

Call for Papers

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS
OF INDIA

9-11 January 2004

Indian Institute of Technology
Kharagpur



Organised by

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS OF INDIA

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BACKGROUND

Traditional Knowledge Systems refer to the unique local knowledge, values and technical capabilities existing within and developed around the specific conditions of communities indigenous to a particular geographic area. Until recently, it was traditional knowledge that provided a vast majority of the population with the basis for production of daily needs, activities including agriculture, irrigation, artisanal production, healthcare, childcare etc. The world has suffered a profound loss due to neglect of the traditional knowledge systems of the indigenous communities. This loss has been accompanied by marginalization of their practices and beliefs, often termed as inferior forms of knowing to be replaced by universalized knowledge derived from western science. Attempts to apply western science universally without regard for traditional knowledge systems have led in many cases to failures in sustainable resource use and the erosion of biological diversity.

In recognition of these issues, there is a growing interest in incorporating Traditional Knowledge Systems into truly meaningful approaches to development. There is an urgent need for deeper understanding of these knowledge systems and their role in community life from an integrated perspective that includes both material and spiritual aspects of society as well as the complex relation between them to ensure just and holistic societal development.

OBJECTIVES

It is primarily the capabilities, values and knowledge of the people that have the strength to reorganize production in a manner that is conducive to the establishment of a just society. In the Indian context, centuries of colonialism led to economic, political, cultural and spiritual dismemberment and marginalization of traditional knowledge systems of the people. This is one of the factors responsible for the disorderliness of Indian society and its continued impoverishment. For Indian society to emerge from the present crisis, it is essential to re-establish continuity with the latent creative knowledge and genius of our people.

The objectives of the seminar are to :

- Promote use of Traditional Knowledge as complementary to the scientific tradition and integrate traditional knowledge into the broader knowledge base
- Understand role of traditional knowledge in restoring dignity to communities, combating poverty, tackling unemployment etc.
- Suggest policy measures to empower traditional practitioners in various sectors and remove obstacles faced by them.

PROGRAMME AND PARTICIPATION

This National Conference is organized around different sectors of knowledge. The Conference will provide a platform to practitioners of traditional knowledge, and to all those who recognize the inherent potential of traditional knowledge systems –academicians, scientists, social scientists, thinkers, social activists, experts and planners. Deliberations are expected to take place on the nature and strengths of traditional knowledge, their regional specificity, and obstacles faced by practitioners of traditional knowledge.

PAPER PRESENTATIONS : Paper presentations in various aspects of traditional knowledge systems are proposed. These will be organized as Plenary and Parallel Technical Sessions on the following themes:

- Traditional non-chemical agriculture
- Rejuvenation of water storage structures
- Artisanal production
- Machinery design in small-scale sector
- Handlooms & natural dyes
- Minerals and metallurgy
- Biomass & sustainable energy
- Inland waterways and transportation
- Traditional medicine & pharmacology
- Traditional food processing
- Traditional building materials and architecture
- Traditional Philosophical Systems
- Vernacular education, creativity and innovation
- Forest knowledge and bio-conservation

WORKSHOPS : As part of the Conference, Workshops on 4-6 specific themes would be conducted by subject experts. Details will be announced in the second circular. –

EXHIBITION / DEMONSTRATION : An exhibition and demonstration by various traditional practitioners of knowledge will be organized. An artisanal haat will also be setup wherein products manufactured by artisans would be exhibited.

VENUE : Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur. Founded in 1951, IIT Kharagpur is the forerunner of all the IITs. Kharagpur Junction is connected by rail to all major cities of India. It is 116 km or just under two hours' journey by express trains from Calcutta. IIT Kharagpur campus is about 5 km from Kharagpur Railway station and can be reached by taxi, autorickshaw or cycle rickshaw.

REGISTRATION : Participants in the Seminar are required to register as Delegates by paying a registration fee of Rs.2500/- (Registration form is enclosed). The Registration fee may be paid by crossed Demand Draft in favour of NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS OF INDIA, payable at Syndicate Bank, IIT Kharagpur. Registration fee will entitle an outstation participant to the conference kit, working lunch and the conference dinner. Guest House / Hostel booking would be done by the organisers. Travel and accomodation expenses would have to be borne by the participants themselves. Delegates registering beyond 1st November 2003, would pay Rs. 3,000/- as registration fees.

SUBMISSION OF PAPERS : Delegates are required to send two copies of typed abstract within 300 words. Name and detailed contact information of the author should be mentioned. Please also state the theme under which you would like your paper to be considered. A Book of Abstracts would be distributed during the conference. Proceedings of the National Conference containing full length papers would be brought out at a later date.

- Deadline for abstract submission : 30th September 2003
- Acceptance of papers will be notified by : 15th October 2003
- Early registration deadline : 1st November 2003
- Deadline for submission of full length papers: 15th November 2003

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REGISTRATION FORM

Name of the Delegate: _____

Designation: _____

Organisation: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Demand Draft No. _____

for Rs.* _____

Dated: _____

Signature of Delegate

* Early registration fee (before 1st November 2003) Rs. 2,500/-
Late registration fee (after 1st November 2003) Rs. 3,000/-

Mail to

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