

PROPOSED 'SHANDILYA UNIVERSITY'

AND The map of Proposed Shandilya University and its project.

With his known environment leading to a progressive, meaningful and widening existence through doing and discerning Thakur puts forth a radical, pragmatic global and electric concept of education. It postulates a concentric expression from the individuals to the collective the society, the creation and the world at large. But the individual does not appear in the scene out of nothing. The beginning has also a beginning. Though the process of education is supposed to start from the very embryonic stage of human existence, Thakur emphasizes 'marriage' as the virtual starting point. We nurture a tree with all care, providing water, manure, food and all that to get a desirable fruit, but the seed is of inferior kind, all our efforts made in terms of man, money and material are reduced to disappointment. Thakur's educational ideal was, indeed, of the rare type. He considered emancipation of mankind to be the real aim of education. In one of his thousands of messages, he fervently observed; "A true university must bedew its students with love, hope and charity, and turn them into the valley of heavenly homage to make them men of talented glory surrendered at the feet of Heaven. The true spirit of universal human uplift enshrined in the above message of Thakur clearly envisages his inspiring educational ideal, which easily reminds us of the lofty educational ideas of our ancient Indian universities of Nalanda, Taxila, Ujjaine and Vikramshila. With a view to implementing his rare educational ideal of all round evolution of mankind, Thakur urgently desired that an ideal educational centre of higher learning, to be named as the Shandilya University, should be established at Deoghar, in the future. He confidently hoped that the Shandilya University, when fully established, would certainly revive the past glories of Nalanda and other ancient Indian Universities. The proposed Shandilya University is to serve as the nucleus for reorientation in the field of education and its primary aim is to produce practical and efficient men of wisdom and character. It seeks to achieve a synthesis between the ancient Indian traditions of education with modern scientific development. That is, academic programme seeks to fulfill the saintly goals of Nalanda and Taxila with the modern technological and scientific advancement of learning represented by Trombey and Tarapore. Thakur has emphasized that "Education is to know existence in constant contrast to environment by doing and discerning". Again "Education is to edit the experience and knowledge that nurture our existence with every progressive push".

site map of proposed university

The main stress is laid on the teacher-student ratio proposed to be maintained as one for every six student in all faculties of the University. This teacher-student close relationship is necessary so that maximum individual attention may be paid to each student who may evolve to his maximum through his distinctive traits and tendencies and bring into living focus all his faculties' physical, mental, moral and spiritual. Beneath the broad curriculum rests the belief that a student can purposefully unfold and integrate his manifold potentialities only if he has a meaningful understanding of his own culture and tradition. This kind of ideal teacher-student relationship can lead a nation to prosperity and glory. In order to inculcate spontaneous discipline, love and reverence among the students from their teachers, superiors, usual hostels will be eliminated. Each teacher's home will be the home for six students living as members of the teacher's family. The teachers will not be inspiring factor in the art of living, so that each student may emerge as an evolved personality in harmony with the Ideal and environment. This harmony characterized by healthy growth and mutual co-operation

will be the guiding factor in the university campus and will also radiate thousands of miles outside. Of course, this university will be an island in the ocean of chaos anarchy outside and it can transform its students so wherever they go, they will radiate their own magnetic-influence and divine glow and create better and healthy atmosphere in this trouble-ridden world. This university will set an ideal example of love, charity, compassion, reverence and active services through practical training in the field of education. The education of women is of prime importance in the country at present. It is a matter of great concern, however, that proper arrangements for female education, akin to their womanly traits and aptitudes, have not been introduced in the existing pattern of co-education in the universities. Hence, we are trying to make separate arrangements for the female education which will fulfill their basic instincts, aptitudes and psycho-physical needs. It is also to be noted in this connection that women had acquired proficiency in different branches of learning in ancient India though co-education was not prevalent in the universities like Nalanda, Taxila and Vikramshila. Even at our earlier date in the Indian history lady teachers used to impart education to the female students separately. Hence, we may introduce separate system of female education on the pattern of our national heritage in this university. Another important fact of this university is the great stress that has been laid on practical training in various arts, crafts and technical skills to be imparted to every student of this university. While learning, the students may receive practical training in one skill or the other so that they might earn while they learn. Laboratories here will not only be demonstration centres, but also production centres. This will help them in maintaining themselves and their teachers and will further promote self-confidence, wisdom and efficiency to work independently when they come out of the university. This will enable the students of this university to be least concerned about getting a job and employment after finishing their university career. This will give them an opportunity of proving their practical worth and utility to the society and will definitely solve the problem of unemployment which is an issue of gravest concern for the young men at present. The report of the education commission supports our view fully. The link between education and productivity can be forged through the implementation of the following programmes which should receive high priority in the plans of educational re-construction:-

1. Science as basic component of education and culture.
2. Work experience as an integral part of general education.
3. Vocationalisation of education, to meet the needs of Industry, Agriculture and Trade.
4. Improvement of scientific and technological education and research at the university stage with special emphasis on agriculture and allied sciences.

As another programme to relate education to life and productivity. Thakur has recommended that work experience should be introduced as an integral part of all education – general or vocational. In his opinion all good and purposeful education should consist of at least four basic elements.

- i) A study of languages, humanities and social science.
- ii) A study of mathematics and natural sciences.
- iii) Work-experiences and
- iv) Social service.

In the present educational system, most of the time is consumed with the first, although even in this limited sphere the attainments are not appreciable. The second as, indicated above, is still quite weak and needs a great deal of emphasis. But third and fourth have been almost totally absent till recently and need to be high-lighted, the former mainly for relating education to productivity, and the latter as a means of social and national integration. Work-experience is thus a method of integrating education with the activities of life. This is not only possible but essential in modern studies which adopt science-based technologies. The fundamental characteristic of a good university is the combination of research with teaching.

This university is primarily interested in conducting research up to the highest standard in all its faculties. Hence it will invite the spirit of original research in the minds of the students from the beginning of their career and will provide all sorts of facilities for the same. Special care will be taken to avoid language controversies and students will be given full scope to read their own regional language, the national language and a foreign language of their choice. Great importance would be attached to learning of Sanskrit and other oriental languages. In this connection it will not be out of place to mention that in this university all important Indian, Asian and European languages will be taught up to the highest standard. It is heartening to note that under the divine guidance of Sri Sri Thakur, several thousand academically qualified and practically trained men are dedicated to the goal and purpose of Shandilya University. They likely to become Ideal-Centric teachers of this university imbued with the feeling of love, compassion, service and sacrifice. Besides this, eminent scholars from different parts of the world will be invited to teach in various faculties. This will solve the complex problem of getting good, adjusted and ideal teachers, the first requisite of any good institution. This university aims at providing education, which deals with the whole of man's being and becoming to its students, at the minimum possible cost. In order to remove the existing commercial relationship between the teacher and students, the following means are being divided for meeting the expenses in maintaining the teachers as well as the students:-

1. Majority of the teachers of this university, dedicated and devoted to the noble cause of Satsang, infused with the growing senses of mutual service and healthy co-operation.
2. The students will be allowed to make collection from the environment in order that they might maintain their teachers with whom they live. In other words, they will be allowed to be in touch with their immediate environment, to serve lovingly and fulfill them, and then to accept unhesitatingly whatever they get in return. This is in consonance with our ancient pattern of education in which every student had to offer oblations to the teacher at his own initiative.
3. They will be inspired to have work-experience, that is, to take up works in different trade centres of the university to earn while they learn. This will help them in discharging their duties towards their reverential teachers and maintaining them to a great extent.
4. Voluntary contribution will be accepted from interested persons, well-wishers and guardians of students so that the excessive financial burden may not be imposed upon the students while they are studying.

Rooted in its own tradition and culture and maintaining the ideal atmosphere of love, compassion, universal brother-hood and active service, this university will characterize harmonious blend of useful elements of the educational system of the west with those of our ancient cultural heritage.

FINANCE

Satsang envisages establishing all the faculties of the Shandilya University in different phases at its own cost. The estimated cost involved in this project is about 75 crores of rupees.

Satsang, essentially a charitable and philanthropic institution, hopes to collect this amount gradually from the following resources:-

1. Our resources are the resources of Satsang and all men of good-will, included in these are millions of adherent and sympathizers, amongst whom are several thousands academically qualified and practically trained men dedicated to the goal and purpose of Shandilya University.
2. Satsang started "Shandilya University Fund" in the past and a substantial amount already to its credit.

3. A pledge has been taken by about ten lacs adherents of Sri Sri Thakur to contribute at least one rupee per month towards the “Shandilya University Fund” for recurring expenses of the university.

4. A fund raising programme has been initiated in the U.S.A. by members of Satsang in that country through which funds for the construction of the university and equipments for the scientific and the technological departments will be provided.

5. Substantial amount are expected as donation from generous and interested persons from all over India and abroad. The expanding groups of disciples of Thakur in U.S.A., U.K., German Republic and France have accepted the responsibility of collecting ample funds for the building constructions, technical equipments and recurring expenditure of university.

It is interesting to mention here the visit of Shri K.B. Sahay the then Chief Minister of Bihar to Satsang, Deoghar sometimes in the month of April 1966 and discourse with Sri Sri Thakur which will reveal the real wealth of Satsang. An attempt has been made to reproduce the verbatim of the discussion between Sri Sri Thakur Anukulchandra and Shri K.B. Sahay in the following paras to explain the final of the proposed Shandilya University.

Shri K.B. Sahay – Thakur! You have established a great institution of Satsang here. What is the Income and Expenditure of this institution?

Sri Sri Thakur- “Man is my income and Love is my expenditure.

Shri K.B. Sahay – Thakur! I have heard that the Satsang has a programme to establish Shandilya University, said to be unique of this kind on the pattern of ancient universities like Nalanda, Taxila at an estimated cost of seventy five crores of rupees and also a project bring Ganges water to Darwa in Deoghar by constructing canals linking the two rivers for which you want to give three crores of rupees to the Govt. of Bihar for implementation of the scheme. May I know what the bank balance of your institution is?

Sri Sri Thakur- My bank balance is ten lacs of people. Shri Sahay repeated his query but the reply of Sri Sri Thakur was the same. At this Shri Sahay uttered with disgust, Thakur! I don't understand what you mean to say. Would you kindly clarify?

Sri Sri Thakur explained – See, if I need one rupee from each of my adherents will come to ten lacs, again if I require five rupees from each of them it will come fifty lacs, and if I require rupees ten from each of them it will become one crore but if I require my devotees and disciples to come with all they have and stand by me they will do so gladly with out hesitation with immediacy, meaning thereby they will dispose off all their belongings and offer the same to me and will stand by me.

Shri K. B. Sahay was moved with tears in his eyes and raised further questions in all humility; Thakur! I have heard that you require a minimum area of forty five kilometers radius of barren waste land around Digaria Hills(located in Jasidih) for the establishment of your proposed Shandilya University. I find people hardly cover even a distance of one kilometer without much difficulty on foot, how will it be possible for them to traverse such a unwildly distance? Sri Sri Thakur replied, for these we shall have three ways of transport viz. Railways, Roadways and Tramways. The transport system will have different stoppages at convenient places and they will be named as station of Physics, station of Chemistry, station of Mathematics and so on, so forth.

The name itself will justify the stoppages and even to lay man it would be easy to locate.

Lastly Shri Sahay put a pertinent question “I have heard that you do not pay anything to your workers, still when they are entrusted with any job they feel delighted to fulfill your desire and take up job with all sincerity and fervour I do not understand how it is possible”.

Sri Sri Thakur said smilingly - “where service tones, silver comes as a tonic in turn. Service

rendered by them becomes a source of inspiration to the people served and so in order to keep the source of inspiration alive they feel blessed to offer money as a symbol of thanks". Shri K.B. Sahay's feeling about Sri Sri Thakur was distinctly marked when he was delivering his talks from Satsang platform. He burst out in sentiment, even after growing old of about 64 years, Thakur's face is glowing with childlike simplicity and innocent smile which impressed me most that permits in this surroundings.

LOCAL NECESSITY:

1. In this region of Santhal Parganas, comprising of several tribal districts, there are a few institutions providing facilities for education only in arts and science and that too up to Honors standard only in a few subjects. This deprives the students of this backward area of the opportunity of education in other faculties either general or technical. There is no scope for post-graduate training and research, or studies in Law and Commerce.
2. In this area there is no Medical College and due to the absence of a synthetic approach, the facility for research in various methods of treatment other than allopathic is hardly to be seen.
3. India still continues to be essentially a land of villages and agricultural and animal husbandry institutes should not be few and far between, in order that the poor villagers may take advantage of the modern techniques. The present food crisis demands that such education should be given to people in the remote villages. Hence agricultural colleges and farm-centres are to be given top priority here.
4. There is growing need of skilled workers in the developing industries of this area which has now to be filled up from outside people. We further feel that artisans, no less the engineers, should be able to start their own enterprise independently after coming out from a technical institute. There is lack of such kinds of institutions at least in this locality. It is the fitness of things that Shandilya University is proposed to be located at Deoghar, which, in addition to its being a health resort, is a seat of ancient culture and place of pilgrimage where people from all over India visit throughout the year.

TEACHING PATTERN:

The close teacher-student relationship in the university gives full opportunity to the teacher to deal with each student in a manner suited to his instinctive and psychological aptitudes. This presupposes the absence of any rigid formal pattern of the system of education. The teacher of a subject will lay emphasis on stimulating the student's interests in their particular subjects. He will goad and guide him in the manner he thinks fit so that the student achieves the best efficiency in the subject concerned. A student, therefore, will have to be under the guidance of so many teachers of different subjects concerned in order that he might be equally proficient in all these. Further more; it will be obligatory on the part of the teacher, under whose guidance the student is living, to make him acquainted with the teacher of particular subject in which he wants to have a specialized teaching. This will enable a student to be proficient in each subject he takes up for study. Moreover, arrangements will be made to provide to each student a systematic knowledge of various branches of learning and their meaningful relation to each other.

EXAMINATION PATTERN

It will be the concern of the teachers of a particular subject to test a student having the practical and applied use of the co-subjects in order to see that a student has attained a thorough knowledge of the subject related with other subjects. Only when he is satisfied of the satisfactory progress of the student in the subject concerned he will satisfy him to have

attained proficiency in it. This will be the pattern of examination in each of the subject taken up by the student in his courses of study. He will then be tested by a board of Professors – which will include the teachers of the subjects concerned – who will find out if the student has reached the standard of being awarded the degree of the university or not. This will enable every student to go through his syllabus thoroughly and with care and attention. This is a direct safeguard against the lop-sided study of the syllabuses by students in universities today. This will definitely help in elevating the standard of efficiency and ability of the students reading in this university.

REAL EDUCATION AS ENUNCIATED BY:

Sri Sri Thakur Anukulchandra explains the real education in following words:- “Education in its real form is to unfold the characteristic faculties that are latent within by attachment to an Ideal embodied; and through the glimpses of expressions, those which come forth as impulses from his experience during periods of exposition – to follow with services, to learn with attention, to do in accordance there with, in a word, to take those impulses in, with sense to unfold and adjust.”(AP-IV)

He further defines a university in the following words:-

“WHERE VARIETIES ARRIVE WITH A MEANING AT UNITY IT IS UNIVERSITY”.

(Chapter-V from the book ‘The Social Philosophy of Sri Sri Thakur Anukulchandra’ by Dr. R.K.Lal)

