

# AKHIL BHARTIYA SHIKSHA SAMAGAM 2023

29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> July 2023



**Organised By**



शिक्षा मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
EDUCATION



कौशल विकास और  
उद्यमशीलता मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
SKILL DEVELOPMENT  
AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

# **Thematic Session 15**

## **Indian Knowledge Systems**

### **1. Introduction**

The Ministry of Education (MoE), along with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MoSDE), organized the 2nd Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Samagam (ABSS) on the 29th and 30th of July 2023, to celebrate the 3rd anniversary of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The event was inaugurated on July 29, 2023, at the Plenary Hall of the Bharat Mandapam at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi. The opening session was followed by 16 thematic sessions which were held parallelly in the forenoon and afternoon over two days on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

The NEP 2020 recognizes India's rich and eternal knowledge history, which includes Jnan, Vignan, and Jeevan Darshan as its guiding principles, with evolution based on experience and experiments. The Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) is recommended to be scientifically integrated, including tribal knowledge and indigenous & traditional modes of learning. It intends to encompass topics such as mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, yoga, architecture, medicine, agriculture, and so on. Other key areas of focus include tribal ethno-medical practices, forest management, natural farming etc.

There is a Bhāratīya way that is both sustainable and strives for the welfare of all. If we want to become the Knowledge Leader in this century and be the 'Viśvaguru', it is imperative that we regain a comprehensive knowledge of our heritage and

demonstrate the ‘Indian way’ of doing things to the entire world. Therefore, there is a need to rejuvenate and mainstream Indian knowledge systems for the contemporary world. The Thematic Session-15 on ‘Indian Knowledge System’ was one of the 16 thematic sessions, whose fundamental objective was to discuss the strategies for integrating the Indian Knowledge System into all levels of educational curriculum and to discuss ways to bring out the ‘Indian way’ before the world.

The **Chairperson** and the **panellists** of the session were:

<b>Chair</b>	<b>Prof. Raghuvendra Tanwar, Chairman, ICHR</b>
<b>Panellists</b>	<b>Prof. Ganti Suryanarayana Murthy, IIT Indore</b>
	<b>Shri Chamu K Shastry, Chairman, Promotion of Indian Languages</b>
	<b>Prof. Michel Danino, IIT Gandhinagar</b>
	<b>Shri Gajanan Londhe, Samvit Research Foundation</b>

## 2. Issues

The discussions sought to address some of the following issues:

- Indian knowledge systems have been existing since ages but have been overshadowed by western ways of thinking. There is a need to bring a change in the existing public mindset and create public awareness regarding IKS.
- Rejuvenation of ancient body of knowledge faces challenges like maintaining the genuineness, quality of material, and relevance of the knowledge in modern times

- Adequate availability of funds for promoting IKS initiatives so as to address modern challenges and promote pride in cultural heritage, intellectual growth, and self-confidence among students and interested persons.
- Incorporating IKS based curriculum in schools and Higher Education Institutions.
- Faculty training in the domain of IKS.

### 3. Discussions

**Prof Ganti S Murthy** began the session by enlightening the audience on the fundamentals of Indian Knowledge Systems and its primary focus areas which are Knowledge (gyan) transmission, Knowledge tradition (gyan parampara) and Practical utility. Prime Minister's vision of intelligence, innovation and emphasis on Indian languages through societal initiatives like outreach activities and so on. Prof Ganti S Murthy encouraged the gathering to participate in the initiatives of IKS on the website <https://iksindia.org/>, and stressed on how we can rejuvenate the education system.

#### **Prof. Raghuvendra Tanwar, Chairman, ICHR**

Prof Raghuvendra Tanwar addressed the audience by explaining that IKS can be viewed as a process of decolonization which is not just economic and political rather it is socio-cultural. Indian systems have been existing since ages but were predominant by the western thoughts, therefore there is a need to bring in a binding force which can change the existing mindset. He laid down the procedural note of

the session and introduced the distinguished panellists to the session. He also said that Indian Knowledge System is not just based on scientific principles, but also deals with ethics. His discussion stressed on collectively building a national narrative on discourse of Indian Knowledge Systems.

### **Prof. Chamu K Shastry, Chairman, Promotion of Indian Languages**

Prof. Chamu K Shastry presented an excellent depiction of Bharatiya Gyan Parampara. He said that Bhartiya Gyan Parampara exists in Indian languages and not in languages like English. He mentioned several ways in which knowledge exists in India i.e., textual, oral (maukhik), kulachar paddhati (learning through everyday activity) since ancient times. He explained the gaps in translation from Indian languages to English by quoting examples like there is no word for ‘punya’, ‘prasad’, ‘teertha’ etc in English depicting the quintessential need of Indian language understanding.

He referred to IKS as a living body, which cannot exist lifelessly. He stressed upon developing parameters of the system (vyavastha) from an Indian drishtikon. He also discussed the ashram vyavastha and how everyone can incorporate dharma and vyavastha in their lives with an essence of experience and experimentation. He suggested a section may be incorporated on the context in the textbooks as well. Interestingly his presentation also had components of tantra yukti (research methodology), gyan anveshan paddhati, and so on. He explained how these tantra yukti (research methodology) were used in ayurveda, shastra gantha, etc for seeking answers for the laid questions. The basic premise of his discussion boiled down to the practices that can be incorporated into the current learning system.

## **Prof. Michel Danino, IIT Gandhinagar**

Prof Michel Danino majorly focused on how IKS can be integrated into school education. He talked about four wheels of NEP 2020 in this area namely National Curriculum Framework (NCF) which in detail touches upon all stages of school education and promotes teacher as the chief instrument of teaching; second, working committee for syllabus; following preparation of textbooks; and lastly working on the biggest challenge of teacher training. He stressed on chapter five of NCF, which talks about integration of IKS with contemporary knowledge systems and rootedness in India. He also said that IKS is a plural idea as it is not just one but a system of many. He brings forth two methods of integration in the system i.e through integration of IKS in other disciplines and second identifying fresh scopes, locating the relevance of IKS in current problems & challenges. Prof Danino mentioned the great encyclopedia of IKS, Prof Kapil Kapoor, and his contribution in the area of IKS. He concluded his address by reminding the challenges in bringing back IKS like maintaining the genuineness, quality of material and its relevance in the present times.

## **Shri Gajanan Londhe, Executive Director, Samvit Research Foundation**

Shri Gajanan Londhe underscored the relevance of IKS rooted in school education for an effective integration of Indian and contemporary knowledge systems. He discussed the various ways in which IKS education can be imparted throughout the five stages of school education. The foundation of rootedness begins at home and extends to school which involves immersive experiences that engage all the senses of the child, especially at the foundational and preparatory stage. The children can be immersed into Indian stories, music, characters, food, play, art etc. to ingrain IKS

at very early stages of learning. The further stages involve exploration followed by reflection and discovery that need to be stimulated at every stage through Indian history, rich culture, local stories and characters, etc. The teacher is the agent of integration and plays a crucial role, therefore they need to be provided with IKS based content material, adequate training and orientation. He further highlighted the role of community on children's minds, that cannot be neglected particularly in the formative stages. It plays a pivotal role in providing contextual learning, role models and characters in building relations with the environment. His major emphasis was on the holistic development of children by integrating Indian knowledge, culture, and experiences into their educational journey to nurture a strong sense of connection to their heritage.

### **Prof. Ganti S. Murthy, IIT Indore**

Prof. Ganti Suryanarayana Murthy elaborated upon incorporating IKS into higher education institutes to nurture enthusiastic scholars with enriched knowledge and critical thinking rooted in Indian culture and heritage. HEIs can contribute to nurturing a generation of scholars deeply engaged in Indian knowledge, capable of innovative research and problem-solving. The IKS can be incorporated into HEIs firstly through initial guidelines and basic courses, so that they become familiar with its concepts and principles. Once IKS is well-established in school education, the next phase of 'Vyavastha,' which involves integrating IKS into core elective courses in specific disciplines can be worked upon. This will require dedicated efforts to develop high-quality textbooks and teacher-centric resources. It is crucial to train teachers in the principles and practices of IKS. Collaboration with the University Grants Commission (UGC) can be beneficial in providing frameworks for deep conversations with students and involving them in experiential learning.

Development of specialized IT courses that incorporate IKS principles will ensure that modern technology is infused with traditional knowledge.

He also emphasized on initiatives for encouraging fundamental and interdisciplinary research in IKS by offering research funding and initiatives. The internships and experiential learning opportunities in the IKS division will provide practical exposure and inspire undergraduate students to become research enthusiasts. He laid stress upon the importance of multiple perspectives and diverse modalities to cultivate confident and well-rounded citizens of Bharat. The IKS is potentially relevant to address future challenges.

The session was further opened for discussion, where participants raised questions around publication opportunities in the area, IKS and its integration with sports, drawbacks of IKS such as caste system etc, its availability on public platforms, were to name a few. The speakers responded to these questions and highlighted the various initiatives that are under process for scholarly publications, sports integration of approximately 4800 Indian games as 'Bharatiya Khel' and referred IKS as a counter to decolonize the prevailing mindset. Three suggestions were also made during the Q&A session: first, actions are required for IKS integration; second, Indianisation of Roman scripts such as sita ramam (suddhikaran); and third, IKS in action, i.e. everyday practices should be a reflection of IKS, such as greeting each other 'suprabhat' rather than good morning.



#### 4. **Way forward**

Based on the deliberations held during the session, the following way forward can be suggested:

- Increasing learning opportunities for students via mandatory credit components, designing regional courses, online/ODL courses etc.
- Promoting teacher recruitment and training via specialized teacher training centers.
- Providing hands on learning opportunities like IKS Internships, Hands-on-workshops, Hackathons
- Translation of academic content
- Promoting employment opportunities for youth through skill-based IKS programs, such as beautician and cosmetician training, Ayurveda-based dietician programs, and heritage technology solutions, aiming to capture 10% of the world tourism market and provide significant job opportunities.
- Research & innovation through national competition, hackathons and incentivizing the innovation.
- Engagement with international institutions like the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) and incorporation of IKS as a theme in ASEAN fellowships to foster collaborations among scholars.

## **5. Conclusion**

The Indian Knowledge System aims to integrate the ancient traditional knowledge of India with the contemporary knowledge system. It also seeks to promote opportunities for scholars and educational institutes for interdisciplinary research in the area. The deliberations held during the thematic session encouraged original, serious and deep scholarly research in this area. The panellists envisaged the framework for IKS studies and research methodologies in contemporary knowledge for global acceptance and to attract Indians and abroad which eventually shall serve the goal of internationalization at home. The discussion additionally emphasized on people's participation 'Janbhagidari' for the development and propagation of IKS.

The session was an amalgamation of 'Madhu Sanchayan' (collection of essential scholarly beings), 'Manthan' (discussion on 3W's of IKS) and 'Yajna' (specifications of taking work forward). By drawing from our vast treasure trove of knowledge, it would be easier to promote and enable further research to address the challenges of our present times. This exposure to both traditional and modern ideas can help in better knowledge of their cultural ethos, broaden intellectual horizon and culminate towards the idea of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat'.