

Report on the Inaugural Programme of the Three-Day Workshop on “Geography in Everyday Practices” on 25-27 March 2025

The Department of Geography at Sikkim University arranged a three-day workshop called Geography in Everyday Practices from the 25th to the 27th of March, 2025. The inaugural programme on the 25th of March 2025 was honored by the presence of the Chief Guest, Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Jyoti Prakash Tamang. Also present were Prof. Satyanand Panda, the Dean of the School of Human Sciences, Prof. Nawal K. Paswan, Dean of Students' Welfare, along with the two esteemed resource persons, Prof. S. C. Rai from the Department of Geography at the University of Delhi and Prof. Ranjan Roy from the Department of Geography and Applied Geography at the University of North Bengal, alongside faculty members, PhD scholars, and PG students from the Department of Geography.

The workshop's inaugural day began with the National Anthem and the Sikkim University Invocation Song, which created a respectful atmosphere for the occasion. Following this, the Vice-Chancellor honored the two resource persons with a Khada and a memento. Miss Preshika Rai, a research scholar from the Department of Geography, was acknowledged by the Vice-Chancellor for receiving the esteemed “Young Geographer Award” from the Indian Institute of Geographers (IIG) in NEHU, Shillong.

In his knowledgeable speech, Professor Tamang explored “Geography to everyday practices” using straightforward, relatable examples. He pointed out how individuals naturally check the weather each morning to organize their day, farmers determine when to plant crops, students get ready for school, and employees dress according to the weather conditions. He clarified that this routine observation is an essential geographical skill. Although contemporary tools like GPS and weather application tools have made navigation easier, the necessity of preserving traditional observational skills, particularly during times of climate uncertainty is still a common practice. While talking about Research and Innovation, Prof. Tamang highlighted the significance of geography in the contemporary world, encouraging scholars to incorporate tools such as bioinformatics and statistical software. He provided the example that the data available on microbes in bioinformatics can aid geographers in understanding the spatial patterns and distribution of diseases. Likewise, data regarding plants can be utilized to identify the spatial variations in plant species. He also emphasized the importance of model building in analyzing and forecasting geographical phenomena. He recommended that faculty members and research scholars select a specific research area and focus their efforts in that domain for an extended period to achieve expertise, specialization, and recognition.

Prof. Sohel Firdos, Head of the Department of Geography, greeted all the attendees, especially the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, for generously sharing his time and resources and for aiding the Department in its development journey. He also highlighted the

constructive and committed role of the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor in influencing Sikkim University since its establishment. Prof. Panda, Dean of the School of Human Sciences, extended his congratulations to both the organizers and the participants of the workshop. He presented the concept of "1 School, 1 Village," suggesting collaborative interactions between academic departments and rural communities, especially after the university relocates to its permanent campus in Yangang. Prof. Panda promoted interdisciplinary research to tackle urgent matters such as climate change, socio-cultural practices, geomorphology, and mental health. He also introduced the idea of the "Google Sathi" concept, envisioning the use of digital tools to improve rural education and facilitate knowledge exchange. Dr. Anant Gautam, Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at Sikkim University, elaborated on the objectives of the event. Citing, "Observation is the key to human inquiry," he connected geographical phenomena to daily practices, including weather-dependent activities and human-environment interactions. Dr. Abdul Hannan, Associate Professor and Co-Convenor of the Workshop, offered a vote of thanks.





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