



**5th World Conference
of
Global Educational Research Association
(GERA)**

EDUCON-2016
25TH& 26TH NOVEMBER, 2016

ON



**WISDOM SOCIETY :
LEARNING TO LIVE WISE**

Organized by



**VINAYA BHAVANA
(INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION)
VISVA-BHARTI
SANTINIKETAN, WEST BENGAL
INDIA-731235**

Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan : The Venue of 5th World Conference of GERA - EDUCON-2016

“ Visva-Bharati represents India where she has her wealth of mind which is for all. Visva-Bharati acknowledges India's obligation to offer to others the hospitality of her best culture and India's right to accept from others their best ”

Rabindranath Tagore

Visva-Bharati is a pilgrimage for education and culture. It reflects the Tagorean ethos of making a complete human being. It is a hallowed place of learning cradled in a serene environment in the lap of Nature where Rabindranath Tagore, the first non-European Nobel Laureate, founded a school called *Brahmacharyasrama* for children in 1901 and it was around this nucleus that the structure of an unconventional University, called Visva-Bharati developed .

Visva-Bharati was declared to be a Central University of India and an Institution of National Importance by an Act of Parliament in 1951. It was granted the status of a unitary, teaching and residential university having courses from KG to PG. The motto of Visva-Bharati has been ***"Yatavisvambhavatyekanidam"*** - ***where the world makes a home in a single nest.***

Santiniketan, the abode of peace, inherits a spiritual legacy wherein Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, father of Rabindranath Tagore, found solace and serenity and built a house for retreat in the early 1860s. The house gradually grew in to an ashrama and the very name came to denote the entire area. Now Santiniketan, apart from having Visva-Bharati, a central University of international repute, is a brand name for its own culture, art and craft heritage whispering the symphony of tradition and modernity.

Rabindranath's choice of Santiniketan for founding his school in a natural landscape is best stated in "My School", as under:

"I selected a beautiful place, far away from the contamination of town life, for I myself, in my young days, was brought up in that town in the heart of India, Calcutta, and all the time I had a sort of homesickness for some distant lane somewhere, where my heart, my soul, could have its true emancipation... I knew that the mind had its hunger for the ministrations of nature, mother-nature, and so I selected this spot where the sky is unobstructed to the verge of the horizon. There the mind could have its fearless freedom to create its own dreams and the seasons could come with all their colours and movements and beauty into the very heart of the human dwelling."

The celebration of seasons was always a feature in the asrama. These festivals came to be associated with the special culture of this institution and the introduction of traditional Indian forms and rituals in organising these festivals, including the decoration of the site, use of flowers, alpana, chanting of Vedic hymns and blowing of conch-shells gave them a new dimension, aesthetically attractive, intrinsically Indian yet totally secular. Rabindranath felt, it was necessary that an affinity be built between the students' minds and the flora and fauna of the asrama.

It was always the objective in Santiniketan that learning would be a part of life's natural growth. The first step towards this objective was to establish in the child a sense of oneness with nature. A child has to be aware of his surroundings - the trees, birds and animals around him. The mind is deprived if one is indifferent to the world outside". Rabindranath said we concentrate on learning from books and neglect the knowledge that is freely available on all sides.

THEME OF THE CONFERENCE

Our world is a hotspot where problems keep rising every day and man is constantly busy in finding probable solutions. Little do we think why and how do they emerge. Unlike a homoeopathic or ayurvedic doctor we seldom think about the root cause. If the cause of disease could be identified and eliminated, the problem would never come to the surface. Similarly if we examine the crisis of our times, which is behind all our ills and maladies, it is the crisis of science without wisdom, which is restricted to acquiring

knowledge and more knowledge. The irrationality of knowledge-inquiry further damages our ability to find solutions. The crux of our crisis is that we are living in man-made non-dynamic systems where we teach social science but not social philosophy, technology but not humanities, facility and rights but not responsibility and reason, exploit natural resources without any thought of conserving them.

Nicholas Maxwell, a wisdom blogger wants that we need to bring about a revolution in the aims and methods of science – and of academic inquiry more generally. Instead of giving priority to the search for knowledge, universities, colleges, schools and other institutions of learning need to engage and devote themselves to seeking and promoting wisdom by rational means, wisdom being the capacity to realize what is of value in life, for oneself and others, wisdom thus including knowledge, understanding and technological know-how, but much else besides. A basic task ought to be to help humanity learn how to create a better world for us and for our children too.

The revolution we need would change every branch and aspect of academic inquiry. A basic intellectual task of academic inquiry would be to articulate our problems of living (personal, social, global and environmental) and propose and critically assess possible solutions, actions, policies, political programmes and philosophies of life. This would be the task of social inquiry and the humanities. Tackling problems of knowledge would be secondary. Social inquiry would be at the heart of the academic enterprise, intellectually more fundamental than natural science.

Academic inquiry as a whole would become a kind of people's civil service. Academia would actively seek to educate the public by means of dialogue, discussion and debate, and would not just study the public. Above all academia, internationally, would be devoted to helping humanity learn what we need to do in response to the impending crisis of global warming, the lethal character of modern war and terrorism, intolerance, jealousy, suspicion, threats posed by modern armaments (conventional, chemical, biological and nuclear), vast inequalities of opportunities, wealth and power round the globe, rapid increase in population, destruction of tropical rain forests and other natural habitats, rapid extinction of species, even the AIDS epidemic. All these distinctively modern crises have been made possible by modern science dissociated from the rational pursuit of wisdom. Isaac Asimov rightly says *"the saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom"*.

If we are to avoid in this century the horrors of the last one – wars, death camps, dictatorships, poverty, hunger, illiteracy, malnutrition, environmental damage – we urgently need to learn how to acquire more wisdom, which in turn means that our institutions of learning become more responsive, sympathetic, people centric, practical and rationally effective.

Modern society is a world of hi-tech instant self-gratification; It has no time for wisdom. The visions of progress include new consumer markets and unbridled profits, nuclear weapons, human cloning, satellite television, polluting factories, western consumption / waste levels, pragmatic corruption, etc. The people argue that traditional wisdom has been a barrier to modern progress and they talk about removing such barriers by 'eradicating' traditional cultures, knowledge systems and by 'civilizing' the 'backward' and 'ignorant' in their own alienated ways. Vanguard of progress advocated material development but the investment made for this only eroded our vitals. Under their influence our modern education system assigned no respect or space to local wise persons, wise languages, wise customs and wise institutions that existed outside the framework of (and deliberately kept away from) formal / non-formal schools in India and they are still engaged in destroying the system by borrowing and superimposing foreign educational methodologies.

We have not yet been able to undo the great harm done to our system for which we are required to discard Lord Macaulay's legacy in which he refers to studies in Sanskrit and Arabic as 'absurd history, absurd metaphysics, absurd physics, and absurd theology' (Minutes on Education, 1835). The well-known

Yashpal Report (Learning Without Burden, 1993) points to a breakdown of wisdom by stating that “a lot is taught but little is learnt or understood” in India’s schools.

Our education system suffers from a structural irrationality but the academia is oblivious to it whereas the same is the cause of all our ills, the crisis of our times. We need a strong and specific argument for quite specific structural changes that need to be made. We need a very clear and definite idea as to what we need to do to develop a kind of academic inquiry that is rationally devoted to helping people realize what is of value in life – to helping us make progress towards as good a world as possible. We may adopt a partly formal, partly non-formal, partly informal approach to discover the way to promote wisdom and culture. We can and there is an urgent need as well to look towards Tagorian and Gandhian wisdom that can be suitably adopted to achieve educational as well as national goals. A philosophy requires an empirical structure in order to achieve the value, it enshrines.

Factory-schooling is most detrimental and injurious to our diverse wisdom traditions; it only promotes a world of fragmentation, competition, jealousy, dependency, negative individualism, selfishness, purposelessness, and consumerism. However, people have started feeling the need of something different about how to create new wisdom frameworks in communities for peaceful and sustainable people-centric development.

In our common understanding different perceptions on wisdom exist ranging from the psychological to the moral, from the specific to the universal, from the practical to the mythical / spiritual. There are also many different spaces, times, and experiences (stories, songs, dances, games, festivals, work activities, health practices) for inheriting, generating and sharing wisdom. These rich and diverse understandings and spaces contribute to dynamic learning processes for developing our individual and collective reflections, creativity, sensitivity, and social responsibility for dealing with the inherent ambiguity, complexity and even absurdity of life.

We need to reset our journey not just from ignorance to knowledge but from ignorance to knowledge to wisdom, which alone can change the world, our living (personal, social, global) and give us a definite direction to solve problems. The road to wisdom is a straight, clear path which is illumined by the essential nature of the SELF as revealed in the Bhagavadgita.

Creating a ‘Wisdom Society’ is the bounden duty of all, not of a chosen few. We need to live, learn and liberate by sharing of our experience and caring for each other, at a little deeper, personal and humane level than being shallow, mechanical, cosmetic and superficial .

A paradigm shift from ‘word’ to ‘world’ , ‘text’ to ‘touch’ and ‘explanation’ to ‘experience’ seem to be more appropriate and possible by simple ‘Dialogue’ than complex and cumbersome discourses . Knowing each other will be more important than showing one intellectually superior. With this backdrop Educon-2016 is christened and aims at addressing the following Sub-themes :

SUB-THEMES (Suggestive only, not exhaustive) :

- Foundations of Wisdom Society- Philosophical, Psychological, Sociological
- Vision & Values of Wisdom Society
- Policies/ Theories & Practices of Education for a Wisdom Society
- Information/ Knowledge / Learning Vs. Wisdom
- Customs, Tradition, Modernization- Continuity & Change
- Medium of Expression- Personal , Local, National & Global - Language, Literature, Art, Heritage Craft , Music, Dance, Drama etc.
- Surplus in Man, Innovations & Creativity In Education
- Public-Private Partnership , Community Participation in Education

- Family, Society, Nation / Nationality
- Endangerment – Deprivation, Urbanization, Deforestation, Extinction, Pollution, Global Warming Sustainable Development
- Violence, Conflict & Peace – Structural & Functional
- Personal –Social, Local-Global Dichotomy and The Universal Man
- Culture of Wisdom – Implicit & Explicit in Tribal/ aboriginal, Native , Folk, Rural
- Gender, Inclusion, Equity & Equality of Opportunities & Challenges
- Research , Development & Extension

- **IMPORTANT INFORMATION & DATES**

1.	Submission of Abstract (Maximum 150 Words)	15 th August, 2016
2.	Communication regarding Acceptance of the Abstract	20 th August, 2016
3.	Submission of Full Paper (Maximum 1000 Words& References-APA style) with Registration Fee & PPT	15 th September,2016
4.	Request for Accommodation	15 th October, 2016

- **DIALOGUE MODE OF PRESENTATION**

The conference will focus on Dialogue & Re-Dialogue form of presentation rather than conventional paper reading. Care will be taken to ensure that papers are truly delivered rather than read and participants are little more wiser during and after the conference.

All Correspondence/ communication be made to :educon2016gera@gmail.com

CONTACT PERSONS :

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REGISTRATION

Interested participants are requested to register them by sending duly filled-in Registration Form (downloadable from the websites of GERA- <http://www.the gera.in> & Visva-Bharati- <http://www.visva-bharati.ac.in>)along with the **Registration Fee*** to the Organising Secretary, Educon-2016.

	Delegate Type	Early Bird Up to 15 th September,2016		16 th September 2016 to 31 st October 2016	
		Indian	USD	Indian	USD
1.	Member GERA	INR 1500/-	120 US \$	INR 2000/-	140 US \$
2.	Non-member / Accompanying Person	INR 2000/-	125 US \$	INR 1300/-	150 US \$
3.	Research Scholars**	INR 1000/-	50 US \$	INR 800/-	75 US \$

*Registration fee includes Conference Kit, Participation Certificate ,Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner for Conference days

**Research Scholars are expected to submit necessary documents duly issued by the Competent Authority/ Head of the Department/Principal of the Institution/ College.

Fee may be paid by **Demand Draft** of any nationalized bank drawn in favour of the **Organizing Secretary, EDUCON-2016**, payable at Santiniketan or preferably by **Direct Electronic Transfer / NEFT/RTGS** to the following :

Account Name	EDUCON- 2016
Name of the Bank	STATE BANK OF INDIA
Branch Name	SANTINIKETAN
Branch Code	2121
Current Account No.	35828148802
IFSC Code	SBIN0002121
MICR No	731002003

Relevant document/ Receipt of Electronic money transfer needs to be produced at the Registration Counter of the conference venue while receiving the Conference Kit.

- **Accommodation**

Accommodation facility in Hostel and Guest Houses of Visva-Bharati is available for delegates on first come first serve basis .However, hotels are available in the vicinity of Santiniketan which may be booked on request and on payment .

- **Weather at Santiniketan**

During the month of November the Weather at Santiniketan is quite pleasant with temperature variation between 26°C (high) and 13°C (low).

- **How to Reach**

Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan , located in Birbhum district of West Bengal State of India, about 165 km from Kolkata (erstwhile Calcutta) , the city of joy , is well connected with major cities of the country and can be easily reached by railways / road . The local Railway Station to get down is Bolpur-Shantiniketan, just two kilometre away from the conference Venue . The nearest Airports are Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, Kolkata (20 K.M. from Howrah Rly. Station/ 158 K.M. from Santiniketan) and

Kazi Nazrul Islam International Airport , Andal, Durgapur (about 60 K.M. from Santiniketan), both well connected by regular public transport services. There are two other railway stations in the city of Kolkata i.e. Sealdah and Kolkata from where trains are available to Bolpur-Shantiniketan. Delegates coming from northern India by train may get down either at Durgapur or Burdwan to avail road transport / catch the connecting trains to Bolpur-Shantiniketan instead of going Howrah and coming back .

Places of Attraction

- Rabindra Bhavana Museum
- Patha Bhavana
- Amarkutir Society
- PrakritiBhavana
- Kala Bhavana
- SangeetBhavana
- Shilpa Sadan

Advisory Committee

Prof.Swapan Kumar Dutta	Vice-Chancellor (Offg.), Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan
Prof.B.K.Passi,	President, GERA& Formerly UNESCO Chair, Vice-Chairman, NCTE
Professor Sabujkoli Sen	Director,SEIRR & Principal , VinayaBhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan
Prof.S.K.Bawa	President ,HQ, GERA, & Dean, School of Education, Central University of Punjab, Bathinda, Punjab
Dr.Subhasini Passi	Expert in Creative and Critical Thinking & Reiki Master
Prof. S.P. Malhotra	President, ASIA& former Dean, Academic Affairs, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Haryana
Prof.Rajarshi Roy	Head, Department of Education, Vinaya Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan
Prof. Samiran Mondal	Head, Department of Physical Education, Vinaya Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan

Local Organizing Committee

Prof.K.C.Sahoo, Organizing Secretary	Dr.KalyaniSahoo, Convenor
Dr.Prosenjit Saha, Jt. Organizing Secretary	Dr. Mahesh S. Khetmalis, Co-Convener
Sri Gautam Saha, Treasurer	

Reception of Delegates & Communication

Dr.ChitralkhaMaiti	KalpataruMondal
Dr.Subhankar Ghosh	Paramita Das
Rudra Prasad Sinha	Julie Chhetri
Ms. MadhuriChatterjee	

Academic & Publication

Prof.Amrit Sen	Ms. Sharmila Yadav
Dr.M.S.Siddiqui	Manojit Koley

Cultural & Exhibition

Dr. T. Banerjee	Anand Gopal Pal
Partha PratimSikdar	Ms. Nandini Rooj
Dr.Soumi Mandal	

Accommodation&Local Conveyance

Dr.Sanat Kumar Rath	Prosanta Saha
GautamSaha	Indrajit Nath

Food & Snacks

Prof.SambhuCharan Roy
Tahajul Mandal