



Prof. (Dr.) B.R. Sharma:

(An Academician Par Excellence and Visionary in Yogic Sciences)

Qualification:

PhD (Dharmashastra), awarded in 1984, from Rashtriya Sanskrit Samsthan, New Delhi

Manuscriptology Course (1983) through U.G.C. at University of Jammu (J&K)

M.A. (Skt.) (1980) from Jammu University, Jammu (J&K),

Shastri (B.A. Hon.) (1978) from Rashtriya Sanskrit Samsthana, New Delhi.

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Life and Vision:

In the evolving history of Yoga as both a living tradition and a modern academic discipline, a few distinguished personalities have served as bridges between the ancient heritage and contemporary scholarship. Among them, Prof. Sharma holds a unique place, rooted in his profound scholarship in Sanskrit yogic Literature. He belongs to that rare league of academicians who not only lived a life deeply immersed in Yogic wisdom but also dedicated themselves to its academic advancement, research, and institutional growth at both national and international levels.

With a professional career spanning more than FOUR decades, Prof. Sharma has distinguished himself as a teacher, researcher, administrator, author, and visionary leader. His work consistently emphasised the integration of the *Ethico-Socio-Philosophical and Spiritual* aspects of Yoga, offering a model of how India's timeless wisdom can address the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Whether through his leadership at Kaivalyadhama, his administrative brilliance at Sri Sri University, or his contributions to global policy through WHO and UNESCO, Prof. Sharma brought depth, dignity, and authenticity to the discipline of Yoga. His academic journey is not merely the story of an individual scholar but a living testimony to the transformative power of Yogic knowledge when combined with visionary leadership.

Early Life and Inspiration:

The foundations of Prof. Sharma's intellectual and spiritual journey were laid in his formative years, when exposure to classical Indian thought traditions ignited a deep passion for Yogic wisdom. Guided and inspired by his revered Spiritual Master, *Yogi Sambhari Nathji*, he was introduced to the subtle dimensions of Yoga not only as a practice but as a comprehensive worldview.

This early training cultivated in him a lifelong commitment to discipline, scholarship, and inquiry. Importantly, it nurtured an understanding of Yoga as a holistic science—not restricted to postures or physical well-being, but encompassing philosophy, ethics, psychology, and spirituality. These formative influences profoundly shaped his career trajectory, fuelling his mission to integrate India's knowledge systems into the modern academic framework.

Academic Foundations and Career Beginnings:

Prof. Sharma's formal academic journey began during his PhD days at Shri Ranbir Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha, Jammu. Here, he taught foundational subjects such as *Samkhya* and *Yoga*, the twin pillars of Indian philosophical thought. This early teaching role was pivotal in sharpening his pedagogical methods.

Students remember him not merely as a teacher of texts, but as someone who awakened in them a spirit of inquiry and reverence for knowledge. His ability to combine clarity of exposition with depth of scholarship became a hallmark of his teaching style. What set him apart even then was his insistence that Yoga was not only to be studied as a discipline but to be lived as a philosophy of life.

Kaivalyadhama Years: Building a Legacy in Research and Education

One of the most defining chapters of his career was his association with Kaivalyadhama Yoga Research Institute, Lonavla, Pune, a pioneering institution founded by Swami Kuvalayananda in 1924. Kaivalyadhama is globally recognised for integrating traditional Yogic knowledge with modern scientific research.

During his **33-year** tenure, Prof. Sharma served in multiple roles:

- **Research Officer** (Jan.1986-Feb.1996 =10 yrs.)
- **Assistant Director& Head**, Philosophico–Literary Research, (March 1996-Feb.2013 = 17yrs.)
- **Principal**, the College of Yoga and Cultural Synthesis, Kdham (March 2013 -Sept.2018=6 yrs.)

As Research Head, he advanced a culture of scholarship that respected the sanctity of ancient texts while engaging with contemporary academic methodologies. He encouraged comparative studies, interdisciplinary dialogues, and innovative ways of interpreting classical Yogic texts. Later, as Principal, he played a pivotal role in curriculum development, ensuring that Kaivalyadhama's academic programs combined intellectual rigour with experiential depth.

His leadership style was not bureaucratic but vision-driven. He mentored faculty, inspired students, and strengthened Kaivalyadhama's global standing as a classical centre of Yoga education and research. Under his guidance, the institute remained faithful to its founding ideals while becoming increasingly relevant to modern society.

Institutional Leadership: Sri Sri University, and Vice-Chancellorship

Following his transformative contributions at Kaivalyadhama, Prof. Sharma joined Sri Sri University, Cuttack, where he assumed multiple leadership roles:

- **Professor and Head**, Dept. of Yogic Science, **Dean**, Faculty of Health and Wellness. (Oct.22,2018-Jan. 28, 2022);
- **Executive Registrar, (In-Charge)** Additional responsibility (Sept 19-Aug. 31, 2021).
- **Executive Registrar (Sept. 01, 2021- March 30, 2022)**. His presence added academic depth and credibility to the young institution.
- **Vice Chancellor** (March 31, 2022- June 30, 2024). His eventual appointment as **Vice-Chancellor** marked the culmination of his leadership journey in higher education. As Vice-Chancellor, he

envisioned the university as a place where ancient wisdom and modern knowledge systems could harmoniously coexist.

His administration emphasised:

- Quality Research
- Innovative teaching methods that combined theory with practice.
- International collaborations to place Indian knowledge traditions on the world map.
- During his tenure, the University was recognised by NAAC with Grade A.
- Many Initiatives were taken up to align the curriculum with the National Education Policy, and distance education, etc.

His leadership style mirrored the principles of Yoga itself—balance, clarity, inclusiveness, and vision—making him a respected figure among faculty, students, and administrators alike.

Contributions to Yoga Education and Research

Prof. Sharma's scholarly contributions are extensive and enduring. He has:

- edited 13 Traditional Yoga Texts (in collaboration), each dealing with diverse aspects of Yogic studies;
- published over 50 research papers in peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, and academic souvenirs.
- guided 10 PhD scholars, whose dissertations explore a broad spectrum of Yoga philosophy, ethics, psychology, and therapy.

As **Managing Editor** of Yoga Mimamsa (vide Circular dated July 19, 2007), one of the oldest academic journals in the field, he maintained the highest standards of publication, ensuring that research was not only rooted in tradition but also addressed contemporary issues such as mental health, education, and wellness.

Through this body of work, Prof. Sharma has expanded the intellectual landscape of Yoga—bridging the gap between scriptural wisdom and practical application.

National and International Contributions

Prof. Sharma's influence extends beyond academia into policy-making and global frameworks. On the recommendation of the Ministry of AYUSH as an AYUSH Expert (vide letter no.M-11014/1/2011-IC Vol. 11, Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India, dated 17-04-2017), Prof. Sharma prepared the Zero Draft on Benchmarks for Training in Yoga for the World Health Organization (WHO). This pioneering document laid the groundwork for setting international standards in Yoga education and practice. In recognition of this contribution, he was felicitated by the WHO during a review meeting in Delhi, Feb.26-28, 2019. Beyond this, he contributed significantly to projects such as:

- Yoga Kosh (comprehensive resource on Yoga knowledge).
- Yoga Concordance (systematic compilation of Yogic references).
- mYoga app, developed under the WHO's "Be Healthy, Be Mobile" initiative. (vide letter no. F. No. MDNIY/WHO-CC/mYoga/2018-19/2605, dated 19.02.2019).

As part of the Government of India's delegation, he also participated in the 11th Intergovernmental UNESCO Meeting in Ethiopia held during Nov.28-Dec.02, 2016, where Yoga was formally recognised as an *Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. His presence at such forums highlighted his role as both a scholar and cultural diplomat. (R.No.CCRYN/2016-17/IGC ICH/dated 29-106-2016).

Honours and Recognitions

Prof. Sharma's remarkable contributions have been acknowledged through numerous awards and honours. Among the most prominent are:

- Yoga Amrit Ratna Samman, during the National Conference organised by the Department of Yogic Science, Gurukula Kangri University, Haridwar on Feb 27-28, 2023.
- Lifetime Achievement Award, by the Indian Association of Yoga during the 6th International Conference on Psycho-spiritual Approach to Yoga held at Uttarakhand Sanskrit University, Haridwar, Feb. 22-23, 2020.
- Lifetime Achievement Award during the National Seminar on "History in Puranas," inaugurated by the Governor of Odisha. Feb. 1, 2020.

These recognitions reflect not only his personal achievements but also the growing academic legitimacy and cultural importance of Yoga in contemporary times.

Memberships and Advisory Roles

His expertise has been sought at the highest levels of policy-making and research governance. He has served as:

- UGC Nominated member of the Governing Council of the Inter-University Centre for Yogic Sciences. Sept.2025.
- Appointed as a member of the Apex and Discipline Committees of the 'NAAC Reforms in Accreditation 2024.
- Nominated as a Senate Member (External), IIT Bhubneswar vide Email dated March 25, 2023, for 2 years.
- Nominated Member of the Advisory Board of the Indian Society for Training and Development (ISTD) dated August 21, 2023.
- Nominated as a Member of the Advisory Board of the Institute of Salutogenesis and Complementary Medicine (ISCM), Balaji Vidyapeeth, Pondicherry, dated June 23, 2023.
- Nominated Member, Scientific Advisory Committee, Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), and General Body Member, MDNIY, Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India, vide letter no MDNIY/GS/2018-19/21/364 dated Dec. 17, 2019, for 3 years. Again, renominated in June 2021, vide File No. MDNIY, Dept. of Yoga Research (SAC)/2020-21. Again, renominated as a non-official GB Member, and SAC member vide No. MDNIY/GS/Re-Constitution/GB/GC/SFC/SAC/AC/2023-24/862 dated 04-10-2023.
- Nominated Member of the Technical Committee of Yoga Certification Board (YCB), AYUSH Ministry, vide U. No. 6-18/YCB/21/N.M.O.D.C./143. dated March 05, 2022.
- Nominated Member of the IEC - Scientific Committee for Sri Sri Institute for Advanced Research (SSIAR), the research wing of the Art of Living Foundation, founded under Ved Vignan Maha Vidyapeeth Trust on 22 February 2021.
- Appointed as one of the Members of the Doctoral Research Committee (DRC) by Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit University, Ramtek, Nagpur, Maharashtra, on October 11, 2021.

- Appointed as a “Yoga Expert” by the Yoga Certification Board, AYUSH Ministry, for Onsite Assessment of PrCBs, Yoga Institute/Centres, vide letter no. 6-6/MDNIY/YCB/19/Asmt dated Nov. 27, 2019.
- As an Advisor (working group), Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL), Project in Yoga, AYUSH Dept. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.
- Nominated Member, Scientific Advisory Committee, Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy (CCRYN), Ministry of AYUSH (vide letter no. D-15020/91/2014 Research Desk dated 17-03-2015 for 3 years).
- Nominated a Member of the Academic Council, Kavi Kulguru Kalidas Sanskrit University, Ramtek, Nagpur, Maharashtra, 2015 onwards.
- Nominated member of the Governing Body and a life member of the Board of Trustees, Kaivalyadhama, S.M.Y.M.Samiti, Lonavla, for more than 15 years.
- Nominated member of the Organising Committee and Chairman of the Program Committee of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, & 8th International Conferences held at Kaivalyadhama, Lonavla.
- **An Organiser:**
 - Worked as Organising Secretary of a National Yoga Seminar on the Eve of Sanskrit Varsha, June 3-4, 2000
 - Organised several batches of Certificate Course in Yoga at Pune University, Pune
 - Organised various batches of Re-orientation Programmes in Yoga for I.S.M. & H. personnel, Govt. of India at Kaivalyadhama. Lonavla.
 - Organised various batches of In-service Teachers' Training Programmes in Yoga,
 - Organised several Yoga workshops/Camps for the executives of various companies, such as Dabhol project, H.D.F.C., and L & T, on Stress management through Yoga.

Through these roles, he shaped the future of Yoga education, certification, and knowledge management both in India and internationally.

International Outreach and Academic Diplomacy

- Prof. Sharma has travelled widely, serving as an academic ambassador of Yoga. He has delivered over 500 lectures, workshops, and keynote addresses in countries including like Spain & Italy (Oct. 28 to Dec.3, 2001) Korea & Japan, (April 4-24, 2002), Geneva, Switzerland (Jan. 19, 2007 to April 4, 2007), Portugal (June 22-28, 2012), Italy (April, 24-28, 2013), Bulgaria (2013,2014&2016), Hungary (2016)and Germany. 2016), Ethiopia (Nov,28-Dec.02,2016).

At each of these platforms, he skilfully presented Yoga not as an exotic cultural artefact, but as a universal discipline addressing health, ethics, and inner harmony. His versatility as a communicator allowed him to engage audiences ranging from academics and policymakers to practitioners and students.

Visionary Contributions: Blending Tradition and Modernity

What distinguishes Prof. Sharma is his ability to blend traditional Yogic wisdom with the demands of modern life. He repeatedly emphasised that Yoga is not merely a therapeutic tool or a fitness regime but a holistic philosophy that addresses human existence in its entirety.

His insistence on the Ethico-Socio-Philosophico-Spiritual dimensions of Yoga ensured that the discipline retained its depth even as it engaged with modern education, therapy, and psychology. This integrative vision makes his work particularly relevant in today’s world, where issues such as stress, alienation, and ecological imbalance require holistic and ethical solutions.

Mentorship and Legacy

At the heart of Prof. Sharma's contributions lies his role as a teacher and mentor. Generations of students and scholars testify to his humility, accessibility, and ability to inspire. He embodied the *Guru–Śiṣya* ethos while simultaneously adopting modern pedagogical approaches.

His legacy lives on through:

- His students are now contributing globally to Yoga education and research.
- His scholarly writings serve as reference points for future researchers.
- The institutions he strengthened, leaving behind robust academic frameworks.

Concluding remarks:

The life and work of Prof. B. R. Sharma exemplify the transformative power of Yogic knowledge when pursued with dedication, scholarship, and vision. From his early academic roles in Jammu, through his long association with Kaivalyadhama, to his leadership as Dean and finally Vice-Chancellor, his journey is a tapestry woven with brilliance and service.

His contributions to WHO, UNESCO, and AYUSH highlight his role not only as a national scholar but also as a global representative of India's wisdom tradition. In him, we see the synthesis of teacher, researcher, administrator, and cultural diplomat.

Prof. Sharma's life stands as a guiding light for future generations, ensuring that Yoga is remembered and practised not merely as a technique but as a comprehensive science of life, deeply ethical, spiritual, and universally relevant.
