







ENROLL-NOW-FOR-TRANSCEND-PEACE-UNIVERSITY'S-COURSES-FOR-2013



## THE YUGANTAR GROUP

Vithal Rajan works with groups of like-minded intellectuals and activists, through commitment to a community way of life and out of a firm belief that the best ideas are produced through social practice. He is an integral member of the Yugantar Group which is a registered not-for-profit civil society voluntary group of activists, professionals, academics and intellectuals in India. The group works for a socially just inclusive society, caring of the Earth and People, while ensuring individual freedoms and community cohesion. Yugantar includes:

**Deepa Dhanraj** (President Yugantar): Internationally known Documentary Film-Maker.

**Dr. K.Lalita**: internationally known Feminist, Writer, Activist, a key resource person in Women's Studies.

**Tejaswini Madabhushi**: A Neo-Gandhian grassroots activist with expertise in Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

**Sashi Kumar** (Secretary, Yugantar): Revolutionary Economist, and former banker.

**Madan Mohan Rao**: Senior Journalist, and former Ashoka Fellow.

**Navroze Contractor**: Internationally known Cinematographer.

**Triveni Goswami Vernal**: former Rotary Peace Fellow, UNESCO/Suzanne Mubarak/Japan-Egypt Friendship Fellow for the Empowerment of Women in Peace and Gender Studies.

**Vandana Phottoli**: Deputy CEO, Yugantar, and advisor, Hyderabad Start-Ups Group.

**Dr Lalitha Iyer**: Senior Banker, expertise in Organisational Development, and former Dean, Social Development, Indian Society of Applied Behavioural Sciences.

**Diia K. Rajan**: Feminist activist and writer, culture studies theorist.

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## (C) Course Content:

Many people in the world, whether rich or poor, whether living in the West or in Third World countries, experience great dissatisfaction with the way of life that is possible today. The conventional wisdom of leaders seems to be unable to cope with rising crime, job insecurity, falling standards in health care and education, corruption in high places, destruction of the environment, climate change, and social alienation. The purpose of this course is to illuminate what has happened in India over the past century, though it was in the forefront of the struggle not only against 19<sup>th</sup> century Imperialism, but under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi against modern, aggressive and individualistic values of exploitative societies. Gandhi was both a spiritual leader and an astute politician, and he vigorously propagated alternative pathways to a happy and contented quality of life to the prevailing Western model, for he foresaw many of our present-day problems. His vision was based on the age-old knowledge of many Eastern spiritual traditions, Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and Christian.

However, the previous two-hundred years of Colonial Rule and the breakdown of the feudal Moghul Empire had almost destroyed the artisanal-industrial fabric of India, and led to wide-spread emiseration throughout the country with repetitive large-scale famines. Indian and

British social reformers tried various ameliorative measures, and it is important to acknowledge their constructive efforts against the general background of imperial policies if we are to understand what followed after Independence.

Widespread poverty and general distress seen against an image of past glories led Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, to opt for a Western industrial model of development based upon American and Russian successes. Sixty years after following this course, we see India as an IT giant, with over 80







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through to the mega level, from literature and history, from complex real-life narratives and exercises, it is absolutely necessary that we share as much as we can. For this reason the entire process is highly interactive and transparent with all participants freely exchanging their thought processes, their interpretations and their views along with the instructor's responses. Through this approach, participants achieve a core understanding of constructive conflict transformation, and they are empowered through their own cooperative efforts to participate in larger attempts at social change in their own societies.

## (E) Course Format

The course is articulated in Six Modules. Each module includes a live discussion-session on Skype every two weeks, for around 60 minutes maximum. No session will include more than 10 participants to ensure maximum interaction. The Skype sessions will take place on alternate Saturdays at a time most convenient for most persons, to be decided by the Course Director after consulting everyone by email before the start of the course. You will experience how enlightening it is to have participants join in from all around the world. And there will be opportunities to contribute by asking questions and making comments on the course website.

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Every one of the Six Modules will follow this format:

### First Week

Tuesday – The Reading Material [and also a few videos or audios] will be sent as email attachment and or as an easily accessible reading list and web-links to all participants.

Saturday – A One-hour Skype session will be fixed after mutual consultations with all participants forming each study circle. The timing will depend on everyone's location and convenience. The essay assignment will be finalized after this discussion.

### Second Week

Thursday – After three or four days of mutual consultation, the study circle will finalize and email back a 5 or 6 page essay on the agreed assigned topic. An individual participant can also submit a short article on the same or allied topic.

Saturday – The Course Director will email back to all the participants a detailed assessment of the essay[s], with additional suggestions for future study.













