

About Institute of Astrology

This is a pioneering institution imparting Vedic knowledge. It stands for the reintegration of India and its rich cultural heritage. Astrology needed such a place for its revival.

With its reputation as the largest center of astrology learning, with uncompromising excellence in research, BVB Institute of Astrology conducts Jyotish Alankar and Jyotish Acharya courses, besides research programmes.

Weekly research classes are being held here for the past thirty years. With the objective of developing astrological research ideas that are generated during brainstorming sessions, the number of research classes has increased. There are six different research classes being held from the past ten years.

To document research, we have been publishing a bi-monthly research journal under the guidance of Mr. K.N. Rao from March, 1997. We believe in the philosophy of *Sharing expands knowledge, confining could result in its loss.*

Two years spent learning astrology in Jyotish Alankar and Jyotish Acharya of the institute is like exploring a long shore-line of the ocean of astrology. We make students who join us stop at select points of this vast ocean. These points have been selected by experts after much deliberation. We technically equip students with all the methods that lead to correct predictions. Only the tested and highly replicable ones are therefore taught.

On successful completion of this intense two-year course, the student is able to identify his aptitude and decide his future in astrology. He is able to assess his strengths and weakness and can give predictions by himself. At this stage, we encourage students to start with predicting for people known to them.

The research programme is designed in such a way that after picking from the available choices, the student is able to conduct research both at the individual level and in a group. The Institute of Astrology, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, can claim to be a global leader in terms of both quantity and quality of astrological research. With Shri K.N. Rao to guide us, the research activity is well-structured and organized.

The institute is identified with the vision and drive of the renowned astrologer Shri K.N. Rao. It is his reputation that attracts astrology lovers to us from all across the globe. An extraordinary vision and high administrative capabilities have gone to blend ancient and traditional systems and techniques of astrology while promoting path-breaking original research, upgrading and carrying the tradition forward to marry it with modern technology and advancement. This is the singular contribution of Shri Rao to modern day astrology.

The credit for making astrology accessible to all also goes to Shri Rao. At the time of inception of the institute, 35 years ago, the beliefs and practices prevalent frowned on teaching astrology to those lower in caste and to women. Shri K.N. Rao wanted astrology to be taught to the deserving, irrespective of caste, religion, nationality and gender, and this has been our guiding principle always. *Teach this supreme vedanga jyotish shastra only to one who is gentle and amiable, devoted, truthful, brilliant and*

well known to you. Only that person, who possesses adequate knowledge of time and positions of grahas and nakshatras, can understand this Hora shastra. Only that person, who has complete knowledge of Hora shastra and who is truthful, can make correct favourable or unfavourable predictions (chapter 97) Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra.

Shri Rao's experience and dedication to astrology is unparalleled. He has many years of experience and has more than 1,50,000 horoscopes in his possession, which are progressively researched by him and his researchers. He has authored 25 books and guided another 25, besides editing the Journal of Astrology from its launch in 1997.

With a scientific and statistical approach, the institute could demonstrate that *Kaal Sarpa dosha*, *Sade Sati* and many such common prescriptive approaches were exploitative and many beliefs and practices that had attached the name of astrology to extort money from the gullible were baseless. These were being used as tools by self-styled, unscrupulous astrologers for selfish gains. The Institute stood up in defence whenever astrology was attacked.

Having provided the inspiration to introduce astrology as a course in universities, we alone defended it in the Supreme Court of India. In response to a petition filed by scientists who wanted the Government to discontinue teaching of astrology in universities in 2004, Shri K.N. Rao spoke at length in the Supreme Court as defendant. The Supreme Court eventually decided in favor of teaching of astrology in universities.

Our fundamental approach to research is based on utilization of the work already done in the field. Here, what matters is the strength of the institution and its astrologers. Since astrology is an ancient science and perhaps the oldest and most discussed, its learning is scattered wide across the world. Here also we need committed manpower to put it together.

Though today we have the internet to aid us, the dependable input in research comes from self-tested replicability of discovered principles. Understanding today's socio-economic milieu is important for modifying the results of earlier research. A systematic investigation into the existing or new knowledge reaffirms the results of previous work done, solves new or existing problems. The syllabus conceived by Shri K.N. Rao has picked the optimal from the vast ocean of the subject. We have experts to select it.

Flexible, not dogmatic, should be the approach: Any astrologer who quotes a shloka and predicts a sequence of events without any other reference and says this is sure to happen as it is within our *shastra* should be treated as shallow. True, our Gurukuls (traditional schools) made students memorize thousands of shlokas and taught ways to retain them through yogic kriyas, but this was just to retain in the memory and draw for reference. The predictor astrologer further scrutinized these classical dictates in the background *desh-kaal-patra* and predicted after *chintan* (concentration) on the divisional charts and at least 3 *dashas*. Mere memorization of classical yogas do not make you a competent astrologer.

Morality and Astrology: We believe it is high time astrologers became honest to their profession. At times, unscrupulous astrologers can cause irreparable damage to astrology. There is an urgent need for astrologers to discipline themselves as many incidents bordering on extortion have been reported. In

U.K., the consumer protection regulations require astrologers to display that their services are for entertainment only and not experimentally proven. Astrologers have to put a disclaimer.

We impart only Vedic knowledge in Astrology: We do not include Uranus, Neptune or Pluto in our analysis. We use only Lahiri's ayanamsha. The institute aims at instilling a spirit of dedication and a non-commercial, inquiring attitude.

Is there a pre-destination: Shri K.N.Rao explains periodically in his discourses on the Bhagwad Gita the subtle links of astrology with spiritual progress in a friendly, simple and casual style. A question that perennially remains in the mind of the conscientious is whether the spiritual soul is bewildered by false ego and takes moral freedom for granted, or there is another dimension. Our shastras clearly point towards pre-destination but leave the extent of it for the scholars and interpreters to draw. But the Mahabharata has it precise. "Yudhisthir will be the instrument for his gambling habits (*nimit*) and the action will come from Arjun and Bhima". The *viraat roop* of Lord Krishna also explains predestination. Bhagwan Sri Krishna explains to Arjun that the death of all the *kauravas* is predestined perhaps for their collective karma. You will get *yash* if you become the instrument. Had Sri Krishna revealed the death of *Abhimanyu*, Arjun's son, he would have shattered and withdrawn. It goes to show that under the umbrella of predestination, there is free will as well. And God can put a curtain on anything he wants. In short, there is no real free will so far as the will of God is concerned. But God leaves humans to exercise their free will like a cow tied to a log that can move into a defined territory where it exercises free will.

Institute's BVB Journal of Astrology: More the number of research articles fed to an astrological research project, the higher is its credibility. Replicability is always measured quantitatively. Replicability alone can give scientific acceptability. It is the numbers and patterns that make a research project empirically sound. Our research journal was made bi-monthly from quarterly from January, 2010. Thanks to the infusion of timely and quality research, we have since been able to meet deadlines and the journal still enjoys the reputation of being the best astrological journal available in the market.

Astrology has originated from saints who reached a high level of understanding of the purpose of life and of human destiny. They could perhaps trace the links to past births with clarity. They devised methods to ensure that the common folk get only a part of what they could discover through insights reached by yogic spiritual practices, as astrology can be misused. A much deeper insight by the ordinary householder could mean more harm to society than good, this was perhaps their view. They perhaps devised methods so that the ordinary astrologer could partake only the trends in general of mundane affairs of life. The depth of astrology is infinite. Astrology hints that at some place there is a universal fusion, a merger. Astrology can perhaps answer all questions that mankind seeks, but an astrologer cannot, due to limitations perhaps ordained by the Almighty. Several hints are available in astrological texts for the spiritually-advanced to seek deeper meanings to answer questions that the ordinary cannot even comprehend. The use of *garbadharan lagna* and many other ascendants referred and some divisional charts are the hints for those advancing.

Astrology can be a truly exciting journey to a completely unknown destination. And this journey must begin with a small step. Mr.K.N. Rao and his team of teachers provide the guiding hand.