



renaissance

college of commerce & management

B.com- I Year

Subject-Understanding India

Syllabus
BBA/B.Com/BAJMC I year
Subject: - Understanding India

Unit	Syllabus
Unit – I	Characteristics of Indus, Vedic and Classical period Indian concept of co-existence and pluralism Cultural symbols: religion, architecture, music, drama, folklore Modern relevance of principles like 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', 'Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah'
Unit – II	Indian Constitution and Civic Duties Vedic Rajdharma and Modern Constitution Fundamental Rights and Duties: Religion–Duty–Morality, Young Citizens and Democratic Participation ,Contribution of Education in Nation Building
Unit – III	Indian knowledge tradition and education approach, Sources of indian knowledge: vedas, upanishads, philosophy, memory, folk literature. Gurukul tradition: disciple centered teaching, oral tradition and memory based learning. purpose of education: self improvement and public gathering. role of teacher: acharya devo bhava, character building, contribution in social reconstruction
Unit – IV	Indian life perspective: Purusharth Chatushtaya (four aims of life), Ashram system (life stages), duty-based ethics Harmony with nature: yajna, Panchamahabhuta (five elements), seasons, and ecological balance Indian economic vision: self-reliance, Swadeshi (indigenous goods), dignity of labor, community enterprise Concept of sustainable development and environmental justice in Indian thought
Unit – V	Contemporary India and Its Global Role Role of Religious, Cultural, and Intellectual Leadership in the Freedom Struggle India's Contribution: Space Science, Yoga, Diplomacy, Philosophy of Peace 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India): Integration of Tradition and Innovation India in the Global Perspective: 'Soft Power', Role in a Multipolar World



renaissance

college of commerce & management

B.com- I Year

Subject-Understanding India

UNIT-1

1. Indus Valley Civilization (c. 2600–1900 BCE)

☐ Political Characteristics:

- No evidence of centralized monarchy; governance likely through a **priestly or merchant class**.
- Well-planned cities suggest **organized municipal administration**.

☐ Social Characteristics:

- Urban society with social equality; no strong evidence of a **rigid caste system**.
- Evidence of **standardized weights and measures** shows a cooperative economic life.
- Female figurines suggest some reverence for **female divinity** (proto-Shakti worship).

☐ Economic Characteristics:

- Highly developed **trade networks** (internal and external – Mesopotamia).
- Economy based on **agriculture, crafts, and trade**.
- Use of **standardized weights, seals, and dockyards** (e.g., Lothal).

☐ Cultural/Religious Characteristics:

- **Polytheistic** worship; deities associated with nature (e.g., Pashupati – proto-Shiva).
- Sacred animals, trees, and fertility cults.
- No temples; religion likely **personal and ritualistic**.

☐ Technological Achievements:

- **Advanced urban planning**, drainage systems, granaries.
 - Use of bricks, metallurgy, pottery, and bead-making.
-



☐ 2. Vedic Period (c. 1500–600 BCE)

▪ Early Vedic Period (1500–1000 BCE)

☐ Political:

- Tribal polity – **Rajan** (chief) and **Sabha, Samiti** (assemblies).
- Society based on **kinship, tribal loyalties**.

☐ Social:

- Varna system in its **nascent form** – fluid social roles.
- **Patriarchal society**, emphasis on family, rituals, and oral traditions.
- Role of women relatively better (could attend assemblies, perform rituals).

☐ Religious:

- Worship of **natural forces** – Indra, Agni, Varuna.
- **Yajnas (sacrifices)** central to religious life.
- No idols, temples, or images.

☐ Economic:

- **Pastoral and agrarian economy**.
- Cattle as measure of wealth; limited trade.

▪ Later Vedic Period (1000–600 BCE)

☐ Political:

- Emergence of **large kingdoms** (Mahajanapadas).
- More **centralized monarchy** with **hereditary kings**.

☐ Social:

- **Varna system solidified**; emergence of **caste hierarchy (jati)**.
- Women's status declined; excluded from rituals and learning.

☐ Religious:

- Ritualism increased, **Brahmins** gained dominance.
- Emergence of **Upanishadic thought**, questioning rituals; move towards **spiritual philosophy**.



renaissance

college of commerce & management

B.com- I Year

Subject-Understanding India

☐ **Economic:**

- Growth of **agriculture**, use of iron tools.
 - Development of **crafts, trade**, and **urban centers**.
-

☐ **3. Classical Period (c. 600 BCE – 1200 CE)**

Includes: Maurya Empire, Gupta Empire, Sangam Age, Early Medieval Kingdoms.

☐ **Political:**

- Formation of **large empires** – Maurya (centralized) and Gupta (decentralized).
- Sophisticated administrative systems, **Arthashastra**, and **Dharma-based governance**.

☐ **Social:**

- **Caste system institutionalized**; rise of **jati-based occupations**.
- **Urbanization** led to rise of merchant and artisan classes.
- Decline in women's rights, though exceptions existed (e.g., women poets in Sangam era).

☐ **Religious:**

- **Pluralistic religious environment**: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism thrived.
- **Bhakti and devotional movements** emerged (focus on personal God, social inclusivity).
- Construction of temples, stupas, and viharas.

☐ **Economic:**

- Growth of **trade and commerce**, both inland and maritime.
- Emergence of **guilds (shrenis)**, **coins**, and **banking systems**.
- Agricultural innovations and land grants to temples and Brahmins.

☐ **Cultural:**

- **Golden Age of Art and Science** during Gupta period: literature, mathematics (zero, decimal), astronomy.
 - Sanskrit and Prakrit literature flourished (Kalidasa, Panini).
 - Temple architecture (Dravidian, Nagara styles) and classical dance/music evolved.
-



renaissance

college of commerce & management

B.com- I Year

Subject-Understanding India

☐ Indian Concept of Co-existence and Pluralism

☐ Roots in Ancient Thought:

- **Rig Veda:** “Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti” – “Truth is One, sages call it by different names.”
- Emphasis on **unity in diversity** and **respect for multiple paths** to truth.

☐ Dharma and Tolerance:

- Concept of **Dharma** allowed people of different beliefs and duties to coexist.
- Ashoka's **Edicts** promoted **religious tolerance** and compassion for all beings.

☐ Religious Pluralism:

- Coexistence of **Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism**, later **Islam, Christianity, Sikhism**.
- Inter-religious dialogue, pilgrimage sites shared by multiple faiths (e.g., Ellora caves).

☐ Philosophical Inclusivity:

- Schools of thought like **Samkhya, Nyaya, Mimamsa, Vedanta, Charvaka** debated ideas without persecution.
- **Buddhist councils** allowed discussion among diverse sects.

☐ Bhakti and Sufi Movements:

- Promoted **love, equality, and harmony** over ritualism.
- **Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya, Basava**, and Sufi saints like **Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti** emphasized universal brotherhood.

☐ Socio-political Harmony:

- Kings like **Akbar** promoted **Sulh-i-Kul** (peace with all).
- South Indian kingdoms like the **Cholas** supported diverse religions through grants.



CULTURAL SYMBOLS OF INDIA

Religion as a Cultural Symbol

Religion in India is both a **personal faith** and a **cultural identity marker**, shaping values, social structure, festivals, rituals, and worldview.

□ Major Religious Traditions:

Religion	Symbolic Aspects
Hinduism	Trimurti (Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva), Om (ॐ), Lotus, Cow (sacred), River Ganga
Buddhism	Dharma Chakra (Wheel of Law), Bodhi Tree, Stupas, Ashoka Pillars
Jainism	Swastika, Ahimsa hand, Kalpa tree, Tirthankaras
Islam	Crescent Moon, Arabic Calligraphy, Mosques, the concept of unity (Tawhid)
Sikhism	Khanda symbol, Ek Onkar (ੴ), Gurudwaras
Christianity	Cross, Churches, emphasis on charity, education, and social service

□ Symbolism in Religious Practice:

- **Puja, Aarti, Yajna** – symbolize devotion, cosmic order.
- **Pilgrimages** – to places like Varanasi, Bodhi Gaya, Ajmer, Velankanni – symbolize spiritual journey and unity in diversity.
- **Festivals** (e.g., Diwali, Eid, Christmas, Baisakhi) – represent cultural harmony and social bonding.

2. □ Architecture as a Cultural Symbol

Indian architecture reflects **religious beliefs**, **political power**, **regional aesthetics**, and **social values**.

□ Temple Architecture:

Style	Features	Examples
Nagara (North Indian)	Curvilinear tower (Shikhara), garbhagriha	Khajuraho, Sun Temple, Orissa
Dravidian (South Indian)	Pyramidal tower (Vimana), Gopurams, Mandapas	Brihadeeswara Temple, Meenakshi Temple
Vesara (Deccan)	Blend of Nagara and Dravidian	Hoysaleswara Temple, Pattadakal



☐ **Islamic Architecture:**

- Arches, domes, minarets, geometric and floral motifs.
- Examples: Qutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb, Taj Mahal (symbol of love and eternity).

☐ **Buddhist Architecture:**

- **Stupas** (Sanchi), **Chaityas**, **Viharas**.
- Symbolize the path to enlightenment, Buddhist cosmology.

☐ **Colonial and Modern Architecture:**

- Indo-Saracenic (Victoria Memorial), Lutyens' Delhi (Parliament), modern symbolism in buildings like Lotus Temple (unity).

3. Music as a Cultural Symbol

Indian music symbolizes **spiritual elevation, cultural continuity, and regional identity**.

Classical Music Traditions:

Tradition	Features	Instruments	Symbolism
Hindustani (North)	Ragas, improvisation, spiritual moods	Sitar, Tabla, Sarod	Emotion (Rasa), devotion
Carnatic (South)	Composed krithis, devotional themes	Veena, Mridangam, Flute	Bhakti, rhythm, harmony

☐ **Folk Music:**

- Region-specific: Bihu (Assam), Baul (Bengal), Lavani (Maharashtra), Bhavageete (Karnataka).
- Reflects **local culture, oral traditions, and socio-political life**.

☐ **Devotional Music:**

- Bhajans, Kirtans, Qawwalis, Gurbani – music as a **path to divinity**.

☐ **Musical Symbols:**

- **Raga** = mood/emotion (symbol of time, season, devotion).
 - **Tala** = cosmic rhythm (time cycle, order of universe).
-



4. Drama and Performing Arts as Cultural Symbols

Drama in India is **not just entertainment** but **religious, moral, and social education**.

Classical Drama:

Tradition	Features	Symbolism
Natyashastra (by Bharata Muni)	Foundation text for drama, dance, music	Drama as Yajna (sacred act), promotes dharma
Sanskrit Theatre	Plays by Kalidasa, Bhasa	Reflect moral values, kingship, dharma
Rasa Theory	9 Rasas (love, fear, valor, etc.)	Emotions and aesthetics (bhava-rasa)

❑ Folk & Regional Theatre:

- **Yakshagana** (Karnataka), **Therukoothu** (Tamil Nadu), **Nautanki** (North India), **Jatra** (Bengal).
- Symbol of **people's voice**, storytelling, satire.

❑ Religious Performances:

- **Ram Lila**, **Krishna Leela**, **Koodiyattam** – blend devotion with performance.

5. Folklore as a Cultural Symbol

Folklore includes **oral literature**, **songs**, **proverbs**, **tales**, and **rituals**, passed through generations.

❑ Types of Folklore:

Type	Examples	Symbolism
Folk Tales	Panchatantra, Jataka tales, Akbar-Birbal stories	Morality, wit, life lessons
Folk Songs	Harvest songs, wedding songs, devotional songs	Connection with nature, society
Proverbs & Riddles	Regional sayings	Local wisdom, ethics, humour
Folk Heroes	Pabuji (Rajasthan), Birsa Munda, Karna	Regional pride, resistance, values

❑ Folk Symbols:

- **Totems**, **ritual masks**, **dolls**, **puppets** – represent **ancestral beliefs**, **spirits**, and **nature worship**.
- Festivals like **Lohri**, **Pongal**, **Bihu** integrate folklore, agricultural life, and community bonding.



renaissance

college of commerce & management

B.com- I Year

Subject-Understanding India

Interconnection of Cultural Symbols

Cultural Symbol	Interconnection
Religion ↔ Architecture	Temples, mosques, stupas as centers of worship & art
Music ↔ Drama	Classical dance-dramas (Kathakali, Bharatanatyam) use music to express narrative
Folklore ↔ Religion	Folk deities, myths, and epics preserve religious values
Architecture ↔ Folklore	Architectural motifs inspired by mythologies and folk beliefs

Modern Relevance of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and 'Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah'

I. Meaning and Origins

1. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam

Sanskrit: वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

Meaning: “The world is one family”

Source: Maha Upanishad (Chapter 6, Verse 72)

- A **universalist principle** that advocates for **global unity**, compassion, and empathy.
- Counters narrow identities of **race, religion, nationality, caste**.
- Encourages seeing **humanity as interconnected and interdependent**.

2. Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah

Sanskrit:

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः

सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु

मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्भवेत्

Meaning:

May all be happy, may all be free from illness,



renaissance

college of commerce & management

B.com- I Year

Subject-Understanding India

*May all see what is auspicious,
May no one suffer.*

- A **prayer for universal welfare**, health, and peace.
 - Reflects a deeply **inclusive, altruistic, and non-violent worldview**.
-

II. Modern Relevance and Application

1. Global Peace & Diplomacy

- **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** promotes **peaceful coexistence among nations**.
- Encourages **dialogue over conflict, multilateralism over unilateralism**.
- Basis for:
 - India's foreign policy approach at **UN, G20, NAM**.
 - Vision of **Global South solidarity**.
 - Initiatives like **International Day of Yoga** and **Solar Alliance**.

□ *Example:*

India's G20 Presidency in 2023 used "**One Earth, One Family, One Future**" — derived directly from Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

2. Social Harmony & Inclusion

- Counters **sectarianism, communalism, casteism, and xenophobia**.
- Encourages respect for **diversity, tolerance, and pluralism** in society.
- Relevance in **multi-religious, multi-cultural** nations like India.
- Promotes **interfaith dialogue**, mutual respect among communities.

□ *Example:*

Movements promoting **unity in diversity, LGBTQ+ rights, anti-discrimination campaigns** resonate with these ideals.



3. Environmental Ethics and Sustainability

- Sees the **Earth not as a resource** but as a **mother (Bhumi Devi)**.
- Encourages **collective responsibility for environmental care**.
- **Global climate crisis** demands Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam approach — shared responsibility, equity, justice.

□ *Example:*

India's “**Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE)**” initiative by PM Modi aligns with this ethos — promoting sustainable living as a global duty.

4. Healthcare and Public Welfare

- ‘Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah’ is foundational for **universal healthcare, equitable access, and public health policy**.
- Justifies **state responsibility** in welfare delivery.
- Encourages empathy for **the vulnerable**, especially during pandemics or disasters.

□ *Example:*

- Global vaccination drives (COVAX), India's **Vaccine Maitri** initiative.
 - WHO's motto “Health for All” echoes this sentiment.
-

5. Ethical Globalization & Corporate Responsibility

- Encourages businesses to think beyond **profit** — towards **ethics, environment, and employee well-being**.
- CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) frameworks reflect these values.

□ *Example:*

Companies integrating **sustainable practices, employee rights, and community welfare** uphold these ideals.

6. Education & Global Citizenship

- Values like **empathy, mutual respect, and service** being included in curricula.
- Students taught to see themselves as **global citizens** — part of one world family.
- Promotes **intercultural understanding** in an increasingly connected world.

□ *Example:*

UNESCO's “Education for Sustainable Development” and “Global Citizenship Education” mirror these values.



7. Technology and Digital Humanity

- In an era of AI, social media, and global communication, the idea of a **digital family** is real.
- Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam promotes **responsible tech use**, **digital ethics**, and **global cooperation** in cyberspace.
- Challenges like **hate speech**, **cyberbullying**, **misinformation** need this moral compass.

III. Contemporary Challenges Needing These Principles

Challenge	Relevance of Principles
☐ War & Conflict	Need for global unity (Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam)
☐ Health Inequality	Universal well-being (Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah)
☐ Climate Change	Shared responsibility for Earth (Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam)
☐ Social Division	Promotes harmony and respect (both principles)
☐ Digital Divide & Hate	Encourages compassion and inclusion

IV. Philosophical and Policy-Level Integration

- **Indian Constitution** reflects these ideas:
 - *Preamble* – Justice, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.
 - *Fundamental Duties* – promote harmony, protect environment.
- **Indian Diplomacy:**
 - Cultural diplomacy, soft power, peacekeeping, disaster relief.

V. Quotes & References

- **Mahatma Gandhi:** “My patriotism includes the good of all nations. I am not a nationalist if nationalism means ‘My country right or wrong.’”
- **Swami Vivekananda:** “We are not antagonistic to any religion. We want to take you all along with us.”