

On Thursday, 26th June 2025

The **Gujarat Sahitya Akademi** has conferred its prestigious **Best Book Award** on two books authored by the eminent Vedic scholar **Prof. Dr. Kapildev Shastri** of the Sanskrit Department, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda.

Dr. Kapildev Shastri, a distinguished Vedic scholar from the Sanskrit Department of the Faculty of Arts at Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, was honored by the Gujarat Sahitya Akademi, Gandhinagar, with the **“Best Book Award in Sanskrit Language and Literature for the Year 2023.”** The award recognized his two remarkable works: *“Atharvavedasya Parichayātmakam - Anuśīlanam”* and *“Śrī Bhartṛhari Virchita Nītiśatakam.”*

The book *“Atharvavedasya Parichayātmakam - Anuśīlanam”* provides a comprehensive introduction to the entire extant Atharvavedic literature, elaborating its significance and contemporary relevance. It offers an in-depth examination of the practical applications of the Atharvaveda today, including external influences on it, political knowledge embedded within, state governance, acquisition of victory, social welfare, scientific principles, agricultural sciences, environment, gems, mantras, medicines, and medicinal plants—highlighting their unique characteristics and importance.

In *“Śrī Bhartṛhari Virchita Nītiśatakam,”* Dr. Shastri presents a profound analysis of complex human conduct. This divine “Nītiśatakam” is portrayed as a medicinal elixir that promotes a healthy and beautiful life through ethics and morality. Recognizing how society becomes afflicted by lust, anger, and greed, the book advocates disseminating this “Nītiśataka”—a metaphorical medicinal plant of righteous conduct—widely to rejuvenate societal behavioral wisdom. Dr. Shastri has edited and translated this work with scholarly insight.

Having pursued the traditional guru-shishya lineage, Dr. Shastri mastered the Vedas and Sanskrit sciences, earning gold medals with the Acharya degree in all four Vedas. To date, he has published about 25 books, delivered over 200 lectures both online and offline, and received more than 18 awards and honors at state and national levels. His books are incorporated as textbooks in various university Sanskrit curricula. Furthermore, he has presented research papers at approximately 62 seminars and conferences nationally and internationally.

Dr. Shastri has published over 60 UGC CARE-listed research papers at national and international levels, focusing on topics valuable for social welfare and rooted in Indian knowledge traditions, such as “Botanical Science in the Vedas,” “Creation Science in the Vedas,” “Meteorological Science in the Vedas,” Environment, and Educational Science. Notably, he has been actively researching meteorological sciences through *“Atharvavedīya Atharvaṇa Jyotiṣa”* over the last five years. His scholarly contributions have earned him honors and awards from various institutions for his research papers and book authorship.

The felicitation ceremony also recognized other scholars for their contributions in different disciplines. Distinguished dignitaries present included the President and Secretary of the Gujarat Sahitya Akademi, the Hon’ble Minister of Sanskrit and Cultural

Affairs of the Government of Gujarat, the Vice-Chancellor of Somnath Sanskrit University, Veraval, the President of Sanskrit Bharati Gujarat Province, heads of all colleges and schools in Gujarat state, Sanskrit department officers, staff, and Sanskrit language enthusiasts. The event was conducted with great solemnity and grandeur.

Special Note: Dr. Kapildev Shastri is currently acknowledged as the world's foremost scholar of the Atharvaveda. Numerous students trained under him have studied the "Atharvaveda Shaunak Shakha" and are actively promoting Vedic knowledge through teaching and recitation in prestigious institutions such as the TTD Trust in Tirupati and Maharshi Sandipani Rashtriya Ved Vidya Pratishthan in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh. Through the practical application of Atharvavedic wisdom—encompassing herbs, roots, gems, mantras, medicines, and rituals—they have contributed to social welfare and enhanced the prestige and authority of political leaders.

This honour bestowed upon Dr. Kapildev Shastri is a matter of great pride for Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda.

Venue of the Award Ceremony:

Uma Arts and Natiya Commerce Women's College, Gandhinagar, Gujarat