



VAAK – Vilasa

वाक् – विलास

A newsletter of the Virtual Academy of Ancient Knowledge Systems

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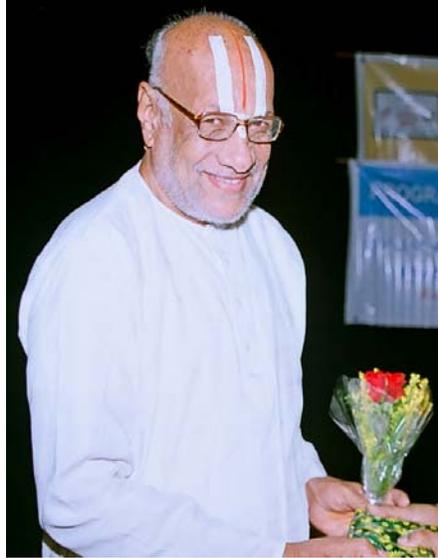
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**VAAK— Virtual Academy of
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is a unit of**



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A message from the Editor-in-Chief



It gives me great pleasure to reach out to all the readers of 'VAAK - Vilasa' and express my happiness at the commencement of VAAK and its newsletter. VAAK — which is the Virtual Academy of Ancient Knowledge systems — is the out come of a long standing desire of many scholars and I do hope that it will serve as a platform for sharing knowledge on the ancient Indian knowledge systems and bridging it with the modern science & technology.

One might very well ask, why is this? There is a wide spread lack of information among people about the ancient treatises on science and technology produced by our forefathers.

A general impression is that ancient works are about philosophy or literature and any thing that is connected with science or technology has come to us from west. The matter is complicated further by the fact that these works are in Sanskrit or such other ancient languages, which one cannot easily understand. One who is proficient in Sanskrit is unfortunately not well informed about science & technology and the modern student of science & technology does not know Sanskrit. Also, what little information we have about ancient science or technology is more in the nature of a legend and not backed by proper validation. The Samskriti Foundation recently did a research project of classifying and digitally cataloguing over 8000 ancient Indian manuscripts. All these pertain to science & technology and cover nearly 40 different domains. This is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg. The total number of manuscripts on Science & Technology available all over our country is very conservatively estimated to be more than one lakh. Imagine, if all these were to be accessed, what a gold mine of information we would have with us?

This is not to gloat about our past and revel in our past glory. The need of the hour is to bridge this ancient knowledge with modern Science & Technology and bring out the best of both worlds for the benefit of the mankind. VAAK will act as a platform to share this knowledge, and bridge it with our latest technology. It will promote and actively involve itself with research in these areas and also promote learning in these areas through academic courses.

'VAAK — Vilasa' will bring you the developments in the activities of VAAK, its research projects and act as a platform for you to share your knowledge, thoughts and research findings with others through its columns.

Best wishes,

M.A.Lakshmithathachar

Sanskriti Foundation

Sanskriti Foundation is a Public Trust engaged in the activity of preservation and propagation of Cultural and Scientific Heritage of India. It has brought out several publications in the form of books, Audio CDs and Interactive Multimedia Computer CDs on various aspects of Indian cultural heritage, Manuscriptology and so on. The Foundation has embarked on a journey of re-establishing the moral and spiritual values through its innovative and pioneering programmes aimed at promoting improvement in the quality of life through living in harmony with nature and upholding the path of righteousness.

Sanskriti Foundation offers various services like conducting courses in Sanskrit and Shastras, mining information on various topics like Aeronautics, Ayurveda, Music, Linguistics and so on from ancient Indian texts, translation of Sanskrit into English / Indian languages and the vice versa, publication of books, CDs, and research projects associated with Indian culture and heritage.

Under the able guidance of Prof. M.A. Lakshmithathachar, an eminent scholar of Sanskrit with many years of experience in research covering a wide range of topics, Sanskriti Foundation has organized many conferences / seminars / festivals of Sanskrit, Ancient Indian Knowledge Systems and Manuscriptology etc., very successfully.

In one such National Sanskrit Festival held recently at Bangalore, eminent scholars and participants felt the need to establish a virtual academy which would have a global access and would promote the awareness, study and research on Ancient Indian Knowledge systems. They further felt that Sanskriti Foundation which has been involved in similar activities for over a decade now should take the lead in creating such an academy.

Responding to this need expressed by many, Sanskriti Foundation has established Virtual Academy of Ancient Knowledge systems (VAAK) which will be devoted to promoting awareness, offering academic courses and involve itself in research in the area of ancient Indian knowledge systems.

The vision

To bring the best of both worlds by bridging the modern technology with ancient Indian knowledge systems.

सर्वेपि सुखिनः सन्तु सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु माकश्चित् दुःखभाग्यवेत् ॥

The Mission

To make the ancient wisdom of India available to all through a web based resource centre where one can access such information, study it and conduct research on it.

The Organization

VAAK is an independent unit under the umbrella of Sanskriti Foundation which is a Registered Public Trust having its head quarters at Mysore. VAAK has an Advisory Board of Experts and its affairs are managed by an Executive Committee consisting of the following members:

Prof. M.A.Lakshmithathachar	Patron
Dr.E.S.Dwarakadasa	Chairman
Dr.V. V. Bhat, IAS	Co-Chairman
M.A.N. Prasad	Secretary
Dr. M.A.R.Iyengar	Member
M.A. Parthasarathy	Member

Membership

VAAK invites all scientists, scholars, professionals and those interested in the ancient Indian knowledge systems to become members of VAAK and support its activities. VAAK will bring out periodically its newsletter 'VAAK – Vilasa' which will be mailed to all members and keep them posted of its activities. Membership subscription is a one time payment of Rs.2,000/- (Two Thousand only) for individuals and Rs.10,000/- (Ten Thousand only) for institutions. For Individuals residing outside India, the membership fee will be US \$ 50 and the Institutional membership will be US \$ 250.

Academic Courses

In due course of time, VAAK intends to offer courses in the following:

- Philosophy
- Indigenous Science & Technology
- Indian arts & Culture
- Indian literature, and
- Many Trans-disciplinary and Multidisciplinary topics

Seminars, Conferences, Participatory Programs

VAAK will organize programs to build awareness in the minds of the public about the rich heritage of ancient Indian knowledge systems we have inherited. Members of VAAK could actively participate in these events.

Research

It gives us great pleasure to inform you that VAAK has entered into a tie up with Sri Venkateshwara College of Engineering (SVCE) at Yelahanka, Bangalore, for establishing a research centre known as "Centre for Advanced Research in Technology" (CART). This research centre will take up research projects based on ancient Indian Knowledge systems and integrate them with modern technology.

Membership of VAAK

Membership application form of VAAK can be downloaded from _____ .
Kindly submit the application duly filled, on line at _____ .

Two Organizations come together - CART inaugurated

Sri Venkateshwara College of Engineering (SVCE) is a premier educational institution devoted to education in Engineering and Management and offers graduate and post graduate courses. Established in 2001, this institution is affiliated to VTU, Belgaum and is approved by AICTE, New Delhi. It is an ISO 9001:2008 institution.

Vision: To provide and promote intellectual competence through best of infrastructure facilities and qualified, educated and dedicated faculty for the students to face the challenges for a dream career during the critical phase. The Institute shall produce graduates ethical, caring, life-long learners; who will provide quality service for the ever growing regional, national and global industry need.

Mission: To be a premier Institution in the country for integrative educational innovation and an inter-professional technical and managerial development that utilizes advanced technology, state-of-the-art facilities to enable them to be honorable Engineers and Managers.

Managed by a Board with good vision, the institution aims to provide and promote intellectual competence of its students by offering them the best infrastructure facilities and a highly qualified and dedicated faculty. They have created state of the art facilities at their institution and their mission is to be the premier institution in the country for an integrative educational innovation.

The backbone of Sri Venkateshwara Education Society:

Chairman:	Sri V. Muniyappa
Chief Executive Director:	Dr. M. Shashidhar
Principal:	Dr. C. Prabhakar Reddy
Directors:	Dr. M. Sridhar
	Dr. Ravi Kumar
	Smt. K .M. Rathanamma
	Sri. L. Ravindra

SVCE strives to be recognized as a centre of excellence for learning in Engineering, Technology and Management. To achieve this, the Institute is committed to:

- Continuous improvement of the quality of education and maintaining the Institution as an effective human resource development organization under all changing environment.
- Contributing to the Nation and beyond, through the state-of-the-art technology and producing vibrant technocrats and managers who are ever willing to work to the spirit of challenge and innovation with high ethical values and professional standards.

The Campus: The college campus is located at Chikakajala, Vidyanagar about 22 kms from Bangalore on the National Highway No.7. The college is approved by AICTE, New Delhi and affiliated to VTU Belgaum. The International Airport at Devanahalli is 6 km away from the campus.

Understanding that the best of coaching and attention will lead to optimal benefit only when taught in a conducive environment, basic facilities in the campus have been created with lot of thought and care.



To integrate information system technology into the present curriculum, the college is equipped with Internet connectivity, through Wi-Fi system connecting students to the world. The faculty and the students are allowed to surf the net free of cost.

Sri Venkateshwara College of Engineering is a leader in technical education and in the development of ideas that shape the world's understanding of engineers. We are proud of our position as the top academic college of engineering and proud of the people who make it so - our students, faculty, staff and the management.

Centre for Advanced Research on Technology (CART)

Sri Venkateshwara College of Engineering was desirous of establishing a school of Indigenous science and technology and having identified Samskriti Foundation and VAAK as an ideal partner who can complement them with the inputs in terms of their knowledge and rich experience, have come together to establish a research centre at SVCE, Yelahanka, Bangalore. This research centre, known as **Centre for Advanced Research on Technology (CART)** is perhaps the first research organization established by an educational institution that will be conducting research based on ancient Indian knowledge systems.

This arrangement will benefit both the organizations.

As a well-established educational institution conducting courses in Engineering, SVCE will be establishing a research facility in its institution and will be the pioneer among educational institutions to take up research in the area of ancient Indian knowledge systems on science and technology. It will also be able to offer post graduate courses and research facility in this area to its students. VAAK which is a unit of Samskruti Foundation established to generate a greater interest in the science & technology prevalent in the ancient period will get an academic base and a good infrastructure which will allow it to undertake research work on the ancient science and technology and get the findings in them validated and adapted into the modern technology systems. Thus, the arrangement will provide opportunities for both the organizations to grow and pursue their objectives.

To mark the coming together of these two institutions, a function was held at SVCE and both the organizations signed a Memorandum of Understanding. The **Secretary of Sri Venkateshwara group of Institutions, Dr. M. Shashidhar**, who presided over the function addressed the gathering and gave an overview of the vision with which two organizations have come together and what their mission is.



Dr. E.S. Dwarakadasa of VAAK and Dr.M. Shashidhar of SVCE exchanging the MoU signed by the two organizations

This was followed by **members of VAAK**, namely **Prof M.A. Lakshmithathachar, Dr. E.S. Dwarakadasa, Dr.M.A.R. Iyengar, Dr.V.V.Bhat and M.A.N.Prasad** briefly sharing their views on the role of the CART.

Dr. Prabhakara Reddy thanked both the organizations for providing the research facility and expressed his confidence that the research institution would produce good results.

To begin with CART would take up research in the field of **metallurgy, Information Technology and water treatment**. Gradually, in due course of time, other areas may get added on.

Classification and cataloguing of 8500 ancient Indian manuscripts

A research project by Samskriti Foundation
About the Project

The Indian Scientific heritage has been extremely productive. India has one of the largest collections of Scientific manuscripts of any civilization in the world. While there is no precise enumeration of the number of manuscripts, estimates vary widely, putting it in the region of 20000 to 100,000 manuscripts. Several of these manuscripts are now in institutions such as – Oriental Manuscripts Libraries, Indological Research Institutions, Universities, Mutts and Archives and many are still in private collections. Manuscripts are also available in foreign libraries in U.K., France, Germany & USA and in Asian countries. Unfortunately there is no detailed and accurate data about the number, extent and distribution of the Scientific manuscripts of India. The presently available published Scientific texts, which are in contemporary use, represent less than 2% of the Scientific literature that is available in the form of manuscripts.

The project, undertaken by the Samskriti Foundation, Mysore, was to prepare a detailed bibliography of manuscripts dealing with Science and technology. It is a pioneering project that has search facilities to search, identify and locate such manuscripts and intends to include books also in due course of time. All those interested in exploring or trying to know more about the rich tradition of science and technology of Ancient India are welcome to access this site not only to enrich their knowledge but also to contribute the invaluable knowledge housed in the texts of yore to the public domain. Under the project, till date, more than 8000 manuscripts pertaining to about 50 different and varied domains of science and technology have been electronically catalogued and are available in a searchable form. The search could be based on various criteria like author, name of the work, Institution in which the manuscript exists and so on. A physical report too of the same has been generated and is being submitted to the Govt. of India which graciously sponsored the Project.

- Dr.M.A.Alwar, Samskriti Foundation



Some photographs taken on the occasion of signing of MoU between VAAK and SVCE