

BHAKTIVEDANTA HOBBY GROUP

A proposal for registering as Hobby Group

Introduction

It is the duty of the universities to produce students with great **character**. In the current scenario, the emphasis of university education is more on accumulating technical knowledge and little on building character. The strength of India has always been its **spiritual wisdom**. It may not be an exaggeration to say that the whole world looks up to the East in general and India in particular for meaningful spirituality that answers all questions of life. However, it is unfortunate that educated Indian boys and girls are turning a blind eye to their own glorious **cultural heritage**. We, at the Bhaktivedanta Hobby group, work to address this issue. Instead of forgetting and feeling ashamed of our Vedic wisdom and heritage, we help students appreciate and inculcate it and make their life stress-free and successful.

Need for the hobby group

Modern education, in general, and IIT education, in particular, is stressful. So, in this rat race of grades, marks and placements etc. students are, unfortunately, missing the most important goal of education, i.e. building character. So there is a great need to help students understand the value and purpose of life and give them a holistic view of life. The Bhaktivedanta Hobby group attempts to do this by presenting the ancient Indian wisdom in a practical way and in a manner that is relatable and palatable to the student community.

Goals

- To bridge the gap between **science** and **spirituality** through a scientific presentation of ancient Indian philosophy so as to make it accessible to the intelligentsia.
- To imbue, through practical training, the principles of **bhakti yoga** and **mantra meditation** to the students.
- To offer the essence of **spiritual wisdom** from the Vedas and other ancient Indian texts to the students.
- Training in **traditional musical instruments, cooking, Deity worship** and **reciting Samskrit hymns**.
- To promote **cleanliness habits** and a **nutritious diet**, satisfying and nourishing to body and soul.

How we hope to accomplish our goals

- Conducting **daily sessions** of mantra meditation and providing an ancient Vedic Gurukula like training to the students; discussing and reflecting/introspecting on the spiritual wisdom contained in the Vedic texts.
- Holding **weekly sessions** on the practical application of spirituality in a student's life. In these sessions, students will be trained in playing musical instruments and singing as a part of Kirtana, cooking and offering food to the Deity and distributing the sanctified food (Prasadam) as a service to all the guests/students.
- Organizing **institute lectures** as well as **short courses** on the philosophy of Bhagavad Gita for the student community by eminent personalities.
- Hostel programs where we have personal interaction with the students and help them resolve problems, if any.

Our activities in the past

We have been active since 1980's. Since then, we have organized a multitude of events. A prominent few of them are –

- **Science and Spirituality talks** like 'At the Infinity', 'Theologians' first mistake', 'Vedic Epistemology'.
- **Institute lectures** like 'Lessons from Earthquake' (Dr. Ian McCahon, New Zealand), 'Dealing with conflicts' (Dr. Brian Bloch, USA), 'Sleep and sleep disorders' (Dr. Arpita Priyadarshini), 'Paradoxes in Quantum mechanics' (Dr. Ravi Gomatam, Berkeley), 'Three modes of nature' (HH Bhakti Rasamrita Swami), 'Message to youth' (HH Bhakti Charu Swami)
- **Short courses** like 'Introduction to Bhagavad Gita', 'Yoga Ladder', 'Power of Habits', 'Science of Reincarnation'
- **Janmashtami**: An annual festival organized on a grand scale, which is thronged by more than 2000 members of the campus community. The event features almost all varieties of Indian dance forms, drama, music, quizzes, drawing competition for faculty kids etc.
- **Educational camps** for financially weak students to provide them an opportunity for higher studies.
- Hall day invocation Kirtans
- **Regular spiritual retreats** to holy places like Vrindavan, Mayapur, Puri, Banaras, Allahabad etc. for rejuvenating students during their vacations.
- **Summer camps**: Aarohan 2012, Anushilan 2010, Anushilan 2009 for the college and school students of Kanpur to give them spiritual education through pertinent presentations as well as cultural activities like quiz, drama, dance, etc.

Why to register as a hobby group?

- A student-volunteered group and, therefore, must come under Students' Gymkhana
- Our attendance for weekly programs is 80+ and increasing
- Need of a venue to organize our activities
- Need of institute patronage

Alumni

Many of our active members are now serving in responsible societal positions and support us. Some of them are:

- Prof. Ranjan Kumar Behera, EE, IIT Patna
- Prof. Pawan Goyal, CSE, IIT Kharagpur
- Prof. Akhaya Nayak, HSS, IIM Indore
- Prof. Prafulla Malik, MSE, IGIT Bhubaneswar
- Prof. Sreenivasulu C, CE, University of South Australia
- Rohit Dasrapuria, Principal, BGIS Vrindavan
- Rishi Kumar, IAS officer, ACIT Nagpur
- Himanshu Singh, PhD scholar, NUS Singapore
- Raghav Goel, MBA, MIT USA
- Harikeshwar Kushwaha, Goldman Sachs, Singapore
- Devendra Upadhyay, Shell, Qatar

Proposed by:

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