

# THE 3<sup>RD</sup> GLOBAL **AUTISM** CONVENTION



## Autism in the Global South: **Culture, Community, and Neurodiversity**



**21<sup>st</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2026**

**St. John's Auditorium, St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences,  
John Nagar, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560034, India**

**CONTACT US**



080 2206 5964



[gac.jan2026@gmail.com](mailto:gac.jan2026@gmail.com)



[www.globalautismconvention.com](http://www.globalautismconvention.com)



# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

## GAC DAY 1

### Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026

#### REGISTRATION



8.00 AM - 9.00 AM



Exhibition Hall

Time	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium	Lecture Hall 1	Nursing Auditorium
9.00 AM - 11.00 AM	<b>WORKSHOP 1</b> <b>USING AAC IN THERAPY SETTINGS</b>  <b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Shoba S Meera, Ms. Anjana Sathyabodha	<b>WORKSHOP 2</b> <b>FEEDING AND EATING DISORDERS IN AUTISTIC INDIVIDUALS</b>  <b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. S. M Manohari, Dr. Avinash Kamath, Dr. Swetha Madhuri Chikkala			
10.00 AM - 1.00 PM			<b>ACT 1 (AUTISM COMMUNITY TRAINING TRACK 1) FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS</b>  <b>FACILITATORS:</b> Dr. Shankar K, Dr. Vinay Kumar, Dr. Bhagyavathi  <b>MENTOR:</b> Dr. Varghese P Punnoose		
11.15 AM - 1.15 PM	<b>WORKSHOP 3</b> <b>MANAGING CO-OCCURRING ANXIETY IN AUTISM</b>  <b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Satya Raj, Dr. Jigyansa Ipsita Pattnaik, Dr. Velprashanth Venkatesan				<b>WORKSHOP 4</b> <b>PLAY WITH PURPOSE: THERAPEUTIC PLAY AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN AUTISM</b>  <b>SPEAKERS:</b> Ms. Priya Sandeep, Ms. Soumya Koduvalli, Ms. Kannika Iyengar





# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

## GAC DAY 1

Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026

Time	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium	Lecture Hall 1	Nursing Auditorium
1.15 PM - 2.00 PM	Lunch Break				
2.00 PM - 5.00 PM	<b>ACT 2 (AUTISM COMMUNITY TRAINING TRACK 2) FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS</b>  <b>FACILITATORS:</b> Dr. Gayathri Rajan, Dr. Rachna George  <b>MENTOR:</b> Dr. Alka A. Subramanyam	<b>ACT 3 (AUTISM COMMUNITY TRAINING TRACK 3) FOR NURSING PROFESSIONALS</b>  <b>FACILITATORS:</b> Dr. Nelia Mathew, Dr. Rajalakshmi Ramu  <b>MENTOR:</b> Dr. Satya Raj	<b>ACT 4 (AUTISM COMMUNITY TRAINING TRACK 4) FOR PRIMARY CARE PRACTITIONERS &amp; PEDIATRICIANS</b>  <b>FACILITATORS:</b> Dr. Shivangi Mehta, Dr. Prasanna Kumar N, Dr. Kashmiri Badbade  <b>MENTOR:</b> Dr. Smita Deshpande	<b>WORKSHOP 5 ASSESSMENT IN AUTISM: TOOLS, ADAPTATIONS, AND REPORTS</b>  <b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Sai Kirthi Kamath, Dr. Meghana Vijayanand	<b>WORKSHOP 6 ADDRESSING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS &amp; TEACHING ADAPTIVE SKILLS</b>  <b>SPEAKERS:</b> Ms. Kavitha Kamath, Ms. Anupama Ramesh



## GAC DAY 2

Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
8.00 AM - 9.00 AM	ORAL PRESENTATIONS SESSION 1		ORAL PRESENTATIONS SESSION 2		
9.00 AM - 9.45 AM		<b>KEYNOTE: AUTISM IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND NEURODIVERSITY</b>  <b>SPEAKER :</b> Dr. Shoba Srinath <b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Vijaya Raman			



# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 2

Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
9.45 AM - 10.30 AM		Inauguration			
10.30 AM - 10.45 AM		Coffee Break and E-Poster Viewing			
10.45 AM - 11.30 AM		<p><b>KEYNOTE: EARLY COMMUNICATION MATTERS: HOW EARLY AND WHAT MATTERS</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKER:</b> Dr. Prathibha Karanth</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Shoba Srinath</p>			
11.40 AM - 1.10 PM		<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: SETTING UP AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS :</b> Ms. Jo Chopra, Dr. Koyeli Sengupta</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Ms. Ruby Singh, Ms. Suchita Somashekaraiah</p>	<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING AUTISM WITH CO-OCCURRING ADHD</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS :</b> Dr. Chhitij Srivastava, Dr. Rachna George</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. S.M Manohari, Dr. Lakshmi Shiva</p>		
1.10 PM - 2.00 PM		Lunch Break and E-Poster Viewing			





# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 2

Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
2.00 PM - 3.30 PM		<p><b>LIVE DEMONSTRATION SESSION:</b>  <b>THE FIRST CONVERSATION:</b>  <b>SHARING AN AUTISM DIAGNOSIS WITH THE PARENT(S)</b>  <b>(INTERACTIVE ROLE-PLAY + PANEL)</b></p> <p><b>MODERATOR</b>            Dr. Satish C Girimaji</p> <p><b>PANELISTS:</b>            Dr. Samiksha Sahu,            Dr. Varghese P Punnoose,            Dr. M Thomas Kishore, Dr. Vanitha Rao</p>			
3.30 PM - 4.00 PM	Coffee Break and E-Poster Viewing				
4.00 PM - 5.00 PM		<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: NEURODIVERGENT WORKFORCE INCLUSION: BEYOND TOKENISM</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS :</b>            Mr. G Vijaya Raghavan,            Ms. Swati Vellal,            Ms. Alina Alam</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b>            Ms. Sarbani Mallick, Ms. Suman John</p>	<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: FROM PRACTICE TO PUBLICATION: HOW AUTISM PRACTITIONERS CAN CONDUCT AND SHARE RESEARCH</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS :</b>            Dr. Naresh Nebhinani,            Dr. Eesha Sharma</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b>            Dr. Denis Xavier,            Dr. Rajesh Sagar</p>	<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: WHAT CAUSES AUTISM? GENETIC, COGNITIVE AND NEUROBIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS :</b>            Dr. Matthew Belmonte,            Dr. Meenakshi Bhat</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b>            Dr. Satish C Girimaji</p>	



# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

## GAC DAY 2

Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
5.15 PM - 6.30 PM		<p><b>OPEN HOUSE: SPEAKING FOR OURSELVES: VOICES OF AUTISTIC SELF-ADVOCATES AND LIVED EXPERIENCES</b></p> <p><b>DISCUSSANTS:</b>            Ms. Alice Mamaga            Akosua Amoako,            Ms. Betsy Selvam,            Mr. Pranav Kumar Rajagopal,            Ms. Asha Sreedhar,  <b>MODERATOR:</b>            Ms. Mugdha Kalra</p>	<p><b>HUMAN LIBRARY: MENTAL HEALTH OF PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH AUTISM</b></p> <p><b>DISCUSSANTS:</b>            Ms. Sita Krishnamurthy,            Dr. Keerthana Thattavarthi,            Dr. Alka A. Subramanyam,            Ms. Shoba Sundar  <b>FACILITATOR:</b>            Dr. Arun Kishore</p>		



## GAC DAY 3

Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
8.00 AM - 9.00 AM	<b>ORAL PRESENTATIONS SESSION 3</b>		<b>ORAL PRESENTATIONS SESSION 4</b>		
9.00 AM - 9.45 AM		<p><b>KEYNOTE: NEURODIVERSITY WITHOUT BORDERS: INNOVATIONS SHAPING AUTISM CARE GLOBALLY</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKER:</b>            Dr. Valsamma Eapen  <b>CHAIR:</b>            Dr. Lonnie Zwaigenbaum</p>			





# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

**GAC DAY 3**

**Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026**

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
9.45 AM - 10.30 AM		<b>KEYNOTE:</b> <b>COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES IN RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED SETTINGS</b>  <b>SPEAKER:</b> Dr. Naoufel Gaddour  <b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Ammar Albanna, Dr. Satya Raj			
10.30 PM- 11.00 AM	<b>Coffee Break and E-Poster Viewing</b>				
11.00 AM - 11.45 AM		<b>KEYNOTE:</b> <b>DISABILITY CERTIFICATION/ UDID CERTIFICATION- UNIFORMITY AND STANDARDIZATION: BANE OR BOON?</b>  <b>SPEAKER:</b> Dr. Alka A. Subramanyam  <b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Rajesh Sagar			
11.00 AM - 12.30 PM			<b>SYMPOSIUM:</b> <b>ELECTRIC PATHWAYS, EMERGING POSSIBILITIES: NEUROMODULATION IN AUTISM</b>  <b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Nishant Goyal, Dr. Sreeraj V S  <b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. G.R.K Sarma, Dr. Kasturi S		



# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

**GAC DAY 3**

**Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026**

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
12.30 PM - 1.30 PM	<b>Lunch Break and E-Poster Viewing</b>				
1.30 PM - 3.00 PM		<p><b>THE FUTURE WE WANT FOR AUTISTIC ADULTS (2035)</b></p> <p><b>IN CONVERSATION WITH:</b> Ms. Merry Barua, Mr. G Vijaya Raghavan</p> <p><b>HOSTED BY:</b> Dr. Henal Shah</p>	<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: MEDICAL COMORBIDITIES IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Minal V Kekatpure, Dr. Nelia Mathew</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Swarnarekha Bhat, Dr. Nandini Mundkur</p>	<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: DIGITAL TOOLS &amp; AI BASED INTERVENTIONS</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Ms. Alice Mamaga Akosua Amoako, Dr. Matthew Belmonte Dr. Suresh Sundaram, Dr. Sridhar Bodapati,</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Shyam Rajagopalan</p>	
3.10 PM - 4.45 PM		<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: UNDERSTANDING GENDER DYSPHORIA IN AUTISTIC YOUTH</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr Henal Shah, Dr. Porpavai Kasiannan</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Nandita De Sousa</p>	<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: DESIGNING SENSORY-FRIENDLY PUBLIC SPACES FOR AUTISM INCLUSION</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Ms. Gita Balakrishnan, Mr. Joseph Bedford</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Mr. G Vijaya Raghavan, Mr. Ravi Ranganathan</p>	<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: COMPETENCY-BASED MEDICAL EDUCATION IN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS FOR INDIAN MEDICAL GRADUATES AND POSTGRADUATES</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Kiran Kumar, Dr. H R Vinay, Dr. M Kishor</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Rajesh Sagar, Dr. Prarthana Karumbaiah K</p>	<p><b>ASK ME ANYTHING: FINANCIAL PLANNING AND LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN AND TEENS WITH AUTISM INTERACTIVE Q &amp; A</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Mr. Sameer Tandon, Mr. Gopinathan Ramakrishnan</p> <p><b>MODERATOR:</b> Dr. Raghavendra Kumar</p>
4.45 PM - 5.00 PM	<b>Coffee Break and E-Poster Viewing</b>				





# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

**GAC DAY 3**

**Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026**

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
5.00 PM - 6.00 PM		<b>PANEL DISCUSSION:</b> <b>BEYOND THE BIOMEDICAL: CAM, AYUSH AND YOGA-BASED APPROACHES IN AUTISM CARE</b>  <b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Madhuri Vaidyeswar, Dr. Pallavi Priyam, Dr. Koyeli Sengupta, Dr. Sindhu Shankar S <b>FACILITATOR:</b> Dr. Hiral Kotadia	<b>SYMPOSIUM:</b> <b>DESIGNING AN ARTS-BASED CURRICULUM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER.</b>  <b>SPEAKERS:</b> Ms. Bela Joshi, Ms. Akshayee Shetty <b>CHAIR:</b> Ms. Gayathri Rajan		<b>HUMAN LIBRARY:</b> <b>INCLUSIVEDUNIYA SIB-TALKS</b>  <b>HOSTED BY:</b> Ms. Pooja Sharma, Ms. Charuvi Dembla  <b>DISCUSSANTS:</b> Mr. Hemanth Marur, Ms. Dhanya P Nayak, Mr. B Praveen Karthik, Ms. Raksha VM
6.05 PM- 7.00 PM		<b>ROUND TABLE:</b> <b>ACADEMIC CHALLENGES AND CLASSROOM SOLUTIONS</b>  <b>SPEAKERS:</b> Ms. Saritha Alexander, Dr. Rajani Padmanabhan, Dr. Rita James, Dr. Rosa Hoekstra, Ms. Neetu P <b>FACILITATOR:</b> Dr. Nandita De Sousa	<b>PANEL DISCUSSION:</b> <b>PARENTING ON THE SPECTRUM: JOURNEYS, STRATEGIES, AND SHARED WISDOM</b>  <b>PANELISTS:</b> Dr. Sunita Maleku Amatya, Ms. Mary Chaitanya, Ms. Mugdha Kalra, Ms. Prachi Deo <b>MODERATOR:</b> Ms. Deepa Bhat Nair		
7.00 PM	<b>Cultural Program and Dinner</b>				



# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 4

Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall
8.00 AM - 9.00 AM	ORAL PRESENTATIONS SESSION 5			
9.00 AM - 9.45 AM		<p><b>KEYNOTE:</b> UNDERSTANDING AUTISM IN GIRLS AND WOMEN</p> <p><b>SPEAKER:</b> Dr. Porpavai Kasiannan</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Henal Shah, Dr. Harshini Manohar</p>		
9.45 AM - 10.30 AM		<p><b>KEYNOTE: CO-CREATING WITH PATIENTS AND COMMUNITIES: DRIVING INNOVATION IN AUTISM CARE</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKER:</b> Dr. Ammar Albanna</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Naoufel Gaddour Dr. Naresh Nebhinani</p>		
10.30 AM - 11.00 AM	Coffee Break and E-Poster Viewing			
11.00 AM - 12.00 PM		<p><b>PLENARY:</b> PERSPECTIVES ON ACHIEVING TIMELY AND NEURO-AFFIRMATIVE AUTISM DIAGNOSES.</p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Lonnie Zwaigenbaum, Dr. Nandita De Sousa</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Matthew Belmonte</p>		





# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 4

Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall
11.00 AM - 12.30 PM			<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: AUTISM AND BULLYING: BUILDING SAFE PEER RELATIONSHIPS IN SCHOOLS</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Ms. Sony Gill, Ms. Chitra Solomon, Ms. Betsy Selvam</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Rajendra K.M</p>	
12.30 PM - 1.30 PM	Lunch Break and E-Poster Viewing			
1.30 PM - 2.15 PM		<p><b>KEYNOTE: PHARMACOTHERAPY IN AUTISM: WHAT WE KNOW, WHAT WE DO, AND WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKER:</b> Dr. Paramala Santosh</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. John Vijay Sagar, Dr. Nishant Goyal</p>		
1.30 PM - 3.00 PM			<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: SEXUALITY &amp; PUBERTY IN ADOLESCENTS WITH AUTISM: WHAT FAMILIES NEED TO KNOW</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Venkata Lakshmi, Ms. Aarti C Rajaratnam</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Sangeeta Saksena</p>	



# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 4

Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall
3.10 PM - 4.40 PM		<p><b>ANSWERING THE "WHAT AFTER ME?" QUESTION: THE UHURU MODEL</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Gitanjali G Govindrajan, Ms. Yashaswini Gupta, Ms. Palak Chanana</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Sunita Maleku Amatya, Dr Priyanka Nambiar</p>	<p><b>SYMPOSIUM: PSYCHOTHERAPY IN AUTISM: STRATEGIES FOR ADOLESCENTS WITH PSYCHIATRIC COMORBIDITIES</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Sowmya Bhaskaran, Dr. Lakshmi Shiva</p> <p><b>CHAIR:</b> Dr. Uttara Chari Dr. Sweta Sheth</p>	<p><b>STORY CIRCLES: GRANDPARENT JOURNEYS IN AUTISM</b></p> <p><b>HOSTED BY:</b> Dr. Mathew Varghese</p> <p><b>DISCUSSANTS:</b> Mr. K. Satya Prasad, Dr. G. Aruna, Mr. V. Raghunathan</p>
4.50 PM - 5.50 PM		<p><b>ROUND TABLE: AUTISM ACROSS CULTURES: GLOBAL LESSONS FROM FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKERS:</b> Dr. Rosa Hoekstra, Ms. Alice Mamaga Akosua Amoako, Dr. Naoufel Gaddour, Dr. Ammar Albanna, Dr. Harshini Manohar</p> <p><b>MODERATOR:</b> Dr Henal Shah</p>		







# SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

**GAC DAY 5**

**Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**Time**

**St. John's Main Auditorium**

**9:00 AM-  
9:45 AM**

**PLENARY: AUTISM AND CHILD SAFETY: IDENTIFYING AND SUPPORTING CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ABUSE**

**SPEAKERS:**

**Dr. Shaibya Saldanha, Dr. Keerthana Thatavarthi**

**CHAIR:**

**Dr. Satya Raj**

**9:45 AM -  
10:45 AM**

**KEYNOTE: FROM BENCH TO VILLAGE: THE CMC VELLORE MODEL IN AUTISM SERVICE INNOVATION**

**SPEAKER:**

**Dr. Paul Russell**

**CHAIR:**

**Dr. Shoba Srinath**

**10:45 AM -  
11:00 AM**

**Coffee Break**

**11:00 AM-  
12:00 PM**

**CLOSING CONVERSATION: THE ST. JOHN'S MODEL FOR AUTISM CARE: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE**

**SPEAKERS:**

**Dr. Vijaya Raman, Dr. Suhas Chandran**

**CHAIR:**

**Dr. Paul Russell, Dr. Lonnie Zwaigenbaum**

**12:00 PM -  
1.00 PM**

**Valedictory**

- **Lessons from GAC 2026 and the path ahead**
- **Award Distribution**

**KINDLY NOTE:**

**The scientific agenda is subject to some changes based on logistical or other unforeseen challenges.**



gac.jan2026@gmail.com

gacregister2026@gmail.com

scientificcommittee.gac2026@gmail.com

scientificcommittee.gac2026@gmail.com

Mr. Shashanka: 9964153557

[www.globalautismconvention.com](http://www.globalautismconvention.com)

