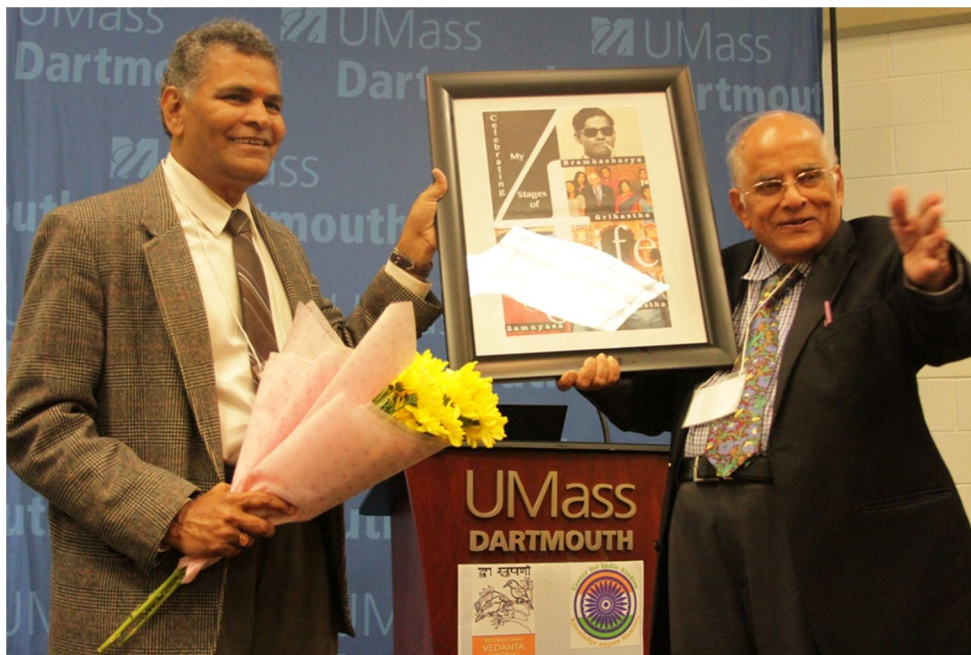


Twenty-Third International Congress of Vedanta August 10-13, 2017

On August 10-13, 2017 the Twenty-Third International Congress of Vedanta was hosted by The Center for Indic Studies, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, USA in collaboration with the Institute of Advanced Sciences, Dartmouth, USA. The inauguration session started in the morning of first day with Vedic chanting performed by Swami Yogatmananda, Vedanta Society of Providence, and Swami Atmajnanananda, Vedanta Center of Greater Washington, DC. Welcome address and introduction presented by Conference Director Prof. Sukalyan Sengupta, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth. Founding Director, Vedanta Congress Prof. S.S. Ramarao Pappu was felicitated in this session. Conference started with an inaugural lecture by Mr. Rajeev Srinivasan on “*Leveraging the Grand Dharmic Narrative for Soft Power*”. Dr. Alex Hankey, SVYASA Bangalore and Dr. Makarand Paranjape, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi were the keynote speakers during this inaugural session. They delivered their talks on “*Synthesizing Vedic and Modern Theories to Explain Cognition of Forms*” and “*Vedanta and Aesthetics*”, respectively. This session was concluded under the chairmanship of Prof. Raghwendra P. Singh, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.



Inaugural Session, 23rd International Vedanta Congress

The Vedanta Congress continues its tradition of bringing scholars of Indic traditions from India and the West together on a platform nearly from three decades. Delegates from various universities and academic institutes were participated in this event such as University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth; Miami University, Ohio; Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; Maharishi University of Management, Iowa; University of Delhi, Delhi; University of North Texas, Denton; University of Toronto, Canada; Assam University, Silchar; IIT Bombay, Mumbai; Pondicherry University, Puducherry; University of Mumbai, Mumbai; University of Maine, USA; Hindu University of America, USA; Barkatullah University, Bhopal; Institute of Advanced Studies, Dartmouth; Vedanta Society of Providence; SVYASA, Bangalore; Vedanta Center of Greater Washington, DC; Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, NJ; VASA, Canada; Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta.

At the 23rd International Vedanta Congress, a diverse group of topics were discussed, including Vedanta and Inner Sciences, Vedanta and the Environment, Vedanta and Philosophy, Modern Vedantic Seers, Social Hierarchies, Vedanta and Consciousness Studies, Relationship between Grammar and Philosophy, Vedanta and Management, Vedanta and Sciences, Vedantic Influence in Other Fields, among others. Apart from these, there were a few plenary sessions and panel discussions as well. About 60 research papers were presented during this 4-day International Conference.



Section of Audience during Conference

For the first time in the history of Vedanta Congress a debate session was held on “*Shankara’s Advaita vs. Dvaita Vedanta of Ananda Tirtha Madhvacaraya*”. In this session debaters were Mr. Jeffrey Armstrong, VASA, Canada; Prof. Adarasupally Nataraju, Assam University; Silchar, and Prof. Raghwendra P. Singh, JNU, New Delhi. “*Creative Approaches to Bhagawad Gita*” was the theme for a panel discussion. Prof. Douglas Allen, University of Maine; Mr. Ishvar Bhai Patel, North Dartmouth, MA; and Swami Yogatmananda, Vedanta Society of Providence, RI were the panellists.

Plenary talks were given by following-

- Prof. M. G. Prasad, Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, NJ on “*Universal Relevance of Vishishtadvaita Vedanta Darshana of Sri Ramanuja*”.
- Prof. Balbir Sihag, University of Massachusetts, Lowell on “*Kautilya: The True Founder of Economics*”.
- Prof. Girish Nath Jha, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi on “*Automatic Translation of Ancient Sanskrit manuscripts - Roadblocks for Human Language Technology*”.
- Prof. Douglas Allen, University of Maine on “*Is Gandhi a Vedantist?*”
- Prof. Krishnamurti Ramasubramanian, IIT Bombay on “*Conception of Space and Time in Vedanta and Physical Sciences*”.
- Prof. Narayanan Komerath, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta on “*A Search for the Truth: Representing Sanatan Dharma to a Global Audience*”.



Academic Sessions and Panel Discussions during Conference

The active participation of young researchers from different Indian universities especially from Jawaharlal Nehru University was the highlight of this International Conference. Attending the Congress was a thrilling experience for them. Also, this reflects the interest of youth in Vedanta, Yoga and Ayurveda even in today's modern era.



Youth Participation in this 4-day International Conference

In addition, a cultural program was planned for the delegates of the conference. That includes an Indian music concert and a short drama. Performers were Shuchita Rao, Radha Rao, Christopher Pereji, Rishab Mathur, Bhima Karma, Shekhar Shastri, Koyel Ghosal and Rajesh Pai. Experiencing Indian arts on foreign land was indeed mesmerizing for the delegates.



Cultural Evening organized during 23rd International Vedanta Congress

In the evening of 3rd day of congress, valedictory session was held. Valedictory address was given by Prof. Bal Ram Singh, Director of Institute of Advanced Sciences. He emphasized that need of the time is to make Vedantic knowledge practical for modern times. Prof. Sukalyan Sengupta of the Center for Indic Studies, University of Massachusetts presented vote of thanks to all the delegates and members of organising & program committees. On the last day of conference, a public discussion session was initiated to take up the suggestions and observations of both learned and young participants of this prestigious conference. After that session a tour to Boston was organised by organisers.



Group of Delegates attended 23rd International Vedanta Congress

The Congress was coordinated by Professor Sukalyan Sengupta of the Center for Indic Studies, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth; Professor Bal Ram Singh, Director, Institute of Advanced Sciences, Dartmouth and Professor Raghwendra Pratap Singh, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. In addition to the support from the three above organizing institutions, the Congress was sponsored by some foundations like Infinity Foundation, Princeton, NJ; Dharma Civilization Foundation, Maryada Foundation; Advaita Academy and people like Mr. Sashi Kejriwal, Mr. Ishvar Bhai Patel, Mr. Mahesh Patel & Dr. Tushar Patel. The Vedanta Congress convenes every two years alternating between the United States and India. The next Congress will be held in the India in 2019.

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