

Is yoga a religious practice?

The yoga ban in two UK churches raises questions. Hyderabad Times gathers reactions

YOGA is a science, a technology for self-transformation and ultimate well-being and not a set of beliefs. Calling



yoga a religion, because people from a particular culture discovered this science is like saying the Theory of Relativity is Jewish because Einstein was Jewish. Labelling the sacred traditions of other cultures as sham is the worst kind of violence.

The religions of the world are not about one man's belief against another, but an opportunity for all humans to reach to their common ultimate source.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev
Spiritual guru

I AM a devout Muslim and I've been practicing yoga for the past 23 years, and by doing so, I am not committing a sin.



Yoga isn't a religion. But of course, one can practice it religiously and that becomes even more beneficial for the individual.

One must understand that religion came into being for the betterment of humankind, and all religions teach that. But religion can't have strict boundaries. I think we've forgotten that society and religion were created for man.

Alefiyah Husain
Educational consultant

YOGA definitely has Hindu roots, but the West has been tolerant of this practice. In fact there's been in-depth scientific research about yoga and there are western writers who've even penned books. Some of the best yoga gurus are accepted in the



West, especially in London, Australia and the US. And they're not even popular in India.

There's also a rebate in medical insurance for those who practice yoga in the US. So the protest is not going to create a furor. Yoga's been around for 5000 years, and it's here to stay.

Sharmila Hirendermath
Yoga expert

AS per the six systems of Hindu philosophy, which are classified by S Radha Krishna, the main aim of yoga is to activate the latent power inside of you to become divine or God himself. It's about attaining the *Padma Chakra*.



That differs from Christian dogma, which asserts that there is no question of man becoming God. Every church is taught comparative religion and churches in the UK, aware of this philosophy, have banned yoga. But you can secularise yoga by confining it only to the asanas.

Dr P Manasseh
Principal of a biblical research academy

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