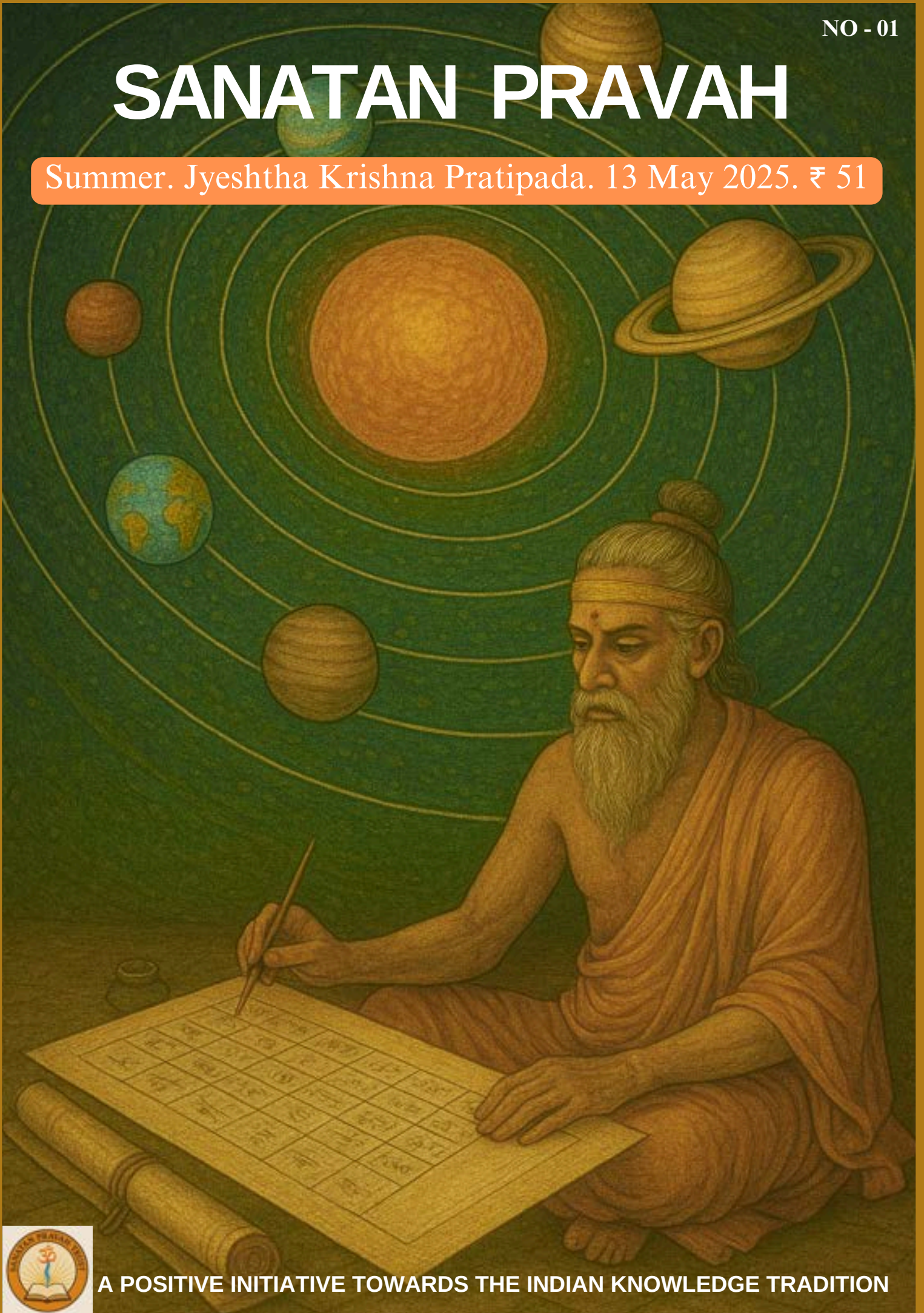


SANATAN PRAVAH

Summer. Jyeshtha Krishna Pratipada. 13 May 2025. ₹ 51



A POSITIVE INITIATIVE TOWARDS THE INDIAN KNOWLEDGE TRADITION

Festivals and Celebrations of Summer Season

Festivals and Celebrations of Jyestha Month

Vat Amavasya Vrat	- Jyeshtha Krishna Amavasya (26 May 2025)
Ganga Dussehra	- Jyeshtha Shukla Dashami (5 June 2025)
Nirjala Ekadashi Vrat	- Jyeshtha Shukla Ekadashi (6 June 2025)
Vat Purnima	- Jyeshtha Shukla Purnima (11 June 2025)

Festivals and Celebrations of Ashadh Month

Sankashti Chaturthi fast	- Ashadha Krishna Chaturthi (14 June 2025)
Yogini Ekadashi fast	- Ashadha Krishna Ekadashi (21 June 2025)
International Yoga Day	- Ashadha Krishna Ekadashi (21 June 2025)
Devshayani Ekadashi fast	- Ashadha Shukla Ekadashi (6 July 2025)
Guru Purnima	- Ashadha Shukla Purnima (10 July 2025)

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Sanatan Pravah: A positive initiative towards Indian knowledge tradition

We are extremely happy to inform you that the first issue of “Sanatan Pravah” magazine is being presented to you. Nowadays, Indian youth are showing special interest and curiosity towards Sanatan Dharma, which is a positive sign. In this issue, we will highlight the importance and scientific nature of the ancient Indian calendar. The calendar is not just a book that determines religious dates, but it is also an accurate medium to understand cosmic events and the influence of planets and stars.

In this issue, we will also introduce you to some important aspects of Yoga and Ayurveda. After the Corona epidemic, special attention is being paid to the health of youth all over the world. Serious problems like high blood pressure, heart disease are being seen even in people of young age, even if their family history is not related to these diseases. Scientists and medical experts are studying this change. As a solution to these problems, some simple and effective yoga asanas have been included in this issue. These asanas not only make the body flexible and active, but also help a lot in doing pranayama and meditation.

“Operation Sindoor” proved that modern technological weapons play a decisive role in war. Advanced means like precision missiles, drones, radars, satellite communication and electronic warfare increased the speed, safety and effectiveness of operations manifold, ensuring success. In each issue of “Sanatan Pravah” we will also provide information about at least one ultramodern weapon so that awareness can be created among the common citizens about the operation of advanced means like electronic warfare.

The aim of “Sanatan Pravah” magazine is to take Indian knowledge tradition like Yoga, Ayurveda and Panchang to the masses, so that people can benefit from them in their lives. Heartiest wishes to all of you on International Yoga Day, hope you will benefit from this issue.

Our endeavour will be to provide you accurate, simple and authentic information on topics connecting you to the basic roots of Indian culture in every issue. Your suggestions and ideas will always be welcome.

Editor
Sanatan Pravah

Indian Calendar: A wonderful combination of science, culture and time

India is an ancient civilization where calculation of time and study of astronomical phenomena have been going on for thousands of years. The Indian Panchang (or Hindu calendar) is a symbol of this knowledge, which not only reflects dates and festivals, but is also deeply connected with astronomy, astrology, seasonal cycles and religious practices. This article is an attempt to explain in detail the origin, structure, variations, utility and relevance of the Indian Panchang in the current context.

Origin of the Indian Panchang:

The roots of the Indian Panchang go back to the Vedic period. The texts like Rigveda, Yajurveda, Atharvaveda etc. contain details of calculation of time, movement of the Sun and Moon, constellations and seasons. Great mathematicians and astronomers of ancient times like Aryabhatta, Bhaskaracharya and Varahamihir gave maturity to the methods of Panchang making.

The word “Panchang” is made up of Sanskrit words “panch” (meaning five) and “ang” (meaning parts or parts). It means – a book with five parts which determines the time and dates.

Five parts of Panchang

The Indian Panchang is based on five main parts:

1.Tithi (तिथि): – It indicates the day according to the movement of the moon. There are 30 dates in a lunar month, which are divided into Shukla Paksha (new moon to full moon) and Krishna Paksha (full moon to new moon).

2.Vaar (दिन): There are seven Vaars from Sunday to Saturday. These are based on the movement of the sun.

3.Nakshatra (Nakshatra): The moon passes through one nakshatra every day. There are 27 nakshatras in total, such as Ashvini, Bharani, Krittika etc.

4.Yoga (Yogah): There are 27 yogas formed by the conjunction of the movement of the sun and the moon. These indicate auspicious and inauspicious results.

5.Karan (Karanam): Half of a date is called Karan. There are a total of 11 Karanas, out of which 7 occur one after the other repeatedly and 4 are fixed.

By studying these five parts, astrologers and scholars determine the timing of Shubh-Muhurat, fasts, festivals, marriages, housewarming etc.

Types of Panchang

Different Panchangs are prevalent in India based on different traditions and regional variations. There are mainly two types of Panchangs:

1 Solar Panchang: In this, the dates are according to the movement of the sun. It is prevalent in states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Odisha and Assam.

2 Lunar Panchang: In this, the dates are based on the movement of the moon. It is more popular in North India, Maharashtra, Gujarat etc.

A third Panchang is also popular by combining these two – Laukika Panchang, which is valid for religious functions and social events.

Calculation of Panchang:

The calculation of the Indian Panchang is very complex and scientific. The movement of the Sun and the Moon, their positions, the inclination of the Earth, eclipses, Sankranti, Solstice, and the position of the constellations – all these are taken into account.

Panchang is prepared keeping this in mind. The methods of time calculation given by Aryabhatta in his book “Aryabhatiyam” are still found at the core of Indian Panchangs. This application of astronomy is a wonderful example of Indian knowledge tradition.

Religious and cultural importance of Panchang:

In Indian culture, Panchang is not only a time determination tool, but also a religious and spiritual book. The auspicious time for any worship, fast, yagya, sanskar or festival is determined from Panchang only.

Every year festivals like 'Nav Samvatsar', Ram Navami, Janmashtami, Holi, Deepawali, Rakshabandhan, Ganesh Chaturthi, Makar Sankranti, Navratri etc. are celebrated according to Panchang.

Panchang has a very important place in astrology. Study of Panchang is necessary in works like position of planets, creation of birth horoscope, prediction of condition etc.

Regional Variations:

India is a country of diversity, so the calendars also show local influences:

Vikram Samvat (lunar calendar): popular in North India, introduced by King Vikramaditya.

Saka Samvat (solar calendar): recognized as the national calendar by the Government of India.

Malayalam Calendar: in Kerala, based on the solar calendar.

Tamil Calendar: popular in Tamil Nadu, with specific Tamil names.

Bengali Calendar: used in West Bengal.

Modern Uses and Digital Panchang:

In the current digital age, Panchang is also now available in the form of mobile apps, websites and software. Many apps like 'Drik Panchang', 'Kaldarshak', 'Hindu Calendar' provide easy information to users about auspicious times, horoscopes and festivals.

The government has also released a Rashtriya Panchang (National Calendar), which is based on Shaka Samvat and coordinates with the Gregorian calendar.

Scientificity of Panchang:

Many people consider Panchang only religious or astrological, but its roots are in astronomy. It contains a very accurate analysis of the position of the Sun and Moon. This is the reason why predictions of eclipses, seasonal changes, Chandra Darshan, Sankranti etc. in Indian Panchangs are 100% accurate.

Conclusion:

The Indian Panchang is not only a measure of time, but it is also a living example of Indian culture, tradition and knowledge-science. Its depth, scientificity and religious significance make it unique. Today, as we live a digital life, the relevance of Panchangam increases even more as it connects us with nature, seasons, astronomy and religion.

We need to understand this ancient heritage, use it and explain its importance to the coming generations, so that this invaluable tradition of Indian Panchangam remains alive and flourishes.

Ashtanga Yoga - A path towards a holistic lifestyle



Yoga is an invaluable heritage of Indian culture, which was codified by Maharishi Patanjali. "Ashtanga Yoga" described in Patanjali Yoga Sutra means - eight limbs of yoga, which lead a person to self-realization. It is not just physical exercise, but a complete path of mental, moral and spiritual advancement. The purpose of Ashtanga Yoga is - restraint of the tendencies of the mind, so that a person can attain salvation.

1. Yama (moral discipline):

Yama is the first part of Ashtanga Yoga, which is related to the social conduct of a person. It is of five types:

Ahimsa - not to do violence to any living being.

Satya - Truthfulness in thought, speech and action.

Asteya - not to steal or misuse someone's property.

Brahmacharya - to control the senses.

Aparigraha - not to collect unnecessary things.

Yama teaches us social responsibility and moral conduct.

2. Niyama (Personal Discipline):

Niyamas are related to self-control and personal life of a person. These are also of five types:

Shauch – Purity of body and mind.

Santosh – Being content in the present.

Tapas – Patience and self-control even in difficulties.

Swadhyaya – Study of religious scriptures and self-reflection.

Ishwar Pranidhan – Faith and surrender to God.

Niyamas are the first step towards self-development.

3. Asana (Physical Exercise):

Asanas are the means of making the body healthy, stable and strong. According to Patanjali, "Sthira Sukhamasanam" – the posture which is stable and comfortable. In the modern era, the importance of yogasanas has increased, because they are helpful in problems like stress, obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure etc. Asanas circulate energy in the body and create a favorable condition for meditation.

4. Pranayama (Breath Control):

Pranayama means – control of prana (life energy). It controls the speed of breathing and creates mental and physical balance. It has four main stages – Purak (inhalation), Kumbhak (holding), Rechak (exhalation), and Shunyaka. Pranayama reduces stress, purifies the mind and prepares the mind for meditation.

5. Pratyahara (Sense Restraint):

Pratyahara means to turn the senses inward by withdrawing them from external objects. This is the first serious step towards meditation, where the practitioner controls his senses and focuses the mind inwardly. In today's digital age, where the senses are entangled in external attractions, Pratyahara is very much needed.

6. Dharana (Concentration):

Dharana is the state when the mind becomes stable on a single subject or object. It is the practice of concentrating the mind on one point, such as focusing on a mantra, idol, light, or breath. Dharana reduces the restlessness of the mind and paves the way for meditation.

7. Dhyana (Meditation):

Dhyana is a refined form of Dharana. In this, the practitioner continuously focuses on that one point, due to which gradually the sense of 'doer' starts ending.

Meditation leads to mental peace, self-reflection and self-knowledge. It is the remedy to remove all mental disorders.

8. Samadhi (ultimate state):

Samadhi is the last and highest stage of Ashtanga Yoga. It is the state where the seeker experiences complete unity between the soul and the Supreme Being.

This is the Nirvikalp state – where thoughts, ego and duality are erased. Moksha is attained only in the state of Samadhi. Ashtanga Yoga is a way of life not only for seekers but for every human being. It establishes the unity of mind, body and soul. In today's fast-paced world, where mental stress and imbalance have become common, Ashtanga Yoga provides a permanent solution. If a person practices it regularly, not only can he get a better health, but can also move towards self-knowledge and peace.

Four gates of salvation

Yoga Vasishtha describes four main gates (paths) for attaining salvation. These four gates are – Shama, Vichar, Santosh and Satsang. Through these gates, the seeker moves towards self-knowledge and ultimately attains salvation.

Shama – It means control of the mind. When the mind is not attracted towards the senses and remains stable and calm, then self-reflection is possible. Shama is the first step towards self-conquest.

Vichar – It is to contemplate discreetly on the nature of the soul, Brahma and the world. Ignorance is destroyed by the power of thought and the true form of the soul is revealed.

Santosh – Santosh means complete satisfaction in the present situation. The mind devoid of desires is situated in inner peace, which is the main symptom of salvation.

Satsang – Satsang means the company of wise people and sages. Satsang awakens discretion, destroys attachment and attains self-knowledge.

Yoga Vasishtha says that if a seeker follows any one of these four paths, he can achieve salvation. These four doors are the main pillars of sadhana.

Patanjali Yoga Sutras – The Eternal Light of Yoga Philosophy

Maharishi Patanjali's contribution in the field of Indian philosophy and spirituality is extremely important and unique. He presented yoga as a complete way of life, not just by limiting it to physical activities or sadhana. The 'Yoga Sutra' written by him is a very concise but influential treatise, which clearly defines the principles, means, and goals of yoga. Patanjali Yoga Sutra is a compilation of only 196 sutras, but its depth is infinite. This treatise is not only a path leading to self-realization, but is also the key to mental balance, peace and higher quality of life.

Form of Patanjali Yoga Sutra: Patanjali Yoga Sutra is divided into four padas (chapters):

1. Samadhi Pada
2. Sadhana Pada
3. Vibhuti Pada
4. Kaivalya Pada

Samadhi Pada-Sutra and English Meaning

1. Atha yoga-anuśāsanam

Now, the discipline of yoga is being expounded.

2. Yogaś citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ

Yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations of the mind.

3. Tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpe 'vasthānam

Then the seer abides in their own true nature.

4. Vṛtti-sārūpyam itaratra

At other times, the seer identifies with the fluctuations of the mind.

5. Vṛttayaḥ pañcatayyaḥ kliṣṭākliṣṭāḥ

The fluctuations (vṛttis) of the mind are five-fold; they may be painful or not painful.

6. Pramāṇa viparyaya vikalpa nidrā smṛtayaḥ

The five types of vṛttis are: valid knowledge, misconception, imagination, sleep, and memory.

7. Pratyakṣa anumāna āgamāḥ pramāṇāni

Right knowledge comes from direct perception, inference, and reliable testimony.

8. Viparyayo mithyā-jñānam atadrūpa-pratiṣṭham

Misconception is knowledge based on a false impression of reality.

9. Śabda-jñāna-anupātī vastu-śūnyo vikalpaḥ

Imagination is a mental concept formed through words, without any actual object.

10. Abhāva-pratyayālambanā vṛttir nidrā

Sleep is a mental modification supported by the absence of content.

11. Anubhūta-viśayāsaṁpramoṣaḥ smṛtiḥ

Memory is the retention of experienced objects.

12. Abhyāsa-vairāgyābhyāṁ tan-nirodhaḥ

Their cessation is attained through practice and dispassion.

13. Tatra sthita yatno 'bhyāsaḥ

Practice is the effort to remain steadily established in that state.

14. Sa tu dīrgha-kāla-nairantarya-satkārāsevito dṛḍha-bhūmiḥ

Practice becomes firmly grounded when done for a long time, without interruption, and with sincere devotion.

15. Drṣṭānuśravika-viśaya-vitrṣṇasya vaśīkāra-saṁjñā vairāgyam

Dispassion is the mastery over desire for objects seen or heard about.

16. Tat paraṁ puruṣa-khyāter guṇa-vaitrṣṇyam

The higher form of dispassion arises from realization of the Self and a freedom from the influence of the guṇas (qualities of nature).

17. Vitarka-vicāra-ānanda-asmitā-rūpa-anugamāt samprajñātaḥ

Cognitive samādhi (samprajñāta) is accompanied by reasoning, reflection, bliss, and the sense of individuality.

18. Virāma-pratyayābhyāsa-pūrvah saṁskāra-śeṣo 'nyaḥ

The other (non-cognitive samādhi) is preceded by practice that brings about the cessation of mental activity, with only latent impressions remaining.

19. Bhava-pratyayo videha-prakṛti-layānām

Some attain this state through birth or dissolution into nature (due to previous practice in past lives).

20. Śraddhā-vīrya-smṛti-samādhi-prajñā-pūrvaka itareshām

Others attain it through faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom.

21. Tīvra-saṁvegānām āsannaḥ

For those who are intensely dedicated, samādhi is near.

22. Mṛdu-madhya-adhimātratvāt tato 'pi viśeṣaḥ

Even among them, there is a distinction depending on whether the effort is mild, moderate, or intense.

23. Īśvara-praṇidhānād vā

Or by devotion to Īśvara (the Lord), samādhi can also be attained.

24. Kleśa-karma-vipāka-āśayair aparāmṛṣṭaḥ puruṣa-viśeṣa īśvaraḥ

Īśvara is a special Self, untouched by afflictions, actions, results, and latent impressions.

25. Tatra niratiśayaṁ sarvajña-bījam

In Him is the seed of unsurpassed omniscience.

26. Sa pūrveṣām api guruḥ kālenānavacchedāt

He is the teacher of even the ancient sages, since He is not limited by time.

27. Tasya vācakaḥ praṇavaḥ

His expression is the sacred syllable Om (Praṇava).

28. Tajjapas tad-artha-bhāvanam

By repeating it and contemplating its meaning, realization dawns.

29. Tataḥ pratyak-cetana-adhigamaḥ api antarāya-abhāvaḥ ca

Through that, the inward consciousness is attained, and obstacles disappear.

30. Maitrī-karuṇā-muditopekṣāṇām sukha-duḥkha-puṇya-apuṇya-viśayāṇām bhāvanātaś cittaprasādanam

Clarity of mind comes through cultivating friendliness toward the happy, compassion for the suffering, delight in the virtuous, and equanimity toward the non-virtuous.

31. Prachardana-vidhāraṇābhyāṁ vā prāṇasya

Or through regulation of the breath

32. Viśokā vā jyotiṣmatī

Or by meditation on a luminous, sorrowless state (inner light).

33. Vīta-rāga-viṣayaṁ vā cittam

Or by focusing the mind on someone who has attained freedom from passion.

34. Pracchardana-vidhāraṇa-abhyāṁ vā prāṇasya.

Or through the regulation of the breath (prāṇa), especially exhalation and retention.

35. Viṣaya-vatī vā pravṛttiḥ utpannā manasaḥ sthiti-nibandhinī.

Or concentration on a sensory experience that arises can stabilize the mind.

36. Viśokā vā jyotiṣmatī.

Or by meditation on the inner light which is free from sorrow.

37. Vīta-rāga-viṣayaṁ vā cittam.

Or by contemplating a mind free from desire.

38. Svapna-nidrā-jñāna-ālambanaṁ vā.

Or by taking as support the knowledge arising from dreams or deep sleep.

39. Yathā-abhimata-dhyānād vā.

Or through meditation on any object of one's liking.

40. Parama-aṇu-parama-mahattva-antaḥ asya vaśīkāraḥ.

The mastery of the yogi extends from the smallest particle to the greatest magnitude.

41. Kṣīṇa-vṛtter abhijātasya iva mañeḥ grahīṭṭ-grahaṇa-grāhyeṣu tat-stha-tad-añjanatā samāpattiḥ.

When the fluctuations subside, the mind becomes like a transparent jewel, reflecting the knower, the means of knowing, and the object known – this is samāpatti (absorptive state).

42. Tatra śabda-artha-jñāna-vikalpaiḥ sañkīrṇā savitarkā samāpattiḥ.

In savitarkā samāpatti, the absorption is mixed with verbal knowledge, meaning, and conceptualization.

43. Smṛti-pariśuddhau svarūpa-śūnye iva artha-mātra-nirbhāsā nirvitarkā.

When memory is purified, the mind appears empty of its own nature and only the object shines forth – this is nirvitarkā samāpatti.

44. Eṭayā eva savicārā nirvicārā ca sūkṣma-viṣayā vyākhyātā.

In the same way, savicārā and nirvicārā samādhis (with and without subtle reflection) relate to subtle objects.

45. Sūkṣma-viṣayatvaṁ ca aliṅga-paryavasānam.

Subtle objects end in the unmanifest (aliṅga), beyond which is pure consciousness.

46. Tā eva sabījaḥ samādhiḥ.

All these are with seed (sabīja samādhi), as they involve an object of concentration.

47. Nirvicāra-vaiśāradye adhyātma-prasādaḥ.

Through the refinement of nirvicāra samādhi, spiritual clarity arises.

48. Ṛtambharā tatra prajñā.

Then arises truth-bearing knowledge (ṛtambharā prajñā).

49. Śruta-anumāna-prajñābhyām anyaviśayā viśeṣa-arthatvāt.

This truth-bearing knowledge is different from knowledge gained by testimony or inference because it concerns particulars.

50. Tajjaḥ saṁskāraḥ anya-saṁskāra-pratibandhī.

The impression born of that knowledge stops other impressions from arising.

51. Tasya api nirodhe sarva-nirodhāt nirbījaḥ samādhiḥ.

With the cessation of even that (truth-bearing knowledge), all is restrained, and this is seedless (nirbīja) samādhi.

2.Sadhana Pad –Sutra and English Meaning

1.Tapaḥ-svādhyāya-īśvara-praṇidhānāni kriyā-yogaḥ.

Discipline (tapas), self-study (svādhyāya), and devotion to God (īśvara-praṇidhāna) constitute kriya yoga (yoga of action).

2. Samādhi-bhāvanārthaḥ kleśa-tanūkaraṇārthaś ca.

It is practiced for developing samādhi and weakening the afflictions (kleśas).

3.Avidyā-asmitā-rāga-dveṣa-abhiniveśāḥ kleśāḥ.

The afflictions are: ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion, and clinging to life.

4. Avidyā kṣetram uttareṣāṁ prasupta-tanu-vicchinna-udārāṇām.

Ignorance is the breeding ground for the others, whether dormant, weak, interrupted, or fully active.

Ignorance is seeing the impermanent, impure, painful, and non-Self as permanent, pure, pleasurable, and the Self.

6. Dṛg-darśana-śaktyoḥ ekātmatā iva asmitā.

Egoism is the identification of the seer (pure consciousness) with the instrument of seeing (mind-body).

7. Sukha-anuśayī rāgaḥ.

Attachment is clinging to pleasure.

8. Duḥkha-anuśayī dveṣaḥ.

Aversion is clinging to pain.

9. Svarasavāhī viduṣo 'pi tathā-rūḍho abhiniveśaḥ.

Clinging to life is self-perpetuating and exists even in the wise.

10. Te pratiprasava-heyāḥ sūkṣmāḥ.

The subtle kleśas are to be reduced by reversing their origin.

11. Dhyāna-heyāḥ tat-vṛttayaḥ.

Their fluctuations are to be eliminated through meditation.

12. Kleśa-mūlaḥ karma-āśayaḥ drṣṭa-adṛṣṭa-jaṇma-vedanīyaḥ.

Karma (actions) with kleśas as their root cause are experienced in this or future lives.

13. Sati mūle tat-vipākaḥ jāti-āyur-bhogāḥ.

As long as the root exists, it bears fruit as birth, lifespan, and experience.

14. Te hlāda-paritāpa-phalāḥ puṇya-apuṇya-hetutvāt.

These fruits are pleasant or painful due to virtue or vice.

15. Pariṇāma-tāpa-saṁskāra-duḥkhaiḥ guṇa-vṛtti-virodhāt ca duḥkham eva sarvaṁ vivekinaḥ.

To the discriminating, all is suffering due to change, anxiety, mental imprints, and the conflict among guṇas.

16. Heyaṁ duḥkham anāgatam.

Future suffering is to be avoided.

17. Draṣṭṛ-dṛśyayoḥ saṁyogaḥ heya-hetuḥ.

The cause of suffering is the union of the seer and the seen.

18. Prakāśa-kriyā-sthiti-śīlaṁ bhūta-indriya-ātmakaṁ bhoga-apavarga-artham dṛśyam.

The seen is made of the elements and senses, characterized by illumination, activity, and inertia, and serves experience and liberation.

19. Viśeṣa-aviśeṣa-liṅga-mātra-aliṅgāni guṇa-parvāṇi.

The stages of the guṇas are: specific, non-specific, indicatable only by a mark, and unmanifest.

20. Draṣṭā dṛśi-mātraḥ śuddhaḥ api pratyaya-anupaśyaḥ.

The seer is pure consciousness, though appearing to see through the mind.

21. Tad-artha eva dṛśyasya-ātmā.

The nature of the seen exists solely for the sake of the seer.

22. Kṛta-artham prati-naṣṭam api anaṣṭam tad-anya-sādhāraṇatvāt.

Though it ceases to exist for one who has attained liberation, the seen continues to exist for others.

23. Sva-svāmi-śaktyoḥ svarūpa-upalabdhi-hetuḥ saṁyogaḥ.

The conjunction of the owner and the owned is for realizing the true nature of each.

24. Tasya hetur avidyā.

Its cause is ignorance.

25. Tad-abhāvāt saṁyoga-abhāvaḥ hānaṁ tad-dṛśeḥ kaivalyam.

When ignorance is destroyed, the conjunction ends, leading to the seer's liberation (kaivalya).

26. Viveka-khyātiḥ aviṣṭavā hāna-upāyaḥ.

Uninterrupted discriminative knowledge is the means to liberation.

27. Tasya saptadhā prānta-bhūmiḥ prajñā.

This knowledge unfolds in seven stages, leading to the highest wisdom.

28. Yoga-aṅga-anuṣṭhānāt asuddhi-kṣaye jñāna-dīptiḥ āviveka-khyāteḥ.

By practicing the limbs of yoga, impurities are destroyed and the light of knowledge shines forth, leading to discriminative wisdom.

29. Yama-niyama-āsana-prāṇāyāma-pratyāhāra-dhāraṇā-dhyāna-samādhayaḥ aṣṭau aṅgāni.

The eight limbs of yoga are: Yama (restraints), Niyama (observances), Āsana (posture), Prāṇāyāma (breath control), Pratyāhāra (withdrawal of senses), Dhāraṇā (concentration), Dhyāna (meditation), and Samādhi (absorption).

30. Ahimsā-satya-asteya-brahmacarya-aparigrahāḥ yamāḥ.

Yamas are non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy, and non-possessiveness.

31. Jāti-deśa-kāla-samaya-anavacchinnāḥ sārvaḥ mahāvratam.

These great vows are universal, not limited by class, place, time, or circumstances.

**32. śauca-santoṣa-tapaḥ-svādhyāya-
īśvarapraṇidhānāni niyamāḥ** Purity,
contentment, austerity, self-study, and
surrender to God are the niyamas
(observances).

33. vitarka-bādhane pratipakṣa-bhāvanam
When disturbed by negative thoughts,
cultivate their opposites.

**34. vitarkā hiṁsādayaḥ kṛta-kārita-
anumoditāḥ lobha-krodha-moha-pūrvakāḥ
mṛdu-madhya-adhimātrāḥ duḥkha-ajñāna-
anantaphalāḥ iti pratipakṣa-bhāvanam**
Negative thoughts like violence, whether
done, caused, or approved, stemming from
greed, anger, or delusion, whether mild,
moderate, or intense, lead to endless
suffering and ignorance. Therefore, one
should cultivate opposite thoughts.

**35. ahimsā-pratiṣṭhāyāṁ tat-sannidhau
vaira-tyāgaḥ**
In the presence of one firmly established in
nonviolence, hostility ceases.

**36. satya-pratiṣṭhāyāṁ kriyā-phala-
āśrayatvam**
When truthfulness is firmly established,
actions and their results are in accord.

**37. asteya-pratiṣṭhāyāṁ sarva-ratna-
upasthānam**
When non-stealing is firmly established, all
wealth comes.

**38. brahmacharya-pratiṣṭhāyāṁ vīrya-
lābhaḥ**
When celibacy (continence) is firmly
established, one gains vitality.

**39. aparigraha-sthairye janma-kathantā-
sambodhaḥ**
When non-possessiveness is established,
knowledge of past and future lives arises.

**40. śaucāt svāṅga-jugupsā parair
asaṁsargaḥ**

From cleanliness comes a distaste for one's
own body and disinterest in contact with
others. Its cause is ignorance.

**41. sattva-śuddhi-saumanasya-
ekaāgryendriya-jaya-ātma-darśana-
yogyatvāni ca**

Purity of mind leads to joy, focus, control
of the senses, and the ability to perceive
the Self.

42. santoṣād anuttamaḥ sukha-lābhaḥ

From contentment comes supreme
happiness.

**43. kāya-indriya-siddhiḥ aśuddhi-kṣayāt
tapasā**

Through austerity, impurities are
destroyed and perfection of body and
senses is achieved.

44. svādhyāyāt iṣṭa-devatā-saṁprayogaḥ

Through self-study, one attains
communion with the desired deity.

45. samādhi-siddhiḥ īśvara-praṇidhānāt

Through surrender to God, perfection in
samādhi is attained.

46. sthira-sukham āsanam

Posture (āsana) should be steady and
comfortable.

**47. prayatna-śaithilya-ananta-
samāpattibhyām**

It is mastered by relaxing effort and
meditating on the infinite.

48. tato dvaṁdva-anabhighātaḥ

Then one is undisturbed by dualities (like
heat and cold, pleasure and pain).

**49. tasmin sati śvāsa-praśvāsayoḥ gati-
vicchedaḥ prāṇāyāmaḥ**

After mastering posture, regulation of
breath (prāṇāyāma) is the control of
inhalation and exhalation.

50. bāhya-abhyantara-stambha-vṛttir deśa-kāla-saṅkhyābhiḥ paridr̥ṣṭaḥ dīrgha-sūkṣmaḥ

The movement of breath becomes long and subtle through controlled inhalation, exhalation, and retention — governed by place, time, and number.

51. bāhya-abhyantara-viśaya-ākṣepī caturthaḥ

There is a fourth type of prāṇāyāma that transcends external and internal aspects.

52. tataḥ kṣīyate prakāśa-āvaraṇam

Then the veil that covers the inner light is destroyed.

53. dhāraṇāsu ca yogyatā manasaḥ

The mind becomes fit for concentration (dhāraṇā).

54. svaviśaya-asamprayoge cittasya svarūpānukāra iva indriyāṇāṃ pratyāhāraḥ

Withdrawal of the senses (pratyāhāra) is the imitation, by the senses, of the mind by turning away from their objects.

55. tataḥ paramā vaśyatā indriyāṇām

Then arises the supreme mastery over the senses.

3. Vibhuti Pad –Sutra and English Meaning

1. deśa-bandhaḥ cittasya dhāraṇā

Concentration (dhāraṇā) is the binding of the mind to one place.

2. tatra pratyaya ekatānatā dhyānam

Meditation (dhyāna) is the uninterrupted flow of consciousness toward that object.

3. tadeva arthamātranirbhāsaṃ svarūpaśūnyam iva samādhiḥ

Samādhi is when only the object shines forth, and the mind is devoid of its own form.

4. trayam ekaṭra saṁyamah

The three—dhāraṇā, dhyāna, and samādhi —together are called saṁyama.

5. taj-jayāt prajñālokaḥ

By mastering saṁyama, the light of knowledge (intuition) dawns.

6. tasya bhūmiṣu viniyogaḥ

Saṁyama must be applied in stages (gradually and progressively).

7. trayam antaraṅgaṃ pūrvebhyaḥ

These three (dhāraṇā, dhyāna, samādhi) are internal compared to earlier limbs.

8. tad api bahiraṅgaṃ nirbījasya

Even these are external to seedless samādhi (nirbīja samādhi).

9. vyutthāna-nirodha-saṁskārayor abhibhava-prādurbhāvau nirodha-kṣaṇa-cittānvayaḥ nirodha-pariṇāmaḥ

The transformation into restraint is when the mind becomes linked to moments of stillness, overcoming fluctuations and impressions.

10. tasya praśānta-vāhitā saṁskārāt

From the serenity of this comes a continuous flow of peace.

11. sarvārtha-ekaāgratayoḥ kṣaya-udaya-au cittasya samādhi-pariṇāmaḥ

The transformation of the mind into samādhi is the decline of all-pointedness and the rise of one-pointedness.

12. tataḥ punaḥ śānta-uditau tulya-pratyayau cittasya ekāgratā-pariṇāmaḥ

When the rising and subsiding thought waves are equal, it is the transformation toward one-pointedness.

13. etena bhūta-indriyeṣu dharma-lakṣaṇa-avasthā-pariṇāmaḥ vyākhyātāḥ

Thus, the transformations of the elements and senses, with regard to their properties, characteristics, and states, are explained.

14. śānta-uditāvyapadeśya-dharmānupātī dharmī

The substratum (dharmī) follows the sequence of properties: past (subdued), present (arising), and unmanifested.

15.kramānyatvaṁ pariṇāma-anya-tve hetuḥ

The difference in sequence is the cause for diversity in transformation.

16.pariṇāma-traya-saṁyamāt atīta-anāgata-jñānam

By practicing saṁyama on the three kinds of transformations, knowledge of past and future is attained.

17. śabda-artha-pratyayānām itaretara-adhyāsāt saṅkaraḥ tat-pravibhāga-saṁyamāt sarva-bhūta-ruta-jñānam

Through saṁyama on the relationship between word, meaning, and idea, knowledge of the sounds made by all beings is attained.

18.saṁskāra-sākṣātkaraṇāt pūrva-jāti-jñānam

By directly perceiving impressions (saṁskāras), knowledge of past lives is gained.

19.pratyayasya para-citta-jñānam

By saṁyama on another's thought-form, knowledge of their mind is attained.

20. na ca tat sālambanaṁ tasya aviśayī-bhūtatvāt

But this does not include knowledge of the object in that person's mind, as it is not the focus.

21.kāya-rūpa-saṁyamāt tad-grāhya-śakti-stambhe cakṣuḥ-prakāśa-asatprayoge antar-dhānam

By saṁyama on the form of the body and inhibiting its perceptibility, the body becomes invisible.

22.sopakrama-nirupakramaḥ karma tatsaṁyamāt aparānta-jñānam āristebhyaḥ vā

By saṁyama on karma (with or without immediate result), one gains knowledge of death or danger.

23.maitry-ādiṣu balāni

By saṁyama on qualities like friendliness, one attains the strength of those qualities.

24.baleṣu hasti-bala-ādīni

By saṁyama on strength, one acquires the strength of an elephant, etc.

25.pravṛtti-āloka-nyāsāt sūkṣma-vyavahita-viprakṣṭa-jñānam

By focusing light on inner perception, knowledge of subtle, hidden, or distant things is attained.

26.bhuvana-jñānaṁ sūrye saṁyamāt

By saṁyama on the sun, knowledge of the world is attained.

27.candre tārā-vyūha-jñānam

By saṁyama on the moon, knowledge of the arrangement of stars is attained.

28.dhruve tad-gati-jñānam

By saṁyama on the pole star, knowledge of the stars' movement is attained.

29.nābhi-cakre kāya-vyūha-jñānam

By saṁyama on the navel center, knowledge of the body's structure is attained.

30.kaṇṭha-kupe kṣut-pipāsā-nivṛttiḥ

By saṁyama on the throat-pit, hunger and thirst are subdued.

31. kūrma-nāḍyāṁ sthairyam

By saṁyama on the tortoise nerve (kūrma-nāḍī), steadiness is attained.

32. mūrdha-jyotiṣi siddha-darśanam

By saṁyama on the light in the head, perception of perfected beings (siddhas) is attained.

33. pratibha-ādī vā sarvam

All knowledge can also come through spontaneous intuition (pratibha).

34. hṛdaye cittasaṁvit

By saṁnyama on the heart, knowledge of the mind is attained.

35. sattva-puruṣayoḥ atyanta-asaṅkīrṇayoḥ pratyaya-aviśeṣaḥ bhogaḥ parārthatvāt sva-artha-saṁnyamāt puruṣa-jñānam

Experience is the confusion of the Self and the intellect. By saṁnyama on the Self's own purpose, knowledge of the Puruṣa (true Self) arises.

36. tataḥ prātibha-śrāvaṇa-vedana-ādarśa-āsvāda-vārtāḥ jāyante

From this arises intuitive hearing, touch, vision, taste, and smell.

37. te samādhāv upasargāḥ vyutthāne siddhayaḥ

These are powers in distraction but obstacles in samādhi.

38. bandha-kāraṇa-śaithilyāt pracāra-saṁvedanāc ca cittasya para-śarīra-āveśaḥ

By loosening the cause of bondage and gaining knowledge of the channels, the mind can enter another's body.

39. udāna-jayāt jala-paṅka-kaṇṭhaka-ādiṣu asaṅgaḥ utkrāntiḥ ca

By mastering udāna (one of the vital airs), one becomes light and can rise above water, mud, and thorns.

40. samāna-jayāt jvalanaṁ

By mastering samāna (vital air), the inner fire is kindled.

41. rotra-ākāśayoḥ saṁbandha-saṁnyamāt divyam śrotram

By saṁnyama on the relationship between ear and space, divine hearing is gained.

42. kāya-ākāśayoḥ saṁbandha-saṁnyamāt laghu-tūla-samāpatteḥ ca ākāśa-gamanam

By saṁnyama on the body-space relationship and by identifying with lightness, one can move through space.

43. bahir akalpitā vṛttir mahā-videhā tataḥ prakāśa-āvaraṇa-kṣayaḥ

Non-conceptual experience outside the body is called mahāvidehā; it removes the veil over light (knowledge).

44. sthūla-svarūpa-sūkṣma-anvaya-arthavattva-saṁnyamāt bhūta-jayaḥ

By saṁnyama on the elements—gross, subtle, essential, relational—mastery over them is attained.

45. tato aṇimādi-prādurbhāvaḥ kāya-sampat tad-dharma-anabhigātaḥ ca

From this, powers like becoming minute (aṇimā), perfection of the body, and invulnerability arise.

46. rūpa-lāvaṇya-bala-vajra-saṁhananatvāni kāya-sampat

Perfection of the body includes beauty, grace, strength, and diamond-like resilience.

47. grahaṇa-svarūpa-asmitā-anvaya-arthavattva-saṁnyamāt indriya-jayaḥ

By saṁnyama on the senses—perception, essence, ego-function, purpose—mastery of the senses is attained.

48. tato manojavitvaṁ vikaraṇa-bhāvaḥ pradhāna-jayaḥ ca

From this come speed of mind, sensory independence, and mastery over nature.

49. sattva-puruṣayoḥ śuddhi-sāmye kaivalyam

When purity of the intellect matches that of the Self, liberation (kaivalya) is attained.

53. jāti-lakṣaṇa-deśaiḥ anya-tānvayāt tulya-yogaḥ prati-pattiḥ

From this arises intuitive knowledge of the distinction between similar objects.

54. tāraṁ sarva-viśayaṁ sarvathā-viśayaṁ akramaṁ ca iti viveka-jñānam

Discriminative knowledge is all-knowing, beyond time and sequence.

55. sattva-puruṣayoḥ śuddhi-sāmye kaivalyam iti

When the intellect becomes as pure as the Self, there is absolute liberation.

4. Kaivalya Pāda –Sutra and English Meaning

1. janma-auśadhi-mantra-tapaḥ-samādhijāḥ siddhayaḥ

Supernatural powers (siddhis) can arise through birth, herbs, mantra, austerity, or samādhi.

2. jātyantara-pariṇāmaḥ prakṛty-apūrāt

Change into another species (or form) results from the overflow of nature's potential.

3. nimittaṁ aprayojakaṁ prakṛtīnāṁ varaṇa-bhedas tu tataḥ kṣetrikavat

The cause (nimitta) does not create change but removes obstacles, like a farmer clearing the path for water to flow.

4. nirmāṇa-cittāni asmitā-mātrāt

Minds created (by yogic power) arise from the sense of individuality (asmitā) alone.

5. pravṛtti-bhede prayojakaṁ cittam ekam anekeṣām

Though activities differ, one directing mind governs many created minds.

6. tatra dhyāna-jam anāśayam

Of these, the mind born of meditation is free of karma seeds (impressions).

7. karma-aśukla-akṛṣṇaṁ yoginas tri-vidham itareṣām

A yogi's actions are neither black nor white (neutral), but others' actions are threefold (good, bad, mixed).

8. tataḥ tad-vipāka-anuguṇānām eva abhivyaktiḥ vāsanānām

Only those impressions (vāsanās) that match the karma-fruits manifest.

9. jāti-deśa-kāla-vyavahitānām apy anantaryaṁ smṛti-saṁskārayor ekarūpatvāt

Memory and impressions are of the same nature, hence their effect is not obstructed by birth, place, or time.

10. tasām anāditvaṁ ca āśiṣaḥ nityatvāt

These impressions have no beginning, as desire itself is eternal.

11. hetu-phala-āśraya-ālambanaiḥ saṅgrhītatvāt esām abhāve tad-abhāvaḥ

Impressions are sustained by cause, effect, base, and support. When these are absent, the impressions vanish.

12. atīta-anāgataṁ svarūpataḥ asti adhva-bhedād dharmāṇām

The past and future exist inherently as variations in the process of change.

13. te vyakta-sūkṣmāḥ guṇa-ātmānaḥ

These (objects) are manifest or subtle and consist of the guṇas (sattva, rajas, tamas).

14. pariṇāma-eka-rūpatvāt vastu-tattvam

The reality of an object is due to the uniformity of its transformation.

15. vastu-sāmye cittabhedāt tayor vibhaktaḥ panthāḥ

Though the object is the same, its perception varies with each mind.

16. na ca eka-citta-tantram vastu tad-apramāṇakaṁ tadākāra-apattau svapnavat

An object doesn't depend solely on one mind—otherwise, it would be unreal, like dream objects.

17. taduparāgāpekṣitvāc cittasya vastu-jñātājñātam

An object is known or unknown to the mind depending on how it colors the mind.

18. sadā jñātaḥ cittavṛttayaḥ tat-prabhoh puruṣasya aparīṇāmitvāt

The modifications of the mind are always known to the Puruṣa (Self), as the Self is unchanging.

19. na tat svābhāsaṁ dṛśyatvāt

The mind does not illuminate itself, because it is an object of perception.

20. ekasamaye ca ubhaya-anavadhāraṇam

The mind cannot perceive both itself and the object simultaneously.

21. cittāntara-dṛśye buddhi-buddher atiprasaṅgaḥ smṛti-saṅkaraś ca

If one mind could perceive another, infinite regress and confusion of memory would result.

22. ceter apratisaṁkramāyās tadākārāpattau svabuddhi-saṁvedanam

Though the Self doesn't move, it is reflected in the mind and thus the mind becomes self-aware.

23. draṣṭṛ-dṛśyoparaktaṁ cittam sarvārtham

The mind, colored by the seer and the seen, is capable of experiencing everything.

24. tad asaṅkhyeya-vāsanābhiś cittam api pariṇāmam ātra

The mind, influenced by countless impressions, appears to act with a unified identity.

25. viśeṣa-darśinaḥ ātmabhāva-bhāvanā-nivṛttiḥ

For one who sees the distinction (between Self and mind), the belief in selfhood ceases.

26. tadā viveka-nimnaṁ kaivalya-prāgbhāraṁ cittam

Then the mind is inclined toward liberation (kaivalya) through discriminative knowledge.

27. tac-chidreṣu pratyayāntarāṇi saṁskārebhyaḥ

In the gaps of discriminative knowledge, other thoughts arise from latent impressions.

28. hānam eṣāṁ kleśa-vat uktam

Just like afflictions (kleśas), these too should be discarded.

29. prasaṅkhyāne api akusīdasya sarvathā viveka-khyāteḥ dharma-meghaḥ samādhiḥ

For one detached even from enlightenment, Dharma-megha samādhi arises—a cloud of virtue.

4.30 – tataḥ kleśa-karma-nivṛttiḥ

Then all afflictions and karmas are destroyed.

32. tataḥ kṛta-arthānāṁ pariṇāma-krama-samāptiḥ guṇānām

Then, for one who has fulfilled the purpose of life, the guṇas cease to evolve.

33. kṣaṇa-pratīyogī pariṇāma-aparānta-nirgrāhyaḥ kramāḥ

Time is the sequence of transformations discerned by the final stage of change.

34. puruṣārtha-śūnyānāṁ guṇānāṁ pratiprasavaḥ kaivalyaṁ svarūpa-pratiṣṭhā vā citīśaktiḥ iti

Kaivalya (liberation) is the return of the guṇas to their source, having no more purpose for the Puruṣa. It is the establishment of the Self in its own nature.

Kittur Rani Chennamma

Kittur Rani Chennamma was one of the first Indian women to lead an armed rebellion against British rule. Born on October 23, 1778, in the village of Kakati in present-day Karnataka, she was raised with a strong sense of courage, justice, and independence. Trained in horse riding, sword fighting, and archery from a young age, she developed into a fearless warrior.

Chennamma became the queen of Kittur after marrying Raja Mallasarja. When her husband died in 1816 and her only son passed away soon after, the future of the Kittur kingdom was at risk. To secure the succession, she adopted a boy named Shivalingappa and declared him as the heir to the throne. However, the British East India Company refused to recognize this adoption under the Doctrine of Lapse, a policy they used to annex Indian kingdoms without a biological male heir.

In 1824, when the British tried to take over Kittur, Rani Chennamma led her army to resist them. In the first battle, her forces defeated the British and captured the British commissioner, St. John Thackeray. This unexpected victory made her a symbol of resistance and bravery. However, the British returned with a much stronger force. After a fierce struggle and betrayal by some of her own commanders, Chennamma was eventually captured. She was imprisoned in Bailhongal Fort, where she died in 1829.

Although her revolt did not succeed in the long term, Kittur Rani Chennamma became a legendary figure in India's fight against colonialism. Her bravery inspired many future freedom fighters, including Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi.

Today, she is remembered with great respect and pride, especially in Karnataka. Statues have been erected in her honor, and her legacy is celebrated annually during the Kittur Utsav. Kittur Rani Chennamma remains a powerful symbol of women's strength, patriotism, and the spirit of resistance against injustice.

Gentle Yoga Poses for Daily Use

Padmāsana



Introduction:

Padmāsana, commonly known as the Lotus Pose, is one of the most important and iconic postures in yoga. It is primarily used for meditation and pranayama (breath control) practices. The word Padma means "lotus," and the posture resembles a blooming lotus flower—hence the name. This asana not only brings physical stability and mental calm but also serves as a gateway to spiritual growth.

History and Mythological References:

Padmāsana is mentioned in several ancient yogic scriptures and Upanishads. It is recommended for meditation in texts such as the Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā, Gorakṣaśataka, and Patañjali's Yoga Sūtras. Statues of both Buddha and Mahavira are frequently depicted in this posture, signifying its revered role in the pursuit of enlightenment.

Anatomy and Posture:

In Padmāsana, the practitioner sits cross-legged with each foot placed on the thigh, soles facing upward, and spine erect. The hands typically rest on the knees in a mudrā (gesture), promoting energy flow and focus. Here is a refined and polished version of your text with improved structure, clarity, and grammar:

Padmāsana Posture and Technique:

In Padmāsana, the practitioner assumes a seated posture where each foot is placed on the opposite thigh. This creates a triangular base, providing the body with a firm foundation that enhances stability during meditation.

Steps to Perform Padmāsana:

1. Sit on a flat mat or yoga mat with legs extended forward.
2. Gently lift the right foot and place it on the left thigh, with the heel close to the navel.
3. Then lift the left foot and place it on the right thigh, so that both heels rest near the navel.
4. Ensure that both knees touch the ground and the spine remains upright and elongated.
5. Rest the hands on the knees in Gyan Mudra (gesture of knowledge) or Chin Mudra (gesture of consciousness).
6. Close the eyes, relax the body, and begin to slow down the breath, bringing the focus inward for meditation.

Physical Benefits of Padmāsana:

- Strengthens and aligns the spine: Helps maintain an erect posture and supports prolonged sitting during meditation or pranayama.
- Enhances flexibility in the hips, knees, and ankles: Regular practice reduces stiffness and increases mobility in the lower limbs.
- Improves digestion: Gentle pressure around the abdominal area stimulates digestive organs and promotes healthy digestion.
- Balances blood circulation: Encourages even distribution of blood, especially toward the brain, heart, and lungs.
- Tones the uterus and bladder: Particularly beneficial for women, this posture supports reproductive and urinary health.

Mental Benefits of Padmāsana:

- Promotes mental peace and stability: As an ideal posture for meditation, Padmāsana enhances focus and concentration.
- Reduces stress and anxiety: Prolonged sitting in this posture calms the mind and soothes the nervous system.
- Strengthens the nervous system: By balancing the autonomic nervous system, it boosts brain function and mental clarity.

Spiritual Benefits of Padmāsana:

- Padmāsana is regarded as a gateway to deep meditation and samādhi (spiritual absorption).

- It awakens sāttvic (pure) energy and fosters a connection between the mind and the soul.
- It supports the awakening of Kundalinī Shakti, the latent spiritual energy at the base of the spine.
- Sitting in this posture during meditation or mantra chanting deepens the meditative experience and enhances inner awareness.

Scientific Perspective on Padmāsana:

Modern medical science and neuroscience increasingly recognize the powerful mental health benefits of yogic postures, particularly those used in meditation. Sitting in Padmāsana activates the parasympathetic nervous system, triggering the body's natural relaxation response. This leads to a reduction in stress hormones like cortisol, while promoting the release of "feel-good" neurotransmitters such as dopamine and serotonin, enhancing overall emotional well-being.

Suitability for Prāṇāyāma and Meditation:

Padmāsana provides a stable base, which is essential for practicing prāṇāyāma (breath regulation). Stability in the body ensures steady breathing and a smooth flow of prāṇa (vital energy). This posture supports stillness during meditation, helping the practitioner achieve deeper concentration and inner stillness.

Paschimottanasana:



Introduction:

Yoga is not just a practice of body movements, but it is a science of combining mind, soul and spirit. Each asana is associated with a deep purpose and philosophy. One of the most effective and classical asanas is Paschimottanasana. This asana provides deep stretch to the western (back) side of the body, especially the spine, back, hamstrings, and calves. Its practice gives peace, flexibility and energy to the body at physical, mental and spiritual levels.

Literal Meaning and Etymology:

Sanskrit Name: Paschimottanasana

Paschim = western side of the body (back or rear)

Uttana = intense stretch or extension

Asana = Pose

Meaning: A posture in which the back side of the body is intensely stretched.

Step-by-step practice method:

1. Sit in Dandasana – stretch both legs straight in front, keep the spine straight.
2. Take a deep breath, take both hands above the head.
3. Exhale and slowly bend forward from the hips, lengthening the spine as you move.

4. Try to hold your toes with both hands. (You may keep the knees slightly bent initially if needed.)

5. Aim to bring your forehead toward your knees, without forcing the movement.

6. Avoid straining—bend only as far as you can comfortably go.

7. Stay in this position for 20 seconds to 2 minutes, gradually increasing the duration with practice.

8. Inhale and slowly rise back up to the starting position. Relax.

Key Characteristics of Correct Posture:

- The knees should remain in contact with the ground.
- The hands should hold the soles or toes of the feet firmly.
- The back should be straight and elongated—not rounded.
- Breathing should remain natural and steady throughout the pose.

Physical Benefits:

- The gentle pressure on the abdomen stimulates the liver, intestines, and pancreas, enhancing their function.
- Provides relief from constipation, gas, and indigestion.
- Improves spinal flexibility and posture.
- Alleviates backache and reduces stiffness in the lumbar region.
- Helps reduce fat around the abdomen and thighs.
- Supports weight loss and helps manage obesity with regular practice.
- Regulates the menstrual cycle in women and improves the functioning of the uterus and ovaries.

Mental Benefits:

- Helps relieve anxiety, stress, and mental restlessness, promoting a calm and balanced state of mind.
- This asana facilitates the attainment of a meditative state.
- With regular practice, it becomes easier to turn the attention inward and maintain focus.

Effect on Energy and Chakras:

- Activates the Manipura Chakra (the energy center located in the navel region).
- Balances the flow of prāṇic energy throughout the body.
- Supports and deepens spiritual practices by enhancing inner awareness.

Paschimottanasana in the Ayurvedic Perspective:

- Helps balance the Pitta dosha (associated with heat and digestion).
- Stimulates the digestive fire (Agni), improving metabolism.
- Calms the nervous system and cools the brain, promoting better sleep quality.

Precautions for Practicing Paschimottanasana:

- Individuals with a slip disc or serious spinal issues should avoid this pose unless advised by a medical professional.
- This asana is contraindicated during pregnancy.

- Those with asthma or high blood pressure should practice with caution and under guidance.
- Avoid forceful stretching or overexertion while performing the pose.

Modern Medical Science and Paschimottanasana:

- MRI and CT scan studies have shown that forward-bending postures like Paschimottanasana enhance lumbar spine mobility and improve intervertebral disc hydration.
- EEG analysis indicates an increase in alpha brain wave activity following this posture, which is associated with a state of mental calm and relaxation.
- This asana also helps regulate the hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, contributing to a reduction in stress and improved hormonal balance.

Paschimottanasana in Yogic Texts:

Paschimottanasana is described in classical yogic scriptures such as the Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā and the Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā.

According to the Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā:

“Paschim paschimtah kritva padayoh sthirayam shanaih
Vaksho vikasayan bhūyo mudrā paschimottamā.”

This verse highlights Paschimottanasana as one of the most beneficial forward-bending postures. It purifies the nāḍī system (energy channels) and promotes a balanced flow of prāṇa (vital energy) within the body.

Shashankasana:



Among the many yoga asanas, one particularly effective and simple posture is Shashankasana. In English, it is commonly known as the Rabbit Pose or Moon Pose. Shashankasana not only helps relax the body but is also highly beneficial for relieving mental stress, anxiety, and high blood pressure. It is a favorite meditative pose among yogis.

Literal Meaning and Etymology:

- Sanskrit name: Shashankasana
- Shashank = Moon
- Shasha = Rabbit
- Ank = Lap or curve
- Asana = Pose

Meaning: A calm, moon-like pose or a rabbit-shaped posture. The body bends in a shape resembling a rabbit sitting on the ground, or an image seen on the surface of the moon.

How to Perform Shashankasana:

1. Spread a mat or yoga mat on the floor and sit in Vajrasana (kneeling position).
- Keep your knees close together, with the buttocks resting on the heels.

- Exhale slowly and bend forward from the waist, bringing your forehead toward the ground.
- Keep your spine straight and lower your forehead to the ground—or bend forward as far as is comfortable.
- Extend your arms straight in front of you on the floor, palms facing downward.
- You can remain in this position for anywhere between 20 seconds and 2 minutes, depending on your comfort level.
- Breathe normally throughout.
- To return, inhale slowly and gently raise your torso, coming back to Vajrasana.

Benefits of Shashankasana (Rabbit/Moon Pose):

- This asana stretches and soothes the back muscles, helping relieve back pain and spinal stiffness.
- Gentle pressure on the abdomen helps activate the digestive system, providing relief from gas, indigestion, and constipation.
- Bending the head forward increases blood flow to the brain, enhancing memory and concentration.
- The stretch in the neck area stimulates the thyroid gland, which can help regulate hormonal imbalances.
- Shashankasana activates the parasympathetic nervous system, promoting a sense of calm and reducing stress.

- Helpful for insomnia and restlessness:
- This pose soothes the mind and body, making it ideal for those struggling with sleep or anxiety.
- Ideal before meditation or Yoga Nidra:
- Practicing Shashankasana before deep relaxation or meditation can help stabilize emotions and prepare the mind for stillness.

Precautions for Practicing Shashankasana:

- Individuals with knee problems should avoid Vajrasana and Shashankasana, or use supportive props like cushions or yoga blocks.
- Those who experience dizziness or have low blood pressure should consult a doctor before attempting this pose.
- Extra care should be taken in case of head, neck, or shoulder injuries.
- Pregnant women should not practice this asana.

Shashankasana from the Perspective of Modern Science:

- EEG (Electroencephalogram) studies show an increase in alpha brain waves during this pose, which are associated with relaxation and mental calmness.
- Regular practice has been shown to help regulate blood pressure.
- A reduction in cortisol levels (the stress hormone) has been observed.

Heart Rate Variability (HRV) improves, indicating better mental and physical resilience.

Shashankasana and Meditation:

- Shashankasana is a meditative posture in which the body folds forward and the mind naturally turns inward.
- When practiced before pranayama or japa (mantra repetition), it helps deepen one's spiritual practice (sadhana).
- This pose is also said to stimulate the Anahata (Heart Chakra) and Ajna (Third Eye Chakra), promoting emotional balance and inner clarity.

Ustrasana:



Introduction:

Ustrasana (Camel Pose) is a powerful yoga posture known for enhancing spinal flexibility, opening the heart center, and revitalizing the body's energy flow.

As a deep backbend, Ustrasana expands the chest, releases tension in the shoulders, and improves lung capacity, making it an excellent asana for both physical vitality and emotional openness.

Etymology of the Word:

- Ushtra = Camel
- Asana = Posture or Pose

The name comes from the resemblance of the body's shape to that of a camel, especially when the practitioner bends backward and holds the ankles with the hands.

How to Practice Ushtrasana (Camel Pose):

1. Begin in Vajrasana (sitting on the heels), then slowly rise onto your knees into a kneeling position (also known as Ardha Vajrasana).
2. Keep the knees hip-width (or shoulder-width) apart.
3. Place both hands on your lower back, with thumbs pointing inward and fingers pointing downward for support.
4. Inhale deeply, and begin to gently arch the spine backward.
5. Lift and open the chest first, then slowly release the head and neck backward.
6. Bring your hands down to grasp your ankles, one at a time.
7. If there's no discomfort, allow the head to drop fully back.
8. Remain in the pose for 20 seconds to 1 minute, breathing steadily.
9. To exit the pose, engage your core and slowly lift the torso, returning to the upright kneeling position with control.

Physical Benefits of Ushtrasana (Camel Pose):

- Provides a deep stretch to the spine, improving flexibility.

- Relieves muscle stiffness and tension in the back and shoulders.
- Expands the chest and increases lung capacity.
- Beneficial for individuals with asthma or other respiratory issues.
- Stretches the abdominal region, including the stomach and intestines.
- Helps relieve gas, constipation, and indigestion.
- Activates and tones the muscles of the neck.
- Ideal for people who spend long hours sitting or working at a computer.
- The backward neck stretch stimulates the thyroid gland, supporting hormonal balance.

Mental and Emotional Benefits of Ushtrasana (Camel Pose):

- As a chest-opening posture, it helps release emotional blockages and opens the heart.
- Eases tension stored in the body, promoting deep relaxation.
- Enhances self-acceptance, confidence, and emotional resilience.
- Stimulates the release of "happy hormones" such as endorphins and serotonin, improving mood and emotional well-being.
- Primarily activates the Anahata Chakra (Heart Center), which is associated with love, compassion, empathy, and emotional balance.

Precautions:

- Avoid this posture if you have severe neck or back pain.
- Use caution if you suffer from high blood pressure or migraines.

Sleeping Vajrasana:



Introduction:

Supta Vajrasana is a yoga posture that promotes deep internal opening, supports digestive health, and fosters profound relaxation. It is particularly beneficial for individuals experiencing mental stress, constipation, back pain, or spinal stiffness.

Etymology:

- Supta = Reclining
- Vajra = Thunderbolt or Stability
- Asana = Posture or Pose

Supta Vajrasana translates to “Reclining in Vajrasana.” In this pose, the practitioner lies back with the body resting on the ground while the feet remain positioned between the thighs, as in the traditional Vajrasana.

Practice Procedure:

- Begin by sitting in Vajrasana—bend both knees and rest your buttocks on your heels.
- Place both palms on the floor behind you, with fingers pointing backward.
- Slowly bend your elbows and begin to lean your body backward.
- If comfortable, gently lower your back and then your head onto the floor.

- Rest your hands either behind your head or alongside your thighs, as preferred.
- **Duration and Return:**
- Remain in this position for 15 seconds to 1 minute, gradually increasing the duration with regular practice.
- To return, slowly rise using the support of your elbows and come back to Vajrasana.

Recommended Timing and Duration:

- **Best Time to Practice:** Approximately 15–20 minutes after a meal
- **Duration:** Start with 15 seconds, gradually increasing to 2 minutes
- **Frequency:** 2–3 times daily or once per yoga session

Physical Benefits:

- Can be practiced after meals, which makes it unique among yoga poses
- Enhances the secretion of digestive juices, aiding proper digestion
- Improves spinal flexibility by bending the back
- Provides relief from back pain and stiffness
- Expands the chest, allowing increased oxygen intake
- Strengthens and increases flexibility in the knees and thighs
- Stimulates pelvic circulation, activating associated glands

Mental and Emotional Benefits:

- Promotes natural stress relief while lying down
- Calms the nervous system
- Reduces mental fatigue and supports deep, restful sleep

Scientific Perspective:

- Stretching the abdominal muscles stimulates intestinal movement
- Activates the parasympathetic nervous system, which promotes relaxation, recovery, and healing

Precautions:

Practice Supta Vajrasana slowly and mindfully, as it places pressure on the back and knees.

Avoid this pose if you have:

- Severe knee pain or arthritis
- Hernia or a slipped disc
- High blood pressure
- Pregnancy

Benefits Specific to Women:

- Helps relieve abdominal pain and menstrual irregularities
- Gently massages the pelvic region, supporting those with PCOS/PCOD
- Assists in maintaining hormonal balance during menopause.

Supta Vajrasana in Yogic Therapy:

This posture is beneficial in managing:

- Constipation
- Gastritis
- Sciatica
- Asthma
- Obesity

Therapeutic Use:

When combined with Ayurveda and proper dietary guidance, Supta Vajrasana becomes a valuable component of holistic healing protocols.

Headstand:



Introduction:

Shirshasana, often referred to as the “King of Asanas,” is a powerful and advanced yoga posture. The word Shirsha means “head,” and asana means “pose” or “posture.” In this asana, the practitioner balances the entire body while standing on the head.

Renowned for its physical and mental benefits, Shirshasana holds a place of prestige in the yogic tradition. It is considered not only a physically demanding pose but also a symbol of mental clarity, self-discipline, and heightened awareness. According to Yoga Shastra, this asana is believed to increase blood circulation to the brain, stabilize the mind, and support the journey toward self-realization.

Preparation:

- Choose a calm and quiet environment for practice.
- Perform on an empty stomach or at least 3–4 hours after a meal.
- Use a yoga mat for cushioning and grip.
- Beginners may practice near a wall for support and safety.

Step-by-Step Practice:

- Begin by sitting in Vajrasana on the yoga mat.
- Spend a few moments in meditation to center yourself and regulate your breathing. From Vajrasana, gently bend forward and place both elbows on the ground.
- Ensure the distance between the elbows is equal to the width of your head.
- Interlock your fingers to form a triangular base with your forearms and hands.
- Place the crown of your head (the fontanel area) on the floor, nestled between your palms.
- Make sure there is no pressure on the neck—support should come from the forearms.
- Slowly lift the hips and straighten the legs, bringing the body into an inverted ‘V’ shape, similar to Downward-Facing Dog.
- Gradually walk the feet toward the head, shifting your body weight onto the head and elbows.
- Bend one knee and gently lift one leg, then bring up the other leg to balance.
- 1. In the beginning, keep the knees bent as you raise the legs.

- Once stable, straighten both legs slowly so the body forms a straight line from head to toes.
- Hold the position initially for 15–30 seconds. With practice, increase to 3–5 minutes.
- To come down, slowly bend the knees and lower the legs back to the ground.
- Return to Vajrasana and rest in a relaxed position.

Benefits of Shirshasana:

- Increased blood flow to the brain nourishes brain cells, promoting mental clarity, alertness, and focus.
- The inversion boosts blood flow to the upper body, revitalizing the face and brain.
- Especially beneficial for the pituitary and pineal glands, aiding hormonal balance.
- Develops strength in the shoulders, arms, and core.
- Helps relieve stress, anxiety, and mental fatigue by calming the nervous system.
- Increased oxygen supply to the brain helps calm the mind and reduce mental tension.
- Particularly beneficial for those suffering from insomnia.
- Inversion allows blood to flow against gravity, stimulating the brain and facial tissues.
- Brightens the complexion: Improved circulation gives the skin a natural glow.
- Strengthens the spine: Helps to align, strengthen, and increase flexibility in the spine.

- The gentle pressure on abdominal organs provides a natural massage, improving digestive efficiency.
- Activates the pituitary and pineal glands, which play a vital role in hormonal regulation.
- Increased blood flow to the neck area supports thyroid function.
- Elevates energy and awareness: Promotes an upward flow of energy (prana), enhancing spiritual awareness and mental clarity.

Who Should Avoid Shirshasana:

Avoid practicing this pose if you have any of the following conditions:

- High or low blood pressure
- Heart disease or neurological conditions
- Eye issues (e.g., glaucoma, retinal detachment)
- Pregnancy
- Cervical spondylitis or recent neck injuries

Important Points to Remember While Practicing Shirshasana:

- Avoid placing excessive pressure on the neck and head.
- Do not get up abruptly or exit the posture in a rush. Move slowly and mindfully.
- Always practice on an empty stomach.

After coming out of the pose, take time to rest in Vajrasana to normalize the body and breath.

Tadasana



Introduction:

Tadasana, known as Mountain Pose in English, is a basic and extremely important asana of yoga. The Sanskrit word 'tad' means 'palm tree' and 'asana' means a sitting or standing position. In Tadasana, the body is made long and straight like a palm tree. This asana is simple as well as provides physical and mental balance.

Tadasana not only trains the body to stand with proper posture but also serves as the foundational pose for all other standing yoga asanas. Regular practice helps straighten the spine, balance the body, and stabilize the mind.

Preparation:

- Choose a quiet and peaceful environment.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing.
- Stand on a yoga mat or any flat, non-slippery surface.

Starting Position:

- Stand upright with feet together or hip-width apart.
- Keep the arms relaxed by your sides.
- Close your eyes gently and take a few deep breaths to center yourself.
- Distribute your body weight evenly on both feet.

Movement:

- Slowly bring your arms forward and raise them overhead.
- You may either join the palms in Namaste Mudra or keep the palms facing each other, shoulder-width apart.
- Inhale deeply and gently lift your heels, balancing on your toes.
- Stretch your entire body upward—arms reaching high, spine elongated, and chin slightly lifted.
- Fix your gaze on a point ahead to maintain balance and focus.

Hold the Pose:

- Stay in this position for 10–30 seconds initially.
- With regular practice, gradually increase the duration to 1–2 minutes.

Release:

- Exhale slowly as you lower your heels back to the ground.
- Bring your arms down and return them to the sides of your body.
- Stand still, breathing normally, in a relaxed and composed posture.

Breathing Technique in Tadasana:

- Inhale as you raise your arms and lift your heels to stand on your toes.
- Breathe normally while holding the posture.

Exhale as you lower your heels and bring your arms back down to the sides.

Benefits of Tadasana (Mountain Pose):

- With regular practice, Tadasana may contribute to increased height, especially in children and adolescents, by stretching the spine and improving posture.
- Helps align the spine, shoulders, neck, and head, encouraging a balanced and upright stance.
- Builds strength in the ankles, toes, thighs, and knees, improving stability and endurance.
- The upward stretching motion engages and tones the abdominal muscles, supporting fat reduction and core strengthening.
- The stretching involved in Tadasana helps enhance overall blood flow throughout the body.

Precautions:

- Avoid raising your heels if you experience high blood pressure or dizziness.
- Pregnant women should perform this pose slowly and only with their doctor's approval.
- Exercise caution if you have heart conditions or significant balance issues.
- Do not practice immediately after a meal; wait at least 2 hours after eating before performing this asana.

Daily Pranayama Routine

Udgeet Pranayam



Meaning of Udgeet Pranayama:

The term Udgeet comes from two Sanskrit words: "ud" meaning elevated or above, and "geet" meaning song or chant. Thus, Udgeet Pranayama refers to the chanting of Om (Omkar) in a prolonged, rhythmic, and mindful manner. It is a form of sound-based pranayama, where the practitioner gently chants "Om" in a deep, slow tone while focusing on the breath.

Because of its calming and centering effects, Udgeet Pranayama is often called a meditative pranayama. It brings the mind to a state of stillness, promotes inner peace, and enhances concentration.

The Significance of Om (Omkar):

"Om" is not an ordinary sound—it is considered the primordial vibration, representing the essence of the universe. In yogic and Vedic tradition, it is referred to as Nada Brahma (the sound form of the divine). Almost all Vedic mantras begin with "Om", highlighting its spiritual and vibrational importance.

Even modern science recognizes that chanting "Om" produces unique vibrational patterns that can influence the mind and body, promoting relaxation and mental clarity.

Effects of OM Chanting:

The vibrations produced by chanting "OM" have a powerful calming effect on both the body and mind. They help balance mental waves, reduce internal noise, and generate positive energy throughout the system.

How to Practice Udgeet Pranayama:

- Choose a quiet, clean, and well-ventilated space.
- The most suitable time is during Brahmamuhurta (4–6 AM) or in the evening.
- Sit comfortably in Sukhasana, Padmasana, or Vajrasana.
- Keep the spine, neck, and head aligned.

Close your eyes and rest your hands on the knees in Gyan Mudra.

Breathing and Chanting:

- Take a slow, deep inhalation.
- While exhaling, chant "OM" slowly and with awareness.
- The "O" sound should last for about 20% of the exhalation.
- The "M" sound should extend through the remaining 80%.
- Focus on the vibration rising from the navel to the crown of the head.
- Allow the exhalation to finish completely before inhaling again.
- Begin with 5–7 minutes per session.
- Gradually increase to 15–20 minutes with regular practice.
- Practice once daily for best results.

Benefits of Udgeet Pranayama:

- Reduces stress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression.
- Stabilizes brainwave activity, creating a state of deep peace and contentment.
- Enhances memory, focus, and decision-making abilities.

Physical Benefits:

- Strengthens the respiratory system and enhances lung capacity.
- Helps maintain healthy blood pressure levels.
- Balances heart rate, promoting cardiovascular health.
- Generates positive vibrations in the body, which contribute to a stronger immune system.

Spiritual Benefits:

- Calms the restless tendencies of the mind, making meditation easier and deeper.
- Supports inner purification and progress toward self-realization.
- Fosters a state of sattva (purity and harmony) and promotes mental balance.

Scientific Perspective:

- Research has shown that alpha brain waves increase during Udgeet Pranayama, indicating a state of calmness and relaxation.
- Improves heart rate variability (HRV), which is a key marker of overall health and resilience.
- Enhances the depth and control of breathing, leading to improved oxygenation and more effective cellular regeneration.

Important Points to Keep in Mind:

- Avoid practicing immediately after a meal; allow at least 2 hours after eating.
- Individuals with high blood pressure, asthma, or other chronic conditions should consult a healthcare provider or yoga expert before beginning.
- Practice with attention and inner awareness, not as a mechanical routine.
- If possible, learn and practice under the guidance of a qualified teacher or guru for maximum benefit.

Bhastrika Pranayama



Meaning of Bhastrika Pranayama:

The word Bhastrika comes from the Sanskrit root "bhas", meaning bellows. Just as a blacksmith's bellows forcefully blow air to kindle a fire, in this pranayama, the lungs rapidly inhale and exhale, creating a powerful flow of breath. This vigorous breathing increases oxygen intake, energizes the body, and accelerates the detoxification process.

How to Practice Bhastrika Pranayama:

- Choose a quiet, clean, and well-ventilated place.
- The best time to practice is in the morning, on an empty stomach.
- Sit in a comfortable meditative posture like Sukhasana, Padmasana, or Vajrasana.
- Keep the spine upright, shoulders relaxed, and the mind calm.
- Begin with a deep and forceful inhalation (Purak).

- Follow it with an equally forceful exhalation (Rechak).
- Continue inhaling and exhaling rhythmically and continuously, maintaining a steady pace.
- **Note:** The breath should be deep, fast, and energetic, but controlled and not strained.

Practice Instructions for Bhastrika Pranayama:

- Perform 10–15 rapid breaths in one round.
- After completing the round, close your eyes and rest in stillness for a few seconds.
- Then begin the next round.
- Initially, practice 3 rounds once a day.
- With regular practice, the duration can be gradually increased to 5 minutes per session.

Physical Benefits of Bhastrika Pranayama:

- The rapid breathing rhythm strengthens the lungs and increases their oxygen-holding capacity.
- Increased oxygen intake helps purify the blood, improving the efficiency of the circulatory system.
- Regular practice strengthens the immune system, helping the body resist common illnesses. Balances heart rate and oxygen supply to the brain:
- Ensures proper oxygenation, supporting cardiovascular and neurological health.
- This dynamic practice increases metabolism, helping to burn calories and reduce fat.

Mental Benefits of Bhastrika Pranayama:

- The powerful breathing rhythm helps release built-up tension, anxiety, and mental fatigue.
- It enhances concentration, alertness, and emotional stability.
- The surge of oxygen and energy refreshes the body and mind, promoting a sense of vigor and enthusiasm.

Spiritual Benefits of Bhastrika Pranayama:

- According to yogic philosophy, Bhastrika Pranayama purifies the nadis (energy channels), making it easier to enter a deep meditative state.
- This practice is especially known to activate the Mooladhara (root) and Manipura (navel) chakras, awakening inner energy and enhancing spiritual awareness.

Scientific Perspective:

From a scientific standpoint, Bhastrika Pranayama rapidly increases oxygen intake by expelling carbon dioxide from the lungs. This results in:

- Activation of brain neurons, enhancing mental alertness and clarity.
- Increased energy availability to body tissues.
- Stimulation of the sympathetic nervous system, which boosts reaction time, focus, and alertness.

Precautions:

Individuals with high blood pressure, heart conditions, epilepsy, or severe respiratory disorders should consult a healthcare professional before practicing.

- Women should avoid Bhastrika during menstruation and pregnancy.
- Practice only on an empty stomach.
- Do not force the breath or practice for too long in the beginning. Gradually build up intensity and duration.
- If you experience dizziness, nausea, or headache, stop immediately and rest.

Experiential Insights:

Yogis who practice Bhastrika regularly report that it:

- Lightens the body,
- Energizes the mind, and
- Sharpens inner awareness.

With consistent practice, Bhastrika can become a powerful tool for spiritual awakening and expansion of consciousness.

Kapalbhati Pranayam



What is Kapalabhati Pranayama?

Kapalabhati is a powerful cleansing technique traditionally described in Hatha Yoga as one of the Shatkarmas (six purification practices). However, in

modern yoga, it is more commonly practiced as a form of pranayama (breath control).

This technique emphasizes forceful exhalation (Rechaka) while inhalation remains passive and effortless. The rapid abdominal contractions involved in this practice deeply cleanse the nasal passages, lungs, and digestive system, revitalizing the entire body.

How to Practice Kapalabhati Pranayama:

- Choose a clean, quiet, and well-ventilated space.
- Practice in the morning on an empty stomach (or in the evening, with a gap of 3–4 hours after a meal).
- Sit comfortably in Sukhasana, Padmasana, or Vajrasana.
- Keep the spine erect, shoulders relaxed, and the mind calm.
- Close the eyes and bring your awareness inward.
- Exhale forcefully by pulling the abdomen inward.
- Allow the inhalation to happen naturally—do not make any effort to inhale.
- Maintain a rhythmic and continuous flow of quick exhalations.
- Begin with 20–30 exhalations per round, followed by a few moments of stillness.
- Gradually increase to 60–100 exhalations per round.
- Perform 3 to 5 cycles, taking short rests between each.

- Start with 5 minutes per day.
- With regular practice, it can be extended to 15–20 minutes.

Physical Benefits of Kapalabhati Pranayama:

- Detoxifies the respiratory system by clearing mucus and toxins through forceful exhalation.
- Enhances lung capacity and improves oxygen intake.
- Activates the abdominal muscles, boosting metabolism and aiding fat reduction.
- Stimulates peristalsis (bowel movement), offering relief from constipation, gas, and acidity.
- Promotes blood purification, which enhances skin health and creates a radiant glow.
- Stimulates the pancreas, aiding in diabetes management.

Mental Benefits of Kapalabhati Pranayama:

- Increased oxygen supply to the brain calms the mind and enhances positivity.
- Stimulates brain cells, improving intelligence, focus, and concentration.
- Provides relief from insomnia, mental fatigue, and restlessness.

Spiritual Benefits of Kapalabhati Pranayama:

- Supports the awakening of the Sahasrara Chakra (crown chakra), encouraging higher states of awareness and consciousness.

Anulom-Vilom Pranayama



Meaning of Anulom-Vilom Pranayama:

Among the various techniques of pranayama, Anulom-Vilom is one of the simplest, most effective, and widely practiced methods. It is also known as Nadi Shuddhi Pranayama, as it purifies the nadis (energy channels) and balances the flow of prana (life energy) in the body.

- Anulom means “in the natural order” – referring to inhalation through the left nostril.
- Vilom means “in the reverse order” – referring to exhalation through the right nostril, or vice versa.

Thus, Anulom-Vilom involves alternate nostril breathing, where inhalation and exhalation are done through opposite nostrils. This practice is highly beneficial for establishing physical, mental, and energetic balance.

How to Practice Anulom-Vilom Pranayama:

1. Choose a calm, clean, and well-ventilated space, preferably in the morning or evening.

- Practice on an empty stomach (ideally 4–6 hours after a meal).
- Sit comfortably in Sukhasana, Padmasana, or Vajrasana.
- Keep the spine, neck, and head upright and aligned.
- Close your eyes and gently shift your attention inward.

Nasal Mudra (Hand Position):

- Use the right hand in Nasal Mudra (Vishnu Mudra):
- Close the right nostril with the thumb.
- Close the left nostril with the ring finger and little finger.
- Fold the index and middle fingers gently into the palm.

Breathing Process:

- Inhale slowly and deeply through the left nostril (Puraka).
- Exhale through the right nostril (Rechaka).
- Then inhale through the right nostril and exhale through the left nostril.
- This completes one round.

Duration and Rounds:

- Start with 5 minutes of practice and gradually increase to 15–20 minutes.
- Perform 8–10 rounds initially.
- Advanced practitioners can follow the ratio of inhalation : retention : exhalation = 1:4:2.

Mental benefits Anulom-Vilom Pranayama:

- The depth and rhythm of breathing brings peace to the brain.
- The mental capacity improves as the brain gets more oxygen.
- It is very useful for people suffering from insomnia and restlessness.
- The balance of the left (Ida) and right (Pingala) nadi stabilizes the mind.

Spiritual benefits of Anulom-Vilom Pranayama:

- This pranayama prepares the mind for meditation.
- The practitioner becomes comfortable in self-reflection and meditation.
- It is especially helpful in balancing the Ajna Chakra and Sahasrar Chakra.

From the scientific point of view:

Science says that when we breathe deeply and in a controlled manner, the parasympathetic nervous system is activated which brings the body to a state of relaxation.

Precautions:

- Do not hurry, do it with patience and a calm mind.
- People suffering from heart disease or high blood pressure should breathe without stopping.
- Do not do this in case of cold or blocked nose.
- Pregnant women should do this only under the supervision of a yoga teacher.
- If you feel any discomfort or dizziness, stop the practice immediately.

Ujjayi Pranayam



Meaning of Ujjayi Pranayama:

The word "Ujjayi" comes from Sanskrit, meaning "victorious" or "one who conquers." This name signifies that the practitioner of this pranayama gains mastery over the senses, mind, and body, achieving a deep state of inner control and awareness.

Method of Ujjayi Pranayama:

- Sit comfortably in Padmasana, Siddhasana, or Sukhasana.
- Keep your spine erect, shoulders relaxed, and eyes gently closed.
- Place your hands on the knees in Gyan Mudra or Chin Mudra.

Breathing Technique:

- Inhale slowly through the nose, slightly constricting the back of the throat to create a soft, whispering sound—similar to gentle snoring or the sound of ocean waves.
- This sound should be audible and steady, but controlled and subtle.
- Retain the breath (Kumbhaka) for as long as comfortable, without straining.
- Exhale slowly through the nose, again maintaining the same gentle constriction in the throat to continue the sound.

- Focus your attention on the sound and rhythm of your breath throughout the practice.

Initial Practice:

- Begin with 5–10 cycles of Ujjayi Pranayama.
- Gradually increase the duration to 15–20 minutes as your practice deepens.
- This pranayama is especially effective before meditation or chanting, as it calms the mind and prepares it for stillness.

Key Features of Ujjayi Pranayama:

- The defining feature of Ujjayi Pranayama is its distinctive ocean-like sound, which arises from a gentle constriction of the glottis (the back of the throat).
- This soothing sound promotes inner peace and helps the mind enter a meditative state.
- The practice generates internal heat, which aids in detoxification and improves digestion.

Physical Benefits of Ujjayi Pranayama:

- Enhances lung capacity and respiratory efficiency.
- Beneficial for respiratory conditions such as asthma and bronchitis.
- Helps maintain balanced blood pressure and regulates heart rate.
- Stimulates digestive fire (Agni), aiding in conditions like constipation and indigestion.
- Activates the throat internally, positively influencing the thyroid gland.

Mental Benefits of Ujjayi Pranayama:

- Focusing on the sound of the breath enhances concentration and mental clarity.
- The practice calms the mind, reducing anxiety, fear, and stress.
- It promotes a deep sense of relaxation, making it ideal for mental well-being.
- This pranayama is highly effective in treating insomnia and disturbed sleep patterns, promoting deep and restful rest.

Spiritual Benefits:

- Ujjayi Pranayama helps draw the senses inward, facilitating the state of Pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses), which is essential for deep meditation.
- It is especially beneficial for the awakening of the Vishuddhi Chakra (throat center) and the Ajna Chakra (third eye center), enhancing intuitive and expressive abilities.

Precautions:

- Pregnant women should consult a healthcare professional or experienced yoga teacher before practicing.
- Individuals with high blood pressure, epilepsy, or serious heart conditions should practice with caution and professional guidance.
- Do not practice immediately after eating; allow at least 2–3 hours after a meal.
- If you experience excessive dryness, irritation, or pain in the throat, discontinue the practice and rest.

Ayurvedic and cultural analysis of the Indian seasonal cycle

Indian Culture and the Seasons:

Indian culture is deeply in harmony with nature. Here, seasonal changes are not viewed merely as shifts in weather, but as integral elements of the cycles of life, health, agriculture, and religious practices. The Vikram Samvat, an ancient Indian calendar system based on the Hindu calendar, divides the year into six seasons, each spanning two months. These six seasons are: spring, summer, monsoon (rainy season), autumn, early winter, and late winter.

This division is based not only on climatic variations but also on the effects of the doshas (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha) in the human body, as well as dietary needs, lifestyle adaptations, and societal activities.

1. Spring Season (Chaitra – Vaishakh / March – April):

Spring is considered the king of seasons. It follows winter and marks a time when nature awakens. Trees begin to sprout new leaves, and crops like mustard, wheat, and gram flourish in the fields. The air is filled with fragrance, vibrant colors, and a sense of renewal.

Dosha Impact (According to Ayurveda):

Spring is dominated by the Kapha dosha. This can lead to symptoms such as heaviness in the body, lethargy, and respiratory issues.

Health, Diet, and Lifestyle Tips:

- Favor foods with bitter (Tikta), astringent (Kashaya), and pungent (Katu) tastes.
- Include Kapha-reducing foods like wheat, barley, green gram, turmeric, neem, and bitter gourd.
- Engage in regular exercise, oil massage (Abhyanga), sunbathing, and Ubtan (Udvardhana) treatments.
- Avoid heavy, sweet, sour, and cold foods.

Cultural Aspects (Spring):

- The vibrant festival of Holi is celebrated during this season, symbolizing the joy and energy of spring.
- Navratri, dedicated to the worship of the Goddess, is also observed during this period.

2. Summer Season (Jyeshtha – Ashadha / May – June):

Summer is marked by extreme heat. The sun's rays grow intense, river water levels drop, and the earth becomes dry and hot. This is the season of evaporation and dryness in the environment.

Dosha Effects (According to Ayurveda):

- Pitta dosha accumulates, and Vata dosha begins to rise during this season. Common physical effects include dehydration, fatigue, irritability, and weakness.

Health, Diet, and Lifestyle

Recommendations:

- Favor sweet, cooling, hydrating, and smooth foods and drinks.
- Beverages like sherbet, coconut water, bael juice, sugarcane juice, as well as natural coolants like khus and sandalwood, are beneficial.
- Daytime rest (short naps) is recommended to maintain energy levels.
- Avoid spicy, sour, pungent foods, and prolonged exposure to intense sunlight.

Cultural Aspects (Summer):

- Folk songs often express the heat and hardship of summer, reflecting themes of thirst, longing, and the anticipation of relief.
- This season also emphasizes the importance of water conservation and forest preservation as essential for ecological balance.

3. Rainy Season (Shravan – Bhadrapada / July – August):

During the rainy season, the sky remains overcast, frequent showers occur, and rivers and ponds fill up. Lush greenery is at its peak. However, humidity levels are also high, which can lead to discomfort and health issues.

Dosha Effects (According to Ayurveda):

- Vata dosha is aggravated.
- Digestive power weakens, and there is an increased risk of waterborne diseases, skin infections, indigestion, and fevers.

Health and Diet Recommendations:

- Prefer warm, light, and easily digestible foods such as moong dal khichdi and dishes containing ginger and trikatu (a blend of ginger, black pepper, and long pepper).
- Avoid curd, cheese, cold items, raw vegetables, and excessive water intake.
- Drink boiled and cooled water to prevent infections.
- Maintain hygiene with regular foot cleaning, oil massages, and neem baths to ward off skin problems and other ailments.

Cultural Aspects (Rainy Season):

- Important festivals like Shiva Puja, Raksha Bandhan, and Janmashtami are celebrated during the month of Shravan.
- Sowing of crops begins as farmers take advantage of the monsoon rains.

Rain is viewed as both life-giving and potentially destructive, reflecting its dual role in nature.

4. Autumn Season (Ashwin – Kartik / September – October):

After the monsoon, the skies clear, and the sun's intensity returns, although the atmosphere retains some moisture. This season is often regarded as a symbol of beauty, balance, and tranquility.

Dosha Effects (According to Ayurveda):

- Pitta dosha reaches its peak during autumn.
- Common ailments include acidity, skin conditions, and a burning sensation in the eyes.

Health and Diet (Autumn):

- Foods with Tikta (bitter), Madhura (sweet), and Kashaya (astringent) tastes are beneficial.
- Include cooling and detoxifying substances such as cold water, coconut, Triphala, bael, and amla.
- Avoid direct exposure to strong sunlight; instead, walking under the moonlight (Chandra Gaman) is considered beneficial.
- Refrain from consuming spicy, oily, and chili-laden foods.

Cultural Aspects (Autumn):

- Major festivals such as Navaratri, Dussehra, and Deepawali are celebrated during this season.
- It is considered an auspicious time for mental clarity and spiritual advancement.

5. Hemant Season (Margashirsha – Pausha / November – December):

During the Hemant season, cold begins to intensify, dryness increases in the air, and

leaves begin to fall. The overall atmosphere becomes stable, calm, and cool.

Dosha Effects (According to Ayurveda):

- Vata dosha accumulates, while Kapha remains stable.
- Digestive strength is at its peak, making it an ideal time to nourish the body.

Health and Diet Recommendations:

- Consume nutritious, warm, and unctuous foods such as sesame seeds, ghee, carrot halwa, and dry fruits.
- Practices like regular exercise, hot water baths, and oil massages (Abhyanga) are highly beneficial.
- Avoid cold, raw, and dry food items that can aggravate Vata.

Cultural Aspects (Hemant):

- Festivals like Tulsi Vivah, Kartik Snan, and Gopashtami are celebrated during this period.
- It is also the harvest season, marking an important time for farmers.

6. Shishir Season (Magha – Phalguna / January – February):

This is the coldest season of the year. Morning fog, dew, and chilly winds are characteristic features. While traditionally seen as a symbol of the end of life, this season also holds hidden potential for renewal and inner strength.

Dosha Effects (According to Ayurveda):

- Kapha (phlegm) tends to accumulate, and Vata becomes aggravated.
- Common issues include cold, cough, dry skin, and joint pain.

Health and Diet Recommendations:

- Favor hot, unctuous (smooth), spicy, and freshly prepared foods.
 - Include warming and nourishing items like sesame seeds, garlic, ginger, ragi (finger millet), millet, and ghee in your diet.
 - Practices such as oil massage (Abhyanga), sweating therapy (steam baths), and wearing warm clothing are beneficial.
 - Avoid cold foods, ice cream, and excessive sweets, which can aggravate Kapha.
- Cultural Aspects (Shishir Season):**
- Festivals such as Magh Snan, Vasant Panchami, and Mahashivratri are celebrated during this time.
 - People also begin preparations for Holi, welcoming the transition to spring.

Conclusion:

According to the Vikram Samvat calendar, the Rituchakra (cycle of seasons) is not merely a marker of seasonal changes—it is a living guide that brings balance, health, and harmony to life. Each season carries its own unique influence, and by aligning our diet, lifestyle, and behavior with these natural rhythms, we can lead a life that is not only free from disease, but also joyful and long-lasting.

This profound wisdom from Ayurveda and the Vikram Samvat system teaches us that true health lies in living in harmony with nature. In today's modern world—where many are becoming increasingly disconnected from natural cycles—the Rituchakra offers an excellent path to restore discipline, balance, and awareness in our daily lives.

The Inspiring Story of Lord Rama and the Squirrel

When Lord Rama was preparing to cross the ocean to reach Lanka and rescue Sita, he began constructing a bridge—Ram Setu—with the help of his monkey army. Mighty warriors like Hanuman, Nala, and Neel were lifting massive stones and placing them in the ocean. Amidst this grand effort, a small squirrel quietly contributed in its own way. It would roll in the sand, carry tiny grains on its furry body, and drop them between the large stones to fill the gaps and help strengthen the bridge. The monkeys mocked the squirrel, and one even brushed it aside. Witnessing this, Lord Rama gently picked up the squirrel, stroked its back lovingly, and said, "Your devotion and effort are as valuable to me as anyone else's." As a mark of his affection, he ran his three fingers along the squirrel's back, leaving behind the three stripes we see on Indian squirrels today.

Brahmos Missile: A symbol of India's power and strategic edge



Among the various technologies and weapon systems that have significantly enhanced India's military strength, the BrahMos missile stands out prominently. It is a symbol of national pride and a testament to India's defense capabilities. More than just a weapon, the BrahMos represents India's strategic self-reliance, advanced technological progress, and innovation in defense.

The BrahMos is a supersonic cruise missile developed through a joint collaboration between India and Russia. It is capable of striking targets from land, sea, and air. With its exceptional speed, precision, and destructive power, the BrahMos ranks among the most advanced cruise missiles in the world.

Origin and Development of BrahMos:

The name BrahMos is derived from two rivers — the Brahmaputra in India and the Moskva in Russia — symbolizing the deep partnership and joint research efforts between the two nations.

The missile was developed by India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Russia's NPO Mashinostroyeniya under a joint venture known as BrahMos Aerospace.

Technical Features of the BrahMos Missile:

Speed: The BrahMos belongs to the supersonic category, with speeds ranging from Mach 2.8 to Mach 3.0—approximately three times the speed of sound.

Range: Initially, the missile had a range of 290 km. However, newer versions have extended this range to 450–800 km, and future variants are expected to reach up to 1,500 km.

Warhead Capacity: The missile can carry conventional warheads weighing between 200 and 300 kilograms.

Guidance System: It is equipped with an Inertial Navigation System (INS) supplemented by GPS/NavIC, enabling precise targeting.

Dimensions:

Weight: Approximately 3 tons

Length: 8.4 meters

Diameter: 0.6 meters

Launch Platforms:

BrahMos Land Attack Version (Land-to-Land): Designed for the Indian Army, this version can be launched from mobile truck-based platforms to strike ground targets.

BrahMos Ship-Launched Version (Sea-to-Land/Sea-to-Sea): Deployed by the Navy, this variant can be launched from warships and is capable of targeting both land-based and naval threats from the sea.

BrahMos Air-Launched Version (Air-to-Land/Sea): This variant is launched from fighter aircraft such as the Sukhoi-30MKI. It enables deep penetration strikes with exceptionally high speed and precision, making it a powerful tool for strategic missions.

BrahMos Submarine-Launched Version (Submarine-to-Land/Sea): This version is designed to be launched from submarines and can be fired while the platform is fully submerged, enhancing stealth and survivability.

Key Features of the BrahMos Missile:

Supersonic Speed: Its high velocity allows the missile to evade enemy radar and air defense systems effectively.

Sea-Skimming Capability: The missile flies at extremely low altitudes over the sea, making it difficult to detect and intercept.

Top-Attack Mode: BrahMos can strike land targets from a steep downward angle, enabling precision attacks on fortified or concealed structures.

Exceptional Accuracy: With a precision of less than one meter, BrahMos is ideal for high-value, strategic strikes.

Indigenisation: A significant portion of BrahMos components have been indigenously developed over time, aligning

with India's Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) initiative.

Strategic Importance of BrahMos:

BrahMos provides India with the capability to conduct deep-strike operations within enemy territory. Its precision, versatility, and rapid deployment across land, air, sea, and submarine platforms make it a cornerstone of India's strategic deterrence and defense posture.

Strategic Deterrence and Operational Advantage:

The presence of the BrahMos missile acts as a strong deterrent against enemy aggression. Its unparalleled speed and precision make it extremely difficult to intercept, thereby discouraging any first-strike attempts by adversaries.

In the event of a conflict, BrahMos can be rapidly deployed to neutralize key enemy installations and command centers, delivering swift and decisive blows.

Capable of operating in all weather conditions and across diverse geographical terrains, BrahMos is a vital asset in India's multi-dimensional warfare strategy.

Future Development: BrahMos-II

India and Russia are currently collaborating on the next-generation version of the missile—BrahMos-II, a hypersonic cruise missile expected to reach speeds of up to Mach 7.

Invitation to Join Sanatan Pravah Trust

Sanatan Pravah magazine, published by the Sanatan Pravah Trust, is a thoughtful effort to keep the spirit of Indian culture and knowledge alive. The magazine shares easy-to-understand and inspiring information about ancient and scientific traditions like Yoga, Ayurveda, Panchang, the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Indian way of living.

Today, many young people are moving away from their roots due to Western influence. In such times, this magazine acts like a guiding light, helping spread the wisdom of Indian knowledge and science.

We invite you to read Sanatan Pravah, take in its valuable ideas, and share it with your family, friends, and especially the youth. Let's work together to keep the eternal values of Sanatan Dharma alive.

Main Goals of Sanatan Pravah Trust:

1. To set up proper places to collect, manage, and safely dispose of used puja items—like flowers, ashes, offerings, and idols—in a way that respects both religion and the environment.
2. To spread, practice, and teach the benefits of Yoga and Ayurveda, helping people stay healthy in body, mind, and spirit.
3. To bring back awareness of traditional Indian rituals and explain the spiritual and scientific value of the ancient Indian lunar calendar (Panchang) in daily life.
4. To hold public events, festivals, health camps, and awareness drives based on India's cultural and spiritual traditions.

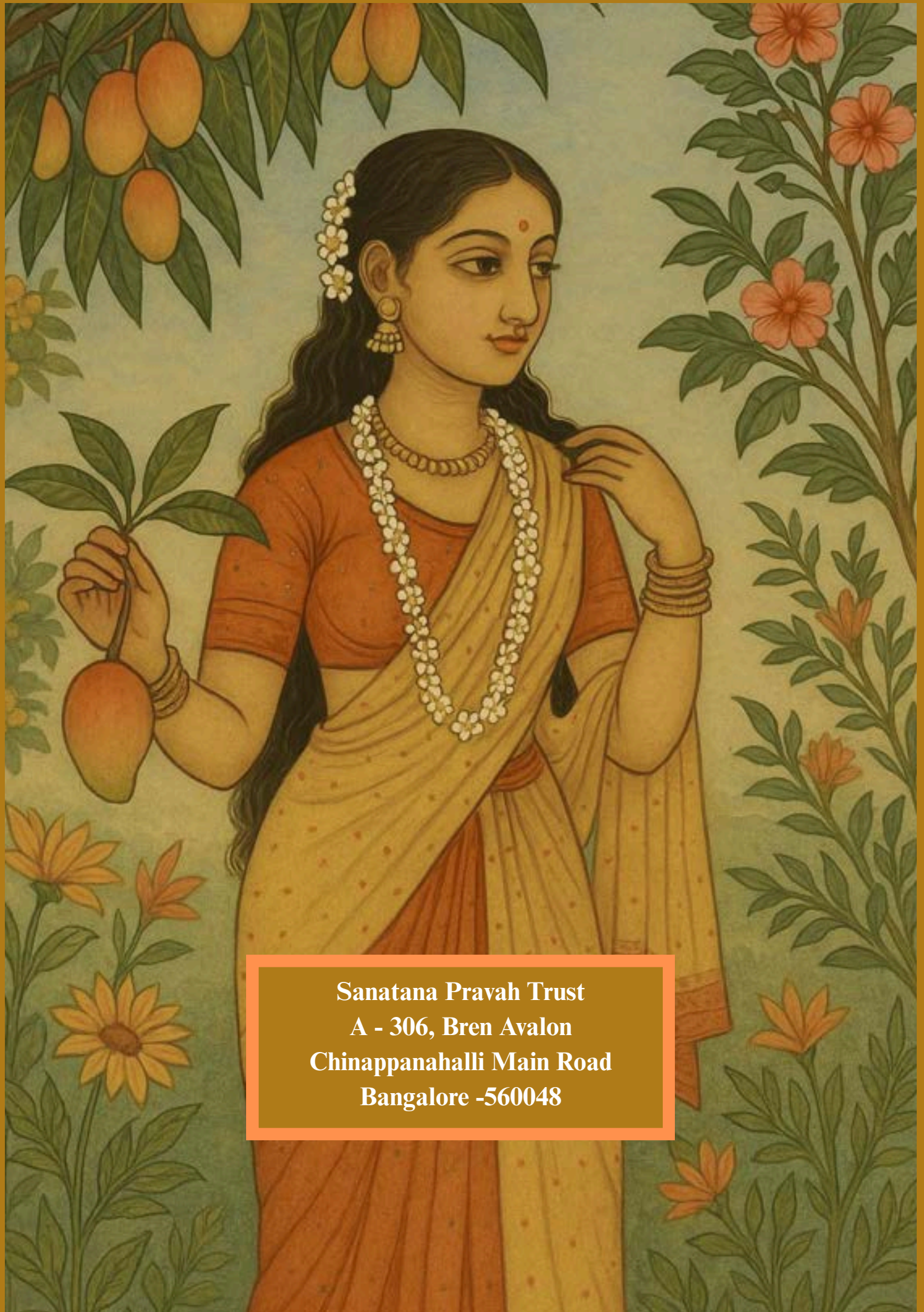
If you want to help bring back the beauty and wisdom of Sanatan culture, join Sanatan Pravah Trust today.

To stay updated, follow our website sanatanpravah.org.

Let's work together to share India's sacred Vedic knowledge with the new generation.

Let the stream of Sanatan flow again—this is our promise.

Chief Editor
“Sanatan Pravah”



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