



National Seminar
on
Indian Knowledge System and Social Science Education in India
Organized by
Department of Social Work, CDOE, RBU
In collaboration with IQAC, RBU
Date: 28.03.2026

EMINENT SPEAKERS



PROF. ASOK KUMAR SARKAR
DEPT OF SOCIAL WORK,
VISVA-BHARATI



PROF. ANANDA MOHAN KAR
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
BURDWAN UNIVERSITY

DATE: 28.03.2026 TIME: 10:30 AM
VENUE: SEMINAR ROOM (ROOM NO. 604,
6TH FLOOR), CDOE, RBU.

**ALL INTERESTED ARE REQUESTED TO
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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION
'RABINDRA BHARATI UNIVERSITY
IN COLLABORATION WITH IQAC, RBU

Seminar on
*Indian Knowledge
System and Social
Science Education in
India*

CONVENORS:
DR. ARUNIMA DHAR
DR. INDRANIL SARKAR
ASSISTANT PROFESSORS
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK,
CDOE, RBU

Introduction

The Department of Social Work, Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE), Rabindra Bharati University, in collaboration with IQAC, organized a one-day seminar on “*Indian Knowledge System and Social Science Education in India*” on 28th March 2026. The seminar was conceived as a platform to deliberate on the relevance of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in contemporary social science education, particularly in the discipline of social work. The event sought to bridge traditional wisdom

with modern academic frameworks, encouraging students and faculty to critically engage with indigenous knowledge traditions as a means of enriching pedagogy, practice, and research.



Paying tribute by Dr. K. S. Chakraborty, Director, CDOE RBU, Prof. Soma Banerjee, Dean, Faculty of Arts, RBU, Prof. Asok Kumar Sarkar and Prof Anondo Mohan Kar

The seminar commenced at 10:30 AM with a ceremonial inauguration that reflected the ethos of Indian tradition. A symbolic act of watering a plant was performed, representing growth, sustainability, and the nurturing of knowledge. This was accompanied by paying tribute to Rabindranath Tagore, whose vision of education continues to inspire the university. The inauguration was led by **Dr. K. S. Chakraborty**, Director, CDOE RBU, and **Prof. Soma Banerjee**, Dean, Faculty of Arts, RBU, along with the invited speakers of the day.

Following the inauguration, the dignitaries felicitated the eminent speakers, **Prof. Asok Kumar Sarkar** of Visva-Bharati and **Prof. Ananda Mohan Kar** of Burdwan University. The ceremonial warmth of the occasion set the tone for the academic discussions that followed.



Felicitations of Prof. Soma Banerjee, Dean, Faculty of Arts, RBU, Prof. Asok Kumar Sarkar and Prof. Anondo Mohan Kar

The inaugural sentences were delivered by Dr. Arunima Dhar, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, CDOE RBU, who also anchored and facilitated the session. Her role ensured a smooth flow of the programme, balancing ceremonial grace with academic rigor. The Welcome Address was delivered by the Director, CDOE RBU, who emphasized the importance of integrating Indian Knowledge Systems into social science education. He highlighted that IKS offers a reservoir of values, practices, and philosophies that can enrich the discipline of social work and make it more culturally relevant.

Session I: Prof. Asok Kumar Sarkar (Dept. of Social Work, Visva-Bharati)



Deliberation by Prof. Asok Kumar Sarkar

Prof. Sarkar's presentation was a comprehensive exploration of the role of Indian Knowledge Systems in social work education. He began by situating IKS within the broader context of social sciences, noting that indigenous knowledge traditions have historically shaped community life, welfare practices, and social organization in India.

He emphasized that social work, as a discipline, often borrows heavily from Western frameworks, which may not always align with the cultural realities of Indian society. By integrating IKS, social work education can become more context-sensitive and practitioner-friendly. Prof. Sarkar elaborated on how each specialization within social work—community development, medical and psychiatric social work, child welfare, social policy, and industrial relations—can benefit from indigenous perspectives.

For instance, he highlighted that community development in India has long been guided by traditional practices of collective decision-making and resource sharing, which resonate with the principles of participatory development. Similarly, in medical and psychiatric social work, indigenous healing practices and community-based support systems can complement modern therapeutic approaches. His presentation encouraged students to view IKS not as a relic of the past but as a living, dynamic framework that can inform contemporary practice.

Session II: Prof. Ananda Mohan Kar (Dept. of Sociology, Burdwan University)



Deliberation by Prof. Anondo Mohan Kar

Prof. Kar's lecture focused on the idea of development within the Indian Knowledge System. He began by contrasting Western notions of development, which often prioritize economic growth and industrialization, with Indian perspectives that emphasize holistic well-being, ethical living, and community harmony.

Drawing from classical Indian texts and philosophical traditions, Prof. Kar explained that development in the Indian context is not merely material progress but a balanced pursuit of physical, mental, and spiritual growth. He cited examples from ancient Indian thought, such as the concept of *Dharma* (duty and ethics) and *Artha* (economic pursuits), which together frame development as a multidimensional process.

Prof. Kar also connected these ideas to contemporary debates on sustainable development, arguing that IKS offers valuable insights into ecological balance, community resilience, and ethical governance. He urged students to critically examine how indigenous frameworks can serve as counter-narratives to Western-centric models of development, thereby enriching sociological and social work discourses. His presentation was both philosophical and practical, encouraging participants to rethink development in ways that are culturally rooted and socially inclusive.

Participation and Engagement

The seminar witnessed active participation from students of the Department of Social Work, CDOE RBU, belonging to sessions 2023–2024, 2024–2025, and 2025–2026 (July 2025). Their engagement reflected the department’s commitment to student-centered pedagogy and experiential learning. The interactive nature of the sessions allowed students to pose questions, share reflections, and connect theoretical discussions with their own academic journeys.



Group photographs of the dignitaries and convenors

The seminar concluded with a **Vote of Thanks** delivered by **Dr. Arunima Dhar**, who expressed gratitude to her co-convenor, **Dr. Indranil Sarkar**, the dignitaries, speakers, convenors, and participants. She acknowledged the contributions of the Director and Dean in supporting the event, the speakers for their insightful presentations, and the students for their enthusiastic participation.

The seminar successfully combined ceremonial warmth, intellectual discourse, and student engagement, leaving participants with a deeper appreciation of how Indian Knowledge Systems can be integrated into social science education. It reinforced the idea that education must be both academically rigorous and culturally grounded, ensuring that future practitioners of social work are equipped with knowledge that is both globally informed and locally relevant.

Key Reflections

- Indian Knowledge Systems provide culturally rooted frameworks for social science education.
- Social work pedagogy can be enriched by linking specializations to indigenous traditions.
- Development, as understood in IKS, emphasizes holistic well-being, sustainability, and ethical living.
- Ceremonial practices (plant watering, tribute to Tagore) reinforced the fusion of tradition and modern academic discourse.



Students engaged at the registration desk