



**BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN**  
**INSTITUTE OF INDIAN CULTURE**  
**37 NEW OXFORD STREET, LONDON W.C.1.**

Presents  
**B. K. S. IYENGAR**  
in a  
Lecture-Demonstration  
on  
**YOGA**

**FRIENDS' HOUSE, EUSTON ROAD. LONDON, N.W.1.**  
**SATURDAY 28th JULY 1973**  
**6.30p.m.**

The proceeds from the demonstration will be donated to  
**BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN**

SOUVENIR PROGRAMME 25p.

# BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN INSTITUTE OF INDIAN CULTURE

(Head Office, Bombay, India)

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# BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN INSTITUTE OF INDIAN CULTURE U.K. Centre

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan was founded in 1938 by the late Dr K.M. Munshi, a prominent lawyer and well-known author, held in high esteem by statesmen and men of letters throughout the world. Since its establishment Bhavan has become widely known for its contribution to the spiritual and cultural life of India.

## **AIMS**

The aims of Bhavan are:

- (1) to bridge the gap between the ancient and the modern scientific schools of thought.
- (2) to enrich the moral values of life, particularly by the exchange of cultural ideas, by the development of a philosophical outlook towards human relationships, and by promoting the study of "Dharma", which defines the responsibilities of the individual towards his family, his society, his nation, the world and finally the universe.
- (3) to serve people of all ages, from all walks of life and of all nationalities.
- (4) to run institutions of learning of many kinds (ranging from nurseries to post-graduate and advanced research centres) so as to preserve the best in Indian academic traditions.

## **BHAVAN IN EUROPE**

The purpose of establishing a branch in London is to further the ideals of Bhavan in Europe. It is intended that London shall be the European headquarters, and this U.K. Centre will conduct special classes and arrange lectures in oriental culture, education and philosophy. It will also co-ordinate and support the work of the local branches in other cities in Europe.

Bhavan's activities in London will include:

- (1) teaching and practising of Yoga and Pranayama.
- (2) classes in Indian dance and music, with particular emphasis on Bharata Natyam and Kathak, Kathakali and Manipuri.
- (3) teaching of Sanskrit, Hindi and other languages of India.
- (4) holding of seminars and discussions on cultural and philosophical subjects.
- (5) arranging of special programmes for children providing instruction in the religions of the world.
- (6) providing a section for women and their special interests ("Mahila Vibhag").
- (7) establishing an extensive library.

## Yehudi Menuhin on the art of B.K.S. Iyengar

"A painter needs his brushes and paints, a musician needs his instrument, but Mr Iyengar needs only his body for his art."

"He is as dedicated to his work as any artist, but his is an art which has been reduced to its simplest form because it requires no instrument at all except this finest and most complex instrument of all – the body. There is no formal choreography, no script, no rules laid down for form, but all the rules of the choreographer, of the artist and the writer are inherent in the body itself. To perfect this art, however, requires a lifetime of patient and persistent effort, always trying to perfect this instrument, the body."

"He is a very warm-hearted and friendly person, but when it comes to his art, he is exacting, tenacious, and as fanatical as any artist must be."

"Whoever has had the privilege of receiving Mr Iyengar's attention, or of witnessing the precision, refinement and beauty of his art, is introduced to that vision of perfection and innocence which is man as first created – unarmed, unashamed, son of God, lord of creation – in the Garden of Eden . . . . Yoga, as practised by Mr Iyengar, is the dedicated votive offering of a man who brings himself to the altar, alone and clean in body and mind, focussed in attention and will, offering in simplicity and innocence not a burnt sacrifice, but simply himself raised to his own highest potential." (from Menuhin's Foreword to "Light on Yoga")

## B.K.S. Iyengar.

"In Yoga the body disciplines the mind and the mind disciplines the body. The mind cannot think of the soul as long as it is connected to the body. The body must be trained to be the servant, not the master."

This is a quotation from B.K.S. Iyengar, world-renowned exponent of Yoga and author of "Light on Yoga" (Allen & Unwin), the only authoritative modern textbook on Yoga.

Iyengar is deemed by many as a finest exponent of Yoga. He was born in Bellur village, Mysore State, S. India, in 1918, the year of a world-wide influenza epidemic. As an infant his life was despaired of, and throughout his school years he suffered from ill-health. At the age of 16 he joined the household of his brother-in-law, Professor T. Krishnamacharya, who initiated him into the art of Yoga and soon his health began to improve. Young Iyengar progressed so rapidly in Yoga, that when Professor Krishnamacharya took his pupils on a demonstration tour in India, Iyengar was selected to stay in Dharwar and teach. There, about 36 years ago, his teaching career began.

In his long career he has taught many leading Indian public figures, and for a number of years was Yoga instructor at the National Defence Academy near Poona – the Indian equivalent of Sandhurst. Here he taught not only the cadets and army officers but also the Commandant of the Academy, Major-General Habibullah and his wife. While at the Academy he gave a demonstration before Krushchev and Bulganin who were so impressed that they invited him to Russia. However, this visit did not take place.

Iyengar began teaching in Europe through his friendship with Yehudi Menuhin, who has called him "my best violin teacher". Through Mr Menuhin he became the teacher of many of the world's leading musicians. *He is author*

> The late Queen Mother of Belgium who admired him so much that she made a bronze bust of him, said that "his teaching gives a wonderful force to the mind and body". He has had two audiences with Pope Paul VI and gave a demonstration in Castel Gandolfo before the Pope and his Cardinals, creating in them an interest to learn Yoga.

Although a supreme exponent of one of the world's most ancient arts, Iyengar is a man of this age. His teaching as well as his execution has the precision of a science, and is supported by a prodigious knowledge of the human body and mind. This scientific approach is Iyengar's unique contribution to the art, and is one of the reasons for his great prestige. He does not tolerate dilettantism and has no time for the humbug and obscurantism often associated with Yoga.

Iyengar is a pioneer in exploring the medical aspects of Yoga. In his book he has gone into detail on the therapeutic and preventative aspects of Yoga, based on years of experience in treating medical cases. Pre- and post-operative cases are often amongst his pupils, on the advice of their doctors. The Indian Medical Congress has expressed interest in his work, and he is held in high esteem by many leading medical specialists in India, including Dr Rustam Vakil of Rauwolfia fame.

Iyengar is, above all, a great teacher. His presence in classes is electrifying and he demands unwavering attention from his pupils. While correcting details of poses his eyes rake a class of 30 or more and instructions, interspersed with mordant witticisms, come in a ceaseless flow. His wit is sometimes used tellingly to correct a fault – "The mouth is for eating, the nose is for breathing. If you breathe through the mouth, I will feed you through your nose!" His pupils love him for his kindness and his sense of humour, and admire him for his wisdom. He is a storehouse of knowledge and he readily shares what he knows with his pupils. One of the rare qualities of his teaching is that he tries to awaken his pupils' awareness and understanding – not mere intellectual understanding, but actual inner awareness. Light is constantly shed on the subtle interplay between mind and body, both in the practice of Yoga and in the art of life.

Yoga has not always been easy for him. When he began he was unable even to touch his toes – an encouraging thought for beginners. Dedicated practice, up to 10 hours a day in the early years, has brought him to his present mastery. Even now he practices rigorously three to four hours a day. "The day I stop practising", he tells his pupils, "I have lost my purity of heart. You will leave me then, for I shall not be able to help you".

He is sometimes called a Raja Yogi, sometimes a Hatha Yogi; he himself makes no such distinctions. His practice and his teaching are based on the principles laid down by the great Indian sage Patanjali, sometimes called the "Father of Yoga". A devout man himself, he leads his pupils to a deeper religious awareness. Yoga

transcends all religions in that it knows no barriers. Thus, in Iyengar's classes are found people of all religious denominations – Hindus, Christians, Jews, Muslims and others. Even people that have embraced a religious life of a particular creed, such as Catholic priests and nuns, are his pupils. It is not generally realised that the word Yoga and the word religion have a similar meaning. Yoga comes from the Sanskrit root "yog" – to unite, link, yoke, in the same way as the word "religio" means to reunite, bind.

Iyengar has given demonstrations in many international centres such as Bombay, Delhi, Poona, Bangalore, London, New York, Washington, Ann Arbor, Paris, Brussels, Rome, Munich, Zurich, Berne, Geneva, Mauritius, Colombo, Nairobi and also in Swaziland. He has given performances on Indian television, B.B.C., and American television. Usually his performances are in aid of a charity and he has collected many thousands of pounds for famine relief, handicapped children, lepers and other good causes.

He has conducted classes in Switzerland, Italy, France, Germany, Holland, Ceylon, Mauritius, Kenya, South Africa, Argentine, United States, New Zealand and Australia as well as in England and India. There are Iyengar Yoga Institutes in Poona, Bombay, London, Brighton, Manchester, Paris, Venice, Munich and also in New Zealand and South Africa.

His work is seriously studied by Yoga students all over the world. Some have come into contact with his dynamic personality; others are attracted to his unique systematic approach by reading his book which has been translated into a number of languages. He is a great man, yet is surprisingly humble and patient. As a master of his subject and as an author, his contribution to Yoga and to its recognition as a serious subject is inestimable. As a teacher, he has a deep concern for and limitless patience with each of his pupils, whether they are receptive and intelligent, or whether they are dull and stupid; all are treated with equal consideration and have complete confidence in him because of his concern and his insight.

Iyengar considers that the art of Yoga is a boon to mankind not only because its practice leads to the acquisition of physical health and mental stability, but because it leads to spiritual enlightenment. He himself adheres rigorously to the yogic disciplines of Yamah-Niyamah and accepts in toto Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga. He believes that the moral and spiritual values of the Yoga philosophy are an essential to bring mankind to sanity. In his classes he is constantly exhorting his pupils to return to the centre, the Source, the Self, and many a pupil has become a believer in God and in Divine Providence as a result of coming in contact with this remarkable  
*man*