



# FRIDAY - YOGA

## EDITORIAL

The New Education Policy (NEP) introduced in India has intended to replace the antiquated education system that had lost its relevance. Still, it continued to be perpetuated due to a lack of vision by India's ruling class since independence. Though meant for India this policy has some ramification for other nations also.

Changes are many, but here is a glimpse; At the school level, it proposes that formal education will begin at the age of three. The School curriculum will also be reduced to core concepts, and vocational training from class six. One of the most significant drawbacks of the present system was the obsession with "rote learning" and "vomiting" in the exam to get 'good' marks but with the little endeavour to teach basic concepts.

Board exams in schools will be low stakes. As part of this intent is to have Report cards based on comprehensive skills and capabilities instead of marks. As is well known, "marks" grossly underestimate a student's capabilities to the extent of even masking abilities that need to be developed.

Another unique aspect of the NEP is that it intends to make education multidisciplinary. It intends introducing flexibility for students to choose amongst different disciplines rather than having a rigid system with poor

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### What's inside

Inexpensive steroids save critical COVID patients.

Yoga to beat COVID stress: Swami Chidekananda, Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata

Four US vaccines set to fail trial.

Immunity booster - Yoga way.



**DR. INDRANILL BASU RAY**  
Editor-in-chief

*Dr. Basu-Ray is a Professor of Public Health at the University of Memphis, Memphis Tennessee, USA. He is also the President of American Academy for Yoga and Meditation-An International Organization for Research in Yoga.*

**DR. RAVI KANT (Mentor) ♦ DR. BHANU DUGGAL (Editor)**



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manoeuvrability, forcing students to choose subjects wholly divorced from their interests. There has to be a complete blend of traditional knowledge with modern sciences like yoga with modern medicine to develop a holistic system. It is strange that while researchers have proved the role of yoga in the prevention and treatment of multiple diseases. Yet, most medical schools do not have any curriculum to introduce yoga to medical students.

With millions of people practicing yoga, it is of utmost importance to have a fixed curriculum introducing the subject to medical students worldwide. Given the salutary effects of yoga on cardiovascular disease and cancers; the two largest killer on earth, most physicians ought to have a basic knowledge on the role of yoga in these diseases.

## **Inexpensive Steroid for “critically ill” - WHO**

**U**se of ‘inexpensive’, readily available ‘steroid’ drugs to treat people hospitalized with Covid-19 reduced the risk of death by one-third, according to an analysis encompassing seven different clinical trials conducted by the World Health Organization and published Wednesday in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Corticosteroids are the first, to demonstrate improvement in odds of survival for critically ill patients with Covid-19.

Based on the newly published data, the WHO on Wednesday issued new treatment guidelines calling for corticosteroids to become the standard of care for patients with “severe and critical” Covid-19. Such patients should receive 7-10 days of treatment, a WHO panel said. The positive steroid findings — the result of a pooled look at data known as a meta-analysis — confirm a similar survival benefit reported in June from a single, large study. But WHO cautioned against use of the steroids in patients with non-severe illness because, indiscriminate use of any therapy for COVID-19 would potentially rapidly deplete global resources and deprive other deserving patients.





**Conversation  
with Swami  
Chidekananda of  
Advaita Ashrama,  
Kolkata on  
COVID-STRESS-  
YOGA for healthy  
life in these  
times of crisis...**

COVID has created a situation and people are under lot of stress and apprehension ..?

True. People are under much stress and apprehension. Sometimes the stress and apprehension comes from what the information which we receive from the media. We have to try act from sat-buddhi —which means that we will follow science and take all proper precautions including social distancing, wearing face mask, using hand sanitizer, etc—and at the same time we will not feel fear.

So, how will fear affect our immunity, please elaborate a bit?

When fear overcomes us, it increases the cortisol level in our body. Science says that when the cortisol level is increased, a person experiences a heightened sense of stress, which leads to higher blood pressure, heart rate, etc. This naturally results in reduced immunity, thus increasing our

susceptibility to diseases like covid-19. Swami Vivekananda similarly alludes this fact and says that a person first makes their mind weak—through fear, anger, etc—and this fear then becomes like a portal from which different bugs and viruses may enter into the human body. According to medical science fear increases our susceptibility to different types of diseases.

How can YOGA help us to overcome such situation? How can fear be handled?

Right, Yoga is very essential. Combining yogic exercises, like asana, pranayama etc, with healthy ayurvedic diet, will help us to be more calm and balanced. When the breathing becomes calm, balanced and rhythmic, then automatically the mind will also become calm, balanced, and rhythmic. With such a mind, we will be able to handle fear and act with proper discretion, rather than react with fear, anger, and emotion.



## Four US Vaccines to Fail!

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine released a draft report laid out a plan for distributing a coronavirus vaccine if one is approved for public use. Surprisingly, in that plan they also “assumes four of the trials will fail”.

“Four of the trials will fail, and all subjects in those trials are offered access to an approved vaccine,” the group wrote in the draft report. “Three of the trials will succeed, and, under a 1:1 ratio between members of treatment groups compared to the placebo group, 15,000 participants

from each of those trials who were assigned to the placebo condition are offered and approved vaccine.”

Why? According to a study published in the scientific journal *Biostatistics*, vaccines for infectious diseases have a 33.4% success rate of making it through clinical trials and to regulatory approval.

Even with this probability scenario U.S. health officials have said they are optimistic they will find at least one safe and effective vaccine by the end of the year and possibly more than one by early 2021.

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## Immunity to fight covid

COVID 19 pandemic has created a panic situational all over the globe. Till date, there is no effective treatment available; even the efforts in vaccine are also not that promising. Hence, preventive measure is the only way to tackle COVID 19. In addition to social distancing and self-hygiene, maintaining optimal immunity is vital in prevention of COVID 19.

Yoga is a non-pharmacological, cost-effective, and safe intervention that has got several health benefits. Yoga consisting of yoga postures, breathing techniques, meditation, and relaxation can give a protection from deadly COVID infection in absence of credible vaccine or medication.

Scientific studies on yoga have shown that it inhibits harmful cytokine storms while enhancing innate immunity. Cytokine storm in COVID 19 is the immune dysfunction that is the principal cause that leads to multi-organ failure and death. The cytokine

storm, also called the cytokine release syndrome, unleashed by the body's unregulated response to COVID-19 induces multi organ damage, resulting in high morbidity and mortality. Also, accumulated evidence suggests that Yoga has a positive impact on the immune system and the inflammatory pathways.

One of the dominant players in innate immunity is Immunoglobulin A, which lines the exposed tracts of body linings like those of the lungs and the gastrointestinal tract and protects from invasion by microorganisms.

A study reported a significant improvement in cortisol levels and immunoglobulin A levels of healthy women who received a 60-minute yoga session twice in a week for 20 weeks. Incidentally, COVID-19 virus enters the lung through these cells that express ACE2 receptors. Thus, Yoga helps fight COVID 19 infection by empowering the inner security of human body.





Webinar Topic	Date	Time	Speakers
Understanding the National Education Policy 2020	5 <sup>th</sup> Sept	7pm to 8.30 pm IST 8.30am-10.00am CST	Swami Amtmapriyananda, Dr. Anil Sahasrabudhe, Dr. Bhushan Patwardhan
Yoga for post COVID management	13 <sup>th</sup> Sept	6pm to 7pm IST 7.30am - 8.30am CST	Dr TR Raju, Dr Susheel Sharma, Dr Manjunath, Dr Singhvi
Integrated approach to Type 1 Diabetes	19 <sup>th</sup> Sept	8pm to 9.30pm IST 10am-11.30am CST	Swami Dayapidhananda, Dr S Srikanata, Dr Ravi Kant
COVID Therapeutics – Where we stand now	27 <sup>th</sup> Sept	8pm to 9.30pm IST 10am-11.30am CST	Dr Shantanu K Tripathi
Yoga in prevention and management of CVD	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	8pm to 9.30pm IST 10am-11.30am CST	Dr HR Nagendra, Dr Indranill Basu Ray, Dr Nirmal Gupta

*Review of Webinar on the 5th of September 2020*

## Understanding the National Education Policy 2020

American Association of Yoga and Meditation and Ganges Mississippi Dialogue organised a webinar on “Understanding the National Education Policy 2020.” The speakers were Swami Atmapriyananda, Pro Chancellor of Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Institute of Education and Research [deemed university], Dr Bhushan Patwardhan, Vice Chairman, University Grants Commission and Dr Anil Sahasrabudhe, Chairman, AICTE.

The discussion commenced on an auspicious note with a Vedic chant (Shanti Mantra) recited by Swami Atmapriyananda. Expressing his views, Swamiji mentioned that the education in India prior to arrival of British was very rich and students from different parts of the world used to come to India to study here. He said that the education policy of Macaulay introduced in 1835, was aimed at producing clerks for the British and crush the Indian Education system. After 185 years, again an Education Policy has been launched with the mix of Indian System and

Western outlook. He mentioned that the National Education Policy 2020 includes the vision of Swami Vivekananda, Swami Brahmananda, Swami Ramakrishnananda, Swami Saradananda, in particular and Rishi Aurobindo. He was confident that NEP 2020, after it is fully implemented, will improve the education system in India.

Simply putting it as “learn how to learn” mentioned in the policy, Dr Bhushan Patwardhan said that our present system encourages rote and the evaluation is on the capacity to reproduce what has been learnt. The approach of both the teacher and the student was to relay on the notes. This continued for years. However, this method will soon change, and there will be radical changes in the college education. Under graduation course will be of four years. If a student discontinues study after one, two or three years, they will get the credit in the form of certificate, diploma and degree. If they want to continue the study, they will join where they left. They will

not lose years. Answering another question, he said that dependence on private tuition will be lesser and lesser, with the passage of time.

Dr Anil Sahasrabudhe dealt with changes in technical education. The stress on theory will be less and more preference will be on the application of the theory, he said. The number of the classes on theory will be reduced as the study material will be available online. The colleges will have to upgrade their laboratories. The students will have the facility of attending practical classes online and for that there will be different websites. He is hopeful that the quality in technical education will vastly improve under the NEP 2020. Answering a question on applicability of Right to Education Act, he said that the Act will have to be more stringently applied as the GER [gross enrolment ration] in schools has been set at 100%.

The programme was efficiently moderated by Shri Nirmalya Bhattacharyya, Co-Chairman of American Association of Yoga and Meditation.