

# YOGANJALI NATYALAYAM

## Annual Report 2007–2008

By Yogacharya Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani,  
Chairman, Yoganjali Natyalayam

We at Yognat are blessed with the great privilege to be the recipients and the torchbearers of the teachings of our visionary founder Satguru Yogamaharishi Dr. **Swami Gitananda Giri Gurumaharaj**. With his benevolent blessings and the loving guidance of our dynamic Pudevai Shakthi, **AMMA**, Kalaimamani **Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani**, we at Yognat have had an eventful year with so many chances for "Skillful action" over the past 12 months. The hundreds of performances, guest lectures, lecture-demonstrations, Yogasport 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! As well side by side we have conducted the Rigorous Yogic Sadhana of the scores of Sadhaks from all over the world in the Residential Six Month International Yoga Teachers Training Course at ICYER. This year was the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Course conducted without break from October 2<sup>nd</sup> to March 25<sup>th</sup>.

Our beloved Amma is one of the fore-runners in the Yoga and cultural renaissance over the past four decades and continues to inspire us with her loving example being more active than ever in her 65<sup>th</sup> year. The numerous accolades received by staff and students of Yognat throughout the year continue to reinforce our resolve to keep the flag of Yoga and Indian Culture flying high at all times. The Annual Day Celebrations are also an occasion to thank all the parents of our beloved 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:** Nearly 150 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 **14<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL DAY** performance and the **KARNA CHARITRAM** and **SAMBANDAR** Dance Dramas were surely the highlights of the year 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 15<sup>th</sup> Annual International Yoga Festival conducted by the Tourism Department as well as at Pondicherry University, Annamalai University, Vinayagar Chaturthi celebrations, Navarathri, Shivarathri and Thiyagaraja 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 at festive occasions all over Puducherry.

**CENTENARY JAYANTHI CELEBRATIONS FOR SWAMIJI:** The Centenary year for Swamiji has seen a great number of Yoga and cultural activities all over the globe in his honour. Swamiji usually provides us with many good reasons to celebrate every day, every hour, every moment of our Yogic lives! The celebration of the **Centenary Jayanthi** of Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri began on July 24<sup>th</sup> 2007 with a private concert by world famous Carnatic vocalist Padma Bhushan TV Shankarnarayanan of Chennai at ICYER. Events have been held continuously since then with an elaborate Guru Puja on Guru Purnima on July 29<sup>th</sup>, a two-week visit by eighteen Gitananda Yoga teachers and students from Italy and a seven-day Centenary Seminar for Senior Teachers of Gitananda Yoga Rishiculture Ashtanga Yoga August 15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> at ICYER attended by sixteen teachers from twelve countries. Events were held throughout 2007 as part of the International Celebrations honouring the contribution of this Great Guru to the modern Yogic movement.

The magnificent dance drama, **Karna Charitram** was presented by Yognat in August as part of the **Centenary Jayanthi Celebrations** of Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri. More than a thousand persons experienced the wonderful Dance Drama that had elegant lyrics, intricate choreography, superb costuming and exquisite music combined with the dancing skills of the sixty children and young adults of Yognat. Under the dynamic direction of Amma and Dr. Ananda, they created a magic realm where time stood still. As usual the entire Dance Drama was unique and original to Yognat. Music was composed by Nada Yoga Shironmani Kalaimamani S.V. Jagadeesan and Dr. Ananda while the Tamil Lyrics were penned by Tamil Gnana Shironmani Kalaimamani Pulavar I. Pattabhiramane. The choreography was a joint effort of Amma, Dr. Ananda and Smt Devasena Bhavanani. The main roles were played by Devasena Bhavanani, S. Ghayathri, Shreya Agrawal, S.S. Lothika and I. Krishnaveni. Cameo roles by Lakshmi and Padma were an excellent way for the seniors to be part of the production in a loving manner. The dramatic skills of all the young artists were so excellent that the audience totally forgot that they were watching a drama and instead felt that they were witnessing the tragic events and conflicts of Karna's life. Smt Rajsri Vasudevan received on behalf of her Guru **Padma Bhushan Dr. Padma Subramanyam** the award "**Bharata Nritya Kala Shironmani**". In her speech she said the **Karna Charitram** was a splendid, perfect effort by a team of more than 100 persons. "So engrossing, absorbing and perfectly executed was **Karna Charitram**", she said, "I literally could not move from my seat!"

Yognat presented its latest spectacular Dance Drama **NAMASHIVAYA VAZHGA** depicting important episodes from the life of **THIRU GNANA SAMBANDAR**, one of the greatest musical child-saints of the Indian cultural tradition at the inaugural of the "Panniru Thirumurai World Conference 2008" held in February 2008. The 90-minute Dance Drama that had original lyrics, music and choreography by Yognat was witnessed by several hundred delegates from all over the world. J Sanghavi, SS Lothika, Shreya Agrawal, R Sruti, S Devasena and Krishnaveni played important roles in the drama that also had Dhivya Priya Bhavanani playing the part of the baby Sambandar.

**IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT YOGNAT HAS PRESENTED 29 MAJOR AND MINOR DANCE DRAMAS AND 17 SPECIAL DRAMATIC COMPOSITIONS IN THE LAST 22 YEARS THAT ARE ALL ORIGINAL IN LYRICS, MUSIC AND CHOREOGRAPHY.**

**ANNUAL YANTRA COURSE AND SPECIAL YOGA CHIKITSA COURSE:** Having been well trained in this art by his Guru-father and having received excellent instruction from Dr Swami Anandakapila Saraswathi (Dr. Jonn Mumford) of Australia during the last six years, Dr. Ananda gave an intense, systematic and in-depth instruction in this "*Science of Number, Name and Form*" in February 2008. A special feature of the February Session this year was the **YOGA CHIKITSA SESSIONS** daily, led by Yoga Chemmal **Dr. Nalini** under the guidance of Amma. In this special session, the Yoga Chikitsa techniques of this Paramparai were revised and re-systematized. The Yoga Chikitsa sessions were received with great joy and a sense of fun. A beautiful book containing wonderful line drawing illustrations by Omkaary of Mexico and sensitive photos by Sri Devi of Switzerland was compiled as the result of the work. The book was edited and sponsored by Dr. Nalini. All the Sadhaks had great praise for the masterly manner in which Amma, Dr. Ananda and Dr Nalini conducted the training in a thorough, interesting, systematic manner.

**SHREYA'S BHARATANATYAM ARANGETRAM:** Yognat presented Kumari **Shreya Agrawal** in her Bharatanatyam Arangetram on 6th June 2008 at the PEC Auditorium. She was awarded her **Seven Year Certificate in Yoga and Bharatanatyam** on the occasion. Shreya has been a star student of Yognat and also excelled in academics and extra curricular activities. She has danced main character roles in Dance dramas produced by Yognat, including Karna Charitram where she danced the role of Arjuna and Sambandar where she enacted the role of the Nayanmar Appar and the Chief Minister. Nearly all of the compositions that were performed at the Arangetram were uniquely composed and choreographed by Dr Ananda and Smt. Devasena under Amma's guidance.

Yognat had in April 2008 also presented Kumari **R Sruti** in her first solo performance as part of the completion of her **Seven Year Certificate in Yoga and Bharatanatyam**. The performance was held at Yognat's Cultural hall and witnessed by an appreciative audience.

**SUMMER COURSES 2008:** The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Intensive Yoga and Bharatanatyam Course was held in May 2008 with nearly 150 staff and students participating in the Yoga, Bharatanatyam and Slokam 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 Ganesh Pacharatnam of Adi Shankara, Lingasthakam and Ganesha Atarvashrisha. **J Sanghavi** topped the intensive classes with a magnificent performance throughout. Theory classes given by Amma were the highlight of the intensive. The concept of the animal nature being transformed into the human and then humane and Divine nature was brought out in an extraordinary manner by Amma. 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. A booklet with the core concepts was compiled and presented to all students for ready reference.

Nearly 70 students and staff members of Yognat participated in the **three day residential camp at ICYER** conducted at the end 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. **SS Lothika, Shreya Agrawal, J Sanghavi** and **V Roshini** were selected "**Best Students of the Camp**" in recognition of their Yogic talents and behavior.

Dr Ananda also conducted a special set of classes in May 2008 that took a detailed look at the **YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI**. The participants delved deep into the amazing thoughts that are contained in the Sutras and also learned to chant the Yoga Sutras in the traditional method. It was a truly educative and reflective experience for all.

**22<sup>ND</sup> PONDICHERRY AND 4<sup>TH</sup> TAMIL NADU YOGA SPORT CHAMPIONSHIP:** Nearly 500 contestants ranging in age from two to 70 years, representing 19 institutions of Pondicherry took part in the 22<sup>nd</sup> PONDICHERRY STATE YOGA SPORT CHAMPIONSHIP 2007 held at Subulakshmi Mahal in Muthialpet on the 17th and 18th of November 2007. **R V Krithika** and **Mohana Padmanabhan** bagged the Senior Championship Awards for female and male competitors respectively while **Poonkuzhali** and **A. Kandavel** won the Junior Championship Awards in the girls and boys categories respectively.

**THE EIGHTH SWAMI GITANANDA BEST CHILD AND YOUTH AWARDS:** The Pondicherry Yogasana Association organized the SWAMI GITANANDA BEST YOUTH & CHILD AWARDS 2007 competitions during December 2007 and January 2008 at the Yoganjali Natyalayam premises in Pondicherry. More than a hundred children and youth participated in this event that was held for the EIGHTH year running. This year the youth category included students who were studying in class seven and above while those below the seventh standard participated in the child events. The Honorable Former Minister of Education, Thiru SP SIVAKUMAR was the Chief Guest of the Awards Ceremony and praised the amazing grace and skill of the young students who put on an excellent show of Yoga, dance and drama. He also inaugurated the Pondicherry Yoga Registry that is aimed at giving opportunities to the qualified and experienced yoga teachers of Pondicherry. The Special Guest of the evening Dr GNANAM who is an internationally acclaimed educationalist and former vice chancellor of many universities praised the efforts of Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani and Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani in bringing out the creative and spiritual best of their students. He also released three new books authored by Dr Ananda. **S Geethalakala** was declared winner of the **Swami Gitananda Best Youth Award 2007** while **S Vidyashankari** won the **Swami Gitananda Best Child Award 2007**. Both received their glittering trophies for the eminent guests of the evening.

**15<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL YOGA FESTIVAL:** As in the past, our Director and Chairman were invited speakers and consultants at this year's festival. Dr. Ananda also organized 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 and VCD that was released on the occasion. Many faculty members of Yognat were selected as Juries for this year's festival and also taught at 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 Devasena Bhavanani, Smt Lalitha Shanmugam and Shri C Shanmugam have been taking many classes for the community in different places and creating an awareness of Yoga. 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.

Amma was a featured speaker at the Special Programme on HIV / AIDS Awareness and Prevention programme in October at the Vivekananda School. The programme, jointly organized by UNICEF – PRATHIBA, Shanthi Ashram, Coimbatore and Pondicherry Women's Conference was directed towards about 400 young people who are members of the National Service Society. Amma spoke to the students in an entertaining innovative way employing the use of what she calls "English Mantras", Yogic truths chanted in English in short, pithy sentences, combined with the use of Mudras, Bharatanatyam and Yogic hand gestures. She also taught the youngsters Jattis used to release tension, emphasizing that Yoga is the **"3 C's" Consciousness, Carefulness and Control**. Students of the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Yoga Teacher Training Course demonstrated Jattis. Yogacharini Guadalupe, Yogacharini Aishwarya and Bhawana gave an excellent Yoga Asana demonstration in tableau form. Little Dhivya Priya and Anandraj were "stars of the show" as they too demonstrated Yogic Jattis.

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 600 patients every month in various villages in and around Auroville.

Yognat also continues to impart quality training in Yoga and Bharatanatyam at our West Branch near JIPMER. Many of these students have come into the main branch and started to shine in a beautiful manner.

As part of the **Study India Programme of Pondicherry University** our senior faculty members imparted practical training in Classical Yoga and Bharatanatyam for 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. 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.

**CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS:** Amma and Dr. Ananda were Invited Guests of Honour for the Yoga Week 2008 held in Delhi during February 2008. Amma was specially invited to deliver the Valedictory Address for the Yoga Week 2008 and Chaired various sessions in the National Seminar on Accreditation. She was one of three women nationally felicitated and honoured by the Union Minister of State for Health for their work in promoting Yoga. Dr Ananda delivered an invited talk and moderated one of the major sessions. Dr Ananda was also the Master of Ceremonies at the inaugural function. He also gave a talk for the Workshop participants on obesity and its management. The honorable Union Minister for health, Dr Anbumani Ramadass delivered the inaugural address where he called upon the Yoga professionals to provide preventive health care for the nation. Dr Ananda presented a copy of his latest book and DVD on YOGA FOR WEIGHT REDUCTION to the Honorable Minister who appreciated his efforts towards the popularizing of Yoga for health and well being. The Yoga Week was attended by the representatives of premier Yoga institutes, Ashrams, Yoga centers, Government and NGO bodies and Universities from all over India. The Yoga Week 2008 was conducted in a successful manner with a lot of positive outcomes thanks to the dynamic organizing ability of Dr Ishwar Basavaraddi, the Director of the MGNIY along with his colleagues who did a wonderful job.

Amma and Dr. Ananda were Featured Speakers at the **National Seminar on "Social Relevance of Sanskrit"** held in February at the Sanskrit Department of Pondicherry University.

Amma is one of the founding directors of the Indian Yoga Association that has been formed by Yogis from twelve different major Yoga traditions across the country. Their aim is to standardize the Yoga National education system and therapy extended by various Institutes in the country with support from the Department of Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (AYUSH), under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The Forum would function as an Accreditation Body, framing common syllabus for various educational programmes in Yoga offered by different institutions, besides evolving modules for teaching and treatment. It also will set standards for Yoga Therapists and members of the Yoga teaching fraternity. A Directory of recognized Yoga Institutes, Yoga courses and Yoga Teachers in India would also be compiled by the Indian Yoga Association. Other founding members of the IYA include amongst others Padma Bhushan Shri B.K. S. Iyengar of Pune (President IYA), Shri. O.P. Tiwari of Kaivalyadhama, Dr. H.R. Nagendra of VYASA, Smt. Hansa Jayadev of the Mumbai based Yoga Institute, Shri. S. Shridharan of the Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram in Chennai, Shri. Shrdhalu Ranade of Aurobindo Ashram in Puducherry, Dr. K.Krishna Bhat of the Mangalore University and Swami Mangaltirtham of the Bihar School of Yoga.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION:** Amma was awarded an *Excellence in Poetry for World Peace Medal* and Certificate by the **United Poets Laureate International** of Hercules, California, USA. The Certificate was signed by Dr. Benjamin R. Yuzon, President. The Medal is inscribed with Amma's name and the words: *For Excellence in Poetry by United Poets Laureate International.*

Amma was also awarded in February 2008, the title **"Saiva Neeri Chemmal"** literally, **"One Who Embodies the Ideal Saivite Life"** by the **"Panniru Thirumurai World Conference 2008"**. Amma, who has been a tireless propounder of all aspects of Saivite Culture including Yoga, Bharatanatyam, Carnatic Music, temple rites and rituals, Dravidian scriptures especially through the medium of Bharatanatyam Dance Drama, she expressed gratitude at being given this title. *"As a lover of this great way of life since my arrival in India forty years ago, it gives me satisfaction to know that my efforts to expound these principles have been understood and recognized by those born to the culture,"* she said.

Amma is an official advisor on Yoga to many Government Departments including Tourism, Education, Human Resources and Health. Amongst the foremost awards received by her are **"Puduvai Kalaimamani Award"** by Government of Pondicherry; **"Puduvai Shakti Award"** by Woman Task Force Y2K in Pondicherry; **"Patanjali Award"** by Lion's Club International; **"Bhaskar Award"** by Bharat Nirman, New Delhi; and **"Yoga Mani Award"** by the then President of India Shri Zail Singh in 1986 at Asian Village, New Delhi.

The work of Amma and Dr Ananda has received wide publicity in the local and national press with write ups their activities and that of the Yoganjali Natyalayam appearing often.

Dr Ananda was recently awarded two more title awards by the Valluvar Villasai Kuzhu. Kalaimamani Pulavar I Pattabhiramane bestowed the awards on Dr Ananda during the best youth and child awards held in February 2008. **MRIDUNGA VITTAGA MAMANI** meaning the great jewel of the art of Mridungam was given in recognition of his talent in the percussion art. The title of **MUTHAMIZH SUVAIGNAR** meaning the one who savors the three aspects of classical Tamil (literature, music and dance) was given in recognition of his love for the ancient language of Tamil and his proficiency in the three aspects of Tamil. Kalaimamani Pattabhiramane is a noted poet, singer and teacher who has been one of Ananda's mentors in Tamil and has helped him develop his love for this language that is one of the oldest living languages surviving today.

**Yogacharini Devasena Bhavanani**, head department of Dance at Yognat received the title award of **"Isai Yoga Bharata Nattuvanga Kali Chudar"** from the Valluvar Villasai Kuzhu that is headed by Kalaimamani Pulavar I Pattabhiramane. He also honoured 4 year old **Dhivya Priya Bhavanani** with the **"Kalai Valar Ilam Pirai"** award for her excellent performance as young Sambandar in the Namashivaya Vazhga Dance Drama.

Dr Ananda has been appointed to the **International Advisory Board** of the IAYT (**International Association of Yoga Therapists**) based in the USA for a three year

term. This prestigious appointment is in recognition of his work in propagating Yoga as a respected therapy worldwide and he will be involved in more and more such research and theory works in the near future on an international scale. Dr Ananda has also been busy with his consultative meetings at AYUSH in the Central Governments Health Ministry at Delhi as well as teaching and performing assignments at Annamalai University, VPCI of Delhi University where he presented a lecture on Yoga and Sinusitis and the Pondicherry Music and Dance Artistes association that organized the Tamil Music festival and Thiyagaraja Jayanthi Festival in which he performed.

**YOGNAT'S YOGIC TOUR 2008:** A select group of forty staff and students from Yognat went on a Yogic Tour of South India with Dr Ananda in April 2008. A visit to the famous new Golden temple in Velore was the first stop and then a visit to the old fort temple in Velore gave a beautiful contrast of the new and the old to all. The ancient temples have such a holy feeling and vibration that no new temple however grand its splendour can never ever match the old. The group visited the Ramana Ashram in Thiruvannamalai and then went on the Padayatra over the holy mountain of Arunachala. Skanda Guha, the cave where Ramana Maharishi stayed many years and other caves on the mountain were visited by all the enthusiastic climbers. The evening trip to the temple of Arunachaleswar completed the day's journey and the tired but satisfied group made its way back to Pondicherry that night. Ananda told many stories to the group of the times when Swamiji would take students on these Yogic tours and all enjoyed hearing the stories and visiting the spots on Arunachala Mountain that Swamiji used to visit. For Ananda also it was a trip back in time as he hadn't been to Thiruvannamalai for nearly 15 years.

**ANANDA'S SUCCESSFUL TRIP TO EUROPE:** Dr. Ananda had two highly successful tours to Italy, Germany and Switzerland in 2007. He taught, lectured and performed in numerous conferences and seminars as well as programmes arranged for him by the Gitananda Ashram in Italy, Vijeya Centre in Locarno, Switzerland and the Berlin Gitananda Yoga Society. He was also an Invited Guest at the Milan Yoga festival where he taught and performed and also at the Tagore Cultural Centre at the Indian Embassy in Berlin where he lectured on Yoga and modern medicine. He will be traveling to the UK, Italy, Switzerland, Germany and the USA in September and October 2008 and to Australia and New Zealand in April 2009.

**PUBLICATIONS:** "The History of Yoga from Ancient to Modern Times", Amma's magnum opus is nearly ready and the first volume of the 3000 paged epic 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 released three new books including "Yoga for health and healing", "Yoga for weight loss" and "Chakras". New editions of his Stress Book and Theory Book were also released this year. He has also presented two new DVDs on Medication and Chakras in the past year and is now working on five more DVDs on Yoga Therapy to be produced in association with the well-known music company SUPER AUDIO, Chennai who is a partner of UNESCO's Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity. For details on the DVDs and books please contact Dhivyananda Creations at [dhivyananda@gmail.com](mailto:dhivyananda@gmail.com) or call 0413-2622902

**YOGNAT ON YOUTUBE.COM:** More than 50 video clippings of Yognat performances and Yoga activities have been uploaded on the popular youtube.com website. To enjoy them please go to <http://youtube.com/user/yognat2001>

**YOGNAT SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS:** Yoganjali Natyalayam each year selects from its hundreds of students, one boy and one girl who have shown outstanding Yogic qualities as well as a student who has shown Yogic valor in trying circumstances. **Recipients of these awards for this year are:** BEST BOY 2008 – **S Sivasankar**; BEST GIRL 2008 – **D Reena Joseph**; Yoga Veerya Award 2008- **Miss R Varalakshmi**.

**Sangeetha Samrat Shri Vijaya Bhaskar Music Award:** The Shri Vijaya Bhaskar Music Awards have been instituted in the memory of the great music composer Shri Vijaya Bhaskar in 2003 by the family of Smt Mangala Gowri and Sri C K Manoharun for students of Yognat showing exceptional talent in Classical Music. **S. Devasena** and **B Keerthana** have been selected to receive the Shri Vijaya Bhaskar Music Scholarships 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 Bharatanatyam and a special merit certificate. Miss **SS Lothika** and Miss **L Kanmani** have been selected to receive the MDYCE Scholarship Awards for 2008.

**YOGNAT EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2008:** On the occasion of its 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Yognat is proud and privileged to honor eminent personalities of Pondicherry who have contributed towards the propagation of our culture and values in our society. This year, Yognat is honouring the eminent musicologist and music composer Kalaimamani Tanjavur Dr BM SUNDARAM with the SANGEETHA GNANA RATHNA in recognition of his selfless service for the cause of Indian Music. The noted Tamil poet and lyricist of all Yognat Dance Dramas, Kalaimamani Pulavar I PATTABIRAMANE will be awarded the MUTHAMIZH MAMANI title award. Yognat honors Kalaimamani K RAJAMANIKKAM with the NATYA KALA SHIRONMANI for his work in the field of Indian dance while "Puduvai Shakthi" Professor Dr P NALINI is honoured for her yeoman service in Pediatrics and through the Hemophilia Society of India with the title award of KARMA YOGA SHIROMANI. The illustrious Violin Vidwan Kudanthai R BALASUNDARAM and the multifaceted Vocalist-Percussionist-Composer Dr Vellore AR SRINIVASAN will be awarded the NADA YOGA SHIRONMANI for their service towards the cause of Classical Indian Music.

*Ananda Ashram has completed forty years of Yoga and Cultural Arts community service to Pondicherry, India and the world in 2008. Yognat was founded in 1993 by Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Gurumaharaj as a continuation of the Sri Kambliswamy Youth Yoga and Cultural Arts Programme started in 1975 by Pujya Swamiji and our beloved Amma at Ananda Ashram, Thattanchavady. Hundreds of students freely trained in that programs have become professional Yoga Teachers, Bharat Natyam masters and Carnatic vocalist. Some of these students are now on the teaching staff at Yognat. 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.**