



REPORT ON

ICHR, NEW DELHI SPONSORED NATIONAL SEMINAR

Traditions of Resistance and Voices of Freedom: The Northeast's Contribution to India's Struggle for Independence

29-30 June, 2026

Organized by –

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Adarsha Mahavidyalaya, Dalgaon, Darrang, Assam

Introduction:

*Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Adarsha Mahavidyalaya, Dalgaon, successfully organised a Two-Day National Seminar on 29–30 June 2026 on the theme "**Traditions of Resistance and Voices of Freedom: Revisiting the Northeast's Contribution to India's Struggle for Independence.**" The seminar was sponsored by the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), New Delhi, under its Financial Assistance for Organising Seminars/Conferences scheme. The seminar was conceived with the objective of critically examining the long and continuous tradition of resistance in Northeast India, extending from ancient and medieval resistance against external invasions and political domination to the organised anti-colonial movements against British rule. It brought together eminent historians, academicians, social scientists, literary scholars, research scholars, and students from across the country to deliberate on various dimensions of resistance movements, indigenous political traditions, cultural nationalism, grassroots mobilisation, and the intellectual heritage of the region.*

Objectives of the Seminar:

The primary objectives of the seminar were–

1. To explore the traditions of resistance in Northeast India from the ancient and medieval periods to the anti-colonial movements against British rule.
2. To revisit and critically examine the contribution of Northeast India to India's struggle for independence through historical, political, social, and cultural perspectives.
3. To document and highlight the contributions of indigenous communities, tribal societies, local leaders, women, and unsung freedom fighters whose roles have remained underrepresented in mainstream historiography.
4. To encourage research on oral traditions, folklore, indigenous knowledge systems, and local archives as valuable sources for reconstructing the history of the region.
5. To provide an academic platform for scholars, researchers, teachers, and students to exchange ideas and present new research findings on the history of Northeast India.
6. To contribute to a more inclusive and balanced national historiography by integrating the experiences and contributions of Northeast India into the broader narrative of India's freedom struggle.

Inaugural and Felicitation Ceremony



The inaugural programme commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, symbolizing the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom. This was followed by a devotional invocation (Mangalacharan) performed by Tamak Ranjan Dutta, a research scholar, invoking peace, harmony, and blessings for the successful conduct of the seminar.

The organizing committee then felicitated the chief guest, resource persons, chairpersons, principals, and distinguished dignitaries with mementoes as a mark of respect and appreciation before the commencement of the technical sessions.

1. Welcome Address by Dr. Kumar Chandan Jyoti (Convener and Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, PDUAM, Dalgaoon)



Dr. Kumar Chandan Jyoti warmly welcomed the distinguished guests, resource persons, faculty members, researchers, students, and participants from different parts of India. He introduced the objectives of the ICHR-sponsored national seminar and emphasized the importance of revisiting the history of resistance movements in Northeast

India.

Quoting the historian E. H. Carr, he remarked that *"History is an unending dialogue between the past and the present."* He argued that studying history enables society to understand present realities and shape a better future.

The convener highlighted that the resistance movements in Northeast India extended far beyond armed conflicts. They included social, cultural, political, economic, and intellectual struggles aimed at preserving identity, dignity, and freedom. From the resistance against medieval invasions to anti-colonial struggles against the British, the people of the region consistently defended their traditions and autonomy. He referred to several freedom fighters and local heroes whose contributions have remained largely overlooked in mainstream Indian historiography. The seminar, therefore, seeks to provide an academic

platform to document these neglected histories and encourage fresh interpretations of regional resistance movements. Jyoti also stressed that even after India's independence, movements in Assam continued to reflect the region's determination to safeguard its language, culture, customs, and regional interests. He explained that resistance should not be viewed merely as military opposition but also as an intellectual and cultural process carried forward by writers, artists, students, and civil society.

He proudly noted that this was the college's third national seminar within two years and that more than 107 participants from across India had registered for the event. Expressing gratitude to the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), invited speakers, participants, and the organizing committee, he hoped that the seminar would generate new research ideas and strengthen academic collaboration. He concluded by reminding the audience that the story of resistance is a continuing source of inspiration for future generations in their pursuit of dignity, identity, and freedom.

2. Inaugural Address by the Principal & Chief Patron- Dr. Lakhi Prasad Hazarika

Dr. Lakhi Prasad Hazarika, Principal and Chief Patron of the seminar welcomed all the dignitaries, scholars, faculty members, and students, expressing pride that the institution was organizing another national seminar on such a significant historical theme.

He emphasized that institutions of higher education must not only provide quality education but also cultivate critical thinking, interdisciplinary research, and academic inquiry. According to him, seminars of this nature are not mere formal events; rather, they create valuable opportunities for young researchers to critically examine history from new perspectives.



Dr. Hazarika underlined Assam's and the broader Northeast's remarkable contributions to India's freedom struggle. He noted that, across several centuries, the region has witnessed numerous courageous struggles against foreign invasions and British colonial rule. Many individuals sacrificed their lives for the ideals of freedom, dignity, and justice, yet their contributions remain insufficiently recognized in national historical narratives.

He stated that the seminar provides an important academic platform for scholars to revisit these historical events, undertake fresh analyses, and contribute to a more inclusive understanding of India's freedom movement.

Dr. Hazarika also thanked ICHR, New Delhi, for sponsoring the seminar and observed that the institution had successfully organized several national seminars over the past two years. He acknowledged participants joining from Assam and other states, including Maharashtra, Bihar, and universities across the country, appreciating their enthusiastic participation. In his concluding remarks, he encouraged all participants to actively engage in discussions, interact with the resource persons, and contribute meaningful ideas that would enrich historical scholarship and promote national integration. He concluded by thanking all the invited speakers and participants for making the seminar a success.

3. Few Lines from Mr. Pankaj Kumar Saha, GB President, PDUAM, Dalgaoon

Mr. **Pankaj Kumar Saha** welcomed all the distinguished guests, keynote speakers, resource persons, research scholars, participants to the seminar. He expressed his gratitude to everyone for their presence and hoped the two-day academic event would provide an engaging, enlightening, and intellectually stimulating experience for all. He encouraged participants to keep an open mind, learn from one another, and actively contribute to creating a welcoming and inclusive academic environment where every opinion would be respected.



faculty members, students, and national seminar. He expressed his gratitude to everyone for their presence and hoped the two-day academic event would provide an engaging, enlightening, and intellectually stimulating experience for all. He encouraged participants to keep an open mind, learn from one another, and actively contribute to creating a welcoming and inclusive academic environment where every opinion would be respected.

Introducing the theme of the seminar, "**Traditions of Resistance and Voices of Freedom: The North-East's Contribution to India's Struggle for Independence,**" he explained that the history of Northeast India is deeply rooted in struggles against political domination, colonial exploitation, and cultural suppression. According to him, the region's history represents not only military resistance but also the determination of its people to preserve their identity, traditions, and dignity.

The speaker traced the beginning of British colonial rule in Assam following the **Treaty of Yandabo (1826)** and described how colonial policies disrupted traditional systems of governance, imposed new land revenue arrangements, and exploited natural resources. These measures led to widespread dissatisfaction among different tribal and indigenous communities, who organized various forms of resistance to protect their land rights, economic interests, and cultural sovereignty.

Mr. Saha highlighted that the freedom movement in Northeast India was unique because it involved the participation of numerous ethnic groups, tribal communities, peasants, students, and local leaders. Their resistance took different forms, including armed rebellions, peaceful protests, social reform movements, and cultural awakening. He emphasized that these movements collectively challenged British authority and strengthened the spirit of self-rule and regional identity.

He referred to several important resistance movements and historical episodes from across the Northeast, mentioning that many of these struggles have remained underrepresented in mainstream Indian historiography. The sacrifices made by local heroes and communities deserve greater scholarly attention and recognition. He stressed that the objective of the seminar is to bring these neglected narratives into academic discourse and encourage fresh historical research.

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Saha expressed confidence that the seminar would provide an excellent platform for meaningful discussions, exchange of ideas, and collaborative research. He hoped that the deliberations would deepen understanding of the Northeast's

invaluable contribution to India's freedom struggle and inspire future researchers to document the region's rich historical legacy.

4. Release of the Book of Abstracts and Transition to the Plenary Session

Following the introductory address, the Anchor Dr. Riju Devi announced the **formal release of the Book of Abstracts**, marking an important milestone in the inaugural session of the national seminar. A book of abstracts with **ISBN:978-81-688071-0-5** was published during the seminar compiling all accepted papers presented at the event. The dignitaries present on the dais were invited to ceremonially unveil the publication, which contains the abstracts of research papers submitted by scholars participating in the seminar. The release symbolized the commencement of the academic deliberations and



reflected the organizers' commitment to promoting quality research and scholarly exchange.

The audience warmly applauded the release ceremony, acknowledging the collective efforts of the organizing committee, authors, reviewers, and contributors who made the publication possible. The Book of Abstracts serves as a valuable

academic resource, providing participants with an overview of the research themes and facilitating meaningful discussions during the technical sessions.

After expressing gratitude to the dignitaries for officially releasing the publication, the Anchor announced the transition from the inaugural programme to the **Plenary Session**. Participants were informed that the conference would now proceed with the keynote address by the distinguished keynote speaker, **Professor Rajib Handique, Academic Registrar of Gauhati University and a renowned Historian**, setting the stage for the academic discussions that would follow.

This marked the formal beginning of the scholarly component of the conference, where experts would present their perspectives on the traditions of resistance and the contribution of Northeast India to India's struggle for independence.

5. Keynote Address by Professor Rajib Handique, Academic Registrar, Gauhati University

Professor Rajib Handique, a distinguished historian, delivered a thought-provoking keynote address that questioned the traditional framing of Indian history. He argued that the Northeast remains largely underrepresented in national curricula, noting that even minor references often lack factual precision. In his keynote address, Professor Rajib Handique explores several critical themes regarding Northeast India's role in the Indian freedom struggle.



The Construct of 'Northeast India': Professor Handique notes that the concept of the "Northeast" as a singular administrative entity emerged primarily under British colonial rule, differing from the region's pre-colonial historical landscape.

Need for Inclusive National History: He highlights that the region's contributions are frequently omitted or

underrepresented in national history textbooks. He specifically advocates for a revision of history to include "unsung heroes" and grassroots resistance movements that have not been adequately recorded at the national level. **Significance of Unique Sacrifices:** The speaker mentions that the first official political figure to be executed (hanged) in India for the freedom struggle came from this region. He emphasizes that documenting such specific, verifiable facts is essential for gaining national recognition.



Grassroots and Oral History: Professor Handique discusses the importance of oral history, sharing his methodology of asking students to interview local families to uncover narratives of their ancestors' roles in the struggle. He cites the specific example of the "Moa" independence movement in 1942, where a local leader declared independence and established a council of ministers

In the concluding portion of his keynote address, Professor Rajib Handique appreciated the way the seminar organizers "carefully crafted" the theme of the National Seminar and expressed his gratitude to the college, specifically addressing the organizers and the "family" of the college. He thanks them for providing him with the opportunity to speak at the event and for allowing him to step outside of his administrative responsibilities to participate as someone who loves history and teaches the subject. He further expresses his confidence in the success of the national seminar, noting the presence of a "galaxy of resource persons" and participants from across the country.

"Traditions of resistance have been there all along" and that it is necessary to "revise our history to make it more inclusive" by bringing local, ground-level facts into the national academic discourse.

-Prof. Rajib Handique

6. Professor Jyotiraj Pathak (Dept. of Political Science, KBVSASU, Nalbari, Assam)

Professor Jyotiraj Pathak address focuses on the intersection of political science, history, and the concept of resistance in Northeast India. His key points include:

- **Defining Resistance:** He frames resistance as an ongoing political process that extends far beyond the colonial era. He notes that the people of the Northeast have a long tradition of resisting state policies, developmental displacement, and ethnic marginalization

- **Historical Context and Geographical Connectivity:** He highlights that historically; the Northeast was more linked to Southeast Asia rather than the Indian mainland. He discusses the impact of the 1947 partition, which left the region connected to the rest of India by only a narrow "corridor" (the Siliguri Corridor), shaping its unique socio-political challenges today

- **Assam as a Role Model for Negotiation:** He suggests that Assam can serve as a "role model" for peaceful resistance. By citing the history of movements like the Assam Movement (1985), he argues that through negotiation and agreements with the government, communities can achieve their goals without resorting to violence

- **Ongoing Socio-Political Issues:** He points out that resistance continues due to issues like ethnic conflicts, lack of political representation (comparing Manipur's limited influence to other states due to a smaller number of MPs), and the negative impacts of globalization on indigenous economies In his concluding remarks He commends the college for its commitment to organizing academic seminars and encourages scholars to document these complex dynamics through thorough research and writing.



7. Dr. H. M. Sarmah, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Assamese, North Lakhimpur University



Dr. Sharma approached the topic from a literary perspective, discussing how history is captured, preserved, and sometimes obscured in regional literature. He emphasized that the "price of freedom" is often reflected in poetry and storytelling, which provide a humanistic dimension to historical facts. His session encouraged scholars to explore how regional literature documents the cultural trauma and the resilient spirit of the Northeast during the freedom struggle.

8. Dr. Indrani Kalita, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Education, KKHSOU, Assam



Dr. Kalita highlighted the pivotal role of educationists in the freedom movement. She argued that while freedom fighters who engaged in armed or political protest are often celebrated, those who contributed through education-providing the intellectual foundation for national consciousness-are frequently overlooked. She mentioned specific figures like Krishna Kanta Handique to illustrate how prominent educational leaders are

sometimes forgotten by the younger generation. She advocated for renaming departments and academic spaces after these local heroes to ensure their legacies are kept alive in the institutional memory.

After the plenary session was over all the Guests, participants, faculties and students went for lunch. Then first technical session started at exactly 2 pm.

Technical Session-I, 29th June, 2026 (2:00 PM – 5.30 PM)

The first technical session of the **ICHR, New Delhi Sponsored National Seminar on "Traditions of Resistance and Voices of Freedom: Revisiting the Northeast's Contribution to India's Struggle for Independence"** brought together scholars, faculty members, research scholars, and students to present diverse perspectives on the role of education, literature, indigenous traditions, folklore, cultural nationalism, and social movements in shaping the freedom struggle and post-independence society in Northeast India. The session was chaired by **Dr. Budhin Hazarika, Retired Principal of Kharupetia College**, while **Dr. Riju Devi, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, PDUAM, Dalgaoon**, efficiently moderated the proceedings as the Session Anchor. The proceedings of the session were meticulously documented by the rapporteurs, **Dr. M. K. Singh** and **Dr. Sima Bhuyan**, both Assistant Professors at **PDUAM, Dalgaoon**. The session witnessed active participation from presenters and delegates, fostering engaging discussions and scholarly exchange on various dimensions of resistance, freedom, education, and cultural identity in Northeast India.

Concise presentation summaries for the papers are listed below-

1. **Jonmoni Das** in her Paper *Voices of Cultural Resistance: Nationalism and the Freedom Movement in Colonial Assam* explores the relationship between cultural expression and anti-colonial resistance in colonial Assam. It argues that literature, songs, theatre, folklore, and other cultural practices fostered nationalist consciousness and united people against British rule. By examining different forms of cultural expression, the paper highlights how Assamese society preserved its identity while strengthening the broader Indian freedom movement.
2. **Tamak Ranjan Dutta & Dr. Hemanta Sarmah** in their Paper *অসমীয়া গীতি সাহিত্যত ভাৰতৰ স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলনৰ প্ৰতিফলন* examines how Assamese lyrical literature reflected the spirit of India's freedom movement. It analyses patriotic songs and lyrical compositions that inspired nationalism, encouraged resistance against British colonial rule, and promoted cultural identity among the Assamese people. The study argues that music and literature served as effective tools

for political awareness and mass mobilisation, making Assamese lyricists important contributors to the freedom struggle.

3. **Rupsikha Kalita** in her Paper *Paper Ballads, Memory and Resistance: Re-reading Colonial Assam through Folk Traditions* explores Assamese folk ballads as historical sources that preserve memories of resistance against colonial rule. It demonstrates how oral traditions protected the stories of local heroes and collective struggles that are often overlooked in conventional history, emphasizing the importance of folklore in reconstructing colonial Assam's past.
4. **Parimita Bharali** in her Paper *উত্তৰ স্বাধীনতা কালৰ অসমত অস্তিত্ব সংকটৰ প্ৰসংগ: ৰীতা চৌধুৰীৰ 'মৰে অসম জীয়ে কোন' উপন্যাসৰ বিশেষ উল্লেখসহ* examines the identity crisis in post-independence Assam through Rita Choudhury's novel *Mare Asom Jiye Kon*. It discusses issues of migration, regional identity, cultural preservation and socio-political transformation, showing how literature reflects the continuing struggles of Assamese society after independence.
5. **Chinmoyee Kalita & Chayanika Kalita** in their paper *Defending the Self: A Critical Study of Indigenous Resistance and Subjectivity in Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya's Mritunjay* analyses *Mritunjay* to understand indigenous resistance and the formation of self-identity during colonial rule. The paper argues that the novel portrays resistance not only as political opposition but also as a struggle for dignity, culture and community identity.
6. **Karabi Nath** in her Paper: *Education and Women's Empowerment in Assam: A Study of Social Change in the Post-Independence Period* discusses how education has transformed the status of women in Assam after independence. It highlights improvements in literacy, employment, decision-making and social participation while also identifying continuing challenges such as gender inequality, rural disparities and limited access to higher education.
7. **Barasha Sahariah & Kangkana Bora** in their Paper: *A Comparative Study of Colonial and Modern Education Systems* compares colonial and contemporary education systems in India. It argues that colonial education mainly served administrative interests and neglected indigenous knowledge, whereas modern education focuses on holistic development, critical thinking, inclusiveness and innovation while still facing implementation challenges.
8. **Taniya Biswas** in her Paper *Education as Empowerment: Examining the Progress and Challenges of Tribal Women's Education in Tripura in the Post-Independence Era* evaluates the progress of tribal women's education in Tripura after independence. It highlights increased enrolment and government support while discussing persistent barriers such as poverty, geographical isolation, early marriage and inadequate educational infrastructure.
9. **Rashmita Saikia** in her Paper *Role of Education in Intellectual Awakening and Resistance Movements in Northeast India during the Freedom Struggle* explains how education promoted political awareness and intellectual awakening during India's freedom movement in Northeast India. It argues that educational institutions and educated leaders played a significant role in spreading nationalist ideas and encouraging anti-colonial resistance.

10. **Supriya Sarmah** in her Paper *Educational Development and Community Development in Post-Independence Darrang District, Assam: Continuities and Changes from the Colonial Era* analyses the relationship between educational expansion and community development in Darrang district after independence. It shows how improved education contributed to social transformation, economic development and better quality of life while identifying the influence of colonial educational legacies.
11. **Nishita Bharadwaj** in her Paper *Education as a Catalyst for Intellectual Awakening and Resistance Movements in Northeast India* argues that education served as a powerful catalyst for political consciousness and resistance against colonial rule. It examines how schools, intellectuals and educational reforms encouraged nationalist ideas and strengthened freedom movements across Northeast India.
12. **Goutam Deka & Jyotismrita Deka** in their Paper *The Role of Village Namghars in Anti-Colonial Mobilization in Colonial Assam (1920–1947): A Case Study of Darrang District* demonstrates that village Namghars functioned as important centres of social mobilisation during the freedom movement. Beyond religious activities, they became spaces for public meetings, dissemination of nationalist ideas and community participation in anti-colonial campaigns, particularly in Darrang district. The 1st technical session ended with Chairman's speech and Vote of Thanks.



Technical Session–II, Conference Hall (30 June 2026, 10.00 am- 3 pm)

Second day's Technical Session–II was chaired by **Dr. Indrani Kalita**, Assistant Professor, KKHSOU, with **Dr. Moon Mandal** serving as the Moderator. **Dr. Sudev Ch. Basumatary**, Associate Professor, Department of History, Bodoland University, delivered the invited lecture. The proceedings were documented by the rapporteurs, **Ms. Barnali Kalita** and **Ms. Aparupa Sarma**, Assistant Professors, PDUAM, Dalgaoon. The session witnessed insightful presentations on diverse themes, including anti-colonial resistance, indigenous movements, women's participation, literary representations, tribal contributions, and the socio-cultural dimensions of the freedom movement in Northeast India, leading to meaningful academic discussions.

Summary of the session:

- **Opening Remarks and Seminar Purpose:** Moon Mandal introduced Dr. Indrani Kalita, an assistant professor at Krishnakanta Handiqui State Open University, Assam to chair the session. In their opening remarks, Dr. Indrani Kalita emphasized that the seminar serves as a crucial platform to address the lack of recognition for underrated freedom fighters, educationalists, and social workers whose contributions have been historically overlooked in official records.
- **Introduction of Invited Speaker:** Dr. Moon Mandal introduced Dr. Sudev Basumatary, an associate professor in the Department of History at Bodoland University, Kokrajhar, Assam, to deliver the invited lecture. Dr. Basumatary was noted for their 15 years of experience in socioeconomic and regional history, particularly concerning Northeast India and colonial Assam.
- **Historiography of the Indian National Movement:** Dr. Sudev Basumatary outlined four distinct historiographical schools concerning the Indian National Movement: nationalist, imperialist, elitist (subaltern), and Marxist. Dr. Basumatary critiqued the nationalist approach for attempting to homogenize Indian nationalism, arguing that such a framework is unsuitable for India's multicultural and multilingual reality, and proposed that nationalism should be understood as a product of diverse historical and cultural coexistence rather than a singular, European-derived model.
- **Methodology for Historical Reconstruction:** Dr. Sudev Basumatary argued against relying exclusively on colonial archival materials, as these documents were created by the British administration for the purpose of governance and often exclude the perspectives of ordinary people. To reclaim and recover lost historical narratives, Dr. Basumatary suggested that historians should "read against the grain" and incorporate alternative sources, such as folklore, oral traditions, and private biographies, to supplement official government records.
- **Boro Participation in the Quit India Movement:** Dr. Sudev Basumatary examined the 1942 Quit India Movement with a focus on the participation of the Boro tribe. Dr. Basumatary highlighted that while individuals like Leela Kachari, Roton Kachari, and Madan Kachari were documented in some government records, the broader experiences of ordinary participants, including those who endured imprisonment, physical trauma, and the loss of livelihood—are missing from traditional historical accounts.
- **Discussion on Regional Documentation:** Following the invited lecture, Dr. Indrani Kalita and Dr. Sudev Basumatary discussed the need for scholars in Assam to document regional history more effectively. Indrani Kalita encouraged participants to utilize oral history methods to ensure that the contributions of local figures from the Northeast are recognized and integrated into the national historical narrative.

Papers Presentation –

1. **Keshab Mazumdar** presented a thought-provoking paper which critically examined the portrayal of mass movements and the struggle for identity in Umakanta Sharma's novel. The presenter highlighted how literary narratives reflect socio-political realities and collective resistance against oppression. It was argued that the novel serves as an important literary document, portraying the aspirations, sacrifices, and identity struggles of marginalized communities while reinforcing the significance of

literature as a medium for preserving historical consciousness and cultural memory. The Chair appreciated the literary approach and suggested further exploration of regional literary sources to enrich the understanding of Assam's socio-political history.

2. **Dr. Dimpy Das** in her Paper *Prison Experiences of Political Prisoners in the Freedom Movement: Through the Eyes of Prabhat Chandra Sarma* examined the experiences of political prisoners during India's freedom movement through the writings of *Prabhat Chandra Sarma*. The paper highlighted the hardships, resilience, and ideological commitment of imprisoned freedom fighters and demonstrated how prison narratives contributed to nationalist consciousness.
3. **Dr. Phoibi Lalniropui Tuolor** in her Paper- *Zeme Nagas Resistance Against Colonial Rule in North Cachar Hills* documented the resistance movement of the Zeme Nagas against colonial administration. It highlighted indigenous leadership, community solidarity, and the struggle to protect traditional autonomy.
4. **Anamika Baro** presented an insightful paper which examined the representation of Bodo culture, identity, and traditions in literature through a critical analysis of the selected literary works of Juri Borah Bargohain. The presenter emphasized how literature serves as a powerful medium for preserving indigenous heritage, cultural values, and collective memory while reflecting the socio-cultural realities of the Bodo community. The paper highlighted the significance of literary discourse in promoting cultural awareness, safeguarding ethnic identity, and enriching the understanding of Assam's diverse cultural landscape. The Chair appreciated the originality of the study and encouraged further interdisciplinary research on indigenous literature and its contribution to cultural preservation and historical consciousness.
5. **Dr. Lakhya Protim Nirmolia** in her paper *The Patharughat Peasant Uprising of 1894: Colonial Revenue Policies, Agrarian Resistance and Forgotten Voices of Assam* analysed the causes and consequences of the Patharughat uprising. It emphasized the exploitative colonial revenue system and recognized the movement as a landmark in Assam's agrarian resistance.
6. **Susmita Bhuyan** in her Paper *Experiencing War, Imagining Freedom: World War II and Nationalist Sentiments in Northeast India with Special Reference to Assam* explored the impact of World War II on nationalist sentiments in Assam. It demonstrated how wartime experiences influenced political awareness and aspirations for independence.
7. **Dr. Abhijit Dihidar** in his Paper: *Analysing the Contribution of Gorkha Community in the Freedom Movement in Northeast India* highlighted the often-overlooked contributions of the Gorkha community in India's struggle for independence. It emphasized their participation in political and military resistance.
8. **Bhanita Mazumdar and Dr. Archana Devi** in their presentation analysed Assamese literary representations of the freedom movement and examined how literature preserved historical memory and nationalist ideals.
9. **Dr. Biraj Jyoti Kalita and Dr. Monalisa Khakhlari** In their Paper *Resistance, Freedom and Tea Workers: The Role of Mangi Orang and Durgi Bhumij in India's Freedom Struggle* discussed the role of tea garden workers and their leaders in resisting colonial oppression. The paper shed light on marginalized communities in the nationalist movement.
10. **Gobinda Patra** In his Paper *Forgotten Voices of Resistance: Unsung Heroes of North-East India Against British Rule* documented the contributions of lesser-known freedom fighters from Northeast India and emphasized the need for inclusive historical narratives.
11. **Abhilashi Gogoi** presented a well-structured paper titled critically analysed the depiction of

people's movements and the politics of class struggle in Dhruba Jyoti Borah's novel Azar. The presenter discussed how the novel portrays socio-economic inequalities, political consciousness, and the aspirations of marginalized communities against oppressive structures. The study highlighted the role of literature in documenting historical realities and fostering awareness of social justice and collective resistance. The Chair appreciated the analytical approach of the paper and suggested that future research could further explore the relationship between Assamese literature, political movements, and the evolving discourse on social transformation.

12. **Gitangshu Deva Sarma** in his Paper *Voices of Resistance through Public Health: A Study of Colonial Assam* examined public health policies during colonial rule and their connection with resistance movements in Assam.
13. **Bikash Sarma** presented a scholarly paper which examined the pivotal role of Anandaram Dhekial Phukan in Assam's freedom movement and his invaluable contribution to nation-building in the post-independence period. The presenter highlighted Phukan's visionary leadership, commitment to democratic values, and efforts to safeguard the political, cultural, and territorial interests of Assam. The paper further emphasized his role in promoting communal harmony, educational development, and administrative reforms, establishing him as one of the foremost architects of modern Assam. The Chair appreciated the historical significance of the study and encouraged further research on the contributions of regional leaders in shaping India's freedom movement and the process of nation-building.
14. **Chijal Hazarika** presented a well-researched paper which examined the significant role of the Assamese periodical Asam Bandhu in fostering national consciousness and socio-political awareness among the people of Assam during the late nineteenth century. The presenter highlighted how the publication promoted the Assamese language, culture, education, and public opinion, thereby contributing to the growth of regional identity and nationalist sentiments under colonial rule. The paper argued that Asam Bandhu served as an important platform for intellectual awakening and laid the foundation for the emergence of modern Assamese nationalism. The Chair appreciated the historical analysis and emphasized the importance of early vernacular newspapers in understanding the evolution of public discourse and the freedom movement in Assam.
15. **Himen Das** presented a thought-provoking paper titled "Anti-Colonial Movements and Indigenous Leadership." The presentation examined the pivotal role played by indigenous leaders in mobilizing resistance against British colonial rule, with particular emphasis on their contribution to safeguarding the political autonomy, cultural identity, and traditional institutions of their respective communities. The presenter argued that indigenous leadership was instrumental in organizing grassroots resistance and inspiring collective action against colonial exploitation and domination. The paper further highlighted the need to recognize the contributions of indigenous communities, whose role has often remained underrepresented in mainstream historiography. The Chair appreciated the relevance of the study and encouraged further research based on archival sources and oral histories to enrich the understanding of indigenous participation in India's freedom movement.
16. **Parishmita Taye** presented an insightful paper titled "Cultural Nationalism in Pre-Independence India: Tradition as Resistance in Northeastern Indian Literature." The presentation explored how the literature of Northeast India became a powerful medium for expressing cultural nationalism and

resisting colonial domination during the pre-independence period. The presenter discussed how indigenous traditions, folklore, customs, and literary expressions helped preserve regional identity while fostering anti-colonial consciousness. The paper argued that literary works not only reflected the socio-political realities of the time but also served as instruments of cultural resistance by reinforcing the values, heritage, and collective aspirations of the people. The Chair appreciated the interdisciplinary approach of the study and emphasized the importance of literary sources in understanding the cultural dimensions of India's freedom movement, particularly in the context of Northeast India.

17. **Chandana Das** presented an engaging paper titled "History, Memory and Political Resistance: Reinterpreting Maharaja Prithu." The presentation offered a critical reinterpretation of Maharaja Prithu's historical legacy by examining his role in resisting external domination and defending the sovereignty of the Kamata Kingdom. The presenter discussed how historical memory, folklore, and literary narratives have contributed to preserving Maharaja Prithu's image as a symbol of courage, political resilience, and regional identity. The paper emphasized the importance of revisiting historical figures through contemporary historiographical approaches to gain a more nuanced understanding of Assam's political and cultural history. The Chair appreciated the originality of the study and encouraged further research integrating historical records, oral traditions, and regional literature to strengthen the historiography of Northeast India.
18. **Dipjyoti Bora's** presentation examined the significance of the foreign goods boycott movement in the tea garden regions of Northeast India as an important expression of anti-colonial resistance. The presenter discussed how the Swadeshi ideology influenced tea garden workers and local communities, encouraging them to reject imported goods and support indigenous products. The paper highlighted the role of the boycott movement in strengthening nationalist consciousness, promoting economic self-reliance, and mobilizing public participation in the freedom struggle. The Chair appreciated the historical relevance of the study and emphasized the need for further research on the contribution of tea garden communities and regional movements to India's struggle for independence.
19. **Swati Sharma, along with Dr. Alok Kumar**, presented a scholarly paper titled "Revisiting Shyama Prasad Mukherjee: Historiographical Debates on His Role in Assam's Resistance." The presentation critically examined the diverse historiographical perspectives on Shyama Prasad Mukherjee's contribution to Assam's political developments and resistance movements. The presenters discussed how different historical interpretations have shaped the understanding of his role in safeguarding the interests of Assam during a crucial period in the nation's history. The paper emphasized the importance of re-evaluating historical narratives through primary sources and contemporary scholarship to develop a balanced and objective understanding of regional history. The Chair appreciated the critical historiographical approach of the study and encouraged further research on contested historical narratives and their relevance to the political and social history of Northeast India.
20. **Namrata Ozah** presented an insightful paper titled "Recovering Forgotten Voices: Women of Upper Assam in the Indian Freedom Struggle." The presentation highlighted the significant yet often overlooked contributions of women from Upper Assam to India's struggle for independence. Drawing upon historical records and regional narratives, the presenter examined the roles played

by these women in political mobilization, social reform, and nationalist activities despite facing numerous social and cultural constraints. The paper emphasized the need to recover and document the contributions of these unsung heroines to ensure a more inclusive and gender-sensitive understanding of the freedom movement. The Chair appreciated the relevance of the study and encouraged further archival and oral history research to bring greater recognition to the role of women in shaping the history of Assam's freedom struggle.

- **Session Conclusion:** The second technical session of the two-day ICHR, New Delhi sponsored national seminar organized by PDUAM, DALGAON concluded with this presentation. The Chairman and moderator expressed gratitude to all participants for their insightful and enlightening presentations. They officially closed the session, encouraging continued academic engagement in future programs.

Technical Session–III, Central Library (30 June 2026, 10.00am -3.00pm)

Technical Session–III was chaired by **Dr. Jutirani Devi**, Assistant Professor, Bodoland University, while **Ms. Jinti Kalita**, Assistant Professor, PDUAM, Dalgaon served as the Moderator. The invited lecture was delivered by **Mrs. Abantika Parashar**, District Museum Officer, Jorhat, who spoke on the importance of museums and heritage in preserving the history of India's freedom movement in Northeast India. The session was documented by the rapporteurs, **Ms. Rupsikha Kalita**, Assistant Professors, PDUAM, Dalgaon. The presentations covered a wide range of themes, including women freedom fighters, indigenous resistance, colonial policies, environmental history, literary representations, regional movements, and the contributions of marginalized communities, fostering enriching academic discussions on the Northeast's role in India's struggle for independence.

Summary of the session:

- **Introduction and Welcome:** Jinti Kalita, from the Department of Education, PDUAM, Dalgaon opened the technical session of the ICHR, New Delhi sponsored national seminar regarding the Northeast's contribution to India's struggle for independence. Jinti Kalita welcomed the participants and introduced the chairperson for the session, Dr. Jutirani Devi, an assistant professor of Political Science at Bodoland University, who specializes in gender studies, indigenous studies, and human rights, including research on the National Rural Health Mission in rural Assam.
- **Introduction of Invited Speaker:** Jinti Kalita introduced the invited speaker, Abantika Parashar, a museumologist and cultural scholar who serves as a district museum officer for the Government of Assam. Abantika Parashar was recognized for their work in heritage preservation, curation, and the recovery of historical artifacts, including ancient silver coins from Mughal and Ahom rulers.
- **Museum Case Studies and Presentation Objectives:** Abantika Parashar began their presentation by confirming they would speak in both English and Assamese. They presented a study on how the concept of freedom is represented in three heritage institutions: the Lachit Borphukan Memorial Complex, Swaraj Udyan, and a third Assam State Museum. Abantika Parashar explained that the presentation aimed to examine how historical narratives are translated into museum experiences, noting their personal association with these three sites.
- **Lachit Borphukan Memorial Complex:** Abantika Parashar detailed the Lachit Borphukan Memorial Complex, which includes two museum buildings, a "statue of valor," and an auditorium. They explained that the design team worked for two years using primary sources

and manuscripts to authenticate historical portrayals. A central feature of this museum is the "hengdang," or sword, which serves as a symbol of pride and the struggle against the Mughal empire.

- **Digital Methodology and Visitor Experience:** Abantika Parashar described the integration of digital techniques to immerse visitors in the history of the freedom struggle. This includes floor projections showing boats and the Ahom emblem, which are designed to create a visceral, emotional response and a sense of pride in the audience.
- **Assam state Museum:** Abantika Parasar discussed the Assam state Museum, which is a conventional gallery space. They noted the constraint of limited space and explained the strategy of combining physical artifacts with digital screens, which allow visitors to access a broader range of legacy data than the physical gallery space alone can accommodate.
- **Engagement and Presentation Conclusion:** Abantika Parasar emphasized the importance of using social media and digital platforms to connect the public to their history and the sacrifices made for freedom. They concluded their presentation by screening a video showcasing the museums, noting that all characters in the video were sketched by hand by artists, and expressed their gratitude to the organizing committee.
- **Discussion on Identity and Heritage:** Following the presentation, Jutirani Devi and Abantika Parashar engaged in a discussion regarding the importance of heritage studies. Jutirani Devi expressed their interest in the connection between heritage and ethnic identity and affirmed their desire to stay connected with Abantika Parashar to further explore research on roots and identity.
- **Another resource person Prof. Dinesh Baishya** contributed to the discussion by providing historical context regarding the freedom movement in Nagaland. They mentioned the history of Konoma village and the role of A.Z. Phizo, describing the struggle of the Naga National Council as a long and difficult period involving significant loss, which remains a "bloody" and "unimaginable" part of history.

Papers Presentation:

- **Bondita Saikia:** Bondita Saikia presents a paper titled "Tradition of Resistance and Voice of Freedom: Northeast India." Following the presentation, Jutirani Devi opens the floor for suggestions regarding the seminar topic.
- **Disha Hazarika** presents "Documenting Konolota Borua's Life Beyond the Martyrdom." They argue that current historical literature flattens Konolota Borua's identity by focusing solely on their death at age 17, and propose that reconstructing their childhood, family background, and rural upbringing provides a more complete understanding of their political consciousness and role in the Quit India Movement. They utilize qualitative historiography, specifically drawing upon a family memoir and a biographical novel, to build this fuller biography.
- **Discussion: Methodology for Disha Hazarika's Research:** Jutirani Devi questions Disha Hazarika regarding the theoretical basis for their research. Disha Hazarika clarifies that as a literature student, they focused on biofiction and familial memoirs rather than applying standard social science methodologies, a practice Jutirani Devi accepts as valid while advising the researcher to focus on strengthening their arguments within the qualitative framework.
- **Ritika Kumari** presents "*Revisiting the Role of Chandra Prabha Saikiani in Assam's Freedom Movement and Women's Awakening.*" They highlight Saikiani's efforts to challenge patriarchal social customs, promote education, and organize women through the Assam Mahila Samiti to

foster nationalistic awareness and self-reliance. Jutirani Devi provides feedback on Ritika Kumari's presentation, noting that while the topic is relevant, the paper is primarily descriptive and relies on existing secondary data. They advise the student that using technical terms like "revisiting" in research requires providing new insights or a novel analysis of the subject, rather than simply restating known information.

- **Protiksha Hatibaruah** presents on "British Raj and the Making of Others: Colonial Ethnography in Northeast India." They discuss how colonial administrators used ethnographic documentation to categorize tribal populations, which facilitated administrative control and the creation of borders, such as those mandated by the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act of 1873. They conclude that these reports remain valuable historical archives for preserving oral traditions and customary laws, despite their inherent colonial biases.
- **Neptune Barman** presents on "The Role of Nalbari District in the Freedom Movement of India," positing that regional history forms the foundation of national narratives. They outline the participation of the Nalbari region in the Non-Cooperation, Civil Disobedience, and Quit India Movements, emphasizing the role of grassroots organizations, boycotts of British institutions, anti-opium campaigns, and the mobilization of both men and women in the resistance. Jutirani Devi questions Neptune Barman on the sources of their data, noting that the numbers presented seemed to come from existing records rather than primary grassroots research. They encourage Neptune Barman to focus on documenting oral testimonies and direct experiences to strengthen their research and provide a more comprehensive view of regional participation.
- Porosha Sonowal presents "Rewriting Erased Past: The Role of Orality and Literature in Reconstructing the History of Thengphakhri Tehsildar" focusing on the novel by Indira Goswami. They discuss the intersection of oral history and literature, explaining how Indira Goswami utilized local voices and Boro oral legends to create a narrative that recovers subaltern histories often missing from official colonial archives. Porosha argued that the novel discussed incorporates oral voices, which challenges the assumption that written archives are the only legitimate source of historical knowledge, noting that oral narratives possess their own authority. They explained that the author, Indra Goswami, portrayed a female protagonist who displayed strength and resilience during a period of restrictive cultural practices such as the Sati Pratha and the burda system. Porosha discussed the literary tension involved in translating these oral narratives, emphasizing that the author characterized the work as fiction that reflects the history, culture, and social realities of the community, rather than a strict historical biography. In response to a query regarding the novelty of the research, Porosha clarified that their paper focused on the limits of literary mediation, specifically how writers make aesthetic and ideological choices when attempting to recapture subaltern voices.
- **Archita Neog and SinSina Taye** presented on the tea tribe of Assam, arguing that this community is often marginalized in mainstream historiography of India's freedom struggle. They detailed how laborers were brought from Chotanakpur and central India under the indentured labor system, facing exploitation while eventually developing a distinct identity and organized resistance. SinSina Taye noted that plantation life fostered political awareness, and the struggle for independence extended into the tea plantations of Assam. They cited figures such as Christian Munda, Mongi Oran, and Dalu Fernikar as part of this collective struggle. Jutirani Devi provided feedback, advising the presenters to clarify whether their analysis applied

to Assam or all of India and recommending that they conduct more in-depth, micro-level research.

- **Bhargab dev Sarmah – Customary Authority and Colonial Law:** Bhargab dev Sarmah presented on the relationship between customary authority and colonial law in Northeast India, focusing on legal pluralism. They analyzed how statutes like the Schedule District Act 1874, the Assam Frontier Tracts Regulation 1880, and Section 92 of the Government of India Act 1935 institutionalized traditional customary governance. The research found that legal pluralism was not a sign of imperial benevolence but a strategic retreat by the British in the face of indigenous resistance. Bhargab dev Sarmah argued that customary institutions acted as barriers against colonial capitalism and that modern constitutional architecture in the region is linked to the administrative borders established during the colonial era. Jutirani Devi engaged in a discussion with Bhargab dev Sarmah regarding the sensitive conflict between customary law and modern legal systems, particularly regarding issues like polygamy and women's rights in the Bodo society. Following this discussion, the participants arranged to communicate further via email, and Jutirani Devi provided their contact number to facilitate this.
- **Parismita Nath** argued that Assam maintained a continuous tradition of anti-colonial resistance following the Treaty of Yandaburu in 1826. They detailed the evolution from elite-led opposition, such as the Ahom nobility, to popular movements involving peasants and tribal communities, culminating in the 1921 merger with the Indian National Congress. Jutirani Devi concluded by advising Parismita Nath to deepen the research through micro-level studies.
- **Dularai Baro** examined how British colonial policies, specifically the wasteland rules of 1838, facilitated the expansion of tea plantations in Assam, causing significant deforestation and landscape changes. They cited data showing that by 1947, there were approximately 769 tea gardens covering 1,211 square kilometers. Dularai Baro concluded that tea plantations were a primary driver of environmental change and resource exploitation rather than just an economic endeavor. Jutirani Devi acknowledged the presentation, noting that the topic had been previously addressed in a progress report.
- **Honey saikia, Jyoti Borah, and Tutumani** Das presented their respective presentations; in regional language and beautifully cited the role of Assam in freedom struggle of India.
- **Presentation by Gautam Kr:** Gautam Kr presented a paper on local Indian initiatives, emphasizing the concept of "Making India local" and referencing the influence of Mahatma Gandhi.
- **Bhanumati Basumatary** presented a paper examining the impact of British colonial policy on Assam following the 1826 Treaty of Yandabo. They discussed how the British administration centralized governance, marking a significant shift from the Aon kingdom's previous structure, and integrated Assam into global trade networks through industries such as tea, oil, coal, and timber. The presentation outlined objectives to analyze economic transformations, social and demographic impacts regarding labor migration, and the influence on indigenous land relations, ultimately concluding that colonial policies fundamentally reshaped the region's economic, social, and political structures.
- **Mayouri Nath** presented a paper on the history of political authority and popular resistance in Assam, tracing the Aon kingdom's administrative structure, including the role of the king, the three Gohains, and the Paik system. They explained how British colonial rule, beginning in 1826, introduced taxation and land revenue policies that triggered resistance, such as the

Phulaguri Dhawa of 1861, Jaintia uprisings, and the Patharughat movement. The presentation utilized historical chronicles and administrative records to argue that Assam possessed well-developed governance traditions before colonial rule, which fostered political consciousness during the freedom movement.

- **Faruk Ahmed** presented on the life of Kushal Konwar, describing them as a regional freedom fighter who made significant sacrifices. The presentation highlighted that Kushal Konwar was executed during the 1942 Quit India Movement after being falsely accused of sabotaging a military train. Faruk Ahmed emphasized that despite being innocent, Kushal Konwar accepted the death penalty while upholding Gandhian principles of truth and nonviolence, serving as a lasting symbol of the freedom struggle.
- **Chairperson's Concluding Reflections:** Jutirani Devi provided concluding remarks for the seminar on the "Tradition of Resistance and Voices of Freedom" in Northeast India. They critiqued the tendency to view India's nationalist struggle exclusively through Western notions of nationalism, which emphasize self-determination in a context different from India's. They encouraged researchers to establish a context-specific definition of nationalism by looking at India's diversified society and urged participants to pursue interdisciplinary research that goes beyond the requirements of obtaining presentation certificates. Jinti Kalita thanked the presenters for their scholarly contributions and acknowledged the chairperson for their guidance throughout the session. These technical sessions conclude here.

Hospitality and Logistics:

The Seminar Organising Committee ensured smooth hospitality and logistical arrangements throughout the programme, including participant registration, refreshments, venue management, and technical support, contributing significantly to the successful conduct of the seminar. Seminar kits, certificates and book of abstracts were provided to all participants.

Valedictory Session

The valedictory session marked the successful conclusion of the two-day national seminar. The guests appreciated the quality of the academic deliberations and emphasized the need for continued research on the resistance traditions and freedom movement of Northeast India. The session concluded with the adoption of the seminar recommendations, distribution of certificates to participants, and a formal vote of thanks by Co convener Jinti Kalita expressing gratitude to the ICHR, New Delhi, resource persons, delegates, participants, and the organising committee for making the seminar a grand success.

Recommendation of the seminar:

Based on the deliberations of the inaugural session, plenary lectures, invited talks, and technical sessions, the following recommendations emerged for strengthening research and documentation on the Northeast's contribution to India's freedom struggle:

1. **Revise National Historiography:** National history textbooks and academic curriculum should incorporate the neglected contributions of Northeast India, including regional freedom fighters, indigenous communities, women, and grassroots movements to ensure a more inclusive understanding of India's struggle for independence.

2. **Promote Research on Pre-Colonial Traditions of Resistance:** The seminar recommends that greater attention be devoted to documenting and analysing the ancient and medieval traditions of resistance in Northeast India that predate British colonial rule.
3. **Promote Regional and Micro-Historical Research:** Scholars should undertake district-level, village-level, and community-based studies to document lesser-known resistance movements, local heroes, and people's participation in the freedom struggle.
4. **Strengthen Oral History Documentation:** Universities and colleges should encourage the systematic collection of oral histories, family narratives, folk traditions, songs, and community memories before these valuable historical sources disappear.
5. **Document Marginalized Communities:** Research should focus on the contributions of tribal communities, tea garden workers, women, peasants, educational reformers, and other marginalized groups whose roles remain underrepresented in mainstream historiography.
6. **Research on Cultural Resistance:** Literature, music, theatre, folklore, museums, and other forms of cultural expression should be treated as important historical sources for understanding the intellectual and cultural dimensions of the freedom struggle.
7. **Preserve and Digitize Heritage Institutions:** Government agencies, universities, museums, and archives should work to digitize manuscripts, newspapers, rare documents, photographs, oral recordings, and local archival materials relating to the Northeast's resistance movements.
8. **Institutional Recognition of Local Heroes:** Colleges should commemorate regional freedom fighters, educational pioneers, and social reformers by naming academic spaces, organizing memorial lectures, and incorporating their contributions into institutional activities.

Conclusion

The ICHR, New Delhi sponsored Two-Day National Seminar on "Traditions of Resistance and Voices of Freedom: Revisiting the Northeast's Contribution to India's Struggle for Independence," organised by PDUAM, Dalgaoon, successfully achieved its academic objectives by providing a platform for meaningful discussions on the historical, political, cultural, and intellectual contributions of Northeast India to India's freedom struggle. The seminar highlighted the region's rich traditions of resistance-from ancient and medieval struggles to the anti-colonial movement-and emphasized the need for more inclusive historical research. The seminar concluded with valuable recommendations for promoting archival research, documenting oral histories, preserving indigenous knowledge systems, and integrating the Northeast's contributions into mainstream historiography.

Dr. Kumar Chandan Jyoti
Convener

Dr. L.P. Hazarika
Chief Patron & Principal

ICHR, NEW DELHI sponsored National Seminar Organising Committee