



THINK EDU 2019-2020

THINK EDU CONCLAVE



Former JNU professor Pushpesh Pant, economist and author Bibek Debroy and author Ashwin Sanghi during a discussion on 'Modern lessons from ancient India: Have we learnt the right ones?' at ThinkEdu Conclave on Thursday | P JAWAHAR

‘INTRODUCE THE YOUNG TO EPICS’

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

PURANAS are not just about stories, instead they are the encyclopaedia, said noted economist and author Bibek Debroy.

Speaking with popular author Ashwin Sanghi at ThinkEdu Conclave 2019 on 'Modern lessons from ancient India: Have we learnt the right ones?' chaired by Pushpesh Pant, Debroy said, "The Puranas are not just stories. We may take them as stories because of whatever comics and badly done television drama we have come across on it. In fact, the Puranas are the encyclopaedia. In reality, today, most of our normal functioning of dharma is based on our Puranas."

He further explained that if there is a death, then, the Garuda Purana is referred to for rituals. Similarly, other Puranas also hold importance in our day-to-day life. He also said that ancient sage, Veda Vyasa, was a great entertainer as he wrote Mahabharata in such an interesting manner.

Speaking on the topic, Debroy said that in the modern day, people focus more on their relationship with the external world. He suggested that instead, people should work on developing their internal strengths. He stressed that people should take

out at least 30 minutes a day for themselves or for the person they love, instead of spending time on the modern day notion of perpetually having to talk, debate and tweet.

Addressing a packed house, he also spoke about the necessity to get rid of the ego. Citing his personal experience, he said every day, he receives hundreds of messages from people asking him to read their articles or watch their interviews. "The modern is characterised by a capital I while our perennial teaching was to get rid of ego," he said.

Ashwin Sanghi stressed on the need to provide an opportunity for our youth to study our ancient texts and interpret them according to their understanding. "We have 300 versions of the Ramayana and we allowed all of them to flourish because we wanted people to understand it. We have to do the same with our history today," said Sanghi. Replying to an interesting question on whether the ancient texts should be introduced to the youth as myths or truth, he said the youth should read our history and ancient stories and we should leave them to decide what the truth is.

"Introduce youngsters to it (ancient texts) as philosophy and leave it to them to decide," said Sanghi.

‘Today Ambedkar and Periyar would have been called seditious’

Chennai: Right-wing panellists on Thursday said while dissent was important it was not right to criticise the country. It was one of those rare discussions where the right and the left sort of agreed on the topic of dissent. They both agreed that it was needed. JNUSU president N Sai Balaji, DU AISA president Kawalpreet Kaur, BASO president Apeksha Priyadarshini, national coordinator of Research Scholars of India, Nikhil Gupta, ABVP national president S Subbiah and Tejasvi Surya from BJP IT cell were panellists at the debate on 'Does dissent still have a place in India's campuses?'. When asked if she felt like she had freedom on campus, Sai Balaji answered with an example, he spoke about how 14 AMU students had been slapped with sedition charges just for speaking. "There lies my answer," he said. Bringing in a little bit of history to make his point, Sai Balaji said that today, the freedom movement would have been called 'seditious'. "Even Bhagat Singh, Ambedkar and Periyar would have been called seditious," he said. ENS

