

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Humanistic Studies was founded in the year 2015. Prior to its inception, the Technical Writing Section was looking after the language and communication needs of the students of the Institute for more than two decades. This Department as an academic entity envisages to enhance the power of science and technology with an inspiring touch of human sensibility that our world urgently needs in the present civilizational crisis pertaining to the mindless development in the form of three dimensional projections as the hallmarks of growth. It will be an interdisciplinary platform to develop finer sensibilities in the students of engineering and technology to creatively engage themselves in the development of a society which upholds values our heritage has provided us with its multifarious sources.

This Department comprises faculty in many disciplines such as History, Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology, Language, Linguistics, Literature and Culture, but not limited to only these. As and when a worthwhile academic proposition that evidently indicates a civilisational change emerges, it will be considered worthy to be included in its curriculum for teaching and research in this department.



Prof. P. K. Panda
Convener and Head, The department
of Humanistic Studies, IIT (BHU)
Varanasi



Prof. Vinita Chandra
Co-Convener, Department of
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circular economies. The objective is to move from siloed scholarship towards integrative frameworks, such as environmental humanities, political ecology, and sustainable discourses which explicitly bridge these domains. Further, this conference aims to catalyse a more robust, interdisciplinary scholarship that is not only analytically rigorous but also actionable. By synthesising insights from across the humanities and social sciences, we can contribute to the development of nuanced, context-sensitive, and ethically grounded pathways toward sustainability. This involves cultivating a scholarship that informs policy, enriches public discourse, and supports the cultural shifts required for a viable and equitable future on a finite planet. The intended outcome is a strengthened intellectual community committed to producing knowledge that is essential for navigating the complex socio-ecological transitions ahead.

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE: 19TH MARCH, 2026

Time	Activity	Venue Hall
08:00-9:45 AM	Registration and Breakfast	Ground Floor
10:00 - 11:30 AM	Inaugural Session	1A
	Lighting the Lamp Ceremony and Kulgeet	
	Welcome Address: Prof. P. K. Panda, Convener and Head of the Department, Department of Humanistic Studies, IIT(BHU)	
	Address by the Chief Guest: Prof. Abhishek Singh Raghunani, Director, Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development, BHU, Varanasi	
	Address of the Chair: Prof. Rajesh Kumar, Dean (Research & Development), Department of Civil Engineering, IIT (BHU) Varanasi	
11:30 AM - 12:15 PM	Plenary Talk: Dr. Bhagirath Behera, Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Kharagpur Title: <i>Human Behaviour: Well-Being, and the Complex Problem of Sustainability</i>	
12:15 PM-01:00 PM	Plenary Talk: Dr. Mritunjaya Mishra, Professor, Environmental Economics, Banaras Hindu University Title: <i>Ecology: Economy and Sustainable Future</i>	
01:00 - 02:30 PM	Launch	Ground Floor
02:00 - 03:30 PM	Session 1A: Sacred Ecologies: Bridging Ancient Beliefs and Modern Sustainability	1A
	Session 1B: Alternative Epistemologies: Indigenous, Mythic, and Marginalised Voices	2A
	Session 1C: Reimagining the Sublime: Decolonial and Materialist Approaches to Ecological Aesthetics	2C
	Session 1D: Orbits and Networks: Rethinking Sustainability Across Scales	2D
3:30 - 5:00 PM	Day 1 Session 2 (Parallel Sessions)	
	Session 2A: From Waste to Wisdom: Rethinking Ecology in Everyday Life	1A
	Session 2B: Planet on Screen: From Animation to Documentary in the Anthropocene	2A
	Session 2C: Indigenous Ecology: Myth, Folklore, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge	2C
	Session 2D: Ecological Consciousness, Displacement and Injustice in a Time of Crisis	2D

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The escalating planetary crisis, characterised by environmental disruption, biodiversity loss, and profound socio-cultural inequalities, represents the defining challenge of the Anthropocene. Addressing this multidimensional predicament necessitates moving beyond purely technological or policy-centric solutions. While the natural sciences diagnose biophysical processes, and engineering devises technical mitigations, the human dimensions of ecological crisis—its historical roots, cultural perceptions, ethical implications, and societal transformations demand the interpretive, critical, and analytical perspectives of humanities and social science disciplines.

The conference will explore several key thematic intersections. These include the critique of growth-based paradigms and the imagining of post-capitalist, degrowth, or

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE: 20TH MARCH, 2026

Time	Activity	Venue Hall
08:30 - 10:00 AM	Breakfast	Ground Floor
10:00 - 11:30 AM	Day 2 Session 1 (Parallel Sessions)	
	Session 3A: Embodied Environment: Ritual, Heritage, and Resilience in Indian Ecology	1A
	Session 3B: Vulnerable Community and the Politics of Survival	2A
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	Day 2 Session 2 (Parallel Sessions)	
	Session 3C: Gendered Bodies, Sacred Spaces and Ecological Crises in Indian Visual Culture	2C
	Session 3D: Re-Storying the World: Culture, Narrative, and Ecofeminist Imagination	2D
01:00 - 02:00 PM	Launch	Ground Floor
2:30 - 4:00 PM	Day 2 Session 3 (Parallel Sessions)	
	Session 4A: Ecologies of Crisis and Care: From Narrative to Wellbeing	1A
	Session 4B: Philosophy, Bhakti, and the Roots of Ecological Thought	2A
	Session 4C: Socio-Cultural Dimensions and Grassroots Actions	2C
	Session 4D: Dismantling the Anthropocene: Voices, Languages, and Lifeworlds	2D
4:00 - 5:00 PM	Valedictory Session	1A
	Valedictory Talk by the Chief Guest: Prof. Krishna Mohan Pandey, Department of English, Banaras Hindu University	
	Vote of Thanks: Prof. P. K. Panda, Convener and Head of the Department, Department of Humanistic Studies, IIT(BHU)	
	Feedback from the participants.	

For more details regarding the conference please scan the QR

