

Nations Ignore Intel Inputs at Their Own Peril

By Vappala Balachandran

The author is Former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat

Foreign intelligence agencies sometimes run into headwinds in conveying information that applies to even a friendly foreign nation.

ON August 15, 1975, then Bangladesh President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family were assassinated in the early hours in a coup d'état by their army personnel in Dhaka's Dhanmondi. The New York Times quoted the Dhaka radio as claiming that the step was "in the greater interests of the country" to end an 'autocratic government'. Mujib's close associate and cabinet minister Khondaker Mostaq Ahmad took power after the coup.

American journalist Lawrence Lifschultz, then a leading voice in South Asian developments, recalled that he was informed about this while at the Indian Independence Day celebrations at the Red Fort, addressed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Bangladesh's The Daily Star (November 19, 2009) quoted him as saying that "the United States had prior knowledge of the coup which killed Mujib, and that the American Embassy personnel had held discussions with individuals involved in the plot more than six months prior to his death." The sensational theory, which was not proved, was that an America-China axis was growing to undercut PM Indira's growing influence in South Asia, backed by the Soviet Union.

However, this issue continued to agitate Indian political and intelligence circles for a long time. In December 1975, I attended the annual DIG-CID conference on intelligence and crime in New Delhi as the Deputy Commissioner of the Special Branch-CID in Bombay. In those days, the state chiefs of police did not meet annually on intelligence issues. The Intelligence Bureau used to host only the deputy inspectors general of the state. However, officers of all Central agencies, including the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) and the CBI, used to be in attendance.

Our conference was inaugurated by then Home Minister Kasu Brahmananda Reddy at the Vigyan Bhawan after a 'welcome tea' the previous evening at PM Indira's house at 1, Safdarjung Road. Reddy's suggestion that we needed to be vigilant over foreign developments affecting our security was interpreted as a veiled criticism of R&AW since there was a general impression that our foreign intelligence agency was remiss in anticipating the developments.

We spent the last day of our conference with R&AW officers so that we could be briefed on external developments. During the discussions, a senior DIG (CID) asked RN Kao, then the chief of R&AW, a loaded question on whether we were 'caught napping' during the Bangladesh coup. Those in the audience squirmed in their seats at the expected explosion from Kao, who was at the peak of his power and influence. However, all he said in a firm but low voice was, "I can assure you that we were not surprised at the developments."

I did not understand the full import of Kao's answer until I joined R&AW in May 1976 to know how a foreign intelligence agency works, which for outsiders would appear to be labyrinthine, as it cannot adopt the public protocol of an internal agency or a law-and-order department.

All we could do in circumstances like these was process and convey such information through diplomatic channels, keeping secrecy as the prime objective. In this case, PM Indira had asked Kao to alert Mujibur about the looming conspiracy. Kao told me after his retirement that Mujibur had dismissed such a possibility, thinking that his people would not do anything like that.

The same was the case with the August 1991 coup attempts against Mikhail Gorbachev, then General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. All American papers accused the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) of not alerting the White House. It was made worse when news agencies reported that US President George HW Bush had learnt about it from CNN on August 18 while on a holiday at Kennebunkport. Bush confirmed this in his book, *A World Transformed* (1998), which he jointly wrote with his National Security Adviser, Brent Scowcroft.

However, Bush also added that then Deputy National Security Adviser (later the CIA Director) Robert Gates had met him at breakfast on August 17 and briefed him that the “prospective signing of the Union treaty meant that time was running out for the hardliners, and they might feel compelled to act.” Gates thought that the threat was serious, although he had no specific information on what might happen. “The next day the plotters struck.”

The Los Angeles Times said on September 26, 1995, that declassified CIA documents indicated that the agency had reported as early as May 1991 that “Gorbachev would be finished politically even if he survived a coup attempt.” It said the first report (April 19, 1991) conveyed that the leaders of the Soviet military, the MVD (internal security police) and the KGB (intelligence service) were “making preparations for a broad use of force in the political process.” The secret CIA report added that “preparations for dictatorial rule have begun.”

James Risen, a noted intelligence expert who had compiled the report, said decision-makers often failed to understand the import of the CIA’s reports and act upon them. It is this failure, which was evident even during the processing of intelligence prior to the attack on Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941, that continues to bedevil security decision-making.

Sometimes, foreign intelligence agencies run into headwinds in conveying information that applies to even a friendly foreign country. Apart from our experience in Bangladesh in 1975, we faced a similar situation in Sri Lanka. In October 1994, we had received intelligence that the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) was about to conduct an operation near Colombo along the same lines as it did against Rajiv Gandhi in May 1991. This time, the target was Gamini Dissanayake. One of Sri Lanka’s brightest politicians, he could have become the island nation’s PM.

We had conveyed it to Sri Lanka through diplomatic channels. But Dissanayake and 50 of his followers were assassinated in a suicide bomb attack during a poll rally on October 24, 1994. Our advance intelligence did not translate into protective or preventive action because of a systemic failure in intelligence-processing in that country.

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Democracy in South Asia: From Lincoln’s Vision to Present-Day Realities

By Dr. Santhosh Mathew

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Abraham Lincoln famously described democracy as "government of the people, by the people, for the people." This vision embodies a system where power is rooted in citizen participation, with governance prioritizing the welfare and representation of all.

However, in South Asia—a region home to one of the world’s largest and most diverse populations—the reality of democracy is far more complex. Despite the presence of democratic institutions, the principles of “by the people” and “for the people” often face challenges due to corruption, authoritarian tendencies, and socio-political divisions. South Asian countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka have established electoral democracies with regular elections. However, participation is frequently compromised by voter suppression, political violence, and manipulation.

India, the world’s largest democracy, boasts high voter turnout and robust electoral processes. Yet, challenges like communalism, disinformation, and centralization of power are weakening the democratic fabric. Youth, a critical segment of the electorate, are increasingly swayed by identity politics rather than constructive policy debates. The influence of media, money, and shrinking spaces for dissent are turning the ideal of a government truly “by the people” into a distant reality. Pakistan’s democratic participation has been marred by frequent military coups, but since 2008, civilian governments have held regular elections. However, voter engagement remains limited due to entrenched political dynasties, electoral fraud, and patronage systems. Pakistan’s youth, though increasingly politically active, are often misled by disinformation, highlighting the need for better civic education and critical thinking. Lincoln’s “government for the people” envisions governance focused on improving citizens’ lives. In South Asia, this principle is often overshadowed by economic inequality, political favouritism, and lack of accountability, even as some countries achieve notable economic growth. Sri Lanka’s recent economic crisis highlighted deep governance failures, as political elites prioritized personal gains over the welfare of ordinary citizens. Youth-led protests in 2022 revealed widespread frustration with corruption and mismanagement, leading to the president’s resignation. For a democracy to be “of the people,” it must be representative and accountable. In South Asia, even where elected governments exist, representation is often compromised by corruption, nepotism, and weak institutions. Nepal’s transition from monarchy to republic has been marked by instability and struggles to ensure broad representation across its diverse society. Political fragmentation and a fragile system challenge the inclusivity of its democracy. Bhutan, which adopted democracy in 2008 through royal initiative, maintains stability but limits political pluralism. In both countries, youth engagement is essential for building a more representative and participatory democracy.

South Asia’s democratic systems have evolved significantly, but they still face fundamental challenges that prevent them from fully embodying Lincoln’s vision of “government by, for, and of the people.” Disinformation, authoritarianism, and socio-economic inequality create an environment where democratic ideals are often compromised. With youth making up a significant portion of the region’s population, their empowerment is crucial for shaping a democratic future. However, to be effective guardians of democracy, young people need access to education, digital literacy, and platforms for meaningful engagement.

Education plays a crucial role in equipping the next generation with the tools to critically engage in democracy. In South Asia, where educational disparities are widespread, integrating civic education into curricula can foster democratic values and active citizenship. Schools and universities should promote debate, dialogue, and participatory governance, enabling students to practice democratic principles in real life. Civic engagement is another vital component of youth empowerment. Initiatives that encourage youth participation in local governance, community service, and political activism are essential for bridging the gap between young citizens and democratic institutions. By giving young people platforms to express their views and influence decision-making, South Asia can nurture a generation that values democracy and is committed to upholding it.

As we celebrate the International Day of Democracy in 2024, South Asia stands at a critical juncture. The ideals of government “by the people, for the people, and of the people” remain

relevant, but achieving them requires renewed dedication. The future of democracy in the region hinges on empowering its youth—not just as voters, but as active participants in shaping governance. By investing in the next generation and addressing the structural flaws in democratic systems, South Asia can move closer to realizing Lincoln’s vision in both spirit and practice. In the end, the resilience of democracy will depend on how well we prepare today’s youth to lead with integrity, courage, and a commitment to the common good.

China-Xizang Himalayan Forum: The cynical ‘sinicisation’ of Tibet

By Srikanth Kondapalli

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The delegates invited, the agenda unveiled, and the larger context, indicate China’s efforts to convert Tibet (renamed recently as Xizang) into the fulcrum of sub-regional initiatives as well as to expand China’s influence in the neighbourhood.

With a forum for the trans-Himalayan region – the ‘China-Xizang Himalayan Forum’ -- Beijing is firstly sending a signal of consolidating and dominating the “roof of the world” in a post-Dalai Lama scenario, secondly encircling India in a multi-dimensional way by following one of its 36 ancient stratagems of “hexiao kongda” (cooperate with the small to counter the big) by providing incentives to South Asian countries to cumulatively exert pressure on New Delhi, and thirdly, obfuscating the impending environmental disaster through its modernisation efforts.

Pointedly, the China-Xizang Himalayan Forum was initiated at Nyingchi prefecture in Tibet, opposite Arunachal Pradesh, in 2018. Its fourth meeting was held in early July this year. The delegates invited, the agenda unveiled, and the larger context, indicate China’s efforts to convert Tibet (renamed recently as Xizang) into the fulcrum of subregional initiatives as well as to expand China’s influence in the neighbourhood.

The first forum meeting in September 2018 was attended by representatives from Nepal, Pakistan and other countries, with the agenda focused on economy and tourism. The next three meetings had a focus on environmental issues, one of the weakest issues for China in view of its exploitation of Tibet’s resources.

At the third meeting last October, China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi made five points, some of them repetitive, some even contradictory to the current Chinese practice in Tibet. Wang called for upholding mutual respect and mutual trust and building a “trans-Himalaya region into a family of solidarity”. He also called for building an “ecological civilisation” and a “trans-Himalaya region of green development and cooperation”, as well as for regional integration through connectivity and enhancing people-to-people exchange.

The fourth meeting, also held at Lulang town of Nyingchi prefecture on July 5 this year, was attended by nearly 20 countries, including representatives from Nepal, Myanmar, Mongolia, Bhutan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan but also countries like Sri Lanka, Chile, Bolivia, and South Korea. The inclusion of countries not connected in any way to the Himalayas suggests that China is trying to drum up support for its policies in Tibet.

While China entered Tibet in 1951 through military intervention, in recent times, it has intensified not only its control but also its “modernisation” efforts. In August 2020, a few months after the Galwan border incident with India, the decisive Tibet Forum Meeting, attended by the Communist Party’s politburo members, including President Xi Jinping,

declared the goal of ushering in “sinicisation of Tibet” – meaning, to intensify the long ongoing effort to strip Tibet of its own characteristics and identity and infuse Han Chinese body and soul into it.

Subsequently, Xi visited Nyingchi prefecture in July 2021 to oversee the progress in infrastructure projects, such as the \$5.8 billion Sichuan-Tibet railway line. His visit to Tibet was also to convey a message of resolve to fully integrate the region into China.

As a result, over a period of time, 7.5 million Han Chinese have come into Tibet, drastically altering the demographics of the region and making Tibetans a minority in their own land. China introduced “strike hard” policies of repression and banned the Dalai Lama’s photos or any activity seen as “splittism”. Beijing has sought to take control of the Dalai Lama’s succession by insisting on a “golden urn” process to select the next Dalai Lama. It has also passed the Land Border Law and built 628 “well-off society” villages across Tibet’s borders with the rest of South Asia. These “well-off society” military/paramilitary “watch posts” are expected to consolidate China’s control over the peripheral areas of Tibet and adjoining regions in South Asia. In the event of any political uncertainty in the region, these are expected to trigger military consolidation efforts by China.

China’s modernisation drive saw a flurry of infrastructure projects in Tibet, with the current 14th Five-Year Plan allocating \$22 billion in funding for railways, roads, energy pipelines, fibre optics, telecommunications, hydro-electricity dams, and reconstituting Tibetan nomads into ghettos for effective surveillance and control.

While the infrastructure projects attracted an estimated 55 million domestic and foreign tourists to Tibet last year, the world’s “third pole” is under stress due to China’s economic policies. China began exploiting 100 minerals in Tibet, as well as diverting water and electricity from it to the rest of China. As a result, Tibetan glaciers have melted over 15% in the past decades, threatening the fragile environment. However, China wants to convince the participants in the China-Xizang Trans-Himalayan Forum that all is well with the Tibetan ecology.

By including countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar in such meetings, China is trying to counter India. To counter China’s intrusions, India needs to comprehensively review its policies, build an international Buddhist circuit in Arunachal Pradesh, promote eco-tourism in the region, and prepare for Trans-Himalayan turbulence in the coming years.

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Teacher’s Day: Honouring Tradition in a Transforming World

By Uday Kumar Varma

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Teachers across India were commemorated a few days ago. Rich tributes were paid and their contribution to society lauded in glowing terms. Much of it was, however, ritualistic, missing an essential opportunity for deeper reflection on the evolving challenges teachers face in our rapidly changing world.

There is no gainsaying the truth that teachers have shaped countless generations, laying the foundation for every profession and institution in society. From the ancient transmission of wisdom to the modern digital classroom, teachers have always been the cornerstone of progress. As we acknowledge their great contributions, it is vital to recognize the devotion and duty of those who continue to practice a profession long hailed as the noblest of all.

For most of us, the first seeds of our dreams were planted by a teacher who believed in us, pushed us, and nurtured our curiosity. Teachers have guided us from ignorance to understanding, encouraging perseverance and the pursuit of wisdom. As William A. Ward so aptly put it, “The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.”

The Teacher’s Character

At the heart of impactful teaching lies not only skill but also the character of the teacher. As Karl Menninger once noted, “What the teacher is, is more important than what he teaches.” Students often look to their teachers not merely as sources of knowledge but as models of integrity, wisdom, and moral guidance. A teacher’s character shapes a child’s value system in ways that academic instruction alone cannot.

The influence of a truly great teacher transcends academic metrics. Their lessons remain imprinted on our minds long after the classroom experience ends, and the values they impart endure throughout life. However, in today’s rapidly evolving educational landscape, we must urgently rethink what it means to be a teacher.

Commercialization of Education

Education, once seen as a sacred mission, is increasingly being commodified. Schools and universities, which were once temples of intellectual and moral growth, are now often driven by market forces. The focus in many places has shifted from nurturing young minds to generating profits. This commercialization risks reducing the nobility of teaching, placing financial gains over the meaningful teacher-student relationship.

As this unsettling trend grows, it raises important questions: How can we reconcile the commercialization of education with its core purpose of enriching minds and society? Can we adapt to these pressures without compromising the essence of education itself? It is crucial that we engage in a serious debate to address these concerns before the sanctity of teaching is eroded beyond repair.

AI and the Future of Learning

The rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education offers both promise and challenges. From automated grading systems to personalized learning platforms, AI is reshaping how students engage with knowledge. No longer are teachers the sole gatekeepers of information; students now have access to vast resources at their fingertips, often challenging the traditional role of the educator.

AI has the potential to redefine the teacher-student relationship. The focus could shift from the transmission of knowledge to the cultivation of critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence. As Socrates insightfully remarked, “I cannot teach anybody anything; I can only make them think.” This rings truer now than ever, as teachers must become facilitators of inquiry, helping students navigate a world of complex information, while fostering empathy, ethical reasoning, and innovation.

Challenges in the AI Age

As AI becomes more integrated into the classroom, teachers face the pressing challenge of upskilling to remain relevant in a tech-driven educational landscape. The constant need to adapt to new tools and technologies can feel overwhelming, yet it is crucial that teachers strike a balance between leveraging technology and preserving the human elements of teaching—empathy, mentorship, and moral guidance.

For students, the challenge lies in learning to use AI responsibly. While technology opens up new horizons, the wisdom and life skills imparted by a good teacher—resilience, compassion, and independent thought—remain irreplaceable.

The future of education will likely see a synergy between teachers and technology. Teachers must learn to integrate AI tools into their teaching methods without losing sight of their unique role as moral compasses and sources of inspiration.

Embracing Change

As Mustafa Kemal Atatürk once said, “Better than a thousand days of diligent study is one day with a great teacher.” This enduring wisdom serves as a reminder that while technology can enhance learning, it cannot replace the profound, personal connection between teacher and student. Like candles, teachers consume themselves to light the path for others—a role no machine can fulfil.

As technology grows more pervasive, questions naturally arise: Will technology eclipse the role of teachers? Will educators retain their central place in imparting wisdom? Or will they eventually become mere facilitators, tools in a world increasingly dominated by AI?

The relevance of teachers in the coming era is a challenge we must confront as we commemorate their contributions. How will educators navigate this transformative period? How can they embrace the changes brought by technology and commerce, while staying true to their mission of guiding, inspiring, and shaping future generations?

Celebrating Teacher’s Day with reverence and gratitude is far more than observing a ceremony. It is an opportunity to reflect on the shifting landscape of education and to address the pressing challenges that lie ahead. The future demands that we engage in thoughtful debate on how best to uphold the sanctity of teaching in a world being transformed by technology and commercialization.

The Hour of God: Jaishankar’s ‘Grim Forecast’ and Time for India to Uphold Its Values

By Claude Arpi

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Ancient India, which today inspires many in India, always was synonymous with personal freedom and decentralised local governance, bringing amazing creativity

More than a hundred years ago, a sage who had just taken refuge from imminent British arrest in a French establishment in South India wrote one of the most amazing texts. Sri Aurobindo, who had earlier been jailed by the Crown for inciting the youth of India to rebel against the Raj, was indeed a visionary.

A few years after he plunged into an intense spiritual sadhana, he foresaw something that the planet may have to go through.

In a short text, in manuscript form, called *The Hour of God*, Sri Aurobindo wrote: “There are moments when the Spirit moves among men and the breath of the Lord is abroad upon the waters of our being; there are others when it retires, and men are left to act in the strength or the weakness of their own egoism. The first are periods when even a little effort produces great results and changes destiny; the second are spaces of time when much labour goes to the making of a little result. It is true that the latter may prepare the former; it may be the little smoke of sacrifice going up to heaven which calls down the rain of God’s bounty.

Unhappy is the man or the nation which, when the divine moment arrives, is found sleeping or unprepared to use it, because the lamp has not been kept trimmed for the welcome and the ears are sealed to the call. But thrice woe to them who are strong and ready yet waste the force or misuse the moment; for them is irreparable loss or a great destruction.”

These poetic words were written at the end of World War I but still remain valid and relevant today as the planet goes through an unexpected and strange upheaval. Even politicians realise this. Jaishankar, the Minister of External Affairs, recently declared: “There is a very grim forecast for the next five years. It is because of what is happening in the Middle East (West Asia), Ukraine, and South Asia, the continued impact of COVID, many have not come out of it.” Grim forecasts are the norm in every domain: economical, strategic, economic, social, or religious.

It started with the COVID pandemic, which originated from Wuhan in China (a fact that the Western nations like the US and France would like to forget as they were hand in glove with the authoritarian regime in Beijing to develop the P4-security level Chinese lab).

For India, it continued with the confrontation with China in Ladakh, at a time a peace-loving government believed in high-level bilateral exchanges (remember the Wuhan Consensus and the Mahabalipuram Connect).

This did not work; China transgressed the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh at five different places. Four years later, the issue is still not settled.

In February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, starting the biggest conflict in Europe since World War II. On February 24, 2022, President Vladimir Putin announced a “special military operation to demilitarise Ukraine.” The West condemned the invasion, while Moscow justified it, quoting NATO provocations.

What is interesting is that Putin had visited Beijing a week earlier, where he would have told Xi Jinping that it would take three days to win the war; two years later, no end is in sight.

It shows the unpredictability of the present world; hopefully Putin’s ‘Ukrainian adventure’ forced Xi Jinping to start thinking about the outcome of an invasion of Taiwan, which would create chaos and devastation in the region for years and probably destroy the Middle Kingdom from inside.

It is difficult to predict if ‘the rain of God’s bounty’ will fall on the Ukrainian conflict, but there is no doubt that the world will not be the same after. Post-war, actors will be aligned differently, and probably some of the Western nations will lose the prominent place in the world that they gained after WWII. The Global East may then emerge as a new world leader.

Then, on October 7, 2023, an armed conflict between Israel and Hamas-led Palestinian militant groups started in the Gaza Strip and Israel. It is the fifth war of the Gaza-Israel conflict since 2008 and the deadliest for Palestinians. Here again, when will it end?

Elsewhere too, the world is truly in turmoil: look at the coup in Bangladesh; the situation in Myanmar, a nation close to implosion; the arrest of the former ISI chief in Pakistan all have serious implications; perhaps more important is the poor economic picture in the Middle Kingdom, which is bound to make China more aggressive on sea and on its land borders.

To cap it all, we witness dramatic climate changes, i.e., devastation in Kerala, in the Himalaya, or earthquakes in Japan.

I shall skip the US elections, which will certainly not bring more harmony and peace to the American continent.

The forecast is indeed grim everywhere.

Is there something, particularly for India, to learn from the present turmoil?

The text of Sri Aurobindo tells us: “In the hour of God, cleanse thy soul of all self-deceit and hypocrisy and vain self-flattering that thou mayst look straight into thy spirit and hear that which summons it. All insincerity of nature, once thy defence against the eye of the Master and the light of the ideal, becomes now a gap in thy armour and invites the blow. Even if thou conquer for the moment, it is the worse for thee, for the blow shall come afterwards and cast thee down in the midst of thy triumph. But being pure, cast aside all fear; for the hour is often terrible, a fire and a whirlwind and a tempest, a treading of the winepress of the wrath of God; but he who can stand up in it on the truth of his purpose is he who shall stand; even though he falls, he shall rise again; even though he seems to pass on the wings of the wind, he shall return. Nor let worldly prudence whisper too closely in thy ear; for it is the hour of the unexpected, the incalculable, the immeasurable. Mete not the power of the Breath by thy petty instruments, but trust and go forward.”

What does it mean for India? The country has so far not fared badly except in the domain of environment, which has been neglected. Politically, New Delhi, which is practicing multilateralism, has not been involved in any major conflict; this is good.

But it is time for India to stand on its feet, not to listen to the worldly prudence whispered by friends abroad; in the coming years, India will have to face the unexpected, incalculable, immeasurable waves of the future.

Practically, it should translate into bold policies; India should become a far more innovative and decentralised state.

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India is Proud of: Charlotte Chopin The 101-YO Yoga Instructor Who Has Taught Thousands



Charlotte Chopin from France started practicing yoga at 50 and has been on a mission to share its benefits with the world. The 101-year-old was recently awarded the Padma Shri for her remarkable contribution to spreading awareness about yoga.

In this fast-paced world reigned by unhealthy lifestyle choices, yoga acts as the catalyst bringing the body and mind together. India's unique gift to humanity, yoga is integral to both physical and mental health.

Charlotte Chopin started practicing yoga at 50, defying her age with grace and strength. Ever since she recognised its transformative power, she has made it her life's mission to share its benefits with others.

Born on 11 December 1922, Charlotte, a resident of Léré in Cher, has instructed thousands of students in the past five decades. Now aged 101, she remains an active yoga teacher and operates a yoga studio in her hometown.

People close to her reveal that her energy is unmatched.

She began teaching yoga in 1982 in France and is credited for creating a wave of yoga in the country. She travels across France, conducting workshops about the benefits of the ancient practice.

Her dedication and expertise even led to an invitation to showcase her yoga talents on the popular French TV show 'France's Got Incredible Talent'. Charlotte's story is proof that yoga transcends all boundaries.

On 9 May 2024, Charlotte was honoured with the **Padma Shri**, India's fourth highest civilian award, for "defying age-limiting norms by learning yoga after turning 50".

As the centenarian credits her health and longevity to her yoga practice, she believes that yoga can bring happiness and promote holistic well-being. Yoga has reached many parts of the world, thanks to the small contributions made by many like her.

Charlotte Chopin continues to be an inspiration for all age groups, embodying the mantra that age is just a number.

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