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**IDY FOR HARMONY AND PEACE**

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**Abstract:**

United Nations General Assembly (UGNA) 69<sup>th</sup> session on September 27, 2014, the Honorable Prime minister of India Narendra Modi addressed and urged the world community to adopt an international Day of Yoga.

PM Modi said, “Yoga is an invaluable gift of ancient Indian tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; harmony between man and nature, a holistic approach to health and well-being. Yoga is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with ourselves, the world and nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness. It can help us to deal with climate change. Let us work adopting an international yoga day.

On December 11, 2014, the 193 member UGNA approached the proposal by consensus with a record 177 co-sponsoring countries a resolution to establish 21<sup>st</sup> June as ‘IDY’. In its resolution, the UGNA recognized that yoga provides a holistic approach to health and well-being and the dissemination of information about the benefits of practicing yoga for the health of the world population. Yoga also brings harmony in all walks of life and thus, is known for disease prevention, health promotion and management of many lifestyle related disorders. But making

people aware of one such IDY is a challenge in itself. The youth of India must take step forward for campaigning and preaching the benefits of Yoga.

### **Yoga:**

Yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body; it is an art and science for healthy living. The word 'yoga' is derived from the Sanskrit root yuj meaning 'to join' to yoke' or 'to unite'. According to modern scientists everything in the universe is just a revelation of the same quantum firmament. One who experiences this oneness of existence is said to be 'in yoga' and is termed as a yogi who has attained a state of freedom, referred to as mukti, nirvana, moksha etc.

Yoga also refers to an inner science comprising of a variety of method through which human beings can achieve union between the body and mind to attain self-realization. The aim of yoga practice (sadhana) is to overcome all kinds of sufferings that lead to a sense of freedom in every walk of life with holistic health, happiness and harmony.

### **Brief history and development of yoga**

Yoga as science has its origin thousands of years ago, long before the first religion or belief systems were born. According to yogic lore shiva has been seen as the first yogi or adiyogi and the first guru or adiguri. Several thousand years ago/ on the banks of lake Kantisarovar in the Himalaya, adiyogi poured his profound knowledge into the legendary Saptarshi or 'seven sages'. These sages carried this powerful yogic science to different parts of the world including Asia, the middle east, northern Africa and south America. Interestingly, modern scholars have noted and

marvelled at the close parallels found between ancient cultures across the globe. However , it was in India that the yogic system found its fullest expression. Saptarishi ‘Agastya’ crafted this culture around a core yogic way of life.

Yoga is widely considered as an “immortal culture outcome” of the Indus Saraswati valley civilization dating back to 2700 BC and has proven itself to cater to both material and spiritual uplift of humanity. A number of seals and fossil remains of Indus Saraswati valley civilization with yogic motifs and figures performing yoga Sadhana suggest the presence of yoga in ancient India. The seals and idols of mother goodness are suggestive of Tantra yoga. The presence of yoga is also available in folk traditions. Vedic and Upanishadic heritage, Buddhist and Jain tradition, Darshanas, epic of Mahabharata including Bhagawadgita and Ramayana, theistic tradition of Shivas, Vaishnavas and tantric traditions. Though yoga was being practiced in the pre-vedicperiod , the great sage MaharshiPatanjali systematized and codified the then existing yogic practices, its meaning and its related knowledge through Patanjali’s yoga sutras.

After patanjali many sages and yoga masters contributed greatly for the preservation and development of the field through well documented practice and literature. Yoga has spread all over the world by the teaching of eminent yoga masters from ancient times to the present date. Today, everybody has conviction about yoga practices towards the prevention of disease, maintenance and promotion of health. Millions and millions of people around the world got benefit of yoga.

### **The fundamentals of yoga**

Yoga concern with the level of one's body, mind , emotion and energy. This is given rise to four broad classification of yoga karma yoga where we utilize the body, Jnana yoga where we utilize mind; Bhakti yoga where we utilize the emotion and kriyayogs where we utilize the energy. Each system of yoga we practice falls within the gamut of one or more of these categories.

Every individual is a unique combination of these four factors. Only a guru can advocate the appropriate combination of the four fundamental paths as is necessary for each seeker. All ancient commentaries on yoga have stressed that it is essential to work under the direction of a guru.

### **Yogic practices for health and wellness:**

Astang yoga includes Yama, Niyam, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharna, Dhyana, Samadhi also having Bandhas and Mudras, Shatkarmas, Yuktahara, Mantra-Japa, Yukta-karma etc.

Five yamas are restraints and five Niyamas are observances. These are considered to be pre-requisites for future yogic practices. Asanas capable of bringing about stability of body and mind. Pranayama consists of developing awareness of one's breathing followed by willful regulation of respiration as a functional or vital basis of ones existence. It is also. Useful to establish control over the mind. In the initial stage, this is done by developing awareness of the Svasa-Prasvasa through nostrils , mouth and other body opening, its internal and external pathways and destinations. Later this phenomenon is modified, through regulated, controlled and monitored Svasa leading to the awareness of the body space getting filled called Puraka, the

space remaining in a filled state i.e. Kumbhaka and it getting emptied by Rechaka during regulated controlled and monitored Prasvasa.

Pratyahara indicate dissociation of one's consciousness from the sense organs which connect with the external objects. Dharana indicates broad based field of attention which is usually understood as concentration. Dhyana or meditation is to focus attention inside the body, mind and Samadhi is integration.

Bandhas and Mudras are practices associated with Pranayama. They are viewed as the higher yogic practices that mainly adopt certain physical gestures along with control over respiration. However, practice of Dhyana which moves one towards as self realization and leads on to transcendence, is considered the essence of yoga Sadhana.

Satkarmas are detoxification procedures that are clinical in nature which helps for removing the toxins gathered in the body. Yuktahara consults appropriate food and habits for healthy living.

IDY embrace the prior guidelines for yoga practice that includes guidelines before the practices, directions during and after practices.

### **Yogic practices specified in IDY**

1. Prayer : essential for prayerful mood to enhance the benefits of practices.

2. Chalanakriyas /loosening practices: every body movement should start by doing these practices which helps to increase microcirculation. It contains neck movement, trunk movement, knees movements.
3. Yogasanas: in four bodyposture asanas suggested for IDY.
  - A) standing position contains Tadasana, Vkrasana , Pada-hastasana, Ardhashakrasana, Trikonasa.
  - B) sitting posture comprise Bhandrasana, Ardhastrasana, Sasankasana, Varasana.
  - C) prone posture contains Bhujangasana, Salabhanasana, Makarasana.
  - D) supine posture contains Setubandhasana, Pawanmuktasana, Savasana.
4. Kapalhati: it is one of the six Shatkarmas of internal purification in Hatha yoga.
5. Pranayama: is the formal practice of controlling the breath. IDY specifying Nadisodhana or Anuloma Viloma, Bhramari and Pranayamas.
6. Dhyana in Sambhavi Mudra: Dhyana or meditation is an act of continuous contemplation.
7. Sankalpa: conception or notion formed in the heart or mind, solemn vow or volition or will. Here we end the yoga practice session with a sankalpa.
8. Santipatha: it is the path of peace, derived from shanti meaning peace and path, meaning the course or direction one is moving.

## Findings

PM Narendra Modi talked about yoga and its benefits in his UN General Assembly speech. He called yoga as 'India's gift to the world. Undoubtedly, yoga is good for health. But some discussion in form of yes and no is also formed.

## **YES**

- Yoga has the power to change the lifestyle of people. Observing a special day dedicated to yoga will remind people of including it in their routine.
- Yoga has become a huge business in the United States. Creating an IDY will force people to see it as a business opportunity.
- World yoga day was celebrated by some organizations. However, it is not official and therefore should deserve attention.
- An IDY will do no harm but will only give one more day of celebration to people.
- Often the awareness comes with celebration and campaigning. People who benefit from yoga share the experiences on an international platform on the dedicated day.

## **NO**

- There is no sense or benefit in adding one more celebration day.
- It is crucial to generate the awareness through regular campaigning and advertisement. Observing one day for yoga will not generate awareness.
- Many people in India don't even pay attention to the important national days.
- The various activities of IDY that will come at a cost of taxpayers money.
- If same routine continues for observing celebration days, once all the 365 days in a year will have some specified day. It will kill the relevance of important days.

## **Conclusion:**

Observing IDY will bring no harm to people. However, we cannot rather count on any of the benefits by just dedicating one day for yoga. Assigning IDY would just add for some activities for those who are already in this field.

Yoga is undoubtedly a very good science with a very good health impact. But, this science could be of any use only if the same is practiced on a regular basis. The day should be utilized for preaching the benefits of yoga to the masses. This day should be concentrating on attracting more people to add into the group of healthy yogic practices. It is not all that easy to preach any such thing in India by just dedicating a day for the same. Young generations are more interested in western days which gives them conviviality. Rather than our national day and Indian tradition celebration.

Making people aware of one such IDY is a challenge in itself. Unless and until our youth takes wholehearted participation in the yoga campaigning and preaching the benefits of the yoga.

Hence, precisely saying as far as India is concerned success of the IDY, if celebrated , lies in the hand of our youth.

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