

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

You are cordially invited to the
INAUGURAL TALK

on

18 Feb 2022 | 6:30 PM

**Keynote Lecture by
Prof. Anvita Abbi**

REGISTRATION LINK: <https://forms.gle/cGEqp5Bk926PWbEz7>

PROGRAMME

Welcome address

Dr. Reenu Punnoose

HoD, HSS

Inaugural address

Prof. P. B. Sunil Kumar

Director, IIT Palakkad

Introducing the Speaker

Dr. Sujatha G.

Keynote Lecture

Prof. Anvita Abbi

Vote of Thanks

Dr. Anoop George



Frontier Discourses, the Colloquium series of the Humanities and Social Sciences Department at IIT Palakkad, is envisioned as a platform where the specialized academic community shares renowned, contemporary research in the fields of HSS and the intersectional areas of HSS-STEM. It is aimed at generating intense discussions and debates that inspire young minds to take up unexplored inquiries and challenge unquestionable truths. It aspires to be a space that 'naturally' provokes disturbances at the boundaries of disciplines and gives rise to new inter- and multidisciplinary research areas. Through dynamic, reflexive engagement with diverse perspectives, it strives to contribute significantly to the vibrant culture of knowledge sharing in the region and beyond.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT Palakkad is a budding, vibrant multidisciplinary

environment that strives to explore the human world through various modes of inquiry which include the critical, analytical, scientific and aesthetic. Through courses, cutting edge research, academic and art events and various social/outreach initiatives, it aspires to nurture a community that is intellectually sharp, socially responsible, aesthetically inclined and consciously inclusive.

THE INSTITUTE

The Indian Institute of Technology Palakkad (IIT Palakkad), one among the third-generation IITs, was founded in 2015. With over 100 faculty, 65 staff and 1200 students, 10 departments offering 4 UG programmes, 9 PG programmes and several PhD programmes, this young institute boasts of an excellent workforce, state-of-the-art infrastructure and strong relationships with both industry as well as other academic institutions. Embodied in the motto of the Institute, "Nurturing minds for a better world", is its vision to be a leader in cross-disciplinary inquiries, and to contribute to the potential that India's demographic dividend represents for the country and the world.

LANGUAGE ENCODES YOUR UNIVERSE. DON'T LET IT DIE

Anvita Abbi

Language serves a missing link in the puzzle of human evolution. The Language Science defines the discipline of Linguistics as an empirical science, to which the disciplines of the social sciences, philosophy, human and evolutionary biology, genetics and genomics, computer science, language technology, and neuroscience are integral and integrated. There is a strong interlinkage between eco-diversity and perception and the language that is used for its coding. It is the first citizens of India, the tribes who represent the first voices of this county have had amalgamated with nature so much so that the two had been inseparable till the axe of 'development' fell on them. We shall consider how does language loss affect our relationship with nature and how does environmental change affect the

resilience of languages, cultures, and philosophy. As of today, we have more than 700 languages which are spoken and not written down engulfing a vast number of secrets of human nature, human tolerance for others, and survival. Some of these languages are on the brink of extinction. We must save our oral tradition to preserve indigenous knowledge system regarding survival and sustenance and stay away from cultural amnesia by documenting it using the most modern technology available in computational linguistics. The lecture exposes the audience how the research on the complexity of language structure has helped us to understand human evolution, its culture, social system, worldview, and cognition of the world.



A B O U T T H E S P E A K E R

PROF. ANVITA ABBI

An advisor to the UNESCO on language issues for long, Prof. Abbi is an eminent linguist and social scientist belonging to the family of writers. She has been visiting professor in Universities across Europe and the Americas. She taught Linguistics at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, India for 38 years and is, at present, Visiting Research Professor at Goa University, Goa. She has carried out first-hand field research on all the six language families of India, extending from the Himalayas to the Andaman Islands. An editor and author of 25 books published nationally and internationally, including Linguistic Diversity in South and Southeast Asia. (co-edited). 2022. Primus Books; Voices from the Lost Horizon. 2021. Niyogi Books; A Grammar of the Great Andamanese Language. An Ethnolinguistic Study. 2013. Brill, Netherlands; Endangered Languages of the Andaman Islands. 2006.

Lincom Europa, Germany; A Manual of Linguistic Fieldwork and Structures of Indian Languages. 2001. Lincom Europa, Germany; Reduplication in South Asian languages. An Areal, Typological and Historical Study 1991. Allied, and Languages of Tribal and Indigenous Peoples of India. The Ethnic Space. 1997 (edited). Motilal Banarsidass. She was the founder Director of the Centre for Oral and Tribal Literature at Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi. Prof. Abbi's work on tribal and other minority languages of South Asia has been exemplary and has bagged several national and international awards including the Bhasha Samman in 2003, Leverhulme Professorship at the University of London in 2011, Padma Shri in 2013 by the President of India and the Kenneth Hale Award in 2015 by the Linguistic Society of America for "outstanding lifetime contributions to the documentation and description of languages of India".

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