

International Yoga Day

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Narendra Modi,
The Yogi Prime Minister of India

With an unprecedented 177 of the total 193 member states of the UN co-sponsoring a resolution on the International Yoga Day - it is indeed a feather in the cap of Indian Diplomacy, as seen by the politicians and diplomats. To the Real, True Practitioners of Yoga, it is an International Acknowledgement of Yoga by the World Community.

At the same time, one wonders if the following lines spoken by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi before the UN General Assembly (September 27, 2014) at the time of his call for the adoption of June 21st as the International Yoga Day has been properly understood:

"Yoga is an invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfilment; harmony between man and nature; a holistic approach to health and well-being. It is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with yourself, the world and the nature."

For many self-styled yoga-entrepreneurs and yoga-certification industry, the adoption of June 21 as International Yoga Day is nothing but an Additional Tool for Marketing Yoga as Commodity. For them, yoga is but a set of gym-like exercises, that's all. Indeed, there are entrepreneurs who scoff at the idea of yoga beyond what is convenient to sell.

Sometime Back, Al-Jazeera aired two shows on Yoga. I am very much surprised as well as disturbed by the comments made by the prominent that yoga is "this" and also "that". I believe they are referring to the present, unfortunate state of yoga, as it is turning into a commodity. There can be no two, no different definitions of medicine or economics or mathematics. The basic definition of each of those and other disciplines is one and the same. It is the same with yoga.

Yoga is a holistic philosophy, covering all aspects of life.

The purpose being equilibrium or samadhi, often translated as equanimity. It is a state of being, and a quality to life. And, if one goes a step further, then it is through yoga practice that one realises oneness, in sanskrit kaivalya, the literal translation of which would be "suchness".

This is the state of being, where one realises the oneness of all creation, all existence. Where one realises the interconnection and interdependency of all living beings, all living organism. Thus, one can no longer remain indifferent toward the suffering of not only fellow human beings, but fellow living beings.

A Yogi, that is a True Practitioner of Yoga cannot be violent.

A Yogi cannot be intolerant. He/she is not a power-monger. There are certain end-results expected of a Yogi from practicing Yoga as Life-Discipline.

Unfortunately, Many Who are Engaged in "Selling" Yoga are not familiar with those values. They are not even familiar with the Basic Texts such as the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (the prime most text), Bhagavad Gita, and Hatha Yoga Pradipika.

They are more concerned with certifications, alliances, and etcetera, with monetary gain as their main aim and sole purpose. To discard all these texts and given to egoistic notion that one can learn yoga without referring to them betrays one's ignorance and vanity.

Our heads may spin upon researching the background of most of the "certification agencies". One wonders if Krishna, Buddha or Patanjali, the great masters of yoga, had any certification? Forget the Oldies and the Divines, even Shivananda, or, more recent Iyengar had no certification.

Unfortunately however, even those associated with such sane names are now given to insanity, to this mad rush to make money by selling Yoga.

Yoga, once again, is a way of life.

One who does not live Yoga can never ever share the Yogi Way of Life.

Certificates issued by them are worthless. The real Yogis are Acharyas, they teach by their own life example. One, two, or five hundred hours of training cannot turn you into a Yogi. It is a lifetime sadhana or spiritual practice. Wake up and be a True Yogi!