



**CONFERENCE ON**

# **ORAL TRADITIONS: CONTINUITY AND TRANSFORMATIONS NORTH EAST INDIA AND SOUTH EAST ASIA**

**SHILLONG, MEGHALAYA, INDIA, 1ST - 4TH FEBRUARY, 2016**

## **PROGRAMME SCHEDULE**

Organized by



Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Division,  
Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH)



The Centre for Community Knowledge,  
Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD)

Supported by





## DAY 1

1st February, Monday, 2016  
Venue: State Convention Centre, Pinewood Hotel Annexe

Photo Exhibition: Rare and Historical Photographs of Northeast Region by Dr. Verrier Elwin

9:30 - 10:00	Registration
10:00 - 11:00	INAUGURAL SESSION - Welcome address - INTACH; Overview to conference; Address by Chief Guest, Governor of Meghalaya and special invitees
11:00 - 11:30	OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION to the Cultural Heritage of the Northeast - <b>Dr T. B. Subba</b>
11:30 - 12:00	INAUGURAL KEYNOTE - <b>Shri Falguni Rajkumar</b>
12:00-13:00	Lunch Break
13:00 - 14:15	<b>SESSION 1- PREHISTORIES</b> <p>As a 'contact zone' of South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia, the prehistory of the region crosses the boundaries that divide Southeast Asia and Northeast India. This region, with its wide cultural diversity of material from early human times, has allowed interdisciplinary research ranging from archaeology to linguistics and ethnography, applied to evaluate evidence from different neighbouring areas. The outcome has allowed us to begin to understand what they have in common, trace continuities between communities and provide clues for further research.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Dr Queenbala Marak</b></li><li>2. <b>Dr Alok Kumar Kanungo</b></li><li>3. <b>Dr Sukanya Sharma</b></li></ol> <p>Presentation - 20 mins each Open discussion at the end</p>
14:15 - 15:50	<b>SESSION 2 - LANGUAGE AND FOLKLORE</b> <p>Northeast India is in a linguistic crossroads, located at the intersection of South, South East and East Asia. Typologically, north east Indian languages exhibit features common to the South Asian and the mainland Southeast Asian linguistic areas, the exact extent differing in form and degree, depending on the language. Questions of cultural continuity revolve around language retention, and verbal lore is tied to inherited patterns of language use. Languages from communities in the region reveal ethnic ties beyond political boundaries of the current day. Besides, languages also help to understand the 'imagined worlds' of the people as preserved in local narratives through folklore.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>Dr Gautam Kumar Bera</b></li><li>2. <b>Dr Manjeet Baruah</b></li><li>3. <b>Dr Saji Varghese</b></li><li>4. <b>Dr Lotika Varadarajan</b></li></ol> <p>Presentation - 20 mins each Open discussion at the end</p>

15:50 - 16:00	Tea Break
16:00 - 18:15	<p><b>SESSION 3 - FOLKLORE AND PERFORMANCE</b></p> <p>The performance approach indicates how folklore is uniquely patterned within specific cultures and variable across cultures. In the modern world, as cultural differences between communities narrow down, there is a simultaneous attempt of each to differentiate from another. Besides representing a distinct identity, performative folklore relations with history and tradition of a particular community help its embedded narratives inform audiences about historical trajectory and the past, community anxiety, moods and nuances.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Dr Roslinabinti Abu Bakar</b></li> <li>2. <b>Dr Shubha Chaudhuri</b></li> <li>3. <b>Dr Somrak Chaisingkananont</b></li> <li>4. <b>Dr Bina Gandhi Deori</b></li> <li>5. <b>Dr Lalitluangliana Khiangte</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Presentation - 20 mins each</b> <b>Open discussion at the end</b></p>
18:15 - 18:30	Tea Break
18:30	DEPARTURE for Cultural Event
19:00	MUSICAL EVENING WITH THE SHILLONG CHAMBER CHOIR

## DAY 2

2nd February, Tuesday, 2016

Venue: State Convention Centre, Pinewood Hotel Annexe

Photo Exhibition: Rare and Historical Photographs of Northeast Region by Dr. Verrier Elwin

09:30 - 10:30	THEMATIC KEYNOTE - <b>Dr Erik de Maaker</b>
10:30 - 11:30	<p><b>SESSION 4(A) - MATERIAL CULTURE AND GENDER</b></p> <p>Attention to the ownership of objects and to the skills required for their production provides an insight into self-perceptions of communities. By focusing on the processes by which cultures maintain the traditional way of life in the presence of the modern, a gendered world is revealed, where the things that women use are perceived as decorative rather than artistic. However, the conditions of production in an age of globalisation forces renegotiations of gender and social status, so that despite using artefacts made by women, a gendered view of ownership continues to devalue objects exclusively female and thus somehow not 'worthy' of attention.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Dr Archana Shastri</b></li> <li>2. <b>Dr Dharitri Narzary</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Presentation - 20 mins each</b> <b>Open discussion at the end</b></p>

11:30 - 12:00	Tea Break
12:00 - 13:00	<p>SESSION 4 (B)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dr Ivy Dhar</li> <li>2. Ms Lovitoli Jimo</li> </ol> <p>Presentation - 20 mins each Open discussion at the end</p>
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 - 16:00	<p>SESSION 5 - <b>ECOLOGIES AND TRADITIONS</b></p> <p>It comes as no surprise that culturally embedded knowledge of biodiversity and ecosystem dynamics and associated management practices exists among communities that, on a daily basis and over long periods of time, interact with surrounding ecosystems for livelihood and sustenance. Combining the way such knowledge is organised, together with institutional arrangements, and cultural foundations of traditional and local societies with contemporary society, indicates the difficulties and possibilities in catalyzing ecologically sound ways of engaging with the surroundings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ms Phejin Konyak</li> <li>2. Dr N. William Singh</li> <li>3. Dr Oinam Hemlata Devi</li> <li>4. Dr Desmond Kharmawphlang</li> <li>5. Mr Akha K. Mao</li> </ol> <p>Presentation - 20 mins each Open discussion at the end</p>
16:00 - 16:15	Tea Break
16:15 - 18:00	<p>SESSION 6 - <b>POPULATION MOVEMENTS</b></p> <p>Outside the control and beyond the interest of the civilizations and empires surrounding them, the highland communities of North East India and South East Asia are nevertheless central to an understanding of the cultural and linguistic history of Asia. For the non-writing based cultures of the region, oral performances refer to ancestors and mention early history, of having arrived from 'somewhere else'. Other memories of the migration and movement are also transmitted by material culture, while recent medical-technical advances also carry similar information.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dr Biswanath Sarkar</li> <li>2. Dr Kanchan Mukhopadhyay</li> <li>3. Dr Manjil Hazarika</li> <li>4. Ms Kelhouvinuo Suokhrie</li> </ol> <p>Presentation - 20 mins each Open discussion at the end</p>
18:00 - 19:00	<p>LECTURE DEMONSTRATION</p> <p>'Oral Traditions and their Contribution to the Creative Arts' - Ms Mamang Dai</p>

## DAY 3

3rd February, Wednesday, 2016  
Venue: Don Bosco Centre for Indigenous Cultures

Supported by the International Institute for the Inclusive Museum

09:00	ASSEMBLE at Hotel Pinewood lobby for outstation participants
09:30	DEPARTURE for Don Bosco Centre for Indigenous Cultures
10:00 - 11:00	THEMATIC KEYNOTE - <b>Prof. (Dr) Amareswar Galla</b>
11:00 - 12:30	MUSEUM WALK guided by <b>Fr Joseph Puthenpurakal</b>
12:30 - 14:00	<p>SESSION 7-</p> <p><b>PANEL DISCUSSION:</b></p> <p><b>MUSEUMS AS CULTURAL CENTRES, AND THEIR ROLE IN REVITALIZING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE -</b></p> <p>Reimagining the Museum as a space for civic engagement and cultural citizenship, the discussion describes how participation and inclusion of citizens in Museums can highlight the life of different communities responding to rapid socio-politico-cultural change, and facing the challenge of maintaining cultural identities through fast disappearing practices. Developing curatorial strategies that seek meaningful exchange with 'living' heritage, Museums reimagined as Cultural Centres can revitalize intangible heritage by fostering community inclusiveness. And in doing so generate new knowledge on the connections between citizenship, living conditions, traditions and everyday characteristics of local communities.</p> <p><b>Prof. Amareswar Galla, Dr K. K. Basa, Dr Sarit Chaudhuri, Dr Dilip Medhi Fr. Joseph Puthenpurakal and Ms Bibinaz Thokchom</b></p> <p>Followed by an open discussion</p>
14:00 - 15:00	Lunch Break
15:00 onwards	LOCAL SIGHTSEEING/HERITAGE WALK by INTACH Meghalaya Chapter

## DAY 4

4th February, Thursday, 2016  
Venue: Lady Keane College

09:00 09:30	ASSEMBLE at Hotel Pinewood lobby for outstation participants DEPARTURE for Lady Keane College
10:00 - 11:00	THEMATIC KEYNOTE – Dr Kishor K. Basa
11:00 - 13:30	<p>SESSION8 - <b>INTERACTIVE SESSION (A) – AWARENESS AND REVITALIZATION OF HERITAGE MATERIALS SOME EXAMPLES</b></p> <p>The future of all museum collections is towards working with people from whom the objects they possess were collected. For a long time now, collections of data and objects are usually done in an unequal society, giving rise to many misconceptions and gaps in information about the collections. By bringing forward community museum presenters from different parts of the North East India, and presenting a forum for sharing their experiences, the session provides a chance to respond and reflect on experiences and challenges in cultural heritage awareness and revitalization at the community level.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ms Kitoli Naje (Sumi Mothers Association), Nagaland</li><li>2. Dr Anil Boro (Bodo Sahitya Sabha), Assam</li><li>3. Mr Bipin Debbarma - (TTAADC), Tripura</li><li>4. Mr M. Gourachandra Singh (Peoples Museum, Kakching), Manipur</li><li>5. Mr C. Shingwang (Konyak Wanglam Nyoiching), Nagaland</li><li>6. Mr Aiban S. Mawkhroh (Architect), Shillong</li></ol> <p>Presentation - 15 mins each Open discussion - 60 mins</p>
13:30 - 14:30	Lunch Break
14:30 - 16:30	<p>SESSION8 - <b>INTERACTIVE SESSION (B) – NARRATIVES AND MEMORIES IN A DIGITAL AGE SOME EXAMPLES</b></p> <p>Is the creative remixing of past, present and future a new and specific quality of the digital age? Is it not the nature of human remembering to be constantly prone to revision? Some historians of technology even claim that these technologies are not foreign to human nature but inseparable from it. What is clear is that the memory of a cultural past has become a powerful narrative in the digital age, and the cases presented here describe a range of community responses in documentation, preservation and dissemination of cultural memory.</p>

1. Dr Joy L. K. Pachuau
2. Shri Toki Blah
3. Dr Tara Douglas
4. Mr Alan West
5. Ms Nerupama Y. Modwel
6. Prof Surajit Sarkar

Presentation - 15 mins each  
Open discussion - 45 mins

16:30 onwards

VALEDICTORY SESSION

