

ARADHANA

Yoga of the heart ♥

Inaugural issue

Year 1 Issue 1
Jan/Feb 2012



Rikhiapeeth, Rikhia, Deoghar, Jharkhand, India



Namo Narayan

Aradhana - Yoga of the heart ♥ is an offering to Paramguru Swami Sivananda and our beloved Pujya Gurudev Swami Satyananda. It is compiled, composed and published by the sannyasin disciples, devotees and well-wishers of Paramahansa Satyananda.

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Rikhiapeeth

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1 & 4 Sw. Sivananda

2 & 3 Sw. Satyananda



Rikhiapeeth, the tapobhumi of Swami Satyananda has developed into a vibrant spiritual epicentre abundant in peace, plenty and prosperity. Aspirants, seekers, devotees, householders and sannyasins, come from all parts of the world to live and work together for the benefit of others by following the high ideals of seva, selfless service, sadhana, spiritual practice, swadhaya, self study, and satsang, association with truth, as taught by Swami Sivananda and established by Swami Satyananda. It is a place of inspiration and joy for the thousands of natives who live in the hundreds of villages that surround Rikhiapeeth, as well as for millions of spiritual aspirants and devotees who come to imbibe the spiritual vibrations that abound in this sacred place.

Aradhana - Yoga of the heart ♥ is intended to share the profound teachings and lifestyle that are being practiced and lived in this sacred place for the benefit of all.

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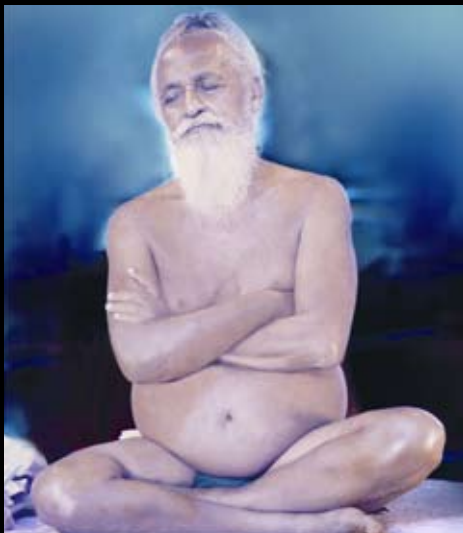
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Aradhana Invocation

देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः । परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ Bhagavad Gita 3:11

Yajnas nourish, strengthen and empower the Devas, they in turn empower us.
Strengthening and nourishing each other in this way, both attain shreya (prosperity).

—Ode to Mrityunjaya—



Om Namo Narayanaya
O Lord Mrityunjaya!
I have worshipped you
As Kaala Bhairava with one tattwa,
As Kaamakshi with five tattwas,
As Vishnu with flowers, fruits, water and milk.

In many forms, in many ways
And in many places
I have worshipped whatever form
You have revealed to me as your own image.

And now, at your burial ground
I will worship you with every breath.

This I promise.

Setyanand

—Sure Steps to Spiritual Life—

Serve

God's plan for human evolution is seva, or selfless service. "Serve. Love. Give. Purify. Be Good. Do Good. Meditate. Realise." That is the spiritual formula for life as life is meant for serving others.

To grow on the spiritual path, you must serve humanity selflessly. Feel that the world is one big family and all are its members. Humanity is your God and serving humanity is your worship. One who is working for all is dear to God.

There is so much suffering in the world. Only selfless service can bring solace and strength to those in need. Serve with the feeling that God dwells in all and receives your service as worship. Be humble, be generous. Cheer up one who is in distress. Encourage one who is dispirited. Wipe the tears of the afflicted. Remove a person's sorrow by loving words. Encourage the helpless and the forlorn. Make a person smile when he is in despair. These are all different forms of seva. Be a lamp to those who have lost their way. Serving others selflessly prepares the heart and mind to receive the divine light. **Seva, or selfless service of humanity, is the first step on the spiritual path. Meditation or samadhi is not possible without preliminary training in seva.** Seva is the salt of life. The meaning of true life is service and sacrifice.

The more energy you spend in elevating and serving others, the more divine energy will flow to you. To live life through seva is to be intimate with life's innermost secret. The secret of attaining God-realisation is serving humanity. Selfless service is the yoga most suited to Kali Yuga, the present age. Seva leaves no loopholes for maya or ignorance to enter you.

—Swami Sivananda



Awaken Intuition through Aradhana

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati



Lalita Homa, Devi Aradhana

There is a common misunderstanding amongst most people that spiritual life is separate from daily life and has no role in it. They imagine, that in order to live a spiritual life, they have to wait till they are at the fag end of life and can live in an ashram renouncing all the pleasures and comforts of life. On the contrary, ashram is the place for learning the skills required for a spiritual attitude and vision of life, not the place where you have to practice or express those skills.

Just as you learn science, art, music, and business in the schools and colleges, but you give expression to that knowledge only when you enter the world arena, in the same way spiritual skills have to be acquired at an early age and expressed in the world, not away from it. Spirit is the source of matter and energy, the two components through which you conduct your life. If you are able to

harness the source, imagine what insight you will have into the very nature of your existence and yourself.

It is only through insight and awareness that you can resolve your day to day difficulties and problems. By acquiring the skills of spiritual life you gain mastery over awareness, for just as intelligence is the expression of the mind and intellect the expression of the buddhi, awareness is the expression of the spirit. Spirit is pure awareness, which is not limited by mind, intellect, senses or ego. It sees and knows all, and can give direct cognition of each and every facet of life.

Our inability to live entirely in the present, as plants and animals do, coupled with our inability to see into the future, makes us strange in between creatures, neither animal nor superhuman. Our amazing intelligence has outstripped us of instinct, the very stuff which kept us in tune and in harmony with nature.

Of course there is no going back. The genie is out of the bottle and it is we who have engineered its emergence. Now the mind has to move forward to intuition, rather than back to instinct. Then the harmony with nature which we have lost, will be restored and we can experience the unified field of nature of which we are an intimate and integral part.

Aradhana aims to bridge this gap that exists in our minds between spiritual life and our daily life in the world of matter, through the teachings of the great spiritual luminary of the twentieth century, Swami Sivananda Saraswati, whose emphasis on living a spiritual life was paramount. Just as Maharishi Patanjali gave accomplished sadhaks the eightfold path for samadhi through the Raja Yoga Sutras, Swami Sivananda gave the ten fold path for samadhi in



Devi Aradhana

the form of sutras which encompass karma yoga, raja yoga, jnana yoga and bhakti yoga for each and every individual whether he was a sadhak or a layman. The teachings of our beloved Swami Satyananda, who gave simple yet practical, comprehensive, systematic and scientific practices to achieve this goal will also be presented in Aradhana.

The title Aradhana-Yoga of the heart was chosen with care. Aradhana is adoring, honouring and propitiating the intangible forces in the galaxy of universes that are defined in yoga as the lokas and making them favourable to one-self. So that, they in turn, pleased with our adoration, bless and steer us on to the right path of true accomplishment, fulfilment and gratification, through the awakening of intuition in our lives.

Aradhana is the highest expression of the human mind where one can perceive the underlying spirit of the universe, through the faculty of intuition. It is intuition that develops through aradhana, for it is only the intuitive mind that can recognize the subtle existence of spirit. Intelligence and intellect just do not have that capacity or qualification. As long as we exist within the limitations of intelligence and intellect we can not take the quantum leap; for that we will have to awaken intuition. Aradhana is



Guru Purnima at Rikhiapeth

an effective, simple and appealing way to accomplish this very difficult task.

Aradhana can be sakaar with form or nirakaar without form depending on our capacity and aptitude. Nirakaar aradhana is on the forces of nature such as surya, chandra, atman, brahman, akasha, vayu, on an idea or thought, something that you cannot see with the eyes or touch, taste, hear or smell. Sakaar aradhana is on the three dimensional manifestation of the forces of nature such as Shiva, Rama, Krishna, Devi, Ganesha or Guru. Whether sakaar or nirakaar, we have to choose a sattwic aradhya or basis for our aradhana. It is aradhana of the sattwic forces that we have to turn to awaken our intuition instead of just adoring and idolizing the tamasic and rajasic forces as most of us tend to do.



Om manifesting during Diwali havan
at Rikhiapeeth

Thus aradhana can become the basis of one's sadhana to enter the esoteric or inner realm whereby all the steps of yoga can be fulfilled from asana and pranayama right up to pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi. First of all in order to perform aradhana one must sit in some form of asana and become steady and equipoised. Then through pranayama the body parts are consecrated and pratyahara induced so that the mind becomes focused on the point of aradhana which is followed by dharana or concentration. Success in these steps eventually leads to dhyana or total absorption and samadhi.



Kanya bhoj during Devi Aradhana

In fact aradhana is the focal point of Rikhiapeeth as all the activities carried out here whether they be feeding and clothing the poor, looking after the sick and ailing, providing means of employment for the needy, or caring for the elderly and destitute, are done in the spirit of aradhana or worship of God in human form.

This bi-monthly journal will also serve as a basis to provide information on the aradhanas performed at Rikhiapeeth and the activities being carried out here in order to manifest the mandate of Serve, Love and Give established by Swami Satyananda at Rikhiapeeth as a path for spiritual life.



Purna in Sivananda Sarovar

Aradhana

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Swami Niranjanananda performing aradhana at Sita Kalyanam

Aradhana is the teaching and the aspiration of Swami Sivananda Saraswati and Swami Satyananda Saraswati. There are two meanings to the word aradhana. The first is the worship of the divine from the religious and ritualistic approach, and the second is seeing and experiencing the presence of the divine in all beings from an applicable and practical approach.

Swami Sivananda, one of the luminaries of the twentieth century, would see the presence of his beloved Narayana in everyone who was sick, hungry, shelterless, destitute, suffering and in need. For him helping all those in need was his aradhana to the divine. Many times Swami Sivananda would tell and instruct his disciples that, if you can serve your fellow human being, you are serving and worshipping the highest God, for God is present in every life and in every form.

Swami Satyananda, who lived and propagated the teachings and precepts of his Guru, Swami Sivananda, would tell us frequently, if

you see a person who is hungry, know that God inside him is also hungry. If you see a person who is suffering, know that God inside that person is also suffering. If you see someone crying with pain, know that God inside that person is also crying with pain, for God is nothing but a reflection of one's own consciousness. In a state of agitation, God is agitated, in a state of bliss and peace, the experience of God is blissful and peaceful.

The luminaries of our tradition have given this practical and applicable approach to an age old thought called Vedanta, and the emphasis is on the realisation of the divine presence in every life. When you cultivate atmabhava as Swami Satyananda has guided us, the ability to see one's own reflection in others, and when you begin to feel for everyone in the same manner that you would feel for your near and dear ones, then the actions taken to bring happiness, prosperity and fulfilment in their lives is the real aradhana.

Worship is an act that people adhere to in order to have divine intervention in their lives, to bring peace, plenty and prosperity, but, along with this personal endeavour to worship the divine, it has to be perceived in every being outside. Applied aradhana develops awareness and the experience of the divine in the mortal dimension and brings happiness, peace, hope, conviction and strength to all. Sage Tulsidas expresses a sentiment in Ramacharitamanas: "I bow with folded hands to the omnipresent effulgence of Sita and Rama which I perceive in the world".

Rikhiapeeth is a continuation of applied aradhana as lived by Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda. The spirit of aradhana



pervades the sanctified area where Swami Satyananda performed highest paramahansa sadhanas and tapasyas, austerities. When people enter the sacred precincts of Rikhiapeeth, they are gracefully enveloped by the dynamic yet gentle, involved yet peaceful spirit of nishkama bhava, selfless nature. Upliftment of all and sharing the bounty of the personal and practical aradhana to bring peace and prosperity through seva, service, is the prasad of the sannyasi who realised the infinite in the finite, and who gave society the teaching of the highest yoga, the yoga of the heart.

Aradhana - Yoga of the heart is also the name of the bi-monthly and bilingual magazine of Rikhiapeeth, which will bring the blessings and inspiration to you to transcend the selfish conditionings and unite with the spirit which is the source of peace and bliss in this hectic life.



Devi Aradhana during Sita Kalyanam

Grace falls on everybody at all times, but people do not realise it. God's grace flows not only towards a saint, but towards every being. To be worthy of God's grace, one must become aware of His grace.

—Swami Satyananda

The Science of Aradhana or Worship

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Aradhana, or worship, is an effort on the part of the worshipper to reach the proximity or presence of God or the Supreme Self. It consists of all the observances and practices – physical and mental – by which the aspirant makes steady progress in the realm of spirituality, and eventually realises the presence of God in his own heart.

Patanjali also emphasises the importance of worship in various places in his Raja Yoga Sutras. For even a raja yogi, worship is necessary. He has his own ishta or guiding deity. Self-surrender to God, ishwara pranidhana, is one of the raja yoga niyamas.



Swami Sivananda worshipping
Ganga, Rishikesh

Aradhana, or worship, may take the form of prayer, praise, meditation, bhajan and kirtan. It differs according to the growth and evolution of the individual. There is nature worship. Parsis worship the element fire. Hindus worship the Ganga, cows, the peepal tree, etc. There is hero worship in which the individual imbibes the virtues of the person whom he worships. Birthday celebrations of great persons are forms of worship. There is relic worship. There is worship of forefathers. There is worship of gurus, rishis and devatas.

Meditation is mental aradhana or worship of the Lord; singing the Lord's names or kirtan is vocal aradhana or worship; service

of living beings with love and a divine attitude is physical aradhana or worship. As a person evolves, he passes from one stage of worship to another. The lower stages drop away by themselves. A person of a higher stage should not condemn one who is in a lower stage. One should not forget the underlying, indwelling, interpenetrating, essence or intelligence when doing worship of any kind.

The fundamental object in aradhana, or worship, is union with the Lord, who pervades or permeates all these names and forms by developing intense love. All are worshipping the one basic reality, Ishwara. The differences are only differences in names and forms due to differences in the worshippers. Worship of Lord Jesus or Lord Mohammed or Sri Guru Nanak or Lord Buddha or Lord Mahavira is really worship of Ishwara only. These are all forms. "In whatever way men approach Me, even so do I welcome them, for the paths men take from every side are mine, O Partha." Bhagavad Gita, 4:11



Kanyas worshipping Sadguru

Wave the lights, sing a song

There are rituals for beginners in the path of worship. When the devotee advances, when his mind is totally absorbed in his object of worship, there is no use in waving lights, offering sandal paste, ringing bells, etc. The whole cosmos is Vrindavan for him. What a glorious state of devotion it is! The devotee attains para bhakti, or supreme devotion. All rituals drop away by themselves for such an exalted bhakta. But rituals are of great help for beginners in developing bhakti. They should not be ignored on any score.

Bhajan is worshipping God. All methods that are calculated to bring the devotee face to face with God are bhajan. Japa, repetition of His name, sankirtan, singing His name either alone or in a group, prayer, etc. constitute bhajan. Even trees, brooks, rivers, the ocean, the gentle breeze, the sun, moon and stars, birds, etc. are doing bhajan silently.

Which worshipper are you?

The Vedas have prescribed five classes of worship according to the predominating element in a person. They are worship of Ganesha, Shiva, Hari, Shakti and Surya. If the earth element is predominant, one should worship Ganesha. If the water element is predominant, one should worship Hari. If the fire element is predominant, one should worship Surya. If the air element is predominant, one should worship Shakti. If the space element is predominant, one should worship Shiva.



Swami Sivananda offering
oblations to the sun, Rishikesh

There is another classification according to the capacity of the individual. Some worship elementals and lower spirits. They are ignorant people. Some worship forefathers and rishis and celestials. Some worship avatars such as Krishna and Rama. Some worship the saguna Brahman, God with attributes. Advanced aspirants worship the formless, attributeless, unmanifest satchidananda Brahman.

There are also four kinds of worship corresponding to four different states and dispositions of the seeker. The realisation that the supreme spirit, paramatma, and the individual spirit, jivatma, are one, that everything is Brahman and nothing but Brahman, the everlasting being, is the highest state, brahma bhava. Constant



Kanyas of Rikhiapeeth performing Sri Vidya Puja

meditation - with yoga processes - upon the Lord in the heart is the lower form, dhyana bhava. Lower still is the bhava of which japa, mantra recitation, and hymns of praise are the expression, and lowest of all is external worship or puja.

Puja bhava is that which arises from dualistic notions of the worshipper and the worshipped, a dualism that necessarily exists in greater or lesser degree until monistic experience is attained. One who realises the truth of advaita, or non-dualism, knows that all is Brahman. For him there is neither the worshipper nor the worshipped, neither yoga nor puja, neither meditation, japa, vows or rituals. He is a siddha, a perfect sage in its fullest sense.

Worship helps the devotee to sit near the Lord or to commune with Him. It purifies the heart and steadies the mind. It fills the mind with Suddha Bhava and Prem or love for the Lord. It gradually transmutes man into a divine being.

—Swami Sivananda

Satsang with Swami Satyananda



If God is formless, then why this idol worship, and why is idol worship important?



It is very easy to describe and accept God as formless or nirakaar. It is even easier to talk about the formless God. Nobody can dispute it because nobody has seen God. If you describe him as formless, having no fixed name or place, nobody can challenge you because nobody has seen God. Whatever you say about the formless God, one has to accept. Refutation or challenge can only come in the case of known things which both you and I have seen. You and I can dispute the appearance of a squirrel and describe it differently because both of us have seen it.



Once three disciples were quarrelling over the exact colour of a chameleon. They could quarrel because all of them had seen the chameleon while it was changing colour. However, God with form, sakaar, is very difficult to comprehend, to explain, to accept and to ingest, but it is the easiest thing to dispute. Even a small child can criticise the concept of God with form.

People have written volumes about God without form. I was born in a family that believed in the formless God. I began



my spiritual quest with the philosophy of the formless God. I had studied Adwaita Vedanta and Shankaracharya. I had never given a thought to God with form, nor had I thought over the formless God, because it was not possible for me to think of a formless God. The God who has no form, name, abode, colour or attribute, simply cannot be a subject of contemplation.

However, later on I had many experiences which made me realise there is somebody talking to me and instructing me. He can talk in English and Hindi. After that, I began to meditate on the God with form and results began to show up very soon. I started sakaar upasana very recently, only after coming to Rikhia, and it started with an image of Sri Ganesha. Ganesha said, "Satyananda, you have just given me names, now watch and see my maya, my miracles." This is the background of my transition into sakaar worship.

To receive God's grace one must aspire for purity. The heart must be kept clean. To invite God to dwell in ones' heart and to make sure that He continues to remain there and give His blessings, it is essential to clean the heart. How will the devotee know that his heart is clean? Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to say that where there is dirt, flies come, where there is wealth thieves come, but if there is a beautiful garden with a lake, blooming lotuses and chirping birds, everyone will come. Similarly, the aspirant can tell the quality of his heart by what he attracts. If the heart is clean, it will invite grace.

—Swami Satyananda

Importance of Aradhana Yoga of the heart ❤️

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Swami Satyananda at Sri Vidya Puja

Mankind has a natural urge for light, bliss, freedom, immortality and knowledge, which leads him towards the path of aradhana and God-realisation. Continuous and repeated thoughts about God make a person pure. This type of worship is called aradhana. To sit near God and think about Him again and again is aradhana which brings the devotee in the proximity of God. Aradhana or worship is such a profound subject that it cannot be explained in a few words. It is very difficult to define aradhana with a synonym, like the terms technology or medical science use. It is a vast, deep subject that comprises of a number of aspects. The Vedic and Upanishadic aradhana has many associations, such as archana, puja, seva, yajna, vandana, dhyana, chintan, inner reflection, japa, upasana, being close, sravana, kirtan, smarana, bhajan, yoga and samsharayana, all of which relate with the concept of worship.

The Shastras teach that the path of aradhana or worship is the simplest and easiest path to experience God in the Kali Yuga. A rational understanding is not required, because worship transcends the logical level of mind. The first important act of worship is to bow down before the deity, who is greater than any other power of the world. Aradhana starts from this act and progresses gradually towards bliss, and love. It is necessary to begin with the deity one loves and adores, but the upasaka should progressively rise beyond the gross form of that deity and reach the all-pervading dimension, finally merging into the supreme atman. In this way, all names and forms, nama and roopa, are ultimately transcended. The upasaka thus becomes one with Brahman and is called a jivanmukta, one who is liberated in this life.

Many paths of worship

In India, most people worship the embodied deity. We are not monotheistic, because worship of God in only one form brings disaster to society. Monotheistic philosophy breeds intolerance, which ultimately reflects in the political system. The impact of monotheism on the political system will be felt in times to come. A polytheistic society in which God can be worshipped in any form according to the choice of each citizen is a better society, a

non-violent society, and a society with greater understanding and tolerance. Polytheism always has a positive impact on a nation's politics, culture and civilization. On the other hand the impact of monotheism has an adverse impact. In Indian philosophy, although the Upanishads speak of one God, they add that this God has various forms: *Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti*– “Although the truth of the supreme spirit is One, the wise identify Him by various names.”



Shiva Aradhana

Therefore, it is not necessary to worship one God alone. As there are various forms of God, it is foolish to say that God is without form. God is both with form, sakaar, and without form, nirakaar. It is up to you to make a choice about how to worship Him, adore Him, and ask a boon from Him. You will have to make a choice between the embodied God and the formless God, and then offer your obeisance to Him. You



Swami Satyananda

are absolutely free to exercise your preference for any form of God. Hanuman is not greater than Sri Rama and Sri Rama is not superior to Hanuman. Even so, Devi is not superior to Sri Krishna and likewise Sri Krishna is not greater than Devi. Previously I had one name, now I have another name, but I remain the same person. Can you say which of my two names is greater? Similarly, the names of God may be different, but the ultimate Truth is the same.

Aradhana is worship of God by chanting His name, singing His glory, performing puja to Him with ritualistic precision, or by mental absorption in Him. Ritualistic precision means with articles of puja, like the conch, bell, flowers and leaves, lights and incense. Worship of God can be done at the mental level also, without these external means. Chanting Hanuman Chalisa, Ramacharitamahas or singing kirtan are also forms of worship. Whenever you remember God, whenever you worship Him with any of the aforesaid attitudes, it becomes aradhana. You may cry out to Him in your adversity to remove your sorrows and sufferings, you may ask His favour for wish fulfilment, you may turn to Him for knowledge about Himself, or you may love Him just for the sake of love. All these types of worship are called aradhana.

The tradition of bhakti does not insist on the necessity of ceremonial worship, as much as other traditions. In fact, ceremonial worship is usually recommended only to the wealthy householders,



Havan Vedi at Rikhiapeeth

who can thereby utilize their riches in an appropriate manner. The Bhagavat Purana empathises that worship with little means, but offered in a spirit of devotion, exceeds an elaborate ritual carried out in a purely mechanical way. The Lord once asked his childhood friend Sudama, “O Brahman, what present have you brought for me from your house?” When Sudama hesitated to offer his meagre gift, the Lord said, “Even the slightest offering, given with affection by my devotees, is considered by me as very great. But lavish offerings given by one who is not my votary bring me no joy or satisfaction.”

Another form of aradhana is to engage in every action as a form of worship. The Bhagavat Purana narrates the story of King Ambarisa, an ideal bhakta of Vishnu, who dedicated all his actions to the Lord’s service. “He engaged his mind in meditation on the lotus feet of Lord Krishna, his speech in singing of the excellences of Lord Vishnu, his hands in services such as cleaning the temple

of Hari and other duties, and his ears in listening to excellent stories of the imperishable Lord. He employed his eyes in beholding the images and shrines of Vishnu, his touch in embracing those who served the Gods, his nose in smelling the fragrance of the Tulsi leaves dedicated to His feet, and his tongue to what he offered to the Lord. King Ambarisa used his feet in walking to the holy places, hallowed with Lord Hari's feet, his head to bow down to the feet of Lord Vishnu. He employed his own desire in the humble service of the Lord and not for the fulfilment of worldly desires. In this way the king dedicated all his daily activities and duties to the glories of the Lord, so that his whole life became a form of worship.

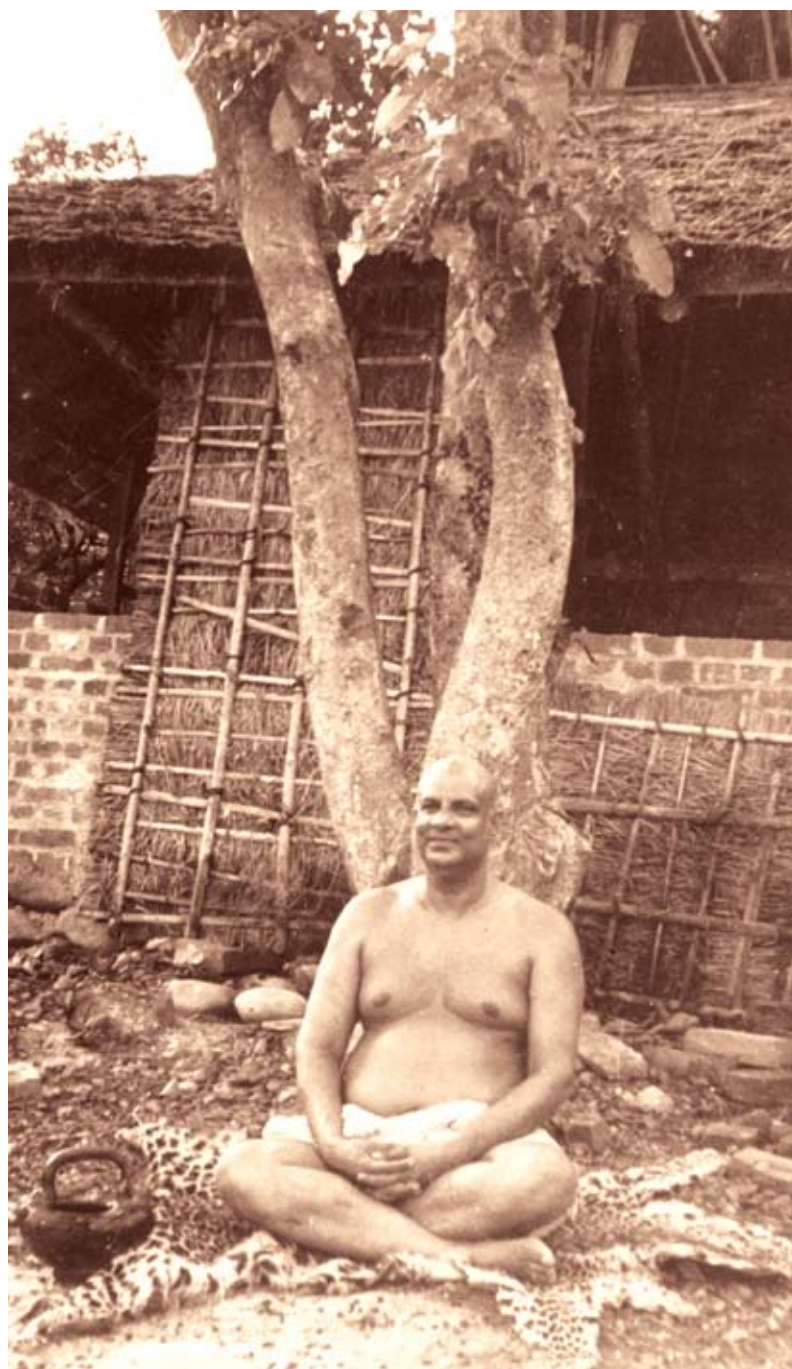


Mangal Nritya by Kanyas of Rikhiapeeth









Makar Sankranti

Makar Sankranti marks the transition of the sun into the Tropic of Capricorn and the first day of Uttarayan. To aspirants all over the world this day has a special significance. The six month period during which the sun travels northwards is highly favourable to aspirants for their march towards the goal of life. It is as though the aspirant were flowing easily with the current towards the supreme. The message of the sun is the message of light, the message of unity, of impartiality, of true selflessness, of the perfection of the elements of karma yoga. The sun shines on all equally; it is the true benefactor of all beings. Without the sun life would perish on earth. It is extremely regular and punctual in its duties and never claims a reward or craves for recognition. If you imbibe these virtues of the sun, what doubt is there that you will shine with equal divine lustre!

—Swami Sivananda

Surya Aradhana

On Makar Sankranti, rise early, take a bath and facing eastwards pour oblations of water to the sun chanting the 12 surya mantras. Daan or offerings to the needy is a special feature of this day.

Om mitraya namah
Om ravaye namah
Om suryaya namah
Om bhanave namah
Om khagaya namah
Om pusne namah
Om hiranyagarbhaya namah
Om marichaye namah
Om adityaya namah
Om savitre namah
Om arkaya namah
Om bhaskaraya namah

Sankalpa for 2012

Ram Naam Aradhana



Swami Satyananda during Ram Naam Aradhana at Rikhiapeeth

After the successful completion of the most sacred and immensely powerful Lalita Sahasra Namavali Homa, which was performed daily at Rikhiapeeth in 2011 for the fulfilment of all sankalpas of Swami Satyananda, Swami Satyasangananda has taken the sankalpa of a year long Ram Naam Aradhana.

This is particularly significant and beneficial for all as Ram aradhana was an integral part of Swami Satyananda's sadhana at his tapobhumi. During the twenty years that he lived in Rikhiapeeth Swami Satyananda recited the Ramayana countless number of times. Sometimes in one month (maas parayan), or in nine days (navaan parayan) or in one day. He even undertook writing the entire Ramayana in the form of likhit japa, which is still preserved at Rikhiapeeth.

The intensity and purity of his Ram aradhana has ensured that the Ramayana verses are forever vibrating in the precincts of Rikhiapeeth, thus providing a ready channel for those who wish to dive deep into the ocean of devotion that Ram aradhana can provide.



Lord Ram



You must learn to take the name of Ram with full devotion and faith. When you study the Ramacharitmanas of Tulsidas, you will learn how great the divine power of that blessed name is.

—Swami Satyananda

Guru Bhakti Yoga of Remembrance ♥



Havan dedicated to Guru

Rikhiapeeth is indeed blessed as it is here that Paramahansa Satyananda took Yoga Samadhi on the 5th December 2009. To preserve the sanctity of this event, Peethadhishwari Swami Satyasangananda has dedicated the 5th and 6th of each month to Guru Bhakti Yoga Aradhana. Each month since then, uplifting and inspiring ceremonies are conducted on the 5th to honour the day Swami Satyananda attained Mahasamadhi and on the 6th to commemorate the day he was given Bhu Samadhi by the Panchagni Vedi.

The Guru Bhakti Yoga sadhana has developed with each consecutive month allowing the energy of Guru to be preserved and intensified,

creating a strong channel or link for the transmission of Pujya Gurudev's blessings. Spiritual and divine vibrations flow in abundance during this time and the grace, blessings and presence of Swami Satyananda is experienced strongly by all fortunate to participate. It is a very special time dedicated to connection, revelation and discovery of the all pervading Guru tattwas.



Satyananda Astottara Sata Namavali Havan

Now over two years have passed since Paramahansa Satyananda attained Mahasamadhi and with Guru Bhakti Yoga sadhana each month we have felt that there has been a noticeable shift of energy, as if a divine hand is guiding and shaping the events. During the chants and ceremonies the feeling of surrender becomes a reality and one experiences the truth in the belief that Guru is God.

Now, at ashrams and centres all over India and around the world, devotees, aspirants, well-wishers, admirers and friends of Swami



Satyananda are also observing these two days of Guru Bhakti Yoga Aradhana to honour Sad-guru Sri Swamiji and get connected to his unlimited store of divine energy. Worldwide the 5th and 6th is developing into two days of remembrance and

worship of Guru where people can align with this great aradhana emerging out of Rikhiapeeth and receive the immense benefits that manifest from this auspicious and most wonderful yoga.

Guru Bhakti Yoga is the yoga of remembrance. All acts throughout the day are intended to enhance your remembrance of Pujya Gurudev Swami Satyananda. It is through remembrance that channels for transmission are formed and He turns His gaze on us and blesses us. The sadhana outlined by Peethadhishwari Swami Satyasangananda is a simple combination of seva, service, prarthana, prayer and aradhana or worship.



Samadhi Sthal at Rikhiapeeth

A guru may leave his body, but he will continue to live in the heart of every disciple. His spirit remains forever if the disciple can remain in tune with him. Then he guides him at all times, in thought and emotion, and in actual life. Disciples may go away but the guru's grace follows them.

—Swami Satyananda

Aradhana during Magh – January

Basant Panchami

This is the festival that marks the first day of spring. Basant means the spring season, which is very congenial for yoga sadhana.

Men, women and girls wear yellow cloth. The yellow colour is a sign of auspiciousness and spirituality. It represents the ripening of the spring crops. Even the food is coloured yellow by using saffron. All the folk get together and sing songs connected with spring.

All get up in the early morning, take bath and worship the sun, Mother Ganga, the deity of the sacred river Ganges, and the earth.

On this day Goddess Saraswati, the bestower of knowledge, is worshipped.

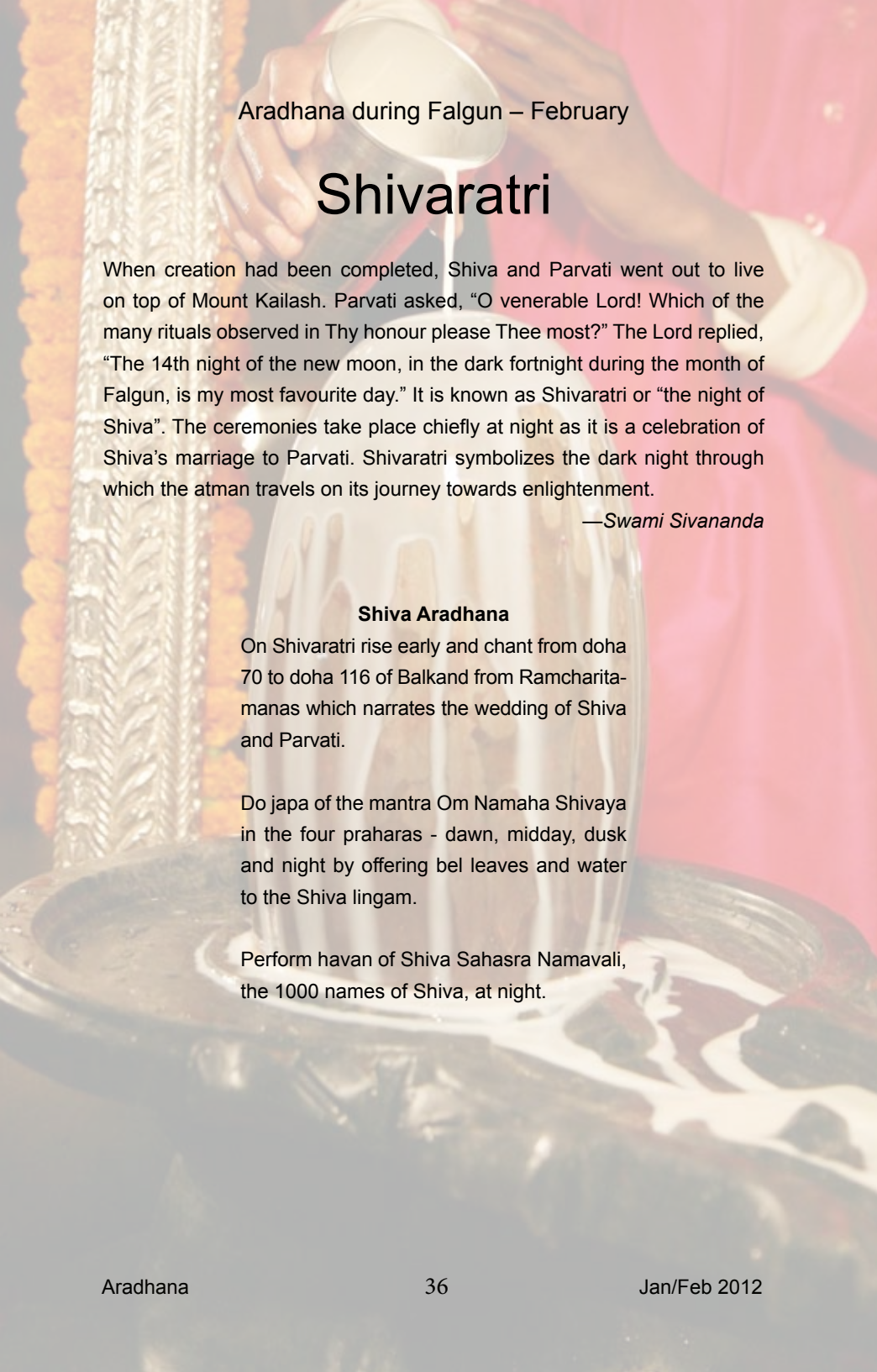
—Swami Sivananda

Saraswati Aradhana

Rise early and after taking a bath light a lamp in front of Saraswati and offering flowers, incense and sweets chant Gayatri Mantra 108 times. After this chant the ode to Saraswati, Saraswati Vandana.

*Ya kundendutusalaharadhavala ya subhravastravṛta
Ya vinavaradandamanditakara ya svetapadmasana.
Ya brahmachyutasankaraprabhrtibhirdevaih sada vandita
Sa mam patu sarasvati bhagavati nihsesajadyapaha*

*Suklam brahmavicharasaraparamamadyam jagadvyapinim
Vinapustakadharinimabhayadam jadyandhakarapaham
Haste sphatikamalikam cha dadhatim padmasane samsthitam
Vande tam paramesvarim bhagavatim buddhipradam saradam*



Aradhana during Falgun – February

Shivaratri

When creation had been completed, Shiva and Parvati went out to live on top of Mount Kailash. Parvati asked, “O venerable Lord! Which of the many rituals observed in Thy honour please Thee most?” The Lord replied, “The 14th night of the new moon, in the dark fortnight during the month of Falgun, is my most favourite day.” It is known as Shivaratri or “the night of Shiva”. The ceremonies take place chiefly at night as it is a celebration of Shiva’s marriage to Parvati. Shivaratri symbolizes the dark night through which the atman travels on its journey towards enlightenment.

—Swami Sivananda

Shiva Aradhana

On Shivaratri rise early and chant from doha 70 to doha 116 of Balkand from Ramcharita-manas which narrates the wedding of Shiva and Parvati.

Do japa of the mantra Om Namaha Shivaya in the four praharas - dawn, midday, dusk and night by offering bel leaves and water to the Shiva lingam.

Perform havan of Shiva Sahasra Namavali, the 1000 names of Shiva, at night.

Rikhiapeeth Events 2012



Makar Sankranti and Diksha

14th January

Marks the transition of the sun into the Tropic of Capricorn and the first day of Uttarayan. This day is celebrated with asana, pranayama, mantra chanting, and havan to invoke Surya. Mantra diksha will also be given to aspirants on this auspicious day.



Basant Panchami and Diksha

28th January

An important day for starting any new venture, Basant Panchami is observed with the traditional rituals performed by the kanyas and batuks to invoke Saraswati, the bestower of knowledge. The best moment for taking sankalpas in a spiritually vibrant environment and to start an inner journey by taking diksha.



Shivaratri Yoga Sadhana and Diksha

19th–20th February

The Night of Shiva is a celebration of the union or marriage of Shiva and Parvati which represents the union of individual and universal soul. This is most powerful at Rikhiapeeth, as it is near an awakened shrine of Lord Shiva, Baba Baidyanath. During the two days, aspirants receive the full benefits of havan, karma yoga, bhakti yoga and gyana yoga. Diksha on 20th February.



Holi

8th March

A colorful and joyous celebration dedicated to Lord Krishna which is filled with joy, love and bliss which are the foundation of spiritual life. This is a very special day at Rikhiapeeth when the mandate of Serve, Love and Give, established at Rikhiapeeth by Swami Satyananda can be experienced as a means for transformation.



Chaitra Navaratri Sadhana and Diksha

23rd March–1st April

Navaratri literally means 'nine nights' and is a sacred opportunity to worship and receive the grace of the Cosmic Mother. A fully charged and spiritually dynamic anusthan which is a must for those engaged in sadhana as this anusthan clears the obstacles on the spiritual path. Diksha on 31st March.



Akshay Tertiya: Sri Vidya Puja and Diksha

22nd–24th April

The sacred Sri Vidya Puja, dedicated to Paramahansa Satyananda, will be performed by the Yoginis of Lalita Mahila Samajam Ashram, Tamil Nadu. The intense Sri Vidya Puja is conducted according to authentic tantric rites and rituals. Diksha on 24th April.



Guru Purnima and Diksha

1st–3rd July

Guru worship is the ultimate of all yogas. This is a glorious time to connect with the subtle, vibrant and spiritually powerful energy of Guru tattwa. Traditional worship of Guru is performed at Rikhiapeth along with havan, mantra chanting, and spiritual discourses. Diksha on 3rd July.



Sri Radha Krishna Jhoolan and Diksha

29th July–2nd August

The annual worship of Radha, Krishna and Bal Gopal is a celebration of pure bhakti and devotion. It combines havan, naam sankirtan and aarti performed by the kanyas and batuks of Rikhiya, who efficiently invoke Radha and Krishna thus converting Rikhiya into Vrindavan for five days. Diksha on 2nd August.



Krishna Janmashtami

9th August

Bhadrpad Krishna Ashtami, the birth of Sri Krishna, is celebrated as Janmashtami throughout India. On this auspicious day kirtans, prayers and aarti are offered to Bal Gopala.



Srimad Bhagavat Katha & Swami Sivananda Janmotsav

1st–8th September

Srimad Bhagavat Katha grants bliss and moksha to saints, knowledge to scholars, and showers blessings upon householders. This unique event in which renowned Kathakars from Varanasi and other parts of India keep audiences spell bound with stories from Srimad Bhagavat Katha, culminates with the birth celebrations of Param Guru Swami Sivananda on 8th September.



Swami Satyananda Sannyasa Day

12th September

A very special day for all disciples, devotees and admirers of Swami Satyananda which always brings abundant blessings of Pujya Gurudev. Rikhiapeth comes alive with his divine presence.



Ashwin Navaratri Sadhana and Diksha

16th–23rd October

Ashwin Navaratri is an important time for undertaking sadhana as at this time the Cosmic Mother is invoked who is the basis of all experiences whether material or spiritual. A nine festival day packed with many sadhanas is sure to give you deeper insight into yourself. Diksha will be conducted on 22nd October.



Diwali

13th November

Diwali literally means “a row of lights” and on this day we worship the beautiful Goddess Lakshmi with thousands of flickering lamps and pray to her for prosperity in the coming year. A beautiful and joyous event at Rikhiapeth.



Sat Chandi Mahayajna/Sita Kalyanam

14th–17th December

Sat Chandi Mahayajna is Swami Satyananda's gift to humanity. His profound compassion and inspired vision led him to conduct this historic yajna to invoke the blessings and grace of the Cosmic Mother. This ancient tantric worship is conducted annually since 1995, to bring peace, plenty and prosperity to one and all. Renowned pundits from Varanasi conduct this wish fulfilling yajna in which ritualistic kanya puja is performed on the last day, thus invoking Devi as a living presence.



Yoga Purnima

24th–28th December

A five day glorification of the Supreme consciousness, Lord Shiva, held to honour the birth of Swami Satyananda Saraswati, which took place on the full moon night, Purnima, of Margasheersha, in 1923. Learned pundits from Varanasi conduct Mahamrityunjaya Homa as well as Rudrabhishek of the divya lingam for five days, creating a divine energy field abundant with auspicious blessings.



Christmas

24th December

On this most auspicious day the birth of Jesus Christ, of the great yogi and visionary is celebrated with pomp and splendour, with Christmas carols, havan, kirtan and dramas depicting the birth and life of Jesus.



New Year

31st December–1st January

This is an opportunity to welcome the New Year and to express love and devotion to Paramahansa Satyananda and to invoke his eternal blessings for the year ahead.



5th & 6th of each month: Guru Bhakti Yoga

Two days of special ceremonies each month to invoke the divine presence of Swami Satyananda and receive his eternal blessings, thus strengthening our ties with Guru. On the 5th we commemorate the day he attained Mahasamadhi and on the 6th we honour the day he was given Bhu Samadhi here in Rikhiapeth.



Rikhiapeeth Courses 2012



Yoga Sadhana and Ashram Life Course

24th January–24th February

Offers sincere aspirants an opportunity to practice yogic sadhana and experience the benefits of ashram life through seva. This course offers a balanced daily routine of hatha yoga, raja yoga, karma yoga, bhakti yoga and gyaana yoga.



Techniques of Dharana from Sri Vijnana Bhairava Tantra

7th–14th February

This course will guide aspirants through the practices of dharana, or concentration, as they are revealed in the ancient tantric text of Sri Vijnana Bhairava Tantra.



Balancing the Chakras Course (French)

17th–24th February

Practitioners of all levels are systematically guided through the various tantric and yogic practices essential for balancing and awakening the chakras or psychic centres, thus introducing aspirants to the practices of kundalini yoga.



Mantra, Yantra & Mandala - Tools of Tantra (Spanish)

21st February–1st March

For international students this course is offered as a 12 day retreat of asana, pranayama, meditation and spiritual discourses.



Yoga Teacher Training Course (English)

23rd February–14th March

This comprehensive course brings an overview of integral yoga as propagated by Paramahansa Satyananda through the Bihar School of Yoga. Includes asana, pranayama, meditation, yoga nidra and shatkarmas and features ashram life, satsang and seva. A certificate qualifying you as a teacher is given at the end of the course.



Deepening Yoga Sadhana

6th–12th March

This unique course guides sincere practitioners to a deeper understanding and experience of the ancient yogic practices as revealed by Swami Satyananda. Aspirants get the added benefit of practicing sadhana in the powerful energy field of Swami Satyananda's tapobhumi, thus getting a boost to their progress in developing the inner experience.



Saundarya Lahari Retreat

17th–19th April

This exceptional retreat reveals the essence of tantric sadhana through the use of mantra, yantra and mandala, which are the most powerful tools for inner experience. Those participating in this retreat have the option to avail the benefits of Sri Vidya Puja which follows right after this course.



Yoga Sadhana and Ashram Life Course

15th–28th June

Offers sincere aspirants an opportunity to practice yogic sadhana and experience the benefits of ashram life through seva. This course offers a balanced daily routine of hatha yoga, raja yoga, karma yoga, bhakti yoga and gyana yoga.



Antar Mouna Course

6th–8th July

This unique course systematically guides practitioners of all levels through the powerful meditation practice of antar mouna, 'inner silence'. It introduces a complete training system to know and control the mind.



Ajapa Japa and Yoga Nidra

14th–16th September

This course integrates ajapa japa and yoga nidra which is a universal panacea for today's fast paced modern world. Ajapa japa systematically leads practitioners from preliminary stages to the highest spiritual experiences and yoga nidra is universally acclaimed as one of the most important and essential yogic practices for relaxation and discovery of one's inner potential.



Chakra Sadhana Course

26th October–4th November

Practitioners of all levels are systematically guided through the various stages of chakra shuddhi, 'purification of the psychic centres'. This course combines powerful tantric and yogic techniques which lead to a gradual cleansing of the chakras and the associated physical, pranic, mental, intuitive, and higher faculties which is a prerequisite of kundalini awakening.



Prana Vidya Course

7th–13th November

This advanced course is designed for those wanting to deepen their yogic practices by exploring techniques for awakening and increasing prana in the body and utilizing it for a multitude of reasons such as healing, purification and inner experience.



Kriya Yoga & Tattwa Shuddhi Course

2nd–8th January 2013

This course will initiate sincere participants into the kriya yoga practices as compiled by Paramahansa Satyananda. The kriya practices are taught in conjunction with the ancient tantric practice of tattwa shuddhi, or inner purification, which prepares the practitioner for higher esoteric practices and discovery of one's highest potential.



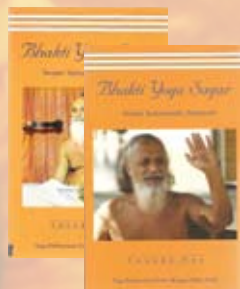
January–October: Introduction to Ashram Life

Offers the opportunity for householders from all walks of life to spend time in the ashram and experience the joys of living life in the spirit of tyag, seva and samarpan and enjoy the benefits derived from that. Aspirants from all over India and around the world have the unique opportunity to experience and live yoga, not only learn it.

Bhakti Yoga Sagar Volume 1 to 7

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

These volumes contain satsangs of Swami Satyananda at his tapobhumi, Rikhiapeeth, during periods of his intense and arduous sadhanas. These compilations provide a priceless glimpse into the enlightened understanding of a master who can see the truth behind existence. They contain eternal lessons which navigate the way for all spiritual aspirants to discover their true potentials and fulfil the purpose of existence.



Rikhiapeeth blog: www.rikhiapeeth.net

The Rikhiapeeth blog is a sanctuary for all spiritual seekers. Inspiring satsangs of Paramahansa Satyananda are posted daily which address universal questions relating to the entire gamut of birth, life, death, reincarnation and karma. These satsangs uplift spiritual seekers from around the globe, known and unknown, in their pursuit to live a divine life. In fact if you have a question these satsangs will answer it.

Also tune into the latest undertakings of the vibrant spiritual epicenter of Rikhiapeeth by reading the posts on current events, programs and courses.



Aradhanas at Rikhiapeeth Jan/Feb

Makar Sankranti and Diksha - 14th January

This sacred Surya Aradhana will be celebrated with asana, pranayama, mantras and havan. Mantra diksha will be given to aspirants.



Basant Panchami and Diksha - 28th January

Basant Panchami Aradhana will be observed with traditional rituals to invoke Saraswati, the bestower of knowledge. An important day for taking sankalpas and start an inner journey. Diksha will be given to aspirants on this day.

Shivaratri Yoga Sadhana and Diksha - 19th - 20th February

An inspiring Shiva Aradhana will culminate on the evening of Mahashivaratri with uplifting prayers, havan and kirtans. The aradhana will be presided over by Swami Niranjanananda and Swami Satyasangananda. Diksha will be given to aspirants on 20th February.

Rikhiapeeth Events 2012

<i>Jan 14th</i>	Makar Sankranti
<i>Jan 28th</i>	Basant Panchami
<i>Feb 19th–20th</i>	Shivaratri Yoga Sadhana
<i>March 8th</i>	Holi
<i>March 23rd–1st April</i>	Chaitra Navaratri Sadhana
<i>April 22nd–24th</i>	Akshay Tritiya: Sri Vidya Puja
<i>July 1st–3rd</i>	Guru Purnima
<i>July 29th–2nd Aug</i>	Sri Radha Krishna Jhoolan
<i>Aug 9th</i>	Krishna Janmasthanmi
<i>Sept 1st–8th</i>	Srimad Bhagavat Katha & Sivananda Janmotsav
<i>Sept 12th</i>	Swami Satyananda Sannyasa Day
<i>Oct 16th–23rd</i>	Ashwin Navaratri Sadhana
<i>Nov 13th</i>	Diwali
<i>Dec 14th–17th</i>	Sat Chandi Mahayajna/ Sita Kalyanam
<i>Dec 24th–28th</i>	Yoga Purnima
<i>Dec 31st–Jan 1st</i>	New Year
<i>5th & 6th each month</i>	Guru Bhakti Yoga

Rikhiapeeth Courses 2012

<i>Jan 24th–24th Feb</i>	Yoga Sadhana and Ashram Life Course
<i>Feb 7th–14th</i>	Techniques of Dharana from Sri Vijnana Bhairava Tantra
<i>Feb 17th–24th</i>	Balancing the Chakras Course (French)
<i>Feb 21st–1st March</i>	Mantra, Yantra & Mandala - Tools of Tantra (Spanish)
<i>Feb 23rd–14th March</i>	Yoga Teacher Training Course (English)
<i>March 6th–12th</i>	Deepening Yoga Sadhana
<i>April 17th–19th</i>	Saundarya Lahari Retreat
<i>June 15th–28th</i>	Yoga Sadhana and Ashram Life Course
<i>July 6th–8th</i>	Antar Mouna Course
<i>Sept 14th–16th</i>	Ajapa Japa and Yoga Nidra
<i>Oct 26th–4th Nov</i>	Chakra Sadhana Course
<i>Nov 7th–13th</i>	Prana Vidya Course
<i>Jan 2nd–8th 2013</i>	Kriya Yoga & Tattwa Shuddhi Course (English)
<i>Jan to Oct</i>	Introduction to Ashram Life

Those planning to attend any of the specified events and courses should contact Rikhiapeeth by phone, email or post in advance (for reply within India, please enclose a stamped self addressed envelope).
Rikhiapeeth, P.O. Rikhia, Dist. Deoghar, Jharkhand, India, 814113.

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