

Brahma Kumaris – Milestones in the Institution's History

Dada Lekh Raj was famous diamond merchant in his late fifties. He had a deep urge for rediscovery of the self, understanding the mystery of the world and realise the true nature of the Supreme Being.

In 1936-37, he experienced series of revelations (Sakshatkars – divine visions) of the Incorporeal Supreme Soul – the Being of Light. He also saw vision of Value- based society, characterised by love, peace, harmony, health, and happiness. He had a call to be an embodiment of virtues, to set an example to inspire others by his practical life and to create other human instruments like himself to spread education in values, mediation and spiritual Knowledge so that the Golden Age Might dawn.

He had a call to be a human medium of the Divine so that God might speak and manifest His knowledge through Dada Lekh Raj. It was in response to this call that this institution in its nascent form was formally founded in 1936. He formed a Trust, consisting of only women, and placed his entire movable and immovable properties in their hands to run the Institution. Thus, he gave dignity and honor to women and they have, since then, been in the forefront as leaders of a revolution in moral, spiritual and human values.

In course of time, Dada Lekh Raj came to be known as Brahma or Prajapita Brahma and those who were spiritually regenerated through oracles of Brahma were known as Brahma Kumaris and Brahma Kumar's. Educational institution came to be known as Prajapita Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya. Brahma Baba left the body in 1969 after dedicating 33 years to bring to reality his vision of people of all cultural, economic and religious backgrounds coming together to rediscover and develop the spiritual dimension of their lives.

International Institution

As an **international institution**, Brahma Kumaris offer people of all backgrounds an opportunity to learn meditation and deepen their understanding of universal principles and innate values through a variety of educational programmes, courses and learning resources. Institution provides a caring, co-operative and supportive environment, which encourages individuals to bring out the best in themselves.

The institution coordinates international and community projects, has created opportunities for people in 129 countries to participate in a number of initiatives aimed at creating world where people live in peace and harmony.

Brahma Kumaris (BKs) have global network with more than 5000 centers spread over India and 85 countries. About 5,00,000 persons daily study moral and spiritual values and practice meditation at these centres. The Institution has gained international recognition for its work on spirituality and Rajyoga Meditation technique.

It is affiliated as an NGO to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations and also to the UNICEF. It has been awarded a Peace Medal, an international and five national 'Peace Messenger Awards' by the United Nations.

Brahma Kumaris host approximately 1,50,000 residential guests annually in Mount Abu and is home to 1000 permanent residents who operate the 42 departments required to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the constant flow of visitors and students from around the world.

Learning for life

The Institution recognizes the intrinsic spirituality and goodness of every human being and helps people to rediscover goodness within them, encouraging and facilitating the development of spiritual awareness, attitudes, behaviors and skills through a process of lifelong learning. It is open to everyone irrespective of nationality race, religion, caste, creed, sect, gender or age.

Seven days introductory course is offered at all the centers to those interested in spiritual knowledge.

Recognising the importance of understanding the wider context of human existence the Institution's core curriculum addresses the spiritual significance of religious and cultural traditions and explores such themes as life after death, our relationship with God and the purpose of life.

The Institution organizes and participates in dialogues across a wide spectrum of issues promoting peace and understanding in many local and global forums.

The Spiritual Dimension

Above all, the Institution emphasizes the benefits of moral and spiritual approaches to life, enabling people to develop attitudes and behaviors, which stem from shared core values (Purity, Love, Happiness, Peace, Bliss, Spiritual Powers and Virtues) and their understanding. Inspired by the vision of a world where people live in harmony with others, the Institution's purpose is to share that vision of the future while strengthening individual awareness of the dignity inherent in every human being.

Academy for A Better World (Gyan Sarovar)

The Academy for a Better World 'Gyan Sarovar' meaning 'the lake of Knowledge', a non-conventional institution for higher learning was established in 1994 at Mount Abu to offer value-based education for different professionals, which enables the practical application of these teachings. The Academy has seventeen departments: Education, Social Service, Administrators, Scientists and Engineers, women Department, Business Industry, Politicians, Youth, Art and Culture, Rural Development, Media, Jurists, Medical, Religious, Sports, Security and Transport.

The Academy is developed on 28 acres of land, without disturbing the natural topography and environment of the hills. Three man-made lakes have been created, which give cool, clean, aesthetic and pleasant environment. Used water is recycled to maintain 20,000 fruit trees and other plants. Guan Sarovar, a lighthouse of learning, combines spiritual wisdom and state-of-the-art technologies created by modern science. It is an example in creating a better future world.

A part of Gyan Sarovar has (a) **Universal Harmony Hall Auditorium** (1800 seats) has facilities for simultaneous translation into 16 languages with excellent acoustics. It has both heating and cooling systems. (b) **International Centre for Higher Learning**, an educational complex with 13 seminar rooms, each of which has capacity to seat 75 to 150 persons; (c) **Two meditation Halls** (300 and 500 seats); (d) **Spiritual Art Gallery**, designed to promote positive attitudes and universal human, moral and spiritual values, has beautiful exhibits depicting all the four time periods (Golden, Silver, Copper and Iron) of human existence a laser show for stress free life and computer education on spirituality; (e) **Residential Complexes:** Raj Rishi Bhawan, Harmony House and Vishnu Puri (accommodate 1000 guests); (f) **Kitchen, Dining Halls are solar energy** powered to prepare and serve vegetarian food to 1200 people at a time; (g) **Administrative Block and Other Facilities** include state-of –the –art communication facilities, photocopying and photography sections, audio and video departments to ensure the smooth functioning of the Academy. Communications include fax, email and satellite phone; (h) **clinic with Resident Doctor and emergency beds** provides medical help; (i) **Library and Research Lab:**

Milestones in the Institution's History

1936

The Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya was founded in Karachi, Sind (now in Pakistan). The founder, Brahma Baba donated his entire wealth to establish the institution.

For fourteen years, until after the partition of India and the formation of Pakistan, the original group of 300 people lived as a self-sufficient community, spending their time in intense spiritual study, meditation and self-development.

1951

The community moved to Mt. Abu, Rajasthan, India; presently the location of its international headquarters. They were invited to establish centers in Delhi and Bombay soon afterwards.

1969

When the founder passed away there were 250 centers throughout India. Two women from the original group, Dadi Prakashmani and Dadi Manmohini, were selected as joint Administrative Heads and the Institution moved into a new phase of expansion.

1971

The first centers outside India were established in London and Hong Kong. In 1974 Dadi Janki was appointed as the main co-ordinator of service activities in countries outside India, and subsequently assumed the position of Additional Administrative Head in London. People from other countries were inspired to study and then teach. By the early 1980s centers had been established in over 40 countries.

1980

Received affiliation to the Department of Public Information of the United Nations as a non-governmental organisation.

1983

Universal Peace Hall (3500 seats) was inaugurated in Mt. Abu. Granted Consultative Status on the Roaster of the UN Economic and Social Council.

1986

Launched its first international outreach project- the Million Minutes of Peace.

1987

Received six national and one international Peace Messenger awards from the Secretary General of the United Nations in New York for work during the international Year of Peace. Granted consultative status with UNICEF.

1988

United Nations Peace Messenger Initiative – Global co- operation for a better World was launched.

1990

The Mt. Abu Declaration was formulated and adopted at the Mt. Abu summit climaxing the first phase of Global Cooperation Project. The Mt. Abu Declaration became a UN General Assembly Document.

1991

Global Hospital and Research Center was inaugurated at Mt. Abu when fully commissioned, it will have 120 beds.

1995

The Academy for Better World (Guan Sarovar) was inaugurated at Mt. Abu.

1996

Launch of the project 'Sharing our Values for a Better World' to celebrate the 50th anniversary of United Nations.

1997

Diamond Hall (capacity 20,000) and Shantivan Complex were inaugurated in Talheti, Abu.

1998

The Institution was granted General Consultative Status with the Economical Social Council of the UN. Formal support is given to Living Values: An Educational Programme by UNESCO.

1999

Commissioning of Peace Village Learning and Retreat Centre, Haines Falls, New York.

2000

Designated “ Messenger for Manifesto 2000” by UNESCO to mark the International year for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence celebrating the richness of the world’s cultural diversity.

2001-2002

Being celebrated by Organisation as Year of World Transformation Through Personality Transformation.

Dadi Prakashmani is one of the original students of the University from 1936 and became the Administrative Head in 1969. Her name means “ jewel of light” and her spirituality. She is renowned for her lightness, generosity and depth of understanding.

Dadi Janki is also one of the original members of the University. She joined the university at the age of 21. Her life is dedicated to the spiritual service of others. She campaigns for truth and works tirelessly for world peace. She lives in London since 1974 and is Additional Administrative Head.

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