



INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY CELEBRATION

DATE: 21ST JUNE 2021

REPORT

Introduction

It is a wonderful gift to us that yoga is associated to our culture and religion. Yoga is an invaluable gift of ancient Indian tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; harmony between man and nature and a holistic approach to health and well-being. Yoga is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with ourselves, the world and Nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help us to deal with climate change. Let us work towards adopting an International Yoga Day.

Yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. It is an art and science for healthy living. The word "Yoga" is derived from the Sanskrit root yuj meaning "to join", "to yoke" or "to unite". According to Yogic scriptures, the practice of Yoga leads to the union of individual consciousness with universal consciousness. According to modern scientists, everything in the universe is just a manifestation of the same quantum firmament. One who experiences this oneness of existence is said to be "in Yoga" and is termed as a yogi who has attained a state of freedom, referred to as *mukti*, *nirvāna*, *kaivalya* or moksha.

On December 11, 2014, the 193 member UNGA approved the proposal by consensus with a record 177 co-sponsoring countries a resolution to establish 21 June as "International Day of Yoga". In its resolution, the UNGA recognised that Yoga provides a holistic approach to health and well-being and wider dissemination of information about the benefits of practicing Yoga for the health of the world population. Yoga also brings harmony in all walks of life and thus, is known for disease prevention, health promotion and management of many lifestyle-related disorders. This booklet intends to give a brief overview about Yoga and Yogic practices to orient one towards comprehensive health for an individual and the community (India, 2020).

History



The practice of Yoga is believed to have started with the very dawn of civilization. The science of yoga has its origin thousands of years ago, long before the first religions or belief systems were born. In the yogic lore, Shiva is seen as the first yogi or Adiyogi, and the first Guru or Adi Guru.

Several Thousand years ago, on the banks of the lake Kantisarovar in the Himalayas, Adiyogi poured his profound knowledge into the legendary Saptarishis or "seven sages". The sages carried this powerful yogic science to different parts of the world, including Asia, the Middle East, Northern Africa and South America. Interestingly, modern scholars have noted and marvelled at the close parallels found between ancient cultures across the globe. However, it was in India that the yogic system found its fullest expression. Agastya, the Saptarishi who travelled across the Indian subcontinent, crafted this culture around a core yogic way of life.

The Number of seals and fossil remains of Indus Saraswati valley civilization with Yogic motives and figures performing Yoga Sadhana suggest the presence of Yoga in ancient India. The phallic symbols, seals of idols of mother Goddess are suggestive of Tantra Yoga. Presence of Yoga is available in folk traditions, Indus valley civilization, Vedic and Upanishadic heritage, Buddhist and Jain traditions, Darshanas, epics of Mahabharat and Ramayana, theistic traditions of Shaivas, Vaishnavas, and Tantric traditions. In addition, there was a primordial or pure Yoga which has been manifested in mystical traditions of South Asia. This was the time when Yoga was being practised under the direct guidance of Guru and its spritual value was given special importance. It was a part of Upasana and yoga sadhana was inbuilt in their rituals. Sun was given highest importance during the vedic period. The practice of 'Surya namaskara' may have been invented later due to this influence. Pranayama was a part of daily ritual and to offer the oblation. Though Yoga was being practiced in the pre-Vedic period, the great Sage Maharshi Patanjali systematized and codified the then existing practices of Yoga, its meaning and its related knowledge through his Yoga Sutras. After Patanjali, many Sages and Yoga Masters contributed greatly for the preservation and development of the field through their well-documented practices and literature (Basavaraddi, 2015).

Historical evidences of the existence of Yoga were seen in the pre-Vedic period (2700 B.C.), and thereafter till Patanjali's period. The main sources, from which we get the



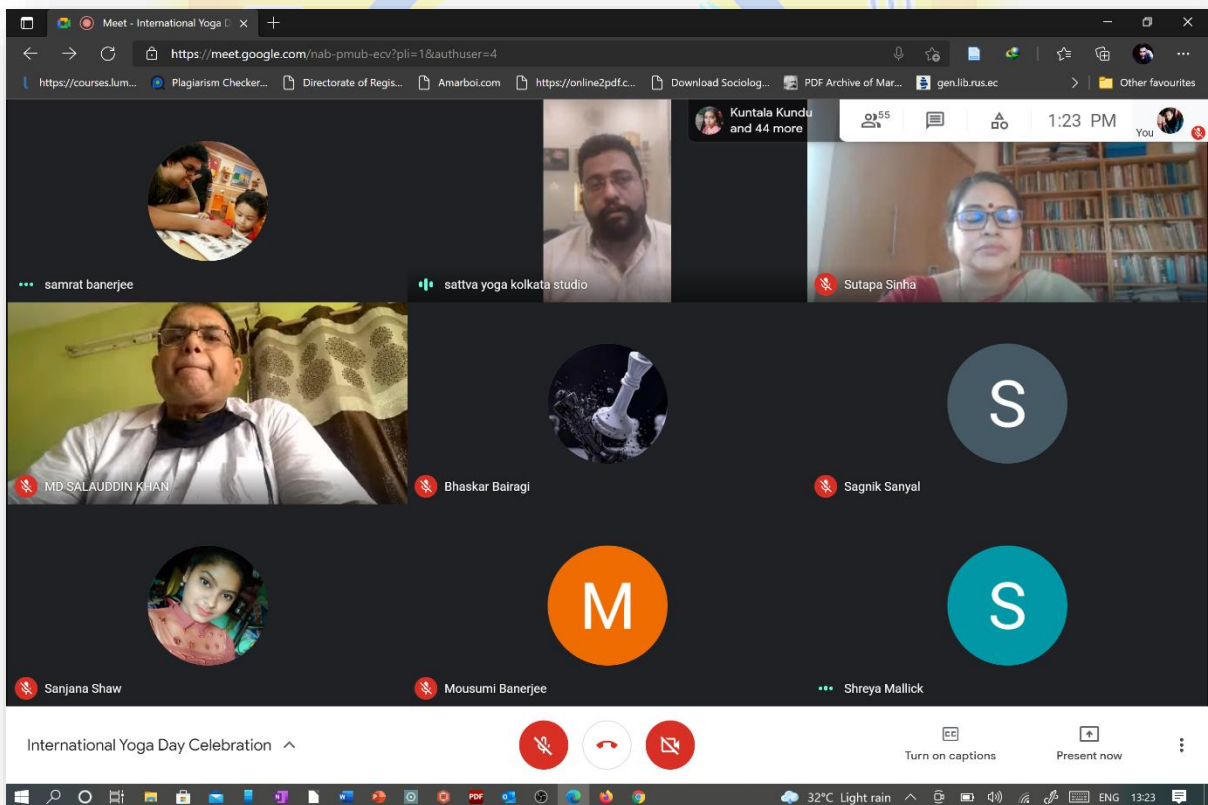
information about Yoga practices and the related literature during this period, are available in Vedas (4), Upanishads (108), Smritis, teachings of Buddhism, Jainism, Panini, Epics (2), Puranas (18) etc. Tentatively, the period between 500 BC - 800 A.D. is considered as the Classical period which is also considered as the most fertile and prominent period in the history and development of Yoga. During this period, commentaries of Vyasa on Yoga Sutras and Bhagawadgita etc. came into existence. This period can be mainly dedicated to two great religious teachers of India – Mahavir and Buddha. The concept of Five great vows – Pancha mahavrata- by Mahavir and Ashta Magga or eightfold path by Buddha - can be well considered as early nature of Yoga sadhana. We find its more explicit explanation in Bhagawadgita which has elaborately presented the concept of Gyan yoga, Bhakti yoga and Karma Yoga. These three types of yoga are still the highest example of human wisdom and even to day people find peace by following the methods as shown in Gita. Patanjali's yoga sutra besides containing various aspects of yoga, is mainly identified with eight fold path of Yoga. The very important commentary on Yoga sutra by Vyasa was also written. During this very period the aspect of mind was given importance and it was clearly brought out through Yoga sadhana, Mind and body both can be brought under control to experience equanimity. The period between 800 A.D. - 1700 A.D. has been recognized as the Post Classical period wherein the teachings of great Acharyatrayas-Adi Shankracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madhavacharya-were prominent during this period. The teachings of Suradasa, Tulasidasa, Purandardasa, Mirabai were the great contributors during this period. The Natha Yogis of Hathayoga Tradition like Matsyendaranatha, Gorkshanatha, Cauranginatha, Swatmaram Suri, Gheranda, Shrinivasa Bhatt are some of the great personalities who popularized the Hatha Yoga practices during this period (Basavaraddi, 2015).

The period between 1700 - 1900 A.D. is considered as Modern period in which the great Yogacharyas- Ramana Maharshi, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Paramhansa Yogananda, Vivekananda etc. have contributed for the development of Raja Yoga. This was the period when Vedanta, Bhakti yoga, Nathayoga or Hatha-yoga flourished. The Shadanga-yoga of Gorakshashatakam, Chaturanga-yoga of Hathayogapradipika, Saptanga-yoga of Gheranda Samhita, were the main tenents of Hatha-yoga. Now in the contemporary times, everybody has conviction about yoga practices towards the preservation, maintenance and promotion of



health. Yoga has spread all over the world by the teachings of great personalities like Swami Shivananda, Shri T.Krishnamacharya, Swami Kuvalayananda, Shri Yogendara, Swami Rama, Sri Aurobindo, Maharshi Mahesh Yogi, Acharya Rajanish, Pattabhijois, BKS. Iyengar, Swami Satyananda Sarasvati and the like (Basavaraddi, 2015).

Our college **KABI SUKANTA MAHAVIDYALAYA** has two Units of National Service Schemes (NSS). This year due to CORONA pandemic our college performing **INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY, 21st June 2021** through **GOOGLE MEET** platform. Inviting guest of the programme was Sri. Suvaditya Gupta (Founder of Sattva Yoga Centre) and Prof. Sutapa Singh (Former HOD of Islamic History, CU).



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Head of the Institute Dr. Md. Salauddin Khan (On the left side) (Source: Own)

We need to follow some guidelines before yoga practice



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General Guidelines for Yoga Practice



A Yoga practitioner should follow the guiding principles given below while performing Yogic practices:

- Cleanliness - an important prerequisite for Yogic practice. It includes cleanliness of surroundings, body and mind.
- Yogic practice should be performed in a calm and quiet atmosphere with a relaxed body and mind.
- Yogic practice should be done on an empty stomach or light stomach. Consume small amount of honey in lukewarm water if you feel weak.
- Bladder and bowels should be empty before starting Yogic practices.
- A mattress, Yoga mat, durrie or folded blanket should be used for the practice
- Light and comfortable cotton clothes are preferred to facilitate easy movement of the body.
- Yoga should not be performed in state of exhaustion, illness, in a hurry or in acute stress conditions.
- In case of chronic disease/ pain/ cardiac problems, a physician or a Yoga therapist should be consulted prior to performing Yogic practices.
- Yoga experts should be consulted before doing Yogic practices during pregnancy and menstruation

Source: (India, 2020)

During the Practice

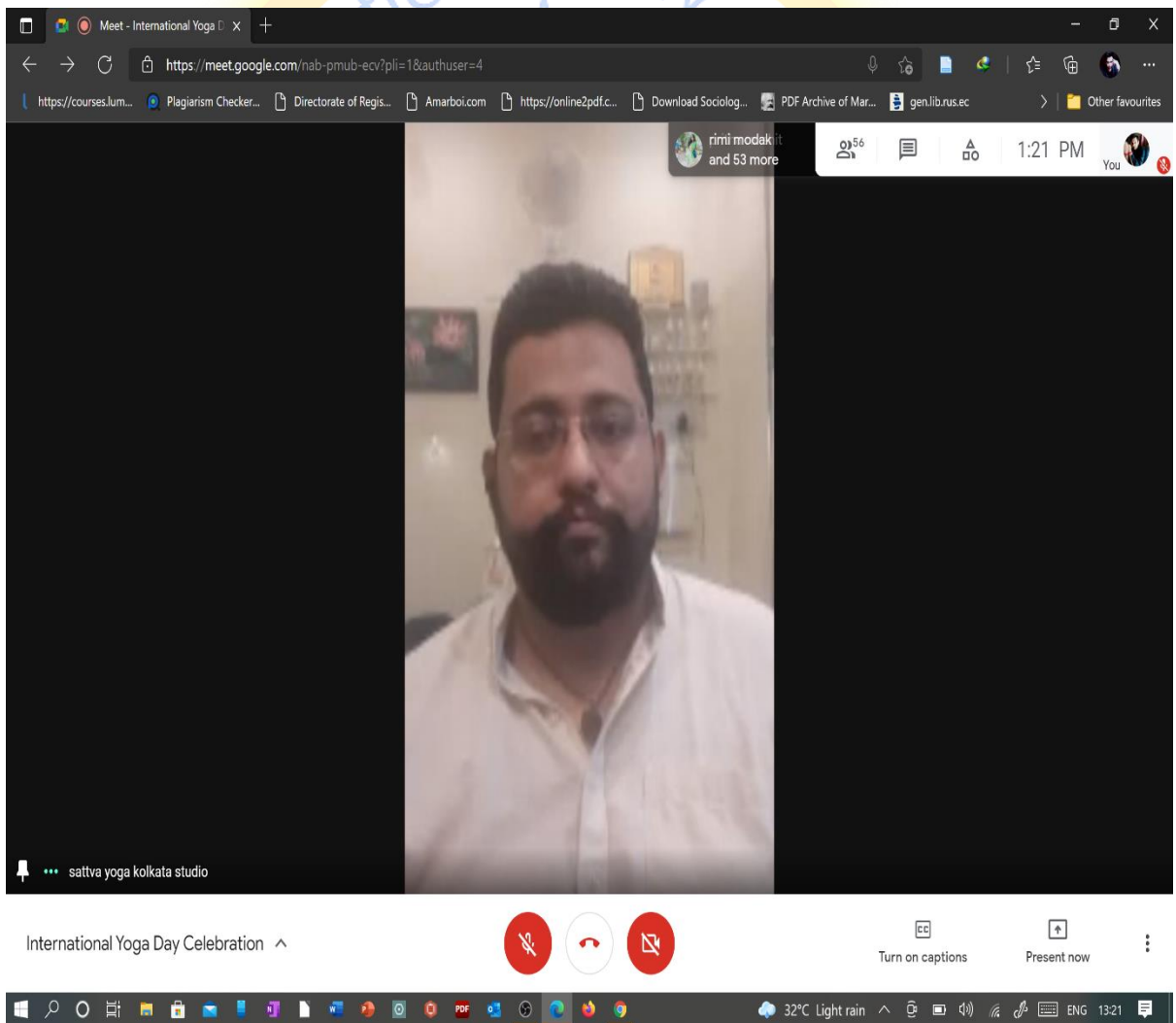
During the practice we need to follow some essential measurements;

- ❖ Practice sessions should start with a prayer or invocation as it creates a conducive environment to relax the mind.
- ❖ Yogic practices shall be performed slowly, in a relaxed manner, with awareness of the body and breath.
- ❖ Do not hold the breath unless it is specially mentioned to do so during the practice.
- ❖ Breathing should be always through the nostrils unless instructed otherwise.
- ❖ Do not hold body tightly, or jerk the body at any point of time.
- ❖ Perform the practices according to your own capacity.
- ❖ It takes some time to get good results, so persistent and regular practice is very essential.



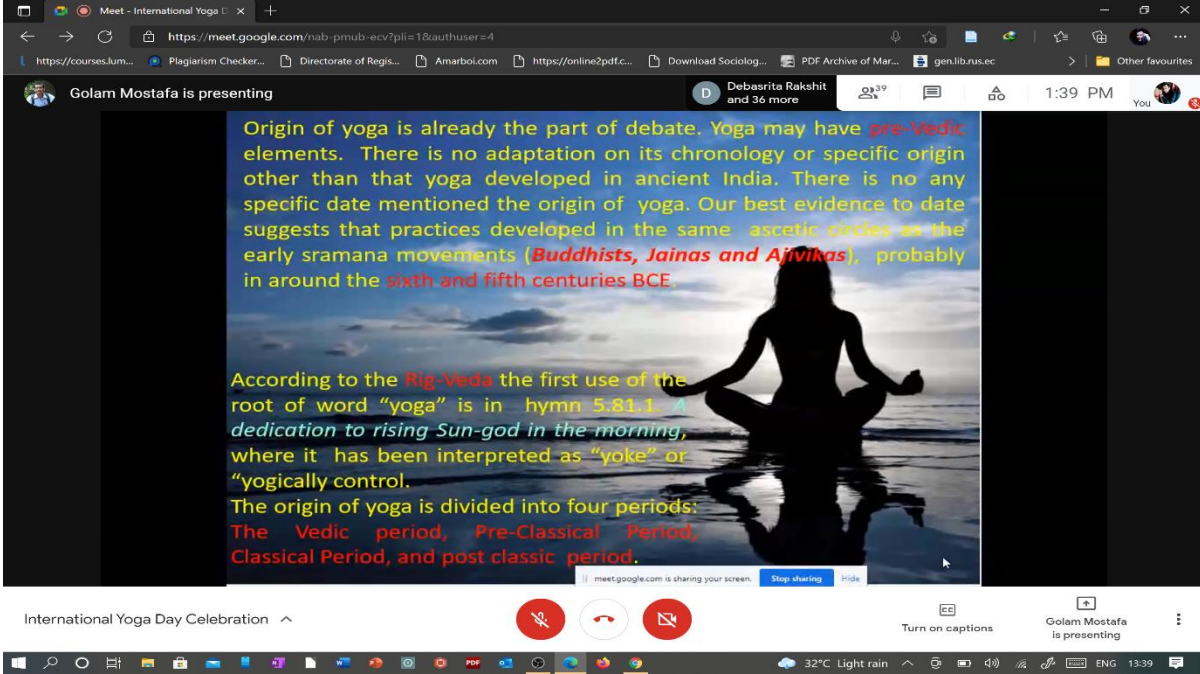
- ❖ There are contra-indications/ limitations for each Yoga practice and such contra-indications should always be kept in mind.
- ❖ Yoga session should end with meditation/ deep silence / Śhānti paṭha (India, 2020).

Essential Photographs of the Webinar

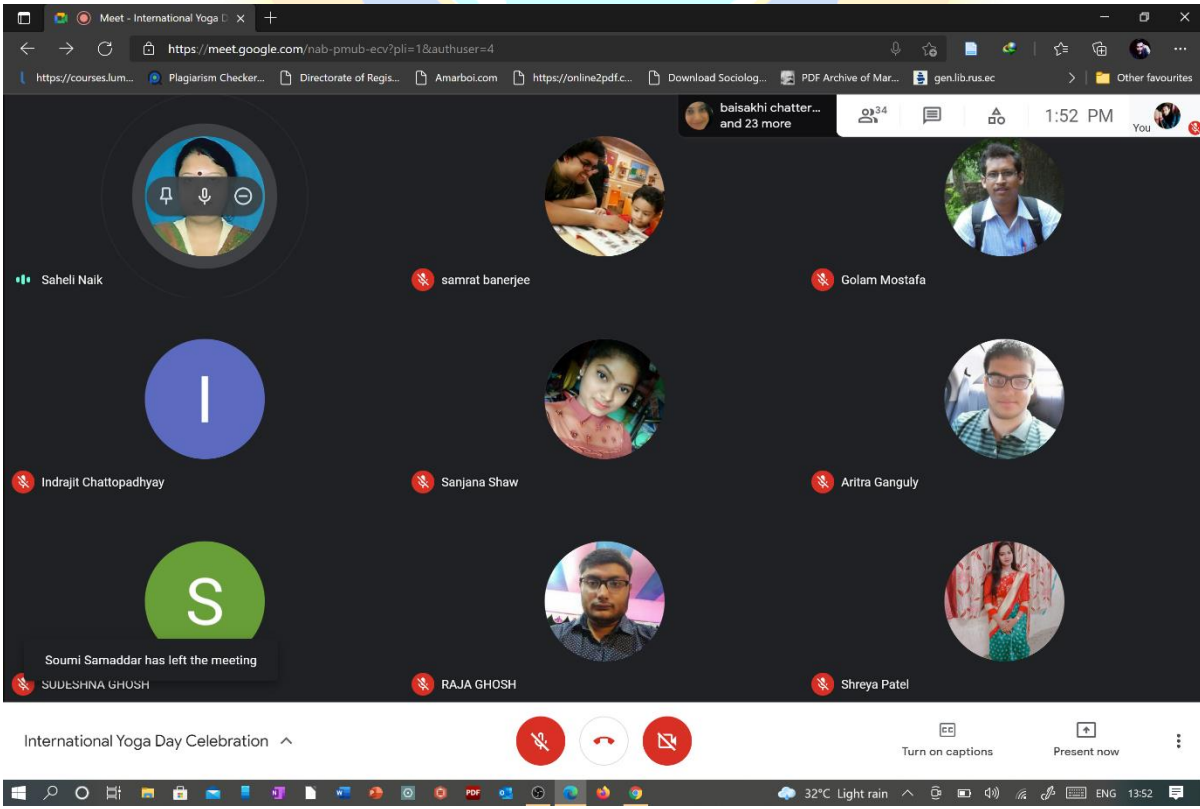


Invited guest Sri Suvaditya Gupta (Founder of Sattva Yoga Centre) (Source: Own)

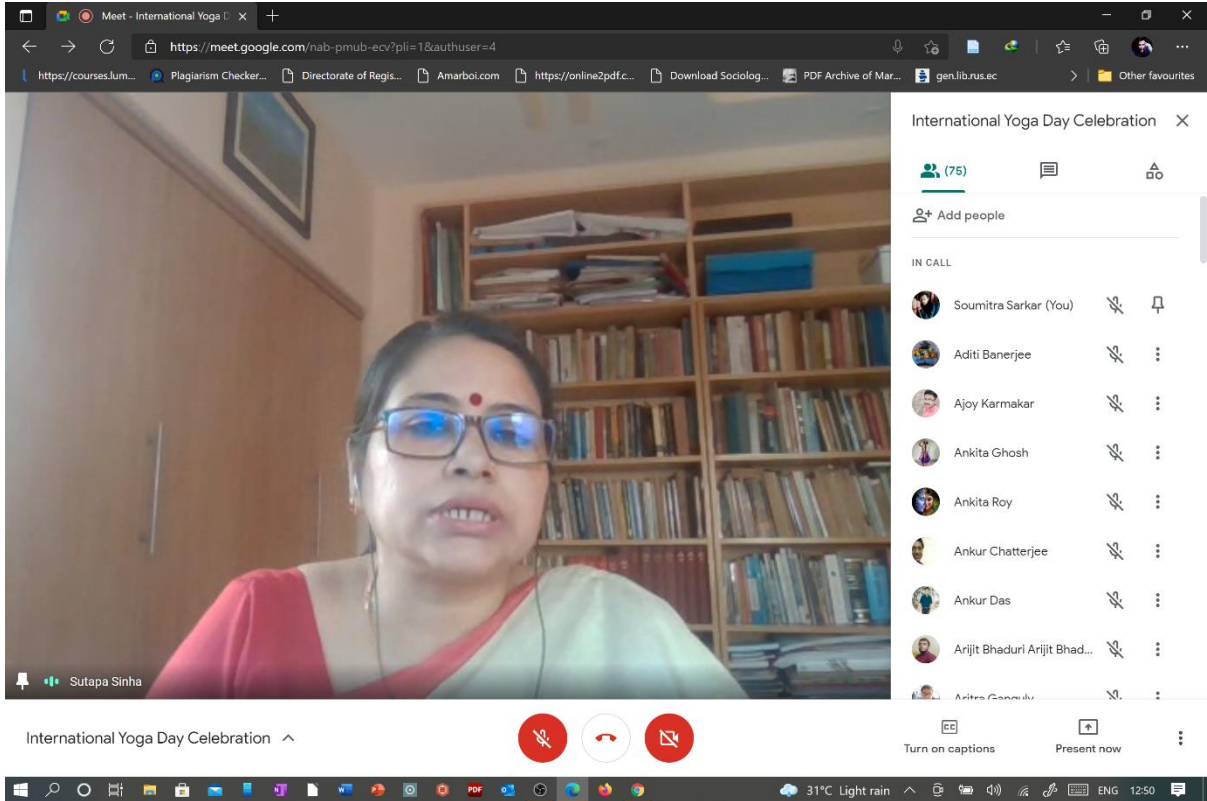
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PPT Presentation by Dr. Golam Mostafa (Assistant Professor) (Source: Own)



Our college students and teachers (Source: Own)



Invited Guest Prof. Sutapa Sinha (Former HOD, Islamic History, CU) (Source: Own)

How yoga can help?

Yoga is essentially a path to liberation from all bondage. However, medical research in recent years has uncovered many physical and mental benefits that Yoga offers, corroborating the experiences of millions of practitioners. A small sampling of research shows that:

- Yoga is beneficial for physical fitness, musculoskeletal functioning and cardiovascular health.
- It is beneficial in the management of diabetes, respiratory disorders, hypertension, hypotension and many lifestyle related disorders.
- Yoga helps to reduce depression, fatigue, anxiety disorders and stress.
- Yoga regulates menopausal symptoms.
- In essence, Yoga is a process of creating a body and mind that are stepping-stones, not hurdles, to an exuberant and fulfilling life (India, 2020).



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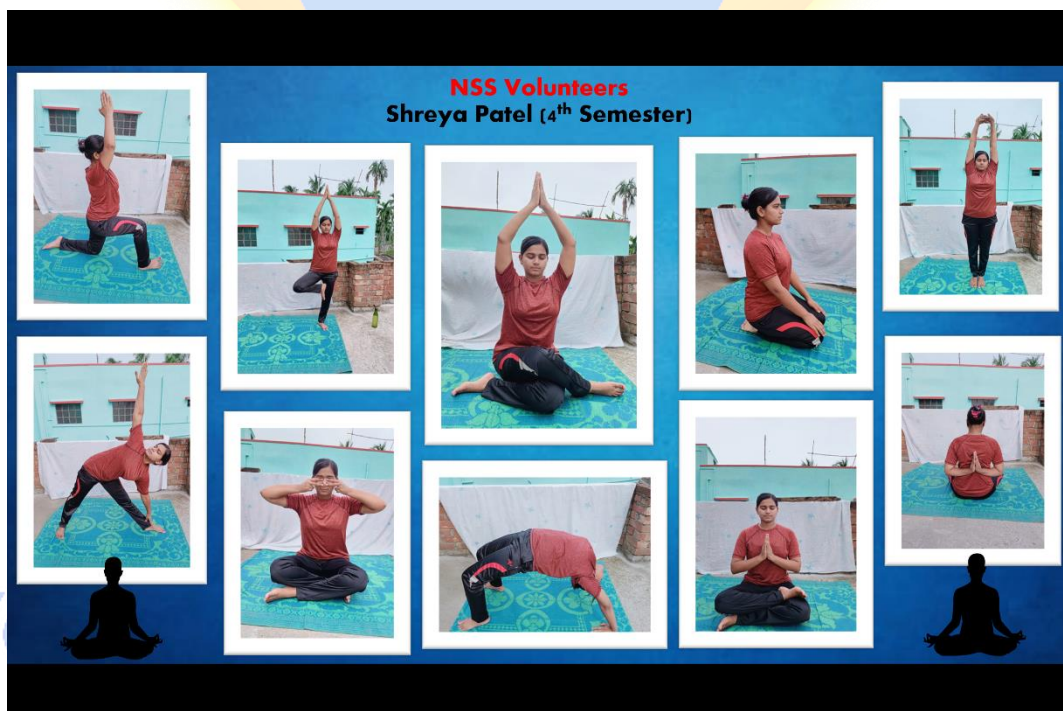
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Presentation of NSS Volunteers



NSS Volunteers Sanjana Shaw (Source: Own)



NSS Volunteers Shreya Patel (Source: Own)



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NSS Volunteers Aritra Ganguly (Source: Own)



NSS Volunteers Ankita Ghosh (Source: Own)

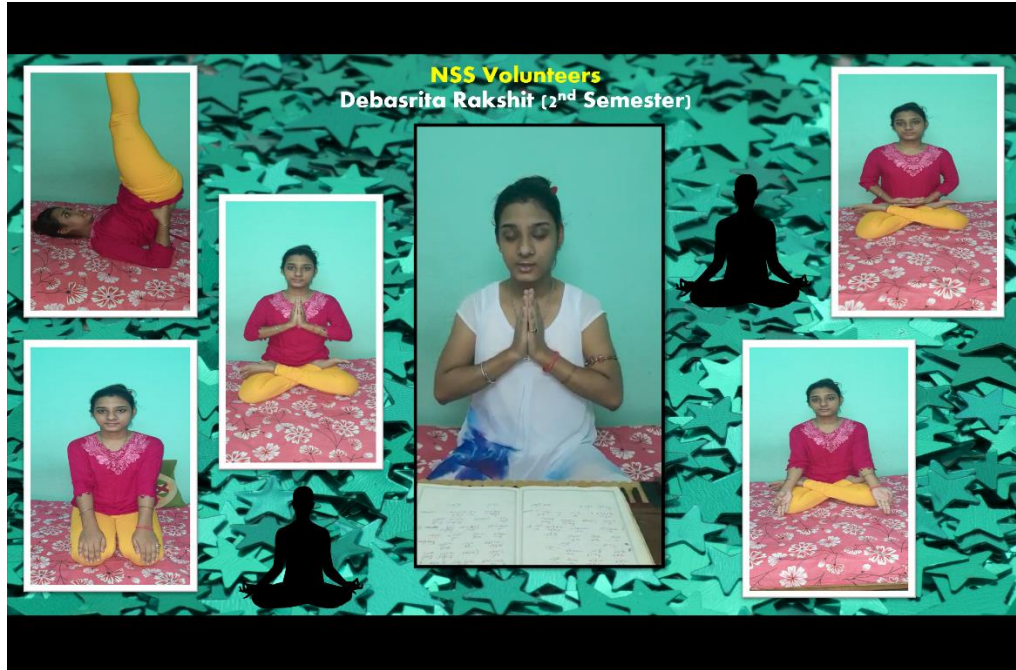


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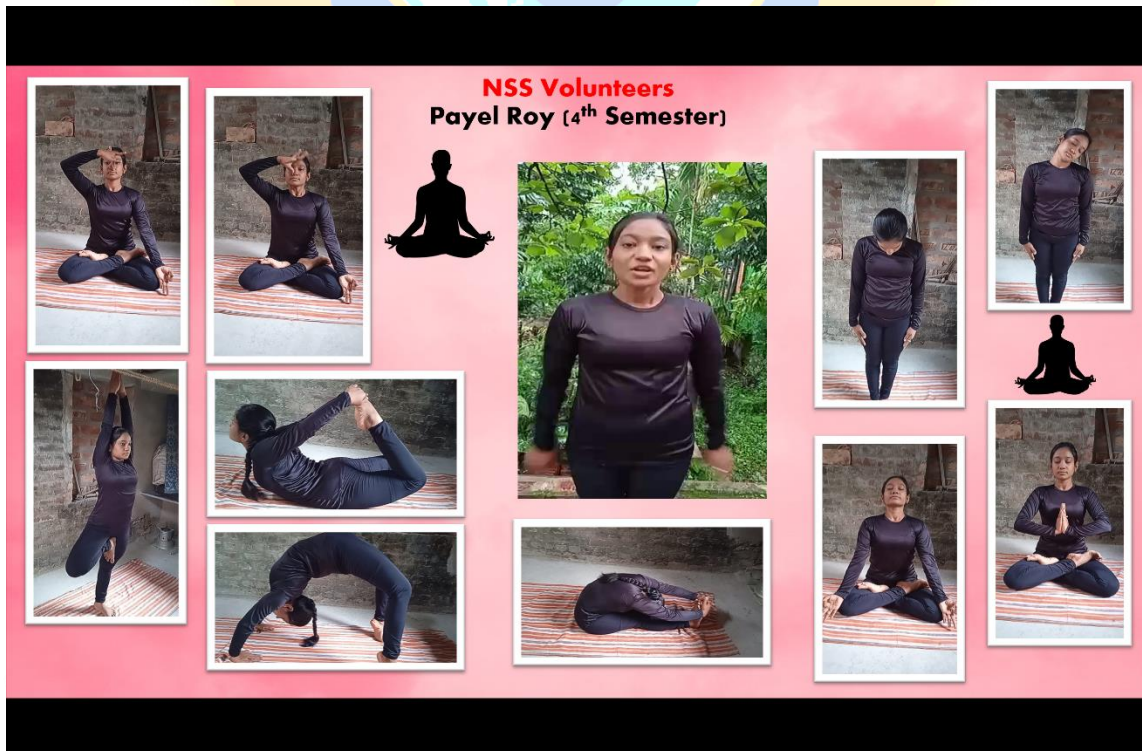
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NSS Volunteers Debasrita Rakshit (Source: Own)



NSS Volunteers Payel Roy (Source: Own)



NSS Volunteers Shreya Dasgupta (Source: Own)

After Practice

- Bath may be taken only after 20 - 30 minutes of practice
- Food may be consumed only after 20 - 30 minutes of practice

Food for Thought

A few dietary guidelines can ensure that the body and mind are flexible and well-prepared for practice. A vegetarian diet is usually recommended, and for a person over 30 years, two meals a day should suffice, except in cases of illness or very high physical activity or labour (India, 2020).

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THANK YOU