UNIT-4: CULTURAL POSTURES (STANDING)

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 Cultural Postures (Standing) –

4.3.1 Garudasana,

4.3.2 Vatayanasana,

4.3.3 Veera Bhadrasana,

4.3.4 Parivartatrikonasana,

4.3.5 Parshva-uttanasana,

4.3.6 Parshwa-konasana,

4.3.7 Natarajasna

4.4 Let's Sum Up

4.5 Further Readings

4.6 Answers to check your progress

4.7 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- will be able to practice the asanas
- will understand the methods of practicing asanas
- will be able to practice the techniques
- will be able to perform various asanas with proper alignment and technique
- will understand the benefits and effects of different asanas on the body and mind
- will be able to develop flexibility, strength, and balance through regular practice
- will learn the connection between breath and movement in asana practice

4.2 INTRODUCTION

Asanas are physical postures or poses practiced in yoga to promote physical health, mental well-being, and spiritual growth. The word **"asana"** is derived from the Sanskrit root **"ās"**, which means "to sit" or "to be present." Traditionally, asanas were primarily seated postures meant for meditation. However, over time, they have evolved into a comprehensive system of physical movements that improve flexibility, strength, balance, and relaxation.

4.3 CULTURAL POSTURES (STANDING)

4.3.1: Garudasana



Garuda means eagle in Sanskrit. This asana resembles the posture of an eagle and is known for enhancing balance and concentration.

Sthiti: Tadasana.

Technique: Stand tall in Tadasana with your feet hip-width apart.Bend your knees slightly, lift the right leg, and cross it over the left leg. Try to hook the right foot around the left calf or thigh.Extend your arms forward, parallel to the ground. Cross the left arm over the right at the elbows and then wrap the right arm around the left to bring the palms together, if possible.Hold this position, with the elbows lifted and the hands in a prayer position or palms touching.Maintain a straight spine and focus on a point in front of you for balance.Breathe deeply and stay in the posture for 20–30 seconds.To release,

gently unwind your arms and legs, returning to Tadasana.Repeat the same on the other side.

Benefits:

- Enhances balance, concentration, and mental focus.
- Strengthens the legs, hips, and core muscles.
- Increases flexibility in the shoulders and ankles.
- Helps improve posture and alleviates tension in the back.
- Stimulates circulation and improves overall flexibility.

Precautions: Avoid this pose if you have knee, ankle, or hip injuries.Practice with caution if you have balance issues or any shoulder or elbow problems.If you experience dizziness, come out of the pose slowly and with control.

4.3.2: Vatayanasana



Vatayana means **horse** or "horse-like". In this asana, the posture resembles a horse rider's stance.

Sthiti: Tadasana.

Technique: Sit on the knee of your left leg. Bend your right leg as if you were doing a lunge. Place your hands together in front of your chest. Inhale, keep your back straight, and lift your hands to your chest. Place your left foot as close as possible to your bent right knee, ideally with your heel next to your knee.

Push your left foot firmly into the mat. Raise your torso and straighten your back to balance. Bring your arms to chest level, with your left elbow over your right. Interlace your forearms to bring your palms together. Keep the back straight and stay in the posture for 10–20 seconds while breathing normally. Return to the initial position and relax. Repeat on the other side.

Benefits:

- Improves balance and concentration.
- Strengthens the thighs, knees, and pelvic muscles.
- Enhances flexibility and alignment of the hips and legs.

Precaution: Avoid this posture if you have knee injuries or hip stiffness. Practice under guidance if you have balance-related issues. Not suitable during pregnancy or after abdominal surgery.

4.3.3: Veera Bhadrasana



The word **Veera** means hero, brave, or warrior. This asana symbolizes strength, stability, and focus, resembling the stance of a warrior.

Technique: Stand straight with feet 3-4 feet apart.Turn the right foot outwards to 90 degrees and the left slightly inward.Inhale, and raise both arms sideways to shoulder level with palms facing upwards. Ensure arms are parallel to the floor. Exhale, bend the right knee so the thigh is parallel to the floor, keeping the knee aligned with the ankle. Turn your head to look over the right hand, keeping your gaze fixed.Maintain the position for 10-15 seconds, breathing

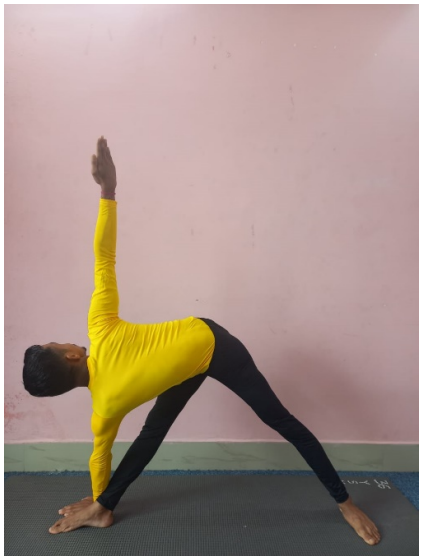
steadily.Inhale, straighten the right knee, and bring the arms down.Repeat on the other side.

Benefits:

- Strengthens the legs, ankles, and back.
- Improves balance, stability, and focus.
- Enhances stamina and stretches the chest, shoulders, and thighs.

Precaution: Avoid this pose in case of severe knee, hip, or shoulder issues. Practice with caution if experiencing high blood pressure or chronic knee pain.

4.3.4: ParivartaTrikonasana



Parivarta means **"**revolved**"** or **"**twisted,**"** and **Trikonasana** means **"**triangle pose**."** This asana involves a twisting motion that stretches and strengthens various body parts**.**

Sthiti: Tadasana

Technique: Stand erect with feet more than shoulder width apart and raise the arms sideways to shoulder level. This is the starting position.Bend forward. Twist the trunk to the right, bringing the left hand to the right foot. The right arm should be stretched vertically to form a straight line.Look up at the right hand.Hold the final position for a few seconds, feeling the twist and stretch of the back.Return to the center forward position.Raise the body to the starting

position, keeping the arms outstretched to the sides.Repeat to the other side.This is one round.Do not lower the arms, practice 5 to 10 rounds.

Benefits:

- Regular practice will help to reduce waistline fat.
- It stimulates the nervous system and alleviates nervous depression.
- This generally affects the muscles on the sides of the trunk, the waist and the back of the legs.
- It improves digestion, strengthens the pelvic area, and tones the reproductive organs.

Precaution: Those who have been suffering from severe back conditions should avoid this asana

4.3.5: Parshva-Uttanasana



Parshva means side or flank, and **Uttanasana**means astretch.

Technique: Stand with your feet spread wide apart, around 3-4 feet, with your front foot facing forward and your back foot slightly turned out. Inhale, lengthen your spine, then exhale as you bend forward from the hips, keeping your back straight. Extend your arm on the side of your back back toward ankle or shin, while keeping your chest andshoulders relaxed. Place your opposite hand on your thigh or hip for stability, or even reach it overhead for a deeper stretch. Look down towards your front foot, keeping your neck long. Keep your core engaged to maintain stability throughout the pose. Exhale, bring the arms down, release the interlock of the fingers, and return to the standing position.

Benefits:

- Enhances posture and balance.
- Stretches and tones the sideof the waist and spine.
- Improves flexibility of the spine and strengthens the oblique muscles.

Precaution: Avoid this asana in case of severe back pain, spinal injuries, or any discomfort in the abdominal region.Perform under supervision if suffering from vertigo or dizziness**.**

4.3.6: Parshwa-Konasana



Parshwa means side or lateral, and **Konasana** means angle pose.

Technique: Stand with your feet 2-3 feet apart.Raise your arms sideways in line with your shoulders, palms facing down.Turn your right foot outwards at a 90-degree angle and slightly angle your left foot inward.Inhale and stretch your torso to the right, reaching your right hand towards your right ankle, shin, or floor (as comfortable).Extend your left arm upward, keeping it aligned with your shoulders. Look towards your left hand.Maintain the position for 10-15 seconds while breathing normally.Exhale, and return to the starting position.Repeat on the other side.

Benefits:

- Stretches and strengthens the legs, spine, and oblique muscles.
- Improves balance and flexibility.
- Stimulates digestion and relieves stiffness in the hips and waist.

Precaution: Avoid this asana in case of severe back pain, sciatica, or neck issues.Perform under guidance if you have balance problems or chronic conditions.

4.3.7: Natarajasna



Nataraj means **Lord of Dance**, referring to Lord Shiva in his dancing pose.

Technique: Stand in Samasthiti with feet together and arms by the side of the body.Shift your weight onto your left leg, keeping it firm and straight. Bend your right knee and lift your right foot off the floor. Hold the right ankle with your right hand.As you inhale, extend your left arm forward and press the right foot back and up, creating a bow-like shape with your body.Balance on the left leg, keeping your gaze fixed at a point for stability.Hold the pose for 10-15 seconds, breathing steadily.Exhale, gently release the right foot, and return to standing.Repeat the same on the other side.

Benefits:

• Improves balance, concentration, and flexibility.

• Strengthens the legs, ankles, and core muscles.

• Enhances posture and opens up the chest and shoulders.

Precaution: Avoid practicing this pose if you have severe knee, back, or shoulder injuries.Perform under supervision if you are a beginner or have balance-related issues.

LET US SUM UP

- Asanas are physical postures in yoga that promote overall well-being.
- They improve flexibility, strength, balance, and relaxation while reducing stress and anxiety.

- Asanas are classified into different types,including standing,sitting, forward bending, backward bending, twisting, inverted, and balancing postures.
- Regular practice of asanas enhances physical health, mental clarity, and spiritual awareness.
- Along with pranayama (breathing techniques) and meditation, asanas form the foundation of a holistic yogic lifestyle.

4.5 FURTHER READINGS:

- Saraswati. S.S.(2009). *Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha,* Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India.
- Muktibodhananda.S.(2016). *Hatha Yoga Pradipika,* Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India.
- Saraswati. S.N.(2012). *Gherenda Samhita,* Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India.

4.6 Answers to check your progress:

Ans to Qn 1. Garudasana (Eagle Pose) enhances concentration, balance, and coordination. It strengthens the legs, improves flexibility in the shoulders and wrists, and helps detoxify by improving blood circulation.

Ans to Qn 2. Vatayanasana(Horse Pose) opens and strengthens the hip joints by improving flexibility and mobility. It also helps in aligning the pelvic region and reducing stiffness in the lower body.

Ans to Qn 3. Veera Bhadrasana(Warrior Pose) strengthens the legs, arms, and core muscles. It improves balance, stability, and endurance while enhancing hip and shoulderflexibility.This asana also increases focus and mental resilience.

Ans to Qn 4. Parshva-Uttanasana (Side Intense Stretch Pose) primarily stretches the hamstrings, calves, lower back, and spine. It also helps in lengthening the torso and improving posture.

Ans to Qn 5. Parshwa-Konasana (Side Angle Pose) enhances flexibility by stretching the legs, spine, and shoulders. It also strengthens the thighs and opens up the hips, promoting better movement and range of motion.

Ans to Qn 6. Garudasana, or Eagle Pose, is a balancing posture that strengthens the legs, arms, and core, while also stretching the shoulders and upper back. It's named after the mythical eagle, Garuda, symbolizing strength, focus, and agility, and Vatayanasana, or Horse Pose, is a deep, wide stance that strengthens the legs, hips, and lower back, while also stretching the groins and inner thighs.

Ans to Qn 7. Technique of Veera Bhadrasana: Stand straight with feet 3-4 feet apart.Turn the right foot outwards to 90 degrees and the left slightly inward.Inhale, and raise both arms sideways to shoulder level with palms facing upwards. Ensure arms are parallel to the floor. Exhale, bend the right knee so the thigh is parallel to the floor, keeping the knee aligned with the ankle. Turn your head to look over the right hand, keeping your gaze fixed.Maintain the position for 10-15 seconds, breathing steadily.Inhale, straighten the right knee, and bring the arms down.Repeat on the other side.

Benefits of Veera Bhadrasana:

- Strengthens the legs, ankles, and back.
- Improves balance, stability, and focus.
- Enhances stamina and stretches the chest, shoulders, and thighs.

Technique of Parivarta Trikonasana: Stand erect with feet more than shoulder width apart and raise the arms sideways to shoulder level. This is the starting position.Bend forward. Twist the trunk to the right, bringing the left hand to the right foot. The right arm should be stretched vertically to form a straight line.Look up at the right hand.Hold the final position for a few seconds, feeling the twist and stretch of the back.Return to the center forward position.Raise the body to the starting position, keeping the arms outstretched to the sides.Repeat to the other side.This is one round.Do not lower the arms, practice 5 to 10 rounds.

Benefits of Parivarta Trikonasana:

- Regular practice will help to reduce waistline fat.
- It stimulates the nervous system and alleviates nervous depression.
- This generally affects the muscles on the sides of the trunk, the waist and the back of the legs.
- It improves digestion,strengthens the pelvic area, and tones the reproductive organs.

Ans to Qn 7. Parshva-Uttanasana is a side stretch that enhances flexibility in the spine, hamstrings, and hips while offering a mild twist, and Parshwa-Konasana, or Side Angle Pose, is a deep stretch for the legs, hips, and sides of the body, while also strengthening the core and legs.

Ans to Qn 8. Natarajasana, or Dancer's Pose, is a graceful balance pose that strengthens the legs, opens the chest, and stretches the shoulders.

4.7 MODEL QUESTION:

Q1. What is the significance of Garudasana in yoga?

Q2. How does Vatayanasana benefit the hip joints?

Q3. What are the benefits of practicing Veera Bhadrasana?

Q4. What part of the body gets stretched in Parshva-Uttanasana?

Q5. How does Parshwa-Konasana help in improving body flexibility?

Q6. Write in detail about Garudasana and Vatayanasana.

Q7. Write down the techniques and benefits of Veera Bhadrasana and Parivarta trikonasana.

Q8. Write in detail about on Parshva-uttanasana, Parshwa-konasana.

Q9. Write in detail about Natarajasana.

*** ***** ***