

## Sona calls for preserving state's traditional knowledge systems



**RONO HILLS, Oct 17:** Legislative Assembly Speaker PD Sona urged scholars to find ways to preserve explore and exhibit the traditional knowledge systems of Arunachal. Sona was addressing the inaugural function of a two-day national seminar on 'Lok kalayein aur siksha (poorvottar ka vishesh sandarbh)' at Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU) here on Thursday. "Arunachal Pradesh is rich in folk arts and traditional knowledge systems," the speaker, who earlier inaugurated the seminar, said, and lamented that "the (state's) beautiful and rich cultural folk arts are yet to be recognized by the rest of the world." He urged the gathering of intellectuals and academicians to "explore the value of art and folk art and traditional education in an academic approach." Bhartiya Sikshan Mandal's (BSM) national secretary, Mukul Kanitkar, highlighted the folktales and folk arts of Arunachal, and said, "The rare Arunachalee culture cannot be saved by making videos or through electronic media only. We have to go back to its history and origin." "If art is not part of education, then the proposed education becomes meaningless. There must be aesthetics in art, and Arunachal is the place which can provide this to the world," Kanitkar said. IGNOU (New Delhi) Pro-Vice Chancellor, Prof Satyakam, delivered a speech differentiating the Indian folk elements from the British folk elements. "As we have left our tradition and culture, the folk aspects have been erased from our minds. In our education we can give an emotional, intellectual and rational approach to folk elements which can integrate us with them," he said. RGU Vice Chancellor Prof Saket Kushwaha expressed his views on "how the colonial masters deliberately framed the education rule in the perspective that would not make us able to rise up in future centuries." "It is indispensable to change and reframe our education policy with a view to improve our lifestyle and standard of life," he said, adding that there is need for "exchange of Northeast folk culture and folk art with the other regions of India." Several scholars, including Lucknow (UP)-based Babasaheb Ambedkar University's Chancellor Dr Prakash Bartunia, Imphal (Manipur)-based Central Agriculture University's Vice Chancellor Prof Premjit Singh, and Kolkata (WB)-based Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad Institute for Asian Studies' (MAKAIAS) Director Dr Sashi Kumar spoke on folk cultures, folk traditions and folk arts of the Northeast, and their relevance in the national and international contexts. The seminar is being organized by RGU's Hindi department, in collaboration with the BSM, the MAKAIAS, and New Delhi-based National Sindhi Language Development Council.

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