

A cultural discourse on “Journey of Adi Shankara and Cultural Connectivity”

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Katra (J&K) along with Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi flagged off the Celebrations of Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav program on 24 February 2022 with a cultural discourse by Dr. V. Shankar on “Journey of Adi Shankara and Cultural Connectivity”.

EBSB is a program to celebrate India’s diversity through continuous, sustained engagement between people from different parts of the country. The engagements cover various aspects of life – language, society, culture, economy, food, festivals, tourist spots, sports, and a lot more. The program aims to enhance interaction & promote mutual understanding between people of different states/UTs through state/UT pairing. The U.T. of J&K has been paired with the state of Tamil Nadu. EBSB at SMVD University and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi, will be organizing various activities themed on culture, language, dance forms, architecture, spirituality, cuisine, festivals et cetera from 24th February to 15th March celebrating the Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav.

The discussants of the event were Dr. R. Naresh Kumar, Karpagam Institute of Technology Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu & Dr. L.Vasu, Nodal Officer, EBSB, Easwari Engineering College (Autonomous), Chennai. They represented the state of Tamil Nadu as a paired institution with SMVD University. Around 40 students from both the collaborating institutions also participated in the discussion. The guest speaker was Mr. V. Shankar. Mr. Shankar holds a degree in Physics from Vivekananda College, Automobile Engineering from the Madras Institute of Technology, and an MBA from Northeastern University, Boston. His experience covers Finance and International operations with Automotive OE and Component manufacturing firms in four countries. Right Now he pursues his passion in several fields like garbage-free streets/Swatchh Bharat, Yoga, running a skill development center in a rural area down South empowering local youth, several Charitable activities. The most important one now is conducting Sri Kanchi Mutt’s Saturdays 7-8 PM online Kashmir Cultural Heritage Awareness Series, now on its 28th week through Maadhyama Dharma Samajam’s (MDS) YouTube Channel.

Shri V Shankar gave a presentation on the journey of Adi Shankara and the social-cultural activities of Shri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham. Adi Shankaracharya started working on national integration several centuries ago. Adi Shankara was born at Kaledy, Kochi. There are many discrepancies related to his birth as reported by different authors, but he certainly left the mortal frame at the age of 32. During childhood, he had shown signs of genius. He traveled all over India and propagated the preservation of Vedas and the philosophy of Advaita. Mr. Shankar further added that Adi Shankara established five Pithas at Dwarka, Puri, Shringeri, Kanchi, and Badrinath. After his Digvijaya, he settled in Moksha Puri Kanchi and established Kanchi Matha. Shri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham is running a medical center, schools, University, college, and hospital that are working towards organic farming herbs and medicinal plantation. Shri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham has been connected with Kashmir also. It is said that Adi Shankara visited Kashmir. In Kashmir,

there is a mountain which was known as Gopadri and after the visit of Adi Shankara, it was renamed Shankaracharya hill which is a very prominent hill in Srinagar, and on top of the summit is an ancient Shiva temple. Shankarajayanti is celebrated here in May June every year and devotees from Tamilnadu visit this place.

The event was moderated by Dr. Virendra Bangroo, Director, Regional Centre, IGNCA New Delhi. The convener of the event was Sumanta Sarathi Sharma, Faculty Coordinator, EBSB, SMVD University. Mr. Sumanta Sharma presented the vote of thanks at the end.



