

**Address by Ms Neeta Bhushan, High Commissioner on the occasion of
International Gita Mahotsav (21st November 2025)**

Namaste & Kia ora...

Members of Shree Sita Ram Ramayan Mandali NZ,
Members of Hindu Council, HOTA Forum and Hare Krishna Mandir,
Dr Pushpa Wood, and members of GOPIO Wellington Chapter,
Ms Sunita Narayan and Members of Wellington Hindi School,
My Dear Fellow Diaspora Members from Haryana esp from Kurukshetra,
Community Leaders & distinguished Guests,
Good evening to everyone !!

It is truly amazing to be here among the gathering of luminaries, scholars, teachers, gurus, and devotees at the special event of International Gita Mahotsav at our High Commission's premises in Wellington.

2. The spirit of the International Gita Mahotsav, which will soon be held in Kurukshetra, Haryana, reflects a beautiful vision that brings together art, devotion, and philosophy in a way that speaks to people of all ages. Hosting this event here in Wellington is yet another reflection of the deep and enduring bonds between our two countries.

Ladies and gentlemen,

3. I must admit, I am only a diplomat, not a scholar of the Gita. It is therefore a little daunting to speak about such a profound subject before so many learned people. The Bhagavad Gita is a text known not only in India or New Zealand but across the world.

4. It is remarkable how a text written more than two thousand years ago continues to guide and inspire humanity. Its wisdom has shaped spiritual and intellectual thought through the centuries and remains relevant even today.

5. The dramatic context of Gita, which is set within the grand narrative of Mahabharata is well familiar to all of us. It is set in a battlefield with battle lines clearly drawn for a major catastrophic war. This conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna explores questions of duty, morality, and the nature of life itself. Through this dialogue, the Gita addresses conflicts both external and internal. It speaks of different paths the path of knowledge, the path of devotion, and the path of action.

6. Importantly, it does not ask us to renounce the world. Instead, it teaches the value of karma yoga of performing one's duty with dedication, without attachment to the results. It represents the very essence of Vedic wisdom which is a way of seeing and living in the world with balance and clarity.

7. Over the centuries, many great thinkers have written commentaries on the Gita. Adi Shankaracharya, Ramanuja, and Madhavacharya offered profound interpretations almost a thousand years ago. Later, scholars rendered the Gita into many regional languages and others making it accessible to more people.

8. During the colonial period, European scholars discovered the Gita, translating it into English and other languages, sharing its universal message with the wider world. Swami Vivekananda shared the Gita's universal message of harmony and unity among spiritual traditions in his historic address in Chicago in 1893.

9. During India's freedom struggle, many of our leaders drew strength and inspiration from the Gita, each in their own way. Mahatma Gandhi, in particular, saw in it a guide to inner peace and moral strength, emphasizing its message of selfless action and non-violence.

10. The Bhagwad Gita continues to inspire scholars, poets, philosophers, and devotees around the world. It is not just a scripture, but a living dialogue that continues to answer the questions and dilemmas of human life.

Ladies and gentlemen,

11. Events like this are especially meaningful in our times, when the world faces many challenges and conflicts. We look to our Gurus and teachers to help us understand the Gita's timeless wisdom and apply its message in our everyday lives.

12. In conclusion, I would like to thank all the associations and organizations that have worked with us to make this wonderful event possible. I am confident that this celebration will deepen our appreciation of the Gita and the shared spiritual heritage it represents.

Thank you all once again.

Jai Hind!
