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7.2.1	<p>State at least two institutional best practices (as per NAAC format)</p> <p>रा.मू.प्र.परिषदः प्रपत्रानुसारेण संस्थायाः सर्वोत्तमं परिपाटिद्वयम् उल्लिख्यताम्।</p>
	<p>सर्वोत्तमपरिपाटिः /Best Practice</p> <p>1. Title of Best Practice -</p> <p>Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University undertakes various distinctive activities to preserve, promote, develop, and elevate India's rich knowledge tradition. These activities primarily focus on Yoga education, natural medicine, Yajna, Vastu Vidya, Ayurvedic astrology, grammar, philosophy, literature, and other subjects. Among these activities, "Vastu Vidya Abhyas" is one of the new initiatives. The best practice of our university is "Vastu Vidya Abhyas."</p> <p>2. Objectives of Best Practice-</p> <p>Vastu Shastra is an ancient Indian architectural system. Its objectives are diverse, with the main ones listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To promote and disseminate the principles of Vastu Shastra and Indian knowledge traditions, and to develop and establish them. ii. To integrate traditional Vastu Shastra with modern architecture. iii. To organize Vastu Shastra-related activities, and to conserve,

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transmit, and promote the ancient Vastu Shastra tradition.

iv. To provide practical training in Vastu Vidya.

v. To make ancient Indian architectural art and science known to all citizens.

vi. To ensure a positive flow of energy in homes, temples, public buildings, and commercial buildings.

vii. To provide training in Vastu Vidya to Sanskrit students and other students, and to provide them with career opportunities.

viii. To present the classical, artistic, and scientific aspects of architecture.

ix. In the standard texts of Vastu Shastra, such as Samarangana Sutradhara, Vishwakarma Vastu Shastra, and Shilpa Shastra, three types of Vastu Shastra are mentioned: 1. Sthapatya (architecture), 2. Shilpa (sculpture), and 3. Chitra (painting). To provide education and training in the three types of Vastu Shastra, and to harmoniously integrate ancient architecture, painting, and sculpture with modern architectural science.

3Reference –

The university undertakes various activities related to traditional Vastu

Vidya, including teaching, learning, training, conservation, promotion, and transmission, presenting the entire subject in a comprehensive and evidence-based manner.

Tradition

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University is always striving to promote, disseminate, conserve, and develop the fundamental principles of Indian knowledge tradition and Indian culture. To achieve this, the university teaches a curriculum that includes representative literature and supporting texts, starting from Vedic literature to worldly Sanskrit literature, such as Vedic literature, Puranas, grammar, astrology, architecture, and education.

Among the projects that promote Indian culture, Vastu Shastra is one of them. This science is also known as Sthapatya. Sthapatya Veda is considered a subsidiary Veda of the Atharva Veda. As mentioned in the Shrimad Bhagavata Mahapurana...

Āyurvedam dhanurvedam gāndharvavedam ātmanah |

Sthāpatyam cāsrjadveda kramātpūrvādhirmukhaih ||

Similarly, it is clearly stated in Katyayana's Charanavyuha that:

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	<p>"Atharvavedasya Sthapatyavedo Upavedah ityaaha Bhagavaan Kaatyayanah." This makes it clear that Vastu Shastra is directly related to Vedic science.</p> <p>"Vasanti yasminniti Vaastuh" meaning "Vaastu refers to the dwelling place of living beings." Acharya Vishwakarma imparts the knowledge of Vaastu Shastra for the welfare of humanity. People construct homes and buildings according to their needs. The ultimate goal is to live a happy and fulfilling life. Therefore, people strive to create a safe and peaceful living space. The importance of Vaastu Shastra becomes apparent in the construction process. Without knowledge of Vaastu, it is impossible to build a suitable home, temple, or other structure. If a Vaastu has defects, it is not suitable for building temples or other structures. Therefore, the Department of Vaastu Shastra undertakes various projects to make traditional Indian architectural knowledge useful for society in the present era.</p> <p>The Vaastu Department conducts practical training to assess the quality and defects of land according to the principles of the scriptures. It teaches students the methods of well excavation, building entrance, and main gate construction in accordance with the scriptures and provides practical training.</p>
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	<p>The Vaastu Department imparts knowledge about the Vaastu Purusha, Chatushshashti, and Ekashiti concepts, and provides practical training in creating Vaastu Chakras.</p> <p>For residential buildings, it teaches students the Vaastu principles for constructing rooms, such as pooja rooms, bathrooms, toilets, kitchens, bedrooms, dining rooms, storage rooms, armories, bedrooms, and medicine rooms.</p> <p>It also teaches students how to determine the auspicious time for constructing these rooms and buildings. For villages and cities, it explains the Vaastu principles for constructing buildings and provides practical training. It teaches students how to calculate the length, width, and area of a plot of land for building construction. It provides theoretical and practical training in constructing various rooms, such as study rooms, guest rooms, office rooms, meeting rooms, and staircases. It teaches students the procedures for planting trees, creating gardens, and making flower gardens near homes, and explains their auspicious and inauspicious effects. Based on Jyotish Shastra, it provides practical training in determining the auspicious and inauspicious times for starting house construction.</p> <p>In Indian culture, temples hold great significance, but before</p>
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constructing a temple, it's essential to determine the Vaastu. Additionally, the creation and installation of temple components like the Mandapa, Garbhagriha, deity idol, Ayudha, and Vahana are crucial. The Vaastu Shastra Department provides theoretical knowledge and practical training in these aspects. To reinforce this knowledge, the department regularly organizes seminars and workshops, where students learn from experts. These events bring together scholars and students from various universities, providing them with training and expertise in Vaastu. Eminent scholars from our university and other institutions participate in special lecture series, sharing their knowledge with students and helping them uncover the secrets of Vaastu.

The Vaastu Shastra Department provides theoretical and practical training in determining auspicious times for various Vaastu-related events, including Devpratishta Muhurta, and explains the procedures for Panchang Shuddhi and Lagna Shuddhi. It also imparts knowledge on Ayurveda, surgery, and astrology, including the study of Nakshatras and Rashis. Following Vedic rituals and Karma Kanda procedures, the department teaches and provides practical training in Shilanyas, Vaastu Shanti, and other rituals. Additionally, it guides students on the construction of medical facilities, including Ayurvedic pharmacies, and advises on the auspicious

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times and dates for these constructions. Through these efforts, the Vaastu Shastra Department educates students on Vaastu Shastra principles, trains them in its practices, and promotes its social relevance. By evaluating and comparing traditional and modern approaches, the department establishes the uniqueness of India's knowledge tradition.

The Vaastu Shastra Department strives to impart the treasure trove of traditional Vaastu Shastra knowledge to students, following both ancient and modern approaches. To achieve this, the department organizes formal and informal lectures from time to time. The department examines the perspective of Vaastu Shastra during the Vedic and Puranic periods and provides practical training relevant to contemporary society.

The Vaastu Shastra Department of the University is committed to preserving and promoting the traditional practices of Vaastu Shastra. To achieve this, the department undertakes various initiatives.

The Vaastu Shastra Department is one of the rarest departments in Sanskrit universities across India. This department has been functioning under Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University for many years.

The department conducts the following programs:

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	<p>i. Shastri Course</p> <p>ii. Acharya Course</p> <p>iii. Vishishtacharya (M.Phil) till the 2020-2021 session</p> <p>iv. Vidyavaridhi (Ph.D)</p> <p>v. Six-month Vaastu Shastra Certificate Course</p> <p>vi. One-year Vaastu Shastra Diploma Course</p> <p>vii. University Grants Commission's Innovative Program, which includes:</p> <p>(a) P.G. Diploma</p> <p>(b) Innovative Lecture Series</p> <p>viii. Two-year Advanced Diploma in Vaastu Shastra</p> <p>ix. "Vaastu Shastra Vimarsha" - a research journal that is published annually by the department, which is UGC-CARE listed, peer-reviewed, and indexed.</p> <p>x. "Naisargik Panchanga" - a unique Panchanga based on Ketaki Ganita, published by the department in collaboration with Naisargik Shodh Sansthan in 2021. The department currently provides free editing and</p>
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calculation services for this Panchanga.

xi. The Vaastu Shastra Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA), New Delhi, on December 16, 2022. This collaboration aims to promote ancient and modern architecture through joint workshops and seminars.

xii. The Vaastu Shastra Department signed an international MOU with the Maharshi University on December 27, 2023.

xiii. Seminars - The department organizes national and international seminars independently and in collaboration with other institutions.

xiv. Workshops - The department conducts annual workshops on various Vaastu-related topics.

xv. Lecture Series - The department organizes lecture series to preserve the tradition, such as the Prof. Shukdev Chaturvedi Memorial Lecture Series, which covers various Vaastu-related topics.

xvi. The faculty members of the Vaastu Shastra Department are also involved in individual research projects and initiatives.

5. Challenges Ahead and Required Resources: -

i. Authentic Vaastu Education and Training: The Vaastu Shastra Department

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	<p>of the University provides a deep understanding of the traditional and cultural aspects of Vaastu Shastra, as mentioned in ancient texts and scriptures, which benefits the students.</p> <p>ii. Students gain insight and guidance in Vaastu Shastra.</p> <p>iii. Students engage in research projects related to Vaastu Shastra.</p> <p>iv. Students enrich their knowledge of the cultural and philosophical aspects of Vaastu Shastra.</p> <p>v. Practical application of the subject matter.</p> <p>vi. Students are prepared for careers in architecture, interior design, consulting, real estate, and more.</p> <p>vii. Environmental-friendly practices are promoted through Vaastu knowledge.</p> <p>viii. Our students excel in various competitive exams (TGT, PGT, Professor, Assistant Professor, Dharmaguru, etc.), classical competitions, and industrial fields due to their expertise in traditional practices.</p> <p>ix. Students become capable of understanding and creating designs for homes, villages, cities, metropolises, capitals, highways, temples, bathing</p>
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ghats, gardens, and more.

x. Students gain expertise in various crafts, including terracotta, woodwork, metalwork (iron, copper, gold, and gemstone), and more.

xi. Students become proficient in creating architectural plans and drawings for buildings and homes.

xii. Students develop skills in painting and drawing.

xiii. Preservation of Indian knowledge traditions and Indian culture.

xiv. Preservation of the Indian Panchanga system.

6. Challenges Ahead and Required Resources -

Problems- It is natural that various challenges are faced during the inception and implementation of any initiative. The Vaastu Shastra Department also encountered challenges during the teaching and implementation of Vaastu Shastra. One of the challenges is that the Shastri and Acharya courses in Vaastu Shastra are taught only in Sanskrit. Students come from various schools, colleges, and universities, and for them, understanding Vaastu Shastra through Sanskrit medium is a challenge at first glance.

Solutions:

To address the aforementioned challenge, the University provides Sanskrit

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language training to students at the Shastri level, ensuring their smooth progress in Vaastu Vidya. Additionally, informal Sanskrit language training camps are organized, enabling students to become proficient in Sanskrit.

Problems:

Throughout India, there was no institution or university that focused exclusively on Vaastu Shastra. Therefore, when the department was first established, there was a lack of ideal working models and implementation strategies to follow. This was a significant challenge.

Another challenge was that the institution had limited students, mainly due to a lack of awareness and promotion.

Solution:

The departmental teachers of the University, who have extensive knowledge of Vaastu Vidya and Vedic tradition, conducted in-depth studies, collected necessary resources, and established the Vaastu Shastra Department.

Innovative programs, referred to as "Innovative Programmes", have been incorporated into the curriculum. As a result, students are drawn to the department in large numbers.

Problems:- In the modern context, integrating "Vaastu Shastra" with "Vaastu Kala" (Indian Architecture) is a significant challenge. This is because there is a vast difference of opinion among traditional and modern

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Vaastu Shastra experts. Traditional experts hold a different view, while modern experts have a different perspective.

Solution:

To address this challenge, the department has initiated various innovative programs, lecture series, seminars, research journals, and the Naisargik Panchanga. The department has also signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with modern institutions to integrate traditional and modern Vaastu Vidya. This leads to a harmonization of thoughts and coordination.

Challenges:

1. Lack of a Vaastu Shastra laboratory, drawing display room, and Vaastu museum.
2. Insufficient classroom space for faculty members and students in the Vaastu Shastra Department.
3. Limited availability of modern equipment and infrastructure for Vaastu Shastra.

Solution:

In this regard, the University is continuously making efforts to address these challenges.

Department of Veda - Istiyaaga Ceremony

Inauguration of the Department of Veda's Istiyaaga Ceremony Venue

The Vedas are the foundation of India's knowledge tradition, a fact well-

known to all. With this in mind, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University has been running the Veda Department for many years, with the objective of preserving and promoting the rich knowledge tradition, interpreting ancient knowledge in the context of modern problems, and ensuring the continued relevance and importance of this tradition.

The main focus of this department is the performance of Yajna-Yaga and other rituals. On February 28, 2024, a ceremonial groundbreaking ceremony for the Veda Department's Istiyaaga Ceremony Venue was held in the university premises. The ceremony was performed in the traditional Vedic manner by the university's Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Murali Manohar Pathak, along with the senior faculty members of the Pourohitya Department, led by Prof. Ramraj Upadhyaya, and other teachers of the Veda and Pourohitya Department.

Inauguration of the Veda Department's Istiyaaga Ceremony Venue -

On 23rd April 2024, corresponding to Chaitra Shukla Purnima of Vikram Samvat 2081, and coinciding with the auspicious occasion of Hanuman Jayanti, the Veda Department's Istiyaaga Ceremony Venue was inaugurated by the esteemed Vice-Chancellor of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University, Prof. Murali Manohar Pathak.

Present on the occasion were the University's Registrar, Shri Santosh Kumar Shrivastava; Senior Professor and Head of the Vaastu Department, Prof. Devi Prasad Tripathi; Head of the Veda Department, Prof. Devendra Prasad Mishra; Veda Department's teachers, including Prof. Gopal Prasad Sharma and Prof. Ramanuj Upadhyaya; Vidya Vaachaspati Prof. Sundar Narayan Jha; Prof. Hanuman Mishra; Ahitagni Dr. Onkar Yashwant Selukar; Head of

the Pourohitya Department, Prof. Vrindavan Das; Controller of Examinations; Head of the Jyotish Department, Prof. Vinod Kumar Sharma; and other faculty members and students.

Integration of ancient wisdom with modern context I

The purpose of human life is fulfilled only by achieving the four Purusharthas (Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha). Among these, Dharma is the primary means of achieving the others. The phrase "Dharmena hinapashubhih samana" (those without Dharma are equal to animals) emphasizes the importance of following the path of Dharma.

The question arises, what is Dharma? The answer lies in the Vedas, as stated in the phrase "Vedo akhilo dharmamulam" (the Vedas are the root of all Dharma). The Vedas provide guidance on Dharma, and it is essential to follow the Vedic path.

The seers of the Vedas have presented Vedic knowledge in two forms: through the words of the Samhitas, Brahmanas, and Shrauta Sutras, and through the performance of Vedic rituals and Karma Kanda. However, in most Sanskrit universities in India, the tradition of studying the Vedas focuses mainly on the word meaning, neglecting the Karma Kanda aspect.

The phrase "Veda hi yajnaratham abhipravrittah" (the Vedas are primarily concerned with Yajna) and an examination of Vedic literature reveal that approximately 90% of the Vedas deal with Shrauta Karma Kanda. This means that the seers have taught Vedic science primarily through the Karma Kanda.

Unfortunately, due to the complexity of Yajna procedures and the

difficulty of adhering to them throughout life, people tend to focus on the Vedanta part of the Vedas, neglecting the initial part. This has led to a prevalent misconception that liberation can only be achieved through the path of knowledge (Jnana Marga), as stated in the phrase "Rite jnanan na mukti" (there is no liberation without knowledge).

However, there is a widespread misconception that the path of Yajna and the path of Jnana have different results. The seers have addressed this question, asking: "Anyadevaahur vidyaya anyaaaha uravidyaya" (some say knowledge is one thing, and others say it is another). We have heard that the wise ones have explained this, but we do not understand.

According to the seers, those who follow only the path of knowledge are plunged into the darkest ignorance. As stated in the Ishavasya Upanishad:

The primary purpose of human life is to achieve the four Purusharthas (Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha), with Dharma being the most important. The Vedas are the root of all Dharma, and following the Vedic path is essential.

The Vedas present Vedic knowledge in two forms: through the words of the Samhitas, Brahmanas, and Shrauta Sutras, and through the performance of Vedic rituals and Karma Kanda. However, in most Sanskrit universities in India, the tradition of studying the Vedas focuses mainly on the word meaning, neglecting the Karma Kanda aspect.

The phrase "Vidyam cavidyam cayastadvedobhayam saha" (one who knows both knowledge and ignorance) from the Ishavasya Upanishad

emphasizes the importance of both Jnana (knowledge) and Karma (action) in achieving liberation.

The Istiyāga is the primary Yajna among all Shrauta Karmas. Therefore, the performance of this Yajna is essential. The Āhita-agni (one who maintains the sacred fire) must perform the Agnihotra and Istiyāga daily.

Unfortunately, in modern times, the practical study of Shrauta Karma Kanda has disappeared. Therefore, the importance of studying Istiyāga cannot be overstated.

The Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University, under the guidance of its Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Murali Manohar Pathak, has taken a pioneering step in establishing an Istiyāga Shaala (Istiyāga Hall) to promote the practical study of Shrauta Karma Kanda.

This initiative makes our university the first of its kind in India, where practical Vedic studies are being conducted. As the saying goes, "Jñānam bhārah kriyām vinā" (knowledge is a burden without action). Knowledge is meaningful only when put into practice.

Therefore, our university's Veda Department stands out as a pioneering institution in promoting practical Vedic studies, and its efforts will undoubtedly bear fruit in the years to come.

The following are the daily rituals performed at the Istiyaaga Vihara:-

1. Daily Agnihotra Homam: The Agnihotra homam is performed every

morning and evening.

2. Pournami Istiyaaga: A special Istiyaaga ritual is performed on every full moon day (Pournami).

3. Amavasya Rituals: On new moon days (Amavasya), the ritual of Shakhachchedanam (cutting of branches) is performed, and the Godohana Vidhi (ritual of milking cows) is also performed for the preparation of curd.

4. Darsha Istiyaaga: The Darsha Istiyaaga ritual is performed on every new moon day (Krishna Pratipat).

5. Agrayaana Istiyaaga: Every six months, during the spring and autumn seasons, the Agrayaana Istiyaaga ritual is performed on the full moon day (Pournami).

6. Special Rituals for Students: To impart practical knowledge of Vikriti Istis (modified Istis) to students, special rituals like Mitra Vinda Isti and Agneya Isti are performed from time to time.

7. Smarta Isti: During every fortnight (Shukla Paksha and Krishna Paksha), a Smarta Isti ritual is performed in the Avasthya Agni (domestic fire) through Darsha Pournamasa Sthali Paka Prayoga.

Unique Features and Success of the Tradition: –

1. It is well-known that the Department of Vedas at Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University currently teaches and studies the Shukla Yajurveda. The Madhyandina Shakha of the Shukla Yajurveda Samhita, the Shatapatha Brahmana, and the Katyayana Shrauta Sutra all primarily describe the Darsha and Purnamasa Yagas. These texts are included in the

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	<p>curriculum of the Vedas Department. Although the curriculum covers topics from Darsha Purnamasa to Agnichayana Yaga, the Istiyaaga is considered fundamental among all Yagas. Therefore, the university administration has initiated this project to familiarize students with the practical aspects of the Darsha Purnamasa Yaga.</p> <p>2. When we study any text or subject, it is essential to understand its practical aspects. The utility of the studied subject depends entirely on its practical application. Therefore, our students will become proficient in their subject by applying the knowledge they have acquired through practical experience. This project aims to provide students with hands-on experience in Vedic rituals and Yajnas.</p> <p>3. Yajnas are the practical manifestation of Vedic knowledge - It is widely acknowledged that the Vedas are apaurusheya (not created by humans) and deal with abstract and intangible subjects. As stated in the Vedas, "Those who know the Vedas understand that which cannot be perceived directly or inferred through reasoning." The Yajnas make the abstract knowledge of the Vedas tangible and accessible. Since humans prefer direct experience, Yajnas provide a practical means of understanding Vedic knowledge.</p> <p>4. Everything originates from Yajna - In Vedic society, Yajnas were considered essential for the fulfillment of all desires. Even Prajapati, the creator, performed Yajnas to create the universe. This is mentioned in various Vedic texts and emphasized in the Bhagavad Gita, where Lord Krishna says, "Prajapati created humans along with Yajnas, and said, 'By performing Yajnas, you shall prosper and fulfill your desires.'" Following the example of the gods, humans also perform Yajnas to fulfill their desires. The</p>
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Istiyaaga is one such Yajna, and Katyayana Shrauta Sutra prescribes the Agneya Isti Yaga for the fulfillment of all desires (Katyayana Shrauta Sutra 4/5/15). Therefore, the Istiyaaga is essential for the fulfillment of all desires and is highly beneficial to society.

Identification of challenges faced during the implementation of the best practices and guidance on necessary resources:

Problems-

1. Lack of practical knowledge of Vedic rituals: In today's society, people are more focused on theoretical knowledge of the Vedas rather than practical application. This lack of practical knowledge is a significant challenge.
2. Shortage of Agnihotri priests: To perform Yajnas, Agnihotri priests are required. However, with the changing times, it has become challenging to find individuals willing to take up this responsibility. The Shrauta tradition dictates that Agnihotri priests should be initiated into the tradition at a young age. However, nowadays, young people are more focused on material pursuits and are less inclined to take up this responsibility.
3. Difficulty in maintaining cows: For the performance of Agnihotra Yajna, cow's milk, ghee, and other products are essential. However, maintaining cows is a significant challenge, especially in urban areas like Delhi.
4. Shortage of Ritvik priests: To perform Yajnas, Ritvik priests with expertise in Yajna procedures are required. However, finding such priests is a significant challenge.

Solutions to the Challenges:

1. To address the challenge of finding qualified teachers, it is essential to

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	<p>have a knowledgeable person well-versed in Shrauta Yajna procedures reside near the Yajnishala. This will ensure that the daily rituals and Yajna procedures are performed correctly and at the right time.</p> <p>2. Ideally, it would be best to have a goshala (cow shelter) and make arrangements for cow care. Alternatively, arrangements should be made to obtain cow's milk and other necessary items as required for the Yajna.</p> <p>3. The university's Vedas department should incorporate a practical approach to learning Shrauta Yajna procedures. This can be achieved by setting up a Shrauta Yajna laboratory where students can observe and participate in Yajna procedures.</p> <p>4. To promote research in Shrauta Yajna, the university should encourage Ph.D. scholars to conduct research on the scientific principles underlying Shrauta Yajna procedures. This will help to reveal the scientific aspects of Vedic knowledge and promote a better understanding of Shrauta Yajna. It is essential to establish Shrauta Yajna laboratories in all Sanskrit universities, particularly those that offer courses in Vedic studies.</p>
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