

## **National Seminar**

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**VISVA-BHARATI**

(A Central University and an Institution of National Importance)

# **National Seminar**

On the theme

*Sufism and Indian Spiritual Traditions:  
Sustaining the Education of Heart*

*Organised by*

**Department of Education, Vinaya Bhavana,  
Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan**

*Sponsored by*

**Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR) New Delhi**

**23<sup>rd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2015**

## Concept Note

*'If a man is truthful to his religion then he can understand the truth in the heart of a man of other religion. He will not be cruel to him.'*  
**-Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi (Masnawi-e-Manavi)**

Our Schools and Universities provide the education of mind and body while heart and soul are often ignored or undereducated. The result is agony, frustration and violence because heart and soul are lost and mind gets training in trades not in traits. Quality is concerned with the outcome of Educational process not by counting the first divisions, rank holders, pass outs etc. Quality of education can be best measured by observing decreasing trends of crimes, corruption, superstition, prejudices and hatred on the one hand and increasing breezes of love, fraternity, patriotism, inter-religious harmony, unity, peace and efforts to maintain the dignity, pride and happiness of the Nation, on the other. In Sufi teacher-training no one is given the responsibility to teach the pupil until he achieves his own refinement of heart. There is a verse in the Qur'an '*Qad af 'laha man zakkaha*' (Arabic) which means, "Whosoever cleanses his self (nafs), gets success." Peace is a condition which emerges and flourishes in a clean and purified heart. Trapped heart and self (nafs) creates hurdle and it pierces the process of purification. Real Education is concerned with peaceful and purified heart. Sufism is the manifestation of love, peace, knowledge and universal fraternity. Sufism is entirely a system of action, application and implementation. Spiritual health is the part of overall holistic pattern of Educational Aims and Achievements in Indian Spiritual traditions. The following Vedic prayer is the best example of this invocation.

*"O God, bestow upon us the best of treasures; An efficient mind, and spiritual luster,  
The increase of wealth, the health of bodies, the sweetness of speech and the fairness of days."*

**-Rig Veda (2.21.6)**

'Education for Peace' by NCERT (2006) quotes the complaint of a student "*With ever greater anger, the student shouted, 'You helped me extend my hands with incredible machines, my eyes with telescope and microscopes, my ears with telephones, radios and sonar, my brain with computers, but you did not help me extend my heart, love and concern for the human family.'*" Education of heart and soul is much required today. Whatever we claim as quality of education in the name of infrastructure, number of teachers, pile of certificates, and circulation of books, are in fact the quantitative aspects. All these elements are concerned with heart. If Education of heart becomes the part of curriculum, it may be possible. If a seed is sown in a well cultivated land the calamity of nature can hardly harm it. The tender plant grows according to predisposed conditions of its cultivation. Our major problems of education are related to hearts and souls of the teachers and pupils. Today we are in need of such torchbearers that can lead us to maintain the peace of heart, and soul and harmony and integration throughout the globe. Today we have broken hearts, dissented souls, polluted conscience, burdened brains, and tumult thoughts. We have no faith, no trust, no hope and no pleasure of genuine nature. We are leading a hollow life in the glinting and artificial environment of bare materialism. There is all

around violence, degradation, agitation, terrorism and fear of death. All these things gave rise two world wars and hundreds of civil wars. A single feature of ancient Indian civilization is that it has been molded and shaped in the course of its history more by religious than by political, or economic, influences. The fundamental principles of social, political, and economic life were welded into a comprehensive theory which is called Religion in Hindu thought. The total configuration of ideals, practices, and conduct is called *Dharma* (Religion, Virtue or Duty) in this ancient tradition. *Srimadbhagavadgita* describes the essence of religion in the performance of duties and obligations in life. While describing the path of righteousness (*Dharma*) it is said that one who works in the path of righteousness, his very intention lends him virtue's greatness. Lord Krishna tells Arjuna "Whenever there is a decline of righteousness and rise of unrighteousness, O Bharata, (Arjuna) then I send forth (create, incarnate) Myself. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, for the establishment of righteousness, and I come into being from age to age." Under the influence of such great religious ideas, the concept of this country ripens as a cultural as also of a spiritual possession, and broadly speaking, India came to be known with her cultural and intellectual wealth. While declaring the purpose of establishing Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, Rabindranath Tagore wrote, "Visva-Bharati represents India where she has her wealth of mind and it acknowledges India's obligation to offer to others the hospitality of her best culture and India's right to accept from others their best." When Islam came to India it offered a religious system revitalizing all the activities of life with a blend of divine discipline and spiritual spark. Islam not only influenced the day to day activities as eating food, drinking water, meeting with people, sleeping posture but also the arenas of arts, music and literature were inspired by Islamic traditions. As far as pure religion is concerned, there is fundamental harmony in the inner spiritual experience of the Hindus and the Muslims. The heart of India which supplies life-blood to Muslims as well as Hindus has been so nurtured on the breadth of mind and vision of mystical traditions, that religious antagonism leading to war, a common phenomenon in Europe in the middle ages, was rare in Indian History. In the last thousand years when two religions, so entirely different as Hinduism and Islam, were brought together on the soil of India, her Saints and Sufis created an atmosphere of not mere toleration but of harmony, so that while Hindu and Muslim princes were struggling for power, the common people of both religions could live amicably together. The spirit of Indian culture rests in universal love, fraternity, expression of truth, beauty and purity of thoughts and deeds. For the first time in the history of mankind the Upanishads were translated by a Sufi Scholar, Dara Shikoh, the Mughal Prince. He composed *Majm-ul-Behrine* (the mingling of two oceans) reflecting the confluence of two great cultures in India viz. Islamic and Vedic. He realized and conveyed to the world that the two great cultures are like the two sacred streams of Divine love that mingled into the ocean of spirituality. Dara Shikoh got the Upanishads translated into Persian with the help of many Hindu and Muslim scholars who knew both Persian and Sanskrit. He himself wrote the book on this subject titled as *Sirr-e-Akbar* (the great mystery) which is the translation of 52 selected Upanishads. This translation brought the great knowledge of Upanishads to European countries in 18<sup>th</sup> century for the first time. To him Islam and Hinduism had great spiritual wealth which might be explored and exposed for the sake of universal love and fraternity. Thus he tried to bridge the cultural gap between Hindus and Muslims. If Akbar was the precursor of political and social unity among the two civilizations, Dara Shikoh played the prominent role in establishing spiritual unity through scholarly compositions. Dara Shikoh made arrangements for the translations of two great Sanskrit books in to Persian i.e.

*Bhagavad-Gita* and *Yoga Vashishtha*. Religion makes a person disciplined and sensible towards performing duties and responsibilities. This dedication for responsibilities in Islam (as *Huqooq-e-Allah* and *Huqooq-al-Ibad*) is the pathway to spiritualism. Sufism is the very name of good conduct and beauty of thoughts. Thus spiritualism is a liberated and advanced stage of religion. In fact Sufism and other Indian spiritual traditions are concerned with the purification of heart and inculcation of traits in human personality. All these tracts go towards the education of heart.

### **Objectives of the National Seminar:**

Bearing in mind the above background, this Seminar seeks to fulfill the following objectives-

1. To promote mutual harmony, love and fraternity among students, teachers and general audience belonging to different social and cultural milieu.
2. To rejuvenate the Indian treasure of tranquility available in the form of spiritual traditions of ancient and medieval India.
3. To understand the development of Sufism on the land of India as a spiritual manifestation of Islam and its intermingling with Indian culture to create an atmosphere of mutual harmony, fraternity, love and spiritual advancement.
4. To explore the role and relevance of the philosophy of Indian spiritual traditions in their varied forms from north to south and east to west, in modern Indian society and Education system
5. To sustain the feasibility of spiritual uplift through the purification of heart.

### **Sub-themes:**

Sub-themes of the National Seminar will be focused over, however not restricted within:

1. Ancient and Medieval Indian Spiritual Traditions and Literature
2. Sainly Traditions in India-Bhakti, Bhagvatism, Shavism, Naynaar, Alvaar
3. Rabindranath Tagore and Spiritualism
4. Indian Education and problems relating to moral, mental and spiritual aspects
5. Sufism as spiritual Manifestation of Qur'an
6. Development of Sufism in India and its contribution
7. Philosophy of Peace Education through Music and Literature
8. Education for Sustaining peace, love and communal harmony in Indian Perspectives
9. Sustaining the Quality of Life through Education
10. Role of Spiritual Qualities in Teacher Education and their sustainability
11. Status of Faith, Superstition and Spirituality in Modern Indian Society

## Call for Paper

Interested participants are requested to submit their Abstracts electronically as an email attachment (not as PDF File) in MS Word, front size 12, Times New Roman. The abstract should be within 500 words and the length of the full paper should not exceed 5000 words, with maximum five Key words. Please send your abstract to the following mail-

[vinayaevents@gmail.com](mailto:vinayaevents@gmail.com)

## Publication

Selected papers will be published in Book form with ISBN

## Registration

Rs. 1200/- as Demand Draft **in favor of ACCOUNTS OFFICER, VISVA-BHARATI**, payable at SBI, Santiniketan Branch code: (02121) To be sent by post to the following address: M.S. Siddiqui, Convener National Seminar, Department of Education, Vinaya Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, 731235 (West Bengal)

Reg. Fee include: Seminar Kit, Lunch, Breakfast, Dinner, Refreshment during Seminar, Publication and accommodation (sharing basis)

Note: Please send DD along with full paper after selection of abstract.

## Important Deadlines:

<b>Abstract Submission</b>	:	<b>25<sup>th</sup> December 2014</b>
<b>Acceptance of Abstract</b>	:	<b>28<sup>th</sup> December 2014</b>
<b>Full Paper Submission</b>	:	<b>05<sup>th</sup> January 2015</b>
<b>Acceptance of Full Paper</b>	:	<b>10<sup>th</sup> January 2015</b>

### Further Communication

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