



**ICPR SPONSORED ONE DAY STATE LEVEL SEMINAR
ON
“Ancient Ethical Thoughts in India: Bridging Tradition and
Modernity”
8th July, 2025
(Indian Philosophers’ Day)**



Distinguished speakers with the members of the Department of Philosophy on the occasion of ICPR sponsored one day Seminar on “**Ancient Ethical Thoughts in India: Bridging Tradition and Modernity**” on 8th July, 2025 commemorating Indian Philosophers’ Day

(L – R: Mrs. Madhurima Chaudhuri, Mrs. Deblina Banerjee, Dr. Koushik Sarkar, Dr. Mithu Sinha Ray from the Department of Philosophy and distinguished speakers Prof. Preetam Ghoshal, Prof. Sabita Samanta, Prof. Dilipkumar Mohanta and Prof. Arindam Bhattacharyya)

AN INITIAL REPORT

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The ICPR sponsored Seminar on ‘**Ancient Ethical Thoughts in India: Bridging Tradition and Modernity**’ was held successfully on the 8th July, 2025 in Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Govt. College, Newtown, Kolkata overcoming inclement weather conditions and marked by active participation from all levels of academicians and students. The programme stuck close to the schedule and the positive feedback of the participants attested to the overwhelming success of the event. The stated goals of the proposal were met and no major challenges were encountered in following the schedule except minor adjustments necessitated by the heavy rainfall and resultant roadblocks in the early part of the day. The invited lectures were invigorating, scholarly, and the paper presenters presented their research findings succinctly leading to enthusiastic discussion. A detailed report of the sessions is presented below for your kind perusal.

INTRODUCTORY SESSION

The inaugural session began with an introduction by Smt. Madhurima Chaudhuri, Assistant Professor of the Dept. of Philosophy setting the stage for the event. The Officer-in-Charge as the acting Principal, the IQAC Co-ordinator, the Teachers’ Council Secretary of the College and the distinguished guests were invited to take the stage. There was a *Mangalācaraṇa* through chanting of *Śloka*-s of the Srimad Bhagavat Geeta Saptashloki by Anagh Chakraborty and Reshmi Parvin, students of the English Department. All the dignitaries were welcomed with flowers and token gifts of modest value. This was followed by an inaugural address by the Officer-in-Charge Smt. Moushumi Chakravarti, who was also the chief patron of the programme. Her speech presented the topic in a nut-shell and laid down the foundation of the programme. This was followed by a short introductory speech by the IQAC Co-ordinator of the College Dr. Arikam Chatterjee, who briefly narrated how the programme was conceived and welcomed all the distinguished guests from different colleges and Universities to the College on behalf of the IQAC. This was followed by another brief Welcome Note by the Secretary of Teachers’ Council Dr. Samir Mondal.



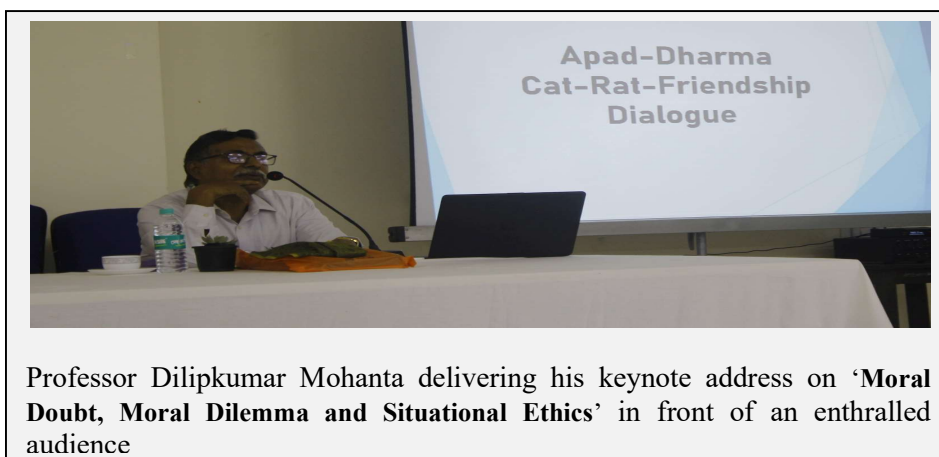
Mangalācaraṇa before the Inauguration by Anagh Chakraborty and Reshmi Parvin



The Keynote address was delivered by the esteemed philosopher and noted academic, Professor Dilipkumar Mohanta, retired Professor of Department of Philosophy, University of Calcutta, and ex-Vice Chancellor of Kalyani University and Sanskrit College & University. His lecture was titled '**Moral Doubt, Moral Dilemma and Situational Ethics**'. Although the address was formally structured on some key concepts of Traditional Indian Ethical Thoughts, yet it was not technically unapproachable, and was liked by all members of the audience. He presented the crux of ethical thinking in Indian Philosophy succinctly and laid down its relevance in present day reality with aplomb.

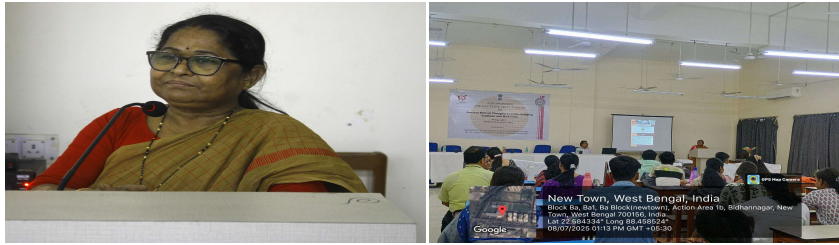
**KEYNOTE
ADDRESS**

In his lecture Professor Mohanta time and again stressed the necessity of considering ethics as a tool of everyday usage, and not one of abstruse cognition. He also emphasized the fact that this is the preferred approach from the ancient times, and it is this spirit that should be respected and honoured. He used stories from popular sources like the *Pañcatantra* and *Hitopadeśa* to emphasize points of ethical complexity and ways to resolve them. The informed use of ppt slides with animations and engaging delivery made the lecture interesting for teachers, scholars and students from diverse disciplines alike.



ACADEMIC SESSION I

This was followed by the first academic session chaired by Professor Mohanta, with Professor Sabita Samanta and Professor Preetam Ghoshal being the main speakers. A brief but lucid presentation was offered by Prof. Sabita Samanta, Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy, West Bengal State University. She spoke on ‘The Paradox of *Niṣkāma Karma*’ which was enjoyed greatly by the students. Her easy diction and the ability to present points of deep philosophical import in an easily understandable manner made this session a very fruitful one. She presented not only the theoretical outline of *Niṣkāma Karma* but also presented instances of its application under critical conditions of lived experience, to which the audience could easily relate.



Invited lecture being delivered by Prof. Sabita Samanta to a full audience

This was followed by an intense lecture on the question of *Vidhi* and imperative with an emphasis on *Mīmāṃsā* sentence categories by Prof. Preetam Ghoshal of Jadavpur University. In this lecture titled ‘*Vidhi* as an Impersonal Imperative: A *Mīmāṃsā* Analysis of *Dharma*’ Professor Ghoshal rigorously engaged with the question of ‘*Dharma*’ through an etymological lens and presented points of disagreement between the *Naiyayika*-s and the *Mīmāṃsaka*-s. Thereby he went on to discuss *Mīmāṃsaka* hermeneutics by presenting sentence types and the grammatical isolation of *vidhivākya*-s, and how they intercept with ethical imperatives as utterances.



Professor Preetam Ghoshal delivering his speech on *Vidhi* as an Impersonal Imperative: A *Mīmāṃsā* Analysis of *Dharma*

The scholars were highly benefitted by this detailed deliberation on a very significant ethical engagement by the scholars of ancient India.

Thereafter, the seminar broke for lunch, where the teachers, participants and students shared a hearty meal with the faculties of the college, exchanging views and having very enthusiastic conversations.

ACADEMIC SESSION II

The Second Session had parallel sessions of paper presentation by the participants, which were held in two different rooms. All the young research scholars enthusiastically presented their papers where many facets of Indian ethical thoughts from ancient Indian times to modern times were brought up. The concluding session was a speech by Professor Arindam Bhattacharyya, noted Professor of Pali from Sanskrit University, and currently appointed as an Officer on Special Duty (OSD) of Presidency University by the Department of Higher Education Govt. of West Bengal. His lecture entitled '*Dhammapada* on Contemporary Ethics' was devoted to ethical thinking as presented in *Dhammapada*, and reflected on diverse issues from categories of non-violence, cognitional balance, harmonious co-existence to ecological concerns and mutual understanding of beings. He also presented situations of practical usage for these tenets.



Professor Arindam Bhattacharyya delivering his lecture on '*Dhammapada* and Contemporary Ethics'.

Concluding Session

The programme was concluded with a Valedictory Session where the participants were honoured by the resource persons through distribution of certificates. Dr. Mithu Sinha Ray, Head of the Department of Philosophy summed up the sessions and a Vote of Thanks was given by Dr. Koushik Sarkar, Organising Secretary of the event. Finally, there was a photo session with the participants, resource persons and all the stake holders who braved the harsh weather conditions to make this event a success.

The concluding note was positive with a promise to initiate more such programmes in the College and thanking the ICPR for their financial support and a hope for more such support in future.



A participant being presented the Certificate by the Honourable Resource Persons



A Concluding Group Photo with Resource Persons, Faculties, Participants and Students



Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Government College,
Newtown, Rajarhat, Kolkata-700156

Department of Philosophy & IQAC

of

Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Government College

Present



Sponsored

One Day Seminar on

“Ancient Ethical Thoughts in India: Bridging Tradition and Modernity”

8th July, 2025

Concept Note

Ethical insights have formed an important aspect of India's social rubric and philosophical engagements within the Indian Knowledge System. Its ambit strides across a wide range of spatio-temporal expanse, beginning with the early Dharmasutras and Arthashastra and culminating in later treatises from the Vedantic, Buddhist and Jain schools. The range of ethical concerns that the ancient Indian thinkers have grappled with is immense, with morality, duty, virtue and components of a good life forming some of its fundamental pillars. This seminar is both a salutation to the enduring relevance of Indian ethical tradition, and an exploration into the ways in which they can be employed to grapple with contemporary challenges of modern living. The seminar intends to initiate and foster a dialogue between ancient wisdom and modern concerns, and look into illuminate the complex avenues of 21st century being through the light of Indian ethical thought.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTION

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Government College is NAAC accredited Government College established in 2014. Located at the heart of the built-in city of New Town, Kolkata with a five acres large campus, a multipurpose playground, a state-of-the art gym, high standard laboratories and a growing library. The campus has a four storied, multi-block building with elevator facility and the campus is friendly towards differently able persons college canteen. The classrooms are large, airy and aided with facilities for the use of ICT.

Chief Patron:

Ms. Moushumi Chakravorti
Officer-in-Charge
Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam Govt. College,
Newtown, Rajarhat

IQAC Coordinator

Dr.Ariktam Chatterjee,
Assitant Professor and Head, Dept. of English

Organising Committee:

Secretary:

Dr. Koushik Sarkar
Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy

Members:

Dr. Mithu Sinha Ray
Associate Professor and Head, Department of Philosophy

Deblina Banerjee
Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Madhurima Choudhuri
Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Keynote Address:

“Moral Doubt, Moral Dilemma and Situational Ethics’

Professor Dilip Kuman Mohanta

Retired Professor of Philosophy, University of Calcutta

Invited Lectures:

Vidhi as an Impersonal Imperative: A Mimāṃsa

Analysis of *Dharma*

Professor Preetam Ghoshal

Dept. of Philosophy, Jadavpur University

Paradox of Niskāma Karma

Professor Sabita Samanta, Head, Dept. of Philosophy,

West Bengal State University

Dhammapada on Contemporary Ethics

Dr. Arindam Bhattacharyya (WBES)

Officer on Special Duty, Presidency University, Kolkata

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