Mahashivaratri: The night of Adiyogi, the source of yoga

The 14th day of every month is known as Shivaratri. Mahashivaratri is the most powerful of the year’s 12 Shivaratris and celebrates the grace of Shiva. The word “Shiva” literally means “that which is not”.

Science says everything came out of nothing and will go back into nothing. In their own language, scientists are saying Shiva holds everything together. If you look at the sky, you will see many stars, but still, the biggest presence is the vast emptiness. This emptiness – the very basis of creation – is referred to as “Shiva”.

On Mahashivaratri, the planetary positions, especially in the northern hemisphere, are such that there is a natural upsurge of energy in the human system. It is easy to move our energies upwards. To facilitate this, one should keep the spine vertical. Hence the tradition of staying awake throughout this night.

Shiva has always been referred to as “Triambaka” because he has a third eye, the eye of inner vision. The two eyes all human beings have are sensory organs that feed the mind with impressions of the physical. They just see what is on the surface. So another eye, an eye of deeper penetration, has to be opened.

Knowing doesn’t come from reading books or listening to someone, nor does it mean simply acquiring information. Knowing means opening up a new vision of life. For true knowing, the third eye has to open. This brings a clarity that no amount of philosophies can. This is a clarity that no situation can distort. On Mahashivaratri, that possibility becomes easily accessible.