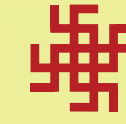




Ministry of Culture
Government of India



Indian Council of
Social Science Research



इन्दिरा गाँधी राष्ट्रीय कला केन्द्र
INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

TWO-DAY NATIONAL SEMINAR

ON

'REVIVING THE INDIAN NARRATIVES ON THE TRADITIONAL COMMUNITIES RESIDING IN THE HILLS AND FORESTS'

(15th-16th November 2023)

CONCEPT NOTE

In understanding the traditional Indian communities residing in forests, hills and plains, there is a total paradigm difference between two perspectives: The Western and the Indian. The Western social scientists have labelled these communities as savages first, barbaric next, primitive later and tribal even later, and now as indigenous people. This understanding is rooted in the colonial and imperial ambitions and consequent invasions and oppressive strategies.

In the case of India, it is evident from the ancient texts of, Vedas, Puranas and Upanishads etc, that the people of hills and forests have a strong and shared worldview, history, culture, and faiths with the people residing in the plains. Further, there was no mention of invasion, segregation, isolation, occupation or forced subjugation of communities living in forests and hills by neighbouring kings/emperors from plains. From ancient times, there has been continuous exchange of people, ideas, knowledge, and wisdom between communities living in forests and hills with plains. The Western narratives on labelling these communities as savages, barbaric, primitive and tribal are found to have originated from the missionaries of colonial masters. The recent Western narrative of labelling the erstwhile savages (people of hills and forests) as indigenous communities are akin to the old wine in a new bottle. The UN document¹ says that the concept of 'Indigenous Peoples' emerged from the colonial experience whereby the aboriginal people of a given land were marginalised after being invaded by the colonial powers, whose people are now dominant over the earlier inhabitants.

¹'State of the World's Indigenous Peoples', United Nations, New York, 2009, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, pp.06. (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18356/e92ca6a3-en>)

The definition of 'Indigenous Communities' makes less sense in most parts of Asia and Africa, where colonial powers did not displace the whole population of people and replaced them with settlers of European descent. Further, separating the Asians or Africans into indigenous and non-indigenous communities will give rise to two classes of peoples and the proposition would promote separatism and violent movements dividing the societies and nations.

It is in this context, the current national seminar intends to bring academicians and research scholars from different disciplines to discuss and deliberate on the following broad themes:

- 1.** Defining the 'Janjati': The Need for an Independent Discourse
- 2.** Origins, Myths and Cultural Universals and Uniqueness of Traditional Communities of India
- 3.** On Janjati Communities in Ancient Indian Texts
- 4.** Culture and Religion: The Shared Worldview(s)
- 5.** Contributions of Janjati Communities for Humanity
- 6.** The Colonial Ideas of 'Backward' and 'Uncivilised'
- 7.** The Colonial Approaches of Exclusion, Exploitation and Marginalisation
- 8.** The Differential Impact of Approach: Autonomy and Integration
- 9.** Situating the Scope of Schedule V and Schedule VI and Constitutional Provisions
- 10.** The Sustainable Janjati Structure: Social, Cultural and Economic Fabric

Through the discussion and deliberations on the above mentioned themes, all efforts will be made to encourage the Indian intellectuals to understand the traditional Indian communities in the right perspective and consequently to revive the Indian narratives on the traditional Indian communities residing in hills and forests.

Important Dates:

Last Date for Submission of Abstracts: **26th October, 2023**

Communication of the Selected Abstracts: **29th October, 2023**

Submission of full paper: **10th November, 2023**

Date of National Seminar: **15th - 16th November 2023**

Venue: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi

Send your abstracts and/or queries to: **seminar.jsignca@gmail.com**