

Philosopher Acharya Prashant's Patna visit: Two sessions, thousands in attendance

🕒 January 18, 2026 👤 IANS 📁 EDUCATION 💬 0

Patna, Jan 18 (IANS) On January 16, Acharya Prashant's first Patna dialogue at the historic Bapu Auditorium near Gandhi Maidan proved unforgettable. The programme ran far beyond its scheduled time and concluded nearly four hours later. Despite the biting cold, close to five thousand listeners remained seated until late at night.

After the session, a kilometre-long queue formed for book signings and continued past midnight. Thousands of attendees received signed copies of Truth Without Apology and other books.

This marked Acharya Prashant's first public programme in Patna. Apart from various districts of Bihar, listeners arrived from Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Nepal as well. The auditorium, with a capacity of five thousand, was filled to the brim. Organisers remarked that they had rarely witnessed such a reception in recent times.

Acharya Prashant is an alumnus of IIT Delhi and IIM Ahmedabad, has cleared the civil services examination, and is the author of over 160 books. He is the founder of the PrashantAdvait Foundation.

More than 150,000 participants are currently enrolled in his teaching programmes on the Gita, the Upanishads, Buddhist texts, and other Indian and Western scriptures. In 2025, the IIT Delhi Alumni Association honoured him with the "Outstanding Contribution for National Development" (OCND) award.

During the session, Acharya Prashant spoke at length on the relationship between Vedanta and women. Describing Vedanta as a true ally of women, he said that only a philosophy that frees one from bodily identification can offer genuine freedom to women.

According to him, the root causes of women's suffering are a lack of education and religious superstition. Referring to temple-entry movements and the freedom struggle, he spoke on the original meaning of Sanatan Dharma, stating that discrimination against women in the name of religion stems not from Dharma itself but from its distorted forms.

In his address, Acharya Prashant also spoke of his connection with Purvanchal, saying he feels as much a part of Bihar as of Uttar Pradesh. He pointed to young people reading and writing in libraries and cafés as signs of a changing Bihar.

Addressing the youth, he urged them not to limit themselves to the race for government jobs and to move towards self-reliance. Dependence on others, he said, whether in thought or in decision-making, is a person's greatest weakness.

After the session, national and regional media organisations, including IANS, interacted with Acharya Prashant. During these interactions, he shared his views on the Indian Constitution, stating that its core values, liberty, equality, fraternity, and justice, resonate deeply with Vedantic teachings.

These values, he said, do not need to be imported from elsewhere; what is needed is to understand them and live by them.

TRANSLATE



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On January 17, Acharya Prashant visited the IIT Patna campus. This was his eighth address at an IIT in recent months. He has recently spoken at IIT Delhi, Goa, Hyderabad, Kharagpur, Madras, Mumbai, and Bhubaneswar. Over the next month, he is scheduled to address five more IIT campuses.

The session at IIT Patna began with a verse from the Kath Upanishad. Acharya Prashant said that so-called custodians of religion have misled society through flawed interpretations of the scriptures.

According to him, the Bhagavad Gita is not a book of ritual worship but a practical science for living rightly. During the question-and-answer session, one student raised a question on climate change and patterns of consumption, while another spoke openly about physical attraction and self-control in student life.

Acharya Prashant responded to these questions directly. The session concluded with book signings, in which students and others participated enthusiastically.

Over two consecutive days, these programmes witnessed remarkable attendance across two distinct audiences, the general public at Bapu Auditorium and technical students at IIT Patna. Acharya Prashant will next address students at IIT Delhi on January 18.

-IANS

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