

A BRIEF GEOGRAPHICAL HISTORY OF YOGA IN MODERN INDIA

Yogacharya

Dr. ANANDA BALAYOGI BHAVANANI,

M.B.B.S., A.D.Y., D.S.M., D.P.C., PGDFH, FIAY

Chairman:

International Centre For Yoga Education and Research (ICYER)

16-A, Mettu St, Chinnamudaliarchavady, Kottakuppam – 605 104.

E Mail: ananda @ icyer.com Website: www.icyer.com

and

YOGANJALI NATYALAYAM

25, 2nd Cross, Iyyanar Nagar, Pondicherry – 605 013. Ph: 2241561

Email: yognat@gmail.com, Webatie: www.rishiculture.org

In the last century, Yoga has developed in various directions and dimensions under the guidance of many eminent masters. These masters have codified their own **Bani** (styles) of Yoga that are often at variance with one another but all of them still maintain the traditional lineage to Yoga Vidya or the Science of Yoga. The term ‘unity in diversity’ is apt for these developments ad though on the surface the different traditions or Banis may appear to be even contradictory, they all ultimately lead to the same goal of spiritual union though in diverse paths. Major developments in recent times have been the extensive research done in the field of Yoga as well as the transformation of Yoga education from the Gurukula and Ashram settings to the college and university oriented Yoga. This essay is a humble attempt to summarize various developments of the last century with reference to the Indian geographical context.

SOUTHERN INDIA

The Southern Peninsula of India has been the abode of a great many Yoga masters who have made this region their home and sanctified the already holy region. South India escaped the mutilation that befell North India as it was more inaccessible to invaders and the many temples and ancient architectural marvels that are still standing here are a living proof to this truth. It is also seen in the living Vedic culture that still exists south of the Vindayas. Yogacharya Krishnamacharya (1888-1989) often called the Grand father of modern Yoga was a great master of this science who belonged to Mysore in Karnataka. Sri Krishnamacharya traced his lineage to the great Rishi Natamuni and imbibed the art and science of Yoga from Yogi Ram Mohana Brahmachari at Manasarovar that is at the foot of Mount Kailash. He used to demonstrate the stoppage of his heart for a reported more than two minutes on many occasions. A traditionalist to the core, felt that Yoga must be adapted to the individual. The three main disciples of this master (Sri Pattabhi Jois, Sri TKV Deshikachar and Sri BKS Iyengar) have interpreted his teachings in different ways. His son and disciple Sri TKV Desikachar has founded the **Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram** in Chennai and developed a system that adapts Yoga to the individual (the Viniyoga of Yoga) that is often known as the **Viniyoga** tradition in western circles. Emphasis on Sanskrit chanting with the Yoga is a specialty of this centre and the Yoga classes are tailored to the needs of each individual. Sri Desikachar has

attracted a large following in recent times and his entire family is involved in the Mandiram activities. Sri Pattabhi Jois of Mysore another of the great disciples of Krishnamacharya has codified the system of **Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga** based on the **Yoga Korunta**. This is claimed to be an ancient text that few have seen in which the system is delineated. **Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga** has become a craze in the west with its vigorous nature ideal for those who 'want to achieve something!' His grandson is continuing his work in taking this system of vigorous Hatha Yoga to the west. Padmabhushan BKS Iyengar has settled in Pune and his influence in western India is described later. It is interesting that these three disciples of the same lineage (Krishnamacharya) have codified quite different systems of Yoga though their Guru Parampara was the same.

One of the most famous Gurus of modern times has been Sri Satya Sai Baba of Puttaparthi in Andhra Pradesh. His Prashanthi Nilayam Ashram at Puttaparthi as well the Ashram at Whitfield in Bangalore are his main centres while he has thousands of centres all over the world. Though not a Yoga Guru in the true sense he has been a master of Siddhis or psychic accomplishments. Another recent Mega Guru, Sri Ravi Shankar at Bangalore was a disciple of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and with his Sudharshan Kriya (a specialized breathing technique) and his new age ideology has captivated the hip population of India to a great extent. His Art of Living has captured the imagination of the high society of India including the Liquor Baron Vijay Malaya and many others. His '**Art of Living**' courses are being run all over the country and the world by his disciples and have become the Mantra for the upper classes and professionals. His movement has been likened to a second coming of the TM movement.

In Kerala the Bhakti Yoga movement has flourished in Anandashram at Kanhangad. Founded in 1928 by Swami (Papa) Ramdas, this Ashram continues to serve aspirants on the path of self-realization. Swami Ramdas and Mother Krishnabhai both attained Samadhi through Bhakti for Lord Rama and Swami Satchidananda who has been a devotee of Ramadas since 1947 now runs this Ashram. Swami Atmananda (1889-1971) was a pioneer in introducing the Yogic and Vedantic concepts to the Malayalam population. He founded the Jnana Ashram at Sri Vyasa Giri and was a great source of inspiration to many spiritual seekers. Swami Vishnudevananda, a disciple of Swami Shivananda of Rishikesh, founded the **Shivananda Ashram** at Nayar Dam in Kerala and this centre continues to impart Yoga training in the Shivananda tradition to both Indians as well as westerners.

Pondicherry has been a blessed city and the abode of Sage Agasthiya. **Sri Aurobindo Ghose** in the beginning of the 20th century and Dr. Swami Gitananda in the later have cultivated it into a "City of Yoga". Sri Aurobindo settled in Pondicherry in order to escape from the British during the freedom struggle and along with the **Mother** (Mira Alfassa) founded the Aurobindo Ashram that is world famous. His **Integral Yoga** and his ideas of the superhuman and super mental brought a great number of devotees from all over the world to Pondicherry. They settled down in the Ashram as well as the international township of Auroville to practice the teachings of Aurobindo and the mother. Sri MP Pundit was a close disciple of Aurobindo and the Mother and continued their work in a great manner. After his Maha Samadhi, Sri Shraddalu Ranade continues to inspire many on the path of Integral Yoga. **Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri** founded the **Ananda Ashram** in 1968 and tens of thousands have received training in the Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga (Gitananda Yoga) system though the Ashram and its branches all over the world. Swamiji was firm in his insistence that all his students have an understanding of Indian Culture from which Yoga sprouted. Known as the Lion of Pondicherry, Swamiji founded the International Centre for Yoga Education and Research (ICYER) as well as Yoganjali Natyalayam and these world-famous institutions are involved in the propagation of Yoga amongst youth of Pondicherry and the world. His students are running more than 130 centres all over the world affiliated to ICYER. His Wife-Disciple Yogacharini

Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani is a Governing Body Member of the prestigious CCRYN and is on various national committees that deal with yoga and education. Along with their son-disciple Yogacharya Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani she is continuing the work of the Yogamaharishi. Swami Gitananda's idea of Yoga Sports has captured the imagination of both the national and international youth and regular Yogasana competitions (Yoga Sports) are conducted under the banner of the national and international Yoga federations all over the world. Swamiji and now Dr Ananda have been involved in the Yoga Research at the central government hospital JIPMER that has contributed many research works in Yoga including those by Dr Gopal and Dr Madanmohan.

The Advanced Centre for Yoga Therapy Education and Research (ACYTER), a collaborative venture between JIPMER, Puducherry and Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), New Delhi was established by an MOU between JIPMER and MDNIY in June 2008 and is focusing primarily on the role of Yoga in the prevention and management of cardiovascular disorders and diabetes mellitus. More than 25,000 patients have benefited from Yoga therapy consultation and attended therapy individual and group sessions between 2009-12. With the active collaboration of MDNIY, New Delhi many research projects are being conducted at JIPMER and numerous papers have been published. (<http://jipmer.edu/ACYTER/main.html>)

The Chennai (Madras) Yoga scene has had many eminent personalities such as Sri Yogeshwar (TS Shankar) a retired journalist who wrote many books on Yoga. He was involved in teaching Yoga at many charitable institutions and hospitals and his classic Textbook of Yoga is still used by many colleges and universities in India. Sri Asana Andiappan, a student of Bangalore Sundaram and Swami Gitananda has also created a place for himself in the history of Yoga in Tamil Nadu through his work in Tamil. Taking the teachings of Yoga to the masses of Tamil Nadu in their mother tongue as well as being involved in Yoga Sports movement he has influenced a large number of Tamils to take up a practice of Yoga. His wife and children are assisting him in his work. The Yogasana Alayam in Chennai has also been involved in propagation of Yoga amongst Chennai residents for nearly half a century. Founded by Sri GM Swami and now run by Sri Kalyana Sundaram this centre conducts regular classes for the residents of Chennai. Sri Kannaiah yogi was one of the extraordinary Acharyas in the field of Yoga, Vedanta and Tantra in Chennai and lived for more than a hundred years. Prof B Ramamurthy, the eminent neurosurgeon and Prof Saradha Subramanyam the eminent physiologist of VHS were instrumental in many doctors taking up the Yoga research in the south as these stalwarts not only were researchers of Yoga but also practiced what they preached. Another great scientist, Prof TM Srinivasan of IIT, Chennai was also involved in the Yoga research with them until he left for the USA.

Maharishi Arunachalam of the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi in Madurai was instrumental in Yoga becoming part of the Gandhian movement in south India. A true Gandhian Sri Arunachalam inspired many youth to teach Yoga as a social service. In Shantivanam at Kulittalai near Trichi, Rev Father Dom Bede Griffith founded the Satchidananda Ashram in a spirit of Hindu-Christian dialogue and was instrumental in many Indian Christians taking up Yoga. His attempt to unite Indian and western concepts were unique and path breaking and his Ashram is a tribute to his ideas. The Ramana Ashram in Thiruvannamalai founded after Saint Ramana Maharishi has been involved in spreading his teaching of "Who am I?". Though Yoga as a practice isn't actively taught there, the emphasis is on Bhakti and Dhyana.

Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (**sVYASA**) formerly known as VK Yogas is run by Dr HR Nagendra and his sister Dr R Nagarathna Located in the beautiful Prashanti Kutiram, Jigani near Bangalore. Their work in Yoga Research and Yoga Therapy has been of great value in developing the scientific outlook to Yoga in the last few decades. Every year a conference is held to propagate Yoga as well as the Himalaya Yoga Olympiad to foster the

idea of Yoga Sports. They have now become a deemed university under the name of Vivekananda Yoga Mahavidyapeetam (VYOMA) with Dr Pranava Paddy as the president. Prof NVC Swamy, and Sri T Mohan, the Secretary of sVYASA are key persons in the centre and have a long association with the Vivekananda Kendra Movement. Dr Shirley Telles is the assistant director of research at sVYASA and has to her credit numerous publications on the value of Yoga in various conditions. NIMHANS in Bangalore under Dr T Desiraju and Manipal University under Dr Krishna Bhat have done a great amount of Yoga Research. Sant Keshavdas with his Nada Yoga has also influenced many in Karnataka towards the spiritual and yogic life. A master of Harikatha he used to enthrall thousands with the magic of Indian Mythology and spirituality.

Andhra Pradesh has seen a great wave of Yoga enthusiasm in recent times and a great deal of credit goes to Yogi Sitaramaih (Yogi Ram) who has been a pioneer in this field. A retired police officer his dedication towards Yoga has inspired many to take up the practice of this great art. Yogi Balaih Kovuru is another who has played a great role in the Yoga Education of Andhra Pradesh. A student of Swami Gitananda he also publishes an English and Telegu magazine called 'Yoga Tara'. Sri Praveen Kapadia and his family as well as Sri Venkata Reddy have also influenced a great many in Andhra. The Yoga institute of Smt Rajalakshmi Devi Bahadur in Thirupathi has contributed immensely via their work in Yoga education and Research. She was a charismatic Yogini who served the cause of propagating Yoga both within and out of India before her untimely death. In Visagapattinam the Institute for Consciousness has done a great amount of research in Yoga while the Vemana Research Institute in Secundrabad has also been in the forefront of Yoga research in Andhra.

CENTRAL INDIA

Sagar University in Madhya Pradesh has been in the forefront of bringing traditional Yoga teachings into the academic setup. A great deal is owed to Dr Joshi who upon deputation by Swami Kuvalayananda went to the university and built up a formidable Yoga department. His work has been continued in later years by Dr Ganesh Shankar who is now the Director of the Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy, Ministry of Health and Family welfare. Dr Joshi continues to be a great source of inspiration and knowledge to many in the field of Yoga and serves on the Governing Council of the Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy (CCRYN). In Bhopal Prof SV Rao in the Government Medical College has been an inspirational figure for Yoga Research. A physiologist and Yogi, he has propagated a scientific view of Yoga on many platforms. Yogarathna KM Ganguly, a successful businessman turned Yogi has been an example of how Yoga Sadhana can be combined successfully with the material success. Even at a very senior age his performance of Yogasanas puts others younger to him by decades to shame.

WESTERN INDIA

The western part of India has seen the emergence of the Brahma Kumaris world spiritual university as a great institution propagating Raja Yoga Mediation. With their head quarters at Mt Abu they have spread all over India and the world. Founded in the 1930s by Brahma Babu (1880-1969) and run today by Dadi Prakash Mani, the Brahma Kumaris teach that we must turn inward to realise that we are the pure peaceful soul. Suraj Karan Jindel, of Jaipur has been acclaimed as the 'Nauli Man' for his flawless performances of the Nauli Kriya and other shat Karmas. A successful lawyer he has been instrumental in creating great interest in Yoga in Jaipur and Rajasthan. Dr. Virendra Singh has done a lot of research in Yoga and designed the Pink City Flow meter for Asthma patients.

The state of Maharashtra has been a great source of joy to Yoga with two illustrious disciples of Paramahans Madavdasji going on to create world famous Yoga institutes. Swami Kuvalayananda founded Kaivalyadhama at Lonavla, while Sri Yogendra founded the Yoga Institute at Santa Cruz in Mumbai (formerly Bombay). Swami Kuvalayananda (1883-1966) who was known as Jagannath Gangadharshastri Gune prior to Sanyasa rendered yeoman service to the cause of scientific Yoga. He founded Kaivalyadhama in 1924 and also started the famous journal 'Yoga Mimamsa'. Swami Kuvalayananda was also to a great extent responsible for Yoga becoming a college subject and for Yoga colleges and universities replacing traditional Ashramas. Many eminent personalities such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru used to take his advice regarding Yoga and Yoga therapy. Swami Digambarji succeeded him and now Swami Maheshanandaji is the director while Sri OP Tiwari is the secretary. Kaivalyadhama has over the past nine decades years done a great amount of literary and scientific research in the field of Yoga and also conducted numerous national and international Yoga conferences. Dr RS Bhogal is the principal of GS College of Yoga and Cultural Synthesis while Sri Subodh Tiwari is the administrator of Kaivalyadhama while the Yoga Seva of Dr BR Sharma in the Philosophico-literary research department is hailed worldwide. Eminent Yoga-Scientists such as MV Rajapurkar, MV Bhole, TK Bera, RK Bodhe, MM Gore, PV Karambelkar, ML Gharote and SL Vinekar have contributed to a greater understanding of Yoga through their scientific and literary research. Sri KS Joshi upon the deputation by Swami Kuvalayananda went to Sagar University and developed the Yoga department as one of the best in the country.

The Yoga Institute at Santa Cruz in Mumbai is a standing testimony to the insights of the great yogi Sri Yogendra who once famously remarked, " we must save Yoga from the world!" A student of Paramahans Madavdasji his Bani is very different from that of Swami Kuvalayananda and the emphasis is on "Householder Yoga." Yoga for the modern world is one of the teachings at this centre and many busy executives have benefited from the Yoga counseling offered here. Sri Jayadeva Yogendra and Smt Hansaji the son and daughter-in-law of Sri Yogendra continue his work under the able guidance of mother Smt. Sita Devi Yogendra. The young and enthusiastic Patanjali Yogendra was expected to follow in the footsteps of his illustrious parents and grandparents but died tragically in an accident on 24th July 2012.

Padmabhusan Sri BKS Iyengar who is now in his mid nineties went to Pune in 1937 upon the invitation of the Deccan Gymkhana Club. He settled down there and founded the Ramamani Memorial Yoga Institute. His system of Yoga now known as **Iyengar Yoga** has a world wide following. His book "a light on Yoga remains one of the best instruction manuals for Hatha Yoga and is the standard text book for Yogasana competitions in the Yoga Sports movement. His daughter (Geetha Iyengar) and son (Prashant Iyengar) are now in the forefront of teaching at the centre under his watchful guidance. Guruji as Sri BKS Iyengar is known is also the President of the Indian Yoga Association, a self regulating association of the important Yoga traditions of India (www.iya.org.in).

Yogashri Ma Yoga Shakti at Gondia in Maharashtra has been an example of the feminine Shakti in the field of Yoga. A disciple of Swami Satyananda, she has charted her own novel path that emphasizes the Bhakti Yoga path.

EASTERN INDIA

Swami Satyananda and his disciples have put Bihar on the Yoga map with the **Bihar School of Yoga** that has been a beacon light for the seeker of Yoga. With numerous branches all over the world and Australia in particular, Swami Satyananda built up the Bihar School of Yoga on the back of the Ganges at Munger in the 1960s. A favorite chela of Swami Sivananda, his Bani

encompasses the Yoga, Vedanta and Tantric traditions dealing with Yoga as a medium to gain and control the Psychic energies. The signature practice of the BSY is the Yoga Nidra that was developed by Satyananda. Swami Niranjanda continues the work of his Guru after Swami Satyananda attained Maha Samdhi. The Ashram in the mid period had become a deemed university under the name of **Bihar Yoga Bharathi** offering masters courses in the science of Yoga but then has changed back due to numerous developments.

The Ramakrishna mission has continued the Bhakti Yoga movement started by Swami Vivekananda and spread all over the country. The main Ashram (Belur Mutt) in Kolkata (Calcutta) sits opposite the river from the kali shrine (Dakshineswar) where Ramakrishna had his mystical experiences with kali. The Swamis of this order are known for their great wisdom and compassion and the mission has carried out a great number of social projects for the underprivileged population. Translation of Indian cultural literature is another of the yeoman works by this mission. Their work in the Northeast along with the Vivekananda Kendra has been vital in maintaining the integrity of India.

Yogodha Satsangha, the Indian wing of the Self Realization fellowship was founded by Swami Yogananda and has been responsible for a great many westerners taking up the practice of Yoga through the medium of **Kriya Yoga**. His famous book 'Autobiography of a Yogi' was a starting point in the spiritual journey of many westerners. His Guru Sri Yukteshwar and Sri Ram Gopal Mujumdar (Swami Kakananda) the Guru of Swami Gitananda were disciples of Sri Lahiri Mahasaya. Bikram Chowdhary the latest Yoga star in the USA is a descendent of Swami Yogananda.

Swami Ritajananda Saraswathi in Patna Yoga Vidyalaya has been a great inspiration to the people of Patna through his Yogashram and its publications. He has been a member of CCRYN and a great example of the Sivananda Yoga Tradition. Dr Niren Mujumdar has been the guiding light for the Yoga Sports movement in India as the General Secretary and now as the Secretary General of the **Indian Yoga Federation** at Calcutta. His attempts to unify participants of Yoga sports and bring forth a standard have been achieved to some extent. His work with Swami Gitananda as well as Shri Gurupriya in Italy has paved the way for the **International Yoga Federation** that conducts Yogasana Championships all over the world with great success.

NORTHEASTERN INDIA

Swami Sivananda of Guwahati and the Vivekananda Kendra have been instrumental along with the Ramakrishna Mission in keeping the Indian culture as well as Yoga alive in the North Eastern part of India that is sadly neglected even in the field of Yoga. Animesh Dhar has also been doing a good job with his time effective Yoga in this zone.

NORTHERN INDIA

Banaras Hindu University has been actively involved in Yoga Research, therapy as well as Yoga Education thorough the Yoga Sadhana Kendra in Malaviya Bhawan. Prof TR Anantharaman who was the director, Institute of Technology, BHU and the president of the **Indian Academy of Yoga** has contributed immensely to the union of ancient Yoga and Modern science through his literary works and lectures all over India and the world. He now runs the Ashram Atmadeep in Gurgaon in Haryana near Delhi. Prof Dr KN Udupa who was the professor of surgery and director of the Institute of Medical Sciences and Prof RH Singh the Professor of Kaya Chikitsa have contributed early research works on Yoga that have set a standard for other researchers in the field. Their work in establishing Yoga therapy protocols

for various medical disorders is to be highly appreciated. A physicist by training Sri UA Asrani was another scientist who had a great role in the Yoga work at BHU before he settled down in Lucknow.

Swami Sivananda Saraswati, a medical doctor from south India settled in Rishikesh after Sanyas and founded the **Sivananda Ashram** in 1932 and the **Divine Life Society** in 1936. He started the **Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy** in 1948 and trained many hundreds of students. Swami Shivananda tried to simplify the yogic and Vedantic concepts in practical tips for the modern man. His disciples have spread his unique teachings that are a combination of Yoga and Vedanta throughout the world. Swami Chinmayananda went on to found the Chinmaya Mission that has done great work in bring the Bhagavad Gita to the common man. Swami Vishnudevananda founded the Shivananda Ashram in Canada as well as at Nayar dam in Kerala. Swami Chidananda helped to establish the Divine life society as a world order through his dedicated and selfless service while Swami Satchidananda and Swami Jyothirmayananda took Shivananda's teachings to the west and established centers in Yogaville and Miami respectively. Swami Satyananda founded the Bihar School of Yoga in Munger and also the Sivananda mutt at Ganga Darshan. Swami Venkateshananda also took his teachings to various part of the world while Swami Krishnanada carried on the Guru's tradition at Rishikesh itself. These are only are a few of the very well known disciples who have carried forth the name and fame of their great Guru.

Swami Rama of the Himalayan International Institute of Yoga Science and Philosophy at Dehra Dun was another great master who went to the west and then finally came back to India. He displayed his yogic powers of stopping his heart and other feats such as changing the body temperature at two close areas of the hands etc to astonished scientists in the USA. Swami Veda Bharathi who is a great scholar and expert on meditation now runs his Ashram, in Uttaranchal. Many of his disciples and associates such as Dr Rudolph Ballentine, Dr Rajmani Tigunait and Swami Ajaya have done great work in the field of Yoga psychology.

The **Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy (CCRYN)** is the apex body for Yoga and Naturopathy in India and has in the past few decades done great work in propagation of Yoga as a therapy as well as in Yoga education and research. Initially Swami Direndra Brahmachari was the director and following him Dr Naresh Kumar Brahmachari developed the council into a formidable body.

Swami Direndra Brahmachari was one of the most famous yogis in India during the time of Indira Gandhi who was a student of this maverick yogi. He founded the **Vishwayatan Yogashram** in Delhi as well as his Ashram in Jammu and made headlines for even owning a gun factory. After his untimely demise in a helicopter crash, the Indian government took over his Ashram in Delhi and now it is functioning as the **Moraji Desai National Institute for Yoga**. The present director, **Dr IV Basavaraddi** has brought all major traditions of Yoga together through the Indian Yoga Association as well as the National Yoga Week held every year in February in the MDNIY premises.

Yoga research has been performed in an exemplary manner at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi. Prof BK Anand and Prof GS Chhinna were amongst the earliest scientists to explore the yogic phenomenon including the burial of yogis under ground for many hours and stoppage of heartbeats etc. Later many more researchers jumped on the bandwagon and a great amount of work still comes out of AIIMS under eminent scientists such as Prof Ramesh Bijlani.

Dr W Selvamurthy, the past director of DIPAS and one of India's most eminent scientists has been one of the top-notch researchers in the yogic phenomenon and his work with Yoga training of the Indian army personnel has been of great value in places such as the Siachin

Glacier. His work on stress and in the Pathophysiology of essential hypertension has been path breaking to say the least. He still remains one of the humblest men in person and a great example to young scientists.

Motilal Banarsidas, the indological publishers has recently completed hundred years of their wonderful service to the cause of Indian literature. Virtually any book on indological nature can be found under their banner and this service done by the Jain brothers is to be highly acclaimed.

NORTHWESTERN INDIA

Direndra Brahmachari through his Ashram in Jammu and Prof RC Gupta and Prof GD Sharma through the Himachal University have been instrumental in propagating Yoga in the Northwestern frontier. It is to the credit of Prof RC Gupta and Prof GD Sharma that HP University Yoga Department a well-known name all over the country.

The **Chinmaya Mission** with its Sidhbari Ashram has carried the message of **Swami Chinmayananda** (1926-1993) and his Gita Yagnas very efficiently. A great orator, Swami Chinmayananda was known for his skill in explaining the most difficult of concepts to the people through the simplest of words. He inspired a great many youth to take up the path of Karma Yoga and serve the motherland by spreading the message of the Gita to every nook and corner of India. The Vendantic message of Swami Chinmayananda is being continued by the Sanyasins of the Chinmaya order under the able guidance of the charismatic Swami Tejomayananda. The youth wing under Swami Mitrananda is achieving great progress in passing on the message at the youth and children level. The Swamis of this order are known for their great oratory skills and Chinmaya Ashrams are now found all over India. The Chinmaya residential schools are becoming a household name with high education standards as well as a deep emphasis on Indian culture.

Swami Shyam with his international meditation institute at Kullu has been teaching the Advaita Vedanta and has a large European and Canadian following.

Brahmarishi Vishwatma Bawra with his Ashram in Pinjore, Haryana was a magnificent personality. An eloquent speaker on Yoga and allied philosophies he was always in great demand at all conferences all over the country and the world. Swami Yogananda and other disciples at his Ashram are carrying on his work.

Ever since **Swami Jyothirmayananda**, a disciple of Swami Sivananda left India and steered in Miami in 1962, there was no one to spread his message in India. Yogirathna Dr Shashi Bhushan Mishra a medical doctor has filled this hiatus and dedicated his life to serving his Guru. He founded the Indian chapter of the International Yoga Society at Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh in 1978 and has been publishing all of his Gurus books as well as the monthly journal Yoganjali ever since. He and his wife are also running a clinic and orphanage in their Gurus name.

NOTE: The author wishes to state that this is only a humble attempt to describe the efforts by various individuals and institutions in the propagation and development of yoga in India in recent times. It is entirely possible that due to the author's inexperience, ignorance or oversight the author may have failed to mention some eminent personalities or institutions. A humble apology is tendered for such omissions and a request that these omissions be brought to his notice (ananda@icyer.com) so that they may be corrected.