

# THE YOUTH DISCOURSE

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## **ADVISORS**

Prof. Aditya Maheshwari,  
IIM Indore

Prof. Debayan Sarkar,  
IIT Indore

## **TEAM**

**Coordinator**  
Divy Dhanotiya

**Editors**  
Shivam Soni  
Aditya Sundwa

**Communication**  
Gyaneshwar Mishra

**Design**  
Sudeeksha Suman



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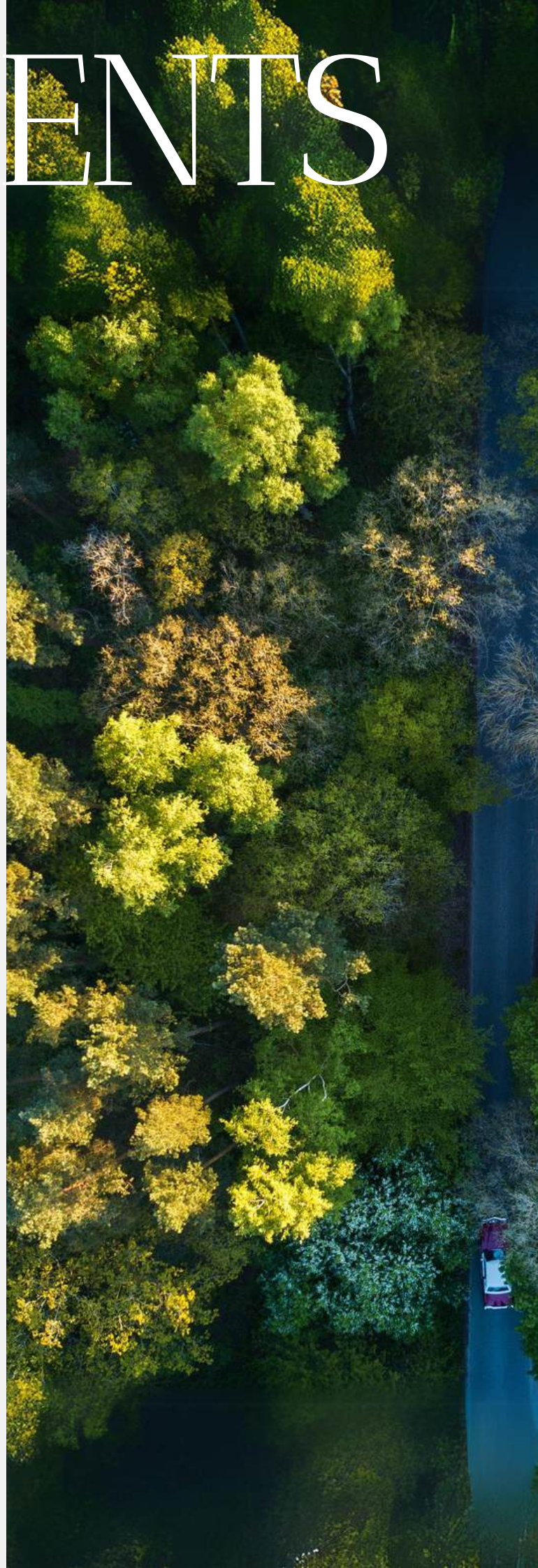
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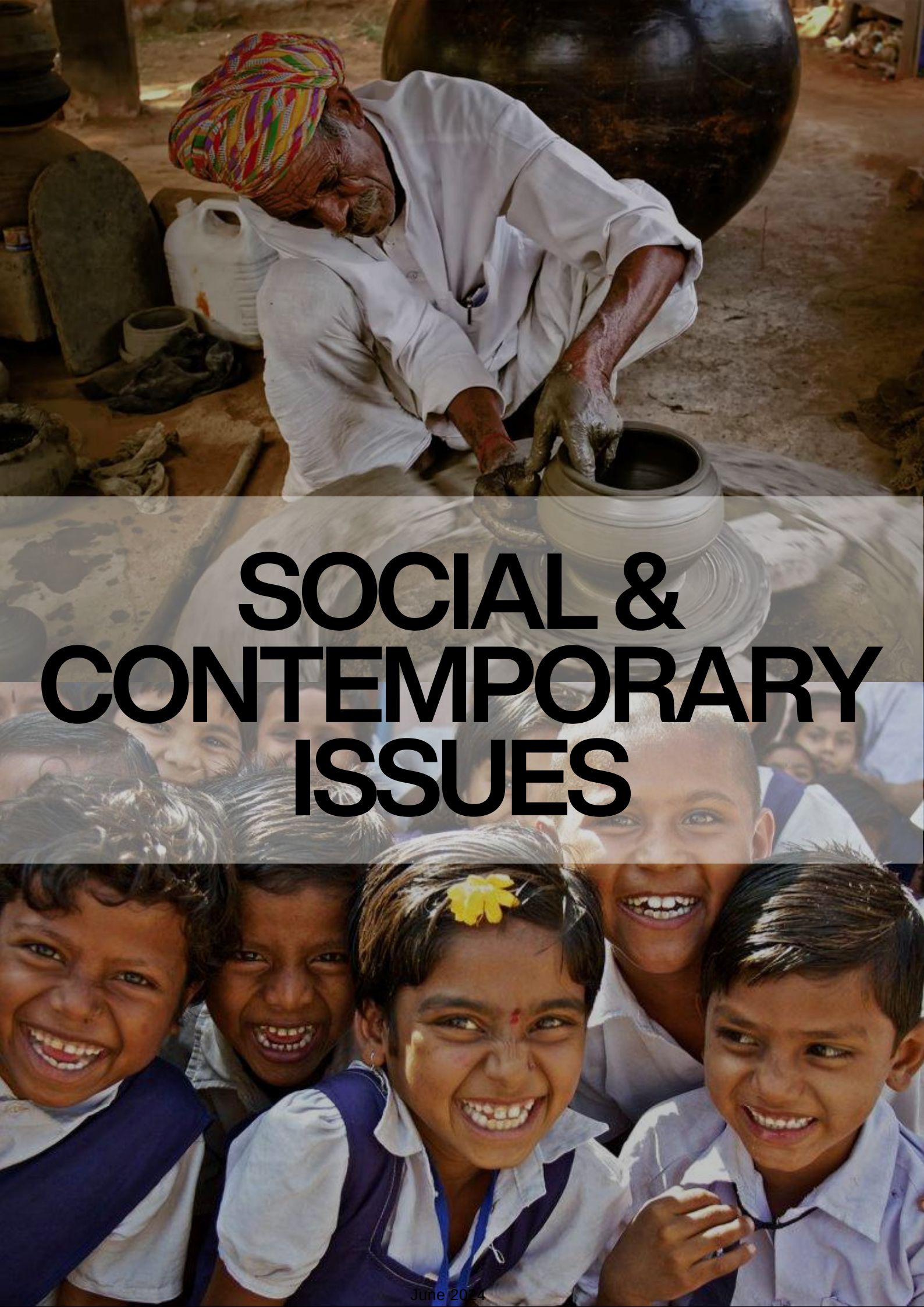
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# **SOCIAL & CONTEMPORARY ISSUES**



# Sustainable Packaging and Water Quality Standards for Packaged Drinking Water

~Rahul Chauhan  
phd1901171006@iiti.ac.in



## Bottled Water's Nanoplastic Concern: 1 Liter Holds Upto 2,50,000 Pieces, Posing Cell Invasion Potential

### Article in Gist

- **Microplastics and Leaching Risks:** Packaged water poses health and environmental risks due to microplastics and chemical leaching.
- **Sustainable Standards Needed:** Establishing contaminant limits and eco-friendly packaging standards is essential.
- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Government, industry, and consumers must work together for better regulation and awareness.
- **Public Awareness and Education:** Increasing consumer knowledge is crucial for informed choices and demand for safer practices.

*Any basic Resource Industry works by first diminishing the basic resource that you did not value while letting it go for free or letting it get polluted, like the water industry by destroying water, the health industry by destroying health, and you can go on adding it...*

Multifaceted challenges associated with the production, distribution, and consumption of packaged drinking water extend beyond the specific concern of microplastics or nanoplastics. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach involving industry standards, regulatory oversight,

sustainable practices, and consumer education.

I here try to propose some points that can help in standardizing the packaged drinking water quality as well as why it is necessary for all (not just humans) thriving on this planet. And if you all can watch the documentary movie "Tapped" released in 2009, that will be more relatable audio visually. I here focus on what this documentary misses in today's time and what needs to be done.

My aims here :

- Public Awareness and Consumer Protection.
- Public Participation and Consultation.
- Governments involve stakeholders in regulatory development through consultations.

These proposed standards aim to address environmental sustainability, water quality, and health concerns in the production and distribution of packaged drinking water.

It includes attention to eco-friendly packaging materials, water sourcing, treatment processes, and transparent labelling to promote regulatory compliance while fostering a more sustainable and consumer-conscious approach in the packaged drinking water sector with responsible industry practices.

**The only way by which plastics (pollutants) enter your body and are retained is by food and water (and air in the future too via dioxins, etc). So, this article is a small step to make you conscious.**

Challenges with packaged drinking water include:

**Microplastic and Nanoplastic Contamination:**

Microplastics (less than 0.5mm) and nanoplastics (less than 100nm) can contaminate water during packaging and may penetrate tissues, raising significant health concerns like infertility, etc.

**Packaging Material Leaching:**

Plastic packaging materials may release harmful chemicals into water, compromising safety and quality. Leaching is more likely under conditions like exposure to heat or sunlight and Bharat is a sub-tropical country.

**Environmental Impact:**

Improper plastic disposal contributes to pollution, with plastic waste breaking down into microplastics, harming ecosystems. Environmental degradation, harm to aquatic life, and bioaccumulation are major concerns.

**Limited Filtration Technologies:**

Traditional water treatment may not effectively remove microplastics, allowing persistence in water supplies, particularly of nanoplastics.

**Consumer Awareness:**

Lack of awareness hinders informed decisions, leading to increased exposure to plastic contaminants.

**Bacterial, Viral, and Chemical Contamination:**

Improper sanitation during bottling, inadequate

monitoring and industrial pollutants can introduce harmful substances into water.

**Flavor and Odor Issues:**

Packaging materials or water sources may cause unpleasant tastes or odours, removing the water consumption mindset.

**Packaging Waste and Recycling Challenges:**

Non-biodegradable packaging contributes to environmental pollution, with challenges in disposal and recycling.

**False Marketing Claims:**

Misleading advertising about water purity may deceive consumers and erode trust in the industry.



**Limited Access to Clean Water:**

In regions with limited clean water access, dependence on packaged water may have economic and environmental consequences, like in Maldives.

**Supply Chain Sustainability:**

Unsustainable water sourcing, energy-intensive production, and single-use plastics contribute to environmental degradation.

**Groundwater Depletion:**

Excessive water extraction for bottling depletes groundwater, impacts ecosystems, and agriculture, and exacerbates water scarcity.

**Carbon Footprint:**

High energy consumption in production and transportation contributes to a significant carbon footprint, affecting climate change.

**Chemical Additives in Bottled Water:**

Additives with potential health implications and contribute to environmental pollution.

**Eutrophication from Nutrient Runoff:**

Nutrient and effluent runoff from bottled water facilities may contribute to eutrophication, impacting water bodies and aquatic ecosystems.

now for all packaged materials like shopping parcels, etc except drinking water, due to the poor holding capacity of the material or the other materials being too costly to use on a large scale like thermoplastics, glass, ceramics, etc.

First of all, it is better to avoid packaged drinking water, but if the situation still persists, then standardizing can be an alternative or changing with better-researched packaging material. Standardization of limits for various contaminants in packaged drinking water can play a crucial role in addressing the identified challenges related to environmental and human health. Here's how we can do it:

**a. Quality Standards for Contaminants:**

Establish standardized limits for microplastics, nanoplastics, and contaminants to ensure water quality meets specific standards.

**b. Controlled Chemical Additives:** Set limits on types and amounts of chemical additives in packaging materials to prevent harmful leaching into water.

**c. Sustainable Production Standards:**

Implement standards for energy use and carbon emissions in production and transportation to encourage sustainable practices.

**d. Groundwater Extraction Limits:**

Standardize limits on groundwater extraction to prevent overexploitation of local water sources for bottled water production.

**e. Eco-friendly Packaging Standards:**

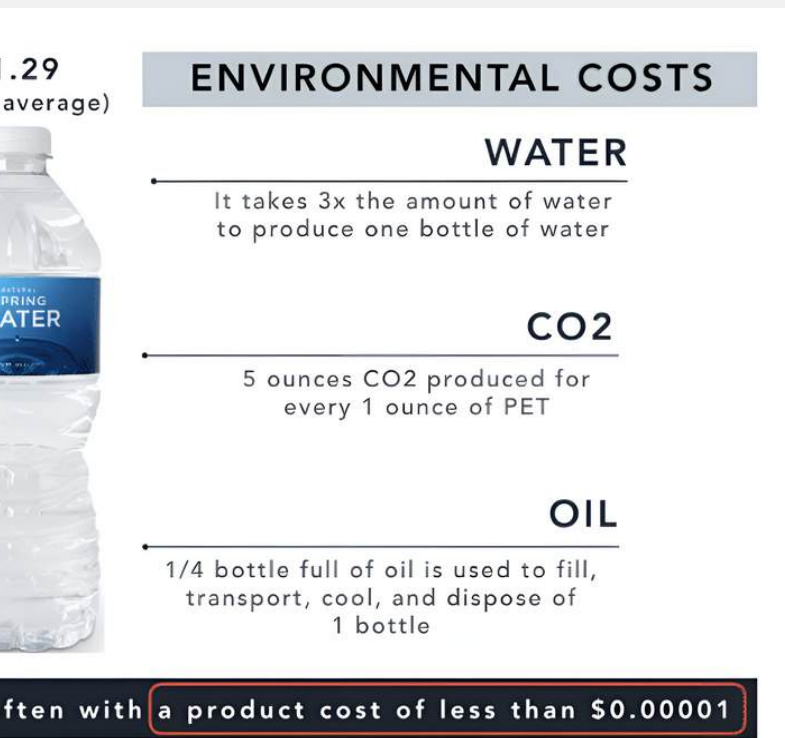
Set standards for packaging materials' type and recyclability to promote the use of environmentally friendly alternatives.

**f. Nutrient Runoff Prevention:**

Implement limits on nutrient runoff from bottled water facilities to prevent eutrophication in water bodies.

**g. Land Use and Habitat Protection:**

Standardize limits on land use and habitat

**Land Use and Habitat Disruption:**

Bottling facilities may disrupt natural habitats, affecting biodiversity and potentially human health because of the techniques involved.

**Emerging Contaminants and Pharmaceuticals:**

Packaged water may contain emerging contaminants and pharmaceutical residues that are drug-resistant, raising health concerns.

We have packaging material standards available



disruption by bottling facilities to maintain ecological balance.

**h. Regular Monitoring for Emerging Contaminants:** Standardized limits require ongoing monitoring for emerging contaminants and pharmaceutical residues, adapting to evolving concerns.

**i. Transparent Labeling and Consumer Confidence:** Standardized limits and transparent labelling build consumer confidence by providing clear information on the quality and safety of packaged drinking water.

As of January 2022, international standards for contaminants in packaged drinking water vary. Key organizations like the WHO and the U.S. EPA set limits for microbial contaminants and chemicals, while packaging material leaching falls under food contact material standards regulated by food safety authorities.

Taste and odour limits are subjective, and regulations on sustainable water use and extraction differ globally. International guidelines, such as the UN Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) framework and ISO 14046, support sustainable production and environmental responsibility. Initiatives like the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy Global Commitment address plastic pollution. WHO and national regulations set limits for chemical additives, with guidelines for nutrient levels outlined regionally or nationally.

Standardizing limits for microplastics and nanoplastics addresses health concerns and promotes sustainability, driving the adoption of eco-friendly packaging. Standards for advanced water filtration technologies align with sustainability goals. Life cycle assessment standards help identify environmental hotspots, reducing overall impact. Standardization supports reducing single-use plastics, promoting transparent labelling, and enhancing consumer awareness.

Industry collaboration is encouraged by sharing best practices and research on microplastics.



Standardization promotes climate-friendly packaging, reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Establishing standards encourages research and innovation, helping companies meet sustainability benchmarks and address climate change. Implementing these standards supports existing regulatory frameworks and facilitates integration into current practices.

Related UN SDG(s) proposed to be addressed are particularly relevant to the issue discussed:

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production





SDG 13: Climate Action

SDG 14: Life Below Water

SDG 15: Life on Land

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals:  
Collaborative efforts among governments, businesses, and civil society to establish and enforce standards, share best practices, and promote sustainable solutions contribute to achieving the goal of partnerships for sustainable development.

Key stakeholders of this proposal include:

- Government Regulatory Bodies
- Water Bottling Companies

- Consumers: transparent labelling and adherence to standards empower them to make informed choices about packaged drinking water products.
- Research and Academic Institutions: for studies, assessments, and policy recommendations in environmental science, public health, and water quality research.
- International Organizations: development of global standards for the packaged drinking water industry.
- Quality Assurance and Certification Bodies: Establish criteria for certification processes.
- Supply Chain Partners: Align practices with industry requirements, including suppliers of raw materials and manufacturers of packaging materials.
- Healthcare Professionals: Understand and communicate the potential health impacts.

It can be understood that the industry is particularly not reporting this issue from their side due to less public awareness in terms of their consumer rights, otherwise, they would have thought of changing the packaging material, mechanism of disposal, and need for quality and biodegradability in choosing the materials. Segregation and Disposal should come under CSR activities for that as soon as possible. We need to understand that there might be a solution to nanoplastics even, but not to the leaching of contaminants, and let us focus before nano starts to leach.





A full-page photograph of two hikers walking away from the camera on a rocky mountain trail. The hiker in the foreground is wearing a grey jacket, dark pants, and a large grey backpack with blue straps. The hiker behind is wearing a blue jacket, grey pants, and a wide-brimmed hat. They are walking on a dirt path with some snow patches. In the background, there are steep, rocky mountain slopes with patches of snow and a large, snow-capped mountain peak under a cloudy sky. A semi-transparent grey horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the word "CHOICES" in large, bold, black capital letters.

# CHOICES

June 2024





# How working with a Student Organization changed the Course of My Life

~Ujwal Masane  
ujwalmasane772@gmail.com

## Article in Gist

- **Pandemic Volunteering:** Joined ABVP during COVID-19, inspired by volunteer efforts.
- **Empowerment and Leadership:** Gained confidence, founded an NGO, and pursued social work.
- **Organizational Impact:** ABVP's activities, workshops, and support transformed my perspective.
- **Community and Friendship:** Built lasting relationships, emphasizing collective service and growth.

With the rise in COVID-19 cases in India, the blazingly hot summer of 2020 was a tough segment for a nation with over 140 crores of population. All the competitive exams were put on hold, people engaged in the service sector were confined to their homes, small and large-scale businesses were at stake, and in the meantime, the most crucifying conditions were encountered by workers, laborers, and pheasants. There were migrations all over India. Workers and laborers deprived of public

transportation due to the 21-day Janta lockdown deployed by the prime minister used all the available means to return to their hometowns from large cities, as the glorified cities were not capable enough now to bolster up their basic need of nourishment. Railways and roadways were overcrowded, and airways were never a poor man's cup of tea. There was complete unrest over all the mechanisms of the government, be they medical, administrative, or transportation.

During all this hoopla, I also went to the railway station to receive my elder brother, as he also returned to our hometown as his firm allotted him 'work from home' too. I never knew my visit to the railway station would be life-altering. Amidst the intense heat waves, several volunteers distributed masks, food packets, and water bottles to all the helpless passengers.



I was just so fascinated by their generous act and also by a sense of deep gratitude immersed in my consciousness. I wanted to help them with their task but was too shy to ask them. I chose to inaudibly leave.

While my JEE exam was also postponed due to the pandemic, I was seamlessly scrolling social media all day round, and while scrolling, a message popped up on my Instagram by one of my friends asking me to volunteer to help them distribute food packets at the government hospital. I reacted affirmatively and joined him. At the hospital, I helped the volunteers distribute the food packets, and they were the same volunteers who did the noble cause at the railway station. This time, I asked them about their cause and their organization, and there I acquired this golden opportunity to get acquainted with Resp. *Shivesh Ji Hargode*, our then city convenor of *Akhil Bharatiya Vidartha Parishad (ABVP)*. I met him, and he invited me to the '*Baithak*' that was going to take place tomorrow at the ABVP office in Wardha.

The next day, I went to the '*Baithak*', which was initiated with '*ABVP Parishad Geet*'. We all sang the song, which filled us with the utmost enthusiasm. I felt great with the aura and atmosphere of the space; everything was new to me, but it just felt like I was made to be here by the divine entities. Later, *Shivesh Ji* asked all of us to introduce ourselves. I was new, so I was meant to introduce myself first. I aptly did. After the introduction, we discussed several issues in our near surroundings and brainstormed solutions to them. I was overwhelmed, as I was in the very initial phase of my youth, full of energy and enthusiasm. Moreover, seeing my energy being utilized for something this productive, my wisdom soared.

In 2020–21, during this entire span of my volunteering with ABVP amid all the waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, I developed the sense that maybe this is my calling—service to society and to the people of my nation. On January 12, 2021, I had the fortune to meet Vidarbha State SFS (Student for Seva) conveyor Resp.



Durgesh ji Sathwane on the occasion of National Youth Day. He was called upon as the chief guest in an orphanage where this programme was being conducted by ABVP. I was all ears while he was delivering his speech, and he also introduced himself as a PhD scholar pursuing his PhD in social work. The echoes from my inner mind suggested that I receive counsel from him regarding my dilemma. This day was important for me too, because the Karyakartas insisted that I deliver the vote of thanks, and that was when I realized that I am not just good but an excellent orator too. After the event, I met with Durgesh Ji and told him that I also wanted to do something in the field of social work. I told him that I wanted to open a youth NGO of my own. I was too nervous about opening an NGO of my own at the tender age of 19. He relieved me by making me realize that there's no age to serve society. He explained to me the legalities of opening an NGO. Finally, on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi ji, on October 2, 2021, I started an NGO named '*Basements Social Forum*'.





On both fronts, I was socially active in serving people. As an engineering student now, I was given the daitva of 'Tantra Shikshan Vikas Karya(TSVK i.e., position, but rather a daitva, i.e., responsibility.

Established in 1949, I always wondered how ABVP kept itself inclined and connected with the youth of the nation and also emerged as the world's largest student organization. My doubts were clarified when I attended Zilla karyashala, i.e., the district workshop for the karyakartas of the district. Along with such workshops, ABVP also conducts district, state, and national-level Adhiveshans, i.e., conferences, which consist of many knowledgeable sessions, discussions, and various activities that are largely responsible for keeping the organizational roots strong and updated to date.

Over time, over the events, protests against various injustices against the students, senate elections, celebrations over national achievements such as *Chandrayaan-3*, attending sessions, and experiencing

nationalism, my timid soul saw a transformation. Alongside, my NGO also thrived by being one of the biggest NGOs in central India. I was more vocal about national issues, issues of society, and issues of the students.

ABVP has many dimensions, which are called *Aayams*. SFD (Student for Development) is for students interested in leadership; SFS (Student for Seva) is for students interested in social works; RKM (Rashtriya Kala Manch) is for students interested in the arts; Medivision is for medical field students; Agrivision is for agriculture field students; Think India is for students studying in national universities; and WOSY (World Organisation of Students and Youth) is for the wellbeing of international students. ABVP got everyone, every student covered; no student can face any injustice with ABVP being their aide.

The members of an organization are the real face of the organization. With the span, my associate karyakartas of ABVP didn't just become my lifelong friends; rather, they became a family. There was not just a fruitful bond between me and them, but also a beautiful bond between them and my parents. With our countless baithaks and discussions at the karyakarta's place, the parents of the karyakarta also get well acquainted with the fact that their ward is in a safe space.

A life lived for others, for the nation, is a life worth living. With millions of people taking birth and millions of departing souls every second, ABVP taught us all to make our lives count through our service to the nation and to society. ABVP taught us how a persona can become eternal just by his thoughts and their respective actions for humanity. 75 years of service to mankind, and with the existence of ABVP in our *Bharat*, the youth of this nation are flourishing and can witness themselves as changed and proud citizens of this great nation.



# Embracing Yoga for Holistic Wellness

~Sampada Maheshwari  
sampadamaheshwari@gmail.com

## Article in Gist

- **Personal Journey:** Started yoga young, deepened during COVID-19, became a teacher.
- **Global Impact:** Yoga's worldwide popularity promotes health and unity.
- **Transformative Experiences:** Witnessed personal and student growth in strength and mental health.
- **Cultural Adaptation:** Adapting traditional yoga to new styles and environments.

My yoga adventure began as a youngster when my parents practically pushed me to practice yoga during summer breaks. Then, after COVID-19, I casually enrolled in a Master of Arts in Yoga with my mother when I was working from home and she wanted some company. Little did I know that it would become a huge part of my life. Initially, my attention was fascinated by the Bhagavad Gita's teachings, as well as the philosophy and science of yoga. One thing that stayed with me is that Bhagavad Gita teaches us how to live life and we should read it when we are young and move towards a beautiful life – a life full of peace, peace amidst chaos.

A few months before moving to the UK to follow my dream of becoming a sports nutritionist, I visited Rishikesh - the yoga capital of the world. There, I learnt about the importance of having a sync between mind and body, which resulted in a tremendous improvement in my strength and flexibility. I have carried that experience with me ever since as the best few days of my life, the energy of that place, the people, the culture and the peaceful nights near the river Ganga were pure bliss that I experienced. Towards the end of my masters, I began teaching yoga, and I've been observing its effect not just on myself but also on my students, with a significant improvement in their mental health, perspective towards self, a positive attitude towards life and overall well-being.

The yoga culture in the UK and across the globe has developed exponentially, becoming an important part of many people's lives. Globally, yoga has surpassed cultural boundaries, becoming a unifying practice that promotes health, peace, and harmony. Be it in bustling cities or serene countryside retreats,



yoga studios and communities are flourishing, offering a haven for people looking for balance and inner peace. I feel proud as an Indian to see yoga being adapted globally and the innovation with styles by different people, which further enriches its universal appeal and benefits.

Puppy yoga was an intriguing workshop I attended, where people practice yoga poses while being joined by energetic dogs. This new approach makes the sessions more enjoyable and also enhances the therapeutic benefits of yoga by reducing stress and increasing feelings of joy and relaxation.

I am thankful to my mother for dragging me into this and making it a part of my career as well as life. I am constantly inspired by the progress and transformations I witness in my students and in myself. My evolution as a yoga teacher has been deeply influenced by my experiences and different people I have encountered along the way. Personally I have seen people finding escape in retreats, from tragic life experiences and finding solace in a Satvik lifestyle, be it a week or fortnight the atmosphere changes and cleanses your aura. I feel blessed to have started yoga practice as a privilege and not an escape but if I can help people find mental peace, this would be my way to give back to society. I've been able to develop my teaching technique and tailor it to the level of students by teaching yoga in the UK. The styles are a bit different from what we used to do back in India but adapting is the way to go, right?!

As we celebrate International Yoga Day, let us receive the holistic approach to health and



wellness that yoga offers, with open arms, it is a day to acknowledge the multitude of benefits yoga entails. This day is not only a reminder of the importance of incorporating yoga into our daily lives but also a celebration of the unity and harmony that yoga fosters across different cultures and communities. Yoga Day serves as an opportunity for everyone to experience the transformative power of yoga, regardless of their age, gender, or fitness level. Let's use this day as a reminder to prioritize our well-being and to continue exploring the transformative power of yoga.

By weaving together my professional background and my personal journey, I hope to inspire everyone to embrace yoga for a healthier and more balanced life, and to keep learning every day because it's a long way from a yoga sadhak to a yogi!



A person with long hair tied in a braid is seen from behind, sitting in a meditative lotus position on a sandy surface. They are looking up at a vast, dark night sky filled with numerous stars and a bright, glowing nebula or galaxy structure in the center. The overall atmosphere is serene and contemplative.

# **THOUGHTS & SPIRITUALITY**



# The Saints we know, the Goddesses we don't

## Article in Gist

- **Unsung Female Figures:** Focus on Yashodhara, Yashoda, and Vishnupriya, highlighting their sacrifices and devotion.
- **Historical Context:** Their struggles reflect the broader societal norms and gender roles of their times.
- **Modern Comparisons:** Progress in women's rights is acknowledged, but persistent challenges remain.
- **Call to Action:** Encourages recognition and celebration of women's contributions, advocating for gender equality.

**Honouring the Forgotten Women Behind Divine Figures:** In the annals of history and spirituality, the memories of great guys who attained divine fame often shine brightly, revered and remembered for centuries. Yet, amidst the testimonies of their ascension, there exist the silent narratives of the ladies they left in the back. This creation seeks to illuminate the lives of three terrific ladies—Yashodhara, Yashoda, and Vishnupriya—whose unwavering devotion and quiet sacrifices diminished into the shadows as their husbands ascended to godhood. While Siddhartha Gautama became the Buddha, Lord Mahavira attained enlightenment, and Chaitanya Maha Prabhu emerged as a divine saint, their other halves traversed a direction marked via solitude, abandonment, and the pain of being forgotten. As we delve into the depths of their memories, we find not only the non-public struggles these women persisted but also the wider societal dynamics that relegated them to obscurity.

Through their biographies, we propose to shed mild on the indomitable spirit of these forgotten girls, who stood steadfast by way of their husbands' sides before being eclipsed by their divine radiance. Their memories function as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by using infinite women at some stage in history, whose contributions often cross unrecognized.

**Yashodhara, The Forgotten Consort of Enlightenment:** Yashodhara's story starts

~Rudraksh Singh Sisodia  
rudrakshsinghsisodia30@gmail.com



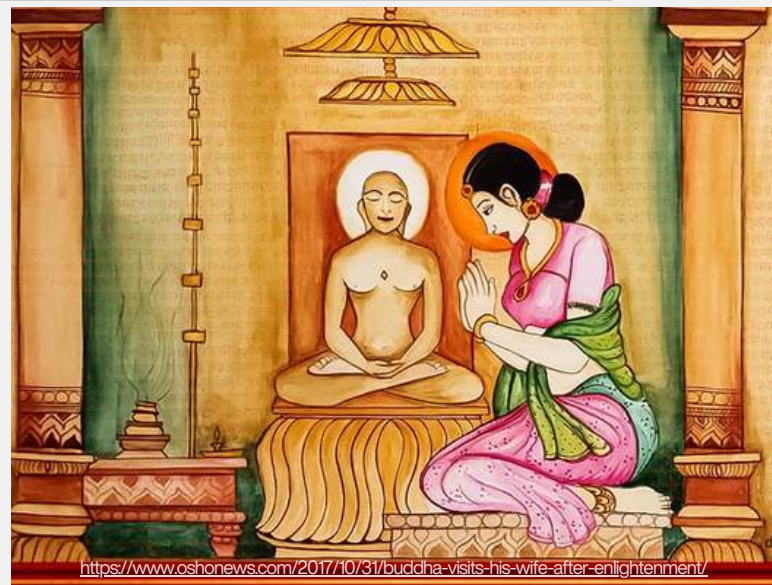
amidst the opulence of a royal palace, wherein she, a princess of unmatched beauty and grace, wed Siddhartha Gautama, a prince destined for greatness. Their union promised an existence of pleasure and prosperity, however, destiny had different plans. As Siddhartha launched into a journey of non-secular looking for, Yashodhara remained at the back, her coronary heart heavy with a load of uncertainty. The beginning of their son, Rahula, brought fleeting moments of happiness, however they were overshadowed with the aid of Siddhartha's stressed soul longing for enlightenment.

Yashodhara's days were marked by solitude, her nights through whispered prayers for her husband's go-back. The palace partitions, as soon as a sanctuary of consolation, have become a prison of longing as Siddhartha's absence stretches into years. In the annals of history, Yashodhara's tale stays shrouded in the shadows solid by using her husband's enlightenment. While Siddhartha attained the identity of Buddha and founded a profound spiritual legacy, Yashodhara's sacrifices faded into obscurity.

Yet, in the back of the veil of silence, Yashodhara's spirit remained unbroken. Her devotion to Siddhartha transcended the boundaries of time and area, a beacon of unwavering love amidst the chaos of worldly affairs. In the aftermath of Siddhartha's enlightenment, Yashodhara's adventure took a brand-new turn. Embracing her position as a mother, she nurtured Rahula with tenderness and knowledge, instilling in him the values of compassion and empathy.

As the years passed, Yashodhara's presence has become synonymous with quiet energy and resilience. Though her call may additionally have been forgotten by the hundreds, her legacy continued within the hearts of those who knew her because the steadfast partner of an extremely good soul. In the twilight of her life, Yashodhara found solace in the teachings of her husband, locating comfort within the information that their paths would someday converge all over again. And whilst that second arrived, she welcomed it with open palms, her spirit in the end reunited with Siddhartha's within the boundless expanse of enlightenment. In the stop, Yashodhara's tale serves as a testament to the energy of affection, devotion, and sacrifice. Though her name may have faded from the pages of records, her presence lingers on, a silent witness to the transformative journey of the soul.

***Yashoda: Standing in the Shadow of Enlightenment:*** In the annals of Jainism, Yashoda's tale intertwines with the non-secular odyssey of her husband, Lord Mahavira, but her very own narrative remains veiled inside the mists of time. As the consort of the twenty-fourth Tirthankara, Yashoda's life spread out in opposition to the backdrop of her husband's ascetic pastimes and eventual attainment of religious enlightenment. Born into a noble circle of relatives, Yashoda's union with Mahavira promised a life of privilege and prosperity. However, as her husband launched into his quest for reality, Yashoda's world grew to become upside down. The comforts of palace life have been changed by using the austerity of the ascetic's route, and the once-bustling halls of the royal court docket grew silent in his absence.



Yashoda's days have been marked by quiet devotion and unwavering guidance for her husband's religious endeavours. While Mahavira wandered the forests and mountains searching for enlightenment, Yashoda remained in the back of, her coronary heart heavy with longing yet steadfast in her clear-up. As Mahavira's reputation unfolded some distance and extensive, Yashoda's presence dwindled into the background. Her sacrifices and struggles had been overshadowed by her husband's divine stature, and her tale has become little more than a footnote within the annals of Jain history.

Yet, regardless of the demanding situations she confronted, Yashoda's spirit remained unbroken. Her devotion to Mahavira transcended the bounds of time and space, a testament to the long-lasting power of affection amidst the trials of mortal lifestyles. In the twilight of her lifestyle, Yashoda observed solace inside the teachings of her husband, locating meaning in the undying expertise he imparted to his fans. Though her call may have been forgotten by using the loads, her legacy endured in the hearts of those who knew her because she was the silent partner of a terrific soul.

In the quiet, Yashoda's story serves as a reminder of the quiet strength and resilience of women in the course of history. Though her call may have diminished from the pages of



records, her presence lingers on, a silent witness to the transformative journey of the soul.

**Vishnupriya, Devotion Amidst Divine Revelation:** Within the vibrant tapestry of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, Vishnupriya's story unfolds as a testimony to unwavering devotion amidst the ecstasy of divine revelation. As the consort of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, a saint whose love for Lord Krishna ignited a religious revolution, Vishnupriya's adventure mirrored the



fervour and devotion of her husband's divine challenge.

Born into a religious circle of relatives, Vishnupriya's union with Chaitanya Mahaprabhu appeared ordained via the heavens. From the instant they exchanged vows, her life became intertwined together with his, their souls certain by using a love that transcended the bounds of mortal life. As Chaitanya embarked on his assignment to spread the lessons of Bhakti, Vishnupriya remained through his facet, a steadfast partner amidst the tumult of divine revelation. Together, they traversed the sacred landscapes of Bengal, their hearts ablaze with the fireplace of devotion and the ecstasy of divine communion.

Yet, amidst the clamour of Chaitanya's divine proclamations and the blossoming of devotion to Lord Krishna, Vishnupriya's presence often diminished into the historical past. Her sacrifices and struggles have been overshadowed by her husband's radiant charisma, and her tale became little more than a footnote inside the annals of Vaishnavism. But at the back of the veil of silence, Vishnupriya's spirit remained unbroken. Her devotion to Chaitanya transcended the limits of time and space, a beacon of unwavering love amidst the chaos of mortal life. In the twilight of her existence, Vishnupriya observed solace inside the teachings of her husband, locating meaning within the undying knowledge he imparted to his followers. Though her name may additionally have been forgotten with the aid of the masses, her legacy persevered in the hearts of those who knew her because the committed associate of a brilliant saint. In the stop, Vishnupriya's story serves as a reminder of the transformative strength of affection and devotion. Though her call might also have faded from the pages of records, her presence lingers on, a silent witness to the eternal dance of divine love that animates the universe.

**Law at That Time and Now: Unravelling the Social Context:** To understand the lives of Yashodhara, Yashoda, and Vishnupriya, it's vital to contextualize their studies in the prison and societal frameworks in their respective eras, in addition to examining them in contemporary perspectives on ladies's rights and gender equality.

During the time of Yashodhara, patriarchal norms were deeply entrenched, and women's rights were frequently limited. In ancient India, ladies were anticipated to adhere to strict social roles and were regularly restricted to the domestic sphere. While there have been variations throughout areas and communities, ladies usually had little autonomy and were subject to the authority of their male spouse and children, whether fathers, husbands, or sons.

Additionally, inheritance legal guidelines commonly favoured male heirs, leaving girls with constrained entry to belongings and resources. Similarly, inside the technology of Yashoda, Jain society adhered to traditional gender roles, with girls in most cases chargeable for family obligations and toddler-rearing. While Jainism espoused principles of non-violence and equality, societal practices often fell short of those ideals, especially regarding gender discrimination. Women's participation in non-secular and social spheres became restrained, and their voices have been seldom heard in matters of governance or choice-making.

In the context of Vishnupriya's time, medieval India witnessed the emergence of numerous spiritual movements, consisting of Bhakti and Sufism, which presented alternative pathways to religious liberation. However, despite the emphasis on devotion and inclusivity inside these traditions, girls continued to face societal constraints and patriarchal structures. While Bhakti saints like Chaitanya Maha Prabhu endorsed the conventional love of God, their teachings did not usually translate into tangible improvements in ladies' rights.

Comparing those historical contexts to current perspectives shows vast development in girls's rights and gender equality. Today, felony frameworks in many countries have the funds for ladies with greater protections and opportunities than in ancient times. Laws prohibiting discrimination primarily based on gender, promoting equal pay and educational possibilities, and spotting ladies' rights to assets possession, and inheritance had been enacted in numerous components of the world. Moreover, advancements in reproductive rights, healthcare access, and political illustration have similarly empowered ladies and challenged conventional gender norms. However, despite those improvements, demanding situations persist. Gender-based total violence, economic inequality, and systemic limitations to girls's advancement continue to plague societies globally. Cultural and spiritual norms regularly intersect with prison frameworks, perpetuating discrimination and hindering development

towards gender equality.

In the end, inspecting the felony and societal contexts of Yashodhara, Yashoda, and Vishnupriya gives valuable insights into the demanding situations faced by ladies in unique ancient intervals. While great development has been made in advancing girls' rights and gender equality, ongoing efforts are made to deal with systemic inequalities and ensure that every individual, irrespective of gender, can enjoy the same rights and possibilities.

In conclusion, Yashodhara, Yashoda, and Vishnupriya's lives illuminate gender, devotion, and societal expectations in ancient and spiritual contexts. Even though overshadowed by their husbands' divinity, these women showed incredible perseverance, dedication, and sacrifice in adversity.

Yashodhara's unwavering love and quiet energy amidst Siddhartha Gautama's pursuit of enlightenment, Yashoda's unwavering support for Lord Mahavira's non-secular adventure, and Vishnupriya's devotion to Chaitanya Mahaprabhu during divine revelation are timeless reminders of women's profound influence on religious and spiritual movements.

The comparison of prison and societal frameworks in their time with modern perspectives shows girls' rights' growth and ongoing obstacles. Legal and social standards have improved girls' autonomy and equality, but systemic inequities and cultural barriers prevent global gender equality.

Let us honour these remarkable women by amplifying their voices, reclaiming their narratives, and working towards a future where all individuals, regardless of gender, can flourish and succeed. Their experiences should inspire us to work for a world that recognises, celebrates, and values women.



# Sophia's foot in Rorty's shoe

~Kanika Butar  
vedanshdevansh@gmail.com



## Article in Gist

- **Perception's Subjectivity:** Influenced by beliefs, experiences, and external narratives.
- **Knowledge's Role:** Shapes interpretation and understanding of the world.
- **Perception Management:** Marketers craft narratives to align with values.
- **Sophia's Journey:** Expands consciousness, challenges beliefs, and embraces diverse perspectives.

A small village girl named Sophia lived her life very peacefully, in her own world. She completed her +2 from the village. She was the girl trapped, consolidated on her own land, never stepping across the line. She never crossed the boundary drawn by her beliefs, the beliefs she ingrained in her mind since childhood. The world she saw through her eyes lied to her about the World. Her eyes lied to her about the world she

was living in, a world shaped by her parents to believe in everything. She broke the glass screen that was covering her eyes. Who helped her in breaking the glass? Her friend 'Rorty'.

One day, while sitting under a beautiful sky, Rorty told her, "There is a temptation to believe that we humans are perceiving the universe adequately. This temptation is foul, and unfortunately, the whole of philosophy has succumbed to it." *Is perception subjective or objective?*

The truths that we believe are shaped by our own ideas, accepted after listening and seeing others. We perceive the things that we like to perceive, tending to believe things based on our consciousness. Our consciousness is not expanded enough, and

because of its limitation, our perception is enclosed behind bars. Sophia's way of perceiving things, the way she sees the world, is just limited to her village people. We need to discard all our truths, taking the truths of others with a grain of salt. After this conversation, Sophia became a rebel against the world she was living in. She understood that the world she was living in was an illusory world, full of illusions, and Rorty burst that balloon of illusions. Perception curates our mind, we know perception since the time we were born into this, the moment we step into this world, we start Perceiving things from our senses. Perception shapes our mind by influencing how we interpret and interact with the world around us. It involves recognizing and categorising environmental stimuli through our senses, and then making meaning of those perceptions. Our perceptions are not just passive sensory experiences, but are also shaped by our motivations, expectations, and cognitive processes..

But, Sophia was still in a dilemma.  
She asked -

If we tend to expand our consciousness and put ourselves in someone else's shoes, then we're still believing their truths, right?

And Descartes said that there's no truth that exists, and we should build our own truths. That's what you're saying from the start, right Rorty?

Rorty explained that neither am I rationalist nor a traditionalist. I'm a Pragmatist. My perception is very practical; I see things and I believe, I expand myself. I agree with Descartes, "I think, therefore I am."

I believe in Aankhon Dekhi, "What you are looking for is inside you." You can see things through another person's eyes; his/her truth belongs to them, not you. Your expansion is beyond this world; it's unlimited.

The things we receive from the ends of this world are a mixture of lies, truths, a blend of other people's views, their points of view. through our subjective experience and interpretation. By crafting narratives that

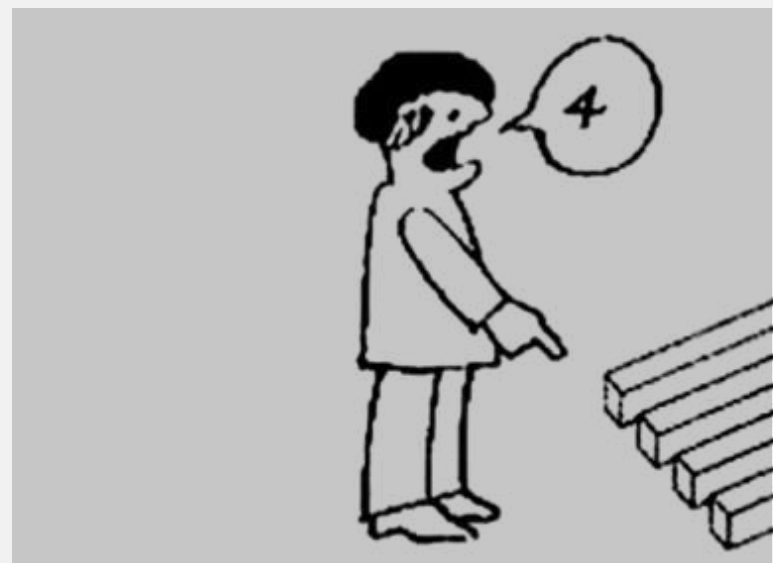
resonate with consumers' values and experiences, marketers can shape perceptions of their products and brands in a way that aligns with their desired messaging.

Sophia: Okay, understood.

Another day: Sophia went to the city for further studies, mind blown away. Rorty was left in the village, but he never belonged to that village, never caged himself; he was still thinking, expanding.

Sophia in a Big City saw many new faces, entered into the lives of others, energies connected, disconnected, crossed with each other. Roads full of thoughts, different representations of the world; her worldview expanded.

Got settled... (Pause)



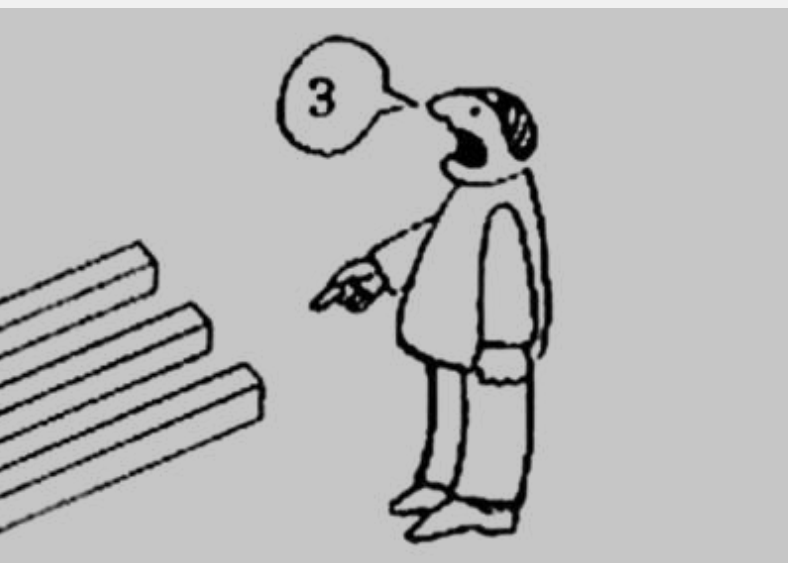
In the classroom, many other students were sitting, Sophia was there too. Different talks were going on, different arguments, thoughts coming out of the mouths of students, spitting out facts. Sophia's world was already expanded, and perception had not only become subjective for her.

A question raised from the group of people:  
**Does knowledge shape our perception?**



Knowledge in the form of stored representations of past visual experience (or of phylogenetic 'experience') can affect perception in various ways: it enables recognition and interpretation to occur; it enables perceptual discrimination among similar members of a category to occur; it can lead to perceptual enrichment effects. Through Knowledge we get to know about the things, ac to Russell (He divided the knowledge in two theories:- Knowledge of things and knowledge of truths) Russell, knowledge of truths is propositional knowledge. And it is distinct from

knowledge of things, which comes in two varieties: knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description, Acquaintance knowledge is the things we perceived directly, based on the prepeostional knowledge, ex:- We enter in the room where there is table, chair, fan, etc , our mind saw the things and mouth utter ohh there's the chair. How??



It's because we did the process of Cognition, we already know somewhere know that it's a table (That has four legs, made of wood, etc)

"I say that I am acquainted with an object when I have a direct cognitive relation to that object, i.e., when I am directly aware of the object itself" Russell (1911) then describes acquaintance as the direct "presentation" of objects and properties to one's senses and says that, strictly speaking, we are only ever acquainted with sense data, our awareness of sense data, and a few other things.

In Russell's view, acquaintance is direct awareness. All other knowledge of things is thus indirect, and counts as knowledge by description. We know things by description when we know of them via a description such as "the waiter", "the brown table in the corner", or "that thing over there". As Russell points out, knowledge by description presupposes some knowledge of truths. For example, in order to know of the waiter as "the waiter", I must know certain propositions about what waiters are.

Nonetheless, Russell holds that knowledge by description, which again is a species knowledge of things is distinct from knowledge of truths. My knowledge of the waiter, for example, or the colour of your shirt, or the eight tables in the room, is not the same as, nor is it reducible to, knowledge of propositions.

THAT'S HOW PERCEPTION IS SHAPED.

We tend to see things and accepts according to our beliefs. It's like when we went to a shop to buy a book for ourselves, what we see in a book?

How does it influence are mind?

We tend to read the introduction, about the author, preface, Right?

It's the matter how the writer presented it to us, and we got influenced by his writings and that shapes our perception further.

Sophia completely burst out, her mind stumbled completely with the world, she kicked herself out from the shell she was living earlier.

As Sophia entered into the world of people filled with thoughts, ideas, then she got introduced with the term 'Social Media', It's the platform where we see people apart from their real life, it's the other form of jail, where we form perceptions about them, we see them in different attire , with a mask

Their own personalities contradict each other. Social media also plays a crucial role in changing perceptions, I think as our

consciousness expands, our limitations also expands. It depends upon how keen we are to accept the world, cinema also amongst this, In childhood, I became lost. I cried during the movie 'Bahubali 2' when Bahubali died. I couldn't get myself out of the movie for many days; I felt that Bahubali was a part of my real life and he was gone forever. Since that day, I've felt connected with cinema. It's a world of imaginative characters that become real, imagined by someone else, and you become a part of that world just because of narration, their direction. Films unfold the world to you; they give wings. It's like Descartes' theory to discard every truth and see the world from a neutral perspective.

It's the powerplay of words, the field where 'No man's land' scripts live, or 'God's own country' characters choose their world. It's the journey from being normal people to becoming all of us strangers.



Psychologically and philosophically share an inter-relation with each other, it curates human nature and their behaviour. Question the things, extract the answers from the questions. Moreover the philosophy of psychology is a subfield that explores the relationship between these two areas of study, dealing with both epistemological and ontological issues and closely monitoring



contemporary work conducted in related fields. Mind works as a monitor in Perception. Perception Management is basically influencing, shaping, curating, works wholly upon the how a individual perceives and react on that particular matter. If we understand it from the general point of view that What it's really then it means pursuing things from other perspective, because perception management works upon more on psychological terms, they organises the things that we got persuaded by it, the presentation of the product makes us to buy, our minds works upon the other's mind, how they want to show us, we perceive it.

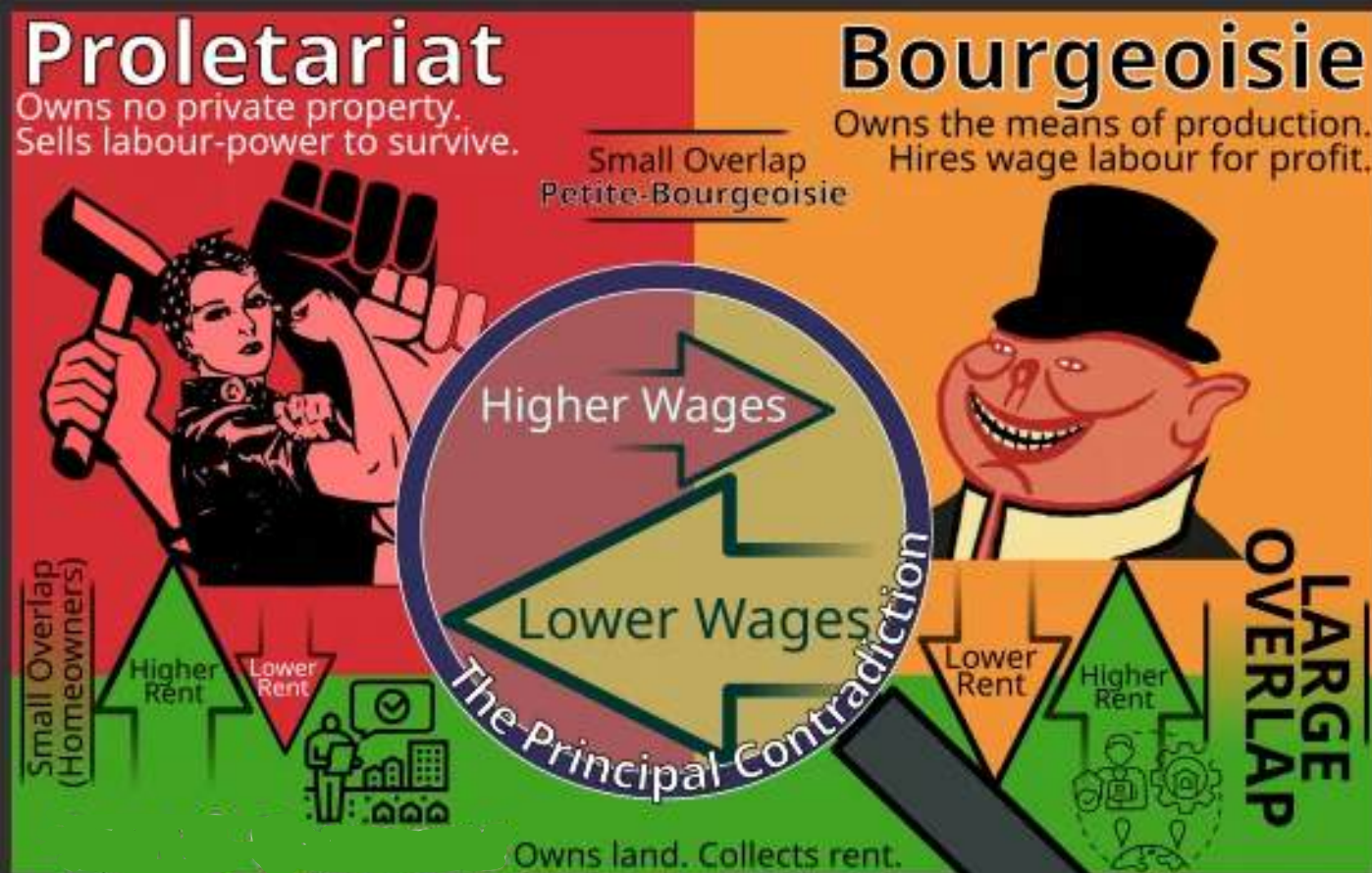
Sophia became completely spellbound, with the questioning, Sophia lost herself and found herself. "It's the balancing on the rope while walking, social media is like this" - It's the rope of our minds.

*"As our eyes get blindfolded with the lies, we need to discern the truth from the illusion, need to remove the curtains to let the light come inside, So that we can perceive the things with clear vision".*



# The root of all Ideological Conflicts : Cultural Marxism

~Jahnvi Naiik  
janhavinaik85@gmail.com



<https://www.artsonia.com/museum/art.asp?id=94134150>

## Article in Gist

- **Marxism's Evolution:** Cultural Marxism shifts rebellion from class to culture.
- **Frankfurt School's Plan:** Disrupt societal norms through 11-point strategy.
- **Narrative Creation:** Cultural Marxism generates alternative perspectives.
- **Agents of Influence:** Academics, media, Bollywood, and institutions spread ideology.

People who are wholly oblivious of the word Cultural Marxism may perceive it as an intellectual one ; however those who are acquainted with this term, also have the sense to identify it as a formidable challenge that is hard to be vanquished.

Before delving into the world of cultural marxism, let's get a brief overview of the word Marxism.

Marxism lays down three substantial features:

1. It bifurcates the world into the parts, namely oppressor and oppressed.
2. It vehemently follows the three RRR — Rebel, Reject, Resist
3. Revolution can only be brought on the grounds of economy.

As widely acknowledged, Marxism stands as a failed ideology, marked by the collapse of the USSR— where it has flourished once upon a time —and a significant contributor to

ideological erosion in America too. Subsequently, Western intellectuals have recognized the inadequacy of Marxist tenets in fomenting a mass revolution. Perceiving the impermanence of class struggles, these thinkers opted for the RRR formula, through cultural avenues to vehemently reject, resist, and rebel against societal norms like culture, family, traditions, festivals, morality, and Dharma (one's own duties), thereby leading the society towards a profound hollowness. The application of Marxist core principles—RRR—and the establishment of new systems through cultural means is termed as Cultural Marxism.

The ideology of Cultural Marxism emerged in 1924 in Germany under the institute of social research — popularly known as Frankfurt School — established under the guidance of Horkheimer.



The Frankfurt School presents an 11-point plan, the on-ground execution of which is discernible in the contemporary scenario of Bharat, these are as follows :

1. The creation of racism offences.
2. Continual change to create confusion.
3. The teaching of sex and homosexuality to children.
4. The undermining of schools' and teachers' authority.
5. Huge immigration to destroy identity.
6. The promotion of excessive drinking.
7. Emptying of churches.
8. An unreliable legal system with bias against victims of crime.
9. Dependency on the state or state benefits.
10. Control and dumbing down of the media.
11. Encouraging the breakdown of the family.

From the above points mentioned we can observe that Cultural Marxism works on three dimensions :

- Creating other, an alternative, an option etc.
- Making a narrative out of this.
- Implementing the narratives through its agents.



The concept of "creating other" is evident in many instances like the discourse surrounding sexuality. Society & Dharma Shastras solely acknowledge two genders but why one shouldn't recognise additional gender identities ; this is cultural marxism. Since the early 2000s, the LGBTQ community has actively advocated for their rights, often staging repetitive protests on university campuses and streets. These demonstrations sometimes involve inflammatory posters with derogatory language against Hinduism. The current situation has escalated to the point where the apex court is discussing and issuing verdicts on the matter. Homosexuality is just aberration and nothing but what are those influential forces who pressurized courts to give judgements in their 'favor' in some way or other. Another example pertains to the uniform code in schools, challenging



rationale behind exclusive adherence to a standard attire for all students. The recent Kerala hijab controversy is a significant instance of dissent against established norms. Furthermore, a distinctive perspective emerges when examining the portrayal of characters from epics, highly deviating from their original



characterization. For instance, presenting Ravana as a hero, by citing his profound knowledge and scholarly expertise in the Vedas, stands in stark contrast to the historical reality, this is how they reshape the image of Ravana. This notion of "otherness" extends to dress categorization, which further goes on questioning why sarees are exclusively designated for women. Following this absurd otherness (wokeness), JNU students started to wear saree, well this can be termed as futile progressiveness.

Lastly, there's a trend of assigning alternative meanings to Bhartiya festivals. For instance, labeling Holi as a festival associated with sexual abuse and molestation or Diwali as a celebration contributing to pollution offers an unconventional perspective, challenging the joyous meaning associated with these festivities.

Now they move further in this direction by systematically constructing a narrative out of this 'otherness' and subsequently operationalising it via their agents. Cultural Marxism, also known as, critical theory has four prominent agents :

- Academics
- Mass Media
- Bollywood
- Formal Institutions

Let's delve into each sphere individually -

• Academics - One can observe the impact of this ideology i.e. cultural marxism in academics in chronological manner. It has some phases which were named by Prasanna Deshpande in his book 'Disindianising Indians' which are as follows :

1. The Colonial Phase: Post Independence Academics in India
2. The Pseudo Secularist Phase
3. The Critical Theory Phase.
4. Postmodernism.
5. Poststructuralism
6. The New Left: The Last Straw of Marxism
7. The Academic Mismatch
8. The New Left via Academics.
9. Cultural Studies.
10. Identity Politics Controlled by Academics.

The prominent ones are Poststructuralism, New Left, Academic Mismatch etc. According to Prasanna Deshpande Ji, "Poststructuralism has produced deconstruction as its interpretative engagement with a written text or cultural values. Deconstruction functions as a deterrent force against the central idea expressed or conveyed into a literary or informative text and culture. It resists the centrality of a particular meaning or interpretation of a literary, cultural or historical texts and 'deconstructs' them by using their indefinite (perceptively though) points or features against the commonly recognisable meaning. This deconstructive approach to the understanding of the real nature of something requires us to substitute the primary meaning with the alternative understanding and foreground it radically as the subversive

meaning of that text."

He further says -

"The most fundamental premise of such a reading of cultural practices or cultural narratives is 'reading against the grain. We can see that Deconstruction treats culture as 'text'. Here are few examples of this :

- 1) Ekalavya is a victim as the upper caste' Dronacharya refused to train him in archery.
- (2) Socialist renderings of Shivaji Maharaj. Shivaji was secular the western sense) and his image as a Hindu icon is a political manoeuvred trick of mainstream Hindu population.
- 3) Aurangzeb as a secular Leader.
- 4) Mahishasur as a victim.
- 5).Bali as a victim.
- 6) Ravana as a hero.
- 7) Sita as a victim.
- 8) Karna as a victim.
- 9) Indian Family is a Power Structure with Father or paterfamilias as the dominant and oppressive power centre. Women are suppressed within this system.
- 10). Religious minorities as the perpetual victims of the cultural dominion of the majority population.
- 11) Women, Dalits, and minorities of all types (sexual, religious. ethnic, and linguistic) are permanent victims. (Their distinctive cultural identity is suppressed).
- 12) Resistance of National Anthem (under the pretext of religious rights).
- 13) Resistance of National Song (under the pretext of minority."

Today, Unfortunately we all encounter these aforementioned instances in the 'intellectual framework' of students.

- Mass media - When mewat violence was erupted some months before, the left wing web media companies or one can say 'media jamaat' [The Wire, The Quint] vehemently emphasised the verity that it's the fault of Bajrang Dal. They spare no opportunity to name Muslim when they're the victims (hypothetically, as per media consensus). However, when these people are perpetrators, it all sum up to a mere mention of 'community' or 'mob.' Numerous online evidence

asserted the fact that violence was entirely orchestrated, pointing fingers at a specific community aiming to obstruct Bajrang Dal's procession. The Media Jamaat completely used here the 'Deconstruction' formula for creating an alternative meaning of the scenario or framing the most unpopular narrative to be in the centre.



The Ujjain rape case showcases this very same hypocrisy of media, as news portals shrewdly conceal the name of priest Rahul Sharma (who aided victimized little girl by giving food & clothes to cover her body and also hospitalized her after seeing her bleeding & half naked condition). Instead, they deliberately link the crime to Shakti worship, employing deconstruction theory once more to craft a narrative that associates followers of the Goddess with a perverse mentality. Moreover, amidst the Manipur violence a kuki women was being paraded naked (which is totally heinous and punishable) which was covered up by every news media houses out there ; but they deliberately haven't showed & highlighted (as horrible as the previous one) the incident that took place in West Bengal where a BJP candidate paraded naked with tore saree & removed underwear, but this case was being totally hushed up with utmost power through the help of ecosystem working in the particular state. That's how Cultural Marxism's theories performed well here too.

- Bollywood - Bollywood has depicted a direct connection of all inappropriate actions with Hinduism. For instance, in a web series 'City of Dreams' heinous crimes like rape are portrayed in association with a Hindu,



showing that the perpetrator has a sacred mark (Tika) on the forehead and wears a 'Rudraksha Mala'. It is true that crime has no religion, but Bollywood's mindset seems to be applicable only to Hinduism. This audacity could lead Bollywood to undeniable intolerance if it continues to depict Hindu community as a potential offender. Also, one can also observe Mughals glorification in one of the scenes of the then hit movie *Bemisaal*. Along with that, pure Hindi speaking characters are always shown as weak and a subject to be mocked. The list is too long!

#### • Formal Institutions -

Rendering a verdict without due consideration of evidence from both perspectives contravenes the procedural norms of the legal system — a principle widely acknowledged — still, diplomacy can be seen in Karnataka Hijab row & SSM i.e. Same-Sex Marriage verdicts. For instance, Justice Gupta upheld the Karnataka High Court order of March 15, 2022, which had directed that the ban on the hijab in State-run pre-university institutions be continued in the interests of unity, equality, and public order. On one hand, where Justice Gupta upheld Karnataka High Court's view that the hijab was not an essential religious practice while on the other, Justice Dhulia felt that neither the petitioners nor the court should have even entered this debate." Why such diplomacy? Why should there be an alternative for school uniforms... remember 'creating an alternative'??

On one side judiciary claims to rely on thorough legal analysis & constitutional principles to make decisions, emphasising a commitment to impartiality and legal integrity rather than on specific, predetermined references ; while on



other, when it comes to Hindu sentiments, these parameters have always been kept aside, why?

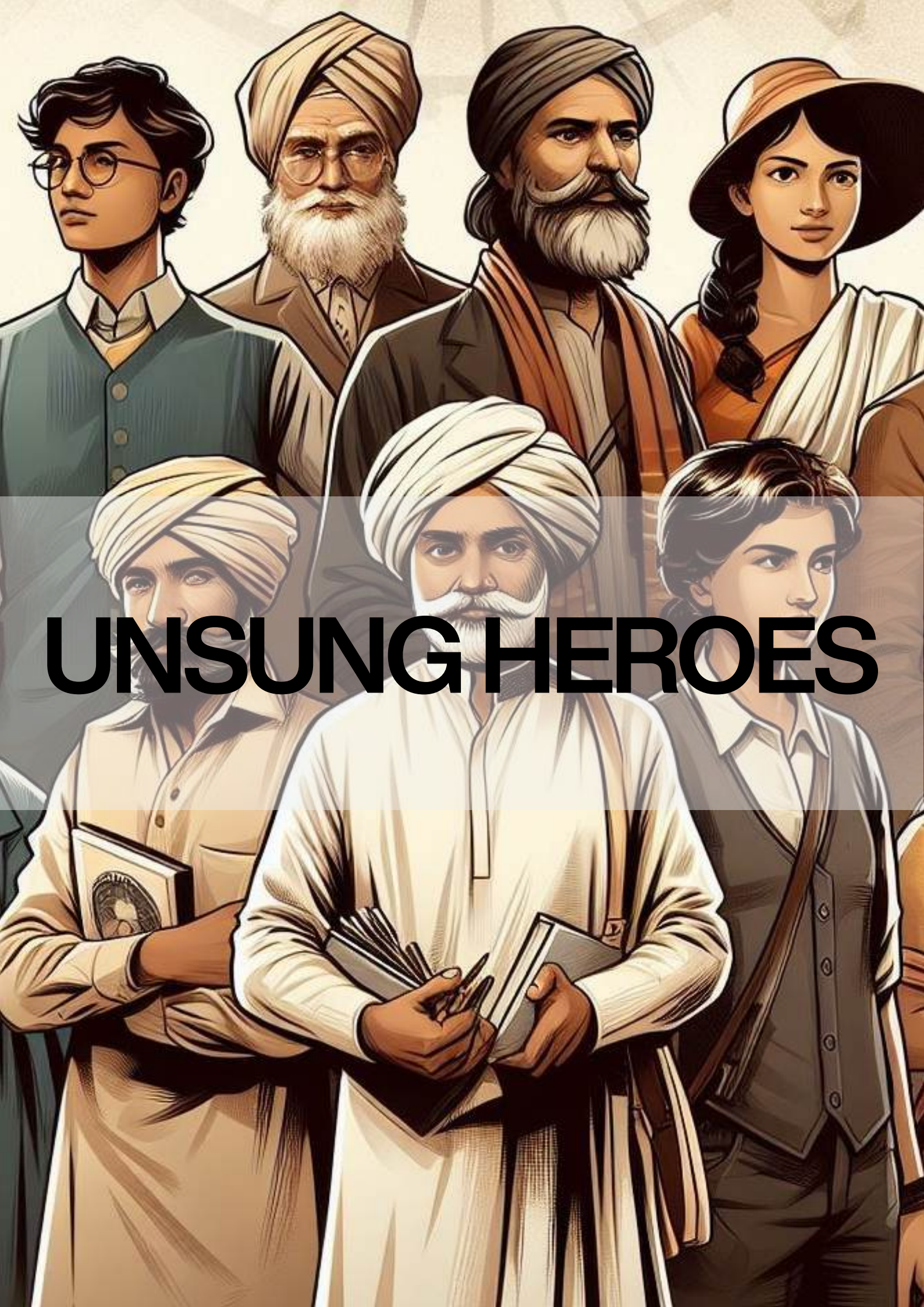
Analysing potential bias in the judiciary requires nuanced examination, along with this delving into the question of external influences demands rigorous scrutiny.

In this way, we have analysed and understood the root cause of all the problems emerging in the country, then what can be the solution. Well, sometimes applying enemies' tactics on enemies itself, can prove beneficiary for us.

But for that, one needs meticulous identification of the problem. In Mahabharata's Shālyā Pārvā, there is a sequence of Gada fight between Duryodhan & Bheema. When the gada fight was not ending, Lord Shri Krishna signalled Bheem to attack on Duryodhan's thigh, although it is against the rules of battle, still Lord Shri Krishna himself commands to do that. Yudhishtir — who is standing besides Shri Krishna — looked inquisitively at Shri Krishna, then he said to Yuddhishtira 'Mayavi Mayaya Vaddhyaha'. Deceit can only be defeated by deceit. So when it comes to a solution (to defeat this ideology) this lesson of Lord Shri Krishna needs to be remembered, always!







# UNSUNG HEROES



# Prafulla Chandra Ray and the Spirit of Self-Reliance

~Shivam "Shabdarthsidh"  
internshivam5@gmail.com

## Article in Gist

- **Prafulla Chandra Ray:** Pioneer of Indian chemical industry and nationalist scientist.
- **Entrepreneurial Vision:** Founded Bengal Chemical for self-reliance against British dominance.
- **Social Reformer:** Advocated rationalism, fought caste inequalities through science.
- **Legacy of Self-Reliance:** Inspires India's pursuit of innovation and national progress.

Open any school science textbook in India, and one finds chapters dedicated to the giants of Western chemistry – Lavoisier, Mendeleev, Dalton. Yet, conspicuously missing is the name Prafulla Chandra Ray – a man revered as the 'Father of Indian Chemistry and Indian Chemical Industry .' What this says in words a thousand about a system that very often misses out on our heroes, the story of Ray goes beyond textbooks. He was a scientist, an entrepreneur, a social reformer, and a nationalist, all wrapped into one—a blend of intellectual brilliance and determination towards his nation.

## The Genius Beyond the Lab

Ray wasn't a laboratory-focused genius. He understood that the development of science was crucially related to securing the nation's economy. In 1901, he established the Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works, the first indigenous pharmaceutical company in India. The venture was much more than just a business venture for Ray; it was his form of defiance against British dominance in the Indian market. This is where Ray set the foundation for a powerful message: India could not only produce scientific minds that could compete with the best on the global scene but also had the capacity and knowledge to become self-sufficient in the economic utilisation of the knowledge base.

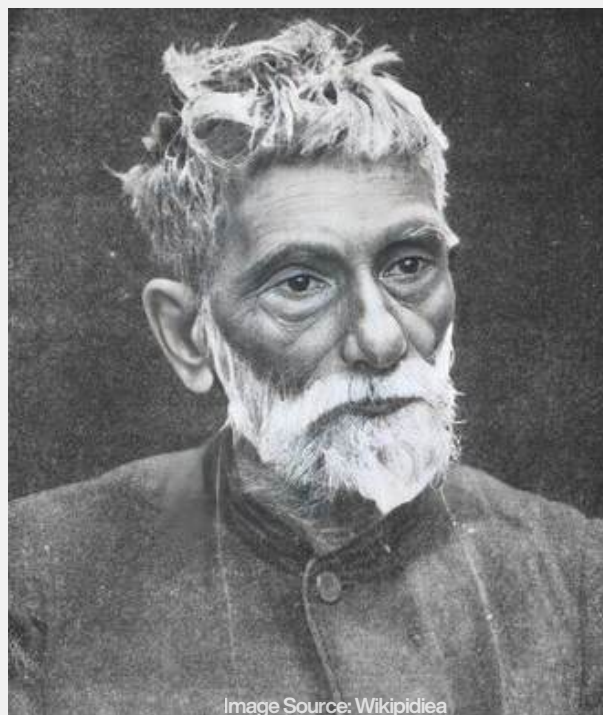


Image Source: Wikipedia

The current industry-academia can be said to follow in the footsteps of Acharya PC Ray.

The Bengal Chemical factory, other than being a manufacturing unit, became an interface between academia and industry. Ray, one of the most respected professors at Calcutta University, always strived to ensure that his research had practical applications. The company gave much-needed drugs, soaps, and disinfectants, which were finally available to an Indian population already starved of these essentials. This model of early industry-academia collaboration stands as a monument to Ray's vision—a vision that remains relevant even today. One who could integrate ideas with idealism. He donated all his salary to the Department of Chemistry to be spent on the development of the department at the University College of Science and to give scholarships to needy students.

He believed and said “I have no sense of success on any large scale in things achieved... but have the sense of having worked and having found happiness in doing so.”

### **An Indigenous Technological Innovator**

The kind of research that fills up India's scientific establishment today is obviously aimed at trying to answer indigenous problems: from affordable health solutions to climate-resilient agricultural practices; the bias is towards building knowledge directly relevant to the country's needs. Ray's pioneering model had opened the way to that, and science inquiry could very well be applied for social and economic empowerment. However, this is not the only sphere in which Ray left an impression. He was also a true rationalist and tried to negate all rigidity of the caste system and other social inequalities. All his writings and speeches were basically geared towards social reforms that asked his fellow citizens to think out of the box and not to be guided by mere dogmas or tradition. This unflagging commitment to social justice is another important aspect of his inspirational legacy.

### **An Unyielding Nationalist**

It is only strange that the man of his stature remains relatively unsung. Maybe that is because Ray himself was not one to be content with quiet contemplation in the laboratory; he was an active associate of the Swadeshi movement—nationalism that propagated indigenous goods and boycotted foreign merchandise. His association with anti-colonial activism may have made him less palatable to colonial chroniclers. But Ray's nationalism was of a kind that was not jingoistic. It flowed from his belief that only an India that became self-sufficient through its science and industrial might could alone attain absolute freedom. He was not simply a scientist or industrialist but, more than that, a nation-builder who used science for the nation's endowment.

### **The Legacy of Self-Reliance**

With a globalised world like this, the self-reliant spirit becomes more imperative. Although India is actively involved in international trade, without

a proper strategy to accelerate domestic innovation and entrepreneurship, it cannot ensure long-run economic security. Therefore, Ray's story indicates that self-progress may only be had out of our intellectual potential and resources.

Prafulla Chandra Ray's life wasn't a neatly compartmentalised narrative. The scientist who steered social reform, the entrepreneur with nationalist fervour, and the educator who translated knowledge into practical applications—it makes him a compelling symbol of what a man could do with his mind, courage, and intense love for his people. There are, of course, invaluable lessons from the story of Ray as we put India on a more robust and self-reliant pedestal: a story of a testament to the power of transformative science and spirit of enterprise, an unwavering pursuit of social justice. His absence from our textbooks could be taken as a mere historical oversight, but the legacy of Prafulla Chandra Ray is inexhaustible. He remains for us a barometer, guiding us to show that real progress cannot come by mere emulation of the West but by going our own way—by the way lit with incandescent light: light born from our knowledge, light fuelled by social conscience uncompromised, and a spirit never to bow nor break under pressures to bend.

### **A Call to Recognize and Celebrate**

When we celebrate someone like Ray, it is not just the past that we pay tribute to; we are laying a foundation for the future in which our children grow up seeing themselves in their heroes—where the story of Indian excellence is not just something one reads about in the accounts of ancient history but part and parcel of life today. It is time to rewrite our textbooks, not just with names but with stories, inspiring a nation to actualize the potential it boasts of—to innovate and stand tall on the global stage. The life and legacy of Prafulla Chandra Ray offer a road map for such a future—where India leads not by imitation but through its unique blend of scientific innovation, social reform, and unwavering nationalism.





# **GEOPOLITICS**

# Understanding Geoeconomics in the Current Geopolitical Conundrum

~Sanchit Jain  
jainsanchit1307@gmail.com



## Article in Gist

- **Geoeconomics Overview:** Links globalization to geopolitical risks in financial systems.
- **DCF Model Application:** Evaluates soap industry disruptions using financial metrics.
- **M&A and Military Alliances:** Shows impact on cross-border mergers with alliances.
- **Risk Trinity:** Geopolitical, economic, policy uncertainties' economic implications analyzed.

The Industrial Revolution allowed civilizations to escape the “Malthusian trap,” which describes the cyclical outbreak of famines as a population grew too large to sustain itself with food and water. Thanks to steam-powered machines, it became possible to mechanize agriculture and mass produce all kinds of household goods. But to build and run these machines, the industrialised

world needed coal and minerals of all sorts. And soon enough, the domestic supply of these minerals would not suffice to power the factories.

The deficit in supply created a demand for coal and minerals, which led to the sharing of resources between countries. This led to a wave of globalization. Globalization has helped countries take advantage of resource distribution. We would not have imagined this interconnectedness before the dawn of the Neolithic Age (just a buzzword for 10,000 BC).

But now this globalization has divided the earth into factions. Faction is being created by naming them first-world, second-world, and third-world countries. These factions



sometimes fight against each other or indulge in proxy wars over other countries's soil. For example, the Afghanistan crisis, the Ukraine crisis, the Yemen crisis, and many more are yet to come. You must be wondering why I started speaking about historical conflicts and blah blah. The article was supposed to be on financial topics. Ok, so let's deep dive into the financial topics, keeping these conflicts aside. But wait, even the financial systems got interconnected because of globalization, and so we bear the risks of conflicts in the world. You know that this risk can also be quantified. But before that, let me explain the various buzzwords I will be using.

You must've heard this news when the Indonesian government restricted the exports of PalmOil exports. This was the time when PalmOil constituted the 8th most imported product in India. One more surprising fact is that PalmOil constitutes 55% of soap. This disrupted the supply chain mechanics of the soap industry in India. Now the question is: how will you value a soap company? The metric normally used to value a company is the DCF model, which deals with the expected cash flows, i.e., the money that the company will earn in the future. The cash flows we consider here are free cash flows to firms, whose formula is:




**Free Cash Flow Formula**

= Operating Cash Flow — Capital Expenditure — Working Capital

EBITDA means the operating profit that you get after subtracting all the business-related expenses. The change in your working capital (current assets minus current liabilities) is subtracted to treat the increase in debtors, creditors, and inventory. Since cash is not used there, these items inflate the value of available cash flows. The amount of capital assets you bought is subtracted, and the sale of capital assets is added to arrive at the Free Cash Flows to the Firm. If anyone wants to invest in a soap company, he will take FCFF and divide it by the risk-free rate( $r_f$ ), which means the interest rate of government bonds or any safer asset whose risk of default is zero. Any investor will demand returns of at least a risk-free rate. Now we add the risk premium( $k$ ),

i.e., the interest rates the investor should take while taking the geopolitical risk associated with your industry. This rate means that over the risk-free rate, what the investor demands is extra as a premium for bearing the geopolitical risk. To adjust the FCFF, we add the inflation rate( $\pi$ ) in the denominator, as a rupee in the present is worth less in the future. Estimate the value of this formula up to infinite times. This is the DCF model related to geopolitical risk.

$$FV = \sum_{t=1}^{\infty} \frac{E[CF_t]}{(1 + r_f + \pi + k)^t}$$

Focusing on the risk premium  $k$ , we analyze how the M&A (mergers and acquisitions) deals are affected by the relations between the countries and the geopolitical risks associated with them. Forming a military alliance with countries results in more MNCs collaborating and entering more M&A (mergers and acquisitions) agreements. In the research cited, they have divided the countries into two pairs: allied and non-allied, based on the active military alliance in a year. To analyze the results, they took the cross-border ratio as their metric, which means the number of deals in which the target is from country  $i$  and the acquirer is from country  $j$  as a percentage of the total number of M&A deals in country  $i$ . You can see the significant difference in the metric.

They concluded that strong military alliances have a positive influence on the volume of cross-border M&As. This proves that geopolitical risk, together with economic and policy uncertainty, is an "uncertainty trinity" that could have significant adverse economic effects.

In today's scenario, where the world economy is extremely entangled in relations between countries, the economic implications of these relations pose a significant risk to financial transactions and the overall economy. Therefore, geoeconomics needs to be considered in the current geopolitical conundrum.





# CULTURE





# Reviving the Vedic, Journey towards Vishwaguru

~Dipanjan Saha  
dipanjansaha2002ds@gmail.com

## Article in Gist

- **Rediscovery of Vedic Civilization:** Highlights ancient Bharat's contributions in architecture, astronomy, surgery, and yoga.
- **Education Reforms:** Advocates integrating Vedic teachings into modern education systems.
- **Technological Innovation:** Proposes using AI and digital platforms to preserve and promote Vedic knowledge.
- **Cultural Revival Strategies:** Emphasizes Sanskrit, Nalanda research, and martial arts for youth empowerment.

## THE VEDIC SOCIETY

The Vedic Civilization is the world's oldest and most advanced civilization which is timeless and has no starting date. From Artistry to Architecture, Astrology to Ayurveda, Literature, Music, Aerodynamics, Surgery, Mathematics, Economics, Spirituality, knowing the Supreme Consciousness and whatnot, this civilization was the richest which made Bharat Vishwaguru. If we look into the history, the accounts of several foreign travellers like Megasthenes (c.350-290 BCE), Fa-Hien(c.337-422CE), Hiuen Tsang(602-664BCE), Al-Biruni (973-1048 CE), etc. provided valuable insights into the high level of development and rich cultural and intellectual heritage of Bharat during their respective period.

## Astonishing Advancements in some major fields during the Vedic Period

### 1) Architecture :

The Shilpa and Vaastu Shastra mention areas where electric and magnetic distributions of the North and South Pole are maximum. Some of the famous Vedic architecture include: The Leepakshi Temple, its hanging pillar and Mural Pillar; The Hampi Virupaksha Temple, built on Mathematical Concepts; the Jain Temple of Ranakpur, with 1444 rock cut pillars each unique; Konark Temple based on astronomical mechanism; The Meenakshi Amman Temple of Madurai, the Tanjore Temple, the Halebidu Temple many more has wonderful examples of architecture and science which dates back to centuries old.

### 2) Astronomy :

Bharatiyas have observed Solar & Lunar eclipse ( Rahu and Ketu). Aryabhatta had given formulas to calculate the length of the Earth's shadow, the length of the moon's shadow, duration and time of the eclipse. Bharatiyas have also observed the "Precession" of the earth, Transits (Grahayuti), and eclipses ( Uparga ) of Mercury and Venus

Not until Galileo used the telescope in 1640, were Europeans in a position to predict a transit of Venus a first in the Western World while this was a routine work in ancient Bharat, Planetary conjunctions (Surya Siddhanta), Lunar Occultation (Chandra and Rohini ), Comets ( Dhumaketu ), Andromeda Galaxy ( the story of Devyani and Sharmishtha in Mahabharata ) etc. many years before the Europeans.

### 3) Medical Heritage and Surgery:

Bharat has the world's most ancient Medical system. Sushruta, the Father of Surgery discusses obstetrics, gynaecology, paediatrics, physiology, geriatrics, diagnoses, pathology, and pharmacology, describes 1120 diseases, surgical methods like excision, incision, probing, extraction, rhinoplasty, cataract surgery etc. many many years before the Westerners could get any trace of it. Sushruta also describes 121 surgical instruments. Researchers found Dental drills ( Baluchistan, then Bharat), skulls with drilled holes, people practising Trepanation, and a Prosthetic Eye in Harappa which dates back 4800 years ago.

### 4) Yoga :

In Bharat, the goal has always been to know "Brahman", the formless through yoga. At least by 800 BCE Patanjali codified the Yoga Sutras: Pratyahara, Dharan, Dhyan, Samadhi, Asana, Pranayama, Yama, Niyama.

### 5) Aerodynamics:

The whole world knows that the aeroplane was invented in 1930 by the Wright Brothers of America but who knows that there were mentions of "Vimanaas" in Vedic Texts many many years ago. We have a complete Shastra named the Vaimanika Shastra which mentions about the construction of Vimanaas like Rukma Vimaana, Sundara Vimaana, Vimanaas of 2 storeys, 5 storeys, 7 storeys etc. Then How it is possible that the whole world admires the Wright Brothers and not our ancient sages? It was just because when globalization happened, we were under colonial rule.

**Why reviving the essential aspects of vedic civilization will make Bharat a Vishwaguru and what should we do to revive it?**

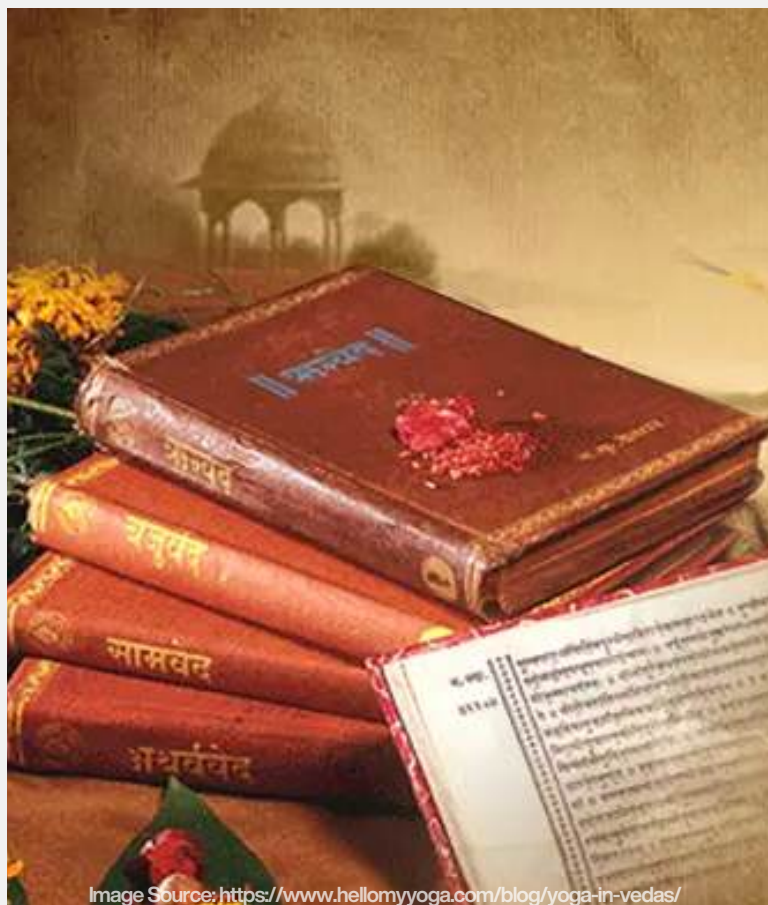


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Major General GD Bakshi, in one of his fierce speeches, said " Where you have come from, impacts your future journey". After 800 years of foreign invasions, it's very crucial that the youth should completely decolonize their mindset and endure the originality of the nation because the future progress of a nation depends on the youth. A civilization if not practised properly for years gets on the verge of extinction. To become Vishwaguru, the country must focus on two objectives: Technological advancement and Spiritual Upliftment, which is the core philosophy of the Vedic. The following are the policies that can be adopted by the Individuals as well as the Government to revive the Vedic civilization :

1) Changes in the School and College Curriculum: The majority of the present educational system comprises topics adopted from the Western World with a very minimal portion of Vedic Heritage. Nowadays, the youth of the country is becoming West Driven. What we study in our books connects us to society. We study Western Philosophies,





Image Source: <https://www.hellomyoga.com/blog/yoga-in-vedas/>

Concepts, and Western ways of living life. So what happens is the children come out of the institution with a colonial-driven mindset which takes them away from their own roots. Our books should also mention our rich Vedic heritage: Yoga, Ayurveda, Astronomy, Vedic ways of agriculture, architecture, Vedic Mathematics, Rasayan Vidya, Charak Samhita, lessons from the Bhagavad Gita, the Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads etc. We have to bridge the ancient technologies and new discoveries. Our Youth should be aware of the Vedic Civilization, how advanced we were during the Vedic Era ? how our civilization got destroyed? and who destroyed it. How can we fill the gap?

2) A Historical and Cultural Research study on Nalanda University: If we discuss some top universities of the world, then names like Oxford, Havard etc. spring into our minds but things were actually quite different roughly 1500 years ago. At that time there was the prestigious Nalanda University in Bharat in which Literature, Philosophy, Theology, Medicine, Mathematics, Aerodynamics, Economics, Chemistry, Pragyotik Vidya etc, were taught many years

before Einstein and Newton. A nine-storeyed library with more than 90 lakh manuscripts was there which was a pool of knowledge. When we Bharatiyas were at the peak of development, the so-called progressed Westerners used to live in caves. Before Invasions started, this university for more than 700 years has taught the world. Teachings of Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Buddhapalita, Shantarakshita etc. attracted foreigners like Hiuen Tsang, Megasthenes, Fa Hien etc. from all over the world. An organization of Historians, Archeologists, Scientists etc. should be formed and a historical and cultural research study of Nalanda University should be conducted with the purpose of connecting the Vedic Civilization and Modern Education.

3) Sanskrit: As the majority of the ancient Vedic Scriptures are written in Sanskrit, learning Sanskrit is the very first prerequisite to study these. To completely decolonize the mindset of the youth instead of English education, Sanskrit should be the first preference. English education should also be there but only to an extent, just to communicate with the foreign world. If we take China as an example, their entire database is in Chinese Language, which makes it very difficult for others to decode. Likewise, if we preserve the entire Indian Database in Sanskrit instead of promoting English, then it would be very difficult for foreign countries to access our confidential data ( The Brahmos Missile Incident ). For example, the entire Mahabharata is a form of coded information. These should be put forward before the youth. If we start this Sanskrit Literary Revolution now, in the next 50 years our Society will regain its originality very easily. These forms of encoded data will help in strengthening the internal security and defence systems.

4) India's Information Warfare Command: The majority of the youth is on social media. Like the world that we perceive in front of our eyes, there is another virtual world inside our phone which relies upon both fantasies and facts. The problem arises when both fantasy and

facts clash. In the era of, Data Acquisition and Information Warfare, it is very important that we should safeguard our Data, hence it's very necessary to have an Information Warfare Command. A council of best CS Engineers from IITs, Hackers, Army officers, and Civil Servants should be formed which will safeguard the data and take action against antinational activities like the spreading of invalid information, misguiding the public, misinformation to demoralising or manipulation, forceful conversions etc. Information warfare is more like psychological warfare leading to civil wars among its own citizens. It will strengthen the Internal security of the country. This command will take action whenever any propaganda is circulated with any misleading narrative.

5) Digitalization of Vedic Knowledge: The Govt. can launch programmes uniting App and Web developers of the country aiming to create App and web portals in which Vedic Education will be circulated. Each category of the student will learn essential aspects of his related studies, for example, a student of agriculture will find a column on agriculture in the app, likewise, he will learn the Vedic techniques of agriculture from there. Make it mandatory for everyone. Link it with the ADHAAR number. A satellite study platform “BHARATIYA VEDIC SHIKSHA” can be made in which teachers and professors of Indic Studies can teach the related Vedic topics in the curriculum. Organizing competitions promoting Vedic culture will attract the youth.

6) Using Artificial Intelligence: As AI is developing day by day, we can use it to create digital libraries and museums showcasing our Vedic Heritage. AI tools like VR and AR can be installed in Schools, Colleges and Universities for experiencing Vedic ways of living life. AI-based Ayurveda Apps can be created which would have personalized health recommendations. ISKCON few days ago launched a Digital Sound Based Bhagavad Gita, in wise AI can be utilized. Further, AI can be used for correct and appropriate chanting of our Vedic Mantras and other scriptures. Bharatiya Yoga Teaching can be promoted globally using Artificial Intelligence-based Apps. AI tools should

be installed in our temples reflecting the rich architectural heritage of Bharat, which would have mentions of the Prachin Pragyoctik Vidya.

7) Reviving the World's Most Ancient Aviation Technology, Vimanas by ISRO, IIT & NIT Collaboration: A scientific research study can be conducted by the ISRO in collaboration with meritorious engineers from IITs and NITs on the Vaimanika Shastra. We have been adopting Western models of aircraft for years. Why not revive our own Model of Aircraft? We have traces of Rukma Vimana, Sundara Vimana etc. in our Vedic Scriptures. A study on what kind of technologies the ancient people used, how they used to fly these aircraft, what mechanisms and resources, and what the design was should be conducted. If we can somehow work on the resources and revive this Ancient Vedic Technology of Aviation, a completely different model of Aircraft will emerge before the World.

8) Martial Arts, Yoga and Ayurveda: Martial Arts training like the Kalariyapattu ( the world's most ancient martial arts in Kerala ), Thang ta, Silam Bam, Gatka, Sqay along with Spiritual Education must be made compulsory in the School and College Curriculum. This will act as a booster in creating a strong and focused youth. The Military in collaboration with Education Authorities can work together and implement these programmes. Yoga Campaigns can be launched in every ward, block, and subdivision by Govt. Medical authorities and Local NGOs. This would bring us closer to our civilization. Some reforms in the Indian Medical System: A bridge needs to be formed between Allopathy and Ayurveda.

**“Say, Say, Say everyone, with the sound of a hundred veenas and flutes, Bharat will again take the highest seat, in the assembly of the world ”**

**-Rabindranath Tagore**





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