

Bhaktivedanta Research Center

Academic Events Report



Table of Contents

Overview.....	5
Events.....	6
Conferences.....	6
Workshops.....	8
Lectures.....	9
Event Partners.....	10
Event Speakers.....	12
International Speakers.....	12
National Speakers.....	13
Reports.....	22
Inauguration ceremony of Bhaktivedanta Research Centre (BRC), Pune.....	22
International Faculty Development Programme.....	25
Reinventing the India Experience.....	28
Spiritual Well-Being and Stress Management: Religio-Psychological Perspectives.....	33
National Education Policy & Bhagavad Gita.....	35
Psychological Well-being During Uncertain Times and Beyond: An Introduction to Holistic Health & Living life with a positive Approach.....	41
Corona Pandemic Lockdown: A Blessing in Disguise for Restoration of Religious Sentiments of Ganga & Yamuna Rivers and Sustainability.....	51
Hermeneutics, A Way and Method In Religious Studies.....	65
Srila Prabhupada Spiritual University Conference.....	66
Establishing the Discipline of Religious Studies in India.....	74
Inauguration of Bhaktivedanta Research Center, Mumbai.....	81
The Context of Chaitanya-Vaishnavism: Bhakti.....	87
Gaudiya Vaishnava Darshana Acharya.....	88
Various Dimensions of Vaishnava Puranas.....	89
Gaudiya Vaishnava Philosophy and Ecology.....	93
Vaishnavism: Theory and Practice.....	96
Relevance, Role and Resurgence of Vaishnavism in 21 st Century Bengal.....	98
The Various Aspects of Manuscriptology and Palaeography.....	99
Second National Workshop on Curriculum Development for De-novo Deemed University.....	101
National Workshop on Curriculum Development for De-novo Deemed University.....	102
The Bhagavad Gita: A Philosophical Deconstruction.....	106
Samvada Lecture Series.....	114
Deciphering pilgrimage networks on the basis of Panda records.....	114

The Expansive Musical Aesthetics in Padavali Kirtan.....	115
Chaitanya's Desire.....	116
Religious Diversity in a Spirit of Devotion: Universal Applications of Mantra and Puja.....	117
Vaishnavism and Academia.....	118

Overview

At the Bhaktivedanta Research Centre (BRC), we are committed to a world class standard of excellence in research and scholarship in the history, philosophy, aesthetics, sociology, religion and culture as found in ancient Indian literary heritage. With a vision to perpetuate this knowledge, BRC frequently holds conferences, workshops and lectures in these myriad disciplines in collaboration with other renowned academic institutions across the world. It provides a unique platform for interactions between students and professors of both national and international repute, thereby fostering networking and mutual learning.



25

PARTNERS

Partners from all across
the globe collaborated
together



29

EVENTS

The events included
conferences, workshops
and lectures



103

SPEAKERS

Eminent personalities
made their valuable
contribution

Events

Conferences

1. Inauguration of Bhaktivedanta Research Centre, Pune
BRC Pune, affiliated to the Savitribai Phule Pune University, inaugurated at the ISKCON temple premises at Katraj-Kondhwa Road, Pune on 9th September, 2021
2. International Faculty Development Programme
A five-day international faculty development programme organised in November 2020 on “Research Methods in Social Sciences with focus on Cultural Studies” with St. Xavier’s College, Sri Jagannath Research Centre of St. Paul’s Cathedral Mission College, Kolkata Society for Asian Studies and Stockholm University, Sweden
3. Reinventing the India Experience
International Travel & Tourism Conference held on 29th, 30th and 31st October 2020
4. International Webinar on ‘Spiritual Well-Being and Stress Management’: Religio-Psychological Perspectives
A three-day international online conference organised in September 2020 with the Kolkata Society for Asian Studies
5. National Education Policy and Bhagavad Gita
A one-day conference organised in August 2020
6. Psychological Wellbeing during Uncertain Times & Beyond: Introduction to Holistic Health & Living Life with a Positive Approach
A one-day national conference organised in August 2020
7. Corona Pandemic Lockdown: A Blessing in Disguise for Restoration of Religious Sentiments of Ganga & Yamuna Rivers and Sustainability
A one-day National conference, held on 17th May 2020 with Mansi Bharat Gada Degree College of Commerce and Jalbiradari, Maharashtra Core Team
8. Hermeneutics, A Way and Method in Religious Studies
A one-day international conference organised in December 2019 with the University of Mumbai
9. A Conference for Srila Prabhupada Spiritual University
A conference held on 14th July 2019

10. Establishing the discipline of Comparative Religion Studies in India
A one-day international conference organised in December 2019
11. Inauguration of the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha Research Center (BVRC)
The inauguration of BVRC, ISKCON's by Honourable Education Minister of Maharashtra Shri Vinod Tawde and His Holiness Radhanath Swami Maharaj, Founder of the BVRC on 1st September 2018
12. The Context of Chaitanya-Vaishnavism: Bhakti
A two-day conference organised in February 2018 with the University of Calcutta
13. Gaudiya Vaishnava Darshana Acharya
A two-day conference organised in February 2018 with Baghbar Gaudiya Math
14. Various Dimensions of Vaishnava Puranas
A two-day international conference organised in January 2018 with the University of Mumbai
15. Hinduism and Ecology: Towards a sustainable future
A four-day international conference organised in December 2017 with Yale University
16. Gaudiya Vaishnava Philosophy and Ecology
A one-day international conference organised in December 2017 with Ramnarain Ruia College
17. Vaishnavism: Theory and Practice
A one-day international conference organised in December 2017 with Jadavpur University
18. Relevance, Role and Resurgence of Vaishnavism in 21st Century
A two-day international conference organised in September 2017 with Shree Halari Oswal College, affiliated to Mumbai University

Workshops

1. The Various Aspects of Manuscriptology and Palaeography

A two-day virtual international workshop organized in July 2021 with the Asiatic Society

2. National Workshop on Combating risk of Covid 19 pandemic on human psychological health and immune system by Yoga and Spiritual Counselling

A national workshop organised in May 2020 with the Dept. of Philosophy, University of Mumbai & Mansi Bharat Gada Degree College of Commerce, Bhiwandi

3. Second National Workshop on Curriculum Development for De-novo Deemed University

A one-day conference organised in Nov 2019

4. National Workshop on Curriculum Development for De-novo Deemed University

A one-day conference organised in Nov 2019

5. Religious Studies and Vaishnavism

A one-day international workshop organized in July 2018 with Ramakrishna Mission, Stockholm University and Sri Chaitanya Study and Research Centre

Lectures

1. The Bhagavad Gita: A Philosophical Deconstruction

A lecture organised on 28th January 2022 with Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College, Mumbai

Samvad Academic Lecture Series

1. Deciphering pilgrimage networks on the basis of Panda records

By Dr. Shekhar Bhowmick in 21st Dec 2021

2. The Expansive Musical Aesthetics in Padavali Kirtan

By Dr. Eben Graves in March 2020

3. Chaitanya's Desire

By Acharya Srivatsa Goswami in Feb 2020

4. Religious Diversity in a Spirit of Devotion: Universal Applications of Mantra and Puja

By Prof. Christopher Chapple in Sept 2019

5. Vaishnavism and Academia

By Dr. Gopal Gupta in Aug 2019

Event Partners





Event Speakers

International Speakers

1. Dr. Abhishek Ghosh

Director
Institute of Vaishnava Studies
Gainesville, Florida, USA

2. Dr. David Haberman

Professor and Former Chair, Dept. of Religious Studies
Indiana University, USA

3. Edith Félix

ICT Security Engineer
Co-president
Coordination Eau Ile-de-France

4. Dr. Ferdinando Sardella

Associate Professor, Dept. of Ethnology
History of Religions and Gender Studies
Stockholm University, Sweden

5. Dr. Ithamar Theodor

Associate Professor
Zefat Academic College, Israel

6. Jean-Claude Oliva

Geologist and Journalist (Science and Environment)

7. Dr. Kenneth Valpey (Krishna-Kshetra Swami)

Post- Doctoral Fellow, Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies
University of Oxford, UK

8. Dr. Mans Broo

Senior Lecturer
Abu Akademi University, Finland

9. Prakriti Goswami

PhD Scholar, Indiana University, USA

M. Phil. Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge

10. Dr. Ravi Gupta

Charles Redd Chair of Religious Studies

Associate Professor, Dept. of Religious Studies

Utah State University, USA

11. Dr. Rita Sharma

Director, GYU Berkeley's Center for Dharma studies

12. Dr. Somdatta Mukherjee

Université Paris Descartes Sorbonne, France

13. Dr. Ulrika Martensson

Professor, Dept. of Philosophy and Religious Studies

Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

National Speakers

1. Dr. Abhishek Bose

Head

Dept. of Comparative Indian Language and Literature

University of Calcutta, Kolkata

2. Dr. Arun Bandopadhyay

ICSSR Senior Fellow, IDSK

The Asiatic Society, Kolkata

3. Dr. Abhijit Sadhukhan

Ph.D Fellow, Dept. of Comparative Literature

Jadavpur University, Kolkata

4. Acharya Shrivatsa Goswami

Director, Sri Chaitanya Prema Samsthana, Vrindavan

Former Faculty Member, School of Divinity, Harvard University

5. Aditya Dhanwatay

Vice President, Vidarbha Tiger Research Foundation Co-owns Tiger Trails

6. Amey Belorkar
VP, IDBI Capital Markets & Securities Ltd
7. Dr. Amit Dey
Professor, Dept. of History
University of Calcutta, Kolkata
8. Dr. Amiya P. Sen
Retired Professor, Dept. of History
Jamia Milia Islamia University, New Delhi
Visiting Fellow, Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies
9. Dr. Ajit Thete
Director, Centre for Development of Leadership in Education
10. Ajay Piramal
Industrialist and Social Entrepreneur
11. Amrit Singh
MD, TransIndus
12. Prof. Dr. Bhushan Patwardhan
Vice Chairman University Grant Commission
13. Dr. Chandrakant Puri
Chair Professor Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Contemporary Studies
14. Claudia Wagner
MD, Fit Reisen
15. D. Venkatesan
Regional Director (West & Central India)
Ministry of Tourism, Govt. Of India
16. Dr. Dhumal
Senior Professor, Department of Botany, University of Pune
17. Prof. Dipak Kumar Kar
Pro-vice Chancellor (Academic)

University of Calcutta

18. Farhat Jamal

Group Advisor, Hospitalities Hiranandani Communities
Chairman Committee – Travel Tourism & Hospitality
Indian Merchant of Chambers

19. Gauri Mahulikar

Dean of Faculties
Chinmaya Vishwavidyapeeth (CVV)

20. Dr. Geeta Ramana

HOD, Philosophy Dept., Mumbai University

21. HG Gauranga Das

Director, Administration
Bhaktivedanta Research Centre

22. Hrishikesh Mafatlal

Chairman, Arvind Mafatlal Group

23. Dr. Hiren Sarkar

External Expert, Centre for the Study of Religion and Society,
Jadavpur University
Former Chief, Development Policy
United Nations, UNESCAP, Bangkok

24. Hemant Rajopadhye

Senior Fellow and Head, Centre for the Study of Indian Knowledge Traditions
ORF Mumbai

25. Dr. Juhi Deshmukh

Assistant professor, Dept. of Psychology
Savitribai Phule Pune University

26. Julian Mathews

Founder & Chairman
THE TOFTIGERS INITIATIVE

27. Karishma Asoodani

Senior correspondent Barkha Dutt TV. Ltd
Independent Financial Journalist
Member of youth delegate, World Water Council

28. Dr. Keith D'souza

Rector, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai

29. Prof. Kaberi Chakraborty

Associate Professor, Dept. of Political Science
University of Calcutta, Kolkata

30. Kala Acarya

Director
K. J. Somaiya Bharatiya Sanskriti Peetham

31. Kamlesh Barot

Director
Barot Hotels & VIE Hospitality Pvt. Ltd.

32. Prof. Dr. Kurane Anjali

Dean, Faculty of Humanities
Savitribai Phule Pune University

33. Kushal Desai

Chairman and MD
Apar Industries

34. Dr. Madhavi Narsale

Assistant Professor, Dept of Sanskrit
University of Mumbai

35. Dr. Manali Londhe

Principal & Asst. Professor, Dept of Philosophy
S.K. Somaiya College, Mumbai

36. Mrs. Maya Shahani

Chairperson
Thadomal Sahani Center for Management

37. Meenakshi Sharma

DG, Tourism, Govt. of India

38. Michael Dominic

Director, Operations, CGH Earth

39. Mili Sham Wittmann

Founder/C.E.O.

TATTVA Tourism Solutions

40. Dr. Murlidhar Kurhade

Dean, Faculty of Arts

Mumbai University

41. Prof. (Dr.) N. J. Pawar

Vice Chancellor

Dr. D. Y. Patil Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University), Pune

42. Dr. Namita Nimbalkar

Organizing Secretary, Dept. Of Philosophy

University of Mumbai

43. Neela Lad

Retired Deputy Director General

Ministry of Tourism, Govt. Of India

44. Prof. (Dr.) Nitin R. Karmalkar

Vice- Chancellor

Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune

45. Prof. Nrisimha Prasad Bhaduri

Professor, Dept. of Bengali

University of Calcutta, Kolkata.

46. Dr. Nitin R. Karmalkar

Vice Chancellor

Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune

47. Dr. Pandit Palande

Vice Chancellor, Bihar University

48. Praveen Singh Pardeshi
Global Programme Coordinator, The Defeat-NCD Partners
United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
49. Pronab Sarkar
President, Indian Association of Tour Operators
51. Dr. Rajarshi Chakraborty
Assistant Professor, Dept. of History
The University of Burdwan, Burdwan
52. Rajeev Shrivastava
Executive Chairman, Basil Partners
53. Dr. Rajendra Singh
Magsaysay Awardee
Stockholm Water Prize Awardee
Founder of NGO, Tarun Bharat Sangh
54. Dr. Rajnish Mishra
Associate Professor, Dept. of Sanskrit and Indic Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
55. Prof. Dr. Ram G. Takwale
Former Vice Chancellor of the University of Pune (1978 to 1984)
Former Vice Chancellor of the Indira Gandhi National Open University
Former Chairman of National Assessment and Accreditation Council
56. Dr. Ranjana Ray
Prof. Emeritus, Dept. of Anthropology
University of Calcutta, Kolkata
57. Dr. Ravindra Kulkarni
Pro- Vice Chancellor, University of Mumbai
58. Reema Lokesh
Founder, Reemarkabl

59. Dr. Ruby Sain

Emeritus Professor, Dept. of Sociology
Adamas University, Kolkata

60. Rupinder Barar

ADG, Policy Planning & Implementation,
Ministry of Tourism, Govt of India

61. Sanjay Basu

Co-founder & Chairman, Far Horizon Tours

62. Dr. Sanjay Deshmukh

Vice Chancellor, University of Mumbai

63. Sanjeet – Travtalk

Director, Buzz Travel Marketing India Pvt. Ltd.
Publisher, Durga Das Publications Pvt. Ltd.

64. Dr. Santanu Dey

Associate Professor, Dept. of History
Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, Belur Math, Belur (West Bengal)

65. Dr. Satish Modh

Director, Vivekananda Institute of Management Studies

66. Dr. Shakuntala Gawde

Assistant Professor, Dept. Of Sanskrit
University of Mumbai

67. Dr. Shubhada Joshi

Former HOD, Dept. Of Philosophy
University of Mumbai

68. Dr. Siddharth Satpathy

Assistant Professor, Dept. of English, School of Humanities
University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad

69. Smeeta Gulvady
Head, The School of Excellence
70. Dr. Snehal Donde
Jalnayak, Government of Maharashtra & Convenor Ganga Mission
Member World Water Council
71. Dr. Sk. Makbul Islam
Director, Sri Jagannath Research Centre
Associate Professor, St. Paul's Cathedral Mission College
University of Calcutta, Kolkata
72. Dr. Srijani Bhattacharjee
Senior Research Fellow
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata
73. Swami Bhajananda
Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Belur
74. Swami Tattwasarananda
Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Belur
75. Swami Shastrajnananda
Ramakrishna Mission, Belurmath, Belur
76. Dr. S. Kannan
PhD & author, Vedic Management
77. Dr. Sandeep Bahvsar
Head, Learning Resource Center
Wellington Institute of Management
78. Dr. Suhas Pednekar
Vice Chancellor, Mumbai University
79. Prof. Dr. S.B. Nimse
Former Vice Chancellor
Lucknow University & SRTM University Nanded (MH)

80. Dr. Sharmishtha L. Matkar
Principal, Patkar – Varde College
81. Prof. Sraboni Chatterjee
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Psychology
Bijoy Krishna Girl's College, Kolkata
82. Dr. Sumanta Rudra
Dean, Academic Affairs
Bhaktivedanta Research Center, Kolkata
83. Thomas Ramapuram
Joint Director, Sales- Evolve Back
Orange Country Resorts and Hotels Ltd.
84. Dr. Tinni Goswami
Head, Dept. of History
St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata
85. Dr. Uma Shankar
Principal & HOD Philosophy
SIES college, Mumbai
86. Dr. Vivekananda Banerjee
The Asiatic Society, Kolkata
87. Dr. Vijay Bhatkar
Chancellor, Nalanda university
Chairman of Governing committee of IIT - New Delhi
Chairman of "Unnat Bharat" abhiyan
88. Vishnu Magare
Pro- Vice Chancellor
SNDT Women's University
89. Vivek Sawant
Managing Director
Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Limited (MKCL)
90. Vrushali Potnis Damle

CA, Founder, The Dhi Project

91. Zalam Chaubal

Director, Kesari Tours

Reports

Inauguration ceremony of Bhaktivedanta Research Centre (BRC), Pune

Inauguration ceremony of Bhaktivedanta Research Centre (BRC), Pune, on 9th September, 2021 in affiliation with Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune

Inauguration of the
Bhaktivedanta Research Center (BRC), Pune
Affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University, Ref. No. CA/742 Dt. 15/07/2021





Prof. (Dr.) Nitin R. Karmalkar
Hon Vice Chancellor,
Savitribai Phule Pune University



Padma Bhushan Dr. Vijay Bhatkar
Chancellor of Nalanda University



Gauranga Das
BRC Trustee and
ISKCON Governing Body Commissioner

Thursday, 9th Sep 2021

Kamalnayan Bajaj Atithi Bhavan
Hall No.2, ISKCON-NVCC, Survey No. 50,
Katraj Kondhwa Road, Pune- 411048.

Hon. Rajesh Pande
Governors Nominee on
Management Council SPPLU, Pune

Prof. (Dr.) Anjali Kurane
Dean, Faculty of Humanities,
SPPLU, Pune

Prof. (Dr.) Sadananda More
President - Maharashtra State Board of
Literature and Culture
Chairman - Smt. Nandev Adhyasa, Pune

Radheshyam Das
(President, ISKCON Pune)

Prof. Dr. K. N. Dhumal
(Hon. Director)

Dr. Sumanta Rudra
(Director)

Dr. J. S. Chitode
(Dean Academics)

Shri. Sanjay Bhosale
(Director Admin)

Bhushan Kumar Chaudhari
(Secretary)



Speakers

- I. Dr. Nitin R. Karmalkar
Vice Chancellor
Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune
- II. Padma Bhushan Dr. Vijay Bhatkar
Chancellor
Nalanda University
- III. Gauranga Das
Trustee
Bhaktivedanta Research Centre

Bhaktivedanta Research Centre has received affiliation from Savitribai Phule University, Pune to study and research Indian saintly literature. The centre was recently inaugurated at the ISKCON temple premises at Katraj-Kondhwa Road. By the auspicious presence of Padma Bhushan Dr. Vijay Bhatkar, Chancellor of Nalanda University and Prof. (Dr.) Nitin R. Karmalkar, Hon Vice Chancellor, Savitribai Phule Pune University.

On this occasion, Trustee of Bhaktivedanta Research Center, Gauranga Das; President of Pune ISKCON, Radheshyam Das; Director of Bhaktivedanta Research Center, Dr. Sumanta Rudra; Director Dr. K. N. Dhumal; presiding Dr. Janardan Chitode; Shri. Sanjay Bhosale; Dean of Commerce Dr. Parag Kalkar; Dean of Humanities, Dr. Anjali Kurne; Shri Rajesh Pandey of Management Committee of Savitribai Phule University of Pune, etc. were present.

All the dignitaries appreciated the initiative of BRC for collect, preserve, research and teach principle in the area of philosophy, arts, music, yoga based on the vision, mission, teachings of saints of India.

Dr. Vijay Bhatkar and Prof. Dr. Nitin R. Karmalkar given assurance to provide all kind of support to BRC-Pune development.

The program was coordinated by Bhushan Kumar Chaudhari; hosted by Sanjay Bhosale and the Vote of Thanks was given by Professor Dr. K.N. Dhumal.



International Faculty Development Programme

A five-day international faculty development programme was organized in November 2020 on “Research Methods in Social Sciences with focus on Cultural Studies” with St. Xavier’s College, Sri Jagannath Research Centre of St. Paul’s Cathedral Mission College, Kolkata Society for Asian Studies and Stockholm University, Sweden



St. Xavier's College
(Autonomous), Kolkata
NAAC ACCREDITED A++; Ranked 7th in NIRF 2020 under 'College Category'
College of Excellence; ISO 9001:2015 Certified; College with Special Heritage Status

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, RAGHABPUR CAMPUS
AND
INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CELL,
ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) KOLKATA**
organize
**A FIVE - DAY ONLINE INTERNATIONAL
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**
on
**'RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES
WITH FOCUS ON CULTURAL STUDIES'**
in collaboration with
BHAKTIVEDANTA RESEARCH CENTRE, KOLKATA
**SRI JAGANNATH RESEARCH CENTRE,
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL MISSION COLLEGE, KOLKATA**
KOLKATA SOCIETY FOR ASIAN STUDIES
**THE DEPARTMENT OF ETHNOLOGY,
HISTORY OF RELIGIONS AND GENDER STUDIES,
STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY**

Platform : ZOOM
23rd November to 27th November, 2020, 5.00 PM - 8.00 PM
Eligibility Criterion – Faculty Members/ Research Scholars/ Independent Researchers.
Maximum Number of Participants – 40
No Registration Fee.
E-Certificates will be awarded to active participants.

[Click Here To Register](#)



Through this workshop, the participants were able to get an idea of the recent trends of research in social sciences and humanities focusing on the core of the qualitative methods aimed at research designing, hypothesis formation, data collection, survey methods, field study, content analysis, etc. with a notion of criticality. This workshop also highlighted the research issues related to Indic studies or Indology.

The following were the objectives of the workshop:

Objectives

1. To have a better understanding of the qualitative methods in the said field.
2. Developing basic skills of subjective analysis.
3. To know the theories related to social science and humanities.
4. To get an idea on the essence of

Indic Studies with special emphasis on Indian philosophy, manuscriptology, heritage and culture studies.

Speakers

- 1) Prof. Kaberi Chakraborty
Associate Professor, Dept. of Political Science
Calcutta University
- 2) Dr. Santanu Dey

Associate Professor, Dept. of History
Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, Belur Math, Belur

3) Dr. Sk. Makbul Islam

Associate Professor, Dept. of Bengali
St. Paul's Cathedral Mission College, Kolkata

4) Dr. Amit Dey

Professor, Dept. of History
University of Calcutta, Kolkata

5) Abhishek Bose

Head, Dept. of Comparative Indian Language and Literature
University of Calcutta, Kolkata

6) Dr. Rajnish Mishra

Associate Professor, Dept. of Sanskrit and Indic Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

7) Dr. Srijani Bhattacharjee

Senior Research Fellow
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata

8) Dr. Siddharth Satpathy

Assistant Professor, Dept. of English,
School of Humanities, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad

9) Dr. Tinni Goswami

Head, Dept. of History
St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata

10) Dr. Ranjana Ray

Prof. Emeritus, Dept. of Anthropology
University of Calcutta, Kolkata

11) Dr. Rajarshi Chakraborty

Assistant Professor, Dept. of History
Burdwan University

- 12) Prof. Sraboni Chatterjee
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Psychology
Bijoy Krishna Girls' College
- 13) Dr. Amiya P. Sen
Retired Professor, Dept. of History
Visiting Fellow, Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies, Oxford University
Jamia Milia Islamia University, New Delhi
- 14) Dr. Ferdinando Sardella
Associate Professor, Dept. of Ethnology
History of Religions and Gender Studies Stockholm University, Sweden
- 15) Dr. Kenneth Valpey (Krishna-Kshetra Swami Maharaj)
Research Fellow, Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies
- 16) Dr. Ulrika Martensson
Professor, Dept. of Philosophy and Religious Studies
Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway
- 17) Dr. David Haberman
Professor and Former Chair, Dept. of Religious Studies
Indiana University, USA
- 18) Dr. Abhishek Ghosh
Director
Institute of Vaishnava Studies, Gainesville, Florida, USA

Reinventing the India Experience

An international Travel & Tourism Conference held on 29th, 30th and 31st October 2020



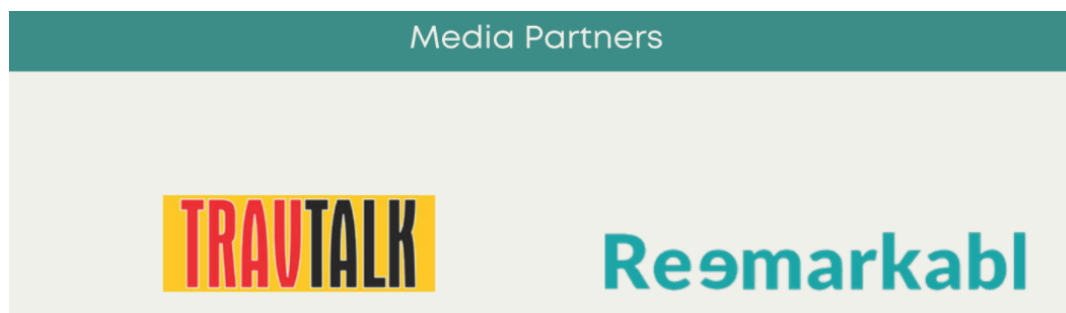
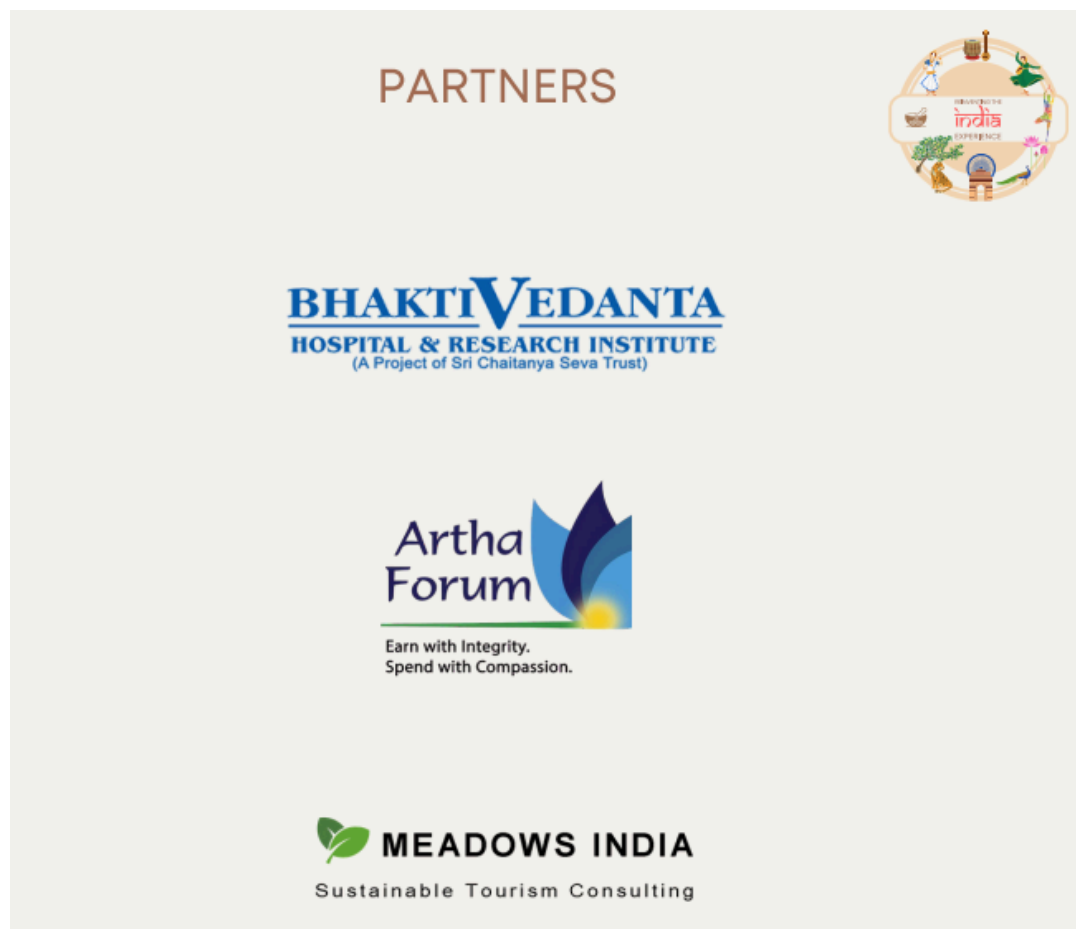
Unprecedented uncertainty and anxiety have forced travel and tourism to take a back seat due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The travel trade sector has been amongst the most affected, globally. Though phased-out restoration strategies are being designed by different countries worldwide, the industry ambiguities are here to stay for a while. As we all move towards the 'new normal', this extraordinary period calls for a united effort and a harmonized approach to seek innovative and organic opportunities for reopening the sector for creating new possibilities in the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic that has hit travel trade the hardest. GEV and the organisers bring together industry leaders and experts to discuss and debate pioneering initiatives that step beyond the usual to reinvent the India experience. Through collaborative deliberation and intense introspection, this platform aims to lead by example to set the stage and creating a manifesto for the 'new normal' of sustainable Indian travel trade.

Aims & Objectives

- To come together for united vision and pioneering action.
- To build resilience – from challenge to prospect.

- To innovate for sustainable transformation of India travel experiences.

Conference Partners



Speakers

1. Amrit Singh
MD, TransIndus
2. Claudia Wagner
MD, Fit Reisen
3. Gauranga Das
Director
Govardhan Ecovillage Strategy and Communications
4. Hrishikesh Mafatal
Chairman
Arvind Mafatlal Group
5. Kamlesh Barot
Director
Barot Hotels & VIE Hospitality Pvt Ltd. Past President, FHRAI
6. Praveen Singh Pardes
Global Programme Coordinator
The Defeat-NCD Partnership United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
7. Meenakshi Sharma
DG Tourism
Central Govt
8. Thomas Ramapuram
Joint Director Sales
Evolve Back Orange County Resorts and Hotels Ltd.
9. Zelum Chaubal
Director, Kesari Tour

Panelists

1. Amey Belorkar
VP, IDBI Capital Markets & Securities Ltd
2. D. Venkatesan
Regional Director (West & Central India)
Ministry of Tourism
Govt. of India

3. Farhat Jamal

Group Advisor, Hospitalities Hiranandani Communities

Chairman Committee – Travel, Tourism & Hospitality, Indian Merchant of Chambers

4. Julian Matthews

Founder & Chairman

THE TOFTIGERS INITIATIVE

5. Kushal Desai

Chairman and MD

Apar Industries

6. Micheal Dominic

Director, Operations

CGH Earth

7. Mili Sham Wittman

Founder / C.E.O

TATTVA Tourism Solutions

8. Pronab Sarkar

President

Indian Association of Tour Operators

9. Rajeev Shrivastava

Executive Chairman

Basil Partners

10. Rupinder Barar

ADG, Policy Planning & Implementation, MOT, GOI

11. Sanjay Basu

Co-Founder & Chairman

Far Horizon Tours

12. S Swaminathan

Managing Director

Dravidian trails

Moderators

1. Aditya Dhanwatay

Vice President – Vidarbha Tiger Research Foundation
Co - owns Tiger Trails

2. Gauranga Das

Director, Administration
Bhaktivedanta Research Centre

3. Neela Lad

Retired Deputy Director General
Min. Of Tourism, Govt of India

4. Reema Lokes

Founder, Reemarkable

5. Sanjeet – Travtal

Director
Buzz Travel Marketing India Pvt. Ltd.
Publisher, Durga Das Publications Pvt. Ltd.

6. Smeeta Gulvady

Head, The School of Excellence

7. Vrushali Potnis Damle

CA, Founder, The Dhi Project

Spiritual Well-Being and Stress Management: Religio-Psychological Perspectives

A three-day international online conference organised in September 2020 with the Kolkata Society for Asian Studies

The poster is for a 3-day international webinar organized by the Bhaktivedanta Research Centre in collaboration with the Kolkata Society for Asian Studies. The title is 'Spiritual Well-being & Stress Management: Religio-Psychological Perspectives'. The dates are 21st - 23rd Sept. 2020, starting at 6:00 PM onwards. The keynote speaker is Dr. Ferdinando Sardella, Assistant Professor at Stockholm University. A grid of 12 speakers is shown, including Dr. Amit Dey, Dr. George Davis, Dr. Kenneth Volpey, Dr. Mans Broo, Dr. Piyali Chakraborty, Dr. Prathoma Chaudhury, Dr. Ruby Sain, Ms. Shilpa Chheda, Dr. Soumitra Basu, Swami Mahamedhananda, and Dr. Tapati Mukherjee. Convenors are Dr. Sumanta Rudra and Dr. Santanu Dey. The co-ordinator is Dr. Tinni Goswami. Contact person is Shrimanti Ghosal. A Zoom link is provided. A red button says 'Click Here To Register'. A banner at the bottom says 'No Registration Fees E-Certificates to be given'.

Bhaktivedanta Research Centre
in collaboration with
Kolkata Society for Asian Studies
organizes

**'Spiritual Well-being & Stress Management':
Religio-Psychological Perspectives**

3 Day International Webinar

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Ferdinando Sardella
Assistant Professor, Department of Ethnology,
History of Religion and Gender Studies,
Stockholm University, Stockholm

21st - 23rd Sept. 2020
6:00 PM Onwards

Convenors
Dr. Sumanta Rudra
Dean, Bhaktivedanta Research Center
Dr. Santanu Dey
Associate Professor, Department of History, RKM Vidyamandira,
Belur Math, Howrah (Affiliated to Calcutta University)
Dr. Sarmistha De Basu
Secretary, Kolkata Society for Asian Studies

Co-ordinator
Dr. Tinni Goswami
Head, Department of History
St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata

Click Here To Register

Contact Person
Shrimanti Ghosal +91 91237 68165
shrimantighosal3@gmail.com

No Registration Fees
E-Certificates to be given

zoom
Video Communications

The Bhaktivedanta Research Center in collaboration with the Kolkata Society for Asian Studies organized a three-day International Webinar on 'Spiritual Well-Being and Stress Management':

Religio-Psychological Perspectives on 21-23 September starting at 6 pm. The webinar was hosted in a streamyard application which was live streamed on You-tube. The official convenors and coordinator of the webinar were Dr. Santanu Dey, Dr. Sumanta Rudra, Dr. Sarmistha De Basu and Dr. Tinni Goswami respectively. In the difficult times brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic, maintaining mental peace and tranquillity has become a necessity in order to stay resilient and tide over these challenging times. The intent of

the two organisations in holding this event was to explore and discuss various ways of spirituality and stress management to foster holistic well-being. Several scholars of national and international repute participated as speakers and moderators. There were almost 2500 views of the webinar on YouTube. The event was also covered by one of the leading newspapers of Eastern India, Ananda Bazar Patrika on 21st September 2020.

Speakers

- 1) Dr. Tapati Mukherjee
Library Secretary, Asiatic Society, Kolkata
- 2) Dr. Mans Broo

Professor, Abu Akademi University, Finland

- 3) Swami Mahamedhananda
Ramakrishna Mission, Chennai
- 4) Dr. Kenneth Valpey (Krishna-Kshetra Swami)
Research Fellow, Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies
University of Oxford, UK
- 5) Dr. Ferdinando Sardella
Associate Professor, Dept. of Ethnology
History of Religions and Gender Studies
Stockholm University, Sweden
- 6) Dr. Piyali Chakraborty
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Pali
University of Calcutta, Kolkata
- 7) Dr. Ruby Sain
Emeritus Professor, Dept. of Sociology
Adamas University, Kolkata
- 8) Prof. Ranjana Ray
Professor Emeritus,
University of Calcutta, Kolkata
- 9) Dr. Amit Dey
Professor of History, the Dept. of History
Centre For Advanced Studies
University of Calcutta, Kolkata

Moderators

- 1) Dr. Santanu Dey
Associate Professor, Dept. of History
RKM Vidyamandir, Belur Math, Howrah
- 2) Dr. S.K. Makbul Islam
Director, Jagannath Research Centre
- 3) Dr. Tinni Goswami
Head, Dept. of History
St. Xavier's College Autonomous, Kolkata
- 4) Dr. Sumanta Rudra
Dean, Academic Affairs

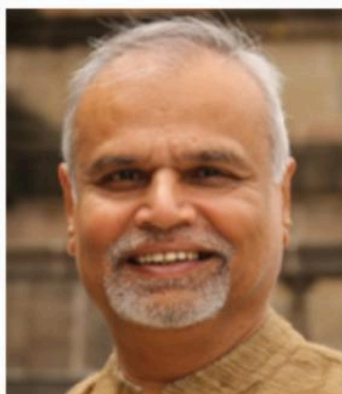
Bhaktivedanta Research Centre, Kolkata
National Education Policy & Bhagavad Gita

One day national conference organized in August 2020 by Bhaktivedanta Research Center, Mumbai



Watch them **LIVE** on **Facebook** discussing the
**National Education policy
& Bhagavad Gita**

on Saturday, August 22nd 2020 at 7-8PM IST



DR. BHUSHAN PATWARDHAN

PhD, FNASc, FAMS
Vice Chairman, University Grants Commission, New Delhi
Professor & Former Director
Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences
Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, INDIA
<https://www.ugc.ac.in/subpage/Vice-Chairman.aspx>



DR. VIJAY BHATKAR

Padma Bhushan Awardee
Chancellor of Nalanda University
Architect of India's first Super Computer 'PARAM'
He is one of the Internationally
Acknowledged Scientist & IT leaders of India
www.vijaybhatkar.org



GAURANGA DAS

Director, Bhaktivedanta Research Center



Introduction of the Speakers	DR. K N DHUMAL	5 Mins
Inaugural Address	DR. BHUSHAN PATWARDHAN	10 Mins
National Education Policy & Bhagavad Gita	DR VIJAY BHATKAR	30 Mins
Concluding Remarks	HG GAURANGA DAS	15 Mins

All the speakers presented the importance of Indian culture and knowledge system based on Bhagavad Gita, Indian heritage. All Indian education system is condensed in Bhagavad Gita. Bhagavad Gita is the universal message.



Speakers

- I. Prof. Dr. Bhushan Patwardhan
UGC-Vice Chairman
- II. Padma Bhushan Dr. Vijay Bhatkar
Chancellor of Nalanda university
Chairman of Governing committee of IIT - New Delhi
Chairman of "Unnat Bharat" abhiyan
- III. Gauranga Das
Director – Administration
Bhaktivedanta Research Centre

Prof. Dr. Bhushan Patwardhan (UGC-Vice Chairman)

Our education system continues to be based on British system. We have lost our originality which was from Gurukul system, Ashram system. We should transform our ancient Gurukul system into Modern Gurukul system. New education system is boldly giving importance to Indian education system. If you are an Indian student, you should know about Indian heritage, Indian culture and knowledge. Even MBBS students should learn about Ayurveda and Yoga. ISKCON is initiating very

different and innovative university. We all of us should bring in Indian education system and build new universities.

Prof. Dr. Vijay Bhatkar

Our education system was incomplete and it has to have some directions. If this policy would have any how involved the message of Bhagavad Gita, then surely this education system would have been completed. We should translate the message of Jagadguru, Sri Krishna which is so penetrating and complete knowledge. If the message of Bhagavad Gita is anyhow involved than our education system which reach to its core.

If Gauranga Das will able to translate it then our education system will be successful. We always shy to present our ancient knowledge. We are never proud to showcase our ancient knowledge in world's leading universities. When Prabhupada went to US his clear message was I want to translate my Guru's and Gita's message and that's how his journey went. With this knowledge Prabhupada transformed youths who were addicted to drugs, loss of lives etc. So, can we transform as Prabhupada already set an example all over the world. Making beautiful temples, making taste foods, beautiful songs, so young people always want to come to you. Cook prasadam and spiritualize the whole process. This was the message of Bhagavad Gita as it is.

Our Jagadguru has given message to Arjuna in the battlefield and told him what to do in such crisis. So, can we implement this knowledge and tell youth what should they do in such crisis may be COVID-19 or something. Our policy is successful if we are able to carry this forward. Education system has failed to ask the question – Who are you? Knowing about milk properties is one thing but tasting the milk is real knowledge. It is not possible to understand the knowledge of 4 Vedas but we should understand it from realized Guru's. Purpose of Vedas is to understand Why I am here? Ramayana and Mahabharat is our history, it's not a myth.

Indian education system is not a fixed system, it's an open system. Our education system is ever eternal which is meant for entire world and humanity. Lord says in Gita after listening to this knowledge, there is nothing else to be known. Only Lord can make such statement. That's the message of Bhagavad Gita. All Indian education system is condensed in Bhagavad Gita. Bhagavad Gita is the universal message. Mahatma Gandhi said when I am confused, when I am frustrated, I go to Bhagavad Gita. I have never seen explanation of science in any other science book than what is given in Bhagavad Gita.

HG Gauranga Das

We may have many skills but what's the point if we lose our will. Currently 29429 universities are there in the world. 130 million books have been published in the modern era so far. As per UNESCO in the year 2000 to 2014 the educational institutions in higher studies have doubled with a student's growing from 104 million to 207 million across the whole world. In India itself there are around 3.74 Cr students in the college and universities in 2019 and around 27 Cr students in 15 Lac schools.

In 2011 census it was demonstrated that only 8.16% or 68 million people are graduates. India has 7 Lac villages and along with that we have very deadly average of 371 suicides happening every single day with 4.3 litres of alcohol consumed. All across the world 18 billion cigarettes are been consumed by people every single day. 6.7 trillion cigarettes being consumed per annum. 1 billion people across the world are struggling with severe smoking addictions. 2000 Cr worth Rs of drug are been smuggled in India every single day just to attract the attention of youths. India has at least advantage of 840 million people or 70% is below the age of 35 years. Currently there are 28 million births and 10 million deaths with happen every year.

Population is increasing by 1.6% every year in India. 1st std to 12th std period progress, there is 88% dropouts from schools. Only 12% of students actually manage to cross 12th std. 12th std is known as educational line of control. We have 300 million people unemployed in India. 93% people in India are employed in unorganised sector and 7% in organised sector. We have 60% of people in India who are self-employed. 2% are government employed.

Private employees are only 11 million. India has a country is governed by 800 members of parliament. 4200 MLAs in 36 states and union territories. 7000 municipalities altogether have a budget of 6200 Cr Rs per day to govern this nation. 26 Rs per day BPL limit means there are 300 million people BPL. If the definition is 65 Rs per day than 600 million people BPL. And if World Bank's definition of 128Rs per day than we have 900 million people BPL.

India has 17 % of world's population but only 3% of world's GDP with an average of per capita income of 1861 US Dollar per year. The foreign trade contribution of India in the year 1019 AD was 33% and that was the time when India's education system was in full force. In 2019 the foreign trade contribution of India has dropped down to 2%. India is one of the largest English-speaking countries in the world. 8% of India's population speaks English but the numbers turn out to be quite huge. So, we are 2nd largest English-speaking population in the whole world. Recent study of Microsoft in 2017 was found that average human attention span in 2012 was 12 Sec. In 2017 it came down to 8 Sec. The human attention span has come down below the goldfish who has attention span of 9 Sec

The number of internet users have grown globally from 413 million in 2000 to 4.62 billion in 2020 with global penetration of 69% almost. 65% users in India use it every day and although only 39% of population all over the world has internet access. Internet addiction rate is 6% and around 420 million people addicted to the internet with 12% of the internet websites having pornographic content which translates more than 2.3 billion pornographic web pages in 2018. So practically an average internet user spends around 5 years and 4 months of life time on social network

Distraction causes for American Business around of 650 billion Dollar worth of losses every year. 64% of all car accidents happen because people while driving are distracted on their smart phones or different devices. Lack of self-control translates to 42% of adults in the world who consume alcohol. In India the share was 15% of adults. Some countries like France have 94.8% of adults consume alcohol. Alcohol is responsible for 2.8 million premature deaths globally and approximately 6 Lac deaths in India every year. Smoking killed around 1100 million people in the year 1900 to 2000 and is estimated to kill 1 billion people in the period from 2000 to 2100.

Lack of self-control over one's own habit and one's own senses which causes 6 million deaths every year which translates to 1 death every sec which means during the course of our seminar and webinar more than 60 people have been consumed by death because of their inability to control. 33% of foods produced for humans to consume are wasted and this translates into 2.3 billion Tons of food waste. As far as municipal waste is concerned, 2 billion Metric Tons of solid municipal waste is produced annually and by 2050 this will grow to 3.4 billion Tons. Only 14% of this water is recycled and 5 ½% is composted. 18 million deaths in 2017 was caused due to Cardio vascular diseases and in London one Author puts the 3 great causes of Cardio vascular diseases as Hurry, Worry and Curry. 10 million deaths due to cancer and 5 million premature deaths due to obesity.



To bring about revitalization of the value systems and culture of the society by providing academic education in various streams of human faculty, rooted in the wisdom of Indian philosophical traditions and fortified with rigor of modern science. To design and deliver academic and research programs based on the study of philosophical traditions, arts and sciences from India and other parts of the world and help produce applied solutions in fields of ethics, emotions, environment, entrepreneurship and efficiency. Distractions has become the global epidemic.

To focus on study of systems of Indian Philosophy with emphasis on Vedanta, Samkhya, Yoga and Nyaya as well as Vaishnava philosophy, history and culture. To create an ambience of deep studies and critical research of classical Indian text such as Bhagavad Gita, Vedanta sutra, the Upanishads, the Puranas, Srimad Bhāgavatam, Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhu etc. To facilitate the establishment of the discipline of religious studies across India and help create an ecosystem and economy for facilitating research in age old wisdom traditions. To serve as a torch light to ignite spiritual interest in the society and thus facilitate spiritual upliftment of the society. Our choice has a louder voice than our voice. We may all not be very great in doing great things but we can always do small things with great love. Everybody thinks of changing the world but very few think of changing themselves. To serve as a filter to critically survey, screen and expose corrupt and deceitful religious beliefs, practices and movements while helping the genuine ones to remain cutting edge and relevant.

To undertake and promote research in application of Vedanta philosophy for resolving modern day problems in the field of ethics, emotions, environment, entrepreneurship and efficiency. To serve as a framework to understand and assimilate the purpose and essence of all religious and thus facilitate harmony and spiritual brotherhood in the society. To explore the philosophy of personalism and the implications of the statement "Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead". To rejuvenate forgotten traditional culture, art forms and sciences and thus reconnect the society to its roots. To cultivate a think tank of qualified and trained scholars who will explore and expand the intellectual heritage that has been passed down in the age old ancient Indian wisdom traditions. To translate ancient literatures to other languages and publish these works with modern scientific notes. To study and apply traditional pedagogical methods used in ancient India. To create an extensive library and resource centre for scholars around the world and promote the publication of journals and other literatures. To develop lasting relationships with leading public and private educational institutions both in India and Abroad. Vedic knowledge was not based on book knowledge but was based on realization and application.

Psychological Well-being During Uncertain Times and Beyond: An Introduction to Holistic Health & Living life with a positive Approach

One day national conference organized in August 2020 by Bhaktivedanta Research Centre, Pune and Savitribai Phule Pune University



BHAKTIVEDANTA RESEARCH CENTER
is organizing a special talk on


PSYCHOLOGICAL

Wellbeing


DURING UNCERTAIN TIMES & BEYOND

Introduction to Holistic Health & Living Life with a Positive Approach

E-certificate for Participants



Prof. Dr. Anjali Kurane
Dean, Faculty of Humanities,
Savitribai Phule Pune University
Ph.D. in Anthropology & Senior Professor
with 32 + years of Experience in Research & Teaching




Prof. Dr. Juhi Deshmukh
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology,
Savitribai Phule Pune University
Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology with 15 years of experience
in the field of Psychology

Introduction of the Speakers	Prof. Dr. K. N. Dhumal, Director BRC	5 Min
Introduction of BRC	Prof. Dr. Sumanta Rudra, Dean (Academics) BRC	5 Min
Inaugural Talk	Prof. Dr. Anjali Kurane, Dean, Faculty of Humanities, SPPU	10 Min
Psychological Well being talk	Prof. Dr. Juhi Deshmukh, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Psychology, SPPU	40 Min
Questions and Answers		10 Min
Conclusion and Vote of thanks	Shri. Sanjay Bhosale, Director Administration, BRC, Pune	5 Min

Organized By
BHAKTIVEDANTA RESEARCH CENTER, PUNE

Prof. Dr. Janardan Chitode
Director Academics, BRC, Pune

Shri. Sanjay Bhosale
Director Administration, BRC, Pune

- Contact Person -
BHUSHAN KUMAR - Secretary, BRC, Pune
+91 70304 67547
brcpune108@gmail.com
 <https://zoom.us/j/3827162613>

20 AUG 2020 | 3:00 - 4:15 PM

FREE REGISTRATION

Speakers

- I. Prof. Dr. Kurane Anjali
Dean, Faculty of Humanities
Savitribai Phule Pune University
- II. Dr. Juhi Deshmukh
Assistant professor, Dept. of Psychology
Savitribai Phule Pune University
- III. Dr. Sumanta Rudra
Dean, Academic Affairs
Bhaktivedanta Research Centre, Pune

More than 350 registered for the seminar including Professor, students, Researcher from all over India. Speakers presented the importance of holistic health and living a day-to-day life with positive approach. Spiritual, physical, mental, social and emotional health. Our approach to face the challenges with positivity, challenges under a proper guidance of counsellor.

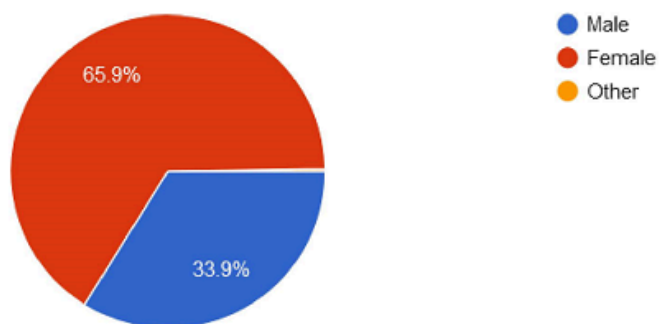
Dr. Sumanta Rudra gave a brief introduction of Bhaktivedanta Research Centre activities in India and abroad and certificates were awarded to the participants.



Registration: Through Online, calling and College visit

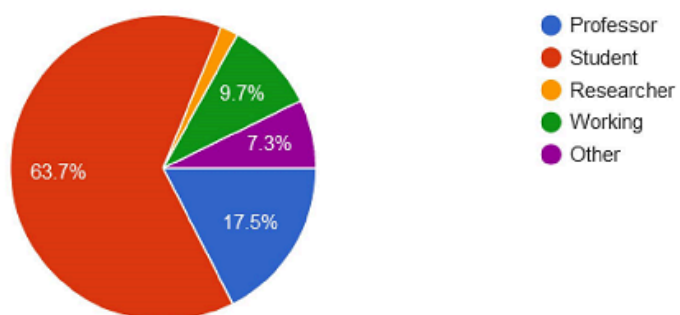
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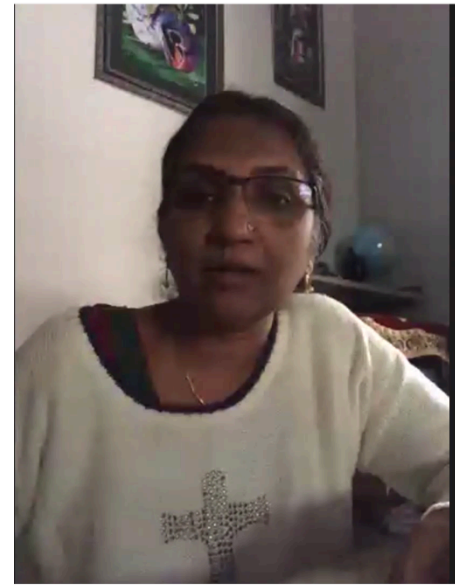
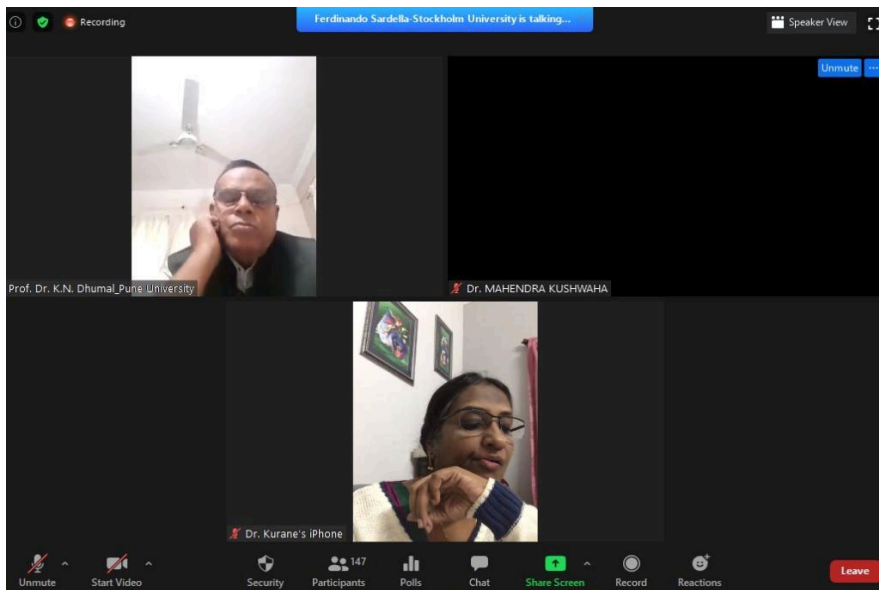
372 responses



Occupation

372 responses

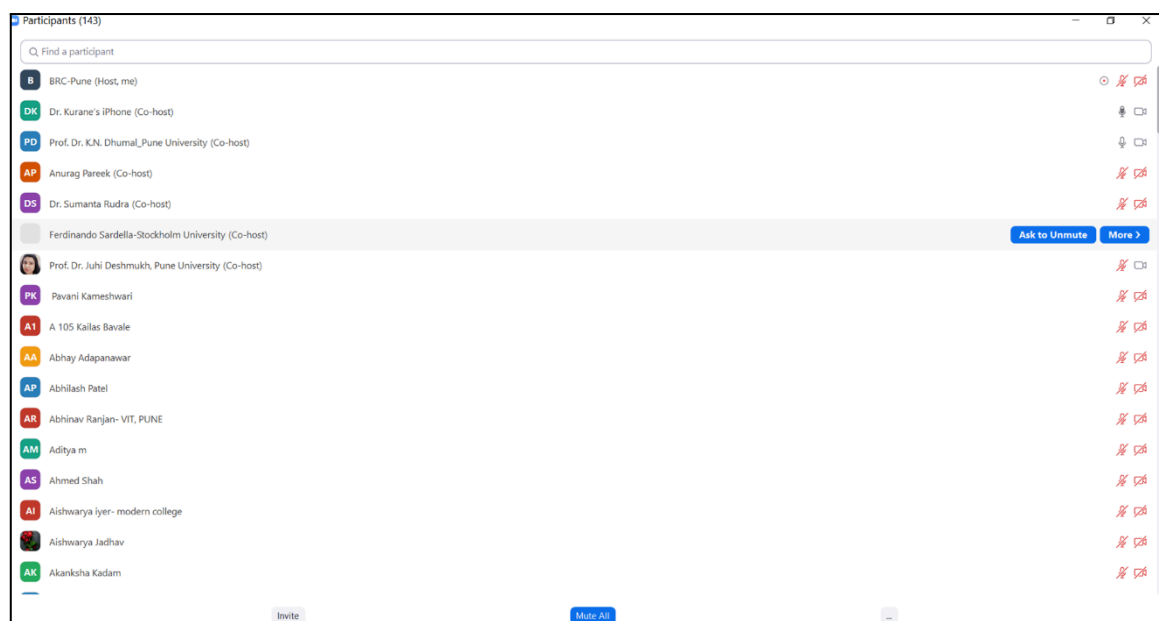




Prof. Dr. Kurane Anjali Dinkar

Mentally healthy means Physically healthy! Mental state and feelings of a wellbeing are essential to overall health of the individual. It consists of emotional health and psychological health both together maintain balance mental health and therefore helps to increase overall productivity. Studies suggest that an individual having higher psychological being are healthier and live long than mediocre people.

Psychological health of wellbeing is essential to maintain positive relations and better connect with society. Emotional distress is natural especially during such Covid-19 pandemic, we should learn to cope up with it proactively. Few remedies are like taking good food, connecting with our loved ones/family, staying positive, etc. Also ask help and offer support to others whenever necessary.



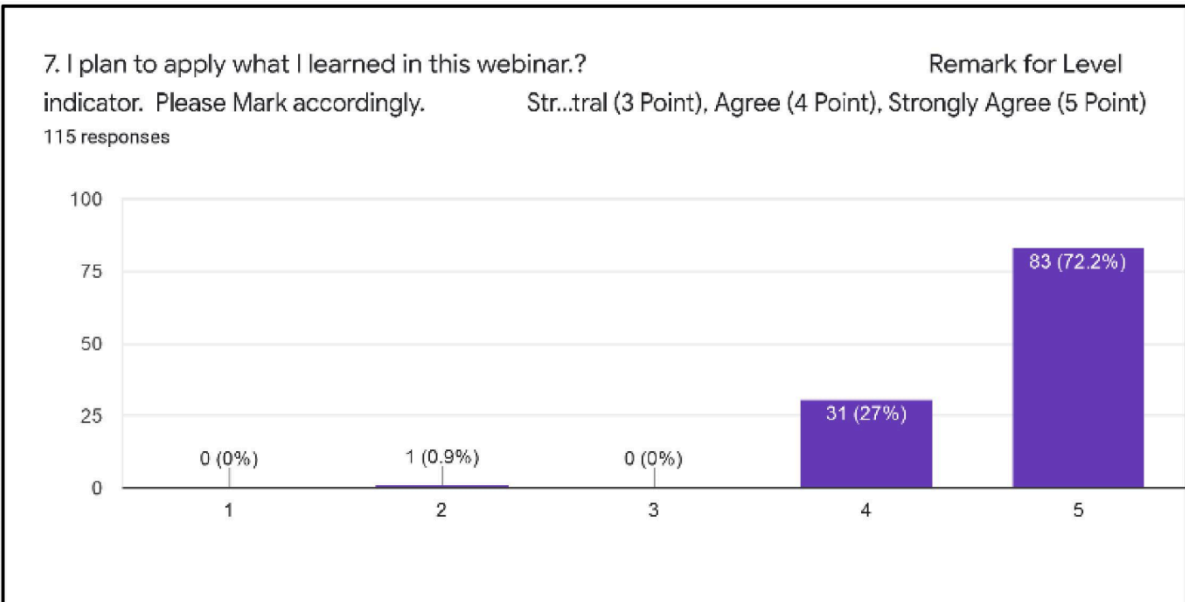
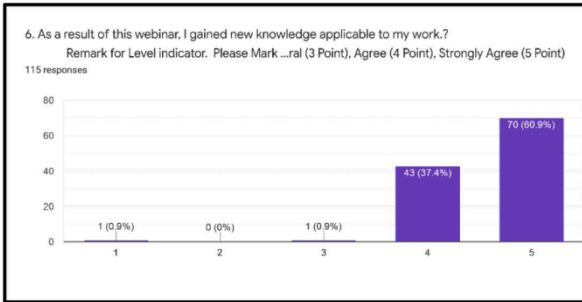
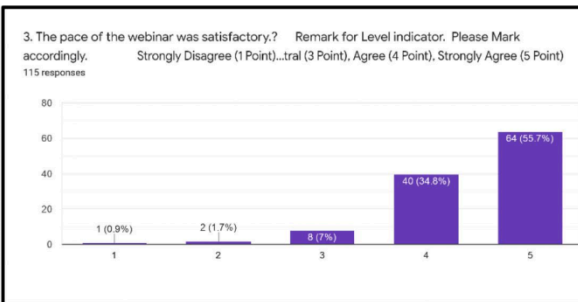
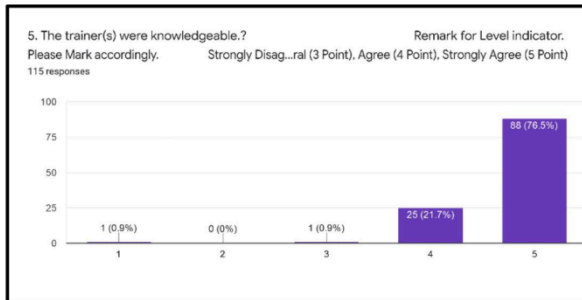
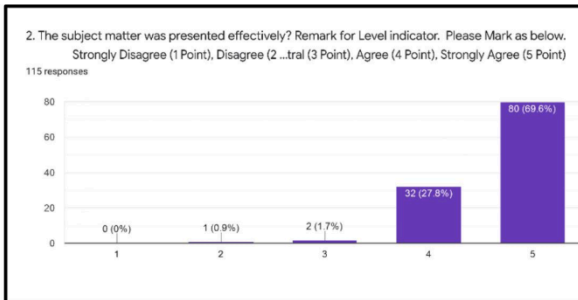
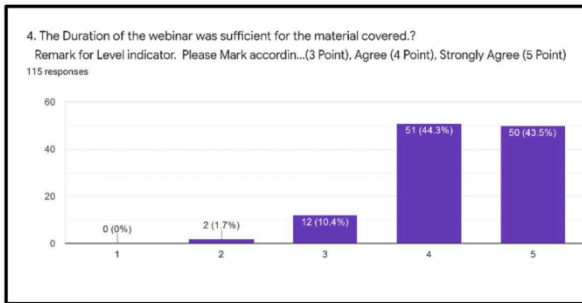
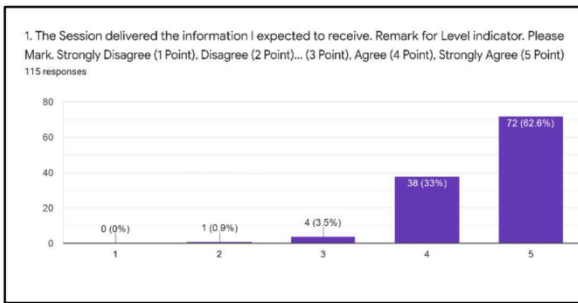
Prof. Dr. Juhi Deshmukh

Mental health should not be remembered only during uncertain time but also it should be taken care even during certain times. We should actively take care of our Spiritual, physical, mental, social and emotional health. Causes of stress can be Academic stress, relationship, body image, peer pressure, hunger, social pressure, career challenges, etc. Just accept the fact that you have both negative and positive emotions- Its ok not to feel ok at times. Free your mind from guilt, excuses, anxiety, over thinking, pleasing others, negative self-talks, etc.

Once we remove old, we create space for new one. Similarly remove some negatives and voila! You got a space to add positives! Validate the negative emotions, accept and work on it, also learn how to respond during different emotion such that we don't have to regret later. Coping effectively: Know your trigger points -> Come out of autopilot mode of thoughts -> Rewire your thoughts -> One at a time -> Try and do something new. Power doesn't lie in your bank balance. Your strength lies within you & nowhere else.

Be always thankful and grateful to what you have. Try an exercise, write 5 good things that happened every day before sleeping. Also, on maintain a jar of gratitude chits, add new chits regularly. One day you will have jar filled with reasons to express your gratitude. Compassion is required more today than ever. Follow PERMA (Positive emotions, Engagement, Positive relationships, Meaning, Accomplishments). There is nothing in nature that blooms all year long, so don't expect yourself to do so either. Make yourself resilient during tougher times. It's absolutely ok not to be ok sometimes!

Feedback from the Participants



Reviews from Participants

1. Prof. Dr. Jaimala Ashok Sode, Assistant Professor,
MGV's S. P. H. Arts, Science and Commerce Mahila College, Malegaon, Dist.
Nashik

First of all, I want to congratulate the team of organizers for the success of webinar. I really appreciate the organizers for selection of most applicable topic because during the Covid-19 situation and also in daily life everyone is very anxious, fearful and experiencing the uncertainty in life and lost their wellbeing. Such kind of topic is required and helpful for maintaining the wellbeing in life and at the same time the selection of the resource person was excellent.

The knowledge of the resource person was amazing Dr. Juhi Deshmukh give the justice to the topic. She started with causes of stress and how our wellbeing is affected by this causes. She said that caring our psychological wellbeing is not only important in bad or tough times but it is also important in our day-to-day life. She also said our wellbeing is affected because of our negative and irrational thinking, sometimes we train our brain to think and evaluate situations negatively for changing our thinking and brains habit of negative thinking, she explained some techniques such as stop feeling guilty, change your perception towards the situations and your experiences, stop over think, try or learn to say it's ok when things are not in your hand, adjust your self-etc., she explained this very simply and nicely. I really enjoyed a lot and learn so many things from her lecture, the terms she explained personally helpful me in my life.

I am thankful to Bhaktivedanta Research Centre for organizing such a wonderful webinar and look forward to the next one.

2. Varadraj das, ISKCON-Pune

A professionally effective presentation MUST have - a very relevant topic, precise problem definition, facts n examples from current times, effective, practical and matured solutions for all levels of practitioners and clear and clean ppt (for modern age), ability to handle run time interruptions, start and end time etc. On top of this a crucial thing is required a presenter who can take it all to audience hearts and brain. I could see all this and much more in an excellent presentation by Dr Juhi Deshmukh madam on psychological wellbeing. Last but important madam knew both theory n practical application - a sign of perfect and rare teacher.

3. Mumtaz Sonawala, Nowrosjee Wadia college, Pune

The webinar on psychological wellbeing in times of crisis and beyond was very Insightful. It lay emphasis on holistic health. The speaker shared effective coping mechanisms to deal with negative emotions. She also explained beautifully the upcoming counselling techniques such as philosophical counselling and made us realise how our Vedic scriptures heal us.

4. Dr. Sarika Devi {Gandhi}, Doctor of Ayurveda and alternative therapy

Webinar on psychological well-being in uncertain times and beyond. Was very good to attend and was appropriate subject for today's scenario. Thanks for same to organiser and speaker. Juhi Deshmukh was very descriptive and gave nice examples to cope the current situation, it was necessary subject in today's scenario and eye-opener to tackle day to day problems which occurs for many individuals Thanks Hoping for more seminars in details on such subjects Also helpful for doctors too.

5. Mugdha Pathradkar, R. S. Mundle Dharampeth Arts and Commerce College, Nagpur, Maharashtra

वेबिनार मध्ये सहभागी होऊन, बर्याच दैनंदिन जीवनातील प्रश्नांची उत्तरे शोधण्याची नवी ईच्छा जागृत झाली आहे..सकारात्मकतेमुळे बरीच प्रश्ने सोडवता येतात हे लक्षात आले... तसेच आनंदी राहण्याचा अगदी सोपा मार्ग सापडला आहे. वेबिनारचा अनुभव समाधानकारक होता.

6. Sumbul Shahid, Nowrosjee Wadia College, Pune

I think it is really essential during this uncertain time to realize the importance of psychological wellbeing which many ppl still don't give attention to. This webinar has helped me understand how I can help other ppl going through tough times. It was well explained by the facilitators and the information imparted will also assist me in using my own psychological knowledge of what I've learned in the past years. It also left me feeling positive about my own self at the end of the webinar. Thank you so much and it was a pleasure attending the webinar.

7. Prerana Bhat, Sir Parasuram College, Pune

Hello I am a student of SYBA Psychology. Yesterday's webinar was the first webinar I attended in this pandemic situation and I must say that, I am very thankful that I got an opportunity to attend this webinar. It was informative and the speakers were also knowledgeable and I personally liked and think that the points that Dr. Juhi Deshmukh ma'am pointed out related to coping strategies and maintaining of the gratitude diary and jar will be really effective in this situation, because at times in these 4-5 months, my sense of resilience felt increasingly frayed and i mostly ignored this. And so, I would start to implement this and also tell others to do so.

8. Fatima Sayed, Abeda Inamdar senior college. (IGNOU)

I think it is really essential during this uncertain time to realize the importance of psychological wellbeing where many people still don't bother. This webinar has helped me understand how I can help other people going through tough times. It was well explained by the Dr Juhi and the

information imparted will also assist me in using my own psychological knowledge of what I've learned in the past years. This webinar also gave a positive vibe at the end. Thank you so much for the time and conducting this webinar it was a pleasure attending the webinar.

9. Prayaga Bomble, Loknete Vyankatrao Hiray Mahavidyalaya college, Panchavati, Nashik

First up all I am thankful to Bhaktivedanta research centre, now in COVID 19 viral infection disease situation available the opportunity to students and all to psychology webinar with the topic of webinar included with the problems thinking the meaning of holistic health and living life with positive approach. How we can manage our positive psychology in this situation Prof. Dr. Kurnae mam and Prof. Dr. Deshmukh can explain very clearly and neatly the how we manage our in any problematic situation. Our positive psychology explains all problems and their solution is that explain with touch of psychological all branches in very simple and suitable language. They explain very clearly the Indian spiritual psychology is very effected for us for mental and physical health. If we live our life mental and physical balance of feelings and health. I am very happy for this webinar Thank you so much.

10. Simran Nagpal (Modern college of Arts, Science &Commerce, Shivaji Nagar, Pune)

The webinar on "Psychological wellbeing during certain time and beyond" left me feeling excited, connected, and knowing there are solution to the problems and things you can put in place to prevent it. The second the webinar was ended, I started making a to-do list. It was a really appreciating and great webinar. I enjoyed every part of it. I really thank everyone who conducted it and put so much effort for us. It was very helpful webinar. Every topic was accurate like causes of stress, coping strategies and freeing our mind from negative things and adding positive thoughts. Thank to everyone for providing us with such a wonderful webinar.

11. Indra & Mahindra, Chennai

Actually, yes, the session perfectly included the information which is needed most during such crises. Subject was totally covered but yes, the time limit should be extended as today we lack this knowledge and nobody talks about it. And yes, surely this knowledge will help us during such difficult times now and even in future. It's very important to have psychological knowledge and to be aware of it. And it was there in our Indian culture from ancient times but latest technologies have ruined our lives and we have trapped in that cage. So, it's very important that we should apply it and i personally follow this since some couple of years.

12. Prajakta Ravindra Ubale

"Psychological well-being during uncertain times and beyond". I must say it was excellent. Prof. Juhi Deshmukh was very inspiring, I bet, she gave a lot of positivity to all of us who joined that day. I learned a lot to things that I could apply in real life, like counting the things that I am thankful in life, and dealing with difficult situations by learning from people who are facing even more difficulties in life.

I also got some useful tips for dealing with anger issues, like analysing and recognising my own negative thoughts, so that m better able to control them and do not act impulsively. In short, I am thankful that I attended the webinar and I am looking forward many more such opportunities. Thanks to your entire team and the experts for guiding us during this time.

Corona Pandemic Lockdown: A Blessing in Disguise for Restoration of Religious Sentiments of Ganga & Yamuna Rivers and Sustainability

A one-day online conference held on 17th May, 2020 with Mansi Bharat Gada Degree College of Commerce (Affiliated to University of Mumbai) in association with Jalbiradari Maharashtra Core Team

The poster is for a conference organized by the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha Research Centre & Mansi Bharat Gada Degree College of Commerce, affiliated to the University of Mumbai, in association with the Jalbiradari, Maharashtra Core Team. The conference title is "Corona pandemic Lockdown: A blessing in disguise for restoration of religious sentiments of Ganga & Yamuna rivers and sustainability". It is scheduled for 17th May, 2020, from 5.30 pm to 7.30 pm (IST). Two eminent speakers are featured: Jalpurush Dr. Rajendra Singh, a Magsaysay Awardee and founder of NGO 'Tarun Bharat Sangh', and Dr. David Haberman, a Professor of Religious Studies at Indiana University and author of the book "River of Love in an Age of Pollution: The Yamuna River of Northern India". The poster also includes contact information for registration and a Zoom link, and mentions Dr. Snehal S. Donde as the Dean and Gauranga Das as the Chairman of BVRC.

Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha Research Centre & Mansi Bharat Gada Degree College of Commerce
(Affiliated to University of Mumbai)
In association with
Jalbiradari, Maharashtra Core Team
organizes International (zoom) conference on

"Corona pandemic Lockdown: A blessing in disguise for restoration of religious sentiments of Ganga & Yamuna rivers and sustainability"

Date: 17th May, 2020 **Time:** 5.30 pm to 7.30 pm (IST)

Eminent Speakers:

Jalpurush Dr. Rajendra Singh
Magsaysay Awardee, Stockholm Water Prize awardee & Founder of NGO 'Tarun Bharat Sangh'

Dr. David Haberman,
Professor, Religious Studies at Indiana University & Author of well known book *"River of Love in an Age of Pollution: The Yamuna River of Northern India"*

With Regards
Dr. Snehal S. Donde,
Jalnayak & Member of world water Council,
Hon. Dean, Administrative Affairs, BVRC & Principal MBGDCC

Gauranga Das
Chairman, BVRC

Register here: <https://forms.gle/zMVuFrijV6YhF2w17>
Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84755584837>

Amidst Corona (COVID-19) pandemic and nationwide lockdown, this conference was arranged to discuss the positive effect of lockdown on river restoration of Ganga and Yamuna rivers and environmental healing.

Speakers

1. Dr. David Haberman

Professor, Religious Studies, Indiana University, US

Author of well-known book “River of love in on Age of Pollution: The Yamuna River of Northern India”

2. Jalpurush Dr. Rajendra Singh

Magsaysay Awardee, Stockholm Water Prize Awardee

Founder of NGO ‘Tarun Bharat Sangh’

3. Jean-Claude Oliva

Geologist and journalist in science and environment

Director

EAU Île-de-France NGO acts for the public management of water, the human right to water and about water and climate.

Co-chairman, Coordination Eau bien commun France

Ecologist elected representative in Bagnolet, near Paris

4. Edith Félix

ICT Security Engineering

Co-president of Coordination

Eau Ile-de-France since 2013.

She leads a European collaborative project on the tight relations between water cycles and climate with partners such as The Flow Partnership from Stockholm water price Rajendra Singh and People and Water from world-class hydrologist Michal Kravčík.

5. Dr. Snehal Donde

Jalnayak, Government of Maharashtra & Convenor Ganga Mission

Member World Water Council

Former Principal, Mansi Bharat Gada Degree college of Commerce, Bhiwandi

6. Karishma Asoodani

Senior correspondent Barkha Dutt TV. Ltd

Independent Financial Journalist from India

Member of youth delegate at World Water Council

Programme Schedule

Time (IST)	Particulars
05.30 pm	Welcoming and Inauguration of Zoom Conference by Prin. Dr. Snehal Donde
05.45 pm	Blessing note by Gauranga Das, Chairman, BVRC

06.00 pm	Inaugural Address by Dr. Rajendra Singh ji, Waterman of India
06.20 pm	Session 1: Jean-Claude Oliva & Edith Félix
06.30 pm	Session 2: Karishma Asoodani
06.40 pm	Session 3: Dr. Snehal Donde
06.45 pm	Session 4: Dr. Rajendra Singh
07.15 pm	Session 5: Dr. David Haberman
08.00 pm	Vote of thanks by Narendra Chugh

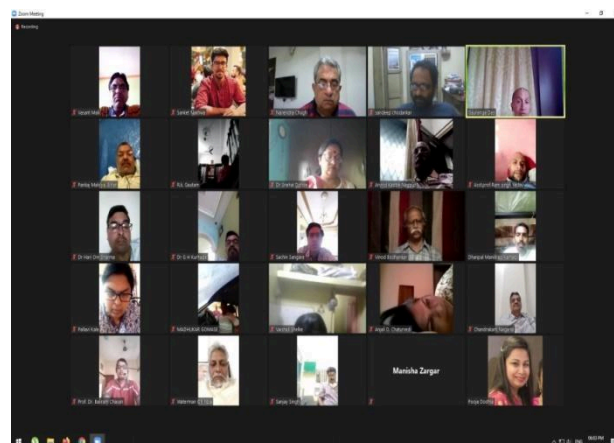
Conference Proceedings:

Welcome of dignitaries and participants by Conference Convenor

The conference initiated with introduction of the concept note of conference by Dr Snehal Donde, Convenor, and respectful obeisance to her Spiritual Guru Gauranga Prabhuji, Social Guru Jalpurush Dr Rajendra Singh ji and Academic Guru Dr David Habermanji. She expressed her gratitude to Dr Rajendra Singhji and Habermen ji as they accepted the invitation to discuss on river ecology with spiritual perspectives. She expressed that today water is high on global agenda as an issue of the utmost importance to national security, economic and social development, peace and environmental sustainability. She explained that amid Corona Virus crisis one good thing that has happened is natural restoration of the rivers and water bodies. BVRC focuses to collaborate with like-minded groups to work for water security and reliable availability of an acceptable quality and quantity of water for health and livelihood as billions of people do not have access to safe water. She expressed that Covid 19 has shown harsh realities of inequalities, hardships, health risk that resulted from our failure to uphold water rights and sanitation. Water management is must for mitigating the risks of flood and droughts. She said surprisingly the world has been so much connected online due to covid and we must make mileage of same and spread the message loud to save the rivers for healthy environment. This was followed by introduction of the dignitaries invited for the conference.

Blessing Note by Gauranga Das Prabhuji, Chairman, BVRC

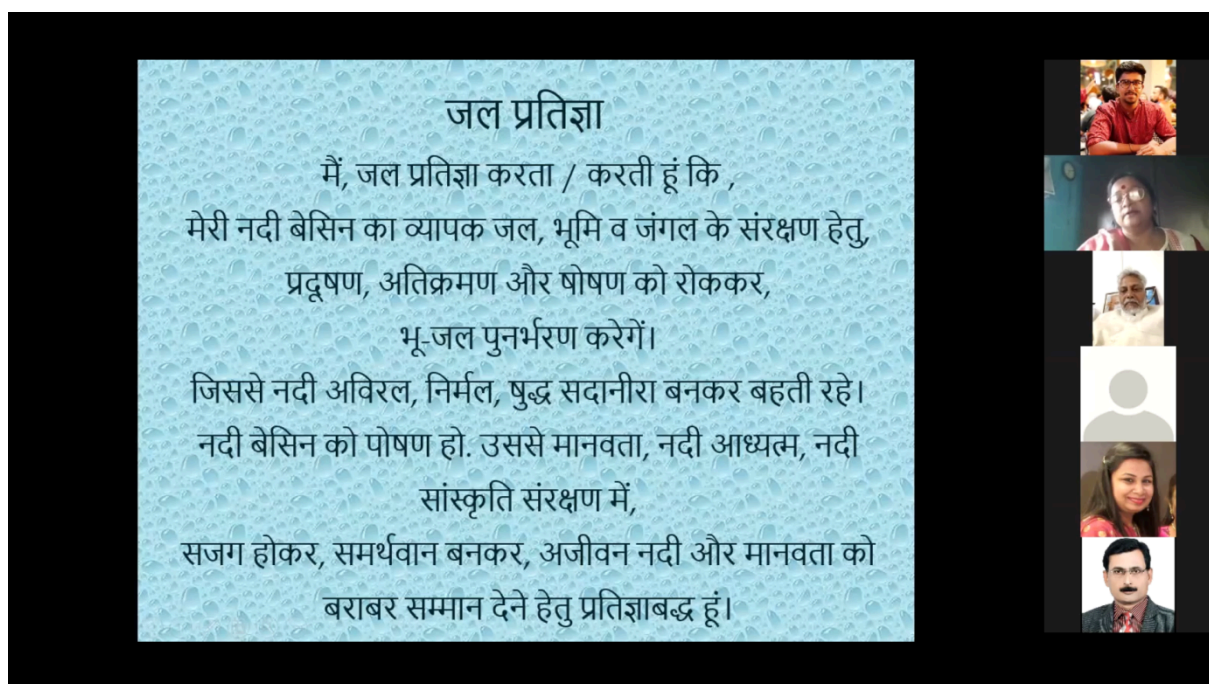
Gauranga Das specified that total weight of Corona virus in all over world is lesser than 1g and this total 1g of virus has forced all of the humanity to stay locked inside their home. He further added that *“For every action there is equal reaction, so the Nature is reacting and telling us rethink, and introspect”* With the help of modern technologies, ancient wisdom and philosophy, we can correct our malpractices which are destroying environment and rivers and transform our lifestyle. He thanked Dr. Snehal Donde for arranging such conference. He also expressed his respects and gratitude for Dr. Rajendra Singh for his phenomenal work and efforts in rejuvenating rivers in Rajasthan. He welcomed all participants joining the



conference and cultivated the thought in everyone's mind that “*May this conference kindle the light of rethinking the purpose of why and what we are doing.*”

Water oath

Dr. Snehal Donde warmly welcomed Mr. Chandrakant Nagaria, Chairman of Mansi Bharat Gada Degree of Commerce, Bhiwandi. Then Dr. Donde introduced Dr. Rajendra Singh ji. Rajendra Singh ji is Waterman of India and also leading internationally for water crisis solutions. Dr. Donde also mentioned about contribution of Dr. Rajendra Singh ji in pioneering Water literacy programs in Maharashtra state. Dr. Donde then requested Dr. Rajendra Singh ji to take Water Oath (*Jal Pratigya*) along with all participants before his inaugural address in conference.



जल प्रतिज्ञा

मैं, जल प्रतिज्ञा करता / करती हूँ कि ,
मेरी नदी बेसिन का व्यापक जल, भूमि व जंगल के संरक्षण हेतु,
प्रदूषण, अतिक्रमण और शोषण को रोककर,
भू-जल पुनर्भरण करेगा।
जिससे नदी अविरल, निर्मल, शुद्ध सदाबहाव बनकर बहती रहे।
नदी बेसिन को पोषण हो. उससे मानवता, नदी आध्यत्म, नदी
सांस्कृतिक संरक्षण में,
सजग होकर, समर्थवान बनकर, अजीवन नदी और मानवता को
बराबर सम्मान देने हेतु प्रतिज्ञाबद्ध हूँ।

Inaugural address by Dr. Rajendra Singh ji, Waterman of India

Dr. Rajendra Singh ji supported Gauranga Das Prabhu ji's statement and said that 1g virus which created outburst of viral pandemic and nationwide lockdown is the by-product of human economical greed. He further stated that In India, rivers are our speech and water is our language we need to understand and revive our spiritual connection with water and rivers. We need to stop our greed, race for materialistic things and need to connect, love and respect our nature. If we follow such harmony with nature then nature will grant us sustainability and if not, then such calamities will keep on coming our way. When we focus on developing cities specifically and ignore the development of villages, it is seen that there is migration from villages to these developed and developing cities. This results in creation of dangerous landscape of these cities and lead to multiple problems and crisis. This pandemic and lockdown have given us much needed time to rethink our current habits and practices. We should revive the forgotten love and respect in Indian religious sentiments, humanity and river relations which will save Indian faith and environment. Ganga Yamuna, Krishna and

Godavari were the rivers which used to hold together society and religious faith. In whole world, India is the one and only country which calls our rivers as our mother. Mahanadi in Eastern India, Godavari in Central India, Ganga and Yamuna in Northern India, Krishna and Kaveri in Southern India are the rivers which are mentioned in our National Anthem and connected in social as well religious aspects of Indian traditions, belief and faith. We should connect and preserve this bonding with nature. Indian Indigenous knowledge and wisdom has chance to defeat this corona virus. We can teach the modern world that we had already learnt living a healthy lifestyle using Ayurveda. But we have lost our connection and faith in Ayurveda and we have also forgotten that power of Ayurveda can be harnessed to defeat Corona and bring victory to India. Migration of workers from cities to villages is increasing the spread of Corona virus from cities to villages. These migrant workers should not be allowed to return to their villages without Corona testing.

Technical sessions

1. Jean-Claude Oliva & Edith Félix

Dr. Donde welcomed Jean Claude, Geologist & Edith Felix from France and asked them to shed some light on situation of water availability during Corona pandemic in France. Edith mentioned that in France, main focus is kept on health and sanitation during this pandemic. During this pandemic, lot of emphasis is given on washing of hands, but access to clean water to everyone is problematic. As the



homeless people living on streets or slums are devoid of access to clean water, they are most affected by this pandemic in France. So, the health crisis demonstrates the need for legal recognition of the rights to drinking water and hygiene and sanitation for all on the French territory, also both metropolitan and overseas. Edith stated that “Before the pandemic. 80 percent of squats and shanty towns in mainland France had no had no access to water, and two hundred and thirty-five thousand people lived on the streets or in makeshift habitats. In total, in mainland France, there are more than a million people living daily without permanent and affordable access to drinking water. In the overseas department and regions of France, the situation is even more catastrophic.” She further explained that Access to running water is too far from being widespread in housing. For a large part of the inhabitants, the water supply is carried out by Standpipes. With the Looper and the Martinek in the Caribbean, faced with a structural lack of water, are experiencing an increasing number of daily water tests which make the fight against the spread of the epidemic all the more problematic. The situations that are of exceptional gravity and call for a global and the urgent action from the governments to guarantee access to water and hygiene devices in the in the overseas department and regions. Beyond the structural efforts already taken before the crisis in a water plan for the dump. The health crisis demonstrates the absolute need for recognition in French flow of the rights of drinking water, hygiene and sanitation for everyone in the territory. It is necessary to urgently realize people’s rights, people’s human rights to safe, physically accessible and affordable water by banning

disconnections due to inability to pay immediately restoring water to households, health centres and public spaces such as schools, streets, workplaces, cetera that are disconnected. Absorbing outstanding water bills and providing free water to those who cannot afford to be for the duration of the coronavirus crisis. Subsidizing water utilities to meet the cost of providing emergency water supply, including by settling unpaid government water and sewage bills must be carried out on priority basis. As an emergency measure, supplying water, hygiene information and a hand washing station to people in public spaces that are not connected to water supply systems such as rural communities and people live on that street. And as a sustainable solution, delivering safe water and sanitation services to public spaces, health centers and homes, prioritizing those in informal settlements, settlements, low-income households, rural areas, Cherry Holmes prisons and refugee camps.

And finally, I would like to point out in France, the public service excellence in the fight against the epidemic, because the researchers at the Paris watch from Lubbock, Gracia Re, which is a public water authority, had a leading role in highlighting the presence of the viruses in Waite's wastewater. Better still, if they were able to correlate the virus rates in wastewater with hospital admissions and with deaths because of the virus. And this happens the way to modelling it by monitoring the separation of the virus and the evolution of the International Pandemic they make with the regular analyses, with regular analyses of wasteful.

2. **Karishma Asoodani,**

An Independent Financial Journalist

Karishma Asoodani, informed that she is an advocate for youth centric development and also been involved in the reputation of World Water Forum. She expressed that she has been very keen researcher of what Dr. Rajendra Singh ji has been

lately speaking about restoration of rivers. She mentioned that the whole nationwide and worldwide lockdown has pretty much proved that the kind of development world was expecting and industrial production has been responsible for bringing certain kind of harm to nature. But the question is that whether in post lockdown, will this be sorted? She shared a personal experience. She was serious about water only when she realized where she's going wrong about it. Water is an essential need and we've all been using it. But only when she started putting out on her focus and knowing where she's going wrong is when she realized the importance of water.

The question of water conservation and the question of solving and treating water and water security come in as somebody who belongs to the youth. We have realized that there are two major concerns across Tunel discussions that we noticed. And one is, of course, that beyond water governance, beyond policies and beyond advocacy and government intervention, what's primarily needed is an attitude and behavioural change. For creating this change, she started to read about so many people who were mentors in colleges who were students or full well, what an enthusiast would actually teaching subjects there, most of them belonging to the commerce background.



She explained that the development needs to start at Schools and colleges as in initial learning are the only time that you can panic about water. And when you panic about water is when you start getting about what a second concern, you know, the majority of youth thinks is on the point of data and alternative solutions. We think that some bit of government lacks in to looking in these two major aspects. And the available data is incomplete, biased, and not all very people actually and persistently covered when it comes to water conservation. Water conservation and water security cannot be a topic that can be discussed once in a week. It is something that has to be persistently lived on every day and talked about. She ended her session by adding that her main reason of connecting youth, that have lots of energy and enthusiasm of the students has to be channelized towards conservation of water.

3. Dr. Snehal Donde

Dr. Donde highlighted the issues of Rivers in India as she is working on Ganga Sedimentation and erosion issues from Farakka to Ganga Sagar in West Bengal. She explained about Panihati and showed a vedio about how systematically Ganga is being converted into garbage nallah by Panihati Municipal council and how the religious sentiments of people is affected in the area. Ganga Siltation slides were

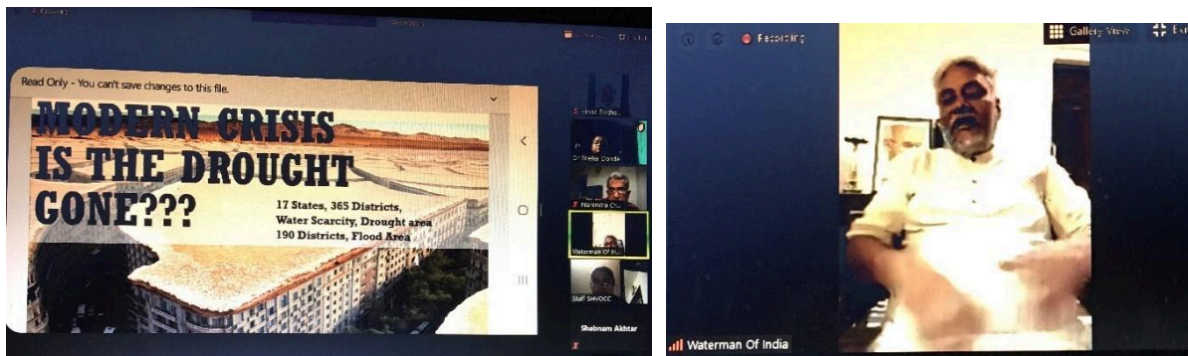


demonstrated to showcase how the villages are eroded since years and Char land is shifting towards Bangladesh. She explained how gaudiya Vaishnavism flourished 500 years back in Panihati and Sukhchar region in Kolkata which is also recognised as Uttar Kashi. She informed how Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityanand prabhu visited that place to meet their mother Suchi Devi in 1514 and to take dip in river Ganga and stayed there for long time and did various activities which keep attracting people across the nation to specially visit the sacred place. Panihati Mahotsav tala is famous for footsteps of both Mahaprabhus. Panihati Rasbari near Ramchand Ghat a fair takes place in full moon in Ras Poornima. Pilgrims visit for Chivda Utsav in Jaishtha month (November) which was started by Raghunath Narayan Dev, Saptagram Zamindar as per the advice of Nityananda Mahaprabhu. Ravindranath Tagore also visited that place at the age of 11 and the glimpses of Ganga and its flow influenced his ideas and thoughts which turned his life. In his book “My Reminiscences” Ravindranath Tagore has explained how flow of Ganga helped his imaginations to go beyond limits and helped in fascinating ideas and creative life. She emphasized with these examples about the religious sentiments of people attached with the place. With the help of her powerpoint presentation, she put forth the issues of siltation and sedimentation and pollution of River Ganga. She urged that as the rivers have restored itself in Corona Virous lockdown period, we need to maintain it and write to government to take action and appropriate measures to maintain it for sustainability. Thus, she explained that the theme of conference was coined aptly as it is blessing in disguise that without

spending millions of dollars automatically rivers are flowing beautifully with necessary ecological flow. She appealed all to participate actively to help in the task of River rejuvenation as it is a robust task and unless each one of us take care of rivers it may again get to previous situation as soon as lockdown is lifted by Government.

4. Dr. Rajendra Singh

He explained the conditions of rivers across the country and the model of Rajasthan Bhikampura and the reverse migration that happened due to Johad and many water created in Bhikampura and other regions.

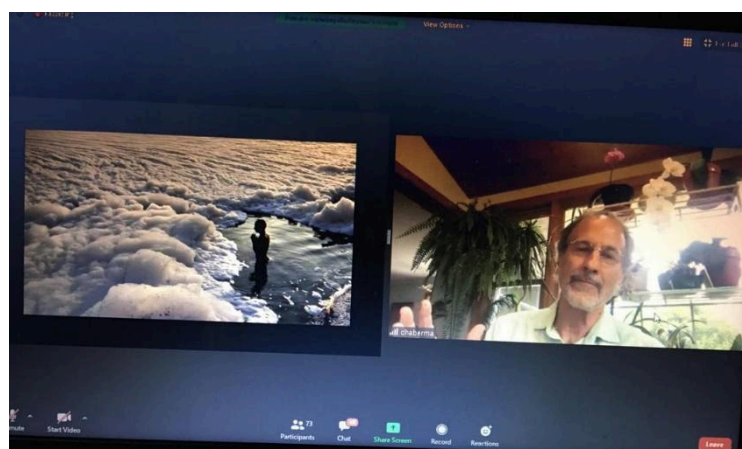


He explained the concept of panch mahabhut and Bhagwan for River rejuvenation and Dvapara yug, Treta yug and Kalyug to bring changes in life style. He explained how Ganga and Yamuna came into existence and present pathetic situation on the banks of river in the name of development. With an elaborated presentation he explained how water table can be improved in the aquifers for water conservation and management. He appealed that Sant and Samaj must come together and save the nation from the water crisis.

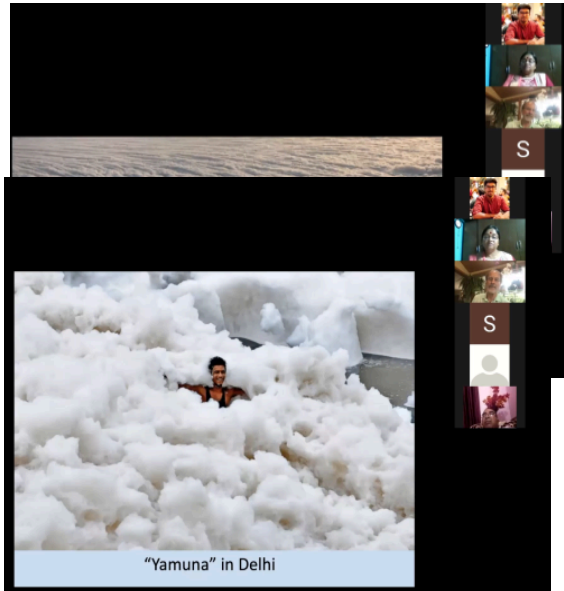
5. Dr. David Haberman

Dr. Snehal Donde introduced Dr. David Haberman as her mentor as well as Professor. Dr. Haberman gave insight that humans are increasingly driven by a globalized economic view of life that often puts monetary profits ahead of people and as well as the well-being of other lifeforms. And he thinks that his concerns are probably shared by many of the participants. One of his book projects is the book 'River of Love in an

Age of Pollution'. Dr. Haberman conducted the research for that book back in the years 1999 through 2002. He senses that things have only gotten much worse since that particular time period,



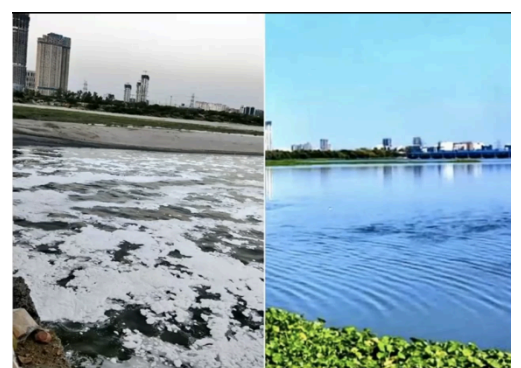
particularly as the development that begun with the opening of the Indian economy in the latter part of the 1980s. This meant that the dangerous toxins that are being released into the river and the amount of water that is being extracted from the river have deteriorated the condition to worse.



Dr. Haberman mentioned that Yamuna in Delhi is covered in highly toxic foam. That is caused by industrial effluents that have been released into the river. this foam is in the industrial effluents that have been released into the river are causing dreadful diseases like cancer, neuro diseases and many others. And this doesn't begin to describe the quality of the drinking water that we are looking at in above slide like this for which many humans and other life forms completely depend. Also, the religious interaction with the river that has for centuries, perhaps millennia, been considered to be in the embodied form of an exquisite goddess, Yamuna ji as a goddess. He further added that he couldn't begin to celebrate Yamuna's extremely

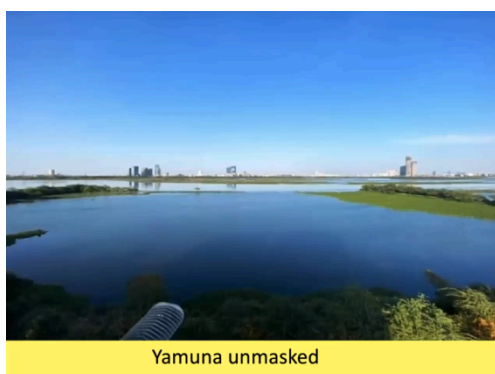
high qualities. She's the mother of all life, is that Dr. Singh had just said about Rivers and she shares that. So the source of life, the source of that which all life depends upon. She is also a nurture of love, that highest quality of human being. Yamuna is the sister of death. And in that relationship, she is considered to be a protector of her devotees and really, by extension, all life. She is the sister of the Sun. But more than anything, she is an exquisite goddess of love. Dr. Haberman thinks the goddess of love par excellence in the creation of a theistic conceptions within Hinduism. Dr. Haberman expressed "Look what has happened to her in this period today. This is this world, the conditions that we are faced with today". As a student of the various religious traditions of the world, that nothing is really simply anything for human beings, rather, that are our perception of the world and therefore our experience of the world is determined by a very particular cultural lens. And our religious traditions contribute a great deal to the formation of that lens. But there is a difference in the perspectives and experiences and therefore our behavior in the world as a consequence of the lens through which we are viewing the world. The world is more and more dominated by a kind of a shared understanding of the non-human world that is much more industrial and utilitarian view of the non-human world. we are seeing the increasing degrading results on the environment of living with that particular perspective on the world that leads to something like this. So that much of the world, that much of the perspectives, religious perspectives on the world are now threatened and the pollution of the young threatens religious practices, people's intimate interaction with the river.

Dr. Haberman found out that there were three different perspectives on Yamuna as a maternal goddess. The first one as is that the pollution has no effect on the river, on the goddess, on the physical river in any way. I think that today that position would be very, very hard to maintain. The second position was



that the pollution doesn't affect Yamuna's energy as a Devi, but it does affect those who depend upon her waters living along her banks. By many who articulated that position, that Yamuna's energy, who had been such a forgiving and nurturing mother over centuries and centuries, is now beginning to draw back a bit from that and to punish human beings. And in this case, punish them with the very chemical pollutants that we are putting into her water through the form of cancers and other kinds of disease. So, we're seeing a transformation even in religious cultures in this particular way. The third perspective was that the river not only affects those beings that rely upon the river's waters, but affect the goddess herself. And there are some and I think increasingly those who see Yamuna's energy now is very ill and in need of human attention, human care, human savior, or perhaps that that she is even a dying river or perhaps even dead.

Dr. Haberman thinks that there is a kind of a great hope and in the title of this conference that is indicated by a blessing in disguise. This is happening worldwide. People are thinking about what are the lessons that we're to learn at this time. A recent poll was conducted within the United States and it was found that 2/3 of Americans from all different faith traditions believe that God is telling humanity to change by the experience that we are now undergoing, sheltering down with the corona virus. So there seems to be an opportunity here for some kind of turning away from the insanity that is indicated by the above inserted slide. He raised the question *"But what is the opportunity? What is it that is being offered to us today?"*



He labeled this slide Yamuna unmasked. This foam seen in earlier slides has now been erased. The dirtiness and trash is not visible here. today as many humans are wearing masks and Yamuna's pollution mask is now unmasked. We are also masking much of our business as usual. Something unusual is happening. The sky is becoming clearer. People who have never seen the Himalaya from the plains are stunned to see them today. Animals are roaming about coming back down for in the areas that humans seem to have chased them out of

previously and our rivers are flowing clear and blue. Again, one of the names of Yamunay is Krishnakumar. She is a feminine form of Krishna. She has a dark tone. And here we see that beautiful dark blue hue of Yamuna's skin. So here we are seeing Yamuna unmasked. But what is important to remember is that the world of nature is always like this. It is always available to us like this at any time. If we could stop masking Mother Nature with our polluting ways and there is that big if clause. Dr. Haberman expressed *"I've been dazzled by the intensity of the stars that I can see in the skies these days. Plane traffic has been reduced to 90 percent. There are fewer cars on the road. Industry has been shut down. There's a deep blueness in the sky. I look up into every morning that I have not seen for years and years, and I am in love."* The title of the conference: Corona pandemic lockdown, a blessing in disguise for restoration of religious sentiments, of Ganga and Yamuna Rivers and sustainability. Could we sustain this sustainability of the means sustaining business as usual? We're given an opportunity today to really question that business as usual in a remarkably embodied form, such as the visions we are seeing here. One of the dangers is that we often think that the world that we are born into is the normal world. In a sense, we're learning that there really is no normal

here. That that many young people in India today are seeing this vision of the river for the very first time.

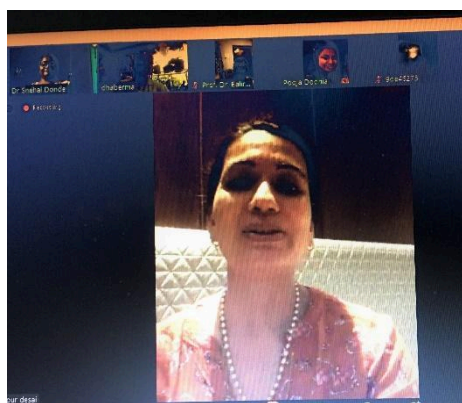
It will be important to realize and remember that there is a public and political aspect of the work that we are now being called to do in this era of globalized economies. A new form of neo liberal Central wisdom has become minute thing where instead of governments regulating industry, industry has come to control governments and to remove and resist governmental regulations. This has to change.



One Earth, many life forms; One Ultimate Reality, many perspectives
One Humanity, many religions

Toxic industrial effluents must be stopped from flowing into the rivers. Enforcement of this must take precedent and a suitable amount of water to keep the river healthy must be allowed to flow from its source. And we need to listen to scientists and to implement this into enforceable regulations. India, like most countries in the world today, is a religiously pluralistic country, and this means that successful politics must be pluralistic. The Hindi statement, *Jal Hai toh Jeevan Hai* or Water is life is not really a religious statement, although it could be regarded as such, but rather it's a biological fact that pertains to all life. Whatever religious or non-religious background happens to belong to, it pertains to all people.

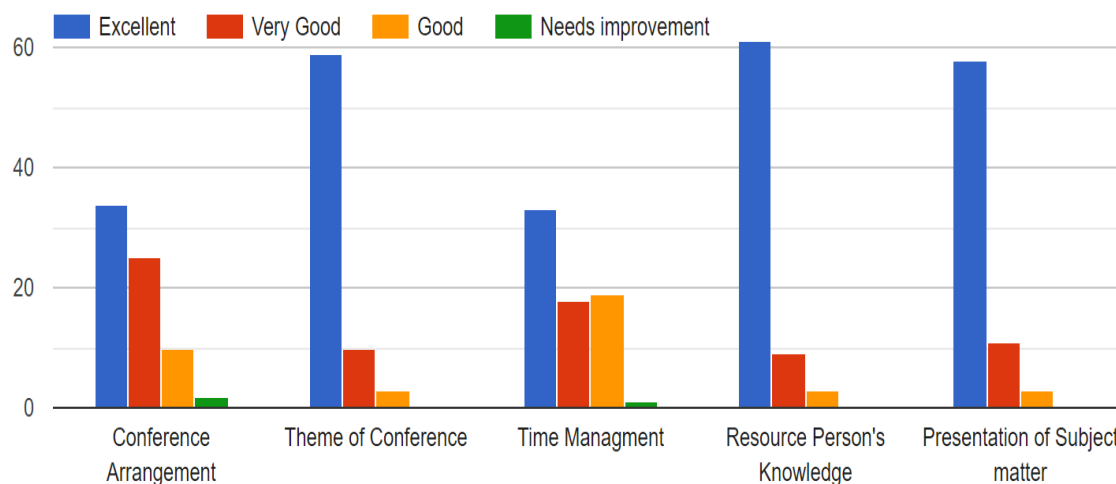
Workshop Feedback



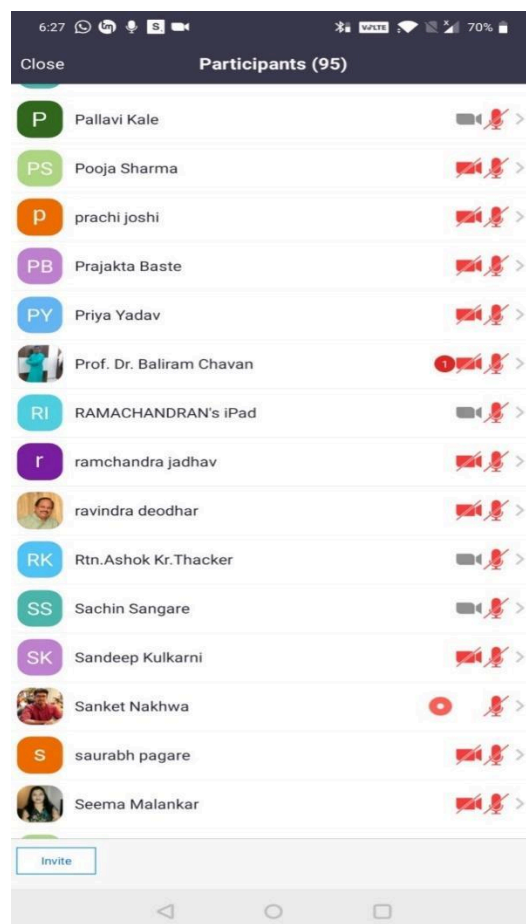
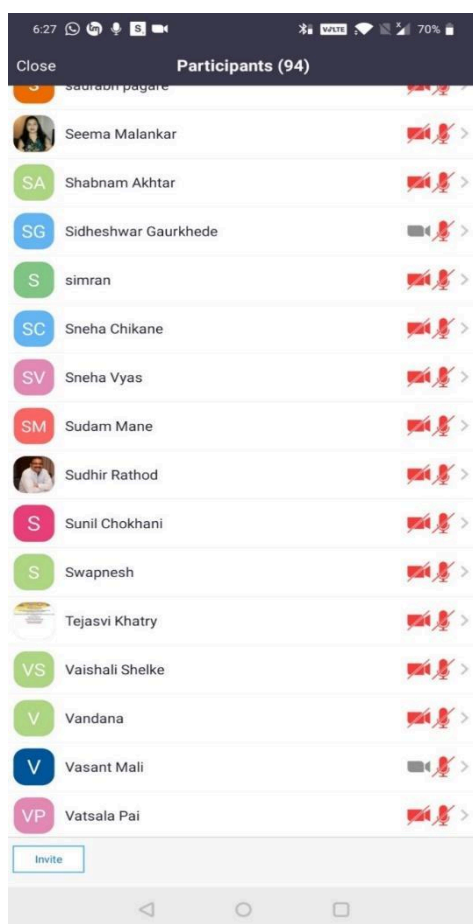
Smt. Noopur Desai thanked the organizers for organizing conference on a very relevant topic as well as selecting right speakers on the occasion. This helped to gain a lot of insight and ideas.

The workshop ended with a vote of thanks by Jalnayak Narendra Chug, co-ordinator Jalbiradari Core Team in Maharashtra. Feedback form link was provided to all participants.

Kindly rate for the below mentioned aspects:



Participants: 95 participants attended the International Zoom Conference.



6:26 70%

Close Participants (94)

Search

	Sanket Nakhwa (me)		
	Pooja Dodhia (host)		
	Celine Therese		
	Atreya Paul		
	cordo		
	Dr Snehal Donde		
	sandeep chodankar		
	Staff SHVOCC		
	9de46275		
	Ajit Kharose		
	Arvind Kadbe Nagpur		
	Asstt.prof.SWATI SINGH		
	Balaji K. Dudhate		
	Chandrakant Nagaria		
	CHANDRASHEKHAR B.SHARMA,BHANDARA		

[Invite](#)

6:27 70%

Close Participants (94)

	Sunil Chokhani		
	Swapnesh		
	Tejasvi Khatry		
	Vaishali Shelke		
	Vandana		
	Vasant Mali		
	Vatsala Pai		
	Vinod Bodhankar		
	Yogita Sawant		
	Anjali D. Chaturvedi		
	Dhanpal Manikrao Kamadi		
	Dr. Babita Pundlik Sarode		
	Dr.Heena Momin		
	f198ec56		
	Zeenat Surve		

[Invite](#)

Hermeneutics, A Way and Method In Religious Studies

A one-day international seminar organised in December 2019 with the University of Mumbai



The Bhaktivedanta Research Centre and the Department of Sanskrit, University of Mumbai organised a one-day International Seminar on 'Hermeneutics, a way and method in Religious Studies' on 19th December 2019.

Speakers

- 1) Dr. Ravi Gupta
Associate Professor, Dept. of Religious Study
Utah State University, USA
- 2) Dr. Keith D'souza
Rector, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai
- 3) Dr. Abhishek Bose
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Comparative Indian Language and Literature
University of Calcutta
- 4) Hemant Rajopadhye
Senior Fellow and Head
Centre for the Study of Indian Knowledge Traditions, ORF Mumbai.
- 5) Prakriti Goswami
Senior Research Fellow BRC Kolkata, West Bengal

Srila Prabhupada Spiritual University Conference

A one-day conference organized on 14th July 2019

BHAKTIVEDANTA VIDYAPITHA RESEARCH CENTRE
(Affiliated to the University of Mumbai)
Govardhan Ecovillage, Project of International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Founder Acharya : His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Galtare, Hamrapur Post, Wada Taluka, Palghar District, Maharashtra, India - 421303

A CONFERENCE FOR
SRILA PRABHUPADA SPIRITUAL UNIVERSITY

Padmashri, Dr. Vijay P Bhatkar Hon. Prof. Dr. Ram G Takawale
Hon. Prof. Dr. N. J. Pawar Hon. Prof. Dr. Nitin R. Karmalkar
Hon. Prof. Dr. S. B. Nimse Hon. Mr. Vivek Sawant
HG Gauranga Das

Date: 14-07-2019 Venue : ISKCON NVCC, Pune





Constitution of a Spiritual university: Vision and Mission:

1. Truth, 2. Tradition, 3. Transformation

- To add character to the idea of competence
- INR 2000 crore drugs
- How can we help people had better control their own selves?
- Prosperous healthy and satisfied society
- America has given academic importance to religious studies
- How to transform the mentality of people?
- How to rejuvenate the forgotten art and sciences?
- India boasts a good number of PhD - 24k
- So, we have a deep interest in academic approach
- Japan paying employees an incentive to sleep. This leads to anxiety disorders.
- In India, 327 people Commit so suicide every day.
- Applied philosophy would be a very good solution to bring out practical solutions to these problems.
- World eco forum has predicted a very high growth of India in terms of population, consumption, education and with kind of wonderful culture, we also have to show how we can grow in hospitality also.
- GEV offers a wonderful section for education, leadership, Ayurveda, also social activities and social initiatives for organic farming.
- To enable and facilitate reverse migration. GEV is accredited NGO with United Nations. UN recognizes that if people are spiritual then their consumption patterns change.
- GEV conducted a number of conferences.
- How do we enable young men and women into academic qualification required to create qualification at the level?

Dr. Vijay Bhatkar



Chancellor, Nalanda University

Description: Vijay Pandurang Bhatkar is an eminent Indian computer scientist, IT leader and educationalist. He is best known as the architect of India's national initiative in supercomputing where he led the development

of Param supercomputers. He is a Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri and Maharashtra Bhushan awardee.

- Mathematics is also a language of all sciences.
- Wonderful journey of CDAC getting integrated into Pune University.
- Gave an interface to statisticians and industry people.
- Started advanced computer technologies institute. Millions of people are from CDAC into very strong institutions.
- World largest number of IT professionals were created from CDAC.
- Gauranga Pr focused on great practical challenges that India is facing today.
- We are witnessing an inception of a spiritual university which will truly give complete an amalgamation of material and spiritual knowledge.
- We believe that we can integrate both adhyatma and vigyan.
- There are many areas where science cannot solve the problems. Beyond what we perceive in our daily life. We can witness a transformation.

Comments: He is very happy with GEV offerings to the society. He is very happy. He looks forward that we have a great journey ahead combining tradition with cutting edge technologies.

- **Suggestion/Recommendation:** Srila Prabhupada is the *Paramacharya* of the proposed spiritual university. The path shown by him, his books, his philosophy will inspire the evolution of this university.

Prof. Dr. Ram G. Takwale



Former Vice Chancellor, University of Pune

From 1978 to 1984

Former Vice Chancellor of the Indira Gandhi National Open University and

Former Chairman of National Assessment and Accreditation Council.

Pillar of education policy in India:

- British introduced industrialization India was witnessing a new education system.
- Last 20-30 years there is a struggle in education of the mass of students, the question is, are we addressing the individual requirements of the people.
- People know a lot but they don't know how to apply in the field of life?
- Initially universities were focusing on imparting knowledge but today this university is taking a good step in bringing these two aspects together.

- Education should also focus on character, self-development, and society.
 - Gandhi suggested model of learning and working together.
 - We should have learnings in our life along with education.
-
- After use of scientific thinking, we're using lots of technology aspects.
 - Pune University installed first computer in 1978.
 - Today there is an empowerment because of these technologies and advancement.

He suggested how:

- Can we attract the new generation with these technologies at the same time we also teach how to use them in our favor.
 - Use technologies and bring spiritually together,
 - Human being need is considered holistically.
 - Do we know the science of human actions, motion of body, classical mechanics & modern?
 - Chandrayan is a very good example.
- How do we train our mind with neurology approaches and training the sentiments?
Actions with intelligence. These kinds of approaches must be included in our university. These things are required to be integrated.
- Education system which brings together a path which leads to a journey of self-discovery.
“Yoga, Udyog and sahyoga”
- Gave example of electron - exhibits wave nature and the particle nature. So it's a matter of your usage.
- Every human being is having two world - cyber space and personal space.
Learning globally, applying locally, executing collectively and transforming totally
- **Final point:** When you have problem, find knowledgeable people. If you don't get, find answers through religion and if you are not able to find still find through your intelligence.
- **Suggestion/Recommendation:**
 - The concept of spiritual university is a need of the 21st century, particularly after the 4th industrial revolution. The education has to focus on learner's needs, and finding solution of the problems being faced in their life and work.
A new ideas and means are essential in developing this university.

Prof. (Dr.) Nitin R. Karmalkar



Vice Chancellor, Savitribhai Phule University, Pune

- Universities for specific course created walls among them, staying together culture, nuclear families getting created. Dialogues not happening in the family. So, when students are working under such environment student doesn't understand his real liking and inclinations.

- Because of lack of discussion, after 12th he is given a blend of everything for 2 years and then understand what he should go ahead. How
- he should proceed ahead.
- Student induction Program, Introducing the student to the value system. 6 days under a mentor.
- **We cannot have spirituality separate from education.**
- Example of Swami Vivekananda and Nicholas Tesla.
- They suggested that energy and mass can be reduced to potential energy.
- How can science be put together to understand the cosmos.
- Education is all about character building and expanding his knowledge so that he can stand on his own. And we have missed these points we need to bring them together.
- Ethics inner value is to be focused that can be practiced throughout the tenure of his studies.
- India has so much to give in the field of medicine - Ayurveda, yoga and Vedanta.
It's our good fortune to have our thought process in aligning the traditions with our education system.

Suggestion/Recommendation: It's a great to integrate pairing with the new education policy. It is need of the time to integrate traditional knowledge with the new futuristic knowledge in the area of science, technology, humanities. The present system is lacking in value systems. Which need to be inculcated in the Youth.

Prof Dr. S. B . Nimse



Former Vice Chancellor, Lucknow University,

Former Vice Chancellor, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded (Maharashtra) (2008-2013).

- I recognize the need of such university in India.
- Whether it has to be a private university or deemed university?
- All the institutes should be independent.
- We need to have the infrastructure which promotes the scientific temper.
- All the ancient Vedic texts should be exercised under the scientific temper.
- We need to scrutinizingly study the texts and try to understand which are the important and relevant sections of the texts are.
- Everything mentioned in the Vedas cannot be always applicable and relevant at all the times.
- Correlating the ancient knowledge with the current knowledge.
- One example of this, there are few mathematicians in the history who have given good explanations of the problems which also exist in the today's world.



- You need to be very careful for the laying the foundation of your university.
- Graduates of the universities should be very much compatible with other universities in today's world.
- Suggestion/Recommendation:
 - Prepare draft proposal, taking in view provision of new education policy-2019.
 - Stress on Indian value systems emphasizing ethics, **** and scientific temper.
 - Metaphysics, mind, ancient Indian spiritual texts shall be part of studies.

Prof Dr. N. J. Pawar

Vice Chancellor

Dr. D. Y. Patil Vidyapeeth, Pune.

(Deemed to be University)

- Whether the western education system was really a good idea for India or not it takes care of access equity and inclusiveness.
- If we look at the inputs by new education policy which has mandates to be fulfilled. How can we satisfy?
- He went through different existing universities which claim to be Spiritual Universities.
- Although they are not offering any specific degrees. They are not formal universities however; they call themselves universities.
- There are many university offering courses like mindfulness, use and abuse of resources, music and spirituality, science and spirituality and meditation are some of the current offerings by these kind of university within the Indian subcontinent or not?
- He also looked other countries, there are also some of the existing universities which offer program related to Spiritual Psychology and Spiritual well-being.
How can we fill gaps that are existing and how can come up a foundation document.
- **Suggestion/ Recommendation:**
 - It is excellent idea to establish spiritual university which is important concept in current times.
 - The university can connect the past practices with current times and build a good future.
 - Ethics and environment are challenging concepts which will be brought into curriculum and action through this university.
 - The university can be established under private university act.



Dr. Vivek Sawant

Managing Director of Maharashtra

Knowledge Corporation Limited (MKCL), Pune

The work of ISKCON is so great that it has influenced young minds a lot. It has provided a source of peace to a large number of young students.

- This is a very good time to start a spiritual university since the AI field is growing a lot.
- The way AI is growing, it is very likely that not only the data but the very identity is under the threat of being hacked.
- Business models being followed is cross subsidy. In the village of Kanakpura, they have implemented a Jain University including free schools for the village people around their place.
- GEV is an ideal place for setting up a university which will have the USP. It can give our people set of students/professionals with GREEN COLLAR JOBS.
- We can think of a completely new university. He would like to reject the Cartesian view. World's intricate and inter connected way.
- The students should be able to think in a very different world view than that of the existing view.
- There is a huge opportunity for us to cater to the world the set of people who can carry out GREEN COLLAR JOBS.
- Regenerative, rejuvenate and resourceful. Canada would be first country who would definitely recruit your student's.
- Suggested that the two schools Sadachar and Sanskriti Peetham should be one single school instead of two different. If they are foundational that would be best!
This University should have a completely different pedagogy.
- Higher education objectives are tackled by the higher institutions, so evaluation of students based on the memorization of facts shouldn't be a focus.
- There should be a difference in the way the students learn.
Concept from the spiritual should go to the Corporate also! Why there is no available Management school in your university?
- India is a very huge service sector, although the Automation kills many jobs but it also gives rise to the service.
- 85% of the jobs depend upon the soft skills, essentially, they are trying to point that we need people with strong spiritual background. Industry is currently looking for work ethics and integrity.
- Currently no university teaches that CHEATERS NEVER WIN AND WINNERS NEVER CHEAT! We used to get these Samskaras in our home but in today's world these issues are missing.
- Originally, Higher education was created to help society with its problems but currently, society is in a need to help (higher) education system.
- University can also leverage the cross subsidy to bring equality.
What you can do with what you know is important in today's world instead of just knowing thing.
- Improving learnability is a challenging task for institutions today with an eye on deriving explicit knowledge.

- Once we have personalities who can understand the scientific temper and spiritual knowledge. This would be our way of internally handling the climate change. We can also have a sanyamam peetham!

Establishing the Discipline of Religious Studies in India

A five-day international conference organized from 24th – 28th Dec 2018



Around 40 Scholars and academicians from various parts of the world converged at the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha Research Center, Govardhan Eco Village for the International Conference on ‘Establishing the Discipline of Religious Studies in India’.

It started with the topic ‘Setting the Scene’ By HG Gauranga Das and Dr. Ferdinando Sardella, followed by a keynote address by Dr. David Haberman on theory and methods in religious studies. Several panel sessions followed over the course of next five days.



In one panel the noted panelists - Dr. David Haberman, Dr. Ferdinando Sardella, Dr. Ravi Gupta Dr. Manali Londhe discussed about 'Religious and Hindu Studies in India and around the World.' In another panel, consisting of Dr. Pandit Palande, Dr. Snehal Donde, Dr. Hari Krishna, discussion about 'Creating the vehicle for delivering value based transformative education' happened. Yet in another fascinating panel session, the topic 'Interfacing and impacting the society through applied solutions', was discussed by Acharya Goswamiji, Dr. David Haberman, Dr. S. Kannan and Mr. Manish Vanvari.



Acharya Shrivatsa Goswami ji's enlivening presence by his keynote address 'The Study of Gaudiya Canon' made everyone enthralled. Keynote speech by HH Radhanath Swami on 'The Mood and Mission for Vaishnava Scholarship' made everyone contemplate on the Vaishnava principles like humility.

Expert team consisting of Dr. David Haberman, Dr. Ferdinando Sardella, Dr. Ravi Gupta and Dr. Abhishek Bose presented Ph.D. trajectory advice. Several students presented their proposed topics for research and experts advised them.



Then the members divided into three groups – academic group, outreach group and administrative group. They discussed among themselves on how to take religious studies and BVRC forward and they presented their discussion summary at the end of the conference. Then a Q & A session held with HH Radhanath Swami and Dr. David Haberman answering the intriguing questions put forward by audience.

Conference Partners



Mumbai University



Piramal Foundation



Vivekananda
International
Foundation



A K Mishra
Foundation



Dharamsinh Desai
Foundation



Sri Caitanya Prema
Samsthana



Bhaktivedanta
Research Center,
Kolkata

Speakers

- 1) Gauranga Das
Director Administration
Bhaktivedanta Research Center
- 2) Dr. Ferdinando Sardella
Associate Professor, Dept. of Ethnology
History of Religions and Gender Studies
Stockholm University, Sweden
- 3) Dr. David Haberman
Professor and Former Chair, Dept. of Religious Studies
Indiana University, USA
- 4) Dr. Ravi Gupta
Director of the Religious studies at Utah state University
- 5) Dr. Rita Sharma
Director
GYU Berkeley's Center for Dharma studies
- 6) Dr. Abhishek Bose
Asst. Professor

CILL

- 1) Dr. Sandeep Bahvsar
Head
Learning Resource Center
- 2) Dr. Suhas Pedneka
Vice Chancellor
Mumbai University
- 10) Dr. Pandit Palande
Vice Chancellor
Bihar University
- 11) Dr. Murlidhar Kurhade
Dean, Faculty of Arts
Mumbai University
- 12) Dr. Geeta Ramana
HOD, Philosophy Dept.
Mumbai University
- 13) Dr. Manali Londhe
Principal & Asst. Professor, Philosophy
S.K. Somiya College
- 14) Dr. Uma Shankar
Principal & HOD Philosophy
SIES college
- 15) Dr. Manju Naika
Chief Library Officer
IIT Bombay

Patrons & Strategy Partners

- 1) HH Radhanath Swami
Founder, BVRC & Govardhan Ecovillage
- 2) Shri Subramanian Swamy

Hon'ble member of Rajya Sabha

3) **Shri Shrikant Bhartiya**

OSD to Maharashtra CM

4) **Shri Shaurya Doval**

Director, India Foundation

5) **Shri Hrishikesh Mafatlal**

Chairman, Mafatlal Industries Ltd.

6) **Shri A.K.Mishra**

Founder, Chanakya IAS Academy

7) **Acharya Shrivastva Goswami**

Visiting Professor of Religious Studies
Harvard University

8) **Shri Vinod Tawde**

Hon'ble Education Minister, Govt of Maharashtra

9) **Shri Ajay Parimal**

Chairman, Parimal Group

10) **Shri Vinay Hebbbar**

Sr. Vice-President
International Market
Harvard Business Publishing

11) **Shri Kushal Desai**

Chairman, Apar Industries

12) **Dr. Nachiket Tiwari**

Associate Professor, IIT Kanpur

Inauguration of Bhaktivedanta Research Center, Mumbai

A one-day conference organized on 1st September 2018



The 1st of September, 2018 witnessed a momentous event in the history of Vaishnava education with the inauguration of the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha Research Center (BVRC) by Honorable Education Minister of Maharashtra Shri Vinod Tawde and His Holiness Radhanath Swami Maharaj, Founder of the BVRC. Other prominent personalities who graced the event were His Holiness Bhakti Brhad Bhagavat Maharaj (Co-President, ISKCON Juhu), Shri Ajay Piramal (Chairman, Piramal Group), Shri Kushal Desai (Chairman, Apar Industries), Dr. Ravindra Kulkarni (Pro-VC Mumbai University), Dr. Vishnu Magare (Pro-VC SNDT Women's University). More than 50

Many professors and administrators from the Mumbai University participated in the event while about 500 devotees from ISKCON were also present in the audience.

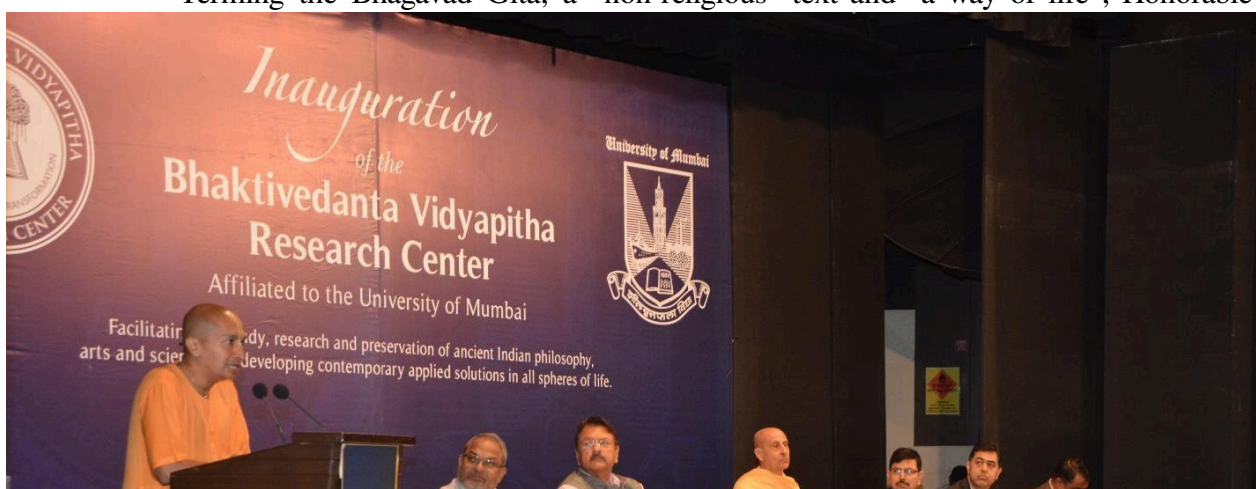
The Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha which started as a two-year study course on Srimad Bhagavatam and Chaitanya Charitamrta at Govardhan Ecovillage has now become affiliated to the University of Mumbai as a Research Center in the subject of Philosophy. With this affiliation, the BVRC shall be able to conduct PhD programs, Diploma courses and Certificate courses in affiliation with Mumbai University. The BVRC aims at facilitating the study and research of ancient Indian philosophy, arts and sciences for developing contemporary applied solutions in all spheres of life such as Ethics, Emotions, Environment, Entrepreneurship, Efficiency etc.



The introductory talk at the event was given by HG Gauranga Das, Chairman of the BVRC in which he quoted examples of China and the US in how these economic superpowers have of late patronized religious studies and philosophy in their educational institutions. He said that concerted efforts at demolition of ancient Chinese civilization in the 1960s led to severe moral decay and identity crisis in the Chinese populace. The Chinese government has of late been actively promoting ancient Chinese culture and the Confucius philosophy to make China stand out as an ideological and cultural superpower and not just a manufacturing superpower. He also explained the evolution of the American education system which began with theological seminaries but later with emergence of science and technology became atheistic in nature.

However, as the society hit dead end with world wars, hedonism, broken families and depleted value systems, religious studies again became relevant and was catalyzed by the establishment of the American Academy of Religion in 1963, which now has 10000 professors and research scholars as members. He advocated the need for the Indian government and intelligentsia to realize and rise to the need of the hour of introducing academic study of religion and philosophy in curriculum. He said that the BVRC would work towards emerging as a world-class research center in the field of philosophy and we hope and pray that it eventually develops into a full fledged Srila Prabhupada University, in fulfillment of the vision and desire of Srila Prabhupada, the Founder-Acharya of ISKCON.

Terming the Bhagavad Gita, a "non-religious" text and "a way of life", Honorable Education



Minister of Maharashtra Shri Vinod Tawde said that he wanted to introduce Bhagavad Gita in lucid language in schools from Class One so that its contents can be easily absorbed by them and they can apply it in their day-to-day lives. Congratulating ISKCON for starting this much needed Research Center he said that Bhakti Vedanta is the ancient Indian knowledge that binds science and spirituality in one vein and with the opening of Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha Research Centre ISKCON and Mumbai University are giving an opportunity for advanced research exploring the realms of spiritual science.



Leading Industrialist and Social Entrepreneur Shri Ajay Piramal shared how Bhagawad Gita has been a constant companion and guide for him in his journey and has helped him to navigate the ups and downs of personal and business life. He said Gita's emphasis on being action oriented and not result oriented is a key paradigm for being successful and stress-free in life. He said that knowledge of the Gita is very crucial for upholding moral and ethical standards in business.



Pro-VC Mumbai University, Dr. Ravindra Kulkarni and Pro-VC SNDT Women's University, Dr. Vishnu Magare lauded ISKCON's initiative of setting up the BVRC and assured all academic and administrative support to make it a grand success.

The event culminated with a fabulous talk by HH Radhanath Swami Maharaj in which he said that education is meant to develop character of a person. Arjuna and Duryodhana though studying in the same University under the same teacher had completely opposite destinies because of the antithesis of their inner character. He said that the Vedanta means the culmination of all knowledge which is Bhakti and thus the name Bhaktivedanta represents the purpose of the BVRC which is to blossom an individual's character to be able to serve with love. He concluded by saying that, "I am hoping and praying that this seed sown today when watered with proper integrity and devotion will grow into a tree and then forest with limitless fruits of knowledge."



The inauguration was done by unveiling of a plaque by the dignitaries led by Shri Vinod Tawde and His Holiness Radhanath Swami Maharaj. The program concluded with a gala lunch at ISKCON Shri Shri Radha Gopinath Temple at Gigaum Chowpatty.





The Context of Chaitanya-Vaishnavism: Bhakti

A two-day conference organised in February 2018 with the University of Calcutta

The seminar emphasised on various aspects of Bhakti including its historiography, socio-political facets, cultural transactions; its relevance in colonial and post-colonial era, and divergence and convergence that are included in Chaitanya-Vaishnavism from the perspective of bhakti. Participants from various fields of Social Sciences participated in the seminar.

Speakers

- 1) Prof. Dipak Kumar Kar
Pro-vice Chancellor (Academy)
University of Calcutta
- 2) Prof. Nrisimha Prasad Bhaduri
Professor, Dept. of Bengali
University of Calcutta
- 3) Acharya Shrivatsa Goswami
Director

Sri Chaitanya Prema Samsthana, Vrindavan
Former Faculty Member, School of Divinity
Harvard University

Gaudiya Vaishnava Darshana Acharya

A two-day conference organised in February 2018 with Baghbazar Gaudiya Math, Kolkata

The conference celebrated 100 years of Gaudiya Math. The two-day conference highlighted Gaudiya Vaishnava Philosophy and its relevance in today's world.

Speakers

1) Dr. Ravi Gupta

Associate Professor, Dept. of Religious Study
Utah State University, USA

2) Dr. Abhishek Bose

Head, Dept. of Comparative Indian Language and Literature
University of Calcutta, Kolkata

3) Dr. Ferdinando Sardella

Associate Professor, Dept. of Ethnology
History of Religions and Gender Studies
Stockholm University, Sweden

4) Dr. Vivekananda Banerjee

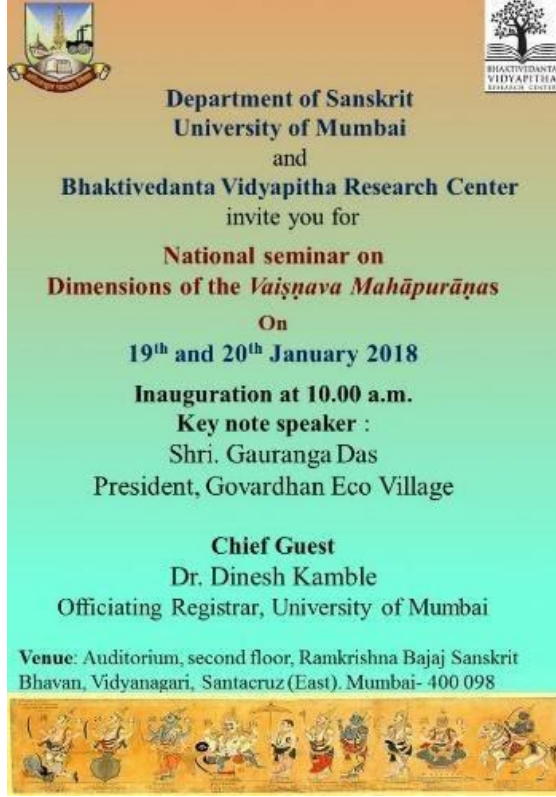
The Asiatic Society of India, Kolkata

5) Dr. Sumanta Rudra

Dean, Academic Affairs
Bhaktivedanta Research Centre, Kolkata

Various Dimensions of Vaishnava Puranas

A two-day international seminar organised in January 2018 with the University of Mumbai



Vaiṣṇava Mahāpurāṇas have played a key role in the religious, cultural and spiritual spheres of Hinduism. They eulogize the worship of Viṣṇu and his incarnations through myth, ritual, iconography and sacred geography. The *Bhāgavata* and *Viṣṇu Mahāpurāṇas* have been explored by many scholars due to their strong linkages with *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava*, *Śuddhādvaita* and *Viśiṣṭādvaita* schools of philosophy and religion. But the other *Mahāpurāṇas* like *Nārada*, *Kūrma*, *Matsya*, *Varāha* etc are yet to be explored and researched. Apart from extolling the glory of Viṣṇu, the principal deity of these *Mahāpurāṇas*, the texts have a deep impact on narratives, philosophy, bhakti, temple architecture, rise of different *sampradāyas*, saint literature etc. Hence a deep study of the *Vaiṣṇava Mahāpurāṇas* revealing their different dimensions is essential.

The seminar focussed on the textual and contextual dimensions of the *Vaiṣṇava Mahāpurāṇas*. It discussed the problems and perspectives behind undertaking critical editions of the *Vaiṣṇava Mahāpurāṇas*. These

texts critique and comment on the culture existing during the time of their composition and compilations. Incarnations are one of the main aspects of *Vaiṣṇava Mahāpurāṇas*. It is a part of assimilation and acculturation of different folk and tribal worships in the mainstream Puranic Hinduism. The *Mahāpurāṇas* describe cosmology, apocalypse, creation and re-creation. The philosophical thought underlining the worship of Viṣṇu as the dominant deity is well-explored in these *Mahāpurāṇas*. The *Mahāpurāṇas* like the *Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* have a living tradition of their narration and it has a pan-Indian presence. It is essential to locate and analyze regional deviations and interpolations in it. *Vaiṣṇava Mahāpurāṇas* underline the strong linkages with saint literature and saint philosophy in the medieval period. In the context of sacred geography, they mention different narratives behind emergence of places as important religious centres. Different art forms like iconography, paintings like the *paṭacitra* from Orissa, games like *ganjifā* from Maharashtra, various *kīrtana* traditions across India depict a deep influence of the *Vaiṣṇava Mahāpurāṇas* on them.

Dr. Prachi A. Moghe, Assistant Director, Bhavan's P.G. & Research Dept., presented a research paper on 'Influence of Vaishnava Puranas on Iconography with reference to Narayana.' The etymology of the word 'Narayana', the conceptual development of philosophy associated with Narayana and its reflection in iconography were discussed. A few examples of images of Narayana from the Indian subcontinent were also explained.

In this way the seminar highlighted, explored, investigated and analyzed the socio-cultural, philosophical and religious aspects emerging from a deep study of *Vaiṣṇava Mahāpurāṇas*.

Speakers

- 1) Dr. Prachi A. Mogre
Assistant Director, Bhavan's P.G. & Research Dept.
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mumbai
- 2) Dr. Smt. Gauri Mahulikar
Dean of Faculty, Chinmaya University, Kerela
- 3) Dr. Smt. Madhavi Narsalay
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Sanskrit
University of Mumbai
- 4) Dr. Smt. Nirmala Kulkarni
- 5) Dr. Smt. Shweta Prajapati
- 6) Dr. Smt. Sindhu Dange
- 7) Dr. Smt. Parineeta Deshpande

Hinduism and Ecology: Towards a sustainable future

A four-day conference organized in December 2017 with Yale University



In December 2017, Bhaktivedanta Research Centre organised a four-day conference on 'Hinduism and Ecology: Towards a sustainable future' in collaboration with Yale University at Mumbai. Over thirty academic scholars participated in this conference. The participants highlighted the contributions of Vedic texts to the solution of the Ecological Crisis.

Speakers

- 1) Dr. Harry Blair
Senior Research Scholar, Associate Chair
South Asian Studies Council, Yale University, USA
- 2) Dr. John Allen Grim
Senior Lecturer and Senior Research Scholar
Yale University, USA
- 3) Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker
Senior Lecturer and Senior Research Scholar
Yale University, USA
- 4) Dr. David Haberman
Professor and Former Chair, Dept. of Religious Studies
Indiana University, USA

- 5) Acharya Srivatsa Goswami
Director, Sri Chaitanya Prema Samsthana, Vrindavan
Former Faculty Member, School of Divinity, Harvard University
- 6) Dr. Ravi Gupta
Associate Professor, Dept. of Religious Study
Utah State University, USA
- 7) Dr. Christopher Chapple
Doshi Professor of Indic and Comparative Theology
Director, Master of Arts in Yoga Studies
Loyola Marymount University, USA
- 8) His Holiness Devamrita Swami
- 9) Dr. Kenneth Valpey (Krishna-Kshetra Swami Maharaj)
Research Fellow
Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies
- 10) His Holiness Bhaktirasamrita Swami

Gaudiya Vaishnava Philosophy and Ecology

A one-day international conference organised in December 2017 with Ramnarain College

RUIA COLLEGE
Explore • Experience • Excel

BHAKTI VEDANTA VIDYAPITHA
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THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY,
RAMNARAIN RUIA AUTONOMOUS COLLEGE
In collaboration with
BHAKTI VEDANTA VIDYAPITH RESEARCH CENTRE
PRESENTS

**A One-Day International Seminar
on
VAISHNAVA PHILOSOPHY &
ECOLOGY**

This one day International Seminar will witness discussion, deliberation & dialogue on Vaishnava philosophy & its application to orchestrating a holistic & healthy ecology in these times of pollution epidemic & climate change

DATE: 15TH DECEMBER, 2017

THEME NOTE BY
Gauranga Das Prabhu, ISKCON

INAUGURAL TALK BY
Prof. David Haberman
Professor, Dept. of Religious Studies, Indiana University, U.S.A.

SPEAKERS
Prof. Ravi Gupta
Director, Religious Studies, Utah State University, U.S.A;
Research Fellow, Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies

Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College in collaboration with Bhakti Vedanta Vidyapith Research Centre organized a one-day international seminar on 'Vaishnava philosophy and ecology' on 15th

December 2017. The seminar was attended by more than 120 students and teachers from more than 15 colleges all across Mumbai. Vatsala Pai, the HOD of Philosophy department at Ruia college welcomed the dignitaries and paper presenters which included Gauranga Das (Director of Govardhan Eco Village) and Prof. David Haberman (Indiana university, U.S.A)

In the Theme Note address, Gauranga Das underscored the importance of philosophy as the backbone and fuel for attaining meaningful success in any other field of human endeavor. He also highlighted that philosophy has been India's USP since ages and we should capitalize on this strength. Prof. David Haberman presented an insightful paper on 'Vaishnava Anthropomorphism: the case of worship of Mount Govardhan' as part of his Keynote address.

Further there were 2 panels where invited speakers presented their papers. Students witnessed a galaxy of international scholars like Dr. Ravi Gupta (Utah State University), Dr. Ferdinando Sardella (Assistant professor, Stockholm university), Sr. Kenneth valpey (Research fellow at Oxford university Center for Hindu studies), Dr. Kamla Srinivas (Assistant prof, S.I.E.S college, Mumbai) and Dr. Himani Chaukar (Assistant prof. Ramanrain Ruia Autonomous college) present enlightening papers at these panels. Papers were presented on a wide range of topics like Ecology in literary works of Rabindranath Tagore and Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, Ethics of cow protection in Vaishnavism, Position of trees in Vaishnava Ecology, Comparison of Vaishnava and tribal perspectives on Ecology etc. The papers were followed by engaging questions and answers between the students and the scholars. Prof. Dr. Shubhada Joshi, (former HOD of Philosophy, University of Mumbai) delivered the valedictory address. Seminar was very well received by the audience.



Speakers

- 1) Prof. Kamala Srinivas

Assistant Professor, SIES College, Mumbai

2) Dr. Uma Shankar

Principal, Head of Dept. of Philosophy
SIES College, Mumbai

3) Prof. Ferdinando Sardella

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Ethnology
Gender Studies, History of Religion
Stockholm University, Sweden
Research Fellow, Oxford centre for Hindu Studies

4) Dr. Himani Chaukar

Assistant Professor
Ramarain Ruia Autonomous College, Mumbai

5) Dr. Kenneth Valpey

Research Fellow
Oxford Center for Hindu Studies

Vaishnavism: Theory and Practice

A one-day international conference organised in December 2017 with Jadavpur University



The conference explored the history, development, culture, philosophy, sociology, gender perspectives, texts and practises of Vaishnavism in all their varieties and complexities, from literary schools to folk traditions, as well as invited discussions about the study of Vaishnavism as a scientific, secular subject.

The speakers highlighted various aspects, including Theology, Philosophy, transitional currents and the development of modern currents that were associated with Vaishnavism.

Speakers

- 1) Dr. Kenneth Valpey (Krishna-Kshetra Swami)
Research Fellow
Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies
University of Oxford, UK
- 2) Dr. Ravi Gupta
Associate Professor, Dept. of Religious Study
Utah State University, USA
- 3) Gauranga Das
Director - Administration
Bhaktivedanta Research Center

- 4) Dr. Santanu Dey
Associate Professor, Dept. of History
Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandir, Belur, West Bengal
- 5) Dr. Ferdinando Sardella
Associate Professor, Dept. of Ethnology
History of Religions and Gender Studies
Stockholm University, Sweden
- 6) Dr. Abhishek Ghosh
Director
Institute of Vaishnava Studies
Gainesville, Florida, USA
- 7) Dr. Arun Bandopadhyay
ICSSR Senior Fellow, IDSK
The Asiatic Society, Kolkata
- 8) Dr. Sumanta Rudra
Dean, Academic Affairs
Bhaktivedanta Research Center, Kolkata
- 9) Dr. Somdatta Mukherjee
Université Paris Descartes
Sorbonne, France
- 10) Dr. Abhijit Sadhukhan
Ph.D Fellow, Dept. of Comparative Literature
Jadavpur University, Kolkata
- 11) Dr. Hiren Sarkar
External Expert, Centre for the Study of Religion and Society
Jadavpur University
Former Chief, Development Policy
United Nations, UNESCAP, in Bangkok

Relevance, Role and Resurgence of Vaishnavism in 21st Century Bengal

An international conference organised in September 2017 with Shree Halari Oswal College, affiliated to Mumbai University

Scholars and academicians from various parts of the country and abroad converged at the Kalina campus of Mumbai University to participate in a first of its kind International Conference on the topic “Relevance, Role and Resurgence of Vaishnavism studies in the 21st century.” Jointly organised by the Bhaktivedanta Research Centre and Shree Halari Oswal College, affiliated to Mumbai University, the conference witnessed participation of more than 200 students, scholars and administrators from the field of academia.

Speakers

- 1) Dr. Sanjay Deshmukh
Honourable Vice Chancellor
University of Mumbai, Mumbai
- 2) Dr Satish Modh
Director
Vivekanand Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai
- 3) Mrs Maya Shahani
Chairperson
Thadomal Shahani Centre for Management, Mumbai
- 4) Dr. Chandrakant Puri
Chair Professor
Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Contemporary Studies, Mumbai
- 5) HG Gauranga Das
Director Administration
Bhaktivedanta Research Center

The Various Aspects of Manuscriptology and Palaeography

A two-day virtual international workshop organized in July 2021 with the Asiatic Society, Department of Ethnography, History of Religions and Gender Studies, Stockholm University, Sweden and Sri Jagannath Research Centre, St. Paul's Cathedral Mission College, Kolkata

The workshop highlighted its focus on several matters related to conservation and preservation with special emphasis on manuscript holding, the role of the library, reservation and documentation of archival documents etc. Also, a brief overview of the classical and modern Indian languages was given with an exposure to the scripts of Brahmi, Kharasthi and Newari.

Speakers

- 1) Dr. Tapati Mukherjee
Library Secretary
The Asiatic Society, Kolkata
- 2) Dr. Swapan Kr. Pramanik
President
The Asiatic Society, Kolkata
- 3) Dr. Sujit Kumar Das
Treasurer
The Asiatic Society, Kolkata
- 4) Dr. Bandana Mukherjee
Research Officer
The Asiatic Society, Kolkata
- 5) Dr. Tinni Goswami
Head, Dept. of History
St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata
- 6) Dr. Rita Bhattacharya
Former faculty of Manuscriptology and Palaeography Section
Jadavpur University
- 7) Dr. Mans Broo
Professor
Abo Akademi University, Finland
- 8) Dr. Rita Chaudhury
Professor, Dept. of Ancient Indian History
University of Calcutta

9) Dr. Sk. Makbul Islam

Director, Sri Jagannath Research Center

Associate Professor, St. Paul's Cathedral Mission College,
University of Calcutta, Kolkata

10) Dr. Sumanta Rudra

Dean, Academic Affairs

Bhaktivedanta Research Center, Kolkata

Second National Workshop on Curriculum Development for De-novo Deemed University

A one-day workshop organized on 25th Dec 2019

On 25th December 2019, BRC Mumbai organized curriculum development workshop for de-novo deemed university for the second time. It was conducted in the presence of Professor Dr. S.B. Nimse Former Vice Chancellor, Lucknow University & SRTM University Nanded (MH), Dr. Ajit Thete (Director, Centre for Development of Leadership in Education), HG Gauranga Das (Director, BRC) and Dr. Dhumal (Senior Professor, Department of Botany, University of Pune).

Around 30 experts from different fields gathered and enthusiastically participated in the curriculum development for their respective fields of expertise.



National Workshop on Curriculum Development for De-novo Deemed University

A one-day workshop organized on 16th July 2019



The Bhaktivedanta Research Centre is putting its humble attempts to establish a university that will focus exclusively on preserving, researching, studying and disseminating India's history, spirituality and culture for the benefit of the contemporary society both in India and the world at large. The BRC is proposing to establish this University as a DE-NOVO DEEMED UNIVERSITY as per the norms of the University Grants Commission. By this, it hopes to contribute to the social, cultural, scientific, economic and ecological wealth of the nation through this offering in the education field.

A critical part of this is to develop a scientific & systematic curriculum based on the philosophy described above. In this backdrop, a one-day conference was organized on 16th November 2019 to design the curriculum content based on the well thought framework. The conference enlisted the (i) Avenues for professional development & career opportunities (ii) Job functions and competencies, (iii) Course level abilities to be developed along with (iv) Course framework and (v) learning-teaching-evaluation.

On November 16th, 2019, several experts from various fields gathered together in a meeting hall near ISKCON Chowpatty to participate in the conference.



Chief Guest for the program was

Prof. Dr. S.B. Nimse Former Vice Chancellor, Lucknow University & SRTM University Nanded (MH).

Other special guests included:

- HG Gauranga Das (Chairman, BRC)
- Mr.Nitin K. Patil (IAS, Managing Director, Maharashtra State Co-op. Tribal Dev. Corporation Ltd., Nashik)
- Dr. Ajit Thete (Director, Centre for Development of Leadership in Education)
- Dr. Sharmishtha L. Matkar (Principal, Patkar – Varde College),
- Dr. Dhumal (Senior Professor, Department of Botany, University of Pune)

Dr. Nimse spoke about the topic ‘internationalization’, how the university that is going to develop should have Universal appeal. HG Gauranga prabhu talked about how the university that is going to establish will solve many problems of the world currently facing due to ecological and sociological problems.

More than 40 experts who are from academic institutions as well as from industry, gathered to participate in it. Dr. Ajit Thete, who is expert in guiding these educational activities, guided the whole event. Govardhan Eco Village is

De-novo University aims at unique novel concept and the philosophy of Govardhan Eco Village is suitable for that.

The curriculum for the following courses were developed during the conference- green infrastructure, Vocational Education, Organic Farming, Natural Resource Management, Waste Management, Rural Eco Tourism, Cultural Studies, Public health, Yoga and Applied philosophy. Govardhan Eco Village is already doing several projects in these areas. So, experts who guided Govardhan Eco Village as well as other experts in these areas from academic circles and from industry gave their valuable inputs to develop the curriculum.

The conference concluded with the participants giving presentation of their work in the presence of HH Radhanath Swami.





Finally, HH Radhanath Swami spoke briefly about how dedicated efforts will lead to results. The program concluded with certificate ceremony.



The Bhagavad Gita: A Philosophical Deconstruction

A lecture organised on 28th January 2022 with Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College, Mumbai




*S. P. Mandali's
Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College,*

*The Department of Philosophy
in collaboration with
Bhaktivedanta Research Center
invites you to the
25th N. V. Joshi Memorial Lecture*

**THE BHAGAVAD GITA:
A PHILOSOPHICAL
DECONSTRUCTION**

Dr. Ithamar Theodor
Associate Professor, Zefat Academic College, Israel



**28TH JAN 2022 | 1 PM - 2 PM
PLATFORM: ZOOM**

The Department of Philosophy, Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College organizes N. V. Joshi memorial lecture every year in memory of their first Head of Department of Philosophy Dr. N. V. Joshi. This year marked the 25th anniversary of N. V. Joshi memorial lecture for which a guest lecture was arranged and Dr. Ithamar Theodor was invited to speak on the topic of 'The Bhagavad Gita: A Philosophical deconstruction' in collaboration with the Bhaktivedanta Research Center. The aim of this lecture was to introduce students to a novel and philosophical approach towards interpreting the Bhagavad Gita.

The Bhagavad-Gita has always occupied a central place in Indian philosophy and literature. As a text of unmatched literary beauty and philosophical depth, not only are its verses pleasurable to recite, but it also offers a deeply satisfying experience to all philosophers seeking to better comprehend the mysteries of life and the universe. It was thus a unique experience for the nearly hundred attendees of this lecture, to witness a journey towards understanding the Bhagavad-Gita from a different lens.

Transcript

Reading the Bhagavad-gītā as Philosophy

There are various possible ways of reading the Bhagavad-gītā; it can be read as a work of literature or poetry, it can be read as a work in the realm of Indology and examined from the point of view of Oriental studies, and it can otherwise be read as a work of philosophy or theology. As a work of literature or poetry, its literary and poetical aspects would naturally be highlighted; as such, the verses' meters, the particular epithets of Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa and the corresponding emotions evoked by their application – these and similar aspects will possibly be looked into. As a work of Indology, its historical and linguistic aspects would be highlighted and, as such, questions regarding the date of its compilation, the singularity or plurality of authors, the linguistic structure of the text, and its relation to the context of the *Mahabharata* would be naturally considered. As a work of philosophy or theology, its conceptual structure, its underlying assumptions and its prevailing ideas would be mainly considered and examined, and this is the thrust of the present paper. In reviewing three Bhagavad-gītā editions, writes Arvind Sharma:

If the other two editions have produced a translation of this popular book, of which there are many, then Ithamar Theodor has produced a “philosophical exploration,” of which there are few by contrast. The chief merit of Theodor's book is that it presents the thought of the *Bhagavad-gītā* on its own terms, rather than as ancillary to a school of existing philosophy, such as that of Advaita, Viśiṣṭadvaita, or Dvaita Vedānta. Despite some issues which got overlooked, the book is nevertheless a solid contribution to the philosophical study of the *Bhagavad-gītā* on its own terms which will steer scholars and students in the right direction.

The Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras who lived in the 6th c. BCE is known for his Pythagorean equation, according to which the area of the square opposite the right angle is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides.

He is also known for his discovery of the mathematical foundations of music. However, his philosophical and scientific achievements were practiced within a religious setting which involved a somewhat simple and austere way of life, a commitment to vegetarianism, a belief in reincarnation and a ritualistic way of life involving the worship of Greek gods. Also, as opposed to the norms of the time, his community included both men and women. In a sense his scientific engagement was practiced within what today would be considered an ashram setting. Similarly, Plato's academy established during the early 4th c. BCE also combined a philosophical search with a religious and ritualistic way of life focusing on the worship of Athena, the goddess of wisdom, war, art and justice; in many ways Plato's academy served as the foundation of western academy.

However, as the years passed and as the tradition became secularized, the practice of philosophy became separated from its ritualistic and religious characteristics. As such, nowadays one can study Greek philosophy without worshipping the goddess Athena or be committed to ancient Greek ritualism. To my mind there is a parallel between the secularization and universalization which occurred to the Greek philosophy

A unique blending of the sad-darśhanas in the *Bhagavad-gītā*

As far as the ṣaḍ-darśanas, all these appear in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*; the Gītā is no doubt vedāntic and indeed is also called Gītopaniṣad. It is much engaged with the Vedic Sacrifice and as such absorbs the mīmāṃsā. It is strongly yogic and accepts the sāṅkhya-yoga metaphysics, and apparently nyāya and vaiśeṣika are also mentioned or at least hinted upon. However, the Gītā blends all these components in a unique way, ties these to each other in an innovative fashion, and so much so, that it articulates a philosophical path in itself, a path which goes beyond each and every of the ṣaḍ-darśanas when studied separately. Considering all this, I propose to consider the guṇa theory, that theory underlying the sāṅkhya-yoga schools, to be the foundation upon which the Gita could be treated as a philosophy. In other words, the guṇas offer secular and universal categories which are able to perceive both the human being and the world in a new way. In other words, the guṇa theory has a potential of offering a new epistemology. Which is based upon qualities rather than upon formal logic.

Qualified philosophy and epistemology

In general, the nature of philosophies is to exist within the sphere of rationality and logic, and specifically within the sphere of formal logic, i.e., logic which captures the object's form as opposed to its particular qualities. It is characterized by its ability to extract the general and abstract principles from the many specifics and particulars in a direct, exact and concise manner, thereby distinguishing the true from the false. It may well be that philosophy focuses more on the substance, which is general, and less on the attributes, which are specific. Thus, for example, when saying that 'a chair is a separate seat for one person, typically with a back and four legs', philosophy would relate to an abstract chair, and not to any particular one with certain attributes related to a specific time and place. As the logic underlying many philosophical systems is formal, it perceives the form of an object and ignores its specific attributes.

The guṇa doctrine, however, has the ability to highlight the specific and particular qualities of a specific object. Examining a flower, for example, the philosophical approach would concentrate on its 'flowerhood', that is, its essential and minimal components that are needed for it to be a flower. In order to do that, it will minimize a perception or, in other words, further a relaxation of its peculiar and personal characteristics in favour of emphasizing and intensifying its abstract and impersonal essence of 'flowerhood'. Examining the same flower from the guṇa point of view, its specific and particular characteristics would be highlighted; its being fresh, red, it having thorns for protection, its being fragrant and its being mildly covered with morning dew – and at the same time further a relaxation, or minimize a perception, of its abstract and impersonal characteristics, that is, its

‘flowerhood’. It follows that philosophical language based upon formal logic favours abstraction, whereas the *guṇa* terminology favours specification, that is concentration on the detailed and peculiar. Let me give another example, that of apples; there may be three apples which are equal as far as their external qualities. However, one apple was acquired in charity, one was bought and one was stolen. The *guṇa* point of view would be able to perceive these subtleties, I argue, not lesser than the way formal logic perceives these.

The *guṇa* theory – a general survey

The theory underlying the *Yoga* and *Saṅkhya* schools considers nature to consist of three qualities or strands, called *guṇas*; the three qualities are named *sattva* representing goodness and transparency, *rajas* representing passion and desire, and *tamas* representing ignorance, indolence and darkness. Human nature or one's *svabhāva* is comprised of the three *gunas* which bind the soul to mind and matter, or to the subtle and gross bodies. As opposed to the soul or *ātman* which remains steady and unchanging, the *gunas* constantly interact among themselves, and unite in various combinations; as such, sometimes goodness prevails, sometimes passion and sometimes darkness. As the *gunas* are so dominant and govern every aspect of life, this world is sometimes called ‘the world of the *gunas*’. As the three *gunas* comprise human nature, they are reflected through each and every thought, word or deed. As such, the way one thinks, speaks and acts reflects the combination of the conditioning *guṇas*. This concept offers a unique division of human and even non-human existence which groups together various aspects of life, such as various psychological components, activity and adherence to duty, social grouping, eating habits and cosmological divisions.

In order to understand the *Bhagavad-Gītā* on its own terms, one would have to link the *gunas* to the concept of *varna*, which underlies the *Gita*'s concept of *dharma*.

Once unifying these three components, i.e., the *guṇas*, the *varnas* and *dharma* the *Gita*'s potential as a universal philosophy is revealed. As far linking the social groups or *varnas* with the *guṇas*, Kṛṣṇa says in verse 4.13: "I have created the four social classes according to the divisions of the *gunas* and modes of work". This linkage between the *varnas* and the *gunas* is unique, and is further developed later in the *gita*:

- 18.41 O Parantapa, the activities of *brahmanas*, *ksatriyas*, *vaisyas* and *sudras* are divided according to the *gunas* and spring from their own nature.
- 18.42 Tranquillity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom and religious piety characterize the *brahmana* as they spring from his own nature.
- 18.43 Heroism, ardour, determination, expertise, fighting spirit, generosity and leadership characterize the *ksatriya* as they spring from his own nature.
- 18.44 Agriculture, cow protection and trade characterize the *vaisya* as they spring from his own nature, and acts of service mark the *sudra* as they spring from his own nature.

Apparently, this social division of the four *varnas* is based on the *guṇa* constitution of each *varna*. Brahmins have dominant *sattva* in their nature, *ksatriyas* have more *rajas*, *vaishyas* have more *tamas* and *sudras* have even more *tamas* in their nature.

Taking a somewhat wider look, it may be said that the *guṇa* of goodness is characterized by knowledge and happiness, and adherence to duty for the sake of duty; it represents the intellectual social group or the brahmins, is associated with fresh vegetarian food and, cosmologically, leads to the higher planets. The *guṇa* of passion is characterized by desire and attachment, and with adherence to duty for the sake of its fruits or for some ulterior gain; when mixed with a larger amount of goodness it represents the ruling class, and when mixed with a somewhat lesser amount of goodness, it represents the mercantile and farming class. It is associated with vegetarian food which agitates the senses, such as spicy or salty food, and cosmologically it leads to the middle planets. The *guṇa* of ignorance is characterized by darkness, indolence and madness and it involves the negligence of duty; it is more dominant among the productive social class, it is associated with non-vegetarian food and intoxicating drinks, and, cosmologically, it leads to the lower planets. This categorization of the four varnas representing different combinations of the *guṇas*, I consider to be external, i.e., these depict one's *svabhava* or nature, but do not depict one's internal state.

The *gunas* may also be thought of as universal paths, on which the soul travels during its journey through *samsara*. The path of goodness seems at first to be somewhat pale, but as one adheres to it, one gradually begins to experience happiness, stability and illumination. The path of passion is contrary, in that it seems very attractive and exciting at first, but as one adheres to it, one begins to experience distress and exhaustion. The lowest path, that of darkness, represent the lowest human condition; it is characterized by indolence, foolishness and even madness, and it leads to self-destruction. Despite the possibility of rationalizing these three paths, it may be rather difficult for the embodied to escape the influence or even bondage of the particular *gunas* binding him or her. For the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the idea of the *gunas* is fundamental and elaborate discussions on the nature of the *gunas* take place, especially in Chapters 14, 17 and 18.

An interesting aspect or feature of the *Guṇa* theory is that implicit in the system is the aspiration to elevate oneself higher and higher within the *guṇas*, and this has deep ethical implications. In other words, the *guṇa* theory not only describes the world, but rather aspires to raise each and every individual to a higher state of existence. The *Bhagavad-gītā* suggests a gradual elevation, by which one raises oneself from a lower *guṇa* to a higher one. For this purpose, various characteristics of the *guṇas*' bondage are delineated, and these enable a process of self-examination or self-study. Consequently, one is able to change one's habits for the purpose of raising oneself in this ladder of the *guṇas*.

Each and every person has his or her unique nature, composed of a specific combination of the *guṇas*. In a sense, one's *dharma* springs from one's nature and this is a very important link offered by the Gita. In other words, the Gita makes a direct link between one's *svabhava*, comprised by a specific combination of the *guṇas*, and one's *dharma* or duty. Let us look into this very interesting linkage.

However, this division is external and besides, there is an internal division which is also based upon the *guṇas*. Moreover, as the *gunas* are subtle they represent not only one's nature but one's

motivations as well. First, there is a clear linkage between sattva guṇa and dharma; this is a very important linkage according to which sattvic action is dharmic.

- 18.23 It is said that an action is of the nature of goodness when performed according to the injunctions of *dharma*, without attachment, devoid of attraction or repulsion, by one who desires not its fruits.
- 18.24 But action performed to satisfy one's own desires, accomplished by great effort or accompanied by an exaggerated ego notion, is said to be of the nature of passion.
- 18.25 An action performed without considering future consequences, loss or injury to others, disregarding one's ability to accomplish it, and undertaken out of delusion, is said to be of the nature of darkness.

Having established this important linkage, the Gītā goes on to articulate various subtleties:

- An agent is said to be of the nature of goodness when he is free from attachment and self-absorption, determined, courageous and enthusiastic, and unchanged in success or failure.
- An agent is considered to be of passionate nature when he is passionate, covets the fruits of his actions, greedy, harmful, impure and absorbed in joy and sorrow.
- He who is undisciplined, vulgar, stubborn, crooked, vile, indolent, dejected and procrastinating, such an agent is said to be of the nature of darkness.

Intelligence and determination are both divided according to the three *guṇas*; hear now a complete detailed explanation, O Dhanañjaya.

- 18.30 The intelligence that discriminates between active involvement and inactive extinction, between what is duty and what is not, between what is to be feared and what is not to be feared, between what binds and what liberates, is of the nature of goodness.
- 18.31 The intelligence that fails to distinguish between *dharma* and *adharma*, and between what should be done and what should not, is of the nature of passion.
- 18.32 That obscure intelligence which takes *adharma* for *dharma*, and perceives all things in a perverted fashion, is of the nature of darkness, O Pārtha.
- 18.33 The determination that sustains the functions of the mind, life air and the senses through a firm practice of *yoga*, is of the nature of goodness, O Pārtha.
- 18.34 The determination that adheres to *dharma*, *kāma* and *artha*, O Arjuna, motivated by attachment and a desire for the fruits, is of the nature of passion, O Pārtha.
- 18.35 The determination with which a dull-witted person refuses to relinquish sleep, fear, sorrow, dejection and intoxication, is of the nature of darkness, O Pārtha.
- 18.36 O Bull among the Bharatas, hear from me now of the three kinds of happiness; that which following a constant practice yield joy as well as the end of suffering,
- 18.37 that which starts just like poison, but is gradually transformed to resemble nectar, that which springs from the tranquillity of one's heart and soul, that happiness is said to be of the nature of goodness.
- 18.38 The happiness emanating from contact of the senses with their objects, which begins just like nectar, but is gradually transformed to resemble poison, is known to be of the nature of passion.

- 18.39 The happiness that deludes the self from beginning to end, and arises from sleep, indolence and negligence, is said to be of the nature of darkness.
- 18.40 There is no being neither on earth nor among the gods in heaven, free from these three *gunas* born of material nature.

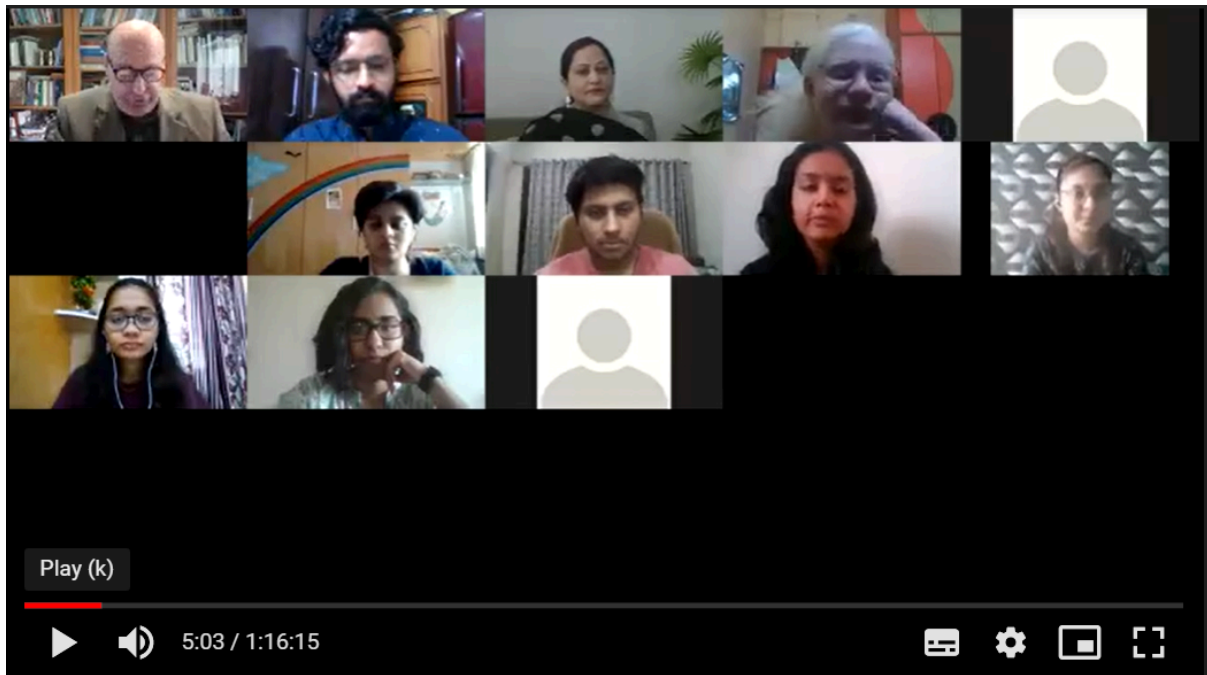
This section describes that which I call "the internal aspect of the *guṇa* doctrine". In other words, the external aspect of the *guṇa* doctrine defines the four classes or *varṇas*, but the internal aspect of the *guṇa* doctrine sheds light on the subtleties of one's internal state. Simply stated there could be a person who is a brahmin by nature acting in *rajas* or *tamas*, and alternatively, there could be a person who is a *śūdra* by nature but acts in *sattva*, and in other words, is dharmic.

Let me summarize the steps taken so far which to my mind, suggest the potential of the *gītā* offering an alternative philosophical system, with a universal potential.

1. The logic of the *Gītā* is based upon the *guṇa* doctrine.
2. The *guṇa* doctrine is secular, non-sectarian and universally applicable.
3. The *guṇa* doctrine offers an alternative epistemology to formal logic; it perceives the object's qualities as opposed to its form.
4. Implicit in the *guṇa* doctrine is a call for a constant ethical improvement.
5. There is a deep linkage between the *guṇa* doctrine and dharma, as according to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, dharma springs from one's nature.
6. The *guṇa* doctrine has both external and internal aspects.
7. Dharmic action is by nature *sattvic*, but one has to understand the internal aspects as well and not only the external ones.
8. All these aspects combined together suggest, to my mind, a potentially universal philosophy based upon these principles, and promoting dharma in a new way.

Speaker


- Dr. Ithamar Theodor
Associate Professor
Zefat Academic College, Israel



Participants attending the online session by Dr. Ithamar Theodor

Samvada Lecture Series

Deciphering pilgrimage networks on the basis of Panda records



Bhaktivedanta Research Center

Samvāda

Lecture Series
Samvāda III

*Deciphering Pilgrimage Networks on the
Basis of Panda Records*


Speaker: Dr. Shekhar Bhowmick
Associate Professor,
Department of History
Vidyasagar College, Kolkata.


Introduction: Dr. Abhishek Bose


Moderator: Dr. Santanu Dey

Convenors Dr. Ferdinando Sardella
Academic Director (Honorary), BRC

Dr. Sumanta Rudra
Dean Academics, BRC

 **zoom**
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 **21.12. 2020**
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

 **9123768165**
samvada@brcindia.com

The 5th Samvada lecture was organized online on 21st December 2021 and an enlightening lecture was delivered by Dr. Shekhar Bhowmick, Associate Professor, Department of History, Vidyasagar College, Kolkata

Speaker

Dr. Shekhar Bhowmick

Associate Professor, Dept. of History

Vidyasagar College, Kolkata

The Expansive Musical Aesthetics in Padavali Kirtan



This session took place on 1st March, 2020 and a fascinating lecture was delivered by Dr. Eben Graves from Institute of Sacred Music, Yale University.

Speaker

Dr. Eben Graves
Institute of Sacred Music
Yale University

Chaitanya's Desire



This session was conducted on 2nd February, 2020 by the renowned Gaudiya Vaishnava scholar, Acharya Shrivatsa Goswami Maharaj, from Vrindavan. Goswami Maharaj is also a visiting Professor at Harvard University. He gave a scholastic speech on ‘Chaitanya’s Desire’.

Speaker

Acharya Shrivatsa Goswami

Director, Sri Caitanya Prema Samsthana, Vrindavan

Former Faculty Member, School of Divinity,

Harvard University

Religious Diversity in a Spirit of Devotion: Universal Applications of Mantra and Puja



This session was held in September, 2019 where Christopher Chapple, Professor of Indic and Comparative Theology at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, delivered an insightful lecture on the above topic.

Speaker

Prof. Christopher Chapple

Professor, Indic and Comparative Theology
Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles

Vaishnavism and Academia



The first Samvad session was conducted by Prof. Gopal Gupta, University of Evansville, Indiana, USA. He gave a scholarly deliberation on “Vaishnavism and Academia”.

Speaker

Prof. Gopal Gupta
University of Evansville, Indiana



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