

Date: 12 March 2026

To whomsoever this may concern.

This response addresses certain claims made in an email dated 22 February 2026 from Her Grace Urmila devi dasi, Chairperson of the Shastric Advisory Council. Her message, directed to the GBC Executive Committee, concerns statements by His Holiness Bhakti Vikasa Swami Maharaja in a video posted on the ISKCON India Scholars Board YouTube channel, which I and others oversee. The email has also circulated in other forums and has recently come to my attention.

With respect to the video in question, it was originally intended for the GBC's internal deliberation as a follow-up to our meeting on 8 February. It was shared privately with them on 9 February and subsequently made public on the IISB YouTube channel on 11 February, after the GBC had concluded its business.

In what follows, I will address only the most serious of Urmila Mata's objections to the video.

## Was the SAC's 2013 paper *Prudent Questions, Shastric Answers* leaked and unauthorizedly circulated?

Regarding the 2013 FDG (female diksa-guru) paper by the SAC, titled *Prudent Questions, Shastric Answers*, as per Urmila Mata's correspondence, the GBC had asked the Sastric Advisory Council (SAC) to draft a paper on the social effects of women giving dīkṣā in ISKCON. Although a draft was prepared with input from members including Narayani and herself, she says,

- 1) "The GBC body never discussed or voted on that paper, it was never produced in a final form, and never published."
- 2) "Evidently someone broke confidentiality and leaked it."
- 3) The paper was "unpublished" and "unfinished."

There are some other facts not mentioned in Urmila Mata's email that are relevant.

- a) **The SAC paper titled Prudent Questions Shastric Answers (PQSA) is dated October 2013.**
- b) **The paper was not later leaked. It was published on the GBC-sponsored website [vdg.iskconinfo.com](http://vdg.iskconinfo.com).**
- c) **The website [vdg.iskconinfo.com](http://vdg.iskconinfo.com) made available the SAC's 2013 paper, along with other papers. At first it was accessible only to GBC members, and then later to the general public.**
  - a. On 19 December 2014, on the Dandavats news site, the website [vdg.iskconinfo.com](http://vdg.iskconinfo.com) was announced by GBC Chairman, Anuttama

Prabhu, along with vice-chairmen Praghosa and Sesa Prabhus. The materials had originally been prepared for internal GBC discussions. After those discussions were concluded, the Chairman and Vice-chairs said, “We thought other devotees might be interested in reading the material that has been compiled and thus we are making it available to whomever wishes to access it.”<sup>1</sup>

- d) **Prior to the 2019 annual general meeting of the GBC, there are no known communications from the SAC saying that the paper was “leaked,” “unpublished” or “unfinished.”** The book Vaisnava Diksa According to Narada Pancaratra, authored by Damodara Dasa and myself, Krishna Kirti Dasa, was published on the occasion of the GBC’s Annual General Meeting in 2019 and distributed to attendees as well as others. This work directly challenged the factual claims of the SAC’s 2013 PQSA paper, particularly its assertion that pancharatrika shastra contains no prohibitions. It was only after the publication of this book that SAC members—beginning with Urmila Mata—commenced raising objections to the continued circulation of the PQSA paper.

**Notwithstanding Urmila Mata’s objection that the PQSA paper is not among the official documents currently listed on the GBC’s website, it was in fact presented to the GBC for discussion, as established by the facts noted above. Moreover, as confirmed in the GBC Chair’s communication, the GBC Executive Committee resolved to share all documents they had reviewed, including the SAC’s PQSA paper. Objections from SAC members regarding its circulation did not arise until five years later—only after substantial challenges to the paper’s factual claims had already been published.**

## Was Mukunda-datta (ACBSP) Prabhu dismissed from the SAC for breach of confidentiality?

Urmila Mata wrote: “regarding why Mukunda Datta Prabhu ‘left’ the SAC--he violated SAC confidentiality rules and was asked to leave by both SAC and the GBC EC.”

But according to the official record, Mukunda-datta Prabhu formally resigned on account of “circumstances beyond his control” and time demands from other services. And Urmila Mata “regretfully” accepted his letter of resignation, lauding him for his past and recent contributions to the SAC. Overall, the tone of both letters is respectful, full of gratitude, and full of praise for one another. There is no indication that he was dismissed

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<sup>1</sup> More details about the site are available on Dandavats.com in an article titled “GBC Completes Three-Day Special Session on Vaishnavi Diksa Gurus”, dated 21 October 2014.

for violating SAC confidentiality rules. And there would have been no necessity of a resignation letter had he in fact been dismissed.

We have included the email exchange for inspection (see Appendix).

## Did Mukunda-datta (ACBSP) Prabhu claim that his name was fraudulently added to the SAC's 2005 paper on Female Diksa-Gurus?

Urmila Mata wrote: "*Mukunda Datta Prabhu's name was listed on the SAC paper about FDG. After nine years, he claimed that the other members (Suhotra Svami, Gopiparanadhana Dasa, Drutakarma Dasa, Purnacandra [then] Dasa, Devamrta Dasa) had fraudulently added his name to a paper with which he did not agree.*"

There is no record that Mukunda-datta Prabhu ever stated his name had been "fraudulently" added. His own account was simply that he had not participated in the production of the paper and therefore requested that his name be removed. That is all. Urmila Mata notes the nine-year gap between the paper's publication and his request, implying that he endorsed the paper until it was no longer in his interest.

Yet it is worth noting that there was also a five-year gap between the SAC's 2013 PQSA paper being posted publicly on *vdg.iskconinfo.com* in 2014 and any request from the SAC that it be withdrawn from circulation. No objections were raised until after the publication of the book *Vaisnava-diksa According to Narada Pancaratra* in 2019, authored by Damodara Prabhu and myself, which directly challenged the factual claims of both the SAC's 2005 FDG paper and its 2013 PQSA paper. For example, the SAC asserted that the *pancharatrika-marga* is of more recent origin than the *karma-marga* (which is incorrect), and that nothing in the *pancharatra-shastras* we follow would disallow women from becoming *diksa-guru* (also incorrect).

This prolonged silence on the part of the SAC could reasonably be taken as tacit acceptance of the paper's public circulation (even if not listed on the GBC website), until objections became inconvenient. Five years is not nine years, but five years is still a long time to remain silent.

The point is that there is no need to ascribe to malice, or fraud, what can be easily explained by inattention. Neither Mukunda-datta Prabhu nor the SAC seemed to pursue their respective matters until they became important. That is all.

As for the remaining objections raised in Urmila Mata's letter, the most serious concerns have already been addressed. While her arguments contain factual and ethical inconsistencies that could call into question her approach, we do not wish to pursue that line of discussion further.

In light of what has already been clarified, we appeal for a measure of charity and understanding. No one is without imperfection. Accordingly, Maharaja's video will remain in its present location without modification. Given the public nature of Urmila Mata's email, we will also make this response available as part of the record.

Yours sincerely, in the service of Srila Prabhupada,

Bhavataḥ sevakaḥ,

Krishna Kirti das,

Convenor, ISKCON India Scholars Board

<https://iisb.co.in/fdg>

## Appendix: Mukunda-datta (ACBSP)'s resignation letter and Urmila (ACBSP)'s response

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Urmila/Edith Best** <urmiladevidasi@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, 28 Oct, 2014, 4:22 pm

Subject: Re: Resignation Letter

To: Michael Tandy <mpt@uw.edu>

Cc: SAC (Sastric Advisory Council) <SAC@pamho.net>, Radha Sundari (dd) RNS (Secretary GBC EC) <Radha.Sundari.RNS@pamho.net>, MM <MM@pamho.net>

On Tue, Oct 28, 2014 at 11:39 AM, Michael Tandy <mpt@uw.edu> wrote:

Dandavats, SAC members. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

Hare Krsna. I also feel compelled to resign from SAC (effective immediately), mainly because I feel I cannot make substantial contributions to it due to circumstances beyond my control. With other service to do, I don't have the time SAC work demands, but I hope I have been of some help in preparing the new mandate, which I feel has been improved in many ways even though I don't approve of everything in it. Thank you for your association; it has been an honor to participate in SAC since its inception, and I wish you all the best. Hare Krsna.

Your humble servant,

MDd

Dear Mukunda Datta Prabhu,

Please accept my obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

I regretfully accept your letter of resignation from SAC. You have added substantially to the creation of the protocol, which should make for a much better SAC and for better SAC-GBC relations. I'm happy that our mutual membership in SAC gave me the opportunity to speak to you in LA and to gain in appreciation for you as a Vaisnava dedicated to Srila Prabhupada and his mission.

I wish you all the best in your publishing and other service, as well as in your bhajana at Vrindavana and Govardhana.

"When the cowherd men of Vrindavana, under instruction of Krsna, stopped offering sacrifice to the heavenly King, Indra, the whole tract of land known as Vraja was threatened with being washed away by constant heavy rains for seven days. Lord Krsna, out of His causeless mercy upon the inhabitants of Vraja, held up the hill known as Govardhana with one hand only, although He was only seven years old. He did this to protect the animals from the onslaught of water."  
SB 2.7.32

Your grateful servant, Urmila devi dasi

