The occurrence of the spectacular Annual Day Celebrations of Yognat every year is a special time for all of us to remember with deep gratitude our great privilege to be the recipients of the blessings and the torchbearers of the teachings of our visionary founder Satguru Yogamaharishi Dr. SWAMI GITANANDA GIRI GURU MAHARAJ. With his benevolent blessings and the loving guidance of our dynamic Puduvai Shakti, AMMA, Kalaimamani Yogacharini MEENAKSHI DEVI BHAVANANI, we at Yognat have had an extraordinary year over the past 12 months. Hundreds of public and private performances, guest lectures, lecture-demonstrations, Yoga sport events and conferences have kept us on our Yogic toes throughout the year, all events extra to our intensive class routines for children, adults, tourists and those in need of Yoga therapy! Our beloved Amma has been in the forefront of the cultural and Yoga renaissance in the past forty years through her inspiring example. Numerous awards and accolades have poured in throughout the year and reinforced our resolve to keep the Yogic and Indian Cultural flag flying at an all-time high. This is also an occasion to thank all the parents of the children for their unconditional and unlimited support at all times. We congratulate each and every one of them for giving their children this "Gift of Our Own Mother Culture". This coupled with the blessings of our well-wishers and patrons from all over the world has enabled our beloved and talented children to make great strides of progress in Yoga and the fine arts. They continue as ever, day-by-day, to make our heart swell with pride at their "Skill and beauty in action".

CULTURAL PROGRAMMES AND PERFORMANCES: More than one hundred public performances, programmes and events including major dance programmes, vocal and instrumental music programmes and Yogasana group demonstrations as well as lecture demonstrations have been conducted by the staff and students of Yognat this year, all over India and abroad as well. The spectacular 13th Annual Day performance and the Navagraha Dance Drama were the highlight of the year for us at Yognat as they showcased the talents and skills of our children in a unique manner. The dedicated staff and talented students also won laurels in numerous Yoga Sports and cultural events at State and National levels. The Yognat cultural troupe performed during the 14th Annual International Yoga Festival conducted by the Tourism Department as well as at Pondicherry University, Vinayagar Chathurthi celebrations, Navarathri and Thiyyagaraja Jayanthi celebrations of Pondicherry Music and Dance Artistes Association, festivals conducted by the Department of Art and Culture, Government of Puducherry as well as numerous invited performances for our patrons at Integra Software Services and many other festive occasions all over Puducherry.

SUMMER COURSES 2007: The 11th Annual Summer Intensive Yoga and Bharata Natyam Course was held in May 2007 with nearly 140 students participating in the Yoga, Bharata Natyam and Shlokam recitation classes that went on for nearly four hours on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. Tremendous changes were witnessed in the children as the intensive gave them an opportunity to work closely with Amma and thus manifest their inherent potential. Students were taught the Aditya Hridayam, a powerful 31-verse chant in praise of Lord Surya, the Sun God. Reena Joseph and S.Geethakala
received the **Best Students of the Intensive Award 2007** for their excellent all round performance that included excellent essays and presentations on the concept of *Yogah Chittavritti Nirodhah* and the Nava Rasa (nine emotions embodied in dance). The theory classes given by Amma were the highlight of the intensive. In her inimitable manner she taught everyone numerous **Yoga Shlokams with Mudras that were linked to controlling the animal nature and developing our human nature into the Divine Nature**. Her theme for this intensive was "*Controlling the Chittavrittis*" by the regular practice of Pancha Yama and Niyama. She also brought out in a beautiful manner how the practice of Swadhyaya can make a person 'sweeter'. The content of these classes lodged deep within everyone’s consciousness as Amma hit the nail right on the head in a soft but steady manner.

More than 60 students and staff participated in the **three day residential camp at ICYER** conducted in the third week of May with numerous activities such as Yoga individual and team games, Team Karma Yoga, beach classes, bonfire on the beach and many other holistic activities to broaden the young minds. The students enthusiastically participated in all activities that also included a special session on *Pranava Awareness* in the Patanjali Kuteer. **Sivasankar** and **V.S. Sriram**, were selected "Best Boys of the Camp" while **R. Subhashini** and **S. Keerthipriya** were selected "Best Girls of the Camp" in recognition of their Yogic talents and behaviour. **S. Samyuktha** received the prize for Karma Yoga.

### 21ST PONDICHERY AND 3RD TAMIL NADU YOGA SPORT CHAMPIONSHIP:

Nearly 500 contestants ranging in age from three to 70 years, representing every nook and cranny of Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry took part in the Yoga Sport Championship held at Pondicherry in November 2006. **Dr. M. RAMADASS**, the Hon’ble Lok Sabha MP distributed the **Championship Awards** to the worthy winners and appreciated the efforts of the PYA for propagating Yoga amongst the youth of India. Dr. Ramadass made a notable mention that Yoga must be introduced in schools with well-trained Yoga teachers to produce a better society. The efforts of Amma and Dr. Ananda were well-appreciated by the eminent economist-academician-politician who has played an important role in Yoga being taught in the Pondicherry University Community College. **Yoga Championship Awards 2006** for Pondicherry were bagged by **R. Diwakar** and **M. Siddhardan** for Pondicherry male and J. Sangavi and R.V. Krithiga for Pondicherry female. All are students of Yognat. At the inaugural function **Thiru S.P. SIVAKUMAR Avl.**, the Former Education Minister and current MLA, Raj Bhavan Constituency declared the championship open and motivated the youth to take up Yoga with great interest and create a stress-free and violence-free world. He praised the efforts of Amma and Dr. Ananda in spreading the knowledge of Yoga to all sections of the society with great quality. "**YOGA CHEMMAL**" awards were presented to **Dr.Nalini Devi**, Smt.Devasena Bhavanani, Smt.Meena Ramanathan and Dr.Madhusudhanan of Pondicherry. **Shri Ravi Arumugam** and **Shri Venugopal** of Tamil Nadu were also honoured with the awards in recognition of their service for the cause of Yoga.

### THE SEVENTH SWAMI GITANANDA BEST CHILD AND YOUTH AWARDS:

The Seventh Annual Swami Gitananda Best Child and Youth Awards were distributed in February 2007 at Yognat's new hall. The Honourable Minister of Health and Family Welfare, **Thiru E. VALSARAJ Avl** was the **Chief Guest** at the Awards Ceremony and was all praise for the amazing grace and skill of the young students who put on an excellent show of Yoga, dance and drama. The performances of Natya Karanas by R.V. Krithiga and Yogasanas with a lamp
on her head by J. Sangavi were the highlights of the cultural show by the winners of various events. Thiru E.Valsaraj Avl. praised the efforts of Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani and Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani in bringing out the creative and spiritual best of their students. Miss R.V. KRITHIKA was declared winner of the Swami Gitananda Best Youth Award 2006. Miss J. SANGAVI and Miss VIBHA SRINIDY won the Swami Gitananda Best Child Awards 2006 in the above 10 and below 10 years categories respectively. All three are students of Yoganjali Natyalayam.

14TH INTERNATIONAL YOGA FESTIVAL: As in the past, our Director and Chairman were invited speakers and consultants at this year’s festival. Dr.Ananda also organised the Yoga theory exam as well as the Yoga Viva for the championship round and the eminent dignitaries from all over the world very well appreciated this unique aspect of the Yoga Sport in Pondicherry. Dr.Ananda also compiled a special booklet of Yoga practices for the “Feel For Yoga” classes and this was published by the Tourism Department on the occasion. Faculty members of Yognat who were selected as Juries for this year’s festival included Sri.C.Shanmugam, Smt.Devasena Bhavanani, Smt.Lalitha Shanmugam, Sri.E.Gajendiran, Smt.Meena Ramanathan, Sri.G.Moorthy, Sri.Chandrasekhar and Sri.Tamil Sengolan. A special feature of this year’s festival was the “Feel For Yoga” classes conducted at six venues in Pondicherry during the festival days.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: Community development is an important aspect of all Yoga instruction and we are doing our best in this regard. Dr.Ananda gave numerous guest lectures as well as conducted lecture demonstrations and insightful introductions to Yoga at numerous forums. Smt.Lalitha Shanmugam and Shri.C.Shanmugam have been taking many classes for the community in different places and creating an awareness of Yoga. Smt.Meena Ramanathan has also been giving introductory sessions for different groups and institutions as well as the Senior Citizens of Pondicherry. Shri.E.Gajendiran has been conducting Yoga classes in numerous schools and colleges as well as for the Pondicherry Police. Yognat faculty members are also teaching in many schools as well as colleges and other institutions.

Our Chairman Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani is a Resource Person for the Yoga courses offered by the Pondicherry University Community College and taught theory classes in the “Scientific Basis of Yoga” and “Fundamentals of Yoga Therapy”. He has also been taking the lectures in Mantra, Yantra and Yoga Anatomy and Physiology for the Annual Six Month International Yoga Teacher Training Course at ICYER. Dr.Ananda is also working at the Auroville Health Centre as a Medical Officer for the Village Health Programme where he is taking care of more than 400 patients every month in various villages in and around Auroville.

Yognat continues to impart quality training in Yoga and Bharata Natyam and Carnatic Vocal Music at our West Branch near JIPMER. As part of the Study India Programme of Pondicherry University our senior faculty members imparted more than 40 hours of practical training in Classical Yoga and dance over a period of three months for six international students of Pondicherry University. These students from different universities in the United States of America had chosen to take a semester in India and to study at the Pondicherry University. Prof.P.P.Mathur, coordinator of the Study India Programme did an excellent job of bringing together all facets of the programme. Yogacharini Dr.Nalini Devi, Founder-Director of the Gitananda Yoga Alayam, Spain and senior faculty member of ICYER conducted the
90-minute classes twice a week at the ICYER campus. Yogacharini Devasena Bhavanani conducted the course in Classical Indian dancing and the students were exposed to the wider aspects of Indian dance and Indian culture. Amma and Dr. Ananda supervised the planning and implementation of this unique programme and the feedback received from the students as well as the University has been very positive. It is hoped that such programmes will be conducted in future and more and more Western students get a chance to see and know India as it 'is' rather than as it is portrayed in the West.

Amma and her team were invited in mid April to the Kalvarayan Hills in Tamil Nadu, a hill station near Salem to conduct Yoga training for 200 Government Physical Education teachers from Tamil Nadu schools. A very successful trip with excellent response from all concerned was a pleasant outcome of the entire programme.

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS: Amma was invited to be the Guest of Honour at the Inaugural Function of The National Workshop on Women’s Health organized by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, New Delhi, on the occasion of International Women's Day in New Delhi. The workshop was inaugurated by Smt. Anita Das, IAS, Secretary to Government, Ministry of Health and presided over by Shri Varghese Samuel, Joint Secretary. Amma addressed the 200 delegates from Yoga, Naturopathy and Ayurvedic institutions gathered for the workshop from every state in India with the theme: "Spirituality For Women". She underlined the need for the modern Indian woman to return to her cultural roots and traditional thoughts, attitudes and lifestyle, which was in essence, a Yogic lifestyle.

Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, New Delhi organised the NATIONAL YOGA WEEK in March 2007. The Yoga Week consisted of a National Seminar on Role of Yoga in Community Health, a National Conference on Yoga and Health Care and Various Skill-Building Workshops on various topics. Dr. Ananda was one of the Invited Guests of Honour for the Yoga Week and delivered a keynote address on "Meeting Points of Yoga and Modern Medicine". He also delivered an invited talk on "Yoga For Children" and was Master of Ceremonies at the inaugural function. Dr. Ananda was also a Member at the Consultative Meeting held to discuss the Accreditation of Yoga Institutes and Courses that was held simultaneously during the Yoga Week.

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been initiating many new projects and proposals in regard to Yoga recently and the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, New Delhi has been entrusted with the duty of bringing all Yoga schools together to evolve a basic consensus on accreditation of Yoga institutes and curriculum in India. Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani, Chairman, Yognat and representative of the Gitananda Yoga Tradition was invited to attend the Consultative Meeting on Accreditation of Yoga Institutes and the curriculum and syllabus of Yoga programmes and courses that was held at the sVYASA Yoga University campus, near Bangalore in June 2007. The meeting was attended by twenty-five representatives of fifteen premier Yoga institutes, Ashrams, Yoga centres and Universities from all over India. The meeting was attended by Shri Samuel Varghese, Joint Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, who held consultations with the Yoga experts on many matters of vital importance including the recent controversy on Yoga Patenting and Copyrighting in the USA. The meeting formulated the draft proposal to be submitted to the Health Ministry for further action and the deliberations were conducted in a
healthy and congenial atmosphere, thanks to the dynamic coordination of Dr.Ishwar Basavaraddi, the Director of the MGNIY.

Dr.Ananda was one of the invited guest speakers for the 5th International Yoga Conference held in December at Kaivalyadhama in Lonavla, Maharashtra. Kaivalyadhama is one of the oldest Yoga institutes in India and this conference highlighted the advances in Yoga Research, Education and Therapy. Dr.Ananda was co-chairperson for the session on Yoga Therapy, Jury Member for the Best Paper Presentation Session and presented his paper on Yoga research as part of the panel discussion on Recent Trends and Advancements in Yoga Research. Eminent Yoga experts from all over the world attended the conference that had a great response from both the Yoga enthusiasts and general public.

VIJAYA DASAMI CELEBRATIONS AT YOGNAT: The official reopening of the renovated City Centre of Yoganjali Natyalayam was done on Vijaya Dasami, 2nd October 2006. A team of Pandits performed various Homas invoking Ganapathi, Lakshmi, the Navagraha as well as for the cleansing and purification of the centre that had seen immense construction activity in the past year. Hundreds of past and present students of Yognat witnessed the Pujas that were followed by a sumptuous feast of Prasadam in biodegradable plates. All present appreciated the foresightedness of Amma's architectural planning as well as the excellent execution of the plan by Shri Gowtham Chatterjee of Creations Constructions who is in-charge of the renovation work. "A real Divine and artistic palace that is a boon for our children" commented one of the highly appreciative parents. The Vijaya Dasami Puja was conducted by Amma who then gave a special lesson on "Asana is not equal to Yoga!" for the assembled students. The importance of right attitude and right action was stressed by Amma who wished the students a steady growth in their inner understanding of the vast science of Yoga. Amma also gave a special session for the dance students where she coached them in the important positions of the dance that are often neglected in the hustle and bustle of modern teaching. Special dance and music classes were then conducted by the faculty for the eager students who then presented their Guru Dakshina to Amma.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION: Valluvar Cultural Society honoured Amma with the title award of PALKALAI POOMPOZHIL on the eve of the Navarathri (Durga Puja) celebrations in September 2006 at the Sri Sringeri Mutt's Saradha Temple in Pondicherry. Kalaimamani Pulavar I.Pattabhiraman, President of the Valluvar Cultural Society read out the citation and honoured Amma with a beautifully framed, coloured certificate of honour on the occasion. Speaking on the occasion, he noted that it is a most appropriate award for Amma who has sown the seeds of a cultural revolution through the fine arts of Yoga, music and dance not only in Pondicherry but throughout India and internationally. She has carefully, like a good gardener, nurtured the artistic and spiritual talents of thousands of youngsters thus resulting in a cultural revolution that is a model for all societies. "There are many who are great, but only a few have the greatness to make others great – Amma is one such maker of greats", said the noted poet.

Amma was awarded the PATANJALI AWARD as part of proceedings of the 4th Tamil Nadu Lions Meet, attended by 1000 delegates of 900 Lions Clubs from all over South India held in February 2007 at Pondicherry. In the citation, Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani was praised an outstanding personality who had done great service in bringing the science of Yoga to local, national and international popularity. She was
also praised for her work in spreading the knowledge of Yoga, Bharat Natyam and Carnatic Music amongst common villagers in Pondy and Tamil Nadu.

Pondicherry University Community College (PUCC) is the first of such colleges in India and is celebrating its decennial year along with the bi-decennial year of Pondicherry University. The Diploma distribution ceremony held at the PUCC campus in October 2006 saw the distribution of three Gold Medals in the reverential memory of Swami Gitananda Giri for excellence in Yoga studies. The Gold Medals sponsored by Dr. Ananda in order to motivate the students into deeper and higher levels of learning were awarded to Rajalakshmi (2001–02), Satish (2002-03) and Meena Ramanathan (2003-04) for securing first place during the Certificate in Yoga Teaching (CYT) course. The Swami Gitananda Giri Memorial Gold Medals were given away by the dynamic Education Minister of Pondicherry Shri M.O.H.F. Shajahan in the presence of Prof. M. Ramadas, the Pondicherry Representative to the Indian Parliament who is also the Founder-Director of the PUCC.

YANTRA COURSE AT ANANDA ASHRAM – A TOOL FOR SWADHYAYA: Two dozen dedicated Sadhaks of the Rishiculture Ashtanga (Gitananda) Yoga tradition gathered at the Mother Ashram for three weeks in February to participate in an illuminating course on Yantra by Yantra Shironmani SWAMI ANANDA KAPILA SARASWATHI (Dr. Jonn Mumford) who is the Patron of the Australian Gitananda Yoga Association. The Yantra Course was inaugurated on the evening of 3rd February after the celebrations marking the 133rd Jayanthi of Yogamaharishi Swami Kanakananda Brighu, the Paramguru of this Rishiculture Paramparai.

ANANDA’S SUCCESSFUL TRIP TO ITALY: Dr. Ananda had a highly successful maiden voyage abroad to Italy in April 2007. He was hosted in an excellent manner by Swami Yogananda Giri at the Gitananda Ashram in Altare near Savona. A hectic two-week schedule awaited Dr. Ananda with Hatha Yoga and Yantra classes, special conferences, performances of Bharat Natyam and Mridungam lessons. Tamil New Year was celebrated with more than 150 immigrant Tamils who are currently residing in Italy. He presented key aspects of Gitananda Yoga during the official inauguration of the Gitananda Federation of Italy on the 9th April 2007. The Gitananda Ashram was also featured on Italian TV during Ananda’s stay and it was a job well done indeed. One of the major highlights of Dr. Ananda’s visit was his meeting with the Prime Minister of Italy Mr. Romano Prodi, who is also the Former President of the European Commission. It was of great significance that Dr. Ananda was in Italy for the signing of the important agreement between the Italian Government and the leaders of eight minority religions in Italy. Dr. Ananda as the Honorary Chairman of the Italian Hindu Union was a member of the three member team that represented Hinduism at the meeting along with Shri Jayendranata (a leading lawyer of Italy) and Swamini Hamsananda Giri who are the President and Vice-President respectively of the Italian Hindu Union. While meeting Mr. Prodi, Dr. Ananda expressed his happiness at Italy giving importance to Hinduism that signifies the acceptance of one ancient culture by another ancient one. Kumari Lilavathi Kamala Devi and Dr. Ananda performed a special programme of Indian music and dance at the Inter-Religious Meeting in Rome that was well appreciated by all the representatives of various religions, educational authorities and school children of Rome who were in attendance at the wonderful auditorium.

38TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL YOGA TEACHER TRAINING COURSE: For the 38th consecutive year without a break, a new batch of eaglets were hatched and trained to fly high
in Yogic skies as the Annual International Yoga Teacher Training Course came to a harmonious conclusion in its Graduation Ceremonies, Sunday, March 25th at Shri Kambiswamy Madam. Fourteen persons from thirteen countries successfully underwent the rigorous six month Yogic transformation of this unusual course, designed by Yogamaharishi Dr.Swami Gitananda Giri Gurumaharaj in 1968 and conducted every year without a break since then in his Gurukula in Pondicherry, India. The course contains 750 hours of practical work and 750 hours of theory classes. More than 300 Asanas, Kriyas and Mudras, forty Pranayammas and a multitude of relaxation and concentration techniques are studied under the guidance of Amma who is the Resident Acharya.

SATYA PRESS PUBLICATIONS: Amma is busy completing her extensive book on "The History of Yoga from Ancient to Modern Times" of 3000 printed pages that will be released by the end of this year. This book will be a reference for all Yoga enthusiasts and is a must for the library of all serious students of Yoga. Dr.Ananda has revised and edited the second edition of Swamiji's books on the "Correction of Breathing Difficulties Through Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga" and "Mudras". He is currently working on a book on "Pranayama in the Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga Tradition" and a revised edition of Swamiji's "Yoga:Step–By–Step" Correspondence Course.

Dr.Ananda is busy producing DVDs related to applications of Gitananda Yoga in association with the well-known music company SUPER AUDIO, Chennai who is a partner of UNESCO's Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity. Following the success of the DVDs on Pranayama, Mudras, Yoga for Breathing Disorders and Yoga Stress Busters, Dr.Ananda has recently released a new DVD on "Yoga for Weight Loss". His next DVD on Meditation: The Inner Yoga will be released shortly.

YOGNAT SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS: Sangeetha Samrat Shri Vijaya Bhaskar Music Award: Yognat conducted the Fourth Shri Vijaya Bhaskar Music Awards in June 2007. This award in memory of the great music composer Shri Vijaya Bhaskar was instituted in 2003 by the family of Smt.Mangala Gowri and Sri.C.K.Manoharun for students of Yognat showing exceptional talent in Classical Music. R.Shalini has bagged the Best Vocalist Award in the Senior category while B.Keerthana has bagged the Best Vocalist Award in Junior category. S.Vidyashankari has been selected to receive the Shri Vijaya Bhaskar Music Scholarship for the year 2007–08.

Michael Danckwerts Yoga and Cultural Excellence Award: In June 2003 Mr.Chris and Mrs.Annette Danckwerts of Australia instituted the Michael Danckwerts Yoga and Cultural Excellence Award in memory of their son who was a lover of Yoga and Indian culture. Candidates are evaluated on the basis of curriculum vitae, character, academics, extra-curricular, personality and poise in an interview by a panel of eminent judges. The award consists of a year's full scholarship in Yoga and Bharat Natyam, a gold medal, a special certificate, and several books on Yoga. Every year two students get the award based on their performance and two others are selected for the scholarship. Winners of the MDYCE Awards for 2007: S.GHAYATHRI and J.SANGAVI. The MDYCE Yoga Scholarships for 2007–08 are being awarded to: S.SAMYUKTHA and R.SUBHASHINI

Yoganjali Natyalayam Institute Awards: Yoganjali Natyalayam each year selects from its hundreds of students, one boy and one girl who have shown outstanding Yogic qualities. A "family" which has gone "above and beyond" the call of duty to ensure that its children are nourished by the roots of our ancient Indian culture is also honoured. Recipients of these

28 students will be awarded Silver Medals for completing Five Years of study at Yognat taking the total of such students to more than 125 over the past 14 years. A truly commendable achievement in the pressure filled world of modern education.

Ananda Ashram has completed forty years of Yoga and Cultural Arts community service to Pondicherry, India and the world in 2007. Yognat was founded in 1993 by Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj as a continuation of the Sri Kambaliswamy Youth Yoga and Cultural Programme started in 1975 by Pujya Swamiji and our beloved Amma at Ananda Ashram, Thattanchavady. It is our keen observation that unlike in most schools where the ordinary are slowly edged out, in Yognat it is seen over the years that many "ordinary students" have been transformed into "dynamic, skillful and talented" youngsters who can hold their own against the best. This has resulted in our adopting a new motto this year "MAKING THE ORDINARY – EXTRA-ORDINARY! AND THE EXTRA-ORDINARY - GREAT!"

It is our heartfelt prayer that Pujya Swamiji continues to bless us to achieve this objective with each and every student who enters our institution and that our beloved Amma will always guide us at all times towards this noble goal.