

SRI GURU TEG BAHADUR KHALSA COLLEGE, SRI ANANDPUR SAHIB

Autonomous College

PG DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Introduction

The PG Department of Economics, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Khalsa College, Sri Anandpur Sahib, organised an educational visit to the Saras Mela, Ludhiana, on 10 September 2025. The visit was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Shaveta Kaushal, with the objective of exposing students to the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), rural entrepreneurship, traditional handicrafts, and the economic flows associated with small-scale industries and cultural markets.

The Saras Mela, organised under the Ministry of Rural Development, serves as a platform for rural artisans, SHGs (Self Help Groups), and traditional craftsmen from across India to showcase their skills and sell their products. For Economics students, the mela provided a rich ground to observe micro-economic activities, market interactions, consumer behaviour, and socio-cultural economic patterns.

Objectives of the Visit

To analyse the economic significance of traditional crafts and rural industry.

To study how Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) are preserved through local art and cultural practices.

To observe market dynamics, pricing strategies, and consumer-seller interaction in a real-world setting. To understand the role of self-help groups (SHGs) in women empowerment and rural employment.

To explore the linkages between culture, heritage, and economic sustainability.



Activities and Observations

Exhibition of Handicrafts and Traditional Products

Students observed a wide range of stalls representing different states of India:

Punjab: Phulkari, juttis, traditional food items.

Rajasthan: Hand-block prints, pottery, bandhni textiles.

Uttar Pradesh: Terracotta art, chikankari embroidery.

South India: Handloom sarees, wooden crafts, organic spices.

These crafts reflected cultural heritage, local knowledge systems, and region-specific skills passed down through generations.

Economic Flow and Entrepreneurship

Students studied:

- Pricing strategies used by rural artisans.
- The impact of mela platforms on income generation.
- Cost structures involving raw materials, labour, transportation, and profit margins.
- Direct selling models eliminating middlemen, enabling artisans to earn better wages.
- Students interacted with many stall owners who highlighted challenges such as:
- Competition with machine-made and imported goods.
- Increasing cost of raw materials.
- Need for better marketing and brand visibility.

Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in Practice

The Mela demonstrated :

1. Traditional art forms are rooted in indigenous knowledge.
2. Natural dyes, handloom methods, and eco-friendly production reflect sustainable practices.
3. Food stalls showcased ancient Indian culinary traditions and regional dietary customs.
4. IKS elements observed included:
5. Use of clay, natural fibres, plant-based dyes, and locally sourced materials.
6. Traditional craftsmanship passed through community teaching and oral traditions.
7. Ritual objects and cultural motifs representing India's civilizational legacy.

Interaction Session and Learning Outcomes

Under the guidance of Dr. Shaveta Kaushal, students conducted mini-surveys and interacted with artisans on:

- Production techniques
- Daily income and seasonal demand
- Role of government schemes

- Digital payment adoption
- Online marketing challenges
- The interaction helped students understand:
- Rural livelihoods
- Entrepreneurship barriers
- How cultural identity influences consumer preferences
- Educational Significance

This visit bridged the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical economic understanding.
Students learned about:

- ❖ Micro-enterprise management
- ❖ Cultural economics
- ❖ Sustainable development
- ❖ Value chains in traditional sectors
- ❖ Market competition and consumer psychology
- ❖ It also helped students appreciate the importance of preserving traditional crafts as part of India's heritage and economy.