



Talk on “Making of a Cult: Journey of Tribal Hero from Birsa Munda to Bhagwan Birsa Munda and Dharti Aaba”

Institute of Tribal Studies, RGU in collaboration with Department of History & IDE, Rajiv Gandhi University organized a talk in celebration of **Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas**, 146th birthday anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. The theme of the talk was “Making of a Cult: Journey of Tribal Hero from Birsa Munda to Bhagwan Birsa Munda and Dharti Aaba. This program was the first of a succession of initiatives scheduled by Rajiv Gandhi University to join the Nation in celebrating this hero. Prof. Ashan Riddi, Director Institute of Distance Education welcomed all the dignitaries and the audience present in the online talk organised on this occasion. Dr. N. T. Rikam said that we could not give Bhagwan Birsa Munda his due diligence for the contribution he had for the national independence. He welcomed this move of the Government of India which has recognised the contribution of this unsung hero by celebrating 15th November 2021 as the **Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas**.

The talk was delivered by Prof. Vijoy Shankar Sahay (Retd.), Former Head, Department of Anthropology, Allahabad University, Allahabad. He started by paying his homage to Birsa Bhagwan. He said that the transcendence of a Birsa Munda to Birsa Bhagwan to Dharti Abba in just 25 years needs to be understood as a part of a non-linear journey during the all-powerful British Raj. He said that there must be a reason for the Tribal uprising only when the British Empire came to power. There has been no such revolt recorded in the history prior to the British came to power. This reason needs to be researched well, he opined. He took the audience to a detailed tour of the journey of this legend. He united the tribal and non-tribal alike. He protested against the colonial narrative in which they portrayed themselves as the saviours of humanity. Prof. Sahay quoted Birsa Munda’s famous line, “Abua raj seterjana, maharani raj tundujana. (Let the kingdom of the queen be ended and our kingdom be established)”. With this he tried to show how he wanted to stop anyone who tried to exploit the nature’s gift to humanity. Prof. Sahay also answered all the questions asked by the participants.

“Next year I pray that we celebrate a hero from Arunachal Pradesh.” This is how Prof. Saket Kushwaha, VC, RGU stressed on the revolutionary nature of this day as this whole week celebrates the festival of tribal and indigenous culture. The program ended with a vote of thanks

by Prof. Jumyir Basar, Director, Institute of Tribal Studies, RGU. More than 120 people participated in this talk.

MINUTE TO MINUTE:

Time: 3.00 PM

DATE: 15th November 2021

Meeting link: <https://meet.google.com/yer-gzsp-qvm>

PROGRAM SCHEDULE		
3.00 PM	Welcome Address by	Prof. Ashan Riddi, Director, IDE, Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh
3.05 PM	Address by	Dr. N. T. Rikam, Registrar, Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh.
3.15 PM	Address by	Prof. Amitava Mitra, Pro Vice Chancellor, RGU, Rono Hills, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh
3.25 PM	Speaker	Prof. Vijoy Shankar Sahay (Retd.), Former Head, Department of Anthropology, Allahabad University, Allahabad
4.00 PM	Q &A	
4.10 PM	Address by Chair	Prof. Saket Kushwaha, Hono'ble Vice Chancellor, RGU, Rono Hills, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh.
4.20 PM	Vote of thanks	Prof. Jumyir Basar, Director, Institute of Tribal Studies, Rajiv Gandhi University.