

PLEACH INDIA FOUNDATION
&
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY, COTTON UNIVERSITY

presents

The Future of the Past

Managing India's Heritage in a Changing Present

A Two-Day National Seminar & Exhibition

Date: 19th - 20th November 2026

Venue: Cotton University, Guwahati, Assam

Concept Note

India's heritage is a living and evolving resource, shaped by the pressures of urbanisation, climate change, migration, tourism, development and changing identities. Managing it today requires approaches that combine rigorous scholarship with community participation, policy, conservation and new technologies.

"The Future of the Past: Managing India's Heritage in a Changing Present" brings together archaeologists, historians, conservators, museum professionals, policymakers and community practitioners to explore how India's tangible and intangible heritage can be documented, protected and made meaningful for future generations. The seminar is held in the spirit of **World Heritage Week**, reaffirming our shared responsibility to safeguard the past.

The seminar also marks **ten years of Pleach India Foundation's "Preserve Heritage for Posterity" (PHP)**, its community-based heritage documentation and conservation initiative and **ten years of teaching-learning at the Department of Archaeology, Cotton University**, which has contributed to archaeological teaching, research and professional training in Northeast India.

Bringing these experiences together, the seminar will reflect on the achievements, challenges and future of heritage management in India, with particular attention to **community participation, sustainability, digital documentation, ownership and climate resilience**.





We invite **students, scholars, researchers, archaeologists, conservators, museum professionals** and **heritage practitioners** to submit abstracts and papers for presentation.

Key Themes

Managing Heritage in the Face of Climate Change and Urbanisation

Community Participation and Living Heritage

Digital Documentation, GIS, AI and Emerging Technologies in Heritage Management

Heritage Policy, Law and Institutional Frameworks

Museums, Collections and Public Archaeology

Sustainable and Responsible Heritage Tourism

Teaching and Training in Archaeology: Building Future Custodians of Heritage

Registration fee: ₹1000

Last Date for Abstract Submission: 15-10-2026

Last Date for Full Paper Submission: 31-10-2026

Link for Submission:
<https://pleachindia.org/the-future-of-the-past-2/>

Coordinators

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Pleach India Foundation is dedicated to preserving and promoting India's rich cultural heritage. The name "Pleach" means "to entwine and create a hedge," symbolising the Foundation's mission of weaving together the many strands of India's legacy. It also stands as an acronym: **P**reserve, **L**earn, **E**ducate, **A**rt, **C**ulture, **H**eritage — the values at the heart of its work.

Over the past ten years, Pleach's flagship programme "Preserve Heritage for Posterity" (PHP) has mobilised communities and institutions around the documentation and safeguarding of monuments, crafts and living traditions across India, alongside work ranging from documenting Deccani miniature paintings and curating a Mini Museum, to supporting the restoration of historic structures such as the British Residency in Hyderabad and hosting Pleach Talks with experts.

This is integral to Pleach's conviction that historical heritage is not just about the past, but a living resource that inspires sustainable development.

www.pleachindia.org



Cotton University, Guwahati, established in 1901 as Cotton College, is the oldest institution of higher education in Assam and Northeast India. It became a full-fledged university in 2017 and remains one of the region's foremost centres of teaching and research across the sciences, humanities and social sciences.

The Department of Archaeology at Cotton University marks ten years of teaching and learning this year, having trained successive cohorts of students in field archaeology, heritage management and the material history of Northeast India — a region whose archaeological record remains comparatively underexplored within national scholarship.

The Department continues to strengthen archaeological education and research in Northeast India while fostering greater public awareness and community engagement in the preservation of the region's rich cultural heritage.

www.cottonuniversity.ac.in

***"What we inherit from the past,
we hold in trust for the future"***