

SRIKRISHNA COLLEGE

(Affiliated to the University of Kalyani)
Reaccredited at “B+” Level by NAAC (3rd Cycle)
Bagula, Nadia, West Bengal – 741502, India

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

EVENT REPORT

Documentary Film Screening Series

“The Kabir Project – I”

Exploring the Mystical Journeys of Bhakti, Sufi & Baul Poetry and Music in the Rural Folk Tradition

Submitted to the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) for the Academic Audit, Session 2025–26

1. Event at a Glance

Title of the Programme	Documentary Film Screening: “The Kabir Project – I”
Theme	Exploring the Mystical Journeys of Bhakti, Sufi & Baul Poetry and Music in the Rural Folk Tradition
Nature	Series of three documentary film screenings
Organised by	Department of Political Science, Srikrishna College
Dates	11 February 2026 (Wednesday), 12 February 2026 (Thursday) and 18 February 2026 (Wednesday)
Time	12:00 P.M. onwards
Venue	Room No. 42 (Smart Classroom), Srikrishna College, Bagula, Nadia
Mode	Offline (in person)
Films Screened	Three documentaries of The Kabir Project, directed by Shabnam Virmani
Open to	All students and interested participants
Total Attendance (3 sessions)	50
Programme Coordinator	TAPASH BISWAS

2. Background and Rationale

2.1 Kabir and the Syncretic Devotional Tradition

Kabir, the fifteenth-century weaver-poet of north India, is one of the most widely sung voices of the Bhakti tradition. His verses questioned caste hierarchy, empty ritual and the walls between Hindu and Muslim, and they have survived for six centuries largely through oral traditions of village singers rather than through written texts. His poetry shares a spirit with kindred devotional traditions, such as the Sufi poetry of north India and Pakistan and the Baul songs of Bengal, which together form an important part of India’s syncretic cultural heritage.

2.2 The Kabir Project

The Kabir Project was initiated in 2002 by filmmaker Shabnam Virmani at the Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology, Bengaluru. In its first phase (2002–2009), the project travelled through rural Malwa and Rajasthan, Indian cities and Pakistan, exploring how Kabir’s poetry connects with questions of cultural identity, secularism, nationalism and religion. This work produced four feature-length documentaries: *Had Anhad*, *Koi Sunta Hai*, *Chalo Hamara Des* and *Kabira Khada Bazaar Mein*. *Kabira Khada Bazaar Mein* received the Special Jury Award at the National Film Awards in 2011. The Department screened three of these films as the first part of its screening series.

2.3 Relevance to Political Science

The films raise questions that lie at the heart of the discipline: secularism and religious pluralism, communal identity and nationalism, caste and social equality, and the relationship between individual conscience, organised religion and social authority. Watching these ideas at work in the lives of ordinary people helps students connect classroom concepts with lived social and political reality. Documentary screening also offers an engaging, participative mode of learning that goes beyond the lecture.

3. Objectives

- To introduce students to the Bhakti, Sufi and Baul traditions as living folk practices that shape India’s pluralist culture.
- To help students reflect on secularism, communal harmony and religious identity through the poetry of Kabir.
- To encourage critical thinking about caste, ritual, organised religion and social authority.
- To show how the arts and oral traditions carry social and political ideas across generations.
- To use documentary film as a tool for participative, interdisciplinary learning.

4. Screening Schedule and Films

Session	Date	Film	About the Film
I	11.02.2026 (Wednesday)	<i>Had Anhad</i> (Bounded–Boundless): Journeys with Ram and Kabir	Explores Kabir’s poetry in relation to the divides between Hindu and Muslim, and between India and Pakistan, shaped by religion and nationalism.
II	12.02.2026 (Thursday)	<i>Kabira Khada Bazar Mein</i> : Journeys with Sacred and Secular Kabir	Contrasts the worship of Kabir by the Kabir Panth sect with the secular reading of his poetry by the social activist group Eklavya, through the life of Dalit folk singer Prahlad Tipanya of Malwa.
III	18.02.2026 (Wednesday)	<i>Chalo Hamara Desh</i> : Journeys with Kabir and Friends	Follows the friendship between Malwa folk singer Prahlad Tipanya and North American scholar Linda Hess, in search of the “des” (country) that Kabir sings of.

Film titles are given as in the notice. The Kabir Project spells the third title “*Chalo Hamara Des*”.

5. Proceedings

Each session began at 12:00 P.M. in Room No. 42. The film was introduced by Kamalesh Poddar who placed it in the context of the theme. The film was then screened

Key Points from the Discussions

- **Session I – Had Anhad:**
- **Session II – Kabira Khada Bazar Mein:**
- **Session III – Chalo Hamara Desh:**
- 6. Participation

The screenings were open to all students and interested participants. Across the three sessions, the total attendance was 50 , and the number of unique participants was 20 . Students attended from semester

Outcomes

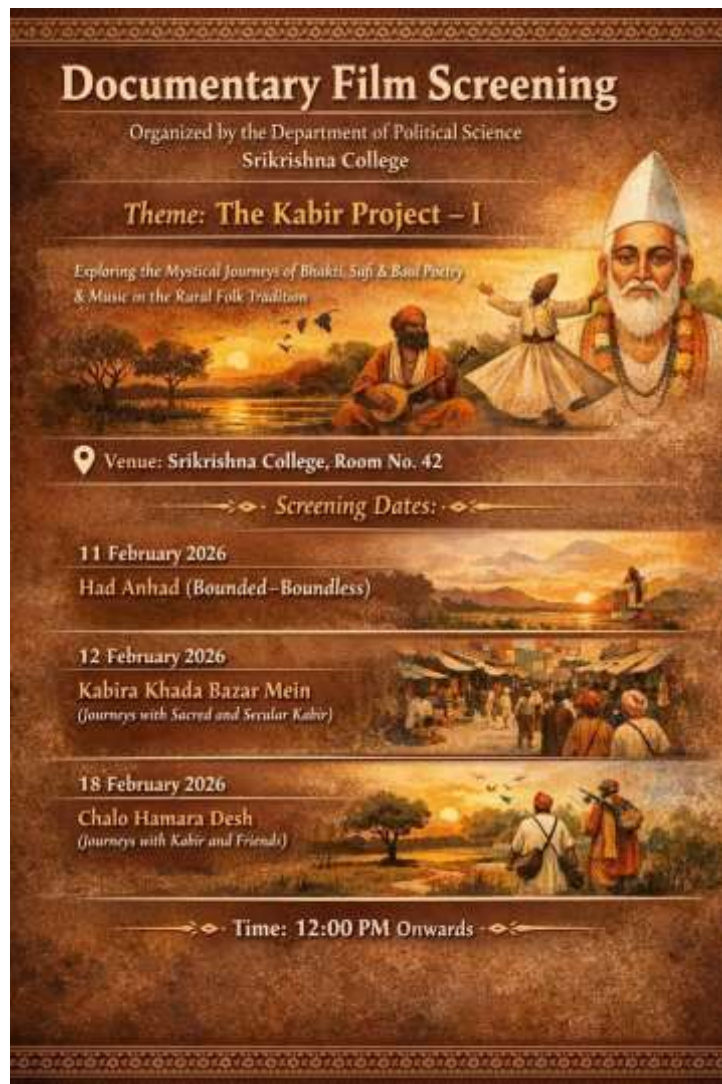
- Students were introduced to Kabir and the Bhakti, Sufi and Baul traditions as living practices rather than only as chapters of history.
- The films opened discussion on secularism, communal harmony, caste and the relationship between religion and politics, linking directly with the Political Science curriculum.
- The series brought together literature, music, religion and politics, encouraging an interdisciplinary outlook.
- Documentary screening provided a participative alternative to classroom lectures.
- **Participant feedback:** *[Summarise feedback or student reflections, or delete this point if not collected]*

8. Relevance to Institutional Quality Parameters

Quality Area	Relevance of the Programme
Teaching-Learning (NAAC Criterion II)	Participative and experiential learning through audio-visual media.
Curricular Aspects (NAAC Criterion I)	Integration of cross-cutting issues such as human values and social equality with the curriculum.
Institutional Values (NAAC Criterion VII)	Promotion of an inclusive environment and of tolerance and harmony towards cultural and communal diversity.

Note: The IQAC may map these items to the specific metric numbers of the accreditation framework applicable to the College.

9. Annexure I: Event Notice and Announcement



Notice of the Documentary Film Screening Series, 11, 12 and 18 February 2026.

Text of the Announcement Circulated to Students

The Department is pleased to announce a special screening of documentary films under the theme:

Theme: The Kabir Project – I

The Kabir Project comprises a series of journeys inspired by Bhakti, Sufi, and Baul poetry and songs, reflecting how these traditions continue to flow through rural folk culture and lived spiritual practices.

Venue: Srikrishna College, Room No. 42

Dates: 11th, 12th & 18th February, 2026

Time: 12:00 PM onwards

Screening Schedule — 11th February: Had Anhad (Bounded–Boundless); 12th February: Kabira Khada Bazar Mein (Journeys with Sacred and Secular Kabir); 18th February: Chalo Hamara Desh (Journeys with Kabir and Friends)

All students and interested participants are cordially invited to attend and engage with this enriching exploration of India's syncretic devotional tradition.