



# 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Hinduism, Philosophy and Global Harmony (HPGH)-Towards Universal Well-being

30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 9.30 am -16.00 pm (London Time) A VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Co-hosted by the
Bhagavad Gita Research Foundation (BGRF)
&

Sri Sri Gitasangha, Dhaka, Bangladesh International Journal of Hinduism & Philosophy (IJHP)

# **Conference Programme**

Method - Integrity - Camaraderie



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## Welcome to the ICHPGH-2024 International Conference

Dear Delegates, Scholars, and Esteemed Guests,

On behalf of the organising committee, it is our profound honour and pleasure to welcome you to the International Conference on Hinduism, Philosophy, and Global Harmony (ICHPGH) - Towards Universal Well-being. This event represents a unique convergence of minds dedicated to exploring the rich philosophical traditions of Hinduism and their relevance in fostering global harmony and well-being.

In an era where the quest for peace and well-being is more urgent than ever, our conference seeks to provide a platform for meaningful dialogue and scholarly exchange. We are privileged to gather a distinguished assembly of academics, practitioners, and thought leaders from around the world, each bringing their own perspectives and insights into the ancient wisdom of Hindu philosophy and its application in contemporary society.

The theme of this year's conference, "Towards Universal Well-being," underscores our collective aspiration to harness the timeless principles of Hindu thought to address the complex challenges of modern life. We will delve into topics such as ethics, spirituality, sustainable living, and the role of philosophy in promoting social and ecological harmony. Through rigorous discussions, thought-provoking presentations, and collaborative workshops, we aim to uncover pathways to a more peaceful and inclusive world.

Our program features an array of distinguished speakers and panellists who will share their expertise on various aspects of Hindu philosophy and its intersection with global issues. We are confident that their contributions will inspire and challenge us, sparking new ideas and fostering a deeper understanding of how ancient wisdom can inform and enhance our pursuit of universal well-being.

We encourage each of you to engage fully in the sessions, participate in discussions, and connect with fellow delegates. It is through our shared commitment and collective efforts that we can hope to make a meaningful impact on our world.

Thank you for being part of ICHPGH. We wish you all a productive and enlightening conference. With warm regards,

## Nityananda Chakravorty Dr P. R Datta

**Conference Chairs** 

International Conference on Hinduism, Philosophy and Global Harmony

#### **ICHPGH-2024 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

#### **Conference Chairs**

Nityananda Chakravorty, President, Sri Sri GitaSangha, Dhaka, Bangladesh

**Dr P. R. Datta,** Executive Chair, Centre for Business & Economic Research (CBER), UK and Director of Research, Bhagavad Gita Research Foundation, UK, Senior Lecturer and Scholarship Lead, School of Business and Law, Regent College London

#### **Conference committee**

- Santosh Chandra Sarker, President, Bhagavad Gita Research Foundation, UK
- Dr B. R Chakraborty, Vice-President, Bhagavad Gita Research Foundation (BGRF), UK
- Prof. Dr. Deepraj Mukherjee, Kent State university, USA, Chapter President-BGRF, USA Chapter
- Prof. Rupen C. Bhattacherjee-Pro-Vice Chancellor, PDM University, New Delhi, India
- Prof. Dr. Gairik Das, IISWBM, Kolkata, India
- Prof. Dr. Atish Prasad Mondal, St Xavier's College, Kolkata, India
- S.R. Sinha, Retired Member of the Supreme Court Bar in England and Wales, UK
- Engr. Dipendra Narayan Singha, Chapter President-BGR, F India
- N. Bardhan, Secretary, Sri Sri Gitasangha Bangladesh
- Amiya Mukherjee, Secretary, Aurobindo Centre, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- Sukumar Chakrabarty, Ex-Banker and religious orator, Bangladesh
- Nanda Gopal Chakraborty, Fellow Chartered Accountant, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- Mohini Mohan Chakrabarty, Ex-Additional Secretary, Government of Bangladesh
- Dr Sajal Kumar Palit, Chapter President, BGRF, Australia
- Anindya Das Gupta, Trustee, Secretary, Bhagavad Gita Research Foundation, UK

### **ICHPGH-2024-CONFERENCE ADVISORY BOARD**

- Prof Dr. Srini R Srinivasan, Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies (JBIMS)University of Mumbai
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- **Dr Arun Kumar Saha:** Former Senior Project Officer/Unit Head, Agriculture & Natural Resources, Bangladesh Resident Mission, Asian Development Bank (ADB)
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- Pawan Sethhi, Bollywood Script Writer, Poet, international orator, India
- Eng. Ranjit Roy, President of the Srikrishna Bhakta Shangha USA
- Stephen Silver, Principal, School of Philosophy and Economic Science, UK
- Dr BalMukund Bhala, MBBS, DA, MD, Patron of Bhaktivedanta Manor in Watford, UK
- Dr. Sunil C Dutta, Ex-president, BGRF, Australia
- Dr Sunil Kanti Roy, Gastroenterologist & General Physician, London, UK
- **Prof. Uday Sankar Chakraborty, Trustee,** Hindu Religious Welfare Trust and general Secretary, Sri Ramkrishna Ashmar, Kurigram, Bangladesh
- Hon. Dr Sockalingam Yogalingam, Politician and Entrepreneur, London, UK
- Ms Nilima Dash Saha, Trustee, Deputy Director, Research & Publication, BGRF, UK

### International Conference on Hinduism, Philosophy and Global Harmony (ICHPGH)



Bhagavad Gita Research Foundation (BGRF) has been established with the express purpose of ensuring a wider understanding of a supremely holy text of Hinduism. BGRF works not only to propagate this work but to ensure greater tolerance and openness of mind. The Bhagavad Gita offers a route to enlightenment that is open to all, for many of its devotees it is a means of finding the eternal way of ultimate liberation, knowledge, and bliss. Importantly, this philosophical treatise offers diverse paths (the spiritual, theological, intellectual, and scientific) that help provide greater meaning to life. Through the study and practice of the tenets and teachings of the sublime book, we are all afforded a means to be spiritually nourished and satisfied. The BGRF seeks to ensure a wider understanding of one of the most influential texts in Eastern Philosophy, as well as bringing people together who have a wish to appreciate life's spiritual essence. We all need to seek and be prepared to question and learn in a spirit of mutual respect, tolerance, and humility. Bhagavad Gita Research Foundation (BGRF) is a non-profit making organization that is registered in UK as a company limited by guarantee. It is an independent and non-political entity that does not accept donations from any person or organization seeking to use the BGRF as a vehicle to promote their own political agenda.



Started with the name and style of Sri Sri Gitasangha (Central) in the year 1990, registered under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Bangladesh, the organization has graduated from local to national status in 30 years of time (in 2022) under revised registration with the name of Sri Sri Gutasangha Bangladesh due to its ever-expanding demand from the Hindu community and its undaunted and successful march for disseminating the holy message of Lord Sri Krishna in Shrimad Bhagavat Gita. This nationwide organization has a wide scope of work including mainly the teaching of the Gita verses to young and aged members of the community in more than 400 Gita schools, conveying its philosophical heights and practical implications and deeper meanings of each Sloka so that this oblivious generation can bring back its wisdom, Vedic, and Upanishadic universality of thoughts to get the strength for coming out of the confines of traditional and myopic religious rituals. Moreover, its devout general members numbering more than a million have locally organized branches to multiply the events of reciting and practicing Gita verses. Besides this, it organizes seminars, symposia and discussions inviting noted intellectuals and virtuous Sannyasins from organizations home and abroad.

As an organization it has its own edited version of the holy book Gita in large and small sizes, cheaper to access and easier to read for the large portion of Hindu community who have no scope to learn Sanskrit in this country. The Ministry of Religious Affairs of Bangladesh have gracefully printed the Gita if this organization in 30,000 copies and distributed those to the learners of Gita in all the temple-based public schools in all the 64 districts of the country. Besides this again, it has published easy version of Sri Sri Chandi and book like Helps to the Study of Gita etc. to open the avenues of wisdom among the new generation Hindus.

Sri Sri Gitasangha Bangladesh feels proud of having the illumining partnership with BGRF recently, which has helped the Sangha to broaden its nobler functions beyond Bangladesh. Working together, we hope to transcend the limits of communal divisions and reach an effective unity in diversities which has been the mainstay of Hindu religion over last thousands of years.



The International Journal of Hinduism & Philosophy (IJHP) seeks to take the reader on a journey of exploration, one that challenges, surprises, and provides meaningful insight. With an estimated 15% of the world's population being adherents to the Hindu faith there is all the more reason to examine this world religion from an academic perspective. Similarly, philosophy, the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality and existence is a laudable pursuit. Hence, the International Journal of Hinduism & Philosophy (IJHP) aims to play a positive and purposeful role in fostering greater understanding and enlightenment. IJHP is a refereed journal that seeks to be a scholarly conduit by which academic papers concerning Hinduism and Philosophy are placed into the public domain. The journal seeks to provide an authoritative source of information for academicians, religious scholars and practitioners, and those desirous to learn about Hindu theology and the way in which thinkers down the ages have wrestled with the fundamentals of human existence.

## PRESIDENT, CONFERENCE CHAIR & KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Santosh C Sarker MEng (water resources) Cranfield University, UK; MBA- USA President, BGRF, London, UK

Mr. Sarker is currently working as a Customer Care Officer in the Joint Government Department of Works and Pension and G4S Secure solutions (UK) Ltd. Before, he worked in British Rail for 2 years. In the capacity of Registrar. Mr. Sarker worked for a British College of further Education for 2 years. Since last 19 years between 1986 till 2005, he worked as a Director and General Manager of Proshika IAF Trust in Bangladesh including 10 years in peoples' facing microfinance project management in the poverty-stricken areas in rural settings of Bangladesh. During his tenure, Mr. Sarker worked as Team Leader of four collaborative research projects with the University of Bath, East Anglia University, University of Greenwich, and Department of International Development (DFID) UK. As additional assignment, Mr. Sarker worked as People's Participation Expert in a consultative group of Hydraulic Engineers in formulating National Water Management Plan of Bangladesh. In the year between 1980 to 1986, Mr Sarker worked as a General Manager of Rural Electrification Board, Bangladesh. Since 1977 till 1980, he has worked in the capacity of Senior Water Resources Engineer with International Engineering Company, Inc USA in a Water Development Project in Chittagong, Bangladesh. Mr. Sarker has co-authored a conference paper and jointly presented in the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. He represented Bangladesh in the World Water Forum in Stockholm, Sweden and presented paper as a keynote speaker.

Mr. Sarker worked with Professor Dr. Robert Chambers of Cambridge University in an action research project as to how to carryout Rapid Rural Appraisal and formulating People's Participation Rural Planning in the remote village of Bangladesh. He is a professional trainer of project planning and management.

Mr. Sarker has the greatest quest of learning about the tenets and teachings of Bhagavad Gita, the holy book of beauty and wisdom, spiritual book of humanity to shake up his spiritual door of ignorance. His dream is to leave a platform for the world-renowned researchers and scholars of Vedic philosophy to diffuse knowledge and wisdom of peace and harmony to our contemporary social settings.

#### **CONFERENCE CHAIRS**

Nityananda Chakravorty
President, Geeta Sangha Bangladesh
Editor in chief, International Journal of Hinduism & Philosophy



Mr. Chakravorty served as a lecturer in Economics in colleges between 1969 to 1976 during which Bangladesh became independent in 1971. He left his teaching profession and joined Bangladesh Water Development Board as an Economist, served the organization for 27 years in different positions and retired as the Joint Chief Planning of the organization in 2003. Since then, he has been serving as national consultant Economist till date for the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, the Government of Bangladesh and for many other international consulting houses. He has been elected as the President of Bangladesh Gita Sangha, a nationally registered organization, since 2010, dedicated for the preaching the teachings of Srimad Bhagabat Gita and practicing those through its more than 400 branches across the country and abroad. He published a largely appreciated edition of the Gita & teaches the Trainers of Gita Schools under the Hindu Welfare Trust of the Government regularly and Chairs many religious Workshops, Seminars and Discussions held at different places in Bangladesh, as requested. Mr. Chakravorty has published extensively including an appreciated edition of the Gita; Sanatan Stories; Bodhayanta Parashparam; Helps to the Study of Gita, etc.

## Dr. P. R. Datta FCIM, FRSA, FHEA, CMBE Senior Lecturer & Scholarship Lead, Regent College London, UK

Executive Chair, Centre for Business & Economic Research, London, UK Director of Research, Bhagavad Gita Research Foundation



Dr. Datta earned his first degree in Plasma Physics from the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia in Moscow, an MSc in marketing from Glamorgan University, UK, and a Ph.D. in Marketing, from the University of Hertfordshire UK. He is a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, UK, Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM), UK, and a member of various professional bodies, including the British Academy of Management, the European Marketing Academy, and the European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management. Dr. Datta is currently a senior lecturer and scholarship lead at Regent College London and holds the position of Executive Chair of the Centre for Business & Economic Research (CBER). Dr. Datta is also the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Business and Retail Management Research (JBRMR) and the International Journal of Higher Education Management. Dr. Datta has published extensively in international refereed journals and conferences, and several of his publications have received positive feedback from business and management scholars. He has published over 30 scholarly articles and over 200 short articles in the last 20 years (published in daily newspapers)

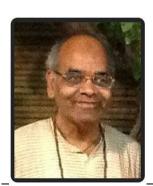
Author of several Books, including "We're doomed! Brexit Revisited", "The Art of Entrepreneurship: the path to success and wealth creation", co-authored with Luiz Alberto Alves Dos Santos published in February 2022, and "Relationship Marketing for Enhancing Customer Retention (2018)". He is a regular contributor to international academic conferences and regularly contributes various business and higher education articles in prominent English-language daily newspapers in Bangladesh. Such is the insight that he brings to the specialism areas that he has made several television appearances in the UK and Bangladesh. A seasoned traveller, Dr. Datta has visited over 75 countries.

#### **CONFERENCE SPEAKERS**



Nityananda Chakravorty President, Sri Sri GeetaSangha Bangladesh Editor in chief, International Journal of Hinduism & Philosophy, UK

Mr. Chakravorty served as a lecturer in Economics in colleges between 1969 to 1976 during which Bangladesh became independent in 1971. He left his teaching profession and joined Bangladesh Water Development Board as an Economist, served the organization for 27 years in different positions and retired as the Joint Chief Planning of the organization in 2003. Since then he has been serving as national consultant Economist till date for the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, the Government of Bangladesh and for many other international consulting houses. He has been elected as the President of Bangladesh Gita Sangha, a nationally registered organization, since 2010, dedicated for the preaching the teachings of Srimad Bhagabat Gita and practicing those through its more than 400 branches across the country and abroad. He published a largely appreciated edition of the Gita & teaches the Trainers of Gita Schools under the Hindu Welfare Trust of the Government regularly and Chairs many religious Workshops, Seminars and Discussions held at different places in Bangladesh, as requested. Mr. Chakravorty has published extensively including an appreciated edition of the Gita; Sanatan Stories; Bodhayanta Parashparam; Helps to the Study of Gita, etc



Dr BalMukund Bhala, TD, RAMC (V) MBBS, DA, MD Anesthesiology (Nagpur), FFARCSI, MBA(Open), LLM in Medical Law (UNN) Consultant in Anaesthesia, Resuscitation & pain management

**Dr Bhala born on the 12**<sup>th of</sup> **January 1949 in a** Rajasthani business family and grew up in Chikhli (Buldana) Maharashtra, India. He completed his MBBS, DA & MD Anesthesiology from Nagpur University. He started working in NHS England in October 1976 with **Full GMC registration** to further Anaesthetic career from London Teaching Hospitals like Guy's & St Thomas' Hospitals. Gained place on GMC Specialist Register soon after completing Anaesthesia Higher Training. Passed **FFARCS (Ireland) and ECFMG (USA)** in one year's time after coming to England. A rapid academic & career progress **from SHO, Registrar, Senior** 

Registrar to a Substantive Consultant Anaesthetist post in the NHS in 1982. Trained at the University of Cincinnati, USA as a Clinical Fellow in Pain Control with Prof Prithvi Raj, Prof de Jong & Prof Bridenbough in 1982. On top of his Medical qualifications, he also completed Open University MBA in 3 years (1995-98) with NHS Executive Management Bursary, while in a full-time consultant post in Kettering, Nothants. Gained PG Diploma & LLM in Medical Law (2000-2002) from Northumbria University at Newcastle upon Tyne, while at BPAS & doing NHS consultant locums.

A practising Hindu Vegetarian, with special practical interests in Bhagwad-Geeta, Regular Fasting, Yoga, Breathing exercises (Pranayam), Sun salutations (Surya Namaskar) & Meditation. Regular speaker at Global Geeta / Yoga Conferences and a teacher at Yoga Teacher Training weekends. Further Yoga & Sewa teacher training www.pupt.org from the experts in Haridwar, Rishikesh & Delhi, India in 2015.

Dr Bhala initiated a few weekly Bhagwat Geeta Study Groups in UK & India, the oldest weekly one in Wellingborough Sanatan Mandir is regularly running for over 27 years. He is a Sanghchalak of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh in South Midlands Vibhag & a Patron of Bhaktivedanta Manor in Watford.



#### Dr Sukanta Saha University of Queensland, Australia

Sukanta Saha is currently working as a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Queensland (UQ), Australia and Senior Scientist at the Queensland Health Corporation since 2000. Previously, he was working at the Institute of Nutrition, Dhaka University (DU) for about ten years. He completed several master's degrees (in Zoology 1981, Nutrition 1983 from DU, Community nutrition, 1988 from UQ) and a PhD in psychiatric epidemiology from UQ. Currently he is living in Brisbane, Australia with his family (wife, son and daughter). He was awarded many grants, and scholarships including Ashoka Fellowship in USA, Colombo Plan Scholarship in Australia. Dr Saha has previously worked as Senior Lecturer (UQ), Analyst (Harvard University, USA), researcher in Thailand, and in collaborative projects with many other international universities. He has published nearly 200 papers including peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, conference proceedings with over seventy-one thousand citations (Google scholar = 71,445). He is a reviewer of about ten international journals. His current research interests are epidemiology and biostatistical analysis of psychiatric disorders. Another of his current works is the 'Global Burden of Disease Assessment' which helps in the formulation of health budgets in most countries of the world.

Outside his academic interest, Dr Saha has been deeply involved in research of Sanatana Hindu dharma to better understand Santani philosophy for global harmony. He is a regular presenter of various contemporary issues of interest in seminars, conferences, and home-based workshops.





An astute academic, a management professional, thought leader, institution builder, leadership coach, and celebrated author. Her groundbreaking contributions to the design of a flexible credit system and skill development in India have garnered international acclaim. She is a Fellow of the Somatic Inkblot Society, USA, she was appointed as the WELL Mind Advisor by the International WELL Building Institute PBC, New York, in 2023. Her concepts and contributions towards Skill development in India have been acclaimed globally. She has spearheaded many innovative initiatives including introduction of flexible credit system and curriculum design. She has been featured in Outlook Spotlight Magazine, 'India at 75- The Change Makers of Modern India' 2022, Received Innovative Leaders in Higher Education by FICCI YFLO 2024, Thought Leader Award 14IC Employability Life, London, Ambassador of the Green Planet Award, EY4EV –Summit 2023, ET Business Leader Award 2023, Green build Leadership Award, USGBC, 2018.

Her book "The Power of Positivity - Optimism and the 7th Sense" published by SAGE is a popular choice globally. She is also the author of Inkblot Personality Test: Understanding the Unconscious Mind. She is the creator of several psychometric test tools including 'Optimism index', a predictive tool for success, used as screening tool for selection and training and LEAPS

Wellbeing Scale. As a life coach, she has exhibited a passion for entrepreneurship by empowering youth and developing leaders from different walks of life. She founded the social enterprise Triarup Foundation dedicated to uplifting and developing society as a whole. Her ultimate aspiration is to transform the world into a happier place by instilling the right skills and optimism in today's youth.



#### Dr Lokesh Ramnath Maharajh Senior Lecturer, School of Education University of KwaZulu-Natal

Dr Maharaj been lecturing at UKZ-N for 20 years. His research is mainly located in the interdisciplinary field of Curriculum and Religion. This is not a common combination, and it allows him to provide insight into the shaping of curriculum and religion. He has a standing in society as a religious scholar and religious leader. This standing arises from his PhD (qualification) and applying my academic work (scholarship). The national broadcaster (SABC) has recognised him as a religious leader and religious scholar. He appeared on SAFM's Facts of Faith hosted by Naye Lupondwana to discuss the Hindu perspective on "Cultural Appropriation" after the singer Rihanna appeared semi-nude with Hindu symbols. He also participated in Facts of Faith on "Law of Karma". He drew on my research from his PhD on "Perceptions and possibilities of the Bhagavad Gita for values education". He was commissioned in 2017 to offer insights into scriptures (Ramayana) to a national television audience weekly. He has been invited regularly by Lotus FM (SABC) to offer insights into Hindu festivals. These are distinct examples of where his scholarship speaks exceptionally to UKZ-N's community engagement policy.





Professor Dr. Mayna Talukdar, currently holding the prestigious position as the Chairperson, Department of Sanskrit, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. She did her M Phil in Sanskrit and Ph D from University of Dhaka. Dr. Talukdar worked as a lecturer in The College of Development Alternatives for about 5 years. She taught Sanskrit for 7 years in the National University, Bangladesh and then joined as a lecturer in Sanskrit department under the faculty of Arts in the University of Dhaka. She then subsequently promoted as a professor in 10 years' time in the same faculty. She obtained Numata Fellowship for Post-Doctoral Research in Kyoto, Japan. Until recent, Dr. Talukdar supervised seven M. Phil students and two Ph. D students. The themes were all in the field of Sanatan Dharma and its tenets and teaching including implication of celebrating related rituals in the families and societies.

Dr. Mayna Talukdar has as many as eight research books publications. She does have about twenty research articles published in the scholarly journals of home and abroad. Moreover, she is the president of Bangladeshof Hindu Law Reform Council. She is also the life member of Bangladesh Asiatic Society, Bangladesh Itihas Parishad and Sri Gita Sangha. Dr. Mayna Talukdar is proud of her son and Husband. She is inspired by the tenets and teachings of Bhagavad Gita and its implication in the society of Sanatan Dharma. She does have wealth of experiences in chairing and delivering lectures in different national and international forums in a broader spectrum of spirituality. Dr, Talukdar believes on righteousness of the greedless doers of deeds which is the beauty of Bhagavad Gita.

Bhagavad Gita Research Foundation(BGRF) is delighted to declare her nomination as the chapter President of Bangladesh



#### Ranjit Roy President, SriKrishna Bhakta Sangha, USA

Sri Ranjit Roy resides in New York City and is a Civil Engineer, working with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. He studied Engineering at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology and New York University. Ranjit Roy is an active member of the Bangladeshi American community. He was the Secretary of the Bangladeshi Engineers and Architects in America and was the president of the Srikrishna Bhakta Shangha USA inc in New York. Ranjit Roy enjoys teaching the younger generation about Hinduism and is an Advisor of Sanatan Philosophy and Scripture (SPS) in Bangladesh. Ranjit Roy is the author of Sahajpathya

Srimadbhagavad Gita (সহজপাঠ্য শ্রীমন্তগবদ্ গীতা) and Prasnauttare Sahajpathya Srimadbhagavad Gita and Naitik Shikha (প্রশোন্তরে সহজপাঠ্য শ্রীমন্তগবদ্ গীতা ও নৈতিক শিক্ষা).



# Pawan K Sethhi Bollywood Script writer, poet, spiritual practitioner & Orator

Pawan K Sethli, a science graduate and a postgraduate in Economics. He has a long career of 35 years in the advertisement industry as a copywriter with ace advertising agencies like Mudra, Rediffusion, Percept. He works as a writer in Indian Hin- di Television and Film industry also known as Bollywood. In his long career as a screenwriter, he has worked on various gen- res and formats, given a few movies and more than 7500 episodes of famous TV serials and operas. His work was awarded in various ceremonies. A spiritual practitioner from the early teens and sunk himself into reading and assimilating different scriptures. He is in the middle of beginning an NGO- TAT TVAM ASI which will propagate Indian philosophy and schools without textbooks for talented underprivileged children. A new magazine in English and Hindi by the name of "KRISHN PRAGYA" is in the final stage of its inaugural issue in the next few months, which will reach the native and international devotees and readers of Shri Krishna.



#### Shubhra Datta

South Asian and Interfaith Liaison for Queens Borough President's Office New York City, USA

Shubhra Datta is the South Asian and Interfaith Liaison for Queens Borough President's Office in New York City. He has a master's in policy analysis from Baruch College. He has a keen interest in South Asian ancient history, politics and warfare.





Miss Anindita Roy Ankhi
Student, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET)

Miss Anindita Roy Ankhi, currently final year undergraduate student at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), under the department of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering. She is also a Life Member of Gitasangha Bangladesh.



#### Oshiro Saha Student, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Oisharjo Saha is a determined young student of STD VIII at Bangladesh International School and College who enjoys creativity and problem solving. Her hobbies include dance, debating, and recitation, as well as reading good books, particularly the Bhagavad Gita's profound teachings, which inspire her with their ageless wisdom and spiritual insights.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1. **Presentation Timing: A Keynote address** is normally allocated approximately 20 minutes for presentation followed by 5 minutes for questions from the audience. However, **an extended keynote address** is normally 25 minutes presentation followed by 15 minutes discussion. The track chair will keep an eye on the time and will alert you when time is beginning to run short. Please note that we actively encourage constructive questions from the audience. Your cooperation in bringing your presentation to a close within the time specified is essential to the smooth running of the conference and to be fair to other presenters.
- 2. Presentation: The BGRF requests that PowerPoint presentations and links for the pre-recorded video clips be sent in good time so that they can be uploaded onto the conference laptop. Please email these with your name and the conference that you are due to present to <a href="mailto:info@bgrfuk.org">info@bgrfuk.org</a>. It is also a sensible precaution to make sure that you hold a copy of your presentation with you. Any presentation that has not been submitted on time will not be pre-loaded and remain the responsibility of the presenter. Please note that the presentation will be shared via the Zoom screen share option by the presenter.
- 3. **Q & A Session:** After each keynote address, a live Q & A session will start, and this will be moderated by the Session Chair. The limited numbers of questions will be accepted. All participants are requested to submit questions by using the *Chat* option during the presentation before the Q & A session starts. When you send the question (s) please ensure to indicate the name of the presenter, slide number (if any) and the questions.
- 4. **Breaks:** Due to the nature of the conference, as it is taking place virtually, we must take a short break after each session for 15 minutes. During this break, please stand up and stretch, get something to drink and refresh yourself.
- 5. **Punctuality:** As this is a virtual conference, please ensure that you join your session promptly and are aware of the order of speakers from the conference proceedings. Please allow extra time to join online and wait for the session start.
- 6. **Your Name and Name of the Affiliation**: All participants are requested to type their name and the name of the Institution when they join Zoom conference so that we will be able to recognize you immediately.
- 7. **Photography:** Screenshots will be taken for various sessions, and such screenshot may be used in post-conference publicity and on future marketing materials. A link will be sent to all participants once these photos are uploaded.
- 8. **Recording:** The whole session or part of the session will be recorded and may be used for internal and external purposes. The edited version of the video will be uploaded via relevant YouTube Channel.
- 9. **Social media Live Streaming**: We may Livestream the whole or part of the session for external viewers.
- 10. **Conduct:** In the event of inappropriate online behaviour by any participants in the view of the Organiser, the participant may be removed from the session and excluded from the conference without refund or compensation.
- 11. **Authorship:** Presenters have a moral obligation to acknowledge all contributions to their paper, both orally at the time of presentation and by referencing authors in papers submitted to the conference.
- 12. **Republishing a Presentation**: Authors are free to publish their presentation elsewhere without fear of copyright problems and permission from the BGRF (if applicable).
- 13. **Abstract-Only Publications:** Authors often elect to publish only the abstract of their presentation in the conference proceedings. This effectively gives the author until the conference date to complete the paper. This also means that the author is free to submit the paper to another journal

without copyright consequences. This is possible because the paper has never been published elsewhere since only the abstract was published in the proceedings. **BGRF** does not copyright the proceedings, which means that authors are still free to do as they see fit with the paper. Consequently, authors can claim academic credit for a conference presentation, a refereed conference proceedings publication, and possibly a journal publication from one piece of research. Please note that only the full-text papers are published in the online conference proceedings.

### **ICHPGH 2024 CONFERENCE HASHTAG**

# #ICHPGH24

Please use the above ICHPGH conference designated Hashtag for connecting with the worldwide audience in all your Tweets from the event.

# 6th International Conference on Hinduism, Philosophy and Global Harmony (ICHPGH)-Towards Universal Well-being

# 30th June 2024, from 9.30 am to 16.30 pm (London Time) VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

#### SCHEDULE FOR THE CONFERENCE

9.15 AM -9.30AM

Registration & virtual networking

# SESSION 1: INAUGURAL SESSION & HINDUISM AND MISCONCEPTIONS 9.30AM-10.45. AM

Session Chair: **Dr P R Datta, Director of Research, BGRF, Senior Lecturer and Scholarship Lead, RCL** Editor-in-Chief, International Journal of Higher Education Management/managing Editor, International Journal of Hinduism & Philosophy **Location**: Virtual Platform

9. 30 AM-9.40AM: Opening address & Introduction

Dr P R Datta, Director of Research, BGRF

9.40 AM -9.50AM: Recitation from chapter 2 (10 slokas)

Miss Anindita Roy Ankhi, Final year student, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka, Bangladesh

Oisharjo Saha, Student of STD VIII at Bangladesh International School and College

9.50 AM-10.00 AM: Message of welcome & About BGRF

Santosh C Sarker, President, Bhagavad Gita Research Foundation (BGRF), UK

10.00 AM -10.05 AM: Welcome message from Chapter president-Australia

Dr Sajal Kumar Palit, Chapter President, BGRF, Australia

10.05 AM -10.10 AM: Welcome message from Chapter President-India

Dipendra Narayan Singha-Chapter president, India; President/CEO-Shree Gouri Shankar Jute Mills, Kolkata.

10.15 AM -10.40 AM: KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Dr Sukanta Saha, MSC, DAND, MCN

Senior Research Fellow at the University of Queensland (UQ), Australia

Title of the presentation: Misconceptions in Sanatana Hindu Dharma

#### Brief synopsis

**Background and Aims**: Sanatana Hindu Dharma is considered as one of the oldest religions in the world. Unfortunately, there are many misconceptions, misconstrued information, and inappropriate practices, beliefs and propaganda surrounding Sanatani philosophy. The main objectives of this paper are to explore: (1) pitfalls of the Varna and caste systems, (2) the status and discrimination of women, (3) the non-Vedic and flung irreligious activities in Hinduism, and (4) Vedic examples of equality in Hinduism.

**Methodology**: To identify various constructs related to the above objectives, an extensive literature review was undertaken based on the main scriptures of Hinduism. Various information from scriptures have been systematically collated and presented in this paper.

Findings and conclusions: The converging evidence from various scriptures suggests that Hinduism was not invented and does not support divisive varna and caste systems, which are inhuman by all standards and against basic human principles. It is unfortunate that caste-related discrimination exists in some traditional societies in many countries including India. It is

praiseworthy that in our Vedic literature women are highly regarded in all walks of life which is unparallel to any systems around the globe. Besides that, some sectarian people have been deliberately attempting to introduce flung irreligious practices which have created misconceptions amongst Hindus. These research findings help to enhance understanding of the purity of Vedic knowledge and build awareness to alleviate misconceptions in the everlasting spiritual knowledge and practices of Hinduism.

# SESSION 2: Philosophy of Religion, Mind, and social sciences Master of the Session/ Chair: Anindya Dasgupta, Banker and General Secretary, BGRF, UK 10.45 AM-12.00. PM

**Location**: Virtual platform

#### 10.45 AM -11.05 AM: KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**Dr Bal Mukund B Bhala**, MBBS, DA, MD Anesthesiology (Nagpur), FFARCSI, MBA(Open), LLM in Medical Law (UNN) Consultant in Anaesthesia, Resuscitation & pain management

Theme of the presentation: Why Geeta?

#### Brief synopsis

First, I will discuss the culture change in Europe & how I witnessed it first-hand in various countries I worked in, at Civilian, Private & Army Hospitals in the last 40 years. From my own knowledge of Bhagavad Gita, I looked at how Hinduism has sprouted in Europe through the efforts of very famous personalities like Swami Vivekanand, Swami Prabhupada, Maharshi Mahesh Yogi, Swami Chinmayanand & others in the soil of Europe from the First World War onwards in which British & Indian Armies were heavily involved. In addition to these famous people, seeds of Geeta culture were brought in by Hindus from India, Africa, West & East Indies. From this soil, we then look at what was watering it so the Lotus could grow in the Mud created for it, along with challenges it faced.

Integral Humanism provided the organic fertilisers in the form of Dedicated Hindu individuals, through Family units, Communities & various Organisations. Through immigration, growth continued in various sectors in the UK & Europe, mostly with a positive impact from different organisations competing & complementing the growth. Then we will look at the challenges of negative impacts on the growth & how we can learn to minimise this impact by following the practices described in Geetaji. That way not only our future but the future of Humanity will be brighter! We will look at the Legal framework & its development to Human Rights Act applicable all over Europe & globally.

Further growth of this plant of Bhagavad Gita in Europe is in the hands of our next generation under our guidance. For this, organisations like BGRF & multiple Study Groups locally will be essential, if we don't let this great Spiritual knowledge disappear with time, as it has happened many times & perpetually revived by individuals & organisations. Arise, Awake & stop not till the Goal of spreading the knowledge of Geetaji to entire humanity is completed!

#### 11.05 AM -11.30 PM: KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**Prof. (Dr) Lokesh Ramnath Maharajh,** School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pinetown, South Africa

Title of the presentation: From Religion to Spirituality: Lessons for Values Education

#### Brief synopsis

This paper discusses the concepts of religion and spirituality in the context of a study on the perceptions and possibilities of the Bhagavad Gita for values education in Durban, South Africa. The ideas are explained through a model of spirituality that has been adopted from the 3H (head, heart, hands) and BMSEST (body, mind, spirit, environment, social, transcendent) models of spirituality in multicultural whole-person medicine (Anandarajah 2008). I argue for a broad and open understanding of spirituality, which I feel has the potential to extend the youth beyond religion. However, I also maintain that young people are easily influenced by material surroundings and are seen as a 'generation of suspects' (Giroux 2006, 149). The model that I present indicates that religious scriptures (in the case of this paper, the Bhagavad Gita) have a perennially valid set of values, which has the potential to contribute to a programme of values education among the youth. However, the youth are not abstracting and extracting these values. For the youth, these values remain elusive and even ethereal.

#### Keywords

values education - religion - spirituality - youth

#### 11.30 PM -11.55 PM: KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Prof. Dr. Padmakali Banerjee, Vice Chancellor, IILM University, Gurugram

Title of the Presentation: A profound framework for individuals to cultivate inner harmony and peace through Vedanta Philosophy

#### Brief synopsis

Vedanta is a school of Indian philosophy that is based on the Vedas, oldest sacred texts of Hinduism. These texts are philosophical in nature and form the concluding part of the Vedas, hence the name Vedanta, which means the end of the Vedas. Overall, Vedanta philosophy emphasizes the unity of all existence, the divinity within each individual, and the path to liberation or moksha through knowledge, devotion, and selfless action. It remains a vibrant and influential philosophical tradition in India and beyond, impacting not only Hindu thought but also inspiring philosophical and spiritual discussions worldwide. Vedanta draws heavily from ancient Hindu scriptures, particularly the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras, and the Bhagavad Gita. These texts provide the philosophical foundation and authoritative teachings of Vedanta. Overall, Vedanta philosophy aims to lead individuals towards self-realization and spiritual growth. Vedanta philosophy promotes peace and well-being through its teachings and practices in several ways, helps individuals cultivate a sense of inner harmony and peace. Recognising the interconnectedness of all beings fosters a profound sense of unity and tranquility. Vedanta teaches that self-realisation, or realising one's true nature as divine, leads to lasting peace and contentment. By understanding the impermanent nature of the world and identifying with the unchanging essence within, individuals can transcend suffering and find inner peace. Vedanta encourages detachment from the transient aspects of life and attachment to the eternal essence within. This perspective fosters mental equanimity, resilience in the face of challenges, and freedom from emotional turmoil. The teachings of Vedanta emphasise the importance of ethical behaviour, compassion, and selfless service (karma yoga). Practicing virtuous actions contributes to mental clarity, inner peace, and a sense of fulfilment derived from serving others. Vedanta advocates practices such as mindfulness meditation, self-inquiry, and contemplation to quiet the mind, develop self-awareness, and cultivate a deep sense of peace and well-being. These practices help individuals transcend the fluctuations of the mind and connect with their inner essence. Vedanta encourages the cultivation of universal love and compassion towards all beings, recognising the divinity inherent in every individual. This attitude fosters understanding, empathy, and peaceful coexistence with others, contributing to overall well-being and harmonious relationships. By offering philosophical insights into the nature of reality, the self, and the purpose of life, It provides individuals with a broader perspective that can reduce stress, anxiety, and existential dilemmas. Understanding the impermanent nature of the world and focusing on spiritual growth can lead to greater peace of mind. Vedanta encourages the integration of physical well-being, mental clarity, and spiritual growth. By addressing the holistic development of individuals, the philosophy promotes overall well-being and a balanced approach to life. In summary, Vedanta philosophy promotes peace and well-being by offering individuals a profound understanding of the nature of reality, the self, and the path to spiritual liberation. Through self-realisation, ethical conduct, mindfulness practices, and universal love, Vedanta provides a comprehensive framework for cultivating inner peace, harmony, and overall well-being in individuals' life and living.

#### 11.55 PM -12.00 PM: A few words and reflection on BGRF in Scotland Samir Saha, Chapter president, BGRF, Scotland

SESSION 3: Hinduism, Bhagavad Gita, and global Harmony (SPECIAL WORKSHOP) 12.15 PM-13.00. PM

Master of the Session/Chair: Dr P R Datta, Director of Research, BGRF, Senior Lecturer and Scholarship Lead, RCL Location: Virtual platform

#### 12.15 PM -13.00 PM: SPECIAL WORKSHOP

Nityananda Chakravorty, President, Sri GitaSangha, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Title of the workshop: Importance of Gita-Education for World-Peace-A Study

#### Brief synopsis

Persistent failure of the international bodies and organizations to prevent wars and maintain peace in the countries and in the world at large leaves a question: Do we have to take an alternative route to untangle the historical knots of inconsistent ethical and moral standards? What are the root causes of structural failures of world bodies (like UNO), different Conventions, Charters and Policies of the national governments to end the cycle of violence and establish a sustainable regime of peace and cohabitation irrespective of cultural/racial differences, religions, value-difference among the population in the world? Or there are other causes of conflicts among nations other than differentials in ethical and moral standards which are now assumed to be the prime cause? For example, differential natural resources endowments of different countries (which are naturally distributed and geopolitically owned, causing envy or greed or violence of the poor or the powerful ones to grab those) for self-aggrandizement and bring about so-called development and rise of income of their people too).

A press release from UN Secretary General observed (16/10/2018): United Nations studies show that more than 40 per cent of internal armed conflicts over the last 60 years have been linked to natural resources. With the increasing impacts of climate change evident in all regions, the risks are only going to grow.

So, we may have to draw our attention from traditional institutional solutions to violence and deprivation, breach of peace, human rights violation, mass-killing, wars etc. to non-traditional way of building up world-wide human population in massive scale to turn to proper human beings for which God has created us. This is reminiscent of the poem of Tagore (discovery of shoes) where he demonstrated that covering one's own feet should be enough to get rid of the exorbitant cost of foolishly covering the earth with carpets to avoid the vile dust. Once a great majority of human beings of each nation are equipped with high level of efficiency, competence and integrity, the dependence on the wishful leaders, ever-contentious Charters, MOUs, Conventions etc. (which are mostly designed by people with extreme ego and many reservations) will be over. World- Workers (wherever they may stay) will be on the ground to play with freedom, clarity of mind and heart, and head erect, unshaken by any perplexity or sense of ego, loss or gain in negotiating human dignity and sustained peace. It will take time, say, centuries, but no harm. The traditional institutions have taken a century to develop but are still ineffective.

Final question Is: Is it possible to reach that "El-Dorado" of sustained Peace? The presentation takes the help of the Holy Gita to see the possibilities.

# SESSION 4: Hinduism, Bhagavad Gita, and every day's life 13.00 PM-15.00 PM

Master of the Session/Chair: Anindya Dasgupta, Banker and General Secretary, BGRF, UK Location: Virtual platform

#### **PRESENTATIONS**

#### 13.00PM -13.25PM

**Prof. (Dr) Mayana Talukdar**, Chapter president, BGRF, Bangladesh, Prof. Department of Sanskrit, University of Dhaka

Title of the presentation: Bhagavad Gita: Present and future

#### Brief synopsis

It is my pleasure and privilege to say few words as the keynote speaker today on the occasion of this august International Conference on Hinduism, Philosophy and Global Harmony on behalf of the Bangladesh Chapter of BGRF. Being the Chairperson in the Department of Sanskrit in Dhaka University, I am in an advantage to access global intellectual resources developed and being developed on different religious philosophies of the world, including Hinduism. Baffling to me, although the traditional religious Hindu scripts and other updated treatises on those demonstrate formation of a magnificent global human society with diversities of cultures and values, actual manifestation on the ground has been mostly myopic and lop-sided. Moreover, challenge is stronger where western demonstration effects of atheism or quasi-theism role around the thought process of new generation Hindus.

Bangladesh Chapter of BGRF has been relatively a new generation entity, but its acceptability here is wide because BGRF has its joint programs with a nationwide organization, Gitasangha Bangladesh, since 2021 onward to celebrate Gita Yajna, Yanmashtami and various seminars and discussions in Bangladesh in presence of thousands of devotees attending those. Recently, Bangladesh Chapter has liaised with Gitasangha Bangladesh to organize and stage intellectual seminars and communities belonging to diverse doctrines, philosophies, Gurus and factions. Here is a good opportunity for engaging young generation in practical perspectives of Gita principles. A challenge is still there today. Attention of new generation Hindus is difficult to draw mainly because of (i) lack of learning facility of Sanskrit language; (ii) absence of teachers of the language; (iii) dearth of adequate Pundits capable to customize the Vedic/Upanishadic concepts into practical operable terms. Besides these, a strong tendency for westernizing of lifestyle and established theistic values have diluted the Hindu's core objective of creating World-Class, desireless and egoless servants for humanity at large. Concocted beliefs and choices made up of a bewildering mix of the east and the west among the new generation have been a blatant obstacle to achieve the cherished goal of Vedic/Upanishadic principles. I am an optimist. I believe, truth is truth. The obstacles apparently hindering our progress will ultimately be away. It is saying that those who are seers of the truth have concluded that of the non-existent [the material body], there is no endurance and of the eternal [the soul] there is no change. This they have concluded by studying the nature of both. We are committed to look forward to building a world society of Gita to successfully anchor our Foundation to the firm granite of Gita-shore against all turmoil and turbulence of the passing world.

#### 13.25 PM -13.50 PM

Pawan K Sethhi, Bollywood Script writer, poet, spiritual practitioner & Orator

Title of the presentation: Bhagavad Gita-The eternal Wisdom in modern time

14.00 PM -14.20 PM

**Shubhra Datta,** South Asian and Interfaith Liaison for Queens Borough President's Office, New York City, USA

Title of the presentation: Connecting Itihas with History

#### Brief synopsis

Ramayan and Mahabharat are considered accounts of past events. However, it is difficult to connect these events with historical references from outside of the Indian subcontinent. The presentation will try to focus on one way to connect the two by looking at the genealogy found in the Itihas text as well as the Puranas to historical references both inside and outside of the subcontinent.

#### 14.20 PM -14.45 PM

Engr. Ranjit Roy, President, SriKrishna Bhakta Sangha, USA

Title of the presentation: Application of Gita in Daily life

**14.45 PM -14.50 PM**: A personal reflection on Hinduism and Bhagavad Gita practices in canada **Subhra Saha**, **Chapter** President-BGRF, Toronto, Canada

14.50PM -14.55PM: A few words and reflection on Bhagavad Gita Haradhan Bhowmik, London, UK

14.55 PM-15.00 PM: Personal reflection on Bhagavad Gira

Hon. Dr Sockalingam Yogalingam, Politician and Entrepreneur, London, UK

#### SESSION 5: CONCLUDING SESSION 15.00 PM-15.45 PM

Master of the Session/Chair: **Dr P R Datta, Director of Research, BGRF, Senior Lecturer and Scholarship Lead, RCL Location**: Virtual platform

Feedback from the audience

15.35 PM CLOSING REMARKS

Conference closes



# Call for Papers International Journal of Hinduism & Philosophy (IJHP)

IJHP is a peer reviewed journal and is a research platform for international scholars and those interested in Hinduism and Philosophy. The journal addresses the need for critical discussion on issues appertaining to the Hindu faith, its development, core tenets and teachings, and various developments and manifestations down the ages. Equally, the journal is a scholarly platform for those seeking to offer fresh analysis and discussion that advances the appreciation and understanding of various schools of philosophical thought. IJHP serves as a key research and learning platform of Bhagavad Gita Research Foundation (BGRF). The journal aims to target a worldwide readership through electronic format.

Although the primary focus of the journal is concerned with Hinduism and Philosophy, it also interested in aspects that relate Hinduism and Philosophy to Business, Management and Economics.

# IJHP - Subject Coverage

#### Hinduism

- History of Hinduism; Ancient India
- The Concept of Dharma, Karma, Samsara, Moksha, astika and nastika
- Yoga: Paths to Moksha; Hindu Concepts of God
- Schools of Thought
- The idea of the guru in Hindu worship; Hindu domestic rituals
- Ashramas; Sacraments; Hindu lexicon & iconography
- Holy Days/Festivals; Time in Hinduism; Science in Hinduism
- Sacred Architecture and Arts; Women in Hinduism
- Caste; Hindutva; Hinduism and India; Hinduism outside India
- Hinduism and the Environment; Hindu philosophy

#### **Philosophy**

- Vedanta Philosophy; Philosophy of Hinduism; Epistemology; Meta-philosophy.
- Metaphysics
- Philosophy of Action; Philosophy of Language
- Philosophy of Mind; Philosophy of Religion
- Indian Philosophy; Environmental Philosophy
- Teaching Philosophy

Preference will be given to papers which are conceptually and analytically strong and have empirical & theoretical relevance. All papers will be reviewed according to the Journal's criterion. The Journal's website is <a href="https://www.bgrfuk.org/ijhp">www.bgrfuk.org/ijhp</a>

For further information, please write to Managing Editor via datta@bgrfuk.org







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Philosophy, UK

## Program Schedule:

9:30 AM Reception to the Invited Devotees and Guests

10.00 AM Chandi path (Chanting Chandi mantras performed by

Nityananda Chakraborty)

10.30 AM - Gita Yajna

4.00 pm-5.00 pm- Prosad distribution

You are warmly invited to this enlightening event. Together, let us seek the blessings of the divine and contribute to a world filled with peace and harmony. All are welcome!

08th September, Sunday 2024 Time: 09.30 AM -17.00 PM
The Hindu Centre (Radhakrishna Temple) Cedars Rd, London E15 4NE

For further details please contact: Santosh Sarker: 07875178990 Dr P. R Datta: 07916326886 Pradip Das: 07852197821

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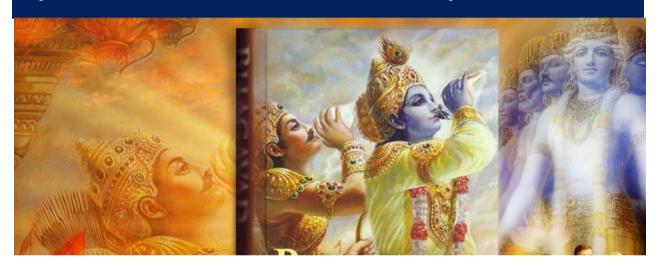
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# Our Mission

To work to help others appreciate the special place that the Bhagavad Gita has in Hinduism, and the lessons that it has for the wider world.



BGRF has been established with the express purpose of ensuring a wider understanding of a supremely holy text of Hinduism. It seeks to ensure a wider understanding of one of the most influential texts in Eastern Philosophy, as well as bringing people together who have a wish to appreciate life's spiritual essence. We all need to seek and be prepared to question and learn in a spirit of mutual respect, tolerance, and humility.

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- Bhagavad Gita Demonstrates the Righteousness of Nature
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