

International Seminar
on
Making New India
Insights from Bhagavad - Gita

13th - 15th December, 2018

REPORT



KURUKSHETRA UNIVERSITY, KURUKSHETRA

(Established by the State Legislature Act XII of 1956)

('A+' Grade, NAAC Accredited)

**Report
of International Seminar on**

**MAKING NEW INDIA:
INSIGHTS FROM BHAGAVAD GITA**

(13-15 December,2018)

Learned scholars from all over the world once again assembled on the pious land of Bhagavad Gita: Kurukshetra from 13-15 December, 2018 to celebrate International Gita Mahotsva and to share views on the topic "*Making New India: Insights from Bhagavad Gita*" in the third International Conference organized by Kurukshetra University. Gita's timeless wisdom makes it similar to the '*Kshira Sagar*' (Ocean of Milk) of Indian Mythology whose churning brings divine results. The more we delve into the mystery of Bhagavadgita, sooner we reach the ultimate goal of life-Moksha (Eternal Bliss). The divine scripture Gita was emerged out of the mouth of Lord Krishna on Eleventh day of the month of *Margashirsha*. Since then it is lighting the path of all human beings and has become one of the most popular religious book in the world. Mesmerized by the enigma of Bhagavadgita, people from faraway places come

to Kurukshetra and find solace in the holy city having many pilgrimage tourist spots. Department of Tourism, Sanskrit, Philosophy, Commerce & Management joined hands to organize this event and feel honoured to invite great scholars of the world giving message of spirituality, wisdom, truth and enlightenment. No plans can be fruitful and no development can be sustainable if there is no measure of spirituality or philosophy in it. The concept of making new India lacks foresightedness if postulated without vision and vision cannot be all-pervading without spirituality.

The following themes emerged from the deliberations during various technical sessions conducted by the Departments of Tourism & Hotel Management; Philosophy; Sanskrit, Commerce and Management of Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

New India and the philosophy of Gita

(a) **Unity:-** Gita, the quintessence of Vedas and Upanishads spreads the message of unity of the world. It is the key to understand SatChit Anand. Gita gives the message of surrender to supreme God and shed away the barriers of caste, color etc. it makes us realize that love for humanity must supercede all

feelings. According to the perception of ancient Indian sages, the whole earth is a single family-*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*.

(b) Eternal Prosperity:- Gita teaches that eternal prosperity does not come from worldly possessions. It is measured by our state of inner peace, happiness, joy, self-satisfaction and fulfillment.

(c) Non-violence:- By inspiring Arjuna for war against Kauravas, Lord Krishna never meant to teach love for war. On the contrary, he believes in Ahimsa (non-violence) which is counted among the five basic principles of Indian Ethics and philosophy. Lord Krishna was an ambassador of peace.

(d) Undivided Global Family:- Many scholars have voiced that Gita teaches to overcome differences based on caste, colour, religion etc. and speaks of one united world i.e. world is an undivided global family in which larger interest is to be taken care of in contrast to selfishness. Social problems like suicide, rape, abortion, female feticide etc. are symptoms of unhappy society. But the right understanding of universal brotherhood can curb evils.

(e) The Art of Living:-Gita gives us the eternal wisdom of how to lead a good life through desireless action (*Karmayoga*). The practical aspect of Karmayoga

is to maintain discipline in every walk of life i.e. taking controlled diet, modulated recreation, regulated actions and managed sleeping and waking up.

Making new India is a concept which demands a work-culture where egos are kept aside and work is done in the interest of humanity. The above points of philosophy of Gita lead a man to the path of enlightenment, to the path of spirituality and to the path of wisdom.

Spiritual Quest for New India: Perspective of Bhagavadgita

(a) **Psychotherapeutic Measures:** - Some are of the view that Lord Krishna was the most effective psychotherapist who could treat Arjuna to come out of his dilemma in a very short span of time. Modern day psychologists are recommending reading and implementing Gita's message to the patients of anxiety and depression. In fact a journey towards self or spiritualism is the only path which brings peace in the moment of emotional crisis. Controlling anxiety is not possible by any external measure or treatment. The message of Gita articulated with such a great scholarship has the capability to change the perception, to show the truth. The emphasis on desireless action reduces

expectation induced anxiety and knowledge of soul and God brings self upliftment.

(b) Spiritual Discernment:- Man is often confused when it comes to choosing right or wrong or doing good or bad. In contradictory situations of life he is unable to perform desired actions. Erroneous beliefs create an inertia of mind which he is unable to break. Gita brings discernment of eternal and temporal realities. When man becomes wise, he is able to apply his knowledge of spirituality at his workplace also. He can foresee the results with his clear mind and take right decisions. The ancient wisdom of Gita is relevant for New India because we need knowledge of doing things at right time and at a right place.

(c) Non-materialism:- The Bhagavad Gita is a message addressed to each and every human individual to help him solve the vexing problem of overcoming the present and progressing towards a bright future in the form of non-materialistic approach. Hoarding and over-exploitation of resources are the key words of today's life. But Gita can curb these tendencies by managing men, money and materials in the best possible way.

(d) Holistic Life:- The concept of righteousness in Gita leads us to the holistic life where purity of mind, action and speech becomes primary. Today world is an ocean of sorrows and man is lost in lust and greed. Holy Gita teaches us the ways and means to live life without suffering in this material world. It teaches us to become a great person from an ordinary one having qualities of happiness to see others progress, sympathy with under-privileged and ignorance towards other's faults.

New India must be build with the concept of Universal Welfare, not with my (individual's) welfare.

The External Wisdom of Bhagavadgita:

(a) Modern Education System and Gita:- Modern education system is objective and goal oriented which leads to egoism and Mercantilism, whereas Gita focuses on *Para* and *Apara Vidya* (higher and lower knowledge) that leads to spiritualism and Moksha, along with worldly knowledge. Secondly, our education system should be value-based, though in current times, we don't find any values,sincerity and work culture among teachers, doctors, engineers, managers, officers and so on. Value-based education as propounded by Gita

inculcates Nationalism, humanity and wisdom. Hence, the essence of Gita must be made understood at student level in all over the world.

(b) Law and Order & Gita: Gita was sung in the background of battle of Mahabharata when Arjuna in the midst of battle field became despondent due to the emotional crisis after seeing his loved ones on the other side. Lord Krishna taught him "Dharma" - the sense of duty and changed his mind. Law and order in a society or a country can survive only if each and every person knows his duty and ready to fulfill his duty. Directionless youth in our country talks about his rights but has not been made conscious of his duty. Moreover, the elders are not role-models for the younger generation for high esteem and morality. It is a need of the hour to adopt the message of Gita to maintain law and order in the country and reject unlawful deeds by inculcating strong moral values.

(c) Character Building and Gita:-Arjuna, the great Warrior has been considered as an icon of the youth by some scholars. A comparative study of Arjuna with Hamlet, a prince of Denmark (a Shakespearean character) is made to show the dilemma of life. But Arjuna through the message of Lord Krishna recovers from his agony overcome by wisdom. This kind of inner strength,

listening to one's own self, handling tough situations and crises is required in our youth to build a strong nation : New India.

Spiritual Tourism and Bhagwad Gita

Since long, religion and spirituality have been observed as one of the major motivations for travel around the world. In ancient times great scholars and philosophers have travelled a lot to experience and analyse varied types of religious beliefs and practices in different regions of the world. In modern times also people travel for religious purposes and to seek spirituality. Spiritual tourism may involve travelling for the purpose of worship, celebrations and charity. People follow the path of spiritual tourism for attaining salvation and peace of mind.

(a) Gita JayantiSamaroh:- Shrimad Bhagvad Gita, written over more than five thousand years ago, is a unique spiritual contribution of ancient India to the mankind. The land of Kurukshetra is the birth place of world's greatest spiritual text in the form of Bhagvad Gita. *Gita JayantiSamaroh*, which is organized every year in Kurukshetra attracts large number of tourists from all over the country and scholars from all over the world who also contribute to the

international seminar on Gita. Visiting the land of Gita provides the opportunity for self-revitalization by following the path as enshrined in Gita. The research contributions and views of learned scholars and academicians in the seminar inferred that Gita JayantiSamaroh generates thoughtfulness among the people and results in promoting the feeling of spirituality in a better way.

(b) Mental Health Tourism:-The research studies in the seminar have covered a variety of topics directly or indirectly related to mental status, problems associated to mind and their solution from the wisdom of Bhagwad Gita. For instance, topics on mental health tourism, non-materialism and peace of mind, stress management, Gita as a tool to cognitive behavioral therapy, issues concerning domestic tourism, status and potential of Kurukshetra as a destination of spiritual tourism etc. throw light on the significance of the message of Gita in dealing the problems of mind and providing spiritual contentment to the human beings.

(c) Kurukshetra as an emerging tourist destination:-Various studies have highlighted the importance and scope of Kurukshetra as a spiritual tourism destination citing that the message of Bhagavad Gita not only provides spiritual development but also visiting the places related to Mahabharata and Lord

Krishna leads to spiritual contentment. Spirituality is concerned with mental status and it acts like a means to rejuvenate the soul. Spiritual tourism fulfils a traveler's quest to find solace of mind and heart. It has increasingly become a significant segment of Indian tourism market. India is famous for its spiritual practices and the origin of Bhagavad Gita provides a great heritage value to Kurukshetra. Also known as '*Place of Enlightenment*' and '*Dharmakshetra*', it has tremendous popularity due to its spiritual and mythological importance. It is an emerging tourist destination and a part of Krishna Circuit. A spiritual visit to Kurukshetra and attaining the wisdom of Gita holds the potential to redefine a traveler and make him an imperturbable being.

Indian Management and the Philosophy of Bhagavad Gita

(a) Interactive Relationship:- Management involves engaging in interactive relationship with different human beings while performing one's own duty efficiently. Generally, people differ in thinking, attitude, knowledge and skills etc. and getting things done from all of them in an organization effectively and efficiently is a complex task. Although the modern management techniques have come from the western world but the Indian management ideas are basically drawn from the Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana, Mahabharata and the

Bhagavad Gita. Bhagavad Gita is undoubtedly one of the most important scriptures of ancient Indian wisdom. The knowledge and wisdom engulfed in the verses of Bhagavad Gita stresses upon the power of invocation, rejuvenation and transformation in context of managing business organizations.

(b) Universal Application:-Indian management ideas have been very much influenced by the philosophy of Bhagwad Gita. The values and ethics enshrined in Bhagwad Gita provides guidance for proper management of mind which further facilitates an effective interactive relationship with others thereby resulting in efficient management of the organization. The principles propounded in Bhagavad Gita have universal application and managers have a lot to learn from these principles for the development and strengthening to managerial capabilities. The understanding of external environment has a direct correlation with the self-knowledge and the philosophy of BhagwadGita enlightens us on all managerial skills leading to a harmonious set of circumstances as against conflicts, pressures, confusion, lack of motivation and low efficiency. The wisdom advocated in Bhagwad Gita stresses upon the maintenance of internal consistency, mental peace and a composed mindset even in adverse situations and to avoid greed, envy, ego, suspicion and anger.

(c) **Mission and vision:**-The research contributions in the seminar have highlighted many insights on mission, vision, excellence in work, leadership, motivation, decision making, goal achievement, commitment to work and planning etc. from Bhagwad Gita. The studies touch upon the finer concept and underlying principles for harmonious affluence achieved through higher sciences of *yagna* thought and system put in action in its true spirits. They examine the importance of leadership and role of permeation in the corporate excellence and its integration with the organizational excellence. They also discuss the concept, relevance and importance of understanding of cosmic network, mutual give and take, mutual dependencies, mutual growth and *vasudhaivakutumbakam*, where every single entity is actively contributing in its unique way towards achieving the noble, cosmic and organizational objectives based on the mother nature. When various acts lead to the violation of cosmic laws, end results are also callous and non-virtuous. And the opposite hold good when the organizations, individuals or any other unit of society moves in line with the principles of karma yoga enshrined in the *Bhagavad Gita*, the prosperity and *Kalyaan* for all that happens. It is a win-win situation of all.

Practicing the instructions of Bhagavad Gita may play a pivotal role in dealing with human behavior under diverse circumstances. It results in a conducive and congenial state of mind which is helpful in efficient decision making. Indian management practices as guided by the philosophy of Bhagwad Gita add the flavour of purity, stability, calmness, cohesiveness and ethics to the western management principles and techniques.

Ethics in Commerce and Bhagavad Gita

The word "Ethics" is basically derived from a Greek work "ethikos" which means "relating to one's character" and it is interchangeably used with word "morality". In the era of commercialization, human beings are commonly carried away by greed, dishonesty, venality, lust and ill-will. People get easily attracted by the materialistic world and they make continuous efforts to become more and richer at the cost of their own peace of mind. The insatiable desires of materialistic life and the overuse of material resources bring about mental stress, frustration, confusion and sorrow.

(a) Business ethics:- Business organizations aim at the maximization of profits and hence all their commercial activities are based on such practices

wherein there is possibility of ignoring the moral and ethical values. At times the prevalence of unethical practices may bring bad reputation and failure to an organization. In the fast growing modern business environment, the cut-throat competition easily induces a person to follow the unethical practices which ultimately brings sadness and sufferings. Under such circumstances, the instructions of Bhagavad Gita guide a person to follow the ethical values and act in a harmonious and well-coordinated way thereby bringing calmness and peace of mind. By following the teachings of Bhagavad Gita and leading a spiritual life, one may easily feel the ultimate happiness and joy in life. Despite having problems and struggles in one's life, the person gets motivation and internal strength to fight the battles of life with a composed mind.

(b) Dedication:-Various scholars have contributed their work in the seminar on the importance and propagation of ethical values from Bhagavad Gita. The people desire for material prosperity and fame in their life but material things are temporary and they do not provide eternal happiness. Eternal prosperity does not come from worldly possessions. It comes in the form of inner peace, self-satisfaction, fulfillment and everlasting joy. Bhagavad Gita guides us on how to attain eternal prosperity and how to maintain it forever, through deep

connection to the divine and the art of work. It teaches us that fulfilling our responsibilities selflessly and righteously with love and compassion for the benefit of all humanity makes us self-satisfied and self-fulfilled. Lord Krishna explains that with dutiful application, commitment, devotion and steadfastness, we free ourselves from all bondages, illusion, pain and sufferings. This is the key to eternal happiness, prosperity and peace. The teachings of Gita are globally applicable in every field and every situation of life from family to universe and from personal to business issues.

Bhagavad Gita constitutes an eternal fountain of wisdom, knowledge and bliss. It examines the causes for human failures and imparts instructions on ways to annihilate them. It offers guidance on the intellectual and emotional development of man and helps to improve the overall personality of a human being. Bhagavad Gita motivates a man to discover his own reasons of failure and strive to eliminate them. The teachings of Bhagavad Gita are universal and are pertinent not just to Indians but to everyone across the world. The background of Bhagavad Gita in a battleground has been interpreted as a representation of the ethical and moral struggles of a human being's life.

Apart from these points, Bhagavadgita has also been studied in the light of problems of translation of sacred texts which indirectly points out that we must be able to study our religious texts in the language they are written i.e. Sanskrit, because translations are influenced by folk culture. Needless to say that insights from Gita if practically adopted can certainly make a strong, sustainable nation- A New India.

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कुरुक्षेत्र विश्वविद्यालय का ड्रोन दृश्य



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