

# **ANNUAL REPORT RESEARCH DEPARTMENT**

**2024-2025**



**INDIAN SOCIAL INSTITUTE  
NEW DELHI**

© Indian Social Institute 2025

For Private Circulation only

Published by  
Indian Social Institute  
10 Institutional Area  
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003

Printed at  
Bosco Society for Printng & Graphic Training  
Jamia Nagar, Okhla Road  
New Delhi-110 025

Design & Layout: Ruben Minj

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| SN  | Pg |
|---|----|
| Preface and Acknowledgements                                | 1  |
| 01 Vision, Mission and Objectives of ISI                    | 2  |
| 02 Unique Selling Point of ISI                              | 4  |
| 03 From the Research Director's Desk                        | 5  |
| 04 Five-Year Plan of the Institute (2022-2027)              | 7  |
| 05 Research Advisory Committee Members                      | 12 |
| 06 Faculty Members  | 15 |
| 07 Completed Projects 2024-25                               | 19 |
| 08 Ongoing Projects   | 20 |
| 09 Publications   | 25 |
| I. Books  | 25 |
| II. Articles  | 27 |
| 10 Workshops  | 32 |
| 11 National Seminars  | 36 |
| 12 Paper Presentations and Lectures (Outside the Institute) | 39 |
| 13 Advocacy and Consultancy in the International Context    | 40 |
| 14 International Collaboration                              | 43 |
| 15 Interns at the Institute                                 | 46 |
| 16 Annual Plan of the Research Department for 2025-26       | 51 |

## Preface and Acknowledgements

Perhaps this is the first time in the history of the Indian Social Institute (ISI) that its Research Department has produced an Annual Report. The ISI releases a yearly report encompassing all its departments. While it serves many purposes, it was felt that an extensive annual report of the research department is necessary for the following reasons: 1. The research department figures in a perfunctory and ineffective manner, and so an exhaustive report of its own is a welcome move. 2. The ISI had a dual face, research and action. Thus, the current annual report emphasizes the research aspect more than the action and advocacy aspects. 3. COVID shadowed ISI's research activities for a few years. This report is to showcase that the research face of the ISI is in the process of being revived. 4. Although ISI has a history of 75 years, many competing research institutes and centers have emerged in Delhi and across the country. In this context, the ISI's Research Department needed to showcase its unique selling point. 5. The ISI's connectivity to universities and colleges run by Christians and non-Christians needs to be revived. This could only be done through a more thorough research department report.

Hence, this report provides a detailed account of the research projects completed during the year, as well as books and articles published, seminars, workshops, and training programs conducted, internship programs, lectures, and presentations of papers delivered outside the Institute, and events organized by it. This annual report also includes the plan for the 2025-26 academic year.

I take this opportunity to thank Dr. Arun Oraon for taking great interest in producing a draft of this report with the help of Mr. Pascal and the faculty members. I also thank Mr. Ruben for doing the layout and design for this report.

The Research Department's output was made possible by the Executive Director, Dr. Sebasti Raj, the Financial Administrator Fr. Ronald Saldanha, and the Head of the ISI complex, Fr. Ravi Sagar, the Research Advisory Committee members, the Governing Board members as well as and the Institute's staff, to whom we are thankful.

**Lancy Lobo S.J.**



# VISION, MISSION, AND OBJECTIVES OF ISI



The Indian Social Institute (ISI) was founded as a research centre to contribute to social transformation, promoting inclusive growth and development for all sections of society. At the time of the Institute's founding, the then-Superior General of the Society of Jesus stated that "The Institute should be founded for the serious study of the Indian social situation in all its aspects." Adhering to this mandate, the Institute has been seeking new ways to engage in social transformation in response to the signs of the times.

## **VISION**

“To build a just, humane, secular, democratic and inclusive Indian society wherein the poor and marginalised communities cherish equality, dignity, freedom, justice, peace and harmony.”

## **MISSION**

“To engage in social transformation through socially relevant research, training, publication and advocacy works aimed at integral development of the marginalized communities, particularly the Dalits, Adivasis/tribals women, minorities, unorganized and landless labourers in partnership with academicians, people’s movements, human rights organizations and ecological movements nationally and internationally.”

## **OBJECTIVES**

- ✦ To assist in the study of the Social Sciences, both theoretical and practical.
- ✦ To promote research on India’s social, economic, educational, health, and cultural problems.
- ✦ To publish books, magazines, periodicals, booklets, handbills, etc., on social, educational, health, and cultural subjects.
- ✦ To maintain libraries and reading rooms.
- ✦ To perform works of charity, social, moral, economic, educational, health and spiritual.
- ✦ Diffuse social, cultural, secular, and scientific knowledge, delegate, and participate in national, regional, and international meetings, conferences, workshops, symposiums, training programmes, and campaigns to pursue the association’s objectives.
- ✦ To network and collaborate with like-minded associations, non-governmental and governmental organisations, and international organisations in pursuance of the objectives of the Institute.

## UNIQUE SELLING POINT OF ISI

02

The Indian Social Institute is a national research institute celebrating its 75th anniversary. Immediately after Independence, the ISI was established to document and assess the social processes and forces operating in rural and urban India, in line with the idea of India that the architects of modern India, including Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru, Sardar Patel, and Ambedkar, visualized. This was a secular, democratic, liberal, socialistic, and industrialized India with a scientific temper. Independence let loose institutional processes for social transformation. ISI's unique selling point has been the focus on women, Dalits, tribals, vulnerable, disadvantaged, and marginalised sections of society. Its vision and mission were to highlight the reality of these sections and give the voiceless a voice, thereby empowering them. Empirical research has been the forte of ISI over the years, leading to advocacy and highlighting policy implications. Its research projects, knowledge production, publications, seminars, workshops, and training programmes have faithfully reflected the original thrust in changing socio-political contexts.

## FROM THE RESEARCH DIRECTOR'S DESK



The ISI is 75 years old! I joined the ISI Research Department in 2021 and assumed the role of Research Director in 2023. The Institute recruited four young Assistant Professors with a PhD, and I am pleased to say that they have been shaping up well. They have undertaken various projects, ranging from minor research to major studies. They have become an effective team, demonstrating appreciable investigative research and analysis skills that align with the Institute's vision and mission areas.

A five-year Plan for the Research Department was developed in 2022 through the expertise of renowned scholars. They were Drs. Lancy Lobo SJ, Thomas Varghese SJ, Denzil Fernandes SJ, Subhadra Channa, Virginius Xaxa, and Fr. Aloysius Irudayam SJ.

The governing body approved this plan. A Faculty Development Programme was held under the guidance of Dr. Prakash Louis. Each faculty member discussed their annual plan at the faculty development meeting. It was also decided that they should hold monthly reports of their work and the plan for the following month. Further, it was agreed to discuss projects, seminars, and book proposals, as well as have regular colloquiums on topics of current interest with the faculty. Upon returning from a field trip, faculty members are expected to share their firsthand fieldwork experiences with other faculty members. These actions have provided an ecosystem conducive to knowledge production.

A new Research Advisory Committee was formed with Professors Subhadra M. Channa, Sabiha Hussain, and Mr. Amit Mitra (an international development consultant). The faculty members spent a day with the Research Advisory Committee discussing individual plans for getting feedback from them.

The Research Department has also recruited a Research Assistant to assist the faculty member responsible for data entry, presentation preparation, writing the faculty meeting minutes, and other related tasks. As a result, the faculty's

performance has been elevated to a higher level, as this report will show.

A few significant items may be noted: 1) One of our faculty members, Dr. Arun Oraon, took an adventurous approach in undertaking his fieldwork by residing in the villages of the Seemanchal districts of Bihar for his study on Media Literacy and Civic Literacy. 2) Dr. Vincent Ekka participated in workshops on extractive industries, displacement, and the rehabilitation of displaced individuals in the Netherlands and Australia. He also participated in a workshop on sustainable development and livelihood in Thailand. He has also completed the first phase of the Bio-Diversity project, which the University of Alberta, Canada supports. 3) Two edited books by Professors Subhadra M. Channa and Lancy Lobo were published by Routledge (London and New York) using archival material from the Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, 1886-1936. 4) Dr Lancy Lobo, Dr Minakshi Sardar and Dr Yatish Kumar conducted an all-India study on socio-religious distancing among college students. They were joined by Arun Oraon and Pascal Tirkey, who administered the questionnaire in 23 colleges of 13 states of India.

### **Lancy Lobo**



# FIVE-YEAR PLAN OF THE INSTITUTE (2022-2027)

Changing external environment, emerging core areas, and research programmes proposed for the next five years.

## A. Research Areas

### 1. Caste, Tribe, Class, Gender, and Minorities

Given the Institute's vision and mission statements, it is essential to continue focusing on the above areas from a new perspective or new vantage point. For instance, the manifestation of caste has changed in rural and urban India. In the realm of politics, caste identities have experienced a resurgence, and castes have become increasingly aligned with political parties.

Tribes have also been undergoing stratification. The market coveted many natural resources, such as forests, mines, land, and water, from the tribal areas, thereby depriving the tribals of their traditional means of livelihood and food security. Today's Tribal unrest and movements are a consequence of this deprivation.

The traditional middle class has given way to a newer middle class with different consumption patterns and mores. It is concerning to consider the role this class plays in today's politics.

Traditional gender studies have examined the conditions of women across various sectors. However, further studies are needed to investigate the role of power flow in gender relations. Women are denied their legitimate share in resources, knowledge, and decision-making within and outside the family. Their control over employment, production, income, resource allocation, household welfare, and their role in water, fuel, and fodder in the domestic sphere needs attention.

Given the fact that the majoritarian regime has reduced the condition of the minorities, especially the Muslims and Christians, to second-class citizens, one needs to give immediate attention in the Institute to study the processes and dynamics that have reduced them to such a state. It is noticed that there is a systematic attempt to discredit the contributions made by Christians to nation-building

## **2. Social Justice, Peace, Reconciliation, and Human Rights**

The displacement of people (refugees, migrants, and internally displaced people) is the result of injustices and inequalities experienced by marginalised people. India's democracy and the Constitution are under threat in the face of growing religious fundamentalism and nationalism. This has led to a spurt in violence against minorities and women, along with the resurgence of patriarchy and casteism. Workers' rights are being steadily abrogated due to increasing privatisation, including privatisation of national assets. In this climate of uncertainty and exclusion, can the Institute focus its attention on healing a broken world, promoting a new way of producing and consuming knowledge?

## **3. Sustainable Development, environment and deprivation in rural and urban areas**

An essential aspect of sustainable development is the relationship between people, development, and the environment, as it seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability to meet those of the future. The adverse effects could be on air quality, water quality, common property resources and biodiversity. One needs to study biodiversity, especially in different ecological zones inhabited by tribes. Studies on displacement due to development, including the impact of development on the quality of life in areas such as education, health, housing, income, and employment, as well as urban development and the impact of smart cities on the poor, are to be focused upon.

## **4. Ideas and ideologies**

It is a fact that Ideas and ideologies for social transformation guide social science research. Social change needs to be situated within the ideological constructs and ideological spectra where the state, market, and civil society interact, with one dominating the other or vice versa. In this manner, Equality, justice, liberty, freedom, and brotherhood are dependent on the dominant ideologies of the regime.

Religion and the political process are two sides of the same coin. The dominant section uses religion to capture power and maintain their hegemony, leaving the minorities as the 'Other', leading to their demonisation. The ISI proposes to capture this process that leads to seeking political legitimacy based on religion.

## **5. Health and Education**

Both health and education have been privatised, and the impacts of this privatisation need to be studied, especially on the poor. COVID has laid bare the truth regarding this country's dismal health management. The government has been abdicating its responsibility in health and education, resulting in a continuous decrease in budget allocation. As a consequence, predatory private agencies in health and education that exclude the poor have emerged.

## **6. Post-truth Society and Information Society**

Our era is known as the post-truth society. Though challenging, there are multiple sources of data which reveal the reality around us: from government agencies, international agencies, and private agencies, which often given conflicting information on sensitive indicators, be it economic, social, or political, is manipulated and withheld by the government, often casting aspersions on the independent agencies and questioning their methodologies. Often, the government lacks data or fails to disclose data that would put it in a bad light. As for the media, does it distort the data in favour of the regime/current dispensation? Hence, the ISI must collect data from various sources and present a fair and just picture of the reality under their scanner.

## **B. New Initiatives Proposed**

### **1. Archival Studies.**

The Centre for Culture and Development, Vadodara, had collected a golden mine from the archives of the Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, 1886-1936. This journal has exploded several myths concerning Indian Anthropology: Firstly, that colonial administrators began it. However, this journal shows that some Indian anthropologists have made significant contributions to the formative phase of Indian Anthropology. Secondly, Indian anthropology has concentrated only on the primitive tribes. Nonetheless, this journal also shows that it has studied advanced societies. Thirdly, the Indian anthropologists have limited their studies to India only. Yet, this journal indicates that they have also studied non-Indian societies. Additionally, as the journal is nearly a hundred years old, it provides a solid benchmark for studying changes in various cultures.

On the whole, the journal is very rich in ethnography, has been well classified, and Professors A.M. Shah and Lancy Lobo have jointly edited the following volumes:



1. Essays on Suicide and Self-immolation by Primus Publications, Delhi.
2. Anthropological Explorations in East and South-East Asia, by Primus Publications, Delhi.
3. An Ethnography of Parsees of India, by Routledge, London and New York.
4. Anthropology in India: Discourses in Bombay, by Routledge, London and New York

**Professors Subhadra M. Channa and Lancy Lobo have carried forward jointly, editing the following volumes:**

5. Religious Pluralism in India: Ethnographic and Philosophic Evidence, 1886-1936, Routledge, London and New York. (2024)
6. Colonial Anthropology: Technologies and Discourses of Dominance by Routledge, London and New York. (2024)
7. Sacred Ecology: Cosmologies, Ecologies, and Rituals in India, Routledge, London and New York (forthcoming).

## **2. Ethnographic Course (online)**

Ethnography is a branch of anthropology that, through participant observation, holistically studies cultural details of a group, community, organisation, or event. At a time when various social science disciplines have fragmented the understanding of social reality, ethnography offers a method to view groups, communities, organisations, and movements holistically, thereby giving rise to policy implications and relevant interventions to improve human conditions. The ISI can offer students an online course on Ethnography. This can be a paid course that generates income for ISI.

## **3. Critical Thinking and Social Analysis Course**

## **4. Research Methodology Course**

## **5. Documentation and Data Mining**

## **6. Colloquiums and Seminars/Webinars/Lectures**

One way to keep the ISI faculty members intellectually vibrant is to hold readings, colloquiums, and discussions on relevant topics. Each faculty member could give a presentation once a fortnight on a particular subject, book, article which is under preparation, or on a topic of their choice, thereby provoking discussions, and soliciting comments.

## **7. ISI and Regional Jesuit Social Science Research Centres**

There are some Jesuit Regional Social Science Centres in India. However, there is little interaction and networking between them and the national centres such as ISI-D and ISI-B. A tie-up with regional and national centres is highly desirable. Region-specific and overarching national issues need a coordinated effort to be a force. Could ISI take the lead in building bridges between the regional and national centres during the coming five years?

## **8. Proposed Lecture Series**

The proposed lecture series will be conducted regularly by the Research Department of the Indian Social Institute, under the supervision of the research director, on relevant and contemporary themes and subjects by eminent scholars, considering the intersectionality of the Indian population. This lecture series would provide a platform for discussions and foster a deeper understanding of the complex socio-economic and political dynamics at the macro and micro levels. Apart from academic talks, this lecture series can play a significant role in promoting and developing social awareness, critical thinking, and inclusive dialogue, which are essential for addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by India's diverse population, especially those living at the margins, and will aid in informed policy intervention.

# RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

# 05

## Prof. Sabiha Hussain (Retired)



Professor Sabiha Hussain has been the former Professor and Director of the Sarojini Naidu Centre for Women's Development Studies (February 2016 to February 2023) and the Centre for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policies, Jamia Millia Islamia. Before joining Jamia Millia Islamia, she worked for a decade at the Centre for Women's Development Studies (an ICSSR funded Research Institute) in New Delhi and carried out two research projects on 'Gender, reproductive rights and behaviour and women of minority and Dalit community engaged in Home based work in North Bihar.

She has obtained her Master's, M.Phil, and Ph.D degrees from the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University. She has more than 39 years of teaching and research experience. She is the authored of five books and many research articles published in reputed national and international academic journals. After joining Jamia Millia Islamia, she has completed major research projects funded by various government agencies (UGC, ICSSR, MOWCD). She has also generated a substantial amount of funds from NCW, AIU, ICSSR, IIPR, and Maulana Azad Foundation, among others, for organising National and International Conferences and Research Methodology workshops. She regularly provides valuable input in formulating Undergraduate and Postgraduate syllabi for Gender Studies in various universities. The National Human Rights Commission nominated her as a member of the 'Women's Rights Group'. She was also nominated as a member of the Governing Board for Non-Government Organisations. She has been the Editor of a peer-reviewed journal, Women's Link, from 2017 to 2020.

## Mr. Amit Mitra



**M**r. Amit Mitra is an independent consultant and researcher based in Delhi. Initially, he was a faculty member at the Centre for Social Studies in Surat, and later worked at the Centre for Environmental Studies in Delhi. He is recognised for his ethnographic approach to research and evaluation, with publications in national and international journals. His specialisations are: Social Impact Assessment, Large Scale Socio-Economic Surveys, Programme Design and Development, Monitoring and Evaluation, Gender Analysis, Assessment of Learning (formal and non-formal), Non-formal Education, Adult Literacy, Water, Indigenous Water Harvesting Systems, Farming systems, Sustainable Livelihoods Development and Natural Resource Management, Forest and Land Rights, Adaptation to Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management., Migration, Food Security, Women's Empowerment, Rural Development, Tribal Development, Child Rights, Eradication of Child Labour, Resettlement and Rehabilitation of people affected by mega development projects. Designing quantitative and qualitative surveys, as well as data collection and processing are also among his many competences as well as Development Communication. Gender and child rights are important cross-cuts in all his work.

## Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa



**P**rof. Subhadra Mitra Channa taught Anthropology at the University of Delhi. She retired from service on 31 October 2016. Her areas of interest are marginalisation and identity, gender, religion and cosmology, ecology and landscapes. She was a Charles Wallace Fellow to the UK (Queen's University 2000) and a Visiting Professor to MSH, Paris (2002), a Fulbright visiting lecturer to the USA (2003) and a Visiting Professor in 2008-9 to USC, USA, and Visiting Professor. to University of Bahia, Brazil, 2019. She has written approximately

ninety scholarly papers and is the author or editor of ten books. She was the president of the Indian Anthropological Association and the editor of the Indian Anthropologist; she was Chair of the Commission on the Anthropology of Women (IUAES?), Chair of the Commission in Marginalization and Global Apartheid, and was elected vice president as well as a Senior Vice President of IUAES (International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences). The Asiatic Society awarded her the S.C. Roy Memorial Gold Medal for her lifetime contribution to cultural anthropology. Her most recent publications include, 'Gender in South Asia' (Cambridge University Press); 'The Inner and Outer Selves' (Oxford University Press) and the edited book, 'Life as a Dalit'(ed.) (Sage Publications) and Gendering Material Culture (ed.), Anthropological Perspectives on Indian Tribes (Orient BlackSwan) and Religious Pluralism in India (edited with Lancy Lobo, Routledge. She is at present the Editor of Reviews in Anthropology (Taylor and Francis).

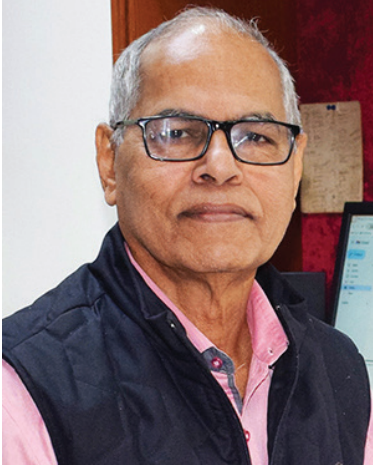
### **Prof. Lancy Lobo**



**P**rof. Lancy Lobo has a doctorate in sociology from the Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi. He was the founder and Director of The Centre for Culture and Development, Vadodara. He also served as Director of the Centre for Social Studies, Surat, under the Indian Council of Social Science Research, Delhi (Ministry of Human Resources). He has extensively studied Dalits, tribals, OBCs and minorities in rural and urban Gujarat. He was an International Fellow at the Woodstock Centre, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., from 1999 to 2000. He has authored, co-authored, edited, and

co-edited 35 books, most of them emerging from the research studies undertaken by him and his team. He is Professor Emeritus and the Research Director at the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi. His recent publications are:

- 1). Tribes of Western India: A Comparative Study of Their Social Structure, by Routledge (with Dhananjay Kumar);
- 2). Urban Daily Labour Markets in Gujarat, Western India by Routledge (with Kanchan Bharati and Dhananjay Kumar).

**Prof. Dr. Lancy Lobo, SJ (Research Director)****Dr. Vincent Ekka, SJ (Assistant Professor)**

**D**r. Vincent Ekka (SJ) is an Assistant Professor at the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, India. He obtained his M.Phil and a doctorate in Sociology from the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. The indigenous communities and their knowledge system, indigenous system of self-governance, and indigenous perspectives are the areas of his interest. His interests and engagements have been interdisciplinary, with a focus on indigenous studies. His publications include four co-edited books- 1. *Sangharsh rat Adivasi Samaj*, (Hindi) 2. *Daliton ke Buniyadi Sarokar* (Hindi), 3. Development with

Dignity: A Tribal Perspective, 4. *India's Indigenous Peoples: A Journey of Self-Reflection on Culture, Society and Sustainability*, and co-authored a book, *The Baigas of Sonbhadra*. He also coordinates tribal organisations across India and is associated with various national and international organisations.



### **Dr. Arun Kumar Oraon (Assistant Professor)**



**D**r. Arun Kumar Oraon obtained his Ph.D. in 2022 from the Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India. The title of his thesis is "Role of Social Media in Thai Politics, 2001-2016". His M.Phil. dissertation was on the "Role of Media in the Politics of Vietnam, 1995-2012". His research interests focus on media, culture, rural communication, and political communication studies. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Research Department at the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi. He has worked for the Journal *Hashiye ki Awaz*. He also

co-edited two published books - 1. *Sangharsh rat Adivasi Samaj*, (Hindi) and 2. *Daliton ke Buniyadi Sarokar* (Hindi).

### **Dr. Minakshi Sardar (Assistant Professor)**



**M**inakshi Sardar holds a Ph.D., M.Phil and M.A. from the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Her doctoral thesis was entitled "Process of Normalisation of Israel-Vatican Relations, 1948-1993". Her M.Phil dissertation was on "Israel's Responses to Hostage Taking". Her area of interest focuses on peace and conflict, negotiation, international relations, minority issues, gender, Christianity, security concerns, diplomatic relations, and conflict resolution. She is a Non-Resident Associate at the Middle East Institute, New Delhi. Dr. Sardar has previously worked as a research assistant at Jahangirnagar

University, Dhaka. She is also the Assistant Editor of the Journal of Indo-Judaic Studies (ISSN 1206-9330).

## Dr. Yatish Kumar (Assistant Professor)



**D**r. Yatish Kumar is an Assistant Professor at the Indian Social Institute. Previously, he served as a project consultant at the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) in New Delhi. His research interests primarily revolve around the dynamics of population ageing and its implications, urban demography, health disparities, gender status, socioeconomic determinants, and education in India, with a focus on various issues and challenges. Dr. Yatish Kumar has an impressive publication record in reputable international journals. He holds a PhD and M.Phil. in Population Studies

from Jawaharlal Nehru University, an M.A. in Geography from Jamia Millia Islamia University, and a Bachelor of Arts (with Honours) in Geography from Shaheed Bhagat Singh Evening College, University of Delhi.

## Dr. Pintu Paul (Assistant Professor)



**P**intu Paul is an Assistant Professor at the Indian Social Institute (ISI), New Delhi. His research focuses on family demography, migration, education, health, and gender issues. He holds an MPhil and a PhD in Geography from the Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Before joining ISI, Dr. Paul worked at Ashoka University, the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). Dr. Paul has authored several research papers, editorials, and book chapters

published in internationally renowned social science journals, including *Social Science & Medicine*, *SSM Population Health*, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, and the *Indian Journal of Human Development*. He has also published op-eds in popular media outlets such as *India Development Review* and *Down To Earth*.



### **Shreya Jessica Dhan (Assistant Professor)**



**D**r. Shreya Jessica Dhan has completed her MPhil and PhD from the Jawaharlal Nehru University (Delhi). Her research interests encompass political theory, tribal identity, culture, and women's issues. She is currently pursuing an ICSSR postdoctoral fellowship at JNU.

### **Mr. Pascal Tirkey (Research Assistant)**



**M**r. Pascal Tirkey holds a Master's Degree from St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu. He worked at the Indian Social Institute on a peace campaign project, "SHANTI SADBHAVNA MANCH" in seven states of Central India. He was the co-editor of *Hashiye Ki Awaz*, a Hindi magazine, published by the Institute.

### **Chin Refugees in Delhi**

The report sheds light on the socio-economic circumstances of Chin ethnic refugees residing in Vikaspuri, one of the many sites in Delhi. These individuals escaped from Myanmar as a result of harassment by the military and the militants, who invaded their homes, stole money and burnt their homes and villages. The report also elaborates on the challenges women refugees face as they navigate between the rules of the institution and the ongoing processes that reinforce their gender roles in society. It aims to provide a deeper understanding of how gender affects the lives of refugee women and how they have adapted, and continue to adapt, their gender roles as they rebuild their lives, integrate into new communities, and create a sense of belonging.

The report explores the numerous challenges refugees encounter in various aspects of their lives, including the workplace, education, health, and their interactions with landowners and the broader community. The socio-economic circumstances refugees face prompt severe inquiries into the effectiveness of the UNHCR in providing support to refugees. The report underscores the daily hardships and distress experienced by refugees, highlighting the pressing need for assistance from the UNHCR's and calling upon the global community to provide essential humanitarian assistance and aid.

# ONGOING PROJECTS

## **1. Christian Contribution to Nation-building (Lancy Lobo and Denzil Fernandes)**

Christianity is believed to have been introduced to India in 52 A.D., when St. Thomas, one of Jesus Christ's apostles, travelled to the Malabar Coast in Southern India and established seven churches. This book explores the interactions between Christianity and the Indian people across various historical periods, highlighting the exchange of knowledge and ideas. Christianity in the Indian subcontinent is as old as Christianity itself, although Christians have consistently remained a small minority within the broader population. This book examines the influence of Christianity on Indian society, focusing on the cultural, economic, and intellectual contributions of Christians across various domains—including education, healthcare, social services, economic development, the arts, politics, public administration, and the armed forces. The book examines key figures, organisations, and institutions to trace the significant role Christians have played in the country's freedom struggle, nation-building efforts, and social development, leaving a lasting impact on the shaping of modern India. This book will appeal to general readers, students, and researchers in the fields of social science, religion, history, anthropology, sociology, and political science.

## **2. Sacred Ecology: Cosmological perspectives of flora and fauna in India (Edited by Subhadra M. Channa and Lancy Lobo)**

This volume delves into the colonial past and identifies papers on nature and natural phenomenon that were deemed 'primitive' and 'superstitious' by those who narrated them and analysed them in the pages of the Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, published from 1886 to 1936; the period covered by the papers that have been reproduced in this volume. However, they have been recast in the contemporary framework of environmentalism, indigenous wisdom and critical reflections on Western science and scientific methodology. The positivist method, or Western rationalism, was propagated during the time of these article's publication through the political hegemony of colonial rule. These papers were presented to criticise 'primitive' cultures and obscurantist thinking. Yet, each presents wisdom and knowledge about nature,

which, if followed, would have averted much of the environmental distress that the world is facing today. These papers have been reproduced with a purpose: to show that real knowledge was discarded as garbage. The volume invites critical rethinking and advocates a revised version of rationalism, reconceptualising nature as sacred, moving away from anthropocentrism towards nature-centrism.

### **3. Media, Civic Literacy, and Political Participation in Seemanchal Districts of Bihar. (Arun Oraon)**

Media in any country is more than just a medium for those residing there. It directly impacts all areas of their lives, helping to inform, educate, and entertain citizens. The press also encourages and inspires change in people. In the 21st century, an era where information revolution, technological progress has introduced a new dimension regarding information among people and brought significant changes in the information field. In this context, media literacy is not just a skill but a necessity for individuals and communities to cope with the information bombardment in the age of technology. This is especially true for the border districts of Bihar, where the state's literacy rate is relatively low. This study aims to empower the community and individuals in the Northeastern districts of Bihar with the skills and knowledge necessary to critically analyse, evaluate, and understand media messages, considering the region's unique socio-cultural, economic, and linguistic characteristics.

### **4. Climate Crisis: Causes and coping mechanisms for heatwave, pollution, water scarcity in Delhi (Yatish Kumar)**

This project provides a detailed understanding of climate change and its profound impact, particularly on workers in the informal sectors in Delhi. The project's primary objective is to explore how community preparedness and the institutional support system can mitigate the impact of climate change and facilitate effective adaptation strategies. The project is structured into several key chapters. It will utilise a combination of secondary and primary data to understand the causes and consequences of climate change on marginalised communities. The study's objectivity will be examined through field work, case studies, group discussions, and interviews.

## **5. 'Biodiversity Conservation: Health and Wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples (Vincent Ekka)**

This study is place-based research, a collaborative effort involving global research across 26 countries. Faculty members from the University of Alberta, Canada, are the lead researchers coordinating the study. The study adopts an interdisciplinary approach, where indigenous scholars from various universities in India collaborate in the planning and implementation of the study. The Indian researchers aim to study biodiversity conservation on two pathways: (1) Biodiversity Conservation: Food Sustainability, Health and Wellbeing; and (2) Biodiversity Conservation and its Interface with Language, Culture and Wellbeing. The place-based research study spans from 2021 to 2027, divided into three phases: Capacity Building, Indigenous-Led Place-Based Research, and Policy Transformation.

## **6. Crime Against Women in India: A Comparative Study of Delhi and Kolkata through the Lens of Culture (Minakshi Sardar)**

Violence against women (VAW) is historically rooted, causing serious concern across all societies and cultures. The phenomenon of Femicide, which refers to the gender-based intentional killing of women, has emerged as a distinct field of study. Studies have suggested that femicide constitutes one of the cruelest forms of VAW and needs to be addressed through proper mechanisms. This project undertakes two major metropolitan cities, having one of the highest records, as its case studies. The study makes a comparative assessment of the pattern of femicide in the broader backdrop of VAW through a socio-anthropological approach. The study aims to understand how culture influences the status of women and the prevalence of VAW in these two metropolitan cities.

## **7. 'Socio-cultural Distancing between Religious Communities in India: A study among college youth!' (Lancy Lobo, Minakshi Sardar & Yatish Kumar)**

This research-oriented project aims to investigate and understand the factors that contribute to social distancing among social groups from diverse religious communities. This study focuses mainly on college-going youth. The youth population is crucial; they form the backbone of society and will be the future stakeholders in shaping and reshaping modern-day India. This study investigates how youth perceive religious beliefs, practices, prejudices, stereotypes, and labels prevalent among people, the socio-political awareness level, and the role

of religion in present-day India. The study's observations and findings will enable us to understand the causes of social distance and religious polarization. It will bring suggestions to help reduce social distance, bridge the gap, and promote tolerance, cooperation, integration, and harmony among social groups.

A questionnaire on the Study of Knowledge, Attitude, Perceptions and Behaviour (KAPB) of the College Students in the Multi-Religious Context of India was canvassed by personally visiting the following 21 colleges during

February-March 2025:

1. Bosco College Dimapur, Nagaland
2. Don Bosco College, Golaghat, Assam
3. Don Bosco Sonapur, Assam
4. Jesus & Mary College, Delhi
5. Loreto College, Kolkata
6. Loyola College, Chennai
7. Maris Stella, Vijayawada
8. Nirmala Niketan Home Science College, Mumbai
9. Nirmala Niketan Social Work College, Mumbai
10. Roshni Nilaya, Mangalore
11. Salesian College of Higher Education, Dimapur, Nagaland
12. St Agnes College, Mangalore
13. St Aloysius College, Mangalore
14. St Anthony's College, Shillong
15. St Andhra Loyola College, Vijayawada
16. St Xavier's College, Ahmedabad
17. St Xavier College, Jaipur
18. St Xavier's College, Kolkata
19. St Xavier College, Patna
20. St Xavier College, Ranchi
21. Women's College, Patna

## **8. Assessing the Health and Well-being of Migrants in Brick Kilns: A Study from the Lower Gangetic Plains of West Bengal (Prof. Lancy Lobo, Dr. Pintu Paul)**

This study focuses on seasonal migrant labourers working in brick kilns—one of the most vulnerable and invisible segments of the informal workforce in India. These workers, many of whom belong to marginalised social and economic groups, often face hazardous working conditions, a lack of legal protection, and poor access to basic services like healthcare, sanitation, and housing. This study aims to examine the extent and nature of health risks faced by brick kiln workers and their families, while exploring the underlying structural drivers of these vulnerabilities within the broader context of informality, gender dynamics, and the political economy. It also aims to assess the accessibility, affordability, and utilisation of healthcare services, particularly emphasising the experiences of women and children. By identifying key health challenges, occupational risks, and institutional neglect, this study will raise the voices of these often-overlooked migrant workers.

## **9. Resource Depository : Cartoons and Research Themes**

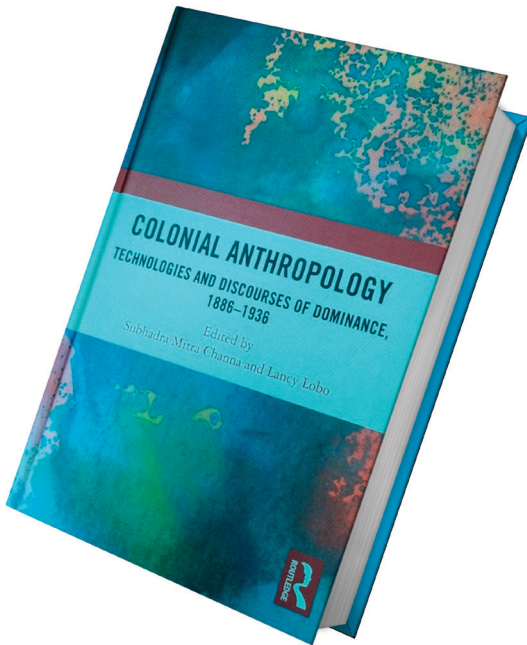
Dr. Lancy Lobo has collected a large number of cartoons, caricatures, and sketches during the last two years, which have been classified by Mr. Pascal under the following titles: Andhbhakt, BJP, Bulldozer, Capitalism, Caste discrimination, Corruption, Cow vs Humans, Development vs poor, Economy, Education, Election jumla, Employment, Freedom of speech, GST, Hindutva, Inspiration, Multicultural India, Olympics, On Babas, On Media, On Modi, Policies, Politics, Rich vs Poor. A cartoon can convey the content of an article or an idea far more effectively and concisely. The faculty members could utilise it for their articles, talks, lectures and training purposes.

Given the vision and mission of the Institute, the Research Department has also prepared a theme bank under the leadership of Dr. Yatish Kumar for faculty members to write articles, prepare study proposals, and deliver lectures, among other activities.



## I. Books

1. Subhadra, M. Channa and Lancy Lobo (2024). **Colonial Anthropology in India: Technologies and Discourses of Dominance**, London and New York: Routledge.

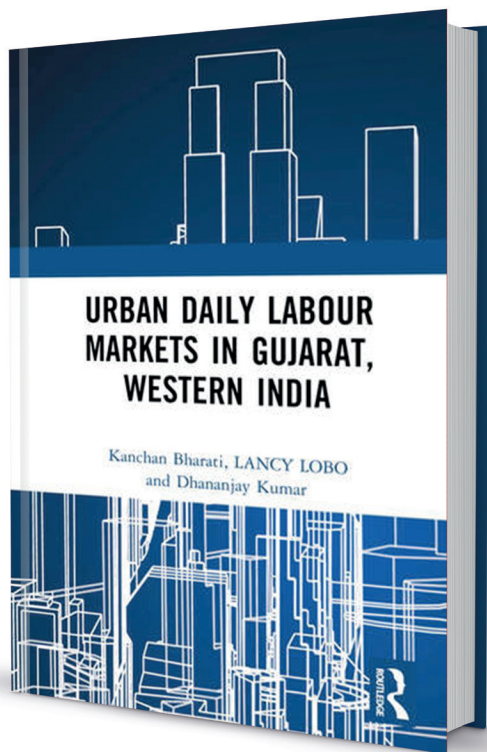


Colonising the vast and complex civilisation that predated their own by several centuries was a challenging task for the British, both ideologically and administratively. Encounter with a non-white yet highly evolved civilisation questioned their racist justification of plunder that was mitigated by the assumption of scientific superiority and the objectification of the vanquished country as an object of study and knowledge production that gave both moral justification as well as provided the technologies of administration and control. This volume is a collection of some of the early works

by administrators and academicians that illustrate the nexus of knowledge production and technologies of domination, such as the Census, classifications, labelling, the creation of museums, and the collection of arts, artefacts, and cultural practices. The primary aim of establishing a successful state control was to enlist the local people in creating an internal stratification, which was conducive to the management of a large population by an outside agency, namely the metropole. However, academic dissent from the dominant colonial political ideology and some genuine soul-searching are also evident in these archival materials, penned by both Europeans and educated upper-class Indians. There is clear evidence of emergent nationalism among the native intellectuals and divergence from the racist superiority of the Europeans.



## 2. Kanchan, B., Lancy Lobo, and Dhananjay Kumar (2024). **Urban Daily Labour Markets in Gujarat, Western India, London and New York: Routledge**



This volume explores one of India’s most complex labour landscapes—the urban daily labour market. These markets form a crucial sector of the urban informal labour market and make a significant contribution to the Indian economy. This book presents an empirical, comparative picture of daily labour markets in Gujarat, Western India. These markets consist primarily of intra-state and inter-state migrant workers who suffer from layered multiple marginalities based on markers of informality, migrant status, caste, ethnicity, gender, and poor agency, and often live in the peripheries of the cities without any rights and entitlements to their spaces and services. This study, based on an extensive survey of three cities in

Gujarat, contains descriptions and analyses of the places of migration and their causes as well as the working and living conditions of the workers along with their spending patterns on food, health, education, and leisure. It mirrors the work, life, and issues of these workers on the regional level while contributing to a better understanding of future policy interventions. This book is an in-depth study that will interest students and researchers in labour economics, labour studies, urban planning, social work, sociology, anthropology, and demography. It will also be helpful to NGOs and trade unions working with migrant workers, civil servants in the Labour Department and other related departments, city planners, and policy makers.

### 3. Oraon, A.K. & Minakshi Sardar (eds.) 2025. 'Digitalisation, Democracy and Inclusive Politics in India', New Delhi: Rawat & ISI Publications

This book is a collection of research articles related to the spread and impact of digital technology in India, including, but not limited to, internet connectivity, mobile technology, and AI. The articles in this book take the status of Digital India programs to the ground level and highlight their impact on rural India. This book is a powerful tool that connects us to the ground reality of India's digital isolation and its effects on education. It also reveals the political changes catalyzed by digital technology and AI in the 2024 elections. The research articles in this book provide a comprehensive understanding of these shifts, offering potential solutions to the issues faced by different states.

## II. ARTICLES

### LANCY LOBO



1. Lancy Lobo, 'The Changing Indian Social Milieu' in Augustine Perumalil (ed) Revitalising the Democratic Soul of India. Delhi: Media House. Pp 29-40
2. Lancy Lobo "Dreams for a New India" in *JIVAN* August 2024, pp. 7-8
3. Lancy Lobo "Development Indices and Olympic Medals" in *Indian Currents*, 26-31 August 2024, pp. 30-31
4. Lancy Lobo. "Life is like a River" in *JIVAN* Nov-Dec 2024, page 25-26
5. Lancy Lobo. Guest editorial, "Apologetics in a multireligious society like India" in *Vidya Jyoti Journal of Theological Reflection*. Vol. 88 MAY 2024 No. 5 page 3-8.
6. Lancy Lobo. "Jesuit Contribution to Languages and Literature: A Way Forward" in *IGNIS*. 2024.1 pages 77-84.
7. Lancy Lobo. "Welfare, allurements, and anti-conversion laws" in *Indian currents*. 11 - 17 November 2024 | *Indian Currents* 33-34.
8. Lancy Lobo, "Constitutional Rights, Violations and Persecution of Christians in India", edited by Anand Teltumbde (forthcoming)
9. Lancy Lobo, "The direction of India's democracy in the coming years", for an edited volume by Augustien Perumalil. (forthcoming)

10. Lancy Lobo "Precariat Urban Daily Labour Markets in Gujarat, Western India" The Urban Reader, edited by Subhadra M. Channa. (forthcoming)

## Book Reviews

1. Lancy Lobo. *Development, Decentralisation and Democracy*. 2024. John Felix Raj and Prabhat Kumar Datta. Kolkata: Dasgupta and Company PVT. LTD. in *Social Action*. Page 233.
2. Lancy Lobo. Aruna Roy, The Personal Is Political in *Social Action*. vol. 74, no. 3 pp.329-330.

## ARUN KUMAR ORAON



1. Oraon, A.K. (2024). इतिहास के झरोखे में पूर्णिया जिले का सृजन, जिला प्रशासन, पूर्णियां, बिहार, pp 3-18.
2. Oraon, A.K. (2024). Chunaavee Ghoshanaapatrah Janata Kee Ummeeden, *Hashiye ki Awaz*, 05(19): 21-25.
3. Oraon, A.K. (2024). Vote Dene Se Pahale Dekhen Kaangres Aur Bhaajapa Ke Ghoshanaapatron Mein Phark, Forward Press, Link: वोट देने के पहले देखें कांग्रेस और भाजपा के घोषणापत्रों में फर्क - Forward Press.
4. Oraon, A.K. (2024). पर्यावरणीय मुद्दे और राजनीतिक पार्टियों का मौन, *Hashiye ki Awaz*, 06(19): 2-3.
5. Oraon, A.K. (2024). साम्प्रदायिक राजनीति का ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में प्रभाव, *Hashiye ki Aawaz*, 20(1), 22-23.
6. Oraon, A.K. (2024). "Impact of communalism in the border areas of Bihar and Nepal, *Indian Currents*,36(51), 16-22.

## Book Chapters

7. Oraon, A.K. (2024). Book Chapter on Tribal Self-Government: A Case Study in Medha-Lekha Village, in Vincent Ekka (ed.) *Musings on Indigeneity*, Delhi: Indian Social Institute.
8. Oraon, A.K. (2024). Book Chapter on Khoba Self-Reliant Village: A Case Study on Nilambhai Dhirubhai Patel's Model, in Vincent Ekka (ed.) *Musings on Indigeneity*, Delhi: Indian Social Institute.
9. Oraon, A.K. (2025). अनुत्तरित लोगरु भारत की समकालीन आदिवासी कविता, Translation of Abhay Xaxa poem into Kurukh, Setu Prakashan, New Delhi.

## YATISH KUMAR



1. Yatish Kumar & Minakshi Sardar (2025) "Shifting Narratives and the Burden of Unpaid Work among Women in India". *Social Action*, Vol. 75, No.1, pp. 1-14, ISSN 0037-7627, Approved by UGC-Care List (Published: January 27, 2025).
2. Yatish Kumar (2025) "The Landscape of Urban Marginality: Exploring Social Inequalities in Old Age in India". *Indian Journal of Gerontology*. Vol. 39, No. 1, pp. 1-164. ISSN: 0971-4189, Approved by UGC-Care List Group B-Science,121. (Published online: December 21, 2024).
3. Yatish Kumar (2024) "Reflection from Laxman Gaikwad's Novel "Uchalya" The Branded". *Hashiye Ki Aawaz* (Voice of the Margins). Vol. 19, No. 09, pp. 1-44, Print ISSN: 2277-5331. (Hindi Publication).

## Book Reviews

1. Yatish Kumar (2024) Review of the book "Decentralised Democracy in India: Gandhi's Vision and Reality" (2018) by M. V. Nadkarni, N. Sivanna and Lavanya Suresh, by Routledge, New York. Published in *Social Action*, July-September 2024.
2. Lancy Lobo & Yatish Kumar (2024) Review of the book "The Emperor's Mirror: The State of Research" in India (2024) by N Bhaskara Rao, by Speaking Tiger Books LLP, New Delhi. Published in *Social Action*, April-June 2024.

## MINAKSHI SARDAR



1. April 2024- 'Christians in Israel: The Fight for Survival', *Indian Currents*, 36(16): 14-15
2. "Challenges to Peace Building in Contemporary India, *Pax Lumina*, 6(1):59-63. (2025).
3. "Shifting Narratives and the Burden of Unpaid Work among Women in India", *Social Action*, 75(1): 1-14, (Co-authored), (2025).
4. "Christians in Israel: The Fight for Survival", *Indian Currents*, 36(16): 14-15,(2024).

5. "Christian Women's Contributions to India's Nation-Building", *Secular Citizen*, 33(38):19-20, (2024).
6. "Violence Against Women: Revisiting India's Commitment to Its Women", *Indian Currents*, Vol. 36, No. 9, (2024).

### **Book review**

1. Minakshi Sardar "Revitalizing the Democratic Soul of India", in *Indian Currents*, 36(27):28-29, (2024).

### **VINCENT EKKA**



1. Ekka, V. (2023). Indigenous Values and Sustainability in *CONVERGENCE*, Vol. 16, No. 1-4, pp 120-127, 2023
2. Ekka, V., Dhan, S.J. (2024). Christianity and Indigenous Peoples. In: Chathanatt, J. (eds) *Christianity. Encyclopedia of Indian Religions*. Springer, Dordrecht.
3. Vincent Ekka. (ed.) *Musings on Indigeneity* (Forthcoming)
4. "Interfacing Indigenous Worldviews with Traditional Ecosystem Services: A Study of Bagru Bauxite Mining Area" for an edited book titled: 'Beyond Belief: South Asian Narratives on Religion, Environment and Gender' to be published by Vernon Press.
5. Ekka, V. (2024). *Adivasi Culture and Modernity: Fusion and Horizon*. Published in the annual *Souvenir of International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (IDWIP-2024)*, published by Indian Social Institute and India Indigenous Peoples, Delhi.
6. Ekka, V. (2024). *Indigenous Values and Sustainability*. Published in the annual *Souvenir of International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (IDWIP-2024)*, published by Indian Social Institute and India Indigenous Peoples, Delhi.
7. Ekka, V. (2024). आदिवासियों का भारतीय हॉकी में योगदान (Contribution of Tribals to Indian Hockey), submitted for publication for a decadal souvenir of Hockey Association of Chotanagpur Tribals, Delhi.

## SHREYA J. DHAN



1. Dhan, S.J. (2024). 'Adulteration of food in India', *Legal News and Views*, 38(06):4-7.
2. Dhan, J. S. (2024). 'Duniya ke Adivasi ke liye aswarmarniya din 9 August', *Hashiye ki Awaz*, 08(19): 32-33.
3. Dhan, J. S. (2024). August 2024- 'The Turn of Democracy After 2024 General Elections', *Indian Currents*,36(32): 31-33.
4. Dhan, J. S. (2024). 'Scaling the Lives of Chin Women Refugees in Informal Sectors in Delhi' *Social Action*, January - March 2025, volume-75, pp. 89-102.

## PINTU PAUL



1. Paul, P., Saha, R., McDougal, L., & Gopalakrishnan, L. (2025). Marital choice, spousal communication, and contraceptive self-efficacy and use among newly married girls in India: Evidence from the UDAYA study. *Social Science & Medicine*, 373, 118006.
2. Paul, P. (2025). Despite serious implications associated with brick kiln work, the issue remains largely overlooked in policy discourse. In *Down To Earth*, Published on: 14 Apr 2025; <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/health/despiteseriousimplicationsassociatedwithbrickkilnworktheissueremainslargelyoverlookedinpolicydiscourse>.
3. Paul, P. (2025). Children in remote tribal areas face significant challenges in accessing schools, despite the existence of the Right to Education Act for over 15 years. *Down To Earth*. <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/governance/children-in-remote-tribal-areas-face-significant-challenges-in-accessing-school-despite-over-15-years-of-right-to-education-act>



# WORKSHOPS

## 1. JESUIT SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH CENTRES

Seventeen Persons from the Jesuit Social Science Research Centres of India met during March 13-14, 2025, at the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, to share their work on knowledge production, deliberate on their concerns, and identify research priorities and collaboration possibilities. The President of the South Asia Conference, Dr. (Fr.) Stany D'Souza gave an inaugural address highlighting the need for intellectual responses to issues faced by contemporary Indian society. The workshop focused on the Christian vision and mission for India. It consisted of five sessions, during which three sessions were dedicated to sharing knowledge production by these centres. The fourth session focused on "Luminous Footprints: The Christian Impact on India."



### ***COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS AMONG RESEARCH CENTRES***

As the chairperson of the session, Fr. Aloysius provided some direction for further discussion and suggestions regarding collaborative projects among research centers in the Conference. He started with questions, like:

1. Can the Jesuit regional/provincial centres join hands?
2. Can you suggest five themes for collaboration among the centres and suggest who can take the lead?
3. How do we prepare young Jesuits for research, and who will lead the effort?
4. Coordination among the centres?

The participants presented their suggestions and proposals.

Map the centres and what areas of specialisation they are in?

Different centres and thematic areas? We must be aware of the limitations and the ways to move forward. Let us start with those who are available. Others can join gradually.

Selva said that there are many centres, but they should not be formally brought together. Let their specificities be more prominent. We need to know the province's emphasis. Collaboration among like-minded people is more important than collaboration among centres.

Let us begin with what is available now, whoever is present here.

- Collaboration is cost-effective and should be explored in some thematic areas
- We should also expand to other people, not just Jesuits.
- Look into areas of collaboration
- The need for collaboration is uncontested.
- Identify the individuals who can collaborate
- Individual culture of research and provincial culture of research
- There are many areas and issues of collaboration.

***Plan of action:***

Cataloguing different centres is important

Thematically categorising various centers

Collaborative research is inevitable, being actors for one project

To begin with, can we think of one topic to work on in a year? for one year?

- Gap in restructuring and reimagining
- The ascendancy of right-wing politics and its impact on Dalits and other minority groups
- Right politics and plunder of natural resources
- Cultural co-option of the community and Hinduization, Sanskritization, legitimisation
- Policy of the right-wing and its legitimisation
- Signals of endangering democracy (how different bodies are co-opted by the government)
- Narrative building,



- Migration issue with data already existing in our centers.
- Changing Contours of Hinduism through the Hindutva Ideology
- Common knowledge resources of Tribals and Dalits
- Resource mapping and mobilising the marginalised for ownership of natural resources
- Labour and migration policy frame
- Social media and digitisation for nation building and ----
- Ways and means of promoting pluralism.
- Success stories of land back movements
- Documentation of each centre, provided by the individual centres, identifies a framework to map the contribution. It will show the contribution we have already made.

### ***How to go about it?***

Can we establish a committee to refine the themes and provide details for future action?

A committee could be formed taking participation from the Nnorth, the Ssouth and like-minded people

1. ISI Delhi and ISI Bangalore, to take the lead-
2. The members who suggested the topics can write a concept note, which could be made available to other centres, and they choose the topics according to their relevance and context.
3. Including more members



## 2. INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, 2024

Indian Social Institute organised the 30th International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (IDWIP) at Ullas Shadi Ground, Sarojini Nagar, New Delhi, on 11th August, 2025.

The main attractive programs were the displays of tribal and indigenous dance, music, and folk dance. Panels were formed to promote indigenous languages and cultures. Traditional tribal arts and crafts were displayed alongside tribal food stalls, and the programme concluded.

The Indian Social Institute has uniquely held a "Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations" since 2004. The Institute is committed to carrying forward the mandates of the UN by participating in and organising various programmes and events aligned with the mission and mandate of the UN. Organizing events on the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (UNPFII) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and collaborating with the ILO, UNESCO, and UNDP, are examples of the institute's participation.



# NATIONAL SEMINARS

## 1. DIGITALISATION, DEMOCRACY AND INCLUSIVE POLITICS IN INDIA



A two-day National Seminar was held at the Indian Social Institute on 4-5 October 2024. 11 Eleven research papers were presented during this seminar. The keynote speaker, Prof. N. Sukumar, presented his views on “Mandate Formation: Democracy and Media in India’s Electoral Politics.” He also attempted to draw people’s attention to the impact of digital media on voting behaviour. Following this, the technical session commenced, during which all participants presented their research papers.

The efforts to digitalise voter identity cards have encountered issues, as the names of minorities frequently disappear from voter lists before elections. As political parties increasingly invest in IT cells and social media to broaden their outreach and engage young voters with their campaigns and propaganda, they often align with authoritarian practices, undermining their commitment to fulfilling electoral interests that should be carefully considered and prioritised.



Each research paper was followed by a lively question-and-answer session, where the scholars and researchers actively engaged with the presenters, asking insightful questions and providing valuable feedback. This interactive process was instrumental in enhancing the originality of the research papers.

The research paper presenters have been requested to diligently incorporate the questions and feedback raised during the seminar into their research papers. This step is crucial to ensure the quality and originality of the research. Once revised, the presenters were requested to send their updates for further review.

## 2. CLIMATE CRISIS, HEALTH, AND DISADVANTAGED GROUPS



The Research Department of the Indian Social Institute, Delhi, organised this Seminar on February 6 and 7, 2025. Fr. Stany D'Souza delivered a message. The ecological crisis is also a summons to profound inner conversion. (LS 217). The 10% of the population that consumes about 90% of the world's resources are the main culprits of climate change (CC), mainly due to their luxurious lifestyles, greed, and consequent exploitation.

Dr Edmond Fernandes, Hon. Director of the Edward and Cynthia Institute of Public Health, delivered a brilliant keynote address, giving a holistic perspective on climate crisis, health and disadvantaged groups. Later, there were four sessions and a panel discussion. The first session, chaired by Dr Shashikant Kumar, addressed understanding climate change and its impact. The second session had the theme of marginalised and disadvantaged groups: refugees, displaced people, migrant labourers, PwDs, LGBTQ+, tribal communities, and individuals. Dr Edmond Fernandes chaired it this session. The third session, titled “Climate Crisis and Health: State, Civil Society, Policies, and Way Ahead,” was chaired by Dr. Lancy Lobo. While Dr. Denzil Fernandes chaired the fourth session. He also shared his overall reflections on the seminar. The panel discussion featured three eminent panelists: Professors Virginius Xaxa, Sonajharia Minz, and Amit Mitra. There were 45 participants. The workshop shed light on the empirical details of how the health of disadvantaged groups in India is affected by climate change.

## PAPER PRESENTATIONS AND LECTURES (OUTSIDE THE INSTITUTE)

1. Arun Oraon presented, "Customary laws and mounting land-related conflict among the Oraon Tribals of Jharkhand: A Study in Lohardaga, Gumla and Latehar Districts," dated February 28, March 1, 2025, at North Eastern Social Research Centre, Guwahati 781005.
2. Vincent Ekka presented a paper on "Indigenous Communities and Mine Rehabilitation and Mine Closure: Learnings from Gulkula Australia", presented during a national seminar on Climate Change, Mining and Indigenous Peoples, organized at Bagaicha, Ranchi, on March 22-23, 2025.
3. Vincent Ekka presented a paper on "Ecological Conservation and Sustainable Practices of Indigenous Communities: Learnings from Gulkula Bauxite mining, Australia" at a National Seminar organized by B.S. College, Lohardaga, Jharkhand on April 25-26, 2025.
4. A classroom lecture on the "Role of the environment in the development of humanity" was delivered by Dr. Arun Kumar Oraon, Delhi University, Janki Devi Memorial College on 26 April. 2024.





## ADVOCACY AND CONSULTANCY IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Vincent Ekka represented the plight of bauxite mining-affected communities in India in an international meeting of the Standard Committee, Board Members, and Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Forum (IPAF) organised by Aluminium Stewardship Initiatives (ASI) in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, from 18 to 24 September 2024.

For more information, click- [ASI Standards Committee Meeting - Amsterdam 2024](#)

### **Discussion with Shri Rahul Gandhi (Member of Parliament) on the Critical Issue of Tribal Sub Plan and Scheduled Caste Sub Plan**

On 02 April 2025, a delegation of 10 people, including Dr. Arun Kumar Oroan, met Opposition leader and Member of Parliament, Shri Rahul Gandhi, in Parliament House. Dr. Arun talked about the irregularities taking place in the tribal sub-plan and Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan.



1. Interaction with Dr. Haneih Moghani, Vice Chairperson of United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII):- Dr. Haneih Moghani is one of the two representatives to the UNPFII from Asia. Dr Moghani is also the vice chairperson of the Permanent Forum. An interaction and information-sharing session was organized at the Indian Social Institute between Dr. Moghani and tribal representatives from Delhi on November 14, 2024. Dr. Moghani informed the participants about the UN mechanisms and the rights of Indigenous Peoples during the interaction. She also told how the issues and concerns of Indigenous Peoples can be brought to the attention of the UN system, which can be adequately addressed.



2. Knowledge Exchange Session with Brendan Loizou and Benjamin Chapple from Australia: A knowledge-sharing session was organised at the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, on 18 January 2025, featuring indigenous experts from Australia and New Zealand. Brendan Loizou spoke to the indigenous representatives of Delhi about “Neo-Colonial Settlerism” and Benjamin Chapple spoke on the “Situation of Indigenous Peoples in New Zealand and Australia.” The members enjoyed an enriching and meaningful exchange of knowledge, news, and views.



**3. Exchange of News and Views with Dr. Mark Annandale from Australia: Dr. Mark Annandale, formerly of the University of the Sunshine Coast, has over 25 years of experience in applied research, cross-cultural communications, consultation, forest management, environmental rehabilitation, project management, and sustainable development. In 2024, he visited Delhi and India, where he had an enriching exchange of knowledge and experience with indigenous representatives, organised at the Indian Social Institute in New Delhi.**



I. The Canadian Government is investing a considerable sum of funds for research in different disciplines. For research in Social Sciences and Indigenous Studies, the University of Alberta, through the Arramat Project, hopes to support 146 Indigenous-led Place-Based Projects across Canada and worldwide in more than 26 countries between 2023 and 2027. The Arramat Project rallies around 10 Pathways. The two areas of research undertaken by the Institute with its partners are-

- (i) Biodiversity Conservation: Indigenous Food Sustainability, Health and Wellbeing of Indigenous peoples, led by Dr. Vincent Ekka, and,
- (ii) Biodiversity Conservation and its interface with Language, Culture and Wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples, led by Prof. Bipin Jojo of TISS, Mumbai.

The study's first phase was completed by March 2025, and the report and financial statement were submitted to the funding agency. The next phase of the research activity commenced in April 2025 and spans the Indian Subcontinent across various zones.

Dr. Vincent Ekka has been participating in various national and international forums. In September 2024, he participated in a three-day workshop on "Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods and Economies" as part of the Arramat Project, organised by a partner in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 9-11 September 2024. This is part of a global research project, Arramat Indigenous-led Place-Based Project, by the University of Alberta, Canada.

II. **The Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Forum (IPAF), India, is a team of Indigenous representatives representing the Indigenous Peoples and affected indigenous communities from bauxite and other mineral mining in India.** Dr. Vincent Ekka and Adv. Nicholas Barla is an elected member from India for the Standard Committee of Aluminium Stewardship Initiatives (ASI), a certifying company based in Australia. Both elected members participated on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Forum (IPAF), India, in a seven-day Aluminium Stewardship Initiative (ASI) Board and Standard Committee meeting in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, from September 18 to 24, 2024. It is a platform and an opportunity to represent the concerns of displaced,



mining-affected, and deprived communities at the highest level of international advocacy.





### III. Mine Rehabilitation and Mine Closure at Gulkula Bauxite Mine site, in Northern Arnhem Land, Australia

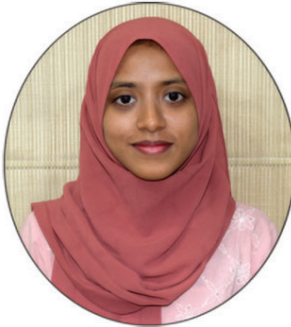
Mining companies are considered the most significant pollutants and destroyers of biodiversity. However, there are examples of excellent practices in biodiversity rehabilitation and land restoration by mining companies. Gulkula Bauxite Mining Company is one such example. Dr. Vincent Ekka participated in a three-week training program on Mine Rehabilitation and Mine Closure at the Gulkula Bauxite Mine site in Northern Arnhem Land, Australia, from January 25 to February 14, 2025. Gulkula is the only indigenous-owned bauxite mining company in the world, which sets a precedent for sustainable resource governance. The company practices and implements all the norms and rules for sustainable mining. A three-week (January 26th - 14th February, 2025) training programme was organised by Aluminium Stewardship Initiative (ASI), Australia for the representatives of the Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Forum (IPAF) from India, Australia, Ghana, and Surinam where proper training on biodiversity rehabilitation and land restoration after mining was provided.





## 1. Ms Esika Kharia

Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar, Gujarat (IITGN), under the guidance of Dr Arun Kumar Oraon (May 1 to June 30, 2024). Topic: "Marriage Rules of Five Major Tribes in Jharkhand (Oraon, Munda, Kharia, Ho and Santhal): A study on movable and immovable properties - inheritance and succession."



## 2. Ms Safia Sathak

Loyola College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, under the guidance of Dr. Yatish Kumar (May 1 to June 15, 2024). Topic: "Understanding the gender dynamics in Elementary Schools: A comparative study within the aspirational districts of Empowered Action Group (EAG), states in India."



## 3. Ms Supriya

Lady Irwin College, DU, New Delhi, under the guidance of Dr. Vincent Ekka (March 18 to June 18, 2024). Topic: "Documentation: History of tribal attire of Jharkhand, (Oraon, Munda and Kharia)";



## 4. Ms Angel Nisha Topno

IIT, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, Under the guidance of Dr. Shreya Jessica Dhan (May 8 to June 30, 2024). Topic: "Impact of Extractive Industries on Ecological Landscapes."



### **5. Ms Tuba Chauhan**

Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, under the guidance of Dr. Minakshi Sardar (June 3 to June 30, 2024). Topic: "Pattern and Trends in Higher Education of Women in India: Prospects and Challenges."



### **6. Ms Preet Joshi**

IIT, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, Under the guidance of Prof. Lancy Lobo from 1st to 31st July 2024. Topic: "The Tribal Question"



### **7. Ms. Malin Kauka**

Georg-August-Universität, Göttingen, Germany, under the guidance of Dr. Yatish Kumar from August 1 to September 30, 2024. Topic: "Urban Ghettoisation"



### **8. Mr. Shahid Minhazul**

Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, under the guidance of Dr. Yatish Kumar from July 29 to August 29, 2024. Topic: Ethnographic Research on Heatwaves in Delhi.





### **9. Ms Ananya Sarma**

Delhi University (DU), under the guidance of Dr. Yatish Kumar, (October 14 - November 13, 2024). Topic: "Ethnography of Heat Waves in Delhi: Impact and Coping".



### **10. Ms Sristi Das**

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), under the guidance of Dr Minakshi Sardar (October 1 to 31, 2024). Topic: "Socio-cultural Distancing between Communities in India: A Study among the College Youth."



### **11. Ms Sinchauni Chaudhuri**

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University Delhi, under the guidance of Dr. Shreya J. Dhan (October 21-November 21, 2024). Topic: "Scaling Female Chin Refugees' Participation in the Labour Market: Understanding and Overcoming Obstacles to Economic Empowerment".



### **12. Ms Tanushree**

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), under the guidance of Dr. Arun Kumar Oraon, (November 11- December 10, 2024), Topic: "Status of Media Literacy, Civic Literacy and Political Participation in Seemanchal Districts of Bihar".



### **13. Ms Pragya**

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Under the guidance of Dr. Minakshi Sardar, (November 25 - December 24, 2024), Topic: "State, Civil Society, Market : Nature of Relation in India"



### **14. Ms Somya**

University of Lucknow, under the guidance of Dr. Yatish Kumar, (November 19, 2024 - January 18, 2025), Topic: "Navigating the Road to Mitigate Delhi's Air Pollution"



### **15. Ms Norah John**

Loyola College, Chennai, under the guidance of Dr. Minakshi Sardar (November 18, 2024 - January 17, 2025), Topic: "Socio-cultural Distancing between Religious Communities in India: A Study among the College Youth"



### **16. Ms Priyanshi Sharma**

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi, under the guidance of Dr. Yatish Kumar, (January 6 - February 5, 2025), Topic: "The Impact of the Climate Crisis on Urban Lifestyle Patterns."



### **17. Mr Agnibha Saha**

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi, under the guidance of Dr. Yatish Kumar, (January 6 - 31, 2025),  
Topic: "Navigating the Road to Mitigate Delhi's Air Pollution: An overview"

# ANNUAL PLAN OF THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT FOR 2025-26

| <b>RESEARCH PROJECTS</b>  |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1                         | A Study of the Socio-Cultural Situation among the Tribals of Purnia and Katihar Districts of Bihar (Arun Oraon)   |
| 2                         | Navigating Urban Ecology: Mitigating Climate Crisis Impacts on Marginalised Communities in India (YATISH Kumar)   |
| 3                         | Preventing Elderly Abuse in Indian Households: A Gender-Based Policy Analysis and Strategic Framework (YATISH Kumar)  |
| 4                         | A Study of Knowledge, Attitude, Perception and Behaviour of the College Students in Multi-Religious Context of India (Lancy Lobo, Minakshi Sardar & Yatish Kumar) |
| 5                         | Crime Against Women in India (Minakshi Sardar )   |
| 6                         | Demography of Tribals in Delhi-NCR (Vincent Ekka)   |
| 7                         | Biodiversity Conservation: Health and Wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples-II (Vincent Ekka)   |
| <b>NATIONAL SEMINARS</b>  |   |
| 1                         | National Seminar on "The Uniform Civil Code" (Yatish Kumar)   |
| 2                         | National Seminar on "Social Harmony In India" (Minakshi Sardar)   |
| <b>BOOKS/PUBLICATIONS</b> |   |
| 1                         | Luminous Footprints: The Impact of Christians in India (Lancy Lobo & Denzil Fernandes)  |
| 2                         | Digitalisation, Democracy and Inclusive Politics in India (Arun Oraon & Minakshi Sardar)  |
| 3                         | Navigating urban ecology: mitigating climate crisis impacts on marginalised communities in India (Yatish Kumar)   |
| 4                         | Laws Related to Mining and Constitutional Provisions to Safeguard the Tribal Land (Vincent Ekka)  |
| 5                         | Collection of Speeches and Interventions of Jaipal Singh Munda in the Constituent Assembly (Vincent Ekka)   |
|                           |   |

## **1. National Seminar on Social Harmony in India: Discourses on Social Distancing and Discontent.**

In the post-globalisation debate across political structures, the decline of democratic governance and retreat of liberalism have led to a notable shift in the global debate on democracies. There has been a blurring of distinctions between democracy and authoritarianism. The binary seeped in through polarisation has not only dented democracies and democratisation, but also manifests in the decline of secularism, social harmony, tolerance and justice.

Polarisation and disharmony, when debated through social distancing, inequality and violence it reflect the new liberal market-led power hierarchy. Polarisation is a challenge to inclusive governance in democracies. The presence of inequality, discontent and social distancing is directly linked to power structures, polarisation and its socio-political context. This delineates that the various forms of polarisation are hugely contextualised in the forms and structures of political polarisation, posing threats to social harmony.

The binaries across social, political, religious, economic and cultural contexts define the macro and micro picture of polarisation, resulting in broad range of democratic damages and widening of social distancing: the prevalence of confrontation over cooperation, moderation, and compromise; performance failures; the entrenchment of policy positions, policy stalemates, and problems of coalition. Significant components of polarisation include identity and interest groups.

India, with its unique feature of 'unity in diversity', showcases the presence of a heterogeneous society with diverse identities. There has been a dire need to address the challenges to the constitutional ethos of Indian democracy, which guarantees equality, equity, liberty, freedom and promotes social harmony. Within the democratic framework, the ideological behaviour of political parties uses the notion of polarisations through identity, culture and clientelism as a form and structure of its governance rather than its commitments to constitutional morality of governance.

This seminar entails the need for a framework of analysis on the discourses on building social harmony across a spectrum of political, social, economic and identity groups at the levels of community, civil society and state. The purpose of the seminar is to discuss the different dynamics of the processes, prospects

and challenges of social harmony among different identities for an inclusive development of the country.

## **2. Workshop on Indigenous Research Methodology (IRM):**

Within India's rich tapestry of cultural diversity, Indigenous studies are distinctive, reflecting the unique traditions, knowledge systems, and socio-cultural contexts of various Indigenous communities across the country. In this context, a ten-day workshop on Indigenous Research Methodology proposes exploring and articulating a methodology rooted in Indigenous Philosophy. The workshop will explore the principles, methods, and ethical considerations specific to conducting research within India's Indigenous communities.

## **3. Research Methodology Course**

The course will be conducted through theoretical and practical sessions to provide a strong and comprehensive understanding of qualitative social science research methodology, with an emphasis on ethnography. The proposed course contents are: (a) key concepts and types of social science research; (b) research design, problem identification, literature review, and ethics; (c) Ethnography (d) genealogical method; (e) life histories; (f) case study, in-depth interview, FGD, participatory research; (g) ethnographic Research, participant observation, fieldnotes; (h) coding, thematic analysis, use of NVivo, and (i) writing research papers, proposals, policy briefs, and reports.

