

**Research Report**  
**(April 2024 – March 2025)**  
**Focus Area: Indian Culture**  
**Institute: BHĀRATSHAKTI**

**Report prepared by: Dr. Beloo Mehra**

**August 2025**

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# INTRODUCTION

BhāratShakti is a vertical/department of Sri Aurobindo Society dedicated to study, research and programme development in the area of Indian Culture in the light of Sri Aurobindo's vision for India and her work for the future of humanity. We find inspiration for our name and focus of work in the following words of Sri Aurobindo.

*"Each nation is a Shakti or power of the evolving spirit in humanity and lives by the principle which it embodies. India is the Bhārata Shakti, the living energy of a great spiritual conception, and fidelity to it is the very principle of her existence. For by its virtue alone she has been one of the immortal nations; this alone has been the secret of her amazing persistence and perpetual force of survival and revival." (Sri Aurobindo, CWSA, Vol. 20, p. 57)*

## VISION AND MISSION

### Vision

- Rediscovery of the immortal Bhārata Shakti, the living energy, the force that is behind India's persistence, survival and revival, which will lead her towards a new future, a renaissance that is true to her spirit, to her swadharma and swabhava.
- Dynamic application of the inner genius of India, her spirituality, to life and all its activities necessary for the building of a new India.

### Mission

### ABOUT BHĀRATSHAKTI WORKS

"It is more important that the thought of India should come out of the philosophical school and renew its contact with life, and the spiritual life of India issue out of the cave and the temple and, adapting itself to new forms, lay its hand upon the world".

*~ Sri Aurobindo, Extract from an interview given to a correspondent of The Hindu*

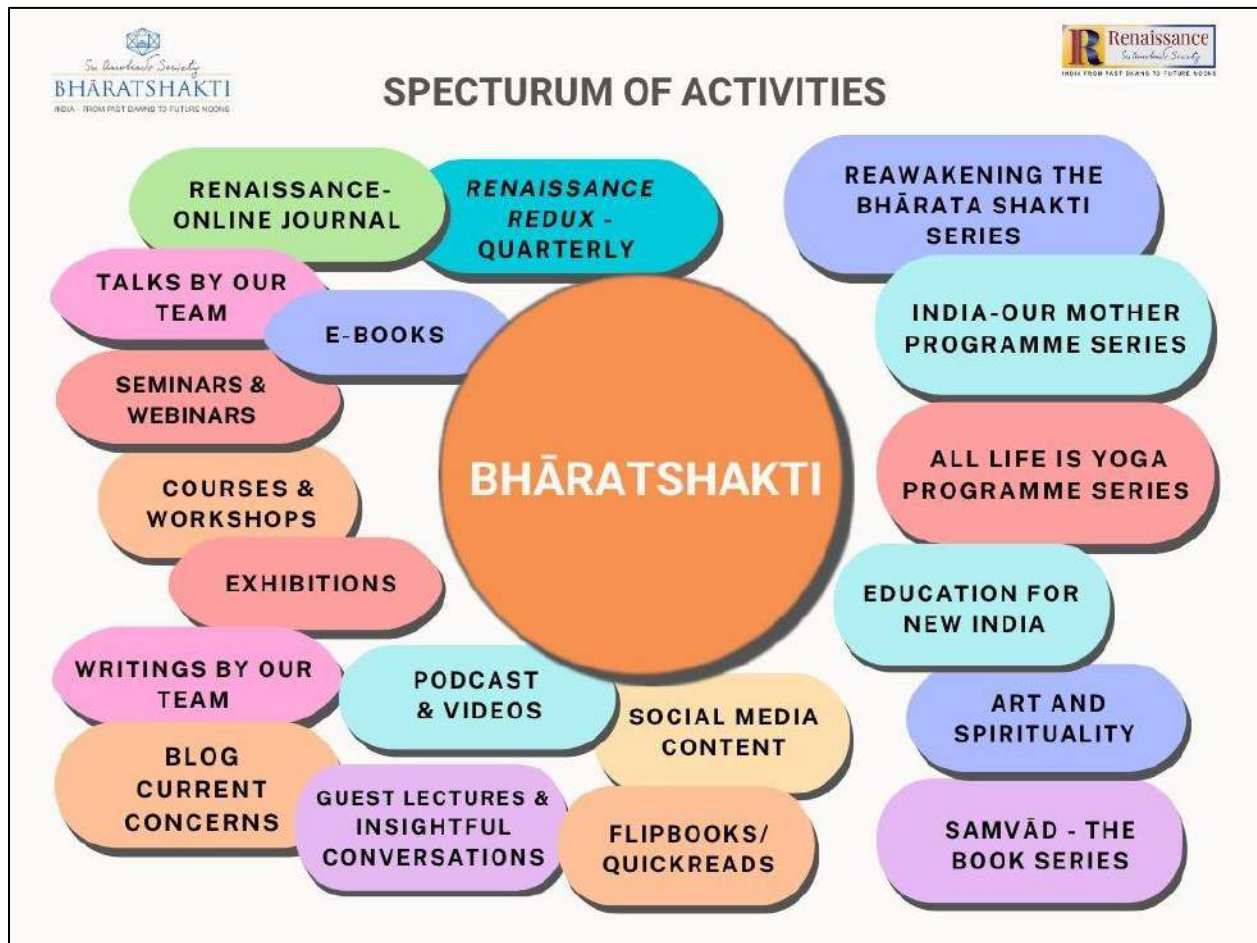
Guided by this new direction Sri Aurobindo has given for a true Indian renaissance, we have embarked on a mission:

- To facilitate a deeper appreciation and understanding of Sri Aurobindo's vision of India's destined work for the future of humanity
- To design and curate inspiring educational programmes that emphasize the dynamic application of spirituality to life and all its activities necessary for the building of a new India
- To create, curate and disseminate inspiring and research-based content related to what Sri Aurobindo speaks of as soul, mind and body of India's rich and diverse culture
- To evoke among the young and young-at-heart a great love for India, pride in India's heritage and an aspiration and will to create an even greater future

**To know more, explore our website – <https://bharatshakti.aurosociety.org/>**

# SECTION 1: MOST SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES (HIGHLIGHTS)

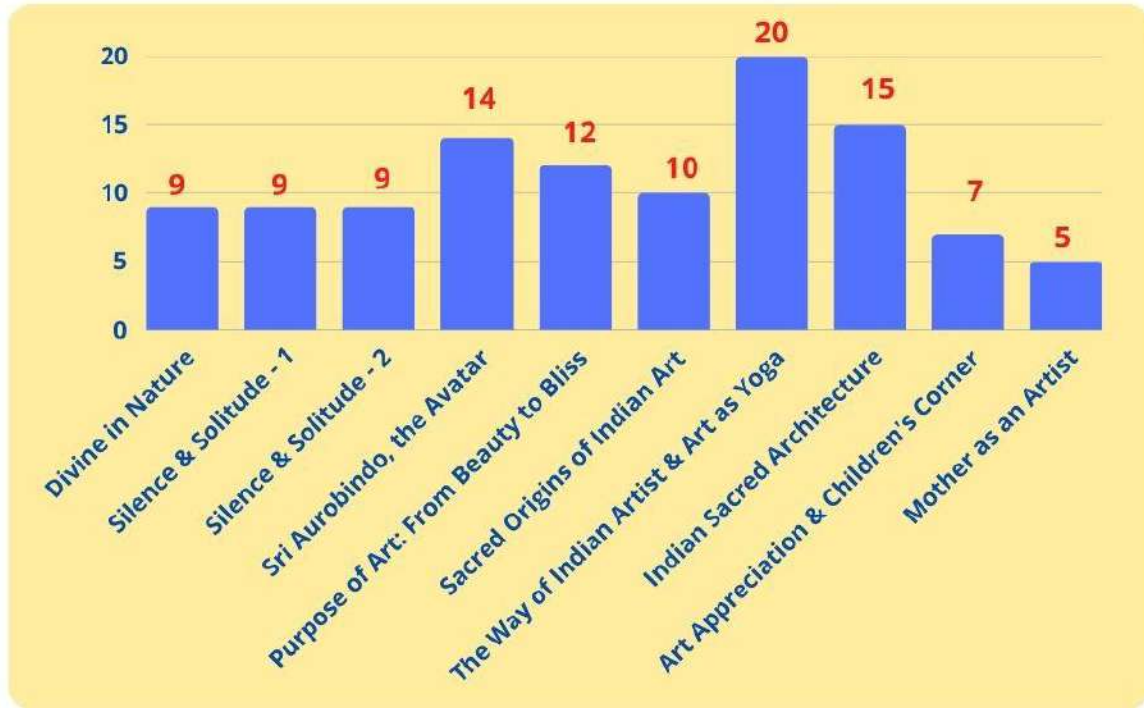
## SPECTRUM OF WORKS CONDUCTED BY BHĀRATSHAKTI



## **MAJOR PROJECT I:**

### **PUBLISHING *RENAISSANCE* JOURNAL - INDIA'S REBIRTH THROUGH INTEGRAL YOGA**

- **Conduct research into the larger theme of India's creative genius** manifesting in various domains – spiritual, artistic, literary, philosophic, aesthetic.
- **This requires a deep study of and research into the written Works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and senior Scholars and *Sādhakas* of Integral Yoga.**
- Also invite fresh perspectives and insights on topics related to India's Rebirth through Integral Yoga.
- **Findings of this research were documented through publishing of 11 ISSUES of monthly journal, *RENAISSANCE* and 1 ISSUE of quarterly journal, *RENAISSANCE REDUX*.**
- **All work can be accessed at: <https://renaissance.aurosociety.org/>**



## **RENAISSANCE highlights during April 2024-March 2025**

- Published 10 issues of online journal *Renaissance*, including two double issues.
- Total no. of articles published in Renaissance from April 2024-March 2025 = 110
- More than 600 posters with appropriate quotes from various works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother were created for these 10 issues, and more than 200 photographs accessed through online research

- Led by readers' request, a new quarterly periodical, *Renaissance Redux*, was launched in February 2025 with an aim to feature selections from journal archives and present them in downloadable PDF format to subscribers.

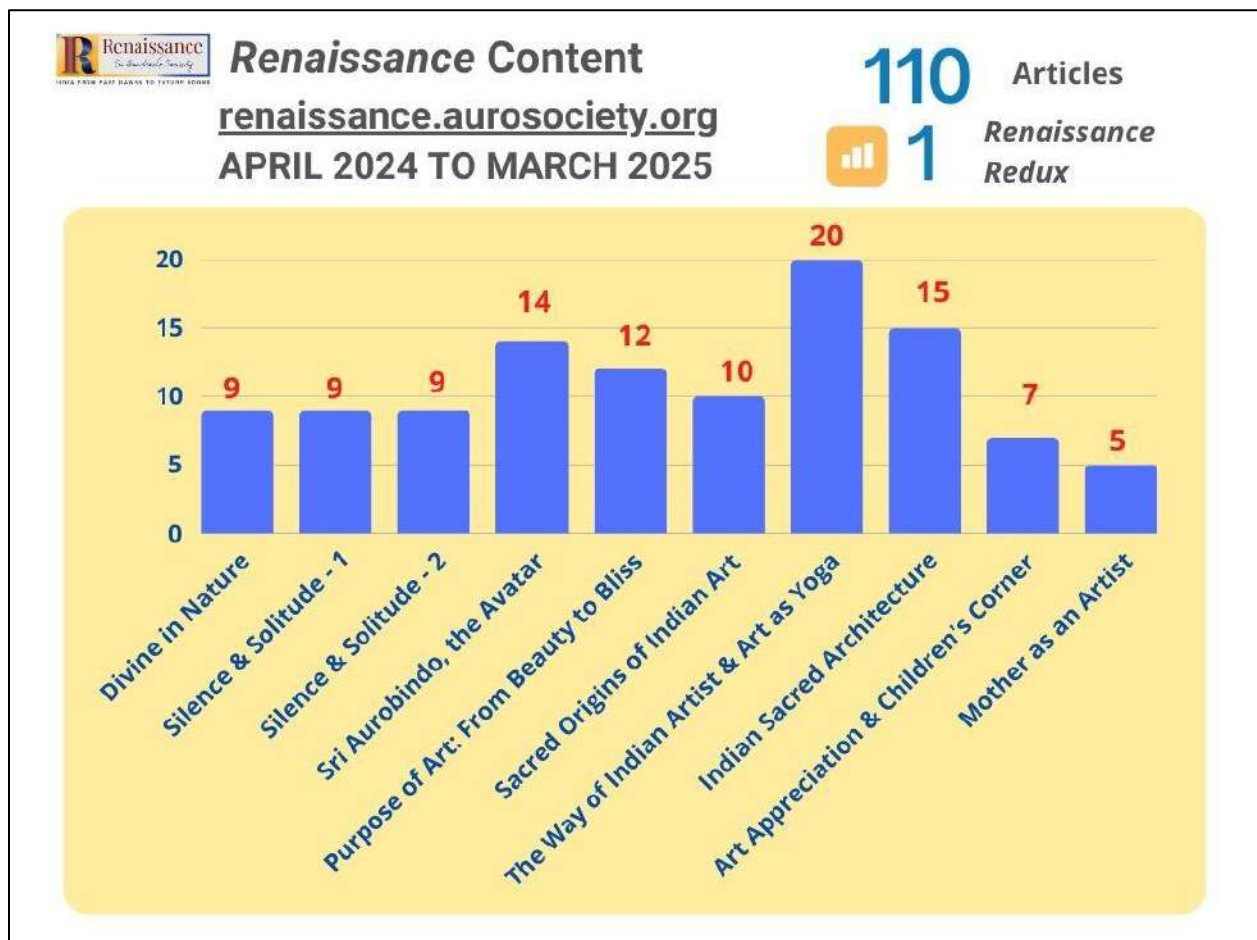
## Themes explored in *RENAISSANCE*, April 2024 to March 2025

- i. [Divine in Nature](#) (April 2024) – 9 articles + 1 podcast
- ii. [Silence and Solitude](#) (May 2024) – 9 articles + 1 podcast + 1 Video
- iii. [Silence and Solitude II](#) (June-July 2024) – 9 articles + 1 podcast + 1 Talk by the editor
- iv. [Sri Aurobindo, the Avatar](#) (August 2024) – 14 articles
- v. [The Purpose of Art - From Beauty to Bliss](#) (September 2024) – 12 articles + 1 video
- vi. [Sacred Origins of Indian Art](#) (October 2024) – 10 articles
- vii. [The Way of an Indian Artist; Art as Yoga; Art Education](#) (November - December 2024) – 20 articles + 1 Video + 1 Invited Conversation on Natyashastra
- viii. [Indian Sacred Architecture](#) (January 2025) – 15 articles
- ix. [Art Education and The Way of an Indian Artist](#) (February 2025) – 7 articles + 1 Invited Conversation on Art for *Chittashuddhi* + 1 video
- x. [The Mother as an Artist](#) (March 2025) – 5 articles + 1 Photography Exhibition + 1 Invited Lecture

## Statistics on *RENAISSANCE* reach during the period

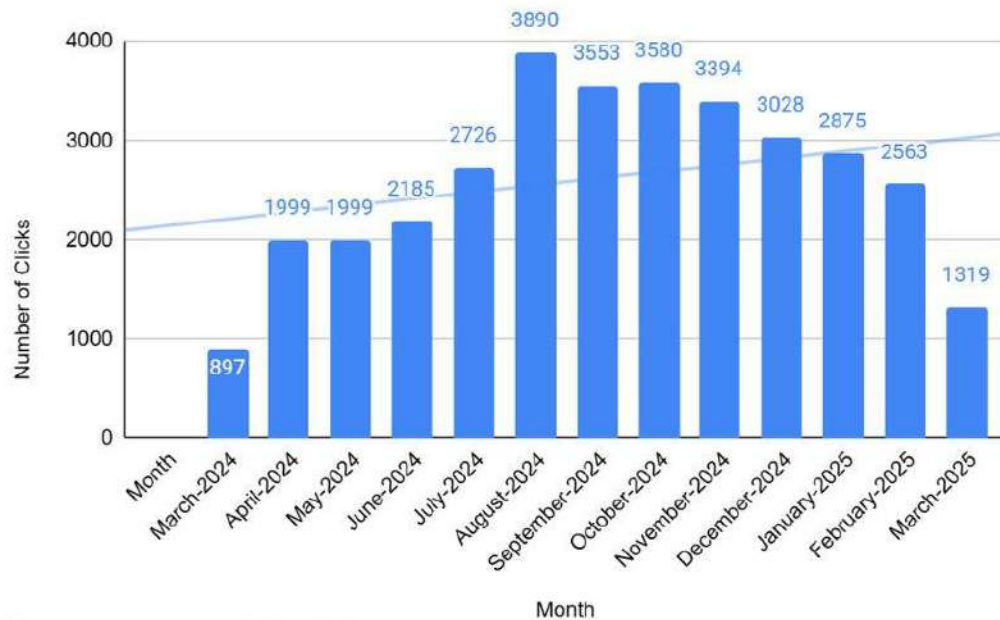
- **2000+** visitors accessing journal website every month, peak being 3890 visitors in August 2024
- **200** genuine users daily
- **5000** unique users monthly

- 23% of all traffic to all Sri Aurobindo Society main websites and subdomains is coming through the traffic to *Renaissance* website alone.
- For many of the themes explored in the journal through research-based and reflective articles, related educational events were also organized to make the exploration of our theme more 'dynamic' and to facilitate deeper immersion into the topic.





***Renaissance Journal* - Number of visits**  
**March 2024 - March 2025**  
**2000+ every month**

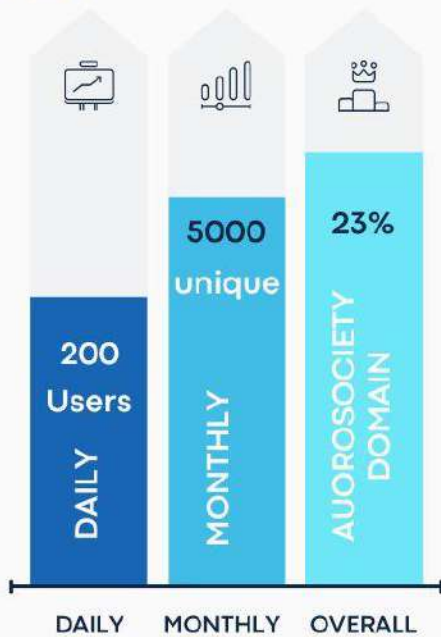


[renaissance.aurosociety.org](http://renaissance.aurosociety.org)

## 2024-2025 Renaissance Website Traffic

renaissance.aurosociety.org

Annual



### DAILY

200 genuine users daily

### MONTHLY

5000 unique users monthly

### OVERALL

23% of the total traffic of all society subdomain and main society websites.

## **MAJOR PROJECT II: DESIGNING AND CONDUCTING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES (n = 23)**

Workshops, Courses, Exhibitions, Webinars, Seminars  
(Total conducted in 2024-2025 = 23)

### **Summary of Key Programmes**

#### **International Symposium (Total = 1)**

**1. The Veda and the Vedic Spirit Date: August 18, 2024**

- Organized jointly with Sri Aurobindo Kapali Shastri Institute of Vedic Culture (SAKSHI), Bengaluru, AuroChit, USA, and La Grace Sri Aurobindo Integral Life Center, USA
- More than 80 participants from various parts of India, USA and Europe joined the 2.5-hour-long online symposium.
- The programme included two keynote speeches, a brief Vedic chanting session and a panel discussion.

#### **National Webinars (Total = 4)**

- National Webinar: Shiva, the Lord of Tapas (March 10, 2025)
- National Webinar: Durga, the Divine Mother (October 5, 2024)
- National Webinar: Sri Aurobindo, the Seer-poet (December 7, 2024)
- National Webinar: Devi Ahilyabai Holkar and Bhāratiya Resurgence (June 22, 2024)

## **National Workshops/Retreats (Total = 6)**

- Educational Vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother (Workshop for educational leaders from Ahmedabad, July 24, 2024)
- Invoking Shakti: Cultivating Courage, Faith and Concentration (4-day Workshop for Students at Karnataka, Sept 24-27, 2024)
- *Sanskriti ॐ Svādhyāya*: Insights from *Itihāsas*, *Purānas* and *Upanishads* (2-day workshop for teachers at Karnataka, Sept 23-24, 2024)
- “Yoga in Everyday Life” (2-day Residential Retreat at Sri Aurobindo Dhama, Karnataka, Dec 27-29, 2024)
- Our Culture, Our Pride (1-day workshop for Adolescents at a Gurukulam in Karnataka, December 27, 2024)
- Appreciating Hindustani Classical Music (Lecture-demonstration at Pondicherry, March 25, 2025)

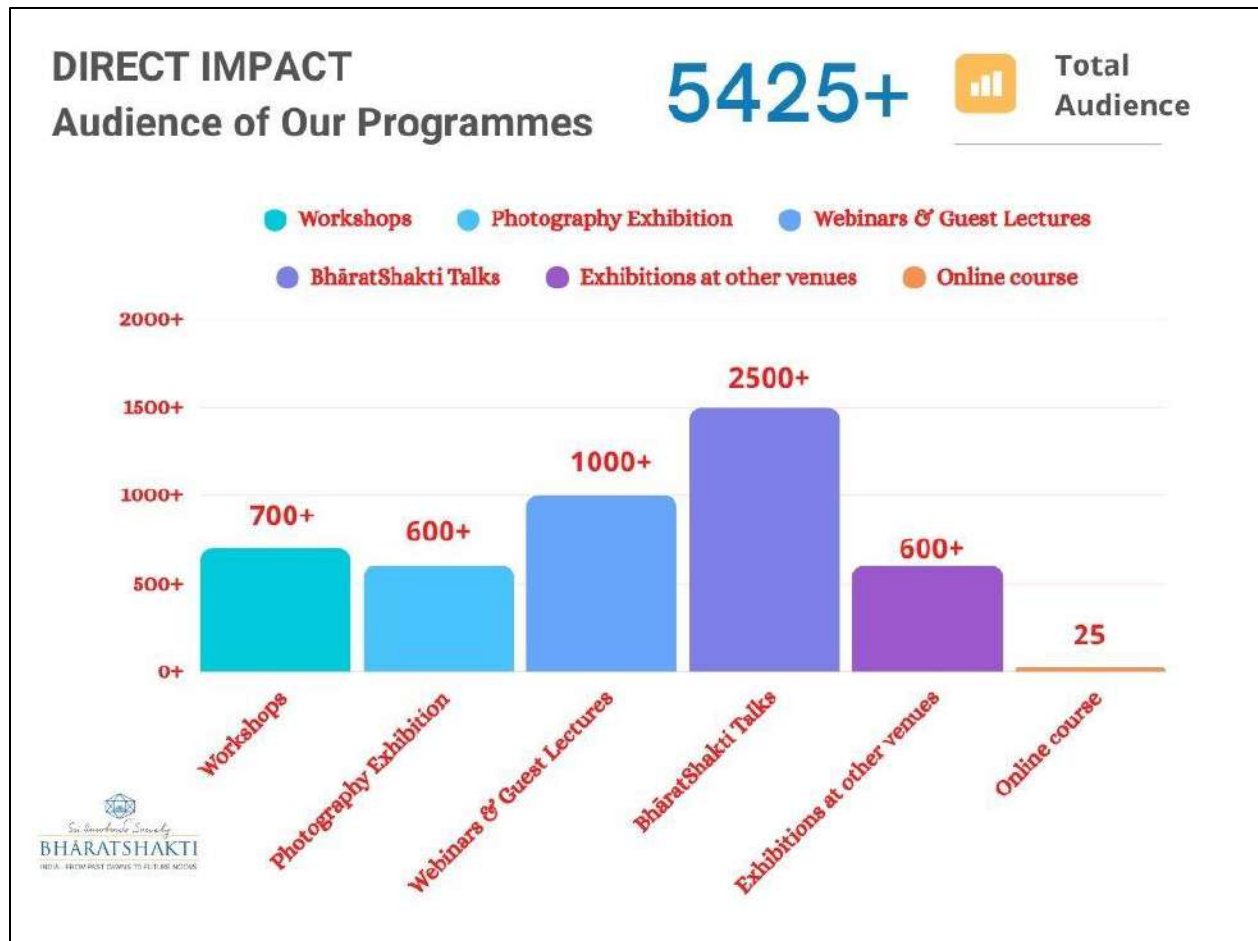
## **Guest Lectures and Invited Conversations (Total = 3)**

- o The Cultural and Political Legacy of The Vijayanagara Empire
- o Art for Chittashuddhi, Purification of the Heart
- o Exploring Human Psychology through NāṭyaŚāstra

## **Curated Exhibitions that travelled across India (Total = 5)**

## **Other Workshops (Total = 3)**

## **Online 12-week course (Total = 1)**



## DETAILS OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

BhāratShakti designs and conducts educational programmes under five major topical categories:

- Re-awakening the Bharata Shakti
- All Life is Yoga
- Education for New India
- India, Our Mother
- Art and Spirituality

The programmes mentioned below are categorized under these five themes. Some of the programmes are categorized in more than one theme, for the sake of easier organisation we are including them only under one, more appropriate theme.

## Reawakening the Bhārata Shakti

### 1. TWO-DAY WORKSHOP FOR TEACHERS: '*Sanskriti* ॐ *Svādhyāya*':

*Insights from Itihāsas, Purānas and Upanishads*

**Dates: September 23-24, 2024**

- Part of BhāratShakti teacher-education initiative under the themes 'Education for New India' and 'Reawakening the Bharata Shakti'
- **PARTICIPANTS: 70 teachers including 25 teacher-leaders and school administrators**
- **Venue:** Beautiful and serene campus called Freedom Land in rural Karnataka.
- The workshop facilitated by Dr. Beloo Mehra and Mr. Narendra Murty included Lecture-discussions, Q & A, Group reflections, Storytelling, Chanting & Contemplative activities.
- **Key themes explored:**
  - *Shāstra* within
  - Revisiting our legends and stories for new light
  - Symbolism in the stories from *Purānas*
  - Insights on Education from our scriptures
  - Dharma and our role as educators
  - Women in the *Itihāsas*
- The focus was on the study of scriptures for gaining deep insights on life, spiritual growth, our work as learners and teachers, dharma and living with truth, social

organization, building a grounded personality which is rooted in our culture and is also progressive, and many more such values.

- **A few takeaway points from the two-day workshop as shared by some of the participants:**

- We are all potentially divine. As your faith is, so are you.
- To understand and grow into the innate Shāstra within.
- Symbolism of each of the characters of the Ramayana and how it applies to my life.
- Dharma is the compass of my life. It gives certitude to my life.
- Going beyond the shastras should be pursued only when a new truth emerges within.
- *Ekam sat, vipra bahudha vadanti*
- Symbolism of *halahala* or poison in Samudra-manthan story
- Our puranas and stories have deep meanings to show us the right path for the sadhana.
- Approach the Shāstra with *sraddha*, without any mental or intellectual prejudice
- Shraddha is the deepest truth within to hold on to.
- Relying on Shāstras as guiding compass during conflicting choices
- Shāstra does not mean a single text, or set of customs.
- Be the disciple and the guru will find you.
- Guru holds within as in a womb, impregnates the student which his/her spirit and delivers student in a new birth.
- Reverence for the symbolic meaning in *puranas* and *Itihāsas*
- An acharya leads by example, seeks to awaken the child.









## 2. FOUR-DAY WORKSHOP FOR STUDENTS, AGES 5-18 – Invoking Shakti: Cultivating Courage, Faith and Concentration

**Dates: 24-27 September, 2024**

- Part of BhāratShakti education initiative under the themes ‘Education for New India’ and ‘Reawakening the Bharata Shakti’
- **PARTICIPANTS: More than 350 children participated in the workshop.**
- **Venue:** The Creative School, Freedom Land, Bengaluru, a progressive educational institution inspired by the Integral Education teachings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.
- **Parallel sessions** were conducted with small groups of children, ranging from 20 to 25
- The workshop involved a wide range of learning activities:
  - chanting sessions
  - storytelling
  - crafts activities
  - **poster exhibition** on the soul qualities of Faith, Courage and Concentration
  - learning Sanskrit songs
  - games involving affirmations
  - fun games to improve concentration and memory
  - self-awareness exercises
  - short educational films followed by discussion
  - Cultural performances by the students
- The facilitators also shared with the students especially curated presentations and video content during some interactive sessions, engaging them in meaningful conversations and peer-learning.
- With senior students in the age group of 14-19, a special topic was explored in an interactive session – Who is the Mother and what is the significance of the Mother’s Symbol?



- Throughout the workshop, the learning environment was kept very relaxed, friendly and informal – which also goes with the overall school culture in general. This helped children feel comfortable and open when interacting with facilitators from the BhāratShakti team.

































# Education for New India

## 3. WORKSHOP FOR YOUTH - YUVA SHAKTI – Cultivating Virtues for Self-growth (for students from Sardar Patel University)

**Date: May 30, 2024**

- Venue: Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry
- **Participants included 24 undergraduate and post-graduate students from various departments and colleges of Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat, and also several faculty members and university coordinators.**
- Apart from the students, **Dr. Niranjana Patel, Vice-Chancellor of Sardar Patel University, Dr. Bhailabhai Patel, Registrar, and three professors Dr. Parambhai Pathak, Prof. Rajesh Kariya, and Dr. Jigna were also present.**
- **The interactive learning programme** involved stories, discussions, humour, engaging games for developing concentration and memory and other creative and contemplative activities.
- Using the Mother's symbol as inspiration, **specific qualities or virtues, namely, Courage, Perseverance and Concentration were highlighted.**
- Through anecdotes, illustrations and engaging students in a discussion, the connection between Courage and Faith was also explored.
- A separate session was dedicated to listening to students' understanding of the selected virtues. Each of them was asked to select a quote from a basket and then invited to share their reflection or understanding of it based on some personal experience or observation.
- Games full of laughter and active engagement were followed by short contemplative activities to highlight **the significance of cultivating concentration in silence.**







#### 4. **WORKSHOP FOR YOUNG CHILDREN - *Navakriti* – Celebrating the Mother's Birthday with Children**

**Date: February 13, 2025**

- Venue: Matriniketan, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry
- Part of BharatShakti's initiative under its project theme - Education for New India
- **Participants included a group of 35 children ages 6 to 8, and 9 teachers** from Creative School, Bengaluru, who were on a field visit to Pondicherry.
- **The 2.5 hour-long programme included a variety of creative learning activities** which helped students reflect on the deeper significance of birthdays, and also learn about the Mother's childhood.
- The activities included **chanting, interactions, creative activities, fun games and storytelling.**
- **The games involved activities meant to facilitate development of alertness and word formation using different combination of letters.**
- Storytelling was used to engage children with the idea of cultivating sincerity.
- Creative activities and group sharing were used to encourage children to aspire for progress and to cultivate gratitude.







## 5. WORKSHOP FOR STUDENTS: Our Culture, Our Pride

**Date: December 27, 2024**

- Venue: Om Shanti Dham Gurukulam, Sangama, Makedatu, Karnataka
- Part of BhāratShakti's initiative under the theme 'Education for New India'
- **Number of participants: 70 students (ages 12-16) + 15 teachers + 15 parents**
- The workshop's primary focus was to introduce the teenagers to reflect on their understanding of Indian culture, and their connection with India from the perspective of Sri Aurobindo's vision of India's destined role for the future of humanity and the world. A few specific questions were explored through a variety of sessions.
  - What is culture? And why should I care about it?
  - Is India One Culture or Many?
  - Is culture static or dynamic?
  - What is India's role in the world?
  - What is my responsibility as an Indian?
- Such deep questions were addressed through a variety of activities including exploratory interactions, experiential activities, storytelling, games, exhibition, and dance. The students were divided into two groups – ages 12-14 and 15-17, and parallel sessions were conducted.











## 6. EXHIBITION: Curated for an Interdisciplinary Learning Project on Hampi

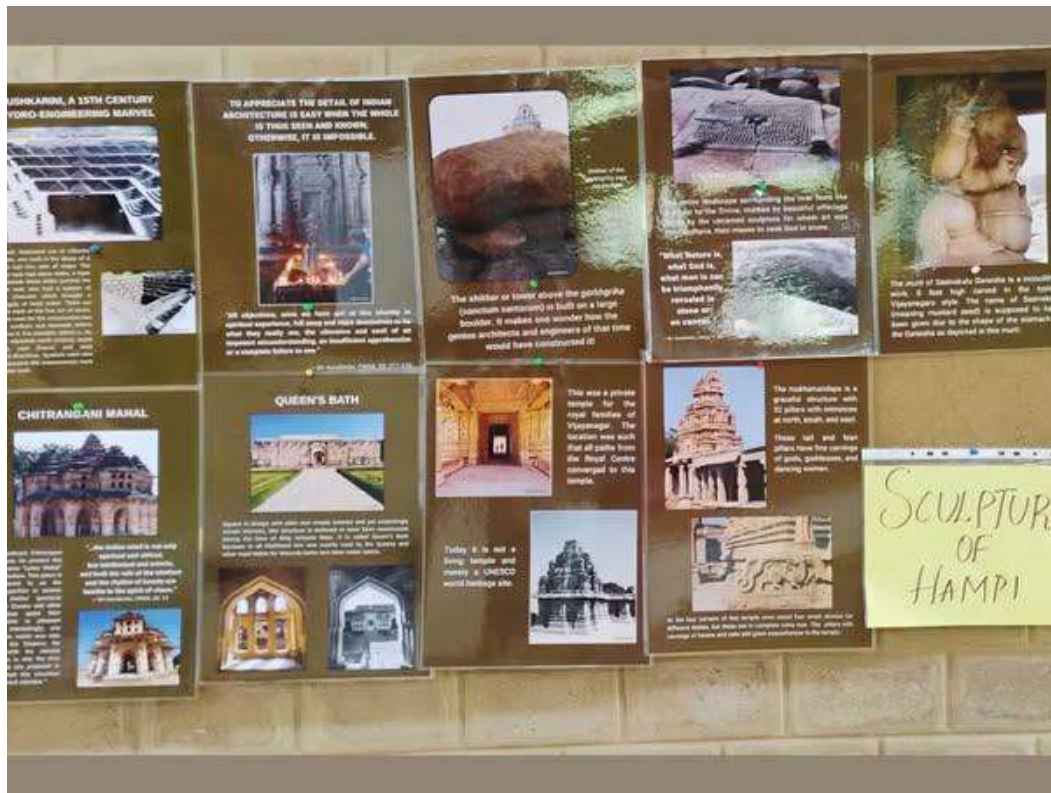
**Date: December 10, 2024**

- Part of BhāratShakti's initiatives - Education for New India and India, Our Mother
- At the invitation of Creative School, Bengaluru, Dr. Beloo Mehra from the BhāratShakti department researched and curated a 58-poster exhibition titled 'Hampi: A UNESCO World Heritage Site' to be used as part of an **interdisciplinary educational project for the students**.
- The posters incorporated many pictures taken at various places in Hampi (permission was taken from the photographer) along with some relevant information and insights on **History, Culture, Arts, Architecture, Literature, Urban Planning and Governance**.



- **The interdisciplinary approach was kept to facilitate a more integral approach to learning.**
- The thoughtfully curated posters informed the students about the history of Vijayanagara empire, the legends associated with Hampi, magnificence of Hampi as a highly prosperous city during the peak of Vijayanagara empire, the architectural and sculptural riches of Hampi, the connection of Hampi with stories from the Ramayana and several other aspects.
- **The posters served as important anchor and starting point for the learning project designed by the school which involved travel to Hampi, reading age-appropriate relevant literature, co-creating learning through arts-based projects, and more.**





## 7. EXHIBITION: Poster Exhibition on Cultivating Soul-values – Courage, Faith and Concentration

**Dates: September 24-October 24, 2024**

- Venue: Creative School, Freedom Land, Karnataka
- The department curated a **30-poster exhibition on the theme – Cultivating Soul-values: Courage, Faith and Concentration** as part of an intensive workshop for students.
- For each of the selected soul-values, relevant quotes were selected by Dr. Beloo Mehra from the works of Sri Aurobindo, the Mother, and Swami Vivekananda.
- Additional explanatory text was written by Dr. Beloo Mehra.
- Pictures that express the essence of the idea and ideal presented in the quotes were carefully selected to design the posters. An appealing and inspiring design was finalized to put together the final exhibition.
- **The posters were displayed at two different locations at Creative School campus for one month.**
- **A total of about 250 students and 50 teachers went through the exhibition.**
- During the last week of September, students participating in the Invoking Shakti workshop were divided into 6 groups (about 35-40 in each group) and were given ample time to go through the posters and note down some key points or quotes they found most interesting.
- The BhāratShakti facilitators team engaged the students in follow-up discussion activity. During this time students were encouraged to share what they found inspiring and intriguing in the exhibition posters, and also ask questions regarding anything they read for which they needed further elaboration or explanation.
- The facilitators also shared some interesting anecdotes or stories to illustrate a few ideas included in some of the posters. This interactive approach helped deepen students' understanding.
- **Over the month-long duration, the students visited the exhibition several times to deepen their learning.**







## **8. NATIONAL WORKSHOP: Educational Vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother**

**Date: July 24, 2024**

- Part of BhāratShakti's project theme - Education for New India
- An interactive session with a group of educational leaders from CN Vidyavihar Group of Institutions, Ahmedabad was organised by the BhāratShakti team on 24th July, at Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry.
- The session was conceived of as a preliminary orientation on the Educational Vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, with a special focus on discussing the challenges involved in translating the ideal vision in mainstream educational institutions.
- Six educational leaders holding the positions of Directors and Principals led by Mr. Yogesh Thanki participated in this session with Dr. Beloo Mehra and Mr. Narendra Murty.
- The following key topics were discussed:
  - Some key challenges in our educational system where learning by rote is encouraged and original thinking is discouraged.
  - Significance of original thinking for students' individual and society's collective development
  - Students as well as teachers are too much burdened by the pressure of completing the curriculum leaving no room for an all-round integral development of the personality.
  - There's hardly any scope to instil cultural values going outside the curriculum.
  - The need for the psychic development for the overall flowering of the personality.
  - Some key aspects the Integral Educational vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.
  - It was also emphasised that for the true development of the students, the teachers themselves have to undergo a process of transformation and make an example of their own lives to inspire the students.







## India, Our Mother

### 9. ONLINE COURSE - Symbolism in Sanatana Dharma (12-week course)

**Dates: June 1 – August 17, 2024**

- **A total of 25 participants registered for the course.**
- Part of BharatShakti's initiative under the project theme - India, Our Mother
- The course was facilitated by Mr. Narendra Murty, and Dr. Beloo Mehra.
- Online classes were held every Saturday from 9:00 AM to 10.30 AM.
- **On each day of the class, introduction and the initial presentation were made in the first 35-40 minutes and thereafter the remaining time was devoted to answering questions from the participants through lively interactions.**

- Each session was concluded with a devotional musical rendering by one of the participants.
- Following topics were covered in the course:
  - The Language of Symbolism
  - Nataraja – The Cosmic Dancer
  - Vishnu – The Seshasayi
  - The Significance of Pilgrimage
  - Symbolism in the Ramayana
  - The Inner Meaning of Samudra Manthan
  - The Human Chariot in the Kathopanishad
  - Om in the Mandukya Upanishad
  - Sri Aurobindo’s Interpretation of the Rig Veda
  - Ila, Saraswati and Sarama
  - Agni – The Lord of the Sacrifice
- **Through this rich diversity of topics, the course touched upon several aspects related to symbolism from the Puranas, Upanishads and the Rig Veda.**
- The course content and pedagogical approach were highly appreciated by the participants. Samples of the participants’ feedback are included here:
  - The simplicity and avoidance of heavy philosophy were much appreciated. The course was designed keeping in mind that most of the participants are ignorant, yet curious about the Sanatana Dharma. The fact that even the simple rituals and symbols depicted in our ancestral scripts are representations of deeper and everlasting truths was most intriguing.
  - I loved the inner meaning that exists behind the symbols.
  - Please conduct more sessions which can connect both spiritual knowledge and Indian history.
  - I highly appreciated the vast knowledge of the facilitators and imparting them in a simple and beautiful way so that we can understand it. All the discussions were very enriching for me.





## 10. INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM: The Veda and the Vedic Spirit

**Date: August 18, 2024**

1. Part of BhāratShakti's initiative under the project theme - India, Our Mother
2. Organized jointly with Sri Aurobindo Kapali Shastri Institute of Vedic Culture (SAKSHI), Bengaluru, AuroChit, USA, and La Grace Sri Aurobindo Integral Life Center, USA
3. **More than 80 participants from various parts of India, USA and Europe joined the 2.5-hour-long online symposium.**
4. The programme included **two keynote speeches, a brief Vedic chanting session and a panel discussion.** The keynote speakers included:

1) Dr. Vladimir Yatsenko, Director, Institute for Applied Research in Integral Studies at La Grace, Sri Aurobindo Integral Life Center, USA. He holds a master's degree in Linguistics, Sanskrit Language and Literature, and a PhD in Indian Philosophy

2) Dr. Alok Pandey, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. An authority on the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother and with an MD in Psychiatry, Dr Pandey has conducted numerous workshops in India and abroad on yoga, education, health and psychology. He has also authored many books and is also the editor of the All India Magazine of Sri Aurobindo Society.

- **The symposium began with a welcome address and introductory remarks by Dr Beloo Mehra.** She highlighted Sri Aurobindo's words that the living energy of a great spiritual conception has been the very principle of existence for India, which has also been the perpetual force for her constant renewal and persistence as an immortal nation. She added that the moment we think of this core foundation of Indian culture, a word that immediately comes to mind is Veda, and that it was Sri Aurobindo who has truly recovered for the humanity the Vedic knowledge and experience in all its splendour, depth and fullness. She

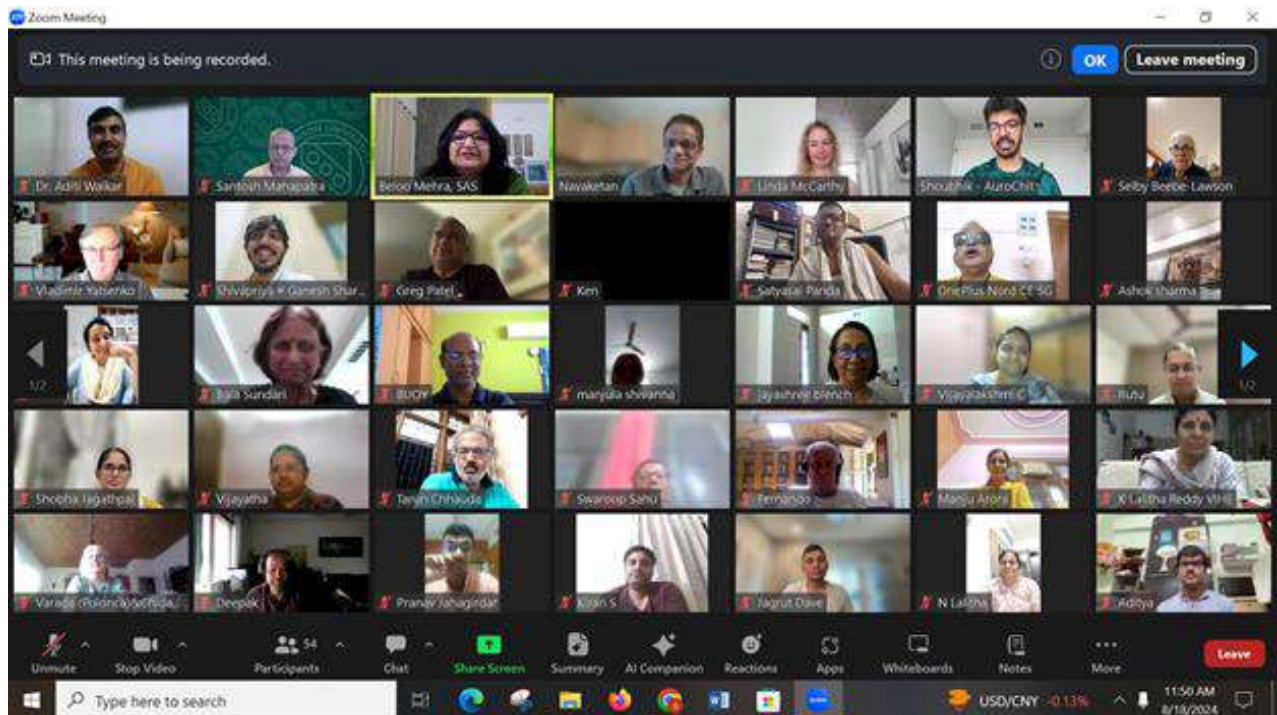


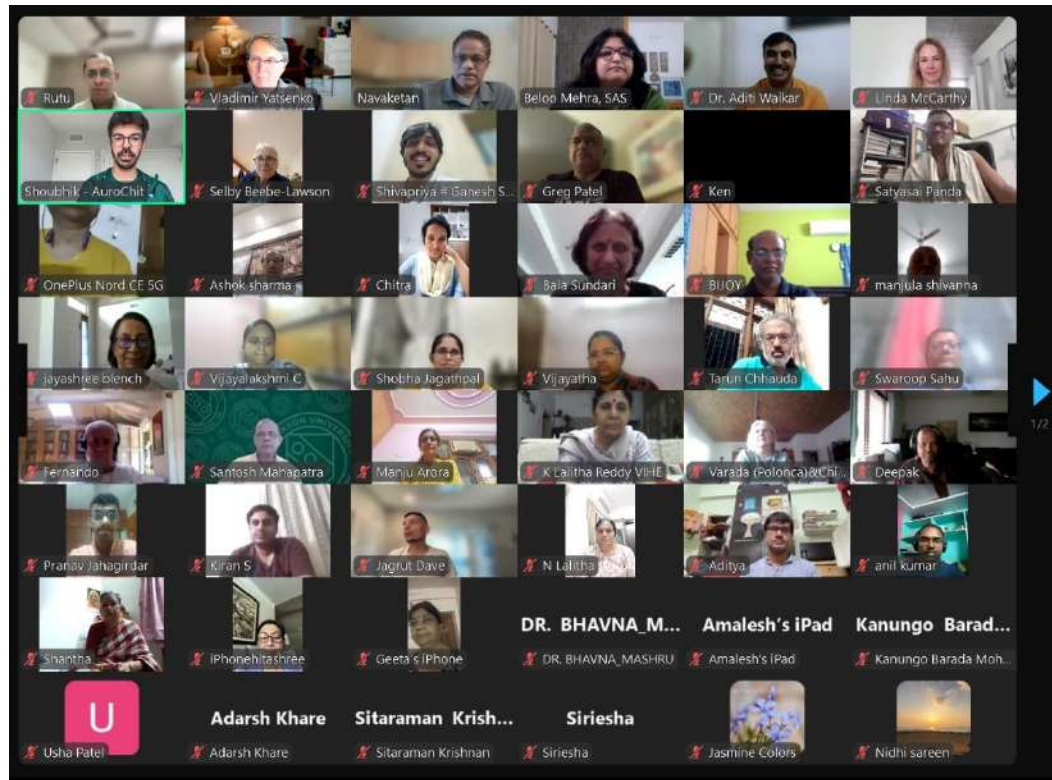
then gave a brief outline of the topics that were going to be taken up during the symposium.

- Dr. Vladimir Yatsenko, who spoke on the subject of the *Vedic Vision in the Light of Sri Aurobindo*. Dr. Yatsenko explained the principle of seven planes of consciousness as per the Vedic cosmology and highlighted the correspondence with Sri Aurobindo's terminology. He spoke about the seven sons of Aditi and how they symbolize the planes of consciousness, including Surya who represents the hidden Sun – hidden in darkness which has to be found by the Vedic rishi. He also briefly described how the later terminologies and ideas which we find in the Vedantic texts as well as Bhagavad Gita find their origin in the Veda. And Sri Aurobindo helps us find that key to understand these deeper connections and continuity of the Vedic tradition.
- Dr Alok Pandey spoke about "*The Powers that are Vedic Devas*". The main thrust of his argument was that the various Vedic gods or devas were essentially cosmic powers. He briefly recalled the story of Creation as the Mother told a few times and through its explanation emphasised that these gods have a real existence and we should not make the mistake of thinking that they are imaginary beings. He also spoke about the hierarchy of the gods which is corresponding to the hierarchy of the planes of consciousness, but each god has a specific assigned function in the cosmos and helps maintain a cosmic order. He briefly summarised the psychological-spiritual functions of some of the Vedic gods such as Varuna, Indra, Agni, Maruts, Ashwins, and gave a few examples of the working of these powers. Both the sessions were followed by some live interaction with the participants who raised some questions.
- These sessions were followed by a meditative experience of Vedic Mantra Chanting by Mr. Ganesh Sharma. Mr. Sharma teaches the chanting of Veda mantras under SAKSHI's Veda Surabhi Program and is also the founder of Nitantara Yoga Shaalaa where he teaches Yoga-sadhana. At the symposium he chanted Ganesha Suktam (Rg Veda, Mandala 8, Suktam 81), Shraddha Suktam (Rg Veda, Mandala 10, Suktam 151), and Medha Suktam (Krishna Yajur Veda).

- This beautiful experience was followed by a panel discussion on the topic – “What is meant by the Recovery of the Vedic Spirit and why is it relevant for the future of humanity?”. The discussion was moderated by Dr. Nagendra N. from SAKSHI, who is a medical doctor and a Vedic scholar. The panelists included: Dr. R V Jahagirdar, Managing Trustee of Sri Aurobindo Kapali Sastry Institute of Vedic Culture (SAKSHI), Bangalore, directing research in the Vedas, publication of books, planning and conducting workshops on the Vedas etc., and Dr. Yogesh Waikar who is the author of 2-volume book, Yoga Mudra which is a collection of short self-revelatory review and notes on Veda Samhita, Brahmana, Aranyaka, Mimamsa and Upanishads.
- The closing remarks were made by Mr. Navaketan Mohanty from AuroChit, USA. He thanked all the participants and speakers and reiterated the significance of studying Vedic insights in the light of Sri Aurobindo.

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## 11. NATIONAL WEBINAR: Durga, the Divine Mother – An Online Celebration

**Date: October 5, 2024**

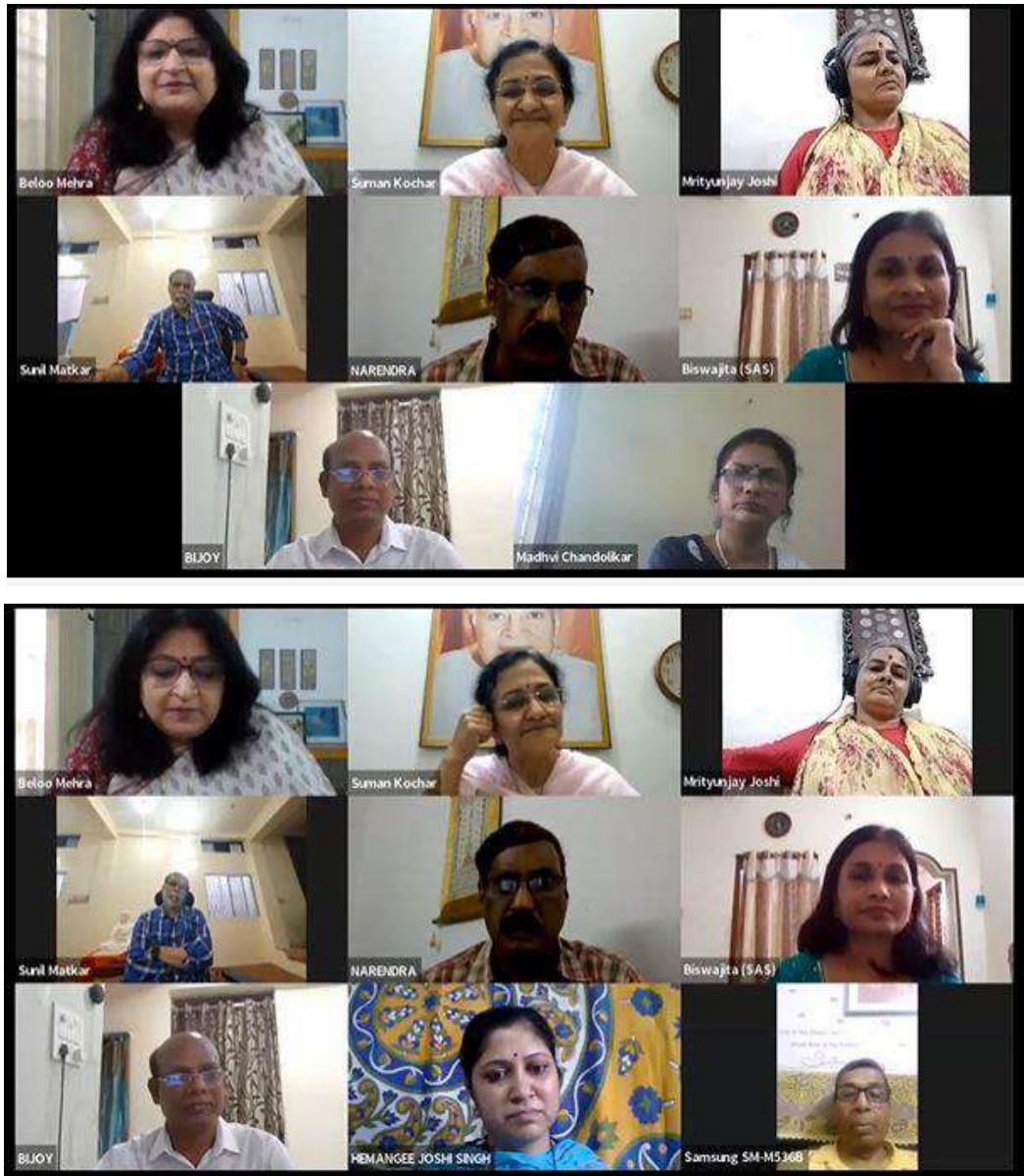
- Part of BhāratShakti's initiative under the theme 'India-Our Mother'
- To celebrate the auspicious occasion of Durga Puja, a day celebrated in Sri Aurobindo Ashram as victory day, a victory of the truth over falsehood.
- **The 2.5-hour-long webinar was attended by about 35 participants.**
- The programme included four talks and a musical offering.
  - Ms. Lakshmijyothi C. spoke on the topic - "The Significance of Durga's Incarnation".
  - Dr. Charan Singh Kedarkhandi spoke on the topic - "The Mother of Might in Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*".
  - Dr. Beloo Mehra spoke on the topic - "Durga, the Devi of India".
  - Mr. Narendra Murty spoke on the topic - Selected Symbolism in *Devi Mahatmya*".
- The four insightful talks were followed by a musical offering from Ms. Biswajita Mahapatra who presented a nice devotional song invoking Mother Durga and Her Power and Grace.

## 12. NATIONAL WEBINAR: Devi Ahilyabai Holkar and Bhāratīya Resurgence

**Date: June 22, 2024**

- Part of BhāratShakti's initiative under the theme 'Reawakening the Bharata Shakti'.
- **Webinar in Hindi organised to commemorate the 300<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Devi Ahilyabai Holkar** (31 May, 1725 – 13 August, 1795), in collaboration with the Indore branch of Sri Aurobindo Society.

- The programme included **inspiring and informative talks**. To celebrate the legacy of this highly inspirational figure of Indian history – one whose untiring works have left an indelible mark on the resurgence and rejuvenation of the Bhāratiya spirit and force –distinguished speakers and performers were invited.
  - **Dr. Suman Kochar**, chairperson of Sri Aurobindo Society, Indore; her work focuses on Ayurveda, Naturopathy and involvement in Women Empowerment through various projects on the ground, including counselling in the field of pre-natal education.
  - **Ms. Sharvaani**, a heritage enthusiast from Indore, educator of Indian culture and history, and an expert in Malwa region history
  - **Mr. Sunil Ganesh Matkar**, a long-time researcher of Holkar legacy and president of Ahilya Natak Mandal, Indore
  - **Ms. Madhavi Chandollikar**, an award-winning vocalist who has performed across MP and India and music educator, Indore
- **About 40 participants from various parts of the country attended the 2.5 hour-long webinar.**
- In her opening remarks, Dr. Beloo Mehra spoke about **Sri Aurobindo's writings on Indian polity and ethos of India** especially as enumerated in his book '*The Renaissance in India and Other Essays in Indian Culture*'. She specifically mentioned about Sri Aurobindo's focus on *Brahmatej* and *Kshatratej* as embodied in our Rishis, sages followed by kings and brave-hearts of this land. She reminded everyone that in the Indian tradition, the role of kings and queens as executors and protectors of Dharma has been highly emphasised, and Sri Aurobindo speaks about that in emphatic manner in his essays on Indian polity.



### 13. NATIONAL WEBINAR: Shiva - the Lord of Tapas

**Date: March 10, 2025**

- Part of BhāratShakti's initiative - India, Our Mother
- A webinar in Hindi was organised by BhāratShakti on the theme of **Shiva, The Lord of Tapas** on March 10, 2025 to celebrate the holy occasion of Mahashivaratri. The

programme involved a talk by Dr. Charan Singh Kedarkhandi and a musical offering by Ms. Biswajita Mohapatra.

- **About 25 people joined the webinar** which opened with an introductory address by Dr. Beloo Mehra who highlighted that according to Sri Aurobindo, Shiva represents the dimension of Tapas. She also presented a short video featuring “Shiva” a sonnet written by Sri Aurobindo.
- **The invited speaker, Dr. Charan Singh Kedarkhandi is a poet, thinker, spiritual seeker and a student of the Indian knowledge tradition.** He lives and works in Jyotirmath, Uttarakhand. **Widely respected as an authority on Sri Aurobindo’s poetry, yoga and philosophy,** Dr. Kedarkhandi writes and speaks about the spiritual vision of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. He is the **founder member of Sri Aurobindo Study Centre, Jyotirmath (Uttarakhand)** and also edits the centre’s annual bilingual magazine Anukampa, the Grace Divine.

#### **14. INVITED LECTURE: The Cultural and Political Legacy of The Vijayanagara Empire**

**Date: March 13, 2025**

- Venue: Ashram Exhibition House, Pondicherry
- Part of BhāratShakti’s initiative - India, Our Mother
- As a part of the 17-day-long Exhibition on “Hampi – A Photographic Journey Tracing the Aesthetics of Perseverance and Valour”, BhāratShakti department organised a Lecture-discussion by Dr. Nanda Kishore M S, Head of the Department of Politics & International Studies and Chair of Sri Aurobindo Studies, Pondicherry University.
- **About 40 participants attended the lecture**, which included members of the Ashram community interested in Indian history, art and culture as well as several students from Sri Aurobindo International Center of Education (SAICE) and Pondicherry University.
- In his presentation, Dr. Nanda Kishore highlighted that the academic disciplines of Politics and International Relations cannot be properly understood unless one



knows History. To really know ourselves, it's important that we know our history and what kind of legacy that the past has left behind for us. He made the point how the great empires that were established had a spiritual guide – as in the case of the Hoysala empire, it was the great Ramanuja while in the case of the Vijayanagara Empire, it was Vidyaranya who inspired Harihara and Bukka, the two founders of the empire.

- The speaker emphasised that we must appreciate both sides of the great contributions of the Vijayanagara empire -- as the political seat of power and as the cultural centre.
- Dr. Nanda Kishor's lecture which used an engaging storytelling approach and synthesised several cultural, historical and political aspects connected with Vijayanagara Empire was appreciated by all participants. An engaging question-answer followed the lecture where some of the students and the members of the audience participated with lot of enthusiasm.



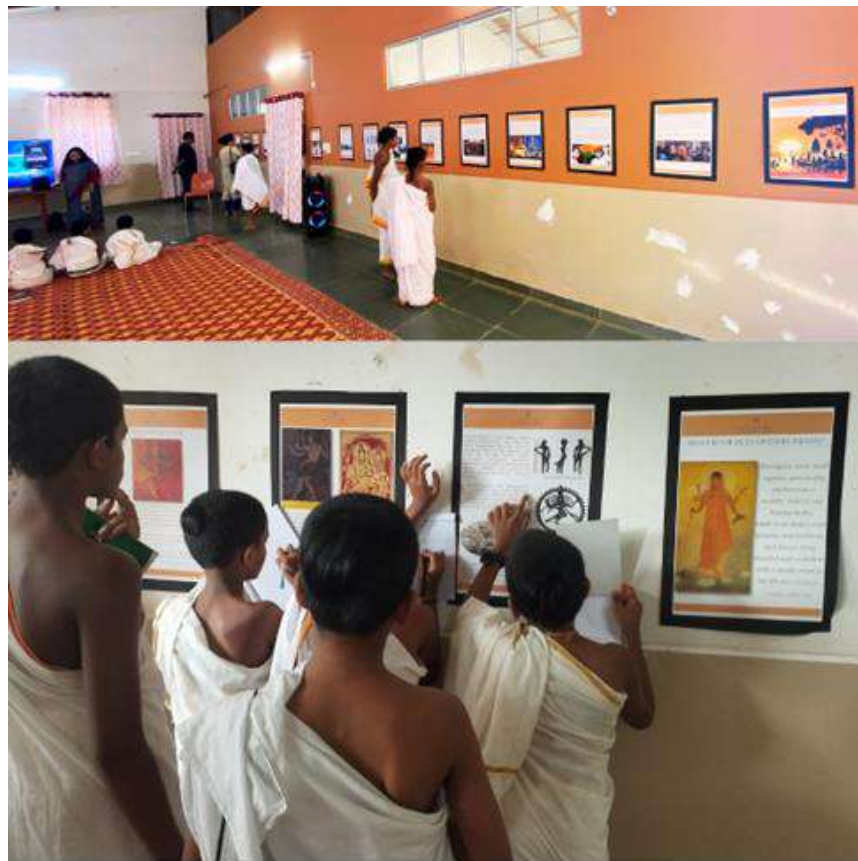


## 15. EXHIBITION: Poster Exhibition – The Greatness of Indian Culture

**Dates: December 27-31, 2024**

- **Venue:** Om Shanti Dhama Gurukulam, Karnataka
- Part of BhāratShakti's initiative under the theme - India, Our Mother.
- BhāratShakti department researched and curated a 20-poster exhibition on the theme – 'The Greatness of Indian Culture' for students and teachers of the Gurukulam.
- **About 150 people** went through the exhibition over the duration of 5 days.
- On the opening day of the exhibition, a total of **70 students** (ages 12-17) were divided into two groups, and were given time to go through the posters and discuss with the facilitators any questions they had about the content displayed in the posters.

- The posters briefly covered several key aspects of Indian culture:
  - Physical Education in Ancient India
  - Aspiration for Strength
  - Temple Heritage of India
  - Temple as the Body of God
  - Indian Sculpture and Painting
  - Rich Variety of Art in India
  - Music for the Divine
  - Dance for the Divine
  - The Future Belongs to the Young
  - Duty of Every Indian











## Art and Spirituality

### 16. EXHIBITION: Hampi – A Photographic Journey: Tracing the Aesthetics of Perseverance and Valour

**Dates: March 6-23, 2025**

- Part of BhāratShakti’s initiative ‘Art and Spirituality’ and as part of the year-long research project ‘Spirit and Forms of Indian Art’
- Venue: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Exhibition House, Pondicherry
- A 17-day-long photography exhibition on the theme: “**HAMPI – A Photographic Journey: Tracing the Aesthetics of Perseverance and Valour**” was organised at the invitation of the Exhibition House of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry.

- The exhibition **curated with a specific intention to integrate Indian History, Art and Culture** was inaugurated on 6th March, 2025 and continued up to 23rd March, 2025.
- The exhibition showcased the story of **magnificence of Hampi, a UNESCO World Heritage Site**, as a highly prosperous city during the peak of Vijayanagara empire, its architectural and sculptural riches, its connection with stories from the Ramayana and much more.
- **All the 150+ photographs** selected for the Exhibition were procured from a BhāratShakti volunteer resource person. **The textual panels accompanying the photographs were curated by Dr. Beloo Mehra from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, in addition to her own descriptions of some of the details of the temples and the architecture, as well as history of Hampi as the capital of Vijayanagara empire.**
- Dr. Beloo Mehra worked closely with the curator at the Ashram Exhibition House to make final selections of the photographs – a process that went over several months – and create a narrative flow to integrate different historical, artistic, architectural and cultural facets.
- As part of the Exhibition, BhāratShakti department also organized a **lecture-discussion event on 13th March at the venue**. Dr. Nanda Kishore MS, Head of the Department of Politics & International Studies and Chair of Sri Aurobindo Studies, Pondicherry University was the speaker on the topic **‘The Cultural and Political Legacy of Vijayanagara Empire’**.
- Over the exhibition duration, **more than 600 people attended the exhibition including several groups of students from the Ashram School (SAICE), Pondicherry University, and also a large number of visitors from Ashram and Auroville**. This effort was highly appreciated by all the visitors.
- **Some comments recorded by visitors in the Visitors’ Book:**
  - Long, detailed photography exhibition. Almost a visual gallery of Hampi itself. One almost doesn’t need to step down there.
  - It is one of the best exhibitions on Indian sculpture that I have seen. It would be nice to see it in Auroville.

- The exhibition gives a clear idea about Hampi. Anybody who wants to visit Hampi must visit the exhibition first to have a perfect idea about the place. Great applause to the photographer and the idea behind it.
- Thanks a lot for the wonderful work. Have always wanted to visit Hampi. Your amazing work of art has instilled in me a burning desire to see this historic place as soon as possible. Ever grateful for this exhibition and the beautiful narrations next to each picture.
- An in-depth presentation of Hampi, very nicely placed with historical snippets.
- A must-see exhibition, especially for the youngsters to know and preserve our Indian heritage.
- First of all, hearty congratulations to the photographer for showcasing his magnificent work of art through his mighty and skillful lens captured at Hampi – the grand old capital of Vijayanagar empire – the old dynasty famous for its grandeur and beauty in varied fields. These photos have given us an opportunity to see the Truth of Sri Aurobindo's famous revelation: Matter shall reveal the spirit's face. You have brought out that "face" through your lens for the people at large.
- I was deeply drawn towards every picture which was on the wall. Very magical and powerful vibrations and I got connected to every image. Beautiful and calmed my whole being within, inside. I just fell in love with every single picture.

















## 17. WORKSHOP & GUEST LECTURE: Sangeet Sandhya: Lecture-demonstration on Hindustani Classical Music

**Date: 25 March, 2025**

- Venue: Sri Aurobindo Society
- Part of BhāratShakti's initiative under the theme - Art and Spirituality and as part of the year-long research project 'Spirit and Forms of Indian Art'
- Smt. Deepshikha Reddy was invited to coordinate the programme with other artists from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Music Section.
- **A brief history of the evolution of Hindustani classical music** was shared with appropriate demonstrations throughout the lecture-demonstration programme.
- **More than 55 people attended the 1 hour and 45 minutes long lecture-demonstration programme.**
- Attendees were mesmerized to experience the richness and wide spectrum of Indian classical music and wished there was more time to explore other forms which could not be presented due to shortage of time.









## 18. INVITED CONVERSATION: Art for *Chittashuddhi*, Purification of the Heart

**Date: December 14, 2024**

- Venue: Sri Aurobindo Society
- Part of BhāratShakti's project theme 'Art and Spirituality' and organised as part of the year-long exploration - The Spirit and Forms of Indian Art.
- BhāratShakti department invited Ms. Jayashree Ashok and Ms. Cynthia Gonzales for a conversation on the topic – **Art for Chittashuddhi, Purification of the Heart**.
- **The topic was inspired by Sri Aurobindo's essay titled '*National Value of Art*'.**
- The session highlighted how art and creative expression can be used for refining the vital as well as facilitating healing and growth in an educational context.
- The conversation focused around a few key questions:



- What inspired the leadership at Creative School to design their curriculum in way which uses Arts and Creative Expression as one of its central foundations?
- What kind of arts-based modalities and approaches are primarily incorporated at Creative School? And how do children of different age groups respond to these approaches?
- What have been some of the key observations, experiences, and outcomes over the years regarding the impact of such arts-based pedagogical approaches?
- What role does arts-based therapeutical and healing approaches play in creating a sense of overall well-being of the learners and teachers?
- Starting with these central questions, the conversation flowed into several other important dimensions such as how arts-based practices can also address different kinds of emotional traumas or struggles which so many youngsters these days face. The role of school in helping teachers work on their own emotional wellness through arts was also discussed.
- **Ms. Jayashree Ashok is Co-founder and Director of Creative School and Prajña Living Wisdom Centre at Bengaluru.** She has extensive experience in the area of education, working on the ground and researching alternative educational approaches. Sacred Parenting and Sacred Classroom Life and Living are some of the frameworks she has developed at Creative School which are completely inspired by the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. She is widely trained and certified in several healing modalities and has been facilitating healing through private sessions and workshops for almost two decades.
- **Ms. Cynthia Gonzales** brings decades of experience in transpersonal counseling and healing work through arts based approaches which incorporate breathwork, mind-body work, Kundalini Yoga and many other modalities. She has worked with people across cultures and in highly diverse settings. She has been practicing meditation since her teens and is a lifelong seeker of that higher truth which animates all existence and life. She has a long experience of facilitating healing work for

individuals, couples, groups in various contexts. Ms. Gonzales has a Master's of Science in Consciousness, Spirituality and Transpersonal Psychology, UK, and has also done post-graduate studies in Transpersonal Counseling at CIIS, USA. She is the founder of Creative Response Therapy™ and has certification in various healing modalities.





## 19. INVITED CONVERSATION: Exploring Human Psychology through NāṭyaŚāstra

**Date: December 4, 2024**

- Part of BhāratShakti's initiative under the theme 'Art and Spirituality' and 'Spirit and Forms of Indian Art'.



- A conversation with **Dr. Mala Kapadia** to explore the **connection between Indian arts, particularly performing arts and human psychology in the light of the eternal Indian knowledge tradition.**
- Exploring a text like Nāṭyaśāstra (Natyashāstra) – one of the core treatises on Indian aesthetics – from a psychological perspective was the focus of this session.
- Hosting such detailed insightful conversations is part of our ongoing projects under which we invite experts working in various domains of activity – individuals who in their own chosen fields have been working to **integrate the eternal spirit of Indian civilisation and culture and in essence giving new forms through to this sanatana spirit through their works** – to share insights on selected topics related to their field of work. Under this project, 16 sessions have already been conducted featuring conversations with authors, educators, artists, storytellers, thinkers, experts and others, on a wide range of topics concerning India’s past, present and future.
- **Dr. Mala Kapadia brings a very rich and diverse academic and professional background. She is presently working as Director, Center for Indigenous Knowledge Systems at Anaadi Foundation. She is also member of the Advisory Council of Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems at Chanakya University, Bengaluru, India.**
- In the session with Dr. Mala Kapadia, we explored why Natyashastra as *pancham Veda* is said to be the Veda for modern age.; what Natyashastra says about the role of arts, particularly performing arts, in helping an individual become more self-aware and conscious, both from an artist’s perspective as well as the *rasika*’s perspective; what kind of insights we find in Natyashastra and Indian aesthetic tradition in general from the point of view of deepening our emotional intelligence or emotional well-being.

# All Life is Yoga

## 20. TWO-DAY RESIDENTIAL RETREAT – “Yoga in Everyday Life”

**Dates: 27-29 December, 2024**

- Part of BhāratShakti initiative under the theme ‘All Life is Yoga’
- **Venue:** Sri Aurobindo Dhama, at the banks of Kaveri River in Sangama-Mekedatu, Karnataka
- **About 40 participants attended the 2-day retreat.**
- The retreat programme included chanting, Savitri readings, presentations, discussions, creative activities, reflective exercises and open interactions.
- The following topics were explored in the light of Sri Aurobindo’s and the Mother’s vision of an integral development and transformation of human life and living:
  - Integral Yoga and Life
  - Yogic Approach to Work
  - Dealing with Change at Workplace
  - What is This Thing Called Love?
  - Human Relations and Self-growth
  - Right Attitude towards Money
  - Humour in Spiritual Journey
  - The Money Force
- The entire period was spent in a joyful spirit of learning and communing with nature.
- **Sample feedback from the participants:**
  - I appreciated learning about the right value and place of money when trying to practice sadhana, and also about the right attitude toward human relationships.
  - All the topics concerning Love, Relationships, Attitude towards life and work were very helpful.

- The idea of integral surrender for Divine's work and becoming the perfect instrument for Divine's work was strengthened in me.
- Appreciated learning about how Integral yoga can be integrated into life.
- Learned how one can dedicate one's work to The Mother.
- It was helpful for me to rethink from a spiritual perspective my mental ideas and formulation about money.
- Doing sadhana through assertion of One and negation of Materialism

















Reflective Exercise







## 21. NATIONAL WEBINAR: Sri Aurobindo, the Seer-poet

**Date: December 7, 2024**

1. Part of BhāratShakti's initiative under the theme 'Art and Spirituality' and 'Spirit and Forms of Indian Art'.

2. The programme included three talks and interaction with the participants. The speakers included
  - Shri Pradeep Narang, Chairman, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry.
  - Dr. Shaurya Brahmhatt from The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda.
  - Dr. Larry Seidlitz from Savitri Bhavan, Auroville.
  - The webinar was moderated by Dr. Beloo Mehra.
3. **More than 35 people joined online for the programme which lasted for about 2.5 hours.**
4. **The webinar was also livestreamed at Sri Arvind Sadhana Kendra at Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat where about 15 more people joined the programme.**
5. Through some deep contemplation on Sri Aurobindo's poetic work, his yogic artistry, the webinar explored *The Yogic Way of the Indian Artist* to help deepen our shared understanding of how in India all artistic and creative pursuit, indeed all knowledge traditions themselves, are essentially and intimately connected with the discipline of yoga – a going within and a seeing within.
6. **The significance of a seer-poet's vision, inspiration, intuition and revelation were explored through some examples from the poetic works of Sri Aurobindo.**

## **22. EXHIBITION: Sri Aurobindo on Yoga – Poster-Exhibition at International Yoga Festival, Puducherry Date: January 4-7, 2025**

- Venue: 30th International Yoga Festival, Old Port Premises, Puducherry
- Part of BhāratShakti's initiative - All Life is Yoga.
- At the invitation of Pondicherry Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), BhāratShakti Director, **Dr. Beloo Mehra curated a 15-poster exhibition on the theme – Sri Aurobindo on Yoga – to be displayed at the 30th International Yoga Festival organized by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of Puducherry.**

- **Puducherry Lieutenant Governor Shri K. Kailashnathan inaugurated the festival in the presence of Chief Minister Shri N. Rangasamy on January 4, 2025** at Convention Centre, Old Port Premises, Puducherry.
- The BhāratShakti exhibition was put up before the official inauguration at which Shri Pradeep Narang, Chairman of Sri Aurobindo Society was honoured in the presence of the high officials of Puducherry Government.
- The exhibition included selected quotes from Sri Aurobindo which briefly describe what is unique about Integral Yoga, and how it is different from the old Yogas.
- The quotes were selected so that the key idea can be presented simply and unambiguously. Sri Aurobindo, in his vast correspondence and talks, has many such references where he has explained abstract philosophical concepts in highly clear and simple expressions. Some of those were also scanned for finding appropriate quotes.
- The exhibition opened with the quote – “Spirituality is indeed the master-key of the Indian mind; the sense of the infinite is native to it.” And it ended with the quote – “We believe that it is to make the yoga the ideal of human life that India rises today; by the yoga she will get the strength to realise her freedom, unity and greatness, by the yoga she will keep the strength to preserve it.”
- **Dr. Beloo Mehra was felicitated at the valedictory programme on 7th January, the final day of the festival by Shri. K. Lakshminarayanan, Minister of Tourism, in the presence of Shri R. Selvam, the Speaker of Puducherry Assembly.**

## **23. EXHIBITION: Poster Exhibition – Sri Aurobindo is as Vast as the Universe (displayed at Sri Aurobindo Sadhana Kendra, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat)**

**Date: August 5-25, 2025**

- A poster exhibition was curated at the invitation of Dr. Rajeshwari Singh, President of Sri Aurobindo Sadhana Kendra, Vallabh Vidyanagar in Gujarat.

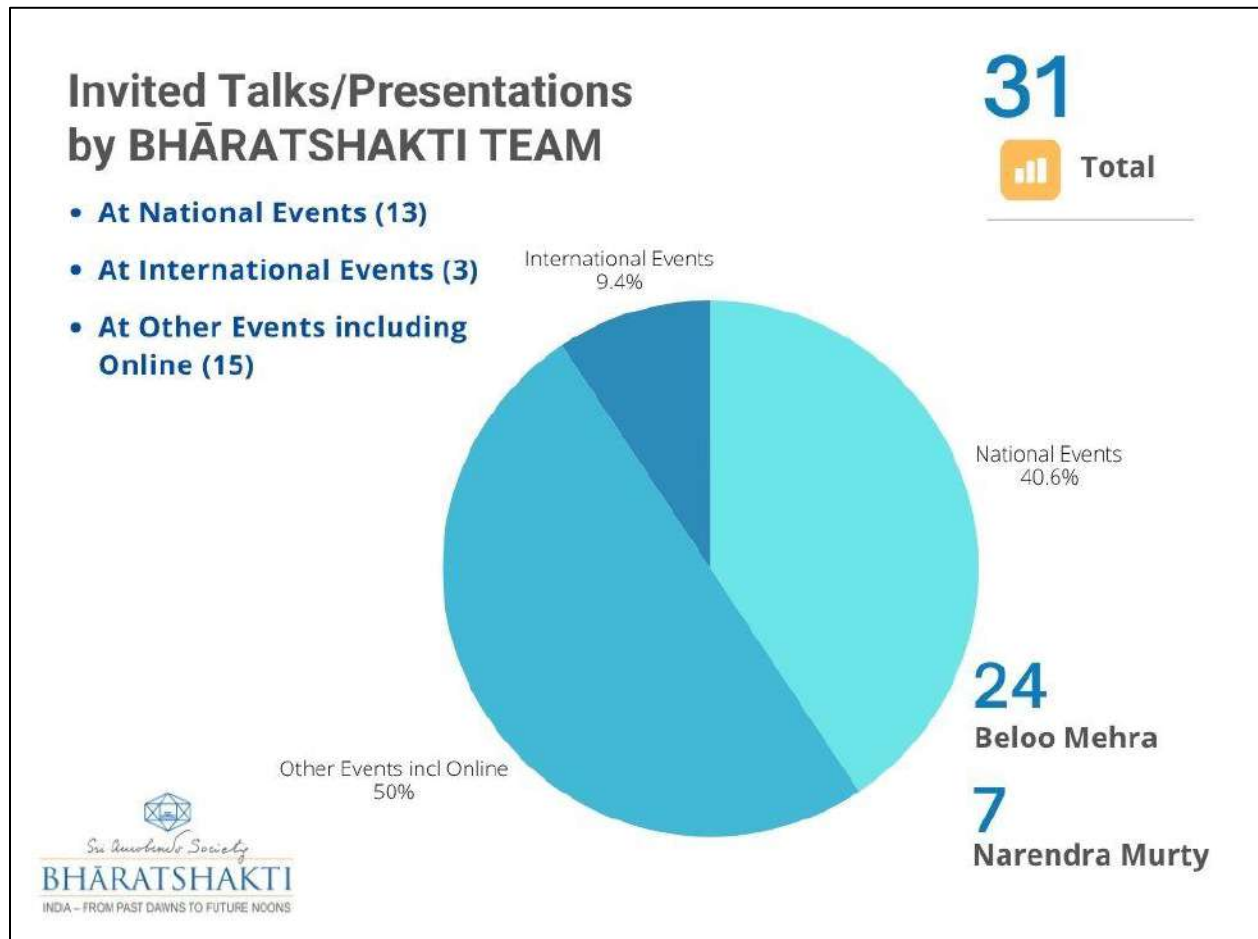


- Significant quotes illustrating the significance of Yogic work of Sri Aurobindo along with several beautiful photographs were selected for the 15-poster exhibition. The theme of the exhibition is – “Sri Aurobindo is as Vast as the Universe.”
- The inspiration for the exhibition came from the Mother’s words – “Who can understand Sri Aurobindo? He is as vast as the universe and his teaching is limitless...The only way to come a little close to him is to love him sincerely and give oneself unreservedly to his work.” With this in mind, rest of the selection of relevant quotes highlighting the stupendous Yogic work of Sri Aurobindo happened smoothly.
- **About 150+ people went through the exhibition while it was on display.**

## **Eminent Speakers Invited for Talks and Webinars**

- Dr. Alok Pandey
- Dr. Vladimir Yatsenko
- Dr. Charan Singh Kedarkhandi – 2 talks
- Dr. Shaurya Brahmbhatt
- Dr. Larry Seidlitz
- Dr. Mala Kapadia
- Ms. Deepshikha Reddy
- Ms. Jayashree Ashok
- Ms. Cynthia Gonzales
- Dr. Suman Kochar
- Ms. Sharvaani
- Mr. Sunil Ganesh Matkar
- Ms. Madhavi Chandolika

## MAJOR PROJECT III: DELIVERING TALKS AND LECTURES (n = 31)



## TALKS BY DR. BELOO MEHRA (TOTAL = 24)

### Invited Talks at International Events

#### 1. **Rethinking Communications beyond Polarities – Talk by Dr. Beloo Mehra at International Conference**

**Date: April 8, 2024**

Organiser: Department of Electronic Media and Mass Communications, School of Media and Communications, Pondicherry University in association with University of Toulon, France, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway, Multimedia University, Malaysia, International Centre for Strategy & Communication, Auroville, Integral World, Auroville, AWARE, Auroville.

On April 8, 2024, Dr. Beloo Mehra was invited to deliver a talk at the Inauguration ceremony of an **International Conference on ‘Future Communications: Rethinking Societies, Cultures and Governance’ organized by the Department of Electronic Media and Mass Communications, School of Media and Communications, Pondicherry University.** The other partners of the conference included: University of Toulon – France, Oslo Metropolitan University – Norway, Multimedia University – Malaysia, International Centre for Strategy & Communication – Auroville, Integral World – Auroville, AWARE – Auroville, Educational Multimedia Research Centre Puducherry, Ananda Rangapillai Library and Directorate of Distance Education, Pondicherry University.

In her speech Dr. Mehra highlighted that in this age of transition as we move beyond the age of reason to an age of greater subjectivism, communications – both as an academic discipline and field of practice – will play an important role. She pointed



out the significance of some key insights we can gain from the vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother when it comes to effective communication that seeks to harmonize and takes one beyond the rigid polarities of thought and thought-process. Dr. Mehra focused on three key lines of inquiry, giving brief hints on each.



**2. Art and Poetry with Insights from Sri Aurobindo - Talk by Beloo Mehra at International Poetry Festival**

**Date: March 3, 2025**

**Organiser: Pondicherry/Auroville Poetry Festival**

On March 3, Pondicherry Poets and The Brown Critique, the founders-organisers of Pondicherry/Auroville Poetry Festival, invited Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti, to deliver a talk at the eighth edition of the Poetry Festival, which was held from 1 to 3 March 2025. This was the international edition of the festival as the poet-attendees from several SAARC countries participated in the festival.

Dr. Mehra highlighted that in India all artistic and creative pursuit, indeed all knowledge traditions themselves, are essentially and intimately connected with the discipline of yoga – a going within and a seeing within. Ever since the Veda, we have had an ideal of “the sacred poet, a mind visited by some highest light and its forms of idea and word, a seer and hearer of the Truth, *kavayaḥ satyaśrutaḥ*”, writes Sri Aurobindo. A poet-seer not only reveals to man his present or reinterprets for him his past, but can also point him to his future and in all three reveals to him the face of the Eternal. She then went on to elaborate on the essential point about the poetic vision through some samples of Sri Aurobindo’s own poetry. She read out Divine Sight, Divine Hearing, Self and some lines from Reflections of Srinath Paul, Raj Bahadoor, on the Present Discontents (The Address of a Perspiring Chairman Rendered Faithfully into the Ordinary English Vernacular) to illustrate the varied ways in which the ‘seeing’ by the seer-poet has been expressed regardless of the content of the poem.

Dr. Mehra also spoke briefly on how Sri Aurobindo speaks of Beauty in two aspects – Essential Beauty and the Form that it takes. He explains that a *rasika* who seeks Beauty is essentially seeking the Eternal Beauty, but through the form. When contemplating on a work of art, the question to reflect upon is whether the artist or the poet has been able to transcribe the eternal beauty in the specific form? On that depends the *rasik*’s reception. Also, what is also important to explore is how sensitive is the *rasik* himself or herself? Is he or she seeking beauty or merely a vital pleasure? She also highlighted Sri Aurobindo’s seminal essay ‘National Value of Art’ to bring to light that in the mahayogi’s vision of humanity’s future, art, poetry, and a healthy aesthetic appreciation play an important role in the integral human development.







### 3. Humility and Power – A Panel Discussion in Auroville

**Date: February 22, 2025**

**Organiser: Auroville Foundation, Auroville and AWARE, Auroville**

As part of the week-long celebration of the Mother's Birthday, the **annual Auroville Festival of 2025** focused on the theme – Humility and its integration with Four Aspects of the Mother. On February 22, the specific theme of Humility and Power (Mahakali aspect of the Divine Mother) was taken up. Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti, was invited to be a part of a panel discussion which aimed to explore the deeper connection between these two values.

Dr. Mehra shared a few thoughts about how we can understand the deeper meaning of Humility when we look at some of the incidents from Sri Aurobindo's life as reported by some of his disciples. She shared a couple of observations made by senior sadhaks in this regard. She also spoke of how Humility and Power or

Courage/Valour were not considered contradictory values in Indian tradition, rather they were considered as complementary and essential qualities to be cultivated as part of the Aryan character. She shared an example from Valmiki Ramayan in this regard.

In response to a few comments and observations made by other panelists with regard to how we can explore the connection between Humility and Power when it comes to women's realities and lived experiences, including women in leadership roles, Dr. Mehra elaborated that it is important we look at our tradition with a deeper understanding of our cultural history. She said that all the examples that are casually thrown in the feminist discourse surrounding Sati-Sita-Savitri syndrome need to be re-examined thoroughly because in truth all these three women from Indian cultural tradition made strong choices, and did so independently. She gave specific examples for each of these women from scriptures and also from Sri Aurobindo's works and translations.



## Special Honour: Fortieth Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture at Jadavpur University

### 4. Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture at Jadavpur University, delivered by Dr. Beloo Mehra, Topic - Sri Aurobindo's Vision for a True National Education

**Date: January 28, 2025**

**Organiser: The Centre for Sri Aurobindo Studies, Department of  
Philosophy, Jadavpur University**

The Centre for Sri Aurobindo Studies, Department of Philosophy, Jadavpur University – an institution whose roots go back to Bengal National College of which Sri Aurobindo was the founder-principal – organizes Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture every year to commemorate this legacy. **Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti, Sri Aurobindo Society, was invited to deliver the 40th Sri Aurobindo Memorial lecture on 28th January, 2025. Dr. Mehra's lecture was titled, "Sri Aurobindo's Vision for a True National Education."** The Annual Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture has been instituted from an endowment made by Late Samar Basu of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry.

In her brief exploration of Sri Aurobindo's vision for National Education, Dr. Mehra pointed out that one important insight we get when reading his writings and speeches on this topic concerns the very idea of nation itself. She pointed the audience's attention to a speech given in Maharashtra on 15 January 1908, in which Sri Aurobindo spoke of the deeper Indian view of nation and explained how we can understand the three bodies of the nation in the same way that we understand the three bodies of an individual – gross, subtle and causal. He spoke of the living soul or spirit of the nation, when he said, "A nation is a living entity, full of consciousness; it is not something made up or fabricated. A living nation is always growing; it must grow, it must attain ever loftier heights." Sri Aurobindo then said that it was this wider and deeper vision of



nation that was kept in front when National Education was conceived in Bengal. This view became the basis for all curricular and pedagogical reform and innovation.

Dr. Mehra also explored another fundamental question – are there some essentials we must keep in front as we envision an education for India’s future? She reminded that according to Sri Aurobindo, our education will be truly national in spirit when it is “proper to the Indian soul and need and temperament and culture that we are in quest of, not indeed something faithful merely to the past, but to the developing soul of India, to her future need, to the greatness of her coming self-creation, to her eternal spirit.”

An education rooted in the deeper aim of ‘knowing oneself and controlling oneself’ is absolutely indispensable for a true Indian resurgence, said Dr. Mehra, illustrating her point with insights from Sri Aurobindo. Only when the youth truly know who they are as individuals, in the complexity of their being, can they become more conscious of their choices and decisions in life. Only then can they become not only responsible and creative citizens of their country but also more conscious and well-balanced individuals walking on the path of a conscious evolution of the human race. Sri Aurobindo reminds us that at the very minimum, a true national education must aim at the building of the powers of the human mind and spirit, and “the evoking of knowledge and will and of the power to use knowledge, character, culture.”





## Invited Talks at National Seminars and Other Events

### 5. **Sri Aurobindo's Insights on National Education and NEP 2020: Hits and Misses - Talk by Dr. Beloo Mehra**

**Date: February 28, 2025**

Organiser: School of International Studies, Central University of Gujarat, and the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Public Research and International Studies, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda.

Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti, was invited as an expert speaker at a **National Seminar on *Ideas of India's Eminent Educational Thinkers and Transformative Learning through NEP2020***, jointly organized by the School of International Studies, Central University of Gujarat, and the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Public Research and International Studies, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda.

Dr. Mehra in her talk titled 'Sri Aurobindo's Insights on National Education and NEP2020: Hits and Misses' focused her analysis on the relevance of the educational ideas and perspectives of Sri Aurobindo in the light of NEP2020. She highlighted the point that many aspects of NEP 2020 seem to reflect well the vision of Integral Education as given by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, especially when we read the policy's emphasis on holistic education, greater decentralization in decision-making, institutional autonomy, greater curricular choice, rethinking student assessment, revitalizing teacher education etc. But a deeper and critical look at NEP 2020 in the light of some fundamentals of Integral Education also reveals several areas where major gaps exist – both in terms of application, and more significantly in acknowledging some of the fundamentals of Integral Education.









Dr. Mehra brought the audience's attention to two specific points – the ideal of holistic education and the role of teacher preparation in order to highlight where NEP2020 falls short. With regard to the first, she explained that the NEP clearly aspires to rethink curriculum and pedagogy in a way which will facilitate an individual to cultivate his mental, intellectual, ethical, dynamic and practical, aesthetic parts, his vital and physical being – something we find emphasised strongly in Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's educational vision. But emphasising development of these various parts of the being merely for their development sake and without recognising the need for integrating these parts around the central truth of the being will fail to recognise an important purpose of all good education, namely to facilitate an inner harmony in the being.

She emphasised that a truly national education for India, one which is national in spirit as per the vision of Sri Aurobindo, must recognise the truth that the inmost self, a portion of the universal Divinity, is the essential truth of an individual being. Recognising that this divine portion within expresses itself through the outer instruments of mind, life-energy, and body, all efforts to provide appropriate care, growth and development of a child's outer instruments – body, life and mind –

undergo a radical shift in their purpose and orientation. This shift brings a deeper dimension and a greater sacredness to the whole enterprise of education making it truly aligned with the Indian spirit. Education thus also begins to facilitate a deeper sense of harmony in the individual.

## 6. Sri Aurobindo and True Fulfilment of Sanatana Dharma

**Date: January 25, 2025**

**Organiser: Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir, Kolkata**

Dr. Beloo Mehra was invited by Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir to deliver a talk on January 25, 2025. Inaugurated on 15 August, 1941 at the same location, Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir was the first public institute of its kind outside Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, entirely devoted to the study, practice and dissemination of Sri Aurobindo's and The Mother's ideals and teachings. **About 40 people attended the talk.**

Dr. Mehra began her talk quoting two lines from Sri Aurobindo's epic poem, *Savitri*.  
*Heaven in its rapture dreams of perfect earth,*  
*Earth in its sorrow dreams of perfect heaven. (Savitri, Book XI, p. 684)*

Building upon the truth expressed in these lines, Dr. Mehra elaborated that one of the most significant truths revealed by Sri Aurobindo concerns the essential impulse working from behind the human civilisation's progressive march toward its ultimate destiny. That destiny is to transform earthly life into a divine life, to bring down the kingdom of God on earth, to establish the true Ram-rajya, the true reign of dharma. All these are different conceptions given to the same aspiration hidden deep in the heart of humanity – that of perfecting Life and World.

She added that this aspiration is there in human heart because, as Sri Aurobindo tells us, it is in truth a Will of the Divine, to make the earth a heaven. But she emphasized that Sri Aurobindo not merely spoke of this declaration of the Divine Will, his was a God's Labour to bring down that highest consciousness which will make this



transformation of earthly life into a life divine possible! Building on the Vedic Cosmology, Sri Aurobindo has given us an integrally dynamic vision of existence, an existence which is a progressive unfolding or manifestation of the Divine Truth. Dr. Mehra elaborated that the world as it is at present is not the divine creation it is meant to be, but rather an obscure and perverted expression of it. It is not yet the expression of the divine consciousness and will, but that is what it is meant to become, Sri Aurobindo reminds us. It has been created to develop into a perfect manifestation of the Divine under all His forms and aspects—Light and Knowledge, Power, Love and Beauty.

This perfect manifestation will happen only when Supramental consciousness becomes the organizing principle on earth. This is the link-world between the two hemispheres of the Vedic vision – the lower manifestation of matter, life and mind, and the upper hemisphere of Sat-Chit-Ananda. Dr. Mehra said that the tremendous yogic work of Sri Aurobindo, the Avatar of the Future can be seen as bringing forth the next destined future march of the Sanatana Dharma. To expand on this she recounted several relevant passages from Sri Aurobindo's own writings.





## 7. Integral Education and a Teacher's Dharma

**Date: January 27, 2025**

**Organiser: Sri Aurobindo Society, West Bengal State Committee and Sri Bhavan, Kolkata**

Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti was invited by Sri Aurobindo Society, West Bengal State Committee to speak on the topic – “Integral Education and a Teacher's Dharma”. This event was held at Sri Aurobindo Bhavan, Kolkata. **About 40 people including several teachers and educationists attended the talk.** Dr. Dilip Kumar Roy, retired professor of Philosophy from Presidency College, Kolkata and recipient of Sri Aurobindo Puraskar by Sri Aurobindo Samiti, Kolkata & the Governor of West Bengal, gave the opening keynote address in which he briefly summarised Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's vision of Integral Education and its significance for the future evolution of humanity. This was followed by a brief introduction of Dr. Mehra given by Shri Subrata Sen.

In her talk Dr. Mehra highlighted that a truly Integral approach to education must ensure that the various instruments of the soul – body, life and mind – are well prepared and trained and developed to their highest potential, and that students are prepared to pursue an inner life or a life of self-discovery and self-transformation along with engaging in all aspects of a worldly life after completing their formal education. If we truly want this to be the goal of education, then the role and influence of a teacher cannot be underestimated. She said that in this information age where one just has to make a few clicks on the keyboard or on phone, or just give command to ChatGPT, the need of the hour is a rebirth of the teacher. This implies that a teacher must rediscover his or her dharma as a facilitator for integral progress of the learner.

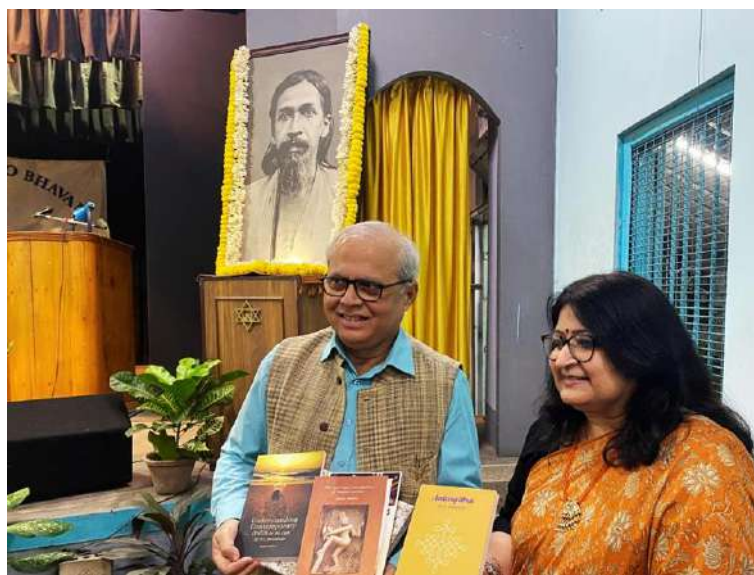
Dr. Mehra also spoke briefly about the Vedic vision of a guru, and further added that in India we have also recognized that a teacher can be working at various levels – depending on his/her own inner level of development and growth of consciousness



as well as preparation. She connected this with Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's insight that an educator's true role is that of a gentle facilitator who tries to create an ideal atmosphere where the learners can discover, with proper impetus, the knowledge that lies hidden within them through gradual unfolding and development of various faculties. For this, it is important that they are fully aware of the complexity of a human being, so that they can be more conscious of their dharma to help the learners grow and develop to their full potential. Dr. Mehra reminded that one of the most basic goals in the Integral education is to attend to the inner needs of every individual student. The education imparted should not be impersonal and group-oriented. It has to be sensitive to the total personality of each individual child.







## 8. Aim of Integral Education

## 9. Role of a Teacher

**Date: December 18, 2024**

Organiser: GIET Degree College, Rajmundhry, Andhra Pradesh in association with Sri Aurobindo's Action, Puducherry

Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti, was invited to deliver two talks at an educational workshop **organized by GIET Degree College, Rajmundhry in association with Sri Aurobindo's Action, Puducherry. The workshop titled “Integral Education for Teachers”** was held on 18th December 2024 at GIET Degree College in Rajmundhry. **More than 30 college teachers and staff attended the workshop.**

In the first talk titled “Aim of Integral Education”, Dr. Mehra highlighted the connection between Education and Life and through several examples and anecdotes reminded the participants how our mainstream education for the most part has been almost exclusively concerned with money, success and social benefits.

Since this was the participants' first exposure to Integral Education, Dr. Mehra kept her remarks simple to understand and gently introduced the idea of why it is essential to look at education as a conscious means of self-development, and what true self-development means for a deeper fulfilment in life. She also introduced them to the concept of psychic education through examples and exercises. Dr. Mehra highlighted a few of the psychic qualities which all educators must consciously cultivate. The second session built upon the first one and focused on the topic – Role of a Teacher. This was an activity-based session and was conducted in a fun manner with some slow rhythmic movements and music built into the session. Participants were asked to reflect on simple quotes that were placed on specially designed bookmarks.

## 10. Decolonizing Indian Cultural Studies with Sri Aurobindo

**Date: September 13, 2024**

Organiser: Tagore Government Arts and Science College, Pondicherry in collaboration with the Department of English, Sree Saraswathy Thyagaraja College, Pollachi

Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti was invited to deliver a talk on the topic – **Decolonizing Indian Cultural Studies with Sri Aurobindo**. This program was organized by the Department of English, Tagore Government Arts and Science College, Pondicherry in collaboration with the Department of English, Sree Saraswathy Thyagaraja College, Pollachi under the title - Understanding India: Its Art and Culture.

The lecture was attended by a group of **60 students and faculty members from the two colleges. The talk was also livestreamed for other students at Pollachi who could not travel to Pondicherry.**

Using plenty of relatable examples Dr. Mehra elaborated upon the need for decolonizing our thought-structures, our mental frameworks and also our conceptual understanding of several basic ideas that form our view of Indian culture. She took up the very words, nation and culture, and using Sri Aurobindo's view explained how we arrive at a more India-centric understanding of these concepts. She illustrated the definition of culture given by Sri Aurobindo with concrete examples.









## 11. Upanishadic Stories for Self-development

**Date: July 13, 2024**

**Organiser: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Delhi Branch, YES Talks**

Dr. Beloo Mehra was invited to deliver an online talk as part of the weekly YES Talks. YES – Yoga, Education and Spirituality – is an initiative started by Dr. Ramesh Bijlani of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch, based on the idea – Yoga is education. Education is incomplete without spirituality. Spirituality in practice is yoga.

In her talk, Dr. Mehra highlighted a few words of the Mother which emphasize that stories can be great vehicles to convey not only these inner dimensions of a culture but also the profound mysteries of existence. From times immemorial, India has been a land of storytellers. Our sages and seers have conveyed the profoundest truths of existence and life through the medium of stories. For the purposes of her talk, Dr. Mehra narrowed down to four specific stories – one from Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, two from Chandogya Upanishad and one from Kena Upanishad.

After a brief introduction to the significance of Upanishadic literature, Dr. Mehra told the stories one by one. She narrated the stories using more contemporary expression so as to make them more living and relevant for present times. After each story, she briefly described the deeper meaning of these stories by highlighting the symbolism of the characters involved in the story, as well as the context, circumstance and event. Emphasis was given on how these stories help us draw meaningful lessons regarding the qualities or values we must cultivate within as aspirants.

## **12. Panelist at National Conference on “Yoga for Women Empowerment”**

**Date: June 13, 2024**

**Organiser: Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth in collaboration with Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India.**

Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti was invited as a panelist for the **National Conference on “Yoga for Women Empowerment” organized by School of Yoga Therapy, Institute of Salutogenesis & Complementary Medicine of Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth in collaboration with Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India.**

Broadening the definition of Yoga and emphasizing its true deeper meaning rather than merely Yogasana or Pranayama, Dr. Mehra felt it was important to bring in a key idea from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother regarding why one should enter the path of Yoga. She shared that it is not for any kind of power or tangible or intangible gain but for the sake of Divine that one takes up Yoga, in the right sense of the word.

Dr. Mehra emphasized an important point the Mother made once that the problem of feminism, like all other problems of the world, is essentially a spiritual problem. Expanding on this, she added that from the perspective of Integral Yoga empowerment could mean a woman being awakened to her potential capabilities and developing a



will to work toward a multi-faceted perfection of various parts of her being – physical, vital and mental – and preparing herself for a higher and deeper path of self-realization, finding her inner truth, her true personality and individuality. When asked to share a few specific points regarding some of the ways Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's works and vision help further the ideal of women empowerment, Dr. Mehra shared that one of the most significant works of Sri Aurobindo, – among many other equally significant works – has to do with the Mother element, which he invoked in three specific and highly momentous ways. Dr. Mehra also spoke briefly about the four aspects or powers of the Mother – Wisdom, Strength, Harmony and Perfection – that Sri Aurobindo has discussed and talked how they can be used as a meaningful way to understand women empowerment. Because a large number of the audience present were students from various institutions, Dr. Mehra presented her perspective through simple-to-understand expressions and examples.







## Other Invited Talks Delivered by Dr. Beloo Mehra

### 13. Makings of a Truly Learner-centric Education: Sri Aurobindo and Maria Montessori

**Date: May 3, 2024**

Organiser: Sri Aurobindo Center for Advanced Research, Pondicherry  
with support from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India

Dr. Beloo Mehra was invited to be part of a research project titled **Sri Aurobindo: A Visionary Among World Thinkers**, launched by Sri Aurobindo Center for Advanced Research with support and sponsorship by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Under this project she was invited for a 75-minute-long conversation with the project director, Dr. Ananda Reddy, based on her extensive research into the work of Maria Montessori in the light of Sri Aurobindo's and Mother's vision of Integral Education.

Delving deep into a comparative analysis of the educational philosophies of Sri Aurobindo and Maria Montessori **Dr. Mehra wrote a 35-page paper titled, “Makings of a Truly Learner-centric Education: Sri Aurobindo and Maria Montessori”, which has been published in a book.** [See the section on Publications]

During the conversation, the focus remained on seeking for the commonalities or parallels between the two visions of education, with an objective to weave them together into one whole pattern. This helps identify how one vision actually finds greater clarity when seen in the light of the other, bringing out a greater harmony between them, even though these two visions were emerging independently in two different corners of the world.



#### **14. “To make Yoga the ideal of human life India rises today”**

**Date: June 21, 2024**

**Organiser: AuroYajna, Sri Aurobindo Society**

Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti, was invited by AuroYajna, Sri Aurobindo Society to deliver an online talk as part of the AuroYajna’s celebration of the International Yoga Day 2024. The larger theme for IDY celebration was Yoga and Indian Culture.

In her talk titled, “To make Yoga the ideal of human life India rises today” Dr. Mehra highlighted selected insights from Sri Aurobindo to bring home the point that Yoga is as ancient as Veda from the point of view of Indian spiritual tradition. She shared a few thoughts on how Sri Aurobindo emphasized Yoga’s connection with Life for perfecting the life of individual and society. She gave a few examples from Sri Aurobindo’s life and work to illustrate this.

Dr. Mehra illustrated a few key points about Vedic yagna and its connection with Yoga. Taking some points from the Vedic writings of Sri Aurobindo, she built upon the idea how the Yoga in the Vedic sense is a battle between devas and daityas. She then connected this thought with another important passage from Sri Aurobindo which emphasises that the problems which have troubled mankind can only be solved by “conquering the kingdom within, not by harnessing the forces of Nature to the service of comfort and luxury, but by mastering the forces of the intellect and the spirit, by vindicating the freedom of man within as well as without and by conquering from within external Nature”.

#### **15. Divine Protection – Conditional or Unconditional?**

**Date: November 21, 2024**

**Organiser: Women’s Council, Sri Aurobindo Society**

As part of the Sri Aurobindo Society’s annual seminar of the Women’s Council, Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti was invited to deliver a talk on the topic – Divine Protection: Conditional or Unconditional? To explore this question, she



selected a few key quotes from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother to highlight that as children of the Mother we must rise in consciousness and become true *adhikāris* of the constant protection of the Mother. Dr. Mehra shared some key insights from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on what conditions we must meet if we want to stay within the circle of protection of the Divine. She highlighted how Sri Aurobindo has explained that it is because of our own wrong movements and desires we go out of the Divine protection. She also emphasized on the point that the simplest way to make the protection effective is by remembering and calling the Mother.

Dr. Mehra illustrated the key points of her talk through some stories and anecdotes. This made the session more alive and relatable for the audience. She also brought in insights from Indian cultural traditions as she explained a few quotes from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.









## 16. Love and Human Relationships - A Session for Youth

**Date: January 11, 2025**

**Organiser: AuroYouth, Sri Aurobindo Society**

As part of the Annual All India Youth Camp 2025 organised by AuroYouth, Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti, was invited to conduct an interactive session with the participants. The 1.5-hour-long session on January 11, 2025 focused on the topic 'Love and Human Relationships'.

The purpose of this session was to highlight that significance of examining the nature of human love and relationships using a deeper psycho-spiritual view of human nature, given to us by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother who had not only explored the depths of human nature but had also raised themselves to the highest heights of consciousness. Dr. Mehra opened her session by reading selected lines from Sri Aurobindo's epic mantric poem, Savitri. These lines were selected to highlight on one side the eternal and divine basis of Love as a Force, and on the other the human deformations that enter into Love which make all human ties fragile and temporary. Dr. Mehra briefly explained the context in which these lines appear in the poem.

She then briefly recounted the Mother's description of the story of creation which explains the descent of Love as a Force of the Supreme which hides itself deep down in the Inconscient. This story, she explained, highlights how Love is at the very foundation of entire manifestation and what we human experience as individual love is an expression of this universal force which is looking to manifest in an instrument that is open and receptive. Some relevant quotes from Sri Aurobindo's and Mother's writings were also shared to stimulate some reflections and discussions. A couple of short clips from some popular films were shown to emphasise that no human experience is insignificant in Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's integral view of life and existence. And that is why we can find relevant insights on almost all aspects of life in their writings and teachings.

Based on the questions raised by the participants, Dr. Mehra also brought in relevant examples and stories from Indian cultural traditions, which throw some deeper insights on love and human relationships. She also focused on the Mother's discussion on the various rungs of love, and highlighted how through our experiences in life and in our relations with others we slowly work our way up through the different rungs of love.







## 17. Austerity of Speech

**Date: February 19, 2025**

**Organiser: AuroYajna, Sri Aurobindo Society**

As part of the celebration of the 147th birthday of the Mother, AuroYajna department of Sri Aurobindo Society conducted a special session on the afternoon of February 19, 2025. They invited Dr. Beloo Mehra from BhāratShakti to share a few insights on the topic ‘Austerity of Speech’ incorporating the important insights given by the Mother on this.

Dr. Mehra began the session with a disclaimer that she would be sharing her understanding of this topic based on the Mother’s essay titled *Four Austerities and Four Liberations* with a full awareness that she too like everyone else present in the *satsang* has to sincerely work towards the kind of austerity the Mother wants us to practice. And that working on this session has been an important reminder for her, and in this spirit she wants to share a few thoughts. Dr. Mehra summarized briefly how the austerity of speech is part of the mental austerity or Tapasya of

knowledge which is discussed by the Mother. She also highlighted the deeper meaning of austerity as a means for transformation, and in that regard it is not about the complete abandonment of speech but control of speech which is we must practice.

Dr. Mehra then went into the way the Mother defines Idle Talk and the various kinds of idle talk that we must avoid. Starting from the physical domain to the spiritual domain there is a lot of useless or unnecessary talk in which we all engage. It is important that we must become conscious of that and gradually develop greater control over this tendency. Special emphasis was given on the kind of talk we engage in when speaking about others. Dr. Mehra highlighted the specific advice Mother gives in this regard – “In all cases and as a general rule, the less one speaks of others, even to praise them, the better” (CWM 12: 59). Highlighting the significance of austerity of speech in intellectual domain, Dr. Mehra brought the participants’ attention to two important insights from the Mother – 1) “Every idea contains a little of the truth or one aspect of the truth. But no idea is absolutely true in itself” and 2) “Certain ideas are capable of transforming the world. They are the ones that ought to be expressed.” Dr. Mehra then reminded the participants how the Mother cautions about idle talk on spiritual matters, which she says is most dangerous. She concluded her presentation with a brief discussion of the work we must do upon ourselves so that our speech gradually acquires the power of truth.

## **Interactive Sessions Facilitated by Dr. Beloo Mehra for Uditam Institute for Integral Healing (Total = 7)**

### **18. The Divine Spark Within**

Date: March 22, 2025

### **19. Psychic Education: Practical Guidance from the Mother**

Date: March 8, 2025

## **20. Love and Relationships**

Date: February 15, 2025

## **21. Inner Progress and Education for Life**

Date: February 8, 2025

## **22. The Psychic Spark and Our Inner Progress**

Date: January 11, 2025

## **23. Psychic, the Divine Spark**

Date: December 21, 2024

## **24. From Love Human to Love Divine**

Date: September 7, 2024











## TALKS BY NARENDRA MURTY (TOTAL = 7)

### Invited Talks at National Events

#### 1. Seven Steps to Integral Leadership

**Date: April 24, 2024**

**Organiser: Jindal Global Business School, Sonipat**

On April 24, 2024, Mr Narendra Murty, Research Associate, [BhāratShakti](#) was invited as a Guest Lecturer by Jindal Global Business School, a specialised institution of O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat. Mr. Murty gave a presentation on “Seven Steps to Integral Leadership” to the first-year students pursuing the Bachelor of Business Administration course. The event was coordinated by Dr. Richa Kapoor Mehra, Associate Professor, Jindal Global Business School.

He covered various aspects of Integral Leadership such as Vision, Mission, the role of Character, Transformative Leadership, and Emotional Intelligence. He used the examples of some of the great leaders from history focusing on their unique characteristics and what made them great leaders. Mr. Murty further highlighted the reasons for the downfall of Napoleon and Hitler – though they may qualify as great leaders. He also gave examples of visionary leaders from the business world whose work went way beyond the profit motive. He also touched upon the vision and work of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo.

#### 2. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

**Date: September 5, 2024**

**Organiser: Jindal Global Business School, Sonipat**



On the occasion of Teacher's Day, September 5, 2024, Mr. Narendra Murty, Research Associate, [BhāratShakti](#), was invited as a Guest Lecturer by the Jindal Global Business School, a specialized institution of O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat. He gave a presentation on the topic "The 6 Thinking Hats Approach to Critical Thinking and Problem Solving" to the first-year students pursuing the Bachelor of Business Administration course. The event was coordinated by Dr Richa Kapoor Mehra, Associate Professor, Jindal Global Business School.

In his presentation, Mr. Murty covered various modes of critical thinking like the Rational/Logical, Emotional/Vital, Pessimism and Optimism, Creativity and finally assimilation and putting everything into perspective by putting it all together. He used real life examples and events which demonstrate the kind of problems that crop up at a later stage impacting the society in an adverse way when critical thinking is not applied at the conceptual stage. He ended his presentation with a quote of Sri Aurobindo about the need for the power of thought for achieving victory in every field of life.

### **3. GURU or NO GURU**

**Date: October 5, 2024**

**Organiser: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch**

On October 5, 2024, Mr. Narendra Murty, Research Associate, BhāratShakti was invited to deliver an online talk as part of the weekly YES Talks. YES – Yoga, Education and Spirituality – is an initiative started by Dr. Ramesh Bijlani of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch, based on the idea – "Yoga is education. Education is incomplete without spirituality. Spirituality in practice is yoga."

Mr. Narendra Murty spoke on the topic – Guru or No Guru? He began his presentation saying that many spiritual seekers are confused by the question. Especially because in the history of the world there have been great Masters who had

gurus. Vivekananda, Sankaracharya, Kabir and Yogananda fall in this category. At the other end there also have been Masters who apparently did not have a Guru in the sense we understand the term – like Jesus, Buddha, Ramana Maharshi and Sri Aurobindo. So Guru or No Guru – that was the essential question.

The final conclusion that was drawn was if the disciple has Shraddha and a burning passion for knowledge and truth then the Divine would ensure that guidance is bestowed on such a disciple. That being a true disciple is more important than the question Guru or No Guru.

#### **4. The Four Qualifications of a Seeker**

**Date: December 14, 2024**

**Organiser: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch**

On 14th December, 2024, Narendra Murty, Research Associate, BhāratShakti was invited to deliver an online talk as part of the weekly YES Talks. YES – Yoga, Education and Spirituality – is an initiative started by Dr. Ramesh Bijlani of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch, based on the idea – Yoga is education. Education is incomplete without spirituality. Spirituality in practice is yoga.

Narendra Murty spoke on the theme “The 4 Qualifications of a Seeker” from the *Vivekachudamani* of Adi Sankara. Starting with Sankara’s mention of the three blessings that only human beings enjoy and the description of the Four Qualifications of a spiritual seeker as enumerated in Verses 18 to 30 of the *Vivekachudamani*, Narendra Murty, went on to show in what way Sankara’s Four Qualifications connects to and differs from Sri Aurobindo’s Four Aids as laid down in *The Synthesis of Yoga*. He drew the conclusion that Sankara’s Four Qualifications give a micro view of what is required of a spiritual aspirant. Whereas Sri Aurobindo’s Four Aids not only includes Sankara’s Four Qualifications but also goes beyond that by encompassing other aspects of Sadhana like

*Shastra, Guru and Kala – which in Narendra’s view, is a macro view of what makes sadhana possible.*

## **5. Human Aspiration and Divine Grace**

**Date: February 23, 2025**

**Organiser: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch**

On 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2025, Mr. Narendra Murty, Research Associate, BhāratShakti was invited to deliver an online talk as part of the weekly YES Talks. YES – Yoga, Education and Spirituality – is an initiative started by Dr. Ramesh Bijlani of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch, based on the idea – Yoga is education. Education is incomplete without spirituality. Spirituality in practice is yoga.

Mr. Murty spoke on the theme of Human Aspiration and Divine Grace based on some lines selected from Sri Aurobindo’s epic poem, Savitri. In his book *The Mother*, Sri Aurobindo talks about the two great powers that crown all spiritual endeavour: HUMAN ASPIRATION and in response to that DIVINE GRACE. Mr. Murty spoke on this theme explaining the two concepts based on the definitions given by Sri Aurobindo in *Letters on Yoga, Vol II* along with stories and anecdotes and most importantly with the lines of ‘Savitri’, Sri Aurobindo’s spiritual masterpiece.

## **6. The Fundamentals of ZEN**

**Date: February 22, 2025**

**Organiser: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch**

On February, 22, 2025, Mr. Narendra Murty, Research Associate, BhāratShakti, was invited to deliver a talk to a group of about 30 devotees from Argentina as a part of the Birthday Celebrations of the Mother at Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch. The subject of the talk was “*The Fundamentals of Zen*” which was based on Mr. Murty’s



book *An Oak Tree in the Garden – Exploring the World of Zen* which won 3 Best Book Awards including one International Award.

In his presentation, Mr. Murty presented some fundamental concepts of Zen like n meditation and realizing one's own Buddha-nature. That the human ego is a false construction and present moment awareness being a central pillar. Also Zen is anti-intellect and strictly against intellectual probing and seeking. And against the acquisition of knowledge which is not relevant to the essential practice of realization of Buddha-nature.

## **7. The Inner Meaning of Samudra Manthan**

**Date: February 23, 2025**

**Organiser: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2025, Mr. Narendra Murty, Research Associate, BhāratShakti was invited to deliver a talk at the Sunday Satsang held in the Meditation Hall of the Delhi Branch of Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The subject of the talk was “*The Inner Meaning of Samudra Manthan*”.

Narendra took up the story of Samudra Manthan which occurs both in the Bhagavat Purana and the Vishnu Purana. After a short narration of the story, the inner meaning of each of the symbols and metaphors like Devas and Asuras, the quest for *Amrita*, Mandara mountain, the role of Vasuki, the significance of Kurma Avatar and the role of Shiva who drinks up the deadly poison Halahal and the emergence of different wondrous objects including Lakshmi – the goddess of Wealth and finally the emergence of the Amrita Kumbha – all these aspects were decoded and the inner meaning of the whole process was described. Mr. Murty described Samudra Manthan as a process of inner churning or Atma Vichara.

## SECTION 2: RESEARCH AT BHĀRATSHAKTI

### LIST OF RESEARCH PROJECTS

SL. No	Title of the Research	Stage of Research
		Completed
		Ongoing
		Proposal Stage/Conceptual Stage
1.	“Streams of Sadhana: An Exploration of Selected Aspects of Spiritual Practice in Integral Yoga”	COMPLETED Started in September 2023 Concluded in August 2024
2.	“The Spirit and Forms of Indian Art”	ONGOING as of March 2025 Started in September 2024
3.	Sri Aurobindo, the Avatar	COMPLETED - Two-month project - July-August 2024

# **COMPLETED RESEARCH TOPIC I: Streams of Sadhana: An Exploration of Selected Aspects of Spiritual Practice in Integral Yoga**

## **RESEARCHER NAME:**

**Lead Researcher:** Dr. Beloo Mehra (Editor, *Renaissance* Journal and Director, BhāratShakti)

**Co-Researcher:** Narendra Murty

## **GENRE(S) OF RESEARCH:**

Text-based, Qualitative, Action-Research

## **DURATION:**

12 months (August 2023-August 2024)

## **ABSTRACT:**

This project aimed to explore selected aspects of spiritual practices and philosophical frameworks that constitute different streams of sadhana in Integral Yoga.

Given the vast and all-integrative nature of the Theory and Practice of Integral Yoga, only a few specific themes or areas were identified for this project. This helped keep the focus clearly defined resulting in specific research findings that can be helpful both for refining one's intellectual understanding of Integral Yoga as well as for deepening one's spiritual practice on this path.

An important criterion used to identify the themes was that these should cover both the individual and collective aspects of sadhana. This was considered necessary because Integral Yoga, with its highest aim of bringing a Divine Life on earth, presents for the aspirants a complete path for the transformation of the individual as well as collective life. Thus, individual, nation, humanity, world, earth – all these progressively enlarging units are of concern to an aspirant on the path of Integral Yoga. Indian cultural insight as well as the necessity for a true rebirth of the soul of India were two other dimensions that were kept in front as we explored the streams of Integral Sadhana from an individual and collective perspectives. We identified the following 7 themes or sub-topics.

1. CONCENTRATION AND FOCUS
2. THE DIVINE SHAKTI
3. YOGA OF INDIAN NATION
4. SYMBOLISM IN SANATANA DHARMA
5. THE MOTHER'S GRACE
6. THE DIVINE IN NATURE (with special emphasis on flowers)
7. SILENCE AND SOLITUDE

## **METHODOLOGY:**

We chose seven (7) sub-themes to explore as part of our research project. Five of these themes were explored over a period of one month each, while two were explored over a period of two months each. In addition, two months' period was used for planning and organizing purposes, especially for the action-based practical and experiential activities required for the research. Thus, a total time period of 12 months was spent for completing this intensive research project. Following steps were employed to conduct systematic inquiry into each of the sub-topics.



## **Review of Literature**

1. An intensive review of literature of the published works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother was conducted.
2. A word-search through electronically available reference materials was also conducted.
3. In addition to the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, we also sourced relevant material from early scholars-practitioners of Integral Yoga including K.D. Sethna, A.B. Purani, Kireet Joshi, Nolini Kanta Gupta, Nirodbaran, M.P. Pandit to name a few.
4. Several compilations and other secondary works were also reviewed.
5. Old volumes of journals published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Sri Aurobindo Society were researched to identify relevant material.
6. The selections were organised in various themes so that each topic can be explored in a multi-perspective manner.
7. All the material was thoroughly scanned and wherever necessary minor formatting revisions were made to present the material digitally.
8. Selected quotes were pulled out for designing the graphics which were inserted to add greater visual interest and ease of virtual reading; and also for the purposes of dissemination over social media.

## **Preparing Original Content**

1. We also invited original content on the chosen themes in the form of short articles, essays, poetry and reflections.
2. A careful review was done of all submitted content to select appropriate content for publication in the journal.
3. Apart from write-ups, we also created audio-visual content in the form of invited talks, interactions, webinars, workshops etc.
4. We also designed several learning activities such as organizing talks, workshops, poster-exhibitions and webinars based on selected themes.

## **Preparing Web-based Journal**

1. All the researched, prepared, collated and reviewed material was transferred every month to our website [Renaissance](#) ensuring that all research is available in the public domain.
2. The research findings were organised and released in 7 issues of Renaissance journal.
3. Detailed attention to detail – both for the design and accuracy of the content – was paid when transferring the researched material to the Renaissance website.
4. Proper citations were added to every selection linking them to online sources wherever possible. This allows a prospective reader to explore further if so desired.

## **RESEARCH OUTCOMES:**

For each of the sub-topics, our research resulted in following outcomes. We explored each topic from several perspectives including inner, outer, individual and collective. The outcomes were documented online in 9 issues of our online journal *Renaissance*, with 2 themes covered over a couple of issues.

### **1. [CONCENTRATION AND PROGRESS](#)**

- [Streams of Sādhana: Concentrate and Progress](#) (Editorial - Beloo Mehra)
- [Concentration in Spiritual Life](#) (Spiritual Philosophy - Sri Aurobindo)
- [On Concentration, Interest and Attention](#) (The Mother)
- [Concentration and Intellectual Development](#) (The Mother)
- [Difference between Meditation and Concentration](#) (Sri Aurobindo and the Mother)
- [Swami Vivekananda on Concentration](#) (Swami Vivekananda)
- [A Fragmented Mind in the Cyber Age](#) (Narendra Murty)
- [Developing the Ability to Concentrate: An Educator's Reflection](#) (Shraddha Gour Mohanti)
- [How to Cultivate Greater Concentration and Focus](#) (Runalika Roy)
- [Developing Concentration: A Personal Journey](#) (Raamkumar L.)
- [Purpose Gives Focus; Concentration Gives the Ability](#) (Chirashree Mitra)

## 2. [DIVINE SHAKTI](#)

- ["She is the Force, the Inevitable Word"](#) (Editorial - Beloo Mehra)
- [The Divine Shakti](#) (Spiritual Philosophy - Sri Aurobindo)
- [Progress in Sadhana and the Mother's Force](#) (Sri Aurobindo)
- [The Dance of Shiva and Shakti](#) (Narendra Murty)
- [Lakshmi Puja in the Ashram – A Memoir](#) (Priti Dasgupta)
- [Woman in Sri Aurobindo's Poetry](#) (Romen Palit)
- [Sri Aurobindo's Poetry in Video: 'The Hill-top Temple'](#) (Suhas Mehra)
- [Mata Durga as Muse: 'Waves and frequencies' – a poem](#) (Gayatri Majumdar)
- [The Upanishads Elucidated: The Light of Lights](#) (Lopa Mukherjee)

## 3. [YOGA OF THE INDIAN NATION](#)

- [India, the Spiritual Battlefield of the World](#) (Editorial - Beloo Mehra)
- [On Indian Nationalism and Yoga](#) (Sri Aurobindo)
- [The Indian Nation and Unity in Diversity](#) (Sri Aurobindo)
- [Of Politics, Patriotism and Yoga](#) (Sri Aurobindo and the Mother)
- [The Ideal Flag for India](#) (K.D. Sethna)
- [Sri Aurobindo and the Modern Academic World](#) (Sacchidananda Mohanty)
- [The Right Path for India: Secularism or Spirituality?](#) (M.S. Srinivasan)
- [The Lines of Our National Yoga](#) (Alok Pandey)
- ['On Original Thinking': An Infallible Light for the Vision of New India](#) (Charan Singh Kedarkhandi)
- [Sanatana Dharma and Indian Nationalism](#) (Beloo Mehra)
- [The Upanishads Elucidated: Swarāt Samrāt](#) (Lopa Mukherjee)
- [The Soul of Indian Nation](#) (Narendra Murty)
- [A Secret Self: Infinite O' Delight \(Poem\)](#) (Kiran Sood)

## 4. [SYMBOLISM IN SANATANA DHARMA](#)

- [Sri Aurobindo on Symbolism in the Veda](#) (Editorial - Beloo Mehra)
- [The Angirasa Legend in the Veda](#) (Sri Aurobindo)

- [The Legend of the Lost Cows](#) (Kireet Joshi)
- [Of Dogs, Gods and Elements: Symbolism in the Upanishads](#) (Nolini Kanta Gupta)
- [Deva and Asura in the Bhagavad Gita](#) (Sri Aurobindo)
- [Sri Aurobindo's Savitri and Vyasa's Savitri](#) (Mangesh V. Nadkarni)
- [Of Pratīka and Pratimā: Why Do We Need Images and Symbols?](#) (Swami Vivekananda)
- [The Gods and Goddesses of the Veda](#) (Beloo Mehra)
- [Daksha and Kali – Decoding the Symbols](#) (Pradip Bhattacharya)
- [The Inner Truth of Mūrti Pūjā](#) (Narendra Murty)
- [Reverential Pranāms to Vāgdevi Saraswati \(Video\)](#) (Narendra Murty)
- [Vaishnava Symbolism and the Future of Symbols](#) (M.S. Srinivasan)
- [The Upanishads Elucidated – The Seekers of Light](#) (Lopa Mukherjee)

## 5. [\*\*THE MOTHER'S GRACE\*\*](#)

- [Only Her Grace Makes Us Remember Her, Always](#) (Editorial - Beloo Mehra)
- [Difficulties and the Mother's Grace](#) (Sri Aurobindo)
- [The New Consciousness and Human Attitude](#) (The Mother)
- [Selections from 'Prayers and Aspirations'](#) (Champaklal)
- [Reminiscences of the Mother's Grace](#) (K.D. Sethna)
- [The Mother's Presence and Her Grace \(Poem\)](#) (Kiran Sood)
- [Do We Really Believe in God?](#) (Rabindranath Tagore, Transl. by Narendra Murty)
- [Human Destiny: A Critical Choice](#) (Nolini Kanta Gupta)
- [Supramental Manifestation and the New World \(video\)](#) (The Mother, with a video by Suhas Mehra)

## 6. [\*\*DIVINE IN NATURE\*\*](#)

- [The One Who Fashions a Cosmos, and a Curl](#) (Editorial - Beloo Mehra)
- [God at the Beginning, God in the Middle, God at the End, God Everywhere](#) (Sri Aurobindo)
- [From Nature to Supernature](#) (Sri Aurobindo)



- Vāsudevah sarvam iti and Karmayoga (Sri Aurobindo)
- Nature, a Collaborator of the New Consciousness (Video) (The Mother, with a video by Suhas Mehra)
- “In Nature one can live in beauty, always” (The Mother)
- In the Playhouse of Infinite Forms (Narendra Murty)
- Environmentalism, Ask Thyself -Is Nature She or It? (M.S. Srinivasan)

## 7. DIVINE IN NATURE - II

- “An unseen Presence moulds the oblivious clay.” (Editorial - Beloo Mehra)
- The Upanishads Elucidated: The Enigmatic Seed (Lopa Mukherjee)
- One Must Try to Become Like a Flower (Mona Sarkar)
- Memory of a Seed (Self-remembering) (Gayatri Majumdar)
- How Flowers Brought Me Closer to the Divine (Runalika Roy)
- Inner Awakening to Nature, featuring Wordsworth’s ‘Daffodils’ (Narration by Narendra Murty)
- वो जो ब्रह्मांड सजाता है, वही तो लटें संवारता है Of Cosmos and Curl (Beloo Mehra, translated by Dimple Chhabra)
- I Found My God on the Trail (Chirashree Mitra)
- Experiencing the Divine through Nature’s Mandalas (Jayashree Ashok)

## 8. SILENCE AND SOLITUDE

- Sea of Stormy Passions, Sea of Serene Silences (a poem, a narration and more) (Editorial - Beloo Mehra)
- “A silent mind is the first step” (Sri Aurobindo)
- Sri Aurobindo on His Silence, Sadhana and Nirvana (Sri Aurobindo)
- Video: “Silence is All” – Sri Aurobindo’s Poem (Video by Suhas Mehra)
- Of Social Relations, Retirement and Sadhana (Sri Aurobindo)
- Of Silence, Voices, and the Voice of God (Sri Aurobindo)
- Two Poems – Soul’s Silence and One Moment (Nirodbaran)

- हृदय में ज्ञान का दीप मौन में ही जलता है – In Silence Alone Dawns the True Knowledge (Dimple Chhabra)
- Lost in the Algorithm: Reclaiming Humanity in the Social Media Maze (Anshika Agrawal and Kaushik Reddy)

#### 9. SILENCE AND SOLITUDE - II

- On Life, Love and Inner Solitude (Editorial - Beloo Mehra)
- On Controlling the Subconscious and Doing Yoga in the World (The Mother)
- Control of Speech, Mental Austerity and Inner Silence (The Mother)
- To Talk or Not to Talk (with narration of Gibran's 'On Talking') (Sri Aurobindo, with Gibran's poem narrated by Beloo Mehra)
- The True Solitude is an Inner Separation (M.P. Pandit)
- Silence and Education: Some Practical Guidance (The Mother)
- चल, आज कहीं चुपचाप जा बैठें – Come, Let's Go to That Quiet Place (Poem) (Dimple Chhabra)
- One Note of Zen (Narendra Murty)

### **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS:**

- All our researched material including original writings related to the themes explored in our research project was uploaded on [Renaissance](#) website and carefully categorised for easier access.
- For each of the issues, Dr. Beloo Mehra wrote insightful [editorials](#) giving an overview of the work completed for a particular theme.
- Following forms of content were created to present our research findings:
  - Long-form written content (including researched compilations, original writings, video content, reports of practical sessions, invited talks and other related fieldwork).
  - Short-form flipbook content & Infographics for social media and website
  - Video content

## RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS:

“A single occupation, a single aim, a single joy—the Divine.”

– The Mother, CWM, Vol. 14, p. 14

This is how the Mother guides us — most simply, and most profoundly. To be even slightly worthy of this term ‘sādhaka’, one must have this — one single occupation, one single aim, one single joy – the Divine. Nothing more. Nothing less. But this requires the most sincere aspiration. It requires an absolutely perfect surrender, and a most rigorous rejection of all that takes one away from that single occupation and single aim. It requires deep and perfect concentration of all our energies, all our thoughts and emotions, every single movement within and without. The path is long. But Her Grace can make it sweet and sunlit.

Sri Aurobindo once said that it is a mistake to think that one can do Yoga on one’s own. No human being can ever do it. It is always the Divine who does the Yoga. Our job is to give full assent to the Divine. There is so much hope and optimism in this thought. Though, of course, even giving our full assent to the Divine Will does not come without challenges.

Most of us – products of modern upbringing and educational experience – have grown up with somewhat confused and confusing ideas of individual agency and self-reliance. We have been more or less conditioned to “make things happen.” Or if not that, at least do things “our way” because we think we know what is good for us. No wonder, it is not easy for such minds and vitals to let go and give assent to the Divine Will. Especially, when we don’t even know what is Divine Will. That makes things more difficult. This is why we have to constantly call for the Mother’s help. Pray for Her grace, guidance and light. Sri Aurobindo reminds us that in Integral Yoga what matters most is the inner relation we build with the Mother. Because She is the path and the goal. He writes in a letter that the “embodied Mother must be the foundation of the concentration” (CWSA,

Vol. 32, p. 52). We can find great help in this advice. Often by starting an inner dialogue with the Mother, we begin to get closer to Her. This is one simplest way of concentrating on Her. One can tell her all that may be bothering one at that moment, and ask for her help. One can ask for her Light and Peace.

One can also specifically ask for help in letting go of a sense of unease which crops up within when one feels stuck in a situation. This unease makes one feel incapable to proceed. One learns over time that this unease comes from one or both of these sources – a mental insistence that one must solve the problem by oneself; and some vital preference that things should go a certain way. At times like this one must ask for Divine's help and strength so that one may be blessed with the will to surrender. So that one may find courage to let go of the mind's insistence or the vital's preference. This inner dialogue with the Mother can be a tremendous practice to become conscious of one's own imperfections. And this awareness makes it easier to offer them all at the Mother's Feet so She may purify and transform them.

The practice of Integral Yoga is based on no one particular method and can use every method. "For in his Yoga there is nothing too small to be used and nothing too great to be attempted," (Sri Aurobindo, CWSA, Vol. 23, p. 61). One has to find what is in accordance with one's inner temperament and soul's turning. Whether it is the path of Knowledge, Devotion or Works, or some combination of these – the Master of Integral Yoga, the real Teacher or Guide within can take up all and guide the aspirant toward the Yoga of Perfection. Whether it is meditating or working in the garden, sitting quietly with some elevating music playing in the background or singing some devotional songs, reading Savitri or some other volume of the Mother or Sri Aurobindo — there can be many methods to help one go within. At the core of them all is Contact with Her. If you are able to connect with the Mother through a particular method, that is your method. Sometimes one method may feel more appropriate, at other times another. But what matters is concentrating on Her. It is through concentration one makes progress.



In the *sādhana* of Integral Yoga, great emphasis is placed on inward aspiration and concentrated seeking of the Divine for Divine sake, not for some personal salvation but for the advent of a new consciousness on earth. The idea is to give maximum freedom to individual aspirants with no external pressure or demand for a certain practice.

In this light, outward practices like chanting, kirtan, worship, rituals and other such things can be important only as much as they can help us to go within. These are more as aids along the way for those who may need some or any of these. Though, of course, all of these and other outer activities when transformed with the touch of the Divine can be means for going within. Depending on the sincerity of the aspiration, they can help one to get in touch with the deepest and highest part within.

## ONGOING RESEARCH TOPIC II: The Spirit and Forms of Indian Art

### RESEARCHER NAME:

**Lead Researcher:** Dr. Beloo Mehra (Editor, Renaissance Journal and Director, BhāratShakti)

**Co-Researcher:** Narendra Murty

### GENRE(S) OF RESEARCH:

Text-based, Qualitative, Action-Research

### DURATION:

12 months (August 2024-July 2025)

### ABSTRACT:

*“Shakti, Force, pouring through the universe supports its boundless activities, the frail and tremulous life of the rose no less than the flaming motions of sun and star. To suggest the strength and virile unconquerable force of the divine Nature in man and in the outside world, its energy, its calm, its powerful inspiration, its august enthusiasm, its wideness, greatness, attractiveness, to breathe that into man’s soul and gradually mould the finite into the image of the Infinite is another spiritual utility of Art. This is its loftiest function, its fullest consummation, its most perfect privilege.” (Sri Aurobindo, CWSA, Vol. 1, p. 452)*

“Spiritual utility of Art” — this very phrase brings to mind a clarity that in India, the Art has always been identical in its aim as the rest of the culture. That aim is to facilitate the spiritual growth of the individual and the collective. But before Art can fulfill this role, it must serve several other purposes. And Sri Aurobindo explains that masterfully in his essay titled *The*

*National Value of Art.* He says that the first and the lowest use of Art is the purely aesthetic. The second is the intellectual or educative, and the third and highest is the spiritual. By speaking of the aesthetic use as the lowest, he did not imply that this is not valuable. In fact, this aesthetic purpose is of immense importance to human progress. And until this work has been done, humanity is not really ready to make full use of Art on the higher planes of human development.

In Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's vision of integral human development, cultivating a sense of beauty occupies an important place. The Mother said that it is one of the greatest weapons of the *Asura* at work when we are taught to shun beauty. She added that it has been the "ruin of India." *"The Divine manifests in the psychic as love, in the mind as knowledge, in the vital as power and in the physical as beauty. If you discard beauty it means that you are depriving the Divine of this manifestation in the material and you hand over that part to the Asura."* (CWM, Vol. 13, pp. 372-373)

Taking inspiration from these words, we are dedicating several issues of Renaissance to explore the topic – The Spirit and Forms of Art in India. The series will explore Indian Art and Aesthetic traditions in the light of Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's vision. As always, we will feature selected gems from the vast ocean that is their written works and conversations. We shall also highlight some writings of other senior sādha-s and scholars. And there will also be a few fresh perspectives and voices.

The subject is certainly a vast one. We don't claim that we shall be able to consider the subject thoroughly and fully. But through this series which will go on until July 2025, we hope to highlight a few salient aspects to help the reader gain a broad orientation to appreciating Art, in general, and Indian Arts, in particular. Our purpose is not to highlight the technical details of various art forms. Rather, the focus will be to highlight the deeper spirit of India as reflected in her diverse art forms and her approach to creating and appreciating art.

**Sub-topics to be explored in this project are:**

- The Purpose of Art: From Beauty to Bliss

- Sacred Origins of Indian Art
- The Way of an Indian Artist
- The Mother as an Artist
- Art as Yoga
- Indian Sacred Architecture
- Sculptural Art of India
- Indian Painting
- Art Education
- New Forms of Art

## **METHODOLOGY:**

Following steps will be employed to conduct systematic inquiry into each of the sub-topic.

### **Review of Literature**

- An intensive review of literature of the published works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother will be conducted.
- A word-search through electronically available reference materials will also be conducted.
- In addition to the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, we will also source relevant material from early scholars-practitioners of Integral Yoga as well as experts and scholars of Indian Art and Aesthetics.
- Several compilations and other secondary works will also be reviewed.
- Old volumes of journals published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Sri Aurobindo Society will be researched to identify relevant material.
- The selections will be organised in various themes so that each topic can be explored in a multi-perspective manner.
- All the material will be thoroughly scanned and wherever necessary minor formatting revisions will be made to present the material digitally.



- Selected quotes will be pulled out for designing the graphics which will be inserted to add greater visual interest and ease of virtual reading; and also for the purposes of dissemination over social media.

### **Preparing Original Content**

- We shall also invite original content on the chosen themes in the form of short articles, essays, poetry and reflections.
- A careful review will be done of all submitted content to select appropriate content for inclusion in the journal.
- Apart from write-ups, we shall also create audio-visual content in the form of invited talks, interactions, webinars, workshops etc.
- We shall also plan for workshops, talks, webinars and exhibitions and other such activities based on our selected themes.

### **Preparing Web-based Journal**

- All the researched, prepared, collated and reviewed material will be transferred every month to our website [Renaissance](#) ensuring that all research is available in the public domain.
- Detailed attention to detail – both for the design and accuracy of the content – will be paid when transferring the researched material to the Renaissance website.
- Proper citations will be added to every selection linking them to online sources wherever possible. This allows a prospective reader to explore further if so desired.

### **DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS:**

- All our researched material including original writings related to the themes explored in our research project will be uploaded on our website and carefully categorised for easier access.

- All detailed reports of our offline and online activities related to the selected themes – including webinars, seminars, workshops, video content, invited talks, poster exhibitions etc – will also be uploaded on our website.
- For each of the issues, Dr. Beloo Mehra will write insightful editorials giving an overview of the work completed for a particular theme.
- At least TWO E-books and/or research monographs are being planned.
- Following forms of content are being planned to present our research findings:
  - Long-form written content (including researched compilations, original writings, video content, reports of practical sessions, invited talks and other related fieldwork).
  - Short-form flipbook content
  - Exhibition posters
  - Posters for social media and journal website

# COMPLETED RESEARCH PROJECT III: Sri Aurobindo, the Avatar

## RESEARCHER NAME:

**Lead Researcher:** Dr. Beloo Mehra (Editor, Renaissance Journal and Director, BhāratShakti)

**Co-Researcher:** Narendra Murty

## GENRE(S) OF RESEARCH:

Text-based, Qualitative, Action-Research

## DURATION:

2 months (July 2024-August 2024)

## ABSTRACT:

Sri Aurobindo has brought to us the assurance of the New World. This is why the Mother speaks of him as the “Future advancing towards its realisation” (CWM, Vol. 13, p. 5). He is the Avatar of the Future who boldly declares that in the spiritual development of the consciousness upon earth “the great past ought to be followed by a greater future”. Not only that, he has also given world the assurance of a divine future.

This work of bringing down the Supermind and launching a new creation based on Truth was truly the work of Twin Avatars – the Two who are One, Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. In one of the “Evening Talks” Sri Aurobindo spoke of the inner, truer nature of the collaboration that was necessary in order for their Supramental Yoga which has transformation, and not escape from the world and life, as its object.

## **Review of Literature**

- An intensive review of literature of the published works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother was conducted.
- A word-search through electronically available reference materials was also conducted.
- In addition to the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, we also sourced relevant material from early scholars-practitioners of Integral Yoga.
- Several compilations and other secondary works were also reviewed.
- Old volumes of journals published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Sri Aurobindo Society were researched to identify relevant material.
- The selections were organised in various themes so that each topic can be explored in a multi-perspective manner.
- All the material was thoroughly scanned and wherever necessary minor formatting revisions was made to present the material digitally.
- Selected quotes were pulled out for designing the graphics which were inserted to add greater visual interest and ease of virtual reading; and also for the purposes of dissemination over social media.

## **Preparing Original Content**

- We also invited invite original content on the chosen themes in the form of short articles, essays, poetry and reflections.
- A careful review was done of all submitted content to select appropriate content for publication in the journal.
- We also designed two poster-exhibitions based on our research.



## PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS:

- All the researched, prepared, collated and reviewed material was transferred every month to our website [Renaissance](#) ensuring that all research is available in the public domain.
- The research findings were presented in the [August 2024 issue of Renaissance](#) journal.
- Detailed attention to detail – both for the design and accuracy of the content – was paid when transferring the researched material to the Renaissance website.
- Proper citations were added to every selection linking them to online sources wherever possible. This allows a prospective reader to explore further if so desired.

## RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS:

The research topic ‘Sri Aurobindo, the Avatar’ concluded with publication of several important articles in our online journal *Renaissance*. In [“Each Action Left the Footprints of a God”](#), editor Beloo Mehra highlighted the point that Sri Aurobindo speaks of the Supermind as an eternal reality of the divine Being and the divine Nature. He explains that it is in its very essence “a truth-consciousness”. It is a “consciousness always free from the Ignorance which is the foundation of our present natural or evolutionary existence and from which nature in us is trying to arrive at self-knowledge and world-knowledge and a right consciousness and the right use of our existence in the universe” (CWSA, Vol. 13, p. 558). Only this Supramental Truth-consciousness is capable of creating a new world. Sri Aurobindo also emphasises that this Supramental is NOT a new version of the Vedantic featureless and incommunicable Parabrahman.

A 2-part feature titled [Avatarhood in ‘Essays on the Gita’](#) brought together a few selections from Sri Aurobindo’s comprehensive volume where he gives in-depth and profound explanation of the concept of Avatarhood. What is especially noteworthy is the explanation that the Avatar comes to bring nearer the [kingdom of heaven on earth](#) in the collectivity as well as to build the kingdom of heaven within in the individual human soul.

Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are ONE consciousness. They affirmed this repeatedly in various correspondences and talks. They worked together as One consciousness to bring down the Supramental Consciousness on the Earth. So, when it comes to speaking about the true significance of this Avataric Work, only the Mother can speak about it with perfect certitude and clarity. We identified two passages from the Mother which were featured in [The Mother on Sri Aurobindo's Avataric Work](#).

In February 2011, Georges van Vrekhem delivered a highly engaging and well-researched talk in Auroville, titled 'The Kalki Avatar'. It is now included in the book *Preparing for the Miraculous: Eleven Talks at Auroville* (2011, pp. 235-266). We featured the talk in 5 parts under the title [Sri Aurobindo and the Kalki Avatar](#).

Sri Aurobindo, the Maharishi has also given us a marvellous body of literature. His written works which include correspondences and talks with the disciples cover practically all aspects of human and divine life. Revealing the Dharma for our age and for the future, he brought back for the humanity the deeper spirit and truth of the Vedas. Sri Aurobindo expressed the deepest and the highest spiritual truths in a manner suitable for the modern mentality. But he did that without diluting, reducing or simplifying anything for the sake of a lazy reader. His words came from a plane beyond 'thought'.

Many of his written works give us a glimpse into his and the Mother's tremendous Yogic work for the earth-consciousness. They reveal for us the Sunlit path we must tread on if we aspire to be a squirrel-like collaborator in their Divine Work. His books are a Force-in-Action; each word is imbued with his supreme consciousness and force. These are also forms of the godly footprints of the Avatar Sri Aurobindo.

The feature titled [Being in the Ashram and Reading Sri Aurobindo's Books](#) highlighted an excerpt from Mona Sarkar's book *Blessings of the Grace: Conversations with the Mother*. It highlights Mother's explanation on how one can experience an immense multi-faceted development by reading Sri Aurobindo's books.

We also identified other enlightening and inspiring content such [Sri Aurobindo, the Avatar of Supramental Humour](#) by Nirodbaran, [Sri Aurobindo: The Avatar and Lover of](#)

[Humanity](#) by Charan Singh Kedarkhandi, and [Towards an Everlasting “Yes”](#) by Narendra Murty.

## SECTION 3: DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

### PART 1 - DISSEMINATION THROUGH 10 ISSUES OF *RENAISSANCE JOURNAL*

#### **Curating, editing and publishing *Renaissance***

- A. This journal features curated pearls of wisdom from the oceanic writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, as well as fresh perspectives and insights on India and her creative genius manifesting in various domains – spiritual, artistic, literary, philosophic, aesthetic.

#### **Themes explored in *Renaissance*, April 2024 to March 2025**

- xi. [Divine in Nature](#) (April 2024) – 9 articles + 1 podcast
- xii. [Silence and Solitude](#) (May 2024) – 9 articles + 1 podcast + 1 Video
- xiii. [Silence and Solitude II](#) (June-July 2024) – 9 articles + 1 podcast + 1 Talk by the editor
- xiv. [Sri Aurobindo, the Avatar](#) (August 2024) – 14 articles
- xv. [The Purpose of Art - From Beauty to Bliss](#) (September 2024) – 12 articles + 1 video
- xvi. [Sacred Origins of Indian Art](#) (October 2024) – 10 articles
- xvii. [The Way of an Indian Artist; Art as Yoga; Art Education](#) (November - December 2024) – 20 articles + 1 Video + 1 Invited Conversation on Natyashastra
- xviii. [Indian Sacred Architecture](#) (January 2025) – 15 articles
- xix. [Art Education and The Way of an Indian Artist](#) (February 2025) – 7 articles + 1 Invited Conversation on Art for *Chittashuddhi* + 1 video
- xx. [The Mother as an Artist](#) (March 2025) – 5 articles + 1 Photography Exhibition + 1 Invited Lecture



## PART II - DISSEMINATION THROUGH EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES INCLUDING WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS, CONFERENCES, GUEST LECTURES (n =23)

Sl. No.	Name of the Activity/ Programme/ Workshop/ Seminar	Dates/Period	No. of participants	Place
1.	<b>Workshop for Teachers</b>  <i>‘Sanskriti च Svādhyāya’</i> : Insights from <i>Itihāsas</i> , <i>Purānas</i> and <i>Upanishads</i>	September 23-24, 2024	70+ Teachers and School administrators	Creative School, Bengaluru
2.	<b>Workshop</b> Invoking Shakti: Cultivating Courage, Faith and Concentration	September 24-27, 2024	350+ students, ages 5-18 + 20 teachers	Creative School, Bengaluru
3.	<b>Residential Retreat</b>  “Yoga in Everyday Life”	December 27-29, 2024	40 participants	Sri Aurobindo Dhama, Karnataka

4.	<b>Workshop</b>  YUVA SHAKTI – Cultivating Virtues for Self-growth	May 30, 2024	24 students and 6 faculty from Sardar Patel University, including the Vice- Chancellor and Registrar	Sri Aurobindo Society
5.	<b>Workshop</b>  'Navakriti – Celebrating the Mother's Birthday with Children	February 13, 2025	35 children, ages 6-8 plus 9 teachers	Sri Aurobindo Society
6.	<b>Workshop</b>  Our Culture, Our Pride	December 27, 2024	70 students, ages 12-16 plus 30 adults including teachers and parents	Om Shanti Dham Gurukulam, Sangama, Mekedatu, Karnataka
7.	<b>Poster-Exhibition</b>  Curated for an Interdisciplinary Learning Project on Hampi (58 posters)	October 30 - December 10, 2024	300+ students and 35+ teachers went through the exhibition	Freedom Land campus of Creative School Karnataka

8.	<b>Poster Exhibition</b>  Cultivating Soul-values – Courage, Faith and Concentration	September 24- October 24, 2024	100+ students and 10+ faculty from Pondicherry University	Freedom Land campus of Creative School Karnataka
9.	<b>Workshop</b>  Educational Vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother	July 24, 2024	7 Educational Leaders from Ahmedabad	Sri Aurobindo Society
10.	<b>Online Course</b>  Symbolism in Sanatana Dharma (12-week course)	June 1 – August 17, 2024	25 participants	Online
11.	<b>International Symposium</b>  The Veda and the Vedic Spirit	August 18, 2024	80+ participants from across the world	Online
12.	<b>National Webinar</b>  Durga, the Divine Mother	October 5, 2024	35 participants	Online
13.	<b>National Webinar (English &amp; Hindi)</b>	June 22, 2024	Around 40 participants	Online

	Devi Ahilyabai Holkar and Bhāratiya Resurgence			
14.	<b>National Webinar</b>  Shiva - the Lord of Tapas	March 10, 2025	25 participants	Online
15.	<b>Invited Lecture</b>  The Cultural and Political Legacy of The Vijayanagara Empire	March 13, 2025	40 participants (about 400 views online)	Sri Aurobindo Ashram Exhibition House
16.	<b>Poster-Exhibition</b>  Poster Exhibition – The Greatness of Indian Culture	December 27-31, 2024	150+ students and teachers and parents went through the posters	Om Shanti Dhama Gurukulam, Karnataka
17.	<b>Photography Exhibition</b>  Hampi – A Photographic Journey: Tracing the Aesthetics of Perseverance and Valour	March 6-23, 2025	600+ people went through the exhibition	Sri Aurobindo Ashram Exhibition House



18.	<b>Workshop and Guest Lecture</b>  Sangeet Sandhya: Lecture- demonstration on Hindustani Classical Music	March 25, 2025	55+ participants	Sri Aurobindo Society
19.	<b>Invited Conversation</b>  Art for Chittashuddhi, Purification of the Heart	December 14, 2024	About 400 views online	Recorded at Sri Aurobindo Society
20.	<b>Invited Conversation</b>  Exploring Human Psychology through NāṭyaŚāstra	December 4, 2024	About 400 views online	Recorded Online
21.	<b>National Webinar</b>  Sri Aurobindo, the Seer-poet	December 7, 2024	35 participants	Online

22.	<b>Poster-Exhibition</b>  Sri Aurobindo on Yoga – Poster- Exhibition at International Yoga Festival, Puducherry	January 4-7, 2025	300+ people visited the exhibition	30th International Yoga Festival, Old Port Premises, Puducherry
23.	<b>Poster-Exhibition</b>  Sri Aurobindo on Yoga – Poster- Exhibition at International Yoga Festival, Puducherry	August 5-25, 2025	150+ people visited the exhibition	Sri Aurobindo Sadhana Kendra, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat

## PART III - DISSEMINATION THROUGH INVITED TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS (n =31)

### TALKS BY BELOO MEHRA (Total = 24)

Only included are invited talks/presentations at external events or at events organized in collaboration with other institutions.

Sl. No.	Name of the Talk/ Presentation	Dates/ Period	No. of participants	Place
1.	INVITED TALK  Rethinking Communications beyond Polarities	April 8, 2024	150+ participants  EVENT: International Conference on 'Future Communications: Rethinking Societies, Cultures and Governance'	Pondicherry University
2.	INVITED TALK  Art and Poetry with Insights from Sri Aurobindo	March 3, 2025	20+ participants  EVENT: Pondicherry/Auroville Poetry Festival - International Edition	Sharanam Convention Center, Pondicherry

3.	<p>INVITED TALK</p> <p>Sri Aurobindo's Vision for a True National Education</p> <p>(40th Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture, Jadavpur University)</p>	January 28, 2025	<p>50+ participants</p> <p>EVENT:</p> <p>40<sup>th</sup> Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture organised by the Center for Sri Aurobindo Studies, Department of Philosophy, Jadavpur University</p>	Jadavpur University
4.	<p>INVITED TALK</p> <p>Sri Aurobindo's Insights on National Education and NEP 2020: Hits and Misses</p>	February 28, 2025	<p>300+ students, faculty, scholars</p> <p>EVENT: National Seminar on <i>Ideas of India's Eminent Educational Thinkers and Transformative Learning through NEP2020</i>, jointly organized by the School of International Studies, Central University of Gujarat, and the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Public Research and International Studies,</p>	The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda



			The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda	
5.	INVITED TALK  Sri Aurobindo and True Fulfilment of Sanatana Dharma	January 25, 2025	50+ participants  EVENT: Special Discourse Series	Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir, Kolkata
6.	PANELIST for the session –  Humility and Power	February 22, 2025	50+ participants  EVENT: Auroville Festival 2025	Unity Pavilion, Auroville
7.	INVITED TALK  Integral Education and a Teacher's Dharma	January 27, 2025	40+ participants  EVENT: Special Guest Speaker Series	Sri Aurobindo Bhavan, Kolkata
8.	INVITED TALK  Aim of Integral Education	December 12, 2024	30+ participants  EVENT: National Workshop "Integral Education for Teachers" organised by GIET Degree College, Rajmundhry, Andhra Pradesh in	GIET Degree College, Rajmundhry, Andhra Pradesh

			association with Sri Aurobindo's Action, Puducherry	
9.	INVITED TALK  Role of a Teacher	December 12, 2024	30+ participants  EVENT: National Workshop "Integral Education for Teachers" organised by GIET Degree College, Rajmundhry, Andhra Pradesh in association with Sri Aurobindo's Action, Puducherry	GIET Degree College, Rajmundhry, Andhra Pradesh
10.	INVITED TALK Decolonizing Indian Cultural Studies with Sri Aurobindo	September 13, 2024	80+ participants  EVENT: "Understanding India: Its Art and Culture" - symposium organised by Tagore Govt. Arts and Science College, Pondicherry & Dept. of English, Sree Saraswathy Thyagaraja College, Pollachi	Tagore Government Arts and Science College, Pondicherry

11.	INVITED TALK  Upanishadic Stories for Self- development	July 13, 2024	20+ participants  EVENT: YES TALKS, organised by Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi	Online
12.	PANELIST AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE  “Yoga for Women Empowerment”	June 14, 2024	100+ participants  EVENT: National Conference on “Yoga for Women Empowerment” organized by School of Yoga Therapy, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth in collaboration with Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India	Institute of Salutogenesis & Complementary Medicine, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth, Pondicherry
13.	INVITED CONVERSATION  Makings of a Truly Learner-centric Education: Sri Aurobindo and Maria Montessori	May 4, 2024	Recorded for YouTube  EVENT: AUROTALKS - Part of the Research Project titled ‘Sri Aurobindo: A Visionary Among World Thinkers’,	Aurovidya, SACAR, Pondicherry

			launched by Sri Aurobindo Center for Advanced Research with support from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India	
14.	<p>INVITED TALK</p> <p>“To make Yoga the ideal of human life India rises today”</p>	June 21, 2024	<p>40+ participants</p> <p>EVENT: Celebration of International Yoga Day, 2024, by AuroYajna, Sri Aurobindo Society</p>	Online
15.	<p>INVITED TALK</p> <p>Divine Protection – Conditional or Unconditional? Writings on Indian Culture</p>	November 21, 2024	<p>50+ participants</p> <p>EVENT: All India Women’s Council Conference, Sri Aurobindo Society</p>	Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry
16.	<p>INVITED TALK</p> <p>Love and Human Relationships</p>	January 11, 2025	<p>40+ participants</p> <p>EVENT: Annual All India Youth Camp, 2025</p>	Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry



17.	INVITED TALK Austerity of Speech	February 19, 2024	40+ participants Event: Celebrating the Mother's Birthday, AuroYajna, Sri Aurobindo Society	Online
18 TO 24	7 TALKS DELIVERED FOR RESIDENTIAL WELLNESS PROGRAMME  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Divine Spark Within</li> <li>• Psychic Education: Practical Guidance from the Mother</li> <li>• Love and Relationships</li> <li>• Inner Progress and Education for Life</li> <li>• The Psychic Spark and Our Inner Progress</li> <li>• Psychic, the Divine Spark</li> </ul>	March 22, 2025  March 8, 2025  February 15, 2025  February 8, 2025  January 11, 2025  December 21, 2024  September 7, 2024	70+ Participants  EVENT:  Residential Healing Programme at Uditam Institute of Integral Healing, Sri Aurobindo Society	Matriniketan, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From Love Human to Love Divine</li> </ul>			
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## TALKS BY NARENDRA MURTY (Total = 7)

Sl. No.	Name of the Talk/ Presentation	Dates/ Period	No. of participants	Place
1.	INVITED TALK  Seven Steps to Integral Leadership –	April 24, 2024	30+ participants  EVENT:  A session with BBA Students of Jindal Global Management School, Sonipat	Online
2.	INVITED TALK  Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	March 6, 2024	40+ participants  EVENT: Special session with BBA Students of Jindal Global Management School, Sonipat	Online

3.	INVITED TALK  Guru or No Guru	October 5, 2024	20+ participants  EVENT:  YES TALKS, organised by Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi	Online
4.	INVITED TALK  The Four Qualifications of a Seeker	December 14, 2024	20+ participants  EVENT:  YES TALKS, organised by Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi	Online
5.	INVITED TALK  Human Aspiration and Divine Grace	February 23, 2025	20+ participants  EVENT:  YES TALKS, organised by Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi	Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch
6.	INVITED TALK  The Fundamentals of ZEN	February 22, 2025	30+ participants  EVENT: Celebrating the Mother's Birthday	Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch

7.	<p>INVITED TALK</p> <p>The Inner Meaning of Samudra Manthan</p>	<p>February 23, 2025</p>	<p>20+ participants</p> <p>EVENT: Celebrating the Mother's Birthday</p>	<p>Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch</p>
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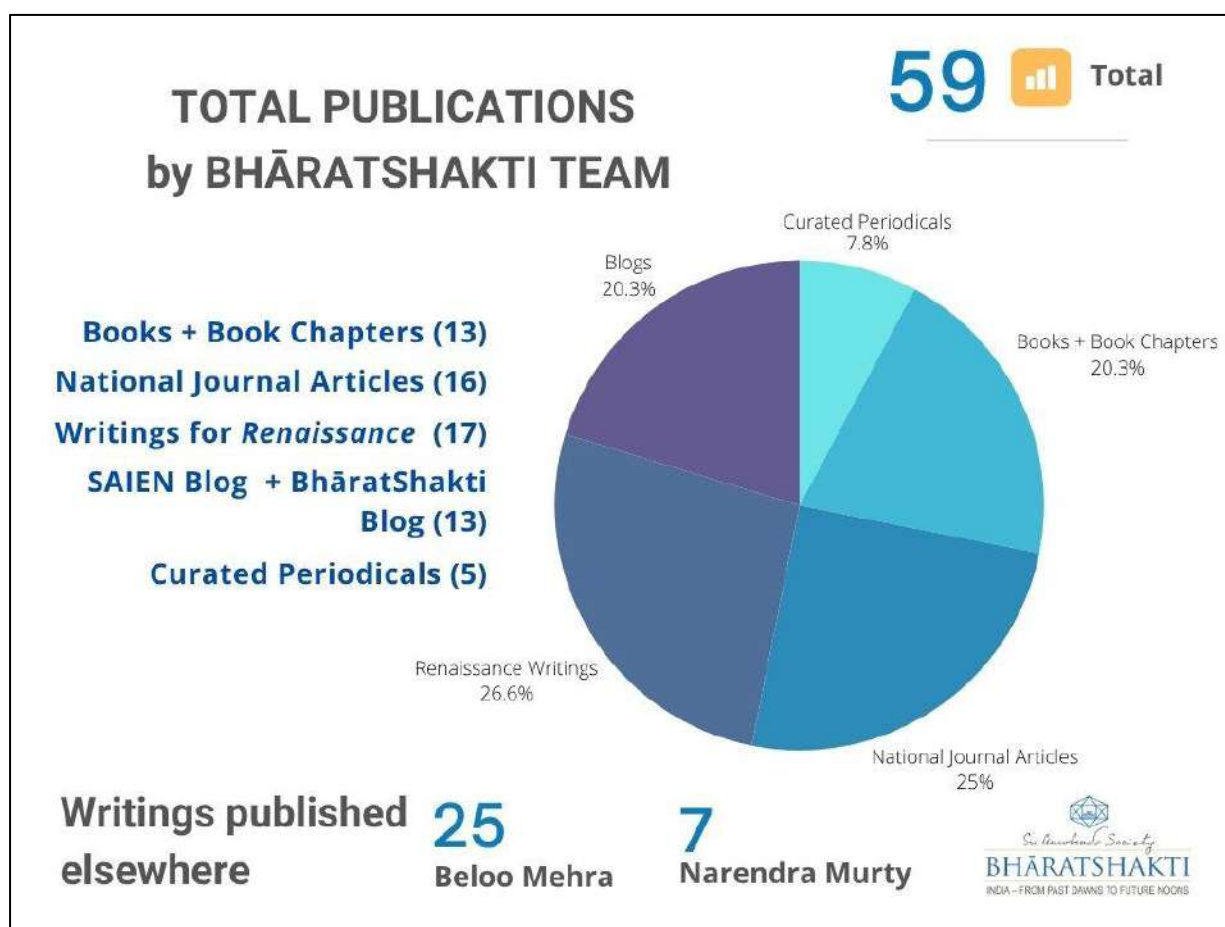
## PART IV - DISSEMINATION THROUGH PUBLICATIONS

(n = 59)

### WRITINGS FOR SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY JOURNALS AND BLOG (27)

Writings in Renaissance by BhāratShakti Team (17)

Blogs by BhāratShakti Team (10)



## WRITINGS FOR OTHER PUBLICATIONS

### PUBLICATIONS OF DR. BELOO MEHRA, 2024-25 (n=25)

- 4 Books
- 4 Edited Books
- 4 Book chapters
- 10 Articles in National Journals other than SAS journals
- 3 Blogs for Sri Aurobindo Integral Education Network (SAIEN)

### ARTICLES (Excludes Articles in Sri Aurobindo Society's Journals)

#### FULL ARTICLES ARE ENCLOSED

1. ***Gṛhastadharma: The Evolving Ideals for a Householder*** (February 2025), *Sraddha*, Vol. 16 (3), pp. 114-126.
2. **Aipan — The Traditional Art of Kumaon and Its Transition to Modern Times**, part 3 in the series, *Kala Vaibhav: The Vibrant Arts and Crafts of India* (March 2025), *Sri Aurobindo's Action – A Journal of Indian Resurgence*, Vol. 56 (3), pp. 8-10
3. **Phulkari, an Integral Part of Punjabi Life and Culture**, part 2 in the series, *Kala Vaibhav: The Vibrant Arts and Crafts of India* (February 2025), *Sri Aurobindo's Action – A Journal of Indian Resurgence*, Vol. 56 (2), pp. 8-10
4. **Phulkari — Stitching Together the Hearts through Threads**, part 1 in the series, *Kala Vaibhav: The Vibrant Arts and Crafts of India* (January 2025), *Sri Aurobindo's Action – A Journal of Indian Resurgence*, Vol. 56 (1), pp. 8-10
5. **Sanatana Dharma and India's March to the Future Noons** (December 2024) *Sri Aurobindo's Action – A Journal of Indian Resurgence*, Vol. 55 (12), pp. 5-7

6. **Spiritual Nationalism and its Significance for Today** (November 2024), *Ritam*, the special sesquicentennial commemorative volume published by Uttarpara Sri Aurobindo Parishad, West Bengal
7. **The Women of the Mahabharata: Our Teachers of Truth and Goodness** (June 2024) *Sri Aurobindo's Action – A Journal of Indian Resurgence*, Vol. 55 (6), pp. 9-11
8. **The Mahabharata — The Creation and Expression of a Mind of a Nation** (May 2024) *Sri Aurobindo's Action – A Journal of Indian Resurgence*, Vol. 55 (5), pp. 2-4
9. **Worship of the Mother in Integral Yoga** (April 2024), *New Race: A Journal of Future and Integral Studies*, Vol. X (2), pp. 43-59
10. **Reprinted -The Mahabharata — The Creation and Expression of a Mind of a Nation**, *Jnana Sarita – Journal of Indian Knowledge System*, April-June 2024, Vol. II (5), pp. 53-58

## BOOKS

1. *Book: ANTARYATRA: SOUL JOURNEYS* (September 2024 **ISBN: 978-93-84216-18-4**) Sri Aurobindo's Action, Pondicherry)
2. *Book: THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS OF INDIAN CULTURE* (August 2024, **ISBN: 978-93-85391-32-3**) Sri Aurobindo Center for Advanced Research, Pondicherry
3. *Book: INDIAN LITERARY TRADITION IN THE LIGHT OF SRI AUROBINDO* (October 2024, **ISBN: 978-81-7060-469-3**) Auropublications, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry
4. *Book: CULTIVATING SOUL-VALUES: REFLECTIONS ON THE TWELVE QUALITIES FROM THE MOTHER'S SYMBOL* (January 2025, **ISBN: 978-81-7060-486-0**) Auropublications, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry

## EDITED BOOKS

1. Book (Edited): HUMAN RELATIONS AND INTEGRAL YOGA (January 2025, **ISBN:** 978-81-7060-485-3), Auropublications and BhāratShakti, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry
2. E-Book (Edited): सर्वे सन्तु निरामया: MAY ALL BE FREE FROM ILLNESS (December 2024) Auropublications, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry
3. E-book (Edited): HUMAN RELATIONS AND INTEGRAL YOGA (October 2024) Auropublications, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry
4. E-book (Edited): FLOWERS OF THE MOTHER'S SYMBOL (July 2024) Auropublications, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry

## BOOK CHAPTERS (ENCLOSED)

1. **Makings of a Truly Learner-centric Education: Sri Aurobindo and Maria Montessori** (June 2024, ISBN: 978-93-85391-41-5). Chapter included in "*Sri Aurobindo: A Visionary Among World Thinkers Comparative Studies in Select Concepts from Sri Aurobindo and World Thinkers*" (Ed. V. Ananda Reddy), Published by SACAR Trust, Pondicherry with a grant from Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
2. **Introduction**, eBook *Flowers of the Mother's Symbol* by Sheeba Naaz (July 2024), Published by Auropublications, Sri Aurobindo Society.
3. **Introduction**, eBook सर्वे सन्तु निरामया: *May All Be Free from Illness* by Dr. Rajeshwari (December 2024) Published by Auropublications, Sri Aurobindo Society.
4. **Foreword** for the book '*Floral Meditations with the Mother*' by Chitra Suresh (February 2025, ISBN: 9788198183873) Published by Midam Foundation, Puducherry



## CURATED PERIODICALS

1. Curated TWO full issues of *Sri Aurobindo's Action Journal* – on Mahabharata (June 2024 and July 2024)
2. Researched, edited and designed web-versions of TEN issues of [\*Renaissance\*](#) Journal, Sri Aurobindo Society.
3. Researched, edited and designed web-version of ONE issue of [\*Renaissance Redux\*](#), Sri Aurobindo Society

## BLOGS FOR SAIEN (ENCLOSED)

1. ARE WE READY FOR A REAL CHANGE? (February 06, 2025)
2. LET GO AND CALL HER (July 18, 2024)
3. TO BE LIKE THE OCEAN (November 7, 2024)

## PUBLICATIONS OF NARENDRA MURTY, 2024-25 (n= 7)

- 1 Book
- 6 Articles in national journals other than SAS journals

## ARTICLES (Excludes Articles in Sri Aurobindo Society's Journals)

### FULL ARTICLES ARE ENCLOSED

1. **Symbolism in the Mahabharata**, *Sri Aurobindo's Action – A Journal of Indian Resurgence*, June 2024, Vol. 55 (6), pp. 2-4
2. **The Eternal Quest**, *Sri Aurobindo's Action – A Journal of Indian Resurgence*, October 2024, Vol. 55 (10), pp. 2-3
3. **Buddhism – The Rebel Child of Hinduism**, *Sri Aurobindo's Action – A Journal of Indian Resurgence*, October 2024, Vol. 55 (10), pp. 5-7

4. **The Awakening**, *Sri Aurobindo's Action – A Journal of Indian Resurgence*, October 2024, Vol. 55 (10), pp. 15
5. **Swami Dayananda – The Reformer**, *Sri Aurobindo's Action – A Journal of Indian Resurgence*, November 2024, Vol. 55 (11), pp. 6-8
6. **Reprinted - Symbolism in the Mahabharata**, *Jnana Sarita – Journal of Indian Knowledge System*, April-June 2024, Vol. II (5), pp. 59-61

## BOOKS

1. *Book: SERMONS OF THE DEAD* (October 2024, ISBN: 978-81-971818-9-9) The Alcove Publishers, Gurgaon)

## Curated Periodical

1. Curated ONE full issue of *Sri Aurobindo's Action Journal* – on Indian Philosophy (October 2024)

## SECTION 4: FUTURE RESEARCH PROJECTS (n = 3)

### The New Ideal Given by Sri Aurobindo: Some Social-Cultural Perspectives

PRIMARY RESEARCHER: BELOO MEHRA

(*Renaissance* project starting in August 2025)

#### Abstract

Indian spiritual view of life and existence holds the key to solving the problems humanity faces today. But for this to happen Indians must wake up to the true meaning of spirituality. Sri Aurobindo speaks of the triple message of India - psychical, spiritual and moral. He writes, "India believes in and has the key to a psychical world within man and without him which is the source and basis of the material" (CWSA, 8: 55). He cautions that Indians must not be content with knowing that they have inherited this great Wisdom. Just having an intellectual pride in this ancient wisdom will only lead to a chauvinistic pride. What is needed is real work on the ground! India "must rise up and live it before all the world so that it may be proved a possible law of conduct both for men and nations". (ibid.)

In her greatest eras, Indian spirituality "has not been a tired quietism or a conventional monasticism, but a high effort of the human spirit to rise beyond the life of desire and vital satisfaction and arrive at an acme of spiritual calm, greatness, strength, illumination, divine realisation, settled peace and bliss" (CWSA, 20: 132). This is the work we must do -- to live the truth of life-affirming spirituality, to rise beyond the life of vital satisfaction.

The aim of this research project is to identify insights and perspectives from the various works of Sri Aurobindo, the Mother and several other scholar-practitioners of Integral Yoga which will help us elaborate on the "spiritual solution" as the only solution for the varied challenges we face today in the world. Whether it is educational crisis, cultural decadence, ecological problems, social stratification, economic concerns or others, we shall look for the

deeper insight and penetrating light through which to examine both the challenge and the possible solution.

## **Kala Vaibhav: Indian Visual Arts in the Light of Sri Aurobindo**

**RESEARCHER: BELOO MEHRA**

(Book project starting in August 2025)

### **Abstract**

The book will be written with an aim to help the readers develop an appreciation and understanding of some of the fundamentals of the Indian views of Art and Artistic Appreciation in the light of Sri Aurobindo's view of the fundamentals of Indian culture. The primary source material for research will be the writings of Sri Aurobindo, the Mother, and selected traditional texts on Indian aesthetics. The author will also study closely the works of a few other notable scholars on Indian arts whose works have been referred to by Sri Aurobindo in his writings on Indian art and culture. Some other contemporary works on Indian arts and aesthetics will also be explored. Wherever necessary, the author will try to interview a few contemporary artists and art historians for insights and explanations.

The focus of the book will be on visual arts, particularly painting and sculpture, though some discussion on temple architecture will also be included. The proposed book will primarily be put together as an explanatory volume for Sri Aurobindo's original writings on Indian Art so that an interested reader can go deeper into the work of Sri Aurobindo on his or her own.

In addition to integrating and synthesising the main themes explored in Sri Aurobindo's writings on related topics, and providing wider explanations of some of the key ideas, the author also proposes to incorporate several relevant examples which will serve as



appropriate substantiation for some of the more general ideas included in the original essays of Sri Aurobindo. Wherever Sri Aurobindo has referred to some specific works of art to illustrate some of his points, the author will go deeper into those examples to help the reader gain a wider and deeper understanding of the original idea of Sri Aurobindo.

## **A Lay Reader's Guide to Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri***

**RESEARCHER: NARENDRA MURTY**

(Book project in Progress)

### **Abstract**

The book intends to give the general lay readers a TASTE of the sea of nectar that is Savitri. A devoted student of Savitri continuously for 7 years, the author started with a research question: Can I write about Savitri in a way that a general lay reader who has not read any of Sri Aurobindo's writings can understand and appreciate what is there in this mystical-spiritual masterpiece? There are countless devotees and seekers who sincerely want to learn and know about Savitri but they are daunted by its height and vastness.

For the general mass of seekers, Savitri requires interpretation and explanation. Though there have been eminent scholars who have written and spoken about Savitri, whose writings has enriched my own understanding of Savitri, the author feels that even their writings belong to a level that is beyond the reach of the general lay reader. Through this book he aspires to bridge the gap between the seeking heart and the wisdom of Savitri.

For clarity and ease of understanding instead of approaching Savitri in its totality, the author has identified 30 themes from various cantos spanning all the 12 Books of the epic poem. Some representative themes/chapters are: Human Aspiration, Divine Grace, The Problem of Pain and Suffering, The Meeting of Savitri and Satyavan, The Silence of the Mind, The Death of Satyavan, The Debate with Death etc.

The author will write commentaries inspired by the selected lines from different cantos in order to bring out the specific theme being expressed through those lines. To help the reader get into the spirit of the poem, the author's commentaries will be interwoven with the lines from the poem. To illustrate and explain the lines the author will also cite quotes from numerous other works of eminent thinkers, poets and philosophers as well as from religious/spiritual texts, stories and parables. This will help bring clarity and richness to the content. To understand and get a taste of Savitri, that is the key objective of this book project.

## SECTION 5: AWARDS AND HONOURS

### **Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture by Dr. Beloo Mehra at Jadavpur University**

**Date: January 28, 2025**

The Centre for Sri Aurobindo Studies, Department of Philosophy, Jadavpur University – an institution whose roots go back to Bengal National College of which Sri Aurobindo was the founder-principal – organizes Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture every year to commemorate this legacy. This year, Dr. Beloo Mehra, Director, BhāratShakti, Sri Aurobindo Society, was invited to deliver the 40th Sri Aurobindo Memorial lecture on 28th January, 2025. Dr. Mehra's lecture was titled, "Sri Aurobindo's Vision for a True National Education."

The Annual Sri Aurobindo Memorial Lecture has been instituted from an endowment made by Late Samar Basu of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry.

### **Literary Awards for a Book by Mr. Narendra Murty**

A book by Narendra Murty, Research Associate, BhāratShakti, SAS won prestigious awards during 2024-2025.

- *An Oak Tree in the Garden – Exploring the World of Zen* won three Best Book awards in the Non-fiction category:
  - a. LIFT Magazine Awards, April 2024
  - b. Indian Awaz Awards, August 2024
  - c. Yathakatha International Film and Literature Award, December 2024

## SECTION 6: ITEMS CHECKLIST

(based on S&T National Survey digital form): *Please populate the fields relevant to you. Add '0' when not applicable.*

Items completed	Number (2023-24)
1. New products developed:	<p>1. Ten <i>Renaissance</i> journal issues, <b>110 articles</b></p> <p>2. A new <b>quarterly periodical, <i>Renaissance Redux</i></b>, was launched in February 2025</p> <p>3. <b>FOUR Poster-exhibitions</b> researched, curated and designed. (Total posters = 170)</p> <p>4. <b>ONE 175+ panel</b> Photography Exhibition researched and curated.</p> <p>5. <b>Blogs</b> = 22</p> <p>6. Social media posters with selected quotes from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother – <b>700+</b></p> <p>7. About <b>100 reels</b> for social media.</p> <p>8. Designed <b>10 virtual flipbooks</b>.</p> <p>9. <b>40+ videos</b> for YouTube.</p>
2. Consultancy services rendered:	<p>1</p> <p>for Educational Leaders visiting from CN Vidyavihar Group of Institutions, Ahmedabad)</p>

3. Papers published in national journals:	<b>16</b>
4. Papers published in international journals:	<b>0</b>
5. Books published:	<b>5</b>
6. Book Chapters published:	<b>4</b>
7. Non-technical reports/blogs/articles published:	<b>22</b>
8. Papers presented in National conferences/seminars/symposia, etc.:	<b>16</b>
9. Papers presented in International conferences/seminars/symposia, etc.:	<b>3</b>

## **ANNEXURES**

**Copies of Published Articles and Book Chapters by Beloo Mehra**

**Copies of Published Articles by Narendra Murty**