

International Gita Forum, 20 Singapore 09

An exploration into the perennial scripture "Srimad Bhagavad Gita"
from a modern perspective



24 October 2009 (Saturday)
PGP Hall (1st Floor), Near Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple),
Serangoon Road, Singapore

Programme Details

24 October 2009 (Saturday)

1:30 pm Registration

2:00 pm Welcome

Address by Guest of Honour, Mr Inderjit Singh, Deputy Government Whip and Member of Parliament for Ang Mo Kio GRC

2:20 pm Session 1

Speaker:
Prof Chandrasekhar Rath

Topic:
"From Man Human to Man Divine"

3:30 pm Session 2

Speaker:
Sri Ravi Kumar

Topic:
"Parallax between Science and Gita"

5:15 pm Session 3

Speaker:
Sri M Ramanujam

Topic:
"Spirit of Surrender"

6:25 pm Session 4

Speaker:
Swamini Vimalananda

Topic:
"Sure Mantras of Success (SMS) from the Bhagavad Gita"

Overview

The Gita is one of the philosophical foundations of Hinduism and has been the subject of commentaries by pioneering thinkers and saints of different schools like Advaita, Visishtadvaita, Dvaita and the like, both modern and ancient. It is also deeply appreciated by innumer-

able philosophers, thinkers, scientists and men of letters of all hues - both oriental and occidental. Gita's universal appeal and essentially spiritual message is evidenced by its support from great scientists and thinkers who are agnostic or even atheistic. It certainly transcends

conventional ritualistic religious practices, sublimating even mundane physical acts into the realm of the spiritual. The Bhagavad Gita epitomizes the mental conflicts and dilemmas of a man of action - the great warrior Prince Arjuna - and their resolutions with the aid of his Divine Teacher - Lord Krishna - in the midst of the battlefield of

Kurukshetra leading to affirmative action. Every modern professional faces similar moral quandaries and spiritual quagmires in his or her battle field of day to day living. The Gita offers an eternal message for practical living - one of philosophical sublimation and mental transcendence while fully in the midst of action.

Objective

The objective of this International Gita Forum (IGFS2009) is to take Gita to those who might not be religious in the conventional sense of the word, but who seek fundamental spiritual values and truths. The aim is to reinterpret the ideas of Gita in the context of current issues, moral and political dilemmas, technological isolation of man, progress of science into manipulation of the basic processes of life itself and economic predominance. The need for the spiritual illumination provided by the Gita is never as necessary as it is now, in the darkness of a world torn apart by cultural fragmentation, terror, rank materialism, nano technology, genetic manipulations and global competition. The relevance of Gita today is perhaps

more than that of the time of its very birth! Gita Forum attempts to translate the Universal and integrating message of the Gita to the language and ethos of the modern living by illustrious speakers well versed in the art of modern living and eternal values as applicable to today's dynamic and ephemeral society. Critical analysis and ruthless investigation into truth have been the very essence of Hindu thought from Upanishadic times. And we hope International Gita Forum (Singapore) 2009 will contribute its mite in this sacred search.



Session 1: “From Man Human to Man Divine” by **Prof Chandrasekhar Rath**

Synopsis:

Man is not enough inspite of all that he has been and has done. He is a transitional being in a long process of evolution. The appearance of man as a creature on planet earth is the cumulative result of myriad of factors and forces working towards it. But the evolution is not of matter but of consciousness. Man is the manifestation, the cover, and the divine is the core. The tendency is to be complacent with the illusion of a perfection, and the impression that he is the peak point beyond which there is nothing. At the same time there is a secret pining, a desire to excel himself and keep excelling. He seeks to grow from Darkness to Light, Untruth to Truth, from Death to Immortality. It is a mysterious seed of aspiration, grafted in him making him feel constantly ‘disturbed’. His soul keeps stirring like the life force in a seed ripping open the pod to emerge. The journey is indeed from the Divine to the Divine. He is the beginning, He is the middle and He is the end.

Speaker Profile:

Prof Rath is a veteran Indian man of letters, a writer, orator and scholar of national repute noted abroad with respect for his scholarship. Professionally, he is an academic belonging to the discipline of Literature both Indian viz. Hindi, Bangla and Oriya and European literatures through English. Besides he has wide range of studies in Indian philosophy, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita and also the unfolding theoretical sciences of today. He is further interested in painting (bracket, oil, pastel, pencil) and sculpting (wood, soft stone, granite and clay).

His other awards include Hutch Crossword Book Award for 2004 (also known as The Booker Award of India), National Sahitya Academy Award (National Academy Of Letters) for significant contribution to Literature, State Sahitya Academy Awards, etc. His translation of Acharya Shankara’s commentary on Bhagavad Gita and his anthologies of poetry are shortlisted for similar recognitions. His papers, “*The Yogic Experiences of Mahima Dharma*” and “*The Yoga of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu*” are parts of the 100 vol work by The Indian Council of Philosophical Research. His papers are also published by Institute of Orissan Culture. His talks include: (1) The parliament of Religions in the centenary celebration of Swami Vivekananda’s Chicago address (2) Foundation Day oration in Ramakrishna Institute of Culture, Kolkata etc. His innumerable other talks include topics such as *The Four Great Utterances of the Upanishads*, *From Man Human to Man Divine*, *The Concept of The Supramental*, *The Cultural Heritage of India as a Future Guidance* etc.

Session 2: “ Parallax between Science and Gita” by Sri Ravi Kumar



Synopsis:

Gita is scientific to the core. The very spirit of science is the freedom to seek, question, experiment and to accept only if and when one is satisfied. Science is the search for truth. Its tools are rationality, objectivity, experimentation, and the free exchange of reliable information. Gita too encourages and accepts this scientific spirit. Very few Holy scriptures, offer this intellectual freedom. It is this scientific spirit which has appealed to the scientists, poets, writers and intellectuals of the world and maintained its relevance in this yuga of science and knowledge based society. But there is a parallax between science and Gita. Parallax, is an apparent change in the position of an object when the person looking at the object changes position. Because of its integrated approach Gita has more than one solution for all the problems of all times and climes and has given Bhagvad Gita eternal life and relevance. In fact the parallax in science is Ego which is corrected in Bhagvad Gita.

Speaker Profile:

Ravi Kumar is an engineer by profession, who left it in 1975, to work full time for Sewa International, to serve the poor and needy Vanavasis. He was involved in many welfare projects for the tribal communities there. In 1982 he was transferred to Hong Kong. For the next 23 years he remained in Hong Kong, Bangkok and Sydney. Now, he is the Joint International Coordinator of Sewa International, one of the largest India-centric welfare organizations in the world, with over 90,000 welfare projects in India and many other countries, in the fields of education, medical help, self-employment and disaster management.

Ravi Kumar has conducted hundreds of camps and seminars on Yoga, Meditation, Indian games, Modern India's Achievements, Vedic Sciences, Bhagwad Gita, Vedas, Vedic Panchang, Ramayan, Mahabharat, Indian Philosophy for both Indians and non-Indians in many countries. Ravi Kumar has also conducted more than 200 workshops on Vedic Mathematics in many leading universities of the world like Berkley, Bradley, California, Chicago, Cleveland etc. He is the author three books (1) “Glimpses of Hindu Genius”, (2) “Ramayan Around The World – A Living Tradition”, and (3) “Vedic Mathematics and Indian Scientific Heritage”. Ravi Kumar is a prolific orator and has addressed several international seminars and conferences. He has been lecturing on various subjects including Vedic Mathematics, Vedic Sciences, Ancient Indian calendar, Symbolism in Indian Culture, Influence of Bhagvad Gita in Western countries etc.



Session 3: “Spirit of Surrender” by Sri Ramanujam Mukundagiri

Synopsis:

Actively Surrendering to the supreme is the final step shown by Bhagavath Geetha. The whole Geeta sastra is the synthesis of acts, wisdom and divine love. Living with true spirit of surrender brings in immediate joy and is the culmination of divine love. Any work is spiritualized by this divine love, gnana or wisdom is the child of divine love (bhakthi is gnana mata). True surrender to the supreme leads to liberation.

Speaker Profile:

Sri Ramanujam Mukundagiri (Ramuji) is a member of GOD India Movement, part of Global Organisation for Divinity, USA, founded with a vision to promote peace, harmony and universal love amidst cultural diversity through inner spiritual transformation. A professional speaker and insightful spiritual instructor, he has sound experience in discoursing on a spectrum of topics from profound concepts of Vedanta and Bhakti to day-to-day aspects of life like ‘Success in Life, ‘Meditation and Happiness’ etc. A disciple of His Holiness Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji, he conveys the message of his Guru that harmony and peace can prevail everlastingly in individual minds and the whole world, only through internal transformation, and this comes with God’s grace, efforts, staunch faith and perseverance.

Sri Ramuji graduated from Delhi University as a “Gold Medalist”. He has a Black Belt certification in Six Sigma which is a well-known global standard for quality that strives for near perfection. Until recently, he worked as a general manager at Visteon India (formerly Ford Automotive Parts). A deep longing to unravel the purpose of life had led him to Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji way back in 1993, under whose benign guidance, he studied *Vedanta* and *Bhakti Shastras* and later quit his job and dedicated his time full time towards propagating the ideals of *Sanathana Dharma* to the society at large. Sri Ramuji has discoursed, on Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi’s works like ‘*Upadesa Saram*’, classical Indian epics, Puranas and *Bhakta Charitras*, Bhagavad Gita as well as “Science in ancient Indian Scriptures”, “Enjoying eternal freedom”, “Unfolding everlasting bliss”, “Success in Life”, “Practical Meditation” etc. Fluent in English, Tamil and Hindi languages, his lectures have earned acclaim from his audience for his knowledge, intelligibility and eloquence. In addition to spiritual discourses, Sri Ramuji has conducted extensive practical trainings and workshops on techniques for positive introspection and self-improvement through practical simple meditation.

Session 4: “Sure Mantras of Success (SMS) from the Bhagavad Gita” by Swamini Vimalananda



Synopsis:

Bhagavad Gita is an excellent Universal treatise on how to face the challenges of life and in the process how to emerge as a successful person. It gives practical Tips on Happy Living through the use of SMS. Through reasoning and righteous living, we learn the art of right choices and living thus becomes a sacred art. Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandaji referred to the Bhagavad Gita as a manual for daily living. It undoubtedly is a vast source of guidance to people from all walks of life in understanding themselves, their relationships, goals and activities.

Certain verses from the Bhagavad Gita have been selected by Swamini Vimalaanandaji to show us how to achieve success, efficiency, and develop noble virtues thus enabling us to live in balance and harmony with the world around us.

Speaker Profile:

Swamini Vimalananda is presently in charge of Chinmaya Mission, Coimbatore and is one of the directors of Chinmaya International Residential School. She is also director of the “Chinmaya Vision Programme” - a holistic and value-based approach to education.

She was educated in Mumbai and graduated with honours from the J J College of Architecture with a Bachelors in Architecture degree. She became a brilliant disciple of Pujya Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda, and soon after joined the Chinmaya Mission Bramachari training course.

She has traveled widely and has conducted many Jnana Yagnas in English, Gujarati and Hindi, as well as camps for children, youth and adults.

She co-authored the books, “*In Indian Culture - Why do We?*” and “*Not too loose, not too tight, just right*” which have become instant best-sellers.

gita jayanti 2010

This is the 13th year in succession that Gita Jayanti is being celebrated in Singapore, having started as a community celebration in 1997. This celebration with the various related events, listed herein, leading up to the Havan on the final day offers an opportunity to the various Hindu

organizations to come closer through participation and unity of purpose. The "Gita Jayanti 2010" is being organized by Singapore Dakshina Bharatha Brahmana Sabha along with the other Hindu Temples and organizations of Singapore under the auspices of the Hindu Endowments Board.

Main Event (Sun, 14 Feb 2010): Gita Havan

***Ganapathi Homam, Sri Krishna Pooja with Ashtotharam
Full Gita chanting with havan for each sloka & Poornahuthi
Maha Prasadam***

Other related activities include: Gita competitions for chanting, quiz, essay and oratorical for youngsters, "Krishna Manjari" cultural programme (at Singapore Polytech Auditorium), Gita Vani 2010 publication etc.

Please visit "www.gitajayanti.org.sg" for details

Register for International Gita Forum, Singapore:

You can register for the IGFS by emailing the following info to gitaforum.sg@gmail.com.

IGFS 2009 - Registration			
Name			
Address			
email		Mobile	

You can also register for the IGFS by posting the above info to Hindu Endowments Board (Attn: Mr K Ganesan), 397 Serangoon Road, Singapore 218123 (Tel: 6296 3469). **Other contacts:** Mr Srinivasan (6346 1850), Dr Vijay Kumar (6760 3020), Sneh Kant Gupta (9488 6363), Krishnakumar (9389 0407)

Registration is FREE and all registered participants shall enjoy free dinner and refreshments. Register today!! All lectures will be in English.