

International 2 Gita Forum 01 (Singapore) 0

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



30 October 2010 (Saturday)

PGP Hall (1st Floor), Next to Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple
Serangoon Road, Singapore

Programme Details

30 October 2010 (Saturday)

1:00 pm Registration

2:00 pm Welcome Address

2:30 pm **Session 1**

Speaker:

Dr Prema Nanda Kumar

Topic:

“The Bhagavad Gita and the Homemaker”

3:45 pm **Session 2**

Speaker:

Sri L Girish Kumar

Topic:

“Gita -Its Practical Application in Daily Life”

5:00 pm **Tea Break**

5:30 pm **Session 3**

Speaker:

Dr R Rangan

Topic:

“Stress Management in the Gita”

6:45 pm **Session 4**

Speaker:

Swami Mitrananda

Topic:

“Spirit of *Yagna* in the Gita”

8:00 pm **Panel Session**

8:45 pm **Vote of thanks**

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

International Gita Forum (Singapore), 2010 (IGFS2010) is part of the International Gita Forum series being organized under the Gita Jayanti celebrations for the last many years. The objective of this International Gita Forum series 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 engineering 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) 2010 will contribute its mite in this sacred search. ■



Session 1: “The Bhagavad Gita and the Homemaker” by Dr Prema Nanda Kumar

Synopsis:

- a) What has the battlefield of Kurukshetra to do with running a household? We have to go to the beginnings when Pandavas and Kauravas stood ready for battle. Prior even to Dhritarashtra addressing Sanjaya, there is Krishna’s voice calling upon Arjuna to pray to Durga
- b) The Durga *Stotra*
- c) For gaining self-confidence, meditating upon Durga and her power brings to the aspirant the needed strength. No point in weeping and feeling helpless in the million situations, both sublime and ridiculous, that woman faces as a homemaker.
- d) *Ma sucha*. Tapasya of being the perfect woman - as daughter, wife, mother - includes the *karma*, *jnana*, *bhakti* yogas. This is *poorna* yoga exemplified in a perfect housewife like Savitri.

Speaker Profile:

Dr Prema was a UGC Post-Doctoral Fellow (1967-70) and Visiting Professor, Swami Vivekananda Chair, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam (1996-7). She was Member, Academic Council (Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, Varanasi, 1988-91); Member, Board of Studies in English (PG, Andhra University, Waltair); Member, Abirami Mandali (Srirangam); Member, National Executive of The Indian PEN and Senate Member, Bharathidasan University.

Dr Prema is a frequent contributor of literary essays and reviews (in Tamil and English) to The Hindu, Deccan Herald etc and a contributor of research essays for various reputed journals like The Cultural Heritage of India (Sri Ramakrishna Institute of World Culture, Calcutta), World Spirituality (The Crossroad Publishing Company, New York), Project of History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture (ICPR, New Delhi) etc.

She has won several titles and accolades like Bharati Silver & Gold Shields, titles ‘*Ilakkiya Perunthahai*’, ‘*Abhinava Andal*’, “M G R Award”, Sri Aurobindo Puraskar, *Sekkizhar* Award, titles ‘*Vidwatjana Vinodini*’, and ‘*Vyasa Praveena*’, Prof T T Iyengar Award, *Tamizh Peravai Chemmal*, *Manimekalai* Award, “*Angla-Dravida Bhasha Vichakshana*” etc.

Dr Prema is also the author of several books like, “A Study of Savitri”, “The Glory and the Good”, “Dante and Sri Aurobindo”, “A Luminous Flame: Sri Aurobindo’s Savitri” etc (criticisms), biographies of Sri Aurobindo, The Mother etc as well as translations of several celebrated Tamil works.

Session 2: “Gita - Its Practical Application in Daily Life” by Sri L Girish Kumar



Synopsis:

An investigation into the practical living aspects as expounded by the Gita, and their parallels in the ancient Indian scriptures as well as modern science on the following: (1) Aim of human life – happiness - permanent/temporary (*Moksha/Kama*). Effort to attain it (*Artha*). Way of putting in effort (*Dharma*). Importance of education in finding the right way of living. (2) Gita helps us to find our way to put in effort (work) in the best way without stress or strain through which we can attain happiness. Gita helps to live in the present fully so that future will be peaceful & happy. (3) Gita is the song of the World Teacher who realized what he preached. Correlation between Lord Krishna’s life and what he says in Gita (4) Gita gives freedom to the listener to do according to his/her choice and (5) Gita, when put in practice, helps to live our life creatively, productively & fruitfully.

Speaker Profile:

Girish Kumar is one of the renowned preceptors in propagating *Tantrashastra*, the ancient technique for the attainment of Self Realization, acclaimed as the best among the sciences by Shri Abhinavagupta. He has been actively involved in learning, preserving and teaching *Tantrashastra* and the facets of Indian culture, for more than 30 years.

Sri Girish is a Post graduate in Chemistry with two years of research experience in Physical Organic Chemistry; but the call of esoteric worship beckoned him to plunge himself as a full time practitioner in Indian culture and more specifically in *Tantrashastra*. He is initiated into *Shrividya* worship and is well versed in the Kerala, Kashmir and Bengal school of *tantras*. His expertise goes into the *Shaiva*, *Vaishnava* and *Sakta Darshanas*. Sri Girish is known for his inspiring advocacy towards the content on the ancient Indian culture and *Tantrashastra*.

His knowledge and experience in *Tantrashastra* has earned him the title ‘*Sarvasadhakacharya*’ and for his contribution towards the preservation and propagation of the Indian culture, he was awarded the title ‘*Paithrka Ratnam*’. Sri Girish-kumar is the founder of *Shripuram*, a Trust with a mission to research, preserve and make available *Tantrashastra* to the world. Today, Shripuram stands for the promotion, preservation, propagation of *Shrividya*, the auspicious wisdom which includes all of *Tantrashastra*. Sri Girish is involved in mystic exploration of Consciousness, preservation of ancient manuscripts, propagation of mystic knowledge and interdisciplinary studies on relationship between Ayurveda and *Mantrasastra*.



Session 3: “Stress Management in the Gita” by Dr R Rangan

Synopsis:

Stress is a physiological and psychological reaction or response to any demand, real or imagined, leading to alarm, resistance and exhaustion. Stress is not something abominable or bad according to the Gita. Stress is not a negative principle. The Gita focusses more on how to manage it than how to nullify it. The Gita identifies stress with psychological speed and force. When it is not mastered it leads to various psychic problems like lust, tension, infatuation and loss of memory. The Gita talks of the sequence of stress-reactions and describes how they can empower one if they are allowed unchecked. The Gita also describes how they can help one to achieve the things, if they are mastered. The Gita gives various techniques of meditation to master stress, such as: (1) Constant nullification of Self’s identity with matter (2) Self surrender to Divine (3) Working without the notion of ownership of deeds (4) Calming the mind through restraining the thoughts etc

Speaker Profile:

Sri Pandurangan, fondly called Sri Rangan Anna, is the second son of Sri Krishna Premi Swamigal. Sri Ranganji’s stunning accomplishments include composition of 7000 verses in Sanskrit at the age of 13, translation of *Sankara Bhashyam* of *Bramhasutra* at the age of 18 and publication of 6 books on philosophy before the age of 25. He has committed to memory all the eight major Upanishads and most of the *slokas* of *Ramayana* at the age of 16. He is a master story teller of *Ramayanam*. He wrote a commentary of Bhagavad Gita synthesizing the commentaries of Shankara, Ramanuja and Madhva at the age of twenty eight and has done a translation for various Vedic Mantras.

Sri Rangan as awarded *Yoga-vidya-varidhi* (a doctoral degree in Yoga from SVYASA, Bangalore). He also has a master’s degree of management from SIMS, Pune. He is a master of Vedas, Vedic Sanskrit, Upanishads and epics. His main inspiration is Sri Rama, whom he calls as his friend, philosopher and guide.

He has written several research articles on Ramayana, Mahabharata, Vedas, Vedanta and Yoga and has published papers related to traditional Vedic education in International journal of Yoga. His articles were published by several spiritual publications. He established a big study circle of Ramayana (*Rama-kudumbam*), while being an under graduate. Sri Rangan’s brilliant expositions on the Ramayana earned him the title “*Rama-kathamrita-varshi*”. He is the founder president of Webolim (Web of Life Makers) which spreads the values of Vedas and conducts Vedic workshops in various places in India and abroad. He delivers discourses on Vedas, Vedanta and epics in many places and presented papers in various international Vedic conferences.

Session 4: “Spirit of Yagna in the Gita”

by Swami Mitrananda



Synopsis:

The spirit of *Yagna* is a universal law of nature. Everywhere around us, from the twinkling stars to the flowing rivers, nature serves the world in the *Yagna* spirit. They all do their duties discovering a joyous fulfilment in the very performance, and yet demanding nothing from us.

A large number of people coming together, without selfish desires, to act in unison at the same altar of grace for the total Glory of all is the *Yagna* spirit. In order to work co-operatively, the entire team must have one single inspiring ideal at the altar of which everyone must readily surrender his personal vanity and greed, otherwise the cadence in the work is lost, and co-operative scheme breaks down.

In this talk Swamiji would guide us through the instructions given in the Sri-mad Bhagavad Gita on how to lead a life of harmony so that the country, community, society and ourselves prosper in this universe and not cause destruction to ourselves by acting in this world in the spirit of *Yagna*.

Speaker Profile:

Swami Mitrananda, Acharya of Chinmaya Mission, Chennai, and Director of the All India Chinmaya Yuvakendra (AICHYK), is a dynamic disciple of Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda. Having dedicated his life to the service of humanity, Swamiji travels all over India and South East Asia, conveying the profound Vedantic Truth with appealing logic and clarity.

The innovative methodology he adopts to teach makes the ancient wisdom of the Rishis extraordinarily appealing to the rational and the adventure seeking minds – young and old. Rooted in the timeless message of Vedanta, his teachings are characterized by a modernity and clarity that attract even the disinterested. His discourses on the Bhagavad Gita, Ram Geeta, Upanishads and other ancient spiritual texts have also changed the course of many lives. The 2004 Zee TV programme “Awakening Indians to India”, conceived by Swamiji, holds the world record for maximum participation in a televised quiz show of over 280,000. Swami Mitrananda is a highly sought-after speaker in the corporate circle. He has delivered Management related talks to various leading corporate houses and business schools in India.

Vibrant and relevant, Swamiji’s voice has a special appeal to the modern world, particularly Asia, where fast-changing lifestyles are facing off with the region’s deeply spiritual heritage.

SYNOPSIS & SPEAKER PROFILE

gita jayanti 2011

This is the 14th year in succession that Gita Jayanti is being celebrated in Singapore, having started as a community celebration in 1997. The Gita Jayanti incorporates various related events with the Gita as the central theme culminating with the Gita

Havan. The "Gita Jayanti 2011" is being organized by **Singapore Gujarati Society** along with the other Hindu Temples and organizations of Singapore under the auspices of the Hindu Endowments Board.

Main Event (Sun, 13 Feb 2011): Gita Havan

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

Related activities include: Gita competitions (chanting, drawing etc) for youngsters, Cultural event, Gita Vani 2011 publication etc.

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

Drawing Competition for Children (5 - 15 yrs) Theme - "Lord Krishna"

30 Oct 2010, 3:00 - 4:00 pm (on the same day as Gita Forum)

Categories (year of birth): cat 1(2003 - 05), cat 2 (2000 - 02), cat 3 (1996 - 99)

Prior registration with name, date of birth, school name and both parents' contacts is required. Last date to register: **28 Oct 2010**. Please register by emailing sandsvk@yahoo.com.sg For enquiries please call 6760 3020 after 7:00 pm.

Register for International Gita Forum (Singapore):

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

IGFS 2010 - 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: 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.