



Point of View

Synergizing yoga science and society for well-being through innovative yoga practices on International Day of Yoga 2024

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: Yoga, a holistic practice with its roots in ancient India, has gained global acclaim for its comprehensive benefits to physical, mental, and spiritual health. The International Day of Yoga, celebrated annually on June 21, highlights yoga's universal appeal and its role in fostering harmony and well-being across diverse communities. This paper explores the innovative yoga practices initiated by AIIMS Bhopal on the 10th International Yoga Day 2024, focusing on the synergy between scientific insights and societal well-being.

Material and Methods: AIIMS Bhopal, under the leadership of the Executive Director, implemented specialized yoga protocols tailored to address the specific health needs of various groups, including healthcare professionals, ITBP personnel, differently abled children, the elderly, and the general public. These protocols were validated by yoga Indo-Tibetan Border police experts and executed through a series of events, workshops, and daily sessions throughout June 2024. The events were promoted via a comprehensive media campaign to maximize outreach and engagement.

Results: The initiatives demonstrated significant improvement in participants' physical and mental health, including enhanced flexibility, strength, stress reduction, and overall well-being. Specialized sessions for differently-abled children, ITBP personnel, and the elderly highlighted yoga's adaptability and its benefits across demographics.

Conclusion: AIIMS Bhopal's innovative approach on International Day of Yoga 2024 showcased the transformative potential of yoga when integrated with modern healthcare practices. Future initiatives should continue to tailor yoga programs for specific populations, promote community outreach, and incorporate yoga into medical education to enhance health and wellness on a broader scale.

Keywords: AIIMS Bhopal, Community wellness, Holistic health, Innovative practices, Integrative medicine, International Yoga Day, Yoga

INTRODUCTION

Yoga, an ancient practice originating in the Indian subcontinent, has garnered global recognition for its profound impact on physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. International Day of Yoga, observed annually on June 21st, serves as a global platform to celebrate and promote the benefits of yoga across cultures and communities.¹ Initiated by India and adopted by the United Nations in 2014, this day emphasizes the universality of the ancient practice of yoga in fostering harmony and peace. It encourages people worldwide to embrace yoga as a holistic approach to health, emphasizing its role in stress reduction, improving flexibility and strength, and enhancing overall quality of life.² International Day of Yoga celebrations typically include mass yoga

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sessions, workshops, seminars, and cultural performances that highlight yoga's transformative power and its ability to unite communities across diverse backgrounds and cultures in pursuit of health and harmony.³

AIIMS Bhopal, a premier institute of medical education and research in central India, stands at the forefront of advancing healthcare through its multidisciplinary approach and commitment to integrative medicine. The Department of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) at AIIMS Bhopal plays a pivotal role in promoting traditional Indian healthcare practices alongside modern medical interventions. In 2024, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bhopal, under the visionary leadership of Executive Director Prof. (Dr.) Ajai Singh demonstrated a pioneering approach to this celebration by integrating innovative yoga practices tailored to address contemporary health challenges. This paper explores AIIMS Bhopal's initiatives on 10th International Day of Yoga 2024, focusing on how these practices synergize scientific insights with societal well-being.

AIIMS Bhopal's commitment to holistic health and integrative medicine makes it a fitting venue for exploring the transformative potential of yoga. The events held on International Day of Yoga 2024 at AIIMS Bhopal underscored the institution's proactive stance in promoting yoga as not merely a physical exercise regimen but as a comprehensive lifestyle intervention.⁴ Participants included not only healthcare professionals and students but also personnel from the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and Traffic Police, to community outreach programs benefiting differently-abled children and elderly residents, underscoring the broad spectrum of beneficiaries engaged in these initiatives [Figure 1]. The approach of designing specialized protocols exemplifies how yoga can be tailored to diverse populations with varying health needs.⁵

Moreover, AIIMS Bhopal's celebration of International Day of Yoga 2024 aligns with broader national and international efforts to integrate traditional practices with modern healthcare frameworks. The systematic incorporation of yoga into daily routines at AIIMS Bhopal, as evidenced by the daily yoga sessions and health camps organized throughout June, highlighted its role in preventive healthcare and chronic disease management. By unveiling specific yoga therapies targeted at addressing prevalent health issues among ITBP personnel, such as stress-related ailments, AIIMS Bhopal not only demonstrates scientific rigor but also showcases the therapeutic potential of yoga in enhancing resilience and overall well-being.⁶ This paper aims to delve into these innovative practices, offering insights into their scientific foundations and their impact on fostering healthier communities.

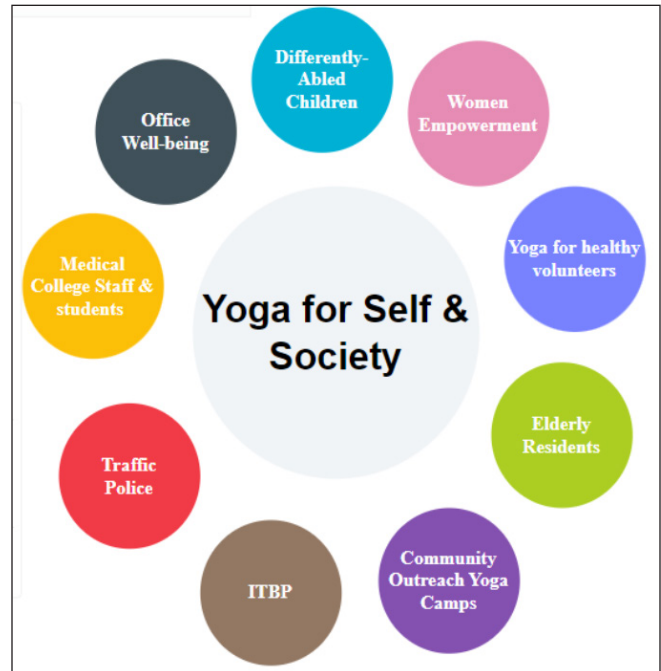


Figure 1: Yoga for self and society. ITBP: Indo-Tibetan Border Police.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The theme for the 10th International Day of Yoga 2024 was 'Yoga for Self and Society' as given by the Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India. The schedule was pre-designed and approved by a competent authority before the commencement of the event. The event number REG/AIIMS/BPL/2024/CSWLC/ESMA/274 was allotted by the registrar's office of the Institute.

Participants enrolled prior to as well as on the day of the event as spot registrations. Participants were selected from several groups, including ITBP personnel, AIIMS patients, healthcare professionals, staff, students, etc. Purposive sampling was done to ensure representation across different age groups, genders, and health conditions. This approach facilitated a nuanced understanding of how the effectiveness of yoga varied on the basis of demographic and health profiles.

'Common Yoga Protocol' was adopted by the normal healthy participants such as general hospital staff, students, those practicing morning yoga, and from rural outreach camps, etc. For people with special needs, such as geriatric persons, differently abled children, and those with occupational hazards, like traffic police personnel, ITBP commandos, and office working people, special yoga protocols were implemented to address the common health issues. Each protocol was well analyzed and validated by three yoga experts having more than five years of experience in their field [Tables 1-5]. Yoga sessions were conducted by Yoga instructors, and other activities of the event were coordinated by the AYUSH Senior Medical officer.

Table 1: Yoga protocol for chair yoga/office yoga.

S.N.	Posture name	Round	Timing
1.	Prayer	1	3 minutes
2.	Overhead stretch	4	2 minutes
3.	Neck stretch	4	2 minutes
4.	Reserve arm hold	4	2 minutes
5.	Chair pigeon	2	2 minutes
6.	Seated forward band	2	2 minutes
7.	Eagle arm	4	2 minutes
8.	Chair warrior	2	2 minutes
9.	Cat-cow stretch	2	2 minutes
10.	Chair spinal twist	4	2 minutes
11.	Seated mountain	4	2 minutes
12.	Camel pose	2	2 minutes
13.	Cat pose	2	2 minutes
14.	Child pose	4	2 minutes
15.	Cobber's pose	2	2 minutes
16.	Cow pose	4	2 minutes
17.	Crescent moon pose	2	2 minutes
18.	Extended mountain pose	2	2 minutes
19.	Extended side angle pose	4	2 minutes
20.	Knee to chest pose	4	2 minutes
21.	Half butterfly pose	4	2 minutes
22.	Suryabhedhi Pranayama	4	2 minutes
23.	Bhramari Pranayama	2	2 minutes
24.	Anulom-Vilom Pranayama	2	2 minutes
25.	Nadi Shobhan Pranayama	2	2 minutes
26.	Ujjayayi Pranayama	2	2 minutes
27.	Breathing awareness meditation	10-15	5 minutes
28.	Shanti path	1	2 minutes
Total Time			60 minutes

Table 2: Yoga protocol for differently able children.

S.N.	Activity names	Duration of activity
1.	Tadasana	2 minutes
2.	Tiryak Tadasana	2 minutes
3.	Katichkarasana	4 minutes
4.	Suryanamskar	10 minutes
5.	Cycling	4 minutes
6.	Natraj asana	2 minutes
7.	Halasana	2 minutes
8.	Shasankasana	2 minutes
9.	Bhujangasana	2 minutes
10.	Garudasana	2 minutes
11.	Vrikshasana	2 minutes
12.	Shambhavi Mudra	5 minutes
13.	Suryabhedhi Pranayama	2 minutes
14.	Bhramari Pranayama	5 minutes
15.	Anulom-Vilom Pranayama	2 minutes
16.	Nadi Shobhan Pranayama	2 minutes
17.	Ujjayayi Pranayama	2 minutes
18.	Breathing awareness meditation	5 minutes
19.	Sankalpa	1 minutes
20.	Shanti Path	2 minutes
Total		60 minutes

Table 3: Yoga protocol for traffic police.

S.N.	Name of yoga	Duration of activity
1.	Prayer	2 minutes
2.	Tadasana	2 minutes
3.	Tiryak Tadasana	2 minutes
4.	Katichkarasana	2 minutes
5.	Vrikshasana	2 minutes
6.	Suryanamskar	5 minutes
7.	Makarasana	2 minutes
8.	Salbhasana	2 minutes
9.	Dhanurasana	2 minutes
10.	Uttanpadasana	2 minutes
11.	Halasana	2 minutes
12.	Sarvangasana	2 minutes
13.	Pawanmuktasana	2 minutes
14.	Naukasana	2 minutes
15.	Savasana	5 minutes
16.	Kapalbhati	3 minutes
17.	Nadisodhana Pranayama	5 minutes
18.	Ujjayayi Pranayama	3 minutes
19.	Bhramari Pranayama	5 minutes
20.	Mindfulness Dhayana	5 minutes
21.	Sankalpa	1 minutes
22.	Santhih Patha	2 minutes
Total		60 minutes

Table 4: Yoga protocol for geriatric persons.

S.N.	Activity names	Duration of activity
1.	Pawan Muktasana Part-1	15 minutes
2.	Tadasana	3 minutes
3.	Tiryak Tadasana	2 minutes
4.	Katichkarasana	2 minutes
5.	Makarasana	2 minutes
6.	Bhujangasana	2 minutes
7.	Dhanurasana	2 minutes
8.	Savasana	10 minutes
9.	Kapalbhati	2 minutes
10.	Nadisodhana pranayama	5 minutes
11.	Bhramari pranayama	2 minutes
12.	Dhayana in Sambhvi Mudra	10 minutes
13.	Sankalpa	1 minutes
14.	Santhih Patha	2 minutes
Total		60 minutes

A team of different cadres of the AYUSH Department was deployed to perform the different activities. Organizing transportation, yoga mats, audio systems, banners, posters, and standees, as well as cleaning the premises, and managing crowd and security were tasks distributed among the team members. Program schedules and timings were circulated among college and hospital staff and students through available modes of communication like e-mails, WhatsApp messages, brochures on the institute website, electronic display board, flexi banners, etc.

Table 5: International day of yoga Common Yoga Protocol (CYP) for ITBP soldiers.

S.N.	Name of yoga	Duration of activity
1.	Prayer	2 minutes
2.	Neck bending	2 minutes
3.	Trunk movement	2 minutes
4.	Knee movement	2 minutes
5.	Tadasana	2 minutes
6.	Vrikasana	2 minutes
7.	Pada-Hastasana	2 minutes
8.	Ardh Chakrasana	2 minutes
9.	Trikonasana	2 minutes
10.	Bhdrasana	2 minutes
11.	Ardh Ustrasana	2 minutes
12.	Sasankasana	2 minutes
13.	Vakrasana	2 minutes
14.	Bhujangasana	2 minutes
15.	Salbhasana	2 minutes
16.	Makarasana	2 minutes
17.	Setubandhasana	2 minutes
18.	Pavanmuktasana	2 minutes
19.	Savasana	5 minutes
20.	Kapalbhati	2 minutes
21.	Nadisodhana Pranayama	2 minutes
22.	Bhramari Pranayama	2 minutes
23.	Dhayana in Sambhvi Mudra	10 minutes
24.	Sankalpa	1 minutes
25.	Santhih Patha	2 minutes
Total		60 minutes

ITBP: Indo-Tibetan Border Police

The promotion of the event was extensively carried out through a comprehensive media campaign, utilizing print, electronic, and social media platforms to maximize outreach and engagement. Print media included newspaper, flyers, and posters distributed at key locations, providing detailed information about the event. Social media played a crucial role, with targeted campaigns on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube featuring engaging content, updates, and interactive posts to attract and inform the audience. This multi-faceted promotional strategy ensured widespread awareness and participation in the event.

OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The objective of International Day of Yoga 2024, themed ‘Yoga for Self and Society’, was to inspire individuals to integrate yoga into their daily lives for personal health and well-being while also fostering a sense of community and social harmony. This event aimed to raise awareness about the holistic benefits of yoga, encourage widespread participation, and promote practices that enhance both individual wellness and collective mindfulness. By doing so, the event seeks to build a healthier,

more compassionate world where the interconnectedness of self and society is recognized and nurtured through the practice of yoga.⁷

The expected outcome of this event was to heighten global awareness of the benefits of yoga for both personal well-being and societal harmony. Participants will experience improved physical and mental health, leading to a more balanced and fulfilling life. Additionally, the event aims to strengthen community bonds by promoting inclusivity and mutual understanding through collective yoga practices.⁸

ACTIVITIES AND WORKSHOPS

1. **Enhancing office well-being: Y-break, or chair yoga,** also known as office yoga, offers a convenient way for individuals to integrate the benefits of yoga into their busy work schedules. This practice involves simple yet effective yoga postures and breathing exercises that can be performed while seated or using a chair for support. Y-break sessions are designed to alleviate physical and mental stress, enhance flexibility, and improve posture, making them ideal for office workers who spend long hours sitting at desks. By incorporating regular Y-breaks into the workday, employees can experience increased energy levels, better focus, and a more balanced state of mind, ultimately leading to a healthier and more productive work environment.⁹

In recognition of yoga as a pivotal aspect of physical fitness, an event was facilitated for ministry employees. Shri Anil Suchari, Secretary, General Administration Department, Madhya Pradesh, graced the occasion as the chief guest. Over 100 ministry employees actively participated in the session, which included a detailed demonstration of various Y-break yoga postures and a meditation session, highlighting the scientific benefits of yoga, including improved physical flexibility, muscle strength, stability, and enhanced mental health through meditation and pranayama.

2. **Empowering differently-abled children:** Yoga for differently-abled children addresses their unique physical and mental health needs through adapted practices that foster inclusivity and empowerment. These tailored yoga sessions focus on improving flexibility, strength, and coordination, while also enhancing emotional resilience and mental clarity. By incorporating gentle postures, breathing exercises, and relaxation techniques, yoga helps differently-abled children develop better body awareness and self-regulation skills. Moreover, the non-competitive nature of yoga creates a supportive environment that boosts their confidence and self-esteem.¹⁰

Yoga practice session for differently-abled children was conducted at the Aarushi Kendra in Shivaji Nagar, Bhopal.

This session saw the participation of 26 differently-abled children and aimed to enhance their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being through the scientifically-backed benefits of yoga. The children engaged in a variety of activities, including general warm-up exercises, micro-exercises, rhythmic yoga, pranayama, meditation, and Om chanting. Organized with the support of Aarushi Kendra volunteer Anil Mudgal and coordinator Sapna Gupta, this initiative by AIIMS Bhopal aims to inspire these children to incorporate yoga into their daily routines, fostering a positive and healthy lifestyle.

3. Strengthening bonds with elderly residents: Through regular yoga sessions, elderly participants experience improved flexibility, balance, and strength, which contribute to a higher quality of life and increased independence. Additionally, the meditative and social aspects of yoga promote mental clarity, reduce stress, and foster a sense of community. As seniors engage in yoga together, they build connections with their peers and instructors, creating a supportive network that combats feelings of loneliness and isolation. This shared practice not only improves their health but also helps strengthen their relationships, enhancing their overall sense of belonging and happiness.¹¹

A comprehensive yoga session at "Apna Ghar" Old Age Home in Rohit Nagar, Bhopal was organized for the elderly. The event aimed to make yoga accessible to the elderly, emphasizing its benefits for physical and mental well-being. With aging, issues like decreased bone density and joint stiffness, particularly in those with arthritis, become prevalent. Regular yoga practice can mitigate bone loss, enhance joint flexibility, and strengthen muscles around the joints, facilitating easier movement. The session included a holistic blend of activities such as brief prayers, posture guidance, chanting, guided meditation, visualization exercises, asanas, and pranayama, all tailored to the needs of the elderly.

4. Community Outreach Yoga Camps: These are initiatives designed to bring the benefits of yoga to diverse communities, often focusing on underserved or marginalized groups. These camps offer free yoga sessions, making the practice accessible to individuals who might not otherwise have the opportunity to participate. By fostering physical health, mental well-being, and community connections, these camps play a crucial role in promoting holistic wellness. They often collaborate with local organizations, schools, *anganwadis*, and community health centers to create inclusive environments where participants can experience the transformative effects of yoga.¹²

The health camp in Amoda and Rapadiya villages, near AIIMS Bhopal, provided a comprehensive healthcare program. Medical officers and yoga instructors led the camp, offering AYUSH consultations, yoga sessions and counseling, and free distribution of AYUSH medicines. The camp catered to different age groups and socio-economic backgrounds, addressing chronic conditions like arthritis, anxiety, and hypertension while promoting preventive health. Participants reported significant improvements in physical and mental health, highlighting benefits such as reduced pain, increased flexibility, and better stress management after yoga sessions. The camp's integrated approach was well-received, enhancing overall community wellness and demonstrating the importance of making yoga accessible to the masses.

5. ITBP yoga event: The ITBP commandos, operating in harsh, high-altitude environments, have unique physical and mental demands that yoga can effectively cater to. Regular yoga practice can enhance their physical endurance, flexibility, and strength, essential for navigating rugged terrains and extreme weather conditions. Additionally, yoga's focus on breath control and mindfulness can improve mental resilience, helping them manage stress, maintain focus, and stay calm under pressure. On 21st June 2024, AIIMS Bhopal celebrated the 10th International Day of Yoga at the ITBP Camp situated in Kanhasiya village. ITBP officers, including the Deputy Inspector General, soldiers and their family members, AIIMS yoga practitioners, doctors, staff, and students, participated in the Common Yoga Protocol. The event featured subtle exercises, asanas, pranayama, mudra, and meditation, aimed at improving physical and mental health, reducing stress, and preventing diseases. A brochure on yoga therapy for ITBP soldiers was also unveiled.¹³
6. Traffic police-led yoga events: A yoga session for about 50 traffic police personnel was conducted on June 15, 2024. Recognizing the physical and mental challenges faced by traffic police, such as stress, pollution exposure, and health issues like hypertension and varicose veins, the session included subtle exercises, asanas, pranayama, meditation, and Om chanting. Traffic police, often exposed to high levels of stress, pollution, and long hours of standing, can greatly benefit from yoga. Traffic Police-led yoga events are essential to address their specific needs, promoting physical endurance, flexibility, and mental resilience. Regular yoga practice can alleviate common issues such as back pain, joint stiffness, and hypertension while enhancing overall well-being. Additionally, yoga's emphasis on breath control and mindfulness can help

traffic police manage stress and maintain focus amidst the chaos of urban traffic.^{13,14}

7. Workshop on women empowerment through yoga: Department also organized a Continuing Medical Education Seminar (CME) titled 'Tattva-2024' on 'Yoga for Women Empowerment' in the lecture hall of the institute. The Executive Director inaugurated the session and emphasized the importance of integrating yoga into daily life and medical treatments to combat non-communicable diseases. Over 100 participants attended the event. The first speaker, an Associate professor in anesthesiology highlighted yoga's benefits in alleviating women's back and knee pain, and potentially preventing diseases like cancer. Another speaker, and Associate professor in Physiology, discussed yoga's impact on managing chronic diseases and menstrual disorders.
8. Medical college staff for enhanced healthcare: Healthcare workers face significant physical and mental challenges due to their demanding roles, including long hours, high-stress environments, and the need for constant alertness. Incorporating yoga into their routine can provide substantial benefits, such as reducing stress, alleviating physical strain, and improving overall mental resilience. The department held successful two-day yoga sessions for doctors, staff, officials, children, and patients in honor of International Day of Yoga. These sessions included asanas, pranayama, mudra, bandha, and meditation, highlighting yoga's physical and mental benefits. This initiative raised awareness of yoga's importance, encouraging participants to incorporate it into their daily lives.¹⁵ Yoga's emphasis on mindfulness, breath control, and physical postures can help healthcare workers manage stress, prevent burnout, and maintain physical health, which is crucial for their ability to provide effective patient care. Regular practice can enhance their emotional well-being, promote better sleep, and foster a sense of balance and calm, ultimately contributing to a healthier, more sustainable work life.
9. Daily yoga session for healthy volunteers: From June 1st to 20th, 2024, a daily morning yoga session was held from 7 AM to 8 AM as part of a public awareness campaign promoting yoga. On average, 50 participants attended each day, engaging in various yoga practices aimed at enhancing physical and mental well-being. This campaign effectively demonstrated the benefits of regular yoga practice and successfully encouraged community participation in adopting healthier lifestyles.

DISCUSSION

This paper highlights AIIMS Bhopal's pioneering efforts to integrate traditional yoga practices with modern healthcare to address contemporary health challenges. On the 10th

International Day of Yoga, AIIMS Bhopal, under the leadership of Prof. (Dr.) Ajai Singh, conducted various yoga events and workshops that catered to many groups including healthcare professionals, ITBP personnel, differently-abled children, and the elderly. These initiatives emphasized the holistic benefits of yoga in promoting physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, aligning with the global theme "Yoga for Self and Society." The events showcased specialized yoga protocols tailored to specific needs, demonstrating the therapeutic potential of yoga in enhancing resilience and overall well-being. The systematic incorporation of yoga into daily routines, as seen in the daily yoga sessions and health camps, underscored its role in preventive healthcare and chronic disease management. Through these innovative practices, AIIMS Bhopal illustrated how scientific insights and traditional yoga can be combined to foster healthier communities, ultimately promoting inclusivity, social harmony, and a holistic approach to health.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, AIIMS Bhopal's innovative integration of yoga practices with modern healthcare on International Day of Yoga 2024 underscores the profound impact of yoga on individual and societal well-being. These efforts highlight the potential of yoga to address contemporary health challenges and promote a holistic approach to wellness. Future initiatives should include tailored yoga programs for specific populations, continuous community outreach, integration into medical education, and digital platforms for wider access. Encouraging research and policy advocacy can further promote yoga's role in healthcare and community wellness.

Author contributions

DJ: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing-Original draft; CS: Data curation, Writing-Original draft preparation, Software; VM: Visualization, Investigation, Reviewing and Editing, Validation; BR: Supervision, Reviewing and Editing.

Ethical approval

Institutional Review Board approval is not required.

Declaration of patient consent

Patient's consent not required as there are no patients in this study.

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There are no conflicts of interest.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted technology for manuscript preparation

The authors confirm that there was no use of artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted technology for assisting in the writing or editing of the manuscript and no images were manipulated using AI.

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