YOGANJALI NATYALAYAM
Annual Report 2009-10
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Chairman, Yoganjali Natyalayam and ICYER, Puducherry. www.rishiculture.org

When you can do your work with love, passion and motivation producing happiness not only for yourself but for others too - then you are truly blessed in your life! We at Yognat are tremendously blessed by our Gurus, for, we are ever busy doing stuff that we love and enjoy. This also gives us the chance to constantly evolve ourselves on the path to liberation, the goal of human existence. “Work is worship” said our illustrious Guru Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj and he makes sure we are busy worshiping the Divine a lot for he keeps us ever busy with newer plans every day. We at YOGNAT are truly blessed to be Sishyas of such a visionary founder and are constantly motivated towards excellence by our dynamic director and Guru, Puduvai Shakti, Ammaji, Kalaimamani Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani.

Hundreds of cultural performances, guest lectures and lecture demonstrations in many universities, Yoga Sport events, competitions and conferences all over the world have kept us on our toes throughout the eventful year. The usual schedule of classes for the children and adults as well as the Yoga therapy sessions have seen good response from the local community with huge enrolment in all the regular as well as intensive programmes. A rigorous Yogic Sadhana has been undertaken by the Sadhakas from all over the world in the residential Six Month International Yoga Teachers Training Course at ICYER and this year was the 41st year of this Annual Course conducted without break since 1968. Dr Ananda and Smt. Devasena had a successful tour to Europe while Dr Ananda was recently in South Africa spreading the greatness of Yoga and our beloved Indian culture all over the globe. Ammaji has been as dynamic as ever and continues to lead the Yoga and cultural renaissance all over the world with her loving example being more active than ever in her 67th year. Staff and students of Yognat have won numerous awards and brought name and fame to Yognat, Pondicherry and India keeping the flag of Indian Culture flying as high as ever.

This year we are celebrating our 17th Annual Day Celebrations of Yognat and it once again creates an opportunity for us to thank all our loving parents and beloved children for their unconditional and unlimited support at all times. We congratulate each and every parent for giving their children this "GIFT OF OUR OWN GREAT CULTURE". It is only the love and blessings of our well-wishers and patrons all over the world that enables our beloved, enthusiastic and talented children to make great strides of progress in Yoga and the fine arts. They have also excelled in their academic studies and many of them are now shining in higher studies and their professional lives. They continue as ever, day-by-day, to make our heart swell with pride at their "Skill and beauty in action" proving true the dictum, “Satyam-Shivam-Sundaram”.

CULTURAL PROGRAMMES AND PERFORMANCES: More than 150 public performances, cultural programmes and events including major dance performances, vocal and instrumental music concerts 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 16th ANNUAL DAY performance was appreciated by all.
while the **PANCHALI SABADHAM** Dance Drama was surely the highlight of the past year. It was definitely the best ever production from YOGNAT and drew great appreciation and tremendous applause from all over the globe.

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 17th Annual International Yoga Festival conducted by the Tourism Department as well as the Cultural Events organized by the Department of Art and Culture, Govt of Puducherry. Numerous cultural performances were given at JIPMER conferences, Vinayagar Chathurthi celebrations, Navarathri and Thiyagaraja Jayanthi celebrations of Pondicherry Music and Dance Artistes Association and at private and public festive occasions all over Puducherry. Dr Ananda and Devasena performed enthralling musical concerts and dance performances in Italy and Germany during their European tour in addition to Dr Ananda’s successful Yoga workshops and seminars in Italy, Germany and South Africa.

**PANCHALI SABADAM:** Under the aesthetic, artistic and dynamic direction and co-ordination of Ammaji, Bharatiyar’s version of this important segment from the Mahabharata came fully alive in front of nearly a thousand strong and appreciative audience who had assembled on 11th October in the New Auditorium of JIPMER. The Panchali Sabadam dance drama was Yognat’s way of paying tribute to its visionary founder, Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj on the occasion of his 102nd Jayanthi (birthday) celebrations. The lyrics were adapted from Bharatiyar’s original play by Mutthamizmamani Kalaimamani Pulavar I Pattabiramane while the music was composed by Kalaimamani Nada Yoga Shironmani SV Jagadeesan. Dr Ananda Balayogi and Smt Devasena Bhavanani choreographed the initial dance compositions that were then tweaked into perfection by Amma ji’s magical hands. As Dr Ananda was to say later, “Ammaji has that amazing magical touch that can make even the lifeless statues come to life and dance with grace and beauty”. No wonder all the children and young adults performed their roles to perfection by merging themselves into their stage characters. “They were so real that I wanted to get up and beat up Duryodhana, Shakuni and Dushshana” said Venkatesan, a senior student of Yognat as he came out of the hall. Many others echoed his sentiments as the three young ladies, Selvi G Kanimozhi (Dushshana), Selvi I Krishnaveni (Duryodhana) and Selvi S Ghayathri (Shakuni) seemed to have been totally transformed into their characters. Krishnaveni deserves a special mention for her excellent help in organizing the songs for the drama. She and Selvi G Kanimozhi were also part of the initial choreography team with Smt Devasena and Dr Ananda and put in many hours to get things together when they seemed to be all in pieces at the beginning. “If not for Krishnaveni’s initial efforts in response to my challenge, this drama may not have occurred this year!” said Dr Ananda in his thanksgiving speech as it is the pride of Yognat to see its students become all-rounders in life and this is part of that training too.

The respected Director of JIPMER Dr KSVK Subba Rao praised the spectacular performance and exclaimed that Yoganjali Natyalayam is a treasure of Pondicherry. He complimented both Ammaji and Dr Ananda on putting on such a performance in the JIPMER auditorium that was the purpose of creating such an auditorium for not only JIPMER but for all people of Pondicherry.

The musical side was led by Dr Ananda and Kalaimamani Sri SV Jagadeesan along with Smt. Devasena and Smt. Vineshwari. Smt Devasena conducted the performance with excellent Nattuvangam and dynamic vocal support. Thirumudi S Arun gave excellent rhythmic support on
the Mridungam along with Sri Al Ramasamy (Mogarsing) and Sri S Gopal (special effects). The costumes were organized by Smt Lalitha Shanmugam with make up by Shri E Somu. Shri C Shanmugam, Sri C Kulandaivelu, Sri Keshavan Giri and others organized the stage management in an excellent manner without any major hiccups. Shri P Mutthamizvaanan and Selvi D Reena Joseph gave an excellent overview of each scene in Tamil and English respectively helping the audience to enjoy better every nuance of the drama. The main characters were played by Dr Padma Prashanthini (Draupadi), I Krishnaveni (Duryodhana), G Kanimozhi (Dushshana), Shreyab Agrawal (Yudhisthira), J Sanghavi (Krishna), S Ghayathri (Shakuni), S Samyukta (Bharatiyar), R Varalakshmi (Bhima), S Devasena (Arjuna), K Nivetha (Karna), A Anjana (Nakulan), S Shanmathy (Sahadevan), G Sarulatha (architect of the palace), M Keerthana (Goddess Saraswathi and Gandhari) and Geethakala (Dritharasthra and Brahma). Able support was given by K Kalaivani, S Manju Priya, N Poonghuzhaly, Pradeepa Narayanan, Reshma S Kumar, Debolina Pal, S Samyukta, S Vidya Shankari, S Valli, A Rajeswari, Dhiyva Priya Bhavanani, S Sahana Sankari, K Swathi, S Preethi, R Sumitra Thillaikannu, R Keerthana Devi, A Priyadarshini, KR Kanagalakshmi, S Anurupa, J Nivedha, R Parkavi, N Ajayraj, S Marcelin, R Pavithra, P Preetika, S Vijayalakshmi, S Pavithra, G Swarnamalya, D Darni Josephine, A Thamizhmalar, Sabarishree who put in great effort to make every scene a great success.

Four of the Yognat families who have been with the institute right since its inception were honoured as FOUNDING MEMBER FAMILIES on the occasion. The families of Shri CK Manoharun and Smt Mangala Gowri (Dr Padma Prashanthini and Thribuvan Vijay), Shri K Manickam and Smt Meenakshi Manickam (M Niraimathi and M Ilaval), Shri R Narasimmanmurthy and Smt Chitra Narasimmanmurthy (N Ramya and N Divya) and Shri V Dhanaraj and Smt D Malathi (D Vimala and D Lakshmi) were thanked for giving Ammaji and Dr Ananda so much assistance at all times as well as producing torchbearers of the highest Yognat standards.

“All the knowledge of Tamil I have gained in my 78 years of life is not sufficient to give apt praise for the efforts of Ammaji and Dr Ananda towards propagation of Indian culture worldwide” said Kalaimamani Pulavar I Pattabiraman who also presented the title award of Pannaya Natiya Sezhunchudar to Dr Padma Prashanthini for her great talent in the ancient art of Bharatanatyam. Padma was doing her internship at the Pondicherry Government hospital and often came for practices right after many hours of grueling duty. As Dr Ananda put it, “Finally Yognat has a dancing doctor, and such an excellent one too!”

Kalaimamani Dr BM Sundaram, the renowned musicologist appreciated the great efforts in putting together such an impressive production and said that it was the best depiction of Panchali Sabadam he had ever witnessed. He further appreciated Ammaji’s untiring efforts in taking the great Indian culture to all the youngsters of the next generation in such an artistic and pleasing manner.

Shri A Muralidharan, eminent Chartered Accountant of Chennai was honoured on the occasion with the title of Karma Yoga Shironmani in appreciation of his efforts of the Indian society. He has been a well wisher of Yognat for many years and is a source of constant guidance for the institute in its development. Yogarani Dr Nalini and Yogacharini Shobana represented the International Gitananda Yoga family on the occasion and paid tribute to the yeoman service to the world community that has and is being done by Swamiji and Ammaji. Thavathiru Velu Swamigal of the Rengaih Madam in Karaikal was also present on the occasion with special blessings for all. The eminent Tamil scholar Prof ML Thangappa later wrote, “The drama was so
impressive that one is easily drawn to say that none has achieved such a perfect rendition of the
Panchali Sabadam till date as Yognat has now done. Congratulations to all involved in the
creation of this grand success.”

**IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT YOGNAT HAS PRESENTED 31 MAJOR AND MINOR
DANCE DRAMAS AND 18 SPECIAL DRAMATIC COMPOSITIONS IN THE LAST 24
YEARS THAT ARE ALL ORIGINAL IN LYRICS, MUSIC AND CHOREOGRAPHY.**

**First Solo Dance Performance of Arushi and Jahanvi Singh:** Young students of Yoganjali
Natyalayam’s West Branch Jahanvi and Arushi Singh performed their first official solo dance
performance on June 24th at the beautiful new JIPMER Hospital Auditorium. The sisters
received their Five Year Certificate in Dance and Yoga Studies on the occasion from the
hands of the Chief Guest, Dr. KSVK Subba Rao, Director of JIPMER Hospital. A good
standing of more than 300 persons witnessed the beautiful performance of Arushi, age 12, and
Jahanvi, age 11. They are the daughters of Dr.Puran Singh and Dr.Vimal Kumari Arya. The
family is moving to New Delhi and so the event was a wonderful climax to their very productive
and happy stay in Pondicherry.

_Yoganjali Natyalayam_ lived up to its name by bringing “The Joy of Yoga into the classical dance
of India” during its programme for the South Zone Cultural Festival on February at the Rainbow
Nagar Community Ground in Pondicherry. Fourteen young dancers and two Yoga demonstrators
enthralled hundreds present with the uniquely choreographed items led by Dr. Ananda on
Mridangam and Smt. Devasena on Nattuvangam. Little Dhivya charmed the audience with her
enactment of “naughty Krishna” in the mini dance drama “Thayee Yashoda”. The Director of
Art and Culture Smt. Bhanumathi, who was present in the audience, was so moved by Dhivya’s
performance that she rose from her seat and honoured Dhivya by wrapping a “ponnadai” (shawl)
around Dhivya’s shoulders! All the girls excelled themselves and won great applause,
interweaving difficult Yoga Asanas into the classical Bharat Natyam Choreography. M
Siddhardhan and M Swaroup Ramanan gave an excellent Yoga demonstration. The South Zone
Cultural Festival draws artists from all over India and is supported by the Ministry of Art and
Culture.

Yoganjali Natyalayam was invited to present a special cultural performance for the _Paniru
Thirumurai Pannatu Manadu_ (World Shaivite Tamil Conference) in February 2010. The
performance was based on the concept of _SHIVA MAYAM_ (all is the grace of Shiva) with S
Devasena (Sowmiya) playing the lead role of Lord Shiva in the company of two dozen young
dancers. The eminent audience was spell bound by the flawless performance and many delegates
from Sri Lanka expressed their admiration for Swamiji and Ammaji’s yeoman service towards
the cause of the Dravidian Classical Fine Arts.

**SUMMER COURSES 2010:** The 14th Annual Summer Intensive Yoga and Bharatanatyam
Course was held in May 2010 with more than 150 students participating in Yoga, Bharatanatyam 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 _Das Sloki_ of Adi Shankara by Smt Meena Ramanathan.
Theory classes given by Amma on the _Shat Ripus_, the six enemies of spiritual evolution were
the highlight of the intensive. 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. 75 students
and staff members 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, a bonfire and many other holistic activities to broaden the young minds. The students enthusiastically participated in all activities.

24th PONDICHERRY STATE YOGA SPORT CHAMPIONSHIP: The 24th Pondicherry State Yoga Sport Championship was conducted in a grand manner on 14-15 November 2009 at the spacious Sri Subulakshmi Mahal, in Pondicherry. Nearly 700 participants took part in this event despite the heavy rain that lashed Pondicherry this week. Expertise and proficiency of the competitors was tested in both their performance of the various types of Yoga Asanas as well as knowledge of Yoga philosophy, psychology and history. Kalaimamani Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani, President of the Pondicherry Yogasana Association inaugurated the championship with Guru Puja to the founder Yogamaharishi Dr Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj. The competitions were conducted simultaneously on four stages with 75 jury members and 25 volunteers performing their roles willingly and untiringly despite the huge workload. There were 46 different separate categories for both male and female competitors ranging from pre-school toddlers to mature college level students. A special event was held for children of the SADAY School for special children. 40 of these special children who have mental and physical handicaps participated and not only performed the Asanas but also expressed the definitions of Yoga in the most sweet and charming manner. Yogachemmal Meena Ramanathan has been doing yeoman service for these kids and the loving bond they share is something that moves one to tears. The sight of these children expressing the definitions of Yoga would have surely even moved Lord Krishna and Maharishi Patanjali.

The climax of the event was the grand CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS competition where the first prize winners from all the categories competed against each other in a spectacular show of Yoga Asana skill as well as expression of their admirable knowledge of Yoga theory. Champion of Champions trophy for this year was bagged by M. SIDDARDHAN in the male category and S. SABARISHREE in the female category. Both these youngsters are students of Yoganjali Natyalayam, the premier institute for Yoga and the Classical Indian Fine Arts, that has been producing innumerable champions over the past 16 years with the blessings of Swamiji and Ammaji.

Dr A GNANAM, Former Vice Chancellor of Pondicherry University was awarded the title of KARMA YOGA SHIRONMANI in recognition of his illustrious and selfless service for the cause of higher education in India. Shri PARAMAKEDOU received the MOOLIGAI MARUTTUVA CHEMMAL award for his service through Herbal medicine in Puducherry. YOGA CHEMMAL awards for the year 2009 were bestowed upon Smt V Suseela, Thiru Venkatachalapathy, Thiru R Chandraselkar, Thiru S Tamilngolan, Thiru G Dayanidy, Thiru T Sathish Kumar, Thiru V Gnanavelu and Selvi G Kanimozhi in recognition of their achievements and efforts for the cause of Yoga.

Three new DVDs on Yoga by Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani were released by Dr A Gnanam on the occasion. These DVDs are on Advanced Pranayamas, Yoga for Pelvic Health and Yoga for Sleeping disorders. These are part of the extensive project of Ananda Ashram at ICYER, Pondicherry (www.icyer.com) of putting out various videos related to applications of Gitananda Yoga in association with SUPER AUDIO, Chennai (www.musicandchants.com) who is a partner of UNESCO’S Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity. Mr. E. Srinivassan of Yatra Multimedia, Auroville who has directed the DVDs was honoured on the occasion. Students of Yognat
presented a spectacular Team Yoga tableau to bring the curtain down on another grand success with the blessings of Swamiji and Ammaji who continue to inspire us all to do our best for the cause of Yoga and Indian Culture.

TENTH SWAMI GITANANDA BEST CHILD AND YOUTH AWARDS 2009: For the tenth year young people of Pondicherry received an opportunity to exercise their Yogic muscles by participating in the Swami Gitananda Yoga and Child Awards 2009 Competitions. More than 150 young ones showed their Yogic skill in action through seven kinds of individual events and four team events. The categories were: Yoga Art Designing, Yoga Art, Fancy Yoga Skit, Fancy Yoga Novelty, Yoga Novelty, Alert Yoga, Dumb Charades Individual. The team events were: Team Quiz, Team Crossword, Team Dumb Charades, Rhythmic Yoga Demo. The person who collected the most points from these various competitions was declared winner. Best Youth Award went to S. Divakar. First Runner Up went to S. Sivasankar and Second Runner Up went to S. Devasena. Best Child Award went to Debolina Pal. First Runner Up went to P. Preethika and Second Runner Up went to Dhivya Priya Bhavanani. The competitions were spread out over a time frame of two months, December 2009 and January 2010 and events were held each weekend. A tremendous amount of organizational effort was made by senior students of Yoganjali Natyalayam in promoting all the events. The direction of the competition was handed over by Dr. Ananda to G. Dayanidy and D. Reena Joseph, both now young professionals but still offering their selfless service to Yoganjali Natyalayam, giving back what they were given. Dayanidy had won the Youth Award in 2004 and Reena Joseph had won the Youth Award in 2005. Prizes were distributed at a gala function attended by hundreds on February 21st at Yoganjali Natyalayam. On that occasion special awards were also made to outstanding personalities in recognition of Yogic Social Services. Presentation of Swami Gitananda Global Yoga Senior Citizen Award was made to Yogacharini LALITHA DEVI of New York, USA and Presentation of Karma Yoga Shironmani Award was made to Thiru K. VENKATRAMAN, MD, Dinamalar Newspaper.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: Yognat places great importance on community development and hence both Ammaji and Dr. Ananda gave numerous guest lectures as well as conducted lecture demonstrations and insightful introductions to Yoga at numerous forums. Senior faculty members of Yognat including Smt Devasena Bhavanani, Smt Lalitha Shanmugam, Shri C Shanmugam, Shri E Gajendiran and Smt Meena Ramanathan have been taking many classes for the community in different places and creating an awareness of Yoga. Yognat faculty members are also teaching in many schools as well as colleges and other institutions.

Ammaji enjoyed a beautiful Satsangha with the Krishnamacharya Yoga family in March 2010, when she was invited to be the Chief Guest and distribute certificates for the Two Week International Pranayama Course at the Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram in Chennai. She was greeted with a warm traditional welcome by Shri Kausthub Desikachar, the grandson of the legendary Yogashri Krishnamacharya. Dr. Latha Satish, Managing Trustee, and Dr. Gita Shankar, Director of Studies took Ammaji on a tour of the wonderful multi-storied complex, which has just completed construction. The sound of Vedic chants permeated the building and a beautiful Kolam at the door in front of a large photo of Yogashri Krishnamacharya created a
Yogic atmosphere in an urban setting. Much loving hospitality was showered upon Ammaji and she fully enjoyed the wonderful meeting with Yogashri T.K.V. Desikachar who is a world renowned Yogi and son of Yogashri Krishnamacharya Ammaji addressed the thirty participants from all over the world, as well as teachers of the Institution on the topic of Yama / Niyama”. Shri TKV Desikachar blessed Ammaji with a Vedic chant and presented her with a lovely Kuttuvelakku which she said she would always cherish. ICYER and Yognat looks forward to close collaboration with this beautiful lineage and Dr Ananda has been invited as a guest speaker for the conference on Yoga and Modern medicine being organized by KYM in Chennai on 18th July 2010.

Yoganjali Natyalayam conducted two outreach programmes for the young trainees of Zest, known as Zest stars who are receiving training in various aspects of management. Yoga practice is a part of the training programme undergone by the Zest Stars in order to make them more skilful and better equipped in their respective jobs. The programme was organised and conducted by Yogachemmal Meena Ramanathan who is the Co-ordinator of Yognat Outreach Programmes with assistance of Dr R Balaji and Shri S Manikandan under guidance of Ammaji and Dr Ananda.

Smt Meena was an invited faculty for the National Seminar on “Essentials of a Qualified Teacher in Yoga” held at Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University, Coimbatore in March 2010. She gave an excellent invited talk on “Yoga for the Differently-Abled Children” that was well appreciated by all delegates and faculty from all over India. She also was invited to give a special presentation on Yoga and autism for a workshop at the same university in May 2010. Yognat congratulates her for her dedicated and loving efforts for the cause of ‘special children’ though Yoga with the support of her husband Shri C Ramanathan.

Smt. Meena also conducted a series of Yoga classes for SHASUN, one of the biggest and leading chemical units in Pondicherry. Dr Ananda gave a theory lecture on Yoga and stress and then Meena conducted a dozen practical sessions. More than 30 staff members benefited from the classes and felt an improvement in flexibility with reduction of stress levels. Shri S Manikandan assisted Meena in the conduct of the course.

Dr Ananda was invited to be the Chief Guest and present a talk on Yoga for Healthy Living during the World Health Day Celebrations 2010 conducted on 5th April 2010, at Ragas Dental College and Hospital, Chennai. Ragas Dental College and Hospital and the Indian Association of Public Health Dentistry, Tamil Nadu Chapter had organized a day-long Seminar to highlight the importance of healthy living for dental professionals and students. Dr Ananda and the group then proceeded to Mahabalipuram for a tour to experience the spiritual and cultural heritage of the region. They enjoyed the heritage walk behind the Arjuna penance that goes up to the lighthouse and spent a quiet evening on the beach. Dr R Balaji, junior faculty of Yognat organized the day-long trip in an efficient manner coordinating all aspects in an excellent manner.

Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani, programme co-ordinator presented an invited talk on “Yoga: A boon for maternal and child health” at Mother Theresa Institute for Health Science as part of the State Level Champaign for mother and child health organized by the Directorate of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy, Government of Pondicherry on 23 February 2010. All the participants and eminent experts of modern medicine and alternative medicine who were present on the occasion appreciated the presentation that highlighted the importance of yoga in both antenatal and postal natal care.
As part of the Study India Programme of Pondicherry University, our faculty members imparted training in Classical Yoga and Bharatanatyam for international students of Pondicherry University. These students from different universities in the USA had chosen to take a semester in India and to study at Pondicherry University. Ammaji gave an introductory session and then Yogacharini Devasena Bhavanani conducted Yoga and Classical Indian Dance classes twice a week at ICYER with the assistance of Yogacharini Shalini and trainee teachers of ICYER. Ammaji, Dr. Ananda and Dr Nalini Devi supervised the planning and implementation of this unique programme and the feedback received from both students and the University has been very positive.

Dr. Ananda presented invited talks on “Bridging Yoga and Modern Medicine” and “Yoga Research – Where Are We?” during the Seminar on Yoga for Doctors organized and conducted at Kaivalyadhama, Lonavla, Maharashtra on 26 and 27 February 2010. More than two dozen doctors from various places in India and sixty students and faculty members of Kaivalyadhama participated in the sessions. Dr. Ananda was full of praise for the organizational abilities of Shri Subodh Tiwari, the current Administrator and son of Shri O.P. Tiwari, the illustrious Secretary of Kaivalyadham. Dr. Ananda also held fruitful meetings with Dr. B.R. Sharma, Director, Research and Dr. R.S. Bhogal, Principal, Yoga College on matters related to Yoga research and academic standardization in India.

The Lion’s club of Pondicherry, in association with the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Saday School had organized a programme to increase awareness amongst the public on Mental Retardation. The programme was on conducted at the Lion’s Club Complex, Kennedy Nagar in December 2009. Smt Meena Ramanathan was invited to be a resource person and gave a presentation on “Knowing Mentally Challenged”. She gave the lecture on how to understand them in a better way and how to improve their Quality of Life through the various Yogic Techniques, which the children of Saday are undergoing for the past 5 years under her guidance.

Smt. Meena Ramanathan is also ably coordinating the Diploma and Post Graduate Diploma Courses in Yoga at PUCC with the cooperation and guidance of Dr Ananda. Faculty members of Yognat are also spreading the knowledge of Yoga as Resource Persons for the Pondicherry University Community College.

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 are shining in a beautiful manner. We are also conducting yoga and dance classes in numerous schools and social institutions by sending yoga, dance and music instructors on deputation.

CONFERENCES WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS: Ammaji and Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani were invited Guest Speakers for the National Yoga Week 2010 organized by MDNIY at New Delhi in February 2010. Ammaji was invited to deliver a Key Note Address during the inauguration of the Seminar on Yoga for Healthy Lifestyle in the presence of the Hon’ble Union Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare Shri S. Gandhi Selvan and the Secretary AYUSH, Smt. S. Jalaja. Ammaji’s lucid talk was well appreciated by the dignitaries and participants from all over the country. Ammaji is a Member of the Governing Body of MDNIY and deeply appreciates the sincere and dedicated efforts made by Dr. I.V. Basavaraddi, Director MDNIY in bringing all Yoga traditions together in order to propagate this invaluable cultural heritage of our country. His role in the formation of the Indian Yoga Association
deserves great praise and it is our wish that he is given unconditional support by all the major Yoga traditions of India in his selfless efforts towards the standardization and wider acceptance of the science of Yoga in India and abroad. Dr. Ananda and Yogacharya Michael Deslippe conducted a workshop on “Yoga for Technostress” on behalf of ICYER in collaboration with staff of MDNIY. The workshop was well attended by 120 participants on both days and Dr. Ananda led the group through the concepts of Stress and Technostress and the Yogic methods by which they can be managed better.

Ammaji was invited as a Special Guest for a National Seminar organized by the Tamil Nadu Physical Education and Sports University at the Rajiv Gandhi Sports Stadium in Chennai in March 2010. The function was presided over by the Vice Chancellor Thiru Dr. Vaithianathan and was organized by Dr. V. Mangaiyarkarasi. About 200 delegates from all over India attended. Ammaji spoke on the essence of sportsmanship as the quality of heroism. She also pointed out that the word “virtue” has its origin in “Veerya” so heroism implies a virtuous character as well as physical strength, endurance and skill. She cited the example of the plethora of great sportsmen in the Hindu Culture such as Rama and Krishna, who were great wrestlers and superbly fit athletes in their capacities as warriors. She asked the young physical education teachers to inculcate the true quality of Veerya in all their students.

Dr. Ananda was an Invited Plenary Speaker at the 6th International Yoga Conference, at Kaivalyadhama, Lonavla, Maharashtra held from 27th to 30th December 2009. He presented an invited talk in the Plenary Session on “Yoga and Cultural Synthesis” that was chaired by Shri Suresh Prabhu, Former Minister of Power, Government of India. Dr. Ananda also chaired the session on Applied Aspects of Yoga and was a panelist in the Panel Discussion on Ethical Decline in Yoga Research and Yoga Teaching. Devasena Bhavanani accompanied him and enjoyed the ambience of Kaivalyadhama and Lonavla.

Dr. Ananda presented an invited talk entitled, “Culturing one’s self through Yoga” in the Plenary Session of the 12th National Conference on Developing School Psychology in India organized by Pondicherry Psychology Association at Pondicherry in January 2010. The conference was held at the Achariya College, Villianur and coordinated by Dr. Panch Ramalingam.

Ammaji and Dr. Ananda were resource persons for a Workshop on “Yoga for Stress Management and Personality Development” organized by ANANDITA and Gautam Buddha Health Care Foundation at Pondicherry in January 2010. Dr. Madanmohan, Dr. Nalini Devi, Dr. Punet Gupta, Dr. Rajalakshmi, Dr. Zeena Sanjay, Shri R. Murugesan, Shri E. Jayasettiaseelon and Mrs. Meena Ramanathan were other faculty. Staff and students of ICYER and Yoganjali Natyalayam participated actively in the excellent workshop that was held at the Surguru Restaurant in down town, Pondicherry. Mrs. Meena Ramanathan, Coordinator Outreach Programmes of Yoganjali Natyalayam, actively coordinated the workshop with Mrs. Bharati from Anandita, New Delhi.

A National Seminar cum Workshop entitled as “Role of Yoga in Geriatric Care with special reference to Osteoarthritis” under auspices of the Advanced Centre for Yoga Education and Research, Department of Swasthavrutta, Shri Gulabkunverba Ayurved College, Gujarat Ayurved University, Jamnagar was organized with the collaboration of Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, New Delhi, in March 2010. Yogacharya Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani, Chairman ICYER at Ananda Ashram, Pondicherry was invited to present a Workshop on Yoga for
Cervical Spondilitis and Frozen Shoulder that was attended by more than 120 participants. He also presented a keynote talk on the Approach to Geriatric Care through the Gitananda Tradition of Yoga and was invited panelist in the open house panel discussion. Dr Ananda gave excellent feedback on the whole event with praise for the organizational abilities of Dr Arpan Bhatt, Programme Director ACYER who is a multi talented, dedicated and amazing humane being who is working hard towards the propagation of the traditional sciences of Ayurveda and Yoga in modern India. Dr Ananda also commended greatly the sincere and dedicated efforts of Dr IV Basavaraddi, Director MDNIY whose foresight has resulted in the setting up of Advanced Centre for Yoga in NIMHANS, DIPAS, JIPMER and Gujarat Ayurved University. He is a true visionary and the International Gitananda Yoga Family Worldwide wholeheartedly supports his yeoman efforts in uniting the Yogis of India together through the Indian Yoga Association and his efforts towards integration of Yoga with modern medicine.

Dr Ananda was invited to present a day long workshop on Yoga and Yoga therapy during the One Month Foundation Course in Yoga for Medical Professionals and Students conducted at the JNMC situated in Wardha, Maharashtra from 4th March to 5th April 2010. This programme was under the auspices of the department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health in the Government of India and though the agencies of the MDNIY, New Delhi. The invitation was all the more special for Dr Ananda as this is the very same medical college where he had completed his studies in medicine. Dr DA Biswas, Professor and Head, Department of Physiology was the prime moving force behind the Foundation Course in Yoga and was guided in this by Dr KN Ingley, Emeritus Professor who served as the Dean and Director JNMC when Ananda joined in 1993. The programme was conducted with blessings of the management of the university who have been supporting the introduction of Yoga immensely while Dr SS Patel, the Chief Coordinator of the University lent full support for the programme. It is hoped that more and more medical colleges will take up such programmes and create a positive environment conducive the integration and the ancient art and science of Yoga with the modern science of medicine for the benefit of humanity.

The 17th International Annual Yoga Festival held in January 2010 by the Government of Pondicherry, Department of Tourism, was a grand success. With more than 1000 delegates from all over India and nearly twenty countries, many proclaimed the festival to be "The Best Ever!" Ammaji and Dr. Ananda served as unofficial advisers for the event. Dr. Ananda was the "backbone" of many events, especially the highly competitive Yoga Sports (Yoga Asana) Competition. S. Sabharisree, M. Siddhardan and V. Dayanidy brought name and fame to Yognat and Puducherry with their great success. The Yoganjali Natyalayam Cultural Troupe enthralled the audience with a spectacular evening’s performance on 5th January while teacher trainees at ICYER were Invited Speakers in the Lecture Sessions. The Yoga Festival was begun in 1993 under the direct stimulus and patronage of Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri and it has been held for seventeen years without break. It is the only Government-sponsored Yoga Festival in the world.

The Advanced Centre for Yoga Therapy, Education & Research (ACYTER), JIPMER organized a Seminar-Cum-Workshop on Yoga and Complementary Therapies for AIDS/HIV in January 2010. More than 100 delegates participated in the sessions held at the JIPMER Nursing College. Dr KSVK Subba Rao, Director JIPMER inaugurated the workshop in the presence of Dr Subbarayalu Naidu, Project Director, Pondicherry AIDS Control Society. Yogacharini Meenakshi Devi Bhavanani, Director ICYER and Dr N Ardhanari, Eminent Social Activist
offered felicitations. The workshop was conducted by a dozen resource persons from various JIPMER, ICYER, Pondicherry Health Department and Pondicherry University Community College under the direction of Dr Madanmohan, Professor and Head, Department of Physiology and Programme Director ACYTER, JIPMER. Practice sessions were conducted by Dr Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani who was assisted by Smt. Meena Ramanathan, Shri G Dayanidh and Selvi L Vithiyalakshmi. DR Ananda is the programme coordinator of ACYTER, that is a collaborative venture between JIPMER, Puducherry and Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), New Delhi. This advanced centre is focusing on the role of Yoga in prevention and management of cardiovascular disorders and diabetes and aims to popularize Yoga amongst medical professionals and general public.

ACYTER and the Department of Physiology, JIPMER organized a two day National Workshop-cum-Seminar on “Role of Yoga in Prevention and Management of Hypertension” in March 2010 at JIPMER. The workshop was organized in collaboration with MDNIY, New Delhi. The workshop deliberated on the role of yoga in the prevention and management of hypertension with keynote lectures, invited talks, lecture-demonstrations, panel discussions and practice sessions that were given by a team of 24 resource persons from JIPMER, DIPAS, Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, Iyengar Yogashraya, Sikkim, Kaivalyadhama, Yoganjali Natyalayam and ICYER. Ammaji gave an excellent invited talk on Yogic attitudes while Dr Ananda gave a talk on Yogic management of hypertension. He also conducted practice sessions of Asanas for hypertension and participated in panel discussions in addition to coordinating the event for ACYTER. Dr Nalini Devi participated in the panel discussions while Smt Devasena Bhavanani, Smt. Lalitha Shanmugam and Smt. Meena Ramanathan assisted in conducting the practice sessions. Staff and students of ICYER and Yoganjali Natyalayam participated in the workshop in an enthusiastic manner and with the participation of the international students of ICYER, the event even took on an international flavour! Yognat also presented a spectacular cultural evening of Bharatanatyam and Yogasana tableaux that held delegates from all over the country spellbound.

WORKSHOPS ON CHAKRA HEALING BY SRI BALA: Yoga Bhishmacharya Sri Bala Ratnam, Founder of Vibrational Breath Therapy in Melbourne, Australia conducted a workshop on CHAKRA MEDITATION FOR HEALING in January 2010 at ICYER. All the participants enjoyed the two hour session that was held in the Satsangha hall with amazing vibrations produced with the chanting of AUM. The relationship between the Shariras, the Koshas, the Chakras and the different parts of the brain were brought out by Sri Bala who led the group through a step-by-step approach to negating the tensions stored in the different regions giving release to them and producing health and healing. Sri Bala took all through a journey that passed through the different stages of consciousness and the Pancha Kosha and guided the participants through the self healing techniques visualizing the Chakras with the chanting of Akara, Ukara, Makara and Omkara Nada. He conveyed many of his personal experiences through his intensive Yoga Sadhana and also in dealing with patients of various ailments. Sri Bala is a dedicated disciple of Swami Gitananda Giri and has codified the Vibrational Breath Therapy based on Rishiculture teachings of his Guru. Sri Bala at 87 years of age is a living example of the beneficial effects of Yoga and is a role model for all sincere Yoga Sadhakas. Sri Bala also conducted a workshop at Bernard Theatre in JIPMER organized by ACYTER and at the International Yoga Festival organized by the Government of Pondicherry. Sri Bala was accompanied by his well wisher Shri Viswanath of Chennai who is the grand nephew of the great Tamil poet, Mahakavi Subramaniya Bharathiyar.
AWARDS AND RECOGNITION: The work of Ammaji 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.

Ammaji was honoured with the “MAHAN ARAVINDAR AWARD” by the Pondicherry Artists Association in November 2009 recognition of her dynamic role in creating a Yoga and cultural revolution amongst the youth of Pondicherry. The eminent artist of Pondicherry, Shri AB Iber is the president of the Artists Association that has been doing wonderful work in organizing art competitions in trains, planes and boats to stimulate the children to display their creative skills. Yognat expresses its heartfelt support for the Association and its President who has been a well wisher of Yognat and the work of Ananda Ashram for many decades.

For the past 13 years Theiva Sikkizhar Mantram, a literary association in Puducherry is propagating the cause of Bhakti Yoga though Periyapuranam discourses and detailed analysis of the lives of the Nayanmars, the great Shiva Bhaktas who led lives of great devotion to Lord Shiva. The late Sri M Chokkalingam and the eminent social activist Dr N Ardhana, a close associate of the Yognat family founded this organization that has been instrumental in educating the youth of Puducherry about the greatness of our wonderful Dravidian culture. This year Ammaji was honored in March by the organization with the title award of MARAINERI KALAIVANI (embodiment of the mother goddess of the ancient literary traditions) in honor of her yeoman service for the cause of Dravidian Shaivite culture. This was a special tribute to her direction and production of numerous dance dramas such as Kannapan, Karaikal Ammaiyar and Nandanar Charitram in the past 25 years. The function was presided over by Smt Vasanthakumari, the President of the Mantram while Kalaimamani I Patabiramane, Smt Pattu Ardhanari, Sri Ramasamy, Sri Velmurugan and Sir Venugopal felicitated Ammaji on the honour in the presence of an applauding audience of Tamil enthusiasts.

Dr Ananda was awarded the title of “SIVANERI ISAI CHEMMAL” (the pure embodiment of music devoted to Lord Shiva) in February 2010. The prestigious award was bestowed upon him by Tavathiru Ratnagiri Mauna Swamigal on behalf of the Paniru Thirumurai Pannatu Manadu (World Shaivite Tamil Conference) in the presence of eminent Tamil scholars and researchers during a ceremony in February 2010. The conference was held under dynamic direction of Shri V Narayanasamy at the VST Mahal. Dr Ananda was blessed to have such an honor bestowed upon him for his devoted service to the Tamilian Classical Music and was especially happy to have blessings from Ammaji, Dr Nalini and Yogacharini Lalitha Devi who were present on the occasion. His loving students from Yognat and PUCC honored him on the occasion with Smt Devasena Bhavanani, Smt Meena Ramanathan, Smt Lalitha Shanmugam, Shri Shanmugam and Shri E Gajendiran taking the lead. The eminent Tamil poet-scholar Kalaimamani Pulavar I Pattabiramane who has been one of the most important motivators in Dr Ananda developing a great love for Tamil was present on the occasion to bless him in person.

Yogachemmal Smt. Meena Ramanathan, Coordinator Outreach Programmes of Yognat was honoured with the CHELLAMAL AWARD by the Kavidai Vanil Kavi Mandram in recognition of her Yogic service for Senior Citizens and the Differently-Abled Children. Smt. Meena received the prestigious award named after the wife of the legendary poet Mahakavi Bharatiyar from the former Education Minister Mrs. Renuka Appadurai in January 2010.

Six young students of Yoganjali Natyalayam participated in the SUPER DANCE Competition organized by Casablanca in August 2009 and won second place overall with a scintillating
performance of a fusion and Yogasanas and Tamil folk dance. The team of N Poonguzhaly, Harini Valli, S Samyuktha, S Vidyashankari, S R Sneha Preethi and S Preethi Manjou beat out a heavy competition with their skillful and charming performance while our senior student, Dr Padma Prashanthini bagged a graceful second place after a hard fought and close battle for the title in the Classical dance category. All the students and Selvi G Kanimozhhi and Selvi I Krishnaveni who were responsible for the choreography and training of the students were felicitated at a special event in September 2009. Dr Ananda gave a vocal concert and an entertaining presentation showcasing the photos of his world tours. Yogacharini MARGO HUTCHISON of Australia was awarded the Swami Gitananda Senior World Citizen Yoga Excellence Award on the occasion in honor of her services for the cause of Classical Yoga in Australia.

ANANDA'S SUCCESSFUL WORLD TOURS 2009-10: Dr. Ananda had two highly successful world tours in the past year. The first one was to the Italy, Germany and Switzerland with Devasena in August 2009 and the second was his trip to South Africa in April 2010. Dr Ananda was invited to present a seminar on Yoga Therapy at the Gitananda Yoga Society in Berlin and to present an intensive residential retreat with talks, concerts, dance lessons, seminars and classes at the Gitananda Ashram in Savona, Italy. Yogacharini Devasena Bhavanani conducted classes on Yoga, Sanskrit and Indian Classical Dance. They also gave numerous dance and music performances. Dr Ananda presented a three day intensive residential retreat along with public talks, classes and workshops upon invitation from the Anjali School of Yoga, Cape Town, South Africa in April 2010. These tours have been a grand success and more and more are getting interested in the marvelous depth of real Yoga and Indian Culture.

Dr Ananda and Devasena will be traveling to Italy and Germany in June 2010 where they have been invited to give a series of workshops, lectures and performances. They will also travel to Australia in September where Dr Ananda has been invited to be the Major Presenter at the 2010 Convention of the International Yoga Teachers Association (IYTA). Dr Ananda and Devasena will also conduct an intensive three day residential retreat at Brisbane for the members of the Gitananda Yoga Association of Australia and New Zealand.

PUBLICATIONS: A new edition of the YOGA THEORY BOOK translated into Tamil by Smt Meena Ramanathan has been released to benefit the Tamil speaking Yoga students. This new edition is completely revised and is now fully up-to-date with the latest English edition. New full colour books have been released on CHAKRAS: THE PSYCHIC CENTRES and MEDITATION while a detailed book was released on the BASIC HATHA YOGA PRACTICES OF THE GITANANDA TRADITION. Dr Ananda has also presented three new DVDs on Advanced Pranayamas, Yoga for pelvic health and Yoga for sleeping disorders that were produced in association with 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 yognat@gmail.com or call 0413-2622902. Ammaji and Dr Ananda’s series of Yoga programmes on NDTV have been again broadcast many times in the past year and are also available on youtube.com. More than 100 video clippings of Yognat performances and Yoga activities have been uploaded on the popular youtube.com website. To enjoy them please go to www.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 valour in trying circumstances. Recipients of these awards for this year are: BEST BOY 2010 – M SIDDARDHAN; BEST GIRL 2010 – I KRISHNAVENI; YOGA VEERYA AWARD 2010- Selvi G Kaniomozhi; 2010 – I KRISHNAVENI Yoga Family Award 2010- Thiru RATNAM and Family (Smt Ratna Kumari, Selvi R Swati and Selvi R Shalini).

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.

Michael Danckwerts Yoga and Cultural Excellence Award: In June 2003 Chris and 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.

Ananda Ashram has completed forty two years of community service through Yoga and Cultural Arts in Pondicherry, India and the world in 2010. Yognat was founded in 1993 by Yogamaharishi Dr. Swami Gitananda Giri Guru Maharaj as a continuation of the Sri Kambaliswamy Youth Yoga and Cultural Arts Programme founded in 1975 by Pujya Swamiji and our beloved Ammaji at Ananda Ashram, Thattanchavady. Hundreds of students who were freely trained in that programs have now become professional Yoga Teachers, Bharatanatyam masters and Carnatic vocalists, many of these students are now on the teaching staff at Yognat. It is our keen observation that unlike 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 the motto

"MAKING THE ORDINARY – EXTRA-ORDINARY!
AND THE EXTRA-ORDINARY - GREAT!!"