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## **PRESS-RELEASE**

### **IIT (ISM) Dhanbad Hosts National Seminar on Reclaiming Indigeneity and Tribal Studies**

The Inaugural Function of the **two-day National Seminar on “Reclaiming Indigeneity: The Adivasi Questions, Janjati Movements and Tribal Studies in Contemporary India”** was held today at the Golden Jubilee Lecture Theatre of the Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines), Dhanbad. The seminar is being organized by the **Department of Humanities and Social Sciences of IIT (ISM) in collaboration with the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)** on August 8 and 9, 2025.

Prof. Sarat Kumar Das, Dean (Faculty) of IIT (ISM), who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, reflected on the prevalence of social cohesiveness in his native state of Odisha and elaborated on the historical context of the term “aboriginals” used to refer to indigenous people. In his address, he also recalled the atrocities and killings faced by tribal communities during the British Raj, underlining the importance of acknowledging and preserving indigenous heritage.

Welcoming the participants, Prof. Gyan Prakash, Head of the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, noted that as a native of tribal-dominated Jharkhand, the seminar’s theme was particularly close to his heart. Seminar convenor Prof. Sangay Tamang highlighted the overwhelming response the event had received, with over 350 abstracts submitted. However, due to various constraints, the organizers were unable to accommodate all the proposals. Prof. Nirban Manna, Co-Convenor, proposed the vote of thanks.

The first keynote address was delivered by Prof. Tanka B. Subba, Visiting Professor at IIT Gandhinagar and former Vice-Chancellor of Sikkim University, who spoke on “*Reclaiming Indigeneity and Adivasi Questions in Contemporary India*”. This was followed by the opening technical session on “*Tribes in Contemporary India: Debates, Discourse and Discussions*”. The second technical session focused on “*Resistance, Mobilization, and Indigeneity in India*”, while the third explored “*Policy, Politics, and Welfare of Tribal Population in India*”. The inaugural day concluded with a panel discussion on “*The Life and Legacy of Birsa Munda*”.

The concluding day on August 9 will open with the fourth technical session on “*Emerging Themes in Tribal and Indigenous Studies*”, followed by deliberations in the fifth session on “*Land, Identity, and Contestation among Tribes in India*”. The sixth session will examine “*Religions, Secularism, and Tribal Worldview*”, while the seventh and final technical session will focus on “*Environment, Climate Change, and Food Insecurities among Tribal Communities in India*”. The seminar will close with a valedictory function marking the conclusion of two days of intense scholarly exchange and discussion on the pressing issues surrounding indigeneity and tribal studies in contemporary India.

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