

Education is knowledge, knowledge is power — Socrates

CHUTIA DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
&
ALL CHUTIA JATI SANMILAN, ASSAM

Sponsored

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON

"Revisiting History, Culture, Identity, and Contemporary Dynamics of Indigenous Communities in Northeast India with Special Reference to Chutia Community"

2nd & 3rd NOVEMBER 2026



Organised By

IQAC, BORHOLLA COLLEGE
BORHOLLA, JORHAT, ASSAM
PIN – 785631

Hybrid Mode: Virtual & in-person

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About Borholla College and Borholla Area

Borholla College is a premier institution of entire greater Borholla area, Jorhat District of Assam, India and affiliated to Dibrugarh University, Assam, India. The college was established in the year 1990 and started its glorious journey as arts Degree College. Borholla college has been provincialized in 2013 and assessed by NAAC in 2023 with B++ Grade (CGPA

2.85) and is enlisted under UGC 2(F) & 12 (B) Act. The college is dedicated to fostering academic rigor, research initiatives, and socio-cultural empowerment. Situated within a tranquil, eco-friendly campus equipped with modern digital infrastructure and a central library, Borholla College offers an inspiring seat of learning for global knowledge exchange and interdisciplinary research. At present the College is offering Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP) approved by NCTE, Distance Education under Dibrugarh University and Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University, Post Graduate Diploma in Computer Application and several carrier-oriented courses apart from the regular Degree Course.

Framed by the lush greenery of tea plantations and the serene foothills of Nagaland's mountain ranges, Borholla offers a picturesque backdrop rich in natural beauty and cultural heritage. The college is located about 38 km distance from district headquarter of Jorhat, Assam and close proximity to Naga Hills, which is one of the offshoots of Himalayan mountain system and on the bank of the river Kakodonga, which is a tributary of mighty river Brahmaputra. Borholla area is well known for production of good quality rice, tea, vegetables etc. and also for extraction of coal and petroleum. Nestled in the southern expanse of Jorhat district—the world-renowned "Tea Capital of Assam"—Borholla is a region characterized by idyllic natural beauty, sprawling emerald tea plantations, and fertile agricultural fields. Set against the backdrop of the Naga Hills, the region boasts a rich cultural tapestry and deep-rooted heritage, located just six kilometres from the historic and sacred Athkhelia Namghar. Borholla offers international scholars and delegates an authentic experience of Assam's vibrant traditions, eco-cultural charm, and warm hospitality.

CONNECTIVITY

Borholla area is well connected by roads, railway and air.

✈By Air:

- Jorhat Airport (Rowriah - JRH): Nearest airport, located ~30 km from Borholla. Connects via regular flights to Guwahati, Kolkata, and Delhi.
- Dimapur Airport (DMU): Located ~75 km away, serving as an alternate regional gateway.
- Guwahati International Airport (GAU): Major international hub with daily flights nationwide; delegates can take a connecting flight to Jorhat or opt for train/road travel to Jorhat/Mariani.

By Rail:

- Mariani Junction (MXN): Primary railway hub located ~30 km from Borholla. Major express trains (including Rajdhani Express and Brahmaputra Mail) stop here.
- FurkatingJunction Located ~18 km away, connecting to regional routes.

By Road:

- Frequent local buses, private taxis, and cab aggregators operate between Borholla and Golaghat Town (Distance 25 KM), Jorhat Town (38 KM), Titabor Town (18 KM). Direct Day Supers are also available from Guwahati to Borholla.

CONCEPT NOTE:

Northeast India is the eastern most region of India representing both a geographic, political, and administrative division of the country. India's Northeast, a region with great historical past and rich cultural heritage, spreads over an area of 2,62,230 sq. kms. It lies between 21.57 N – 29.30 N latitude and 89.46 E – 97.30 E longitudes. The region is constituted with the eight States namely Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. They are known as eight siblings and referred to as 'eight sisters' or 'seven sisters and one brother'. Surrounded by hills and beautiful rivers, these states fall in the category of eastern Himalayan ranges and Patkai-Naga hills along with Brahmaputra-Barak river systems and valley plains. The hills and basins are a mixture of mountain ranges, plateaus, low hills and valleys. Rich in natural resources and flora and fauna, the region is a gateway to east and South-East Asia. Around 98 per cent of the boundary of these states has international borders. The region occupies a special position in the country, not only because of its location but also because of the cultural and historical uniqueness of its people and indigenous communities. The states have distinct cultures and multiple ethnic groups and are a fine example of unity in diversity. The variety of ethnic groups, languages and religions reflect the multi-cultural character of the states. The region houses over 200 of the 635 tribal groups in the country, speaking a variety of Tibeto-Burman languages and dialects. States like Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland are predominantly inhabited by tribals with a certain degree of diversity among the tribes. States like Assam, Manipur, Tripura and Sikkim are inhabited by people of various religious denominations like, Hindus, Christians and Muslims and a combination of local tribes and communities.

When we speak about indigenous communities then comes the question about the definition of indigeneity. The world's total indigenous population varies from 200 million to 370 million (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs). Indigenous peoples live in every region of the world. Significant international agreements defining the rights of indigenous peoples are the Convention no. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples by the

International Labour Organization from 1989 and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the General Assembly on 13 September 2007. The ILO No. 169 convention defines such peoples indigenous whose ancestors have lived in the area before the settlement or the formation of the modern state borders. In addition, the convention provides that indigenous peoples have maintained either wholly or partly their own social, economic, cultural, and political institutions. ILO no. 169 convention recognizes indigenous peoples' special rights to their traditional residential places and natural resources, and demands that states start special measures to for example protect indigenous cultures, languages, and environments. However, the convention does not take a stand on how indigenous people should be defined (ILO, 169). The ILO No. 169 convention is complemented by United Nations' special reporter José Martinez Cobo's (1986) report on the discrimination of indigenous peoples, United Nations. Cobo's definition covers the group- and individual-level definitions of indigeneity. According to the group-level definition, those communities and peoples, who still have continuous historical connection to the societies preceding colonization, who developed on areas populated by these peoples and who consider themselves as clearly separate from other societal structures currently prevailing in the area, are indigenous. In addition, indigenous peoples are not in a ruling position in the modern society and they want to maintain, develop, and transmit the inherited lands and ethnical identity to the future generations. Their ethnic identity forms the existence of the people as one, unitary population in harmony with their own cultural practices, social institutions, and legal systems (Cobo, 1986). Cobo also gives general answer to the question of who individual people (persons) can be seen as members of an indigenous people. The person must identify himself or herself as a member of an indigenous people (the subjective definition) and on the other hand, the group must acknowledge and accept the person as the member of the people (the objective definition). Cobo emphasized the power of the group in this matter: the group acceptance includes a sovereign right to decide who belongs to the group without outsiders' interference (Cobo, 1986). On the other hand, the UN Declaration states in Article 9 about the sovereign right of an indigenous person to belong to indigenous group the following: "Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right to belong to an indigenous community or nation, in accordance with the traditions and customs of the community or nation concerned, no discrimination of any kind may arise from the exercise of such right" (UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007). According to Dr. Tanja Joona (2010), the definition of an indigenous people as a group is not challenging as such but the definition is problematic at the individual level. The core of the problem is in the indigenous peoples' aspiration to get back their historical rights to the land and waters. Special rights make the individual-level definition topical: how to define the subjects entitled to use indigenous peoples' rights? Joona (2010) emphasizes the significance of the self-identification as the definition of indigeneity and leans on the first article of the ILO convention no. 169, the ninth article of the United Nations' declaration on indigenous peoples, and the final report of the United Nations' committee on the fight against all racial discrimination concerning Finland (dated March 5, 2009).

As mentioned above the Northeastern region of India is home to various indigenous communities counting about 200 of the 635 tribal groups in the country, speaking a variety of Tibeto-Burman languages and dialects. Among them Chutiya people are one of the earliest and most historically prominent indigenous communities of Northeast India. Ney Elias expressed his views regarding Chutia dominating region which was situated to the west of the Udaigiri Mountains (Brahmakunda and the ranges bounding Khamti on the west), the hills on the south were inhabited by Kacharis and the Nagas, to the west it extends as far as the country of the Kushan, a Hindu tribe dwelling in the neighborhood of Visnath and on the north the area of stretches up to the hills Amut-Miri (Perhaps North Easter Assam Himalayan range). The ancestors of chutia community belong to rajah 'Bishmook', the father of celebrated Rukmini, which was mention in the "Srimad Bhagawata". Chutia kingdom was known as Vidarbha and its capital was at Kundil standing on the river of the same name (K.L. Boruah). At present the region is located near Sadiya of upper Assam and close proximity to the Arunachal Pradesh. The medieval Chutia Kingdom established complex governance systems, extensive trade networks, defensive military architectures, and distinct traditions in stone carving, metallurgy, and water management. Chutia people have also rich culture, indigenous knowledge to safe guard the environmental, expertise skills for preparation of ornaments and other equipment required for day-to-day use. They are the first community in this region, who have acquired the manufacturing knowledge of artilleries. Last Chutia queen Sati Sadhani formed the first woman warrior group in Asia continent. The Chutia rulers exercised powers by regulating eastward trade and movement of people between Assam, Tibet and southern China.

In recent years, the community has fostered strong efforts to retrieve its glorious history and cultural distinctiveness. All Chutiya Jati Sanmilan, Assam and its sister organizations are trying their level best to build the consciousness and promoting safeguard and uphold the community. Preservation and upgradation of historical places, monuments, traditions,

indigenous knowledge, folkdance and songs, rituals, documentations of rare scripts, recording of narratives and oral traditions etc. related with Chutiya community are some prominent steps.

Over centuries, transition dynamics—ranging from geopolitical conflicts with neighbouring powers to integration within the broader Assamese society, colonial policy shifts, and post-independence administrative transformations—substantially reshaped the socio-political status and cultural practices of the Chutia people. In contemporary academic discourse, there is a growing necessity to critically re-evaluate the historical contributions, linguistic heritage, sacred geography, and social evolution of the Chutia community. Apart from that contemporary Socio-Political Assertions and Rights of Chutia community are other dimensions to analyze in proper way. Constitutional recognition, demand of Scheduled Tribe (ST) status and affirmative action to safeguard the identity of the community are some important issues. Further, Challenges of urbanization, globalization, identity retention, and heritage preservation in the 21st century facing by the community should be discussed in depth.

This international seminar seeks to serve as a focused, interdisciplinary forum to move beyond conventional historiographical gaps, bringing together scholars to analyse the intersection of history, cultural transformation, identity politics, and modern socio-economic aspirations, assimilation process, technological intervention, present status of all the indigenous communities of the region with special focus on Chutia people. The international seminar is not merely an academic meet but tries to focus on each indigenous communities of Northeast India with their contributions from prehistoric period to present and their culture and present status. The globalization process threatens the existence of each indigenous communities of the world and Northeast India is also not exceptional. The seminar aspires to articulate a future oriented framework for prestigious existence of all the communities of the region.

Main Theme

Revisiting History, Culture, Identity, and Contemporary Dynamics of Indigenous Communities in Northeast India with Special Reference to Chutia Community.

Sub Themes

1. Northeast India's socio-cultural landscape.
2. Socio-economic life of the people of Northeast India.
3. Social structure and organizations.
4. Identity politics in Northeast India.
5. Historical origins and Migration among the communities.
6. Demographic and Spatial distribution.
7. Language and linguistic heritage.
8. Religion and worldview.
9. Political organizations and autonomy.
10. The struggle and the subalternity of the marginalized communities.
11. The role of women in preserving indigenous heritage and culture in Northeast India.
12. Technology intervention in indigenous community life.
13. Indigenous knowledge and environment sustainability.
14. Land use and settlement patterns of indigenous communities.
15. Rituals as economic rationality.
16. Documentation and preservation of indigenous knowledge, culture and heritage in the digital age.
17. Eco-consciousness among indigenous communities.
18. Historical overview of science and technology in Northeast India.
19. The prospect of indigenous ecotourism.
20. Folk medicine and traditional healing practices among indigenous communities.
21. Political aspirations of the indigenous communities.
22. Traditional crafts, cultural heritage and market transformation.
23. Preserving cultural heritage and identity of indigenous communities through educational progression.
24. Integration of traditional knowledge with the Indian Knowledge System.
25. Integration of indigenous pedagogies into higher education.
26. Integration of indigenous linguistic heritage into mainstream education under NEP 2020.

Any other theme related to the main theme.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE SEMINAR?

- Academics and Researchers from various disciplines.
- Policymakers and Industry Participants.
- Representatives from NGOs and Civil Society Organisations.
- Research scholars and PG/UG students.

IMPORTANT DATES:

20th October, 2026	Last date for submission of Abstract
27th October, 2026	Last date for notification of acceptance of Abstract
28th October, 2026	Last date for submission of Full Paper
28th October, 2026	Last date for Online Registration
2nd November, 2026	Last date for Spot Registration
2nd November & 3rd November, 2026	Chutia Development Council. Government of Assam & All Chutia Jati Sanmilan, Assam Sponsored International Seminar.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION

1. All Papers sent for consideration should be original and unpublished following the standard plagiarism norms.
2. All articles should be either in English or Assamese.
3. Word limit for abstract: 250 words with minimum 5 keywords.
4. Word limit for the full paper: 2500-5000 words.
5. The abstract and full paper must be emailed to seminarbc2026@gmail.com
6. All soft copies must be submitted in English typed using MS-Word, formatted in Times New Roman, Font Size 12 with 1.5-line spacing and in Assamese Unicode-compliant Assamese fonts.
7. The papers must have proper references following APA 7th edition or MLA 9th edition.
8. Joint paper presenters have to register separately.
9. Same Author submitting separate papers must register separately.
10. Registration link:
    https://forms.gle/u3tQRPCg6izmQg6J8
11. No TA/DA will be provided for paper presenter and participants.
12. Accommodation will be provided on payment basis only with prior intimation. (For accommodation contact Mr. Simanta Borah, Assistant Professor on +91-8638299798.
13. For any query related to submission please contact:
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REGISTRATION PROCESS

FEE STRUCTURE

Academician:	Rs. 1200.00
Research Scholar:	Rs. 700.00
PG/UG Students:	Rs. 300.00
International Participants:	US$ 25
Spot Registration:	Rs. 1500.00
Only for Participation:	Rs. 300.00

ACCOUNT DETAILS

Name of Bank: SBI, Borholla Branch
Account No. 45573686706
IFSC: SBIN0004573
Account Holder's Name: Borholla College

After the fee payment fill up the Google Form:
https://forms.gle/u3tQRPCg6izmQg6J8

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