



# The Date of Kurukshetra War (3162 BCE)

*Astronomical Evidence*

**Vedveer Arya**

# The Date of Bharata War – 3162 BCE (-3162)

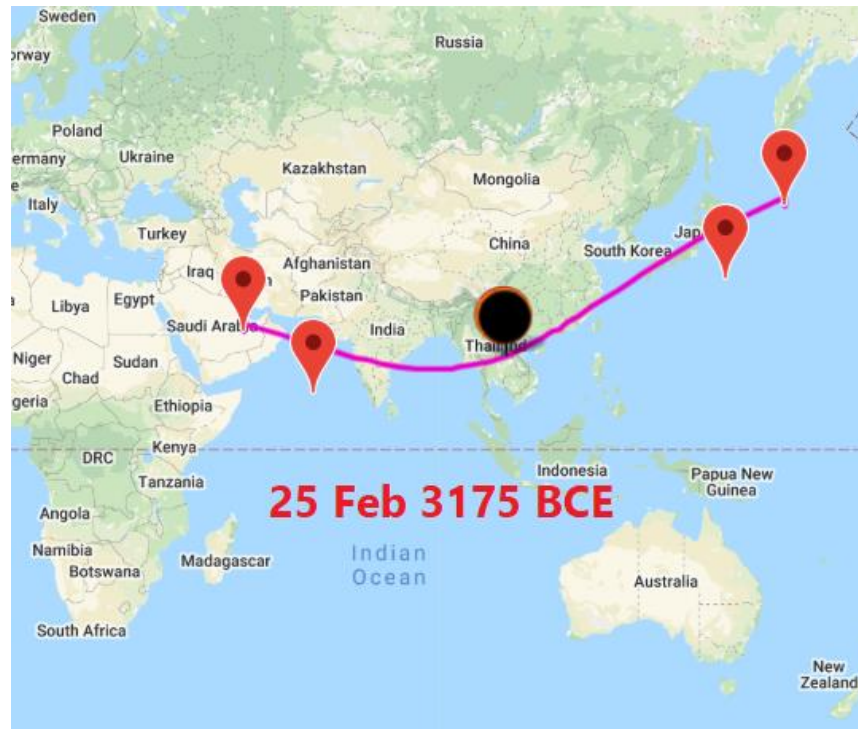
- Saptarshis in Magha Nakshatra – 3176-3076 BCE.
- Dvapara Yuga ended and **Kaliyuga commenced in 3176 BCE** (Paitamaha Siddhanta).
- **Mahabharata followed 5-year Yuga Calendar** of Paitamaha Siddhanta (Magha Shukladi).
- Aihole Inscription : Saka -556 (27 BCE) and **Bharata War – 3162 BCE.**
- Yellaya: कल्यब्दाः रूप (12) रहिताः पाण्डवाब्दाः प्रकीर्तिताः – (3173 BCE – 12 = 3161 BCE)
- Krishna left the world in the 36<sup>th</sup> year after Kurukshetra war- 3162-36 = 3126 BCE.
- Brahma Siddhanta (Chaitra Shukla Pratipada) – **3126 BCE** (Kaliyuga, Prabhava Samvatsara when Jupiter was in Dhanishtha Nakshatra)

## Solar Eclipse on the day when Pandavas left for Vanavasa

- Sabhā Parva mentions that a solar eclipse occurred when Pāndavas left Hastinapur for Vanavāsa of thirteen years.

आसीन्निष्ठानको घोरो निर्घातश्च महानभूत्।

दिवोल्काश्चापतन्धोरा राहुश्चार्कमुपाग्रसत्॥ Sabhā Parva-72.21



**A Solar Eclipse  
occurred on 25 Feb  
3175 BCE, Phalguna  
Amavasya.**

# Bhishma Calculated the Exile Period of Pandavas in 5-Year Yuga Calendar

- Bhishma clarified that 13 lunar years, 5 lunar months and 12 nights spent in exile by Pandavas.

तेषां कालातिरेकेण ज्योतिषां च व्यतिक्रमात् । पञ्चमे पञ्चमे वर्षे द्वौ मासावुपजायते ॥

तेषामभ्यधिका मासाः पञ्च द्वादश च क्षपाः । त्रयोदशानां वर्षाणामिति मे वर्तते मतिः ॥ Virata Parva 47.3-4

- Pandavas left Hastinapur on 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 3175 BCE (Phalguna Amavasya) for 13-year exile when a solar eclipse occurred.
- Ajnatavasa of one year began on 14<sup>th</sup> Mar 3163 BCE.
- Bhishma clarified that 13 lunar years (29.5 days x 156 = 4602 days), 5 lunar months (29.5 days x 5 = 148 days) and 12 nights = total 4762 days (4602+148+12) spent in exile from 25 Feb 3175 BCE to 11/12 Mar 3162 BCE. If you convert it into lunisolar years (366 x 13 = 4758 days), Pandavas spent more than 13 lunisolar years in exile.



# Mars was on Retrograde in Between Chitra and Swati

ध्रुवः प्रज्वलितो घोरमपसव्यं प्रवर्तते ।  
चित्रास्वात्यन्तरे चैवधिष्ठितः परुषोग्रहः ॥  
(Bhishma Parva 3.16)

कृत्वा चाङ्गारको वक्रं ज्येष्ठायां मधुसूदन ।  
अनुराधां प्रार्थयते मैत्रं संशमयन् इव  
(Udyoga Parva 141.8)

वक्रानुवक्रं कृत्वा च श्रवणे पावकप्रभः ।  
ब्रह्मराशिं समावृत्य लोहिताङ्गो व्यवस्थितः ॥  
(Bhishma Parva 3.17)



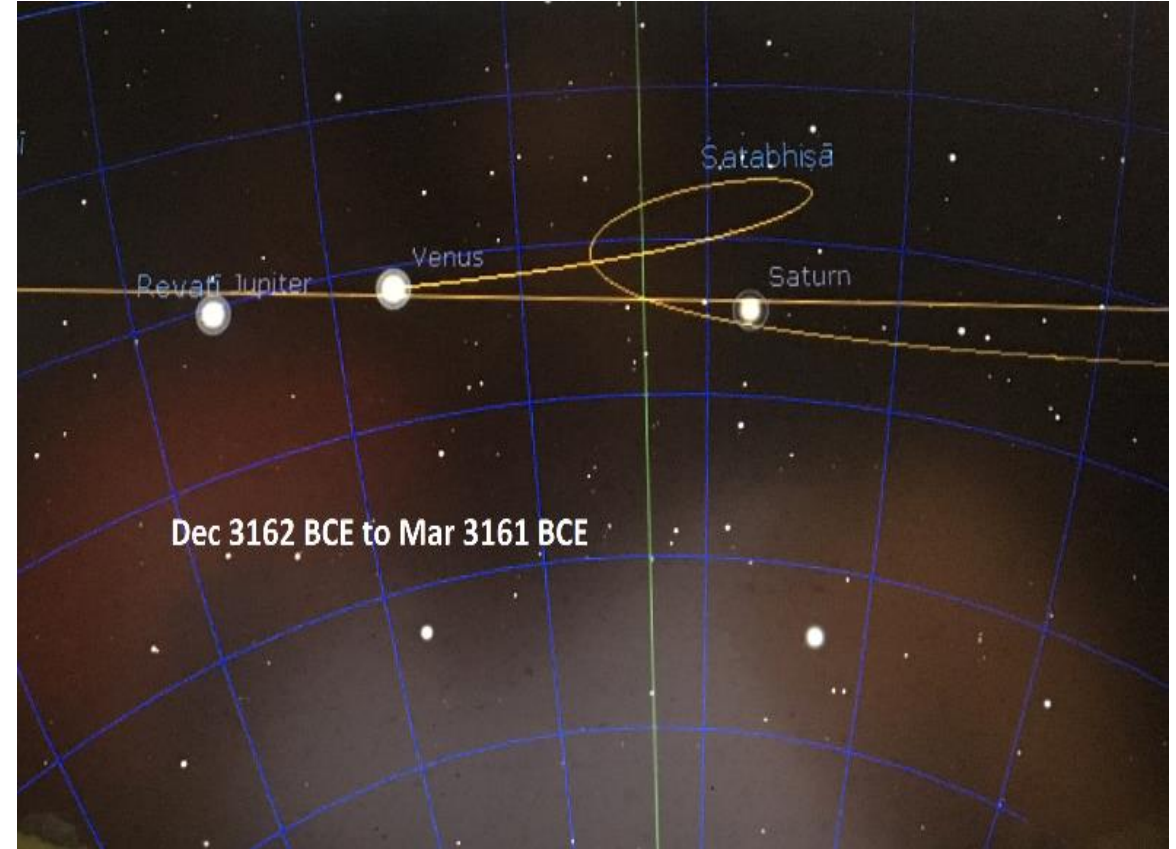
The retrograde of Mars ended in between **Anurādhā and Jyēsthā Nakśatras** in the first week of **Aug 3162 BCE** and Mars positioned in **Śravaṇa Nakśatra** in the middle of **Oct 3162 BCE**. Mars was in **Śravaṇa** before the beginning of the Mahābhārata War on **25<sup>th</sup> Oct 3162 BCE**.

# Venus was Ready to go on Retrograde in Purva Bhadrapada Nakshatra at the time of MB War

शुक्रः प्रोष्ठपदे पूर्वे समारुह्य विशांपते,  
उत्तरे तु परिक्रम्य सहितः प्रत्युदीक्षते ॥

(Bhishma Parva 3.15)

- It is indicated in the Mahābhārata that Venus was ready to go on retrograde in Pūrva Bhadrapada Nakṣatra. Venus was in Śravaṇa Nakṣatra before the beginning of the Mahābhārata War and it went on retrograde in Pūrvabhadra around **Dec 3162 BCE**.



# Mercury on Retrograde in Three Nakshatras Before MB War

त्रिषु पूर्वेषु सवेषु नक्षत्रेषु विशां पते ।

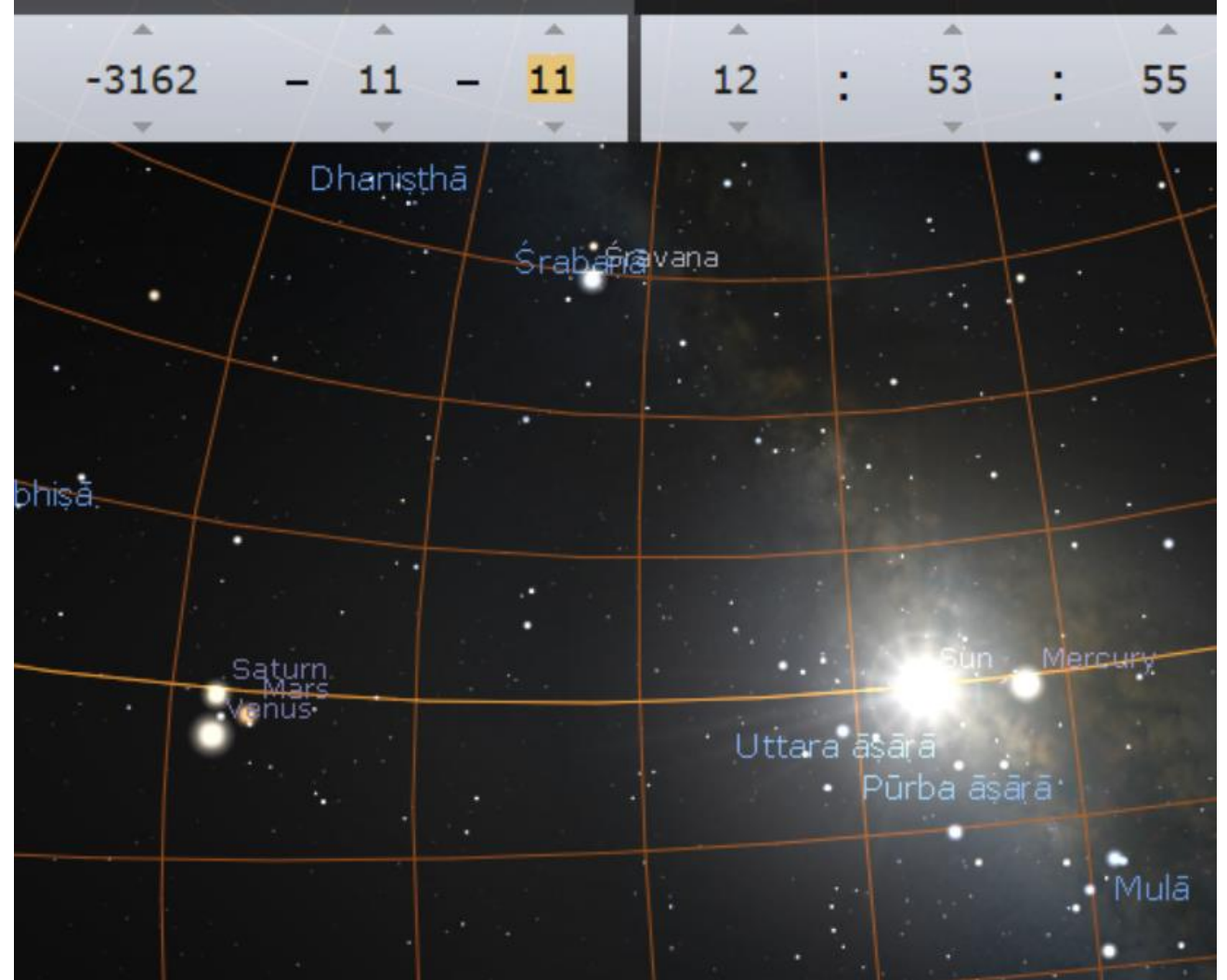
बुधः संपतते अभीक्षणं जनयन् सुमहद् भयम् ॥ Bhishma Parva 3.27

- Mercury was on Retrograde in three Nakshatras, i.e., **Purva Bhadrapada, Pushya and Vishakha** before the commencement of Mahabharata war on **25 Oct 3162 BCE**.

# Venus and Mars in conjunction on the 18<sup>th</sup> Day of War.

भृगुसूनुधरापुत्रौ शशिजेन समन्वितौ  
चरमं पाण्डुपुत्राणां पुरस्तात् सर्वभूभुजाम् ॥  
Shalya Parva (GP 11:17)

- Venus and Mars were in conjunction on the 18th day of the MB War and Mercury was also positioned closely. The 18<sup>th</sup> day was **11 Nov 3162 BCE**.





# When Moon was in Magha, No Planet was Visible in the Night

मघाविषयगः सोमस्तद्दिनं प्रत्यपद्यत ।  
दीप्यमानाश्च सम्पेतुर्दिवि सप्त महाग्रहाः ॥  
Bhishma Parva 17.2

Moon was in Magha Nakshatra on  
**18 Oct 3162 BCE** and all planets  
were in the sky during the  
daytime after Brahma Muhurta.



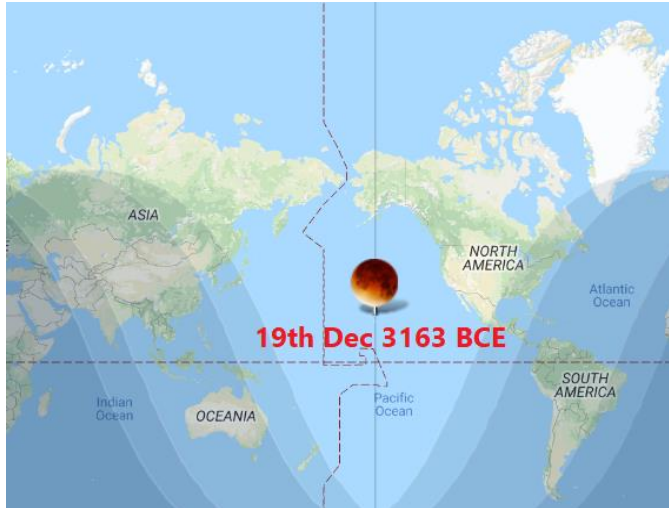
# A Lunar Eclipse Followed by a Solar Eclipse Before MB war

- Bhishma Parva indicates that a lunar eclipse followed by a solar eclipse occurred before the Mahābhārata War. Probably, there was an adhika tithi before Krishna trayodashi.
- A lunar eclipse was on 19<sup>th</sup> Dec 3163 BCE and a solar eclipse was on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan 3162 BCE.

चतुर्दशीं पञ्चदशीं भूतपूर्वा च षोडशीम्,  
इमां तु नाभिजानामि अमावास्यां त्रयोदशीम्॥

चन्द्रसूर्यावुभौ ग्रस्तौ एकमासे त्रयोदशीम्,

अपर्वणि ग्रहावेतौ प्रजाः संक्षपयिष्यतः॥ (Bhishma Parva 3.28-29)



## A Pair of eclipses before the 36<sup>th</sup> year or in the 36<sup>th</sup> year after MB war

- Musala Parva states that a lunar eclipse followed by a solar eclipse was again occurred before the 36<sup>th</sup> year after MB War, i.e., 3126 BCE.  
एवं पश्यन् हृषीकेशः संप्राप्तं कालपर्ययम्,  
त्रयोदश्याम् अमावास्यां तान्दृष्ट्वा प्राब्रवीद् इदम्॥  
चतुर्दशी पञ्चदशी कृतेयं राहुणा पुनः,  
तदा च भरते युद्धे प्राप्ता चाद्य क्षयाय नः॥ (Musala Parva 3.16-17)
- A Solar eclipse occurred on **11 Aug 3128 BCE** and a Lunar eclipse occurred on **25 Aug 3128 BCE**.
- or
- A lunar eclipse occurred on **9<sup>th</sup> Jan 3126 BCE** and a solar eclipse occurred on **24<sup>th</sup> Jan 3126 BCE**.

# Krishna's Diplomatic Mission

- According to MB 5.81.6-7, Sri Krishna **leaves for Hastinapur on the day of Revati Nakshatra (7 Oct 3162 BCE)** in the month of Karttika. Krishna meets Karna **on the day of Uttara Phalguni (19/20 Oct 3162 BCE)** and tells him that the war will begin **on the 7th day from now when Amavasya will occur in the Jyeshtha nakshatra (25<sup>th</sup> Oct 3162 BCE).**

सप्तमाच्चापि दिवसादमावास्या भविष्यति ।  
सङ्ग्रामं योजयेत्तत्र तां ह्याहुः शक्रदेवताम् ॥ (Udyoga 140:18)

# Bhishma Nirvana (92<sup>nd</sup> Day from the 10<sup>th</sup> Day of War)

- The Mahābhārata War began on Kārtika Amāvāsyā.
- The fall of Bhishma on the tenth day of the war.
- The Mahābhārata War lasted for eighteen days. (8 days)
- After the war, Pāndavas stayed on the banks of Ganga roughly for a month. (27/28 days)
- Thereafter, Yudhiṣṭhira was coronated in Hastinapur. (Pushya Purnima)
- Yudhiṣṭhira and Krishna met Bhishma on the next day. Krishna indicated that Bhishma had only fifty-six days to live. (56 days)
- Yudhiṣṭhira came back to Hastinapur and lived there for fifty nights.
- Yudhiṣṭhira confirmed that Uttarāyaṇa had already commenced. Therefore, he left Hastinapur and met Bhishma on the fifty-first day from the day of his last meeting with Bhishma.  
स निर्ययौ गजपुरात् याजकैः परिवारितः । दृष्ट्वा निवृत्तमादित्यं प्रवृत्तं चोत्तरायणम् ॥
- Bhishma told Yudhiṣṭhira that Uttarāyaṇa had already commenced and hinted the date as Māgha Śukla Pañchamī.  
दिष्ट्या प्राप्तोऽसि कौन्तेय सहामात्यो युधिष्ठिर । परिवृत्तो हि भगवान् सहस्रांशुर्दिवाकरः ॥  
माघोऽयं समनुप्राप्तो मासः पुण्यः युधिष्ठिर । त्रिभागशेषः पक्षोऽयं शुक्लो भवितुमर्हति ॥
- The Mahābhārata mentions a date of Māgha Śukla Aṣṭamī related to Bishma Nirvāṇa.



# Bhishma Nirvana (92nd day from the 10<sup>th</sup> day of war)

		<b>BCE</b>
1	The first day of the Mahābhārata War (Kārttika Chaturdaśī or Amāvāsyā)	25 <sup>th</sup> Oct 3162 BCE
2	The fall of Bhishma (10 <sup>th</sup> day of the war) Mārgaśīrṣa Aṣṭamī or Navamī	3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov 3162 BCE
3	The war lasted for 18 days or the 18 <sup>th</sup> day of Mahābhārata war (Mārgaśīrṣa Krishna Pratipadā/Dvitiyā)	11 <sup>th</sup> Nov 3162 BCE
4	The epoch of Yudhiṣṭhira era or the coronation of Yudhiṣṭhira in Hastinapur (on Pauṣa Pūrṇimā after the Mahābhārata War)	8 <sup>th</sup> Dec 3162 BCE
5	Yudhiṣṭhira and Krishna met Bhishma (Pauṣa Krishna Pratipadā)	9 <sup>th</sup> Dec 3162 BCE
6	Adhika Pauṣa month began on	24 <sup>th</sup> Dec 3162 BCE
7	Uttarāyaṇa occurred on	15 <sup>th</sup> Jan 3161 BCE
8	Māgha Śukla Pratipadā	23 <sup>rd</sup> Jan 3161 BCE
7	Yudhiṣṭhira lived 50 days in Hastinapur. Thereafter, he met Bhishma on 51 <sup>st</sup> day, i.e., Māgha Śukla Pañchamī/Ṣaṣṭhī.	27 <sup>th</sup> Jan 3161 BCE
8	Bhishma went into Samādhi state (Māgha Śukla Aṣṭamī, Rohiṇī Nakṣatra).	30 <sup>th</sup> Jan 3161 BCE
9	The date of Bhishma Nirvāṇa (Māgha Śukla Dvādaśī and the 92 <sup>nd</sup> day counting from the 10 <sup>th</sup> day of the Mahābhārata War.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb 3161 BCE
10	Bhishma Pañchakam: Bhishma was in Samādhi state for five days from Māgha Śukla Aṣṭamī to Māgha Śukla Dvādaśī.	30 <sup>th</sup> Jan 3161 BCE to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb 3161 BCE

# **Mistranslations of Some Slokas**

# Observation of Super Moon or Harvest Moon

अलक्ष्यः प्रभयाहीनः पौर्णमासीं च कार्तिकीम्,  
चन्द्रोऽभूद् अग्निवर्णश्च समवर्णे नभस्तले ॥ (Bhishma Parva 2.23)

- This sloka of Bhishma Parva indicates that a Super Moon or Harvest Moon occurred on the full moon day of Karttika month **(10 Oct 3162 BCE)** before the Mahābhārata War. It has been mistranslated that a penumbral lunar eclipse took place on Karttika Purnima. If it was a lunar eclipse, “Raktavarnah” should have been mentioned instead of Agnivarnah. Moreover, “Samavarne nabhasthale” indicates the rise of Agnivarna Chandra.



# Occultation of Rohini by Saturn?

- It is stated that Saturn regularly occulted Rohiṇī Nakśatra (ε Tauri).  
रोहिणीं पीडयन्नेष स्थितो राजञ्शनैश्वरः । (Bhishma Parva 2.23)  
प्राजापत्यं हि नक्षत्रं ग्रहस्तीक्ष्णो महाद्युतिः  
शनैश्वरः पीडयति पीडयन् प्राणिनोऽधिकम् ॥ (Udyoga Parva 141.10)
- These Mahābhārata references of the Saturn's position in Rohiṇī should not be interpreted as the event occurred during the year of the Mahābhārata War.
- It was actually a general statement because Saturn regularly occulted Rohiṇī (Rohiṇī-Śakaṭa-Bheda) during the period 3500-3000 BCE.
- The Sanskrit word “Pīḍayan” has a suffix of “Śatri” (Latah Śatrishanachavaprathamā-samaanaadhikarane – 3.2.124 and Lakshana-hetvoh Kriyaayaah 3.2.126) and it clearly indicates the regular occurrence.

# Saturn and Jupiter were in Vishakha?

- It is also mentioned that Saturn and Brihaspati were in Viśākhā Nakśatra in the Samvatsara of 5-year calendar.

संवत्सरस्थायिनौ च ग्रहौ प्रज्वलितावुभौ ।

विशाखयोः समीपस्थौ बृहस्पतिशनैश्चरौ ॥ (Bhishma Parva 3.25)

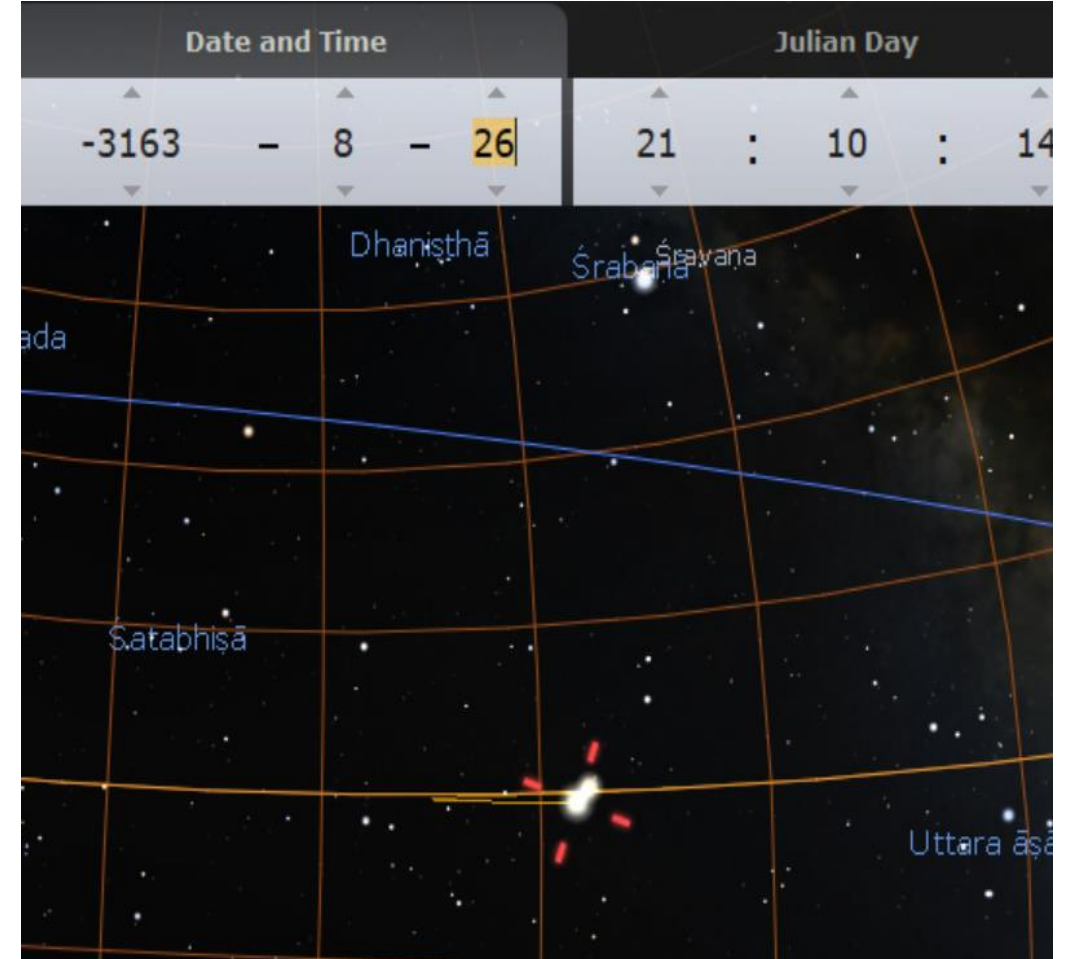
- Saturn was in Vishakha in 3171 BCE, Samvatsara, the first year of 5-year calendar and Jupiter was in Vishakha in 3166 BCE, Samvatsara.
- If a rough conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter is intended than Saturn and Brihaspati were in Viśākhā Nakśatra in 3201 BCE, Samvatsara.



# Jupiter on Retrograde in Shravana and Occulted by Saturn

मघास्वङ्गारको वक्रः श्रवणे च बृहस्पतिः,  
भाग्यं नक्षत्रमाक्रम्य सूर्यपुत्रेण पीड्यते ॥ (Bhishma  
3.13)

When Mars was in Maghā, Jupiter completed retrograde motion in Śravaṇa and occulted by Suryaputra i.e. Saturn. At that time, Saturn was sitting in “Bhāgyam Nakśatra” i.e. Shravana. Bhaga was also a name of Vishnu. Therefore, Bhagya nakshatra means either Shravana or Dhanishtha. This astronomical event took place one year before MB War around 26 Aug 3163 BCE. Seemingly, occultation of Jupiter by Saturn was considered to be a bad omen.



# Arundhati-Vasiṣṭha Observation?

- Vyāsa tells Dhritarāṣṭra that the sky used to burn during sunrise and sunset. It used to rain blood and bones. Arundhati also rose ahead of Vasiṣṭha in the past.

उभे संध्ये प्रकाशेते दिशां दाहसमन्विते ।

आसीद्गुधिरवर्षं च अस्थिवर्षं च भारत ॥ रुधिरवर्षं

या चैषा विश्रुता राजंस्त्रैलोक्ये साधुसंमता ।

अरुन्धती तयाप्येष वसिष्ठः पृष्ठतः कृतः ॥ (Bhishma Parva 2.30-31)

- Evidently, Vyāsa referred to these bad omens as the events of the past because he used the verb “**आसीत्**” and **कृतः** (Bhute, Ktaktivatoo Nishtha – Panini) in past tense. He also indirectly cautioned Dhritarāṣṭra that the same can repeat again.
- At the end of the Chapter 3 of Udyoga Parva, it is stated: “After carefully listening to the words of his father (Vyāsa), Dhritarāṣṭra says, I agree that such events (bad omens) occurred in the past (पुरा) and undoubtedly these events may occur again.” पितुर्वचो निशम्यैतद्धृतराष्ट्रोऽब्रवीदिदम् । दिष्टम् एतत्पुरा मन्ये भविष्यति न संशयः ॥ (Bhishma Parva 3.44).

# Ketu (Shveta Graha) Positioned after Crossing Chitra Nakshatra

अभीक्षणं कम्पते भूमिरर्कं राहुस्तथाग्रसत् ।  
श्वेतो ग्रहस्तथा चित्रां समतिक्रम्य तिष्ठति ॥ Bhishma Parva 3.11

- Ketu (a shadow planet) moves from east to west. It was positioned in Cancer during the year 3162 BCE as per the modern calculations. Indians had not yet mastered the eclipse calculations during the Mahabharata era as stated in Kerala astronomical texts.

# Rahu (Shyama Graha) Positioned in Jyeshtha

श्यामो ग्रहः प्रज्वलितः सधूमः सहपावकः ।

ऐन्द्रं तेजस्विनक्षत्रं ज्येष्ठामाक्रम्य तिष्ठति ॥ Bhishma Parva 3.15

- Rahu (a shadow planet) was positioned in Shravana during the year 3162 BCE as per the modern calculations. Indians had not yet mastered the eclipse calculations during the Mahabharata era as stated in Kerala astronomical texts.

# Prediction of a Solar Eclipse

- Udyoga Parva predicts the future occurrence of a solar eclipse based on the observation of moon just before the Mahābhārata War.  
सोमस्य लक्ष्म व्यावृत्तं राहुरर्कम् उपेष्यति ।  
दिवोल्काश्च पतन्त्येताः सनिर्घाताः सकम्पनाः ॥ (Udyoga Parva 141.10)
- There is also a statement that a solar eclipse took place after 18<sup>th</sup> day of war.  
राहुश्चाग्रसदादित्यमपर्वणि विशां पते ।  
चकम्पे च महाकम्पं पृथिवीं सवनद्रुमाः ॥ Shalya Parva 55.10
- The MB war was ended on 11 Nov 3162 BCE and a solar eclipse took place on **24<sup>th</sup> Nov 3162 BCE**.



# Minor Interpolation

# Balarama's Pilgrimage and Krishna's Diplomatic Mission

- Thus, Mahabharata war began on the day of Jyeshtha nakshatra. If so, Moon was in Pushya nakshatra on the last day, i.e., the 18<sup>th</sup> day.
- Now the question is why MB says that Balarama returned on the last day of war when moon was in Shravana nakshatra?

पुष्येण संप्रयातो ऽस्मि श्रवणे पुनरागतः(9.33.5)

ततो मन्युपरीतात्मा जगाम यदुनन्दनः

तीर्थयात्रां हलधरः सरस्वत्यां महायशाः

मैत्रे नक्षत्रयोगे सम सहितः सर्वयादवैः

.....

रौहिणेये गते शूरे पुष्येण मधुसूदनः (9.34.12-14)

- Anuradha is 17<sup>th</sup> and Pushya is 8<sup>th</sup> nakshatra which means Balarama waited for 18/19 days to start his pilgrimage but Balarama was upset and wanted to go on pilgrimage immediately.
- According to my opinion, Balarama left for pilgrimage on Shravana (22<sup>nd</sup> Nakshatra) and returned on Pushya on the 42<sup>nd</sup> day. Seemingly, the ancient editors of Mahabharata mistakenly changed the order of tithis and stated that Balarama left on Pushya and returned on Shravana.

## Balarama's Pilgrimage and Krishna's Diplomatic Mission

- Sri Krishna decided to go to Hastinapur for final peace mission. He left Upaplāvaya on 7 Oct 3162 BCE when moon was at Revatī Nakśatra and reached Hastinapur on 9 Oct 3162 BCE when moon was at Bharanī Nakśatra. But the final peace mission of Sri Krishna also failed. Mahābhārata war began on 25 Oct 3162 BCE, Kārttika Amāvāsyā and ended on 11 Nov 3162 BCE.
- Balarāma came to Kurukṣetra on the last day of Mahābhārata war, i.e., 11 Nov 3162 BCE when moon was at Puṣya Nakśatra. Yudhiṣṭhira was coronated on the throne of Hastinapur on 8th Dec 3162 BCE, Pauṣa Pūrṇimā.
- **Actually, Gita Jayanti day (Margashirsha Shukla Ekadasi) had confused the updater of MB who has changed the order of nakshatras related to Balarama's Pilgrimage. Seemingly, Gita Jayanti was the day of Anugita and not Gita of Mahabharata era.**