

July 2019

₹ 8.00



Purity

Vol. 38 No.10 Pages 12



On Bhagavad Gita
(Page 7)

Monthly Journal of the Brahma Kumaris, Mount Abu, Rajasthan, India

International Day of Yoga 2019 at Red Fort Delhi

"Yoga arrests erosion of values"

— Hon'ble Venkaiah Naidu
Vice President of India



NGO OF UNITED NATIONS IN CONSULTATIVE STATUS WITH ECOSOC & UNICEF. OVER 4500 ASSOCIATE CENTRES IN 137 COUNTRIES.

IDY 2019 at Red Fort Delhi



Hon'ble Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India being presented 'Tulsi' plant on arrival and frame of 'Shiva' before departure.



Rabbi E.I. Malekar



Dr. A.K. Merchant



Firoz Bakht Ahmed



Dr. Khadar Vali

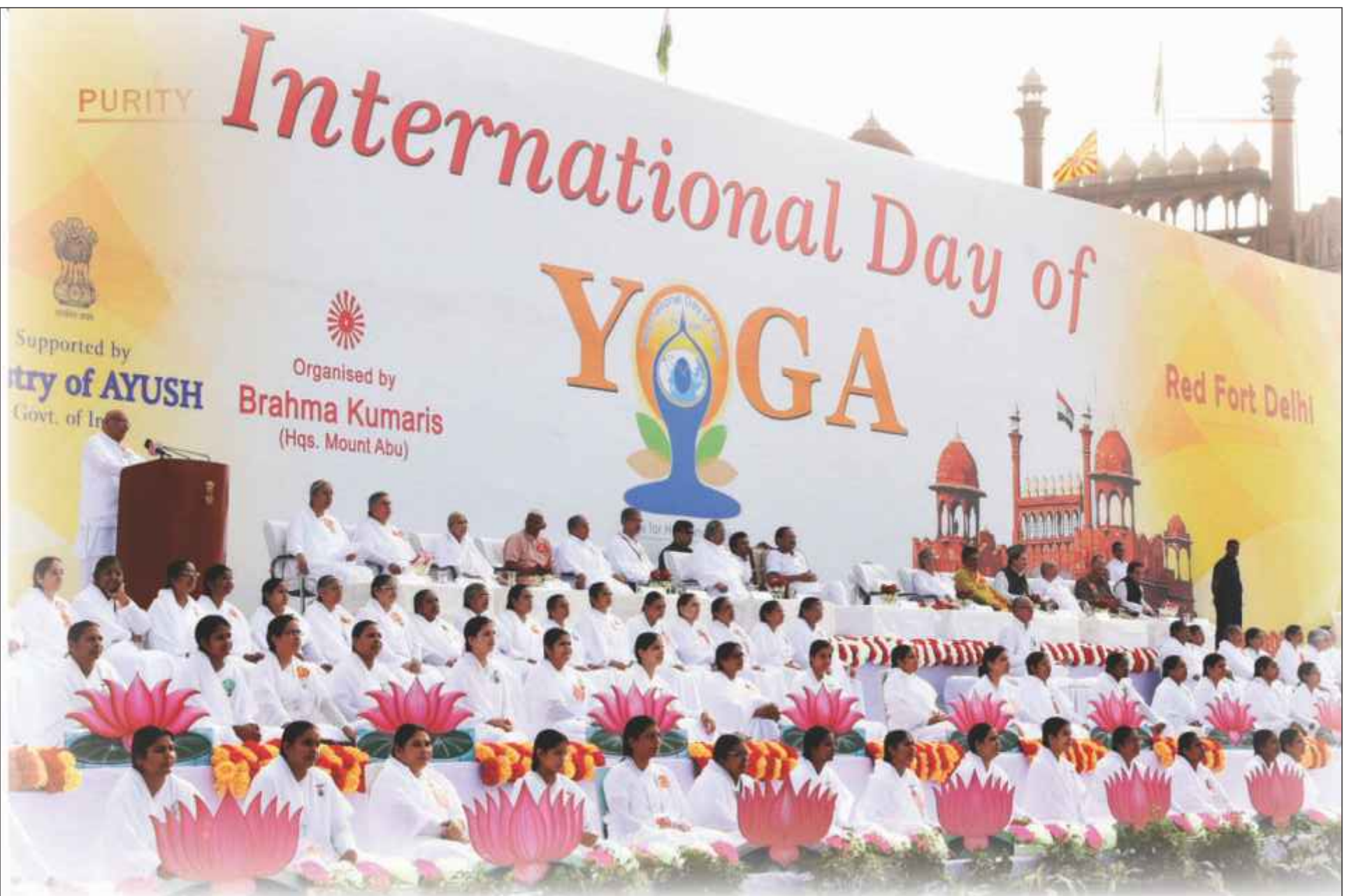


Pt. Shivananda Mishra



Live coverage by TV Channels.





Yoga — A holistic discipline for complete wellbeing

The Brahma Kumaris organised a grand event at the historic Red Fort grounds in Delhi to mark the International Day of Yoga on June 21. The highlight of the event was a speech by the Vice President of India, Hon. M. Venkaiah Naidu. Addressing a gathering of more than 30,000 people, Mr Naidu said that yoga was not just a form of physical exercise to be practised for a few minutes every day. It was “a holistic discipline that leads to not only a healthy body, but also a strong mind and an empowered soul, all of which are essential to experience complete well-being”, he said.

“Yoga also means union – of spirit and matter, thought and action, man and nature. A true yogi develops harmonious relationships with the self, others and the environment that form the foundation of healthy societies and a healthy planet,” he said.

He added that yoga was a way of life that entailed simplicity, honesty, compassion, and respect for all creatures and nature. It was a lifestyle based on non-violence at every level – in thoughts, feelings, words and actions.

“Share and care is the core of India’s philosophy, and we must all practise that,” he added.

The Vice President recommended that yoga be made a part of school curricula to promote physical health and mental well-being.

To attain and maintain health, he urged all to pay attention to their food habits and shun junk food. “Instant food leads to constant disease. Our forefathers gave us good food habits that were based on the season, reason, and region. We must return to that.”

He lauded the Brahma Kumaris for propagating yoga and organising events to mark yoga day across the globe. “Yoga arrests erosion of values. If we practise yoga, our future is safe and bright,” he said.

Earlier, speaking on ‘Yoga as per Bhagavad Gita’, BK Brij Mohan, Additional Secretary General of Brahma Kumaris, said that in the Gita, which is the original book of yoga, God says that when knowledge of yoga disappears from this world, He once again teaches yoga.

God also says in the Gita that He teaches yoga to establish a divine community. He says that lust, anger and greed are gates to hell. When society is in the grip of these vices, God comes and creates a divine community by teaching yoga.

Yoga, he stressed, is a spiritual practice through which God turns impure souls into pure souls. “Today, in India, which was once a divine land where women were honoured, women are unsafe due to the vice of lust. To remedy this, God has said, conquer lust, for which He has taught yoga. Yoga is a connection between soul and God, which fills the soul with power, with which vices can be conquered. It is time we connect our minds with God and again make India a divine land.”

Delivering his greetings on the occasion, Dr A K Merchant, National Trustee of Bahai Community of India, prayed for the light of unity to fill the world. He urged everyone to practise Rajyoga meditation taught by the Brahma Kumaris. “By doing so we can enlighten ourselves and keep the mind and body healthy”, he said.

Firoz Bakht Ahmed, Chancellor, Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad, said the Brahma Kumaris “join lacerated hearts and broken homes”. He said yoga brought people together and its message could be summed up in four letters, A, B, C and D: Amity is better than animosity; brotherhood is better than barbarism; conciliation is better than confrontation; and dialogue is better than deadlock.

Rabbi Ezekiel Isaac Malekar, Secretary of Judah Hyam Synagogue, New Delhi, said that yoga was above all religions, and its only religion was humanity. “Practice of yoga should be reflected in our actions and conduct,” he said.

On the occasion, the first copy of the book, *Siridhanyalu (Millets) Food that heals*, by Dr Khadar Vali and Shri Venkateshwar, was presented to Vice President Naidu.

Pandit Shivananda Mishra, head priest of Gauri Shankar temple in Chandni Chowk, Delhi recited some shlokas during the event, while BK Pushpa, Director of a Brahma Kumaris centre in New Delhi, conducted guided meditation. BK Shukla, Vice Chairperson of the Security Services Wing of the Brahma Kumaris, thanked all for their cooperation and participation in the event. ■

(Purity Report)

THE SPEAKING TREE

Published in
Times of India
The Speaking Tree
20 June 2019

BK Brij Mohan
Chief Spokesperson
Brahma Kumaris
Mount Abu

Yoga for Your Body, Mind and Soul

The image that most readily comes to mind at the mention of the word 'yoga' is that of people stretching or holding their body in various postures.

Yoga is a good way to improve one's flexibility and strength, and just about everyone can do it. Yoga is much more than physical postures or breathing techniques; it is a holistic discipline that leads to not only a healthy body, but also a strong mind and an empowered soul.

In the Bhagavad Gita, in a treatise on yoga, Krishna tells Arjuna, "Perform action being steadfast in yoga, abandoning attachment and balanced in success and failure. Evenness of mind is called yoga."

Later on, Krishna says: "Endowed with wisdom – evenness of mind – one casts off in this life, both good and evil deeds; therefore, devote thyself to yoga; yoga is skill in action."

If the mind and soul are stabilised, the choices one makes, and the actions one



performs, will naturally be beneficial for the body.

The root of most physical ailments is deficiencies in the form of vices such as lust, anger, gluttony and laziness. Medical scientists acknowledge that more than 80 per cent of all diseases are psychosomatic, that is, they are caused or aggravated by a mental condition.

When vices exert great influence, the person's actions and lifestyle will tend to lead to diseases. Yoga, when practised in its entirety, strengthens the very foundations of health by making the soul the master of the body and ruler of the senses.

The Gita says, "The senses are superior (to the body); superior to the senses is the mind; superior to the mind is

the intellect; and superior even to the intellect is the Self."

If the Self, the soul, is weak, physical exercise may keep the body fit, but one might not experience peace of mind or happy relationships, and diseases will slowly take root inside the body.

Yoga, including exercise, meditation and a yogic lifestyle, brings balance and harmony between soul, mind and body. This is characterised by moderation in one's life.

"Yoga becomes the destroyer of pain for him who is always moderate in eating and recreation, who is moderate in exertion in actions, who is moderate in sleep and wakefulness," says the Gita.

A sound body by itself does

not produce a sound mind. The mind and the intellect are faculties of the soul, and just as nutritious food and regular exercise are needed to keep the body going strong, they require a diet of positive thoughts and exercise in the form of meditation to remain healthy.

The information we consume and the thoughts we create are food for the mind. As the quality of this food, so will be the state of the mind.

One cannot stop ageing and decay of the body, and one will gradually experience diminishing physical abilities, but an enlightened mind can lend great value even to a weak body.

The greatness one can achieve through yoga is best described by the Gita, where Krishna says: "The yogi is thought to be superior to the ascetics and even superior to men of knowledge; he is also superior to men of action; therefore, be thou a yogi, O Arjuna!" ■

The Writing on the Wall

The world in which we live is fast moving towards a catastrophe, which could be brought about by any of the several phenomena that are gaining destructive proportions.

When we look around us, everywhere we see the forces of destruction growing by the day – destruction of human society by moral degradation and violence, destruction of nature by man's greed and the consequent backlash in the form of natural calamities, and the growing stockpile of weapons of mass destruction.

All these negative phenomena are getting aggravated, with no sign of a reversal in the trend. We only have a look back at the last eighty years to see how these trends have changed the world and where we are headed.

The moral degradation that we brought upon ourselves by casting off our values and moral restraints has brought humans to the level of animals. In their hedonistic pursuit of pleasures of the senses, humans have thrown to the winds the norms of decency and morality. The noble human spirit has become so enslaved to the senses that humans are today prepared to descend to any extent for momentary sensual

gratification.

This slavery has weakened the soul and made it hostage to vices. As a result human relationships have been vitiated and the basic unit of our social structure – the family – is threatened with destruction.

The other manifestation of our moral degradation has been an explosion of crime and violence. Violence has become so commonplace in our society that most humans have become inured to it. Some eighty years ago, a single violent crime used to cause considerable concern in society. Today murders occur so frequently that nobody even reads about them in newspapers unless someone wealthy or famous is involved. As for cases of theft and fraud of various varieties, they are too numerous to be mentioned in newspapers.

In some societies, crime and violence have gone out of control and anything can happen to anyone at any time. International terrorism has only aggravated the situation and created an atmosphere of suspicion, insecurity and fear.

But an even greater threat looms over us all – that of annihilation of humanity by weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

Countries adopted legal and security measures to prevent such weapons falling into the "wrong hands". But the irony is that the countries expected to spearhead this nonproliferation effort themselves have the biggest stockpiles of nuclear weapons in the world – so many weapons that they can destroy the world many times over.

It is naive for people to expect that countries that had for decades spent huge sums of money and their best scientific brains to develop these deadly weapons would give them up for the sake of peace. After all these weapons are one of the main pillars of their power and prestige.

The threat of a full-scale nuclear war looms over us today. The arms control treaties which curbed the unrestrained development of strategic weapons, have been scrapped and the nuclear powers are developing even more refined lethal weapons.

Warnings from scientists are clear about the threat posed to human survival on this planet by climate change. Man's industrial activity and resource-intensive lifestyle have damaged the

environment irreversibly. In spite of centuries of exploitation, nature has sustained us along with millions of other creatures. But now our recklessness is recoiling on us.

Scientists have predicted that a rise in the average global temperature of over 3 degrees Celsius is inevitable despite ongoing efforts to combat global warming. According to computer-modelled predictions, a 3 degrees C rise in temperature could put 400 million more people at risk of hunger, cause cereal crop yields to fall by 200 to 400 million tons and destroy half the world's nature reserves.

The writing is clear on the wall but man is refusing to see it. And that may well be for good. For how long can we continue to live in a world turning into hell because of the lack of human values? Prolonging our existence in this world the way it is would only stretch our misery further.

In comparison, a big destruction offers the promise of an end to our woes and the hope of a fresh start, where man, wiser from his mistakes, would live a life fitting his noble status in the cosmic scheme of things. ■

(Purity Bureau)



London, UK : BK Sister Jayanti speaking at 5th International Day of Yoga Celebrations. To her L is Yoga Guru Dr. H.R.Nagendra from India.



Mongolia : Brahma Kumari Sisters conducting meditation at City University, Ulaanbaatar. H.E. M.P.Singh, Indian Ambassador is seen in the middle.

Moscow, Russia : BK Sister Sudha conducting Rajyoga Meditation at the famous Park Zaryadey. The IDY program was organised jointly with Indian Business Alliance and other associations.



Shanghai, China : BK Sister Sapna conducting meditation as part of Common Yoga Protocol at IDY celebrations organised by the authorities. Yoga Community Teachers Award was also presented to her by the President of World Cultural Congress.



Washington DC, USA : BK Sister Jenna with HE H.V.Shringla, Indian Ambassador and BK participants in IDY celebrations held at iconic Washington Monument.



Singapore : Sister Koh Jun conducting Yoga meditation at Brahma Kumaris Peace Hall to celebrate IDY.



United Nations, New York : At the IDY Committee at UN Yoga Event, conversation on 'Yoga : Return to the Heart of the Source' in progress between BK Sister Gayatri Naraine, Denise Scotto and Bruce Cryer.





Let it not be one-day wonder

Editorial—

The 5th International Day of Yoga was widely celebrated in India and abroad last month. Indian embassies around the world especially took it forward with great enthusiasm. Several iconic venues like the Eiffel Tower, Washington Monument, Wall of Peace and Independence Square were chosen to mark the occasion.

It is heartening to see an overwhelming global response to India's most ancient tradition, and to see the common public and well known names in politics, movies, sports and other fields come together for a good cause in a grand way. But it must be understood that blocking one day in the yearly calendar for yoga is not our destination; it is only the beginning.

21st June is a special day but it is meant to work essentially as a memorial to spread awareness on the holistic benefits of yoga, and to encourage people to experience those benefits in their daily life. It is important that we pursue our aim further, and not let all this become a one-day wonder.

There is now a greater worldwide recognition of the fact that yoga is not just about mastering physical postures that keep us fit, and that it deals with much more profound aspects such as mastering our inner world, transforming our thoughts, and steering our lives to harmony and balance. A yogi is able to contribute to the world through his peaceful vibrations, and it all ultimately leads him to experience a unity between the spiritual, material and the natural worlds.

It is now being increasingly recognised that yoga is much more than hath yoga or doing physical exercises and it needs to be supported by a healthy, non-violent and sustainable lifestyle. Reiterating this, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while addressing the nation from Jharkhand on the International Day of Yoga-2019, said that yoga happens not only for the half an hour when we do asanas on the floor. "Yoga is discipline and surrender, and one must practice it for life... Yoga is above distinctions of age, colour, caste, region, financial status, nationality... Yoga belongs to everyone and everyone belongs to yoga."

He said that an exhausted mind and a tired body are incapable of realising aspirations, and so the government's attempt in the past years has been to establish yoga as a strong pillar of preventive healthcare. In continuation of that, the Indian Government adopted "Yoga for Heart" as the theme for the Yoga Day this year. The United Nations went a step ahead and chose "Yoga for Climate Change" as the theme, emphasising the crucial role of yoga in creating harmony between man and nature. All these developments suggest that a healthy environment and a healthy body are strongly linked to a healthy mind.

The Brahma Kumaris daily practise and promote Rajyoga, a form of ancient meditation that connects the soul to the Supreme Soul through a mental love-link, and eventually makes the soul the ruler of its subtle faculties of mind and intellect, and the physical body of five senses. A raja does not last for a day, he rules a lifetime. It implies that Rajyoga is very much a way of life – one that is a clear departure from patterns that enslave us to our senses.

In this light, let us not remain content with the achievements of Yoga Day. Both the citizens and the governments must take active measures to make yoga a regular part of our lives. Thereby, we must bring about a large-scale cultural shift in society by replacing the consumerist or bhogi lifestyle with yogi lifestyle, as it offers a fertile ground for values to grow.

A major role in this direction can be played by schools, colleges, government institutions and other establishments by dedicating time and space to inculcating yoga. Seeing this, even householders will be encouraged to join in.

The Gita states that yoga enables a person to do his karma well. A yogi develops the art of performing his tasks accurately and as per requirement. So the daily practice of yoga will increase the efficiency of the students and the productivity of the employees. Any time spent doing yoga will thus be well compensated for. ■

Gleanings from the press

Indian diet can provide a sustainable future

Traditional Indian food that is largely plant-based can show the world how a nutritious and sustainable diet can be provided to the world's projected population of 10 billion people by 2050 without environmental degradation, said global experts at EAT Stockholm Food Forum 2019. Food production has emerged as a major cause of land-use change, biodiversity loss, and natural water depletion and accounts for about a fourth of greenhouse gas emissions. (News Item)

Drinking coffee may help fight obesity: study

Drinking coffee may stimulate the body's own fat-fighting defences, which could be the key to tackling obesity and diabetes, says a study published in the journal Scientific Reports. The study is one of the first to be carried out in humans to find components which could have a direct effect on 'brown fat' functions, which plays a key role in how quickly we can burn calories as energy. (PTI London)



Surfing net may alter your brain functions: study

The Internet can alter specific brain regions and affect our attention capacity, memory processes and social interaction, a study has found. The research, published in the journal World Psychiatry, showed that the Internet can produce both acute and sustained alterations in specific areas of cognition.. (PTI Melbourne)

'Virtual biopsy' device can non-invasively detect skin tumours

Scientists have developed a 'virtual biopsy' device that can quickly and non-invasively determine whether a skin tumour is cancerous and needs to be removed surgically. Using sound vibrations and pulses of near-infrared light, the device can determine a skin lesion's depth and potential malignancy without using a scalpel, according to the researchers from Rutgers University in the U.S. The ability to analyse a skin tumour non-invasively could make biopsies much less risky and distressing to patients. (PTI London)

Meals taste better when you are seated: study

Food tastes better when you are seated, say scientists. Holding a standing posture for even a few minutes causes physical stress, muting taste buds. The research looked at how the vestibular sense, which is responsible for posture, interacts with the gustatory sense, which impacts taste. (PTI Washington)



We ingest thousands of microplastic bits

Humans eat and breathe in tens of thousands of microplastic particles every year, according to a new analysis that raised fresh questions over how plastic waste could directly impact our health. Microplastics – tiny plastic shards broken down from manmade products such as synthetic clothing, car tyres and contact lenses – are among the most ubiquitous materials on the planet. (Agence France-Presse)



Bhoola Bhai

And our friend Bhoola Bhai on the Temple Street says that non-resistance is a great power. Water is perfectly non-resistant. It can wear away a rock and sweep all before it. Non-resistance means surrendering the ego absolutely.

Turning Point

A Mistake is usually followed by guilt and low self-esteem. Instead of wasting time and energy feeling guilty, one needs to know the weakness behind the mistake. When one learns from the mistake, he is able to move on. It is important to forgive oneself and let go of the past only then can one make progress in life. Every incident has some lesson for our progress.

Was the war described in Bhagavad Gita a violent war or a non-violent war against vices?

Looking at all the vital changes that are occurring today – global warming, political unrest, economic imbalance and crumbling down of age-old values and institutions, it is anybody's guess that we are standing on the brink of a huge upheaval. When we look at the present world scenario we wonder what is the solution or way to end all our problems and suffering.

Who can salvage humanity at such a critical hour? The present state of the world is beyond the capacity of human beings to repair or improve. Only God can guide humanity from such an impasse to lasting peace and happiness. God is unique and above all. He is Supreme amongst all creation, therefore, He has the wisdom and power that can change the entire world and restore it to its original perfect state.

The Bhagavad Gita has been widely acclaimed as a text of profound spiritual wisdom and universal values. However, it is narrated in the form of a tale of two warring clans engaged in a bloody epic battle called Mahabharata in which Lord Krishna talks about establishment of a righteous society or *dharma*. God of Gita is shown as instigating a violent war. He exhorted a reluctant Arjuna to fight against the Kauravas and he himself gave directions about how to fight. All these references seem to give a divine sanction for violence and justify war.

Non-violence is considered as the supreme religion in the Hindu and many other religions. In ancient India people practically lived by the principle of 'Ahimsa Parmo Dharma' (Non-violence is Supreme Conduct). If there was no violence during the Golden Age then how did we come to this sad state today when violence has pervaded every level of human life?

One of the reasons why humans have created such a violent society is because they believe that violence is the right means to conquer wicked or evil forces. Such beliefs came in vogue when scriptures were documented in Dwapar Yuga wherein deities are shown using violent weapons to defeat the

evil demons.

Did a righteous religion as mentioned in the Gita get established through the massive scale of violence as depicted therein? Is the Mahabharata war described in the Bhagavad Gita a violent war or a non-violent war?

However, there are clear references in the Gita towards a subtle war. There are numerous verses pertaining to the subtle war against vices such as lust, anger, doubt, greed etc. The Gita tells us that God loves yogi souls who commit no violence, and one who is constantly peaceful and blissful. God establishes a righteous world not through violence but through complete non-violence. The battle of human beings here is not against any person who is considered evil but against evil vices such as lust, anger and greed. In the Gita God tells Arjuna that by means of this war, gates of heaven open and that if anyone dies fighting this war he will go to heaven and the wicked people will destroy themselves through the weapons and wars created by their own selves.

The Bhagavad Gita is considered as a profound treatise on yoga. It consists of 18 chapters. Each chapter is believed to be a highly specialized yoga revealing the path of attaining self-realization.

If we look at the essence of what God as represented by Lord Krishna is emphasizing to the warrior prince Arjuna is contained in a few verses such as:

*man-mana bhava mad-bhakto;
mad-yaji mam namaskuru; mam
evaisyasi yuktvaivam*

atmanam mat-parayanah
[Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, offer obeisance and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me.]

(Ch 18 | 65)

*sarva-dharman parityajya
mam ekam saranam vraja;
aham tvam sarva-papebhyo
moksayisyami ma sucah*

[Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reaction.]

(Ch 18 | 66)

The Bhagavad Gita was written in *Dwapar Yuga* by a *rishi*. It does

not give any clear idea about the name, form and abode of God or about the time and method of His incarnation, most people do not have any definite knowledge of how God incarnates Himself and hence, there is no sign of liberation or redemption from sin and suffering for humans.

How can humans connect to God when there is so much confusion about Him? Some say soul and Supreme Soul are same. Then others say that God is present even in animals. Another view is that He is living in all animate and inanimate things. There are many who even believe that they themselves are manifestation of God and chant Shivo hum. In this scenario how can one connect to God?

At the present time of 'Sangamyuga', confluence of end of Kaliyuga and beginning of Satyuga, God reveals His true identity through the human medium of Prajapita Brahma. God does not take birth like humans do but He incarnates in a human body and imparts the true knowledge of Yoga. Chapter 4 of Gita has references to this divine birth of God.

In perhaps the most famous passage in the *Bhagavad Gita*, God as represented by Shri Krishna is quoted as saying that He descends on Earth when unrighteousness reaches extreme proportions. God says that he comes to redeem all souls, destroy evil and re-

establish a righteous order. But when in the history of this world does God perform this task? The passage in the Gita contains the words *sambhavami yuge yuge*, which has led people to believe that God's descent takes place in each of the four yugas or Ages in the cycle of time. Is that the case?

The cycle of time begins with the Golden Age, when both human souls and the elements of nature are in their purest state. Humans at that time have divine virtues and are free of all vices. Humans call out to God in times of sorrow and when things deteriorate beyond human tolerance. God, the redeemer, rejuvenator and remover of sorrow then comes to restore peace and happiness in this world. God's descent, thus, is meant to remove human suffering and rejuvenate the world.

God comes to this world at the end of the Iron Age to re-establish completely non-violent world order of *Ahimsa Paramo Dharam*. He reminds them of their true, spiritual identity and their innate virtues. He also tells them about their relationship with Him and how they can regain their original, pure state by remembering Him. By this remembrance, souls fill themselves with power and virtues, gradually overcoming the influence of vices. ■

(Purity Features)

National Convention of Saints and Scholars on New Learning from Bhagavad Gita

Sunday 28 July 2019

10.00am to 1.30pm

Venue
Siri Fort Auditorium
New Delhi

Free Event



Organized by
Brahma Kumaris
(Hqs. Mount Abu)

For enquiries please contact:

Mobile - 9650692053, 8826770393

Email: godofgita@gmail.com

Register online at www.godofgita.com

Photos of IDY 2019 celebrations in the States



Shantivan, Abu : Brahma Kumari Sisters and Brothers celebrating IDY 2019 in Diamond Hall.



Chandigarh : Mr. Justice Anil Kshetarpal, Hon'ble Judge Punjab & Haryana High Court addressing the participants before start of Common Yoga Protocol.



Jaipur, Rajasthan : BK Sisters Sushma and Chanderkala leading IDY celebrations at Central Park jointly organised by Brahma Kumaris & Gurukul Yog Sansthan.



Chennai, Tamil Nadu : BK Sister Beena, Mr. P.Ponniah, IAS, Kancheepuram Dist. Collector, Chief Guest and others taking pledge at IDY celebrations.



Brahmapur, Odisha : Standing in silence after lighting candles to celebrate IDY are Ms. Sarojini Sahu, Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, BK Sisters Mala and Manju, Dr. Rajendra Kumar, Mr. S.S.Nayak, Mr. K.C.Patro, Dr N.Patro, Dr. P.C.Patro and others.



Dehradun, Uttarakhand : On stage for IDY celebrations are (R-L) BK Shalu, Dr. Manoj Sirivastava, BK Sister Manju, Yogacharya Vipin Joshi and Yogacharya Subodh Negi.



Borivali, Mumbai - On stage at IDY celebrations are L-R Mr. Abhinav Kashyap, Film Director, BK Shreya, Ms. Diana Edulji, Mr. P.V.Shetty and BK Sister Bindu.

Palakkad, Kerala : At IDY 2019 organised at Prassannalakshmi Auditorium are Rev. Father Joseph Chittilapalli, Swami Madhusree Janathapaswi, BK Sister Meena, Janani Dr. Remyaprabha Janathapaswi and others.



The Way to maintain Harmony in Relationships Q&A with Dadi Janki

How can I maintain good relationships with others?

To start with, avoid thinking that you cannot get along with someone because of their personality. Humility and the genuine feeling of wanting to learn from others are very effective in creating harmony. The more spirituality there is in your relationships, the easier it is to have good interactions, constantly.

An awareness of your own spiritual identity fills your character with beauty and spirituality. This becomes a basis for good moods, good feelings about yourself, and even for a good atmosphere and vibrations around you.

Self-respect is essential for good relationships. It is developed by cultivating a spiritual awareness of yourself and raising your thinking to the level where it can tune in to God. It is easy to remain in a state of self-respect when you spend a lot of time like this, up above, with God.

Self-respect is not developed by coming down, again and again, from your divine state of inner dignity, in reaction to negative forces, external or internal.

Be very careful about being affected or influenced by anything. If you are so affected repeatedly, it means that there is some weakness in you. It means that you are still looking for support by something external to the self.

This is not an aspect of self-respect. It is not true to your inherent dignity. The inherent dignity of each, based on self-sovereignty, is the true foundation of harmony in relationships.

How to harmonise personalities?

Harmonising our personalities is the greatest challenge we face. Three qualities which allow us to best rise to this challenge are love, mercy and forgiveness — first and foremost to our own self.

Inauguration of Amrit Sarovar Retreat Centre and Golden Jubilee celebrations of Brahma Kumaris services in Gulbarga, Karnataka.



Lighting candles during celebrations are Dadi Janki, Chief of Brahma Kumaris, BK Hansa, BK Vijaya, Sub-zone Incharge, BK Prem Singh, BK Basavaraj, Hubli Sub-zone, BK Lakshmi, Mysore Sub-zone, Mr. Rajsheshkar Patil, Karnataka Minister, Mr. Dattatrey Patil, MLA, and others.

Be merciful and forgive your own self... and with love, forget the things of the past and move forward. Then you will be able to have real feelings of mercy and love for others. This is the way to truly be of help to others.

True help does not mean empathizing with the suffering of others to such an extent that you lose your own happiness. Be careful of this. Our duty is to maintain a healthy inner state of being constantly, that no matter what the state of those around us, our influence is the stronger one, bringing them into happiness, too. ■

Spirituality – Key to Self-Respect and Transformation

BK Jayanti, Director, Brahma Kumaris, Europe & Middle East



At the heart of every human tradition lie three aspects: respect for the sacred, the divine; deep inner values and, thirdly, a guide or signpost for what human life is about and what we human beings should be doing in life. The present state of world affairs suggests that the voice of conscience has become numb, if not silenced. The conscience has stopped speaking to us and, even when it does sometimes, we don't heed its signal because of public opinion, society, culture and history. Instead, we say, "Let's just follow what others are doing."

What happens when the conscience awakens? As I begin to listen to that quiet voice within, I honour my unique

perspective. I then move away from narrow perspectives and my horizons widen. I begin to see humanity as one human family and respect planet Earth as our home. I look at the past and see what we have done and take steps not to get stuck in my habits. I look towards the future and see what I need to do now to create the future of my choice.

The choice isn't a difficult one. It's not even just a question of a better world. It's a question of survival. The seed of change sits within the human heart and mind. Compassion awakens within the alert conscience; we begin to treat each other with dignity and respect. But respect and dignity don't begin in my interaction with you; they begin deep down within the core of my inner being.

Spirituality means to understand the self as a spiritual being and acknowledge my values and my self-respect. Secondly, spirituality makes me aware of the presence of the Creator in my life. In meditation, I focus on the Divine using a direct connection free of intermediaries. This way I draw spiritual strength and power from the Divine, which I then use to transform myself and my behavior.

Societies worldwide are facing a huge crisis of self-respect and this is the root cause of the environmental crisis.

Respect for the self and others can only begin when I go inside and revisit my inner qualities and values. In this state of sharing, we benefit personally, because we are able to transform ourselves and live our lives according to our values.

There's a trajectory that works on the spiritual level and it manifests the material world also. Our awareness defines our attitude. Our attitude colours our vision. Our vision dictates our actions. Our actions shape our culture. Our culture creates our world. Seeing the human world family as my family and nature as my home, there's a relationship of caring and sharing. I no longer see woods and forests just as pounds and dollars for timber; I see their beauty and their vital role as the lungs of the earth.

The major part of our work, however, is consciousness-raising — seeking to change the awareness, vision and attitude of those in government, civil society and within our own organisation through dialogue, partnerships, national and international conferences and local initiatives. We aim at an understanding of how to empower people and flourish in response to the environmental crisis through a deeper understanding of their core values and inner strengths. ■

Overcoming Barriers to Good Feelings for one and all

Everyone is taught from childhood to be polite and nice to others. Such behaviour, we are told, is the mark of civilisation. It is also important because you get what you give, and if we want others to be nice to us, our behaviour towards them should be similar.

But if nice behaviour is superficial, as a mask over not-so-nice feelings, it will not win us any goodwill. For the law of karma operates even at the most subtle level of feelings — you get what you give.

So, first of all it is important to have good feelings for others. When the feelings are pure, good wishes and nice behaviour come naturally. We don't have to tell ourselves to be nice to someone or, at a more subtle level, suppress or dismiss negative thoughts that arise on seeing someone. Because if the feelings are pure, such negativity never arises.

We have pure feelings and love for a lot of people in our lives. We wish them well



We must make a distinction between the sin and the sinner. There is a popular adage which says: Hate the sin, not the sinner.

from the core of our heart and celebrate their successes. Even when they fail, we give them hope and encourage them to do better.

Why? Because we love them.

The reason we love them may be because they are among our family or friends, from whom we get a lot of love. But what about those outside the circle of our family and friends? Our feelings towards them keep changing according to how we perceive them.

It is not that anyone is inherently bad. It is all our perception. That is why we react differently when the same mistake is made by a loved one and by someone else. To one we show sympathy and understanding, and to the other we may show irritation, anger or even spite. We are quick to affix negative labels to others: selfish, lazy, stupid, egoistic etc. And whenever we see that person, or even think of him, the first thing that comes to mind, consciously or unconsciously, is the label that we have assigned him. Our thoughts, words and behaviour towards that person are decided by that label. Thus, we find ourselves unable to be nice to some people.

But we can be nice even to people who consistently do bad things. When we see them doing something bad, it is alright to judge their actions as bad. But we must make a distinction between the sin and the sinner. There is a popular adage which says: Hate the sin, not the sinner. But the mistake we make is that instead of being merciful and knowledgeable, we immediately judge the sinner by his sin and condemn him in our mind. We must not let the sin enter our heart and change our feelings towards the sinner. Instead, we should keep in mind that the sinner is succumbing to some inner weakness or character flaw and mercifully help him overcome that flaw. If we look at every person in this knowledgeable and merciful way not only will our feelings for all would remain pure but we would also be able to help weak souls, who are rejected by all, to overcome their weaknesses and transform their lives. ■

(Purity Bureau)

Traffic Jam of Thoughts

All of us must have got stuck in a traffic jam sometime or the other. How does it feel? When the traffic jam persists for some time, one starts worrying as to how long one will remain stuck. As one is helpless to do anything, one may even become irritated or tense. This is particularly so if one is on the way to an important appointment or to catch a flight or a train. On the whole, being caught in a traffic jam is an unpleasant experience, something no one would look forward to.

Now, what effect does a traffic jam of thoughts has on us? A traffic jam in the mind is always created by wasteful or negative thoughts. These are two of the five kinds of thoughts that we create, the other three being necessary thoughts, positive thoughts and elevated thoughts.

Wasteful and negative thoughts always come fast, and if not checked can grow into a storm that will send our mind into a tizzy. When we let the mind run loose, the wasteful thoughts that follow one after the other weave a web of illusion that produces feelings



Unlike the traffic jam on the road, the traffic jam of thoughts is created by ourselves by letting the mind run riot.

of distress, fear, anger, hatred or jealousy, which in turn lead to negative thoughts.

We can experience for ourselves how wasteful and negative thoughts can turn our peaceful state of mind into turmoil in a minute. In such a state of turmoil, we have little control over the thoughts that

flood the mind.

What can we do to avoid such a traffic jam of thoughts and get out of it?

First, we must know that unlike the traffic jam on the road, the traffic jam of thoughts is created by ourselves, by letting the mind run riot. To avoid creating this jam and getting stuck in it, we have to be able to realize when a jam is going to occur. The signals are always there as the wasteful or negative thoughts begin, peace of mind vanishes, and negative feelings begin to arise, making one feel uncomfortable. As soon as one feels so, one needs to apply the brake on one's thoughts using the intellect, which has awareness of what is happening and what needs to be done. But that may not be possible for everyone. If one has been carried away too much by one's thoughts, one may find oneself unable to control them. If that is the case, one needs to take a diversion to avoid a jam. Instead of trying unsuccessfully to check one's thoughts, one can turn the mind to another subject to get away from the negativity,

and one will feel better in no time.

To prevent such a situation from arising, we need to observe some traffic rules for the mind. First of all, our thoughts should follow the lanes of the *shrimat* given by God — that one should always remain conscious of one's identity as a soul and remember the Supreme Soul. He has also said that we must never see or think about others' faults. If at all we have to look at others, we should see their specialties and virtues. It also helps to heed the stop light of our conscience, which signals us to stop whenever we begin to think negative. Ignoring this sign can lead to a serious accident in the form of depression, aggression etc.

Another good practice is to take a minute or two off work and allow the mind to experience silence, several times during the day. This will help us remain calm and collected the whole day. Otherwise continuous work without break can tire the mind and leave one exhausted and irritable by the end of the day. ■

(Purity Bureau)



New Delhi : Mr. Jagat Prakash Nadda, Working President of Bhartiya Janta Party after a meeting with BK Sister Asha, BK Prakash Bhai and others.



Panipat, Gyan Mansarovar : Lighting candles at 'God's Power for Golden Age' program are BK Dr. Nirmla Didi, Mt. Abu, MM Swami Dharmdev, MM Swami Martandapuri, Dr. Prakash Mishra, BK Sarla Didi and BK Bharat Bhushan.



Vashi, Navi Mumbai : BK Sister Sheela speaking at 'Eid Milan' function organised by Greater Mumbai Police Commissioner Mr. Sanjay Barve. Also on stage is Hon'ble Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister of Maharashtra.



Mohali, Punjab : BK Sister Rama greeting Mr. Munish Tewari, Member of Parliament.



Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh : A group of Army Jawans being taken round the Spiritual Museum by BK Sister Taposhi at BK Global Light House, Sarnath.

Pune, Maharashtra : First two male winners (in front) of 11.5km 'Yogathon' run Kiran Matre and Henry Togum (from Kenya) organised by Brahma Kumaris from Jagadamba Bhawan, Pisoli area seen with BK Sister Sunanda and others.



Nagpur, Maharashtra : Inaugurating Media Conference are BK Rajni, BK Karuna Bhai, Chairperson Media Wing, Mr. Babanji Nakhle, HOD, Dhanwate College and others.



Raipur, Chattisgarh : Planting a sapling at Shanti Sarovar is Mr. M.K. Singh, Chief Conservator of Forests after inaugurating Environment Festival organised by Brahma Kumaris.



Bengaluru : The imposing Rajyoga Bhawan - Academy for Divine Wisdom located in Gottigere was inaugurated by Dadi Hirdaya Mohini, Addl. Chief of Brahma Kumaris from Mumbai by remote where Dadiji is convalescing.

Peace of Mind
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videocon 497 | dishtv 1087



Borivali (E), Mumbai : Inaugurating World Environment Day celebrations are Mrs. Mala Singh, Chairperson and MD, PEC Greening India, BK Sister Divyaprabha, Ms. Pratima Kannan, Film and TV Artist and Ms Meena Kaku, President Inner Wheel Club of Borivali.



Mauritius : Hon'ble Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius with BK Sister Vedanti from Kenya, BK Sisters Geeta and Gaitree and Brothers Andatta, Ricardo and Pradeep.



Gyan Sarovar, Mount Abu : A scene from cultural performance at National Media Conference organised by Media Wing of Rajyoga Education and Research Foundation.

Kathmandu, Nepal : Hon'ble Giriraj Mani Pokhrail, Minister of Education, Science and Technology being presented memento by BK Sister Kusum and BK Ramsingh.



Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram : Children performing Yoga exercises in Central Park to celebrate IDY 2019.



Mr. Wise



Mr. Wise?

Yes.

Can light and darkness exist at the same place?

No. Darkness is the absence of light in the same way as ignorance is the absence of wisdom.

Then how come the wise and enlightened ones are seen making prayers to God to lead them from darkness to light?

I cannot say.

And Mr. Wise?

Come on.

Can you call it day even if a place is brilliantly lit at night?

Certainly not. Artificial lights cannot convert night into day.

Then isn't it like living in "a fool's paradise" to believe that artificial pomp and show can give us happiness in the present Kaliyugi world or the Night of Brahma?

Lastly...

I am listening.

Night follows day and day follows night in cyclic order?

Yes, and the mighty Sun, the source of all physical light makes it happen.

Is that the way God Almighty, the source of all spiritual light, wisdom and Gita gyan that ushers in Satyuga or the Day of Brahma has been compared with the Sun in the preamble to Gita?

Perhaps you are right.

Tailpiece



So you want a day off.

Let's take a look at what you are asking for.

There are 365 days per year available for work.

There are 52 weeks per year in which you already have 2 days off per week, leaving 261 days available for work.

Since you spend 16 hours each day away from work, you have used up 170 days, leaving only 91 days available.

You spend 30 minutes each day on coffee break which counts for 23 days each year, leaving only 68 days available.

With a 1 hour lunch each day, you used up another 46 days, leaving only 22 days available for work.

You normally spend 2 days per year on sick leave.

This leave you only 20 days per year available for work.

We are off 5 holidays per year, so your available working time is down to 15 days.

We generously give 14 days vacation per year which leaves only 1 day available for work and I'll be darned if you are going to take that day off!