

## **Report**

A Report on the **Two Days National Seminar** on “**Anthropological Perspectives: Contemporary Issues and Challenges**” Organized by **Department of Anthropology**, School of Applied Sciences, Dr. Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya (A Central University), Sagar, MP in collaboration with **Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGMRS)**, Bhopal (MP) From **15<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> July 2016**.

The present Seminar fundamentally revolves around the practical applicability of the different anthropological perspectives and approaches like holism, relativism, positivism, interpretive, reflexivity and ethnographic fieldwork etc., in resolving the contemporary issues and challenges which we face in everyday life. In the backdrop of the heterogeneity and the diverse perspectives which rarely go together, it would not be too much to say that, it is almost impossible to construct a single perspective that encompasses the variety of anthropological viewpoints. Besides, it would be unfair and rather narrow to look at any social phenomena through a single anthropological lens. At this very point, it is perhaps much more imperative for us to channelize our energy on the human welfare rather than entangling ourselves to the myriads of anthropological viewpoints.

In the same vein, the rapidly transforming society, with its worths and flaws, demands anthropology for a paradigm shift. It needs to unravel and refocus on its role as a ‘social doctor’ to make a politically meaningful contribution to the world and also make a vital connection between knowledge and action. This gives anthropology a great deal to say authoritatively about problems and predicaments of people in the contemporary world. Issues pertaining to population growth, poverty and hunger, environmental degradation, disease, ethnic and religious strife, war, and crime etc. are constantly aired all through the day on television, radio, newspapers, and news magazines. Again, managing these problems with humanely capacity even with the help of highly scientific technology spurt challenges most of the time. Therefore, there is a huge demand for realistic and pragmatic anthropology to come up-front to solve these human problems. Thus, as an initiative to bring about these practical changes and encourage the interactive engagements, we are organising the present seminar as part of our department’s Diamond Jubilee Celebration.

### **Objectives:**

1. To initiate a dialogue and to look afresh on the traditional anthropological approaches in evaluating the contemporary social issues and challenges.
2. To critically assess the intercultural dynamics and diverse power relation that undermines anthropological knowledge and raise challenges in its involvement in solving humanitarian problems
3. To highlight the distinctiveness of anthropology and its proficiency as a problem solving alternative for human welfare
4. To provide a common platform for interaction and debate where experienced social scientists and young researchers could pool their ideas together about the applicability of anthropology in dealing with human problems

### **Brief Summary of the Event:**

For the two days National seminar, about 45 abstracts had been received, 38 abstracts were accepted after a thorough review by the experts and others were rejected. These 38 abstracts were compiled in the form an abstract book.

In the two days National Seminar, many renowned anthropologists had come and graced the event. Mentioned may be made of Prof. Sarit Chaudhuri, Director IGRMS, Bhopal, Prof. Jibon

Kumar, Head, Department of Anthropology, Manipur University, Manipur, Prof. Rajan Gaur, Department of Anthropology, Punjab University, Chandigarh, Prof. Swapan Kumar Kolay, School of Anthropology and Tribal Studies, Bastar University, Dr. Debashis Debnath, Dr. P. Venkatraman, IGNOU, New Delhi, Dr. Anil Kumar, IGNOU, Dr. Vijay Prakash Sharma, Jharkhand, Dr. D.V. Prasad, Department of Anthropology, IGNTU, Amarkantak, Dr. Prasanna Kumar Patra, Dr. Ramesh Sahani, Dr. Anand Murti Mishra, Bastar University and Dr. Yaiphaba Meitei, Department of Anthropology, Manipur University, Manipur. There were five academic sessions in total and each academic session was dealing with different themes viz., the first academic session was dealing with Issues of Health, Well-being and Quality of Life and the second session was dealing with Identity Issues and so on. Thus, in these five academic sessions, a total of 11 special lectures had been delivered on different topics relating to the diverse themes and 28 research papers had been presented by different faculties and research scholars from different universities. Every session was followed by brainstorming sessions of question and answer sessions and elaborate discussion.

Therefore, two days National Seminar brought about intensive discussions regarding the applicability of the theoretical knowledge of anthropology to deal with the issues we are facing in our everyday life. There were extensive discussions on how to enhance the applied anthropological aspects to not only deal with the so called 'primitive societies' but also extend our approach to deal with the contemporary societies and also their issues.

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