

## ANNEXURE 32

### Detailed Biosketch of Swami Atmapriyananda

Swami Atmapriyananda is the Vice Chancellor of Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University, a multi-campus University trying to actualize Swami Vivekananda's educational vision and devoted to teaching and research in a variety of unique areas. This University was envisioned by Swami Vivekananda himself just on the eve of his passing away on 4 July 1902 to impart character-building and value-oriented education to the youth of India combining the best elements of the East and the West. On account of its unique features, particularly its emphasis on 'gap areas' (areas scarcely addressed by the conventional Universities in India), this new University has been awarded full membership of 'Global University Network for Innovation' (GUNI), a Europe-based global organization networking Universities with social commitment. Swami Atmapriyananda received his Ph.D. from the University of Madras, India, in Theoretical Physics for his work in elementary particle theory and has a number of research publications in reputed international journals in this area. Inspired by Ramakrishna-Vivekananda ideology, he joined the Ramakrishna Order of monks in 1978 and was posted at Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, a premier college of Ramakrishna Mission at Belur Math, where he taught Physics for nearly 25 years besides serving in the academic administration of the college as Vice-Principal and Principal for 19 years. He took charge as Vice Chancellor of Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University on 4 July 2005.

As a monk and an educationist, his present interests are: (i) Swami Vivekananda's educational vision education for character building in the youth (ii) Yoga-Vedanta vis-à-vis modern science, (iii) Ramakrishna-Vivekananda thought in the context of present day challenges, (iv) Consciousness Studies as taught in the Upanishads, (v) Synthesis of the four yogas as taught by Swami Vivekananda and Bhagavad-Gita, and (vi) Harmony of religions as lived and taught by Sri Ramakrishna. He has a good number of publications on the above subjects in the journals of Ramakrishna Order and of various organizations. The number of papers/articles/essays on the above subjects contributed by him over the years is around 50. He has also a book of translations of some of the minor Upanishads having a bearing on renunciation or *sannyasa* in the ancient Indian tradition. A second volume of this book is being contemplated. Besides, two more books being collection of his articles and papers on Vedanta in particular are getting ready for publication.

Swami Atmapriyananda serves on several national committees relating particularly to education as for example, the National Committee constituted by the Government of India with the Prime Minister of India as the Chairman to commemorate Swami Vivekananda's 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary, Committee to frame guidelines for fostering social responsibility in higher education institutions in India, Committee for evaluating proposals for establishing Swami Vivekananda Chair in various Universities, constituted by University Grants Commission, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, Advisory Committee constituted by the Government of West Bengal

on higher education. He was also made the national convener for the youth programmes undertaken by Ramakrishna Mission with HQ at Belur Math, West Bengal, on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda's 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary.

**Linkages and involvement with various international organizations working in the areas of interest, namely, Yoga-Vedanta philosophy, interreligious understanding, promotion of harmony and peace in the world, holistic welfare of children, etc.:**

Swami Atmapriyananda participates on invitation in various religious and educational seminars, symposia, colloquia, workshops and conferences in India and abroad organized by Universities, research institutes and religious organizations on the subjects of his interest as mentioned above. He serves on several international organizations working in his areas of interest as stated above, either as a member of their Executive Council, a Co-Chair, an invitee, a permanent invitee to their meetings and conferences. Some of the areas wherein these organizations are working are: interreligious understanding, promotion of harmony and peace in the world, yoga, holistic welfare of children, etc. We mention below some of these international organizations:

- (i) Sarvayoga International, Italy,
- (ii) Italian Yoga Federation, Italy,
- (iii) Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders, an arm of Elijah Interfaith Institute, Israel,
- (iv) Council for Parliament of World Religions based in USA,
- (v) Day of Prayer and Action for Children, an arm of Arigatou International, with HQ in Tokyo, Japan, and Secretariat in New York,
- (vi) Guerrand Hermes Forum for the Interreligious Study of Mysticism and Spirituality', a Project of the Elijah Interfaith Academy and Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders, Forum meets usually held in Marrakesh, Morocco,
- (vii) Religions for Peace (a Co-Chair of ACRP—Asian Conference of Religions for Peace),
- (viii) Kyiv Interfaith Forum, Ukraine, Kyiv.

He toured Europe twice during 2008-2009 on invitation to act as a Resource Person at international and national yoga conferences in Italy organized respectively by *Sarvayoga International* and *Italian Yoga Federation*. As a member of the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders, an arm of Elijah Interfaith Institute, a global organization working for interreligious understanding and peace, he attended on invitation a conference at Haifa, Israel, in October 2009 on *The Future of Religious Leadership*. He was an invited speaker at the Parliament of World Religions organized in Melbourne, Australia, in December 2009, on *The Training of Religious Leadership in a Multi-religious World*. He attended on invitation a meeting of religious leaders of various world religions at the 'Guerrand Hermes Forum for the Interreligious Study of Mysticism and Spirituality', a project of the Elijah Interfaith Academy and Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders, held at Marakesh, Morocco, during 22-26 February 2011. On his way back, he had lively talks and interactions with groups of interested spiritual seekers at Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

### **Recent visits abroad (between March 2012 and April 2016):**

1. Marrakesh, Morocco, to attend the second meeting of the Guerrand Hermes Forum for the Study of Mystical and Spiritual Life, organized by Elijah Interfaith Institute, held during 15-18 March 2012,
2. Oxford, UK, to attend a meeting of the Elijah Board of Religious Leaders, organized by Elijah Interfaith Institute, held at Oxford during 18-21 March 2012,
3. Curitiba, Brazil, to attend the second meeting of the Executive Council as a member of 'World Day of Prayer and Action for Children', a global organization working for holistic welfare of children with Secretariat at New York, during 21-24 March 2012,
4. New York, USA, to attend the first meeting of the Executive Council as a member of 'World Day of Prayer and Action for Children', a global organization working for holistic welfare of children with Secretariat at New York, during July 2011,
5. Assisi, Italy, to attend the third international yoga conference of 'Sarva Yoga International', Italy, held during 29 March - 1 April 2012,
6. Vedanta Centres of the Ramakrishna Mission in USA, viz., Ridgely Manor, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Olema Retreat, Berkeley, Los Angeles' Hollywood centre, Santa Barbara centre, Trabuco centre for talks, discourses and interactions on spiritual matters,
7. New York to attend a High Level Meeting convened by the Royal Government of Bhutan, upon the invitation from the Prime Minister of Bhutan, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 2 - 4 April 2012 to discuss the developing of a new economic paradigm 'Gross National Happiness' in place of 'Gross National Product' or 'Gross Domestic Product'.
8. South Africa during the first two weeks of May 2012 on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the starting of the Ramakrishna Centre in South Africa. He visited and spoke at the main centre at Durban and the satellite centres at Chatworth, Phoenix, Pietermaritburg, Ladysmith and Johannesburg.
9. Marrakesh, Morocco, to attend the third meeting of the Guerrand Hermes Forum for the Study of Mystical and Spiritual Life, organized by Elijah Interfaith Institute, held during 18-21 February 2013.
10. Ukraine to attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> interfaith meet of the Kiev Interfaith Forum held during 23-24 April 2013.
11. Vienna, Austria, to attend on invitation a four-day conference from 19 - 22 November 2013 of *Religions for Peace*, an international Europe-based organization working for harmony and peace, to be held in Vienna, Austria. The conference focused on the core mission of *Religions for Peace* to identify the critical ways that inter-religious cooperation can advance the response of religious communities to these issues.
12. Tokyo, Japan, from 3 - 6 April 2014 to attend the Executive Council meeting of *Arigatou International's World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*.

13. Assisi, Italy, from 23 – 27 April 2014 to attend the fortieth anniversary celebration of Italian Yoga Federation on invitation as a Resource Person to conduct yoga workshops and make presentations on the theme *Secret Stairs to Superconsciousness*.
14. Incheon, South Korea, from 25 -- 29 August 2014 to attend on invitation to deliver the keynote address on behalf of Hinduism at the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP).
15. Jerusalem, Israel, from 24–30 October 2015 to participate in the preparation of visuals and films on Interfaith Prayer by religious leaders, organized by Elijah Interfaith Institute
16. New York from 16–20 April 2016 to deliver lectures on Vedanta philosophy and Swami Vivekananda's worldview at New York Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center on invitation from the Center
17. Panama City from 21 –26 April 2016 to attend the Council meeting of Day of Prayer and Action for Children organized by Arigatou International
18. Dubai and Abu Dhabi during transit on almost all of the trips above to South Africa, Europe and/or United States of America.

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