reverse the current trends of erosion of biodiversity and weakening of cultural diversity. As UNESCO says, a joint approach to promotion of diversity would strengthen the integration, interdependence and positive relationship between cultural and biological diversity. The loss of cultural diversity (including languages) and traditional knowledge of indigenous communities and their cultures is intricately linked to the loss of biological diversity. The relationship is so intrinsic that it goes unspoken. There are evidences to support the fact that exposure to nature has a positive effect on physical and mental health. That is why non-human nature is often considered sacred, as demonstrated by sacred groves, and is reflected in the growing interest in Bioregionalism. International recognition of the links between biodiversity and cultural diversity is reflected in the program of work of IUCNC/EESP and UNESCO, and in the UNEP's (2007) flagship report, Global Environment Outlook. This describes biodiversity as encompassing "human cultural diversity, which can be affected by the same drivers as biodiversity, and which has impacts on the diversity of genes, other species, and ecosystems" (UNEP, 2007). A joint approach therefore would strengthen the integration, interdependence and positive relationship between cultural and biological diversity. Drawing a parallel between interaction of scientists in critical thinking and active conversation about cultural diversity within the context of North East India, in this seminar, some basic information on biological diversity will be provided to understand why it should be given a central role in shaping the cultural milieu of any area, especially in the current time of global changes. At the same time, treating the North-eastern region of India as a single homogenous territory, only highlights the complexity of identity and marginality in the region. It is important to note that different cultures interact with nature in different ways and forge different relationships with their local environments. Utilizing a multidisciplinary approach, this endeavour involves insights not only from anthropology, but also from human biology, geography, sociology, political science, economics, literature, history, and other disciplines, to unravel the layered dynamics of myriad factors such as ethnicity, gender, health, religion, and socio-economic status contributing to the strengthening and fostering the culture and linking them with the prevalent biological diversity of the region.

You are requested to submit abstract in 500 words in structured form on any of the following sub themes:

1. Human and environment
2. Biodiversity and climate change
3. Nutrition and Body composition
4. Managing nature: Livelihoods, Practices and Resource
5. Growth, Development and Aging
6. Education for the vulnerable and marginalised communities
7. Community participation in development and policy making
8. Rethinking development
9. Local Religions and beliefs
10. Gender studies
11. Marginalized languages, literature, and cultural heritage
12. Marginalised communities in Urban development
13. Archaeological facets of culture

Last date of abstract submission: 01/03/2025

Acceptance notification date: 05/03/2025

Registration date (after acceptance of abstract) with accomodation: 10/03/2025

Registration date (after acceptance of abstract) without accomodation: 10/03/2025

Send the Abstract of the research paper to email id: [anthroseminar2025@gmail.com](mailto:anthroseminar2025@gmail.com).

Use the Google form (<https://forms.gle/zYD3TTzrmyTUaDZg6>) for Registration and Transaction details.

Category	Registration Fee (Without accommodation)	Registration Fee (With accommodation)	On Spot Registration (No accomodation)
Research Scholar	Rs. 1,500	Rs. 4000	Rs. 2,000
Academicians/ Faculty	Rs. 2,000	Rs. 5000	Rs. 2,500
Other Organizations	Rs. 2,500	Rs. 5000	Rs. 3,000



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 9678010970, 9706136898,  
 9435034172

\*Registration fees include modest accomodation (if opted), working lunch, session tea, Seminar kit and certificate

## About Gauhati University

Gauhati University (GU) is one of the premier institutions of higher education in Northeast India and one of the most sought after postgraduate institutions. It is a top ranking institute as per the NIRF rank list and is a NAAC A+ Grade institution. In the recent NIRF 2024 rankings, it has been placed at the top spot above all universities in the Northeast India. It has the most diversified academics among all other institutions of higher education in the Northeast. Gauhati University has been selected for the prestigious NSS Award for the year 2019-20. Great Sanskrit scholar, Indologist and philanthropist Krishna Kanta Handiqui was the founder Vice Chancellor of Gauhati University. Some very illustrious sons and daughters of Assam have been our alumni which includes none other than Bharat Ratna Dr Bhupen Hazarika, noted litterateur and Gyanpeeth Award Winner Mamoni Raisom Goswami. Being the oldest and the largest university in the entire Northeast, the university represents the academic and cultural background of the region, on which the other academic institutions of Northeast India started their journey.

## About the Department

The department of Anthropology, Gauhati University was established in the year 1948. The founder head was Prof. Madhab Chandra Goswami. The Department moved to Jalukbari in 1956 with its permanent Gauhati University campus and launched its Post Graduate programme. The Department shifted to the current building in 1968. The Department of Anthropology has been providing quality education in its three major branches of Physical Anthropology, Social and Cultural Anthropology, and Archaeological Anthropology for the past 77 years. The Department of Anthropology has a museum named as Madhab Chandra Goswami Anthropological Museum after its founder Head. The museum has been collecting, preserving and documenting the cultural materials from the different parts of the region since its establishment. It can be said to be a repository of the documents of the cultural history of the region. The museum houses both ethnographic and archaeological specimens. The museum has a large collection of basketry items, ornaments belonging to different tribes of the North East India, wooden figurines and other items of everyday use made of wood, masks, iron objects and a rich collection of fibre and textiles of the region. All the collections are first hand collections by the department. The department currently has a faculty strength of 10 teachers, 1 curator, 1 exploration officer and other associate staffs.

## How to reach:

Gauhati University is located at Jalukbari, within the Guwahati city area that belongs to the Kamrup Metro District, Assam. Guwahati is the gateway of entire North East India. The university is at a distance of 10.5 kilometres from the Lokapryia Gopinath Bardoloi International Airport at Borjhar on the National Highway No. 37, 5 kilometres away from Kamakhya Railway Station, 8 kilometres distance from Rupnath Brahma Inter State Bus Terminal and 23.5 kilometres away from the capital, Dispur. The university is easily accessible from Guwahati city, which has road, rail, bus and air links from all the part of the country.

## Patron-

Prof. Nani Gopal Mahanta, Vice-Chancellor, Gauhati University

## President-

Gulrukh Begum, Professor & Head, Department of Anthropology, Gauhati University

## Co-ordinators-

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2. Dr. Nabajit Kumar Das, Department of Anthropology, Gauhati University

## Organising Committee-

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