

ICSSR SPONSORED
TWO-DAYS COLLABORATIVE INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE
ON
"Prospects and Possibilities of Golden
Threads (Muga) of Assam: A Path towards
Vikshit Bharat"



06-07 February 2025



Council Hall, Tezpur University, Assam



Hybrid Mode

ORGANISED BY:

- Dept. of Cultural Studies, Tezpur University
- Gargi College, University of Delhi
- Kherajkhat College, Madhabdev University
- N.N Saikia College, Dibrugarh University
- S.B.M.S College, Gauhati University

PRE-CONFERENCE BROCHURE



(Part of ICSSR Sponsored Collaborative Research Project under special call for Vision
Viksit Bharat@2047)



ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

This international conference is being planned to celebrate, preserve, and promote India's rich textile heritage. The symposium brings together a diverse community of experts, artisans, researchers, designers, and policymakers. Collectively, they explore the historical significance and modern relevance of traditional textiles, while emphasizing the critical importance of sustainably produced natural silk in shaping the future of the textile industry. This conference focuses on the uniqueness of Muga silk, traditional community knowledge and sericulture practices, sustainable ways of production, and the gradual erosion of these methods due to climate change and changing economic practices. It focuses on the cultural and economic significance of Muga silk, traditional sustainable ways of production as opposed to more modern methods, and the economic as well as psychological impact of these.

Muga silk, renowned for its golden hue and durability, is Assam's first Geographical Indication (GI) registered product. Its uniqueness perhaps lies in its golden hue and lustre and the fact that this is one silk which resists being dyed into any other colour except its original golden. Unlike most other silks, Muga silk can be handwashed, and in fact, only increases its shine with every subsequent wash. It is sustainable because of its exceptional resilience as the fabric can last an entire lifetime and even as long as a century. This appeals to a more minimalist and hence sustainable ethic. It has the ability to repel harmful UV rays which also positions it as a treasure in the global textile industry. The Muga silk industry, while being significant for a worldwide market owing to its uniqueness, simultaneously preserves the indigenous knowledge and sustainable practices, thus connecting the local with the global.

At the current juncture, the sustainable production of Muga silk requires addressing certain challenges such as disease management, waste reduction, and the socio-economic upliftment of artisan communities. Global warming and the consequent climate change have adversely affected the conditions of rearing and breeding of the Muga silk moths. This has led to a steep decline in the production of Muga silk over the years which has also led to an exorbitant increase in prices. The natural forests and cultivated plantations of Som and Sualu trees on which Muga moths feed are also decreasing in size and number as a result of climate change as well as certain economic practices, hence leading to a decline in production. Although this was traditionally a Vanya silk where the silk moths are bred on natural forests of Som and Sualu by indigenous communities, this is now being replaced by commercial plantations. This affects the market as well as the livelihood of artisans.

As Muga silk production is based on indigenous community knowledge and practices which have been passed down through generations, a decline in production also leads to the erosion of shared knowledge about sericulture, weaving, and natural dyeing techniques, and the communal methods of teaching-learning related to these skills. Communal feeling and togetherness also decline as activities such as cocoon harvesting, weaving festivals and Muga silk centres and markets gradually begin to phase out and local co-operative societies and self-help groups relying on Muga silk face dissolution. Decreasing Muga silk production may push artisans, craftspeople and workers to adopt other occupations. With diminishing employment opportunities within the traditional, rural frameworks, there might be a disproportionate increase in migration to urban areas. The absence of locally-produced Muga silk may

encourage a shift towards synthetic alternatives which do not carry the same value of traditional cultural heritage, knowledge and practices.

As Muga silk is an emblem of Assamese pride and cultural identity, its disappearance may lead to feelings of alienation and cultural dislocation or uprootedness. Artisan and weaving craft communities and worker-families will face financial instability on account of this, leading to stress, anxiety, and a sense of hopelessness. A loss of their craft may lead to a decline in self-worth for artisans and weavers and a sense of being undervalued. The disappearance of Muga silk production would not only disrupt the socio-economic fabric of Assamese society but also deeply affect the psychological well-being and collective identities of the communities involved.

The conference seeks to foster discussions on how Muga silk can contribute to the economic empowerment of Assam while preserving its cultural heritage and indigenous methods of production. By bridging traditional craftsmanship with modern innovations, the symposium aims to reimagine the future of Muga silk in national and international markets.



CALL FOR PAPERS

Papers can cover various themes, including but not limited to, those listed below. This conference highlights India's textile heritage, with a focus on the cultural and economic significance of Muga silk of Assam. Bringing together experts, it examines sustainable sericulture and traditional practices, addressing their decline due to climate change and economic shifts, while advocating for preservation and innovation to ensure a sustainable future for the textile industry worldwide.

OUR THEMES

○ Theme I: Sustainable Production of Muga Silk

- Challenges in Muga silkworm rearing and disease management
- Innovations in sustainable sericulture and waste reduction
- Strategies for increasing production to compete globally

○ Theme II: Impact of Climate Change on Muga Production

- Deforestation and its impact on Muga Silk Production
- The Role of Pollution in declining Muga Silk Quality
- Biodiversity and Ecosystem balance in Muga Silk Cultivation
- Challenges in Muga Seed Production



CALL FOR PAPERS

○ Theme III: Historical and Cultural Significance of Muga Silk

- ▷ Role of Muga silk in Assamese cultural heritage and rituals
- ▷ Symbolism of Muga textiles in mythology and folklore
- ▷ Artisans as custodians of intangible cultural heritage
- ▷ Preservation strategies for cultural assets related to Muga silk

○ Theme IV: Economic Impact of Muga Silk: Producers and Consumers

- ▷ Sericulture and rural economy: Indigenous-led skill development and / entrepreneurship
- ▷ Employment, and, Market: Opportunities and Challenges
- ▷ Women's role in reviving traditional handloom industries through economic models
- ▷ New market strategies: Unconventional methods of popularisation
- ▷ Role of Golden threads in economy of Assam: past, present, and future

○ Theme V: Technological Innovations in Natural Fibres

- ▷ Mechanisation and advances in processing and product development of Muga silk
- ▷ Integration of AI and digital tools in textile production
- ▷ Diversification of Muga silk products for functional and technical uses
- ▷ Cost-effective extraction and value addition methods
- ▷ Muga Biotechnology, Biochemistry, and Molecular biological practices

○ Theme VI: Community Engagement and Psychology

- ▷ Decline of age-old traditional practices associated with Muga
- ▷ Weakened social ties and decline in artisan networks
- ▷ Shift to other livelihoods and urban migration
- ▷ Economic stress
- ▷ Loss of cultural identity and declining self-worth

○ Theme VII: Any other topic related to Muga Culture

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

A dedicated panel of subject experts will carefully review the submitted abstracts. Only upon acceptance will the authors be notified to proceed with the submission of the full paper.

Abstract Guidelines:

1. Authors are hereby invited to submit original unpublished research papers on the mentioned areas.
2. Abstracts (300-500 words) should align with the Conference themes but need not be limited to the ones listed.
3. Must include the following sections: Purpose, Design/Methodologies, Findings, Originality, Implications, and Keywords (Minimum of 3, Maximum of 5 keywords).
4. Include a brief bio-note of the author(s) and contact details.

Full Paper Submission Requirements:

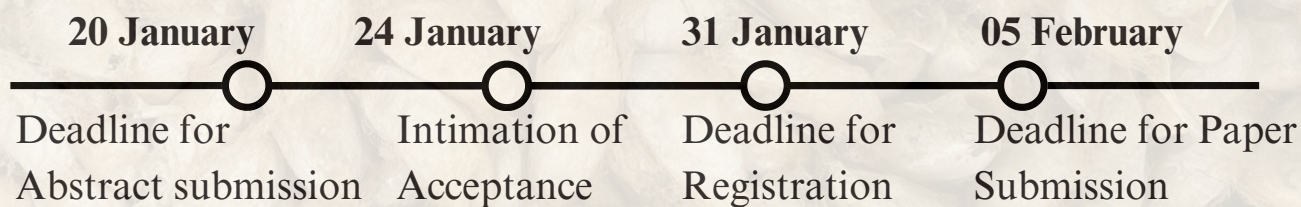
1. The full paper should adhere to the IMRAD format (Introduction, Materials & Methods, Results, and Discussion).
2. Formatting details:
 - Paper size: A4
 - Layout: Single column
 - Line spacing: 1.5
 - Font: Times New Roman
 - Language: English & Assamese
 - Word Limit: 2500-3500

CALL FOR PAPERS



- Hard copy should be submitted on the day of Conference.
- Authors are requested to send their Abstracts and Full Papers at : icssr.muga@gmail.com

IMPORTANT DATES



PUBLICATION OPPORTUNITIES

Selected high-quality papers will be published as a Conference Proceeding/co-edited volume by a reputed publisher at an additional cost.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION DETAILS

Upon acceptance of the abstracts, authors are requested to register themselves through the google form link given below and pay the fee in given bank details.

Registration link: <https://forms.gle/EezKrLPYbRKLubfh6>



Bank Deatils:

Account No: 43443835120

IFSC: SBIN0010444

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Categories	Domestic	International
Students other than Tezpur University	₹300	\$06
Research Scholars/Independent Researchers	₹800	\$12
Faculty/Academician	₹1200	\$15
Industry/Organizations	₹1500	\$18
Any other interested participant without paper	₹600	\$10

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation will be provided to the participants only after prior information. This will be arranged to the outstation participants at their own cost.

HOW TO REACH?

Air Connectivity: The nearest airport to Tezpur University is the Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport located at Guwahati city, Assam, India. There are direct flights to Guwahati from all major cities of India.

Train Connectivity: Nearest main rail hub is Guwahati which is well connected by different Trains from all major cities of India. Tezpur has its own Railway Station, Dekargaon Railway Station which is about 10 km away from Tezpur city and is connected to Guwahati and all other major cities of Assam.

Road Routes: Guwahati to Tezpur University

National Highway No. 31 via Jalukbari upto Baihata Chariali and NH 52 from Baihata Chariali via Mangaldoi. Distance : 175 kms (approx.)

National Highway No. 37 via Nagaon upto Kaliabor Tiniali and NH 37A from Kaliabor Tiniali via Kolia Bhomora bridge. Distance : 198 kms (approx.)

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