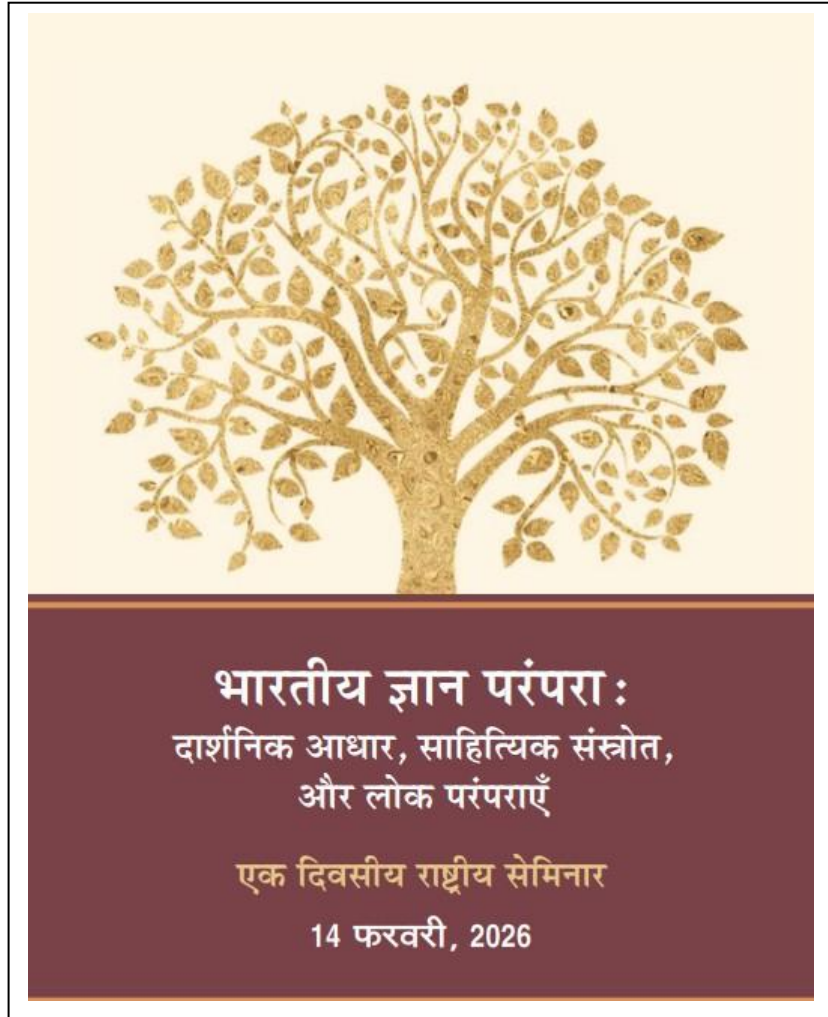


SEMINAR REPORT

One-Day National Seminar

on

**“Indian Knowledge Tradition: Philosophical Foundations,
Literary Sources, and Folk Traditions”**



Venue:

**Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute
Jhansi, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh**



Organized by:

Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute

Summary of the Seminar

The One-Day National Seminar on “*भारतीय ज्ञान परंपरा: दार्शनिक आधार, साहित्यिक स्रोत और लोक परंपराएँ*”, organized at the Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute (GBPSSI), Prayagraj, on 14 February 2026, provided an in-depth academic platform to deliberate upon the philosophical foundations, literary sources, and community-based knowledge traditions embedded within the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). The seminar brought together eminent scholars, policymakers, academicians, and research scholars to critically engage with the continuity, plurality, and contemporary relevance of India’s intellectual heritage.

The inaugural session set the conceptual tone of the seminar by emphasizing the integrative nature of Indian knowledge traditions, rooted in the four puruṣārthas—Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha. Speakers underscored that Indian epistemology historically harmonized ethics, economy, governance, and spirituality within a unified worldview. The need to institutionalize IKS within higher education curricula and align it with contemporary technological tools for preservation and dissemination was strongly advocated.

The plenary session deepened the philosophical discourse by exploring the diversity of Indian schools of thought and their holistic approach to knowledge production. Discussions highlighted that Indian intellectual traditions have consistently accommodated multiplicity, debate, and interpretive flexibility. Particular attention was given to Ayurveda as a preventive and ecological health system, demonstrating the applied relevance of traditional knowledge in addressing modern lifestyle and public health challenges.



The technical sessions (Parallel Sessions A–D) expanded the discourse from textual philosophy to lived traditions. Presentations examined folk knowledge systems, tribal ecological practices, water conservation traditions, oral literature, and the intellectual role of community-based practices. Several papers engaged critically with methodological issues, advocating epistemological pluralism and questioning exclusive reliance on positivist frameworks. The sessions also explored ecofeminist interpretations, lifecycle ethics, and the translation of philosophical principles into policy-relevant frameworks.

The valedictory session synthesized the deliberations and emphasized that Indian Knowledge Systems must be approached with academic rigor rather than symbolic reverence. Speakers stressed interdisciplinary research, ethical documentation of indigenous knowledge, and meaningful curriculum reforms to ensure that IKS contributes constructively to contemporary governance and development discourse. Overall, the seminar succeeded in fostering critical dialogue between classical philosophical traditions and contemporary academic inquiry. It reaffirmed the necessity of preserving, reinterpreting, and integrating Indian knowledge traditions within modern institutional and policy frameworks while maintaining methodological robustness and ethical sensitivity.

Inaugural Session

Venue: Auditorium

Time: 10:00 AM – 12:10 PM

The Inaugural Session of the One-Day National Seminar commenced with the ceremonial welcome of the Hon'ble Governor, followed by garlanding at the statue of Govind Ballabh Pant, lighting of the lamp, and felicitation of distinguished guests. The formal academic proceedings began with the welcome address, book release, keynote address, and chief guest's remarks.



Welcome Address

Speaker: Prof. Yogendra Pratap Singh

Director, Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute, Prayagraj

Prof. Yogendra Pratap Singh formally welcomed the Hon'ble Governor of Himachal Pradesh, distinguished guests, invited scholars, faculty members, research scholars, and participants. He expressed sincere gratitude for their presence and emphasized that the seminar provided a meaningful platform to deliberate upon the philosophical and cultural foundations of Indian Knowledge Traditions.

In his address, Prof. Singh highlighted the pressing need to reconnect with India's traditional knowledge systems, which, he observed, had been marginalized during the colonial period and subsequently received limited structured engagement within mainstream academic discourse. He stressed that Indian intellectual traditions embody a holistic worldview that integrates ethics, philosophy, language, and social thought, and therefore require renewed academic attention. He advocated for the integration of ancient wisdom into modern education through a balanced and holistic curriculum that harmonizes tradition with contemporary knowledge systems.

Prof. Singh further underlined the richness and diversity of India's linguistic and intellectual heritage. He called for systematic reinterpretation and critical engagement with classical

knowledge traditions rather than treating them as static historical artifacts. He emphasized that the revival of these traditions must be accompanied by scholarly rigor and institutional commitment.

Referring to ongoing academic initiatives at the Institute, he mentioned programs such as the MBA and the Master of Liberal Arts/Science, alongside research-oriented work under PHS. He noted that the Institute is actively engaged in restructuring pedagogical approaches to incorporate Indian knowledge frameworks within interdisciplinary teaching and research.



Addressing contemporary transformations, Prof. Singh reflected on the transition from oral and manuscript-based traditions to the digital era. He particularly highlighted the rise of Artificial Intelligence and emphasized the need for serious academic research on its societal, cognitive, and ethical implications. He proposed focused academic engagement on emerging themes such as Digital Unity and Digital Social Science (Humanities), suggesting that these areas hold significant potential for bridging classical knowledge systems with modern technological advancements. He concluded by reiterating that the integration of Indian Knowledge Traditions into contemporary education must be thoughtful, research-driven, and future-oriented.

Book Release and Introduction of the Book *Gathari*

Introduced by: Dr. Archana Singh

Associate Professor, Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute, Prayagraj

Dr. Archana Singh introduced *Gathari* as a deeply symbolic work that embodies a “bundle” of memories—interwoven with ancestral narratives, folk traditions, and intergenerational

recollections. She explained that the title itself signifies the preservation of lived experiences carried across time, much like a traveler safeguarding treasured belongings.



The book narrates the emotional and cultural journey of a mother tracing her roots across cities such as Kolkata, Patna, and Prayagraj. These locations, she noted, are not merely geographical markers but represent migration, belonging, cultural memory, and identity formation. Through this narrative movement, the text captures the layered experiences of displacement, attachment, and continuity that shape individual and collective histories.

Dr. Singh highlighted that the book is structured in the form of letters written in English, Hindi, and Bhojpuri, accompanied by translations. This multilingual approach reflects the richness of India's linguistic diversity and strengthens the book's role as a bridge between personal memory and documented knowledge. By preserving oral histories and intimate reflections within written form, the book transforms private memory into a shared intellectual resource.

She presented *Gathari* as a meaningful attempt to give cultural memory a permanent space within the broader discourse of knowledge traditions. Concluding her remarks, she invited readers and scholars to engage with the work not only as literature but as a living archive of collective memory, encouraging them to carry forward and sustain this cultural legacy.

Address by the Chief Guest

Speaker: Prof. Rama Shankar Dubey

Former, Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Gujarat, Vadodara

Prof. Rama Shankar Dubey, in his address as Chief Guest, elaborated on the philosophical depth and civilizational continuity of India's knowledge traditions. He stated that Indian intellectual heritage is fundamentally rooted in the Vedas, Upanishads, and classical schools of philosophy, which collectively articulate a spiritual yet holistic worldview. According to him, these traditions do not isolate metaphysics from material inquiry but integrate both within a unified framework of understanding.

He explained the significance of the Mahavakyas, particularly expressions such as *Aham Brahmasmi* and the principle of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, emphasizing the idea of universal interconnectedness and unity of existence. He argued that these philosophical foundations promote not only spiritual insight but also social harmony and ethical responsibility.

Prof. Dubey further highlighted that ancient Indian thinkers made remarkable contributions to diverse fields such as logic, atomic theory, astronomy, and early notions analogous to gravitation. He stressed that this demonstrates the seamless integration of spiritual reflection and scientific reasoning within the Indian intellectual tradition. Knowledge, in this framework, was never compartmentalized but viewed as an interconnected pursuit of truth.

Emphasizing the importance of traditional education systems, he referred to the Gurukul model as a holistic pedagogical structure aimed at character-building, discipline, and moral development. He also cited Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga as an example of a comprehensive system that harmonizes physical, mental, and ethical dimensions of life.

Concluding his address, Prof. Dubey urged academic institutions to meaningfully integrate India's ancient knowledge systems into modern curricula across disciplines. He emphasized that such integration should not be symbolic but grounded in rigorous scholarship and interdisciplinary engagement, ensuring relevance in contemporary education and research frameworks.



Address by the Chief Guest

Speaker: Shri Shiv Pratap Shukla

Hon'ble Governor, Himachal Pradesh

The Hon'ble Governor, Shri Shiv Pratap Shukla, in his address, appreciated the academic and research contributions of the Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute. He remarked that although the Institute may be modest in its physical size, its scholarly output—particularly in the fields of data analysis and policy-oriented studies such as research related to MGNREGA—has been both significant and impactful. He commended the Institute for maintaining academic rigor and policy relevance in its research endeavors.

In his remarks, the Governor emphasized the necessity of reassessing and revitalizing India's knowledge traditions, which, he observed, had long been interpreted and framed predominantly through Western intellectual lenses. He highlighted that Indian knowledge systems possess profound spiritual and philosophical depth, rooted in the Vedas and classical traditions, which offer enduring insights into human existence, ethics, and societal organization.

Referring to contemporary educational reforms, he expressed strong support for the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into higher education, in alignment with the objectives outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. However, he stressed that such integration must go beyond symbolic inclusion and be implemented with seriousness, academic commitment, and institutional planning.

Concluding his address, the Hon'ble Governor underscored the importance of leveraging modern technologies—particularly Artificial Intelligence—for the systematic organization, preservation, and wider dissemination of India's intellectual heritage. He suggested that digital platforms and technological tools could play a transformative role in making traditional knowledge accessible to future generations while ensuring its scholarly integrity.



Vote of Thanks

Dr. Archana Singh, Associate Professor at the Institute, delivered the formal vote of thanks. She expressed sincere gratitude to the Hon'ble Governor, the distinguished speakers, faculty members, research scholars, participants, and organizing committee for their contributions to the successful conduct of the inaugural session.

The session concluded with the National Anthem, followed by a tea break.

Plenary Session

Date: 14 February 2026

Time: 12:10 PM – 1:30 PM

Theme: “*Theoretical Foundations of Indian Intellectual Traditions*”

(A discussion on Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha, and the philosophical transformation of worlds)

Chair: Prof. Harsh Kumar, Department of Ancient History, Allahabad University

Rapporteurs: Anita Singh & Srishti Yadav

The Plenary Session constituted the intellectual core of the seminar, focusing on the theoretical and philosophical foundations of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). The deliberations centered on the four puruṣārthas—Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha—and explored how these principles structure ethical life, social organization, and intellectual inquiry within the Indian civilizational framework. The session sought to demonstrate that IKS is not merely a historical inheritance but a dynamic and integrative epistemic tradition with enduring relevance.

Chief Speaker

Prof. Anand Shankar Singh

Principal, ISDC, Allahabad University

Title of Lecture: *Uniqueness and Holistic Foundations of the Indian Knowledge System*

Prof. Anand Shankar Singh began his address by situating the Indian Knowledge System within a long civilizational continuum extending over thousands of years. He emphasized that IKS is distinctive not only because of its antiquity but also because of its integrative and holistic character. In contrast to fragmented disciplinary traditions, IKS, according to him, is grounded in a unified vision of existence.

A central theme of his lecture was the concept of *Brahma*, which he described as the foundational principle underlying Indian philosophical thought. This concept, he explained, embodies universality and interconnectedness, forming the metaphysical basis upon which various schools of philosophy evolved. He argued that the Indian worldview is deeply oriented

toward *Lok Kalyan* (public welfare), and that this ethical orientation differentiates IKS from many other global knowledge systems.

Prof. Singh elaborated on the notion of *Adhyatma*, describing it as the ideological and spiritual essence present in all forms of existence—human beings, flora, and fauna alike. He maintained that Indian philosophical traditions recognize a shared ontological foundation, thereby fostering harmony between humanity and nature. He also pointed out that the six classical schools of philosophy offer structured methods of logic and reasoning, all implicitly directed toward answering the ethical question: “*Lok Kalyan hoga kaise?*” (How will public welfare be ensured?).

Additionally, he touched upon women’s discourse within IKS, drawing references from the Atharvaveda and Markandeya Purana to demonstrate the inclusive and nuanced character of Indian intellectual traditions. Concluding his address, he described Indian culture as fundamentally preservationist—“*Bharat ki Sanskriti, Sanrakshan Sanskriti hai*”—and called upon scholars to undertake rigorous and in-depth research to uncover the many dimensions of IKS that remain unexplored.



Distinguished Speaker

Prof. (Dr.) Girendra Singh Tomar

Former Principal, Rajkiy Ayurved Mahavidyalay, Handiya, Prayagraj

Title of Lecture: *Ayurveda as the Foundation of Holistic Health in Indian Knowledge Tradition*

Prof. Girendra Singh Tomar commenced his lecture with a Sanskrit shloka that encapsulated the holistic and profound character of the Indian Knowledge System. He structured his address around the idea that the realization of the four puruṣārthas—Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha—is contingent upon *Aarogya* (good health). Without physical and mental well-being, he argued, higher philosophical or material pursuits cannot be meaningfully achieved.

Drawing extensively from foundational Ayurvedic texts such as the *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita*, he emphasized the principle of prevention over cure. He explained that Ayurveda prioritizes the maintenance of health through disciplined daily routines (*Dinacharya*) and seasonal adaptations (*Ritucharya*), thereby reducing susceptibility to disease. According to him, this preventive orientation reflects a sophisticated understanding of health as a balanced state rather than merely the absence of illness.

Prof. Tomar elaborated on the concept of *Prakriti*, the individualized body constitution determined by the interplay of Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. He noted that this framework anticipates contemporary discussions on personalized medicine, as it recognizes the uniqueness of each individual's physiological and psychological profile. Beyond physical health, he underscored the centrality of mental well-being and the inseparable mind–body connection described in classical texts.

He concluded by asserting that Ayurveda continues to hold immense relevance in the modern era, particularly in the context of lifestyle disorders, preventive healthcare, and holistic well-being. He suggested that integrating Ayurvedic principles into contemporary health discourse could strengthen both public health policy and individual lifestyle management.

Distinguished Speaker

Prof. Bhawana Chauhan

Department of Ancient History, CMP College, Allahabad University

Title of Lecture: *Historical and Scientific Dimensions of Indian Knowledge Traditions*

Prof. Bhawana Chauhan focused her lecture on the historical, textual, and scientific dimensions of the Indian Knowledge System. She began by clarifying the distinction between *Para Vidya* and *Apara Vidya*, as articulated in the *Mundaka Upanishad*. *Para Vidya*, she explained, refers to higher knowledge that leads to the realization of ultimate reality (*Param Satta*), whereas *Apara Vidya* encompasses worldly, textual, and empirical knowledge transmitted through scriptures such as the Vedas, Puranas, Nyaya, Mimamsa, and Vedangas.



She emphasized that this conceptual framework demonstrates that Indian thought never separated spiritual knowledge from empirical inquiry. Rather, worldly sciences and philosophical reflection coexisted within a broader epistemological structure. To substantiate this argument, she cited archaeological and historical evidences, including rock art depicting anatomical understanding and findings from Kaushambi that indicate advanced knowledge of physiology. She also referred to textual traditions suggesting awareness of complex medical and bodily processes in ancient times.

Prof. Chauhan argued that such evidences challenge the misconception that ancient Indian knowledge was purely metaphysical or speculative. Instead, she maintained that it was deeply scientific, practical, and historically grounded. By integrating philosophical reflection with empirical observation, IKS developed a comprehensive intellectual tradition that addressed both spiritual and material dimensions of life.

She concluded by reiterating that Indian Knowledge Systems must be understood as a synthesis of philosophy, science, and lived experience, and that further interdisciplinary research is necessary to properly situate its contributions within global intellectual history.



Chair's Remarks

Prof. Harsh Kumar appreciated the depth and diversity of the presentations delivered during the session. He emphasized that Indian *Sanskriti* (culture) possesses distinctive characteristics

that differentiate it from other cultural traditions. He highlighted the concept of “Unity in Diversity” as a foundational principle well documented in texts such as the Vedas, Puranas, Ramayana, and Mahabharata.

He described IKS as an ancient and evolving knowledge tradition and reaffirmed India’s intellectual stature as “*Vishwa Guru*”. Concluding his remarks, he stressed the importance of sustained interdisciplinary engagement and scholarly rigor in advancing research on Indian Knowledge Systems.

Technical Session – A

(Offline Technical Session)

Date: 14 February 2026

Time: 02:15 PM – 03:30 PM

Theme: *Intellectual and Folk Traditions: Focused discussions on the cultural continuity and intellectual role of folk knowledge, organic intelligences, and community traditions*

Chair: Dr. Subhash Kumar and Dr. Archana Singh

Rapporteur: Anita Singh

Technical Session A was devoted to examining the dynamic relationship between intellectual traditions and lived folk practices within the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). The session brought together diverse presentations that engaged with ecofeminism, environmental ethics, traditional water systems, community survival knowledge, literary expressions, tribal transformations, and socio-historical perspectives on marginalized groups. The deliberations highlighted that Indian knowledge traditions are not confined to scriptures but are deeply embedded in everyday practices and community wisdom.



Anita Singh

Title: *Gender and Environment in the Indian Knowledge System (IKS): Interpretations from an Ecofeminist Perspective*

Anita Singh's presentation examined the interrelationship between gender and environment within the Indian Knowledge System through an ecofeminist lens. She analyzed how ecological thought, social organization, cosmology, and ethical life in Indian traditions have historically

conceptualized the relationship between nature and gender. Unlike modern Western environmentalism, which largely emerged in response to industrial crises and environmental degradation, she argued that Indian ecological thought was organically embedded within cosmology, ritual practices, livelihood systems, and philosophical traditions.

Her study emphasized that women have historically functioned as knowledge bearers in areas such as agriculture, water conservation, biodiversity management, and ritual ecology. However, she also urged critical engagement with these traditions, recognizing both their ecological wisdom and the hierarchies embedded within social structures. She concluded that while IKS offers valuable ecological insights, it must be examined through a balanced and critical framework that acknowledges both empowerment and structural limitations.

Rambaboo Tiwari

Title: *Indian Knowledge System and Wisdom of Ancient Water Harvesting Knowledge: The Role of Rural Ponds in Banda (Bundelkhand)*

Rambaboo Tiwari focused on the traditional water harvesting systems of Banda district in Bundelkhand, particularly the role of rural ponds as repositories of ancient ecological wisdom. His study examined how these ponds functioned historically as sustainable water management systems deeply rooted in community participation and local knowledge.

He argued that such water systems have existed since Vedic times and represent an intellectual heritage that requires revival in the context of contemporary water crises. The presentation highlighted how neglect, modernization, and policy shifts have led to the erosion of these traditional systems. He emphasized that restoring rural ponds through community involvement could offer sustainable solutions to present-day environmental challenges. The study positioned ancient water management practices not merely as cultural remnants but as practical knowledge systems with contemporary relevance.

Akhand Pratap Singh

Title: *Traditional Knowledge Practices of the Valmiki Community in Food Crisis Situations*

Akhand Pratap Singh presented a study centered on the Valmiki community and their traditional survival strategies during times of food scarcity. He highlighted how the community has historically preserved food resources, such as saving chapatis for later consumption, demonstrating adaptive knowledge rooted in lived experience.

The presentation underscored that such practices reflect practical wisdom developed through generations of hardship and resource constraints. Rather than perceiving these practices as mere survival tactics, the study framed them as forms of indigenous knowledge that illustrate resilience, foresight, and community-based coping mechanisms. His work contributed to the broader theme of recognizing marginalized communities as carriers of intellectual traditions.

Anshika

Title: *Expression of Public Opinion in Sanskrit Dramas: With Reference to Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti*

Anshika examined how public opinion is articulated in Sanskrit dramas, particularly in the works of Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti. She argued that classical plays function as mirrors of society, reflecting social attitudes through the dialogues of citizens, servants, soldiers, and other characters.

Her analysis showed that public opinion in these dramas does not merely serve as praise but also acts as a form of social critique. For instance, references to Dushyanta's behavior illustrate how rulers were subject to moral scrutiny. In Bhavabhuti's works, she observed that public opinion contributes to shaping democratic consciousness and social morality. The study highlighted that classical literature within IKS incorporates public discourse as an ethical and political dimension.

Vartika

Title: *Science in Vedic Literature*

Vartika's presentation explored the development of scientific thought within Vedic literature. She emphasized that Vedic texts contain foundational ideas related to Ayurveda, Dhanurveda, Gandharvaveda, and economic principles. According to her, disciplines such as mathematics, astronomy, astrology, and medicine evolved from Vedic knowledge traditions.

She argued that science in ancient India was not compartmentalized but was integrated with spiritual and philosophical frameworks. By tracing the evolution of various scientific disciplines from Vedic sources, the presentation reinforced the argument that IKS embodies both intellectual and empirical dimensions.

Pushpa Gond

Title: *Tribes of Uttar Pradesh: A Study of Social and Cultural Changes Among Them*

Pushpa Gond's research analyzed the social and cultural transformations occurring among tribal communities in Uttar Pradesh. She described tribes as distinct social groups characterized by their own language, customs, rituals, and modes of living. Her study highlighted traditional practices such as nature worship, folk songs, dances, handicrafts, and indigenous cultural expressions.

She identified major challenges posed by modernization, including threats to cultural identity, youth distancing themselves from traditional values, and lack of education and awareness. The presentation emphasized that while social change is inevitable, preserving tribal knowledge systems is crucial for sustaining cultural diversity within the Indian Knowledge System.

Alisha Bano

Title: *Understanding Pasmada as Moolnivasi: A Socio-Historical Perspective*

Alisha Bano examined the Pasmada communities from a socio-historical perspective, particularly in relation to conversion theories in South Asia. She argued that although artisan and Dalit groups converted to other religions, they often retained their traditional occupations, socio-cultural practices, names, and rituals.

Her presentation raised critical questions about the definition of knowledge within the Indian Knowledge System. She asked whether weaving skills, leather craftsmanship, or occupational expertise among marginalized communities are recognized as legitimate knowledge traditions. The study challenged dominant narratives and called for a broader and more inclusive understanding of knowledge that acknowledges artisanal and community-based skills as integral to IKS.

Chair's Observations

The Chairpersons appreciated the diversity of themes presented during the session and noted that the discussions successfully bridged classical philosophical frameworks with lived community experiences. The session concluded with the understanding that Indian Knowledge Traditions are not confined to textual archives but remain vibrant within folk songs, ecological practices, artisanal skills, and community survival strategies.

Technical Session – B

Date: 14 February 2026

Time: 02:15 PM – 03:30 PM

Theme: *Intellectual and Folk Traditions: Focused discussions on the cultural continuity and intellectual role of folk knowledge, organic intelligences, and community traditions*

Chair: Dr. Kamai Samson and Dr. Chandraiah Gopani

Rapporteurs: Sakshi Mishra & Srishti Yadav

Technical Session B concentrated on the philosophical, ecological, and socio-economic dimensions of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), with particular emphasis on environmental ethics, ecofeminism, economic morality, and age-structured social organization. The session reflected a strong interdisciplinary orientation, connecting classical philosophical concepts with contemporary policy debates and modern theoretical frameworks.



Tanushree Jaiswal

Title: *Prakriti and Shakti: The Ecofeminism in Ancient India*

Tanushree Jaiswal's presentation explored the intrinsic relationship between *Prakriti* (Nature) and feminine representation within the Indian Knowledge System. She argued that in ancient Indian philosophy, nature was not conceptualized merely as inert matter, but as a living and dynamic force. Drawing from Vedic literature and Sankhya philosophy, she explained the concept of *Prakriti* as the primary substance underlying material existence. She elaborated on the idea of *Panch Bhoota* (the five elements), demonstrating how ancient Indian thought

articulated a holistic ecological worldview that recognized the interconnectedness of natural forces. The presentation connected these indigenous ideas with contemporary ecofeminist theory, including references to global environmental movements and thinkers such as Vandana Shiva. She further argued that modern development paradigms, largely rooted in exploitative and materialist frameworks, have contributed to climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and resource depletion. By contrast, she suggested that Indian philosophical traditions offer a relational and ethical understanding of nature that could inform more sustainable approaches. The paper emphasized that revisiting the ecological wisdom embedded in IKS could provide alternative perspectives for addressing contemporary environmental crises.

Sakshi Mishra

Title: *Vedic Environmental Ethics and Modern Urban Climate Governance: Bridging Indigenous Knowledge with Policy Frameworks*

Sakshi Mishra's presentation examined the relevance of Vedic environmental ethics in addressing contemporary urban climate challenges. Drawing upon principles articulated in the *Rigveda*, she emphasized the ethical responsibility of maintaining harmony between human beings and nature. According to her, Vedic thought underscores reverence for natural elements and advocates ecological balance as a moral duty.

She argued that global policy frameworks, such as the Paris Agreement, can be strengthened by integrating indigenous knowledge systems into urban climate governance. The presentation highlighted the importance of embedding value-based environmental consciousness within modern scientific and policy-oriented strategies.

During the discussion, a participant raised a question regarding the practical incorporation of Vedic environmental ethics into current urban governance structures and local policy mechanisms. In response, the deliberation emphasized the importance of translating ethical principles into actionable guidelines and community-based initiatives. The Chair appreciated the interdisciplinary approach adopted in the presentation and noted that bridging traditional ecological knowledge with modern policy discourse offers meaningful directions for sustainable urban development.

Pradeep Kumar Sharma

Title: *Economic Morality in Indian Knowledge System*

Pradeep Kumar Sharma's presentation focused on the ethical foundations of economic thought embedded within ancient Indian philosophy. He argued that unlike many modern economic systems, which often prioritize profit maximization and market efficiency, the Indian Knowledge System situates economic activity within the broader ethical framework of *Dharma*.

Drawing upon classical texts such as the *Arthashastra* and *Manusmriti*, he explained that *Artha* (wealth) is one of the four *puruṣārthas*, but its pursuit is conditioned by moral and social responsibility. He discussed the concept of trusteeship, later reinterpreted by Mahatma Gandhi, wherein wealth holders are regarded as custodians of societal resources rather than absolute owners.

He further elaborated on the principles of *Dana* (charity), *Seva* (service), and community-based economic responsibility, emphasizing that these reflect a moral economy rather than a purely market-driven structure. In the contemporary context marked by economic inequality, consumerism, environmental degradation, and corporate misconduct, he argued that the ethical dimensions embedded in IKS offer an alternative framework for economic thought and practice.

Srishti Yadav

Title: *Age-Structured Economic Roles: Linking the Modern Lifecycle of Labour Income to the Indian Knowledge System*

Srishti Yadav's presentation examined the relationship between modern lifecycle economic theories and the age-structured socio-economic philosophy embedded in the Indian Knowledge System, particularly the *Ashrama* system. She began by outlining the concept of the Lifecycle of Labour Income, which describes how production, dependency, inequality, and intergenerational transfers are distributed across different age groups.

She briefly discussed major modern lifecycle theories, including Franco Modigliani's Life-Cycle Hypothesis, Paul Samuelson's Overlapping Generations Model, Jacob Mincer's Age-Earnings Profile, the National Transfer Accounts framework developed by Ronald Lee and Andrew Mason, and Claudia Goldin's work on gendered lifecycle inequality.

The presentation then shifted to the philosophical framework of the *Ashrama* system—Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, and Sannyasa—describing it as a socio-philosophical doctrine that structures life according to purpose, responsibility, and economic contribution at different stages. She emphasized that the Ashrama framework provided normative guidance regarding education, productive work, withdrawal, and renunciation.

Concluding her presentation, she observed that contemporary economic realities reveal significant gender disparities and deviations from the idealized age-structured roles prescribed in ancient thought. The study thus highlighted both conceptual parallels and structural differences between modern lifecycle theories and classical Indian socio-economic philosophy.

Chair's Concluding Remarks

The Chairpersons commended the presenters for engaging deeply with philosophical traditions while maintaining relevance to contemporary environmental and economic debates. They emphasized that the session successfully demonstrated how Indian Knowledge Systems can contribute meaningfully to discussions on sustainability, governance, and socio-economic ethics when interpreted with analytical rigor and interdisciplinary sensitivity.

Technical Session – C

Date: 14 February 2026

Time: 02:15 PM – 03:15 PM

Theme: *Intellectual and Folk Traditions: A discussion focused on the cultural continuity and intellectual role of folk knowledge, biological intellectuals, and community traditions*

Chair: Dr. Samanta Sahu and Dr. Manik Kumar

Rapporteurs: Anjali Verma & Priya Pandey

Technical Session C centered on epistemological debates within the broader framework of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), particularly examining how knowledge is produced, validated, and recognized. The session engaged critically with dominant paradigms of scientific inquiry and reflected on the position of traditional and indigenous knowledge systems within contemporary academic discourse.



Ashok Kumar Maurya

Paper Title: *Rethinking Scientific Knowledge*

Ashok Kumar Maurya presented a critical examination of the dominant position of positivism in the production of scientific knowledge. He began by outlining how positivism has historically been regarded as the most legitimate and reliable method for generating knowledge, emphasizing objectivity, empirical observation, measurement, quantification, and verification. Within this framework, knowledge is considered valid only when it is observable, measurable, and free from subjective interpretation.

In his paper, the presenter questioned the assumption that scientific knowledge must be exclusively grounded in positivist methodology. He argued that equating science solely with quantifiable and empirically verifiable methods narrows our understanding of reality. According to him, truth and reality are not always singular, fixed, or entirely objective; rather, they can be multidimensional, context-bound, and socially constructed.

Drawing from interpretivist and constructivist traditions, he highlighted those subjective meanings, lived experiences, cultural contexts, and indigenous knowledge systems also contribute significantly to knowledge production. He emphasized that scientific inquiry should not dismiss experiential and context-based interpretations simply because they do not conform to quantifiable frameworks.

In the context of Traditional Knowledge Systems, he pointed out that many indigenous and community-based forms of knowledge have historically been marginalized precisely because

they do not fit within positivist standards of validation. Yet, these knowledge systems have sustained communities for generations and embody empirical wisdom embedded in lived practice.

The paper proposed that positivism and interpretivism need not be treated as mutually exclusive paradigms. Instead, he advocated for epistemological pluralism—an inclusive approach that recognizes both empirical verification and contextual understanding. He concluded by linking broader debates in the philosophy of science with the recognition and validation of traditional and indigenous knowledge systems within academic discourse.



Chair's Observations

In his concluding remarks, the Chair acknowledged the importance of questioning dominant epistemological frameworks. However, he noted that critiques of positivism are not new and have been articulated by several intellectual traditions over decades, including interpretivism, phenomenology, post-positivism, constructivism, and postmodernism.

The Chair raised a critical question regarding the novelty of the presenter's argument, asking what distinctive contribution the paper makes in light of these established critiques. He encouraged deeper clarification on how the proposed epistemological pluralism could be operationalized within research practice and institutional knowledge systems.

The session concluded with an understanding that discussions on Indian Knowledge Systems must not only address content and tradition but also critically examine the methodological frameworks through which knowledge is evaluated and legitimized.

Technical Session – D

Date: 14 February 2026

Time: 02:15 PM – 03:15 PM

Venue: MBA R.D. Hall, Room 2

Theme: *Intellectual and Folk Traditions: Focused discussions on the cultural continuity and intellectual role of folk knowledge, organic intelligences, and community traditions*

Chair: Dr. Ambuj Sharma, Shri Anjesh Kumar, and Dr. Rewa Singh

Rapporteurs: Devasheesh Verma, Shreya Bind, Kavita Pal, and Rajkamal Bind

Technical Session D brought together presentations that bridged classical philosophical texts, indigenous community knowledge, and literary traditions. The session highlighted that Indian Knowledge Tradition is simultaneously textual and lived—preserved not only in scriptures but also in local practices, oral expressions, and community skills.



Gopal Pandey

Title: *Relevance of Sadhan Chatushtaya and Shat-Sampatti in Adi Shankaracharya's 'Vivek Chudamani': Path to Self-Knowledge and Moksha*

Gopal Pandey's presentation focused on *Vivek Chudamani*, a seminal Advaita Vedanta text attributed to Adi Shankaracharya, and examined its continuing relevance in contemporary life. He analyzed the concept of *Sadhan Chatushtaya*, the fourfold qualifications required for self-realization: *Viveka* (discrimination between the eternal and the transient), *Vairagya* (dispassion), *Shat-Sampatti* (sixfold virtues), and *Mumukshutva* (intense longing for liberation).

He elaborated particularly on the six virtues under *Shat-Sampatti*, presenting them as disciplines necessary for mental purification and spiritual progress. According to the presenter, these ancient philosophical disciplines remain essential even in modern life, where distractions and material pursuits often overshadow self-reflection and ethical grounding. He argued that the text provides a structured path toward self-knowledge and liberation (*Moksha*), thereby maintaining enduring intellectual and spiritual relevance.



Nilesh Pant

Title: *Folk Traditions of the Bhotia Tribe and Their Contribution to the Indian Knowledge System*

Nilesh Pant's presentation examined the folk traditions of the Bhotia tribe, highlighting their unique cultural landscape and contribution to the Indian Knowledge System. He discussed the geographical context in which the Bhotia community resides and described their distinctive social organization and traditional heritage.

The presenter focused on the "Rung" culture and the tribe's intimate relationship with nature, traditional agriculture, and local craftsmanship. He emphasized that their livelihood practices are rooted in ecological knowledge accumulated over generations. However, he also addressed the challenges posed by modernization and socio-economic change, which threaten cultural continuity. He underscored the importance of documenting tribal intellectual property and safeguarding indigenous knowledge systems to ensure their preservation within the broader framework of IKS.

Vijay Bahadur Pal

Title: *Contribution of Folk Culture and Traditions in the Development of Hindi Literature*

Vijay Bahadur Pal explored the deep interconnection between folk traditions and the evolution of Hindi literature. He described folk literature as a mirror of society, reflecting the lived realities, emotions, and aspirations of people across historical periods.

Tracing the presence of folk elements from *Adi-kaal* (including poets such as Amir Khusro and Vidyapati) to *Bhakti-kaal* (Tulsidas and Surdas), and further into modern prose (Premchand and Phanishwar Nath Renu), he demonstrated how classical Hindi literature has continuously drawn inspiration from folk narratives and cultural motifs. He argued that folk traditions provide the “ground reality” and emotional depth that have sustained Hindi literature across centuries. The presentation reinforced the idea that literary development in India cannot be understood without acknowledging the foundational role of folk culture.

Kavita Pal

Title: *Indian Knowledge System: Traditional Knowledge of the Mallah/Nishad Community*

Kavita Pal presented a detailed study of the indigenous knowledge systems of the Mallah/Nishad community in Prayagraj. She explored traditional skills such as boat construction, expert navigation techniques, and nuanced understanding of water quality parameters. These practices, she argued, reflect a sophisticated ecological knowledge rooted in lived experience.

Beyond technical skills, she highlighted the community’s cultural expressions, including folk songs, poetry, and publications such as the *Mallah Jyoti Magazine*, which preserve collective memory and social identity. The presentation emphasized the crucial role of the Nishad community in river conservation and local development, demonstrating that their traditional expertise forms an integral part of the Indian Knowledge System.

Chairperson’s Concluding Remarks

In their concluding observations, the Chairpersons commended the presenters for successfully bridging the gap between classical philosophical texts such as *Vivek Chudamani* and the lived experiences of communities like the Bhotia and Nishad. They emphasized that Indian Knowledge Tradition is not confined to libraries or scriptural archives but exists as a living and

dynamic entity preserved through folk songs, artisanal skills, local languages, and community practices.

The session concluded with the collective understanding that intellectual heritage in India must be approached as both textual wisdom and experiential knowledge, sustained through cultural continuity and community participation.

Valedictory Session

Date: 14 February 2026

Venue: Auditorium Hall, Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute, Jhunsi, Prayagraj

The Valedictory Session marked the formal conclusion of the One-Day National Seminar on *“Indian Knowledge Tradition: Philosophical Foundations, Literary Sources, and Folk Traditions.”* The session brought together eminent academicians who reflected upon the intellectual deliberations of the day and situated the discussions within the broader trajectory of educational reform and Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS).



Prof. Rajneesh Shukla

Former Vice-Chancellor, Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya, Wardha

Prof. Rajneesh Shukla delivered a comprehensive and reflective address, sharing profound insights on the evolution of the Indian education system, the role of traditional wisdom, and the transformative potential of contemporary policy frameworks. He began by greeting the distinguished dignitaries present, including Prof. T.V. Kattimani, Prof. Yogendra Pratap Singh, Prof. Harikesh Singh, and Prof. R.S. Dubey.

He specifically acknowledged Prof. R.S. Dubey for his outstanding administrative and academic leadership, noting that under his stewardship several universities had witnessed qualitative academic transformation. He cited the example of Bhagalpur University, where Prof. Dubey's tenure as Vice-Chancellor significantly strengthened academic standards and institutional credibility.

Linking the discussions of the seminar to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Prof. Shukla argued that the policy's emphasis on interdisciplinary learning represents a return to the holistic ideals envisioned by Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya. According to him, interdisciplinary education is not a modern innovation but a revival of the integrated framework that historically characterized Indian education.

He interwove the discourse on Indian Knowledge Systems with references to Goswami Tulsidas, suggesting that traditional texts contain foundational blueprints for contemporary knowledge systems. He urged participants to rethink their "way of looking" at education and emphasized that classical frameworks such as Chanakya Vidya and the four Upavedas should not be treated as relics of the past but as practical systems relevant to governance, health, and scientific thought.

Addressing the tension between regimentation and advancement of knowledge, Prof. Shukla observed that modern academia often confines knowledge within departmental silos. While knowledge may appear "neutral" in contemporary discourse, he argued that it must be reclaimed and integrated in a manner that serves humanity and aligns with ethical and civilizational values.

Prof. Harikesh Singh

Former Vice-Chancellor, Jai Prakash University, Chhapra (Bihar)

Prof. Harikesh Singh began his address by warmly welcoming the Chairperson of the session, who joined virtually, and acknowledging the Chairperson's distinguished academic background. He extended his respects on behalf of all participants and organizers to the dignitaries present, including Prof. Yogendra Pratap Singh and Prof. Rajneesh Shukla.

He highlighted Prof. Shukla's significant contributions to national academic institutions such as the Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR) and the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR). Describing him as a representative of the "Saraswat tradition" of Kashi, he portrayed him as a bridge between Indian philosophy and historical scholarship.

Prof. Singh emphasized that the ultimate objective of all knowledge traditions is *Anand* (Bliss). He remarked that while many participants arrived through effort and dedication, the experience of intellectual fulfillment—Anand—remains a higher, almost divine attainment.

Reflecting on his administrative experience, he recalled his collaboration with the former President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, during his tenure as Governor of Bihar. He mentioned his involvement in drafting the "Disha Patra" (Direction Paper), which served as a foundational framework for educational reforms in the state. He concluded by praising the intellectual "Triveni"—the confluence of wisdom, philosophy, and tradition—represented by the scholars gathered at the seminar.



Vote of Thanks

Prof. Yogendra Pratap Singh

Director, Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute, Prayagraj

Prof. Yogendra Pratap Singh delivered the concluding address and formal Vote of Thanks. He expressed deep gratitude to the distinguished speakers, particularly Prof. Rajneesh Shukla and Prof. Harikesh Singh, for enriching the seminar with their scholarly insights.

He appreciated the active engagement of faculty members, research scholars, and students of the Master in Liberal Studies (MALS) programme, acknowledging that their participation infused intellectual vitality into the discussions. He also extended sincere thanks to the administrative and support staff whose efforts ensured the smooth execution of the seminar.

Reflecting on the organization of the event, he expressed immense satisfaction that such a high-caliber academic seminar was successfully conducted within a limited preparation period. He attributed this achievement to the collective spirit, dedication, and collaborative effort of the Institute. The Valedictory Session concluded on a note of intellectual fulfilment and reaffirmed commitment to sustained research and dialogue on Indian Knowledge Systems.

The seminar has ended with the National Song performed by Dr. Sujit Kumar Singh, Department of Hindi, University of Allahabad.