



Department of Sports Science and Yoga
Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research
Institute
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(Rated A++ by NAAC in March 2019)

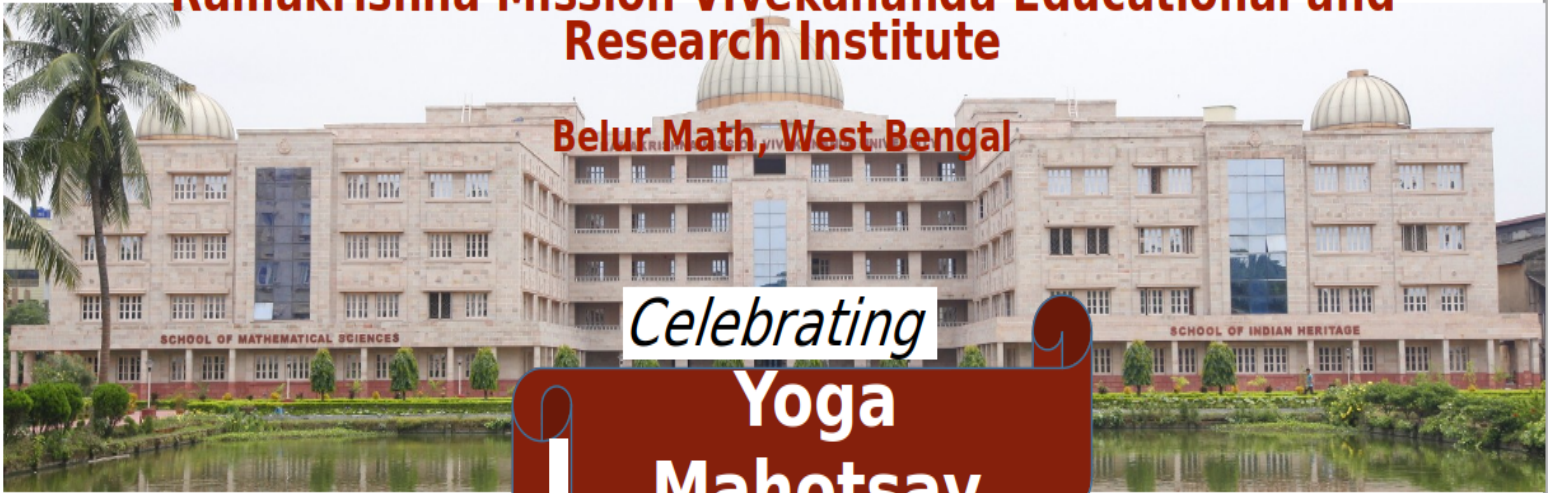


Department of Sports Science



Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute

Belur Math, West Bengal



Celebrating

Yoga

Mahotsav

23 May, 2022



*100 days countdown of
International Day of Yoga*



UNESCO Chair in Inclusive Adapted Physical Education and Yoga



योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा
धनंजय।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं
योग उच्यते ॥४८॥

Chapter 02
Shloka 48

International Day of Yoga-

Yoga is a science of living. It needs to be incorporated in our day to day life. It works on physical, mental, social and spiritual levels of human beings. Yoga helps in improving the quality of life. It brings about the harmony of body and mind.

Recognising its universal appeal, on 11th December, 2014, the UN proclaimed 21st June as the International Day of Yoga. The IDY 2022 is the 8th edition of the International Day of Yoga.



In recent times, the world has seen an unprecedented helplessness with the outbreak of Covid -19 Pandemic. Beyond its immediate impact on physical health, the pandemic manifested itself in psychological sufferings and mental health problems, including depression and anxiety. So here arises an urgent need to address the mental health dimension of the pandemic in addition to the physical health aspects. Not only these, the pandemic highlighted several vulnerable economic and development models in many countries. The essence of yoga being balance, that is balance within the body , balance between the body and the mind and the balance in human relationships in the world, when its principles are applied to communities and societies, Yoga offers a path for sustainable living. Yoga can be an important instrument in the collective quest of humanity for promoting sustainable lifestyle in harmony with planet Earth.

In keeping with this spirit, the theme for this year's Yoga Day celebrations is **"Yoga for Humanity"**.

Yoga Mahotsav 2022-

The 8th edition of International Day of Yoga (IDY2022) is being promoted through multiple programs by the Ministry of Ayush, in association with Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga. A curtain raiser event to mark the 100 days countdown was celebrated on 13th March 2022, which started the campaign: 100 days, 100 cities, and 100 organizations from 13th March to 21st June 2022, across the globe.

One Day Yoga Mahotsav on 23rd May, 2022 at RKMVERI-

Prelude-

Our Institute was selected among 100 organizations to organize Half Day Programmes/ Workshops/ Seminars through hybrid mode in connection with the celebration of the 100 days countdown to IDY-2022. The celebration took place on 23rd May, 2022. It was the 71st celebration in the list of 100 such celebrations. This celebration also happened to be the inaugural event of a **month long Yoga Mahotsav** which our institute is celebrating from 23rd May - 21st June. It was organized by the *Department of Sports Science and Yoga*, RKMVERI under the aegis of *UNESCO Chair in Inclusive Adapted Physical Education and Yoga* with the generous financial support from *Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga*.



Participants-

The Yoga Mahotsav on 23rd May saw 59 registered participants who attended the workshop and the seminars, alongside many other unregistered participants who were mostly students from other departments of our Institute. The distinguished resource people included Revered Swami Atmapriyananda, Pro-Chancellor of RKMVERI, Revered Swami Sarvottamananda, Vice-Chancellor of RKMVERI, Prof. J P Verma, Vice-Chancellor, Shri Shri Aniruddhadeva Sports University, Assam and our esteemed faculty members. Prof. Verma was made the Chief-Guest for this occasion. This august gathering comprised serious yoga enthusiasts and professionals both on the theoretical as well as the practical front.

Events at the Mahotsav -

Demonstration of Common Yoga Protocol:

The Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India has prepared a set of rules and guidelines along the lines of which the practice of Yoga should be done for the Yoga Day celebrations and also for practicing in general. These sets of procedures constitute the Common Yoga Protocol. The events at this one day mahotsav began with the demonstration of Common Yoga Protocol from 8 o'clock to 9 o'clock in the morning. It took place in front of the Vivekananda statue near the entrance to our Institute. The participants were students, staff, other members of our institute as well as some participants from outside. They were guided by the students of the Yoga Department of our institute.

Some salient aspects that constitutes CYP are-

- The Yogic Practice should start with an INVOCATION, a prayer or, a prayerful mood that will enhance the benefits of Yoga.
- The starting practices should be the LOOSENING PRACTICES / SADILAJA/ CĀLANA KRIYĀS which include Neck Bending (Grivā Śakti Vikāsaka), Shoulder's Movement, Trunk Movement (Kaṭiśakti Vikāsaka) .



- The third activity as mentioned in this protocol is the practice of YOGĀSANAS which has to be done after the Loosening Practices. Here various Yogasanas in different postures like standing, sitting, prone and supine postures are mentioned. They are Tadasana, Pada-Hastasana, Bhadrasana- to name some of them.



- The next in line is the Practice of KAPĀLABHĀTI in any comfortable or meditative posture like Sukhasana, Padmasana.

- Following KAPĀLABHĀTI, the direction is given to perform PRĀNĀYĀMA .



- PRĀNĀYĀMA should be followed by DHYĀNA, which is an act of continuous contemplation and can be done in any comfortable posture.
- The Yoga Practice session shall end with a SANKALPA and Śāntih Pāṭha. The SANKALPA is the sankalpa to commit oneself to remain in a balanced state of mind all the time, and the sankalpa to commit to do one's own duty to self, family, to society, and to the world, for the promotion of peace, health and harmony. The practice ends with the Śāntih Pāṭha- “ *Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah,Sarve Santu Niramayah,... Om Santih, Santih, Santih.*”

Technical Session/ Talks -

Following a one hour break after the CYP demonstration, the main session began at 10 am with the chanting of Shanti Mantra as is customary in all Ramakrishna Mission Centers.



The inaugural speech was delivered by **Revered Swami Atmapriyananda ji**, Pro-Chancellor of our institute on the topic- “*Dimensions of Yoga*”. He started his speech with Swami Vivekananda’s introduction of yoga to the west and his harmonizing of the four paths. He also mentioned Swami Vivekananda’s vision of amalgamating the best elements of the West and the East for the overall development of the society. On the meaning of Yoga, he stated that the root word for Yoga in sanskrit is *Yuj* which has three different aspects- *Yujir-Yoge*, that is union; *Yujir-Samadhu*, signifying meditation and the last one- *Yujir- Sanyamane*, control of the senses and the limbs. He stated that these three put together comprehensively defines Yoga as the science by which one can awaken one’s consciousness from the lower level to higher and higher levels. He also pointed out that every human being has two dimensions, one is the finite and the other is the infinite. The realization of the infinite dimension, the divinity which is already there in us is the purpose of Yoga and all human beings can elevate themselves to



the divine by Yoga and that to make Yoga accessible to all was the great task before Swami Vivekananda. Revered Maharaj gave a clarion call to all that, we, who have inherited the sacred legacy of Swami Vivekananda owe it to the world to take Yoga forward, and scientifically rate it on one hand and on the other hand practice it in our daily life and live a life of impeccable character, of purity, unselfishness, truthfulness so that we will not only champion the cause of Yoga but we will also be Yogis ourselves, and thus ended his highly inspiring and motivating speech.

The next in line was the speech by **Revered Swami Sarvottamananda ji**, Vice-Chancellor of RKMVERI. He spoke on the topic- “ *Swami Vivekananda’s Raja Yoga in modern times.*” He began by sharing his belief that Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga are not to be considered different. Rather one should be aware of the principles of Raja Yoga when he/she indulges in the practice of Hatha Yoga. He pointed out that Swami Vivekananda’s Raja Yoga is very simple and shared the fact what Swami Vivekananda said- that the scientific way of doing spiritual practice is Raja Yoga. He basically stressed on two points on the essence and the practice of Raja Yoga. The first one regarding the essence of Raja Yoga is that Raja Yoga emphasizes the fact that one can attain anything by the control of mind and



that Raja Yoga very precisely and scientifically trains the mind to be capable of this. The world view of Raja yoga is that one can evolve oneself by the control of mind and with the controlled mind attain anything. He also pointed that Raja Yoga is scientific in its ways - that it gives one some methods to practice which are actually simple steps like breathing exercises, maintaining postures, etc which should be accompanied with Pratyahara, which he equated with Will- Power and then the practice of concentration, that is Dharana which finally crosses over to Dhyana or meditation and finally Samadhi. He mentioned that in the whole structure there are no superstitious dogmas. He expressed that the things which Raja Yoga speaks of is very simple and easily practicable and this makes Raja Yoga a completely holistic and modern method and that it is easy for us to have faith and belief in Raja Yoga. The other area he stressed upon is that, in the background of whatever we are practicing, we should have to fix our goal and keep it in view always, as in the case of practicing Raja Yoga without the goal the very word Yoga loses its meaning. So he cautioned us to fix our goal before proceeding. The speech was really an enlightening one regarding the practice of Raja Yoga in modern times.

Maharaj ji's speech was followed by the speech by our respected Chief-Guest for the session, **Prof. J.P. Verma**. The topic of his speech was - “ *Meditation- a way of*



life.” He chose this topic for his deliberation on this Yoga Mahotsav as the path of meditation is one of the paths through which the purpose of Yoga can be fulfilled. At the outset, he shared a fascinating story of how meditation shaped his personality. Then he went on discussing the various techniques of mediation like



concentrating on an object, objectless meditation, with mantra, etc. He gave a very valuable discourse on importance and the benefits of meditation in day to day life. He also deliberated upon the end results of meditation- that meditation settles down

mental thoughts, makes one peaceful, calm and focussed, rejuvenates one's awareness and fills the practitioner with bliss. He, in his address also shared some practical methods by which the benefits of meditation can be assessed in day to day life. His discourse concluded with a very nice question -answer session with the participants. The participants on their part have gained a very enriching experience with Prof. Verma's presentation.

After Prof. Verma's speech, a video record of an Artistic Yoga Performance on **Cittabhūmayāḥ** was presented. The participants were students from our Yoga Department. This performance depicted the five different stages/conditions of our mind as described by the sage *Vyasa*. The original performance had taken place a few months earlier at the Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari where our students participated in the Yoga Sastra Sangamam-2022.

Then there were speeches by our esteemed faculty members.

Prof. U.S.Ray spoke on – “*Benefits of Common Yoga Protocol.*”

Prof. Arnab Das spoke on - “*Physiology of Yoga.*”

Dr. Santi Ranjan Dasgupta spoke on- “*Application of Yoga in Sports.*”

The last talk was delivered by **Prof. Subhadip Paul**. He made his speech on- “*Neuroscience of Consciousness.*”

Br. Mrinmay Maharaj, Coordinator, Dept. of Sports Science and Yoga concluded this forenoon session with his vote of thanks.



The participants then gathered for a group photo session. After the photo session they proceeded to the dining hall and had their lunch.

The Yoga Mahotsav owes its successful celebration to Br. Mrinmay Maharaj, the faculty members of the Department of Sports Science and Yoga, for their meticulous effort and definitely to the student volunteers who worked tirelessly to leave no stones unturned, from attending the guests to guiding the participants in the venue, in the dining hall, etc. Last but not the least, the Mahotsav owes its success also to those also who worked behind the curtains to make it possible.



Conclusion-

The enthusiasm and support which the celebration of the International day of Yoga and the practice of Yoga, a term which a few centuries ago was obscure outside the Indian subcontinent, is receiving and gaining acceptance all around the globe has made clear that the day is not very far when the Upanishadic phrase - “*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*” will no more remain just a phrase to believe in, but shall become a reality to be experienced.

The decision to select our Institute for this kind of a celebration could not have been more apt on the part of the Ministry of Ayush, as this institute and the place bears the hallowed names of Sri Ramakrishna, and his disciple, Swami Vivekananda. We are extremely grateful towards the Ministry of Ayush,

Government of India for this kind of an endeavor and towards the MDNIY for their support and generosity. Sri Ramakrishna was the master Yogi, in whose personality, the four Yogas got their unparalleled and unique demonstration and bore its finest fruits. Equally true was his disciple, Swami Vivekananda.

It is not at all an exaggeration to say that the modern world is fortunate to see this day, because a Hindu monk bearing the name of Swami Vivekananda, in 1893, had crossed the ocean and set his foot on the soil of America, carrying with him the spiritual heritage of India. To make Yoga accessible to all was the great task before him. He tolled the bell and set the process in motion and became the voice without a form, inspiring men everywhere.

And now the responsibility lies on us. Regarding our duty, revered Swami Atmapriyananda ji has made it clear towards the conclusion of his speech that, we, who have inherited the sacred legacy of Swami Vivekananda owe it to the world to take Yoga forward, and scientifically rate it on one hand and on the other hand practice it in our daily life and live a life of impeccable character, of purity, unselfishness, truthfulness so that we will not only champion the cause of Yoga but we will also be Yogis ourselves.

