

“Tribal Voices, Aspirations and Challenges: Remembering Bhagwan Birsa Munda on Jan Jatiya Gaurav Diwas”



Centre For Multidisciplinary Development
Research
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in collaboration with



Chamarajanagara University,
Chamarajanagara

and



Kodagu University, Kodagu

Date: 13th December 2025

Venue: Chamarajanagara University,
Chamarajanagara, Karnataka

Tribal Voices, Aspirations, and Challenges: Remembering Bhagwan Birsa Munda on Jan Jatiya Gaurav Diwas

Introduction

Karnataka is home to over 4.24 million Scheduled tribe population, representing nearly 7% of the state's population. Among them, about 50,870 belong to particularly primitive tribal groups, and of the 50 tribal groups, 12 to 14 tribes (including two primitive ones-Jenu Kurauba and Koraga) are primarily forest-dwelling tribes. Despite rich traditional knowledge and practices, tribal communities in the state face serious deficits in health, nutrition etc., particularly in remote, forest and hilly areas across the different regions. □ According to the 2011 Census, Scheduled Tribes (ST) make up about 11.8% of the Chamarajanagar district's total population. The total ST population in the district in 2011 was 120,219. The district profile notes that the tribal population includes forest-dwelling tribals – Soligas, Jenu Kurubas, Betta Kurubas, among others.

Janjatiya Gaurav Divas, observed nationwide on 15th November to honour the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda, an iconic leader of India's tribal freedom movement. The life and struggle of revered Birsa Munda symbolise courage, resistance and a deep commitment to social justice and cultural pride. The observance not only commemorates his contribution to India's freedom but also acknowledges the invaluable role of tribal communities in nation-building, environmental stewardship, and cultural diversity. To commemorate Bhagwan Birsa Munda and celebrate his enduring legacy, the Centre for Multidisciplinary Development Research (CMDR), Dharwad, proposes to organise a seminar in collaboration with Chamarajanagara University and Kodagu University. The seminar is scheduled to be held on Saturday, 13 December 2025, at Chamarajanagara University, Chamarajanagar, under the theme ***“Tribal Voices, Aspirations and Challenges: Remembering Bhagwan Birsa Munda on Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas.”***

The seminar aims to promote tribal culture, heritage and legacy, while addressing critical issues faced by tribal communities in today's contemporary situations. Specifically on health, education, identity and livelihood opportunities to tribal communities in Karnataka, urgent intervention is required. It also aims to explore ways to integrate cultural aspects with social justice, promote inclusive policies and build bridges between traditional wisdom and modern development initiatives.

Objectives

1. To commemorate Bhagwan Birsa Munda and celebrate Janjatiya Gaurav Divas by honouring tribal contributions to India's history and development
2. To explore the contemporary problems of tribal people with a focus on health, education, opportunity, and identity
3. To facilitate dialogue between scholars, policymakers and tribal representatives on inclusive development and empowerment
4. To compile a seminar report and compendium capturing key insights, recommendations and research contributions

Sub-Themes

- **Tribal Health and Well-being-** *Access to healthcare, nutrition, traditional medicine, and maternal-child health*
- **Education and Skill Development** - *Educational equity, use of local languages, dropout issues, and vocational training*
- **Livelihoods and Economic Opportunities** - *Forest-based livelihoods, self-employment, skill enhancement, and digital inclusion*
- **Cultural Identity, Heritage, and Legacy** - *Tribal art, craft, music, and language; preserving oral traditions and rituals; intergenerational knowledge*
- **Policy and Governance for Tribal Empowerment** - *Review of welfare schemes, participation in self-governance, and inclusion in decision-making*

Structure of the Seminar

1. **Inaugural Session:**
Opening Remarks and Keynote on *“Legacy of Bhagwan Birsa Munda and Jan Jatiya Gaurav Diwas”*
2. **Technical Session I:**
Academic Paper Presentations on tribal health, education, opportunity, developmental challenges and identity
(*Academics, Researchers, Students etc.*)
3. **Technical Session II:**
Interaction with Tribal Representatives: dialogue on problems and experiences in health, education, and livelihood
(*Tribal leaders/representatives, field practitioners, NGOs etc.*)
4. **Panel Discussion:**
“Preserving Tribal Heritage and Promoting Inclusive Development”
(*Experts, Policymakers, Administrators etc.*)
5. **Valedictory Session:** Summary, recommendations, and closing remarks

Outputs

1. Enhanced academic and public understanding of tribal heritage and developmental challenges.
2. Policy and research recommendations for improving health, education, and livelihoods in tribal regions.
3. Strengthened collaboration between academic institutions and tribal communities.
4. A Seminar Report documenting deliberations and recommendations.
5. A Compendium of Papers and Tribal Voices to serve as a reference for scholars and policymakers.
6. Valuable addition to the Centre for Excellence in Tribal and Marginalised Studies