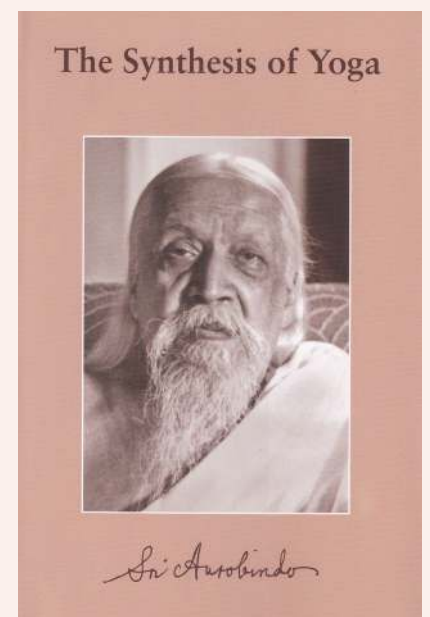
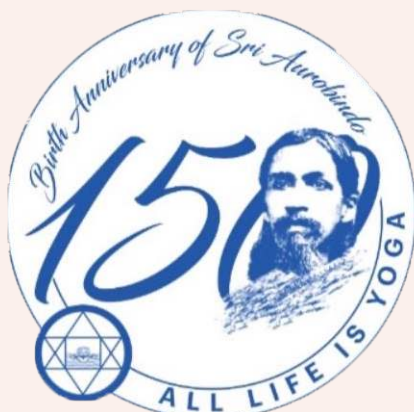




The Call Beyond





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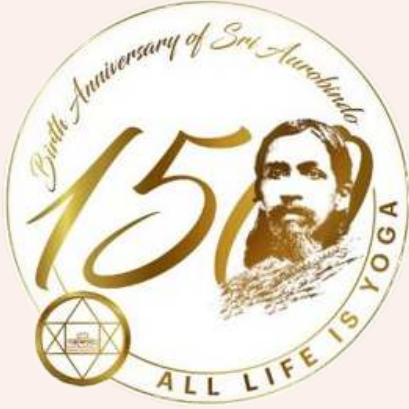
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Celebrating 150 Years of Sri Aurobindo

(1872-2022)



Who was Sri Aurobindo? **A freedom fighter**, who shook the British Empire within five years? **A poet**, who could give poetic expression to whispers from the heavens? **A writer**, who would have honoured the Nobel Prize for Literature, if it had been conferred on him? **A linguist**, who raised the level of the English

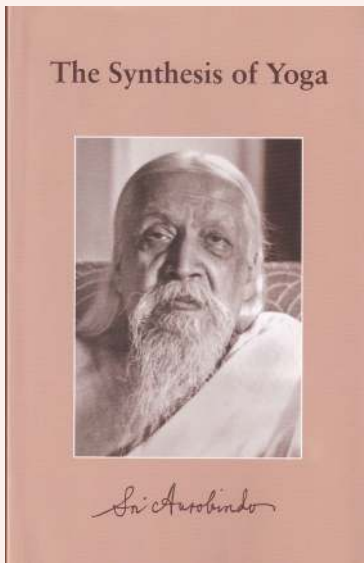
language to that of Sanskrit, and deciphered the symbolism of the Veda? **A yogi**, who gave the world Integral Yoga, a powerful synthesis that incorporated the major traditional systems of yoga, and went beyond all of them? **A rishi** (a seer) and **a muni** (a thinker) rolled in one? Or, **a spiritual master**, radical, rational and revolutionary, far ahead of his times, who is today the Guru to millions in the world?

Sri Aurobindo was all this, and more. Due to our limitations, *The Call Beyond*, however, will concentrate on Sri Aurobindo, the writer. In the category of spiritual literature rooted in the Indian tradition, the original of which was written in the English language, Sri Aurobindo's works belong to a class apart, both in quantity and quality. In his works, Sri Aurobindo has given nothing short of a prescription for sculpting humanity into a new shape that would be beyond recognition. Even through the works that have their origin in the *Arya*, which were written over a period of just six years (1914-1920), he has created enough homework for the world to stay busy with for several centuries.

The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo (CWSA) run into 36 volumes. The humble offering of *The Call Beyond*, however, would be limited to bringing you every month just the glimpses of one of the works of Sri Aurobindo.



The Synthesis of Yoga



Sri Aurobindo worked out about a hundred years ago a very powerful synthesis of the major traditional schools of yoga. The synthesis was necessitated by two factors, both of which are easy to understand even today. First, the different schools of yoga had specialized to such a degree that the outer form and techniques had come to subordinate the true spirit of yoga. Secondly, Sri Aurobindo saw the emergence of yoga from hermitages where it had so far been

confined to a select few into the wider arena of the life of the common man. As if in fulfillment of this foresight, in 2014 the United Nations declared June 21 as the International Day of Yoga exactly 100 years after Sri Aurobindo said it.

In his characteristic catholic vision even as a critic, Sri Aurobindo blamed nobody for the specialization that had resulted in dilution and diminution of the spirit underlying yoga. He pointed out that all the “greater forms of human activity” start as a “harmonised complexity and totality.” The totality naturally has many facets. Individuals differ, and therefore, some individuals may get fascinated by one facet, and others by another. Each individual contributes to the development of the facet that he has been drawn to. Different individuals concentrating on different facets leads to a variety of specialized schools or disciplines. The price paid for the high level of specialization is that the original grand idea with which the endeavour started is forgotten. The details of the outer form start subordinating the spirit underlying the original totality. This is the stage that calls for a synthesis of the diverse disciplines. The synthesis is more powerful than the original idea with which the endeavour started because the synthesis can benefit from the era of specialization. The benefit



of specialization is that the degree of development achieved in a narrow area would have been impossible without concentration of attention, effort and energy on that area. The synthesis now can make use of this enormous development while trying to reconcile the different schools of specialization and revive the harmony and spirit of the original idea.

The cycle of specialization and synthesis is exemplified by developments in medicine. Till about 50 years ago, a general practitioner often helped families with their health issues from womb to tomb. Then came the era of specialization, which went to such ridiculous extents that it began to be said in jest that the day is not far when we shall have a doctor who has specialized in diseases of only the right eye so that we will need another one for diseases of the left eye. Fortunately, before specialization reached such ridiculous levels, there was felt the need for a synthesis. The urge for synthesis is reflected in new disciplines such as Community Medicine, Family Medicine, Mind-Body Medicine and Holistic Medicine. These new syntheses are more powerful than the medical practice that preceded the era of specialization because the advances made during that era have also been incorporated in the new specialties that have emerged.

Something similar to what has happened to medicine in the recent past, happened in the field of yoga long ago. Developments in Hatha Yoga reached such levels that a person could spend, for years, all the time he had, exclusively on physical practices, and thereby develop the capacity of the body to such an extent that he could perform feats bordering on the miraculous. Similar developments in Raja Yoga made possible a phenomenal increase in mental capacities, such as the possibility of knowing what is going on in somebody else's mind, or knowing what is happening on the other side of the globe. Classics in Hatha Yoga and Raja Yoga create the impression that yoga is meant only for a select few who renounce the world so that they can pay exclusive attention



to physical or mental perfection. Although these classics did not forget the spiritual aims of yoga, in practice, the focus came to be on the techniques rather than the higher, wider and deeper goal of yoga, which went far beyond the mere development of impressive abilities of the body or the mind.

In the synthesis of yoga that Sri Aurobindo worked out, he took into account mainly three traditional schools of yoga: Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, and the Triple Path of the Gita. He made clear that a true synthesis is neither the successive practice of the different paths, nor a mere combination of the different schools of yoga achieved by placing them side by side. Successive practice would be beyond the capacity of an individual; and simultaneous half-hearted practice of different schools would not be a true synthesis. Simultaneous practice has been attempted, and much can be said in its favour, but that is not a synthesis. For example, if somebody practices asanas and pranayamas for an hour every day, and thus claims to be practicing Hatha Yoga; spends half an hour on meditation and that he considers to be his daily practice of Raja Yoga; spends an hour a day on voluntary social work and calls that his Karma Yoga; spends an hour a day on reading the scriptures or attending lectures on spirituality (or watching them on YouTube!) and that becomes his Jnana Yoga; and finally listens to devotional music for half an hour a day because he wants to practice also Bhakti Yoga – all that will still be an integrated practice; it would not amount to a synthesis. A true synthesis is ‘integral’, not an ‘integration’. A true synthesis, according to Sri Aurobindo, takes into account the central feature of all the schools incorporated in the synthesis, and to that are added the particular features of those schools to the extent considered appropriate for our purposes and to the extent that the outer form will not kill the unifying spirit underlying all the schools included in the synthesis. What we get through such a synthesis is a single harmonious entity, not a mere combination.



The Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo, to which the Mother gave a practical shape at Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, is a true synthesis. The comprehensive work of Sri Aurobindo, which may be considered the last word on the philosophy and practice of Integral Yoga, is *The Synthesis of Yoga*. Integral Yoga is not just a synthesis of some of the major traditional schools of yoga, it also goes beyond all of them. While the focus of all the traditional schools was on individual liberation and salvation, the collective benefits being only incidental by-products, the collective upliftment of the human race with the intention of creating a better world is unique to Integral Yoga. For the first time in the history of yoga, Sri Aurobindo made the upliftment of the consciousness of the human race the ultimate goal of yoga. The rise in the level of the average human consciousness would change typical human nature. The tipping point would come when the typical human consciousness is transformed from being ego-driven to one that is drive by love. That would be the end of the problems of human existence, which are rooted in the ego, and are responsible for inequalities of all types, which in turn lead to injustice, cruelty, misery and suffering. Sri Aurobindo's and The Mother's Integral Yoga is for a better world, and they have given the assurance that the world will change – how soon it will change depends on all of us.

The world is preparing
for a big change.

Will you help?



Selections from 'The Synthesis of Yoga'

The chief processes of Hathayoga are asanaa and pranaayaama. By its numerous asanas or fixed postures it first cures the body of that restlessness which is a sign of its inability to contain without working them off in action and movement the vital forces poured into it from the universal Life-Ocean, gives to it an extraordinary health, force and suppleness and seeks to liberate it from the habits by which it is subjected to ordinary physical Nature and kept within the narrow bounds of her normal operations. In the ancient tradition of Hathayoga it has always been supposed that this conquest could be pushed so far even as to conquer to a great extent the force of gravitation. By various subsidiary but elaborate processes the Hathayogin next contrives to keep the body free from all impurities and the nervous system unclogged for those exercises of respiration which are his most important instruments. These are called pranaayaama, the control of the breath or vital power; for breathing is the chief physical functioning of the vital forces. Pranayama, for the Hathayogin, serves a double purpose. First, it completes the perfection of the body. The vitality is liberated from many of the ordinary necessities of physical Nature; robust health, prolonged youth, often an extraordinary longevity are attained. On the other hand, Pranayama awakens the coiled-up serpent of the Pranic dynamism in the vital sheath and opens to the Yogin fields of consciousness, ranges of experience, abnormal faculties denied to the ordinary human life while it puissantly intensifies such normal powers and faculties as he already possesses. These advantages can be farther secured and emphasised by other subsidiary processes open to the Hathayogin.

The results of Hathayoga are thus striking to the eye and impose easily on the vulgar or physical mind. And yet at the end we may ask what we have gained at the end of all this stupendous labour. ... the weakness of Hathayoga is that its laborious and difficult processes make so great a demand on the time and energy and



impose so complete a severance from the ordinary life of men that the utilisation of its results for the life of the world becomes either impracticable or is extraordinarily restricted.

(Sri Aurobindo: 'The Synthesis of Yoga', CWSA Vols. 23 & 24, pp. 34-35)

Rajayoga takes a higher flight. It aims at the liberation and perfection not of the bodily, but of the mental being, the control of the emotional and sensational life, the mastery of the whole apparatus of thought and consciousness. It fixes its eyes on the *chitta*, that stuff of mental consciousness in which all these activities arise, and it seeks, even as Hathayoga with its physical material, first to purify and to tranquillise. The normal state of man is a condition of trouble and disorder, a kingdom either at war with itself or badly governed; for the lord, the Purusha, is subjected to his ministers, the faculties, subjected even to his subjects, the instruments of sensation, emotion, action, enjoyment. *Swarajya*, self-rule, must be substituted for this subjection. First, therefore, the powers of order must be helped to overcome the powers of disorder. The preliminary movement of Rajayoga is a careful self-discipline by which good habits of mind are substituted for the lawless movements that indulge the lower nervous being. By the practice of truth, by renunciation of all forms of egoistic seeking, by abstention from injury to others, by purity, by constant meditation and inclination to the divine Purusha who is the true lord of the mental kingdom, a pure, glad, clear state of mind and heart is established. This is the first step only. Afterwards, the ordinary activities of the mind and sense must be entirely quieted in order that the soul may be free to ascend to higher states of consciousness and acquire the foundation for a perfect freedom and self-mastery. But Rajayoga does not forget that the disabilities of the ordinary mind proceed largely from its subjection to the reactions of the nervous system and the body. It adopts therefore from the Hathayogic system its devices of *aasana* and *praanaayaama*, but reduces their multiple and elaborate forms in each case to one simplest and most directly effective process sufficient for its own



immediate object. Thus it gets rid of the Hathayogic complexity and cumbrousness while it utilises the swift and powerful efficacy of its methods for the control of the body and the vital functions and for the awakening of that internal dynamism, full of a latent supernormal faculty, typified in Yogic terminology by the kundalinī, the coiled and sleeping serpent of Energy within. This done, the system proceeds to the perfect quieting of the restless mind and its elevation to a higher plane through concentration of mental force by the successive stages which lead to the utmost inner concentration or ingathered state of the consciousness which is called Samadhi.

We perceive that as Hathayoga, dealing with the life and body, aims at the supernormal perfection of the physical life and its capacities and goes beyond it into the domain of the mental life, so Rajayoga, operating with the mind, aims at a supernormal perfection and enlargement of the capacities of the mental life and goes beyond it into the domain of the spiritual existence. But the weakness of the system lies in its excessive reliance on abnormal states of trance. This limitation leads first to a certain aloofness from the physical life which is our foundation and the sphere into which we have to bring our mental and spiritual gains. Especially is the spiritual life, in this system, too much associated with the state of Samadhi. Our object is to make the spiritual life and its experiences fully active and fully utilisable in the waking state and even in the normal use of the functions. But in Rajayoga it tends to withdraw into a subliminal plane at the back of our normal experiences instead of descending and possessing our whole existence.

(Sri Aurobindo: 'The Synthesis of Yoga', CWSA Vols. 23 & 24, pp. 35-37)

The triple Path of devotion, knowledge and works attempts the province which Rajayoga leaves unoccupied. It differs from Rajayoga in that it does not occupy itself with the elaborate training of the whole mental system as the condition of perfection, but seizes on certain central principles, the intellect, the heart, the will,



and seeks to convert their normal operations by turning them away from their ordinary and external preoccupations and activities and concentrating them on the Divine. It differs also in this, — and here from the point of view of an integral Yoga there seems to be a defect, — that it is indifferent to mental and bodily perfection and aims only at purity as a condition of the divine realisation. A second defect is that as actually practised it chooses one of the three parallel paths exclusively and almost in antagonism to the others instead of effecting a synthetic harmony of the intellect, the heart and the will in an integral divine realisation.

(Sri Aurobindo: 'The Synthesis of Yoga', CWSA Vols. 23 & 24, pp. 37-38)

The Path of Knowledge aims at the realisation of the unique and supreme Self. It proceeds by the method of intellectual reflection, *vichara*, to right discrimination, *viveka*. It observes and distinguishes the different elements of our apparent or phenomenal being and rejecting identification with each of them arrives at their exclusion and separation in one common term as constituents of Prakriti, of phenomenal Nature, creations of Maya, the phenomenal consciousness. So it is able to arrive at its right identification with the pure and unique Self which is not mutable or perishable, not determinable by any phenomenon or combination of phenomena. From this point the path, as ordinarily followed, leads to the rejection of the phenomenal worlds from the consciousness as an illusion and the final immergence without return of the individual soul in the Supreme.

But this exclusive consummation is not the sole or inevitable result of the Path of Knowledge. For, followed more largely and with a less individual aim, the method of Knowledge may lead to an active conquest of the cosmic existence for the Divine no less than to a transcendence. The point of this departure is the realisation of the supreme Self not only in one's own being but in all beings and, finally, the realisation of even the phenomenal aspects of the world as a play of the divine consciousness and not



something entirely alien to its true nature. And on the basis of this realisation a yet further enlargement is possible, the conversion of all forms of knowledge, however mundane, into activities of the divine consciousness utilisable for the perception of the one and unique Object of knowledge both in itself and through the play of its forms and symbols. Such a method might well lead to the elevation of the whole range of human intellect and perception to the divine level, to its spiritualisation and to the justification of the cosmic travail of knowledge in humanity.

(Sri Aurobindo: 'The Synthesis of Yoga', CWSA Vols. 23 & 24, pp. 38-39)

The Path of Devotion aims at the enjoyment of the supreme Love and Bliss and utilises normally the conception of the supreme Lord in His personality as the divine Lover and enjoyer of the universe. The world is then realised as a play of the Lord, with our human life as its final stage, pursued through the different phases of self-concealment and self-revelation. The principle of Bhakti Yoga is to utilise all the normal relations of human life into which emotion enters and apply them no longer to transient worldly relations, but to the joy of the All-Loving, the All-Beautiful and the All-Blissful. Worship and meditation are used only for the preparation and increase of intensity of the divine relationship. And this Yoga is catholic in its use of all emotional relations, so that even enmity and opposition to God, considered as an intense, impatient and perverse form of Love, is conceived as a possible means of realisation and salvation. This path, too, as ordinarily practised, leads away from world existence to an absorption, of another kind than the Monist's, in the Transcendent and Supra-cosmic.

But, here too, the exclusive result is not inevitable. The Yoga itself provides a first corrective by not confining the play of divine love to the relation between the supreme Soul and the individual, but extending it to a common feeling and mutual worship between the devotees themselves united in the same realisation of the supreme Love and Bliss. It provides a yet more general corrective



in the realisation of the divine object of Love in all beings not only human but animal, easily extended to all forms whatsoever. We can see how this larger application of the Yoga of Devotion may be so used as to lead to the elevation of the whole range of human emotion, sensation and aesthetic perception to the divine level, its spiritualisation and the justification of the cosmic labour towards love and joy in our humanity.

(Sri Aurobindo: 'The Synthesis of Yoga', CWSA Vols. 23 & 24, p. 39)

The Path of Works aims at the dedication of every human activity to the supreme Will. It begins by the renunciation of all egoistic aim for our works, all pursuit of action for an interested aim or for the sake of a worldly result. By this renunciation it so purifies the mind and the will that we become easily conscious of the great universal Energy as the true doer of all our actions and the Lord of that Energy as their ruler and director with the individual as only a mask, an excuse, an instrument or, more positively, a conscious centre of action and phenomenal relation. The choice and direction of the act is more and more consciously left to this supreme Will and this universal Energy. To That our works as well as the results of our works are finally abandoned. The object is the release of the soul from its bondage to appearances and to the reaction of phenomenal activities. Karmayoga is used, like the other paths, to lead to liberation from phenomenal existence and a departure into the Supreme. But here too the exclusive result is not inevitable. The end of the path may be, equally, a perception of the Divine in all energies, in all happenings, in all activities, and a free and unegoistic participation of the soul in the cosmic action. So followed it will lead to the elevation of all human will and activity to the divine level, its spiritualisation and the justification of the cosmic labour towards freedom, power and perfection in the human being.

We can see also that in the integral view of things these three paths are one. Divine Love should normally lead to the perfect



knowledge of the Beloved by perfect intimacy, thus becoming a path of Knowledge, and to divine service, thus becoming a path of Works. So also should perfect Knowledge lead to perfect Love and Joy and a full acceptance of the works of That which is known; dedicated Works to the entire love of the Master of the Sacrifice and the deepest knowledge of His ways and His being. It is in this triple path that we come most readily to the absolute knowledge, love and service of the One in all beings and in the entire cosmic manifestation.

(Sri Aurobindo: 'The Synthesis of Yoga', CWSA Vols. 23 & 24, pp. 39-40)

Certainly, behind all intelligent action there must be an intelligent will, but it need not be the intelligence or the will of the conscious mind in the actor. In the psychological phenomena of which I have spoken, it is obviously in some of them the will and intelligence of other human beings that uses the organs, in others it is doubtful whether it is an influence or actuation by other beings or the emergence of a subconscious, subliminal mind or a mixed combination of both these agencies. But in this Yogic status of action by the mere organs, *kevalair indriyair*, it is the universal intelligence and will of Nature itself working from centres superconscious and subconscious as it acts in the mechanically purposeful energies of plant-life or of the inanimate material form, but here with a living instrument who is the conscious witness of the action and instrumentation. It is a remarkable fact that the speech, writing and intelligent actions of such a state may convey a perfect force of thought, luminous, faultless, logical, inspired, perfectly adapting means to ends, far beyond what the man himself could have done in his old normal poise of mind and will and capacity, yet all the time he himself perceives but does not conceive the thought that comes to him, observes in its works but does not appropriate or use the will that acts through him, witnesses but does not claim as his own the powers which play upon the world through him as through a passive channel. But this phenomenon is not really abnormal or contrary to the general law of things. For do we not



see a perfect working of the secret universal Will and Intelligence in the apparently brute (*jada*) action of material Nature? And it is precisely this universal Will and Intelligence which thus acts through the calm, indifferent and inwardly silent Yogin who offers no obstacle of limited and ignorant personal will and intelligence to its operations. He dwells in the silent Self; he allows the active Brahman to work through his natural instruments, accepting impartially, without participation, the formations of its universal force and knowledge.

This status of an inner passivity and an outer action independent of each other is a state of entire spiritual freedom. The Yogin, as the Gita says, even in acting does no actions, for it is not he, but universal Nature directed by the Lord of Nature which is at work.

(Sri Aurobindo: 'The Synthesis of Yoga', CWSA Vols. 23 & 24, pp. 404-405)

By knowing the eternal unity of these three powers of the eternal manifestation, God, Nature and the individual self, and their intimate necessity to each other, we come to understand existence itself and all that in the appearances of the world now puzzles our ignorance. Our self-knowledge abolishes none of these things, it abolishes only our ignorance and those circumstances proper to the ignorance which made us bound and subject to the egoistic determinations of our nature. When we get back to our true being, the ego falls away from us; its place is taken by our supreme and integral self, the true individuality. As this supreme self it makes itself one with all beings and sees all world and Nature in its own infinity. What we mean by this is simply that our sense of separate existence disappears into a consciousness of illimitable, undivided, infinite being in which we no longer feel bound to the name and form and the particular mental and physical determinations of our present birth and becoming and are no longer separate from anything or anyone in the universe. This was what the ancient thinkers called the Non-birth or the destruction of birth or Nirvana. At the same time we continue to live and act through our



individual birth and becoming, but with a different knowledge and quite another kind of experience; the world also continues, but we see it in our own being and not as something external to it and other than ourselves. To be able to live permanently in this new consciousness of our real, our integral being is to attain liberation and enjoy immortality.

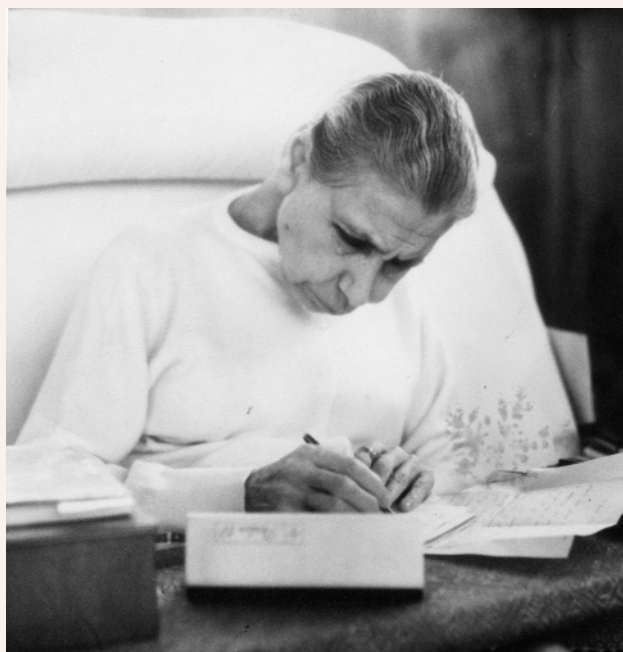
(Sri Aurobindo: 'The Synthesis of Yoga', CWSA Vols. 23 & 24, p. 439)

Our first absorbing impulse when we become inwardly aware of something entirely beyond what we now are and know and are powerfully attracted to it, is to get away from the present actuality and dwell in that higher reality altogether. The extreme form of this attraction when we are drawn to the supreme Existence and the infinite Ananda is the condemnation of the lower and the finite as an illusion and an aspiration to Nirvana in the beyond, — the passion for dissolution, immersion, extinction in the Spirit. But the real dissolution, the true nirvana is the release of all that is bindingly characteristic of the lower into the larger being of the Higher, the conscious possession of the living symbol by the living Real. We discover in the end that not only is that higher Reality the cause of all the rest, not only it embraces and exists in all the rest, but as more and more we possess it, all this rest is transformed in our soul-experience into a superior value and becomes the means of a richer expression of the Real, a more many-sided communion with the Infinite, a larger ascent to the Supreme. Finally, we get close to the absolute and its supreme values which are the absolutes of all things. We lose the passion for release, *mumukshutva*, which till then actuated us, because we are now intimately near to that which is ever free, that which is neither attracted into attachment by what binds us now nor afraid of what to us seems to be bondage. It is only by the loss of the bound soul's exclusive passion for its freedom that there can come an absolute liberation of our nature.

(Sri Aurobindo: 'The Synthesis of Yoga', CWSA Vols. 23 & 24, pp. 507-508)



The Integral Yoga



In the integral Yoga, the integral life down even to the smallest detail has to be transformed, to be divinised. There is nothing here that is insignificant, nothing that is indifferent. You cannot say, "When I am meditating, reading philosophy or listening to these conversations I will be in this condition of an opening towards the Light and call for it, but when I go out to walk or see friends I can allow myself to forget all about it." To persist in this attitude means that you will remain untransformed and never have the true union; always you will be divided; you will have at best only glimpses of this greater life. For although certain experiences and realizations may come to you in meditation or in your inner consciousness, your body and your outer life will remain unchanged. An inner illumination that does not take any note of the body and the outer life, is of no great use, for it leaves the world as it is.

The Mother ('The Great Adventure', p. 42)



Pandit Barun Kumar Pal (1946-2022)

Pandit Barun Kumar Pal was a musician with a difference. He created both music and a musical instrument. He taught committed musicians as well as school children. One thing that he always wanted to do was to make a musical offering on every Darshan Day at Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch. He will be missed by the Ashram and a large family of music lovers all over the world.



On 17 January 2022 a great human being breathed his last. Pandit Barun Pal ji, or *Guru ji*, as he was called by his disciples in the close-knit music family that he had built around him, was not just a musician par excellence but perfection personified in all aspects of his life. An exponent of the Indian slide guitar *Hansa Veena*, he has left behind him a legacy of performing artists who would like to keep his teachings alive by continuing to disseminate what they received from him. One of his close disciples shares: “Guru ji has taught us how to teach ourselves. He always encouraged us to share our knowledge, specially with the younger generation.” His love for children was no secret; all his life he had children around him. He taught a novice with the same zeal as a senior student. It has been said that the best teacher is he who loves students, loves teaching, knows how to teach, and knows the subject that he has to teach – in that order. Pandit Barun Pal ji had in him a powerful blend of all these four qualities, which is a combination so rare.

Born in Cuttack, Odisha, into a family of music lovers, he was exposed to Indian classical music early in his childhood. Great musicians of those times were his father’s friends and often visited their house. Very early on, he started playing the guitar,



and later transitioned to the slide guitar, which became his means of sadhana for the next 60 plus years.

He spent his younger days in Calcutta, completing his formal academic studies in engineering. He started playing light classical music, which attracted more than 300 students, who learnt from him on a regular basis. His father introduced him to the legendary sitar player Pandit Ravi Shankar, who instantly felt a connection with Barun Pal, and accepted him as his disciple. The *Guru-shishya* bond only grew stronger with time. So much so that, when Pandit Ravi Shankar ji asked him to move to Delhi and take charge of his institute, Ravi Shankar Institute For Music and Performing Arts (RIMPA), without a second thought Barun Pal ji gave up everything that he was doing in Calcutta and moved to Delhi, where he went on to work and teach for the next 14 years. One of his projects with the Government aimed at promoting Indian Classical Music brought him to The Mothers International School (MIS), which was the beginning of his relationship with the Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch. After spending many fruitful years in Delhi, he once again moved to his home town, Kolkata, where he continued to work and teach till he left for his heavenly abode. He will be remembered for his perfection in music, his passion for teaching, his dedication to service, and above all, the love that his students received from him, not just as their teacher, but as a role model, and as a support they could always count on.

Barun Pal ji was a deeply spiritual man, who told his students, “Treat every note like it is an offering to a Higher Power – it needs to be perfect.” The world has lost not just a masterful musician, but a tireless torchbearer of Indian tradition and an inspirational human being.

(Compiled by Aditi Kaul, with contributions from Ramanan Venkataraman, Radhika ji, Lakshmi ji, Madhvi ji, and Naren Ramaswamy)



A Gnawing Void and the Lingering Presence

Amitabh Khare

*“Love is the keynote, Joy is the music, Knowledge is the performer,
The Infinite All is the composer and audience.”*

Sri Aurobindo



Writing these few lines is like walking to a crucible; excruciatingly painful, yet at the same time ennobling. A true devotee of soulful Indian classical music, always dedicatedly exploring its spiritual nuances and essence, Pt. Barun Kumar Pal is no more with us, in his physical body. This is a great loss, both to music and music lovers, a deep void which is

impossible to fill. But this all-so-humble, self-effacing artiste par excellence has quietly and unassumingly impacted so many lives, and has left such an indelible imprint on their minds that the aroma of his art and pure heart lingers on and on.

Our group of students first met Pt. Barun Pal Ji in Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch. His impeccable purity, dedication and quiet, peaceful personality seemed to be resonating with the piety of the Ashram’s sylvan surroundings. It was as if the Almighty Himself had ordained this gift for us, meeting him there, and to compound the fortune, meeting the venerable, now Padma Shri, Tara Didi too. Barun Ji embodied the true spirit of great Indian classical music flowing for thousands of years through the uniquely Indian channels of ‘Guru-Shishya Parampara’. He was an ideal disciple and a dedicated teacher. Nurtured by the sitar maestro Bharat Rana Pt. Ravi Shankar, he internalised the latter’s trilogy of “Guru, Vinay, Sadhana” in letter and spirit, and followed this path all his life. He never hankered for personal glory, never promoted himself, but only promoted music as his ‘Sadhana’ with great humility.



He was a master and an innovator. He designed and perfected 'Hansa Veena', and became its leading exponent in the country. He believed in the time-honoured dictum that knowledge grows by sharing. He selflessly taught impressionable young minds the beauties and intricacies of classical music without any discrimination. His students belonged to various age groups, and practised different instruments. **Sri Aurobindo has said, "Perfect health, sincerity, honesty, straightforwardness, courage, disinterestedness, unselfishness, patience, endurance, perseverance, peace, calm, self control are all things that are taught infinitely better by example than by beautiful speeches".** Barun Ji was a living example of this principle. As much as he inspired his disciples with his teachings in music, he inspired them even more by his own example. His training was not limited to mere teaching of Raagaas, but stretched much beyond to encompass the daily habits and personalities of his students. Besides music, they also learnt from him the virtues of purity, simplicity and humility. His students could be easily identified from among the crowd for their quiet gracious manners and respect for the people and environment around them. I had the opportunity of personally witnessing this miraculous metamorphosis in his students, in a few of his week-long music camps in the Ashrams at Ramgarh and Tirthan Valley. There, the students became one with Ashram's lifestyle and 'lived' music from early mornings to late evenings. No wonder, his disciples, besides being proficient practitioners of their respective instruments, have also excelled in their studies and careers, and are an example for the youth to emulate. So widespread and long lasting was his impression on their minds that he would live in their hearts forever.

I am not a formal student of music. But his music had the capacity of enveloping and transporting even an uninitiated person like me to the higher realms of being. Whenever I heard him offering his music, within moments, I lost the feel of the immediate physical



surroundings and started travelling with his melodious strains, soaring higher and higher, experiencing inexplicable peace and tranquillity. It was as if the shower of music was drenching me inside out. Perhaps for such pure, potent music and its deep impact at subconscious levels only, did the world renowned poet *T.S. Eliot* write: **“You are the music, while music lasts.”** Such experiences got especially accentuated and uplifting when he offered music in the august Meditation Hall of Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch. The spiritual quietude of the large hall, under the benign eyes of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, seemed to provide the perfect mystical setting for delineation of his each and every note and strain with remarkable clarity. **I could see the truth of Leopold Stokowski’s saying coming true: “A painter paints its picture on canvas, but Musicians paint their pictures on silence”.**

Such geniuses, whose ethereal presence resides in countless hearts and uplifts them nobly, never depart. They live on. Pt. Barun Pal Ji also lives on. The steady, sweet aroma of his pious personality and the magic of his mellifluous music lingers on and on.
Om Shanti!!

A Swan on the Water of Life

The Call Beyond interviewed Barun Pal ji’s daughter, Chandrima Pal. Here are excerpts from the interview.

CB: What were your father’s qualities that particularly inspired you as a child?



CP: My father was a perfectionist. Whatever he did, he did it with all his heart. There were no half measures for him. He loved taking everyone along. He was inclusive. My father loved spreading joy. He



taught us the importance of being positive all the time, and the true essence of dedication — whether it was his calling, which was his pursuit of spirituality through music, his role as a family patriarch, a friend, a parent, a grandparent, a mentor, brother, partner. He set very high standards.

CB: How would you like the world to remember him?

CP: As a dedicated musician who spread the light of knowledge and compassion wherever he went; as someone whose instrument was a vehicle to transport himself and his audience to a higher spiritual plane; as someone who made you believe in the goodness of people.

CB: How did he see the world and his role in it?

CP: He showed us by example how you can be happy when you make others happy. He set very high standards with his dedication and sincerity. Even when he turned to gardening during the lockdown, he did it with compassion and dedication. His motto was the same as Swami Vivekananda's: Service to the Divine through service to humanity.

CB: How would you describe his relationship with music?

CP: Music was his worship, his prayer, the essence of his being, his *raison d'être*. He lived and breathed music till the day before he had his fatal stroke. Music was his karma yog. Whether he was performing before thousands or alone, when he was playing music he was one with the universe.

CB: Anything else you would like to share with us?

CP: My father showed the world that you can live a life dedicated to human values and be the perfect musician, husband, father and teacher. No wonder his guruji, Pandit Ravishankar, named the instrument that my father played as the *hansaveena*. My father was like a swan on the water of life.



The Significance of Flowers

Dr. Ahana Lakshmi

When you look at flowers, a number of emotions flow through you. The mere sight of fresh flowers is refreshing. Their fragrance is invigorating. Flowers make one feel cheerful. It is not surprising that a vase of flowers on a table is always a welcome sight. Women especially have great affinity for flowers. In South India, women from all walks of life willingly spend a few rupees every day on flowers such as jasmines to adorn their hair. We welcome people with garlands of flowers. A flower bedecked *pandal* is part of the marriage hall. In short, flowers and our lives are closely interlinked.

There is more to flowers than mere colour, shape and fragrance. When I see flowers I am always reminded of these two lines, part of a translated Hindi poem learnt long ago at school:

From flowers to smile, and from bees to sing you learn

From bent bows of trees, to bend your head you learn.

The Mother was fascinated by flowers and developed the flower cult in the Ashram. When one enters the Ashram, it is a riot of colours. One sees flowers everywhere—in big pots and little pots, in bunches in vases of different shapes and woven in garlands and artistically arranged. The whole atmosphere is charged with a variety of fragrances giving a calming, soothing and heartening effect. The Mother's advice was:

Be like a flower: open, frank, equal, generous and kind. Its presence fills us with joy, it is always cheerful and happy.

Flowers are integral to the Indian culture. We use them in worship. And though most of us are unaware about it, each flower has its own meaning in the Indian religious ceremonies. It is significant therefore that the Mother gave the same



meanings to several flowers as the Indian religion suggests. Thus, the lotus which signifies fullness and perfection to the Indian mind was given the name Divine Consciousness by the Mother. The sacred Tulsi was given the name Devotion; Jasmine was called Purity and Nagalingam flowers, Prosperity, to name but a few.

For the Mother, each flower symbolized a quality and the presence of the different flowers gave an impetus to the development of these qualities. It was not exotic flowers that were suggested as having such attributes, but the flowers that we see around us. Thus, Bougainvillea exemplifies Protection and Zinnia signifies Endurance while the Day Queen, *Centrum diurnum*, canopied with delicate tubular white flowers suggests Light. The common Pattanipu, *Antigonon leptopus*, indicates Harmony, Datura hints at *Tapasya*. Fragrant Rajanigandha (tuberose) is the New Creation: strong, lasting and fragrant, rising straight forward to the sky. *Catharanthus roseus*, the Madagascar Periwinkle from which drugs to cure leukaemia are extracted, denoted Progress. Madar, *Calotropis procera*, garlands of which are sold during Vinayaka Chaturthi represents Courage. Even dropseed, *Sporobolus capillaris*, a common variety of lawn grass has something to suggest—Humility. The Mother truly taught us as Wordsworth put it:

*One impulse from the vernal wood
can teach you more of man
Of moral evil and of good
than all the sages can.*

Courtesy: 'New Swatantra Times', October 1996

Reproduced from 'The Call Beyond', Vol. 22, No. 2, 1997, p. 39



The Four Aids Every Seeker Needs

Shishu

Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga gives every seeker the freedom to carve out her own path. It is a freedom which is easy to welcome but difficult to make good use of. Therefore, most seekers end up also looking for any hints whatsoever in his teachings, which may give some clues to what they are expected to do. One of the well-known hints comes from a chapter on 'four aids' in Sri Aurobindo's monumental work, *The Synthesis of Yoga*. The four aids on the path of yoga are: knowledge, personal effort, Guru and time.

Some knowledge of the philosophy of yoga; the techniques that have been used successfully by seekers in the past; choosing between right and wrong in life; and the attitude to life, particularly to success and failure, joy and sorrow and all the ups and downs of life, is helpful. Much of the necessary knowledge is actually within the seeker; it just needs to be awakened. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, "All teaching is a revealing, all becoming is an unfolding."

Personal effort should be guided by knowledge. For personal effort, Sri Aurobindo uses the word *utsaha* (literally, enthusiasm or vigour), which is in itself highly insightful. Having an intense aspiration to make spiritual progress and to be eager to put in all the necessary effort are more important than the exact type of work that the seeker puts in. The seeker "should be able to say in the Biblical phrase, 'My zeal for the Lord has eaten me up'," says Sri Aurobindo.

The Guru is, in fact, more than an aid. The Guru is so essential that, just to set the right example, even those who did not need a Guru, adopted one. Even Rama and Krishna had Gurus. Guru is the bridge between the Divine and the seeker. It is through the Guru that the Light, Power and Grace of the Divine are



channelized to the seeker, without which all the knowledge acquired and the effort put in may merely amount to much activity without achievement.

Finally, time is something that one may forget as a necessary aid. No matter what one does, and how much devotion one has to the Guru, spiritual progress is a slow and unsteady process. It is a long journey, for which one lifetime is grossly insufficient. Therefore, one has to patiently let the process take its time. As a couplet by Kabir says, a plant will not grow any faster if we give it too much water; the plant will grow only at the rate at which it is programmed to grow.

Calling knowledge, effort, Guru, and time mere aids is an understatement. As Sri Aurobindo says, progress in yoga “can be best attained by the combined working of [these] four great instruments. ... The Sadhaka (seeker) who has all these aids is sure of his goal. Even a fall will be for him only a means of rising and death a passage towards fulfilment.”

(Published earlier in the ‘Life Positive’, July 2021)



The secret of success in Yoga is to regard it not as one of the aims to be pursued in life, but as the one and only aim, not as an important part of life, but as the whole of life.

Sri Aurobindo ('The Synthesis of Yoga', SABCL edition, p. 65)

Much more than half our thoughts and feelings are not our own in the sense that they take form out of ourselves; of hardly anything can it be said that it is truly original to our nature.

Sri Aurobindo ('The Synthesis of Yoga', SABCL edition, p. 69)



Whether it is the disciple who chooses the Guru, or it is the Guru who chooses the disciple may be debatable, but fascinating and often incredible are the stories behind their being brought together. This column will bring you the circumstances under which some of the foremost disciples of Sri Aurobindo felt his unmistakable magnetic pull.

‘Surrender Not’ Surrenders



Chacha ji, as he looked when he joined the freedom struggle in 1921

Imagine two friends on a tour across the length and breadth of the country. The year was 1939. The two friends were Shri Surendra Nath Jauhar and Dr. Indra Sen, and accompanying them was also the former's nine-year old son, Anil. When they reached Chennai (then called Madras), they were told that not too far from Madras was Pondicherry (now Puducherry), where two spiritual masters had their Ashram. The friends did not take too long to decide to go there, as if they were being pulled there by a magnet. Their initial reaction on reaching Pondicherry was disappointment. What type of an Ashram it was, they wondered, which had no religious ceremonies, ritualistic worship or devotional songs going on, which had no dress code, and which had so many young people. But since they had gone all the way, they decided to wait, where many more were also waiting, for The Mother to arrive for collective meditation. The Mother arrived, punctually, on the dot. As she was coming down the staircase to the Meditation Hall, both the friends felt it was not an ordinary person coming down a staircase, but a fairy descending from heaven: they were captivated for life. **A casual remark by someone in Madras that they might as well go also to Pondicherry became a turning point in their lives.** Both of them started making frequent visits to Pondicherry. They started leaving their children in the 'Ashram School' run by the Mother. Dr. Indra Sen gave up his job as the Professor of Psychology and Philosophy in the University of Delhi.



Surendra Nath ji had been named Sikandar Lal by his parents. Surendra Nath was the name he had given to himself because it resembled 'Surrender Not', and he did not want to surrender to the authority of the British Government. At the age of 18, he had been drawn into the freedom movement by Mahatma Gandhi. He stayed with the struggle for India's freedom till the country became free in 1947. By then he had been a freedom fighter for more than 25 years. Therefore, he could have easily become a leader, as many other freedom fighters did. But he did not do so because he had discovered The Mother and Sri Aurobindo in 1939. Therefore, he wanted to do something that could contribute to their vision of a better world. He had bought a piece of land near Mehrauli in the 1930s, an area that was then at the outskirts of Delhi, although now it is in the heart of the city. He decided to use this land for that purpose. Therefore, he was overjoyed when The Mother told him that this place could house 'Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch'. The Ashram was formally established on 12 February 1956. The Ashram is a living demonstration of Sri Aurobindo's revolutionary doctrine, 'All life is Yoga'. The focus of the Delhi Branch has been on education and health. On 23 April 1956, the Mother blessed the opening of the Ashram School of the Delhi Branch. The school has now blossomed into The Mother's International School, which is one of the best schools in the country.



Chacha ji, as he looked when the ashram was established in 1956

Surendra Nath ji, fondly called Chacha ji (uncle), had resolved that he would 'Surrender Not'. But he ended up surrendering completely to The Mother. While the first phase of his life was devoted to the cause of freedom of the motherland, the second phase was dedicated to the freedom of humanity from the ignorant half-awake consciousness under which it has been labouring for millennia. That was the vision of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, and that is the goal that guides all the activities of the Ashram that Chacha ji established.



Power of Concentration

Aditi Kaul

Anybody who knows anything about Sri Aurobindo knows that he was a great scholar and an avid reader whose reading was not confined to any one genre or language. His passion for reading, together with his amazing ability to learn new languages, enabled him to explore virtually any compartment of human knowledge, and that too in the language in which it had been originally written, which is far better than reading a translation. His power of concentration was so intense that he would be engrossed in reading for hours together without breaking his concentration as if everything else around him had come to a standstill. During his Vadodara (now Baroda) days, one of his students, Rajaram N Patkar, came close to Sri Aurobindo and often visited him. One day when Rajaram came to meet Sri Aurobindo, he found Sri Aurobindo deeply engrossed in a book. Rajaram was aware of Sri Aurobindo's total involvement in what he was reading; therefore, he decided to wait. He stood like a statue in front of Sri Aurobindo for fifteen long minutes. Finally, Sri Aurobindo took notice of him. His immersion in a book was so thorough that nothing could distract him; neither a visitor nor even food. Once, when he was reading, his helper brought him food. Knowing Sri Aurobindo, the helper, with some hesitation, told him about the food in a rather soft voice. When he came to clear the plate after an hour, the plate had stayed untouched, and Sri Aurobindo was still immersed in his work. The helper was scared of asking Sri Aurobindo to finish his food. Thinking that Rajaram might have the courage to remind Sri Aurobindo about his meal, he approached Rajaram. When Rajaram did, Sri Aurobindo gave a pleasant smile, hurriedly went to the table, quickly finished the job of feeding himself in ten minutes, and resumed his work. His immense power of concentration percolated to all aspects of his work, be it reading or teaching. The clarity of his thinking, the command over his subject,



and his creative intellect made his style of teaching a novel one. That is why, he was loved by all his students.

These incidents make us reflect on our own power of concentration in our day-to-day activities. Most of us have a wavering mind, which is always full of thoughts about so many things all at once that we often end up in mess. While doing one thing, we are already thinking of what next to do. Studying for exams become so difficult as the moment we sit down to study, we start thinking about when and what to eat next, whom to call when we are through with reading, what to watch later in the day, and so on. Being in the present moment becomes very difficult with a distracted mind. Concentration is one fundamental quality that we all need to develop which can help us become better in what we do, ground us in the present moment and keep us connected to what we do. Concentration not only improves the quality of what we do but also makes us much faster. As the Mother has said, "If you are able to concentrate, you can do absolutely in ten minutes what would otherwise take you one hour."

*(Based on 'Sri Aurobindo: Life and Times of the Mahayogi'
by Manoj Das, p. 121)*



Hathayoga selects the body and the vital functionings as its instruments of perfection and realisation; its concern is with the gross body.

Sri Aurobindo ('The Synthesis of Yoga', SABCL edition, p. 28)

The widest synthesis of perfection possible to thought is the sole effort entirely worthy of those whose dedicated vision perceives that God dwells concealed in humanity.

Sri Aurobindo ('The Synthesis of Yoga', SABCL edition, p. 44)



Selfless Service Honoured



In the Civilian Awards announced by the Government recently, among the awardees was Ms. Tara Jauhar, the Chairperson of Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch, on whom has been conferred the Padma Shri. Known more commonly as Tara Didi, it was the unsolicited recognition of the selfless work that she has been doing

tirelessly as the Mother's instrument for about 75 years. For these awards, a nomination is required, which in practice translates into self-glorification by the nominee. But in Tara Didi's case, it was different. She has never expected anything except the joy of working for the Mother. No application or nomination was made. The Government spotted her, and conferred the award on her. That is the way it ideally should be for any award or recognition.

A direct disciple of The Mother, Tara Didi went to Puducherry at age eight, and stayed there without a break till age 40. She was hardly ten when the Mother, seeing her leadership qualities, made her the captain for supervising the sports activities of school children just a couple of years younger than herself. After returning from Puducherry in 1976, she started helping her father, who had established the Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch in 1956. For about 45 years, she has been a selfless worker initiating and running various activities of far-reaching social significance at Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch and its outreach programmes in Uttarakhand and Odisha.

She adopted an austere lifestyle as a child of eight, and has stuck to the same. She has never known any other lifestyle, and is happy with it. Nearing 86 now, age has neither diminished her enthusiasm nor impaired her capacity for coming up with new ideas for projects in the fields of education, health, social welfare



and environment. Her dynamism and energy put to shame people less than half her age. She has a passion for projects that would benefit the youth of the disadvantaged sections of the society.

She wastes no time; she wastes no words. She has no social life, and avoids ceremonial functions. She thrives on work. She shuns limelight, and needs no rewards or recognition. But since awards expand the circle inspired by a leader, the recognition that she has received would inspire many towards a life of selfless service.

The wide circle that her award has inspired may be estimated from the number of congratulatory messages she has received since the list of awardees was announced by the Government. The excerpts from some of these messages appear below.

Received on 25 January 2022



I cannot tell you how happy I felt hearing the news that our dear Taradidi has been honoured with the Padma Shri. I know that these awards mean nothing to you. You have always considered your work as an offering to the Mother and perhaps, that is why you never tire! However, a prestigious award like this brings your work into the limelight and tells the world about the work that Delhi Ashram has been doing for so many long years. Today, I remember Anilji and

Manojda. Both of them would have been so happy.

Sanghamitra (Ghosh)

Finally, a recognition hard earned, much deserved, and much delayed. You would rightly say, the award came when the Mother willed it. We all knew it, but now the world knows that you are one of the Mother's favourite children.

Ramesh (Bijlani)

Congratulations on the Padma-Shri award! This is fantastic news.

Kailash



Kindly accept my heartfelt congratulations on the Padma Shri award! I appreciate the present government that has recognised the dedication of a pure soul like you.

Kiran (Singh)

You really merit this recognition. So simple in your lifestyle. So kind and generous in your actions. Always One-Pointed... towards... Her work.

I am so lucky to have been your student. You have always taught what you believed in and what you lived yourself. You are a source of Inspiration to me.

Purnima (Sethia)

Congratulations Tara Didi, Living Legend, Inspiring Soul and My Mentor. Proud moment for all of us. It's the recognition of Your selfless service; It's the recognition of a great Journey; It's the recognition of Our Beloved Chacha-Ji's and Anil Ji's sacrifice, Dreams and Ideals. It's the Divine Mother's Blessings upon us.

Anonymous

You scaled the heights and ventured forth
To bring the Lord's Light into the lives of all,
Mother's wonder child of invaluable worth
Your courage and grit always to enthrall.
Taradidi, an epitome of service beyond compare
Truly a shining star ever so rare.
May each year herald brighter dawns
With verdant blooms of celestial glow
No more victims or helpless pawns
Her Grace of victory seeds ever to grow.

Harsha (Dalal)

If anyone deserves this honor it's you and only you. And how befitting as we celebrate The Master's 150th birth anniversary and 75th year of independence of bharatvarsh, The Mother's favourite child is being celebrated.

Oindrila (Banerjee)



Received on 26 January 2022

No Republic Day has brought so much personal joy for me as the present one. The lifelong service of one of the most beloved children of The Mother has been fittingly rewarded.

Charan (Singh)

Congratulations on your well deserved elevation and recognition as padmashri on the celebration of the republic day . The divine Mother and Your dad would be so proud of you.

Subhash (Thaker)

Congratulations for being conferred with Padmashree award. Gratitude for all the efforts which made possible the special Tableau on the life and works of Sri Aurobindo on this Republic Day.

Biswaranjan (Sahoo)

Tara Didi grew up in Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry under the loving care of The Mother, Sri Aurobindo's spiritual collaborator. Tara Didi worked with her father in establishing The Mother's International School, which is regarded as one of the finest educational institutions in the country and Mirambika Free Progress school, which has received national recognition. The Vocational Trainee program Tara Didi pioneered in the 1980s has transformed the lives of thousands of rural youth from practically every state in the country. Tara Didi has also established spiritual centers in the Himalayan region, which welcome seekers for individual and collective sadhana.

Ranjan (Mohanty)

You are the most deserving person for being recipient of this national recognition for your selfless work for thousands of young people as well as senior citizens.

Kiran (Sood)

Thoroughly well-deserved and extremely proud moment for all of us who have had the privilege of spending time with you. We already know all the good that you do and the lives you change through your work.

Ullaas (Misra)



It's a great honour for all of us to be in touch with you and working with you. A befitting honour for a true daughter of Chachaji, a revolutionary and patriot of Mother India.

Ananya (Roy)

On behalf of the devotees of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother of Odisha I congratulate you for the PADMA Award. I pray for your long and healthy life for Mother's work.

Anonymous

May The Mother give you more courage and strength to do wonderful work for humanity. You are indeed our "Hero Warrior"

Rashu (Bhalla)

I personally feel that an award of this kind may not matter much to you as you are a true child of The Mother and She has chosen you to be Her instrument. I pray to Her that you always move forward to accomplish more which needs to be done for Her!

Prabhjot (Kulkarni)

We are really lucky to know and receive blessings from a person who has dedicated her life to serve The Mother, not to forget your contribution in the field of education.

Nandita (Didwania)

It is a proud moment in the history of our Ashram as the value of the work done by it through you, has been recognised at the national level. Of course, Chachaji's sacrifice and tapasya and the Mother's divine shakti are the two forces that are all the time working behind the scene.

Nalin(Dholakiya)

Congratulations, Tara Didi, for being awarded Padma Shri!

Bratati (Manna)

Congratulations to dear Tara Di !

Sucheta

Our Heartiest Congratulations to you Didi, from all of us At The Mother's International School.

Yogesh and Ashutosh



We are extremely happy and proud of you. You really are doing wonderful work. Taking the Mother and Sri Aurobindo to the world at large. We pray that we may all be doing our best and be worthy of them.

Namita and Selvi.

Very happy and fortunate to be a small contributor in whatever way that you want me to be in the work that you are doing of The Mother.

Avadhut (Thali)

Hearty Congratulations -- this is indeed a well-deserved recognition of your achievements and contributions to the nation. Hope and pray for greater achievements and successes in the future too.

Shashi (Sharma)

Congratulations to you, dear Tara Di. May you continue leading from the front!

Anupama Roy (Jarrisse)

Wish you the best of health and energy to achieve what you still aspire to achieve, for years to come.

Tulsi (Bhandari)

Received on 27 January 2022

Congratulations to you and the Ashram family for the “Padma Shri” you are awarded with.

Sheel (Gupta)

This appears like a stamp of the Mother on your dedicated life in her service.

Hrushikesh Acharya

We are indeed proud and happy that the Government of India has recognised and honoured you for the selfless service you have given for more than 65 to 70 years. We pray for the Mother to give you good health and strength to continue her divine work on the earth.

Prof. Krishna (Mohan)

Congratulations on receiving this National Award Padma Shri!

Chander Mohan and Vibha



Many many congratulations for the Padma Shri Award.

Ruchi (Raina)

We, Congratulate & wish you a very very glorious, prosperous, & happy moment on being facilitated with Padma- Shri national award.

Rajendra & Smita (Sarodiya)

This is indeed a matter of pride for the whole Ashram and MIS family. Being the matriarch, You are a source of constant inspiration. We pray for your long and healthy life so that you keep motivating us with your life by being the true leader that you are.

Priyanka (Verma)

Your Orissa Brothers and Sisters send their love and gratitude for your getting this auspicious award.

Prasad (Tripathy)

Congratulations on your Padma Shri.

Capt. Rupinder (Kaur)

Would like to congratulate you on being conferred the Padma Shri award.

Naresh (Modi)

Heartiest Congratulations on this award and even more gratitude for the learnings and examples you have set all these years.

Isha (Gupta)

Hearty congratulations to Tara didi and Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

Dr Dheeraj (Arya)

Heartfelt congratulations to one and all on this moment of pride for all of us.

Mugdh (Kumar)

Received on 28 January 2022

We thank the Mother and Sri Aurobindo and her own parents for inculcating in her the qualities of Service.

Dr. J.C. Batra



From a practical and spiritual point of view the award is not great but as it is stated, since rewards expand the circle inspired by a leader, the recognition that she has received would inspire many towards a life of selfless service.

Palani, Auroville.

Truly well-deserved for selfless dedication to Sri Aurobindo's and Mother's ideals and their work. We have seen her in action in the Pondicherry Ashram wherein she was captain of my group and worked hard at all hours at the Physical education office. May she touch many more souls and pioneer new ideas relevant to the future of India as envisaged by our masters.

Anonymous

The Divine Grace Has Always been with you and Maa and Sri Aurobindo have always Guided you to do their Work without any reservations.

Ramanbhai.

All of us, my brother Kuldip, Vandana and I are so absolutely thrilled to learn about your Padam Shri . In our eyes and in God's eyes you and your contribution is so much more than any Award. I am sure Chacha ji, Anil ji, Indu Didi must be smiling and feeling happy and proud too.

Mira

My best wishes on the occasion of the honor of receiving Padma Shri. I look forward in the near future for your Padma Bhushan. It is justified in view of your work and dedication.

Dr. Chacko, MD, Ph.D

IIT - Bombay.

You've truly been a stalwart realizing The Mother & Sri Aurobindo's vision of holistic education and spending a lifetime working to actualise their vision, no doubt The Mother herself has chosen you for this award.

May The Mother continue showering you with her blessings, health & happiness.

Anil (Vajpeyi)



Heartiest congratulations to you for Padma Shri
Madhulika Varma Srivastava and Family

We are so elated for this recognition given to an inspirational personality.
NK Bhattacharjee
Chairman, SAS, Assam State Committee

Nandakumar and myself were delighted with the news that you are being honoured with Padma Shri. You have placed Karma Yoga in your front and have been working tirelessly without thinking of such recognitions, but we are happy that this sweet news has come. It is indeed a welcome honour to the Builder of Tomorrow reflecting sweet Mother's dream.

M.S. Nandakumar & Prema Nandakumar

Heartiest congratulations for the honor.
Gordon Korstange

Received on 29 January 2022

Certainly this announcement gives us a feeling of joy, happiness and pride. Tara Didi is my role model and also a guide to path of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.

Vinod Marodia

Our Matrubhavan, Ahmedabad family is very glad to hear this news. We heartily congratulate Taradidi for this achievement during celebrations of 150 years of Sri Aurobindo.

Meera (Dhankani)

You really deserve for your tremendous work.
Udit

Received on 30 January 2022

It is a very proud moment for all the children of The Mother.

Always at the Lotus Feet of the Mother,
Rishi (Mithal)

Congratulations, Tara didi.
Mahesh Chandra (Arora)



This is the Victory of Divine in this most destructive of times. I am joyful and filled with gratitude.

Usha (Sapra)

Please accept our heartiest congratulations on this momentous occasion. Our selfless work has been recognised and befittingly honored. We are extremely proud of you. We all wish you receive many such awards for Her work.

Ajit (Sabnis) and Members of Sri Aurobindo Society Karnataka

This laurel of yours is an honour for Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch and to Puducherry also. You have always been an inspiration and motivator for me from the time I joined The Mother's International School and the Ashram.

Harpal (Bhalla)

Received on 31 January 2022

Many congratulations on being conferred the Padma Shri, a well deserved recognition for many decades of hard work and dedication. A moment of pride for all of us, best wishes to you and everyone in the ashram.

Anonymous

You truly inspire every single person who comes across you, to follow the path of right action and devotion. May God give you a healthy and long life so that you may continue to inspire all the living souls on this earth.

Purshotam (Pathak)

Additional district & Sessions judge (Delhi)

Heartiest Congratulations and pranams to the Self Luminous Star (Tara)... the true child of the Mother.

Anonymous

Received on 1 February 2022

This was long overdue. Her selfless work has benefited million of followers, I am one among the million.

Anonymous



Indeed, she has touched many lives, brought about revolutionary changes to the society and every drop of her selfless service has been a blessing. Congratulations.

Preethi (Stephen)

Kindly accept our congratulations.

Dr.G.Natchiar

The honour conferred on you is only a token for the services rendered by you over so many years. Words are inadequate to express our appreciation and gratitude to you who have touched so many lives and given them hope and care.

Vatsala and Siva

Your photo with the Mother is the Divine Award. Beyond all human beings can give you. You have been chosen by the Divine herself..an Award that will be with all your future lives..too..

Ananda (Reddy)

It is indeed a matter of great pride for each one of us associated with the Ashram and its activities. She has truly energized and inspired all around her.

Meera (Budhiraja)

Tara didi has played such a significant role for the welfare of the Ashram, and more importantly instilling the right values amongst generations of MIS students. The award is a true recognition of her selfless and untiring spirit .

Mily Roy (Anand)

My heartiest congratulations to Taradidi and entire MIS community.

Madhumita (Bandyopadhyay)

This is a matter of great pride and celebration for us that the inspiring, dedicated life and work of complete consecration and surrender has given Taradi this award with Mother's Grace. This may not matter much to Didi but would sure help inspire countless people, young and senior to continue on the path of Karmayog, no matter what. Proud of you, Taradi.

Jayanti Ravi



You have always been a great inspiration to all of us and your work has made the most profound impact of thousands of families

Aanya, Aarav (both alumni of MIS), Ashima & Hardik, From London

Received on 6 February 2022

Your leadership, commitment and hard work has brought Shri Aurobindo Delhi Ashram to greater heights and will always be our source of inspiration.

Yogesh (Sharma)

Received on 10 February 2022

As a proud student of The Mother's International School I cannot help but feel even more proud to be associated with the Ashram and in a way her too . . . We wish Tara Didi great health so she can continue her passion of serving the people with single-minded devotion . . . this recognition indeed is only a way to expand the awareness of what she has been doing . . . more power to Tara Didi . . . God Bless her more !!

Ravinder S. Singha

Received on 12 February 2022

Your dedication, perseverance, and hard work alongwith your quality of delegation and with The Mother's Grace has taken Delhi Ashram to the pinnacle of success.

Smita Goyal Gupta

Our prayer at the lotus feet of The Mother and Sri Aurobindo for your life time achievements. You are a luminous star that is always spreading Her light to all.

Niharika and Saswati

So proud, Taradi. For us you are above any award. So blessed to have spent so many years together of learning and it has helped shaped me for what I am today. Eternally in gratitude to you.

Madira (Dhawan)



Received on 15 February 2022

Thank you for your continued efforts. May Divine blessings continue for you.

Doris Canter Visscher (old friend of the Ashram from Holland!)

It is truly an honor that is befitting, given the immense contribution you have had in uplifting the lives of so many. This recognition means so much to the Ashram community worldwide and I know I am beaming with joy and have shared this news with many former MIS students here in the US.

Sankalp

Received on 16 February 2022

Please accept our congratulations on the Padma Shri Award bestowed on you!

Raju (Mansukhani)



Dear Friends,

I am truly overwhelmed by the unbelievably large number of messages with good wishes for my Padma Shri award.

My heartfelt thanks to all of you for your love and support which has made this award possible.

Gratitude to all for being part of the Ashram journey. We pray for your continued support and goodwill for The Mother's work.

Because of the large number I may have missed thanking some of you, which may please be excused.

Bliss
Tara didi





Feedback and Encouraging Words

Feedback on the online Yoga Course, YES.01

Namaste Rameshbhai Bijlani & Aditi,

I have been viewing your class recordings and I really like the way you are introducing Sri Aurobindo and The Mother's Integral Yoga to the inspiring souls. Your adoration for and knowledge about our guru are visible in your presentation and Q&A sessions.

The Mother and Sri Aurobindo have protected, guided and showered me with their blessings throughout my life. On Feb 21 2021, we launched a simple website, The Mother's Guidance. We have shared over 100 different topics of interest in daily life, provided guidance in Their words.

Our website is based on the following New Year card:

"To understand his teaching better and try to put it into practice, is certainly the best way of showing our gratitude to him for all the light, knowledge and force which he has so generously brought to the earth.

May his teaching enlighten and guide us, and what we cannot do today, we shall do tomorrow.

Let us take the right attitude in all sincerity, and it will truly be a BONNE ANNEE."

The Mother - 1972

I'm looking forward to the next few months of listening and practicing yoga.

Varsha (Patel)

New Jersey, USA

(in an email dated 16 January 2022)

Dear Ramesh Ji,

I am thoroughly enjoying the YES course sessions in the mornings. Your words carry a lot of value for me as you truly walk the talk. I love the way you start your talk with some personal touch. Akhter Gory, a friend, who is also attending this course, wrote to me today: "Yes. Like



he says, intros can give you the context through which one processes the rest of info on the subject.”

Jogi (Bhagat)

Austin TX, USA

(in an email dated 17 January 2022)

Full of respect for the joyous introduction. The enthusiasm, the work done as a preparation to be able to give this course, a life fully devoted to... I accept the offering humbly, being grateful that this has come on my way; also grateful to Dr. Monica Gulati who shared the info.

Specially the de- schooling factor, plus the mentioning of ‘own pace’ had an effect on me as if a peaceful blanket started comforting me. Because the pressure in society has always blocked me. Never been able to come along with it.

Already now at the start of this uplifting YES course I feel the innate attitude comforting me, which over here in the west is a rare phenomenon for participants. At least I did not meet many of them yet.

Here is an eternal student

Also thank you for the explanation of the prayers of today’s session. The prayers as such are not unknown to me, but I will re- view the video and type it out. Very uplifting.

Till van Dorst, Netherlands

(in an email dated 18 January 2022)

[Editor’s note: The YES.01 is an online course on Integral Yoga that started on 12 January 2022. Class recordings are available on https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKYy7iXI_Z_0Hpk01FPdoGxu8Hn-W1c6W. The next module, YES.02 will start on 7 April 2022. For details, please drop an email to sa150yes@gmail.com]





Mail from a Well-wisher

Belated congratulations from my side...I had been travelling and was unable to congratulate the Sri Aurobindo teams on becoming a part of the High Level National Committee for the 150th Year Celebrations. I hope all the ideas and concepts will now become a reality in the coming years.

Yes, thanks for sharing this Special Issue (January 2022) of *The Call Beyond*. I have in turn shared it with several colleagues and friends who benefit from such readings. I laud the hard work that has gone into preparing this issue.

My regards for Tara Didi and the Delhi Ashram team.

Best wishes, always

Raju (Mansukhani)

(in an email dated 20 Jan 2022)



All human imaginations indeed correspond to some reality or real possibility, though they may in themselves be a quite inaccurate representation or couched in too physical images and therefore inapt to express the truth of supraphysical realities.

Sri Aurobindo ('The Synthesis of Yoga', SABCL edition, p. 433)

Life is a precarious incident in inanimate Matter.

Sri Aurobindo ('The Synthesis of Yoga', SABCL edition, p. 449)

Mind is born from that which is beyond mind.

Sri Aurobindo ('The Synthesis of Yoga', SABCL edition, p. 458)

When desire ceases entirely, grief and all inner suffering also cease.

Sri Aurobindo ('The Synthesis of Yoga', SABCL edition, p. 475)



Contact us

Our quarterly magazine in Hindi, 'Sri Aravind Karmadhara', is also available on-line now, and may be viewed on our website www.sriaurobindoashram.net.

For a free subscription to 'Sri Aravind Karmadhara', please send an e-mail to sakarmdhara@gmail.com

To get 'The Call Beyond' online regularly, month after month, please send an e-mail to: callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

To learn about the recent and forthcoming activities through the Ashram's e-magazine, 'Realization', send an email to: callbeyond@aurobindoonline.in

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If you subscribe either to 'Realization', or to 'The Call Beyond', you will start receiving, month after month, both the magazines.

For information about Auro-Mira Service Society and the Kechla project, please visit the website www.auromira.in



Note

In view of the Hundred and Fiftieth Birth Anniversary of Sri Aurobindo on 15 August 2022, the Ashram is expanding its mailing list to reach out to more and more who may benefit from the teachings of the Master and the Mother. To get included in the Mailing List, please go to <http://erp.saaonline.net.in/addcontacts.cfm> to fill in a form, which will take you only a few minutes.



Get in touch with Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch on:

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Feedback

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