Title:

Preservation, Promotion and Integration of Indian Knowledge System and Indigenous knowledge system

Objectives:

- To preserve and promote and to sensitize students and the wider public to the rich heritage of the Indian knowledge System (IKS) and deeply rooted local indigenous knowledge tradition.
- To revive traditional practices and celebrate indigenous heritage through organizing various workshops, symposiums.
- To bridge the gap between traditional Indian knowledge and modern practices in culinary wisdom, food systems, cultural elements and health.
- To align ancient knowledge with modern living by helping participants recognise, appreciate and apply the time tested, sustainable practices hidden within local community knowledge. Such initiatives will help the participants to realize its values and ensure its continuity.

Context:

India possesses an abundance of rich knowledge and traditional wisdom dating back to antiquity.it is found that many domains of modern knowledge have rooted basis in Indian knowledge system. Across the nation, each and every tribe, communities have their own distinct rich knowledge system that they practice both consciously and subconsciously in their daily lives. Despite its profound value, much of this indigenous knowledge has remained out of the mainstream limelight and face the existential challenge due to the advancement of modern science, technology and globalization. But preservation, promotion and application of this knowledge system is very important as they represent centuries of empirical wisdom, cultural identity and practically developed by our local and indigenous communities. Bijni College has students with vibrantly diverse representing from various ethnic communities. Each community within the student body carries its own distinct time-tested knowledge system. Integrating and safeguarding of indigenous knowledge system not only help in sustainable well- being of humanity as a whole but also protect the intellectual property rights of indigenous resources and community own knowledge.

The Practice:

One week workshop on celebrating indigenous flavour: A Taste of Heritage from 30th to 5th February,2025 organized by Research, Innovation and publication cell, Bijni college in collaboration with IQAC, Bijni College. An indigenous food system ensures ecological, socio-economic

sustainability and provides health benefits. Many traditional food items are rich in nutrients, source of probiotic compounds and alternate way to tackle the food insecurity problems and helps in holistic well- being for future generations. Furthermore, indigenous foods reflect the collective capacities of community people who cultivate and consume their own local biodiversity items for nourishment. Proper use of this knowledge leads to development of Entrepreneurial skill among the students resulted to economic self- sufficiency. Through this workshop students learn practically the way of preparation of food items of different communities and tribes. However, the impact of science, technology and globalization have made a big challenge in preserving and practicing of indigenous knowledge system shifting natural fresh culinary food habit to preservative foot habit.

By introducing students to these time-tested culinary arts, this workshop sought to counter act these challenges, foster cultural pride, and unlock avenues for economic self-sufficiency through entrepreneurial skill development.

Workshop on preparation of Eco-friendly Holi Colours was organised as a part of environmental education programme on 2nd March 2026 by Eco Club, Bijni College Bijni under the sponsorship of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate change, Govt. of India. The programme aimed to spread awareness about sustainable celebration of Holi. The programme provides platform to students to get hands on experience in preparing eco- friendly Holi colour from naturally available flowers, leaps, fruits. Such practices encourage them environmentally responsible behaviour.

Khunga Thamthi Rongjali Bwisagu Borainai Fwrbw Falinai 2025 celebrating the cultural legacy of Bodo Tribe was organised by All Bodo Students' Union, Bijni College Unit under the sponsorship of Government of Assam on 11/04/2025 at U.C Das Memorial Open Stage and Bijni College playground. The programme demonstrates the cultural values of Bodo tribe, how love and respect build the relation between older and younger Bodo generations through Bwisagu. Traditional folk songs, dance along with indigenous games of the Bodo tribe were organised in the programme.

Cultural heritage of Bodoland: A symposium on Indigenous Attire and Ornament and fashion show on the same was held on 3/02/2026 at B.G. Basumatary Auditorium. Professor Indira Boro, the then HOD, of Bodo, Bodoland University was attended as a resource person in the programme. She highlighted about the indigenous heritage of Attire and Ornaments of Bodoland. The programme was followed by students' fashion show on indigenous Attire and Ornaments representing different indigenous tribes and communities.

Museum of Traditional handicraft items are opened by the department of Bodo, Assamese and Economics of Bijni College to showcase and enhance knowledge about the handicraft items of rural indigenous community. The Museum is stocked with handicraft items prepared and collected by students made of Bamboo, wood and hand woven Aronai, Bihu Gamcha, Rabha Pajar etc.

Gwkha Gwkhwi Janai: Showcasing cultural food habit of Bodos during Bwisagu and identification of medicinal values was organised by IQAC, Bijni College in association with Department of Bodo on 2/05/2026 at Green Belt of Bijni College. The programme was vibrant from collection and identification of vegetables, medicinal leaves, steam, demonstration and preparation of Gwkha Gwkwi. Dr. Indrajit Brahma, Associate professor, department of Bodo gave speech on cultural value of Gwkha Gwkwi janai among Bodo tribe while Panja Basumatary, Guest Faculty of department of Botany highlighted the medicinal properties of each herb of Gwkha Gwkwi culinary food. A demonstration was held on total 101 herbs use in Gwkha Gwkwi. Cooking demonstration on herbs along with other traditional dishes and locally brewed traditional sticky rice wine were also organised on the same day.

Evidence of Success:

As evidence of success large number of students from different community of the Bijni College as well as reputed neighboring schools of the Bijni participated irrespective of gender and community. Students were highly motivated by innovative practices shared, gaining tangible skills in indigenous culinary arts. Not only the students but teachers other than resource persons also participated alongside students in acquiring practical experience preparing the indigenous culinary dishes, pitas, sweets etc. Participants learned how traditional diets contribute to long term well-being and help address modern health challenges. Moreover, preparation of Eco-friendly Holi Colours taught the participants the techniques for extracting colours from botanical sources such as turmeric, beetroot and flowers etc. By selling out successfully their hand- made colour the very same day, they learned how eco-friendly colour production could serve as a sustainable small-scale venture. As a success, Cultural heritage of Bodoland: A symposium on Indigenous Attire and Ornament and fashion show attracted large number of students representing attire and ornaments of tribes and communities. Among them Miss Swrji Muchahary, a student of FYUGP from the department of physics and Apurba Basumatary, a student of FYUGP from the department of Assamese were crowned Miss Bijni College, 2026 and Mr Bijni College, 2026 respectively. Furthermore, Chandra Basumatary, PG student from department of English was awarded the Best Photography Award, 2026 at the same event.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

Indigenous knowledge depends on nature. Arrangement of required material is not easy task now a days. It requires manpower and financial resources. Moreover, due to the mass influx of industrial, mass-produced commercial goods, genuine indigenous material and equipment are becoming exceedingly rare.

Indigenous knowledge is fundamentally dependent on nature. Due to rapid industrialisation and urbanisation, local biodiversity is shrinking. For instance, the traditional Gwkha Gwkwi preparation of Bodo tribe historically required 101 distinct wild herbs; today, collecting all the herbs is nearly impossible because several plant species are on the edge of extinction.

Sourcing authentic, organic raw materials from nature has become incredibly expensive. Furthermore, manufacturing eco-friendly dyes and botanical Holi colours requires base agents like cornflour, the rising cost of which significantly drives up production expenses.

Genuine indigenous ornaments and traditional weaving equipment are becoming exceedingly rare. Students face severe difficulties in sourcing authentic tribal jewellery and attire for exhibitions and showcase.

Maintaining the handicraft museum, and hosting hands-on training workshops require substantial financial backup, good physical infrastructure, and intensive human labour (manpower) that are difficult to sustain without permanent, dedicated funding.

"Best Practice Report Compiled by Dr. Kusum Brahma, Convenor, Institutional Values & Best Practices Monitoring Committee, IQAC, Bijni College"

