

Bhagirathi

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The Center for Indic Studies Inaugurated at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

As the conch shell echoed through the UMass Dartmouth Main auditorium, traditional lamp-lighting ceremony was led by Swami Yogi Satyam at the inaugural function for the Center for Indic Studies on October 6, 2001.

A photo of Mahatma Gandhi and an image of Saraswati, the goddess of learning, flanked the stage. A statue of Lord Ganesha adored the stage. Shambhu Shastry chanted Ved Ghosh in Sanskrit and Yogi Satyam delivered the benedictory remarks.

"The flame is a symbol of humanity's quest for perfection and harmony with universe", he said. "It dispels the darkness and removes all negativity, including ignorance, evil and sorrow."

Chancellor Jean MacCormack formally welcomed the guests and strongly supported the mission of the Center. "The mission of the Center for Indic Studies is in consonant with our campus's mission and goals related to global awareness and diversity" said the Chancellor. She appreciated the effort of the Center's faculty in leading its mission.

The Chancellor also noted the multidisciplinary model for the new center. "It will join studies and activities from a variety of fields including, but not limited to, philosophy, religion, culture, science, and politics", she said.

Our Center for Indic Studies is first of its kind in the United States in terms of its mission, goals, and action plans, said Professor Bal Ram Singh, the Center's Director. The Center's mission is to highlight India's time-tested, eternal values for world progress, peace and harmony, and to cultivate relevance of ancient India's human values through scholarly understanding and promotion.

Dr. Singh noted three specific goals:

1. To increase understanding of issues relating to the arts, philosophy, culture, societal values and customs of India.
2. To promote international harmony through a mix of ancient and modern values, and
3. To promote awareness among Americans of contemporary India and its demographic diversity in 21st century.

The Center's action plan that will be implemented by its 12-member faculty include promotion of studies on issues germane to contemporary Indian society and their relevance to the evolving multicultural global society, community outreach, Sanskrit and other languages, science and astronomy, traditions and cultures, universal spirituality, yoga and health, and music and art.

From the Director's Desk. Many thanks to all those who helped at the inaugural of the Center.

Bhagirathi is a quarterly newsletter of the Center for Indic Studies.