

Yogasana declared as a sport

December 18, 2020

In news

The Ministry of AYUSH and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports announced the formal recognition of Yogasana as a competitive sport

Key highlights

1. Secretary AYUSH gave a presentation and explained that the sports discipline of Yogasana is likely to have 51 medals in 4 events & 7 categories.
2. The proposed events for both men and women include Traditional Yogasana, Artistic Yogasana (Single), Artistic Yogasana (Pair), Rhythmic Yogasana (Pair), Free Flow/Group Yogasana, Individual All Round – Championship and Team Championship.

Road map and the future development of Yogasana Sport:

Secretary also informed the following steps or activities will form part of the road map and the future development of Yogasana Sport:

1. A pilot Yogasana Competition named as “National Individual Yogasana Sports Championship (Virtual Mode) to be held in early 2021.
2. Launching of an Annual Calendar of competitions, events and programs of Yogasana sport.
3. Development of Automated Scoring System for the Yogasana Championship.
4. Courses for Coaches, Referees, Judges and Directors of competitions.
5. Coaching camps for players.
6. Launch of a League of Yogasana, to ensure a career and social status for performers, experts and practitioners,

- to create Sports Stars among Yogasana athletes.
7. To introduce Yogasana as a Sport discipline in National Games, Khelo India and international sports events.
 8. Steps to create job opportunities for Yogasana athletes.

What is 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 of healthy living.**
- The word 'Yoga' is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Yuj', meaning 'to join' or 'to yoke' or 'to unite'.
- As per Yogic scriptures the practice of Yoga leads to the union of individual consciousness with that of the Universal Consciousness, indicating a perfect harmony between the mind and body, Man & Nature
- The aim of Yoga is Self-realization, to overcome all kinds of sufferings leading to 'the state of liberation' (Moksha) or 'freedom' (Kaivalya). Living with freedom in all walks of life, health and harmony shall be the main objectives of Yoga practice.
- "Yoga" also refers to an inner science comprising of a variety of methods through which human beings can realize this union and achieve mastery over their destiny.
- Yoga, being widely considered as an 'immortal cultural outcome' of Indus Saraswati Valley civilization – dating back to 2700 B.C., has proved itself catering to both material and spiritual upliftment of humanity. Basic humane values are the very identity of Yoga Sadhana.

A Brief History and Development of Yoga:

- The practice of Yoga is believed to have started with the very dawn of civilization. The science of yoga has its origin thousands of years ago, long before the first religions or belief systems were born.

- In the yogic lore, Shiva is seen as the first yogi or Adiyogi, and the first Guru or Adi Guru.
- Historical evidences of the existence of Yoga were seen in the pre-Vedic period (2700 B.C.), and thereafter till Patanjali's period.
- Yoga as a discipline was detailed first by Patanjali (BCE 600) in his Yoga Sutras, the first systematized treatise on Yogic theory and praxis
- The main sources, from which we get the information about Yoga practices and the related literature during this period, are available in Vedas (4), Upanishads(108), Smritis, teachings of Buddhism, Jainism, Panini, Epics (2), Puranas (18) etc.
- Tentatively, the period between 500 BC – 800 A.D. is considered as the Classical period which is also considered as the most fertile and prominent period in the history and development of Yoga

The fundamentals of Yoga

Yoga works on the level of one's body, mind, emotion, and energy. This has given rise to four broad classifications of Yoga they are;

- Karma Yoga (where we utilize the body)
- Jnana Yoga (where we utilize the mind and intellect)
- Bhakti Yoga (where we utilize the emotion) and
- Kriya Yoga (where we utilize the energy).

Each system of Yoga one practice falls within the gamut of one or more of these categories. All ancient commentaries on Yoga have stressed that it is essential to work under the direction of a guru

Promotion of Yoga

Following are the initiatives taken for the promotion of Yoga;

- The International Day of Yoga has been celebrated annually on 21 June since 2015, following its inception in the United Nations General Assembly in 2014.
- UNESCO inscribed Yoga in the representative list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity during the 11th session of the held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in the year 2016.
- Inclusion of Yoga in National Health Policy 2017: in order to leverage a proper healthcare legacy, the National Health Policy recommended the introduction of Yoga in school and at workplaces as part of the promotion of good health
- Yoga in School Curriculum: Yoga Education was made compulsory by the National Council for Teachers Education (NCTE).
- Yoga Certification Board: it is established by the Ministry of AYUSH.
- UGC has established Yoga Departments in Six Central Universities and framed Standard Yoga Syllabi for various courses.
- Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) under auspices of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) also deputed Yoga teachers to Indian Missions for imparting training to local students and teachers.
- The ICCR signed and MoU with Yunnan Minzu University, China for the establishment of Yoga College named "India-China College of Yoga".
- Yoga Olympiad: NCERT has taken the initiative of "YOGA OLYMPIAD" for School Children.
- Yoga training to CAPF personnel: Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India has introduced Yoga training to Central Armed Police Force (CAPF).
- PM Awards on IDY: Four awards, Two National and Two International, have been announced in the field of Yoga.
- National AYUSH Mission: It inter-alia makes provision

for the following

1. Upgradation of exclusive State Government AYUSH Hospitals and Dispensaries including Yoga.
2. Setting up to up to 50 bedded integrated AYUSH Hospital including Yoga.
3. Under the flexible components of the scheme of NAM, Provision has been made for Grant-in-aid to the Yoga Wellness centers