

Newsletter

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Ādi Śāṅkara Nilayam, Ādi Śāṅkara Marg, Veliyanad, Ernakulam District – 682313, Kerala, India

editorial

There are some events in life which give one the feeling of growing, of evolving, of moving upwards. CIF has had small experiences of this in this year and it is extremely heartening to experience growth. For growth is preceded by Grace.

The first has been an overwhelming warmth from devotees who have been relentlessly sending donations for Project CIF, so that from a state of wondering how the funding will be managed, we are now wonderstruck. Recently at a Chinmaya Mission World Workers Conference held at Chinmaya Vibhooti, after listening to a presentation on Project CIF, Chinmaya Mission West (CMW) made an offering that was heart warming. CMW announced that whatever funds CIF collects for the project, they would match rupee for rupee.

In that case, said Chinmaya Mission UK instantly, they would strengthen CIF's hands extra hard and help collect a really huge amount so that CMW's guarantee was much more handsomely reaped!

Enthusiasm like this only strengthens our resolve while also reminding us of Gurudev's famous and favourite quote: "Hold on to Narayana, Lakshmi cannot be far behind!"

While the construction projects have been going on effectively, Pūjya Guruji's visit to Ādi Śāṅkara Nilayam in November 2012 for the Living in Meditation Camp, was a blessing. For, when there is an overwhelming amount of work to be done, the loving presence of the Guru irons out any residual difficulties lingering in the system. Guruji conducted a five day Meditation Camp which was attended by



Chinmaya International Foundation is a bridge between East and West, past and present, science and spirituality, and pundit and public.

— Pūjya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

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240 people – which was a good dry run for CIF to test out its new facilities. Besides which, of course, the idea of living in meditation was understood

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perfectly in time! Meanwhile, Guruji has already blocked dates in 2013 for the Brahmasutra Camp.

CIF Shodha Sansthan has a new Chairman this year. CIF welcomes Dr. N. P. Unni, former Vice-Chancellor of Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, who was appointed to this august office on April 15, 2013. Our sincere gratitude to Dr. K. G. Paulose, the outgoing Chairman, for his leadership and guidance during his tenure.

Thanks to such luminaries at the helm of its management, the CIF Shodha Sansthan has been going from strength to strength. This year, in deference to our drive to ensure Sanskrit language's pride of place in the Indian arena of literary greatness, the Shodha Sansthan has instituted an award in the name of Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda for young Sanskrit Scholars for accomplishing excellence in Sanskrit literature. The first Gold medal was conferred in February this year, on Prof. Srinivasa Varakhedi, Dean and Director of Karnataka Sanskrit University, Bangalore.

It has been hectic as usual with more textual workshops, more spiritual camps, more seminars, more publications. Do look up the latest from CIFSS sections. An interview with our young Dr. Manoj in these pages, throws the spotlight on the precision in Sanskrit research that abounds at Ādi Śaṅkara Nilayam. Also drawing your attention to an even younger student Sriram, from Kendriya Vidyalaya, who is our youngest Gītā Home Study Course student. His views on why study the Gītā cannot be ignored. It portends the quality of the future.

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Sanskrit with Swami Ramakrishnananda

Jul
2012

**Faculty: Swami Ramakrishnananda,
Acharya, Easy Sanskrit Course**

Through the Chinmaya Mission, Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda wanted to spread not only Vedanta, but he also wanted to preserve the language from which this great knowledge comes. For this purpose, the Chinmaya International Foundation was established at the birthplace of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara, in Veliyanad, Kerala. Ever since, CIF has been conducting courses and camps to spread the Sanskrit language. One such is Easy Sanskrit.



The Art of Teaching Sanskrit with Swami Ramakrishnananda

An extension of teaching students, is enhancing teaching skills that are conducive for Sanskrit appreciation. 'Art of Teaching Sanskrit' was a unique teaching camp for Sanskrit-teachers from schools all over Kerala. Forty six school teachers assembled at CIF to gain new and innovative pedagogic methods to teach Sanskrit, from Swami Ramakrishnananda whose teaching skills have captured many an audience.

If there were skeptics among these experienced teachers, then Swamiji put paid to their doubts with his unexpected wit-filled ideas.

Giving them numerous examples from our secular life he showed how Sanskrit pervaded quietly. Sanskrit is not, Swamiji stressed, a dead or dying language, but its presence is as compelling and as important – perhaps more – than a few thousand years ago. This understanding was the beginning of a rewarding journey of learning for the Sanskrit teachers.

Academic Programmes

One of the aspects Swamiji picked up intuitively, was ridding the student of the fear of Sanskrit; ridding the student of the perception that Sanskrit is a complex language. In imparting these to the teachers, Swamiji showcased the rich heritage and values that Sanskrit embodies.

Additionally, teachers were asked to devise their own methods of teaching Sanskrit, of making the subject more interesting and joyful for students.

This camp has gone a long way in enhancing the attitude to both learning and teaching Sanskrit.

Unpublished Manuscripts of Kerala

Aug
2012

Dignitaries: Dr. N. P. Unni, Former Vice-Chancellor, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady; Prof. P. C. Muraleemadhavan, Founder Chairman CIFSS, Dr. Baladevananda Sagar, All India Radio, Dr. Dilip Kumar Rana, Director CIFSS, Swami Ramakrishnananda, Acharya, Easy Sanskrit Course, Sri. K. K. Rajan, CIF Chief Sevak

Scholars who presented: Dr. P. V. Ramankutty, Principal (Retd.), Former Professor and Head, Department of Sanskrit, Govt. College, Pattambi, Dr. C. N. Neelakanthan, Director, Books and Publication Division, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady, Dr. T. P. Sankaran Kutty Nair, Director, Institute of Kerala Studies, Trivandrum.

India has been a treasure trove of old unpublished manuscripts since the days when data collection was through the medium of palm leaves. Over the centuries palm leaf manuscripts and later paper manuscripts were preserved by scribes and scholars and later by families, without the latter even knowing what to do with these. In recent times, manuscripts have been found in the most unexpected places.

The two-day seminar on “Unpublished Manuscripts of Kerala” aimed to draw the attention of scholars to the importance of manuscripts as a link to India’s culture and heritage and the need to bring these to light and publish them.

The knowledge-rich scholars present at the occasion presented a host of papers on different aspects of unpublished manuscripts in Kerala, some on critical editions produced, the Sanskrit tradition itself, and Kerala manuscripts in the area of Sanskrit literary criticism.

There were paper presentations on different topics by various scholars as follows:

Unpublished Manuscripts in Kutalloor family – Prof. P. C. Muraleemadhavan

Sanskrit Tradition in Kerala – Dr. P. V. Ramankutty; Kerala Manuscripts on Sanskrit Literary Criticism – Dr. Neelakanthan; Keralite



The campers at the The Art of Teaching Sanskrit camp for Sanskrit teachers

Academic Programmes

Manuscripts on Gaṇita – Dr. P. V. Narayanan;
Manuscripts Collections in Kerala – Dr. N. P. Unni;
Viṣacandrikā – on Toxicology – Visalakshi;
Unpublished Manuscripts on Keralology – T. P. Sankarankutty Nair. *Akṣarapraśna – An Edition* – Ashok Kumar N. K.

Kṛṣṇapadi – A commentary on *Śrīmadbhāgavatam* – P. N. Sudarsanan.
Pāṇḍuliprasthānaṁ Keraḷeṣu – Dr. Rajan E. M.

Introduction to Knowledge Representation in Navya Nyāya and Western Logic

Sep
2012

Knowledge Representation (KR) is a branch of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which in the words of Marvin Minsky, a reputed cognitive scientist in AI, 'is the science of making machines do things that would require intelligence if done by men.'

KR is multidisciplinary in the sense that it incorporates theories and techniques of three different disciplines—logic, ontology and computation. Logic provides the formal structure and rules of inference. Ontology is the systematic study of the essential nature of things. It adds meaning to the formal system of logic. Without ontology terms and symbols employed in logic are empty. Computation, on the other hand, supports the application that distinguishes KR from pure logic.

The purpose of holding such a workshop whose subject matter was so vast and diverse, was to initiate a dialogue between experts in each of these disciplines of KR, and to then explore the emphasis and roles of each of these.

But Navya Nyāya (NN) and Western Logic (WL) are fundamentally different in their very origins. WL is empirical and based on the material world of things and beings. Whereas NN aims at proving the presence of the soul behind everything by searching through the ephemeral to reach the eternal.

WL, on the other hand, stops at the ephemeral.

But both systems use inference and syllogism to conclude a point of logic. Such as:

In WL, the conclusion that X is a mortal is arrived through inferring that – X is a man, All men are mortals. Hence X is a mortal.

NN uses inference thus: There is fire on the mountain/ because there is smoke seen/where there is smoke there must be fire (as in the kitchen)/ since fire and smoke concomitantly exist in the kitchen, (it stands to reason that) there must be fire on the mountain.

Workshops like this are intended to draw the western philosopher to examine the Indian logic systems and find the parallels with the western way. Especially since Indian philosophy is now working very closely with science and technology. But neither one can claim superiority over the other as being better. But the intent of NN philosophers is to show that technically NN having its origins so far back in time and in a language considered more suited to computers. So workshops like these just make the handshake meaningful and warmer paving the way for further explorations.

Such a rich workshop that panned 16 sessions across five days was more enriched by the quality of scholars who presented rich dissertations in each of logic, ontology and computation.

Sanskrit Research Today

Dec
2012

Lecture by Prof. Ashok Narhar Aklujkar

Chaired by Dr. C. Neelakandan, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit

Aegis: Chinmaya International Foundation Shodha Sansthan

Prof. Ashok Narhar Aklujkar, an eminent scholar in Sanskrit and Indology (Retired Professor, University of British Colombia, and Vancouver, Canada), spoke eloquently about a desired approach to Sanskrit.

Prof. Aklujkar pointed towards the need for a change in approach, both towards the language

cif

Academic Programmes

as well as the text itself, if research should yield greater value for the researcher and the community. Taking the example of historical texts and comparative studies, he said the arguments could be made more impressive by providing standing opinion.

Researchers, he urged, should get into the heart of historical and cultural problems related to Sastra. This will add great depth to their work which they should produce as a series in research.

After the lecture, the audience discussed among themselves the problems faced by present day researchers on selecting a topic, finding a guide and the availability of data on published/unpublished theses.

National Workshop on Navya Nyāya Language and Methodology (Level II)

Feb
2013

Dignitaries present: Dr. Dilip Kumar Rana, Director, Prof. K. G. Paulose, Chairman.

The second level of 'A National Workshop on Navya Nyāya Language and Methodology' was organized by CIFSS.

Prof. K. G. Paulose made an apt point when he referred to the 'argumentative mode' of Indians and their ancient academic practices as a result of which India achieved a coveted position in the world as the storehouse of perennial wisdom.

The faculty of this workshop, Prof. V. N. Jha, former Director of Centre for Advanced Study in Sanskrit, Pune and its present Director Prof. Ujjwala Jha, both emphasized the need for acquainting with the Nyāyaśāstra in order to gain mastery in all other kinds of philosophical literature. *Nyāyasiddhāntamuktāvali* (Śabdakhaṇḍam) was the text prescribed for this level of the workshop.

The 25 students who participated were evaluated based on a 'friendly written test' and declared eligible for Level III.

Key Events This Year

Guruji Inaugurates CIF Kottayam Centre

Nov 13,
2012

Present at the occasion: Swamini Vimalananda, Swami Mitrananda, Director, CHYK, Smt. Mini Nair (donor of building), Sri. N Rajagopal, President of Chinmaya Mission, Kottayam, A S Mony, Trustees of CIF

CIF now has a branch office in Sivaranjini, Kottayam. This is the Office of the Online Home Study Courses. CIF is very grateful for this generous donation of premises from Mrs. Mini Nair, an ardent devotee of Pūjya Gurudev.

The centre was inaugurated by Pūjya Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda.

The Ganapathy temple on the premises was sanctified by Guruji after the idol was sanctified according to custom, by Swami Paratmananda. Also present at this event were Swamini Vimalananda and Swami Mitrananda.



Guruji unveiling the picture of Gurudev at the CIF Centre

Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa Pūjā and Yajña

Jan 14,
2013

Present: Swami Ramakrishnananda, Swami Advaitananda, Swami Shantananda and Swami Paratmananda.

This is the fourth consecutive year when CIF has held a Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa Pūjā and Yajña for the well being of the donors of Project CIF.

This yagna is held on Makara Saṅkrānti every year, when the sun is on the ascent into the Tropic of Cancer. Every year CIF remains in deep gratitude

Key Events This Year

to every donor for their every little mite that goes to build the new constructions that will enable it take the work in building the bridges of its Vision, to its next level of completion.

These structures, we know by now, are a dedication to Pūjya Gurudev to mark his 100th birth year in 2015-16. Every year, a pūjā is offered to Goddess Lakṣmī and Lord Nārāyaṇa on this auspicious day to invoke upon the donors, both material and spiritual wealth.



The Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa Pūjā and Yajña

This year the pūjā on Makara Saṅkrānti Day was attended by 250 guests.

CIFSS Foundation Day 2013

Dignitaries present: Prof. K. G. Paulose, Chairman of CIF Shodha Sansthan, Prof. P. C. Muraleemadhavan, former Chairman, Dr. D. K. Rana, Director, CIFSS, and Dr. C. P. Ambika, Research Associate, Swami Advayananda, President of CIF, Dr. Sheeba, Dy. Director of CIFSS

CIF was conferred the Research Institute recognition on 24th February, 2008. Ever since, this day is celebrated as Foundation Day by CIFSS.

Every year, the occasion is marked by a few traditional events which have come to be synonymous with the Shodha Sansthan's Foundation Day. One of them is the Swami Chinmayananda Commemorative Lecture, which this year was delivered by Prof. V. N. Jha.



Prof. Srinivasa Varakhedi receiving the first Swami Chinmayananda Gold Award

This year, CIFSS instituted a gold medal in the name of Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda, to be awarded to an outstanding Sanskrit scholar below the age of 40. The first gold medal was awarded to Prof. Srinivasa Varakhedi, Dean and Director of Karnataka Sanskrit University.

Other events on this day include:

- New titles release: *Tattvopaplavasīṃha* with English commentary by Prof. V. N. Jha, *Vyākaraṇamahābhāṣyam* with the Malayalam commentary titled *Punarnavā* by Prof. O. Vatsala and Knowledge Representation: Navya Nyāya and Conceptual Graphs by Prof. Srinivasa Varakhedi
- The day was made further memorable when Prof. N. P. Unni, noted Sanskrit scholar was honoured on the occasion as he was bestowed the Mahamahopadhyaya Award by Kalidas University, Nagpur.
- An academic seminar on Sanskrit Research: Retrospects and Prospects, chaired by Prof. C. M. Neelakandan, Retd. Profesor of SSUS, Kalady. Papers were presented by Prof. C. Rajendran, Dr. P. V. Ramankutty and Dr. Muthulakshmi.
- The Kulasekhara Theatre Festival conducted as part of the Foundation Day Celebration in collaboration with the Govt. Sanskrit College, Tripunithura and International Centre for Kutiyattam was the focal attraction wherein a blend of traditional art forms and modern theatre came in close exchanges. Interactions and performances by several renowned

Key Events This Year

Directors and artists with their masterpieces made the occasion memorable.



Inauguration of the Foundation Day Celebrations

Kulasekhara Festival

In the Udyoga-parva of the Mahābhārata we meet Yayāti's hitherto unmentioned daughter, Mādhavī. And before we know, Yayāti gifts Mādhavī to Galava, a son of Sage Viśvāmitra. Going deeper, this Galava had come looking for 800 white horses with one black ear. But Yayāti found it easier to gift away his daughter, saying gift her to a king and you will find your horses. Galava in turn sells her to three kings and eventually gets the horses that his father asked for. He then gives the horses and Mādhavī to Viśvāmitra, who also sires a child through her.

This story of Mādhavī is a study of both the psychological and sociological conditions of those times, while also being the representative of the objectification of women ever since and her exploitation.

This story of Mādhavī was presented in the dance form Naṅyārkkūttu and one of the many theatre performances at the Government Sanskrit College, Trupunithra, as a part of the week long Kulasekhara Festival.

*Inaugural lecture by Prof. V. N. Jha (Chinmayananda memorial lecture).

Sep
2013

*Swami Chinmayananda Gold Medal Award presented to Prof. Srinivasa Varakhedi by Swami Advayananda.

**Vyākaraṇamahābhāṣyam* – Punarnavā – with Malayalam commentary authored by Prof. O. Vatsala, was released on this occasion.

*Seminar on 'Higher Education' led by C. M. Neelakanthan, with papers presented by scholars C. Rajendran, P. V. Ramankutty, A. Muthulekshmy, and others.

*Book released: 'Indian Method in Acting' by Prof. Prasanna who also talked on the subject. Dr. N. P. Unni delivered the presidential address.



Kulasekhara Festival

*Lecture demonstration presentation on:
a) Dhvani – by Margi Madhu and Indu. G.
b) Rasābhinaya in Kathakali by P. Venugopal and Kalamandalam Shanmugham

Session 3:

Presided by Terry Converse, Professor of Theatre, Washington State University.

Session 4 was also lectures and talks on "Understanding Women in Theatre" by Dr. N. K. Geetha including a presentation by Sajitha Madathil.

The performers such as Usha Nangiar, Sukanya, Salini, Kapila Venu, Indu all expressed their views on different personalities such as Draupadī, Mādhavī, Kuntī, Ahalyā etc.

Key Events This Year

Dr. Sudhanva Deshpande, Jananatyamanch, Delhi in his speech on 'Tradition in Service of the Modern: The Theatre of Habib Tanvir' explored the dialectics of Tanvir's relationship with tradition in order to forge a unique and entirely contemporary theoretical expression.



Book launch

The last session was led by T. M. Abraham, directors such as Shibu S. Kottaram, Sajitha Madathil, Chandradasan who shared their experience in encountering tradition. They are of the view that women's social history is not documented.

Some of the performances were: Kathakali on 'Kalyāṇasaugandhikam' by Tripunithura Kathakali Kendra, Kūṭiyāṭṭam on 'Tapatisamvaranam' by Usha Nangiar, 'Subhadrādhanañjayam' Kūṭiyāṭṭam by Margi Madhu and Surj Nambiar, 'Nangiarkuttu' by Kalamandalam Sindhu and Kalamandalam Girija, Kathakali on 'Tapasāṭṭam' by Renjini Suresh are some of the outstanding performances.

The dramas presented include: 'Draupadi' directed by Chandradasan, Lokadharmi, 'Mālavikāgnimitram' by Sopanam, Kavalam Narayana Panicker and 'Beegum Panicker' Theatre Repertoier, FACS, SSUS, Kalady, and "Mudiyettu" performed by Kizhillam Unnikrishnan and Party.

This six-day celebration brought to fore the traditional art forms while also driving home a great need to ensure that the youth preserve and protect these gems of Indian theatre.

Vedic Maths

Vedic Maths

Chinmaya International Foundation's Vedic Math division has been actively sought after by teachers, parents and students alike. Numerous camps and workshops dotted the events diary in 2012-13.

Sep
2013

September 2012

- **Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Kannamally (Ernakulam) – Faculty: Shri Vinay Nair** – Four-day workshop on 'Vedic Mathematics' was jointly held by CIF and SOVM. Ninety six students from 6th to 12th standards participated. Topics covered: Simpler Techniques in Subtraction, Multiplication and Squaring; Cubing and Algebraic multiplication. An orientation for parents and students was also held, where Nair discussed how the fear for Maths can be overcome. He also talked about the art of problem-solving in Maths.



Research on Quadrilaterals

October 2012

- **Chinmaya Vidyalaya Nagapattinam – Faculty: Shri Vinay Nair.** Workshop on Vedic Maths jointly held by CIF and SOVM for 385 students from classes 6th – 10th along with their Maths teachers. Topics included: faster subtraction, multiplication, squaring, cubing, gaining conceptual clarity in specific topics in Math. There was also held a Math debate for Class 10 students on the topic of 'Pi'. Separate sessions for the Maths teachers included topics such as HCF, LCM, Fractions, Mensuration, Concept of Angles, etc., since these were the major bug bears for students.

Nov 2012

- **Ancient Indian Mathematics for Modern Times** - Chief Faculty: Shri Venugopal D. Heroor. Others: Shri Ventaka Subbarao -- Three day non-residential camp for Maths teachers held at Ādi Śaṅkara Nilayam. **Twenty** teachers from Chinmaya Vidyalayas in Palakkad, Kottayam, Kannamally, Tirupathi and Nagapattinam participated. Topics covered: Numeration in ancient India (word numerals, Āryahaṭṭa's number system and Kaṭapayādi), Brahmagupta's Geometry (Brahmaguptan quadrilaterals, derivation of Euler's formula by Brahmagupta many centuries before Euler, 9 properties of cyclic quadrilaterals, etc.), birth of Trigonometry, Progression, Geometric presentation of Algebraic formulae, to name a few.



The campers at Vedic Mathrix - Unlocking the Code

- **Chinmaya Vidyalaya Kalladathur** – Faculty: Shri Vinay Nair – Six-day workshop on Vedic Maths was jointly held by CIF and School of Vedic Math. Topics covered included: easy techniques of subtraction, multiplication, squaring and cubing; area, derivation of formulae for Area of all 2-D and 3-D shapes.

March 2013

- **Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Kottayam** – After the successful completion and overwhelming response to Vedic Mathematics Workshop

Module-1 conducted in 2012, a Vedic Mathematics Workshop for Module-1 and Module-2 was organized under the joint collaboration of CIF and SOVM. Out of the 225 students from classes 6th–8th, 200 new students attended the Module-1 of Vedic Mathematics Workshop and 25 enrolled for Module-2. Topics like Subtraction, Multiplication, Squaring 2/3/4-digit numbers, Square Root, Algebraic identities, were discussed. Throughout the course the faculty, Vinay Nair, encouraged the students to discover hidden patterns in the techniques in Vedic Mathematics.



Outdoor games enhancing teamwork and group coordination

April 2013:

- The fourth annual residential camp '**VEDIC MATHRIX**' based on ancient Indian Mathematics was held at CIF. The camp had participants from Mumbai, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and also from Sydney. The topics included Brahmagupta's Cyclic Quadrilaterals, Number Systems, Base Systems, Kaṭapayādi Number Systems and Magic Squares. The campers were fascinated by the beauty in patterns and the algebra behind Magic Squares. The camp also included indoor and outdoor games, evening bhajans and group activities. During the sessions, the faculty Shri Vinay Nair and the participants closely interacted and discussed the logic behind beautiful patterns in Magic Squares and other topics.

Few of them did some wonderful research in Brahmaguptan Quadrilaterals and made their own new observations, discoveries, and formulated new ways of deriving the area of a cyclic quadrilateral, which was presented on the last day of the camp by the campers themselves. The students also liked the beauty hidden in the number systems and base systems that enables the smooth arithmetic calculations but seldom does one notice how base system helps in numerical calculations.

May – June 2013:

- **Chinmaya Mission, Vasai** organized a 6-day workshop on Vedic Maths for school students. 35 school students participated in the workshop. The faculty, Vinay Nair, discussed faster calculation techniques in Vedic Maths for Subtraction, Multiplication and Squaring. The participants were amazed to see the splendid techniques in Vedic Maths by which they achieved results of many calculations in few seconds. An orientation session for parents was also conducted towards the end of the workshop. The workshop achieved its objective in creating an interest for Maths in the students.
- **Chinmaya Mission, Borivali** organized a 5-day workshop on Vedic Maths for school students from 28th May – 1st June 2013. There were 15 participants which included school students, teachers and parents. The faculty, Vinay Nair, discussed faster calculation techniques in Vedic Maths for Subtraction, Multiplication and Squaring. The children loved to do Maths in a different way that seemed to be like magic to them. They were delighted to see that there are many ways in Vedic Maths to do a single calculation. The workshop achieved its objective of removing the fear for maths.

The complete reports, participants' feedback and pictures are available on www.chinfo.org/vmworkshop

Chinmaya Adhyathmika Sadhana Shibir

Sep
2012

Br. Akash Chaitanya from CM Vijayawada and Br. Ravi Chaitanya from CM Hyderabad together conducted an Adhyathmika Sadhana Shibir at Ādi Śaṅkara Nilayam.

The texts taken during the camp were Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad, 15th chapter of Bhagavad-gītā, Vedic chanting and Meditation.

With an attendance of 145 from Vijayawada and Hyderabad, this camp was a good test drive to examine its potential to run such large scale camps including Guruji's Living in Meditation Camp that was coming up in November 2012.

"For the Family"- Seminar with Guruji

Nov
2012

A two day seminar 'For the Family' was held and hosted by CIF at Ādi Śaṅkara Nilayam.

The seminar was inaugurated by Pūjya Guruji after the welcome address by Chief Sevak Sri K. K. Rajan.

The crux of this seminar was to help the youth to see marriage, their partner and the institution itself in the right perspective. This would naturally lead to the essence of a family and how a family is nurtured by the members. For after all, the starting point is marriage and that is what leads to a family, to children. This seminar therefore sought to examine the role that we need to play in a family.

Pūjya Guruji spoke on the subject "Marriage a Melody" where he addressed the audience mostly comprising youngsters and newly married couples. Emphasising the preciousness of the partner that one got in a marriage, Guruji said, 'understand, the spouse you get is one out of a billion and hence, so precious!' Just the very idea underlying the uniqueness of the partner one gets in a marriage, shifted gears in many minds.

Spiritual Camps

Guruji also added that 'Marriages are made in Heaven, but maintenance is our responsibility,' thus emphasizing the role of participation, tolerance, nurturing in the maintenance.

The second session was addressed by Swamini Vimalanandaji, who said "In marriages, the bride or bridegroom gives their hand to the other and that giving must empower the other person."

On the second day, the seminar examined parenting via a seminar on "Joy of Parenting". Emphasising the role of education and the duty to educate, Pūjya Guruji said, "Parents who fail to educate their children are enemies of their children! Every child is born with a capital but the parent must also give them something (interest). Parents must bring up a child as a worship of God."

'Happiness is Me' – Swami Advaitanandaji's camp at CIF

Swami Advaitananda held a spiritual camp, 'Happiness is Me'. It was attended by 150 delegates from Mumbai, Pune, Kolkata, Baroda and Jaipur. They studied Muṇḍakopaniṣad. Swamij's deep knowledge of the subject and the philosophy of the text were enhanced by his melodious bhajans. The campers also attended the Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa Pūjā on the January 14, Makara Saṅkrānti day.

Jan
2013

Spiritual Sadhana camp with Acharya Vibhuti Shah and Br. Kutastha Chaitanya

May
2013

Chinmaya Mission Trichy organised a Spiritual Sadhana camp at Ādi Śaṅkara Nilayam from 9th May to 15th May 2013. The subject of discourse was Praśnopaniṣad in English by Acharya Vibhuti Shah (Acharya, CM Trichy) and Praśnottari in Tamil (Maṇiratnamālā by Ādi Śaṅkara) by Br. Kutastha Chaitanya, Acharya CIF. Swami Ramakrishnananda inaugurated the camp inspiring all the 75 campers. Acharya Vibhuti's teaching style and personal approach made abstract concepts easy to comprehend and Br. Kutastha Chaitanya discussed Maṇiratnamālā in detail with simple practical examples. The camp delegates enthusiastically presented a colourful variety of cultural programmes based on the camp texts on the eve of Ādi Śaṅkara Jayanti. On the 15th of May, Ādi Śaṅkara Jayanti was celebrated with full religious fervor. All devotees of the camp individually participated in abhiṣekam and arcanā. An inspiring talk was delivered by Pūjya Swami Vivikatananda, Regional Head, Chinmaya Mission – Kerala, followed by Acharya Vibhuti on Bhagavān Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara's life and works which was very informative and inspiring. Pūjya Swami Vivikatananda graced the valedictory function too. Certificates were distributed to all the participants and as a token of appreciation all the devotees received mementos.



Spiritual Sadhana Camp

Meditation: Many Techniques, One Practise

Pūjya Guruji's "Living in Meditation" camp

Nov
2012

There is not one aspirant who has not wanted to meditate successfully. And every such aspirant has wished deeply that the teaching will come from none other than his or her own master, Guru.

Pūjya Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda held a 5-day camp at Chinmaya International Foundation's Ādi Śaṅkara Nilayam and the 240 odd participants from all around the world have benefitted in a way that is not easy to describe.

The five days were a combination of practical guided meditation and study of a text "Dhyāna Svarūpam". Guruji divided the teaching into three parts: *Understanding Meditation *Practicing Meditation * Living in Meditation – the last being the objective of the camp.

Elaborating on this, Guruji said, to live in meditation requires an understanding of meditation, and "when we try and understand what *is*, it is also important to understand what is NOT meditation. Because there are so many notions about meditation. "

Guruji took the students on a mental walk showing them how none of their notions and impressions tantamount to meditation. Thus to get across the point that meditation has to be studied as revealed in the Upaniṣads and Vedānta-śāstras, which said – Ātman should be seen, Guruji said, "The Upaniṣad says if you want to see atma, don't open your eyes; open your ears. That means listen to the words of your guru who will reveal to you the nature of Ātman . Hence ātmā vā are śrotavyo – listen to what that atma is."

Having said that, Guruji shifted gears and instantly stepped on the brakes. The resultant jerk was a great moment of learning, for he said, "If Atma means I, then I know myself, isn't it? Oh but the Upaniṣads say, what you know of yourself is not the whole truth!" Then to make matters worse, Guruji added, "In fact whatever we know about anything, is partial, incomplete, not the whole."

And lest we feel bad, Guruji said that was Arjuna's problem too. He told Krishna in Ch. 7, but I already know you! But Bhagavān's import is: *asaṁśayaṁ samagraṁ māṁ yathā jñāsyasi tacchrṇu or, Know me fully, without any doubt.*

Then Guruji went on to dissect the word 'doubt'. "If you do not know a thing at all then there is no doubt. And if you know it totally, then too there is no doubt. It is only when we know a thing partially, that doubts arise.

So what is doubt? asks Guruji. "Doubt is a gulf. I have knowledge about a thing. Then some new knowledge about that thing is given. Now I am not able to comprehend at all. Because an established understanding has been displaced. That gulf between our present knowledge and the new knowledge – that is a doubt. Consequently a question arises and it arises only in our intellect. Hence the intellect alone has to be satisfied...."

Therefore, Guruji urged, the knowledge has to be made firm. Hence, logically reflect upon that knowledge of the Self. That is how doubts are removed. Knowledge must be owned, possessed, made one's own. Only then can it be retained and recalled when the need arises. Whatever knowledge we gain through listening (śravaṇam), must be strengthened with reflection.

For, only Knowledge that is assimilated, made our own, will liberate us. And making that knowledge our own is meditation.

This was an excellent road he took the students on to help them know why they needed meditation.

Summing up the point, Guruji said, "To remove ignorance, śravaṇam is means; to remove doubts mananam is the means; and to assimilate that knowledge meditation is the means."

But now Guruji added, 'But what happens is, even after getting knowledge, (that I am Saccidānanda Brahman), our old vāsanās rise up like old enemies and don't allow us to enjoy the bliss which is my own true self! This is an unenviable position. If we didn't know we are Brahman, no one is the wiser for

Guruji's Camp

it. But having heard, reflected and made it my own, if I am still unable to reach it? That is indeed a serious matter....," said Guruji sombrelly.

Guruji placed the blame squarely on our vāsanās, "These old vāsanās don't go away easily. Habits die hard. That is why Śrī Śaṅkara says,

ज्ञाते वस्तुन्यपि बलवती वासना नदिरेषा,
कर्ता भोक्ताप्यहमिति दृढा यास्य संसारहेतुः.

jñāte vastunyapi balavati vāsanā nadireṣā,
kartā bhoktāpyahamiti dṛḍhā yāsyā saṁsārahetuḥ.
(Vivekacūḍāmaṇi – 267)

Taking the students higher Guruji said, "Then again, once you have this knowledge you cannot even go back to ignorance! Because now you can neither call yourself ignorant nor enlightened. The only way is, strengthen that knowledge. That process is meditation. But that comes only after śravaṇam and mananam. Sitting down, closing eyes, etc are just bodily actions. Sitting straight is called sitting. Closing eyes is called 'closing eyes'. These do not constitute meditation. Meditation is a different kind of doing." Many who jump into meditation as a fad, as a must-do, end up merely sitting straight and closing eyes. Most do not know what to meditate upon or that they have to meditate upon something. Nor do they know why they want to meditate. The desire and the will to think about it and meditate upon That, filled with firm determination, is the precursor. So first *nirṇaya* (decision) then *niścaya* determination. And once decided remain firm on that resolve. Don't give up, don't stop. Don't slow down.

That niścayapūrvaka desire and that attempt to meditate is called nididhyāsanam.

Guruji then went on to urge the participants, "Somehow wrong notions got superimposed upon us – they should be removed, all the habits and vāsanās should be removed, all the vāsanās that are not allowing us to enjoy the bliss of the self, that should be removed. So meditate..."

Lest there be any doubt, Guruji reiterated: In meditation, we are not creating anything new; only what is already there about which we have learnt via śravaṇam and mananam, we are meditating upon that." And by so doing we establish the knowledge, make it our own, assimilate it..

This was Guruji's introduction to the 5 day camp. A camp where he was going to show them that the subject of their meditation was their own true self. This was the meditation Guruji was teaching at this camp: the meditation upon one's own self.

The nature of this meditation was different. That is why Guruji spent more time pointing to all that was NOT meditation.

A special slot was devoted to understanding the Why of meditation. Guruji explained that if the purpose is not bought into, then the decision (*nirṇaya*), followed by the determination (*niścaya*) and the eagerness (*utsāha*) would not accompany the effort. Naturally, the group spent time also discussing the biggest issue: the difficulties and obstacles on the path of meditation and how they should be dealt with.

Once all this was in control said Guruji, then we Live in Meditation.

Guruji also added an excellent point -- we have to live with material things, living beings, so many experiences, a lot of inconsistencies and uncertainties, so that there is not a moment when something is not happening.

But the worst, he said is old age and the inevitability of old age. To drive home this point he used words that were infallible:

"Infancy comes and goes, youth comes and goes, but old age does not go! It stays and not only does it stay, one also -- and only --, gets older and older! So we need to know how to deal with this....!"

Truth is also that as we grow older, we will have lesser people willing to be patient with us. But if we have met our true Self, we will be well anchored.

Seeking Krishna



Sometimes, when we drift and blame our busy lives for all our inabilities, a rush of fresh air wafts towards us to reveal an unusual, unexpected human. Unexpected because his age defies his qualification to be a part of our consideration set.

Such is Sriram. Age 14, just out of class 9 into class 10, the bogeyman of all school students, given the Board exams. Sriram comes to us as a message in focus, clarity and drive. A student of Kendriya Vidyalaya, Minnambakkam Chennai, Sriram is (already) chasing a career in aeronautics. He is already enrolled for tutorials that will shape his future, his nose already buried in those severe looking IIT-JEE books and given his clarity, we know he will be top of the charts.

Sriram has his eyes set on exploring space, He thinks a lot about the Black Hole, Alpha Centauri and discovering new things. Seemingly, he is already defining nirguṇa Brahman.

And when he is done for the day with his IIT tutorial study, Sriram sits with his Gītā Home Study Course (GHSC) lessons to listen to Kṛṣṇa. Ask him why and he says, "It enhances my performance in school." *All his words.*



Sriram R.M., Kendriya Vidyalaya, Minnambakkam, Chennai.

Sriram, naturally, is our youngest student in the Gītā Home Study Course and that is enough to drive the wind out of the sails of most.

So how did he decide to enrol for the GHSC? He says his parents read the Gītā every day that triggered his interest, he asked his father about it, and the answers they gave him prompted him to see some relevance, for that is when he enrolled for the home study course.

Now this is very poignant, for in a household, parents talk about so many things. For one topic to cause a child to say, 'Show me what you are seeing!' means, some synergy had developed in the young Sriram at 13.

Yes, Sriram joined the course at the age of 13, when he was in Class 9. So, is the level too high? Does he have to take help to understand? Is there a local Acharya whose help he can access? Says Sriram, "It is in simple English and easily understandable. Also, some concepts are difficult, at that time I take help from my mother."

Sriram says "this Course enhances my performance in school." For a 13 year old to conclude so is startling, for it means he is watching himself very closely. And he goes on to say, "This course is excellent for students." And why does he think this enhancement is owing to the Gītā? He says, "Previously I would study (go to school) without any interest, but now I know that any work which is done with full dedication is the best thing. Now I learn with curiosity and with very much interest, which enhances my performance. The Gītā tells me not to work expecting results."

At 14 today, Sriram has bought into the logic that working with an expectation of a defined outcome is not productive. In his words, "the Gītā is excellent for students."

Newsletter: You seem to be talking from experience; clearly, there are aspects of studenthood that you have in mind, as being solvable by the Gītā?

Sriram: If students join this course, they will know how to study; like for eg. we should not always look

Home Study Courses

out for the result, it is only God who is going to decide the result, hence we need not think about it; instead we must motivate ourselves to study more; and that we should not always think and grieve about the past (as nothing can be done to reverse the actions) and hence think of the now, not the past.

“Nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ!” quotes Sriram to drive home the point he is making.

Setting aside the modern day surprise and wonder, if one ponders, one will see that in the old Gurukul days, students had completed the study of the Gītā at school. For, as Pūjya Guruji says, this is a manual for living. A lot of the grief that students let themselves into is a function of not knowing how to deal with the innumerable stimuli that life throws at them – from greed, to desire to distraction to disinterest – all of which are detrimental to student life, usually find their cause in absence of right attitude.

Therefore we can take pride in the fact that Sriram has his milestones perfectly in place. And we may please take a leaf from his book.

Sriram is currently studying the 9th lesson, which deals with Chapter 5, Karma Sannyasa Yoga.

Newsletter: And having come so far, can you say that the study of the Gītā has/is changing the way you are approaching your everyday life? Tell me more here...

Sriram: The lesson on Karma Yoga is great; it tells me how to work for exams, and that gives immense results.

Newsletter: But if Karma Yoga is about not looking at results, you insist it delivers immense results. So how do we understand your take away?

Sriram: The result that I am referring to is that I am improving in studies, i.e., I am better than before. Earlier, I wanted to get good marks and hence studied for good marks. As I learnt that we should not mind the results which are not in our control, I changed my attitude to work; now my aim is to enhance my knowledge and study with more interest. Once I changed my approach, I never minded the marks).

And, mainly, the “results” which I am talking about, is the pleasure which I get while following the words of the Gītā and turning into a better human. Hope I am not wrong anywhere. If I am wrong please tell me where I am wrong, so that I can rectify.

As a result, my performance in school immensely increased after I joined this course. However, it takes me more than the allowed time to complete each lesson of the home course.

Also... the Bhagavad-gītā tells me how to live..

Newsletter: How do you say that? Which particular counsel of the Gītā (about how to live) impacted you most?

Sriram: We have to live without expecting results, we have to work hard and work with dedication and sincerity, we should not cheat anyone (pāpa & puṇya). In our attitude to results, we should have prasāda-buddhi (receive with delight, whatever is given to us.) It tells me to work with dedication.

Then again, since I also study Sanskrit at school, the ślokas and meanings that come up in the lesson, enhance my Sanskrit knowledge.

Newsletter: To sum up, Sriram, have you shared with friends that you are studying the Gītā and urged them to study too? What comes in the way (according to you) of taking up the study of Gītā at your age or by students in school/college? Therefore what do you think can be done to make the study of the Gītā easier for students?

Sriram: Doing anything with interest is essential. Urging my friends to study Gītā is of no use unless they have the interest for it. They should want it, look for it. It's better if we can tell them about this book and not compel them.

Study of Gītā would be easier when a lot of real-life examples are given, so that young people can relate it with their life experiences; then understanding is much easier.

Home Study Courses

Foundation Vedanta & Bhagavad Gītā Courses at CM, Mumbai

Chinmaya Mission Mumbai offered a special tribute to the work of CIF by launching for the very first time ever, the Foundation Vedanta and the Bhagavad Gītā courses in a classroom format.

It was first launched 2 years ago simultaneously at Chinmaya Mission Andheri and Chinmaya Mission Churchgate as an experimental initiative. Swami Swatmananda and Brni. Nidhi Chaitanya conducted the batches.

While Swamiji's batch of about 30 students went through the Course with open-forum discussions, exciting quizzes, in-depth reflections and life-transforming insights from Swamiji, Nidhiji's batch of about 25 members went through the course in a more academic format with lesson-summary-notes, group-discussions, specially-designed objective evaluations and personal guidance from Nidhiji.

The program was a grand success and concluded together in the presence of Pūjya Guruji, Swami Advayananda, Swami Swatmananda and Brni. Nidhi in a very special convocation ceremony at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Mumbai.

Swami Swatmananda shared in his convocation address, "Several of these members, who were complete novices to the Mission when they joined the course, had been converted into Committee Members, Study Class Sevaks and Volunteers over this 1 year. The course has fulfilled the purpose with which it was launched."

Pūjya Guruji handed over the certificates to the members. "I am very happy to see the way Vedanta Course has benefitted people. Other centres should also take this up" said Pūjya Guruji.

What was most encouraging was to watch the transformation and inspiration kindled in the hearts of the members who completed the Courses and graduated.

Nidhiji took this further by launching the Bhagavad Gītā Course for these members. All 26 members who graduated from her batch enrolled for the 18-month Bhagavad Gītā Course being run by her, and are now studying under her guidance.

Two more batches of Foundation Vedanta were also launched – One in Andheri & the other in Juhu, with 48 and 27 members respectively. It is believed that there are now many members in waiting list for forthcoming batches also!

What is the secret of this overwhelming response? "The younger generation wants clarity but has less time to commit. Since we do this

course on weekends and it is only for a year, young and middle-aged people find it more feasible, than an ongoing study-group. I think that's the only attraction. Rest is the power of Vedanta!" explains Brni. Nidhi.

These courses are helping members gain a better grip on the subject and also a lot of extra input and guidance, which makes the Foundation Course and the Gītā Course an even more enriching experience for each and every one.

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Knowing Excellence – CIF Shodha Sansthan

Sep
2012

Chinmaya International Foundation is a combination of study and research, which is the primary intention or guiding vision that went into its inception. Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda had painted a fourfold vision for the furtherance of Sanskrit (where Sanskrit goes beyond language to the very culture that is the bedrock on which stands India), which are verily the four pillars on which CIF is poised:

Each of these find expression via CIF Shodha Sansthan, or, Centre for Excellence in Sanskrit Research. This offshoot of CIF is an affiliate of Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, a membership that is prestigious and necessary for serious work in research. Ever since its inception the CIF Shodha Sansthan (CIFSS), has been serving as a nucleus for the study of Sanskrit, philosophy, principles and values, and the cultural heritage of India.

In our newsletter, we attempt to provide a clear enough picture of all our research activities. CIFSS has been publishing a newsletter that details the scope and outcome of its numerous workshops and lectures, which are rich and varied, as well as the numerous books they are publishing.

CIFSS is committed to making great leaps and reach the heights of successful furtherance of Sanskrit Research. In an editorial in their recent newsletter, Director Dr. Rana, alluding to the imminent National accreditation audit, says, "The NAAC have some common parameters [for evaluating us], whereas the present condition of Sanskrit is bleak as it is diminishing from the fore, especially as the number of learners is dwindling...." And he rightly points to the prevailing environment that projects its religious anxiety upon Sanskrit, so that the study of the language has receded further away from the general academic purview. "As a result," says Dr. Rana, "the democratic values that were enshrined in Sanskrit's secular literature for eons, have gone into oblivion."

The attitude we therefore see in CIFSS' Newsletter is promising and endearingly aggressive, both which augur well for research work.

Sanskrit Roots by Dr. V. Manoj

Often, in Sanskrit, we come across a verb used in a meaning different from the meaning attributed by Pāṇini. It happens thus because verb roots have multiple meanings.

Dr. V. Manoj, Deputy Director of CIFSS, held this dissonance in his heart through his college years until recently when he decided to validate this proposition, that verb roots have diverse meanings (different from the meaning attributed by Pāṇini) and can thus be used in diverse ways.

He unravelled five reasons that validated this postulate or truism and put it all together in a hundred paged book titled '*dhātūnāmanekārthatvasādhanaṁ*' = or dhātūnām + aneka + arthatva + sādhanam or Establishing the manifold meaning of roots.

Each of the five reasons he unravelled have assumed the form of a chapter in this unique of grammar research books.

Chapter One – examines if the presence of a prefix is what causes a verb root to take on a different meaning. Some grammarians have asserted that prefixes have their independent meaning; others have rejected this and said prefixes simply enable a root to show off its real meaning, by being close to it!

Manoj takes the example of the prefix 'Api' which is credited with lending meaning to the word apidadhāti as 'to close', as also when it undergoes elision to give another word 'pidadhāti', which also means 'to close'.

He then argues about the sanctity of the prefix (upasarga) saying, 'multiple senses of roots are revealed in the presence of the prefix.' And if mere concomitance helps deriving the meaning of the root, then such meaning must be resident in the prefix anyway. In other words, it is not possible to

create something from something else that doesn't have the properties of what is created.

Therefore it stands to reason that the prefix has its own independent meaning in which case they should have been used independently and not necessarily in conjunction with a verb.

In Chapter II, Manoj introduces 4 Pāṇini-sūtras to exemplify that Pāṇini himself gave hints about the multiple senses of roots. He takes one root 'śliṣa āliṅgane' where the verb root śliṣa means āliṅgana. Then why would Pāṇini, the lover of brevity, choose to say śliṣaāliṅgane which is repetitive? He says this also because śliṣa is the only root which stands for āliṅgana out of the 2000 roots in Sanskrit grammar. And so we see a charming Manojism here when he asks in his characteristic style, "Is it not like calling out to a man as 'Govinda, the father of Gayatri' when Gayatri is the only daughter of

Govinda and there is no other Govinda present!" Yet as if replying to himself he avers that āliṅgana while being applicable to one person embracing another, also derives applicability to the sticky wax stuck to a plant, where proximity affords the as-if-ness of embracing even if it is without the use of limbs, until we undoubtedly agree with the factual usages where the word 'āliṅgana' is used to mean different aspects of closeness at different places.

Manoj is an excellent writer and the explanation of grammar begs a certain danseuse-like agility and comfort with words and verbs, orchestrating their role in complex sentence structures, commanding them to express the logic inherent in the grammar laws.

So Chapter III extracts 223 roots from the *dhātupāṭha* of Pāṇini to prove that the distinctive way of their enumeration itself is standing testimony to the multiple senses of roots.

Chapter IV, presents 25 commonly found usages where the roots are found used in a meaning that in no way matches the meaning given by Pāṇini. There is no prefix either to express a different meaning which is an indication of their manifoldness of meaning.

Chapter V is a highly technical chapter where Manoj takes 25 intricate grammatical applications explained by Pāṇini to conclude the multi-sense-ness of roots.

All in all, the book must be read to celebrate Sanskrit and Pāṇini and our ancient scholars who derived such joy from making complex word formulae talk to them! For English speakers, the bad news is this is a Sanskrit book. But the good news is Manoj may do a translation into English and then the beauty of Sanskrit grammar can be enjoyed by one and all. Besides which we can revel in the fascinating manner in which Manoj orders the English language to deliver an ode to Sanskrit grammar!

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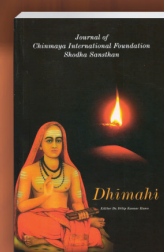
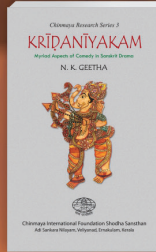
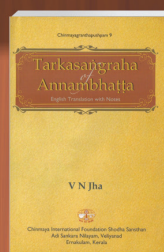
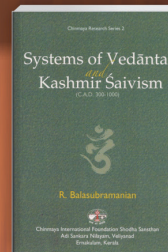
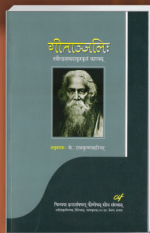
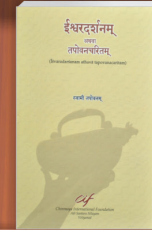
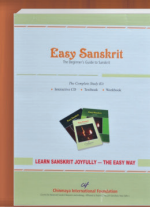
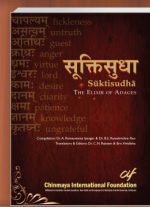
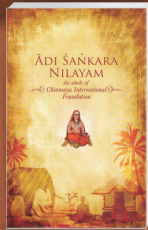
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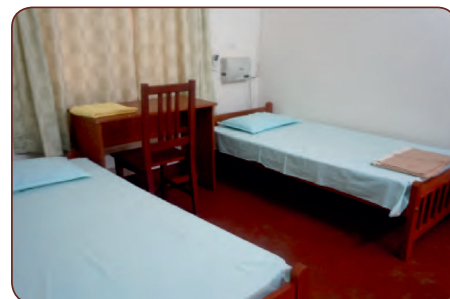
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CIF was one of the last projects undertaken by Pūjya Gurudev during HIS lifetime. The year 2016 marks the birth centenary of Pūjya Gurudev. Important construction projects have been planned for enhancing the facilities at CIF to dedicate unto HIS Lotus feet on this auspicious occasion. We invite and welcome all spiritual seekers and philanthropic devotees to join hands with us to fulfill HIS vision for CIF.

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— *Swami Tejomayananda,*
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With their minds wholly resting in Me,
with their senses absorbed in Me, enlightening each other,
and ever speaking of Me, they are satisfied and delighted.

— *Bhagavad-gītā, 10.9*

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