

TACTICAL VICTORY

It is good that Pakistan has decided to shun its plan to continue constructions along the LoC in Kupwara's Teetwal sector after objections were raised by the Army or else India will have to take the other route which at this time of complete truce can have precarious results. As per the reports, Pakistan halted construction activity after Indian Army warned of action near the Line of Control in J&K's Kupwara. The Indian Army used loudspeakers to warn Pakistan Rangers of action if the construction was not stopped in Teetwal sector of Kupwara. According to Army officials, no side can indulge in construction activity without prior intimation close to LoC. Army's warning to Pakistan came after it noticed that a structure was being raised opposite to the Indian side. Going by past history of Pakistan it is still doubtful to say that the rogue nation will not indulge in this kind of acts again because there is every chance that the construction which was started by the Pakistanis in the vicinity of LoC was just to have an idea of response from Indian side because otherwise Pakistani Rangers know well the protocol and the rules about initiating any construction near the LoC. Whatever may be the reason the Pakistan's response to stop the construction work is surely the strategic victory of the country because otherwise India has to use power which might prove detrimental for the renewed truce pact under which guns have gone silent along borders and the people on both sides have taken a sigh of relief. Under no circumstances the Indian army should become complacent as far as places near border with Pakistan is concerned because no doubt truce pact is working this time but as per army and police Pakistanis are continuously attempting to send foreign mercenaries to this side through old and new modus-operandi used for infiltration. Even drones are being used to reccce, smuggle arms and narcotics thus making the neighbouring country enemy number one of India. For the security forces including the Army there is one and only advice to never give a chance to a Pakistani to act against India as the rogue nation on the western side of the country is highly deceptive and mistrustful.



OFF 'D' CUFF

All are Equal before God! - Human Rights Day

In whatever way people submit unto me, I respond to them accordingly. Knowingly or unknowingly, everyone follows my path, O Arjun!

-The Bhagavad Gita
When human beings try to come near God in devotion they may have a question, 'Does God care equally for all?'

Certainly, He does!

Lord Krishna's kindness towards even the cruel-hearted is visible at many instances in the epic Mahabharata. He personally goes to Duryodhan in an effort to avoid bloodshed and turmoil. He visits the court of Kauravas and requests just five villages for Pandavas. He also guides kind-hearted Arjun like a concerned Guru in the War.

There are many such instances where you would find that everyone is equal before God. Even before the war, when Arjun and Duryodhan both got a chance to seek blessings from Lord Krishna, He was ready to bless both of them.

Undeniably, there is no doubt that everyone's equal in God's eyes, yet God is not equal in everyone's eyes. Different people understand God differently. Some come to God with selfless devotion while some for receiving the reward of devotion.

And so in the above verse from the Gita, Lord Krishna clearly says, He reciprocates according to how His devotees approach Him. Yet He wants to shower His blessings upon everyone equally.

Therefore, rather than thinking about whether God treats everyone equally, devotees should focus on understanding God properly.

Understanding God's Grace

Understand that God is one with all. He treats all equally and does not care for anyone 'more' than He cares for anyone else. His blessings are for all without any discrimination based on caste, race, societal position, the color of skin, faith, ability, etc. He gives favorable and unfavorable circumstances in everyone's life and also gives everyone an equal opportunity to make life beautiful.

Dr Archika Didi

Who am I? Not the body, because it is decaying; not the mind, because the brain will decay with the body; not the personality, nor the emotions, for these also will vanish with death.

-Ramana Maharshi

EDITORIAL

Relevance of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita in modern times

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

The relevance of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita in the modern times cannot be exaggerated. It is a spiritual treasure which guides us and shows us how to live a life of contentment. It is a nectar coming from the lips of the Bhagwan Krishna and everyone of us should partake this nectar meaning thereby that we should read and study the treasure kept by the Lord in this book. This scripture has got universal applicability and it is cosmopolitan in nature. Its significance and importance cannot be denied in today's world. This spiritual treasure is specially relevant in the modern greed torn world where everything is weighed on the touchstone of gain or loss. In these days of materialistic world where there is mad race for money, name and fame this treasure helps us to lead a contented life and the book shows us as to how purposeful life and meaningful life can be lived in this materialistic world. The world has celebrated the Gita Jayanti on Tuesday, December 14, 2021 with great fervor and enthusiasm and on the occasion of the Gita Mohotsava, Gita recitation was done and the importance of this scripture was brought home to the people by the learned men who had mastery over Gita. It was also brought fore to the people that the habit of reading and studying of the Gita is very useful especially in the modern times where there is greed and cunningness in the world and in such a situation the significance of this treasure is next to none. Bhagavad Gita is a philosophy and it is shows a way of life to the universe. In fact the study of this scripture helps the mankind to lead a balanced life and it guides us towards the supreme and ultimate truth. The Gita is the sum total and essence of Upanishads and one who reads Gita is said to have understood Upanishads also. The greatness of the Gita is that it is a guide for the practical life and it shows us how to live a life in the world and live a life like a lotus away from the worldly mud and filth. Gita teaches us renunciation not from the world but renunciation from the wrong and selfish activities. Thus it teaches us to renounce the bad actions and live a selfless life. It never teaches us to renounce the world but to renounce all the negative thoughts and actions in the world. This scripture teaches us to live a saintly life away from the materialism and greed but it in no way exhorts us to leave the world. It teaches the mankind to leave the sense pleasures and live a life of contentment and a meaningful life away from the madness of the world. The Gita teaches us the highest philosophy of Karam Yoga and exhorts us to perform the allotted works and duties in a selfless manner and leave the results of the actions in the hands of the almighty. It teaches us as to how we will perform our duties and works without attachment while remaining in the world. Therefore it teaches us to work incessantly without bothering about the fruit of our actions. So it teaches us detachment from the materialistic pleasures and the Gita ordains us to perform our duties and works without caring for the results of our Karmas. Thus, philosophy of Karamyoga is the greatest philosophy to lead a life of purpose and teaches the people how to work and perform duties in a detached manner. Therefore selfless service and the service to the mankind is borne home to the people through Bhagavad Gita and the reading and its practice makes us noble individuals so that we work and perform duties with selfless devotion. It teaches and helps us to work and live in the world like a saint. Therefore the Gita exhorts us to live a detached life while performing our allotted duties and works. It says that work is your right and the fruit of the work should not bind you to the worldly pleasures. So it teaches the people not to renounce the duties and works but to renounce the selfishness while working and living in the world. Gita in fact is an empirical and scientific knowledge and thus it guides us in the practical world. It is the Chapter third of the Gita which teaches the people the philosophy of Karamyoga. This chapter of the Gita teaches us to live a life of a Karmyoga and work without caring and bothering about the fruits of your activities. Gita also teaches the humanity the Yoga of knowledge as well as the Bhakti Yoga which is total surrender and love for the God. It is said of the Kaliyuga that surrender and the love of the almighty is the simplest way to reach and attain the God and thus the philosophy of the Bhakti Yoga is the only simple way to know the supreme being. In fact the philosophy of love and devotion is the sure way to attain God in this universe. It is the chapter eleventh of the Bhagavad Gita which is dedicated to Bhakti Yoga meaning yoga of devotion. It says that total devotion and love for the God is the simplest way to reach the almighty in this Kaliyug. Thus the people observe total devotion and love for the almighty to reach to the ultimate goal and attain God. Lord Krishna exhorts the humanity to perform total devotion and practice the devotion and love for the God and in this way we can attain the supreme Lord. Thus we should do total devotion to the God and surrender to Him and in this way we can reach to God and so yoga of devotion is a simple way to attain the supreme being and therefore we should perform devotion to God so that we will be successful in this Kaliyug and reach the ultimate truth. So the Karmyoga and Bhakti Yoga are the two ways to realize the god and their description is given in Gita along with other forms and systems of yoga. Gita is the complete text of philosophy and shows us how to lead a life in this materialistic world were greed reigns supreme and thus Gita is the practical guide to lead a happy and contented life in this world. Since Gita is the essence of Upanishads because the Vaidika Philosophy is made easy for understanding through it. When the Upanishads are compared to cows, the Gita takes the position of milk. When one has plenty of milk at disposal one need not undergo laborious task of maintaining cows. One who has studied and understood Bhagavad Gita may be said to have caught the cardinal teachings of the Upanishads. The importance and relevance of Gita cannot be exaggerated in the modern world as it has much practical value and relevance for the mankind. Let us all read and study the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita in order to be successful in the world. When the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi was facing any problem in life he was seeking the solution in the Gita. The significance of Gita can be rightly be summed in the words of Ashurban who had said, "Burn all libraries of the world for their essence is in Bhagavad Gita".

(The author is a retired Education Officer and Columnist).

Urban farming & food security

■ DR BANARSI LAL

Presently COVID-19 pandemic is the major concern for the people across the globe. This outbreak was initiated in December 2019 and its consequent spread across the global level has pushed the entire world into the serious crisis. The subsequent lockdowns imposed due to COVID-19 have affected the agricultural sector and has caused the unprecedented disruption in the food supply chain from rural areas to urban areas. Lockdowns have affected the daily requirements of food for the urban population. Urban farming is the practice of cultivating, processing and distributing of food in and around the urban areas. It involves small scale agricultural operations by which the need based edible commodities can be produced. It is not a new concept. As human population progressed, agriculture was confined in the rural areas while urban population engaged itself in the trading activities. Natural disasters and acts of man such as war encouraged urban population to explore for the urban farming due to the disruption of food supply chain from the rural areas. This was happened in World War-I and World War-II when the city dwellers were encouraged to grow the food in their open spaces and reduced pressure on rural population. In recent times, former US First Lady, Michelle Obama promoted the concept of kitchen garden. This garden has been located in the premises of White House. It was having a beehive and 55 varieties of fruits and vegetables. Presently when the whole world is under threat due to COVID-19 urban farming can ensure food security to the urban dwellers. It can cut down the carbon emission by saving the fuel which otherwise is used in the transportation of food items from rural to urban areas. Urban agriculture can reduce the poverty and health issues in the urban areas.

According to United Nations, by 2050 more than two-third of population will be living in cities. Urban farming can play a significant role in proving the food to this population. In recent decades urbanization has increased rapidly and this has caused malnutrition in urban areas. There is dire need to pay attention on the food security especially for the urban dwellers. In urban areas there is pressure on the land due to population, construction of buildings, industrialization, roads etc. But still there remains enough area where the fruits and vegetables can be grown.

Nature also does not discriminate when it shows its wrath or generosity on humans, animals, or plants. The colour of blood and the body anatomy is same for all humans. This is God's way of doing things that all humans are one and connected with each other. There is absolutely no discrimination.

In fact, God has created a lot of things that prove that every human being is equal in His eyes. Just look around yourself with pure intent and you'll find them. Kudos to the Messengers of Equality. At times it is really disheartening to see the prevalence of conflicts and crises all around due to prevalent inequalities in society.

Thankfully, Human Rights have the power to tackle their root causes. It addresses grievances, eliminates inequalities and allows people to take part in decision-making that impacts their lives. It is clearly visible that societies and countries that protect human rights for everyone are more prosperous and strong in comparison to those that don't. Such societies deal with unexpected crises easily and get ahead with time. Hence, Equality and Non-discrimination must be preserved in all situations. Not in any case certain people or groups should be excluded or face discrimination in the name of anything.

Therefore, all rights organisations working anywhere in the world deserve a huge round of applause as they are working selflessly day & night for protecting the Human Rights of the needy. They are the messengers of equality. They truly believe in God's decree of equality.

Dr Archika Didi

YOUR COLUMN

Election rallies-Invitation to another wave of pandemic

Dear Editor,

Through the columns of your esteemed paper I like to highlight the frenzy of election rallies by those in fray to win the elections in UP and other states that are to woo the voters especially by ruling BJP that owns much responsibility being

in power both in center and states and announcing number of packages and inauguration of various schemes at different locations that are attended by large number of people. These rallies are attended by the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Chief Ministers and many other stalwarts who are in power. All these have forgotten the increasing cases of Corona and allied variants only because of power lust without caring about its effect on the common man. Same people on the other end terrify the people of new variants of corona and talk of restricting gatherings and of night curfews and charging heavy fines from common man even for minor violations. When the Prime Minister himself indulges in such overcrowd-

ed rallies, who is there to dictate restrictions on such rallies. If the sense prevails upon such leaders they should campaign through TV channels and newspapers and Courts on their own should restrict these power hungry classes of politicians to carry on public rallies. The ECI, an independent constitutional authority and responsible to conduct elections, is a dummy puppet, who has no eyes and ears to blow heavily on these leaders. If all this nonsense is not stopped in time, the consequences could be dire than the second wave of pandemic.

Mahadeep Singh Janwal,
Udhampur.