

Udyogaparva

Of the eighteen parvas of the Mahabharata, Udyogaparva is the fifth one. This has 10 adhyayas and 6682 verses.

1.Senodyogaparva

This upaparva of the Udyogaparva consists of 19 chapters. The Pandavas and their associates felt happy as the marriage of Abhimanyu and Uttara was celebrated. On the second day, the Pandavas were present in the royal court. The old and honourable Virata and Drupada took their seats first in the assembly. Following them, Vasudeva and his sons Krishna and Balarama were seated. The other members included the sons of Drupada, Virata and Draupadi, and other great chariot-warriors. Every one was eager to listen to the words of wisdom of Krishna. The latter started by describing how Sakuni of Sabala defeated Yudhishtira by deceit in the game of dice and grabbed his kingdom. The condition put in the game was that the defeated should go to woods for twelve years and live incognito for one year. The Pandavas who were defeated in gambling stayed in the woods for twelve years and lived in disguise in the kingdom of Virata for one year experiencing many hardships. Because of the treachery of the Kauravas, the Pandavas had to face difficulties. The Pandavas having completed the stay in the woods and the stay in disguise then were asking for their wealth. The truthful Yudhishtira was present there before them along with his brothers. If the Kauravas were to behave offensively with them, the Pandavas would kill them. What was in the mind of Duryodhana, they were not aware of so far. So a virtuous person should go there as an emissary and advise Duryodhana to give half the kingdom to Yudhishtira. Balarama appreciated the speech of Krishna and said that the pious Yudhishtira was in fact asking for only half of the kingdom, foregoing his right over his kingdom. And by offering half the kingdom to the Pandavas, there would be peace to the Kauravas, and welfare to the public. Hence to bring peace between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, it was a good suggestion to send an emissary. The messenger should talk politely and convince them for the sake of Yudhishtira. At no point should he annoy or irritate the Kauravas. Even though his well-wishers advised him against gambling, Yudhishtira did not heed their words. Indulged in gambling he lost his kingdom. Even though there are other players, leaving them aside, Yudhishtira challenged Sakuni, and lost to him. As Balarama was saying so, Satyaki got up angrily and condemned his speech. He said that everyone would speak according to his inner sense. Balarama also did so. Having been released from the bond of the stay in the woods, the Pandavas had then become the rightful owners of their property. To beg the enemies is itself a wrongful and blamable matter. Yudhishtira should get his kingdom again. Otherwise all the Kauravas would perish in the war. Drupada also supported him and said that he could not accept Balarama's words. It was very important to send an emissary to the Kauravas as early as possible. He further said that there was a well-versed Brahmin in his



service. It would be appropriate to send him to Dhritarashtra as a messenger. Lord Krishna gave his consent to that and went away to Dwaraka. Later, the king of Panchala, with the permission of Dharmaraja, decided to send his priest to the Kauravas as an emissary during the auspicious time of Jaya coinciding with the Pushya star. At the command of king Drupada, a Brahmin priest, rich in good customs started for Hastinapura.

After sending the Purohita to Hastinapura, the Pandavas decided to send messengers to other kings also. Having done so, Arjuna himself set out for Dwaraka. Duryodhana received information regarding the activities of the Pandavas through his spies. On the same day on which Arjuna reached Dwaraka, Duryodhana also reached there. Both of them went into the chambers where Krishna was asleep. Duryodhana entered first and sat on the high seat at the head side of the bed. Later Arjuna went in and stood at the other side folding his hands in respect. On waking up, Krishna saw Arjuna first. He welcomed both of them and then enquired the reason of their visit. Then Duryodhana requested Krishna's help in the forthcoming war. Then Krishna said that even though Duryodhana had come first, he saw Arjuna first. So he was prepared to help both of them. But according to the word of the scriptures, the younger Arjuna would have the right to choose first his desired object. He had with an army consisting of ten crore Gopa soldiers. They were always prepared for war. On the other hand, he was there all alone. He would neither participate in the war nor hold any weapon. He asked Arjuna to choose one of the two. When Krishna thus offered a choice, Arjuna selected Krishna. Duryodhana who was very much pleased inwardly, chose the whole army. Having thus gained the troops, he went to Balarama and told him the reason for his arrival. Balarama announced that he would support neither Duryodhana nor Arjuna. He advised them to fight according to the rules of war. Duryodhana was pleased within himself, and thought that they would win the battle as Krishna was weakened. Then he went to Kritavarman, who presented him an army of one akshauhini. Duryodhana returned to Hastina satisfied. At the request of Arjuna, Krishna became his charioteer.

On receiving the message of the Pandavas, king Salya set out accompanied by his son and a large army to meet Dharmaraja. Having come to know of this, Duryodhana made preparations to receive him half the way. Salya felt very happy and told Duryodhana to ask for a boon. The latter requested him to be the commander of his whole army. Salya accepted it happily. Then he went to Yudhishtira and reported to him about the boon given to Salya. Then Yudhishtira praised him saying that he was equal to Krishna in driving a chariot. And he requested him to help Arjuna if he wanted to do good to him. When Karna and Arjuna would face each other, he should discourage Karna. Salya agreed to it and said that he would do accordingly. As Fate is powerful, even noble persons would face difficulties now and then. Having said so, he narrated how Indra faced troubles. Then taking leave of him, Salya, the king of the Madras went Duryodhana along with his army. All those kings who were on the side of Duryodhana sent their armies to Duryodhana. Thus the total strength of Duryodhana's army became eleven akshauhinis.



2. Sanjayayanaparva

There are 13 chapters in this section. The priest of Drupada went to the Kauravas as an emissary and was warmly received by Dhritarashtra, Bhishma and Vidura. He described the strength and capabilities of the Pandavas and asked the people around to give half of the kingdom to the Pandavas as it was to be bestowed to them rightfully. Bhishma also supported him and started to describe the valour of Arjuna. Interrupting him in the middle, ridiculing his speech, Karna said that Duryodhana would never share, even one fourth of his kingdom with any one out of fear, leave alone half of it. Foolishly Bhishma was turning his mind towards the negative way. Rejecting the words of Karna, Bhishma again eulogized the valour of Arjuna, and referred to the defeat of six great warriors at the hands of Arjuna during the battle at the city of Virata. Then Dhritarashtra reprimanded Karna and revered Bhishma. He said that the advice of Bhishma was beneficial to all. Then he honoured the priest, and having sent him away, decided to send Sanjaya to the Pandavas. At the command of king Dhritarashtra, in order to enquire the welfare of the Pandavas on behalf of the king, and to act in the interest of the family of Bharata, Sanjaya went to Upaplavya to meet the Pandavas. Having met Yudhishtira he enquired his well being. After that Yudhishtira questioned about the actions of the Kauravas. Having answered him, Sanjaya conveyed the message of Dhritarashtra. At that moment, Sri Krishna, Satyaki, king Virata, and all the Pandavas were present there. Sanjaya said that Dhritarashtra wanted peace. He wished that the Pandavas would accept the king's advice, and a treaty could be made between the two camps. Then Yudhishtira remarked that they also did not raise the topic of war. He wondered why the Kauravas were getting nervous. It was Dhritarashtra and his sons who took the path of adharma. The uncouth behaviour of the Kauravas towards them could not be concealed. He demanded that Duryodhana should return the Indraprastha kingdom of the Pandavas. Sanjaya then again spoke about the demerits of the war, and advised Yudhishtira to turn away from it. He further instructed him to distribute all his wealth to his counselors, if at all he was thinking in terms of war at their suggestion, and warned him not to move away from the path of dharma by killing his family members. On hearing that Yudhishtira asked him to decide first whether the Pandavas were in the path of dharma or adharma. Sri Krishna, the lord of dharma, the master of polity was present there. He was a well wisher to both the sides. So he should speak out his mind in that regard.

Then Krishna said that he indeed wished the good of both the sides. The Pandavas should make peace with the Kauravas and live calmly. But that would not happen without first appropriating the share of the Pandavas in the ancestral property. The virtuous Pandavas were set for peace; nevertheless they were well equipped for war also. So the facts must be told to Dhritarashtra after proper deliberation. When Krishna said so, Sanjaya took permission to take leave of them and go back to Hastinapura. Yudhishtira then asked Sanjaya to enquire the welfare of all there and report theirs also to them. Then he wanted



him to convey the message that the Pandavas were capable of making both peace and war. Sanjaya went to Dhritarashtra with the message and after conveying the welfare of the Pandavas, criticized the deeds of Dhritarashtra. He said that in the whole world that it was only Dhritarashtra who supported his sons in gambling, and praised them. He could then witness the terrible consequences of that. He punished the trustworthy by uniting the untrustworthy. He then said that as he was exhausted, he would convey the message of Yudhishtira in front of every one in the assembly the next day. Dhritarashtra permitted him to go to his house.

3. Prajagaraparva

There are 8 chapters in this section. After Sanjaya left, Dhritarashtra called Vidura. The latter met him as was ordered. The king mentioned the arrival of Sanjaya and said that the latter carried the message of Dharmaraja to him and went home having criticized him. He would convey the message in the assembly also the next day. The king's heart burned as he did not know what was in the mind of Dharmaraja. Agitated he was, he could not even sleep. He was not tranquil also. He was very much disconcerted. So he requested Vidura to advise him what was good for him. In reply to him Vidura said that sleep will not visit a weak person who opposes a stronger one, or one who has lost all his wealth, or a lustful one or a thief. He then queried whether the king found himself in one of those kinds. Then Dhritarashtra beseeched him to speak some the righteous and the beneficial words. Then Vidura explained about the natures of the knowledgeable and the ignorant, and advised him on the greatness of the righteous way. At the end he remarked that the five sons of Pandu were like five Indras in capabilities. He further advised him to give kingdom to the Pandavas in the rightful manner, and be happy with his sons. Then Dhritarashtra sought advice on what he should do. Then Vidura again discoursed on the way of dharma. But Dhritarashtra said that he was not satisfied with those words. Vidura then suggested acting amicably with both the Kauravas and the Pandavas. Further, he narrated the argument occurred between Sudhanvan and Virochana for possessing the extraordinarily beautiful Kesini in the swayamavara. He queried how he could desire prosperity while placing the burden of the kingdom on Duryodhana, Sakuni, the stupid Dussasana, and Karna. The Pandavas treated him as a father. He also should treat them as his children and behave accordingly. Asked by Dhritarashtra, he gave an account of the characteristics of a noble born. On hearing it, Dhritarashtra said that Yudhishtira was cheated. So the angry Pandavas would fight with his sons and kill them. That was the reason why his mind was restless. And he requested him to show him the tranquil way. Vidura again advised him to make peace with the Pandavas and prevent Duryodhana from misbehaviour. Dhritarashtra consented with him saying that he also thought so. He had affectionate feelings towards the Pandavas. But his mind turns the other way when he was under the influence of Duryodhana. Nobody can overcome



fate. He also considered fate unalterable. The efforts of man are in vain before that.

4. Sanatsujataparva

There are 6 chapters in this sections. Dhritarashtra asked Vidura to tell him if there was anything more to be told. Vidura answered that Sanatsujata, the celebrated son of Brahma alone could clear all the doubts that were in the mind of the king. Having said so, he thought of the sage. After welcoming the sage, who appeared just by thinking about him, Vidura requested the sage, who took rest, to clear the doubts of Dhritarashtra. Dhritarashtra asked the sage whereas according to the latter's theory that there was no death; he however heard that the gods and the demons observed celibacy in order to escape from death. Which of these two was true? Then the sage replied that both the propositions were true. Carelessness is death and carefulness is immortality. The demons were defeated because of their carelessness whereas the gods became equal to the Brahma because they were vigilant. There is no form for the death to see. After dying, man takes birth again to experience the results of his deeds. He can not transcend death. Thus Sanatsujata explained to Dhritarashtra. And this is called Sanatsujatiya.

5. Yanasandhiparva

This section contains 25 chapters. The next day many kings attended eagerly the assembly to listen from the mouth of Sanjaya the message of the Pandavas. Duryodhana, Dussasana and others were also present. Asked by Dhritarashtra, Sanjaya started with the message of Arjuna. Whatever Arjuna said, Duryodhana should hear. If Duryodhana would not leave the kingdom of Yudhishtira, he would have to face the consequences. He had to fight with warriors like Bhima, Arjuna etc. Then Duryodhana would repent. Lord Krishna was on their side. Even if Krishna would not participate in the battle, still whose victory the Lord desired in his mind, that person would defeat all his enemies. And Arjuna would win the whole of the country of the Kurus by killing all the sons of Dhritarashtra including Karna. He would not leave any one of the sons of Dhritarashtra. But still, whatever Grandfather Bhishma, Kripa, Drona, Aswatthama and Vidura said would prevail. Let all the Kauravas live for long.

Bhishma told Duryodhana that Krishna and Arjuna were the incarnations of Sages Nara and Narayana. For the welfare of the worlds, whenever and wherever the necessity of war occurs, they will take their birth then and there many a time. He warned Duryodhana that if the latter would not listen to his words, then the destruction of the Kauravas was certain. He condemned Duryodhana for agreeing with the ideas of Karna, the son of a charioteer, Sakuni and the evil minded Dussasana. On listening to those words, Karna abused Bhishma and said that he never indulged in anything unpleasant to Duryodhana. Talking about peace with the Pandavas was improper. And he



further asserted that he was able to rout the Pandavas all alone. Bhishma reviled the speech of Karna. Drona also supported him and advised to make peace with the Pandavas. Even though the words of Bhishma and Drona were meaningful, Dhritarashtra rejected them and asked again Sanjaya about the Pandavas. Then Sanjaya spoke about them whom Yudhishtira was contacting for help in the war. Dhritarashtra then became terrified on thinking about the prowess of Bhima and Arjuna, and put forth before the Kauravas the matter of making peace with the Pandavas. Sanjaya then recounted the mistakes of Dhritarashtra and advised him to keep on tight leash the evil Duryodhana and his accomplices. Then Duryodhana reassured his father by praising the valour of Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Aswatthama, Karna and others who were on their side. He said that the Pandavas had only seven akshauhinis. So there was no question of his defeat. He asked his father not to get worried. Then he asked Sanjaya about the preparations for war being done by Yudhishtira and Sanjaya told him everything. Dhritarashtra advised Duryodhana to make peace with the Pandavas. He asked his son to turn away from war. He further advised him to give the rightful share of the kingdom to the Pandavas. Half the kingdom was enough for him to lead his life along with his counsellors. In fact it was Sakuni who was making them do that all. But Duryodhana did not accept his words. He said that he did not invite the Pandavas for a fight placing his confidence on Bhishma, Drona and others. Karna and he had taken the vow to perform the sacrifice of war making Yudhishtira the sacrificial lamb. The chariot would become the altar in that sacrifice. Sword and mace were the sacrificial ladles sruk and sruva. The armour was the deer-skin. The four horses were the four fires. Arrows were the holy grass kusa and fame was the oblation. Karna, Sakuni and he, the three of them would annihilate the enemies. Living with the Pandavas was never possible. He would not give up to the Pandavas even that much of land on which the sharp end of a needle could stand. On listening to those words Dhritarashtra spoke of abandoning his son and again asked Sanjaya to tell about the messages of Arjuna and Krishna. Then Sanjaya reported whatever Krishna had spoken about the valour of Arjuna. Having heard all that Dhritarashtra remarked that the Pandavas were more powerful than the Kauravas. Getting angry at that, Duryodhana boasted about himself. Karna egoistically spoke that he could single handedly kill all the Pandavas. When Bhishma condemned him, Karna left the assembly and went away. Vidura referred to the story of the birds and said that family feud was harmful and advised to make peace with the Pandavas. Dhritarashtra again tried to convince his son. When Duryodhana rejected the proposal of Arjuna and Krishna, then all the kings in the assembly walked out. In the meantime Sage Vyasa arrived there. At his command, Sanjaya eulogized the greatness of Krishna. He said that Krishna was coming to make treaty between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. On hearing that Dhritarashtra felt happy.

6. Bhagavadagamanaparva



This section has 79 chapters. After the departure of Sanjaya, Yudhishtira went to Sri Krishna and sad that they were all safe under his protection. They were challenging Dhritarashtra, Duryodhana and others for a fight. Krishna must save them from the impending war. Because he never coveted kingdom in full. He asked only for five towns. But the wicked Duryodhana was not prepared to give even them also. According to the duties of a Kshatriya, one should fight when there is a wrong doing. Having said so, Yudhishtira sought Krishna's advice on proper way of dealing with the situation. Having listened to him, Sri Krishna spoke of the necessity to go to the Kauravas for making peace for the sake of the welfare of both the Kauravas and the Pandavas. Clearing the doubts of Yudhishtira, he further asserted that he would burn to death all the Kauravas, if at all they misbehaved with him. He must go there whether it would be fruitful or not, in order to escape from the blame. Yudhishtira agreed with Krishna's proposal.

Lord Krishna encouraged Yudhishtira for war saying that it was obvious by what transpired so far that war was inevitable. When Bhima spoke in terms of peace, Krishna ridiculed him and encouraged him for war. Bhima explained that it was not out of fear that he put forth the topic of peace. He just did not wish the obliteration of the family of the Bharats. Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva also expressed their opinions in that regard. Draupadi articulated before Krishna her mental agony and condemned the talk of peace. With eyes filled with tears she said that if Bhima and Arjuna spoke of peace, becoming cowards, then her aged father with his sons would fight the enemies. She would not be happy and peaceful until she would look at the shoulder of Dussasana cut and lying in the dust. Sri Krishna consoled her. Then in order to accomplish the task of auspiciousness of the Kauravas and the Pandavas, he started for Hastinapura in the favorable time of the star of Revathi named Maitra in the month of Karthika. He explained the good and bad omens during the journey. On his way he comfortably camped at Vrikasthala for the night.

Dhritarashtra, who received the news of the arrival of Sri Krishna through his messengers, felt happy, and ordered Duryodhana to make arrangements for welcoming Krishna, and also for constructing rest-houses on the way. Duryodhana made all the arrangements accordingly. However, Krishna did not even cast a glance at them, and directly went to Hastinapura. Dhritarashtra made arrangements to present Krishna many invaluable gifts. Vidura however told Dhritarashtra that Krishna would not accept anything else except water to wash his feet and hands, and enquiries after health. He desired peace between the Kauravas and the Pandavas. Vidura advised Dhritarashtra to obey the words of Krishna. Duryodhana rejected the idea of gifting gold, precious gems etc. to Krishna and declared that he would make Krishna a captive when the latter arrived. When he did so, the whole world would be under his control. On listening to those words of treachery from Duryodhana, Dhritarashtra and his ministers became sad and agitated in mind. Dhritarashtra advised Duryodhana not to like that. Angry at the wickedness of Durodhana, Bhishma walked out of the assembly.



The next day Krishna arrived in Hastinapura from Vrikasthala. As he entered the royal court, Dhritarashtra, Drona, Bhishma and others got up from their seats and welcomed him. He then went to the house of Vidura from there. Then he went to Kunti, who was sorrowful, and consoled her. Having taken leave of her, he went to the palace of Duryodhana. Dussasana, Karna and Sakuni were also present there. After welcoming his guest, Duryodhana invited him for lunch. But Sri Krishna did not accept it. When asked about the reason for his refusal, Krishna explained that a messenger can take meals or accept any honour only after accomplishing the task. That is the rule. So he told Duryodhana that he along with his ministers could honour him only after the completion of his job. He told him that it was improper for him and his brothers to fight with the Pandavas without any reason. Whoever hated the Pandavas, hated him also. And whoever was favourable to them was favourable to him. The food which was defiled by the wickedness of Duryodhana was not fit to be eaten by him. Having said thus to Duryodhana, he went to the house of Vidura. He and his followers ate and took rest there only for the night. Then Vidura told Krishna that according to his opinion Krishna's visit was not advisable. Because Duryodhana was of the opinion that Karna alone could defeat all the Pandavas. So he would not accept any treaty. On listening to the words of Vidura, Sri Krishna explained to him the propriety in his efforts for an agreement.

The next day Duryodhana and Sakuni came to Sri Krishna, and invited him to the assembly. As soon as Krishna entered the assembly hall, led by the king, Bhishma, Drona and others came forward to worship him. Sages like Narada also came to meet him. After the sage-folk took their seats, Krishna and other royal members took their seats. Later, Krishna looked at Dhritarashtra and said that he came there to seek peace between the Pandavas and the Kauravas so that there would be no killing of the royal warriors. The family of the Kurus was the best among all the royal families. And if any member of that family misbehaved Dhritarashtra should put him on the right track. His son was behaving like a cruel person, abandoning dharma and artha. Making peace between the two sides was in the hands of Dhritarashtra and Krishna. Dhritarashtra should control his son. Krishna would control the Pandavas. Both the sides would be benefited by that. The sons of Kunti were prepared to serve the king. And if necessary, they were prepared for war also. Whatever the king felt good, could be followed. On listening to the words of Krishna, the members of the assembly were astonished, and none could utter a word in answer. Then Parasurama told the story of an emperor Dhambhodbhava and advised Dhritarashtra to make peace. And sage Kanva recounted the anecdote of Matali, the charioteer of Indra, and advised Duryodhana to make peace with the Pandavas. Sage Narada also tried to convince Duryodhana for securing peace, by relating a number of episodes.

On the request of Dhritarashtra, Krishna again said explaining to Duryodhana that he should make peace with the Pandavas, and live happily for a long time, having listened to the friends. On hearing such unpalatable words of Krishna, Duryodhana said that Krishna was partial towards the Pandavas. So



he was abusing him. All of them, including Dhritarashtra hated him for no reason. But he did not commit any offence. He further declared that even an iota of land would not be given to the Pandavas. That was his decision. Krishna got angry on listening to those words of Duryodhana and having recounted the offences of Duryodhana advised that Duryodhana, Dussasana, Sakuni and Karna should be made captives and handed over to the Pandavas. Dhritarashtra called Gandhari and asked her to convince Duryodhana. Gandhari also advised Duryodhana to take resort to Sri Krishna and make peace with the Pandavas. But Duryodhana did not consider his mother's words also. Duryodhana, Dussasana, Karna and Sakuni secretly conspired among themselves and decided to take Sri Krishna as a prisoner. Satyaki who could understand the mind of others through the gestures they made, grasped the evil plan of the wicked four. He immediately alerted their soldiers at the main gate and gave hint of the scheme of Duryodhana etc. to Sri Krishna. Then he revealed it to Dhritarashtra and Vidura also. At the command of Dhritarashtra, Vidura brought Duryodhana and his brothers to the assembly. Both Dhritarashtra and Vidura again described the greatness of Sri Krishna, and advised him to take the path of virtue. Then Sri Krishna scoffed at Duryodhana for the latter's ignorance in trying to seize him, and showed his Viswarupa. Dhritarashtra, having requested received two invisible eyes from Lord Krishna to watch the Viswarupa. Having known this the sage-folk was astonished and praised the Lord. Later Sri Krishna went to meet his maternal mother Kunti.

Sri Krishna reported to Kunti whatever had happened in the court of the Kauravas. Kunti gave her message to the Pandavas at this bidding. On that occasion she narrated the dialogue between the great royal lady Vidula and her son. Later, Krishna after bowing to Kunti, started from there. He took leave of Bhishma and other elders, made Karna get into his chariot, and along with Satyaki went towards the city of Upaplavya. After the departure of Sri Krishna, Bhishma and Drona again tried to convince Duryodhana to make peace with the Pandavas. After leaving Hastinapura along with Karna, Krishna asked him to behave as a brother with the Pandavas. It would benefit him. But Karna expressed his desire of staying on Duryodhana's side. He said that if he gained victory in the battle, they could meet again. Otherwise, they could meet in heaven only. Having said so, he embraced Krishna, and taking leave of him, got down from the backside of the chariot, and getting into his car, returned to Hastinapura. Krishna went to Upaplavya along with Satyaki.

Vidura went to Kunti and told her of the impending terrible events between the Kauravas and the Pandavas. The disturbed Kunti met Karna and revealed to him that he was her eldest son, and requested him to side with the Pandavas. But he did not comply with her request and said that he would fight with her sons. But he promised not to kill the other four brothers except Arjuna, even if an opportunity arose to do so. Thus she would be left with five sons even after the battle. They would be five, with Karna if Arjuna was killed and with Arjuna if Karna was killed. Then Kunti and Karna went their way. Sri Krishna on reaching Upaplavya reported verbatim to the Pandavas whatever had happened in the court of the Kauravas and encouraged them for war.



7. Sainyaniryaparva

There are 9 chapters in this section. Yudhishtira understood from the words of Sri Krishna that the without making a fight Kauravas would not give the Pandavas their share in the kingdom. War was imminent. In the presence of Krishna only he told his brothers that they also heard everything. They had seven akshauhinis of army. Drupada, Virata, Dhrishtadyumna, Sikhandin, Satyaki, Chekitana and Bhima would be the seven commanders for the seven akshauhinis. They had to decide about the Commander in Chief. So they should suggest who had the capabilities to become the chief of the army. On listening to him Sahadeva suggested Virata, Nakula suggested Drupada, Arjuna suggested Dhrishtadyumna, and Bhima recommended Sikhandin as having the required qualifications. Asked by Yudhishtira, Sri Krishna said that Dhrishtadyumna was worthy of becoming the chief of the army. The Pandavas were happy with his suggestion. All the soldiers prepared themselves for war with enthusiasm. Everywhere the sounds of conches and drums reverberated. King Yudhishtira moved in the midst of the army. Along with him went the expert medical team. Draupadi also followed him for a distance and then returned to Upaplavya along with other ladies. Having planned the arrangement of the troops, the army of the Pandavas reached Kurukshetra. There was a pious river Hiranvathi of pure waters. On reaching it Sri Krishna got a trench dug and put soldiers on duty to guard it. Thousands of tents were erected separately for the kings to stay. Doctors also stayed there with their equipment. All the material was put in the tents. On the other side, Duryodhana also made his troops set, and ordered the erection of tents. He told the kings to make an announcement that very day to the effect that the troops should march forward for battle the next morning. There should be no delay. Asked by Yudhishtira regarding the appropriate action, Sri Krishna said that the wicked Kauravas were not behaving properly with them. The Pandavas did not want peace with the Kauravas where they had to forego all their wealth. So war with them had to happen. Then Yudhishtira ordered the kings to make preparations for war.

King Duryodhana divided his eleven akshauhini army into the best, mediocre and lowly divisions, and placed them at the appropriate places. At Kurukshetra a total of eighteen akshauhinis of army collected together. The eleven commanders of the Kaurava army are Kripacharya, Dronacharya, Aswatthama, Salya, Jayadratha, Sudakshina, Kritavarma, Karna, Bhurisravas, Sakuni and Bahlika. Duryodhana requested Bhishma and made him the commander in chief. Balarama met the Pandavas and having taken leave of them went to worship in the pilgrim centres near the river Saraswati. He did not want to see the annihilation of the family of the Kurus. Dhritarashtra asked Sanjaya about the arrangements of the armies of the Kauravas and the Pandavas. Sanjaya told him to listen to everything.

8. Ulukadutagamanaparva



This section contains 5 chapters. Duryodhana consulted secretly with Karna, Dussasana and Sakuni and decided to send Uluka, the son of Sakuni as a messenger to the Pandavas. He called Uluka privately and asked him to convey the message to the Pandavas in the presence of Sri Krishna only. The message said that the terrific war between the Kurus and the Pandavas had commenced. Whatever oaths the Pandavas took could be fulfilled. Why they were engaging in a sinful action being themselves virtuous men. They asked for only five villages. But Duryodhana knowingly rejected them. The reason was that Duryodhana wanted to make the Pandavas angry somehow to get an opportunity to fight with them. He challenged them to come with Sri Krishna and fight. Then Uluka went to the camp of the Pandavas and met Yudhishtira. He reported to him all that was told by Duryodhana. The irritated Pandavas sent a reply to the message. Sri Krishna also sent a message on his behalf in which he asked Duryodhana to come to the battle field the very next day and give a demonstration of his prowess. Having received that message from Uluka, Duryodhana ordered his army to begin the battle before dawn the next day. Yudhishtira also prepared his troops for battle under the commandery of Dhrishtadyumna.

9. Sthatisahasamkhyanaparva

In this section there are 8 chapters. Having been made the commander in chief, Bhishma told Duryodhana that he had acquaintance with the military arrays of the gods, Gandharvas and the humans. He would mesmerize the Pandavas with that skill. He would fight with the Pandavas while protecting the army of Duryodhana. Thus the mental anguish of Duryodhana should be gone. Then Duryodhana wanted to know the details about the Rathis and Atirathas in his army. Then having described them Bhishma gave an account of the warriors on the side of the Pandavas. He said that Sikhandin was a woman first who later became a man. So he would not fight him. He would kill all other kings who participated in the war, but would never kill the sons of Kunti.

10. Ambopakhyanaparva

There are 24 chapters in this section. Duryodhana asked Bhishma the reason why he would not kill the kings and let them off. Then Bhishma told him the episode of Amba. After the death of his father Santanu, Bhishma keeping his promise crowned his brother Chitrangada. When the latter died, he made his brother Vichitravirya the king. Bhishma decided to bring a suitable girl and marry Vichitravirya to her. He defeated all other kings and brought the three daughters of the king of Kasi Amba, Ambika and Ambalika from the swayamvara hall and sent them to his mother Satyawati to perform the marriage of his brother with them. But Amba, who loved the king of Salva, took permission of Bhishma and went to him. When the king of Salva rejected her, she decided to take revenge on Bhishma who was the prime cause for her misfortune and spent the night in the hermitage of some sages. An old sage



Saikhavatyā comforted her. Guided by her maternal grandfather Hotravahana, she took refuge with Parasurama. A great battle took place between Parasurama and Bhishma. At the end, Bhishma wanted to use the Prasvapanāstra. But at the intervention of Narada, both of them stopped their fight. Princess Amba performed severe penance. By the power of that she became with half of her body a river called Amba, and was born as a girl in Vatsadesa with the other half. Even in that birth also she performed great penance to kill Bhishma. When Siva appeared before her, she asked for the death of Bhishma as a boon. Siva said that her desire would be fulfilled. She was born as a woman, but would become a man some time later. She burnt herself on the funeral pyre on the banks of the river Yamuna in that birth. The childless king Drupada having performed severe austerities sought a son from Siva to take revenge on Bhishma. Then Siva said that the king would get a girl who would later become a man. The queen of Drupada gave birth to a girl. But the king announced that it was a boy. Only Bhishma came to know about Sikhandin through Narada. At the appropriate age Sikhandin's marriage was performed with the princess of the Dasarnas. Having come to know the truth about Sikhandin, Hiranyavarma, the king of the Dasarnas got angry. Sikhandini went into the woods and there requested a yaksha name Sthunakarna a way out from her distress. The yaksha then exchanged his masculinity with her femininity for sometime. Kubera who was annoyed with that cursed the yaksha to continue to be a woman and Sikhandini became a man by the name Sikhandin. As he was a female at first, Bhishma resolved not to kill him in a battle. The armies of the Kauravas and the Pandavas had set out for war.

