

Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, presents

Yoga: Our Heritage

What is yoga?

Yoga is an ancient science and lifestyle that was discovered and developed by rishis and seers millennia ago. It has been carefully preserved and maintained as well as propagated on the Indian subcontinent across ages and through the highs and lows of history. This has been possible due to a conducive social, cultural and historical environment here. And today, yoga has become a part of the whole world. Millions have embraced yoga to attain health and harmony, and to explore the inner potential.

Contributors to the cause of yoga

Many spiritual masters have contributed to this achievement, and one of the names that stands out in this legion of yogis is that of Swami Satyananda Saraswati, inspirer and founder of the Bihar School of Yoga. In 1963, he proclaimed: "Yoga will emerge as a mighty world culture and change the course of world events." As the twenty-first century dawned, the truth of his words was evident all around. Therefore, since 2008, the yoga-vidya tradition of India celebrates 'Yoga Purnima' on the full moon day of the month of Margashirsha (Nov-Dec) to pay tribute to the fullness of yoga that has blossomed in the lives of people throughout the world. This was a day chosen by Swami Satyananda to mark the pinnacle of human evolution that yoga can achieve.

International Day of Yoga

What was the thought of the sages has now become a thought of the world. In 2014, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a unanimous declaration that 21 June would be celebrated as International Day of Yoga. On this day of the summer solstice, when night and day express imbalance, the power of yoga to bestow equilibrium will be honoured.



Your Yoga Program:

The Bihar School of Yoga fully supports the idea of the International Day of Yoga and the effort being made by national and international communities to promote yoga. In response to requests by individuals and organizations on how best to participate in the celebration of the International Day of Yoga, the Bihar School of Yoga would like to share its ideas.

We are directing children, youth, women and other associated Yoga Mitra Mandals to conduct two yoga sessions of specific practices at specified times.

Morning: From 6 am to 7 am, people will gather on the roof-tops, verandahs, courtyards and other open spaces of their homes and community centres and do the following practices:

1. Shavasana*
2. Kaya sthairyam
3. Om chanting (3 times) and Shanti mantras**
4. Tadasana (10 rounds)
5. Tiryak tadasana (10 rounds)
6. Kati chakrasana (10 rounds)
7. Shavasana*
8. Surya namaskara (5 rounds)
9. Shavasana*
10. Nadi shodhana pranayama (10 rounds)
11. Bhramari pranayama (10 times)
12. Shavasana*
13. Om chanting (3 times)

* *Shavasana may be practised as per the need of the group.*

** *Om saha naavavatu. Saha nau bhunaktu.
Saha veeryam karavaavahai.
Tejasvinaavadheetamastu maa vidvishaavahai.
Om shantih, shantih, shantih.*

These practices have been specially selected as they promote and enhance all-round health and wellbeing. The idea is also to come together as a family or community in the spirit of yoga.



International Day of Yoga 2015

Evening: From 6 pm to 7 pm a short yogic meditation will be practised. An oil lamp or candle will be lit on the floor in the centre of a room which will illuminate the entire space evenly. Participants may sit in a circle around the lamp or candle and practise a three-step meditation:

1. Om chanting (3 times) and Shanti mantras**
2. Kaya sthairyam (body stillness) for 5 minutes
3. Trataka (steady gazing at the lamp/candle) for 10 minutes.
4. Pratipaksha bhavana: Review the activities of the whole day to identify the most disturbing or negative experience that occurred. Next, focus on the opposite positive and uplifting quality. Then, convert the negative experience into a joyous, happy and fulfilling one.
5. Chanting of the yogic prayer:

*Asato maa sad gamaya
Tamaso maa jyotir gamaya
Mrityor maa amritam gamaya
Sarveshaam svastirbhavatu
Sarveshaam shantirbhavatu
Sarveshaam poornam bhavatu
Sarveshaam mangalam bhavatu
Loka samastaa sukhino bhavantu
Om shantih, shantih, shantih.*

The prayer is a resolution and contains the essence of yogic teachings. It represents the personal and social aims of yoga for every aspirant. From unreal to real, from darkness to light, from mortality, destruction and transformation to stability, continuity and eternity, this is the personal goal that yoga has given us to discover. Once these personal aims of harmony, equilibrium and balance are attained, then they are transformed into aims that reach out and touch everyone in the world. The social aims of yoga are abundance of goodness, peace, wholeness, an auspicious environment everywhere, and a content, joyous and harmonious life. These are the aims that a yoga aspirant aspires for in order to perfect yoga.





Aim of the International Day of Yoga

What should be the focus of the International Day of Yoga? In order to honour the true intention of this ancient spiritual science, the aim should be to inspire people to adopt yoga not as a physical culture but as a lifestyle. When yoga becomes a lifestyle, there is enhancement of physical health and stamina, development of mental clarity and inner creativity, and an experience of peace and fulfilment from life. Therefore, on the International Day of Yoga, every yoga practitioner and sadhaka should make a *sankalpa*, a resolve, to incorporate yogic components into their daily routine and live the yogic principles so that a healthier, brighter and more peaceful future for humankind is ushered in.

Hari Om Tat Sat

