

# **Traditional Studies - Necessity of Impetus**

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## **Contents**

Salutation.....	2
Executive Summary: .....	2
Part 1 - Sabdaatmaka Veda Pari Rakshana (Core Text Preservation): .....	2
Pronunciation - Uchchaarana .....	2
Visual Representation of Vedic Letters/ Alphabets/ Characters:.....	2
Propagation of Perfection in Vedic Education.....	3
Urgent Action Required.....	3
Allied Activities Suggested.....	3
PROJECT 2 .....	5
Part 2 - Arthaatmaka Veda Pari Rakshana.....	5
(Preservation of the Methodology to understand and interpret Veda) .....	5
Relevance .....	5
Real Life Incident .....	5
Set of questions to Worshipper.....	5
Set of questions for Archaka/ Purohit / Pundits?.....	6
A Brief Note on the scope of Shaastra .....	6
Vedanga (Shadanga).....	6
Upaangas (Other affiliates).....	7
Plan of Action to Preserve the understanding Vedic Texts & philosophy.....	8
Other Avenues to promote the propagation of Veda Dharma .....	9
Project 2.....	9
Preparation of Text Books .....	9
Project 3 - Analysis of Vedic Texts in Modern Context.....	9
Status.....	9
Objective.....	10
Suggested Action .....	10
Avadhoota Datta Peetham .....	11
SGS VedaNidhi Academy & Masters' Institute .....	11
Veda Nidhi Project (Quotient of SUCCESS 2008 – 2015).....	11
Vaakya Data Base .....	11
Module - Publication & Distribution of Vedic Texts by Vedic Institutions .....	13
Basic Estimate.....	13
Participation by Patrons:.....	13
Modus Operandi:.....	13
Logical Conclusion: .....	13

## **Salutation**

At the outset, we salute all those noble people, whose incessant efforts had ensured that the traditional heritage in the form of Vedic Scriptures is imparted thru generations in its original pristine form without any distortion.

It is a well known fact, that the Vedic Literature is one of most important sources of Culture and Heritage of this planet, and of course the pride of India. Since time immemorial, our Acharyas had set stringent rules to ensure its passage from generation to generation without any misrepresentation or alteration and dedicated their lives for the continuity of the knowledge, wisdom and principles of Truth as enshrined in our Sanatana Dharma.

## **Executive Summary:**

It is heartening that more and more support, respect is forthcoming for the Vedic Tradition and its practitioners in India and abroad. However, it shall be noted that most of the efforts and resources are allocated and spent towards the superficial preservation, confined to few Puja Practices and Basic Temple maintenance activity.

In reality, very few practitioners – the Pundits/ Priests/ Purohits and patrons realise the need to restore the roots of these practices and knowledge in the form of Vedic Literature, so that our deeds, pronunciation, understanding of the underlying philosophy are consistent with the roots of the heritage.

True preservation of the knowledge shall be made by the twin modes of protection of the core text and the method of interpretation to understand its meaning in correct perspective.

## **Part 1 - Sabdaatmaka Veda Pari Rakshana (Core Text Preservation):**

After, the Knowledge preservation in right perspective is ensured; we can set our sight on rectification of the Propagation/ Teaching methodology. Hence, let us examine the fundamental reasons for contemporary status and ascertain the course of remedial action, which is the need of the hour.

### **Patterns of Malady and Possible solutions:**

#### **Pronunciation - Uchchaarana**

Pronunciation is the most important aspect of the Veda Mantras. In earlier generations, sole medium for Teaching was oral chanting from Teacher to Students. However, with change of times, written documentation in the form of text books is occupying an important slot in the process of teaching.

#### **Visual Representation of Vedic Letters/ Alphabets/ Characters:**

In order to visually represent the oral chanting and all the regular characters and special characters, our Acharyas have prescribed a wonderful scientific mode of Instruction called Shiksha Saastra, which enlists the complete set of characters required in the accurate pronunciation.

# **Propagation of Perfection in Vedic Education**

After ensuring that the proper text books are available for preservation and education, separate efforts shall be initiated to put into practice the correct methodology of Pronunciation and information about Mantras, Suktas, Anuvaaka, Chapter/ Context.

## **Urgent Action Required**

It is pertinent to coordinate with Government organisations, Nodal agencies responsible for support of Vedic education and other prominent Donor Organisations/ Institutions from all the states to carry out the below mentioned activities.

1. To arrange Symposium of Praatisaakhya/ Siksha Shaastra/ Vyakarana Scholars representing each sect; to discuss the reasons of Paatha Bheda/ Uchhaarana Bheda (Difference of Pronunciation and Text) and rationalise the same, wherever possible.
2. To Document the opinions of Pundits for Paatha Bheda/ Uchhaarana Bheda, so as to ensure that no more future Paatha Bhedas spring up, claiming Sampradaaya. Variants of Vedic Text threatens to be spoiler with potential to exterminate the originality and authenticity of our Vedic Tradition. (Right now, different versions between different publishers is viewed with concern by scholars).
3. To arrange regional meetings of Veda Pathasala Administrators; in order to sensitise the teachers thru the management about the requirement of perfect Uchhaarana to ensure proper results of Veda Parayanam
4. To Arrange training camps/ refresher courses for teachers from Veda schools on continual basis.
5. To arrange a conference of administrators and examiners of prestigious Vedic Examination Centres to prescribe common standards for Veda Examinations, with emphasis on Uchhaarana
6. To arrange annual training camps in all Veda Pathasalas to impart basic requirements of Uchhaarana, Varnotpatti Vidhi (Genesis of Alphabets) etc of Siksha Saastra.

## **Allied Activities Suggested**

7. To conduct competition/ quiz/ examinations about the information about Mantras; not delving deep into meaning aspect, but limited to the basic information about Mantras, connotations, chapters etc. (This is one of the most missing practices, where as one Veda Paathi (One who recites), does not know even the basic information of his own Veda Sakha, not to speak of other Saakhas)
8. To compile the master data base of Veda Pundits, Schools, with specialisations
9. Compile a Compendium of Vedic Organisations in order to organise Quarterly/ Annual Meetings at regional/ national and international level to achieve greater cohesion.
10. Seminars/ Workshops should be organised
  - i. To discuss the activities conducted or intended along with the objectives

- ii. To share previous experiences and to initiate genuine discussion about the benefit each conference derived in respect with Academic betterment
  - iii. To discuss the Strategy and fine tuning perspectives to achieve common objectives
  - iv. Last but not least: Publish the Gist of each conference at a common website.
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## PROJECT 2

### Part 2 - Arthaatmaka Veda Pari Rakshana

(Preservation of the Methodology to understand and interpret Veda)

#### Relevance

Traditionally, Veda is compared to Raw Gold Bar and Vedaanga/ Shaastra are described as the tools to make an ornament. Let us understand what exactly Shaastra stands for? Shaastra means to dictate. The terms and references in Vedic texts are so vast and general to understand. Hence, our Rishis have stipulated that the Vedaangas (affiliated parts of Veda) and Upaangas (Shaastras) are essential to understand the perspective, purport and meaning of Vedic Sentences.

#### Real Life Incident

About 3 years ago, there was an incident in Mangalore, in Coastal Karnataka. An evangelist was arrested by police, for attempting conversion of fishing community in a pocket. Critics pointed out that police action was initiated at the behest of right wing activists.

Basic issue: Reprinting the translated version of Veda Mantras proclaiming Jesus to be the incarnation of God. Mantra in question was: Chatwaari Shrunga Trayo Asya Paadaah... which is a daily prayer to Yajneshwara in any Vedic Ritual. (An abnormal description is given to the form of the deity: Literally it translates that: A great Deity with 4 Horns, 3 Legs, 2 Heads, 7 Hands which is tied in three different ways. That Great Force has entered humanity.) The pastor has originally depicted this to be Jesus, with some comparison to biblical description. Traditionalists were infuriated by this inference, which was deployed by the pastors to lure the devout Hindus.

Counter Question was posed by Critics: If you are confident about the meaning of the Mantra, which you claim to be your heritage, why cannot your priests, scholars narrate the original meaning, which is based on the scriptures. Take the war to media and enlist the portions. (Later the meaning from Veda Bhaashya of Vidyaaranya Swamy and Mahaa Bhaashya of Patanjali were quoted by the scholars to dispel the propaganda and the issue was laid to rest.)

However, the basic issue has churned the minds of traditional scholars across the region for some time. Let us take the illustration of Ganapati Puja, one of the most common features of Indians. The following four questions point towards the state of pity, in which the system is entangled.

#### Set of questions to Worshipper

These are addressed to the devout public, who are interested in customary rituals:

1. How many of the worshippers (people) know how to perform the primary Puja?
2. How many of them, have perfect knowledge of conduct of the Puja?
3. How many of them require the assistance of the Purohit? (For clarity, the word – Priest is avoided)
4. How many of them are sure of the quality of the assisting Purohit?

## **Set of questions for Archaka/ Purohit / Pundits?**

1. What caused them to undertake this profession? (Family Customs/ Financial Necessity/ Self Interest/ Social Respect)
2. How many of them are qualified to perform Ganapati Puja? (Got trained under a scholar)
3. How many of them can understand the meaning of the Puja and explain the innate philosophy?
4. How many of the Pundits can explain the methodology, for its interpretation with authority? Who can amplify the rationale for the approach for the way it is understood and explained?

The answers for the above are obvious. But, it is matter of grave concern that the society is blissfully insensible to the downward trajectory. It is the common conclusion that the number of knowledgeable persons is fast dwindling and the answer to the last question is even more frightening.

In this age of misinterpretation, misrepresentation, malaise and ignorance, the onerous task of preserving the methodology of understanding the Vedic Text, its underlying practices and customs lies with those pious souls, who yearn to secure the cultural and wisdom fabric of India. Study of the Shaastra, bestows the mental strength, finesse of interpretation, essence of understanding the terms and word backed by the vigour of logic.

It is to be noted that erudition in Shaastra, which is very essential for understanding Vedic literature, almost extinct. It is quite disheartening that the ratio of Shaastra Scholars (Higher learning after Vedic Studies) to Veda Scholars (Basic Studies) is 1: 1000. Is it not quite alarming that we have less than 100 Erudite Shaastra Scholars in a population of 1.3 Billion?

In the current alarming scenario, it is the need of hour to encourage brilliant students to undertake the study of Shaastras, after the completion of basic Veda Adhyayana (with memorisation skills) to acquire analytical skills with Shaastra Adhyayana.

## **A Brief Note on the scope of Shaastra**

Anga is a limb. Six important streams of knowledge and wisdom are compared as the limbs of Veda, which are termed as Vedaanga. (Since they are six in number, they are also called Shadanga).

### **Vedanga (Shadanga)**

1. **Shikshaa Shaastra** - Science of sound origination and pronunciation
2. **Vyaakarana Shaastra** - Grammar
3. **Chhandas Shaastra** - Composition of Metres such as Gayatri, Ushnik, Trishtup, Anushtup etc.
4. **Niruktam** - Encyclopaedia/ Thesaurus of terms and definitions of words in Vedic Texts
5. **Jyotisha Shaastra** - Astrology; to determine the right time to conduct Vedic Rituals
6. **Kalpa Sutra** - Principles in the form of sentences,

- **Shrouta Sutra** - Correlating and compiling the procedures for Vedic Rituals for the benefit of the society and family;
- **Gruhya Sutra**- Compilation of procedures for Samskaaras (Purification/ Refinement Rituals) for individuals & Society
- **Dharma Sutra**- Code of Conduct for individual/ public life
- **Shulba Sutra**- Applied Geometry to build Yaagasala;

These Sutras vary from followers of each Veda to another and generally draw inspiration or inference from Vedic Sentences.

Along with these Shadangas (Six affiliated parts); other Upaangas are also required for proper understanding of Vedic Knowledge.

### **Upaangas (Other affiliates)**

1. **Tarka/ Nyaaya Shaastra** - Logic Based on the principles of Rishi Kannada &

Goutama, this Shaastra is necessary to bring out finesse in the thought process.

2. **(Poorva) Meemaamsa** - Understanding the Vedic Texts in correct

perspective. In this process Meemaamsa Shaastra sets the standards to interpret sentences. Poorva – Meemaamsa - Poorva Meemamsa is the Shaastra based on the principles of by Rishi Jaimini, which enquires and determines the perspective of various Vedic verses related with Karma Kaanda (Rituals). The word Meemamsa generally refers to Poorva Meemamsa in general usage.

3. **Uttara – Meemamsa (Vedanta Shaastra)**- Uttara Meemamsa is based on the principles of Sage Veda Vyasa, intended to bring out clarity in texts of philosophy such as Upanishad and Bhagavad Geeta. As this deals with the last part of Vedas, this is also called as Vedanta, also meaning the Final declaration of Veda.

4. **Dharma Shashtra** - Dharma Shaastra is nothing but an extensive code of conduct for public and private life. This has many interpretations by many Rishis from different points of view. Although, Dharma Sutras based on Vedic verses, (Dharma Sutra aspect of Kalpa), Smruti and Puraanas are the origin of the Dharma Shaastra, there are other texts such as Dharma Sindhu, Nirnaya Sindhu, Veera Mitrodaya etc. useful in finding out intricacies of Dharma.

In addition, other prominent Shaastra texts pertain to

1. Fine arts (Literature, Music, Dance, Sculpture, Architecture)
2. Medicine : Categorised as (Definition of Well being; Symptoms of Disease & Causes; Cure and Prevention); Pharmacology (Herbs & Medicine Preparation)
3. Astronomy, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry
4. Metallurgy and other material sciences

Note: All of these Shaastra Texts are believed as elaboration or inspiration from various branches of Knowledge, contained in Core Vedic Verses and Texts.

## Plan of Action to Preserve the understanding Vedic Texts & philosophy

1. To Create awareness about the existence and importance of Veda Bhaashya (Commentaries) and Shaastra Texts as part of Vedic Heritage
2. **To promote the study of Samskruta, which is basic requisite to learn Shaastra**
3. **To encourage Students/ Pundits to achieve erudition with the study of authoritative commentaries (higher learning) Veda Bhaashya/ Shaastra by instituting Scholarships during the study of 3 - 12 years, based on the course selected.**
4. Donors/ Philanthropists or Organisations can institute Scholarship in their names, to sponsor the study of students.
5. In the current inflationary scenario, monthly maintenance of Rs.18,000 (300\$) would be required. **Absence of financial support is actually impeding the study of very few interested prospective students, whose alternative course would be to limit to Pourohitya.**
6. Hence, it is highly desirable to institute scholarship for **(60)** sixty students to take up higher studies in Vedic Literature after Graduation/ Post Graduation in Vedas.
7. Concerted effort to find right students by conducting a written examination and interview annually (after Under Grad/ Post Grad examinations) will help the cause.
8. Panel of interested teachers shall be formed to select students, based on the Veda Shaakha, mother tongue and location/ logistics.
9. Results of Annual/ Bi - Annual examinations will be intimated to the donors/ sponsors assuring the output and its quality.
10. To coordinate with Government agencies and leading organisations, engaged in the promotion of Samskruta to formalise an action plan to increase the scope of Samskruta Study from literature/ grammar to other branches of knowledge (Saastra)
  
11. To compile a list of available scholars with specialisation
12. To encourage Scholars to undertake study of other Shaastra Texts, so as to gain wider exposure to other branches knowledge
13. To provide incentive to learned scholars, who are willing to run the traditional Shaastra / Veda Bhaashya/ Vedaanga Paathasala to impart education to students
14. To organise Annual/ Bi-Annual/ Quarterly Shaastra Sadas, to supplement the existing Sadas. (From time immemorial, Shaastra Vaakyaarth Sabha (Shaastra sadas in short) was conducted in the format of current day seminar/ workshop/ symposium. In this Sabha, scholars with multi faceted talents and vistas of knowledge used to partake in the Sabha and give presentation on various subjects. In contemporary ages, Shaastra Sadas is confined to Vyakarana, Nyaaya and Poorva Meemamsa and Uttara Meemamsa Saastras. Accordingly debates and presentations are limited to these four Saastras. We can expand the scope by including more subjects from different Shastras.
15. Choice of Teachers/ faculty need not limited to a particular University or region. Since, the study requires very special scholars, who may not number more than 200 in a nation of 1.3 billion, erudition, ability and interest to teach discerning students be the sole criterion to enlist of teachers.
16. Higher Studies start at an age of 20 years and have span of 3 - 12 years on average. Hence, reasonable stipend to support the student himself as well as support the family to some extent should be considered. The student should be able to choose the place of study in any state of India, based on the current availability of slots of Ranking Scholars across India.

## **Other Avenues to promote the propagation of Veda Dharma**

1. To spread the message and philosophy of Veda, its rituals, customs in correct perspective
2. To organise Annual Scholarly congregations, to redefine various practices and customs to suit current day contexts (in a method non-violative of the Core Principles in Veda Dharma)
3. To institute a Parishad (consisting of learned scholars and pontiffs) to issue timely clarifications in matters that affect the religious life of a common man
4. To effectively repudiate unfounded criticism of Indian Traditions
5. To correct the maladies in the traditions and practices in the society, by realigning the practices with the core principles of Dharma; as per the necessity of the context.
6. To constitute a team of Pundits to prepare an Abridged Text containing the gist of Each Text Book of Every Shaastra, which will acquaint the general Samskruta Reader about the subject and essence of each Shaastra.
7. To translate this book into various languages including English to disseminate knowledge in order to kindle interest and to initiate efforts to include the book in Social Studies in schools
8. To promote the study of this abridged text book in all the Veda Pathasala
9. To produce audio and video recording of 10 - 30 minute lecture series; about various subjects explaining traditions, contained in each of the Shaastra Text, so as to promote general understanding of the culture, traditions and customs along with underlying philosophy
10. To arrange telecast in mainstream media and publication in print media.

### **Project 2**

#### **Preparation of Text Books**

11. To train qualified Sanskrit Students/ Pundits in Desktop Publication, Computer Typography and allied subjects, so as to create a pool of skilled work force
  12. To Constitute a team of Scholars to edit and typeset the Text Books and commentaries, hitherto unpublished and retype old text books (out of print), using day modern day punctuation and publication amenities
  13. To provide for inclusion in Browsers, so that the content could be published in Internet; with the permission of the publishing houses.
  14. To create PDF model, with index and tagging to display entire text, marked by content list with search capability. This would enable viewers, users and researchers to reach the required chapter of any specific text, sorted/ searched by the order of alphabet, chronology and content
  15. To host the content on web and also to make available copies of the texts along with commentaries to students, at nominal cost (Since the content has limited usage/ reference – the texts will not be printed, unless there is a demand for 100 or more copies).
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## **Project 3 - Analysis of Vedic Texts in Modern Context**

The Final part of this paper is to establish relevance of Vedic Text in contemporary world.

### **Status**

- There are many organisations, engaged in correlating various modern technological and scientific aspects to various verses/ phrases of Veda. Many seminars are organised to

unearth the meaning of the Mantras/ texts. The relevance of this discovery, at best could be of psychological satisfaction of having achieved the correlation. But, this research in primary stages might not be of great help to the scientific establishment, with modern scientific methods.

## **Objective**

1. To strengthen the nascent bondage between modern scientific establishment and tradition
2. To Include mathematical principles, that enhance value of the education system in contemporary text books
3. To initiate research on management principles, business and administrative ethics, envisaged in Veda
4. To propagate the immortal social values envisaged in Veda Dharma, and to include them in the social sciences of current day
5. To give impetus to the growth of Research based on the concepts envisaged in Veda
6. To establish relevance of Samskruta as a mother language to cater to the needs of contemporary society

## **Suggested Action**

1. To introduce Samskruta as a language in primary schools
  2. To Popularise Vedic Scientific terms by publishing the Encyclopaedia/ Thesaurus
  3. To Training Science graduates in Sanskrit and the Scientific terms in Sanskrit
  4. To initiate projects by research students in Universities
  5. To arrange Introductory courses for bright Shaastra Scholars in modern aspects of Science, so that they can also assist the research projects, as compilers and arrangers
  6. To constitute a committee of language experts to derive equivalent terms for scientific, business, technological and administrative terms for Indian Languages; so that current day usage is in line the terms (as done by Germans and Japanese)
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# **Avadhoota Datta Peetham**

**SGS VedaNidhi Academy & Masters' Institute**

**Veda Nidhi Project (Quotient of SUCCESS 2008 – 2015)**

## **PROJECT 4**

1. Indic Language Fonts of Windows are Customised. to include all the Special Vedic Characters deemed necessary, with provision to include more, using Unicode Font System. (Vista & Windows 7 & 8 support the Fonts)
2. Key Board Lay Outs re-designed to assign separate key board lay outs, on the existing QWERTY keyboard.
3. Easy Data Entry, with Search and Sort capacity is fully enabled along with Vedic Characters.
4. Transliteration Technology JAR Files are accurately functional, with the help of Java Programming.

### Data Entry

5. Samhita, Braahmana, Aaranyaka and Upanishad Texts; Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda & Atharvana Veda are type set by Veda Nidhi Team.
6. Proof Reading is in Final state, indicating the completion of Stage 1.
7. **Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SV Vedic University promoted by TTD, the finalised texts are offered to the varsity, for publication and distribution on 1st September 2014.**

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### **Action Plan for 2014 - 2017**

## **Vaakya Data Base**

**Comprehensive repository and Customised Search Engine**

**for Veda & Shastra Sentences with commentaries**

1. Integration of the Mantras in a Common Database. Technology Experts are roped in to design the database, server side & client side programming, along with mobile device (Android & IOS) Phone and Tablet adaptation.
2. In this phase, Meta Data about each Mantra shall be compiled. Necessary information about each Mantra such as Chhandas (Metre), Devata (Deity), Rishi (Seer) and context of the Mantra will be provided on the side margin. Wherever necessary (as in Taittireeya Sakha of Yajurveda & Other Braahmana Texts, Division of Mantra & Braahmana would be presented in italics/ bold).

3. Lack of this basic information (if not the meaning) of the Mantra has a debilitating impact on the Chanter (Student).
  4. Summary Information about Each Sukta/ Anuvaaka and its relevance would also be included in the beginning of each chapter.
  5. Mantra Anukramanika (Listing of Mantras), Glossary shall be appended with the main text in the end.
  6. Contents of Each Veda Text would be provided in Devanagari, with translations in English, Telugu, Hindi, Kannada and Tamil (wherever necessary).
  7. Vedaanga texts such as Kalpa Sutra, Vyaakarana and Meemaamsa Shaastra texts along with Commentaries will be type set, proof read, and made part of the data base.
  8. Texts will be printed in Devanagari and other regional languages, wherever the users are more than 10.
  9. For lesser users, the text can be taken as laser Print out as and when required.
  10. All the texts shall be published on Internet Browser, with appendix, search criteria, glossary.
  11. For Internet Publication, Hyper mark/ links to each chapter with tagging in PDF format should be available for easier search capability.
  12. Scope for providing translation of commentary in Samskruta, and translations in English, Hindi, Telugu, Kannada and Tamil is included in the Browser Versions.
  13. Draft Text Books shall be circulated to select departments of Universities known for excellence, apart from traditional Veda Scholars, imparting education in other schools; for approval after final proof reading.
  14. It is matter of satisfaction that SGS VedaNidhi Academy has handed over the manuscripts with digital rights of distribution and circulation to SV Vedic University, TTDevasthanams free of Cost, by handing over the books and content to the Vice Chancellor in 2014. This set contains the effort of 30,000 man days of effort by dedicated scholars and volunteers affiliated to Datta Peetham.
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## **Project 4**

# **Module - Publication & Distribution of Vedic Texts by Vedic Institutions**

## **Basic Estimate**

- Estimated Number of Schools: 1,200 Approximately
- Estimated Number of Students in India: 20,000
- Number of New Batches per Annum: 4,000
- Number of Books required per Annum: 4,000
- Cost of each Book Approximately: 300/-
- Cost of entire Set: Rs.1,200/- to Rs.2,500/-  
(Dependent on the Branch)
- Annual Requirement of Books: 5,000
- Annual Cost: 12,00,000/- (at the highest)

## **Participation by Patrons:**

- Sponsorship: Protagonists of Vedic Culture, shall be enrolled as Life Members for this project. They shall donate a minimum Rs.1,000/- annually, to sponsor the publication of Vedic Text Books.
- Requisition: Any eligible student, requesting thru the school principal/ teacher is entitled to receive the book, at an advanced intimation of one month.
- Price: Vedic Text books shall be distributed at 10% of the cost. (This 10% is charged for accountability, as well as postage).

## **Modus Operandi:**

- Upon the receipt of requisition, the text shall be printed in the desired language, and the number of books shall be printed to meet the demand. (Selective/ Limited Printed is possible now a day, due to the advancement of printing technology, to save storage, demurrage, handling issues.)

## **Logical Conclusion:**

Protagonists of Vedic Studies shall actively support this project, under the umbrella of Great Proponents of Veda Dharma such as Shankaracharyas, Vaishnava Pantheon Aachaaryas, which shall ensure that the efforts reach the logical end by distributing the content to students.

## **Synopsis - Threatening factors for Wisdom and Culture**

1. Lack of understanding about our Culture
2. Misrepresentation of facts by British Instituted Education system
3. Lack of command in Indian Languages
4. Non Inclusion of Traditional Education Values in curriculum
5. Lack of Coordination/ Communication between Political, Community and Business Leadership with Leaders of Traditional Knowledge
6. In light of the above mentioned conditions, the society is mired in Confusion, Malice and Distortion. As a traditional adage explains, Vedic literature is akin to the roots of a grand tree of Wisdom & Culture. Other great Texts pertaining to various fields of knowledge (Civil Code, Metaphysics, Legal Jurisprudence, Fine Arts, Administration, Physical Sciences, Grammar etc.), are similar to stems, branches, leaves of this great tree.

Hence, the roots have to nourished and protected for the well being of the Tree (Culture & Wisdom) and resultant welfare of the society. If the roots are deprived of nourishment and protection, prospects of healthy survival for the rest are destined for devastation. Therefore, the roots have to be assiduously preserved.

वेदोऽपि तां धर्ममूलम्

धर्मो रक्षाति रक्षितः