

India Herald

VOL. 14 NO. 22 • FRIDAY, MAY 30, 2008 • 6610 HARWIN DR. STE 120 • HOUSTON, TX 77036 • PERIODICAL PERMIT USPS 017-699 25 C

A breath of fresh air: Camp offers key to healthy living

By SESHADRI KUMAR

To remain hale and healthy, just inhale and exhale.

If it sounds too good to be true, it won't be, but India's venerated Yoga practitioner, Swami Ramdev, defies that conventional wisdom.

A simple regimen of breathing exercises holds the key to a healthy human life, devoid of any ailments, he says.

Saying good health is humanity's birth right, he literally breathes a new life into millions of people.

You need no expensive equipment or strenuous preparation. Just be willing to follow the simple breathing techniques demonstrated by Swami Ramdev.

There are no expensive prescriptions or side effects.

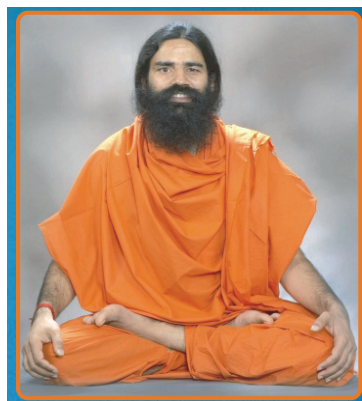
Inhaling and exhaling free air, accompanied by a few body exercises, should not be a difficult chore even to the lazy ones.

After creating a mass movement among people who follow his breathing exercises, known as *pranayam* in Sanskrit, in India, both in person and through the popular cable television channel, Astha, Swami Ramdev has now followers around the world, including the U.S. and Canada.

Houstonians will have an opportunity to attend Swami Ramdev's five-day Yog Science Camp at the George R. Brown Convention Center from July 16 to July 20.

The camp from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. is expected to be attended by 3,000 to 5,000 people.

Swami Ramdev does no miracle, though anecdotes of people who have miraculously been cured of ailments are abundant. He does



Swami Ramdev

not criticize modern medicine nor does he cast himself in the role of an adversary to allopathy.

Swami Ramdev explains the science behind the breathing exercise as a mechanism to enrich the blood with the life-giving oxygen and exhale the harmful carbon-dioxide. In other words, his breathing technique enables the body to get 10 times more oxygen than normal.

Ramesh Bhutada of Houston is a living example of how Swami Ramdev's techniques, combined with Ayurveda, helped heal his knee pain and back pain and totally cured him of blood pressure.

Bhutada is a driving force not only behind Swami Ramdev's visit to Houston, but also on establishing Swami Ramdev's Patanjali Yog Peeth in Fort Bend County, the first treatment and research center of its kind outside India.

Shekhar Agrawal of Sugar Land is also active in establishing the center.

Urging Houstonians to attend the camp, Bhutada says "the camp is a good activity at individual, family, community and organiza-

tional levels."

"It is a winning proposition. Let us make Houston a very healthy community. Let us start with ourselves," Bhutada told a meeting of community leaders recently.

Organizers say the camp is more geared toward demonstration, though Swami Ramdev gives interludes of commentary. Language should be no barrier to anyone because volunteers on the floor will assist everybody in following the exercises.

Bhangwan Gambir from Fort Lauderdale is the trustee of Patanjali Yog Peeth in U.S. A. and Canada. He was in Houston last weekend with Shrawan Kumar Poddar of Scotland to give preview of the Yog Science Camp.

Gambir accidentally saw the Astha channel during a visit to India, and his interest in the yog increased. His wife, after following the exercises, was totally cured of migraine that had bothered her for decades. After realizing the benefits of Swami Ramdev's exercises, he wanted to popularize the technique in the U.S.

The money raised from the camps will be used to fund the yog centers in India and the proposed Houston center.

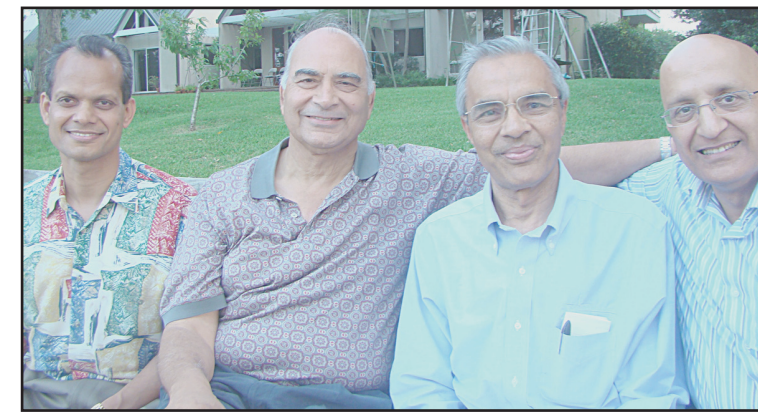
Poddar, a structural engineer by profession, is trained in conducting the breathing exercises and has also been gathering knowledge about herbal medicine.

"I need no proof for the success of Pranayam (the breathing exercise.) I have experienced it," he says.

Swami Ramdev will also hold camps in Los Angeles from July 9 to 13, in Washington D.C. from July 23 to 27 and in Vancouver from July 30 to Aug. 3.



Shrawan Kumar Poddar explains eye massage during a demonstration of Swami Ramdev's yog exercises as a preview to the upcoming five-day camp in Houston.



Shekhar Agrawal, left, Houston area coordinator with Bhagwan Gambir, national coordinator of the Yog Science Camp from Fort Lauderdale, Ramesh Bhutada, also of Houston, and Shrawan Kumar Poddar of Scotland, a yog trainer previewed the arrangements for the camp in Houston last week.



Above, Volunteers from the Houston area attend an orientation meeting for Swami Ramdev's the Yog Science Camp.