



St. Vincent College
(Affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University)
Pune -411037

Title of the Event	Online Interreligious Talk: “What is the Importance Given to Nature or the Earth in My Religion?”		
Date of the Event	28th September 2024	Place of the event	Online
Objectives of the Event	To facilitate interreligious dialogue on different themes		
Name/s of the Resource Persons	Dr. Mahesh Deokar		

A short narration of the program

An engaging Online Interreligious Talk on the topic “What is the importance given to Nature or the Earth in my Religion?” was held on Saturday, 28th September 2024, from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM IST via Zoom. The session featured Dr. Mahesh Deokar, a distinguished scholar renowned for his expertise in Buddhism. Dr. Deokar shared profound insights into how Buddhist teachings emphasize the sanctity of nature and its interconnection with human life.

Key Highlights of the Lecture:

1. Buddhist Philosophy and Ecology:

Dr. Deokar began the lecture by explaining the fundamental Buddhist perspective on the interconnectedness of all life forms. He highlighted the principles of Pratītyasamutpāda (Dependent Origination) to underscore how human actions directly impact the environment and how nature’s well-being is essential for human survival and spiritual progress.

2. The Five Precepts and Environmental Ethics:

Dr. Deokar linked the **Five Precepts** of Buddhism to ecological awareness:

- **Abstaining from harming living beings:** Encouraging compassion for all forms of life, fostering a harmonious coexistence with nature.
- **Abstaining from taking what is not freely given:** Promoting sustainable use of natural resources.
- **Abstaining from false speech:** Advocating for honest dialogue about environmental challenges.
- **Abstaining from intoxicants:** Acknowledging the importance of clarity in addressing ecological crises.

3. Buddhist Texts and Environmental Teachings:

Drawing from ancient Buddhist texts, Dr. Deokar illuminated the teachings of the Buddha regarding nature. He discussed how the Buddha often meditated in forests and regarded them as



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places of wisdom and tranquility. The Jātaka tales were highlighted as a treasure trove of ecological lessons, emphasizing kindness towards animals and the protection of natural resources.

4. The Role of Mindfulness:

Dr. Deokar spoke extensively about the practice of mindfulness (Satipatthāna) and how it fosters a deeper connection with the natural world. He emphasized that mindful living—being aware of consumption, waste, and one’s impact on the environment—can lead to a more sustainable lifestyle.

5. Buddhist Practices in Contemporary Environmentalism:

The lecture included examples of how Buddhist communities worldwide have embraced eco-friendly initiatives. From planting trees and protecting wildlife to advocating for vegetarianism and reducing carbon footprints, Dr. Deokar illustrated the relevance of Buddhist values in combating modern ecological crises.

6. Interactive Q&A Session:

The talk concluded with a lively Q&A segment where participants asked about integrating Buddhist principles into daily life to address environmental issues. Dr. Deokar’s responses were insightful, emphasizing the role of collective action and inner transformation in fostering ecological balance.

The talk served as a valuable platform for fostering interreligious dialogue on the shared responsibility towards nature.

Name of the Collaborating Agency	Snehsadan
Learning Outcomes of the Event for the Participants	Ecological perspectives of Buddhism were learnt
Learning Outcomes for the Organizing team	To impart interreligious perspectives on different themes
No. of Participants	20
Faculty in Charge	Prof. Gilbi John
Documents Attached	1. Photographs



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ST. VINCENT COLLEGE, PUNE 37

in collaboration with

SNEHASADAN INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION, PUNE 30

Inter-Religious Talk On

**What is the importance given to Nature or
the Earth in my Religion?**

Buddhism

On

Saturday, 28th September 2024

6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.



Zoom Link

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84736479308?pwd=xxQjR5PkH3DvXLpyndEbU89Yoe5ATC.1>



Zoom Meeting Details

Meeting ID: 847 3647 9308

Passcode : 926104

Dr. Mahesh Deokar