

# वाणी

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Department of English

Maharaja Ganga Singh University

Bikaner – 334004 (Rajasthan)



# Newsletter



**Prof. (Dr.) Vinod Kumar Singh**  
Vice-Chancellor


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## Message

It gives me immense pleasure to learn that the Department of English has been bringing out its Newsletter regularly since its inception in the year 2011. Newsletter is a reflection of the activities/events and achievements of a Department. I congratulate the Department of English and wish them all the best in their endeavour.

  
(Prof. Vinod Kumar Singh)

## EDITORIAL

### WALKING THROUGH WALLS

Border walls divide; their purpose is to intimidate and repel. Significantly and surprisingly, the number of these walls has increased to 16 since the fall of Berlin wall. These walls divide people, cities and countries across the world. Besides, there are more destructive invisible walls. These are the walls which are powered by the psycho-socio-political interests. Artists have repeatedly reflected on the profound inhumanity of divisive walls culminating into disintegration.

We, as artists, activists, architects and public intellectuals need to envision alternative designs, for the walls, it seems, cannot be removed. Can't we re/imagine border wall's potential of being a "generative site" of binational cooperation? Can't these walls be utilized to create a social system wherein dwell people, peace and prosperity. Painter and Printmaker Celeste De Luna explores how border walls follow people around in her print *Breach Baby*. She does this by representing a woman's torso and upper body as the border between the US and Mexico, with picket fencing and barbed wired serving and trapping her bare breasts and limbs. Governments build walls for a variety of reasons such as a form of political theatre, as a form of international gamesmanship, as an assertion of control that marks sovereign power; academic bureaucrats usually as Heads of the HEIs create walls to continue their ramification by taking recourse to the British impious Mantra of 'divide and rule' on the University Campuses in the name of making their own HEIs high ranking educational institutes. This has adversely impacted our academic performance, dragging us to the state of stagnation, segregation and isolation resulting into a corpus of barren academics. It has done a great harm to HEIs world over, we being no exception.

We, at the level of the Department, have struggled hard to break these divisive barriers. The obstructionists and discriminatory policy has taken its toll. Somehow, we stand! We, however, are determined not to let it continue anymore. These divisive walls shall fall automatically when we move ahead towards our destination with fair intentions. We have resolved to break the divisive walls. We would initiate towards the elimination of these barriers by creating a linguistic bridge; by founding the 'Anuvad Kendra' in the forthcoming session. Further, we need to paint these divisive walls to make them look like a deformity, and stand out phenomenon so that a unified, self-reliant, self-determining, resilient nation may be built. Because of the COVID-19 induced lockdown, the Department had to be closed in the last week of March. Hence, several curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities could not be organised. Even the reopening is not very promising. As a consequence, the Diksha celebrations (Farewell Party) were organised online. We have started working with an optimistic outlook, and hope to return to new normal in COVID free Bharat.

Professor S.K. Agrawal

## Cells, Associations and Systems

### Guidance for Competitive Exams Cell

Guidance for Competitive Exam is a regular feature of the Department. The current times are the times of competition when the students appear for a number of Competitive Examinations. The students are to be encouraged and guided to prepare for such challenging examinations. Taking into consideration the need of the day, the Department has established the Competitive Exam Guidance Cell. Through this Cell, the Department organizes various activities for the development of the students. The Cell conducts special lectures and different competitions for the students. A large number of students have been benefitted by the activities conducted by this Cell. They learn how to plan and prepare tactfully for the examinations. Through varied types of interaction, the students are made aware of their potentials that they can get success in Competitive Examinations.

### Remedial Coaching Cell

Remedial Coaching Cell functions with the spirit to bring teaching and learning to near perfection. The Coaching Cell becomes functional in the last one and a half month of every Semester. The objectives of the Cell are to conduct the diagnostic test to find out the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning, so as to utilize the strengths to make teaching learning process more effective and to evolve a process to eradicate the weaknesses of teaching and learning.



Teacher-Student interface during the Remedial Coaching Session

The Cell operates in a systematic way. Slow and advanced learners of every area are identified, and thereafter the advanced learners are asked to guide the slow learners. The faculty members concerned guides the slow learners and enable them identify their weaknesses and suggest the ways to eradicate them. All the Faculty Members are Office Bearers of this cell. The Head of the Department is the Director of the Cell and all the Faculty Members serve as Members. Owing to the vibrant functioning of the Remedial Coaching Cell the Department has given cent percent results since its establishment.

### Career Counselling Cell

To ensure the overall development of the students and to equip them with the information that helps them to be better placed, the Department has constituted a Career Counselling Cell. All the Faculty Members are the Members on the Cell with one Faculty Member serving as Co-ordinator. The objectives of the Cell are to educate the students on the current issues which are not the part of students' curriculum, to update them on the current vacant job positions, to suggest them the devices and ways which can



Teacher- Students interaction during Career Counselling Session

make them good human beings and better citizens of the country and to generate awareness about the socio-economic concerns amongst them which impact the society in some or the other way.

The vibrant Career Counselling Cell holds collective as well as individual meeting with the students so as to find out the remedies of the problems the students have or are likely to face in near future. The micro and macro analysis of the problems is done, and solutions are arrived at.

## **Mentoring System**

The Department has a Mentoring System with all the Faculty Members acting as Mentors. The Mentors carry out the following tasks:

- Keep the mentees updated on the curricular and co-curricular matters.
- Acquaint the mentees with the current issues.
- Equip the mentees with the presentation and communication skills.
- Encourage and prepare them for participation in University/State/National/International level events.
- Guide the mentees in fulfilling the admission and examination related process such as filing of admission and examination forms.
- Report to the mentee's parents about his/her progress and further updates.
- Work for the improvement /betterment of the mentee's emotional intelligence.
- Equip the mentees for the forthcoming competitive examinations such as UGC NET and the examinations conducted by the UPSC, RPSC and other PSCs of the country.
- Acquaint the mentees with various fellowship and scholarship schemes.
- Motivate and prepare the mentees for participation in national/international level Seminars /Conferences/Workshops, etc.
- Involve them in one or the other Extension Activities or Activities/Events of Social Corporate Responsibility which contribute towards the growth of the nation and society at large.

## **Alumni Association**

The Alumni Association has been established in the Department to promote and foster mutually beneficial interaction between the Alumni and the current batch of Students. It provides a Forum for the Alumni for exchange of ideas on academic, cultural and social issues by organizing and coordinating reunion activities of the Alumni. Besides this, the Association keeps an updated record of all Alumni and their pertinent data. The Alumni Association regularly organizes get together events that enable students both old and new to connect with each other as well as the Faculty Members. Every year is organised an Alumni Meet. This year, however, due to COVID-19 it could not be possible.

## **COVID 19: HIGHER EDUCATION CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The Pandemic has pushed the world to drastically reinvent ways of coping with the 'new normal'. After the initial phase of complete overhaul, it is critical to understand the short and long term impact. Can India emerge from this Crisis with a refreshed perspective and boost to higher education?

A timely response to the Crisis was to go digital. Developing robust online platform has become necessary to offer continuity in learning. Yet in a developing country like India with vast disparity in socio-economic backgrounds of students and the quality of educational institutions, the shift has not been easy. The digital divide has been further widening the gap, and needs urgent attention from both public and private sector players as the Crisis continues. Good teachers, refreshed curricula and effective tools will ensure students stay involved and active in the learning process. Lacks of Indian students choose to pursue higher education abroad. Today India is the second-largest source of international students in the world. This exodus is likely to transform into an influx to Indian Higher Education Institutions, for travel restrictions and health risks. This means that crores of rupees and resources spent in foreign education could be retained in the country, as more students look towards options at home. While International Institutions might bear the brunt of the change, this is a remarkable opportunity for India to enhance its capacities and offer quality education of global standards.

The ripples of economy can be felt in the education sector as well. While many students will chart alternative paths, the Pandemic is leaving others in limbo. As unemployment is predicted to increase and financial capacity of Indian homes come under stress, the country can expect a drop in enrollments. Public Universities may be under threat of reduced funding. On the flip-side, the pandemic could also prompt reform in fee structures and creation of more cost-effective programmes.

The Pandemic is also an opportunity to rethink the traditional education system in India. Digital learning is leading the change as a mainstay, and many new trends are picking up momentum across the globe. Multidisciplinary and modular pedagogy that afford transferable skills and customized learning will succeed. Post-pandemic times could see a blend of e-learning and mainstream face-to-face teaching with a boost from traditional universities and ed-tech sector. Opportunities for student's mobility and practical exposure through exchange programmes, internships, participation in conferences, innovative new forms of collaboration and alternative paradigms are needed to drive learning, research and teaching. Sharing of knowledge between institutions globally through joint teaching, virtual guest lectures, etc could give students an enriched global perspective in these difficult times.

A paucity of quality teachers has already been a pressing challenge; it shall grow more serious. Only the quality teachers can redesign course content to meet the current and future needs. Moving away from traditional pedagogy shall demand quality educators; these will be the torch bearers who will take higher education forward from the crisis. COVID-19 portends a change in our ideas of the human also. This idea of human was already under increasing challenges due to technological change, from medical advances, from the existential threat of climate crisis, from ideological de-centering, etc. It is the time to enter the post-human when 'sensation' aroused in literature classrooms will disappear: without sensation, no sensitization is possible. Will it not result into "fractured times" and 'fabricated society'? This creates a scare in a sensitive and quality educator. All of us need to feel that SCARE so that we feel STIR; this shall certainly make the difficult paths easy to walk on.

**Professor S.K. Agrawal**

## Creative Corner

### Corona Cry: Stay in India, Study in India

Every chickenshit,  
Portend something inept.  
To India Corona brings propensity,  
Higher education returns to felicity.

For cruel COVID-19 denotes-  
Tertiary education Metamorphosis;  
From sending docks  
Into retaining abodes,  
And receiving harbours.

For Indian universities shall sprout-  
When there looms uncertain abroad environment;  
When prohibitive costs outnumber value adequate;  
When employment and immigration are under threat;  
It announces that scene of young Indians;  
Ready to head out with their bags soon to diminish.

This Cherish-  
We not let it perish,

We should it relish,  
And prepare ourselves-  
That quality enhances,  
That we bring to education-  
What we call value proposition,  
Residing in India's Intellectual Traditions.

Professor S. K. Agrawal

## Literary and Cultural Activities

**Literary Forum:** The Literary Forum organizes literary, dramatic, creative and other cultural events in the Department at regular intervals. The Forum conducts Classroom Seminars at weekends under the guidance of the Head of the Department and the convenor Literary Forum. Every year the Literary Forum organises Literary Programme under which the events such as Literary Quiz, Poetry Recital Sessions, Poster Making Competition are organised. The following cultural and literary events were celebrated/ organized in the academic session 2019-20:

**1. Abhinandan:** Abhinandan (Freshers' party) was hosted on 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2019 by the students of M.A. (Sem III) to accord a warm welcome to the students of M.A. (Sem I) and P. G. Diploma in Translation. The newcomers were welcomed by applying *tilak* on their foreheads and this was followed by an icebreaking session with the newcomers' fascinating introduction. The senior students welcomed the newcomers by presenting a wonderful skit and arranged various indoor games for them. The newcomers also gave wonderful stage performances and expressed their gratitude to the seniors for having welcomed them with such a fervour.



**2. Gurupurnima:** We, at the Department, celebrate those festivals also which are associated with the teachers' glory and their dedication to the students. This year the students celebrated Gurupurnima on 16<sup>th</sup> July. The celebration started with lighting a lamp before goddess Saraswati. The students presented flowers and gifts to the teachers and sought their blessings. The teachers in return gifted books and pens, tools of learning to express their love for the students. Speaking on the occasion Prof. Agrawal reminded the students of the Vyas *Guru Parampara* which put *Guru* above God in esteem. The celebration ended with a vote of thanks by the convener, Literary Forum.



**3. Plantation:** The students and Faculty Members of the Department planted Neem, Peepal and Sheesham trees and many ornamental plants like palm and bottle brush on *Haryali Teej* on 3<sup>th</sup> August, 2019 in the park in front of Vashishtha Bhavan in the University Campus. The students took an oath to take care of the trees planted by them. The Department organises Plantation Day every year. As a result, the campus has become lush-green.



**4. Teachers' Day:** On 5th September was celebrated Teachers' Day. Students welcomed the teachers and presented them handmade cards. They also performed a Skit and a Dance Drama dedicated to their beloved teachers. Addressing the students on this occasion Professor S.K. Agrawal cited examples from Indian history to emphasise the importance of teacher in one's life.



**5. Gandhi Jayanti:** Students and Faculty Members of the Department celebrated the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. Professor S.K. Agrawal narrated inspirational tales of the lives of Gandhi and Shastri and students sang songs dedicated to these national icons. The Department also proposes to take part in the celebrations and programmes to be organised at the University level in collaboration with Centre for Gandhian Studies on the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Gandhi.



**6. Children's Day:** The Department celebrated the birth anniversary of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru on 14<sup>th</sup> November. Sweets and chocolates were distributed amongst the students. Surprise games for students were also planned by teachers. The teachers made the day memorable for the students by reciting poems and singing songs. Both the teachers and students were seen in reverse roles on the occasion; students conducting the classes and teachers attending the classes.



**7. Vivekanand Jayanti Celebrated:** The birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was observed as National Youth Day on 13 January (12 being a Sunday). On this occasion floral tributes were offered on the portrait of Vivekananda. A quiz based on the life and deeds of Swamiji was arranged for the students, and the winners were given attractive prizes.



**8. Vasant Panchmi Celebrated:** The Department celebrated Vasant Panchmi on 30th January. The celebration began with the lighting of lamp before the Goddess Saraswati. Speaking on this occasion the Head of the Department Professor S.K. Agrawal said 'pen is mightier than sword' and through knowledge we can conquer the world.



**9. English Language Day Celebrated:** The Department observed the English Language Day on 23rd April. The Event was celebrated by the Stake-holders through the exchange of audio-visual Greetings. On this Day, the Head of the Department Professor S. K. Agrawal through his greetings exhorted both the Faculty Members and the students to work towards the contribution of multilingualism and cultural diversity. "English is one of the leading languages of the world that has very well incorporated into it the spirit of linguistic diversity and it is for this reason that it could come to stay as the World's leading language. The event is a deliberate coincidence with the believed date of birth and death (23th April) of the great English Bard William Shakespeare, and reminds us of his Literary Heritage. Dr. Agrawal wrote in his Greeting Note sent to the students and the Faculty Members (due to the COVID-19 induced lockdown, it was celebrated online).

**10. Dikshanta 2020:** The Department bade goodbye to the outgoing Semester online on 22 July 2020 (due to COVID-19 restrictions). The students of M.A. Semester IV, Semester II and Faculty Members shared space on digital platform and exchanged their experiences with each other. The juniors gave titles to their seniors and thanked them for the valuable support and guidance rendered to them. The outgoing students shared their memories at the campus and the Department. Professor S.K. Agrawal gave the *Dikshanta Mantra* to the students and wished them success in life. Due to Pandemic COVID-19, the Department remained deprived of the zeal witnessed both among the teachers and the students during the Literary Fest- a regular feature of the Department.



### COVID Response

COVID-19 has forced Universities across India, and the world indeed, to suspend physical classrooms and shift to Online classes. We, at the Department, managed this sudden transition to Online education successfully. We shifted to the Online mode in the last week of March, and remained largely unaffected by the nationwide lockdown enforced on 24 March 2020. The Faculty Members delivered lectures online (on Google Meet, Zoom, etc.). As a result, the academic activities were much less affected. We shared study materials and audio files with students over the Internet. Online teaching was managed by using recorded and live sessions on Facebook and Zoom.

It was, however, difficult for the students to adapt suddenly to Online teaching because of the problems of Connectivity and Internet. There are other challenges which are faced at both ends of the spectrum-students as well as Faculty. In Online teaching substantial teaching is lost. We feel that education is not just about classes. It is about interactions, broadening of ideas, free-flowing open discussions, debates and mentoring of each student. While one tries to do all this, a lot gets lost in translation on the Online platform. Despite the constraints, the Department has efficiently completed the Online Admission Process of admission to Semester III, and is all set to do the Internal Assessment Online in the month of August. We feel that there is a need to invest in creating standardized Online teaching platforms. The way ahead can be chartered only if we take into account the diverse views of experts, and incorporate all the lessons learnt from the Summer of 2020.

## TRANSLATION WORKSHOP



A Translation Workshop to prepare Rajasthani-Hindi-English Dictionary (powered by Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra) was organized from 1st to 7th January 2020. The Workshop was conducted under the guidance of Professor S.K. Agrawal, Head Department of English. Besides, Jamil Usta, Dr. Atul Goswami, Purkaif Usta, several students completed the translation work within the stipulated time period. The Rajasthani-Hindi-English

Dictionary would be published by Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra. The Dictionary would prove a milestone as it would enlarge the Indian and Foreign readership of Rajasthani. The Director of Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Professor N. K. Pandey in a message sent to the Head of the Department applauded the Department of English for excellent translation work.

## LeAP Awarded to Prof. S.K. Agrawal

Professor S.K. Agrawal, Head, Department of English, as always, brought laurels to the Department when he was selected under the very prestigious MHRD i.e. Ministry of Human Resource Development (Now MoE i.e. Ministry of Education) Government of India LeAP Award Scheme to be trained as Leader to lead the Universities/Institutions of Higher Education. He was the only one in the Faculty of Humanities in the whole country selected for this Accolade. Under the Scheme, Professor Agrawal successfully completed the two phases of Training - in the first phase he attended a two weeks' programme from 16 December to 30 December, 2019 at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh where he was titled as 'Mr. Eloquent'. In the second phase, he attended a tight scheduled Training Programme 'Becoming a Top 100 University' from 17-21 February, 2020 conducted by Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. Here, his presentation on 'Becoming a Top 100 University' was considered the best one. He was flagged off at the airport by the students and staff and on his arrival was received with rousing welcome at the Airport, Bikaner.



## **Voicing Opinion (Outgoing Batch)**

**Let me speak.....**

I liked all the classroom activities such as Group Discussions, Seminar Presentations, Memory Games, Quiz Competitions etc.

**Ankit Rao, M.A. Sem IV**

The Department has opened new knowledge frontiers to explore new areas of research at local and global level.

**Renuka Goyal, M.A. Sem IV**

The Department has provided us platform to showcase our hidden potential.

**Priya Purohit, M.A. Sem IV**

The Department is an ideal place of learning. The environment here is student friendly.

**Bharti Bhati, M.A. Sem IV**

These two years at the Department have been the best years of my life. I shall carry from here some of the best memories of my life to cherish them lifelong.

**Nirmal Swami, M.A. Sem IV**

The Department has equipped me to face the challenges as I step out to compete with others in job market.

**Nirma Bishnoi**

**P G Diploma in Translation**

## **OUR TOPPERS MASTER OF ARTS**



**Aditi Vyas**



**Sfurti Varma**

**Courses and Programs run by the Department**

**Master of Arts  
Master of Philosophy  
Post Graduate Diploma in Translation  
Ph. D.**

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