

REPORT

STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMME 2023

Between
St. Joseph's College Darjeeling

and

Moridhal College, Assam.

Date: 29th and 30th of September 2023

VENUE: MORIDHAL COLLEGE, DIST Dhemaji ASSAM

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INTRODUCTION

A student exchange program is a great and popular way to gain new experience, live in a different environment, explore a different culture and meet new people. St Joseph's College, North Point, Darjeeling has partnered with multiple institutes both in India and outside for student and faculty exchange through active Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs). As a part of the MoU between St Joseph's College, Darjeeling and Moridhal College, Dhemaji, Assam, we had a first short term (that is, two days) student exchange programme at Moridhal College, Dhemaji, Assam, during 29th and 30th of September, 2023. A team of eight students and three teachers from our college representing different departments participated in the exchange programme.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS FROM ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

Students	Faculty Members
Amit Bishwakarma (MCJ Hons)	Fr. Dr. Donatus Kujur, SJ (Principal)
Siddhant Lama (MCJ Hons)	Dr. Padam Nepal (Political Science)
Benjamin Subba (English Hons)	Dr. Shristikala Chettri (Sociology)
Siddhant Khaling (English Hons)	
Ladenla Sherpa (Economics Hons)	
Shreya Subba (Sociology Hons)	
Michen Tamang (History Hons)	
Astha Chettri (Zoology Hons)	

THE PROGRAMME

Academic Exchange

Day 1: National Seminar on Folklore and Folklife

The programme was designed to be held for two Days. Day 1 (29th September, 2023) was devoted for the *ICSSR Sponsored National Seminar On "Globalisation and its Impact on the Folklore and Folk Life of the Tribes of North East India"*, a programme organised by department of History and Department of English in collaboration with Research Cell and IQAC, Moridhal College. The seminar began with felicitation of the Keynote Speaker Professor Chandan Kumar Sarma, Department of History, Dibrugarh University, Plenary Speaker and Resource Person Dr. Padam Nepal, Department of Political Science, St. Joseph's College, Darjeeling, and other Resource Persons Professor Aparna Konwar, Department of Assamese (Dibrugarh University), Dr. Anurag Bhattacharya, Department of English (Dibrugarh University) and Dr. Ram Chandra Deka, Associate Professor (Retd) Sipajhar College, Assam, and Guest of Honour, Fr. Dr. Donatus Kujur, Principal, St. Joseph's College, Darjeeling.. This was followed by a Welcome Note by Dr. Dipen Saikia, the Principal, Moridhal College, followed by the introduction of the Seminar by the Seminar Coordinator.



(Dr. Dipen Saikia, Principal, Moridhal College, Dhemaji, delivering Welcome Speech)

After the keynote address delivered by Professor Chandan Sarma, a plenary speech was delivered by Dr. Padam Nepal covering dimensions like theorisations on Globalisation and folklore, problems of folklore collection and preservation, folklore and market, etc. and also highlighted the complexities involved in Orality and Folklore research, collection and

preservation of folklore, and marketing of the folklore and oral traditions, among others, citing examples from his own experience in a similar endeavour in the Eastern Bhutanese context, which had finally culminated in the form of a publication titled '*Orature as Testimony: Folklore from Eastern Bhutan*' (Delhi: Authorspress, 2023).

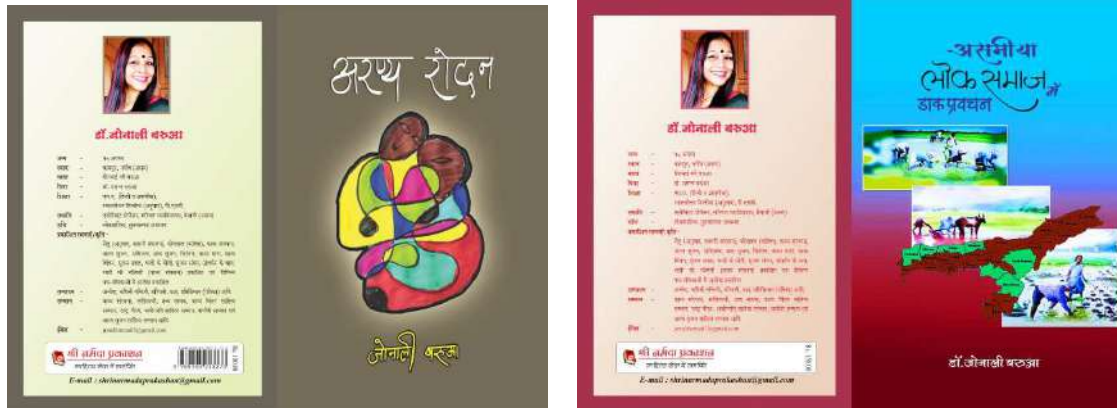
Some eighty plus research papers were presented by faculty members, experts and researchers from multiplicity of disciplinary and methodological perspectives in three parallel sessions throughout the day. The experience of attending a national seminar of this stature was a rare and a learning experience for all of us students.



- **Day 2: Special Lecture: *Histories From the Margins: Northeast India in Context*** by Dr Padam Nepal, Department of Political Science, St Joseph's College. On the sidelines of the seminar, Dr. Padam Nepal, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, St Joseph's College also delivered a lecture on *Histories From the Margins: Northeast India in Context*" at the Department of History, Moridhal College, as a part of the Exchange Programme.
- **Day 2: Inaugurations of Hindi Department's Wall Magazine: *Indradhanush*** by Dr. Padam Nepal: As a part of the academic Exchange, Dr. Padam Nepal also inaugurated the Wall Magazine of the Department of Hindi, Moridhal College *Indradhanush* in presence of Dr. Jonali Boruah, the Head, and other faculty members, editors of the magazine and the students of the Department.



- Day 2: Book Release:** Dr. Padam Nepal, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, St Joseph's College and Fr. Dr. Donatus Kujur, Principal, St. Joseph's College released two books, *Arannya Rodan* and *Assamiya Lok Samaj Mein Daak Pravachan*, both authored by Dr. Jonali Boruah, Associate Professor and Head, Moridhal College, Dhemaji, respectively.





Day 1: CULTURAL EXCHANGE

The Brahmaputra River Cruise: As a part of the Cultural Exchange the host college arranged for a Brahmaputra River Cruise for the students and faculty of St Joseph's College in the evening of 29th September, 2023 after the Seminar. This was a programme that intended to facilitate the participant students to understand and appreciate how rivers have played a significant role in the lives of the local communities, specially the Missing Community in upper Assam that inhabits the banks of the Brahmaputra River. The two and a half hour long boat cruise was a mesmerising lifetime learning experience for us from the Hills.

Day 2: CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Showcasing of Folklife of the Tribes of Northeast and Cultural Exchange between St.

Joseph's College and Moridhal College: On the 30th of September , 2023, the Cultural Exchange program was carried out. The program started with the felicitation of the Principal, teachers and the students of our college and an Inaugural speech by FR. DR. Donatus Kujur. Students from our college performed three different types of culture folk dance namely:

- MARUNI DANCE
- KHUKURI DANCE
- TAPPA DANCE



- **MARUNI DANCE:** *Maruni* is a Nepalese folk dance of the Magar community. Alongside India and Nepal, it is popular in Nepalese Diaspora communities in other parts of the World. It is one of the oldest and most famous dances of the Nepali community. originally danced as part of *Dashain* and *Tihar* festival. Dressed colourfully with rich ornaments, the dancers dance to commemorate "the victory of good over evil", accompanied by the traditional *Naumati Baja* orchestra.
- **KHUKURI DANCE:** *Khukuri* is a small knife that symbolizes the Gorkha valour. It generally has carved wooden handles with sharp blades. *Khukuri* is a very important

part of Gurkha culture. Gurkhas display their triumph using a *Khukuri*. It is a sign of robustness and power. *Khukuri* was designed for the warriors who won the battles and saved the pride of Gorkhas. In this folk dance, *Khukuri* is used as a prop. This knife is the soul of *Khukuri Naach*. The dancers perform various tricks using the *Khukuri* while dancing on the beats. *Khukuri* dance not only symbolizes courage, but it also demands courage. Only the bravest are entrusted with a *Khukuri*. It is not easy to balance *Khukuri* while following the beats and elegantly moving the feet by the



dancers.

- **TAPPA DANCE:** The *Tappa* dance is also called a *Chudke* dance is another group dance of the Gorkha community performed during *Phagu Purnima* in March. It is popular among the *Gurung* community. The dance starts in a slow manner and then the tempo gets faster and faster towards the end. It is danced to the rhythm and beating of the hand drum, called *Madal*.

Student from Moridhal College also performed their cultural folk songs and folk dances with great enthusiasm. Some forms of their performances include:

- **DIHANAM:** It is a type of congregational prayer sung by women in Assam in praise of the Assamese saint Sankardev. Instruments like the *Negera*, *Taal*, *Ichal* , and also hand-clapping is used in it.
- **DEORI BIHU:** Deori is a tribal community inhabiting upper Assam. Deori *Bihu* is traditionally called “*Ebaku Bihu*”. It is spring festival celebrated by Deori

community of Assam on the first Wednesday of *Bohag*- the first month of the Assamese calendar.

- **MISHING GUMRAK DANCE:** Mishing is fishing and agricultural community. This dance form is associated with the Mishing festival *Gumrak*. The dances demonstrate various stages of process of cultivation through their performance.
- **TIWA DANCE:** Tiwa is another Tribal Community of Upper Assam. *Langkhon Fuja Mishwa* is a traditional dance of Tiwa tribe of Assam.
- **BIHU:** The *Bihu* dance is an indigenous folk dance from the Indian state of Assam related to the *Bihu* festival and an important part of Assamese culture. Performed in a group, the *Bihu* dancers are usually young men and women, and the dancing style is characterized by brisk steps, and rapid hand movements. The traditional costume of dancers is colourful and centered around the red colour theme, signifying joy and vigour. It is a festival of joy and happiness.

Outcome of the Exchange Programme

The outcome of the Student and Faculty exchange programme (Academic and Cultural) between St. Joseph's College and Moridhal College has proven to be a transformative experience, fostering a mutual understanding, friendship, and appreciation for diversity. The rich exchange of traditions, ideas, and perspectives has not only enriched the lives of the students involved but has also strengthened the bonds between the two institutions. This collaborative endeavour highlights the importance of such initiatives in promoting global awareness and unity among academic communities. Looking forward to many more such collaborative exchange programmes in the days to come!