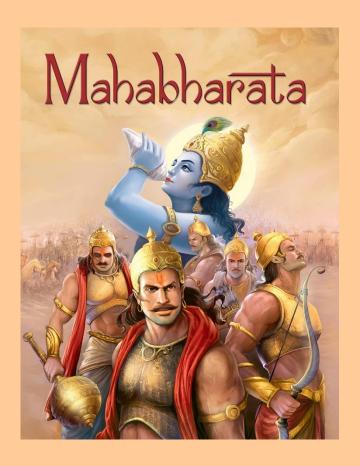
UNNOTICED CHARACTERS

FROM MAHABHARATA



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INTRODUCTION

Vyasa's Mahabharata, has engaged researchers and readers both alike, through many centuries in search of new born insights. The Great Epic of India is a narrative apart. It is unique in its variety of angles / opinions: it is seen as a poetic drama; it is looked upon as a chronicle consisting core of history overlaid with myth, as atlas of war and politics and, last but not the least, as an encyclopaedia of ancient philosophy. Bhagavad-Gita, on the other hand, is looked upon as a bequest to mankind, secular knowledge and thought. Mahabharata gets its grandness from its exquisite stories and variegated characters, who give the readers both positive and negative appeal on lifestyle. This grandness, on contrast cannot be seen on any other epic of the entire globe. The Mahabharata is more regaling to those who look at it with a macro-vision rather than with a narrow tunnel-view.

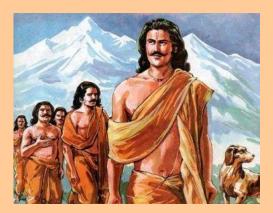
Mahabharata retells the story of paternal first cousins, which happened between the five sons of King Pandu, popularly known as the Pandavas and the one hundred sons of King Dhritarashtra, known as the Kauravas. They became bitter rivals and fought the war at Kurukshetra in northern India, known as Mahabharata War (The Great Indian War) or Kurukshetra War, for the possession of their ancestral kingdom. Dhritarashtra and his sons behaved viciously and humiliated the Pandavas in a game of dice, and forced the Pandavas into exile from the kingdom for twelve years. Another pre-requisite kept by the cunning cousins required the Pandavas to live somewhere in disguise, without being discovered for a year following this 12th year of exile. The Pandavas fulfilled their part but Duryodhana, the eldest son of Dhritarashtra, was unwilling to restore the Pandavas to their kingdom even after the thirteen years of cruel exile.

Lord Krishna, friend and advisor to the Pandava camp attempted a peaceful resolution without success, and both sides called upon their allies. Two armies arrayed themselves at Kurukshetra in northern India. The War lasted for 18 days, resulted in horrendous bloodshed and victory to the Pandavas.

But this is only the tiny part or I would like to say it as the abstract which everyone in the society knows in general, when the topic of this great epic arises. There are many other important tales and life lessons we missed to notice while reading about Mahabharata. It is rather ravishing for me to know that there are hundreds of interesting characters who went unnoticed in this mighty tale. I, hence chose to study about the back stories of these characters for my Amrita Values Programme Research Project this semester. A few of them

did sound familiar although we don't know about who they actually were or how they became a part of this mighty mythological / political epic.



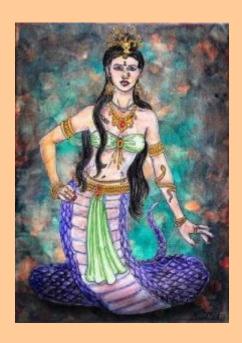


CHARACTER 1: ULUPI

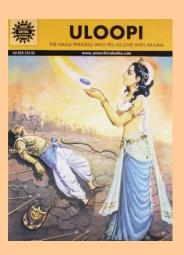
Ulupi, is one of the most unnoticed character epic Mahabharata. She was the daughter of Kauravya, who was the king of Nagas. Her father ruled the underwater kingdom of vicious serpents in the Ganga river. She was a versatile personality and was also a well-trained warrior. She is one amongst the 4 wives of the mighty archer Arjuna. Ulupi is said to have clearly met as well as married Arjuna when he was in exile with his brothers and panchali, and with whom she bore his son Iravan. She played a major part in the upbringing of Babruvahana, Arjuna's son with Chitrangada. She is also credited with redeeming Arjuna from the curse of the Vasus by restoring his life after he was slain in a battle by Babruvahana. So, the back story for all these events goes as follows.

Arjuna, the third Pandava sibling, is ousted from Indraprastha, to go on a twelve-year journey as a repentance for disregarding the provisions of his union with Draupadi, the siblings' regular spouse. Joined by Brahmins, Arjuna goes toward the north eastern district of present-day India.

At some point, when Arjuna washes in the Ganga waterway to play out his customs, the momentum manoeuvres him into the stream. He later understands that it was Ulupi, the Naga princess, who got a handle on and maneuverer him into the waterway. She held him with her hands and went under her will. They at last wound up in a submerged realm, the house of Kauravya. Arjuna went over a conciliatory fire there and acquainted his rituals with the fire. Agni was satisfied with Arjuna's unhesitating contribution of oblations.



Enchanted by her demonstration, Arjuna asks Ulupi around her experience. She uncovers her genealogy and concedes that she had become hopelessly enamored with him. Arjuna, be that as it may, decreases her proposition refering to his chastity on his journey. Ulupi contends that his abstinence is restricted uniquely to Draupadi, Arjuna's main spouse. Fulfilled by her contention, he weds her and goes through a day with her. A child realized Iravan was destined to them. Ulupi awards him a help that any creatures that address submerged will submit to him and that he will make up never crushed in battle submerged. The Vasus, Bhiṣhma's siblings, reviled Arjuna after he murdered Bhishma through injustice in the Kurukshetra War. At the point when Ulupi knew about the revile, she looked for the assistance of her dad, Kauravya. Her dad went to Ganga, Bhishma's maternal parent, and



delegated her for an alleviation from the revile. After hearing him, Ganga said that Arjuna would approach slaughtered by his own child, Babruvahana—Arjuna's child through Chitrangada—and highlighted back to life when Ulupi put a diamond called Nagamaṇi on his chest.

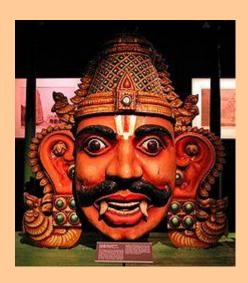
Following her dad's recommendation, Ulupi actuates Babruvahana to battle Arjuna. At the point when Arjuna goes to Manipur with the pony alluded for the Asvamedha penance, the lord Babruvahana, as coordinated by Ulupi, moves Arjuna to a duel. In the wild fight that occurred between them, both are ruined by different's bolts. At long last, Arjuna is mortally injured and is murdered by his child when he shoots an amazing bolt at him. Chitrangada races to the spot and misuses Ulupi for impelling Babruvahana to battle Arjuna. Apologizing of his deed, Babruvahana is resolved to commit suicide, yet is quickly halted by Ulupi. She goes to her realm and brings the Nagamani.

At the point when she puts the Nagamani on Arjuna's chest, his life is re-established, in this manner assuaging him of the Vasus' revile. When rewarded his life, Arjuna gets glad to see Ulupi, Chitrangada, and Babruvahana. He takes every one of them to Hastinapur. Upon the beginning of the Kali Yuga, the Pandavas alongside Draupadi resigned and left the seat to their solitary beneficiary Arjuna's grandson, Parikshit. Surrendering any their effects and ties, they depicted their last excursion of journey to the Himalayas, joined by a canine. Ulupi returned to her realm in the Ganga stream. People can also find her reference in the Vishnu Purana and the Bhagavata Purana.

CHARACTER 2: IRAVA

Albeit a minor character in the Mahabharat, the tale of Iravan comes around today in two religions of Tamil starting point, and chiefly found in Southern India – the Kuttantavar clique devoted to Iravan in locale Villupuram; and the faction of Draupadi. At the point when Arjuna needed to leave the organization of his family and go on isolation for a year as an atonement he meets Ulupi, the girl of King of Nagas. He at that point ended up wedding Ulupi. Arjuna was not invited by the Naga faction. This disdain could be because of Arjuna killing a few snakes prior during the consuming of Khandava backwoods, or possibly because of the progressing contention among men and snakes around then.

Arjuna remained with Ulupi for some time, and afterward left for additional experiences. From their short association was conceived Iravan, likewise called Aravan (in Tamil, signifying 'upright'). As Iravan grew up into a fine kid, his mom enlightened him regarding his genuine dad and family. Tired of the steady second-resident treatment and dismissal allotted to him by his uncles, and with the new information on his brilliant heredity, Iravan was anxious to meet his most famous dad. Arjuna had by then arrived at Indra's royal residence in the paradise. So Iravan followed him to Indralok.



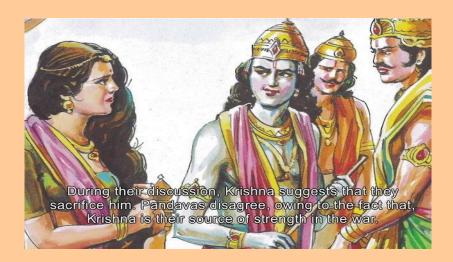


At the point when Iravan at last met Arjuna in Indralok, he was pleased to see his child full grown. Arjuna trained Iravan to return and sit tight for his return, so the families can be accommodated. Iravan got back to Naga loka close to the Ganges and anticipated to get with his dad. Things happened, and the unpleasant fight between the cousins Kauravas and Pandavas spilled across the whole nation, at long last bringing about all the lords and rulers of the age walking towards the war zone of Kurukshetra for the Great War. Iravan heard the news, and anxious to help his dad, took his multitude of snakes and rushed to the combat zone. Arjuna was happy to see his child, presently a completely developed youthful chap, daring and knowledgeable in the specialty of war.

The Great War started. During the fight, Iravan battles numerous adversaries, the most noticeable are the children of Subala, lord of Gandhara, and siblings of Shakuni. Iravan's multitude of nagas (snakes) routs them and he executes 5 out of the 6 Gandhara rulers. In any case, as the eighth day of the war reaches a conclusion, things look disheartening. There is demise and obliteration and seemingly no end in sight. It appears to be the war will go on for eternity. The two players are similarly coordinated. Both have probably the best heroes the

world has seen. Both are battling a dharma-yuddha. Both parties concur that the war is taking longer than wanted, and is prompting enormous and pointless gore. Individuals discuss what should be possible. Abruptly a thought approaches – perhaps a human penance to Kali, the goddess of death, could conciliate her and finish up the war sooner.

The casualty ought to consistently be deliberate and able to surrender his life in a human conciliatory ceremony, and he ought to likewise be an example of good fighter – with 32 veer lakhshana. There are just 4 heroes who make it to the short rundown – Shalya from the Kaurava side, Arjuna the third Pandava, Iravan the child of Arjuna, and Krishna himself.



While this is going on, Iravan becomes acquainted with about the chamber and comes over. At this point, Krishna has offered himself as a conciliatory casualty. Yet, Iravan steps in, and consents to have his spot. Everybody commends the youthful chap and his fortitude. Krishna is satisfied and asks him for helps. Iravan requests three things. First and foremost, he says he might want to a kick the bucket a brave passing, much the same as some other Kshatriya sovereign, instead of biting the dust like a symbol of atonement. Also, he was apprehensive he will bite the dust an unhitched male and be covered after his demise similar to the custom for the individuals who have not finished their stations throughout everyday life, instead of given the appropriate burial service rituals that are typically given to ordinary, hitched individuals. So he requests to be hitched before he passes on. Furthermore, thirdly, he wished to see the remainder of the fight and Pandava's triumph despite the fact that he would be dead.

Krishna acknowledges every one of his desires. Iravan offers himself as a casualty, and cuts his own body multiple times, one each for his veer lakshana. After his penance is acknowledged and offered to goddess Kali, he is resurrected for day, either by Krishna or by the righteousness of him being a naga (snake) and equipped for self-recovery. For his subsequent desire however, they required a young lady to get him hitched for an evening. However, no lord would approach to offer his little girl, realizing that the kid is required to kick the bucket the exceptionally following day. After a few to and fro, Krishna mediates. He takes the female type of Vishnu, known as Mohini, and gets married to Iravan for an evening. Mohini later likewise mourns his demise like any widow would, breaking her wedding bangles and tearing the adornments. After that Krishna gets back to his typical male structure, and continues his obligations as Arjuna's charioteer.

Iravan goes to the war zone with his naga armed force while Bhishma is as yet driving the Kaurava camp, and makes devastation in the Kaurava armed force, completely mindful of his approaching destruction. The Kauravas alarm at this. At last, Duryodhana sends the Rakshasa Alambusha to battle Iravan. Their fight seethes on for quite a while, in which both presentation extraordinary ability of arms. Iravan is courageous, strong and ensured by his naga genealogy. It is said that individuals could see the hood of Adi Shesha naga over his head as he battled his foe. At last, Alambusha, child of sage Rishyashringa muni and Shanta who is likewise knowledgeable in maya (the craft of figment) being an evil presence, appears as powerful Garuda the Eagle and jumps at Iravan. At seeing their human adversary the Eagle, the snakes incorporating Adi Shesha pull back in fear, leaving Iravan unprotected briefly. At this stage, Alambusha strikes the dangerous brush and murders Iravan by removing his head, consequently finishing the penance, and furthermore giving Iravan the demise of a hero he so wished.

The most predominant convention is among the faction of Kuttantavar in Tamil Nadu, where Iravan is additionally the primary divinity and his marriage and passing is ordered in a multi day celebration every year. Because of his union with a lady who was initially a man (Krishna as Mohini), Iravan (or Aravan or Kuttantavar) is viewed as the benefactor god of hijras, or transsexuals. Indeed, in the South the transsexuals call themselves Aravanis or life partner of Aravan, or Thiru-Nangais or Aalis. During the celebration, they get hitched to a wooden head of Iravan which is later scorched, and afterward they regret his demise the following day, much the same as Mohini did.

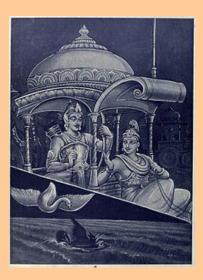
Presently, the third help, is normally just found in the faction of Draupadi. This custom says that after his demise, his head was cut off and set on a post high up in the front line, so he could see the remainder of the fight. This is the reason in Draupadi's sanctuaries in the South India, one discovers Iravan's cut off head, with a mustache, enormous eyes and ears, two teeth (devilish teeth to remind that he is a naga ruler), and a tapered crown, frequently with a snake hood on top.

CHARACTER 3: SHALYA

In the epic Mahabharata, King shalya was the sibling of Madri, just as the leader of the Madra realm. Shalya, a ground-breaking Spear and mace contender and an impressive charioteer, was deceived by Duryodhana to battle the battle on the Kauravas. Shalya was a unimaginable quiet and purposeful warrior, why he made a decent charioteer and why he could dominate at Spear and mace-battling regardless of his slight form. Shalya means'a pointed weapon', his different names are Madraraj. On his approach to Hastinapur, King Pandu experienced Shalya's military. At parlay and his general met with Pandu. Shalya suggested that they could either choose the victor by battle, by marriage, he uncovered that his general was in all honesty his sister Madri. Taking a gander at her magnificence, Pandu acknowledged the woman enthusiastically and took her to Hastinapur, Shalya twisted the knee to Hastinapur. A long time after Madri had chosen to go for sati, every year, for a spell, brought his nephews Nakula and Sahadeva to Madra, wanted to make them his beneficiaries. On their eighteenth birthday celebration, Shalya uncovered his expectation to the twins.



Shalya contended that Nakula could be a ruler one day, rather than fourth-in-line to the seat of Hastinapur, provided that Yudhishthira was named the crown sovereign in any case. The shrewd Nakula called attention to that Shalya just needed Nakula and Sahadeva as his beneficiaries, on the grounds that both were offspring of God truth be told, Shalya was shunning his own kids with this ploy. Nakula guaranteed that while he and Sahadeva



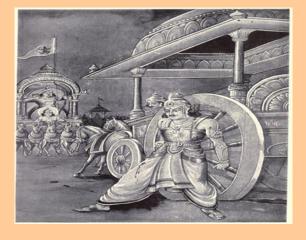
remaining with the Pandavas would give them no force, his siblings and Kunti really adored him, could never attempt to make Nakula and Sahadeva their pawns. Through some consultation, Nakula is persuaded, he and Sahadeva become the beneficiaries to the seat, however Sahadeva told his uncle on one condition: they will consistently remain with the Pandavas. At the point when Shalya knew about the approaching Kurukshetra War, he walked forward with his military to join his nephews. In transit, Shalya was deceived by Duryodhana, who masterminded a colossal blowout for Shalya and his men, engaging him for quite a long time. Intrigued, Shalya is liberal with his recognition and requests to see Yudhishthira, who Shalya thought was his host.

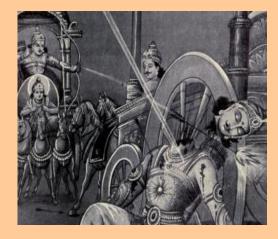
At the point when Duryodhana uncovers the unfairness, Shalya is amazed however is constrained to give a help because of the neighborliness. Unfit to turn down Duryodhana's solicitation to join the Kauravas, Shalya met the Pandavas and apologized for his mix-up. Nakula and Sahadeva got angered, saying that Shalya had demonstrated that Nakula and Sahadeva weren't genuine siblings to the Pandavas, yet just advance siblings. Yudhishthira stepped in and reproved the twins, directing that they were never to again debase their relationship by saying they were "step" siblings. Now, Shalya figured it out. Yudhishthira vowed to Shalya. Before the beginning of the war, Yudhishthira met with his elderly folks on the Kaurava side, requesting their gifts. Shalya gave his endowments to Yudhishthira,

favoring him with triumph. In spite of the fact that not lively in his battle, Shalya went up against numerous incredible fighters during the war. Shalya killed Uttar Kumara on the main day of the war. Shalya slaughtered the kid with his lance after an awesome duel. On the second day, Shalya's child Madranjaya was killed by Virata.

Along these lines, he crushed and was going to slaughter him yet Satyaki saved him. On the thirteenth day, Shalya's children Rukmangada and Rukmaratha were killed by Abhimanyu. On the fourteenth day of fight, Shalya was accused of getting Jayadratha far from Arjuna. Shalya endeavored to check Arjuna's development. Arjuna reacted by binds Shalya to his chariot utilizing his bolts, much similarly Abhimanyu had done the day preceding. On seventeenth day of fight, Karna crushes however saves Nakula and Sahadeva, saying that they are more youthful and not his equivalents, in this way not meriting demise by his hands and continues to conflict with Arjuna. Karna-Arjuna duel starts. Unfit to beat Arjuna with his own strength, Karna welcomes Ashwasena snake on his bolt and focuses on Arjuna. Shalya interferes. Sickened at Shalya's steady recognition of Arjuna, Karna imagines that counsel should be wrong, focuses on Arjuna's head. Krishna, pushes Arjuna's chariot into the ground. Finally Arjuna slaughters Karna with Anjalikastra and Duryodhana names Shalya as the president.

In the wake of turning out to be president, presently energetic to battle for the Kaurava cause. Krishna recommends that Yudhishthira should slaughter the incredible fighter in light of the fact that the oldest Pandava was not a man of hostility and could meet Shalya's quiet disposition, in fight. Shalya is slaughtered by Yudhishthira in lance battle. After Shalya and Sahadeva turned into the lords of Madra realm.





CHARACTER 4: VRISHASENA

Vrishasena was oldest child Of Karna. furthermore, grandson of Lord Surya. He was an extraordinary bowman and amazing contender like Karna. Individuals consistently offer significance to misrepresented one day hero Abhimanyu who battled uniquely on the thirteenth day of the war. In any case, Vrishasena had the ability to move mountains exactly at 16 years old. Vrishasena vanquished draupad and valiant draupad fled from combat zone. Beset with the dread of Karna's child, the Panchalas fled away on all sides, similar to the Danavas from dread of Indra in the incredible clash of yesteryear between the divine beings and the Asuras. In this way distressed fighting by Vrishasenaa, the Panchalas and the Somakas, O ruler, brightened by lights, looked extremely lovely. Having vanquished them in fight, Karna's child looked wonderful like the child, O Bharata, when he arrives at the meridian. Among each one of those huge number of rulers of thy side and their the valiant Vrishasenaa at that point appeared to be the solitary shining illuminator.



Vrishasena without any help crushed the five uppandavas. Shot by Vrishasenaa in that fight, a huge number of bolts flowed every which way, puncturing through men and horses and vehicles and elephants. Distressed and squashed therewith, heroes and horse-men, abruptly tumbled down on the earth. Observing that solitary fighter flowing boldly on the field, all the rulers (of the Pandava armed force) joining, encircled him on all sides. Nakula's child, Satanika, surged at Vrishasenaa and punctured him with ten bolts fit for entering into the vitals. The child of Karna, notwithstanding, removing his bow, felled then his norm. Immediately, different children of Draupadi, covetous of saving that sibling of theirs, surged at him. Also, soon they were made imperceptible by methods for Vrishasena's arrowy showers.

Vrishasenaa crushed Nakula and fearless Nakula fled on chariot of Bhima. Vrishasena vanquished Nakula and made him chariotless n courageous nakula fled on chariot of Bhimsena, in seeing Arjun. Vrishsena alone experience both Nakula and Bhima at same time. At that point he made the two of them washed in blood and nakula got weaponless. Bhimsena with the dread of Vrishasenaa mentioned Arjuna to executed Vrishasenaa. Furthermore,

Nakul said "rapidly murder him". First of padnada heroes like Arjun, Bheem and Nakul alongside numerous other exposed Vrishasena to a gathering assault! However, he penetrated every one of them courageously. Vrishasena was locked in with Nakula and was going to execute him. To save nakula, Arjuna meddles and murdered vrishasen which was contrary to control of war. Some likewise guarantee that Arjuna cheated in executing this incredible hero child of Karna.

CHARACTER 5: YUYUTSU

Yuyutsu assumed a significant part in Mahabharat, as a source or well-wisher of Pandav, among the Kaurava. He helped Pandav by giving basic data about Kaurav readiness and arranging. We can call him Vibhishan of Mahabharat.

With Sage Vyas' help Gandhari got pregnant. She was pregnant for over one year, and still the conveyance was not in sight. Then again Kunti brought forth Yudhistir, which made Dhrutarashtra eager. He chose to have a child through Gandhari's dasi Sugadha. She was not Kshatriya, but rather had a place with Vaishya varna. Child of Dhrutarastra and Sugadha was Yuyutsu. He was Kuru from father's side and Vaishya from mother's side. He was brought into the world around the same time as Duryodhan. To that degree, he was more youthful than Yudhistir and of a similar period of Duryodhan. Yet, he was senior to other 99 stage siblings and sister Dushala.

Yu signifies 'to battle' and utsu signifies 'interest'. So by begetting these two words, the importance of the name is 'the person who is interested to battle'. It worked out that, his name was in opposition to his character. For his entire life he attempted to bring harmony among Kaurav and Pandav. In spite of the fact that he was child of Dhrutarashtra, Kaurav never acknowledged him as one of them, since his mom Sugadha was a dasi. While growing up, he was abused by Kaurav. There are very few records of his childhood, then again, actually, Yuyutsu cautioned Bhim about Duryodhan's arrangement to execute him by harming his water. It was Duryodhan's second endeavor of killing Bhim. After Duryodhan's first endeavor of harming Bhim, truth be told Bhim had acquired strength of thousand elephants. Thus, notwithstanding alert from Yuyutsu, Bhim drank the water and nothing happened to him.

He was one of the eleven maharathis in Kaurav, who could battle 7,20,000 champions at the same time. Dhrutarashtra had delegated Yuyutsu as the emissary of the Varnavrata district. Once, an alliance of incredible rulers assaulted Varnavrata. Yuyutsu opposed them and guarded the realm for a half year in a row. During this time, neither Duryodhan nor

Hastinapur sent him any assistance. Before long, following a half year, the crushed rulers surrendered and left. In this way, it would seem that that alongside Kaurav, seat of Hastinapur, didn't actually like Yuyutsu.

There is additionally a notice that he was available during Draupadi's swayamvar, however he didn't take an interest in swayamvar. Kurukshetra war was viewed as upright war, which is viewed as Dharmakshetra Kurukshetra. Champions from either side were offered opportunity to pick, which side to battle for. Just before war, the reliable Yuyutsu chose Pandav side to battle for and he battled against his progression siblings Kaurav. During the war, he accompanied all the women of Kuru tribe, back to Hastinapur and got back to fight ground. On the twelfth day, he battled Bhagadatta and his elephant Supratika. He additionally battled Uluka, the child of Shakuni. He was the lone Kaurav survivor among the twelve overcomers of the extraordinary battle of Kurukshetra. After the war, Pandav made him King of Indraprasth. He additionally dealt with Dhrutarashtra and Gandhari. Afterward, when Pandav chose to leave the world, they gave over control of Hastinapur to Yuyutsu and left. One can draw matches among him and Vidur. Both being children of Dasi. Both were faithful to Hastinapur seat and both cherished and adored Krishna.



INFERENCE:

Bagavadgita which consists of the verses told by the almighty lord himself to Arjuna in the battle ground is popularly said to give solutions to each and every problem present in a person's life. From personal and professional needs, many people are now depending on it in order to find the solution to the crisis they are facing in life. What caught my attention was

that, if a tiny part of the entire story on the battle ground can affect the lives of people to this extent and make them better humans and provide them a peaceful lifestyle, how much more the impact could the stories of unsung characters of the great epic, The Mahabharata, can teach to the world. With the same thought I went about researching for their stories. Most of them had highly provoking tales to be told, but it is sad that these characters were not given the needed limelight in the popular epic. Their aspect of loyalty, their respect towards each other's words, their wisdom and on top of all their lionhearted brave attitude teach us the how to inculcate required ethical lifestyle and stand on our feet for fighting against Adharma. Knowing these stories not only gave me a deeper insight about the popular Indian mythology but also gave me different viewpoints and opinions which I can use in my life for making crucial decisions.

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