



IIT (ISM)
DHANBAD
1926-2026
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ICSSR Sponsored Two Day
National Seminar

On
**Reclaiming
Indigeneity**

The Adivasi Questions, *Janjati* Movements
and Tribal Studies in Contemporary India

Organised by

The Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines) Dhanbad
Jharkhand, India

**8 & 9
AUGUST
2025**



MORE INFORMATION

SCAN FOR REGISTRATION

✉ reclaimingindigeneity2025@gmail.com

CONCEPT NOTE

The demand for indigenous status in India has evolved into a multifaceted struggle over the last few decades, the most effective being the emergent demand for Schedule Tribe (ST) status by different tribal groups (or Janjati) across the country. India, home to approximately 700 tribal groups with 104 million (Census 2011), hosts the second-largest tribal population globally after Africa. However, many of these communities face existential threats to their livelihoods, cultures, identities, lands, and basic survival, stemming from exploitative development activities that date back to the British colonial era.

These extractive developments have infringed on their land and forest, resources that tribal communities have traditionally managed through various traditional institutions and pushed them away from their land. During British rule, tribal resistance to these exploitative systems was widespread. Resistance against such an extractive model of development has always been an integral part of the many tribal groups who fought against colonial exploitative practices. Among these resistances, the legacy of Birsa Munda (1875–1900) remains a keystone in the history of India's tribal movements, particularly in the Adivasi heartland of Jharkhand. His leadership of the Munda Rebellion, or *Ulgulan* (Great Tumult), against the British colonial rule – was a defining moment in the assertion of Adivasi identity, cultural pride, and the demand for autonomy. As a political leader and a spiritual guide, Birsa Munda's contributions extend beyond rebellion, offering a profound reflection on resistance, dignity, and the rights of marginalized communities. By centralising the contribution of Birsa Munda in shaping the discourse of tribal resistance against the exploitative forces since colonial times, this seminar aims to underscore the historical formation of Adivasi movements in different parts of the country.

In this regard, one can draw an influence from Birsa's legacy in the struggle for land rights by many indigenous communities across the world and the tribal population in India. His legacy inspires contemporary movements advocating for tribal rights, environmental justice, and the preservation of indigenous cultures. This seminar focuses on different aspects of *Janjati* movements and their demands for social, cultural, and environmental justice. In recent years, Birsa Munda's legacy has gained national prominence, symbolizing the resilience and aspirations of marginalized communities across India. His enduring spirit is a beacon of hope and inspiration for those committed to the struggle for equality and dignity. As the nation commemorates the 150th birth anniversary of *Dharti Aba* (Father of the Earth), it is imperative to reflect on his contributions and renew the commitment to uphold the values he championed.

Additionally, the academic endeavours to encompass the diverse legacy of Adivasi leader Birsa Munda have remained limited within the Adivasi heartland like Chhotanagpur Plateau and Jharkhand only and failed to incorporate the struggle of tribal groups in other parts of the country. This created a sharp division in using terms like “adivasi,” “tribes,” and “ethnicity” in the Indian context, the former being centred on the lives of Adivasi within the central India or fifth scheduled areas and the latter (tribes and ethnicity) is associated with the political and identity formation in the sixth scheduled areas (mostly Northeast India). This seminar aims to bridge this gap by bringing together participants from different parts of the country while focusing on the emerging themes and challenges of tribal studies in India. This seminar, organized to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Birsa Munda, will also be a part of the centenary celebrations of the Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines), Dhanbad, Jharkhand.

SOME IMPORTANT THEMES RELATED TO THE SEMINAR BUT NOT LIMITED TO IT:

- Colonialism, Tribal Resistance and the Legacy of Birsa Munda.
- Tribes, Development and Environment.
- Tribe, Ethnicity and Nation.
- Identity Politics and Community Formation among Tribal Communities in India.
- *Janjati* Movements in Contemporary India.
- Tribes and Religions.
- Land Conflicts, The Forest Rights Act, and Land Ownership in Tribal Areas.
- Constitutional Rights and Protection.
- Education, Aspiration, and Mobility in Tribal Society.
- Infrastructure, Urbanisation and Tribal Livelihood.
- Tribal Elite and the Rise of the Middle Class in Tribal society,
- Gender, Food Culture and Health in Tribal Society.
- Policies and Practices of Tribal Welfare in India.
- Tribes and Tourism: A Perspective from the Region.
- Pedagogy and Education in Tribal Society.
- Emergent Themes, Epistemic Questions and Challenges in Tribal Studies in Contemporary India.

PARTICIPATION AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

We invite well-researched papers from early career researchers, faculties, and individuals working in the field of tribal-related issues in India. Interested scholars are invited to submit a 300-word abstract and a short bio for the seminar through the [link](#) or by scanning the QR code. There are limited seats for participation and all selected participants must submit a full-length research paper before the seminar.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Abstract Submission Date: **30th May 2025**
- Notification of Acceptance: **15st June 2025**
- Last Date of Registration: **25th June 2025**
- Submission of Full Paper: **20th July 2025**

REGISTRATION

- Faculty: Rs 1500
- Research Scholar: Rs 1000
- Independent Scholar: Rs 1000

TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATION

The Registration includes local hospitality at the IIT (ISM) Dhanbad campus for the duration of the seminar. Travel Assistance equivalent to 3Ac Train fare will also be provided to all research scholars and presenters who lack other funding sources. Only participants who submit their full papers will be eligible for this support. In the case of a co-authored paper, only the first author will be eligible for this.

PUBLICATION

ICSSR aims to publish a multi-volume collection of “selected” research papers from *Janjatiya* Gaurav seminars. In pursuance of this, the organizing institution will constitute a Peer Review Committee to scrutinize and select high-quality research papers to be presented during the seminar.

ORGANIZERS:

CONVENOR

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