Issue no. CMS/14/2023



OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2023

COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS & SITES





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EVENTS CALENDAR

October to December 2023

SL. NO.	DATE	NSC/ ZONE/	POINT OF CONTACT	NAME OF THE EVENT
1	4 Nov	North East Zone	Dilip Changkakoty, North East Zone Rep.	Webinar on 'Nocte Tribe and Assamese Society'
2	10 Nov	North East Zone	Dilip Changkakoty, North East Zone Rep.	Webinar on 'Brajavali - A Special Literary Language'
3	18th Nov	East Zone	Bikramjit Chakraborty, East Zone Rep.	Heritage Walk - South Park Street Cemetry
4	Nov	East Zone	Bikramjit Chakraborty, East Zone Rep.	Members Meeting
5	1 Dec	North East Zone	Dilip Changkakoty, North East Zone Rep.	Webinar on 'Dikhou Steel Bridge - A Treasure of History and Engineering Marvels'
6	8 Dec	North East Zone	Dilip Changkakoty, North East Zone Rep.	Webinar on 'Nongkrem Dance Festival of Meghalaya'
7	9 Dec	North East Zone	Dilip Changkakoty, North East Zone Rep.	Webinar on 'Jingkieng Jri, Living Root Bridge of Meghalaya'



From the Secretariat

The October to December quarter saw one financial meeting taking place between the ExCom and two membership review meetings. For the 1st cycle of new members for the year 2024, the meeting was held on 30th October 2023 and for the 2nd cycle the review meeting was held on 19th December 2023.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Announcement of 2nd & 3rd cycle New Membership & Renewals

ICOMOS India opened the 2nd and 3rd cycle of membership for the year 2024 from 1st November to 30th November 2023 and 15th December 2023 to 15th January 2024 respectively. Subsequently the 3rd cycle deadline was extended till 25th January 2024.

2. Announcement and Appointment for the post of Research Intern.

A call for applications for the post of Research Intern at the ICOMOS India Secretariat Office was sent out on 11th October 2023 and applications were invited till 20th October 2023. The Executive Board of ICOMOS India selected Ms. Akanksha Malik Parashar for the same. Ms. Parashar - a post-graduate in Archaeology with experience of working as an intern at National Museum, Delhi and freelancing as a heritage walk leader - commenced work at the Secretariat from 26th December 2023.

EVENT NEWS

1. Webinar on 'Nocte Tribe and Assamese Society'

North East Zone organized an international webinar as part of the 'Unfold North East India' initiative, titled 'Nocte Tribe and Assamese Society on 4th November 2023, which focused on the profound connection between the Nocte Tribe and Assamese Society in Arunachal Pradesh. For more information click here.

2. Webinar on 'Brajavali - a special literary language'

North East Zone organized the second webinar of the six webinar series as part of the 'Unfold North East India' initiative on 10th November 2023. For more information click here.

3. Heritage Walk at South Park Cemetery

East Zone held a Heritage walk at South Park Street Cemetery, along with the representatives of The Grave Diggers, Kolkata, as part of the Heritage Week celebration on 18th November 2023. For more information, click here.



4. East Zone members meeting

East Zone organized a members meeting in November. For more information, click <u>here</u>.

5. Webinar on 'Dikhou Steel Bridge - A Treasure of History and Engineering Marvels'

North East Zone organized a webinar on 1st December 2023 which focused on the historical and engineering significance of the Dikhou Steel Bridge, a colonial-era marvel built in 1935. For more information click here.

6. Webinar on 'Nongkrem Dance Festival of Meghalaya'

North East Zone organized a webinar as part of the 'Unfold North East India' initiative, titled 'Nongkrem Dance Festival of Meghalaya' on 8th December 2023. For more information click here.

7. Webinar on 'Jingkieng Jri, Living Root Bridge of Meghalaya'

North East Zone organized a collaborative webinar on 9th December 2023 which explored the spiritual and cosmic sense of the local cultural landscape. For more information click here.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

A meeting was held between the ExCom and CA on 30th October 2023, to discuss ITR and associated matters.

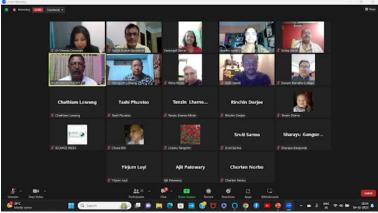


Zone News

NOCTE TRIBE & ASSAMESE SOCIETY

4 November 2023

COMOS India's North East Zone is actively committed to preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the North East through initiatives like UNFOLD NORTH EAST INDIA. In a recent international webinar on 4th November 2023, the organization focused on the profound connection between the Nocte Tribe and Assamese Society in Arunachal Pradesh.



The webinar, the first in a series of six, began with Dr. Rima Hooja's eloquent address on Intangible Cultural Heritage. The spotlight was on the Nocte Tribe's relationship with the Sri Sri Merbil Bareghor Sattra in Merbil, Upper Assam. Insights from Mr. Satradhikar Gajen Mahanta and Golap Borah highlighted the enduring centuries-old connection.



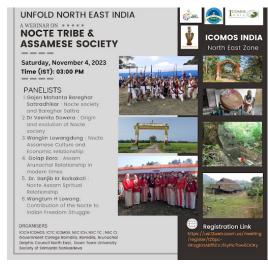
One of the presentations during the event; Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

Dr. Vineeta Dowerah, a renowned Nocte researcher, provided insights into the tribe's traditions, including mineral extraction practices and cultural preservation. Wangtum H. Lowang, Director of Nocte Digest, shared lesser-known aspects of Nocte history, emphasizing their contribution to India's freedom movement.

Dr. Sanjib Kumar Borkakoti's research lecture added depth, and Ms. Madhu Vottery's skillful Q&A session addressed topics like mineral resource commercialization and heritage preservation strategies. The webinar was held on the zoom platform with 52 participants in attendance.

It was expertly led by Mr. Dilip Changkakoty and moderated by Gitanjali Barua, showcased the organization's dedication to preserving the vibrant cultural heritage of the North East, promising more revelations in upcoming sessions.

Youtube link of the webinar: https://www.youtube. com/watch?v=faXksyY0sc8&t=1437s

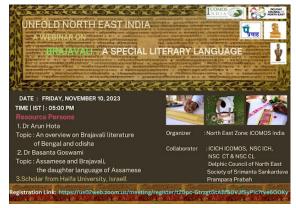


Poster of the event

BRAJAVALI – A SPECIAL LITERARY LANGUAGE

10 November 2023

N ICOMOS India North East Zone organized an enlightening webinar on the Brajavali language, showcasing its linguistic and cultural nuances. The event, held on 10th November, featured insightful presentations and discussions aimed at preserving and promoting cultural heritage. Mr. Munish Pandit, President of ICICH, emphasized the importance of preserving linguistic diversity in his welcome address, setting the event's tone.



Poster of the event

Distinguished speakers, including Professor Arun Hota and Dr. Sanjib Kumar Barkakoti, provided a comprehensive overview and explored distinct



features of Brajavali in Bengal, Orissa, and Shankari. The international dimension was enriched by Israeli scholar Oren Jonder, who drew parallels with the revival of the Hebrew language. Reviews from Dr. Shelley Palag and Dr. M. Satish Kumar added cross-cultural perspectives.

The Assam Tribune

Date 4 Jan 2024

Discussion on origin and evolution of Brajavali language

Newspaper article on Brajavali in The Assam Tribune, on 4th January, 2024

ICICH President Mr. Munish Pandit expressed commitment to advocate for the inclusion of languages like Brajavali in UNESCO's "Intangible Cultural Heritage." Renowned percussionist Dilip Changkakoty guided the webinar seamlessly, emphasizing Brajavali's linguistic richness and cultural significance.



Participants attending the webinar; Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

There were about 41 participants who joined us through the zoom platform for this webinar. The success of the webinar highlights North East Zone ICOMOS India's dedication to fostering awareness and appreciation for diverse linguistic heritage, contributing to a more inclusive understanding of global heritage. The organization's commitment to preserving cultural expressions, especially through dormant languages like Brajavali, showcases a proactive approach to safeguarding cultural diversity.

Video link of the webinar: https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=VgGn2u35HxI&t=21s

HERITAGE WALK - SOUTH PARK STREET CEMETERY

18 November 2023

East Zone, ICOMOS India supported a Heritage walk organized by The Grave Diggers, Kolkata, at South Park Street Cemetery, on 18th November 2023. The walk conducted by Dr. Sutapa Joshi *was held as part of the Heritage Week celebrations. It further aimed to generate awareness among the inhabitants of Kolkata about their rich cultural heritage.



Heritage Walk; Image Credits - Bikramjit Chakraborty

EAST ZONE MEMBERS' MEETING

November 2023

A physical meeting was convened at Kolkata's "RED BARI," an example of the adaptive reuse of a heritage building. The members often meet online and have taken up specific activities connecting the State Heritage Commission in West Bengal. Specific tasks are mentioned in the letter sent to the West Bengal Heritage Commission.



Memebrs of the East Zone; Image Credits - Bikramjit Chakraborty

- Riverfront Development Strategy for Kolkata: Develop a comprehensive whitepaper integrating heritage conservation principles with modern development practices considering the "urban Transformation" process.
- Heritage Health Report and Awareness Programs: Create a "Heritage Health Report" mechanism for listed and non-listed structures at the district level. Organize periodic Heritage Awareness Programs to engage and educate communities about the importance of heritage preservation.
- Comprehensive Documentation of Spatial Attributes

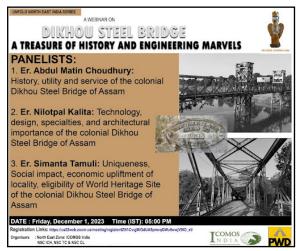


associated with Durga puja: Listing of "Bonedi Bari-er Pujo": Seek support from WBHC to work on a comprehensive documentation of spaces and context and, as an initiation of that, look at the Durga puja historically organized by the Bengali family as a part of their cultural tradition within their pristine built spaces across the state and associated built heritage.

A working group was constituted to discuss these initiatives, led by Ms. Ananya Bhattacharya and Mr. Kamal Banerjee, supported by Ms. Mukul Agarwal, Prof. Akhil Ranjan Sarkar, and Mr. Sandipan Chatterjee.

DIKHOU STEEL BRIDGE - A TREASURE OF HISTORY AND ENGINEERING MARVELS

8 December 2023



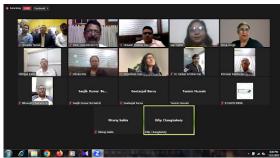
Poster of the event

The third edition of the UNFOLD NORTHEAST INDIA 2023 webinar series focused on the historical and engineering significance of the Dikhou Steel Bridge, a colonial-era marvel. Mr. Dilip Changkakoty, Coordinator of the North East Zone, ICOMOS India, welcomed participants, and Ar. Anju Mani Kalita skillfully moderated the event. The webinar saw 78 participants who had joined online via zoom. Er. Chandan Sarmah, Commissioner & Special Secretary to the Government of Assam, PWRD, shed light on the bridge's construction in 1935 by M/s Braithwaite & Co. India Ltd., emphasizing the role of Assamese Engineer Hari Prasad Baruah.



Dikhou Steel Bridge; Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

The webinar delved into various aspects of the Dikhou Steel Bridge, like Er. Abdul Motin Chowdhury's history, utility, and service overview, Er Nilotpal Kalita's exploration of technology, design, and architectural importance and Dr Rima Hooja's emphasis on global linkage that marked key insights. Er. Simanta Tamuli discussed the bridge's uniqueness, social impact, and potential World Heritage Site status. Concerns about the bridge's reparability were addressed, proposing a comprehensive plan for aged steel bridges.



Participants attending the webinar; Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

Closing remarks by the President of ICOMOS India underscored the importance of preserving such structures, urging collective efforts. Participants were encouraged to contribute to documentation, preservation, and UNESCO listing, emphasizing the bridge's role as a historical link. The webinar not only informed but ignited a commitment to safeguard the colonial Dikhou Steel Bridge's heritage, symbolizing a connection across regions and history. The President praised the Government of Assam's sensitivity to heritage matters, advocating for public voices to support preservation efforts, drawing parallels with the dismantling of the original London Bridge. The event celebrated human ingenuity, bridging the past and the present.

Youtube link to the webinar: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tDEdf25CNU&t=138s

NONGKREM DANCE – MUSIC, SPACES, AND KHASI CULTURE

9 December 2023

Nongkrem Dance, a cherished five-day Khasi religious celebration, unfolds its vibrant tapestry during the enchanting autumn. Guided by the Syiem of Khyrim and the venerable high priest, the ceremony unfolds gracefully, culminating in a symbolic offering to the benevolent deity of Shyllong peak—a humble sacrifice of a cock.

The religious fervor paves the way for a spectacle of dances, where unmarried girls don enchanting costumes, their movements a celebration of tradition and grace. Amidst this rhythmic panorama, the men take the stage, their dance exuding a natural vigor



and energy. With a sword clasped in their right hand and a delicate white Yak hair whisk in their left, they synchronize their movements to the captivating beats of drums and the soulstirring melody of pipes.

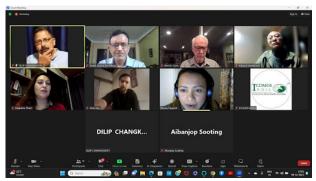


Poster of the eveni



One of the presentations during the event; Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

These captivating rituals have been meticulously explored by distinguished experts in the field, including Dr. Madeline Yvonne Tham, Ar. Aiban S Mawkhroh, and Professor Emeritus Dennis Royse. Through their insightful perspectives, they unravel the cultural heritage, sacred spaces, and the melodic articulation of meaning within the Nongkrem Dance Festival, contributing to a deeper appreciation of this cherished Khasi tradition. This webinar in the Unfold North East India Initiative series on Nongkrem Dance - Music, spaces and khasi Culture, saw 72 participants joining online via the zoom platform.



Participants attending the webinar; Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

Youtube link of the webinar: https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=9sQ7YY7vPPE&t=56s

JINGKIENG JRI / LYU CHRAI CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

9 December 2023



Poster of the event

The collaborative webinar titled "Jingkieng Jri/Lyu Chrai Cultural Landscape," organized by ICOMOS India, its North East Zone, and esteemed partners on 9th December. Atteded by 78 participants, it showcased a profound exploration of the cultural landscape. Er Dilip Changkakoty, North East Zone Coordinator, and ICICH Expert Member, led the event, featuring an inaugural address by Professor Rana P B Singh, Coordinator of the NSC CL.



One of the presentations during the event; Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

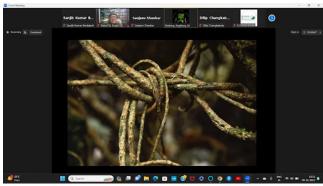
Despite facing health challenges, Professor Singh emphasized the holistic spiritual cosmic sense of the cultural landscape, particularly suited for the North East. He entrusted Er Dilip Changkakoty to prepare a comprehensive report reflecting his vision, aligning with modern frameworks. Four distinguished resource persons:- Mr. Mohonsing Khongshun, Ms. Ketki Prashant Pathak, Mr. Tilaris Marwein, and Mr. Gunanka D. B., IFS, covered habitat uniqueness, cultural landscape approaches, protection, and management in their presentations.





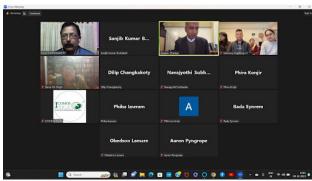
One of the presentations during the event; Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

International experts, including Professor Singh and Dr. Sanjib Kumar Borkakoty, provided valuable insights. Professor Singh stressed the intricate relationship between nature and culture, advocating for education that integrates deeply rooted traditions into the cultural framework. Dr. Borkakoty offered recommendations for the living root bridge's UNESCO submission, emphasizing comprehensive preparation and economic implications.



One of the presentations during the event; Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

The collective aspiration is for Jingkieng Jri's designation as a World Heritage Site, with a commitment to assisting the Government of Meghalaya. The international experts in the North East Zone pledged continuous support, reflecting a shared vision for the preservation and recognition of the cultural landscape.



Particitants attending the webinar; Image Credit: Dilip Chankakot)

Link to the webinar: https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=DetVOKWDIk8&t=234s

Members' Corner

GSV SURYANARAYANA MURTHY

World Heritage Volunteers Camp

2 - 13 October 2023

ICOMOS India Member and South Zone Representative, Mr. GSV Suryanarayana Murthy, was invited to give a lecture at the World Heritage Volunteer Camp which was held from 2nd to 13th October 2023 at UNESCO WHS Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Telangana.



college of Architecture on topic 'Kakatiya Cultural Landscapes and architecture of Kakatiya Monuments' GSV Suryanarayana Murthy's lecture at WHV Camp; Image Credits -

MADHU VOTTERY

World Heritage Volunteers Camp

2 - 13 October 2023

ICOMOS India Member and NSC CT Coordinator. Ar. Madhu Vottery was invited to give a lecture at the World Heritage Volunteer Camp, which was held from 2nd to 13th October 2023 at UNESCO WHS Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Telangana.



Ar. Madhu Vottery's Lecture at WHV Camp; Image Credits - GSV Survananravana Murthy



DILIP CHANGAKOTY

Preserving Tiwa Heritage: Insights From Langkhon Kham Festival

31 October 2023



Langkhon Kham Festival Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

Langkhon Kham, the national festival of the Tiwa people, epitomizes their vibrant cultural identity. Attending the festival at the Tiwa Cultural Complex, located in Ulukunchi, West Karbi Anglong district, on 31st October, 2023, provided a unique perspective. The festival, deeply rooted in bamboo-centric traditions, signifies the connection between Mother Earth and bamboo trees, paying homage to deities associated with bamboo creation.



Langkhon Kham Festival Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

Distinct Tiwa clans use Jati and Bijuli bamboo varieties in rituals, unfolding the festivities at a public Barghar or Nubar—a bamboo-constructed royal court and place of worship. Notably, the structure avoids metal to prevent lightning strikes during secret religious ceremonies.



Langkhon Kham Festival Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

Symbolically representing the origin of the world and fertile energy, Tiwa people intertwine masculinity and femininity through bamboo and fists, following the bamboo god. However, UNESCO reports signaling the endangerment of the Tiwa language raise concerns about the potential extinction of their entire traditional culture. This calls for urgent collaborative efforts in preservation, promotion, and documentation to safeguard this unique heritage from the encroachment of Western influences. Langkhon Kham serves as a testament to the urgency of preserving Tiwa cultural richness.



Langkhon Kham Festival Image Credit: Dilip Chankakoty

Video Links:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFspjllVsQE https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFspjllVsQE h t t p s : / / w w w . y o u t u b e . c o m / watch?v=kgnGgZyWtDM h t t p s : / / w w w . y o u t u b e . c o m / watch?v=49VPYvoKuYw https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-I46SxfIyj8 h t t p s : / / w w w . y o u t u b e . c o m / watch?v=LkdVr9qvEJU h t t p s : / / w w w . y o u t u b e . c o m / watch?v=aYsEcl9vESs

MADHU VOTTERY

Workshop

22 November 2023

As part of World Heritage Week Celebrations, ICOMOS India Member and NSC CT Coordinator, Ar. Madhu Vottery was invited as an expert to conduct a workshop for the students of architecture, from various architectural institutes of Lucknow on 22nd November at Frog Temple, Sitapur, UP. The workshop was attended by around 50 students, faculty members and a senior Engineer from State Archaeology Department, UP, Sri Pradeep Singh.



Workshop at Frog Temple, UP; Photograph credits - Ar. Madhu Vottery



Workshop at Frog Temple, UP; Photograph credits - Ar. Madhu Vottery



Workshop at Frog Temple, UP; Photograph credits - Ar. Madhu Vottery



Workshop at Frog Temple, UP; Photograph credits - Ar. Madhu Vottery

SANJIB KR. BORKAKOTI

conference Attended on **Contribution** of World Heritage to SDG

29 November 2023

ICOMOS India member, Dr. Sanjib Kr Borkakoti attended an international conference of ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee on Contribution of World Heritage to SDG. Dr. Borkakoti is an expert member in ICTC and was hence invited to attend the conference online. This conference was organised by a unit of UNESCO, World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region (WHITRAP).



Image Credit: Saniih Borkakoti

Publication Life on and Contributions of Srimanta Sankaradeva, book on Cultural Maestro Srimanta Sankaradeva

1 December 2023

Dr. Sanjib Kumar Borkakoti's book "Life and Contributions of Srimanta Sankaradeva" was published on 1st December 2023 with 1000 copies printed. The details of the book are as follows:

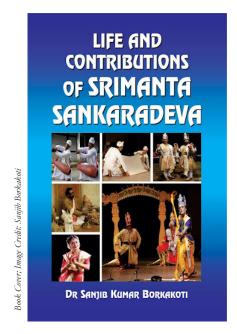
Life and Contributions of Srimanta Sankaradeva Deals with the life and contributions of Saint Srimanta Sankaradeva. It seeks to highlight the pioneering role he played in various disciplines of art and literature. The polymath founded Eka Sarana Nama Dharma, an order dedicated exclusively to celebrating the glory and worship of Lord Krishna. As the first playwright in all of India's modern languages, he founded his own schools of art for painting, music and dance. He is also the world's first play director, dramatist, to



use drop-scene or background scenery in a theatrical setting. He used Drama as a tool to convey his message to the people. As a great social reformer, he created a composite culture that went on to become mainstream Assamese culture. This work delves into the multi-dimensional contribution the polymath has made to academia.

The book is available at

https://www.mlbd.in/products/life-and-contributions-of-srimanta-sankaradeva-by-dr-sanjib-kumar-borkako ti-9789357608206-9357608206-9789357608459-9357608451



SHIVANGI THAKUR & SWAPNA KOTHARI

Conference Paper Publication & Presentation

16 December 2023

A joint paper was presented (virtually) at the Conference on Public spaces in historic cities - Conservation Principles and Good Practices organized by the International Scientific Committee on Theory and Philosophy of Conservation (THEOPHILOS) on the 9th and 10th of March, 2023 in Florence, Italy.

Ms. Shivangi Thakur and Ms. Swapna Kothari presented their paper titled "The 'heart' of public interventions in historic cities- reflections on the HRIDAY scheme" on the 2nd day in Session VII. The paper took into consideration the complexity of dealing with historic cities' core for urban local bodies, via central government schemes like the HRIDAY. The paper specifically addressed how public chowks and market streets fared under the scheme, from secondary sources in two selected cities and how the addition of urban infrastructure to enhance cultural spaces could lead to guidelines and theories for future heritage sensitive urban development in cities and towns across India.

The ISC Organizing Committee pushed participants to publish papers from the conference via submission to the peer-reviewed, half-yearly, international journal Protection of Cultural Heritage. Ms. Shivangi Thakur's and Ms. Swapna Kothari's paper was published in the No. 16 (2023): Protection and Transformation of Public Spaces in Historic Areas, part. 2 Volume (Pgs.75-85).

It is available on :- https://ph.pollub.pl/index.php/odk/issue/view/276

PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE No 16, 2023

Protection and Tansformation of Public Spaces in Historic Areas, part. 2

ICOMOS - POLAND
Lublin University of Technology
The Royal Łazienki Museum in Warsaw
ICOMOS ISC for Theory and Philosphy of Conservation and Restoration

PROTECTION

Paper Publication ; Image Credit: Swapna Kothari

We look forward to your valued and continued support this year!

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