



2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

CENTRE FOR TRIBAL STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI



About CTS

VISION

The Executive Council of the University of Delhi decided to establish Centre for Tribal Studies (CTS) on 9 June 2023 as a multi-disciplinary centre under Faculty of Social Sciences, to facilitate studies on different tribes of India as per Ordinance XX (Z). The office bearers were appointed on 1st August 2023. The Centre is currently located at Room no. 30 of the Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi.

The Centre attempts to:

(i) Understand the term “Tribe” from India-Centric perspective including study of their social, cultural, linguistic, religious, economic, environmental diversity and commonalities.

(ii) Study the role and contribution of tribal leaders in various eras of Indian history.

(iii) Highlight role and significance of tribal leaders in India’s struggle for freedom, and bring out to prominence the unsung heroes among them.

(iv) Document various Lok traditions of India’s tribes including their indigenous/traditional knowledge and work to disseminate such information to the public in general and to academia and students in particular.

(v) Identify special problems and needs of Denotified and Nomadic tribes and Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) with special reference to conservation, development and special health needs.

(vi) Examine the significance of forest-tribe relationship with special reference to stability of forest ecosystems and livelihood issues.

(vii) Study contemporary issues relevant to the tribal communities which has a significant bearing on their present well-being and future progression in terms of overall developmental perspective.

Governing Structure



Prof. Yogesh Singh
Hon'ble Vice Chancellor
University of Delhi

Executive Council of the University

Governing Body

- (i) **Prof. Shri Prakash Singh**
Chairperson of Governing Body
 - (ii) Pro-Vice Chancellor
(Ex-officio)
 - (iii) Dean of Colleges
(Ex-Officio)
 - (iv) Dean, Faculty of Science
(Ex-Officio)
 - (v) Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences
(Ex-Officio)
 - (vi) Dean, Faculty of Arts
(Ex-Officio)
- External Expert members*
- (vii) Prof. T.V. Kattimani
Central Tribal University of A.P
 - (viii) Prof. Chander Mohan Parsheera
Director, Institute of Tribal Studies, Himachal Pradesh University
- Distinguished Academician*
- (ix) Prof. Payal Mago,
Director, Campus of Open Learning
 - (x) Prof. K. Ratnabali,
Dean, Academics
 - (xi) Prof. V.S Negi
Department of Geography
 - (xii) Prof. Soumendra M. Patnaik
Director of the Centre - Member Secretary
 - (xiii) Dr. Avitoli G Zhimo
Joint Director, CTS

Research Committee

- (i) Prof. S.M. Patnaik
Director, CTS - Chairperson
- Distinguished Academician*
- (ii) Prof. Payal Mago,
Director, Campus of Open Learning
 - (iii) Prof. K. Ratnabali,
Dean, Academics
 - (iv) Prof. V.S Negi
Department of Geography
- Expert Members*
- (v) Prof. T.V. Kattimani
Central Tribal University of A.P
 - (vi) Dr. Seema Singh
Faculty of Law
 - (vii) Dr. Santosh Hasnu
Hansraj College
 - (ix) Dr. Avitoli G. Zhimo
Joint Director, CTS - Member Secretary

Activities conducted

Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas | 15 November 2023

The Centre for Tribal Studies celebrated 'Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas' on November 15, 2023, to commemorate the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).

During the event, Prof. Shri Prakash Singh, Chairperson, Governing Body of the Centre and Director, South Campus emphasised the vital role of the Centre for Tribal Studies at Delhi University, in the context of lack of awareness within academia and the broader public regarding the tribals' significant contributions to India's independence struggle. He announced a substantial seed grant of 50 lakhs for the centre, with forthcoming fellowships and projects aimed at fortifying research and documentation of India's tribes.

Chief Guest Prof. Balaram Pani highlighted the discipline and precision exhibited by Bhagwan Birsa Munda at a young age. Drawing parallels, he elucidated the scientific knowledge possessed by tribal communities iron technology and construction of ancient temples.

Renowned folk artist and theatre director Shri. Anirudha D. Wankar delivered an enlightening lecture on '*Zhadipatti Rangbhoomi*,' illustrating how folk art serves as a means to express the life stories and contributions of tribal heroes like Bhagwan Birsa Munda.

Prof. S.M. Patnaik, Director of the Centre for Tribal Studies, emphasised the need for an India-centric approach to the study of tribes, outlining the vision for the newly established centre. He stressed the idea of interdisciplinary to make tribal studies holistic and meaningful.

Exhibition

An exhibition titled 'The Contribution of Tribal Leaders of India in Nation-Building', was presented, highlighting the culturally significant heritage of tribal leadership.

Film Screening

Ethnographic films focused on the indigenous knowledge systems of tribes were also screened, providing a comprehensive view of their cultural significance.

Students from tribal communities, enrolled in various courses, actively took part in the event donning their traditional attire.



Activities conducted

Elocution Competition | 24 November 2023 Role of Tribal freedom fighters in Nation building

Centre for Tribal Studies, University of Delhi organised a day-long celebration of Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas on 24 November 2023. Students from different departments – Political Science, History, Sanskrit, Botany, Cluster Innovation Centre participated in the competition. Undergraduate students from different colleges of University of Delhi participated in this competition. They are:

- (i) Indraprastha college for Women
- (ii) Miranda House
- (iii) Sri Venkateswara College
- (iv) Hansraj College
- (v) Lakshmbai College
- (vi) Motilal Nehru College
- (vii) Dayal Singh College

Students spoke on the topic 'Role of Tribal freedom fighters in Nation building'. It covered the unsung tribal heroes from different parts of India - Sido Kanhu Murmu, Tilka Manjhi, Budhu Bhagat, Laxman Nayak, Komaram Bheem, Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu, Rani Gaidinliu, Rani Durgavati etc.



Special Talk | 24 November 2023

'Memories of the tribal heroes in the freedom struggle and nation building'

On 24 November 2023 (afternoon), the Head of the Janapada Sampada Division, Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, **Prof Anil Kumar**, who belongs to the Pradhan tribe in Telangana, delivered a special talk on '*Memories of the tribal heroes in the freedom struggle and nation building*'. In his deliberation, he appealed to the participants to be empathetic towards the causes of the tribes. He said that understanding of the contemporary Indian tribes needs a new terminology. The term 'Jana' or 'Janajati' comes closer to the etymology of tribal reality. Quoting Harsh Chouhan, the former chairperson of the National Commission of Scheduled Tribes, he said that even the 'Janajati Samuha' could be another possibility. The present-day discourse needs to be centred around decolonizing the concept of tribe.



Special Talk | 14 March 2024

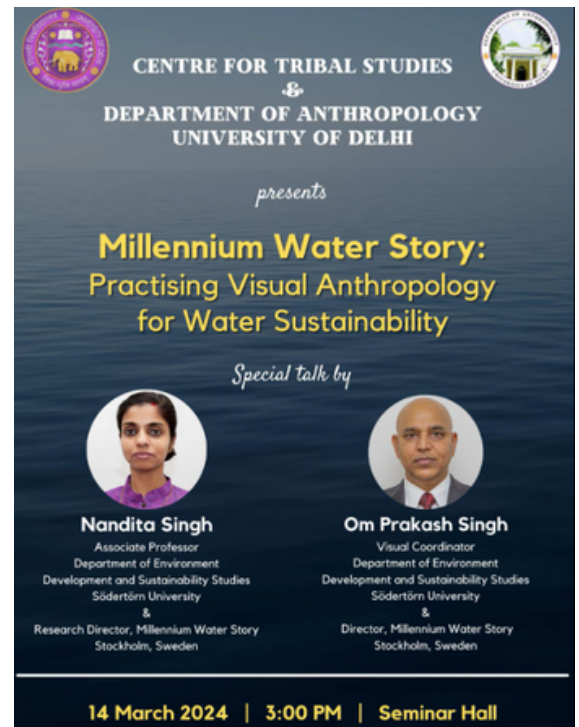
Millennium Water Story: Practising Visual Anthropology for Water Sustainability'

Nandita Singh

Associate Professor, Department of Environment, Development and Sustainability Studies, Södertörn University & Research Director, Millennium Water Story, Stockholm, Sweden

Om Prakash Singh

Visual Coordinator, Department of Environment, Development and Sustainability Studies, Södertörn University, & Director, Millennium Water Story, Stockholm, Sweden



The project 'The Millennium Water Story' stands as a testament to dedication towards knowledge creation for a sustainable future through the powerful medium of visual storytelling. In a world where the concept of sustainable development often seems like an oxymoron, social scientists are at the forefront, striving to bridge the gap between theory and practice, especially through a bottom-up approach. Through insightful photo essays on different tribal communities from Rajasthan and Nagaland, the speakers effectively showcased the intricacies and challenges of water sustainability in diverse contexts.

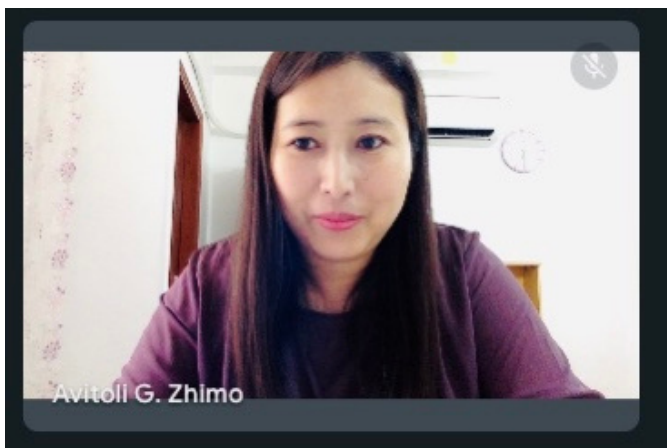
What sets this work apart is the deliberate choice of using black and white photography, which serves as a poignant representation of the complexities of life and the gravity of the water crisis. By stripping away the distractions of colour, they allow viewers to focus solely on the essence of the issue at hand. Through this monochromatic lens, they highlight not only the stark realities of water scarcity but also the resilience and resourcefulness of communities in managing local water resources.

One of the key insights gleaned from their work is the critical role of social capital in the management of indigenous water recharging technologies. Through their visually compelling narratives, the speakers effectively demonstrate how communities harness collective knowledge and social networks to implement sustainable water management practices. Their project serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of community-based approaches in addressing complex environmental challenges and paves the way for future research and action in the field of water sustainability.

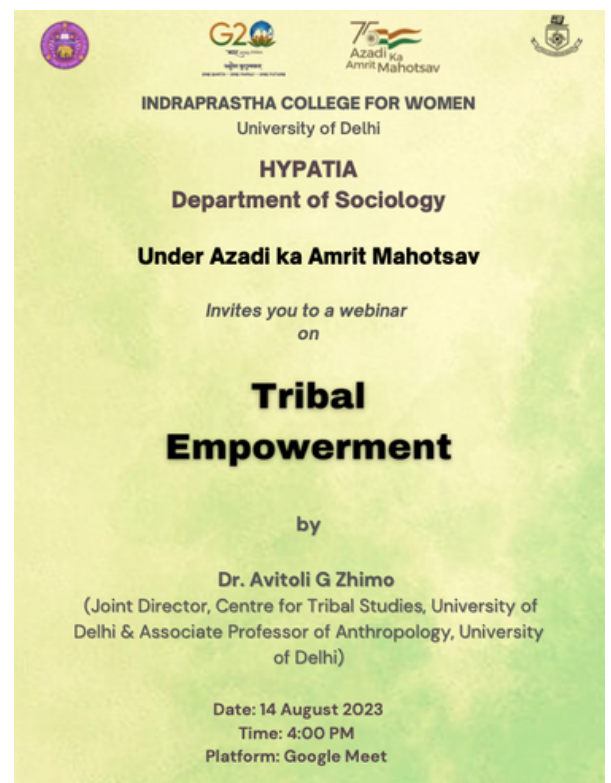
Other academic activities



- Prof. S.M.Patnaik (Director, CTS, DU) chaired the Third Professor Vinay Kumar Srivastava Memorial Lecture on '*Trajectory of Tribal resistance in Odisha*' on 29 December 2023 during the 48th All India Sociological Conference at Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore.



- Dr. Avitoli G. Zhimo, Joint Director, Centre for Tribal Studies, delivered an invited lecture on '*Tribal Empowerment*' in a webinar organized by the Department of Sociology, Indraprastha College for Women, University of Delhi, on 14 August 2023



Prof. Poonam Kumria
Principal

Dr. Meenakshi Gautam
Teacher in Charge

Dr. Astina Malik and Ms. Shilpi Shikha
Phukan
Academic Society Advisors

Vanya Jain
Vice President
8383074165

Other academic activities

- Prof. S.M. Patnaik (Director, CTS) delivered an address on *Indian Tribes and their mention in Sanskritic Texts wrst Methodology of Studying them* during Acharya Jyoti Swarup Memorial Lecture organised by Department of Sanskrit, University of Delhi on 9 December 2023.



- Prof. S.M.Patnaik (Director, CTS, DU) delivered special address as Guest of Honour on *Tribal Study in India:Policy and Practice* at Sambalpur University, Odisha. 10.01.2024.
- Dr. Avitoli G Zhimo delivered an invited lecture on '*Our land and people- Cultural Heritage of North Eastern India*' 484th Orientation Course in line with NEP-2020 for in-service teachers from 30 January 2024 at Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) Headquarters, New Delhi.
- Dr. Avitoli G Zhimo delivered an invited lecture on '*Women in Indian Culture and Folk Traditions*' on the occasion of International Women's Day organised by Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), Regional Centre, Ranchi. 14 March 2024.



Research Committee



L-R: Dr. Avitoli G. Zhimo, Dr. Seema Singh, Prof. V.S Negi, Prof. K. Ratnabali, Prof. Payal Mago, Prof. Soumendhra Mohan Patnaik, Dr. Santosh Hasnu,

The first meeting of the Research Committee of Centre for Tribal Studies was held on 11th December 2023 at 3:00 PM in the room of the Head, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi. The members discussed and identified the following thrust areas for future research and documentation by the Centre for Tribal Studies.

- India-centric perspective to study tribe: Understanding tribe from Indian perspective; Decolonizing; Re-writing of tribal ethnographies; Restudy of tribes
- Role of Women in tribal societies
- Customary Law and its Interface with State Law
- Traditional Knowledge; GI tags
- Sustainable Practices
- Sacred Spaces & Spirituality
- Ethnoarchaeology and Oral History
- Infiltration and Conversion
- Dialect and Languages
- Skills and their Documentation: Interface with the market
- Cultural heritage: Identification and Protection

Work in Progress

- The Centre has already formulated a research project on 'History of Cultural Practices in the Western and North Eastern Himalayas with special reference to Art, Craft and Folk Traditions' for extramural funding. This was originally prepared for ICSSR and now being submitted to Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- National Symposium '*Tribal Cosmologies and Environmental Consciousness: Exploring the Interface with Indian Philosophical Traditions*'. Indian Council of Philosophical Research has agreed in principle to sponsor the symposium.
- Data bank of students and faculty members belonging to Scheduled Tribes.
- Researchers and Faculty members of Delhi University working on research projects / PhD thesis on tribes.
- [Website cts.du.ac.in](http://cts.du.ac.in)



- Establishment of Bhagwan Birsa Chair as per UGC guidelines.

- **Research and Education Plans**

The Centre for Tribal Studies shall seek to roll out research and education plans that involve the following tentative Research Projects and activities:

i) *Role of Tribal Leaders in India's Freedom Struggle*: This research project aims to explore the often-overlooked contributions of tribal leaders to India's struggle for freedom. The research will examine historical records, oral histories, and archival materials to provide a comprehensive understanding of the diverse ways in which tribal leaders across different regions of India actively participated in and influenced the freedom movement.

ii) *Ethnographic study of tribal communities*. This kind of research will involve ethnographic fieldwork to document and analyse the various rituals, ceremonies, and cultural practices that are pertinent in maintaining social cohesion, identity, and spirituality within tribal societies. Restudies of classical ethnographies of Indian tribes would be theoretically and methodologically innovative.

iii) *Indigenous Knowledge Systems*: Various methods shall be used to document indigenous knowledge systems, i.e., traditional medicinal practices, ecological knowledge, biodiversity and traditional craftsmanship, among tribal communities. This research seeks to safeguard and rejuvenate endangered cultural traditions while promoting the transfer of knowledge between generations.

iv) *Development Interventions on Tribal Livelihoods*: This research will examine the impact of development projects such as infrastructure development, conservation initiatives, and social welfare programs, on the livelihoods and socio-economic well-being of tribal communities. The benefits, challenges, and unintended consequences of such interventions will be explored in detail.

Collaborations and Partnerships

Research collaboration has been agreed upon in principle with the Centre for Endangered Languages , Central University of Jharkhand, Ranchi. Research partnership is being worked out with other Research institutions. Fostering meaningful collaborations with tribal communities, government agencies, NGOs, academic partners, media organizations, and international networks, by engaging in the following activities:

- i) Organising workshops in collaboration with tribal communities to understand their needs and aspirations. These workshops will serve as platforms for dialogue, co-creation, and partnership building, ensuring that research and outreach activities are informed by community perspectives and participation.
- ii) Make strategic partnerships with relevant government agencies, such as the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and State-level tribal welfare departments, State Tribal Research Institutes, tribal universities to leverage resources, expertise, and networks for the implementation of research projects and policy advocacy initiatives which will eventually lead to the promotion of the rights, well-being, and development of tribal communities.
- iii) Collaborate with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society organizations, and grassroots movements working on tribal issues to strengthen the Centre's research and outreach activities.
- iv) Establish collaborations with academic institutions, research centres, and scholars working on tribal studies to promote interdisciplinary research, knowledge exchange, and capacity building. This can be achieved by organizing joint research seminars, conferences, and publications, facilitating collaboration and mutual learning among researchers and practitioners from diverse disciplinary backgrounds.
- v) Partner with media organizations to disseminate research findings, raise awareness, and promote greater public understanding and empathy.

DU sets up Centre for Tribal Studies

Soumendra Mohan Patnaik appointed as Director and Avitoli G. Zhimo Joint Director of CTS

August 10, 2023 12:57 am | Updated 12:57 am IST - New Delhi

THE HINDU BUREAU

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August 10, 2023 12:57 am | Updated 12:57 am IST - New Delhi

THE HINDU BUREAU

To mark the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, Delhi University announced the establishment of the Centre for Tribal Studies (CTS) on Wednesday. In a statement, the university said the CTS would work towards understanding the diversity of tribal practices, culture, language, religion, economy, commonalities and relationship with nature through an India-centric perspective. It has appointed Soumendra Mohan Patnaik, Head, Department of Anthropology, as the Director of the new centre and Avitoli G. Zhimo, Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology, as the Joint Director. At present, the CTS will function from the Department of Anthropology and DU said it aspires to provide insightful academic impetus to public policy with special reference to conservation, development, forest, and special health needs.

“The inception of the Centre for Tribal Studies will be a transformative step in advancing and addressing the contemporary issues relevant to the tribal communities in terms of their overall development and well-being in present as well as in future progression. “The establishment of the CTS will endeavour in highlighting the role and contribution of many tribal leaders throughout Indian history and also bring to light the efforts of many unsung tribal leaders in India’s struggle for freedom,” the university said.

It added that the centre will get inputs from two external experts, T.V. Kattimani, Vice-Chancellor, Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh, and Chander Mohan Parsheera, Director, Institute of Tribal Studies, Himachal Pradesh University. “CTS will study and document various traditions of Indian tribes and their indigenous knowledge. It will also play a pivotal role in bridging the gap between the needs of Denotified, Nomadic tribes, and Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs),” it added.

News / Cities / Delhi / DU establishes Centre for Tribal Studies, to have 'all-India perspective'

DU establishes Centre for Tribal Studies, to have 'all-India perspective'

The Centre for Tribal Studies will function from the Department of Anthropology, DU, an official statement said.

By: Express News Service

Delhi | Updated: August 10, 2023 12:06 IST

NewsGuard

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दिल्ली यूनिवर्सिटी सेंटर फॉर ट्राइबल स्टडीज और आईजीएनसीए ने मनाया जनजातीय गौरव दिवस

सेवादाता

दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय के जनजातीय अध्ययन केंद्र ने इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय कला केंद्र (आईजीएनसीए) के सहयोग से भगवान विरसा मुंडा की जयंती मनाने के लिए 15 नवंबर, 2023 को जनजातीय गौरव दिवस मनाया।

कार्यक्रम के दौरान, साउथ कैम्पस के निदेशक प्रोफेसर श्री प्रकाश सिंह ने दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय में जनजातीय अध्ययन केंद्र की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका पर जोर दिया, और भारत के स्वतंत्रता संग्राम में आदिवासियों के महत्वपूर्ण योगदान के बारे में शिक्षा जगत और व्यापक जनता के भीतर जागरूकता की कमी पर प्रकाश डाला। उन्होंने भारत की जनजातियों के अनुसंधान और दस्तावेजीकरण को मजबूत करने के उद्देश्य से आगामी फेलोशिप और परियोजनाओं के साथ केंद्र के लिए 50 लाख रुपये के बीज अनुदान की घोषणा की।



मुख्य अतिथि प्रोफेसर बलराम पाणि ने भगवान विरसा मुंडा द्वारा कम उम्र में प्रदर्शित अनुशासन और सटीकता पर प्रकाश डाला। समानताएँ खींचते हुए, उन्होंने कुतुब मीनार में लौह स्तंभ और कोणार्क मंदिर के घटकों के निर्माण में शामिल आदिवासी समुदायों के पास मौजूद वैज्ञानिक ज्ञान को स्पष्ट किया, और स्वदेशी

आदिवासी ज्ञान की प्रासंगिकता पर जोर दिया। प्रसिद्ध लोक कलाकार एवं नाट्य निर्देशक श्री. अनिरुद्ध डी. वानकर ने झड़ीपट्टी रंगभूमि पर एक ज्ञानवर्धक व्याख्यान दिया, जिसमें बताया गया कि कैसे लोक कला भगवान विरसा मुंडा जैसे आदिवासी नायकों की जीवन कलानियों और योगदान को व्यक्त करने के साधन के रूप में कार्य करती है।

जनजातीय अध्ययन केंद्र के निदेशक प्रोफेसर एसएम पटनायक ने नव स्थापित केंद्र के दृष्टिकोण को रेखांकित करते हुए जनजातियों के अध्ययन के लिए भारत-केंद्रित दृष्टिकोण की आवश्यकता पर जोर दिया। उन्होंने जनजातीय अध्ययन को समग्र बनाने के लिए अंतःविषयकता के विचार पर जोर दिया।

राष्ट्र-निर्माण में भारत के जनजातीय नेताओं का योगदान शीर्षक से एक प्रदर्शनी प्रस्तुत की गई, जिसमें जनजातीय नेतृत्व को सांस्कृतिक रूप से महत्वपूर्ण विरासत पर प्रकाश डाला गया। जनजातियों की स्वदेशी ज्ञान प्रणालियों पर केंद्रित नृवंशविज्ञान फिल्में भी प्रदर्शित की गईं, जो उनके सांस्कृतिक महत्व का एक व्यापक दृष्टिकोण प्रदान करती हैं। विभिन्न पाठ्यक्रमों में नामांकित आदिवासी समुदायों के छात्रों ने अपनी पारंपरिक पोशाक पहनकर इस कार्यक्रम में सक्रिय रूप से भाग लिया।

Expected Outcomes

The Centre for Tribal Studies is expected to have an impact on tribal empowerment, academic research, and community engagement.

i) Through capacity-building initiatives, skill development programmes and opportunities, the tribal communities will be empowered socio-economically.

ii) Research on tribal issues, culture and development will contribute to the academic understanding of tribal societies.

iii) Quality publications and Research Reports can inform policymaking in the areas of tribal governance, sustainable development, and cultural preservation.

iv) Interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge exchange will foster creativity and cross-pollination of ideas.

v) Participatory approach to development of tribal communities.

vi) Educational outreach programmes, and culture revitalization initiatives will empower the tribal community to own their identity, thereby celebrating their cultural traditions, language and customs with a clear-cut vision for future in the *Viksit Bharat*.

