



National Seminar  
on  
**Rock Art - Archaeology of India**  
**A Comparative Interpretation with Northeast India**



**Adi Drishya Division**  
**Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts**  
**New Delhi**

In collaboration with

**Indian Council of Historical Research**  
**New Delhi**

&

**Department of Anthropology**  
**Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar**  
**Arunachal Pradesh**

The Adi Drishya Division of Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi, organized a national seminar titled “Rock Art - Archaeology of India: A Comparative Interpretation with Northeast India” from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2024. This event was held in collaboration with the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), New Delhi, and the Department of Anthropology, Rajiv Gandhi University (R.G.U), Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh.

The inaugural session was compered by Dr. Dibyajyoti Das, Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at R.G.U. The ceremony formally commenced with the introduction of prominent dignitaries from the three institutions involved. The key figures on the dais included:



- **Prof. Saket Kushwaha**, Vice Chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar, served as the Chairperson at the seminar.
- **Prof. Sarit Kumar Chaudhuri**, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar, delivered the welcome address.
- **Dr. Ramakar Pant**, Head of the Adi Drishya Division, IGNCA, introduced the seminar.
- **Dr. Nabam Tadar Rikam**, Registrar of Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar, served as a Special Guest.
- **Prof. Tana Showren**, Member of ICHR and the Department of History at Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar, served as a Guest of Honour.
- **Prof. Ravi Korisettar**, Adjunct Professor at NIAS, Bengaluru, delivered a keynote address.
- **Dr. Nitin Kumar**, Assistant Director in charge of the Northeast Regional Centre, ICHR, delivered vote of thanks.

**Prof. Sarit Kumar Chaudhuri**, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, delivered the welcome address, highlighting the significance of the seminar focusing on rock art and archaeology in Northeast India.



*Welcome address*

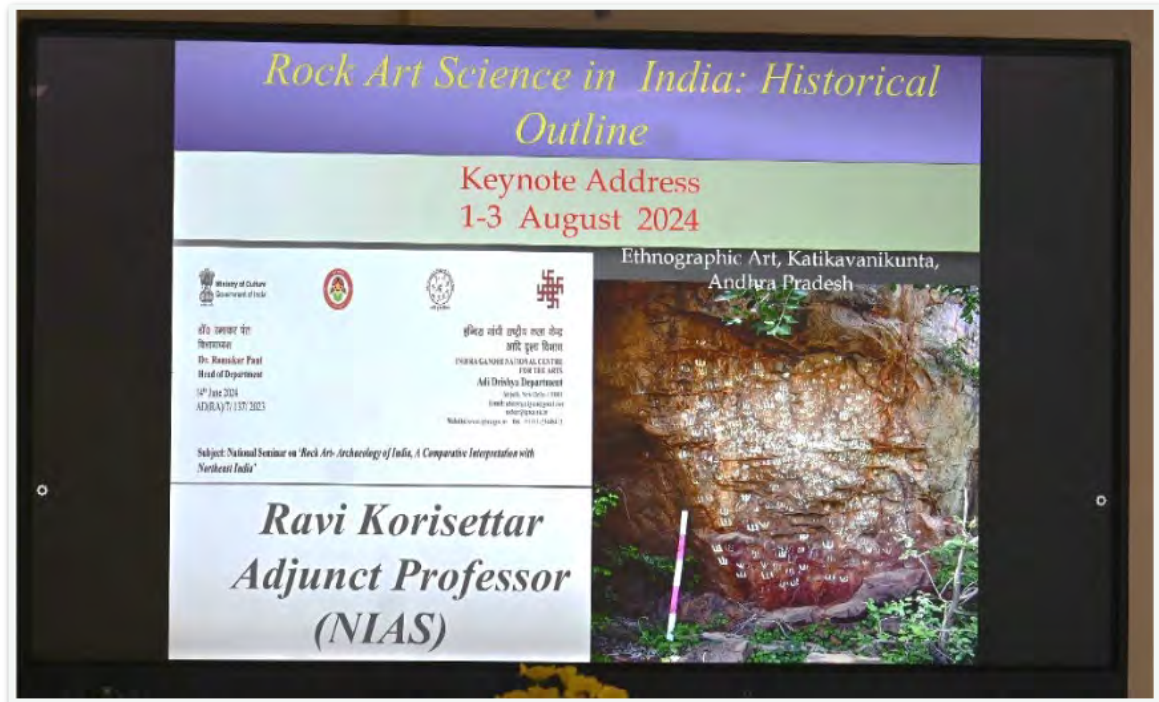
Just after the welcome speech, a brochure related to the seminar was released.



**Dr. Ramakar Pant** introduced the seminar, by discussing the concept of rock art and highlighting the role of the Adi Drishya Division in researching, preserving, and documenting rock art sites across India. He further stressed upon the importance of a comparative approach, integrating insights from other parts of India to enrich in understanding of rock art traditions nationwide by delving on interdisciplinary dimensions. He outlined the Division's initiatives and efforts, which have paved the way for new opportunities in rock art research for scholars. He emphasized that the Divisions initiative to organise national seminar like this, should serve as a valuable medium for disseminating knowledge about rock art among scholars.



*Introducing the seminar*



The keynote address, titled “Rock Art Science in India: Historical Outcome,” was delivered by **Prof. Ravi Korisettar**, who classified rock art into additive and subtractive forms. The additive technique involves adding material to the rock surface, generally referred to as ‘Pictographs.’ The subtractive technique involves removing material in an engraving process, creating ‘Petroglyphs.’ He further stated that rock engravings were used to pass on tribal knowledge, and although the spoken word was crucial, song, dance and ritual were equally significant in transmitting folklore through generations. He also discussed the use of digital photogrammetry for documenting rock art.

Prof. Korisettar’s presentation showcased different rock art sites, including Edakkal petroglyphs and Kupgal/ Sangnakallu petroglyphs, and highlighted the major turning point led by Dr. V.S. Wakankar in excavating the rock art site of Bhimbetka. Overall, Prof. Ravi Korisettar presented an insightful analysis of various rock art sites in India, emphasizing their importance and the role of rock art in human cognitive development. His presentation provided an excellent base to start the seminar.



*Keynote Address*

Following, a short documentary previewing the rock art of Chandauli was shown by the Adi Drishya Division, IGNCA.



*Documentary preview*

**Prof. Tana Showren**, stressed the importance of preserving indigenous communities and their cultural heritage, and called for the decolonization of research in Northeast India.



*Address by Guest of Honour*



*Address by Special Guest*

**Dr. Nabam Tadar Rikam** highlighted the lack of research and documentation of rock art sites in Northeast India. He conveyed the words of Prof. Saket Kushwaha, VC to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Anthropology, RGU and IGNCA to foster academic cooperation.

**Dr. Vinod Kumar** from ICHR outlined various research opportunities and schemes available to scholars through ICHR in the form of fellowships and grants.



*Introducing the schemes of ICHR*



*Address by Chairperson*

**Prof. Saket Kushwaha**, Vice Chancellor of RGU, emphasized the importance of appreciating Indian culture and exploring the Indian knowledge system to broaden research perspectives on rock art and archaeology. He also proposed to **sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** and also announced for the **development of a Rock Art Museum** at the R.G.U campus, involving the Department of Anthropology in collaboration with the Adi Drishya Division, IGNCA.

**Dr. Nitin Kumar** concluded the inaugural ceremony with a vote of thanks, summarizing the event and expressing gratitude to all contributors and the RGU authorities for their support in organizing the three-day national seminar.



*Vote of thanks*

## Session I

Chairperson: Prof. Ravi Korisettar

Rapporteur : Jimmy Sonam and Hake Yame

### **An Understanding of Petroglyphs in Nagaland**

**Dr. Aokumla Walling**, Assistant Professor in the Department of History and Archaeology in Nagaland University, delivered a presentation offering a comprehensive examination of Naga visual arts and rock art, providing valuable insights into their socio-economic and cognitive dimensions. The discussion began with an analysis of how Naga visual arts reflect the socio-economic aspects of society. Dr. Walling highlighted that most of these artistic expressions are carved or engraved onto wood, offering a glimpse into the traditional craftsmanship of the Nagas.



A significant portion of the presentation focused on historical work by J. H. Hutton, who conducted research in 1926 and 1927 on the Kigwema and Wakching villages. This research was later published in the journal "Man". The author elaborated on how both rock and wood artworks reveal the belief systems, societal patterns, norms, and aspirations of the Naga communities.

A recent discovery was emphasized, involving a PhD scholar's findings at the Langto site in Maksha village under the Tuensang district. The term "Langto," meaning "stone writing," reflects the discovery of numerous rock art pieces. Dr. Walling also mentioned rock art found in Changsang village and Mavezhotsu, Kikrume village in the Phek district. The presentation covered how stone engravings often signify warrior bravery and headhunting practices, where warriors mark stones with symbols such as swords or spears to commemorate their achievements. Additionally, stones were marked before entering a village as part of a sanctification process to protect the community.

Dr. Walling discussed the impact of environmental factors on the preservation of these rock markings, noting the gradual disappearance of these ancient artworks. Tattoos and body arts among headhunters were also examined, revealing their role in symbolizing authority, and personal history. The presentation highlighted that while body art, rock art, wood art, and dress designs all reflect historical and cultural narratives, tattoo traditions are not uniform across all Naga groups specifically, the Angami and Chakesang Nagas do not practice tattooing.

The author pointed out that the knowledge of Naga rock art remains limited due to poor preservation, a preference for wood over rock, and the need for extensive regional survey and documentation.

In closing, the presentation underscored the dual aspects of Naga rock art- overt and covert, natural and supernatural, realistic and naturalistic. The rock art's minimalistic use of lines, strokes, dots, and curvatures was presented as a means of communicating the Naga way of life. The art provides unique insights into social activities, beliefs, and practices, reflecting both the imaginative

and creative aspects of the Naga people. The author emphasized the importance of documenting and understanding these artworks to preserve indigenous tribal history, traditional attitudes, experiences, and sentiments.

## Rock-cut Images from Three Sacred Rock Art sites from Tripura

**Dr. Salam Shyam Singh**, Assistant Superintending Archaeologist at the Archaeological Survey of India, Aizawl Circle. He recently conducted a field survey in Tripura, significant findings were reported concerning three notable rock art sites located across the state. The survey offers an in-depth look into these culturally and historically significant sites, summarizing the key discoveries, their features, and their broader implications.

The first site of interest is located in the Kailashahar district, specifically on the rocky walls of Unakoti hillocks. This site is renowned for its monumental rock art, which includes a series of colossal sculptures depicting a variety of religious figures. These include gods, goddesses, shivalingas, kurma (tortoise), and intricate floral motifs. The scale and detail of these carvings suggest a rich cultural and religious significance. Notably, a local tribe holds this site in high reverence, performing annual worship rituals at the site. The carvings are situated approximately 6 meters above the river level and extend 7 meters in breadth, highlighting their prominent placement and importance.



Another site within Kailashahar district is located in Sivabari, which, while lesser-known, is equally intriguing. This site features a Lingam representation, adorned with carvings of two snakes and trishul (trident) motifs. Due to the rock's inclined position, artificial supports have been added to maintain its stability. The site is notable for its detailed carvings, including symbolic images of snakes, roundels representing Shivalinga, and floral motifs, showcasing the artistry and craftsmanship of the period.

The third site is situated in the Gomti district, at Devatamuda, along the banks of the Gomti River. This site is distinguished by a colossal image of Mahishasuramardini, as well as depictions of other gods, goddesses, and human figures. The river's proximity, considered sacred by local communities, enhances the site's spiritual significance. The carvings at Devatamuda are thematically connected to the Brahminical pantheon, reflecting the influence of Hindu religious traditions.

The rock art found at these sites spans several historical periods, including the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. This chronological range illustrates the evolution of artistic and religious expression in the region. The diverse motifs and styles observed across the sites indicate a blend of historical and cultural influences, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the region's artistic heritage.



The paper also highlights the relative scarcity of rock art in Northeast India and underscores the importance of these findings in filling this gap. The rock art sites in Tripura, with their thematic connection to the Brahminical pantheon, reveal a rich tapestry of religious and symbolic motifs.

Dr. Salam's analysis includes an examination of the techniques used in creating these artworks, providing insights into the artistic and technological processes involved. The study aims to uncover the meaning and purpose behind these rock cut images, contributing to a deeper understanding of their thematic and stylistic elements.

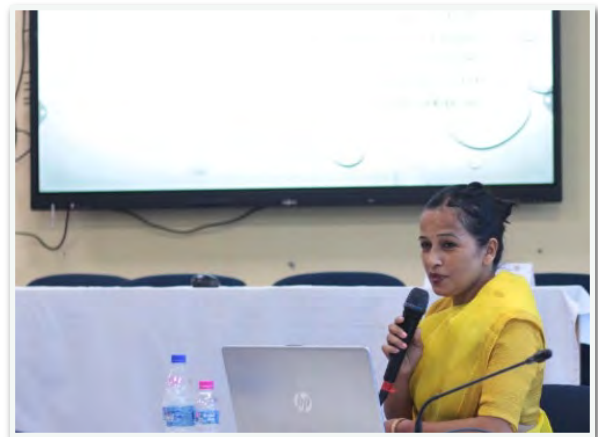
Overall, the survey of rock art sites in Tripura offers valuable insights into the region's cultural and religious history. These sites, carved into cliffs and monoliths, represent significant aspects of the region's artistic and spiritual heritage. The findings emphasise the need for preservation and further research to fully appreciate and understand the historical and cultural significance of these remarkable rock art sites.

### **Pre-historic Culture of Eastern Himalayas: A Case Study of Kalimpong**

**Dr. Gouri Dey**, Assistant Professor and Head in the Department of History at Salesian College, Siliguri, explores the archaeological and historical significance of Kalimpong, a district in West Bengal. The paper highlights Kalimpong's transition through different political controls from being part of the Sikkim Kingdom, to Bhutanese control in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and finally to British territory following the Anglo-Bhutan War of 1865 and the Treaty of Sinchula. It also underscores Kalimpong's archaeological importance, particularly in the context of early human activities and settlement patterns.

Kalimpong, situated in the Teesta Valley, has a rich historical backdrop. The Teesta River, originating from the Himalayas and flowing through Sikkim and West Bengal, traverses the Teesta Valley near Kalimpong. This region has gained archaeological prominence due to significant discoveries made over the years. The earliest documented evidence of human activity in Kalimpong dates back 6000 years, based on findings from excavations conducted by Prof. Subrata Chakrabarti in 2003. These excavations at sites such as Tashiding, Samdong, and Sankhe Dunga revealed Neolithic stone tools and pottery, providing insights into early human settlement and technological development in the area.

Kalimpong's role as a trade route and gateway between India and Tibet further adds to its historical importance. The region's strategic position facilitated cultural and economic exchanges between these areas. Dr. Dey further notes the cultural continuity in Kalimpong, and states that the Lepcha people tends to regard Neolithic stone tools as sacred relics from heaven. The Lepchas' reverence for these stones, including their refusal to allow scholars to touch or examine them, adds a layer of cultural significance to the archaeological findings.



Such archaeological findings contribute to a broader understanding of the Neolithic period and the historical development of the area. The study underscores the importance of integrating archaeological research with cultural sensitivity to preserve and respect local traditions while advancing historical knowledge. Overall, the paper emphasized the need for continued exploration and preservation of archaeological sites while acknowledging the challenges posed by local cultural practices. The findings from Kalimpong contribute meaningfully to the understanding of early human history and settlement patterns in the region.

## **A Study of Sustaining Traditions and Wildlife Utilization Among Jeme Naga of North Cachar Hills and Their Representation of Animals on Stone Jars**

**Atashi Maitra, Tilok Thakuria and Pankaj Brahma Choudhury**

The paper was presented by **Atashi Maitra**, Doctoral research scholar in the Department of History and Archaeology, in North Eastern Hill University, Tura Campus, explored the relationship between humans and animals, tracing their interactions from prehistoric times through to the present era. Focused on the indigenous Zeme Nagas of North Cachar Hills, the research aims to understand how these communities have historically engaged with their ecological surroundings, particularly through foraging and prey exploitation. The paper also examines the representation of animal motifs on stone jars, highlighting the significant role that animals have played in human cultural and ecological contexts.

A significant portion of the study states that 80% of the area is covered in forest, indicating a rich ecological backdrop that influences human-animal interactions. The study investigates how animals have been represented in local folklore and art, particularly through stone jars.

She presented an overview of previous research on stone jars in Southeast Asia, referencing McCarthy's discovery of megalithic stone jars in 1990, and the work of J. H. Hutton and J. P. Mills in 1929, which focused on jars in North Cachar Hills. The author also elaborates on the local inhabitants, including the Zeliangrong people a collective term for the Zeme, Liangmai, Rongmei, and Inpui groups and the Dimasa people, known as "children of the big river."

The stone jars feature zoomorphic figures that serve various purposes, including as hunting trophies, zootherapeutic measures, and ritualistic objects. Examples include a buffalo and Mithun motif correlated with Zeme Nagas' hunting souvenirs and a bird motif associated with Dimasa people's hunting trophies.

The presenter also speaks about the diverse ways in which the Zeme Nagas utilize wildlife. This includes the collection of mandibular arcades, porcupine spikes, and bear hides. Traditional uses of animals were also discussed, such as using fox flesh mixed with rice beer for respiratory ailments,



and consuming black bear, porcupine, and python flesh for gastric and gynecological issues. These practices underscore the deep connection between the Zeme Nagas and their environment.

By examining ancient societal behaviours and subsistence techniques, archaeologists can fill gaps in understanding hunting strategies and technological advancements. The paper suggests that planned linear conservation measures for different species populations could enhance the utilisation of wild fauna and support ecological well-being.

The study contributes significantly to the understanding of human-animal interactions in North Cachar Hills, illustrating the cultural and practical roles animals have played in the lives of the Zeme Nagas and other local communities. By linking faunal representations with traditional practices and suggesting conservation strategies, the research underscores the importance of valuing and preserving faunal resources for both cultural heritage and ecological health. Future research and conservation efforts should build on these findings to ensure the sustainability of faunal resources and their continued relevance to indigenous cultures.

## **Ancestral Narratives: Ethnography of the Ruangmei Naga of Manipur and their Rock Art Legacy**

**Dr. Huidrom Suraj Singh**, Assistant Professor in the Department of History at G. P. Women's College, a constituent college of Dhanamanjuri University, Imphal, presented a comprehensive examination of the rock art found in Manipur and Mizoram, focusing particularly on the Ruangmei Naga tribe. Dr. Singh discusses the significant role of rock art in understanding tribal cultures and highlights the challenges faced by these traditions due to modern influences, including religious conversions. The study explores the cultural and historical dimensions of rock art and its role in preserving tribal identity amidst modernization.

Dr. Singh begins by emphasising the importance of petroglyphs in Manipur and Mizoram, noting their crucial role in understanding the Ruangmei Naga tribe's cultural heritage and addresses how these rock arts are instrumental in documenting the tribe's historical and spiritual narratives but are increasingly at risk due to conversion to Christianity and other modern influences.

He further stated that the practice of erecting monoliths to commemorate good harvests and successful raids, showcasing how these monuments are deeply embedded in the tribe's cultural rituals. Geometric structures and buffalo horns engraved on stones are highlighted as symbols used to celebrate significant events, including sacrifices. The presence of male and female figurines, as well as groups of figurines holding each other, further illustrates the symbolic and ceremonial functions of these artworks. It was also noted that rock engravings are created with the assistance of other Naga tribes, reflecting a network of cultural exchange.



The representation of various symbolic elements found in the rock art, including female genitalia, which underscore the prominence of fertility and phallus worship within the tribe's cultural practices. Additionally, the sacred nature of certain sites is emphasized, such as a rock with water believed to have healing powers. Local beliefs hold that tampering with this sacred water could bring misfortune, and unmarried women visit the site to perform rituals before marriage.

The presenter also addresses the significant challenges faced by the Ruangmei Naga tribe in preserving their rock art heritage. The rapid conversion to Christianity has led to a decline in traditional practices and the deterioration of rock art preservation efforts. He further highlights that many rock art relics have already been destroyed, and the remaining artifacts are increasingly at risk. The loss of these cultural expressions poses a threat to the tribe's ability to maintain their historical identity, especially for those without written scripts.

Additionally, Dr. Singh advocates for the recognition and preservation of indigenous knowledge systems embedded in rock art traditions, emphasizing the need to safeguard these cultural treasures against the impacts of modernization and religious conversion.

Overall, the paper underscores the profound cultural and historical significance of rock art for the Ruangmei Naga tribe. By documenting the intricate relationship between the tribe and their rock art, the paper highlights the critical need for preservation efforts to protect these invaluable cultural assets.

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## Session II

2<sup>nd</sup> August 2024

Chairperson: Prof. Jumiyr Basar

Rapporteur: Pallabi Gogoi and Nada Aku

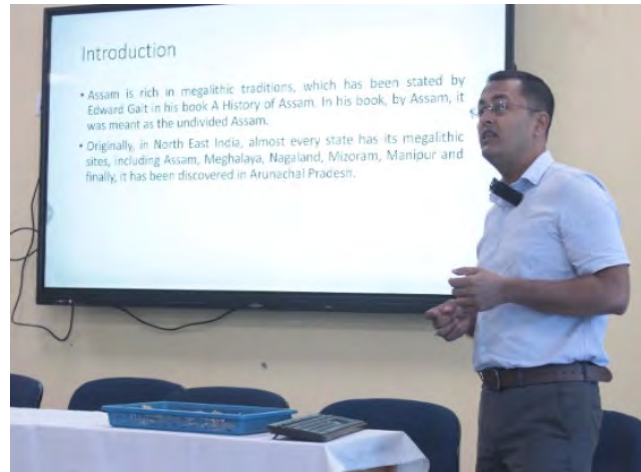
### Potsherds of Khamar Megalithic Sites: The Second Phase

**Dr. Dhritiman Sarma**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Rajiv Gandhi University, presented a paper on the classification of different types of potsherds. The main objective of his paper was to illustrate the relationship between prehistoric phases and the continuation and evolution of cultural practices from the prehistoric period to the present.

Dr. Sarma's study focused on Khamar, an archaic megalithic site with 93 megaliths, a number that has remained unchanged since 2009. The paper discussed the potsherds and associated finds discovered at the site. These potsherds included various types such as cord-impressed potsherds, grey-colored potsherds, and light brown potsherds.

The study confirmed, based on historical data and the area's past-present continuum, that the region was once under the Dimoria Kingdom, which was originally ruled by a king in an area inhabited by the Karbi and Koch communities of Assam. Dr. Sarma's paper explored the correlation between the Karbis and Koch people, highlighting their distinct cultural identities and their shared heritage within the broader unity of Assam.

The paper concluded with a recommendation for future research, specifically suggesting the use of radiocarbon dating on the potsherds to determine their precise and absolute dates, which would provide more accurate historical context and data.



### Role of Rock Art in Preserving Tribal Identity in Northeast India

**Baishnavi Thapa**, currently working in Adi Drishya Division, IGNC, began her paper with an introduction to rock art and its significance within the context of Northeast India. She highlighted the diverse artistic style and characteristics, symbolic meanings, cultural practices as well as oral practices associated with rock art, in discovering its importance in maintaining tribal heritage and identity. The paper primarily focused on the rock art sites in Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland, with the presenter selecting these states due to time constraints.

The presenter explained rock art as a purposeful modification of bare rock surfaces to produce preconceived images in the form of paintings and engravings. The spectrum of rock art is vast in

terms of thematic and stylistic content in which rock art is categorised into pictographs and petroglyphs, with the latter including carvings, engravings, and incisions.

In Northeast India, petroglyphs form of rock art is incorporated on Megaliths, Monoliths, and Menhirs. Studying these depictions in the form of rock art can offer deeper insights into their indigenous meanings. She also further mentions that in the context of Northeast India, petroglyphs on natural rock surfaces are relatively rare, which may indicate the need for further research in the area.



Megaliths are traditionally erected in memory of the deceased, but in Mizo community, megaliths are also raised to celebrate the achievements of the living. In Mizo culture, it is believed that erecting a megalith with certain depictions often serves as a bridge between the world of the living and the dead. The presenter also highlighted the importance of animals among the Mizo's by showing different petroglyph depiction of animals and their significance among the tribe. Sometimes, the petroglyphs depict human figures, often portrayed as warriors, alongside representations of severed heads, which may suggest connections to headhunting practices.

She then went on to discuss the rock carvings of Nagaland as an important part of Naga Cultural legacy. The rock carving also reflects the ancient experiences and spirituality of the Naga people. Thereby it showcases aspect of ceremony, beliefs and history as recorded in visual forms.

The presenter concluded with general observations that the petroglyphs is not just for entertainment but this holds a whole lot of cultural importance. She emphasized the need for preservation and conservation of petroglyphs, acknowledging that this is a challenge due to geological and ecological considerations.

## **A study of Megalithic Culture among the Nocte of Tirap District, Arunachal Pradesh**

**Chandan Kumar Baruah**, currently a faculty member in the Department of Anthropology at N.C.D. Bordoibam College, Dibrugarh University, conducted research in the Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh, which is inhabited by the Nocte tribe. The primary objective of his paper was to explore the continuity of the prehistoric megalithic tradition in various villages of Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh. The research involved two field visits, first in 2016 and then in 2018. Among the Nocte tribe, both sepulchral and non-sepulchral megaliths were found, with menhirs, dolmens, and cists being the predominant forms.

The researcher explored megalithic sites in Laho, Kheti, Borduria, Wasanthong and Deomali village of Tirap district. They discussed different megaliths sites, its structures and its importance.



The local terminology for these structures includes *Wangsa Long* (Seat Stone), used by village headmen; *Kho Long* (Burial Stone), where the skull of the deceased is placed after the body has decomposed; and *Joban Long* (Religious Stone), erected during house construction following the sacrifice of a fowl. Notably, the practice of religious stone erection continues today, regardless of religious affiliation. The paper also included detailed discussions of various other structures, supplemented with photographs. The study concluded that both archaic and modern types of megalithic structures are present in the area.

## Pre-historic Cultures and Rock-Art of North East India

The paper was presented by **Jaba Saikia**, Doctoral research scholar in the Department of History and Archaeology, in North Eastern Hill University, Tura Campus. She began her paper by stating that British scholars such as Captain Steel (1876), Anderson (1871), Hutton (1928), and Mills and Hutton (1929) were among the first to report prehistoric traditions in North-East India, based on stone implements found in various parts of the region.

Despite several claims of discovering Palaeolithic and Mesolithic remains- such as B.P. Borpadikar's (1972) claim of Palaeolithic tools in Arunachal, T.C. Sarma's (1978) claims of Palaeolithic tools in the Garo Hills, and Sonowal's (1987) proposal of middle and upper Palaeolithic typo-technology from Misimagre in the Garo Hills, these claims still require verification and authentication.

Since there is no concrete evidence of cultural records from the Pleistocene epoch, the existence of early-age rock art in this region remains questionable. Unlike other regions, North-East India has not reported pictographs, but petroglyphs, or engravings on megalithic-shaped stones or surfaces, particularly menhirs, are prevalent.



Significant sites in the region include:

- Uma Tumoni and Sub Sites like Chakreswar, Baghreswari, Mangaleshwar, Hanuman Sila. The presenter showed pictures courtesy of A.K. Chatterjee, depicting various motifs such as birds, labyrinths, mythical animals, traditional game boards, and circles from Chakreswar.
- Kanai Borosi: Known for four medieval inscriptions and six rock blocks with petroglyphic engravings, including labyrinths, chessboards, circles, animal and human figures, linear marks, demons, and female figures. Pictures courtesy of Dwipen Bezboruah highlighted the labyrinth and inscriptions with symbols.
- Dirgheswari: Features rock-cut sculptures, including a Ganesha, two elephants, and other engravings. At Sapaiddong, an engraved Ganesha, a square chess board, and a small bow with an arrow were found. Hatisila revealed a human face, engravings resembling a human eye, and dot marks.

Mayong presented a circle, a rock inscription, a trident, engravings of Ganesha, and rock-cut sculptures of Uma Maheswar.

The presenter observed that engravings on megaliths are crucial for understanding the socio-political and religious history of the region. These engravings often reflect social norms and the status of a clan or family. Engravings from historical and medieval periods include both iconic and non-iconic representations, which can be classified under engravings on non-modified rock surfaces and modified rock surfaces, including megaliths and stone jars. Despite extensive documentation efforts by scholars like Bezbaruah (2017), many rock art pieces still lack clear cultural context.

In conclusion, the rock art and engravings of North-East India, though not extensively documented in pre-historic contexts, offer valuable insights into the historical and medieval periods of the region. The continued study and verification of these findings are essential for a comprehensive understanding of the region's cultural heritage.

This technical session concluded with a note by the Chairperson Professor Jummy Basar mentioning key points such as Archaeological terms used is not very much applicable in Archaeology in Northeast region. There's a need for deeper research to be done in order to see the gap. Therefore, young scholars and researchers need to have a look in this area for further study.

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## Session III

Chairperson: Dr. Salam Shyam Singh

Rapporteur: Chibom Jilen and Teshmi Raji Tamin

### **A Preliminary Model of the Spatial Configurations of Megaliths in Naga Inhabited Areas of Northeast India**

**Dr. Oinam Premchand Singh**, Assistant professor in the Department of History at Rajiv Gandhi University, sought to address the importance of Megalith culture among the six villages of Manipur inhabited by the Naga tribe. He highlighted the existing knowledge gap in this area, emphasizing the need for further research. In his work, he documented a total of 3,475 stone monuments, significant landscape features, and built structures. He also mapped all the stone tools using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology. To provide insight into the significance of Megalith culture among the Nagas of Northeast India, he conducted six case studies across these villages.



In the first case study, which covers the Willong Khullen and its adjoining areas, a total of 345 stone monuments were documented. In the second case study, which was done in Maram Khullen and its adjoining areas, it was recorded that a total of 1635 stone monuments were documented by the researcher. Further, the stone monuments were distributed into different categories. The third case study was done in Oinam and its adjoining areas, a total of 407 stone monuments were recorded by the researcher. The fourth case study was done in Lujyat Khullen and its adjoining areas of Senapati district of Manipur has a total number of 554 stone monuments recorded by the researcher. The fifth case study was done in Makhel and its adjoining areas depicts a total of 318 stone monuments being documented by the researcher. The sixth and the last case study done by the researcher was in Pudumamei and its adjacent areas on the boundary of Manipur and Nagaland gives an insight into the 219 stone monuments being documented by the researcher.

The main findings of the research revealed variability in the size and shape of the stone monuments in different villages. Monoliths were generally located in fewer numbers in inhabited areas and were mostly located outside the boundary area of the inhabited place. The study also found that monoliths were more numerous along footpaths near the local paddy field, with a higher concentration on the lower hill slopes. Monoliths were mostly located in clusters, while burial stones were found within habitation areas. The majority of stone circles were situated near habitation areas, with some also found along footpaths and in paddy fields. Sacred or religious stone monuments were primarily located near habitation areas and in forested regions.

Furthermore, Dr. Oinam emphasized the need for further in-depth research work on the study of the megalithic stone culture of the Naga-inhabited regions to gain a better understanding of the rich megalithic culture of the Naga tribe, as well as the whole Northeast region of India.

## **Megalithic-Rock Arts of South India: A Comparative Analysis with the North-Eastern Region**

**Praveen C. K.**, currently working as a Project Associate in Adi Drishya Division, IGNCA, provides the artistic and cultural expressions found in the megalithic rock arts of South India, comparing them with similar traditions in the North-Eastern region of India. Rock art, encompassing paintings, engravings, brushings, and pecking on natural rock surfaces, serves as a window into the spiritual and social lives of ancient peoples. Megalithic art, specifically, is found on megalithic structures and includes carvings, engravings, brushings, and paintings, reflecting the cultural heritage of the region.



The study of megalithic cultural materials in South India began with Babington's (1823) work in Kannur, Kerala, and has since seen contributions from numerous scholars, including Iyer (1967), Gururaja Rao (1972), Sundara (1975), Narasimhalah (1980), Moorti (1994), Rajan (1997), Peter (2002), Satyamurty (2007), Darsana (2010), and Nihildas and Joglekar (2010-2011). These studies have highlighted the distinct mortuary practices and grave goods characteristic of megalithic culture in South India. The rock art practices included paintings, engravings, and sculptures, which was an essential part of funerary rites. The Iron Age culture was primarily known through these megalithic monuments constructed using large slabs or blocks of stone.

The presenter highlighted key megalithic structures in South India, such as the Hat Stone (Toppikkal), which is hemispherical in shape and made from dressed or undressed granitic stones used as lids for burial urns. Major sites include Cheramangad, Porkkalam, Eyyal, Vandiperiyar, and Thiruvilvamala. Another important structure is the Dolmen, a rectangular box-like chamber constructed with four orthostats and a fifth slab used as the capstone. These structures are found in the highlands of Palakkad, Thrissur, Idukki, Alappuzha, and Thiruvananthapuram districts. They often contain grave goods such as iron implements, jars, and beads.

The images were presented from Nelladichanpara in Idukki, Kerala, where paintings suggest ritual practices among tribes. These paintings feature figures and symbols, both vertical and horizontal, inside dolmen.

The presenter also talked about the North-Eastern region, describing the area as predominantly hilly, with significant geographical features in Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Meghalaya. Key studies and surveys in the North-Eastern region include P. Binodini Devi's (2011) ethnographic data on the practice of megalithic traditions among 16 Naga tribes in Manipur, D.

Bezbaruah's (2003, 2005) extensive surveys of megalithic remains in Karbil Along, Assam, and Marak (2012) and Mittri's (2014) studies on megalithic and Neolithic remains in the Khasi-Jaintia Hills of Meghalaya. Additionally, Laithangliana (2001) and Malsawmliana (2019) have conducted research on Mizo megaliths and associated rituals.

In conclusion, the presenter set the observation that megaliths in South India were typically composed of a structure with four orthostat stones and a capstone with pictographic depiction of various motifs, whereas in the Northeast, megaliths traditionally consist of a single stone, often adorned with carvings. This distinction highlights the cultural and ritualistic differences between the megalithic practices of the two regions, reflecting their unique historical and social contexts.

### **Thematic Classification of the Rock Art of Kaimur Hills in Chandauli District, Uttar Pradesh and its Co-relation with Rock Art of North-East Regions of India**

**Dr. Rajiv Kumar Jaiswal**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Vasanta College for Women, (Banaras Hindu University), Varanasi, stated that rock art is the primary source to study the culture, rituals, tradition, behaviour and lives of prehistoric societies. Kaimur range reveals adequate rock painting records which provides the excellent potential to understand the various aspects of past human life. The Kaimur hills in Chandauli district are dominated by arenite sandstone which is semi-friable to friable in nature. However, these hills provided an unending canvas for prehistoric humans to exhibit the cognitive perception of their surroundings.



A high level of stylistic variability exhibits in rock art traditions across the subcontinent but the relationship between variability and geographical, cultural, and other forms of diversity has not been well studied and only a small number of researchers undertaking systematic exploration and recordings. Recent studies undertaken in this region have yielded many new rock shelters and rock art sites by using extensive photography, recording, drone shooting and tracing. This study focuses on the thematic classification of rock art. Based on their content and style; it was observed that these paintings belong from the Mesolithic to the historic period.

Various depictions of animal hunting, domestication, animal fighting, battle scenes, human dancing and many aspects of human societies are the main content of these rock arts, large number of handprints as well as stencil marks are also depicted here. Given the vast range of content variability observed in these rock paintings, they offer an opportunity for study through an extensive and multidisciplinary approach.

Research shows that while pictorial rock paintings are absent in Northeast India, engraved rock art is present, particularly in megalithic burials in Manipur, Nagaland, and Mizoram. Independent engravings are also found on rocks and stone jars. The main themes include human

heads, dancers, human figures, female reproductive organs, animal figures, mithun, boars, snakes, and buffaloes. These engravings reflect the cultural behaviour, social customs, and agricultural festivals of local tribal groups. When comparing rock art from these two regions, we observe cultural and religious similarities. The primary aim of this research paper is to highlight these thematic similarities between the regions.

## **Ethno-Rock Art and Indigenous Aesthetic in Panchamukhi, Kaimur Range, Uttar Pradesh**

**Dr. Sachin Kumar Tiwary**, an Assistant Professor in the Department of AIHC and Archaeology at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, conducts research focused on ethno-rock art and indigenous aesthetic traditions in Panchamukhi, located in the Sonbhadra district of the Kaimur range, Uttar Pradesh. His study aims to explore the rich history of tribal art, in connection with rock art of the region, and trace its evolution from the Mesolithic to later historic periods. The research focuses on identifying thematic changes in the art that indicate interactions with external communities and examines contemporary tribal art practices to gain insights into ancient methodologies.

The research employs a multi-phased, interdisciplinary approach, involving ethnographical surveys, interviews, documentation, and recording, as well as the collection and micro-documentation of samples from the tribals and the original rock art sites. Scientific analysis of pigments and comparative studies with contemporary tribal art are also conducted.

In Phase one, covering the Bihar region, documentation of rock art sites is complete while scientific analysis of pigments is ongoing. Phase two, in the Uttar Pradesh region, involves ongoing micro-documentation and scientific analysis of pigments. Phase three, in the Madhya Pradesh region, includes documentation of rock art sites, with scientific analysis of pigments yet to be done.

The research map categorizes rock art sites into three major localities: Kauvakhoh, Ghormangar, and Panchamukhi Hill. These sites are further classified into three categories based on threats from industrial development, proximity to village settlements, and remoteness from modern infrastructure. This categorization aids in understanding the changing landscape and the requirements for developing effective preservation strategies.

The findings reveal the historical significance of rock art in Panchamukhi, showcasing a continuum of artistic traditions that reflect both indigenous folklore and external influences. Notable depictions include war scenes and motifs similar to contemporary tribal art in regions like Jharkhand. There is a notable continuity in the art forms, with contemporary tribal communities using similar symbols and designs in their wall art and tattoo traditions. For instance, the peacock, a common motif in rock art, continues to hold cultural significance in tribal art and festivals.



Pigment analysis indicates that both ancient and contemporary tribal communities used similar raw materials for pigment preparation, such as laterite, hematite, and sedimentary rocks. Modern tribes soak these materials in water to create pigments, a practice that likely mirrors ancient methods. There is a significant correlation between historical tattoo art and current practices among tribes like the Ghasia, Baiga, Gond, Kol, and Kharwar. The motifs and their placements on the body reveal deep cultural meanings and continuity of traditions.

Dr. Tiwary offers a comprehensive insight into the rich cultural heritage of the Kaimur range. By comparing ancient rock art with contemporary tribal practices, the study highlights the continuity and evolution of indigenous art forms. The findings underscore the importance of preserving these cultural treasures in the midst of the challenges posed by modern development. The study not only sheds light on the historical and cultural significance of Panchamukhi rock art but also provides valuable information for devising effective preservation strategies. It emphasizes the need for continued research and documentation to protect and celebrate India's indigenous aesthetic traditions.

## भारतीय शैलचित्र कला: जलवायु परिवर्तन और चुनौतियाँ

डॉ० बृजेश रावत, सहायक प्रोफेसर, इतिहास एवं पुरातत्व विभाग, डॉ० शकुन्तला मिश्रा राष्ट्रीय पुनर्वास विश्वविद्यालय, लखनऊ, उत्तर प्रदेश, ने अपने शोधपत्र वाचन में भारत में शैलचित्र कला के स्थलों पर जलवायु परिवर्तन से उत्पन्न होने वाले तात्कालिक संकट, उनकी भेद्यता एवं उसके तत्काल संरक्षण प्रयासों की आवश्यकता पर बल दिया। शोधपत्र के माध्यम से डॉ० रावत ने विभिन्न जलवायु विज्ञानों के अध्ययनों और संरक्षण प्रतिवेदनों से प्राप्त आंकड़ों का उपयोग करते हुए, इस बात पर बल दिया कि किस प्रकार से बढ़ते तापमान, वर्षा की परिवर्तनशीलता में वृद्धि और अत्यधिक गर्म मौसम की घटनाएं इस अप्रतिम प्राचीन धरोहर के क्षरण को तेज कर समाप्त कर रही हैं। उत्तर भारत में लद्दाख व जन्सकार घाटी से लेकर दक्षिण भारत, तथा पश्चिम भारत से पूर्वोत्तर भारत तक के शैलचित्र कला स्थल जलवायु परिवर्तन के कारण तीव्र प्राकृतिक अपक्षय, क्षरण और जैविक विकास का किस प्रकार से सामना कर रहे हैं। जलवायु द्वारा प्रेरित नमी जैविक उपनिवेशीकरण को बढ़ाती है, जबकि तापमान में उतार-चढ़ाव से चट्टान की सतहों पर भौतिक तनाव होता है, इन खतरों को कम करने के लिए वैज्ञानिक पद्धतियों, उन्नत निगरानी, पुरास्थल पंजीकरण, जलवायु अनुकूलित संरक्षण तकनीकों, सहयोगी अनुसंधानों और नीतियों के विकास तथा सामुदायिक जुड़ाव और शैलकला विषय से सम्बंधित शिक्षा के प्रचार-प्रसार व जागरूकता कार्यक्रमों के आयोजन हेतु सुझाव प्रदान किया, ताकि भविष्य की पीढ़ियों के लिए इन अमूल्य सांस्कृतिक कलाकृतियों का संरक्षण सुनिश्चित किया जा सके।



## Session IV

3<sup>rd</sup> August 2024

Chairperson: Prof. Ashan Reddy

Rapporteur: Nada Tido and Tame Doro Tabang

### Engraved Dolerite Flake from Misimagree, West Garo hills Meghalaya

**Dr. Tilok Thakuria**, Associate Professor in the Department of History and Archaeology, at North Eastern Hill University, Tura Campus. Dr. Thakuria presented his paper with the background of Neolithic culture of West Garo Hills and contributions of scholars like JP Mills, TC Sharma who carried out a number of research at Garo hills concerning prehistoric tools. The contribution of Guwahati University since its establishment in 1948, whose archive has been a great source of stone tools research for contemporary scholars.



He further elaborated that Misimagree site belongs to Neolithic deposit contradicting T.C. Sharma who claimed dolerite flakes of Misimagree as palaeolithic deposit. The site consisted of only dolerite flakes. Most of the artefacts are loose flakes found on the hill slope possibly due to rain, and he further opined that the site is a single deposit and must have been a manufacturing unit. Like all prehistoric site of Northeastern India, Misimagree site is also devoid of any human remains. Pottery and ecofacts were not found at the site; however, seeds were discovered, indicating a Neolithic culture.

The presenter also stated the recurring problem and limitation of tool typology problem of northeast India. He had the typology problem for this site. Further, study was recommended during the discussion while emphasizing the statement 'single deposit might represent single culture'. Discussion also highlighted that the problem of artefacts from northeast India, that there is no knowledge of culture for any artefacts.

## भारतीय शैलकला में महाशमीय संस्कृति एवं मोक्ष की अवधारणा: नृजातीय-पुरातात्विक अध्ययन

संगोष्ठी एवं चतुर्थ सत्र का अंतिम शोधपत्र डा० दिलीप कुमार सन्त, असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर, आदि दृश्य विभाग, इन्दिरा गाँधी राष्ट्रीय कला केन्द्र द्वारा वाचित किया गया | डा० सन्त का शोधपत्र प्रागैतिहासिक काल से अभी तक के महाशमीय संस्कृति के पुरातात्विक प्रमाणों, उनका शैलकला में अंकन तथा किस प्रकार से वर्तमान में भी देश के अनेक भागों में शवों के दफनाने की परंपरा व्याप्त है एवं उसके सांस्कृतिक प्रतिबिम्ब क्या है, इस पर आधारित रहा | साथ ही पुरातन प्रमाणों तथा एवं जीवंत परम्परा के तुलनात्मक एवं नृजातीय - पुरातात्विक अध्ययन पद्धति के आधार पर महाशमीय संस्कृति को व्याख्यायित करने का प्रयास किया |



शवों को दफनाने की पृथा मुख्यतः मनुष्य के इहलोक से अधिक पारलौकिक जीवन की कल्पना पर आधारित है जिसका प्रारंभ प्रागैतिहासिक काल से हुआ था। अनेक पुरातात्विक उत्खननों में शवों के साथ अन्य मनुष्य उपयोगी वस्तुओं को भी रखने के प्रमाण मिलते हैं। जैसे मध्य-पाषाणिक पुरास्थल सरायनाहर राय, महादाह, दमदमा (उ० प्र०), बुर्जहोम (कश्मीर), तमिलनाडु आदि। वस्तुतः पारलौकिक जीवन की कल्पना के साथ दफनाने की यह परंपरा भारतीय मानव संस्कृति के आधार पुरुषार्थ कर्म, धर्म, काम एवं मोक्ष, के अंतिम पड़ाव मोक्ष से संबंधित है। यद्यपि यहाँ यह स्पष्ट करना अधिक आवश्यक है कि शैल कला में अंकन एवं महाशमीय संस्कृति में शवों की दफनाने की परम्परा वैदिक संस्कृति के अंग पुरुषार्थ के मोक्ष से अलग मानवीय जीवन के 'मुक्त' होने से और यह विश्व के सभी संस्कृतियों, सभ्यताओं एवं धर्मों में होता है। संभावित यह है कि उसको प्रस्तुत करने का माध्यम, अंकन, प्रतीक, पद्धति अलग अलग हों जैसा कि भारत के ही विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में देखने को मिलता है मुख्यतः दक्षिण भारत, मध्य भारत एवं उत्तर-पूर्व भारत के क्षेत्रों में।

इसके साथ ही यह भी स्पष्ट किया कि वर्तमान में यह पद्धतियाँ क्षेत्रवार अलग-अलग हैं किन्तु प्रागैतिहासिक अद्यौतिहासिक काल में यह किसी भी धार्मिक साहित्य परंपरा पर आधारित न होकर स्वयं के समुदाय एवं संस्कृति के अनुसार था। अर्थात् मानव की आवश्यकता, तथा पारलौकिक जीवन की काल्पनिक सोच कालांतर में पौराणिक कथाओं, फिर साहित्य एवं साहित्य से पुनः मानव जीवन में यथार्थ परम्परा के रूप में अनुग्रहित किया गया। किन्तु आज भी देश के अनेक स्थानीय समूहों एवं आदिम जन-जीवन में शवों के दफनाने की प्रारम्भिक परम्परा उनके प्रकृतिजन्य सोच एवं पारलौकिक जीवन की कल्पना पर आधारित है।

इसके अतिरिक्त प्रकृति एवं इस पर आश्रित समस्त जीवन जीव-जन्तुओं, वनस्पतियों आदि की उत्पत्ति का मूल स्रोत पंचमहाभूत अथवा पंचतत्त्व है- आकाश, वायु, जल, अग्नि एवं पृथ्वी। मानव जीवन की उत्पत्ति से मृत्यु तक यह पंचमहाभूत ही प्राथमिक एवं अंतिम स्रोत के रूप में है। डॉ० संत ने नृजातीय पुरातात्विक अध्ययन पद्धति के आधार पर मृत्यु के पश्चात दफनाने की प्रक्रिया के समय इन पंचमहाभूतों का पूजन किया जाता है चित्रों के माध्यम से इस पर भी व्यापक प्रकाश डाला इस प्रकार पुरातात्विक प्रमाणों, शैल कला में अंकन, साहित्य में वर्णन तथा जीवन्त परम्परा में कैसे इसके प्रभाव आज भी विभिन्न समूहों एवं जनजातियों में व्यापक हैं, पर व्यापक व्याख्या प्रस्तुत किये।

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## VALEDICTORY SESSION

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The technical seminar overall marked a significant milestone in the understanding and appreciation of rock art in all perspective. The event which brought together experts, researchers, and students ended on a high note with insightful discussions and engaging presentation.

Towards the end of the seminar, after the technical sessions concluded, the valedictory session was chaired by Dr. Sarit Kumar Chaudhuri (Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, R.G.U), Dr. Ramakar Pant (Head, Adi Drishya Division, IGNCA), Dr. Radhe Amung (HoD, Department of Anthropology, R.G.U), Dr. Nitin Kumar (Assistant Director, In-charge, North-East Regional Centre, ICHR) and Dr. Vinod Kumar (Assistant Director) ICHR. It was followed by a lively panel discussion among the scholars focusing on the outcomes and the future avenues for researchers.

Scholars such as Dr. Salam Shyam Singh, Dr. Tilok Thakuria, and Dr. Huidrom Suraj have suggested developing a short-term course and conducting frequent workshops on rock art in universities and colleges in Northeast India to familiarize students with rock art studies and and acquaint them with field documentary techniques. Dr. Tilok Thakuria specially stressed on the need for a basic rock art book publication accessible for researchers. Similarly, Dr. Gouri Dey also suggested the organisers to come up with certain projects in relation with the study of art and culture and conduct workshops in Northeast areas including Sikkim.

Dr. Sachin Kumar Tiwary, noted that the rock-cut engravings in the Northeast, often depicted in high relief, are categorised as rock art, whereas in North India and other regions, such forms would typically be considered rock-cut sculptures. He also emphasized the need for extended workshops on rock art, particularly those hosted by educational institutions in the Northeast. Given the unique challenges of conducting research in the Northeast—such as the dense greenery that persists year-round—it is essential to prioritise publishing more research on the region's rock art to enhance understanding and documentation.

Dr. Rajiv Kumar Jaiswal emphasized the importance of organizing workshops specifically for undergraduate and postgraduate students. He suggested that these workshops should introduce students to scientific methods of documentation, which will aid them in conducting future research, surveys, and documentation in the field of rock art.

Head, Adi Drishya, IGNCA Dr. Ramakar Pant stated that after the seminar, there should be a brainstorming session to discuss how to advance the study of rock art that determine future course of action among researchers. Additionally, he noted that the Adi Drishya Division has been initiating the effort of publishing survey work and documentation in the form of a district rock art series, easily understandable book for general masses. Dr. Pant also stressed that a collaborative effort with Universities and Organisations is always important in bringing rock art into the mainstream, so it may pave the way to establish rock art as an interdisciplinary school of thought.

Thereafter, Dr. Nitin Kumar emphasised the importance of integrating oral history to highlight rock art and appreciated Dr. Aokumla Walling's paper which pointed out the tradition of Naga head hunting and further stated that unless we understand the indigenous aspects there can be wide range of different interpretation regarding one's culture and traditions.

The session headed towards certificate distribution to all the participants by Dr. Sarit Kumar Chaudhuri and Dr. Ramakar Pant. Soon after, Dr. Sarit Kumar Chaudhuri gave a few of his words by sharing the wonderful work of conducting artistic workshop led by IGNCA at Bhimbetka rock shelters (UNESCO World Heritage Site), where students from fine arts made creative artistic work by replicating the rock art motifs depicted in the rock shelters at Bhimbetka.



He further stressed the importance of signing a MoU along with the development of Rock Art Museum at RGU Campus and believes that this initiative will give a new direction towards research in the context of rock art in Northeast India. This will also pave the way for future research and efforts to incorporate rock art into the existing knowledge framework of the region.

Following are significant outcomes which may set the stage for future research directions:

1. **Enhanced Understanding of Prehistoric Cultures**
2. **Transition from Foraging to Farming**
3. **Ethnographic Insights**
4. **Cultural and Archaeological Conservation**
5. **Future Research Directions:** The seminar identifies gaps in current knowledge and proposes future research directions. This includes advocating for systematic and scientific studies in rock art, enhancing interdisciplinary collaborations, and promoting conservation efforts of rock art sites in Northeast India. The integration of advanced technologies such as LiDAR scanning and photogrammetry could also be discussed to enhance documentation and preservation.

Lastly, the vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. Radhe Amung (HoD, Department of Anthropology, R.G.U) mentioned that this is just the beginning. She talked about rock art as an interesting discipline to study and incorporate into research work. She acknowledged and appreciated the work of all those who chaired the technical sessions during the three-day seminar. She also thanked all the faculty members of the Department of Anthropology, R.G.U for actively supporting in the work of seminar. Additionally, she also acknowledged the contribution of representatives from IGNCA, Mr. Praveen C.K. and Ms. Baishnavi Thapa, who played a key role in coordinating the proceedings of the seminar.

The event concluded with a renewed sense of commitment and enthusiasm as the seminar's success serves as a strong motivator to promote rock art as a multidisciplinary field and raising awareness about our rich cultural heritage.

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# ARUNACHAL FRONT

The People's Daily

We support development, not expansionism: PM Modi | P5      Unflappable Swapnil Kusale clinches India's first ever Olympic bronze in 50m rifle 3 positions | P8

NAHARLAGUN/ITANAGAR | FRIDAY | 02 AUGUST | 2024

**...aims to equip community leaders, local body members**      **Scientists discover six...**

ath. the and s to P.6)      spected various ongoing projects. The team led by Minister      While interacting with the contractors and executing      The outdoor stadium of Aalo will be (Cont. P.6)      the Ut ment s dispatch Force l nook a

## National seminar highlights rock art in context of Northeast India



**RONO HILLS, Aug 01:** The Adi Drishya Division of Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi has been organising a national seminar on the theme on 'Rock Art - Archaeology of India: A Comparative Interpretation with Northeast India' from August 1-3, 2024 in collaboration with Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), New Delhi and Department of Anthropology, Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU), Rono Hills, Doimukh. The session was hosted by Dr. Dibyajyoti Das, Assistant Professor of the Department of Anthropology, RGU. The formal opening of the ceremony began with the introduction of the important dignitaries from all the three institutions. The dais was chaired by Prof. Saket Kushwaha, Vice Chancellor, RGU, Dr. Ramakar Pant, Head, Adi Drishya Division, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Dr. Naban Tadar Rikam, Registrar, RGU, Prof. Tana Showren, Member, Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi and Department of History, RGU. (Cont. P.6)

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ndi- um, fan- (O) ver, i re- h of mer- gade and fully s in- dent iron, uty P.6)      BEIJING      Preside called technol ment o for bor "new challe Beijing and ma putes v The made d sessio tended Party's buro, it body. Xi h to "stri

**SERVATION OF PRIESTHOOD CULTURE**



## Nat'l seminar on rock art ends

August 5, 2024



**RONO HILLS, 4 Aug:** A three-day national seminar on 'Rock art – Archaeology of India: A comparative interpretation with Northeast India', organised by the Adi Drishya Division of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts

(IGNCA), in collaboration with the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) and the anthropological department of Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU), concluded here on Saturday.

At the inaugural session on 1 August, RGU Vice-Chancellor Prof Saket Kushwaha announced the development

of a new rock art museum, to be established by RGU's anthropology department, in collaboration with the Adi Drishya Division, the university informed in a release.

Prof Ravi Korisetar from the National Institute of Advanced Studies highlighted the importance of rock art in understanding human cognitive development, while RGU Registrar Dr NT Rikam underscored the necessity for further research on Northeast India's rock art sites, and proposed that a memorandum of understanding be signed among RGU's anthropology department, the IGNCA and the ICHR "to foster academic cooperation."

The seminar focused on the historical and cultural significance of rock art and archaeological findings in India, with particular emphasis on Northeast India.

The discussions covered early archaeological efforts by pioneers such as Alexander Cunningham and Robert Bruce Foote, and examined the cultural connections between Northeast India and Southeast Asia, including the Hoabinhian culture.

The event showcased rock art discoveries across Assam, Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal, Tripura, and Manipur, and highlighted the ongoing traditions of rock and wood engraving

## রোনো হিলস-এ রক আর্টের তিনদিনের জাতীয় সেমিনার সম্পন্ন



### সোমনাথ রায়

ইন্ডিয়ান কাউন্সিল অব হিস্টোরিক্যাল রিসার্চ (আইসিএইচআর) এবং রাজীব গান্ধী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের (আরজিইউ) নৃতাত্ত্বিক বিভাগের সঙ্গে সম্মিলিতভাবে ইন্দীরা গান্ধী ন্যাশনাল সেন্টার ফর দ্য আর্টস-এর আদি দৃষ্টি বিভাগ রোনো হিলস-এ 'রক আর্ট - ভারতের প্রত্নতত্ত্ব : উত্তর-পূর্ব ভারতের সঙ্গে তুলনামূলক ব্যাখ্যা' শীর্ষক তিনদিনের জাতীয় সেমিনারের শনিবার সমাপ্তি হয়েছে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় এক বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে জানিয়েছে, ১ আগস্ট উদ্বোধনী অধিবেশনে আরজিইউ উপাচার্য অধ্যাপক সাকেত কুশওয়াহা একটি নতুন রক আর্ট মিউজিয়াম প্রতিষ্ঠার কথা ঘোষণা করেছেন। যা

আরজিইউ-এর নৃবিজ্ঞান বিভাগ আদি দৃষ্টি বিভাগের সহযোগিতায় স্থাপিত হবে। ন্যাশনাল ইনস্টিটিউট অব অ্যাডভান্সড স্টাডিজের অধ্যাপক রবি কোরিসেত্তার মানব জ্ঞানের বিকাশ অনুধাবনে রক আর্টের গুরুত্ব তুলে ধরেন। আরজিইউ রেজিস্ট্রার ড. এনটি রিকাম উত্তর-পূর্ব ভারতের রক আর্ট সাইটগুলিতে আরও গবেষণার প্রয়োজনীয়তার উপর জোর দিয়েছেন এবং আরজিইউ-এর নৃবিজ্ঞান বিভাগ, আইজিএনসিএ এবং আইসিএইচআর-এর মধ্যে 'অ্যাকাডেমিক সহযোগিতা বৃদ্ধির জন্য' একটি মউ স্বাক্ষর করার প্রস্তাব দিয়েছেন।

সেমিনারে আলোচকরা ভারতের এবং বিশেষ করে উত্তর-

পূর্ব ভারতের রক আর্ট এবং প্রত্নতাত্ত্বিক অনুসন্ধানের ঐতিহাসিক ও সাংস্কৃতিক তাৎপর্যের উপর মনোনিবেশ করেন। তাঁরা আলেকজান্ডার কানিংহাম এবং রবার্ট ব্রুস ফুটের মতো অগ্রগামীদের প্রাথমিক প্রত্নতাত্ত্বিক প্রচেষ্টা এবং হোয়াবিনহিয়ান সংস্কৃতি সমেত উত্তর-পূর্ব ভারত এবং দক্ষিণ-পূর্ব এশিয়ার মধ্যে সাংস্কৃতিক সংযোগগুলির ওপর আলোকপাত করেন। অনুষ্ঠানে অসম, মিজোরাম, নাগাল্যান্ড, অরুণাচল, ত্রিপুরা এবং মণিপুর জুড়ে শিলা শিল্পের আবিষ্কারগুলি প্রদর্শিত হয় এবং আদিবাসী গোষ্ঠীগুলির মধ্যে পাথর ও কাঠের খোদাইয়ের চলমান ঐতিহ্যগুলিকে তুলে ধরা হয়। উত্তরপূর্ব ভারত এবং অন্যান্য অঞ্চলে শিলা শিল্পের তুলনামূলক অধ্যয়ন, প্রাগৈতিহাসিক এবং প্রত্নতাত্ত্বিক সংস্কৃতির থিমগুলিও অন্বেষণ করা হয়। সেমিনারে ১৬টি গবেষণাপত্র পড়া হয়।

সমাপ্তি অনুষ্ঠানে, আদি দৃষ্টি বিভাগের প্রধান ডাঃ রমাকর পন্ত রক আর্ট স্টাডিজের জন্য একটি মাল্টিডিসিপ্লিনারি পদ্ধতির গুরুত্বের উপর জোর দেন এবং বলেন, উত্তর-পূর্ব ভারতের রাজ্যগুলিতে এ ধরনের আরও কর্মশালা আয়োজন করা উচিত। আইসিএইচআর সহকারী পরিচালক ডাঃ বিনোদ কুমার, আইসিএইচআর উত্তর-পূর্ব আঞ্চলিক কেন্দ্রের সহকারী পরিচালক ডাঃ নীতিন কুমার এবং আরজিইউ সামাজিক বিজ্ঞানের ডিন অধ্যাপক সরিত কে প্রমুখ বক্তব্য রাখেন অনুষ্ঠানে।

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## Nat'l seminar on 'Rock Art - Archaeology of India: A Comparative Interpretation with NE India' begins at RGU

RONO HILLS, Aug 1: A three-day national seminar themed 'Rock Art - Archaeology of India: A Comparative Interpretation with Northeast India', organized by the Adi Drishya Division of Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi in collaboration with Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), New Delhi and Department of Anthropology, Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU), commenced at its premises here today.

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In his keynote address, Prof Ravi Korisetar, Adjunct Professor (National Institute of Advanced Studies-NIAS), delivered an insightful presentation on rock art, emphasizing its importance covering various rock art sites in India.

Prof Korisetar also presented a critical analysis taking various examples for understanding the role of rock art in human cognitive development.

In his introductory speech, Dr Ramakar Pant, Head, Adi Drishya Division, IGNCA, explained the concept of rock art and the role of the Division in research and preserving the rock art sites all over India.

The Division's initiation and its various efforts have made rock art research as a new avenue among the scholars, he said.