

## Glossary of Indian (mostly Sanskrit) words/phrases used in "Kaumudi"

Term	Meaning
<b>Abstract Indian Terms</b>	
Babu	A respectful moniker for someone older or higher stature; equivalent to saying "Sir".
Saahib	A respectful moniker for your boss or someone in a superior position; also refers to an Englishman in colonial India.
Kaumudi	Moonlight; it also refers to the false moon that Lord Krishna creates to bring time to a standstill, such as during the time when he proclaims the Bhagavad Gita. It can also refer to something that brings a sense of joy and calmness, similar to the effect of moonlight.
Sathya	Truth or honesty.
<a href="#">Bhagavad Gita</a>	Also referred to as Gita, it is the ancient Hindu scripture that forms the crux of the Mahabharata epic.
<a href="#">Kaliyuga</a>	"Yuga" means age; in Hinduism, Kaliyuga is considered to be the present age, which is full of conflict and sin. It is believed to be the fourth, shortest, and worst of the four yugas.
<a href="#">Mahabharata</a>	One of the two major Sanskrit epics of ancient India (the other being the Ramayana). Both epics are highly revered in Hinduism. The Mahabharata specifically narrates the events and aftermath of the Kurukshetra War, a war of succession between two groups of princely cousins, the Kauravas and the Pandavas. This war lasted 18 days.
<a href="#">Guru Dakshina</a>	Refers to the tradition of repaying one's teacher or spiritual guide (also known as one's <i>Guru</i> ) after a period of study or the completion of formal education. The tradition is one of acknowledgment, respect, and thanks. It is a form of reciprocity and exchange between student and teacher. The repayment is not exclusively monetary and may be a special task that the teacher wants the student to accomplish.
<a href="#">Chakravyuha</a>	A very special wheel-shaped battle formation ( <i>chakra</i> means wheel and <i>vyuha</i> means battle formation). The knowledge of how to penetrate it was limited to only a handful of warriors on the Pandavas' side, namely: Abhimanyu, Arjuna, Krishna, and Krishna's son <a href="#">Pradyumna</a> , of whom only Abhimanyu was present when the Kauravas used this strategy on the battlefield.
<a href="#">Gurukul</a>	A traditional system of religious education in India where students or "disciples" lived near or with the Guru (teacher) in the same house for a period of time, where they learned and received education from their Guru.
<a href="#">Dharma</a>	In common parlance, it means the right way of living or the path of righteousness.
<a href="#">Chamaar</a>	A casteist slur in modern times, this refers to the tribal community that was involved in either leather tanning or shoemaking, such as a cobbler. In the ancient Hindu caste system, the chamaar were among those that had the lowest stature in the hierarchy.

### Places

<a href="#">Ganga</a>	Also known as the Ganges, it is a trans-boundary river of Asia that flows through India and Bangladesh. The 2,500+ kilometer-long (1,570 mi) river rises in the Western Himalayas in the Northern-Indian state of Uttarakhand. The Ganges is a sacred river for the Hindus along every fragment of its length. All along its course, Hindus bathe in its waters, paying homage to their ancestors and their gods.
<a href="#">Allahabad</a>	Now known as Prayagraj, this city lies along the Ganga in the Northern-Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, and has deep-rooted references in Indian history as well as in the holy Vedic scriptures.
<a href="#">Banaras</a>	Also known by the names of Varanasi or Kashi, this city in Uttar Pradesh (North India) lies in the middle-Ganges valley. It has a central place in the traditions of pilgrimage, death, and mourning in the Hindu world.
<a href="#">Ghaat</a>	The series of steps leading down to a body of water or wharf, such as a bathing or cremation place along the banks of a river.
<a href="#">Kurukshetra</a>	Situated in the northern state of Haryana (North India), its significance lies in being the area where the epic Mahabharata war was fought (and where the Bhagavad Gita was narrated by Krishna to Arjuna).

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<b>Mythological Characters</b>	
<a href="#">Ravana</a>	The demon king of Lanka (present day Sri Lanka) who is the main antagonist of the Ramayana epic. He abducts Sita, the main female protagonist of the Ramayana. Upon finding the location of his wife, Lord Rama wages war on Ravana in an epic battle that eventually results in Ravana's demise at the hands of Lord Rama.
<a href="#">Bhagwan Shiv</a>	Refers to the powerful Hindu God Shiva in the Hindu trinity.
<a href="#">Pandavas</a>	A group name referring to the five legendary brothers: <a href="#">Yudhisthira</a> , <a href="#">Bhima</a> , Arjuna, <a href="#">Nakula</a> , and <a href="#">Sahadeva</a> , who are central figures of the Hindu epic Mahabharata.
<a href="#">Arjuna</a>	Also known as Arjun, he was a key warrior from the Pandavas' side in the battle of the Kurukshetra in the Mahabharata. Before the beginning of the war, his mentor Krishna gave him the supreme knowledge of the <a href="#">Bhagavad Gita</a> , guiding him through his moral dilemmas. Throughout the epic, Arjuna is the closest friend and companion of Krishna. Arjuna's mother Kunti and Krishna's father Vasudev are siblings.
<a href="#">Draupadi</a>	Also known as Paanchaali, Draupadi is the main female protagonist of the Mahabharata, and the common wife of the five Pandava brothers. She is noted for her beauty, courage, and polyandrous marriage.
<a href="#">Kauravas</a>	A <a href="#">Sanskrit</a> term that refers to descendants of <a href="#">Kuru</a> , a legendary king of India, who was the ancestor of many of the characters of the epic Mahabharata. Most commonly, the term is used as a group name for the 100 sons of King <a href="#">Dhritarashtra</a> and his wife <a href="#">Gandhari</a> . The most well-known among the 100 Kaurava brothers are <a href="#">Duryodhana</a> , <a href="#">Duhshasana</a> , <a href="#">Vikarna</a> and Chitrasena.
<a href="#">Keshav/Krishna</a>	A major deity in Hinduism, he is worshipped as the eighth incarnation (or <i>avataar</i> ) of Vishnu and also as the Supreme God in his own right. He is known for his compassion, love, and protection, and is widely revered among Hindus. Lord Krishna is a central figure in many Hindu texts, including the Bhagavad Gita.
<a href="#">Subhadra</a>	Subhadra is the half-sister of Krishna, who is made to elope and marry Arjuna.
<a href="#">Abhimanyu</a>	The son of Arjuna and Subhadra, he learned the strategy of breaking the <i>chakravyuha</i> from Arjuna while still inside his mother's womb. However, he was unable to hear how to exit the <i>chakravyuha</i> , and this incomplete knowledge later contributed to his demise in the Mahabharata war.
<a href="#">Drona</a>	<p>Also referred to as Dronacharya respectfully by his students and peers, he was the royal <a href="#">preceptor</a> of the Pandavas and the Kauravas. He is one of the primary counsellors and warriors featured in the epic. Once, Arjuna had saved Drona from a crocodile while the latter was bathing in a stream. As a reward, Drona gave Arjuna mantras to invoke the super-powerful divine weapon of Brahma known as Brahmashirsha Astra, but told Arjuna not to use this invincible weapon against any mortal.</p> <p>Under Drona's tutelage, Duryodhana and Bhima excelled in the art of maces, Nakula and Sahadeva excelled in swordsmanship, Yudhishtira excelled in charioteering, and Arjuna excelled in archery. When Arjuna, inspired by his brother Bhima's nocturnal eating, mastered archery in absolute darkness, Drona was greatly impressed by Arjuna's concentration, determination, and drive. Drona promised Arjuna that he would make him the greatest archer on earth.</p> <p>However, in the epic war, Drona follows the path of Dharma and fights on the side of the Kauravas against Arjuna and the Pandavas.</p>
<a href="#">Ekalavya</a>	<p>A young tribal prince in the Mahabharata epic, who seeks to learn archery from Drona. However, Drona refuses to accept him as a disciple due to his low social status. Ekalavya trains himself in the forest using a clay statue of Drona as his guide. His exceptional skill attracts the attention of Arjuna, who, feeling threatened, complains to Drona.</p> <p>In response, because Drona had promised Arjuna that he would make him the best archer on earth, Drona demands Ekalavya's right-hand thumb as Guru Dakshina (teacher's fee). Ekalavya willingly gives it, thus diminishing his archery abilities.</p>

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<b>Mythological Characters (Contd.)</b>	
<a href="#">Duryodhana</a>	Also known as Duryodhan, he is the primary antagonist in the Mahabharata. He was the eldest of the 100 Kaurava brothers, and therefore the eldest son of the blind King Dhritarashtra and Queen Gandhari.
<a href="#">Duhshasana</a>	<p>Also known as Duhshasan, he is the second brother in age among the 100 Kauravas, and was very devoted to his older brother Duryodhana. Together, the brothers plotted many times to kill the Pandavas. Prior to the epic war, when Yudhisthira gambles away Draupadi in a game of dice to the Kauravas, Duhshasana drags and tries to disrobe Draupadi in court.</p> <p>Upon Draupadi's behest, Krishna appears and saves her from humiliation. But Draupadi was still angry that Duhshasana pulled her by her hair. Bhima eventually kills Duhshasana in the Mahabharata war and takes revenge for Draupadi's humiliation.</p>
<a href="#">Karna</a>	<p>Also known as Karn, he is the tragic hero of the Mahabharata, and his life can be described as that of the "flawed good man". Karna was born to an unwed Kunti (who later became the legitimate mother of Yudhisthira, Bhima, and Arjuna). Afraid of facing societal backlash, Kunti abandons Karna soon after his birth by setting him adrift in the Ganga.</p> <p>A low-caste but childless charioteer and his wife find and adopt Karna, who eventually becomes an accomplished warrior, becomes Duryodhana's loyal friend, and aims to kill Arjuna in the war by fighting him from the Kauravas' side. Karna meets his biological mother later in the epic and discovers that he is the older half-brother of those he is fighting against.</p> <p>Karna is a symbol of someone who is rejected by those who should love him yet do not do so, given the circumstances; despite that, he becomes a man of exceptional abilities willing to sacrifice his life as a loyal friend. His character is developed in the epic to raise and discuss major emotional and <i>dharmic</i> dilemmas (bound by duties, ethics, and morals).</p>
<a href="#">Jayadratha</a>	<p>When Abhimanyu dies in the Mahabharata war on the 13th day, Arjuna blames Jayadratha to be the cause for Abhimanyu's death and vows to kill him the very next day before sunset, failing which he would immolate himself. This sets the stage for the epic 14th day of the war.</p> <p>Drona enforces a special three-pronged battle formation to protect Jayadratha till the end of that day. When the sun was about to set and thousands of warriors still protected Jayadratha from Arjuna, Krishna sends his Sudarshana Chakra (the golden discus that he wields) in order to obscure the sun, and thus create an illusion of sunset. (<i>This is an example of Keshav's Kaumudi</i>).</p> <p>The Kaurava warriors rejoice over Arjuna's defeat and look forward to his imminent self-immolation. Jayadratha is relieved that he was saved and comes out of the battle formation to mock Arjuna. With Jayadratha now within Arjuna's reach, Krishna frees the sun from his illusion and points out Jayadratha. Arjuna quickly shoots a divine arrow at Jayadratha, decapitating him before the sunset ended the 14th day.</p>

