

CHAPTER – IV

THE TRANSITION OF YOGA PHILOSOPHY- ANCIENT TO MODERN AND ITS RELEVANCE

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A. DEVELOPMENT OF YOGA PHILOSOPHY-ANCIENT TO MODERN :

Originally *Yoga* was developed about 5,000 years ago in the eastern part of the world. *Yoga* was first practised by the Hindus¹. But the practice of *Yoga* is not confined to India alone. Indian *Yoga* is not affiliated to any specific Philosophy or religion. It is an independent method of enquiry and practice. It is the result of a powerful desire of human beings for self-realization.² The origin of *Yoga* practice in India dates back to the distant past. During the early period, the practice of *Yoga* was confined only to a few sages who had transmitted it to devote pupils and through them to the successive generation. The exact date of the origin of *Yoga* has not been established beyond difference of opinion. Historical evidences of the existence of *Yoga* were found in the Vedas. The main sources from which we get the information about *Yoga* practices and the related literature during this period, are available in Vedas, Upaniṣads, Smṛtis, teachings

¹ Burley, Mikel, *Haṭha Yoga*, p.17

² *Ibid.*, 19

of Buddhism, Jainism, Pāṇiṇi, Epics, and Purāṇas etc. However, *Yoga*, what we see today, reached this position through various periods of development though most of the early writings on *Yoga* were lost or damaged.³

It is already mentioned that the fundamental basis of the *Yoga* is the *Veda*. But, from the historical point of view; it can be said as a religion. It was developed before the Vedic times. In that time, *Yoga* was developed in the northern India⁴ during the Indus-Sarasvati civilization. From the archaeological findings of the Maheñjodāro and Harappā, it is found that the people of the pre-historic ages worshipped a male deity who may be regarded as a prototype of Śiva.⁵ In Maheñjodāro a status is discovered who is represented as seated in a *Yoga* posture, surrounded by animals, snakes, bearing three faces with two horns on the two sides (*Ref. pic. No. 01*). It indicates the evidence of *Yoga* practice in Harappā and Maheñjodāro long before its development in Vedic India. So, it can

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Feuerstein, Georg, *The Yoga Tradition*, p.275

⁵ Chanda, Ramprasad, *Medieval Sculpture in the British Museum*, p.9

be assumed that the later conception of Śiva as Yogin took place before the Vedic period.



Pic. No. 01

The early literary evidence on the origin of the practice of *Yoga* was found in the Vedas. The first development of *Yoga* may be traced back to the *R̥gveda* in various senses such as Yoking⁷ or harnessing, achieving the unachieved,

⁶ www.yogabill.net

⁷ kadā yogo vājino rāsabhasya yena yajñam nāsatyopayāthaḥ / *R̥gveda*, I.34.9

connection and the like. At several places, it denotes the horses etc. to be yoked to a chariot or the act of yoking itself.⁸ Several seeds of Yogic concepts can be found in the *Ṛgveda* itself. The first two accessories of Patañjali's *Aṣṭāṅgayoga*, *yama* and *niyama*, can be traced in the *Ṛgveda*. *Ahimsā*(non-violence) has been mentioned as a virtue of God Mitra.⁹ The *Steya* (theft) and the *Stenas*(thieves) have been often condemned.¹⁰ *Dhāraṇā* consists in fixing the mind in a particular region and likewise the Vedic poets were certainly trying to fix their minds on the deities while seeking their favours.¹¹ Thus the idea of Yogic concepts was also current in some way in the age of the *Ṛgveda*.

⁸ rathamāvṛtyā hariyogaṃṛbhvasaṃ // *Ibid.*,I.56.1 ;

vājayanniva nū rathān yoghāgnerupastuhi // *Ibid.*,II.8.1;

harīrathesudhurāyoge // *Ibid.*,V.43.5

⁹ yan nūnaṃ aśyāṃ gatim mitrasya yāyāṃ pathā /

asya priyasya śarmaṇyaahimsānasyasaścire// *Ṛgveda*,V.64.6

¹⁰ cf. *Ṛgveda*,VII.104.10

¹¹ *Ṛgveda*.X.43.2

In the *Atharvaveda* also, *Yoga* occurs in the three passages. At one place¹², the word was used as *Aṣṭayoga* and *Ṣaḍyoga* certainly tempts one to find the *Yoga* of eight accessories and that of six accessories mentioned here, where as in other two places, the word has been used in the sense of acquiring the un-acquired.¹³ At a few more places, the word occurs in compounds such as *Brahmayoga*, *Kṣṭrayoga* etc.¹⁴ However, the growth of the means of self-

¹² iyam yavamaṣṭā yogiḥ ṣaḍayogebhircarkṛṣuḥ / *Atharvaveda*, VI.91.1

¹³ aṣṭavimśāni śivāni śagmāni saha yogam bhajantu me /
yogam prapadye kṣemaṁ ca kṣemaṁ prapadye yogam ca namohorātrābhyāmastu //
Ibid., IX.8.2 ;

saghā no yoga ā bhuvatsarayesapuramadhyaṁ /

gamadvajevirāsānaḥ // *Ibid.*, XX.69.1

¹⁴ jiṣṇve yogaya brahmayogairvo yunjim / *Ibid.*, X.5.1 ;

jiṣṇve yogaya kṣṭrayogaivo yunjim / *Ibid.*, X.5.2 ;

jiṣṇve yogayendrayogairvo yunjim / *Ibid.*, X.5.3;

jiṣṇve yogaya samyogairvo yunjim / *Ibid.*, X.5.4;

jiṣṇve yogayāpsuyogairvo yunjim / *Ibid.*, X.5.5

advancement which were later to be systematized under the name of *Yoga* can certainly be found in the *Atharvaveda*, and to a very large extent indeed.

The gradual development of the Yogic practice in India culminated in the Yoga system of Patañjali. After the Vedas, a number of treatises known as the Upaniṣads were approved, wherein the seers had summarized their spiritual vision and mystical experience. The Upaniṣads teach various aspects of reality ranging from Metaphysics to Ethics. They also offer practical guidance on the observance of ritual sacrifices. The central message of the *Upaniṣad* is that consciousness which underline human nature is non-different from Universal Self or *Brahman*.¹⁵ In another place in the *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* the realization of the Absolute Reality is explained as follows:

“It is by pressing the seaman seed that its oil is extracted. It is by churning milk, curds that butter is formed. It is by digging a well that subterranean water can be induced to gush forth. It is by rubbing two pieces of wood together that

¹⁵ sarvājīve sarva samsthe bṛhante asmin haṁso bhrāmyate brahma cakre /

prthag ātmānam preritāraṁ ca matvā juṣṭas tatas tenāmṛtatvam eti // *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*, I.4

fire is dawn out of them. Similarly Brahman, the Absolute Self, is cognized within one's own soul by practising a life of taugt and self-discipline (tapas).¹⁶

The *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*¹⁷ also says that by the practice of *Yoga*, one is free from disease, old age and untimely death. There is lightness, healthiness, brightness and fairness in the colour of the body. One is unattached to the worldly objects. One's voice becomes melodious. There is reduction in the urine and excretion. Thus, one becomes *kṛtārtha* and *vītaśoka* (free of sorrow).

Among the various Upaniṣads, the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* is considered as the oldest *Upaniṣad* which deals explicitly with *Yoga*. The doctrine propounded in this scripture is called *Adhyātmayoga* or *Yoga* of self-absorption. Its target is the Supreme Being which is difficult to be seen and hidden in the care of heart.

¹⁶ tileṣu tailaṁ dadhinīva sarpir āpas srotassu araṇīṣucāgniḥ /

evam ātmātmani grhyate'sau satyenainaṁ tapasā yo'nupaśyati // *Ibid.*,I.15

¹⁷ pṛthvyapyatejo'nalakhe samutthite pañcātmake yogaguṇe pravṛtte /

na tasya rogo na jarā na mṛtyuḥ prāptasya yogāgni mayam śarīram // *Ibid.*,II.12 ;

laghutvam ārogyam alolupatvam varṇa prasādam svara sauṣṭavam ca /

gandhaś śubho mūtra purīṣam alpaṁ yoga pravṛttim prathamām vadanti // *Ibid.*,II.13

“Beyond the senses are the sense objects; beyond the sense objects is the mind; beyond the mind is the wisdom-faculty (*buddhi*); beyond the wisdom faculty is the great self (*mahātman*)”.¹⁸ “Beyond the great self in the un-manifest (*avyakta*); beyond the un-manifest is the self (*puruṣa*); beyond the self there is nothing; it is the summit, it is the supreme goal.”¹⁹ The second chapter of the *Kaṭhapaniṣad*, which appears to be completely self-contained unit, contains the standard definition of the term *Yoga*. Here, *Yoga* is the steady binding of the senses (*sthiraṁ-indriya -dhāraṇam*).

After the Upaniṣads, two great Epic poems known as The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* appeared in India. The *Rāmāyaṇa* gives little instruction on the technicalities involved in the practice of *Yoga*. The most famous and important

¹⁸ taṁ durdarśaṁ gūḍham anupraviṣṭaṁ guhāhitaṁ gahvareṣṭham purāṇam /
adhyātmayogādhiḡamena devam matvā dhiro harṣaśokau jahāti // *Kaṭhapaniṣad*,I.2-12

¹⁹ indriyebhyaḥ parā hyarthā, arthebhyaś ca param manaḥ /
manasaś ca parā buddhir buddher ātmā mahān paraḥ // *Ibid.*,I.3.10;
mahataḥ param avyaktaṁ avyaktāt puruṣaḥ paraḥ /
puruṣān na paramkiñcit sā kāṣṭhā sā parā gatiḥ // *Ibid.*,I.3.11

part of the Epic *Mahābhārata* is the *Bhagavadgītā*. It gives an elaborate instruction how one can attain salvation or *Mokṣa*. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Divine Teacher imparts the great message of the *Bhagavadgītā*. The Supreme Teacher instructs his disciple to discard all guilt about the worldly attachment and asked us to do our duty without any motive for the results of action. This detailed knowledge is referred to in the *Bhagavadgītā* as Sāṃkhy-Yoga. The *Bhagavadgītā* says that we have a right to action never to its fruits, let not the fruits of our work be our motive, neither let there be in us any attachment to inaction.²⁰ “Perform your duty equipoise, O Arjuna, abandoning all attachment to success or failure. Such equally is called *Yoga*”.²¹ Thus *Yogī* is a devotee who has conquers his mind, body and senses and as acquires perfect serenity,

²⁰ karmanyevādhikāraṣṭe mā phaleṣu kadācana /

mā karmaphalāheturbhūrmā te saṅgo’stvakarmaṇi // *Bhagavadgītā*, II.47.

²¹ yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi saṅgaṃtyaktvā dhanañjaya/

siddhyasiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā samatvaṃ yoga ucyate// *Ibid.*,II.48

recognizing his own self as the Supreme Self. Thus “*Yoga* is the restraining of the modification of the thinking principle”.²²

A systematic and comprehensive account of *Yoga* practice is seen even in heterodox systems such as in Buddhism and Jainism. Buddhism is an ethico-philosophical movement that arose as a protest against extreme religious orthodoxy and ritualism. Gautama, the Buddha spoke of the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism (*aryasatya*) which formed the central teaching of Buddhist Philosophy. They are suffering (*duḥka*), its causes (*duḥkakāraṇa*), its suppression (*duḥkanirodha*), and the way by which the cause can be removed (*nirodhamārga*). Ignorance is believed to be the cause of suffering and bondage. Buddha had accepted suffering as a fact of life. He had also shown the way out of suffering. The concept of *Aṣṭamārga* or eightfold path by Buddha - can be well considered as early nature of *Yogasādhana*. The eight fold path consists of:

1. *Samyag-dṛṣṭi* 2. *Samyag-sankalpa* 3. *Samyag-vāk* 4. *Samyak-karmānta*
5. *Samyag-ajīva* 6. *Samyag-vyāyāma* 7. *Samyag-smṛti* 8. *Samyag-samādhi*

²² Vasu, S.C., *Introduction to Yoga Philosophy*, p.8

The first five steps are headed under the code of conduct to be observed by the individuals. The remaining steps of the ethical discipline are classed under the Yogic practice. Thus Buddhism had given a comprehensive account of the practice of *Yoga*. Buddha himself was a dedicated *Yogī* who had a passion for total meditative absorption. The Buddhist eight fold paths is a method for training the mind for the realization of the vision of Reality. It was devised with a view to transcend the finite self.

Jainism, a socio-religious movement that arose in India was founded by Mahāvīra. The Jaina code of discipline comprises of fourteen stages. A most important feature of Jainism is what may be described as *Yoga*. In the Jainism, *Yoga*, has been defined in many ways. The term *Yoga*, is used as *Samādhi*²³ and *Dhyāna*²⁴ in many ancient Jain scriptures. Jaina Yoga is non-theistic. In the *Jainadarśana*, doctrine of *Ratnatraya* is accepted as a means to *mokṣa*. They are *Samyaktadarśana* (right inclination), *Samyakjñāna* (right cognition) and

²³ yogah samādhiḥso'syāsti iti yogavān / *Uttarādhyayana*, 11.14.27.2

²⁴ *Sūtrakṛtāṅga*, 1.2.1.11

Samyagcāritra (right conduct).²⁵ According to the *Tattvārthasūtra*, the activity of body, speech and *manas* is *Yoga*.²⁶ It is responsible for association with *karma*.

The foundational text of the Yoga school is the *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali, who is regarded as the founder of the formal Yoga philosophy. The Sūtras of the Yoga philosophy are ascribed to Patañjali who may have been, as Max Müller explains, “the author or representative of the Yoga philosophy without being necessarily the author of the Sūtras.”²⁷ Patañjali defines *Yoga* as the restraint of mental modifications.²⁸ It controls the mind stuff from taking various forms (*vṛttis*). *Cittabhūmis* are- *kṣipta* (Wandering), *mūḍha* (Forgetful), *vikṣipta* (occasionally steady or distracted), *ekāgra* (One pointed) and *nirodha* (restrained).²⁹ Patañjali has classified mental modifications on the principle of

²⁵ samyagdarśanañānacāritrāṇi mokṣamārgaḥ / *Tattvārthasūtra*,1.1

²⁶ kāyavānmanaḥkarma yogaḥ / *Ibid.*,6.1

²⁷ *Ibid.*,p.158

²⁸ yogaścittavrttinirodhaḥ / *Yogasūtra*.I.2

²⁹ kṣiptaṁ mūdhaṁ vikṣiptaṁ ekāgraṁ niruddhamiti cittabhūmayah/

Yogabhāṣya on *Yogasūtra*, I.1

cognition and stated that these modifications can be either coloured i.e. attended by tensions or colourless i.e. free from tensions.³⁰For the purification and enlightenment of the mind (*citta*), the *Yoga* gives eight-fold means which is called *Aṣṭāṅgayoga*. These eight-fold means are *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇā*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi*.

A few centuries after Patañjali, *Yoga* took a turn, the new generation of *Yoga* masters beginning to probe the hidden powers of the human body, developing a system where different exercises, in conjunction with deep breathing and meditation, would help to rejuvenate the physical body, prolong life and achieve enlightenment. The human body was regarded as the temple of the immortal soul. The advent of *Yoga* in the West during the late 1800's. So, the period between 1800 -1900 A.D. is considered as Modern period in which the great *Yogacāryas*- Ramana Maḥarṣi, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Paramhansa Yogananda and Vivekananda and others etc. have contributed to the development of *Rājayoga*. They popularized Transcendental Meditation in the 1960's. Dalai Lama is a great *Yogī* from Tibet; he was awarded the Nobel Prize

³⁰ vṛttayaḥ pañca tayyaḥ kliṣṭakliṣṭaḥ / *Yogasūtra*,I.5.

for peace and has inspired many westerners to learn more about Buddhism and Yoga.

Now in the Modern times, everybody has conviction about *Yoga* practices towards the preservation, maintenance and promotion of health. *Yoga* has spread all over the world by the teachings of great personalities like Swami Shivananda, Shri T. Krishnamacharya, Swami Kuvalayananda, Shri Yogendara, Swami Rama, Sri Aurobindo, Maharshi Mahesh Yogi, Acārya Rajanish, Pattabhi Jois, BKS. Iyengar, Swami Satyananda Sarasvati and the like.

The Yoga teachers started to visit the west during the time of 1800-1900 with an objective to attract the followers there. In 1920 in India, *Haṭhayoga* was strongly promoted by Mr. T. Krishnamacharya. Shri Krishnamacharya traveled through India and provided demonstration of various yoga postures and opened the first Haṭhayoga School. B.K.S. Iyengar, T.K.V. Desikachar and Pattabhi Jois were the three students of Shri Krishnamacharya who continued his legacy and increase the popularity of *Haṭhayoga*.

The first modern Indian saint to become world-famous is Ramakrishna Paramahansa and his disciple Vivekananda who is the first apostle of Indian

spirituality in the west. Ramakrishna was born in 1836 in a small village of Bengal. His wife Saradā Devi who became his disciple later on, was purely an intellectual one having knowledge of both Hindu scriptures and practice of *Yoga*. Ramakrishna received Advaitic instruction and then he accomplished the goal of *Jñānayoga*.³¹ When Ramakrishna died in 1886, a group of his closest pupils formed a monastic community under the leadership of Vivekananda. Later on, the movement grew into a world-wide organization, the ‘Ramakrishna Math Mission’ which still exists.

Vivekananda is the second great name connected with the spreading of knowledge about Yoga in modern times.³² His intelligence and intellectual capacity made him an able apostle of Ramakrishna’s teaching to the west. He was born in 1863 in Calcutta in an aristocratic family. He was an undergraduate when he first visited Ramakrishna and was told by Ramkrishna straight away that he had been chosen to continue his mission. After some initial mistrust and inner struggles, he succumbed to Ramakrishna’s charm and spiritual influence.

³¹ Lal, Basant Kumar, *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, p. 4

³² *Ibid.*

Eventually, he was helped by him to achieve even the highest experience of *Samādhi*. But the history of modern Yoga is widely thought to begin with the Parliament of Religions” which was held in Chicago, U.S.A. in 1893. Vivekananda was a great Advaita Vedāntist and *Jñānayogī* and it was due to him that Indian philosophy and *Yoga* began to fire the imagination of many people in Western countries as early as the end of the last century.³³

Ramana was born of a Brahman family on the 30th December, 1879 in Tiruchizhi in South India and later became famous all over the world for his immense work on the *Yoga*. Even outstanding politicians visited him and among them were the two Presidents of India Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. But many people considered themselves to be his pupils on the path of *Yoga* and many seem to follow his method even today. His instructions, especially the two books viz. ‘Self-Enquiry’ and ‘Who Am I?’ can be classified as following the path of *Jñānayoga*.³⁴ But they are formulated so as to be easily understood today. They offer a method of self-inquiry that is basically analytical

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Singleton & Goldberg, *Gurus of Modern Yoga*, p. 72

and proceeds to eliminate the meditator's identification with insubstantial constituents of his personality- which are his body, his feeling and his thought-in order to enable him to penetrate to experience his hidden essence or 'real self'.

Aurobindo Ghosh represents an entirely different type of *Yogī* from Ramana. He was born on 15th of August, 1872 in Calcutta. The teaching of Aurobindo was the essence of the intellectual path of *Vicāra* and *Jñānayoga*. The philosophy of Aurobindo is known as Integral Yoga in which he tried to 'spiritualize the material'.³⁵

After Ramana Maharsi, Paramahansa Yogananda is the most popular teacher of the Western Yoga movement. Arriving Boston in 1920, Paramahansa Yogananda established Self-realization. He died in 1952 when he was fifty-nine years old but his ideas remained immortal through his fascinating work like *Autobiography of a Yogi* and with a thousand of followers worldwide. Likewise, Swami Kanakānanda was also a master of *Haṭhayoga* āsanās including Kriyās, Mudrās, Prāṇāyāmas.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

In 1919, another *Yogī* namely Yogendra Mastamani reached US wherein he demonstrated to the Americans Haṭhayoga for nearly three years. Prior to his return to India, he established Kaivalyadhāma (American branch) which was established by late Swami Kuvalayānanda, a master the scientific study of *Yoga*. It may be mentioned that he was known as the ‘House holder *Yogi*’³⁶ as he married one of his students namely Sita Devi and led a family. His first and foremost aim was to make *Yoga* handy to all especially to the ordinary family people in solving their daily problems and hence tried to create a better life style through Yogic attitudes, simple Āsanās, Prāṇāyāmas, relaxation and health oriented techniques.

In 1930, Jiddu Krishnamurti, with his eloquent talks, delighted thousands of philosophically minded Westerners towards the righteous execution of *Jñānayoga* and subsequently flanked by a huge crowds of admirers. Although groomed by the Theosophical Society in the initial stage of his life, Jiddu Krishnamurti rejected this mission later. He formulated a lonely path towards the

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.162

divine and said that man must discard all traditions, all practices and delve deep within himself to find that Ultimate Truth.

Indra Devi, Russian-born yogini, is called to be the ‘First Lady of *Yoga*’³⁷ who opened a Yoga studio in Hollywood in 1947. Indra Devi set up many yoga centers across the globe and attracted number of people who were keen to know about the *Yoga*.

Shri Yogendra of the Yoga Institute of Santa Cruz in India visited the United States in 1950 and pioneered medical research on Yoga. Later on, his son Jayadev Yogendra has been continuing his valuable work to demonstrate the efficacy of *Yoga*.

The Himalayan master Swami Sivānanda was a physician and primarily a Vedāntist in the tradition of Adi Saṅkara. An advocate of simple and pure living, Swami Sivānanda mainly focused himself in the arena of *Bhakti* and *Karmayoga* with *Japa* and spiritual study. He opened schools mostly in the European countries and most of them are still active.

³⁷ Werner, Karel, *Yoga and Indian Philosophy*, p.156.

One of the great exponents of *Haṭhayoga* in modern times was Sri Krishnamacārya, who died in the year 1989. He practised and taught the *Viniyoga* system of *Haṭhayoga*. He was basically engaged as a yoga teacher in the palace of Maharaja of Mysore. He developed a unique yogāsanas based on an ancient manuscript called ‘the Yoga Korunta’. His son T. K. V. Desikachar continues his saintly father’s teachings and taught yoga to various people including the famous Jiddu Krishnamurti. Another well-known student of Sri Krishnamacārya and a master in his own right is Desikachar’s uncle B. K. S. Iyengar, who has taught ten thousand students, including the world-famous violinist Yehudi Menuhin.³⁸

Since Yoga is not restricted to Hinduism, here the name of Dalai Lama, the champion of non-violence, may also be mentioned. He is unquestionably one of the truly great yogis of modern Tibet who demonstrates that the principles of *Yoga* can fruitfully be brought not only into a busy daily life but also into the arena of politics. Today Tibetan Buddhism (which is a form of *Tantrayoga*) is extremely popular among Westerners, and there are many lamas (spiritual

³⁸ *Ibid.*,p.158

teacher) who are willing to share with sincere seekers the secrets of their hitherto well-guarded tradition.

Born as Ramkrishna Yadav to Ram Yadav and Gulabo Devi in 1965 in Alipur in the Mahendragarh district in the Indian state of Haryana, Baba Ramdev is a renowned *Yogī* who is famous for revolutionizing *Yoga*. While living in Kalwa Gurukul in Jind district, Haryana, he offered free yoga training to villagers for some time. He then moved to Haridwar in Uttarakhand and spent several years studying ancient Indian scriptures at Gurukul Kangri Vishwavidyalaya. He has been organizing Yoga camps since long which use to see a large attendance of his followers. He is also one of the founders of the “Divya Yoga Mandir Trust” that aims at promoting Yoga among the masses.³⁹

In December 2006, Swami Ramdev claimed⁴⁰ to improve the condition of patients suffering from AIDS through *Yoga* and Ayurvedic drugs sold by his Divya Yoga Mandir Trust. Baba Ramdev started Patañjali Yogapeeth in 2006 as a centre of excellence for Yoga & Ayurveda. He started research in the field of

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.163

⁴⁰ <http://www.yogapranayama.com/yog%20Sandesh.html>

Yoga & Ayurveda. Now Patañjali Yogapeeth is one of the largest centres in the world for research & development on Yoga & Ayurveda. This centre offers free Yoga classes & free Ayurveda consultation for all. Apart from this, centre runs approximately 20000 yoga classes & approximately 2000 Ayurveda clinics all over the country.⁴¹ This centre also has 300-bed hospital, pharmacy, Research & Development centre and a university. The *Yoga guru* also teaches *Prāṇāyāma*, a series of breathing exercises that were a part of the ancient Indian system of Yoga. His Yogic educational show is broadcast on TV with a total viewer ship of millions.⁴² People who watch his TV shows have given examples of how they have been cured of various diseases after practising *Yoga* and breathing exercises prescribed by Baba Ramdev.⁴³

I. MODERN TEACHERS OF YOGA:

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *The Times of India*, 7 January 2006 (<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2006/1/7>)

⁴³ Economic Times-Oct. 25, 2015‘*Maharashtra government begins sale of Ayurvedic medicine*’, p.23 (<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com>)

a. THE PERIOD FORM 1836 TO 1920

2. Sri Ramakrishna Dakshineswar, Bengal
3. Swami Vivekananda, Calcutta, Bengal
4. Sri Ramana Maharisi, Thiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu
5. Lahiri Mahasaya, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
6. Sri Kakananda, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh and Bengal
7. Swami Brahmananda
8. Swami Akhandananda
9. Swami Vijñānanda
10. Ramakrishnananda
11. Swami Saradananda
12. Mahatma Gandhi
13. Swami Premananda
14. Swami Turiyananda
15. Swami Yogananda
16. Swami Abhedananda
17. Swami Trigunatitananda

18. Yogendra Mastamani
19. Swami Niranjananda
20. Swami Subodhananda
21. Swami Adbhutananda
22. Sri Aurobindo

b. THE PERIOD FROM 1921 TO 1960:

1. Swami Yogananda, Bengal (Later California, U.S.A)
2. Swami Rama Tirtha
3. Jiddu Krishnamurti
4. Smt. Indira Devi, Russia (Later Argentina, South America)
5. Sri Yogendra, Bombay, Maharashtra
6. Sri Swami Sivananda, Risikesh , Uttar Pradesh
7. Sri Aruobindo and The Mother, Pondicherry,
8. Sri Kuvalayananda, Kaivalyadhama, Pune, Maharashtra
9. Dr. Ananda Bhavanani, Vancouver, Canada

c. THE PERIOD FROM 1961 TO PRESENT TIMES:

- 1) Swami Gopi Krishna
- 2) Swami Shankaradev Saraswati
- 3) Swami Satyananda Saraswati
- 4) Swami Sivananda
- 5) M.P. Pandit
- 6) Swami Ratnatirtha
- 7) Kuvalaya
- 8) Yogamaharisi Dr. Swami Gītānanda Giri, Pondicherry, India
- 9) Yogacharya BKS Iyengar, Pune, Maharashtra
- 10) Sri Pattabhi Jois, Mysore City, Karnataka State
- 11) Swami Vishnu Devananda, Valmorin, Canada
- 12) Swami Satchitananda, Yogaville, Canada
- 13) Sri Amrit Desai, USA
- 14) Sri Krisnamacarya
- 15) Sri T.K.V. Desichachar, Chennai, India
- 16) Sri Jayadev Yogendre, Bombay
- 17) Swami Rama, Honesdale, Pennsylvania, USA
- 18) Sri Dharendra Brahmachari, New Delhi, India

19)Mahesh Yogi, Risikesh (Now head quarter in Holland)

20)Dalai Lama

21)Swami Ramdev

II. CHRONOLOGY OF TRADITIONAL YOGA TEACHERS & THEIR PROMINENT WORKS:

If we see the works pertaining to the development of Yoga chronologically, then we can cite some of the texts that can show a tradition of *Yoga* from the ancient to modern period.

1. PĀTAÑJALAYOGAŚĀSTRA of PATAÑJALI(350-400BC):

Patañjali wrote *Yogasūtra* approximately in the 4th century. It is known as the first book of Yoga system. These sūtras are a highly condensed summary of the system in its four *pāda*.

2. VYĀSABHĀṢYA of VEDAVYĀSA(400-500 BC):

Both the *Yogasūtra* and the *Vyāsabhāṣya* are roughly contemporary and may be dated approximately in the 4th century (350-400 BC) and certainly no later

than the 5th century.⁴⁴ In this book, *Yoga* is provisionally defined as concentration, which is a property of awareness. Awareness has five stages (*bhūmi*), viz. *kṣipta* (distracted), *mūḍha* (sluggish), *Vikṣipta* (partially distracted), *ekāgra* (one-pointed), and *niruddha* (suppressed). The awareness of the fourth stage (one-pointed), called content filled (*samprajñāta*), illumines a real thing and is able to destroy the afflictions and to slacken the knots of *karma*. The fifth stage (suppressed) is called contentless (*asamprajñāta*); in it all fluctuations of awareness are suppressed.

3. TATTVAVAIŚĀRADĪ of VĀCASPATI MIŚRA (c. 950):

According to tradition, Vācaspati Miśra is a famous interpreter of Indian Philosophy. He is a Maithila Brāhmaṇa from the region of Bihar. He is lived either in the middle of the 9th century or toward the latter half of the 10th century. The commentary begins with a discussion of what is presupposed in one who embarks on the study of *Yoga* and in what sense the *Yogasūtras* are authoritative.

4. KAULAJÑĀNANIRŪPA of MATSYENDRANĀTHA (c.900-950):

⁴⁴ Radhakrishnan.S., *Indian Philosophy*, Vol.II,p.342

Matsyendranātha is one of the important figures in regard to the origins of *Haṭhayoga*. He is one of the eighty-four (84) mahā siddhas and was a teacher of Gorakṣanātha. He most likely lived in the early part of the tenth Century (900-950) in the region of Bengal and Assam. He is said to be the author of one of the earlier text *Haṭhayoga* is *Kaulajñānanirṇaya* (decision of the knowledge pertaining to the Kaula tradition). The text contains 24 paṭalas (sections) in the form of a verse-dialogue between Bhairava (Śiva) and *Devi*.

5. SIDDHASIDDHĀNTAPADDHATI of GORAKṢANĀTHA (c.1000-1250):

Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati is regarded as the most authoritative scripture on the philosophy of the *Nāthayoga* cult in India. Gorakṣanātha has used in this book hundreds of technical terms which are largely unknown to the general reader. The main theme discussed in the *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati* is the truth or theory (*tattva*) of the coalescence in the individual body (*piṇḍa*, microcosm) and the cosmos (*brahmāṇḍa*, macrocosm). The book contains six chapters or instructions (*upadeśa*).

6. KITAB PATAÑJALA OR THE BOOK OF PATAÑJALI of AL-BERŪNI(c.1050):

Al Beruni made Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* available in Arabic Language by translating it from Sanskrit in 973-1050. The Arabic version has the force of a dialogue of questions and answers between "the ascetic roaming in the deserts and the forests" and Patañjali.

7. RĀJAMĀRTAṆḌAVṚTTI of BHOJADEVA (c.1050):

Bhojadeva was a scholar and he worked in such areas like philosophy, poetics, veterinary medicine, phonetics, archery *Yoga* and medicine. He wrote *Rājamārtanḍavṛtti* on the *Yogasūtra* in the middle of the 11th century. In the opening verse of his commentary, the identity of the two Patañjalis is asserted viz. Patañjali of *Mahābhāṣya* and Patañjali of the *Yogasūtra*.

8. GORAKṢAŚATAKAM of GORAKṢANĀTHA(c.1200-1250):

The famous disciple of Matsyendranāth was Gorakṣanātha. He composed *Gorakṣaśatakam* in 100 verses. This book represents many practical techniques of *Yoga*.

9. GORAKSAPĀDDHATI of GORAKṢANĀTHA (c.1000-1250):

Goraksapāddhati is also known as *Gorakṣasaṃhitā*. Gorakṣanātha narrates the most important practical aspects of *Hāṭhayoga*-what to practice and how to practice. The text is divided into two parts named *Śataka*, consisting of approximately 100 main verses (slokas). The first *śataka* consists of 199 verses dealing with posture, exercise and bonds. The second *śataka* deals with the six fold acts (*śatakarma*) from postures through concentration. The whole book contains 366 verses in all.

10. SARVADARŚANASAMGRAHA of SAYANA MADHAVA(c.1350):

Mādhavācārya was a follower of the Adaita Vedānta tradition and has usually been dated in the 14th century. He is said to have been a minister in the court of king Bukka I (1356-1377) of Vijayanagara. His work *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* provides summary treatments of the various philosophical and religious systems prevalent in his period.⁴⁵ Altogether he treats some sixteen systems in what appears to be a hierarchical manner. His treatment begins with the *Cārvākadarśana*. Regarding his treatment of *Pātañjalayoga*, two observations

⁴⁵ *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* ,p.89

are pertinent. First, he refers to Yoga as *śeṣvara-sāṃkhya*, that is, ‘theistic Sāṃkhya’, which also has another name, *sāṃkhyapravacana*, that is, “an explanation of Sāṃkhya”. Second, it is interesting to note that he places *Yogadarśana* even higher in his ladder of systems than the Sāṃkhya.

11. SIDDHASIDDHĀṆTAPADDHATI of NITYANĀTHA(c.1000-1400):

The author Nityanātha is also known as Nityanāthaparvatīputra in the colophon. He is well known teacher of nātha tradition of *Yoga*. He has been mentioned one of the mahāsiddhas.⁴⁶

12. HAṬHAYOGAPRADĪPIKĀ of SVĀTMĀRĀMA (c.1350-1400):

Svātmārāma yogin lived sometime in the 14th century, and his text, *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*, is one of the most well-known texts on *Haṭhayoga*. The text is filled with the technical terms and practices of the *Haṭhayoga*.

13. MAṆIPRABHĀVṚITTI of RĀMĀNANDA SARASVATĪ (c.1550-1600):

⁴⁶ kānerīpūjyapādaścanityanāthonirañjanaḥ/

kāpālībindunāthaścakākacaṇḍīśvārāhvayaḥ// *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*,I.7

Ramananda Sarasvati was a student of Ācārya Govindānanda. He was a follower of the Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara. He wrote *Brahmāmṛtavarṣinī* on the Brahmasūtras and *Maṇiprabhāvr̥tti* on the *Yogasūtra* for the most part follow earlier commentaries.

14. PĀTAÑJALARAHASYA of RĀGHĀVANANDA SARASVATĪ(c.1550-1600):

Rāghavānanda Sarasvatī wrote *Pātañjalarahasya* on Vyāsa's *Yogasūtrabhāṣya* and Vācaspati Miśra's *Tattvavaiśāradī*. He says that his purpose in composing this commentary is to supplement gaps and omissions in Vācaspati Miśra's commentary. According to him, the benedictory verse-*yastyaktyārūpamādyam ...*⁴⁷ belongs to the *Vyāśabhāṣya*. This verse has been commented on by Vijñānabhikṣu, but not by Vācaspati Miśra.

15. YOGAVĀRTTIKA of VIJÑĀNABHIKṢU(c.1550):

Vijñānabhikṣu lived in the 16th century C.E. He thus lived at a time when all the three schools of Vedānta, i.e. Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and *Dvaita* had been established and also after the *bhakti* movement had reached new heights during

⁴⁷ Larson, J. G.& Bhattacharya, S. R, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*, Vol.XII.p.294.

the time of *Caitanya*. He wrote *Yogavārttika* on Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*. In Introductory verses he establishes that *Yoga* is the philosophy par excellence for those seeking liberation.

16. YOGASĀRASAMGRAHA of VIJÑĀNABHIKṢU(c.1550):

This is a short summary of the large *Yogavārttika*. *Yogasārasamgraha* was written by Vijñānabhikṣu in 16th century. He also wrote *Sāmkhyasāra*, *Brahmādarśana*, and *Sāmkhyabhāṣya* which are mentioned in this book.

17. PRADĪPIKĀ of BHAVĀGĀNEŚA DĪKṢITA(c.1600-1700) :

Bhavāgānesa Dīkṣita was a direct disciple of Vijñānabhikṣu .So it can be dated the 16th century. He composed a brief commentary on the *Pātañjalayogasūtra* called *Pradīpikā*. It is a summary of Vijñānabhikṣu's *Yogavārttika*.

18. YOGASIDDHĀNTACANDRIKĀ OF NĀRĀYAṆATĪRTHA(c.1600-1700):

Nārāyaṇatīrtha was a well-known scholar not only in Sāmkhya and Yoga Philosophy but also in the philosophical systems of the Nyaya-Vaisesika school

and the Vedanta. He was a devotee of *Kṛṣṇa*. He wrote three works on *Yoga*, the *Yogasiddhāntacandrikā*, the *Sūtrārthabodhinī* and the *Pātañjalasūtralaghuvṛtti*. Japanese scholar Ko Endo has studied the life and works of Nārāyaṇatīrtha extensively and has concluded that he is best dated 1600-1690 C.E.⁴⁸

19. SŪTRARTHABODHINĪ of NĀRĀYAṆATĪRTHA (c.1600-1700):

Arthabodhinī is a brief summary on the *Yogasūtra*. Its chief purpose is to afford easy explanations of the Sutras. It is based on *Tattvavaiśārādī* and also on the Rājamārtaṇḍa commentaries.

20. GHERAṆḌASAMĪHITĀ of GHERAṆḌA (c.1650-1700):

The work is in dialogue form between Gheraṇḍa, the teacher, and Caṇḍakāpāli, the disciple. The work is named after the name of the teacher, and its authorship is unknown. It is probably a product of the late 17th Century roughly contemporaneous with the *Śiva Samhitā*, another *Haṭhayoga* classical text. A large number of verses of this text are more or less similar to verses of the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*.

21. SAṬKARMA SAMGRAHA of CIDGHANANĀNDANĀTHA (c.600-1700):

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.198

This is another text on *Haṭhayoga* where in Cidghanānandanātha indicates that he was a disciple of Ganganānandanātha of the Nātha sect. However, his precise date is not known. This text took up the subject of the “six (cleansing) actions” (*saṭkarmāṇi*) of *Haṭhayoga* as set forth in the works of Gorakṣanātha.

22. HAṬHA RATNĀVALĪ of ŚRĪNIVĀSA BHAṬṬA(c.1600-1700):

Śrīnivāsa Bhaṭṭa composed *Haṭha Ratnāvalī* in the 17th Century. He composed works on Nyāya and Vedantā also. He was an inhabitant of Tirabhukti. This Tirabhukti is in the present day Andhra Pradesh. Though the present work is based on the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* and the like, it contains a few unique views. It enumerates two kinds of niyamas, mental and bodily which is not found in any well-known work on *Yoga*. In the place of the six purificatory acts (*karman*) usually prescribed in *Haṭhayoga* works, it prescribes to more, namely *cakri* and *gajakaraṇī*.

23. YOGASUDHĀKARA of SADĀŚIVENDRA SARASVATĪ(c.1700-1800):

Sadāśivendra Sarasvatī wrote the *Yogasudhākara* on Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*.

The author Sadāśivendra Sarasvatī was born in the Chola country near the town Karur in South India. He is supposed to belong to the eighteenth century.

24. YOGACINTĀMAṆI of ŚIVĀNANDA SARASVATĪ(c.1850):

Yogacintāmaṇi was composed by Śivānanda Sarasvatī in between 16th and the 19th centuries. Śivānanda Sarasvatī was the disciple of Rāmacandra Sāmānanda Svarasatī. The text consists of four chapters which are replete with quotations from authoritative texts. Only in a few place thus the author depicts his own views. In fact, the work is a topical compendium of yogic texts.

25. YOGATARAṄGA of DEVATĪRTHASVĀMIN(c.1855):

Devatīrthasvāmin, also known as Kaṣṭhajihva Svāmin, was a disciple of Vidyāraṇyatīrtha. He was patronized by the Maharaja of Kasi during his

scholarly career. The text called *Yogataraṅga* is a small booklet containing a few important sutras of the Yogasūtras with occasional observations by the author.

26. BHĀṢYA of BALARĀMA UDĀSĪNA(c.1890) :

Balarāma Udāsīna was a follower of the Udāsīna sect and studied Vedānta with Rāmamiśra Śāstrin. He was born in 1855. He studied *Nyāya* in Bengal for some time, but spent the last part of his life in Varanasi. He composed a short Sanskrit commentary on the *Tattvavaiśārādī* of Vācaspati Miśra.

27. YOGAKARṆIKĀ of AGHORĀNANDANĀTHA(1905):

Yogakarṇikā is an early 20th century manual on *Haṭhayoga* which is largely a collection of quotations from other works. The author, Aghorānandanātha is also known as Aghorānanda Nirvāṇin. The text was published by the Shri Ganga Prasad Asrama, Varanasi, in the Bharat Jivan Yantralaya. The work has 5 chapters altogether. Chapter I describes rituals to be performed in the morning and gives a description of nine vital centers in the body. Chapter II focuses on meditating on parts of the body. Chapter III deals with control of breathing. Chapter IV describes the “six cleansing actions” (*saṭkarmāṇi*). Chapter V deals with postures.

Chapter VI describes withdrawal of the senses. Chapter VII deals with holding the breath (*kumbhaka*). Chapter XVIII discusses bodily exercises. Chapters IX, X, and XI deal respectively with *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *Samādhi*. Chapters XII, XIII, XIV and XV take up descriptions of *Layayoga* and unusual postures and bodily exercises.

28. VAIDIKAVṚTTI of HARIPRASĀDA SVĀMIN (c.20th century):

Hariprasāda was a disciple of Ātmārāma, who lived in the first quarter of the 20th century. This commentary was published during his lifetime. In most of the places of this commentary, he closely follows the *Vyāsabhāṣya*. He seems to be a follower of the school of Dayananda, the founder of the Ārya Samaj.

29. ŚIVOKTAYOGAYUKTI of HARIHARĀNANDA ĀRAṆYA (c.20th century):

Hariharānanda Āraṇya lived from 1869 to 1947. He is the founder of the Kapila Maṭha, a monastic community claiming to maintain the tradition of Sāṃkhya and Yoga in modern India, which is located in Bihar. *Śivoktayogyukti*

is an edited from West Bengal Kapilāśrama in 1914. Hariharānanda wrote a number of works on Sāmkhya-Yoga in Bengali and Sanskrit. His best known work in Bengali is the *Kapilāśramīyapātajalyogadarśana* which has been partly rendered into English by P.N. Mukerji under the title “The Yoga Philosophy of Patañjali” in 1963.

30. YOGAPRADĪPIKĀ of BALADEVA MIŚRA(c.20th century):

Baladeva wrote *Yogapradīpikā* in the middle of the 20th century. It is said to have been composed by following Vācaspati Miśra’s *Tattvavaiśārādī*.⁴⁹ In the

⁴⁹ bhasyaṁ sarvārtikaṁ dṛṣṭvā vācaśpatyaṁ ca kṛtsnaśaḥ/

tebhyaḥ proddhṛtya saṁkṣepādvacaśpatyaṅgāminīm//

ārūrūkṣoviśeṣeṇa yogaṁ tatropakariṇīm /

karomi yogasūtraṁ vyakhāṁ yogapradīpikāṁ // *Yogapradīpikā*, p.1

Sanskrit introduction it is stated by the editor that the commentary was published in probably 1987-1930 CE.

31. KIRAṆĀ of KṚṢṆAVALLABHĀCĀRYA(c.20th century):

Kṛṣṇavallabhācārya wrote *Kiraṇā* on Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* and Bhoja's *Rajamārtanḍa*. He also wrote a commentary entitled *Kiraṇāvalī* on Vācaspati Miśra's *Tattvakaumudī*.

32. BHĀṢYA of SWĀMĪ JÑĀNĀNANDA'S (c.20th century) :

Swāmī Jñānānda is the well-known founder of *Bhārata Dharma Mahāmaṇḍala*, a religio-cultural organization of Varanasi. His work is an elaboration of the *Vyāsbhāṣy*.

B. THE RELEVANCE OF YOGA IN THE MODERN TIMES

The modern times, basically, are the time frame after the post-classical era. Modern history can be divided broadly into the early modern period and the

late modern period on the basis of the Industrial Revolution (1760) and the French Revolution (1787) respectively. Modern Age possibly starts with the following developments at global level:

- a) Industrial Revolution in Britain
- b) Starting with the settlements in Europe following the Napoleonic Wars, thus from the 1820s and
- c) Possibly from the end of First World War when the world was seriously shaken up.

However, in Indian context, especially, the modern period started after the ‘Sepoy Mutiny’ (the first war of Indian independence) of 1857.⁵⁰ Hence, we will consider 1857 as the base year to carry out the present study of *Yoga* under the roof of modern times.

a. MODERN VIEW OF YOGA:

In modern times, people believe that the word *Yoga* refers to physical postures or *Āsanas*. In this modern world the whole environment is fighting for

⁵⁰ Chandra, Bipan, *India's Struggle for Independence*, pp. 32-33

survival and the human beings have been suffering from more and more physical and psychological stress. Although, it is not possible to control them always, yet it can be learnt how to face them and to this end. In this regard, *Yoga* is as good as an invention and that is the reason it has now become a ‘Yoga boom’. As discussed in the previous chapters, it is palpable that the aim of *Yoga* is the attainment of physical, mental and spiritual health in connection to which the UN has declared to celebrate June 21 of every year as 'International Day of *Yoga*'.⁵¹ It may be mentioned that Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed joy over the UN General Assembly for adopting this resolution and also thanked all the 177 Nations of the global body for celebrating a successful International Yoga Day.⁵²

Modern age is the age of science and reason. *Yoga* is also a science of spirituality for our physical, mental as well as moral-spiritual aspects. *Yoga* is based on practical philosophy that is used for our day-to-day living. *Yoga* produces desirable physiological changes and has sound scientific basis.⁵³

⁵¹ *Times of India*, 12 Dec 2014 (<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>)

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Bullard, M, ‘*Yoga with mentally handicapped and other disabled people*,’ *The Yoga*

Materialistic outlook and consumerism, pollution of mind and environment, dependence on junk food and drugs, deficiency of noble virtues and deeds and the stress of daily life are the main diseases of our present society. *Yoga* is the perfect solution for all these problems. If the society practices *Yoga*, people will be physically healthy, mentally calm and spiritually evolve and hence become more effective and happy. The rush and burden on our hospitals will be greatly reduced. Hence, there is an urgent need to popularize *Yoga* among our masses. *Yoga* is consistent with our culture and complementary to science. It is our duty to promote it further and become Yogis as Yogeśvara Kṛṣṇa unequivocally declares the superiority of a *Yogī* thus: ‘*Yogī* is superior to ascetics, *Jñāna* is as well as those who perform actions with motive. Therefore, Arjun, do thou become a *Yogī*.’⁵⁴

Yogic treatment can be administered along with medical treatment as a complementary therapy. As yogic treatment is effective and inexpensive, we will be able to save billions of rupees annually and there will be a tremendous

Review, Vol. III, pp.25-27

⁵⁴ tapasvibhyo’ dhiko yogī jñānibhyo’ pi mato’ dhikaḥ /

karmibhyaścādhiko yogī tasmādyogī bhavārjuna // *Bhagavadgītā*, VI.46

reduction of pressure on our hospitals which are over-crowded, under-staffed and fund-starved. It should be noted that while drugs have many undesirable side effects on our physical and mental health, *Yoga* has some helpful ‘side effects’ for the improvement of psychosomatic health. It is clear that *Yoga* is a boon for the ‘modern’ society which has become a victim of everyday stress.

b. YOGA AND EDUCATION:

Yoga education, in common, has been referred to as the training and teaching process of *Yoga*, though it also bestows better support to the education process through application of *Yoga* techniques. Therefore, it is a demand of the time to include *Yoga* and *Yogic* values in education system. Here *Yogic* values refer to the holistic and spiritual approach towards life and the world. In the governmental spheres too, the newly elected NDA government, under the leadership of Narendra Modi, has appointed Shripad Yesso Naik as the *Yoga* Minister of his Cabinet for the promotion of the yearlong *Yoga* tradition in the

country as well as in the globe.⁵⁵ Inclusion of *Yoga* in educational process can lead to the development of harmonious personality and behavior at all the levels.⁵⁶ In this connection, an atmosphere should be developed where the students come up to study *Yoga* with their own enthusiasm. Normally, in the education process, one is taught and asked to store in mind as much as possible, there is not any format for the appreciation in the education system regarding the values for optimal mental usage and getting rid of the burden of information, to become tranquil for a while. The system of *Yoga* may offer this kind of training and teaching.

The importance of *Yoga* can be analyzed by seeing the secondary school curriculum since 1988 from when *Yoga* has been a compulsory subject for Health and Physical Education through adoption of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005.⁵⁷ In a bid to make *Yoga* a more integral part of the physical education programme in central government run schools, the Human Resource Development Ministry in June, 2015 released course material and

⁵⁵ www.nhp.gov.in/meet-the-ministers_pg

⁵⁶ 2014/01/kvs-orders-yoga-teaching-in-kendriya.htm

⁵⁷ National Curriculum Framework-2005 prepared by NCERT, India

syllabus for Yoga designed by NCERT for classes VI-X, while also introducing Yoga as a training module in teacher education programmes.⁵⁸ *Yoga* is already taught as an optional subject in government-run schools like the Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas under the co-scholastic activity of Physical Education. Yoga and physical education module children in achieving overall development. However, up till now both Yoga and physical education have not been given due importance and neither has their contribution to the health and overall development of the child been adequately acknowledged.

Presently, it is being seriously sensed that the classical Indian tradition established four goals of human life (*puruṣārtha*). They are. Ethics (*Dharma*), Wealth (*Artha*), Enjoyment (*Kāma*) and Emancipation (*Mokṣa*), which are equally essential and significant for sublime human existence in present time too. The education system should also impart the teaching and training of the Ethics (*Dharma*), socioeconomic (*Artha*), psychological (*Kama*) and spiritual (*Mokṣa*) values to the students.⁵⁹ In other words Acharya Vinowa Bhave, the main icon of

⁵⁸ <http://indianexpress.com/article/india>

⁵⁹ ihakhaludharmārthakāmamokṣākhyeṣucaturvidheṣupuruṣārtheṣumokṣaeva

the *Bhu-daan* movement in India and the spiritual successor of Mahatma Gandhi, commented that the education system in India should be based on three principles: *Yoga* (spiritual training), *Udyoga* (vocational training) and *Sahayoga* (social training).⁶⁰ Swami Rama also expressing the views ‘On the Integration of *Yoga* with Modern Education’ that *Yoga* should become a part of education in India.⁶¹ According to Swami Rama ‘Education process should include three steps⁶² viz. education at home, environmental education and self-education.

It is evident that *Yoga* renders self-education. It is nothing but the education of self-awareness as it teaches how to live with wisdom. The prevailing education system causes orientation towards external world to such an extent that one gradually starts losing the awareness of his being i.e. self-awareness. The present education system conveys no training to develop an

paramapuruṣārthaḥ / *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, p.1

⁶⁰ Bhava Vinowa, *Talks on Gita*, p. 36

⁶¹ Tripathi, K.M., *Scope of Yoga for Refinement of Educational Process in Modern Globalizing World – Certain Reflections*, *The Yoga Review*, Vol. IX. p. 18

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 21

acquaintance with the abstract internal world of our Self. There is essentially a need to learn to understand the subtle realities concerned with the inert aspects of self-existence. Above all, practice of *Yoga* renders progressive knowledge for the development of self-awareness and educates the mankind about the realities of being and becoming. How the process of Self-Education in yoga takes place, has been obviously elucidated in the famous dialogue of Varuṇa (the teacher) and Bhṛgu.⁶³ Following the instructions of Varuṇa, Bhṛgu after going through the actualization process of five sheaths or levels of the self, successively i.e. Corporeal Sheath (*Annamaya Kośa*), Vital Sheath (*Prāṇamaya Kośa*), Mental Sheath (*Manomaya Kośa*), Gnostic Sheath (*Vijñānamaya Kośa*) and Beatific Sheath (*Ānandamaya Kośa*), attained Self-realization⁶⁴

In the last century, *Yoga* has developed in various way and style under the observation of many conspicuous scholars. These scholars have discovered various styles of *Yoga* that are at disagreement with each other. Yet, some scholar still maintains the traditional line age to *Yogavidyā* or the science of

⁶³ *Taittīriyopaniṣad*, III.1-6

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

Yoga. In recent times, so many major developments and scientific and academic research has done in the field of *Yoga*. The teaching of *Yoga* has transferred from the *Gurukula* and *Āśram* settings to the college and university oriented *Yoga*.

Yoga schools have mushroomed, operated by people who have undertaken courses in Universities and colleges. Some courses have a few months duration, some for one year. Some have the equivalent training of a B.A. or M.A. These are all characterized by an academic structure where each student has 'several teachers.' The *Guru śiṣya* relationship is missing as well as the long term intimate structure of *Gurukula*. As a result, the students' Knowledge of *Yoga* is often more academic than personal. '*Yoga* has become a subject to be studied like any other history, chemistry, mathematics etc. as preparation for the career. Great emphasis is placed on the therapeutic aspects of *Yoga* and treatment of various alignment through *Yoga* techniques. In some case *Yoga* is totally identified with *Āsanas* and is looked upon as a type of physical education. There is much central and state Government's activity in the field of *Yoga* CCRN (Central Council for Research in Yoga & Naturopathy) under the Ministry of Health in New Delhi.

Renowned Yoga Guru Swami Ramdev has expressed his desire to introduce yoga courses in Manipur University as well as in the upcoming Cultural University in the state. In this connection, he announced Rs. 2 crore to establish two yoga centres – one *Ācāryakulam*, a residential Vedic and modern educational school in Imphal and Veda Vidyalay in Char Hajar in Senapati district. It may be mentioned that five organizations viz. Patanjali YogSamiti (PYS), Bharat Swabhimān Trust (BST), Mahila Patanjali Yog Samiti (MPYS), Kishan Panchayat and Yuva Bharat have been imparting Yoga training in Manipur through 420 centres out of which Imphal alone has 237 yoga training centres.⁶⁵

c. YOGA AND HEALTH

Yoga is an ideal method for purifying as well as strengthening our body and mind. Purified, strengthened and disease free body-mind complex of a *Yogī* is the temple of the Divine (*dehodevālayaḥ*) and an efficient instrument for doing all the noble deeds.⁶⁶ The ultimate goal of *Yoga* is to help the individual to transcend

⁶⁵ <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.aspx?id=feb29.16>

⁶⁶ śarīramādyamkhalu dharma sādhanam /

the self and attain enlightenment. As the *Bhagavadgītā* says, “A person is said to have achieved *Yoga*, the union with the Self, when the perfectly disciplined mind gets freedom from all desires, and becomes absorbed in the Self alone.”⁶⁷ It is a way of life good living and for the benefit of the body. It is the only way through which the body will be fit and fine without any trainer, without equipment and medicine. The World Health Organization (WHO), a prime organ of UNO, states “health is the state of wellbeing at physical, mental, social and spiritual level”. Holistic approach of Health care includes (i). Preventive Health (ii). Promotive Health (iii). Curative Health. For our better and disease free health, yoga is very much essential. In this connection, Most of the physicians recommend yoga to their patients for various reasons among which the following can be mentioned⁶⁸:

1. To enhance concentration

dharmārthakāmamokṣānāmarogyam mulaṁ uttamaṁ // *Caraka Saṁhitā, Sūtrasthanam*, I.15

⁶⁷ yadā viniyataṁ cittamātmanyevāvatiṣṭhate /

niḥspṛhaḥ sarvakāmebhyo yukta ityucyate tadā // *Bhagavadgītā*, VI.18

⁶⁸ Joshi, K.S., *Yoga in Daily Life* , p.49

2. It minimizes the amount of harmful hormones produced in the body at the time of depression.
3. Reduces back pain and other 'joint pains'.
4. Mitigates respiration problems.
5. Weight loss and weight gain.
6. Develops the immune system of body.

The administration of Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education & Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh has initiated the process to include *Yoga* as an integral part of the medical science. This holistic attempt is an outcome of the address of Narendra Modi, PM of India which was delivered in the convocation of PGIMER in September, 2015 emphasizing importance of *Yoga*. The PGIMER conducts special sessions with its patients to teach them *Yoga* after they are weaned off medicines. Specializing in asthma and bronchitis, the pediatrician complements medicine with *Yoga*. Some collaborative studies carried out in the

PGIMER have provided sufficient evidence that *Yoga* can be recommended as an alternative therapy in posture-related disorders including respiratory diseases.⁶⁹

Yoga in day to day fast life, trains the body, mind and spirit to become strong and flexible, release stress and create inner peace, while developing a deep connection with one's spirit, intuition and personal power. All of these are essential for living a healthy balanced life. The benefits of *Yoga* are unlimited. At the physical level, *Yoga* and its cleansing practises have proven to be effective for various disorders. Many people who practice *Yoga* say that it reduces anxiety and stress, improves mental clarity and even helps them to sleep better. The science of *Yoga* and its techniques have now been reoriented to suit modern sociological needs and life style. Expert of various branches of medicine including modern medical science are realizing the role of these techniques in the prevention of disease and promotion of health. Daily practice of *Yoga* in itself, leading to improve health, emotional wellbeing clarity and joy in living.

However, a number of ways have been following in regards to the practicing of *Yoga* since ancient times. In the *Brahma Purāṇa*, the time and the

⁶⁹ <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/>

place of the practicing *Yoga* are properly described. One should not practice *Yoga* when i) his hand has disturbed, ii) fast breathing, iii) tired, iv) hungry, v) having confusion, vi) coolness, vii) hotness, viii) too much of wind, ix) noisy place, x) near water place, xi) old house, xii) squire lane, xiii) near snake or serpent, xiv) cemetery, xv) at the other side of the river, xvi) near fire, xvii) nor at the chaitya, xviii) near anthill, xix) having fear, xx) near well, and xxi) not on the bunch of the dried leaves.⁷⁰ But in *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, the time and place appropriate for the practice of *Yoga* are described. When it is neither very cold nor hot, when both are present, when it is not windy. At these times, the ascetic should practice *Yoga*.⁷¹

⁷⁰ na manovikale dmāte na śrānta kṣudhite tathā /

na dvandve na ca śīte ca na coṣṇe nānilātmake // *Brahmapurāṇa* 127.7 ;

saśabde na jalābyāṣe jīrṇagoṣṭe catuṣpathe /

sarīṣṭpe śmaśāne ca na nadyante'gnisañnidhau // *Ibid.*, 127.8 ;

na caitye na ca valmīke sabhaye kūpasāñnidhau /

na śuṣkaparṇanicaye yogaṁ yuñjīta karhicit // *Ibid.*, 127.9

⁷¹ nātiśīte na coṣṇe vain a dvandve nānilātmake /

kāleṣveteṣu yuñjīta na yogaṁ dhyānatatoarah // *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*, 36.47

‘Experience of *Yoga* shows us that regular practice of the *Āsanas* and suitable *Prāṇāyāma* exercise plus the harmonious disposition of the consciousness help us to quickly develop tendencies inside us towards a positive mental approach.’⁷² *Āsanas* means a state of being in which one can remain physically and mentally steady, calm, quiet and comfortable. In the *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali, we find a definition of *Yogāsanas* that *āsana* means comfortable and steady sitting.⁷³ So, we can see that *Yogāsanas* in this context are practised to develop the practitioner's ability to sit comfortably in one position for an extended length of time, as is necessary during meditation.

For most of the people in the last century, also in the present, *Yoga* simply indicates a meaning of maintaining health and well-being in an increasingly stressful society. *Yoga* forwards eightfold path of discipline. The first path *Yama* is the abstention from harming others, from false-hood, from theft, incontinence and greed.⁷⁴ All these five are the most important things even today. *Ahimsā* is great duty for all. Likewise other four types of *Yama* also are important for living

⁷² Ananda, Sri, *The Complete of Yoga Harmony of Body and Mind*, pp.55-58

⁷³ sthiramsukhamāsanam /*Yogasūtra*,I.46

⁷⁴ ahimsāsteya brahmacaryāparigrahāḥ yamāḥ / *Ibid.*,II.30

the life smoothly. Patañjali describes the strict disciplines of a dedicated yogi. According to Patañjali, these five forms of abstention are the basic rules of conduct. They must be practiced without any reservations to caste, place, time and purpose.⁷⁵ The second path *Niyama* types of *Yoga* are purity, devotion to God.⁷⁶ Purity is cleanliness both physical and mental.⁷⁷ If a man thinks of himself as being the dwelling place of the self, he will naturally feel that his body and mind have to be kept clean. One attains supreme happiness due to contentment.⁷⁸ As a result of austerity, impurities are removed. *Āsanas* remove the physical discomfort accumulated during a day at the office sitting in a chair, hunched over a desk etc.

In *Rajayoga*, *Āsanas* refer to the sitting position, but in *Haṭhayoga* it means something more. *Āsanas* are specific body positions which open the energy channels and psychic centres. They are tools to higher awareness and provide the stable foundation for our exploration of the body, breath, and mind

⁷⁵ ete jātideśakāla samayānavacchinnāḥ sārvabhaumā mahāvratam / *Ibid.*, II.31

⁷⁶ śaucasantoṣatapahṣvādhyāyeśvarapraṇidhānāniniyamāḥ/ *Ibid.*, II.32.

⁷⁷ ābhyantaram cittamalānāmākṣālanam / *Yogavāṣya* on *Yogasūtra*, II.32

⁷⁸ santoṣādanuttamaḥ sukhalābhaḥ / *Ibid.*, II.42

and beyond. The *Haṭhayoga* is also found by developing control of the body through *Āsanas*.⁷⁹ Therefore, the practice of *Āsanas* is foremost in *Haṭhayoga*. *Śavāsanas* may be performed at any point during *Āsanas* practice, especially when feeling physically or mentally tired.⁸⁰ It should also be practised on completion of the *Āsanas* program. A person, irrespective of age, can give up laziness if he practises all the *Yogāsanas* attentively.⁸¹

Yogaāsanas can help improve circulation and eliminate toxic waste substance from the body. It can help increase digestion, circulation, muscular control, nerves and granular systems and awareness to a man's sexual region.

There is no special dietary rule for *Āsana* practitioners, though it is better to eat natural food 'to become a *siddha* after a year'.⁸² Contrary to popular belief,

⁷⁹ haṭhasya prathamāṅgatvādāsanam pūrvamucyate /

kuryāttadāsanam sthairyamārogyam cāṅgalāghavam // *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*, I.17

⁸⁰ uttānam śavavadbhūmau śayanam tacchavāsanam /

śavāsanam śrāntiharam cittaviśrāntikārakam // *Ibid.*, I.32

⁸¹ yuvā vṛddhoativṛddho vā vyādhito durbalo'pi vā /

abhyāsātsiddhimāpnoti sarvayogeṣvatandritaḥ // *Ibid.*, I.64

⁸² atha nādānusandhānamabhyāsānukramo hathe /

brahmacārī mitāhārī tyāgī yogaparāyanah /

Yoga does not say that a vegetarian diet is essential, although in the higher stages of practice it is recommended. At meal times it is advised to half fill the stomach with food, one quarter with water and leave the remaining quarter empty. Eat only to satisfy hunger and not so much that a feeling of heaviness or laziness occurs. That is what Mahatma Gandhi said, “Eat only to live rather live to eat.”⁸³ *Yoga* lays due emphasis on the purity of the food.⁸⁴ The food that is useful for the accomplishment of *Yoga* is mentioned in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. The Alms consisting of rice-gruel, butter-milk, milk or barely-gruel, fruit, roots, or panic seed, grain, oil cake and *saktu* food-these are good articles of food.⁸⁵ *Yogī* should

abdādūrdham bhaved sīddho na atra kāryā vicāraṇā//*Ibid.*,I.57

⁸³ Gandhi, M.K., *My Experiment with Truth*, p. 81

⁸⁴ āhāra śuddhau sattva śuddhiḥ sattva śuddhau dhruvā smṛtiḥ /

smṛtilambhe sarvagrānthīnām vipramokṣaḥ // *Chāndogyopaniṣad*, VII.26.2

⁸⁵ bhaikṣam yavāgū tarkam vā payo yāvakameva vā /

phalam mūlam priyaṅguṃ vā kaṇḍapīnyākasatktavaḥ// *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, 38.11 ;

etyete ca śubhāhārā yoginām siddhikārkāḥ /

tatprayuñjyānmunirbhaktyā paramaṇa samādhinā // *Ibid.*,38.12

give up things too hot or cold and salty food. He should always subsist on milk.⁸⁶

Foods which cause acidity or gas in the digestive system, which are heavy, oily and spicy, should be avoided.⁸⁷ The food of the Yogin should be of that type which is conducive to *Yoga*. He should take food in the form of *saktu*, *yavāgu*, *takra* (butter milk), *mūla* (root), *phala* (fruit), *payah* (milk), *yāvaka*, *kaṇapiṇyāka*.⁸⁸

The breathing practices of *Yoga* can help in improving the lung capacity and harmonize body including the mind. The meditation practices of *Yoga* can help still the mind and bring about greater inner clarity, peace of mind, and self-understanding and acceptance. This can help lead to greater emotional awareness and stability. For those people seeking spiritual enlightenment; *Yoga* has a

⁸⁶ tyajetkaduṣṇaṁ lavaṇaṁ kṣīrabhojī sadā bhavet / *Skandapurāṇa*, 41.134

⁸⁷ bhojanamahitaṁ vidyāt punarasyoṣṇīkṛtaṁ rūkṣaṁ/
atilavaṇamamlayuktaṁ kadaśanaśākotkaṭaṁ varjyaṁ// *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*, I. 60

⁸⁸ āhāraṁ yogadoṣāṁśca deśkālaṁ ca buddhimāna /
jñātvā samabhyasedyogaṁ nirdvandvo niṣparigrahaḥ // *Brahma Purāṇa*, 127.5;
bhuñjansaktuṁ yavāgūṁ ca tarkamūlaṁ phalaṁ payah /
yāvakaṁ krṇāpaṇyākamāhāraṁ yogasādhanam // *Ibid.*, 127.6

variety of techniques that can help support. Through *Prānāyāma*, people can improve the oxygen supply and blood circulation in all parts of the body. According to *Skanda Purāṇa*, *Prānāyāma* properly practised brings about destruction of all ailments. It is improperly performed; it brings about all sorts of ailments.⁸⁹ Improperly in the practice of *Prānāyāma* results in several diseases like hiccups, gasping for breath coughing and headache including pain in ears and eyes.⁹⁰

Meditation is not only good for restoration of the lost psychosomatic balance but it is also prevention of loss of balance. *Prānāyāma* helps in removing of impurities of body and by removing the impurities; the air can be restrained, according to one's wish. With this, moreover, the appetite is increased, the divine

⁸⁹ prānāyāmena yoktena sarvavyādhiḥśayo bhavet /

ayoktābhyogena sarvavyādhisamudbhavaḥ // *Skanda Purāṇa*, 41.98

⁹⁰ hikkā śvāsaśca kāsaśca śiraḥ karṇākṣivedanāḥ/

bhavanti vividhā doṣāḥ pavanasya vyatikramāt // *Haṭhayogapradīpikā*, 41.99

sound is awakened, and the body becomes healthy.⁹¹ There is no doubt, that cough, asthma, enlargement of the spleen, leprosy, and 20 kinds of diseases born of phlegm, disappear by the practice of *Dhautikarma*.⁹² When *Prāṇāyāma* is performed properly, they eradicate all diseases; but an improper practice generates diseases.⁹³ Hiccough, asthma, cough, pain in the head, ears and eyes; these and other various kinds of diseases are generated by the disturbance of the breath.⁹⁴ By practising this *Bastikarma*, colic, enlarged spleen, and dropsy, arising from the disorders of *Vāta* (air), *pitta* (bile) and *kapha* (phlegm), are all

⁹¹ yatheṣṭamdhāraṇam vāyoranalasya pradīpanam /

nādābhivyaktirāroghyam jāyate nāḍīsodhanāt // *Ibid.*, II.20

⁹² kāsaśvāsaplīhakuṣṭham kapharogāśca vimśati /

dhautikarmaprabhāveṇa prayāntyeva na samśayaḥ // *Ibid.*, II. 25

⁹³ prāṇāyāmadiyuktena sarvaroghakṣayo bhavet /

ayuktābhyāsayogheṇa sarvarogasamudbhavaḥ // *Ibid.*, II.16

⁹⁴ hikkāśvāśca kāśaśca śiraḥkarnakṣivedanāḥ /

bhavanti vividhā roghāḥ pavanasya prakopataḥ // *Ibid.*, II.17

cured.⁹⁵ By practicing *Basti* with water, the Dhātus, the Indriyas and the mind become calm.⁹⁶ It gives glow and tone to the body and increases the appetite by disappearing all the disorders. Tranquility (Alolya), perfect health, gentleness, a pleasant adour, scanty excretions, a physical beauty, benignity, and softness of voice are indeed the first indications of the accomplishment of Yoga.⁹⁷ People get affection for him and praise his virtues in his absence.⁹⁸

It may further be mentioned that by the daily practice of both āsanas and prāṇāyāmas the life expectancy of human is increased. The life expectancy in India for Male is 63.8 years where as for female is 67.3 years and total life

⁹⁵ gulmaplihodaram cāpi vātapittakaphodbhavāḥ /

bastikarmaprabhāveṇ kṣiyante sakalāmayāḥ // *Ibid.*, II.27

⁹⁶ dhātuviriyāntaḥ kāraṇaprasādam dadhācca kāntim dahanapradīptām //

aśeṣadoṣopañcayam nihanyādabhyasyamānam jalabastikarma// *Ibid.*, II.28

⁹⁷ alauyamārogyamaniṣṭuratvam gandhaḥ śubho mūtrapurīṣamalpaṁ /

kāntiḥ prasādaḥ svarasaumyatā ca yogapravṛtteḥ prathamam hi cihnam //

Mārkeṇḍeyapurāna, 36.63

⁹⁸ anurāgamjanoyātiprokṣeguṇakīrtanam / *Ibid.*,36.64

expectancy is 65.5 years in average keeping India in the World Life Expectancy ranking of 133.⁹⁹

LIFE EXPECTANCY (IN YEARS)¹⁰⁰

Men		Women	
2001-2005	2011-2015	2001-2005	2011-2015
62.3	67.3	63.9	69.6

The increase of the life expectancy in India (please refer the above table), generally attributed to the day to day research and modernization of medical sciences. However, the role of *Yoga* practice, in the modern day scenario, as practiced by Baba Ramdeva and others, cannot be ruled out in respect of the enhancement of the life expectancy in the country as well as in abroad because-

- *Yoga* is an ideal practical system of self-culture which aims at the inter-related harmonious development of one's body, mind and dormant psychic potencies.
- *Yoga* is a precise science. *Yoga* is an eternal life in the soul or spirit.
- The aim of *Yoga* is the harmonious development of the body, mind and soul. It also controls the mind and its modification.

⁹⁹ <http://data.worldbank.org/news/WDI-2011-database-and-publication>

¹⁰⁰ www.mohfw.nic.in

The most positive side of *Yoga* practice in today's society is that it requires no 'acrobatic' skills and also provides the unfit, as well as handicapped ill and convalescent people through easily accessed adult education Centers, health Institutions, fitness and Sports club, Rehabilitation centers and health Resorts. It enhances positive thinking, orientation etc. towards the Supreme power and understanding from the way to self-knowledge and self-realization.

Today, in the 21st century, *Yoga* represent the noblest cultural achievement of man which is not a result of unbalanced emotionalism or of empiric ventures at self-realization but the positive endowment of a scientific training and living. There is nothing dubious or mystical about *Yoga* because like any exact science its practices are based upon the unchangeable laws of nature and are, therefore, open to precise evaluation. In this regard, *Yoga* is not only a physical exercise. But also an aid to establishing a new perception what is real, what is necessary, and how to become established in a way of life which cannot be understood intellectually connecting with their true selves and will only become living knowledge through āsanas and hitherto.

d. IMPACT OF YOGA ON STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY

Academic stress involves mental distress regarding anticipated academic challenges or failure or even an awareness of the possibility of academic failure. School-related situations – such as tests, grades, studying, self-imposed need to succeed, as well as that induced by others – are the main sources of stress for high school students. The impact of academic stress is also far-reaching: high levels of academic stress have led to poor outcomes in the areas of exercise, nutrition, substance use, and self-care. Furthermore academic stress is a risk factor for psychopathology. For example, fourth, fifth and sixth-grade girls who have higher levels of academic stress are more likely to experience feelings of depression resulting dropout rate higher in these classes & ages.

In connection with my present work, it was also tried to carry out a survey among the students' of Guwahati to trace out the impact of Yoga in removing their stress.

This work investigates the academic stress and mental health of the high school students of both the state government aided & private schools. A total of 180 students from grades 11 and 12 from three government-aided and three private schools in Guwahati were surveyed in the study. Data collection involved using a specially designed structured questionnaire.

Research Questions:

1. Do adolescent boys and girls differ significantly with respect to academic stress and examination-related anxiety?
2. Do adolescents of different age groups suffer from similar stress?
3. Is there any relationship between academic stress and Yoga in removing examination-related anxiety?
4. Are adolescents involved in extra-curricular activities including yoga less prone to academic stress?

76.67% of the students belonging to state government aided schools stress due to academic pressure – with no significant differences across gender, age, grade, and several other personal factors.

The study was conducted on a group of 180 11th and 12th grade adolescent students from six schools – three (03) government-aided and three (03) private – in Guwahati following the multi-stage sampling technique. The sample included 49 boys (25.8%) and 131 girls (74.2%) aged between 16 and 18 years.

PROCEDURE TO APPROACH THE SCHOOLS:

Ten schools were officially approached. Four schools declined to give permission on account of examination and syllabus load. Verbal permission was obtained from all the schools after explaining the objectives of the study to the school authorities. At the time of data collection, students were briefed about the objective of the study and its justification in simple terms and were assured about confidentiality of the information. Only those students who had given informed consent for participation were covered in the study.

The following data have been collected from the above survey carried out in the all six schools of Guwahati city on the basis of the replies given by the respondents (students):

Category of School	Students' with anxiety (No. & %)	
	Pre-Yoga period	Post-Yoga period
Government aided 1	23 (76.67%)	-
Government aided 2	21 (70%)	-
Government aided 3	25 (83.34%)	-
Government aided (Average)	23 (76.67%)	-
Private 1	18 (60%)	10 (33.34%)
Private 2	18 (60%)	13 (43.34%)
Private 3	21 (70%)	13 (43.34%)
Private (Average)	19 (63.34%)	12 (40%)

DISCUSSION ON THE SURVEY FINDINGS:

The mental health of students, especially in terms of academic stress and its impact has become a serious issue among researchers and policymakers because of increasing incidence of suicides among students across the globe. The present study revealed that 70.05% of the higher secondary students (average of both governments aided & private) in Guwahati experience academic stress prior to initiation of Yoga classes in their respective schools.

On the other hand, the above table shows that the percentage of students facing anxiety due to different reasons, such as examination, family background etc., came down to 40% compared to 63.34% in its pre-yoga period. However, this data are only of the Private schools of the Guwahati as no assessment, especially of the post-yoga period, could be made pertaining to the government schools of the city concerned due to non-induction of yoga as a part of education here. It may be mentioned that parents put pressure on their children to succeed because of their concern for the welfare of their children and their awareness of the competition for getting admission in reputed institutions. The overall unemployment situation in India has also provoked parents to put pressure on their children for better performance. Some of the parents wish to fulfill their unfulfilled dreams through their children. All these have made a normal

pursuit for adolescents leaving them to deal with the demands of the school as well as that of their tutors. More than half of the parents appoint 3 to 4 private tutors or even more for their wards. On days when there are no academic tuitions, there are art or music lessons. The students hardly get time to watch TV, to play or to interact with neighbours freely or even to get adequate sleep. Naturally such students end up being nervous wrecks when the examination pressure mounts. This is a normal phenomenon of students irrespective of government as well as private schools though amount of pressure varies in both the segments. In my investigation regarding the relevance of *Yoga* practice in our society it is seen that most of the schools of Guwahati and surrounding specially tradition based schools have implemented the practice of *yoga* with a view to make their students healthy and sound. The table evidently shows that induction of *yoga* in the private schools minimized the numbers of students those were facing anxiety before. Hence, an assumption of similar results could be made in respect of government schools too.

It is believed that extra-curricular activities could be one of the mediating factors for academic stress. More than three-fifths of the students reported to be involved in extra-curricular activities like games and sports, cultural programmes, National Cadet Corps (NCC) and National Social Service (NSS) and so on. No significant difference is

found between the academic stress of students who are involved in extra-curricular activities and who are not. This could be because of either a lack of meaningful involvement in extracurricular activities or involvement for an insufficient period of time and requires further investigation. However, bridging a relation between Yoga and extracurricular activities may greatly mitigate this problem among the students.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

Given the large population of the higher secondary students in Guwahati, the sample size was relatively small. Therefore, caution should be used when generalizing the findings of the study. Secondly, responses are based on self-report. However, the findings give some idea about prevalence of the academic stress among higher secondary students in Guwahati and its association with examination-related anxiety. The present study did not take into account the effect of punishment or threat of punishment in schools on the mental health of the students – keeping in view the recently imposed blanket ban on corporal punishments in Indian schools, and also the fact that punishments are not usually deemed necessary in the Higher Secondary classes, as students are seen as mature enough to follow rules and regulations themselves.
