



Press Release

**International Conference Explores the Interface of Thought,
Perception and Reality at IIT Bhubaneswar**

Bhubaneswar, 27th December 2025: The School of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Management (SHSSM), Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar, in collaboration with the Centre for Foundation of Science and Consciousness, Bhaktivedanta Institute, Bhubaneswar, inaugurated the International Conference on Thought, Perception and Reality (ICTPR 2025) on 27th December 2025.

The inaugural session was graced by the Chief Guest, Prof. Andrew Briggs, Emeritus Professor of Nanomaterials, University of Oxford; the Guest of Honour, Prof. (Dr.) Ashok Kumar Mahapatra, Padma Shri Awardee (2025) and former Chair, AIIMS Delhi; Prof. Shreepad Karmalkar, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar and Shri Vasudeva Rao, President, Bhaktivedanta Institute, Kolkata.

Welcoming the participants, Prof. Shreepad Karmalkar highlighted IIT Bhubaneswar's unique campus ecosystem and noted that the true strength of an institution lies beyond infrastructure, in its "collective discipline, research rigour, and integrity of habits." Drawing from Indian and Western philosophical traditions, he emphasised that effective academic leadership depends on aligning institutional reality with shared perception through rigorous standards and transparent feedback, transforming compliance into meaningful contribution.

The conference brought together eminent scholars, academicians, and thinkers to engage in cross-disciplinary reflections on the nature of thought, perception, and reality, spanning philosophy, psychology, science, consciousness studies, and the humanities. Chief Guest, Prof. Briggs, reflected on the relationship between perception and reality, drawing insights from quantum theory to highlight the observer effect and inherent indeterminacy. He emphasised how subjective choices can shape objective reality, drawing connections between scientific insight and spiritual wisdom in a seemingly random world. He further raised critical questions about the values that will guide artificial intelligence and the possibility of moral reality, reinforcing the central theme of thought, perception, and reality. Guest of Honour Prof. (Dr.) Mahapatra reflected on the contemporary relevance of consciousness studies and ethical inquiry. Drawing on the example of medical professionals trained in public institutions, he underscored the ethical responsibility of serving society and humanity, noting that while perceptions may vary, reflective thinking remains central to meaningful action and social commitment towards the motherland.

A brief address on the vision and activities of the Bhaktivedanta Institute was delivered by Shri Vasudev Rao. In his brief remark, he highlighted the contemporary relevance of the conference theme, which lies at the intersection of science, philosophy, and spirituality. Invoking Maurice Merleau-Ponty, he noted that without philosophy, science lacks clarity about its own discourse. Emphasising consciousness as a central mystery, he underscored the need for an open, integrative approach to understanding thought, perception, and reality.

The conference is being convened by Dr. Sreetama Misra (Philosophy) and Dr. Aparna Pandey (Psychology), Assistant Professors at IIT Bhubaneswar, along with Shri Jitun Dhal, Director, Bhaktivedanta Institute Bhubaneswar. The Book of Abstracts for ICTPR 2025 was formally released during the inaugural ceremony.

In the coming two days, the conference promises intellectual deliberations and interdisciplinary collaborations. ICTPR 2025 marks a significant academic event, fostering meaningful dialogue between philosophy, science, and consciousness studies. The conference reaffirms IIT Bhubaneswar's commitment to promoting interdisciplinary research and intellectual exchange at both national and international levels.
