

Astrology for a LIVING

With people closely following the vagaries of their destiny, astrology has never had it so good, says **Smitha Joseph**

Well-known professor of astrology CS Rao says “astrology is both art and science”. Many traditional Indian scholars even describe it as an ‘exact science’ which uses mathematical calculations laid down in the Vedas to make predictions. In the Indian tradition, a person’s destiny can be forecast based on his or her asterism or group of stars.

Both in the Eastern and Western traditions, astrology has been regarded as a science that studies planetary alignments and how they affect us. The iconic Swiss psychiatrist and anthropologist, Carl Gustav Jung, once said, “We are born at a given moment, in a given place and, like vintage years of wine, we have the qualities of the year and of the season of which we are born. Astrology does not lay claim to anything more.”

Today, as universities increasingly accept astrology as a science, it has gained popularity at the professional level. Many universities offer

graduate and doctoral programmes while various online courses are also available.

Typically, an astrologer prepares birth-charts, makes predictions, and often offers spiritual solutions to temporal problems. Thus to begin with, a person needs to be well-versed in Sanskrit. Astrologer Sandeep Garg says that the original Sanskrit text of the Vedas should be studied for a better understanding of this science rather than English or Hindi translations of it. A thorough knowledge of the Shastras would also help in making accurate predictions. Accuracy is of the essence in astrology.

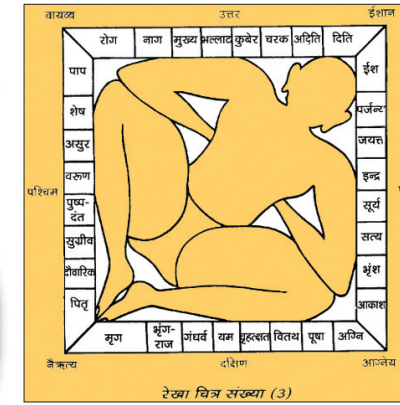
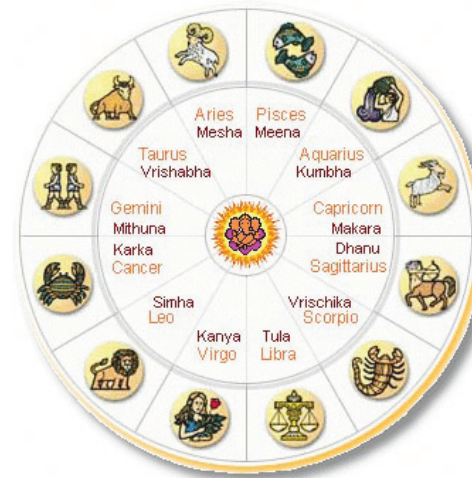
To become a professional astrologer, you would need a basic degree called ‘Jyotish Alankar’. After graduating, a practitioner can set up an office or work from home. Today, even softwares which can help you draw up astrological charts are available. Thus some computer proficiency would be useful.

Beginning a career as an astrologer and establishing oneself

call it science, because there are many applicable principles, while it can be deemed an art because it depends on a person’s skill of interpreting a given law. Many astrologers have exhausted themselves giving interpretations and they may not be true all the time.

How promising is astrology as a career?

If a person is sincere and loves this art, astrology can prove to be quite promising. One needs to study the universal principles of



Where to Study

- Shree Vatsa Jyotish Vidyalaya, Nagpur
- Potti Sriramulu Telugu University, Hyderabad
- Benaras Hindu University, Varanasi
- Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, New Delhi
- Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, New Delhi
- Maharshi College of Vedic Astrology, Rajasthan

as a recognised and learned one could be a tad difficult. But hard work, research, and determination will see you through. An astrologer’s reputation generally spreads by word of mouth. As an established astrologer, or what is called a ‘celebrity astrologer’, you can earn up to Rs 1-2 lakh per day. But there is a belief that if you were to commercialise your art, you could lose the ‘gift of insight’ and fail to make proper predictions!

With many in the West now keenly following astrology, many Indian astrologers have set up lucrative online consultancies. Besides astrology, some mastery in related fields like gem therapy, Vaastu shastra and numerology can also help. Faith is central to astrology and the followers of this science are legion.

What is the fee structure?

Normal university fee structures apply to astrology courses also.

Would you recommend this as a career option?

It depends on a person’s orientation. It is not a regular profession like that of a doctor or an engineer. Thus I would recommend it to a person who is ready to work hard and who is ready to sincerely devote time to his craft.

astrology as laid down in the Vedas and have good interpretation skills to utilise them.

Are astrology courses available in mainstream universities and colleges?

Presently, a battle is on to ascertain whether astrology is actually a science or not. Thus it may not be often taught as an accredited university study course. But still come courses are available and some astrology universities have also developed over time. Many people

Astrologer Sandeep Garg spoke to *India First*. Excerpts:

Will you recommend astrology as a career?

I think it is a flourishing career today. Astrology has been in demand since time immemorial. People feel that



astrology has answers to many of their problems. People consult astrologers to seek solutions for various problems and to achieve success. Today, even in the West astrology has become a popular science.

What are the basic requirements to set up practice?

A computer and a few astrological softwares to help you prepare horoscopes or birth-charts — this is the basic requirement to set up professional practice. But the most important of all is a deep knowledge of the Vedas and the Shastras, an analytical mind, and sincere dedication.

How does one establish oneself?

The start is a little difficult. When I set out, I had only two clients. Then later when my predictions came true, my fame spread by word of mouth. Now I have clients not only in India but also in countries like Canada and Brazil. So the beginning may be tough but as time passes and people recognise your gift, your fame will spread.

How much can a person earn?

There is no limit. Some people charge a nominal fee of Rs 100 for their readings. Then there are some astrologers who are like celebrities and are sought after by VVIPs. They earn up to Rs 1 lakh a day. Then there are very learned people who do not charge anything at all! It is actually difficult to say how much a person can earn. It depends on your knowledge and accuracy of predictions.

Any advice ?

My first and most important advice is that students should study the Shastras and the Vedas thoroughly. Half-baked knowledge is dangerous. They should know that people put a lot of trust in astrologers. So deep textual knowledge alongside proficiency in Sanskrit is essential. The Vedas are written in Sanskrit and to understand their actual meaning, the original Sanskrit text should be analysed. The student should also be sincere and hard working.

Professor CS Rao, renowned astrologer and honorary faculty member of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, New Delhi, explains the wonders of astrology.



Would you call astrology a science?

Astrology is both an art and science. One can