

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Gangadhar Meher University (GMU), Sambalpur was established on 30 May 2015 by the Government of Odisha, evolving from the historic Gangadhar Meher Autonomous College. Tracing its roots to 1944 as Sambalpur College, the institution was renamed in 1949 in honour of renowned Odia poet Gangadhar Meher and has since grown into a major centre of higher education in Western Odisha.

With a strong legacy of academic excellence, the institution introduced science education in 1957, postgraduate programmes in 1964, and achieved autonomy in 1991. It was recognised as a College with Potential for Excellence (UGC) and accredited with 'A' grade by NAAC, leading to its elevation as a unitary university.

Today, GMU offers a wide range of UG, PG, and PhD programmes, supported by modern infrastructure, advanced research facilities, hostels, sports amenities, and digital resources. Committed to the National Education Policy, Indian Knowledge Systems, multidisciplinary learning, and inclusive development, GMU plays a crucial role in expanding access to quality higher education, particularly for the tribal and marginalised communities of the region.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The School of Anthropology, established in 2019, is committed to setting a standard of excellence through quality teaching and research. Its vision is to extend and apply anthropological knowledge to promote inclusive development and bring positive social change. The School strives to impart quality education by preparing students to become competent anthropologists equipped to address contemporary societal issues.

The School offers a comprehensive curriculum through Undergraduate (UG), Postgraduate (PG), and Ph.D. programmes, fostering a strong academic foundation in anthropology. It places a strong emphasis on experiential learning, providing students with opportunities to undertake biocultural studies of diverse communities, including indigenous tribal populations, identify prehistoric sites along the River Mahanadi belt, and visit museums annually. Such academic and field-based activities complement classroom learning and contribute to the development of trained anthropologists capable of contributing to social dynamics and human welfare.

The School also proudly houses a newly established Anthropological Laboratory and Anthropological Museum, offering hands-on training and enriching students' understanding of material culture and artefacts as living traditions.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

PATRONS:

Prof. (Dr.) Susanta Kumar Das, Vice Chancellor, GMU
Prof. (Dr.) Gyanranjan Swain Chairman, PG Council, GMU
Shri Sanat Kumar Naik, Registrar, GMU

CONVENOR:

Dr. Bibhu Kalyan Mohanty,
Associate Professor, School of Anthropology, GMU

ORGANISING COMMITTEE:

Dr. Meera Swain, Associate Prof. & Head, School of Anthropology, GMU
Dr. Kalyani Rath, Assistant Professor, School of Anthropology, GMU
Dr. Minaketan Bag, Assistant Professor, School of Anthropology, GMU
Mr. Sachin C. Pujar, Assistant Professor (Guest), School of Anthropology, GMU
Mr. Shubhashish Pandia, Guest Faculty, School of Anthropology, GMU



Important Dates

Registration Starts From	1st February, 2026
Last Date of Registration	15th March, 2026
Abstract Submission Deadline	15th March, 2026
Acceptance of Abstract	16th March, 2026
Full length Paper	20th March, 2026

NATIONAL SEMINAR

on

*“Artefacts Speak:
Indian Knowledge Systems in
Traditions Across India”*

ORGANISED BY: SCHOOL OF ANTHROPOLOGY

**Gangadhar Meher University,
Amrut Vihar, Sambalpur, 768004**



Sponsored by:



On

23 & 24 March, 2026

Venue

School of Anthropology, GMU



ABOUT THE SEMINAR

India, a land of rich and diverse cultures, showcases its continuity of cultural heritage through artefacts found even today in some remote pockets, especially in tribal and rural milieus. It reveals their continuity, associated with their social obligations, belief systems, and traditional wisdom. The artefact showcases its regional and cultural heritage, serving as tangible historical evidence while protecting its intangible cultural legacy, a narrative tradition in Indian culture. In an anthropological museum, each artefact is a living testament to the creative thinking of a craftsman, with sustainable and straightforward craftsmanship involved in its making. Age-old traditions continued to highlight the artefact's uniqueness, where meticulous documentation can speak about its richness and contemporary relevance.

Museums display diverse crafts and mastery while preserving legacies within specific eco-cultural zones, which are shaped by readily available and sustainable resources, allowing for sustainable utilisation practices that lead to continuity.

The present national seminar, Artefacts Speak: Indian Knowledge System in Traditions Across India, invites scholars of repute, young research scholars, museum professionals and academia to share their insights on artefacts from across the nation, which may include artefacts from the museum or from personal collections of antique or extinct items, while explaining their unique legacies, cultural affinity and a pride for future generations.

KEY THEMES

The seminar engages with artefacts as cultural texts that embody memory, belief, skill, and identity across diverse Indian communities. The themes collectively examine material culture not merely as objects, but as dynamic carriers of social knowledge, ecological adaptation, and historical continuity.

- **Tribal Artefacts and Belief Systems:**
Explores the cosmological, ritual, and symbolic dimensions of artefacts within indigenous communities, where material objects function as mediators between the human, natural, and spiritual worlds.
- **Rural Crafts and Sustainable Practices:**
Focuses on traditional craft systems rooted in local ecology, emphasizing indigenous technologies, resource optimization, and community-based models of sustainable production.
- **Intangible Legacies Through Tangible Artefacts:**
Investigates how oral traditions, skills, values, and collective memory are encoded and transmitted through material forms, linking tangible heritage with intangible cultural practices.
- **Regional Diversity and Cultural Inheritance:**
Highlights India's plural cultural landscape by examining region-specific artefacts as expressions of localized histories, identities, and inter-community interactions.
- **Museum Preservation and Documentation:**
Addresses curatorial practices, documentation methods, and ethical representation, considering museums as sites where artefacts are conserved, interpreted, and recontextualized for public knowledge.
- **Contemporary Relevance and Future Pride:**
Examines the adaptation of traditional crafts in modern markets, policy frameworks, and digital platforms, positioning heritage as a resource for livelihood, identity, and cultural confidence in the future.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To explore the historical background of a craft tradition and find the challenges of its continuity, its preservation and its journey from familial to institutional level.
- To sensitise the mainstream population about regional traditions while creating a sense of pride among the people.
- To have a dialogue on different kinds of challenges, which include the availability of resources and the demand of the market, while exploring the kind of innovation needed for sustaining a tradition, including marketing and policy interventions.
- To create a platform for interdisciplinary research among academics and artisans so that policymakers can formulate meaningful strategies for the conservation of cultural heritage.

Scan for Registration



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