

IASTAM

INDIA

NEWSLETTER

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Connecting Systems; Bridging Disciplines

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Fusing Gaps Bridging the Journey.

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- Pre Note 1
- Response 3
- Our Aspirations 4
Shri P. R. Krishnakumar
- News 5
- Accolades 6
- Recognition 6
- Announcement 7

PRE NOTE

1. Conclave on Cancer, 2. Workshop on Learning of Sanskrit & Samhita

Dr. Narendra Bhatt

Selection of Oration Awards

I am happy to inform that the procedure for selection of IASTAM Oration Awards for 2019 has been completed much in advance.

Padma Bhushan Vaidya Devendra Trigunaji from *Delhi*, a renowned Ayurvedic Physician with expertise in Pulse diagnosis will deliver the next, 10th '*Pandit Shiv Sharma Oration for Propagation of Ayurveda*'. He is known to have curative protocols for several diseases such as blood cancer, kidney ailments and several others. He has been an honorary physician to the number of dignitaries and elite. He is President of All India Ayurvedic Congress.

The 5th '*IASTAM Zandu International Oration for Research Contributions to Natural Products*' for the year 2019 will be delivered by *Dr. Robin Marles* from *Canada*; a pharmacognosist - biologist who has been closely associated with the regulatory authorities in USA and Canada. Presently he is the Senior Scientific Advisor, Nutrition Premarket Assessment Division, Bureau of Nutritional Sciences, Food Directorate, Health Products and Food Branch, Health Canada.

The recipient of the 6th '*IASTAM Zandu*

International Oration (Indian Citizen) For Research Contributions to Natural Products' for the year 2019 is *Dr. S. C. Lakhota* from *Varanasi*, a Distinguished Professor (Lifetime) at BHU, INSA Senior Scientist, Former Professor Emeritus & DAE-Raja Ramanna Fellow, Head, Dept. of Molecular & Human Genetics and Former Dean, Faculty of Science.

As usual, we were amused by some proposals. Amongst the few self-nominations, one not only sent his biodata but suggested to organize the function on a date of his convenience. We were reached by some interested experts but most withdrew after realising our adherence to the procedure. A critical observation by a senior member about the method of selection by the committee could only be responded by increasing our commitment to further improve the procedure. No procedure is absolutely perfect. Our efforts will always be to expand our reach and improve our selection rather than being besieged by a group with limited latitude.

IASTAM - Role of Honour

Over the last few years, it has been noticed that we have not been able to recognize the contributions of several senior members of our association and distinguished

experts. Their close association, their very senior positions and at times though nominated their names did not receive enough votes to make it to the final choice. We have decided to prepare a list of such dignitaries. We will discuss on means to recognize such contributions. I welcome suggestions from our members that will be taken up by the managing committee.

Award Function

As informed the next, 5th in row, *IASTAM Oration and Award Function - 2019 and Conclave on "Cancer Care & Research in AYUSH: Developing A Roadmap"* are planned from 15th - 17th February 2019 at Kochi.

After floods as Kerala resumed back to normalcy, we had a meeting in Kochi on 4th and 5th September for planning of the award function and the conclave. We had a meeting with Dr. Shantikumar V. Nair, Dean of Research, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham and Director, Amrita Centre for Nano Sciences and Molecular Medicine with review on the facilities available. At Kollam we had discussions with Br. Sankarachaitanya, Medical Director, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham and their faculty members. Dr. Ram Manohar, Research Director, Amrita School of Ayurveda and a member of our Managing committee help coordinate these discussions in a very able manner. Initial planning and details of organizing the event were finalized. We will follow it up further for a promising event.

Conclave

The theme "*Cancer Care & Research in AYUSH: Developing A Roadmap*" will have following subthemes.

1. **Developing Drugs and Products for Cancer Management**
2. **Clinical Insights for Understanding Cancer in AYUSH**
3. **Cancer Biology and AYUSH Principles, Evolving Integrative Approaches**
4. **Treatment Modalities for AYUSH in Cancer**
5. **Prevention of Cancer, AYUSH Perspectives**

A **Workshop** will be held on '*AYUSH Treatment Modalities in Cancer*' on 15th February 2019 to share the experiences of professionals and views of academic experts. This workshop is aimed at providing guidance to the practitioners for treating Cancer patients and to help academics and researchers provide variant understanding of the AYUSH approach to the disease.

Learning of Sanskrit and Samhita - Response

My earlier PreNote '*In Search of the Indian Meulenbeld*' has generated much interest. A review

from Prof. Dharmadhikari in previous issue is followed in this issue with an informative response from Vaidya Dilip Gadgil, another scholar of repute. It will be pertinent on us to take forward the issue about learning of Sanskrit and *Samhita* in an elaborate manner. I also had a brief interaction with Dr. Nevpukarkar at Aurangabad during my visit for a personal reason.

The need of learning Sanskrit and *Samhita* is never doubted, not now, never in past. Despite that the reality is contradictory to what is desired. This needs a serious discussion on why and how?

Both Prof. Dharmadhikari and Vd. Gadgil are committed to the purpose and are involved for last many years with single minded objective of promoting learning of the *Samhitas*. The question is, 'is it enough?' With nearly 275+ Ayurvedic colleges under institutionalized training there is need to reconsider our means and methods to evolve new modalities that could be adopted by or linked with university based teaching.

We need to evolve learning modalities which will excite both the faculty and students. We need to generate interest in learning of multiple contextual meanings and realize how exciting it could be to get meaningful interpretations for contemporary use. The challenge is how to generate interest in learning of Sanskrit for its contextual relevance and applicability's and not merely as a language. The beauty and depth of Sanskrit as an important tool to fathom the vastness of a subject and derive the applied objectivity are important for interpreting of knowledge.

Maybe we also need to adapt to fast track learning process as are followed in some part of India, particularly in Varanasi. This will make it easier for the teachers and students to enjoy richness of language rather than going through it in a mundane way. Maybe we need to evolve new digital learning modalities. Another important suggestion could be a national level platform where a group of experts can respond to the queries related with such questions.

My own experience for searching and evolving meanings of words has not been easy. I had to struggle hard to get required expertise and even relevant texts. Another important problem is prohibitive cost of texts for reference. The costs at present of '*Shabda Kalpa Droom*' or '*Vachaspatyam*' are definitely prohibitive for individual reader.

We are working to organize a meet on this issue of concern.

I urge all our readers to share your views related to learning of Sanskrit and *Samhitas*.

