



DEI MONTHLY NEWS

With Profound Gratitude and Veneration, this Issue of the DEI Newsletter is most humbly dedicated to Gracious Huzur Dr. M.B. Lal Sahab, the August Founder of the Institute. Our heads are bowed and our hands joined, as we seek His continued Grace & Benediction to attain excellence in all our noble ventures.

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Section A : DEI

Two-Day International Conference DSC-ATDI 2024 Organized



Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Deemed to be University, Dayalbagh, Agra-282005, UP and ATDI (Association for Transport Development in India) in collaboration with six International Universities organized The Fifth Winter Session of Dayalbagh Science of Consciousness (DSC) 2024 on 31 December 2023 and 1 January 2024, coinciding with the celebration of 'Shiksha Diwas' & 'Dayalbagh Science of "Consciousness, Conscience, and Awareness" Day' in Trinity Mode (Upper, Middle and Lower).

The First Session of the Conference commenced on Sunday, December 31, 2023, in which various Regional Satsang Associations, under the auspices of the Ra Dha Sva Aa Mi Satsang Sabha (RSS), Dayalbagh, Agra 282005, India, highlighted the initiatives taken by them and their impact in transforming the lives of the people in the neighbourhood towards 'better worldliness'. The topic of the day's session was the "Conscientiousness-Driven Self-reliant Socio-spiritual Model of Dayalbagh in Practice for 108 Years – Its Scalability, Global Implementation, Sustainability, and Impact". Presentations were made by 11 Regional Satsang Associations located across India and 5 located abroad, reflecting the diversity of projects and activities in their over 50 residential colonies not only for leading a fulfilling life themselves but also setting a glowing and practical example for the communities around. This was followed by lively and multifarious cultural presentations by children from various Regions.

On day two, January 01, 2024, a Panel Discussion was held, centred on the theme of "Community Conscientiousness for lateral and longitudinal mobility (transportation) for the realization of Ultimate Consciousness. The Panel Discussion commenced with the 'Vision Talk' by Most Revered Prof. P.S Satsangi Sahab, Chairman, Advisory Committee on Education (a non-statutory body serving as a think tank for Dayalbagh Educational Institutions).

Thirty Esteemed Panelists from diverse backgrounds across the globe shared insights into fostering physical, intellectual, and spiritual mobility within communities, culminating in collective enlightenment and a deeper understanding of human existence. The discussions emphasized the cultivation of mindfulness, ethical conduct, and facilitating movement across various dimensions, enabling progress towards a higher level of consciousness and a deeper connection with the Divine. Of notable importance was the focus on integrating consciousness within transportation systems, sustainable lifestyle practices, technological advancements, Quantum Sciences, and holistic developmental frameworks. The discussions highlighted the need for conscious systemic planning to ensure lateral and longitudinal integration across various domains, aiming for global progress and harmonious coexistence. Ultimately, the focus of the Panel Discussion centred on understanding the indispensable significance of spiritual guidance provided by an adept master. The discourse delved deeply into the quintessential role and position of such a spiritually adept master, facilitating the journey from the physical to the spiritual realm, and concluded with expressions of gratitude for the Profound Guidance bestowed upon all participants by Most Revered Chairman, ACE.

The Two-Day Conference concluded with a Students' Poster Session and a vibrant Cultural Programme by children of the Sant(Su)perhuman Evolutionary Scheme, which included a 'Camel Song' to commemorate the UN's declaration of 2024 as the International Year of the Camelids, and another one, 'Lead Kindly Light', based on the 1883 Hymn by St. John Henry Newman.

Dayalbagh Educational Institute Embraces *Lohri* with Cultural Gala

Dayalbagh Educational Institute celebrated its socio-cultural day through *Lohri* celebrations on January 13, 2024. Held at the scenic venue of Camel Point, the event was a confluence of tradition, culture, and youthful energy marked by a wave of energetic enthusiasm that swept across the entire campus. Students dressed in vibrant attires from the earliest stages of their educational journey—ranging from Sant(Su)perhuman Evolutionary Scheme children to students of University levels, participated in a kaleidoscope of performances. The dance, '*He Sundar Mundriye and Satguru Lohri De*,' was a colourful display of traditional *Lohri* themes by the children of Phase II Sant(Su)perhuman Evolutionary Scheme. DEI Radhasoami Saran Ashram Nagar School captivated the audience with its graceful storytelling through an Action Song. Group Dances by students of Prem Vidyalaya Primary School, of different colonies of Dayalbagh and of School of Art and Culture manifesting high energy and vibrant moves brought everyone to their feet. They brought warmth and exuberance to the wintry ambience with their lively displays. The Soulful renditions by DEI students touched spiritual cords by their devotional themes.



Amid the nippy weather, the air was filled with the comforting aromas of winter treats, like, popcorn, peanuts, and *revari*, which were generously shared among the attendees. This traditional gala added festive nostalgia and togetherness to the occasion. The successful execution of the programme was a collaborative effort that highlighted the

Institution's unity with the community, leaving a memorable imprint on all.

Short-Term Capacity Building Programme on Statistical Analysis Organized at DEI

The Association of Indian Universities, along with Dayalbagh Educational Institute (Deemed to be University), Dayalbagh, Agra-282005 and Academic and Administrative Development Centre (AIU-DEI-AADC) organized a Short-Term Capacity Building Programme on *Statistical Analysis: Theory and Practice (Applications of SPSS and R-Software in Research)* from November 28, 2023, to December 5, 2023 at DEI. Prof. Poornima Jain, Convener of the Programme, welcomed the guests and participants and introduced the programme. Dr V. M. Katoch, former Director-General, Indian Council of Medical Research and the Chair of the National Academy of Sciences, India (NASI), Dr. Amrendra Pani, Joint Director, and Head, Research Division, Association of Indian Universities, Prof. C. Patvardhan, Officiating Director, DEI and Prof. Anand Mohan, Registrar, DEI graced the Inaugural Ceremony.

Besides Resource Persons from DEI, Dr. Vineeta Singh, Professor, Department of Statistics, Institute of Social Sciences, and Director, Institute of Fine Arts, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Agra, Prof. Diwakar Khare, Former Director, Department of Statistics, Institute of Social Sciences, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Agra, Dr. Manoj Kumar, Post- Doctoral Associate (Data Science, Biostatistics, Health Economics), McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA registered their views as experts.

The overall course content of the Programme was divided into 16 modules with two sessions each day. Theoretical sessions enhanced the understanding of the participants regarding data analysis and the use of data in research whereas, practical sessions helped the participants to have a hands-on experience with the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and R software. Fifty-four participants from different Institutes/Universities attended the Programme in blended mode. Prof. Jyoti Gogia, Nodal Officer, AIU-DEI-AADC, proposed the Vote of Thanks. The Programme received an overwhelming response.

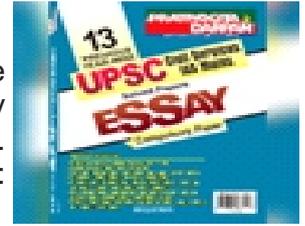


Faculty News

Faculty of Arts

Student's Achievement:

Ms. Deepali Seth, Research Scholar, Dept. of English, Faculty of Arts, DEI, wrote a Help Book for Civil Services Aspirants to guide them regarding the Compulsory Paper on Essay- Writing of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Exam. The book was published by *Pratiyogita Darpan* (Upkar Prakashan) with ISBN No: 978-93-91068-85-1.



Faculty of Education

Pupil Teachers Take Oath as Scouts and Guides

The Faculty of Education, Dayalbagh Educational Institute organized a Five-day Scouting and Guiding camp for B.Ed., D.El.Ed and PSTE(Pre-Service Teacher Education)Teacher Trainees from December 14 to December 18, 2023. Smt. Namita Sood, Former Headmistress, Delhi Public School, Agra was the Chief Guest of the Inaugural Function.

On the first day of the Camp, the Scouts and Guides took part in the Environment-Cleaning and Slogan-making competitions which were evaluated by two senior teachers of Faculty of Arts, DEI, Dr. Namasya and Dr. Nishith Gaur. On the second day, Smt. Sangeeta Sinha, a Yoga Trainer, conducted meditation exercises for the students. This was followed by a demonstration of First Aid and Self-defence Techniques and a cultural programme by the Scouts and Guides. On the third day of the Camp, Dr. Ranjeet Satsangi, Prof. Emeritus, Faculty of Education, conducted a Training Session on Tent Pitching. On the fourth day, the Scouts and Guides went for hiking, put up tents in groups, and prepared food with fire. The evaluation was done by Prof. Emeritus Archana Kapoor and Prof. Emeritus D. Vasantha (both from Faculty of Education). During the Camp, the Scouts and Guides learnt a variety of skills, including First Aid and Self-defence.

In the Valedictory Session, Smt. Sneh Bijlani, Treasurer, DEI, and Prof. Kiran Nath, Former Dean, Faculty of Education, DEI, conferred the oath on the Scouts and Guides. In her address, she urged the attendees to commit to developing themselves into reliable and responsible individuals who are ready to face the challenges of life with courage and determination. Prof. P.S. Tyagi and Dr. Arti Singh of Faculty of Education, DEI, coordinated the Camp. All Members of staff and students of Education Faculty participated with enthusiasm and zeal.



Workshop on Competency-Based Teaching and Learning at Primary Level Organized

A Three-Day Workshop on Competency-based Teaching and Learning at the Primary level was organized from 4 to 6 January 2024 by School of Education, DEI in collaboration with District Institute of Education & Training (DIET), Agra. The Workshop was organized for DEL.Ed. trainees and the in-service school teachers of DEI schools. Dr. Pragya Sharma from DIET, Agra, Mr. Satyapal Singh, Ms. Priyanka Gautam and Ms. Pooja Sharma Master Trainers from Poorva Madhyamic Vidyalaya, Kagarol, Agra, Composite Girls' School, Etmadpur, Agra and Primary School, Khedia-1, Agra respectively, acted as the Resource Persons in the Workshop. They oriented the participants with the format of competency-based lesson plans and activities. Hands-on experiences of competency-based activities in Languages, Maths, and Environmental Studies subjects were provided to the participants. The participants were also given exposure to various school records and Online and Offline Assessment tools which they can use in making their teaching effective. The conveners of the workshop were Dr. Parul Khanna and Ms. Mugdha Sharma.



Faculty of Engineering Students' Achievements:

Participation in National Level Hackathon

A team from Dayalbagh Educational Institute (Deemed to be University), Dayalbagh, Agra-282005, got selected for the Grand Finale of Smart India Hackathon (SIH), an initiative by the Ministry of Education of India hosted at VNRVJ Institute of Engineering & Technology, Hyderabad on 19 and 20, December'23. The team comprised Atam Swaroop (Team Lead), Aarat Swaroop, Aarat Prasad, Gargi Yadav, Vanshika Rajpal, and Priyanshu Sharan, all students of Engineering Faculty, DEI, under the Mentorship of Ms. Manisha Gupta and Ms. Monika Singh, Faculty Members from Dept. of Physics and Computer Science, Faculty of Science, DEI.



Faculty of Science Students' Achievements:

Ms. Radha Yadav and Prof. ShabadPreet presented a paper on 'Evaluation of Lemongrass Nanoemulsion and its Alum Blend for Larvicidal Activity Against Dengue Vector *Aedes Aegypti*' and were awarded the '**Young Scientist Award**' at the International Conference, ICMRP-2023, organized by Koshambi Foundation India and Dept. of History & Culture, Dr. B.R Ambedkar University at Sanskriti Bhavan of the University from 16 to 18 December 2023. At the same Conference, Ms. Basudha Rani, and Prof. ShabadPreet presented a paper on 'Molecular Docking Study on Phyto-Constituents of Clove Essential Oil Against Mosquito Juvenile Hormone Binding Protein and Potential Effects on *Aedes Aegypti* Metamorphosis' and received the '**Best Innovation Award.**'

DEI Prem Vidyalaya Intermediate School

School News:

NCC Training Camp: A CATC 17 Camp of NCC was organized from December 12 to December 21, 2023, at Shri Rajendra Singh College, Dhimishri, Agra. In this Camp, 44 cadets of DEI Prem Vidyalaya



participated with full energy, intensity, and passion under the able guidance of Captain Surat Pyari. Many other reputed colleges of Agra, like, Agra College, and Agra Public School, were also there. Many competitions were held to test the calibre of the cadets and our students came up with flying colours and won several prizes, which included, Winner in Tug of War, Second in Drill Competition, First in Group Song, First in Solo Dance (Ms. Anjali Baghel XII Arts), First in Solo Song (Ms. Satviki Saran XII Commerce) and also the Best Cadet Award (Ms. Satviki Saran).

Olympiad:

The English Olympiad was organized by SOF International English Olympiad in November 2023. In this Olympiad, 50 students of Class VI to XII took part and did extremely well. Nirat from class VI and Tanisha from class XI have been selected for the Level 2 Competition. Roshni, Nirat, Swarupika from class VI, Nihar Bhushan from class VII, Amrit Thapar, Damini, and Tanisha from class XI got the prestigious Gold Medal of Excellence.

Section B: DEI-ODE (Online & Distance Education)

From the Coordinator's desk



Amongst the futuristic trends in higher education, the buzzword Lifelong Learning (LLL) stands out. As per Wikipedia, it is defined as “all learning activity undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competencies within a personal, civic, social and/or employment–related perspective”. It is often considered learning that occurs after the formal education years and distinguished from the concept of continuing education or adult education or training in the sense that it has a broader scope....., this type of learning is concerned with the development of human potential....

A very comprehensive research project on Lifelong Learning in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) was conducted by the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning located in Hamburg, Germany, in cooperation with the International Association of Universities and the Shanghai Open University lasting over 3 years (2020-22) in which 399 HEIs from 96 countries, including 18 from India, participated. It has come out with a Research Report entitled 'International Trends of Lifelong Learning in Higher Education' in the year 2023 which is based on the practices followed in the participating HEIs.

As noted by the Director of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning in the Foreword to the report: *“In the context of fast-paced technological developments, the climate crisis, persistent social inequalities and demographic shifts, there is a need to rethink learning for people of all ages and to transform education systems. With increasingly unpredictable labour markets, reskilling and upskilling throughout life become an essential part of people's professional pathways. In addition to digitalization, robotics and automation, the shift towards low-carbon economies is expected to reshape labour markets, resulting in a growing demand for skills to support this green transition. These changes will also deepen the inequalities between population groups, disproportionately impacting those who are already at a disadvantage”.*

Some of the main findings of the report are listed below:

- *On-campus learning is still the most common form of provision for all degree and non-degree programmes, yet blended and distance options are more likely to be offered for shorter programmes, including certificates, diplomas, and other postgraduate courses.*
- *The two most prioritized groups targeted for LLL activities by HEIs are working people requiring upskilling/reskilling (89% of HEIs) and individuals working in public and private organizations (84%). By contrast, early school leavers, migrants, refugees, etc. are only targeted by 25 per cent of HEIs or less.*
- *To address the diverse needs of lifelong learners, more flexible provision of educational programmes is required, including flexibility in terms of learning times, places and modalities, as well as considering shorter, non-degree programmes and alternative credentials to certify learning outcomes.*
- *When it comes to admission and transfer pathways, the higher education sector still appears as rather restrictive, with a general secondary school-leaving certificate providing by far the most common form of access. In particular, access to degree programmes is highly regulated with few options for alternative access, for example from vocational tracks. Unsurprisingly, flexible options are more available for short-cycle programmes.*

It has been pointed out in Wikipedia that people with higher cognitive reserves, attained through lifelong learning, were better able to endure the inevitable ravages of ageing and therefore avoid cognitive decline.

It is noteworthy that National Education Policy 2020 states that HEIs will provide opportunities for lifelong learning through their Open Distance Learning (ODL) and Online programmes provided they are accredited to do so. The Distance & Online Programme of DEI offers short Stand-alone Modular Courses of 9-week duration and Vocational Programmes at certificate level which meet the needs of lifelong learning.

(Prof. V.B. Gupta)

News From the Information Centres

Shiksha Diwas Celebrations: Reports from Various Centres

Shiksha Diwas was celebrated on 1 January 2024 at **Ludhiana Centre** with tremendous zeal by students as well as teachers. The Function started with the Institute Prayer and University Song. The importance, role, and goals of education in DEI were discussed. The aims and objectives of the education model of DEI with the Mission Objective of 'the Development of a Complete Man,' were also discussed. Sweets were served to all in the end.



The **Atlanta Branch, USA**, began the new year with morning prayers and watching the 5th Dayalbagh Science of Consciousness (DSC) Programme. Afterwards, children and youth recited *Shabd*s in English, Hindi, and Sanskrit, followed by an informative session on the basics of Drones. Later in the day, Branch members, along with those from affiliated Centres in Florida, Houston, and Dallas, joined via audio conferencing to mark 'Anupam Utsav' - a two-year-old initiative to welcome the new year by learning something new. The event drew approximately 80 participants, including DRSANA President, Vice President, Secretary, and Smt. Sandhya Mathur and Prof. Sarla Paul from Dayalbagh. The Programme kicked off with an interactive



session, featuring guidance from our Revered Sant Satgurus, aimed at fostering a healthy and spiritually enriched life for all. Following this, a review of key 2023 events at Dayalbagh and DEI was presented, highlighting milestones such as the 'Yamuna River Restoration Project' and the introduction of camels to Dayalbagh Gaushala. A craft activity encouraging financial literacy was held, guiding participants to craft their piggy banks. It also featured insights from the Atlanta Branch Secretary on Dayalbagh's 'Baal Bachat Yojana.' The Programme's final segment featured approximately 26 students from the branch sharing their perspectives on the topics "Nature v/s Nurture" and "Macro v/s Micro." This discussion was part of a recurring series, as directed by the Most Revered Prof. Prem Saran Satsangi Sahab. The Event concluded with remarks from the Atlanta Branch Secretary and other guests, focusing on lessons learned in the past year, plans for improvement in the coming year, and a heartfelt prayer for Grace and Guidance.

At **Bangalore**, Shiksha Diwas, 2024 was celebrated with bubbling enthusiasm in Hybrid Mode to enable many to attend. The Programme was scheduled after Morning E- Satsang. The celebrations started with the rendering of the University Prayer by a team of Members of the Satsang Branch, followed by the reading of "The Brief Note on Shiksha Diwas". Then, recitation of Shabda from the Holy Books took place by Gents as well as Ladies. Subsequently, Excerpts from the "*Discourses on Education in Dayalbagh: A Vision of Complete Education...*"



were read out. Thereafter, the Centre in Charge Prof TVSN Murty gave a speech on, " Academic

Aspects". The function was closed with the recitation of another Prayer and the distribution of Prasad to all.

DEI Information Centre, **Secunderabad**, organized a Virtual Meet to celebrate Shiksha Diwas on January 1, 2024. The Programme commenced with a welcome sloka in Sanskrit by Dr. Y.V. Mahalakshami, Mentor. After that, the following persons spoke on various topics:

Dr. YV Subrahmanyam, Centre in Charge, - 'Importance of Shiksha Diwas', Shri Radhanand, Branch Secretary – 'Overview of DEI Education', and 'Role of Satsangis in promoting DEI', Shri Pradeep Kumar Mathur – 'Empowering Children with Practical Knowledge', Shri N Sasidhar- 'Innovative and Comprehensive Education System',

Smt. Lata Akella – 'Telugu Version of a Chapter from *Bhagavadgita* by Sir Sahabji Maharaj, Smt. Ritu – 'Education is Life Long', Shri Prasad Parvatam – 'Conscience and Satsang Teachings', Smt. Vasantha Laxmi – 'DEI Education System – Promotion'. Later, Dr Y V. Mahalakshmi recited a Sanskrit sloka, Smt. Radharupa presented verses in Sanskrit, Smt. Vani played two *Tyagaraja Krutis* on Veena, Ms. Avira presented a prayer in Sanskrit and Master Avin shared his Summer school experience. In the end, a Vote of thanks was proposed by the Centre-in-Charge and the Programme concluded with the University Song. A total of forty-five people joined the Zoom meeting.

The occasion of Shiksha Diwas was celebrated by the students and teachers of **Jamshedpur** Centre with zeal and enthusiasm. The Programme commenced with the University Prayer followed by an address from the Centre-in-charge on the importance of this day. The students contributed by participating in events such as Speech Delivery, Singing, and thought-provoking exchange of ideas. Centre Teachers shared their insights on the objectives of Education and DEI's role for the betterment of individuals, society, and nation. The Programme concluded with a Vote of thanks followed by the University Song and the distribution of refreshments.



The **Toronto branch** joyously commemorated Shiksha Diwas during the early hours of January 1, 2024. The theme of the celebration aimed to foster an appreciation of 'Macrocosm & Microcosm' and 'Nature & Nurture.' The participants in the event included current students of the Agriculture Science Course, several DEI Alumni, and ongoing Distance Programme students, along with members of the Toronto branch. A total of 34 people were present. The event commenced with a soulful prayer recitation by one of the superhuman children of the branch on the piano, accompanied by heartfelt vocals. This was followed by a captivating poetry recitation featuring four children from the branch, including the participation of two talented youngsters from the Montreal MPG. Two other children presented a brief talk on camels, shedding light on the myriad benefits of camel milk. Subsequently, a high-school student from the branch delivered an insightful presentation elucidating the distinctions between Microcosm and Macrocosm. The presentation delved into the interpretations of ancient philosophers from both Western and Eastern traditions, drawing parallels between the human mind and the vast cosmic universe. Noteworthy figures such as Paracelsus, Leibniz, Plato, and insights from Hindu Vedantic philosophy and Upanishads were eloquently discussed. The Programme further delved into a presentation addressing the



alarming prevalence of wildfires in North America as part of the *Knowledge for Children* initiative. The comprehensive coverage included the causes and benefits of wildfires in the natural ecosystem, culminating in a meaningful discussion where children shared their newfound understanding of Nature and Nurture. The celebration proved to be an exceptional learning experience for both children of the branch and the Members of the Toronto Information Centre.

At **Gadiras (Sukma) Centre**, the Education Day and Dayalbagh Science of "Consciousness, Conscience and Awareness" Day in Trinity Mode (Upper, Middle and Lower) was celebrated jointly by the students, their family members, teachers, locals and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel. The guests included Shri Anami Sharan, 2nd in Command 2nd Bn CRPF, his wife Smt. Savitry Kumari, Shri Om Parkash Bishnoi, Assistant Commandant, 188 Bn CRPF, Shri Rajiv Kumar, Assistant Commandant, 2nd Bn CRPF and his wife, Thana in charge, Smt. Sitara Paswan. The



Programme started with a Prayer in Sanskrit language followed by a Patriotic Song, a local Folk Dance, a Short Skit and the University Song. On this occasion, an Exhibition-cum-Sale was organised where students displayed their stitched garments like pillow covers, handkerchiefs, children's garments, flowers made of palm tree leaves and broomsticks. A Fete was also organised in which these students sold homemade local snacks and sweets. After the Cultural Programme and feasting, a motivational speech was delivered by the Chief Guest and other dignitaries. A Vote of Thanks was delivered by Centre in Charge Shri Vijander Kumar and faculty member, Smt. Bhupinder Jeet Kaur.

DEI Alumni and members of the **Chicago branch** celebrated Shiksha Diwas, on January 6, 2024. The function started with the DEI University Prayer followed by recitation of its English version 'All Gracious Ever Merciful Lord'. Alumni presented salient features of 'DEI Education Policy' with emphasis on proposals and policies enumerated by 'Param Guru Huzur Dr M. B. Lal Sahab'. In continuation, an Interactive Session was held on 'DEI sustainable development goal for all', where the implication of policies on People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships was discussed. Thereafter, a very interesting presentation was made by a PhD student pursuing AI on 'The Artificial Intelligence Revolution.'



Lastly, brothers and sisters at the Chicago Study Centre jointly recited *Shabda* accompanied by musical instruments. The function concluded with the prayer '*Tamanna Yahi Hai*'.

Shiksha Diwas was celebrated at DEI **Chennai** Information Centre on 1 January 2024. The programme commenced with the University Prayer. This was followed by *Shabda* Paths recited by present students, DEI Alumni, Centre Faculty members as well as children. Students presented their views on the importance of Shiksha Diwas. This was followed by a Poetry recitation related to Education in English and Hindi, by the Alumni of DEI as well as Sant (Su)perhuman Evolutionary Scheme children and school students. Excerpts of *Bachans* by Revered leaders of Ra Dha Sva Aa Mi Faith about Education were presented by some students and children. Members of Chennai branch presented their views on the importance of Education in enhancing individual and community consciousness and how Education at different age levels can facilitate the growth of an individual to realize his / her full potential. The programme concluded with a Vote of thanks, University Prayer and distribution of sweets.

Section C: DEI Alumni (AADEIs & AAFDEI)

From the Editor's desk

The arrival of a herd of camels in Dayalbagh and the UN designation of the year 2024 as International Year of Camelids has to be more than a coincidence. The UN noted that camelids are an important source of livelihood for many who live in the most hostile ecosystems on earth. Apart from the significant role that camelids play in culture, economy, nutrition and food security, contributing positively to the lives of indigenous peoples and local communities, they also stand for resilience, hard work, patience, endurance and humour. However, here in Dayalbagh a strange narrative of Divine Grace and Mercy unfolded. With their regal looks, colourful attires, graceful walk, each with a personal name, these majestic creatures have easily and in a very short time become an integral part of the community. With one of the injured camels being miraculously restored to good health under the Merciful Gaze of the Supreme Father, the entire herd comes with a message of cheer and hope and a lesson in Faith so powerful that it can move mountains.

Do share your comments and contributions at aadeisnewsletter@gmail.com. Your response will be deeply appreciated!

Humps Beyond the Dunes

Pranay Bhatnagar

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During my undergraduate and postgraduate programs at DEI, I had the privilege of encountering rare fauna, turning each sighting into the most insightful and delightful experience. And now as an ecologist, the recent arrival of camels to Dayalbagh has once again sparked my curiosity, prompting a desire to delve deeper into their origins, characteristics and behaviors.

An attempt to trace their origins reveals that they are believed to have originated in North America around 45 million years ago. The first true camels, of the genus *Protylopus*, appeared during the Eocene epoch. Over time, these early camels migrated to other parts of the world. The ancestors of modern-day camels eventually crossed the Bering land bridge, connecting North America to Asia, and dispersed into the Old World. Camels evolved further in Asia and the Middle East, adapting to diverse environments.



Said to be architects of arid and semi-arid Ecosystems, camels play diverse roles crucial for the overall functioning of these environments. Serving as herbivores, camels possess the unique ability to graze on tough and thorny plants, contributing significantly to nutrient cycling by processing plant material in regions where forage can be scarce. Their role extends to seed dispersal, with the ingestion and subsequent excretion of seeds aiding in the distribution of plant species across the ecosystem. The microbial fermentation in their stomachs during the digestion process extracts nutrients from fibrous plant material, and the nutrient-rich dung produced enhances soil fertility and nutrient cycling in arid landscapes. The dung beetle owes much to the camel for its survival! The browsing behaviour of camels additionally assists in vegetation management, influencing the composition and structure of plant life and preventing the dominance of specific species.

The two well-known species of camels found in the world are the Dromedary camel (*Camelus dromedarius*), which has one hump and is native to the Arabian Peninsula, and the Bactrian camel (*Camelus bactrianus*), which has two humps and is native to the steppes of Central Asia. The one-humped dromedary makes up 94% of the world's camel population, and the two-humped Bactrian camel makes up 6%. The wild Bactrian is now considered critically endangered.

India is home to the Dromedary camel, the sole camel species in our country. This species exhibits remarkable adaptations for thriving in arid and semi-arid environments. Primarily inhabiting desert regions, arid plains, and semi-arid areas, these camels demonstrate resilience in harsh conditions. Physiologically, they tolerate high temperatures, conserve water by producing concentrated urine, and reduce sweating to minimize water loss. Known for their ability to endure extended periods without water, Dromedary camels efficiently consume large quantities when they do drink, crucial for survival in regions with limited water sources. As herbivores, they display adaptability in their diet that many other animals cannot achieve. Their nomadic lifestyle, responding to changing environmental conditions, further enhances their survival strategies. While a significant wild population persists, Dromedary camels have been domesticated for centuries, serving human needs for transportation, carrying goods, and providing milk, meat, and hides.

Within the Dromedary species, the ICAR-National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources, India recognizes nine officially registered Dromedary camel breeds: Bikaneri – Rajasthan; Jaisalmeri – Rajasthan; Jalori – Rajasthan; Kutchi – Gujrat; Malvi - Madhya Pradesh; Marwari – Rajasthan; Mewari – Rajasthan; Mewati - Rajasthan & Haryana; Kharai – Gujarat.

Among the nine, the Bikaneri breed stands out as a major camel breed, deriving its name from the city of Bikaner, established by Rao Bika in the 15th century. Renowned for its superior draught potential, Bikaneri camels are predominantly bred in Bikaner and neighbouring districts, including Sriganganagar, Hanumangarh, Churu, Jhunjhunu, Sikar, and Nagaur of Rajasthan, along with adjoining parts of Haryana and Punjab. The home tract of the Bikaneri breed is characterized by arid and sandy conditions with extreme hot and cold climates.

It is this breed of camel that has made a home in Dayalbagh. Bikaneri camels are distinguished by their heavily built and attractive physique, exhibiting a noble appearance. The Bikaneri breed exhibits a varied coat color, distinctive facial features, and a well-developed body, tracing its lineage back to ancient camel domestication in the Arabian Peninsula. Evolving through traditional breeding and environmental adaptation over centuries, the breed reflects a history rooted in its characteristics.

The domestication of camels was influenced by the nutritional richness of camel milk, which differs from cow's milk. Notable features include lower casein protein, making it potentially suitable for those with cow's milk allergies, distinct fat composition with higher polyunsaturated fatty acids, and rich content of vitamins, minerals, immunoglobulins, and natural antimicrobial properties. The nutritional profile of Bikaneri camel milk varies based on factors like diet and environment, contributing to reported health benefits.



Dayalbagh Gaushala's New Arrival

Priya Singh

*Batch: MBM (1993), Postgraduate Diploma in Theology (2012), DEI;
Currently, Centre Incharge, DEI Chennai Information Centre*

Dayalbagh Gaushala now has another addition,
After goats, Camels are the new Edition,
From Jaipur to Agra, they have travelled,
Facing impediments with courage unparalleled.

A symbol of strength and resilience,
Brought to fulfill a purpose, by Providence,
Majestic and beautiful they are,
Dayalbagh Gaushala's rising stars.

At Camel Point, they're protectively kept,
Nurtured with love, warmth and food,
Blessed with the Merciful Glance of Spiritual Adept,
That calms the swings of their mood.

Chanting of Ra Dha Sva Aa Mi name at all times,
The healing mantra, soothing body and mind,

Calm, composed, they listen to Divine songs,
And for Gracious *Darshan*, their heart longs.

Friendly the Camels are to all and one,
Children too are having a lot of fun,
Happy to stand by the Camels' side,
For children, it's a matter of pride.

Camel's milk is rich and precious,
A complete health tonic, so nutritious,
For Sant Superhumans it's a real boon,
They'll become healthy and strong very soon.

Grateful to Almighty Father, for their arrival,
Tradition of Camels in Agra is on a revival,
Pray that Camels continue to Grace our land,
In Dayalbagh Gaushala, we see them tall and grand.

A New Land Became My Haven

Gurpyari Bhatnagar

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Gifts from God, Bestowed on me
In two shapes, So grand and rare
And I thought
Which gift is rarer of the two?
Which gift is more precious of the two?
It that my hump
That stored the water and kept me strong?
Or my rare eyelashes
That shielded my eyes as I crossed the hot land?
Each time, the sun scorched the land
Each time, the hot wind blew in my face
I looked at the vast sky above
To thank Him
For the two Thoughtful Bounties
Each time, I walked

Through the harshest terrains
I Thanked Him for my rare gifts of utility
That helped me endure and survive
In the endless desert heat
BUT another gift's been found
Another treasure added
A gift rarer and dearer
THAN the two I had before
When a New Land Became my Haven
When a New Land Became my Haven
The two gifts that stood so grand before
The two gifts that were so rare in their own right
Yet not as rare as this New Land's Sight
Yet not as rare as this New Land's Sight



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