



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON Psychosocial Support & Mental Health Services in Disaster Management

*“Beyond the Rubble: Building Resilience
through Psychosocial Support”*

10 - 12 OCTOBER 2025

Organized by

Department of Psychosocial Support in Disaster Management (DPSSDM),
National Institute of Mental Health and NeuroSciences (NIMHANS),
Bengaluru, Karnataka, India - 650029

dpssdm.nimhans.co.in

<https://nimhans.co.in/>



pssindm@nimhans.ac.in

pssdm.com/conference//





WELCOME MESSAGE

Ladies and Gentlemen, esteemed guests, and distinguished speakers,

It is my profound honour to welcome you to the International Conference on Psychosocial Support and Mental Health Services in Disaster Management titled **Beyond the Rubble: Building Resilience through Psychosocial Support**, taking place here in the vibrant city of Bangalore, India, from October 10th to 12th, 2025.

We are privileged to have gathered a diverse group of experts, practitioners, researchers, and advocates from around the world, all committed to enhancing psychosocial support in the wake of disasters. In recent years, we have witnessed the profound impact of disasters on mental health and community resilience. It is crucial that we address these challenges with a comprehensive and compassionate approach. Over the three days of conference, we will explore a range of topics, from best practices in psychosocial support to innovative strategies for community engagement. Our agenda is rich with keynote addresses from leading figures in the field, engaging panel discussions, and workshops designed to foster collaboration and share knowledge. I encourage each of you to participate actively, ask questions, and share your experiences. The insights we gain here will be invaluable as we strive to improve our collective response to crises.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our organizing committee, sponsors, and volunteers whose dedication and hard work have made this event possible. Your commitment to this cause is commendable and essential in ensuring the success of our conference. As we embark on this journey together, let us remember the importance of empathy and understanding in our work. The well-being of individuals and communities in the aftermath of disasters is not just a professional responsibility; it is a moral imperative. Let us inspire one another to create a lasting impact. Thank you for being here, and I wish you all a productive and enriching conference. Together, let's pave the way for a future where psychosocial support is an integral part of disaster management.

Welcome once again!

In Solidarity

Dr. Ajay Kumar Goyal,
Organizing Secretary,
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology,
DPSSDM, NIMHANS



ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

This conference brings together researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and community stakeholders with the following key objectives, focusing on the intersection of climate change, disaster risk reduction (DRR), and psychosocial support and mental health services (PSSMHS):

- **Identify Gaps and Opportunities in Current Climate and Disaster Practices:** Analyze current practices in disaster risk reduction and climate change mitigation concerning PSSMHS, identifying gaps, areas for innovation, and opportunities for improving mental health outcomes in vulnerable populations affected by climate change.
- **Enhance Understanding of Disaster Impact on Vulnerable Populations:** Deepen the comprehension of how climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable populations, with a focus on psychosocial well-being and DRR strategies that address these challenges.
- **Share Research and Case Studies on Disasters and PSSMHS:** Disseminate recent research, case studies, and evidence-based interventions addressing the psychosocial impacts of climate change and disasters, providing a platform for knowledge exchange on effective PSSMHS interventions.
- **Promote culturally sensitive and equitable interventions:** The conference will emphasize the importance of understanding cultural nuances and tailoring PSS/MHS interventions to diverse populations.
- **Strengthen multidisciplinary collaboration:** The conference will foster collaboration between mental health professionals, disaster management experts, and community leaders to develop and implement effective PSS/MHS strategies.
- **Bridge the gap between research and practice:** The conference will provide a platform to share research findings and translate them into actionable strategies for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

By fostering dialogue and knowledge exchange, this conference seeks to advance a comprehensive approach to climate change adaptation and disaster management that prioritizes long-term psychosocial wellbeing and resilience for individuals and communities.



CONFERENCE THEME

The growing frequency of disasters, driven by both natural forces and the impacts of climate change, has brought about unprecedented psychological and social challenges for affected communities. The interwoven effects of disasters, mental health issues, and social vulnerability call for comprehensive strategies to mitigate the psychosocial consequences. This conference, titled "**Beyond the Rubble: Building Resilience through Psychosocial Support**", aims to delve into the pivotal role of Psychosocial Support and Mental Health Services (PSSMHS) in fostering resilience in the face of evolving disaster risks, particularly in the context of climate change.

The conference will explore the critical intersection between **climate change, disaster resilience, and mental health** through various thematic discussions, emphasizing the urgent need for psychosocial support in disaster contexts. As climate change increasingly fuels disasters like extreme weather events and environmental degradation, the mental health impacts on affected populations are becoming more evident. These stressors are linked to rising anxiety, depression, and trauma, especially in vulnerable populations. There is a growing need for targeted mental health interventions that build climate resilience and provide support to those most affected by climate-related disasters.

In the face of these growing challenges, **enhancing community resilience through proactive disaster risk reduction (DRR)** is crucial. By integrating psychosocial support into DRR strategies, communities can reduce their vulnerability and promote sustainable recovery. Empowering communities through local knowledge and participation ensures that disaster preparedness is not only proactive but also culturally relevant and effective. **A multidisciplinary approach is necessary to address the psychosocial impacts of disasters.** Collaboration between psychology, social work, public health, and emergency management experts enables the development of evidence-based interventions, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy and resilience training, to enhance the effectiveness of psychosocial support in disaster settings.

Additionally, **tailored psychosocial interventions are vital for vulnerable populations** like children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and marginalized communities, who face disproportionate risks during disasters. Inclusive approaches that meet their unique needs can promote more equitable recovery and long-term resilience. Finally, **effective disaster governance plays a pivotal role in integrating psychosocial support into national and local disaster management frameworks.** Transparent policies, institutional capacity-building, and community participation are essential to managing disaster risks in a sustainable and equitable manner, ensuring that mental health and psychosocial support are prioritized in governance strategies.



DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The Mental Health and Psychosocial Impact of Natural and Man-Made Disasters

This theme will focus on the psychological, and social consequences of both natural (earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, etc.) and man-made disasters (wars, terrorism, industrial accidents, etc.). It will explore how these events disrupt individuals, families, and communities, and how these impacts are experienced differently across cultural and social contexts.

Key topics: PTSD, anxiety, depression, social isolation, and community trauma.

Research focus: Individual and Community Mental health outcomes associated with natural vs. man-made disasters.

2. Climate Change and Its Psychosocial Consequences

Climate change-induced disasters, such as extreme weather events, wildfires, and rising sea levels, are increasing in frequency and intensity. This theme will delve into the psychosocial consequences of these disasters, focusing on communities at the frontlines of climate change.

Key topics: Anxiety, eco-grief, displacement, migration, loss of livelihood, cultural identity, weakening of social ties, incidence of violence, aggression, suicide, sense of isolation etc

Research focus: How climate change exacerbates existing mental health challenges and creates new vulnerabilities at individual, family, and community levels.

3. Psychosocial Support for Migrants and Refugees in Crisis Situations

Displacement, whether due to conflict, persecution, or environmental disasters, places individuals and families under severe psychological stress. This theme will examine the unique mental health challenges faced by migrants and refugees, and explore interventions that provide psychosocial support during migration and resettlement.

Key topics: Trauma related to forced displacement, resettlement stress, loss of identity, and building resilience among migrant populations.

Research focus: Developing culturally-sensitive mental health interventions for displaced populations.

4. Psychosocial Support in Conflict and Post-Conflict Zones

Armed conflicts, internal violence, and war create complex environments for the survivors. This theme will address the mental health and psychosocial impacts of living in conflict zones, as well as the challenges and strategies for recovery and rebuilding in post-conflict settings.

• **Key topics:** Trauma recovery, rebuilding community support systems, addressing gender-based violence in conflict, and reintegration of ex-combatants.

• **Research focus:** Assessment of psychosocial and mental health impact conflict and violence, psychosocial interventions in post-conflict areas, and lessons learned from conflict-related displacement.



DISCUSSION POINTS

5. Children and Adolescents: Addressing the Mental Health Needs of Young Survivors

Children and adolescents are particularly vulnerable to the psychosocial impacts of disasters. This theme will focus on how disasters affect their development, emotional well-being, and future prospects, and explore the specific psychosocial support strategies required for this age group.

Key topics: Trauma-informed care for children, adolescent mental health post-disaster, educational disruption, and the role of play and expression in recovery.

Research focus: Evidence-based strategies for supporting young survivors of disasters and integrating mental health support into educational settings.

6. Trauma-Informed Care and Psychosocial Intervention in Disaster Management

This theme will emphasize the importance of trauma-informed approaches in disaster response. It will explore psychological first aid, crisis intervention techniques, and the importance of mental health professionals being well-prepared to support disaster survivors.

Key topics: Psychological first-aid, Post traumatic stress disorder, prolonged grief conditions, building resilience in first responders, and the integration of trauma-informed practices into disaster relief efforts.

Research focus: Psychological first aid for survivors and first responders, training of professionals in trauma-informed care, PTSD, Prolonged and Complicated Grief reactions, depression, anxiety, behavioral problems among survivors of disaster and traumatic events. Psychotherapeutic interventions for survivors of traumatic experiences.

7. Community Resilience: Empowering Local Systems to Support Mental Health

Community-based approaches are essential for fostering resilience and providing long-term psychosocial support. This theme will focus on building local capacity, empowering communities, and creating sustainable support systems that can respond to the mental health needs of disaster survivors.

Key topics: Community mobilization for mental health, peer support networks, and the role of community leaders in disaster response.

Research focus: Case studies on successful community-driven mental health interventions and resilience-building models.



DISCUSSION POINTS

8. Policy and Advocacy for Psychosocial Support in Disaster Response

This theme will explore the role of policy and advocacy in integrating mental health services into disaster management frameworks. It will discuss global and national policies, the allocation of resources, and the need for integration of mental health and psychosocial support as a priority in disaster planning and response.

Key topics: Advocacy strategies for mental health, policy frameworks for integrating MHPSS in disaster management planning and implementation, and ensuring equitable access to mental health care during crises.

Research focus: Policy level intervention for integration and shaping MHPSS during pre-disaster, during/immediate post-disaster and post-disaster programs and activities commissioned by various national and local government agencies

9. Innovative Approaches and Technologies in Disaster Mental Health Support

With the increasing use of digital tools and technologies, this theme will explore how innovations are being used to provide psychosocial support during disasters. Topics will include telehealth, mobile apps, and virtual mental health services for disaster survivors.

Key topics: Tele-therapy, online support platforms, mobile apps for mental health, and virtual communities for survivors.

Research focus: Evaluating the effectiveness of digital mental health tools and platforms in disaster response settings.

10. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Disaster Responders and Humanitarian Workers

Often overlooked, disaster responders and humanitarian workers are exposed to high levels of stress and trauma. This theme will focus on the mental health needs of those who provide assistance, addressing burnout, secondary trauma, and strategies for maintaining well-being.

Key topics: The psychological toll on humanitarian workers, strategies for self-care, and creating supportive work environments for disaster responders.

Research focus: Assessing the mental health risks faced by disaster response teams and developing interventions to support their well-being.



ABOUT THE ORGANIZER

Vision Statement:

“Developing and strengthening the components of Psychosocial Support in Rescue, Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, Preparedness, Mitigation and Prevention of disasters at international, national, regional and local levels.”

Mission Statement:

“Strengthening and implementing capacity building, human resource development, research-based practice, programs and policies on Psychosocial Support and Mental Health Services at all phases of disaster management, including disaster risk reduction.”

NIMHANS has been involved in psychosocial support and mental health services (PSSMHS) for survivors of disasters over the past four decades. NIMHANS was recognised by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, GOI, as a nodal centre for Psychosocial support (PSS) in disaster in 2005, as a ‘Centre of Excellence’ by the National Disaster Management Authority in 2010, and a Nodal centre for Psychosocial support and Mental Health services for the COVID 19 pandemic in 2020. Considering the importance of Mental health needs and psychosocial support in disaster, GoI sanctioned the Centre for Psycho-Social Support in Disaster Management (PSSDM) at NIMHANS in August 2019, and 2021, the centre was upgraded as a department.

DPSSDM at NIMHANS is dedicated to enhancing psychosocial support and mental health services (PSSMHS) for disaster-affected individuals. Their work focuses on capacity building, human resource development, and research-based practices across all disaster management phases. The department, comprising clinical psychologists, psychiatric social workers, and psychiatrists, has extensively trained on various psychosocial topics, including first aid, support, rehabilitation, prevention, and preparedness. Key service provisions include a helpline for disaster survivors, the Psychosocial Care Clinic for Disaster Survivors (Samaashraya Clinic), and a Stress and Trauma Lab, all aimed at providing holistic, socio-economic, rehabilitative care, and psychological support to disaster survivors. These initiatives ensure comprehensive care, resilience building, and support for vulnerable populations before, during, and after disasters.



ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

CHIEF PATRON

Dr. Pratima Murthy
Director, Senior Professor of Psychiatry, NIMHANS

PATRON

Mr. Harsha A H, ICAS,
Registrar , NIMHANS

ORGANIZING SECRETARY

Dr. Ajay Kumar Goyal,
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology, DPSSDM, NIMHANS

JOINT ORGANIZING SECRETARY

Dr. Subahsis Bhadra,
Professor of Psychiatric Social Work & Head, DPSSDM, NIMHANS

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dr. Jayakumar C,
Additional Professor of Psychiatric Social Work, DPSSDM, NIMHANS

Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Manikkappa,
Associate Professor of Psychiatric Social Work, DPSSDM, NIMHANS

Dr. Dinakaran Damodharan,
Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, DPSSDM, NIMHANS



ADVISORY BOARD

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Former Registrar,

Senior Professor & Consultant, DPSSDM, NIMHANS

**1. Richard A. Bryant AC, BA (Hons), Psych,
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Director, Traumatic Stress Clinic
Scientia Professor; NHMRC Leadership Fellow,
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2. Kenji Iwamitsu, PhD

Professor, Faculty of Health and Welfare,
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Pondicherry University.

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Head I/C, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services,
Department of Psychiatry,
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NIMHANS, Bengaluru.

8. Allen R. Dyer, MD PhD

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Faculty Psychoanalytic Center of the Carolinas,
The George Washington University

9. Dr. Neera Agnimitra,

Professor and Former Head,
Department of Social Work,
University of Delhi.

10. Dr. N. Janardhana

Professor,
Department of Psychiatric Social Work,
NIMHANS, Bengaluru.



DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Coordinator:

Dr. Subhasis Bhadra,
Professor of Psychiatric Social Work

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Ms. N. Sathana,
PhD Scholar, DPSSDM, NIMHANS.
Ms. Sona Francis,
PhD Scholar, DPSSDM, NIMHANS.
Mr. S. Swamy,
PhD Scholar, DPSSDM, NIMHANS.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

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Assistant Professor of Psychiatry

Members:

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Ms. Monimoyee Chakrabarty,
PhD Scholar, DPSSDM, NIMHANS.
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PhD Scholar, DPSSDM, NIMHANS.

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PhD Scholar, DPSSDM, NIMHANS.
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Dr. Jayakumar C,
Additional Professor of Psychiatric Social Work

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Mr. Allen Daniel Christopher,
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Fellow, DPSSDM, NIMHANS.

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Psychiatry Resident

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Ms. Sharoan Thoams,
Fellow, DPSSDM, NIMHANS.
Ms. Sreelakshmi,
Fellow, DPSSDM, NIMHANS.



CONFERENCE STRUCTURE

Invited Lectures by Experts

- Renowned experts in the field will deliver lectures on key topics, providing in-depth insights and sharing their extensive knowledge and experience. These sessions aim to inform and inspire participants, offering valuable perspectives on current trends and practices.

Panel Discussions by Experts

- Expert-led panel discussions will facilitate dynamic conversations on critical issues. Panellists will engage in debates and share diverse viewpoints, encouraging a comprehensive understanding of the topics and fostering an environment of collaborative learning.

Case Studies by Experts

- Detailed case studies presented by experts will highlight real-world applications and success stories. These sessions will illustrate practical implementations and outcomes, helping participants connect theoretical knowledge with practical experiences.

Stalls/Displays by NGOs

- Various NGOs will set up stalls and displays to showcase their initiatives, projects, and resources. These interactive exhibits will provide participants with opportunities to learn about different approaches, tools, and support systems available in the sector.

Poster/Paper Presentations by Participants

- Students will present their research and projects through posters or powerpoints. This session will provide a platform for young scholars to showcase their work, receive feedback from experts, and engage in discussions with peers and professionals.

Policy Dialogues by Experts

- Experts will lead dialogues on current and emerging policy issues. These sessions will explore the implications of various policies and propose recommendations, encouraging informed debate and the exchange of ideas among participants.



CALL FOR PAPERS

All participants are required to submit the Registration Form along with the Abstract and keep the full paper ready for submission through online mode. Kindly register online via pssdm.com/conference/ for initial registration, submission of Abstract and online payment.

Abstract Submission Guidelines: Each abstract (max. 300 words) should include: Title of the presentation, Name(s) and affiliation(s) of author(s), 3–5 keywords. Abstract body with the following structure: Background/Context, Research Objective, Methodology, Main Results and/or Implications for Disaster Mental Health, Disaster Management, Psychosocial support, and Various disciplines of research, policy, and practice, and Conclusion. Accepted submissions will be presented as oral/poster presentations during the conference.

REGISTRATION DETAILS

CATEGORY	NATIONAL	INTERNATIONAL
Students (Participants)	₹7,000 + GST (18%)	₹10,000 + GST (18%)
Professionals (Participants)	₹10,000 + GST (18%)	₹15,000 + GST (18%)
Attendees (Non Participants)	₹6,000 + GST (18%)	

REGISTRATION PERIODS	APPLICABLE REGISTRATION FEE
EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION till April 30th 2025	20% Discount on Regular Registration Fees
Regular Registration 1st May, 2025 to 31st August, 2025	Regular Registration Fees (As Mentioned Above)
Late Registration 1st September, 2025 to 10th October, 2025	10% Late Fee on Regular Registration (For all categories of participants)



CONFERENCE VENUE

NIMHANS Convention Centre,
Hosur Main Road, Lakkasandra, Hombegowda Nagar,
Bengaluru, Karnataka 560029



HOW TO REACH

The NIMHANS Convention Centre is centrally located in Bengaluru and is easily accessible by various modes of transportation. **By Road From Majestic Bus Station:** It's approximately 8 km away. You can take a direct BMTC bus towards Lalbagh or Jayanagar and get off at the NIMHANS stop. Alternatively, taxis or auto-rickshaws are available. **By Metro:** The nearest metro station is **Lalbagh Station (Green Line)**, which is about 2 km from the Convention Centre. From there, you can take an auto-rickshaw or taxi to reach the venue. **By Air: From Kempegowda International Airport:** The Convention Centre is about 40 km from the airport. You can take an airport taxi, or a BMTC airport shuttle bus (Vayu Vajra) heading towards the city and alight at the NIMHANS stop. **By Rail:** The nearest major railway station is **Bangalore City Junction (Majestic)**, approximately 7 km away. Auto-rickshaws and taxis are easily available at the station to reach NIMHANS.

ACCOMMODATION & TRAVEL SUPPORT

Accommodation shall be provisioned on prior information and prior payment. The arrangement for a comfortable accommodation on reasonable and subsidized rates shall be made on the first-cum-first serve basis. Participants have to bear the travel expense on their own as there is no travel support from our side.

CONTACT US AT

Department of Psychosocial Support in Disaster Management,
National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences,
Bengaluru, Karnataka, India, 560 029

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<https://nimhans.co.in/>



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08026972283



FOR FOREIGN PARTICIPANTS

Foreign participants who wish to attend the conference in India must ensure completion of the following documentation and formalities in a timely manner:

1. Passport

- Ensure your passport is valid for at least six months from the date of arrival in India.
- Keep a scanned copy of the photo and address page for submission and records.

2. Indian Visa

- Apply for an Indian Conference Visa through the nearest Indian Embassy/Consulate.
- You will need the following documents:
 - Invitation letter from the conference organizing committee.
 - Government clearance letters (if applicable).
 - Copy of the conference brochure/announcement.
 - Proof of accommodation (if arranged by the organizer).
 - Passport-size photographs.
 - Valid passport.
- Please note: e-Tourist visas are not valid for conference attendance if it is organized by a government body or educational institution.

3. Invitation Letter

- After registration and acceptance of your paper (if applicable), request an official invitation letter from the organizing committee. This will be required for visa application and immigration purposes.

4. Ministry Approvals

- Conferences hosted by Indian institutions require Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) clearance for foreign delegates.
- The organizing committee will initiate and facilitate these clearances once you submit the necessary personal details (passport copy, nationality, institutional affiliation, etc.).

5. Customs and Entry Declaration

- If carrying any scientific equipment or presentation materials, please check customs regulations or consult the Indian Embassy.

6. COVID-19 or Other Health Regulations

- Follow updated guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, including vaccination or testing requirements.



SITE SEEING

Sightseeing Options in Bengaluru (Local Day Trips)

NIMHANS is centrally located in Bengaluru, making several attractions easily accessible:



Place	Highlights	Approx. Distance from NIMHANS	Ideal Duration
Lalbagh Botanical Garden	240-acre garden, Glass House, rare plants	3.5 km	1.5 – 2 hours
Cubbon Park	Historic park with museums nearby	5 km	1 – 2 hours
Bangalore Palace	Tudor-style architecture, museum	9 km	1.5 – 2 hours
Tipu Sultan's Summer Palace	Indo-Islamic architecture	5 km	1 hour
Visvesvaraya Industrial & Technological Museum	Science and innovation museum	5.5 km	1.5 – 2 hours
ISKCON Temple	Modern Hindu temple with cultural activities	12 km	1 – 1.5 hours
Commercial Street / Brigade Road	Shopping and local eateries	6 – 8 km	1 – 2 hours

🕒 Total Time for Bengaluru Local Tour: Half-day to full-day depending on selection.



SITE SEEING

Sightseeing Options in Mysuru (Day Trip / Overnight Trip)

Mysuru (Mysore) is a historic city located about 145 km from Bengaluru and is ideal for a day or overnight trip.



Place	Highlights	Ideal Duration
Mysore Palace	Magnificent royal palace, illuminated at night	1.5 hours
Chamundi Hills	Temple and panoramic view of Mysuru	1 hour
St. Philomena's Church	Neo-Gothic style church	30 – 45 mins
Brindavan Gardens	Famous for musical fountain show	1 – 1.5 hours (Evening visit)
Mysore Zoo	One of India's oldest zoos	1.5 – 2 hours

Travel Time to Mysuru:

By road: ~3.5 – 4 hours (one way)

By train: ~2.5 – 3 hours (fast trains)

Suggested Itinerary:

Day Trip: Depart early morning and return by late evening.

Overnight Trip: Stay in Mysuru and explore at leisure.



ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotels (Budget to Mid-range)

Hotel Name	Type	Distance from NIMHANS	Price Range (per room/night)
Hotel Temple Tree – Wilson Garden	3-star	2.5 km	₹2,500 – ₹3,500
La Marvella – A Sarovar Premiere Hotel	4-star	2 km	₹4,000 – ₹6,000
Hotel Nandhini – Jayanagar	Budget	2 km	₹1,800 – ₹2,800
Octave Hotel – Double Road	Economy	2 km	₹1,500 – ₹2,500
Hotel TAP Gold Crest	Budget	2 km	₹1,200 – ₹2,000

Shared Accommodation (2–3 Sharing Basis)

Stay Option	Type	Distance from NIMHANS	Approx. Cost per person/night
Zostel Bengaluru	Boutique Hostel	3.5 km	₹800 – ₹1,200
Tribe Stays – Koramangala	Co-living	5 km	₹1,200 – ₹1,800
Stanza Living – Wilson Garden	Co-living/PG	2.5 km	₹1,500 – ₹2,000
Colive Residences	Serviced apartments	4 km	₹1,800 – ₹2,500
NIMHANS Guest House (subject to availability)	Institutional	On campus	₹500 – ₹800

Booking Note:

Early booking is recommended, especially for shared or dorm-style stays.
For NIMHANS Guest House, please contact the organizing committee to check availability.
Most options are accessible by auto, taxi (Ola/Uber), or metro.