



# International Yoga Festival

March 8-14, 2024

Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh (Himalayas), India



Incredible India



Ministry of Ayush  
Government of India



संस्कृति मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
CULTURE



आयुष मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
AYUSH





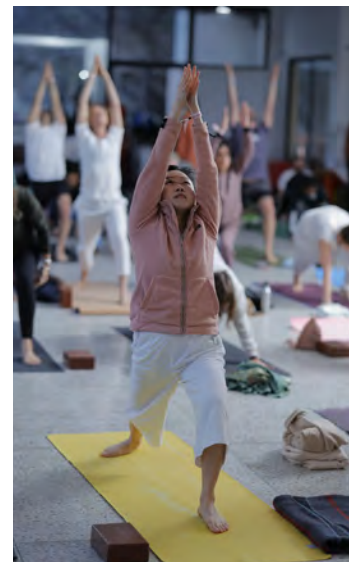
परमार्थ

PARMARTH

Parmarth Warmly Welcomes Delegates of the IYF 2024

INTERNATIONAL YOGA FESTIVAL

PARMARTH NIKETAN







# Creating harmony

*in the world, since time immemorial.*

— *India, the land of Yoga* —



## Contents

---

13	<b>ABOUT PARMARTH NIKETAN</b>
14	<b>PUJYA SWAMIJI &amp; SADHVI BHAGAWATIJI'S BLESSINGS</b>
16	<b>ABOUT INTERNATIONAL YOGA FESTIVAL</b>
18	<b>IYF 2024 WELCOMES YOGA LOVERS From Nearly 75 Nations</b>
22	<b>CELEBRATING THE MAHA SHIVRATRI</b>
26	<b>OFFICIAL INAUGURATION of IYF 2024</b>
30	<b>LIVING YOGA FOR PEACE AND SUSTAINABILITY</b>
34	<b>POWER OF AYURVEDA TO HEAL</b>
38	<b>BRIDGING THE DIVIDE</b>
42	<b>CELEBRATING PEACE AND LOVE</b>
46	<b>IYF 2024 CONCLUDES WITH HOLI CELEBRATION</b>
50	<b>MEDIA COVERAGE</b>
51	<b>SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS</b>
52	<b>YOGA OFF THE MAT</b>





**HH PUJYA SWAMI SHUKDEVANAND SARASWATIJI**  
Founder of Swami Shukdevanand Trust



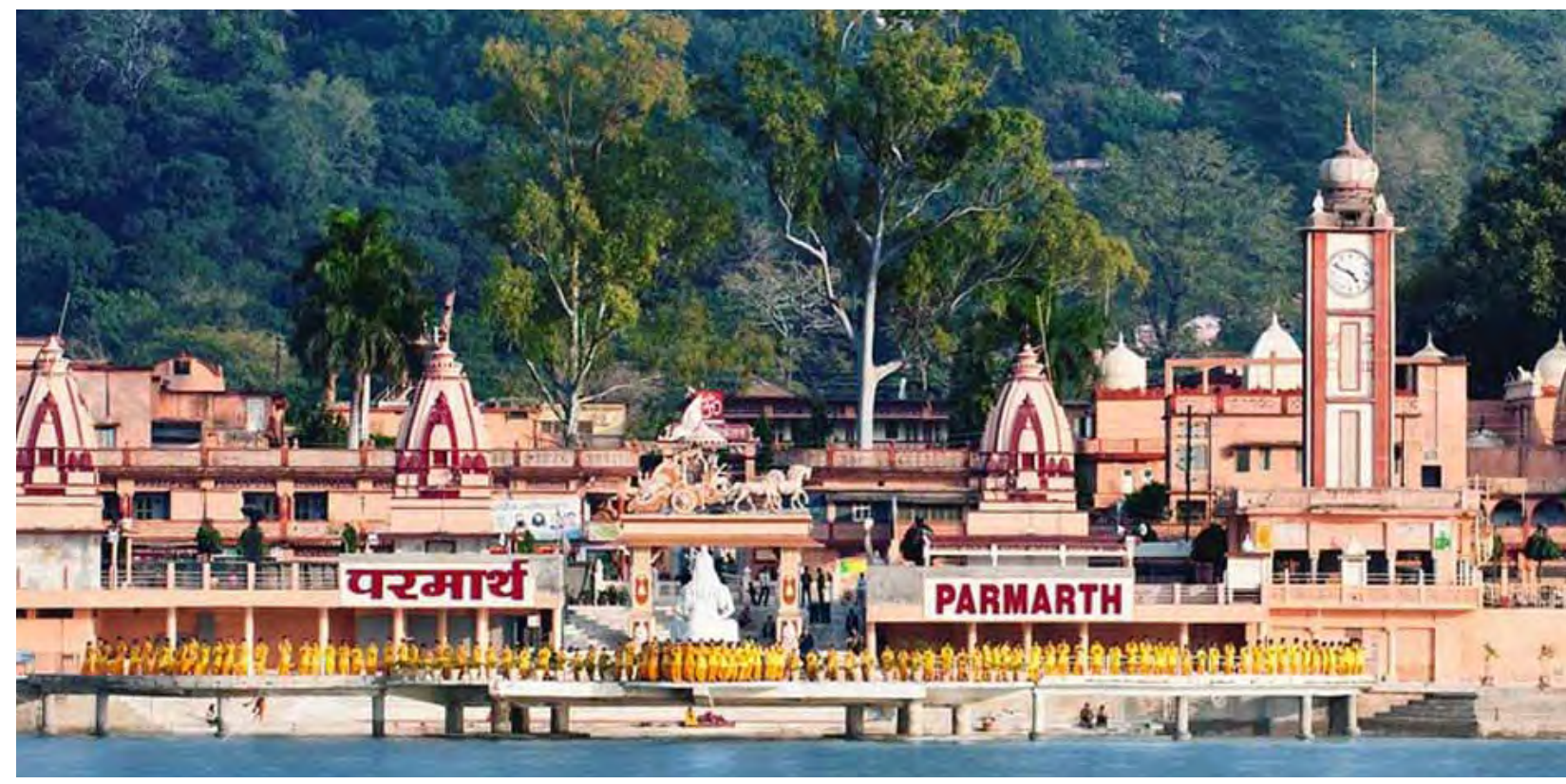
**H.H. PUJYA MM SWAMI ASANGANANDJI**  
Managing Trustee of Swami Shukdevanand Trust



**HH PUJYA SWAMI CHIDANAND SARASWATIJI**  
President of Parmarth Niketan

# About Parmarth Niketan

HOME TO THE WORLD RENOWNED, ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL YOGA FESTIVAL



To learn more: [www.parmarth.org](http://www.parmarth.org)

Yoga is practiced by some 300 million people worldwide, making Parmarth Niketan's International Yoga Festival a tremendous draw for individuals from around the world.

Parmarth Niketan Ashram was founded by HH Pujya Swami Shukdevanand Saraswati Ji, in the early 1940's. The ashram is currently blessed by HH Pujya MM Swami Asanganand Saraswati Ji and guided by the leadership and vision of HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati Ji.

feel your soul bathing in the peace of sacred energies, including those that emanate from nature and those that linger from the timeless healing powers of saints, sages and enlightened masters.



Parmarth Niketan Ashram offers comfort, inspiration and upliftment for your body, mind and spirit as well as a deeper connection with the Divine. As you experience the serenity of the Ashram you will

Parmarth Niketan is also one of India's largest interfaith, yoga and spiritual institutions. Parmarth Niketan Ashram literally means an "Abode Dedicated to the Welfare of All" and is a true spiritual haven, lying on the holy banks of Mother Ganga, in the lap of the lush green Himalayas.

# Blessings

H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji  
President and Spiritual Head of Parmarth Niketan



Pujya Swamiji, one of India's most renowned leaders, is President of Parmarth Niketan, the largest ashram in Rishikesh and one of the largest spiritual institutions in India. He is a world renowned spiritual leader, visionary and divine guide. He is the Founder of numerous organizations dedicated to protection, preservation and upliftment of society as well as interfaith harmony, including: Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, Ganga Action Parivar, Divine Shakti Foundation, Interfaith Humanitarian Network & India Heritage Research Foundation (see inside back cover for details). Pujya Swamiji has received innumerable awards, both in India and abroad for his extraordinary leadership. His religion is Unity, and he is a frequent leader at international interfaith conferences and summits such as the UN, World Economic Forum, Parliament of World Religions, etc. He travels the world, bringing people of every religion and culture closer to the Divine.

To learn more please visit:

pujyaswamiji.org  
@pujyaswamiji  
youtube.com/parmarthniketan

Dear Divine Souls,

I am so glad to welcome you all to the holy banks of Mother Ganga, to the lap of the sacred Himalayas, to this land which is the birthplace of yoga.

The last few years have been a time of turmoil, turbulence and tragedy. I believe we need to move from a "Greed Culture" to a "Green Culture." We can only do that if we shift our focus from I to We. When I becomes We then Illness becomes Wellness.

IYF is not only a festival where people learn yoga; rather, the festival itself is yoga – a divine union of the east and west, the north and south. On the banks of Mother Ganga, people of every country, every culture, every color and every creed come together as one family, connecting to the Divine within themselves and within others. It is a time of uniting not only one's hands to one's legs, but a time of uniting oneself to the Divine, to the Divine that exists in every single one of you.

Know that you have come home, here at Parmarth Niketan. This is your Himalayan home. Everything that your soul needs is here in abundance: serenity, inspiration and the divine touch. Come, sit by the banks of Mother Ganga, absorb the divine energy of saints, sages and rishis who have meditated and performed yoga here for centuries. Be touched and transformed by the divine, sacred energy of this holy place.

I always say, "Come to nature, be with nature, and discover your true nature." Let your soul and spirit reach the height of the Himalayas in whose lap you are sitting. Let your joys, sorrows, attachments flow like the water in the Ganges. Become like the sunrise which brings light and warmth each day and a new day to all – with no discrimination, no vacation, no hesitation, and no expectation.

I extend great thanks to all our dedicated teachers who have travelled from every corner of the globe to come and offer their experience, enthusiasm and expertise to the Festival.

May God bless you all with the continued awareness of the Divine within you and continued connection to the Divine Source.

With love and blessings always,

Swami Chidanand Saraswati

Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji,  
Director of International Yoga Festival



Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, PhD is a spiritual leader, motivational speaker, author and social activist, based at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh. She is President of Divine Shakti Foundation, Secretary-General of Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, and Director of the world-famous International Yoga Festival. She has received numerous awards for her humanitarian work including the Lifetime Achievement Award by U.S. President Joe Biden. She is also the author of #1 bestselling memoir, Hollywood to the Himalayas: A Journey of Healing and Transformation. Originally from Los Angeles, and a graduate of Stanford University, Sadhviji has lived at Parmarth Niketan for more than 26 years, where she gives spiritual discourses, satsang and meditation, leads myriad humanitarian programs and serves as a unique female voice of spiritual leadership throughout India and the world.

To learn more please visit:

sadhviji.org  
youtube.com/sadhviji  
@sadhviji  
@sadhvibhagawatisaraswati  
@sadhvibhagawati

My dear sisters and brothers,

It is such a great joy and blessing to welcome you home to the holy banks of Mother Ganga, to the lap of the Himalayas, to the birthplace of yoga — the place where for thousands of years saints and sages, rishis and yogis have come to meditate, to do yoga and to attain enlightenment or "moksha," ultimate liberation.

As our world falls tragically more and more into the throes of divisiveness, polarization, and violence, so many of our brothers and sisters around the world are stuck in an "us vs them" mentality. Minds contract. Hearts contract. Lives contract. At this time our coming together is even more important and powerful. .

We are all one people who depend upon the same air, water, soil to survive. Powerful bombs don't care whether there is a wall or a country border separating us. In the same way, climate change doesn't care, water shortages don't care, air pollution doesn't care. And we're one on the deepest, spiritual level. In the Vedantic tradition, the philosophical underpinning to yoga, this means we are of one soul, one spirit, one consciousness, one source. According to the Vedas, creation is pervaded fully by the creator. Not only are we one with God, but we are one with all.

This spiritual teaching is not so different from what much of science tells us as well. That which literally composes my body makes up your body, and bodies of water, the earth, and – according to our best astronomers – the very components of space, the sun, stars and even dark matter. So that exquisitely perfect creation which allows me to sit here and write also allows hearts to beat in every human on Earth and allows flowers to open their petals to the rising sun.

The International Yoga Festival is a sacred time of uniting together with our global family of yogis from every country, culture, color and creed. It is a union of different lineages and traditions.

During the week that you are here, allow yourself to be taught by the teachings, but also allow yourself to be touched and transformed by the sacred, holy energy of this place. Let the waters of Mother Ganga wash over not only your bodies, but also into your minds, hearts, and souls.

And as you allow yourself to truly bathe and bask in the divine energies, let us open our hearts together to our sisters and brothers across the world who are suffering. From Israel and Palestine to Ukraine and Russia to Sudan to Myanmar to so many other places in the world. As we come together this week in joy, celebration and gratitude, let us dive deep into ways that our own yoga can extend into compassion and service for all.

In His seva

Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati







# RISHIKESH THE YOGA CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

On the Holy banks of Mother Ganga  
AT PARMARTH NIKETAN

In the Lap of The Himalayas

OFFERING YOGIS FROM  
AROUND THE WORLD

THE TEACHING, TOUCH  
& TRANSFORMATION

OF YOGA

# IYF 2024

IYF has taken place in Rishikesh since 1989, first organized by the Government of Uttar Pradesh, and then by the Government of Uttarakhand since 2001.

Parmarth Niketan has been hosting this event, since 1999. In this time, the IYF has grown to international acclaim and continues to increase in attendance yearly. 🙏



OVER 2000  
PARTICIPANTS

From 75  
countries



OVER 175  
CLASSES

More than  
50 diverse class  
offerings



MORE THAN 70  
PRESENTERS








# 75 Countries Participate in the International Yoga Festival 2024

 Afghanistan  Albania  Argentina  Australia  Austria

 Bangladesh  Belgium  Bhutan  Bosnia & Herzegovina  Botswana

 Brazil  Bulgaria  Canada  Colombia  Czech Republic  Denmark

 Estonia  Falkland Islands  Finland  France  Germany  Georgia  Ghana  Greece

 Hungary  Iceland  Ireland  Israel  Italy  Japan  Kuwait





 Lithuania  Malawi  Malaysia  Mauritius  Mexico  Morocco

 Mozambique  Namibia  Nepal  Netherlands

 New Zealand  Nigeria  Norway  Oman

 Panama  Peru  Portugal  Russia

 Saudi Arabia  Singapore

 Slovenia  South Korea  Spain  Sri Lanka

 Sweden  Switzerland  Tajikistan  Ukraine

 United Arab Emirates  United Kingdom

 United States of America  Uganda  Uruguay

 Venezuela  Zimbabwe  Zambia





अतुल्य भारत  
Incredible India



# INTERNATIONAL YOGA FESTIVAL

8-14 MARCH, 2024

PARMARTH NIKETAN, RISHIKESH

## IYF PRESENTERS & TEACHERS



Maa Dr. Hansa Yogendra



Shri Gauranga Das Prabhu



Sadhvi Abha Saraswati



Dr. Chinmay Pandya



Dr. H.R. Nagendra



Dr. Ishwar V. Basavaraddi



Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa



Seane Corn



Luke Coutinho



Anand Mehrotra



Kia Miller



Tommy Rosen



Ira Trivedi



Vaidya Dr. Ramkumar



Gurushabd Singh Khalsa



Dr. Smita Naram



Vaidya Dr. Padma Nayani Raju



Yogishi Vishvketu



Stewart Gilchrist



Subodh Tiwari



Dr. N. Ganesh Rao



K.C. Jain



Dr. Eden Goldman



Katie B. Happy



HS Arun



Yogiraj Swami Jayant Saraswati



Claire Missingham



Jai Hari Singh



Maria Alejandra Avcharian



Sensei Sandeep Desai



Bijay Anand



Mohan Bhandari



Justice J.R. Midha



Mansi Gulati



Paula Tapia



Dasa Das (Alan Aleid)



Dr. Indu Sharma



Ganga Nandini



Gayatri Yogeoharya



Erioa Kaufman



Rohini Manohar



Dr. Nishi Bhatt



Aoharya Ashish Gilhotra



Dr. Radhika Nagrath



Kamala & Jahnavi



Darshana

## ARTISTS & MUSICIANS



Kailash Kher



Sivamani & Runa



MC Yogi



Daphne Tse



Visvambhar Sheth



Gurnimit Singh



Nriyavali



Krishnapriya



Joseph Sohmidin



Sudhanshu Sharma



Sandra Barnes



Astrid Slegten



James Cassidy



Sanae Yamamoto



Lalita Shivani



Sattyananda



Sanj Hall



Simon Glöde



Aoharya Dilip



Aoharya Ramprasad Adhikari



Aoharya Vinod Joshi



Parmarth Pishikumars

SCAN FOR IYF HIGHLIGHTS



@IntlYogaFest

@InternationalYogaFestival

#IYFPARMARTH

#IYF2024

Watch LIVE [www.youtube.com/@parmarth.com](http://www.youtube.com/@parmarth.com)

“Parmarth’s IYF illustrates that the time has come for yogis and yoga practitioners to take yoga off the mat and into the world, becoming the solution to the challenges that ail our planet and all of humanity. From the banks of Ganga, the message is: Become the rivers of conscious action, thinking not merely of ‘what for me’ but ‘what through me’. Becoming soldiers and stewards of peace is what Yoga is all about.”

- H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji

“In this sacred land, where the saints, sages and rishis have come for thousands of years, the participants of International Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan receive the highest excellence in teachings. But along with teachings from yoga experts from across the world, the participants also receive the divine touch and transformation of Mother Ganga and the Himalayas, and this energy of awakening in the Birthplace of Yoga. It is that confluence of teachings, touch and transformation that is so special and draws people here from every corner of the globe.”

- Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji -



# Celebrating Maha Shivratri

Day 1

Maha Shivratri begins the International Yoga Festival (IYF) at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh

The 36th annual International Yoga Festival began with the auspicious celebration of Maha Shivratri this year, approximately 1400 yoga enthusiasts from 75 countries and 64 yoga teachers from 25 countries arrived at the holy banks of Maa Ganga. With the blessings of H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, President of Parmarth Niketan, and Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji, International Director of Parmarth Niketan and Director of IYF, the highly anticipated annual International Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh began with much excitement on the holy banks of Maa Ganga, in the sacred lap of the Himalayas. The Festival has been organized with the support of Incredible India, Ministry of Tourism, in association with the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India.

**H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji**, President of Parmarth Niketan in inaugurating the festival shared, "It is a great joy to welcome so many revered saints and respected yogacharyas to the International

Yoga Festival. This week, all of the participants will receive not only the gift of their wonderful teachings, but also the gift of their divine touch, through which all will be transformed."

**Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji**, Director of International Yoga Festival said, "The renowned presenters at IYF bring not only the best of strength and flexibility through asana, but they also bring the depth and breadth of yogic philosophy and spiritual wisdom for true alignment of body, mind, heart, spirit and connection of the self to the Divine."

Yoga classes representing every major lineage of yoga started the day, with something for yogis of all ages and interests. The morning asana class began at the break of dawn with Kundalini Sadhana led by Gurushabd Singh Khalsa from California, USA, followed by pre-breakfast classes including: "Freedom In My Foundation - 1st + 2nd Chakra Balancing Vinyasa - Hips + Hamstrings" by Katie B Happy, best-selling author and motivational speaker; and "Enlivening Shakti" with

**Anand Mehrotra**, who founded the Sattva Yoga Academy. Participants practiced ancient Himalayan pranayama and kriyas, then danced ecstatically, while Mehrotra encouraged yogis to "Move like you've never moved before!"

Furthermore throughout the day numerous thought provoking discussions took place, including on the power of yoga and ayurveda can heal addiction between American yoga teacher and addiction recovery expert Tommy Rosen, founder of Recovery 2.0, and renowned Ayurveda expert Vaidya Dr. Ramkumar.

**Tommy Rosen**, taught participants how to use yoga to rise above whatever addictions hold us back in life.

"Addiction is the place where nothing connects," Rosen said. "Yoga is the place where everything is connected. Yoga is recovery. Recovery is yoga. You can't have one without the other."





Yoga and flexibility expert Rubber Girl Anvi enthralled and inspired the audience. Anvi is a 15-year-old Down syndrome special child who has been invited to meet PM Modi, performing a remarkable yoga demonstration to the delight of those gathered. Pujya Swamiji and Pujya Sadviji honored Anvi with a mala and a sacred rudraksha tree, the iconic green gift of Parmarth Niketan, and a blessing that she may continue to uplift and inspire girls and people of all abilities across the world.

H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati Ji, President of Parmarth Niketan Ashram, said, “Today, Anvi can be a special ambassador for all girls on earth. Today, which is both Maha Shivratri and International Women’s Day, let us remember that girls don’t need to be empowered. Girls will empower the world.”

Pujya Sadvhi Bhagawati Saraswati, International Director of Parmarth Niketan and Director of IYF, also

brought awareness to the significance of Mahashivratri falling on Women’s Day stating, “Tonight is auspicious - the great night of Lord Shiva. Shiva is that power that destroys all that which prevents new creation. The perfection of the universe requires each of us to acknowledge the perfection of ourselves, that we are each divine. It is also International Women’s Day. We remember the feminine when we say ‘Mother Earth,’ ‘Mother Nature.’ In Hindi, the word for nature, prakriti, and the word for creative force, shakti, are feminine. So on this day, we remember to celebrate the feminine throughout our lives, in honoring the women in our lives—our mothers, sisters, aunts, friends—and the creative essence that exists in every tree, every body of water. This is how we honor the feminine in our lives.” Participants raised their hands joyously and pledged to honor the feminine on the banks of Ganga under the moonless night of Shivratri.”

A sacred Rudraabhishek took place just

after the divine Ganga Aarti, honoring and invoking the blessings of Lord Shiva where all present had the opportunity to participate in the worship together with the gathered spiritual luminaries. The ceremony took place with soul stirring kirtan with renowned musicians Gurnimit Singh, a 3rd generation lineage holder Kirtan singer from Vancouver, Canada, and others, had participants in bliss chanting the holy name of Lord Siva, dancing in joy till late at night on the banks of Maa Ganga.

During the celebrations, famous Actor Rajkummar Rao joined celebrity Yoga teacher Ira Trivediji along with other devotees to offer their prayers and soak in this sacred experience at the feet of the iconic Lord Shiva in the yoga capital of the world. The celebrations continued into midnight with a visually spectacular light and sound dance by Sattyanand, an accomplished musician, followed by a sacred sound bath post the Aarti in the Satsang Hall that brought everyone into the next day of the Festival.

**Plenary Wisdom Talk**, starting a daily tradition where acclaimed thought leaders inspired the festival, with the first day taking a deep dive on “Shivratri, Sacred Energy of Shiva”, graced by **Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji and Pujya Sadvhi Bhagawati Saraswatiji**. Pujya Swami Ji said, “If you want to be peaceful on this earth, this is the way: Realize Shiva (masculine) and Shakti (feminine) are not two; they are one. Today is Shivaratri and International Women’s Day. This is a beautiful way to start the Festival. Yoga is the union of Shiva and Shakti.”

He continued to expand on this sense of unity as applied to the Festival sharing, “People from Ukraine and Russia, Palestine and Israel were in

my jyopri last night, but there was no war. Yoga is the way, love is the way, peace is the way. That is why we come to Yoga, come to the banks of Maa Ganga in the lap of the Himalayas. Your practice will first transform yourself, then your communities, countries, and the world.”

Pujya Sadviji introduced the international audience to core Vedic understandings on this auspicious day. “In Vedic tradition, we do not believe in original sin but original divinity. That we have not been created by the Divine but OF the Divine. Hinduism is not a polytheistic religion or monotheistic religion but actually, there is nothing but the divine. The dilemma is we have ignorance; we forget who we are. We think we are this body, this skin color,

this skill, this bank account, and then we suffer. The solution is to come back to the truth of who we are. Everyone wants to know, ‘what’s the purpose of life, what’s my dharma?’ You are here to remember. Shivratri is the day to remember you are divine. That’s the real you.”

Around 5:30 pm, the participants gathered on the holy banks of Ganga at the Parmarth Niketan Ghat for the first sacred aarti of the festival, with a special Maha Shivratri lecture, meditation, and chanting session led by H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati Ji, Pujya Sadvhi Bhagawati Saraswati Ji, and renowned yogacharyas from across the world.





# Official Inauguration of the 36th International Yoga Festival

**Day 2**

The Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand, Lt. Gen. (Retd), offers a keynote address on Day 2 of the International Yoga Festival (IYF) at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh.

Inspiring Plenary on Total Wellness

Spectacular Performance by Internationally Acclaimed Recording Artist MC YOGI

After a vibrant first day of the 36th International Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh, **Day 2** began with equal vigor and enthusiasm yet again at dawn with another full and overflowing schedule. The official inauguration of the Festival took place on this day by the Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand, Lt Gen (Retd) Gurmeet Singh Ji who inspired the festival goers with his profound spiritual insight and wisdom, as the festival geared up to welcome visits from other Hon'ble Diplomats, and Dignitaries throughout the week.

**Ganga Nandiniji** of Parmarth Niketan welcomed the guests from across the nation and from every corner of the world, offering thanks to the support and partnership of Incredible India, Ministry of Tourism as well as the association of the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India.

**Hon'ble Governor Lt Gen (Retd) Gurmit Singh ji** spoke to the heart of the Festival during his powerful address, saying "This place itself is so blessed. To be on the banks of Maa Ganga. If you look behind, we have the Himalayas.... What better moment can there be than this? If you look at this word, 'Parmarth,' where you are sitting, it literally means 'the deepest meaning.' If you want to understand the deepest meaning of life, then this is the place where you can have the deepest meaning of being, the deepest meaning of the cosmos."

He implored the guests to open themselves to the experience of the

divine which is present here stating that "This place is the union of Shivji and Ganga Ma. You can feel the vibrations of the divinity, spirituality, and cosmic depth," The Hon'ble Governor continued. "The deepest meaning of the word 'yoga', the path you have chosen, is a union of body, mind, and soul. It's a union of your own consciousness with the cosmic consciousness. In fact, the path that you have taken, if you evaluate yourself now and re-evaluate yourself after seven days, you'll find a world of difference because of the divine and spiritual vibrations. I can assure you of one thing: after seven days, you'll be the best friend with your own inside."

"Yoga isn't what we do; it's who we are," added Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati Ji. "It's what we practice not only on the mat but off the mat. It's what we practice every day of life. We are in the world capital of yoga, where we were all given keys freely, with no copyrights. Take the keys wherever you are and use them to open the locks so that light may shine onto millions and millions on earth. Yoga is a union. That starts with you. You are the key; you must look into yourself."

**Pujya Swamiji** continued "Our world doesn't have a shortage of land, or water, or food. We have a shortage of consciousness. So we give great gratitude to the saints and rishis and sages of Rishikesh who gave mantras to this entire world. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. That is India's message to the world. The World is one family."

"Yoga is that which is the answer

to everything that ails our planet today," said **Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati Ji**. "Every day in the news is another opportunity to pick sides. We have conflicts based on race, skin color, political party, sexual orientation, and gender. As the climate worsens, we realize every one of our problems is caused by one fundamental issue—the myth of separation. If I feel separate from other people, from the planet, I bring suffering to others and the earth. When we remember we are connected, the problems start to ease. Yoga isn't the union of the nose to the knees. It's the union of the self to the divine and the divine in all. As we look at what's happening in Russia and Ukraine, Israel and Palestine, Myanmar, and so many places, we remember yoga is the answer."

"Yoga has much to do with the mind," said **Dr. Hansaji Yogendra Ji**, a globally acclaimed Spiritual Yoga Guru and the Director of The Yoga Institute. "Know yourself. Know your type of body, know your mind, know the types of thoughts you have. Slowly, according to your age, your lifestyle, your level of consciousness, yoga helps you experience each side of you so that you can live more happily."



**The day's Yoga classes** saw an ecstatic kundalini class after sunrise led by Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa, the disciple of Yogi Bhajan who founded Yogi Bhajan's first yoga center in the United States, the class was under the theme 'The Thunder Power Of Love ~ Courage, Commitment, Tenacity.'

"How much thunder you have in you, how much power you have in you, comes from the heart," Gurmukh Ji said. "The only way I've found to heal yourself and to heal the world is through love. Love has become overused in the West. Love isn't always sweet. Sometimes it's tough love. Sometimes you have to speak your truth. This comes from the navel, then it goes to your heart. Don't be too quick to say, 'love you, love you.' Pause and ask yourself, 'do I mean it, can I feel love in my soul?' If you do, that is the thunder power of love."

"It is so inspiring to receive directly from Gurmukhji," said participant Marouf Triad Mahmoud, from Qatar. "She is a living legend. Being in her presence, she can inspire us towards being full of love."

**Plenary Wisdom talk approaches "Total Wellness"**, Some of the brightest minds on the mind-body connection gathered for an insightful plenary, which featured Luke Coutinho, the Wellness Champion at the forefront of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Fit India Movement, Vaidya Dr. Ramkumar, a passionate Ayurveda Vaidya hailing from a traditional Ayurveda family, third-generation vaidyas, and Dr. N. Ganesh Rao, the founder of ACT Yoga who holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy as well as multiple diplomas in Naturopathy and Yoga Education, and is a Yoga Chikitsa Acharya, moderated by Ira Trivedi, the best-selling author and yoga expert who founded Yog Love. The Speakers approached total mind body spirit wellness and gave the audience incisive insight and practical takeaways to implement in their life and inspire everyone to undertake their journey towards total wellness.

**Luke Coutinho** said "I think the teaching that I would like to share at a point in this world where there is so much awareness but yet a lack of action." he went on further to say that "it is that a change in human behavior is required for better health spiritually, mentally, and physically. My message would be of the importance of bringing mindfulness and awareness to action and human behavior for better health."

94 to 95% of diseases today are inflammatory in nature and categorized medically as lifestyle conditions, which means they are caused by poor lifestyle and the hope is that if we

modify our lifestyle we get better, the remaining 5 percent is highly genetic, which means no matter how fit and healthy you are, you have a high chance of getting that illness, but now with the field of epigenetics we know that if we modify our environment within and around us we can even up regulate and down regulate genes"

**Dr Ganesh Rao** highlighted that "Wellness is dynamic, It is rooted in individual choice. We are able to make choices, for example, to practice yoga, and by pursuing healthful choices, wellness is able to improve over time. The goal is always to move towards holistic health. There is no one tailor fit treatment to disease, Yoga and Ayurveda helps us look at the underlying cause and address the issue at the source"

"Any autoimmune problem is the immune system behaving erratically, attacking you. It's not a disease. It's an attack. There is no cure. What are the triggers? Number one is stress. Two is sleep deprivation. Three is the leaky gut syndrome. We need to come back to our baseline. You take medicine as a crutch. But we need to find out what the trigger is and work with that. That's what it takes to put it into remission. Absolutely it can be genetics. But don't become a victim of genetics. Medicine isn't the answer. We must take a holistic look at the whole person."

**Dr Vaidya Ramkumar** shared "in the modern world when we talk of wellness and health, it is not just about how do I correct my liver or lungs, but it is about the whole system, not just about the body, but the spirit, mind and senses, when we begin to direct the mind inward we gain radiance and shine like a thousand bulbs, the more we engage with the senses, the less possibility for total wellness"

**MC Yogi performs on the banks of Mother Ganga.** A very special evening ecstatic musical performance took place after the Aarti where participants danced late into the evening beneath the new moon to the vibrant and ecstatic beats of MC YOGI, internationally renowned recording artist who fuses western dance music with spirituality and sacred hindu chants which raised the energy at the festival to an ecstatic and euphoric level. MC YOGI played his famous "Give Love," to an ecstatic crowd who formed heart shapes with their hands and sang along. He stole everyone's hearts as Pujya Swamiji, Sadvhiji and Mataji joined Parmarth Rishikumars, IYF presenters and participants in dancing to his music late into the night.



# Living Yoga for Peace and Sustainability

**Day 3**

Spiritual Masters Pujya Maa Hansa Ji and Shri Gauranga Das Ji join us for Day 3 of International Yoga festival (IYF) at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh

Padamshri Kailash Kher Treats Participants with Unique Blend of Indian Folk and Sufi Music

The 3rd day of the 36th annual International Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan was set to be an incredibly inspirational one with exciting activities, wisdom offerings and a special evening performance by world renowned musician and artist Padma Shri Kailash Kher Ji.

The morning unfolded with a host of classes including from **Ira Trivedi**, a celebrated author and Yoga Acharya who is the founder of Yog Love and Namami Yoga, led students to Salute the Sun at dawn on the famous Parmarth Yoga Ghat; world renowned Yoga Teacher Kia Miller, originally from England and now based in Los Angeles, led her students in connecting with Kundalini Shakti; and Gurnimit Singh, 3rd generation lineage holder Kirtan singer from Vancouver Canada, taught students how to open their throat chakra.

After a light and nutritious brunch, **Dr. Smita Naram**, Co-Founder of Ayushakti, one of the leading and most trusted ayurvedic health centers around the world, showed students powerful methods for detoxing the body in order to renew the mind, body, and spirit. **Vaidya Dr. Ramkumar**, a lifelong student of Ayurveda and other traditional Indian knowledge systems, conducted a masterclass on how the Spiritual Foundations of Ayurveda. On the mat, **Tommy Rosen**, Founder of Recovery 2.0, led an asana on Nervous System Attunement, and internationally celebrated yoga teacher **Seane Corn** led an asana class with the theme of Mystics on the Mat: Magick, Alchemy, and Ritual as a Pathway Towards Liberation.

**Illuminating Wisdom Talk** Spiritual Plenary Session inspired the festival goers to delve into the profound theme of “Living Yoga for Peace and Sustainability.” Esteemed speakers included Pujya Maa Dr. Hansa Ji Yogendra, globally acclaimed Spiritual Yoga Guru and the Director of The Yoga Institute; Director of ISKCON’s Govardhan

Ecovillage (GEV) Shri Gauranga Das Ji, who serves as UNEP’s Faith for Earth Counsellor, sits on the board of the Govardhan School of Public Leadership, which prepares students for the civil services exam, and is the administrative director of Bhaktivedanta Research Centre (BRC), which creates libraries of Vedic literatures and manuscripts; **HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji**, President of Parmarth Niketan, world-renowned Spiritual Guru and founder of numerous, wide-scale service initiatives; and **Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji**, Director of International Yoga Festival and International Director of Parmarth Niketan, Best-selling author and motivational speaker. **Kia Miller**, the internationally acclaimed yoga teacher, moderated the session. This remarkable gathering exemplified the festival’s commitment to fostering unity, health, and inner peace on a global scale.

“Yoga is not merely a physical practice; it is a way of life—a holistic path of balance and sustainability,” said **Pujya Maa**. “As early as the fifth century B.C., Indian values espoused the need for sustainability and the pertinent need for us to live peacefully and with balance and harmony. These values have been the foundational basis of Yoga philosophy. Through the practice of yoga, we are guided to cultivate inner peace, harmony, and balance, which are essential prerequisites for creating a sustainable and peaceful world. The idea is that when we find peace within ourselves, we naturally radiate that peace outward, creating a ripple effect that touches the lives of those around us and extends to the entire planet.”

“Let us remember that each one of us has the power to make a difference,” **Pujya Maa** continued. “By integrating the teachings of yoga into our daily lives, by living with mindfulness, compassion, and reverence for all life, we can co-create a world that is not only peaceful and sustainable but also filled with love, joy, and abundance.”







**Special evening performance at Ganga Aarti with Padma Shri Kailash Kher Ji.** H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati ji and Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati led the nightly sacred Ganga Aarti and kirtan celebration, which culminated in a very special performance from our beloved and acclaimed Padma Shri Kailash Kher, world renowned Artist and former Parmarth Niketan Rishikumar.

During aarti Sadhviji opened up to the audience about “Our Spiritual Happy Hour,” where you enjoy spiritual intoxication by chanting the name of the Divine but don’t suffer from any hangovers. “This is our thank you and I love you ceremony,” Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati Ji. “Every night, 365 days a year, people from every corner of the globe, every race, religion, race, skin color, gender, culture, country, ability to celebrate

for this beautiful time to go within. This time to connect with the supreme reality. Beyond all forms and names, in all forms, in all names.”

**Padmashri Kailash Kher,** celebrated the launch of his newest song “Jay Jay Kedara,” which he released two days ago on Maha Shivratri, with the whole audience raising to their feet in dance and celebration for a once in a lifetime experience with this acclaimed artist as his music reverberated across the banks of Maa Ganga at the feet of Lord Shiva.

Pujya Swamiji honored Padma Shri Kailash Kher’s remarkable journey from a Rishikumar at Parmarth Niketan’s Gurukul to a world famous musician. Pujya Swamiji said, “Let us be the song. We should launch our souls with this song.”



# Power of Ayurveda to Heal

## Day 4

World Renowned Ayurvedic and Spiritual Experts Including Vaidya Dr. Padma Nayani Raju, Dr. Smita Pankaj Naram, María Alejandra Avcharian and Anand Mehotra Offer Insights into the Power of Ayurveda to Heal.

The fourth day of the International Yoga Festival unfolded its petals to reveal the profound and diverse experiences that the Festival showcases, including much dance and celebration which culminated with special cultural performances in the evening by Rishikumars from Parmarth Niketan's Gurukul and children from the ashram's charitable schools.

Morning classes included "Open the Gates to the Ecstatic Heart," with Rishikesh-born and raised Yogi Ananda Mehrotra. Mentored by his Guru from childhood, Mehrotra was led to deeper states of self-realization. As a young man, he traveled extensively throughout India, studying teachings from the Vedic and Tantric traditions.

The day also included a special Lila Shakti Dance Asana

class led by Erica Kaufman, the founder of Lila Yoga and the owner of Lila Yoga Studios in PA, USA. Influenced by Jiddu Krishnamurti's philosophy and Krishnamacharya's teachings, she offered a traditional Hatha Yoga practice, integrating Raja (philosophical) and Bhakti (devotional) Yoga.

Nrityavali dance company delighted international guests with a lively workshop on the traditional folk dance styles of Gujarat and Rajasthan, preparing those who joined to join the stage with them in the evening at Ganga Aarti. Nrityavali is derived from the Indian words "Nritya" (dance) and "Avali" (series, legend), making the meaning of a series and a legend of dance. Founded by India's ace performing artists, Mr. Bharat Bariya and Mr. Akshay Patel, Nrityavali is an emotive creation of an independent dance company.





**Enlightening Wisdom Talk on the “Power of Ayurveda to Heal!”** featured luminaries such as **Vaidya Dr. Padma Nayani Raju**, trained in Ayurveda since childhood and holding a BAMS in Ayurveda from Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Karnataka; **Dr. Smita Pankaj Naram**, Co-Founder of Ayushakti, one of the leading and most trusted ayurvedic health centers around the world; **María Alejandra Avcharian**, who studied in Uruguay, trained in India at PDI Prakash Institute and PVA Ayurvedic Hospital in Kerala, and completed several postgraduate courses both in India and Argentina; and **Anand Mehrotra** of Rishikesh, founder of the Sattva Yoga Academy. The wisdom talk was moderated by **Paula Tapia**, an international Yoga, mindfulness, and wellness expert specializing in integrative health, self-care education, and healthy lifestyle science.

bean and vegetable soup. Don't you clean your house daily? Keep your system clean and strong. Fifth, build your health on a daily basis by taking in the right nourishment. And finally, the key to vibrant health is to detox to renew. You build up your health and you renew on a daily basis.”

“When we understand our nature we can transform ourselves,” said **María Alejandra Avcharian**. “When our body hurts or our mind is disconnected, we can't concentrate on our spiritual path. We must align our body and our mind. That is the main law that Ayurveda encourages. We can make small changes using practices from Ayurveda to be connected and rooted in our life. To put it simply, what Ayurveda teaches us is about our composition. Which element is in our body and our mind. When we understand which element is out of balance, we can make little adjustments to be at peace in our body and mind.”

**Dr. Smita Ji** notably shared “core principles that help people gain health and prevent illness and how, using your own kitchen, you can heal yourself.”

“First, you must balance yourself,” Dr. Smita Ji said. “Second, remember this: Listen to your body. For example, when there is a fever, the body says, ‘I have toxins, rest.’ The infections cannot be controlled by the immune system so fast, so rest. Third, protect your digestion. Fourth, stop consuming wheat, milk, dairy, meat, and deep-fried food. All of these will kill your metabolism. If you take one of these once, balance your system instantly with mung

Day 4 of the International Yoga Festival closed with a special Ganga Aarti dedicated to karma yoga, sacred service, containing a remarkable, boisterous, and colorful cultural dance performance that showcased diverse regional dances of India, performed by Parmarth Niketan Gurukul Rishikumars and girls from the schools supported by the Divine Shakti Foundation who dazzled the audience with mind bending performances of yoga and dazzling offerings of traditional dance from all across India.





# Bridging the Divide

Day 5

Revered Yogacharyas and Experts, Including Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, Seane Corn, Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa, Anand Mehrotra and Tommy Rosen.

Discuss how to Bridge the Divide During this Time of War and Divisiveness that Permeates the Globe.

Internationally Acclaimed Artist Daphne Tse offers a concert in the name of Love

The fifth day of the world-renowned International Yoga Festival (IYF) was overflowing with another full schedule of diverse offerings in yoga, meditation, lectures, and talks. To greet the rising sun, participants joined in sunrise Vedic chanting with Sudhanshu Sharma, acclaimed teacher and instructor of Vocal Music and Voice Culture in New Delhi who is trained in the Guru-Shishya tradition under the tutelage of Pandit Baldev Raj Verma, he is the fourth generation of performing artists in the Indore Gharana lineage.

Stewart Gilchrist led an ashtanga asana themed The Teachings of Yogasana: Mind Set, Arjuna. Gilchrist's intense sadhana commenced after a severe back injury in the 1980s which left him in constant pain and mild disability. He experienced an amazing recovery through intensive Ashtanga Vinyasa Mysore yoga practice. London-based Yoga Instructor Claire Missingham also led an enlivened Vinyasa asana themed OM Cycle Vinyasa Karma: Strength and Harmony.

Furthermore, today, the festival had the great opportunity to hear from global presenters, revered saints, spiritual masters, and Yogacharias on how to bridge the divide. In a world where wars are ongoing and people increasingly feel in opposition, what path forward might exist to bring people back together?

Enlightening plenary session included none other than Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, International Director of Parmarth Niketan who also serves on the United Nations Advisory Council on Religion and on the steering committees of the International Partnership for Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD) and the Moral Imperative to End Extreme Poverty, a campaign by the United Nations and World Bank; the illustrious Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa, the disciple of Yogi Bhajan who founded Yogi Bhajan's first yoga center in the United States; acclaimed Yogacharya, leading voice of yoga and social change Seane Corn; Anand Mehrotra, who along with founding Sattva Yoga, established the Sattva Yoga Academy; and Kia Miller, founder of Radiant Body Yoga, and moderated by Tommy Rosen, founder of Recovery 2.0.

The panel came together after Pujya Sadhviji posted a conscious call for unity on Holocaust Remembrance Day, which was met with violence and vitriol in online comments and how this can drive us apart. This was an awakening moment, revealing how divisive America in particular, and much of the Western world, has become which spurred on a profound conversation.

"Sahan Shakti power, which is the power to tolerate, to sit with that which disturbs, is a fundamental teaching of yoga that seems to be disappearing in our communities," Pujya Sadhviji said. "It has been a declining quality in the West for some time, but lately it is getting much worse. "Spiritually and psychologically, this deeply troubles me because we are all seeing ourselves as the violated party. So we feel entitled and righteous. You have traumatized me, injured me, your very presence on earth has injured me. There is an 'all-about-me-ness' that is a major block to our spiritual growth."

Host Tommy Rosen echoed Sadhviji's sentiments and went on further to state "Many people feel like they've woken up in a world they no longer understand," He continued on saying " Suddenly we're living in a world of fear and incredible divisiveness, where people are more concerned with being right than unifying."

Anandji added insightful observations for our modern times stating that "One of the biggest dangers of our time is that we are giving up our humanity, our nature, our fundamental existence to a fabricated universe," he continued saying "We are outsourcing our intelligence to AI. And this will only increase because the technologies play on the addictive tendencies of the human psyche. There are propaganda machines telling us who to demonize now. 'You didn't change your profile photo to a flag of Ukraine,' you should be demonized. We need to bring in an awareness to our lives so that our value system isn't being subjugated to social media. My guru taught me, 'Don't try to be right, try to be wise.' Learn. Listen."



**Seane Corne** helped the audience make sense of these headwinds for society and charged people with the responsibility that we have to act, saying that “There were two things given to me that I held very closely in my heart,” Seane Corne shared. “One was that our liberation is bound - None of us are free unless all beings are free. The second is ahimsa is not just ‘do no harm’. Passivity can cause harm to others. Silence can make you complicit. If we continue to step into leadership, take accountability, take responsibility, find the language, invite other people into a process, teach them to operate not from a place of contempt, but with compassion. Maybe we can move through this moment of learning, and find a new way.

**Kia Miller** then encouraged people to look within instead of jumping to blame stating that “After five years of deep introspection, I have learned that everything I think is about someone else is about me. If I don’t take time to go inward with my own lived experience with deep consideration, all I can do is react and create more drama in the field,” Kia Miller said. “With all of the information we are constantly getting, we often act from our own unprocessed trauma, or generational trauma. Before we react, do radical introspection, and act from wholeness. Every action you take, choose to stay in love instead of fear and you can impact wholeness in the world..”

“I don’t understand any of this,” **Gurmukhji** jokes. “You have 60 likes, or 6 million likes, or no likes, and now you’re a nobody. Who cares who likes you? You don’t even know them! Yogi Bhajan taught his first class and you know what happened? No one

showed up. And you know what he did? He taught it anyway. It’s really very simple. People want to love and to be loved. Get up at 2 or 3 in the morning, and pray to the sun. Thank you for giving me another day of life. Thank you for my time here. It’s time to be here, to be thankful. If life gets complicated, say to yourself, how can I slow down. And then you can serve. Your whole life will change.”

**Evening cultural program** - The wonderful Nrityavali dance ended the evening with a cultural performance of traditional folk dance styles of Gujarat and Rajasthan. Nrityavali is derived from the Indian words “Nritya” meaning dance and “Avali” meaning a legend. Founded by India’s Ace Performing Artists, Mr. Bharat Bariya and Mr. Akshay Patel, Nrityavali, is an emotive creation of an Independent Dance Company giving the audience an immersive experience of India’s rich culture and the experience of witnessing devotion in the form of dance. With the artful choreography of the energetic troupe, thus ended the 5th day of the International Yoga Festival.

The Rama Sita Milap performance, led and choreographed by Padma Shri Indra Agus Udayana, was presented by the Santisena Ashram Gandhi Puri (AGP) coming all the way from Bali Indonesia. Hendra portrayed Rama, Pushpa played Sita, and Savitri took on the role of Suparnakha. The performance depicted the serene life of Rama and Sita in the forest, the aggressive interference of Suparnakha, and the disruption caused by the golden deer. It concluded with the peaceful and divine reunion of Rama and Sita, returning from Lanka to Ayodhya.





# Celebrating Peace and Love

Day 6

International Guests Make a Special Visit to the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi Ashram, popularly known as the Beatles Ashram.

Day 6 of the world famous International Yoga Festival was full of delights for the attendees, including a full schedule of classes and a very special trip to the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi Ashram, popularly known as the Beatles Ashram, an incredible moment of collective unity where a special concert was performed to the jubilant crowd. This visit was the highlight of the sixth day, which has been made possible with the support of Incredible India, Ministry of Tourism, in association with the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of AYUSH. During the visit, the participants were blessed by Pujya Swamiji's divine chanting and singing and Pujya Sadhvi's beautiful guided meditation, along with a pledge for environmental preservation and climate action. Following this, Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi, along with the global IYF family, planted dozens of Rudraksha trees.

Under this spirit of unity H.H Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati shared "You only see holes in other people when you aren't whole," He then continued on "War is not the way. Fighting is not the way. We have Russians, Ukrainians, Palestinians, Israelis, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis. And we have love. We have peace. This is the message of the International Yoga Festival. It is up to us to take this message of love and peace back home across the world. Love is the way. Peace is the way."

"If we are one family, we must take care of the planet," he continued. "If any part of our family isn't happy, we are not happy. The planet is suffering. We must take care of the planet. In the name of love, become green yoga ambassadors. Inspire those you touch and teach. There is no planet B. Love is all there is."

The participants further immersed themselves in the historic Ashram's sacred energy of this holy ashram, where the great Saint Maharishi Mahesh Yogi once lived, practiced, and taught Transcendental Meditation, and which was also home for some time to the world-famous Beatles. Musicians from across the globe came together to sing for peace and love. MC YOGI, Gurnimit Singh, Daphne Tse, Joseph Schmidlin, Sudhanshu Sharma, Sandra Barnes, and many more sang sacred mantras and "Imagine" by the Beatles together.

"The only way I've found to heal yourself and to heal the world is through love," said Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa, the

disciple of Yogi Bhajan who founded Yogi Bhajan's first yoga center in the United States. "Love is the way. Love is all there is."

**Day 6 Classes.** a special class by Dr. Yogrishi Vishvketu on Bringing Pranayama into Your Daily Routine, where participants practiced sacred breath with the Himalayan Yoga Master, author and founder of Akhanda Yoga, Yogrishi Vishvketu (Vishva-ji). Students were delighted with the master's infectious laughter and memorable stories. Meanwhile, true to the festival's multicultural and international scope, Sensei Sandeep Desai, a master of T'ai Chi, Ashtanga Yoga and Martial Arts led an Original Chen style T'ai Chi Circles and introduction to Form. Other participants enjoyed diverse styles of asana like Kundalini yoga with Kia Miller, founder of Radiant Body Yoga, vinyasa with London-Based Claire Missingham, and power yoga with Yogiraj Swami Jayant Saraswati, the head of the Kanav Ashram in Kotdwar.

**Ganga Aarti recognised in the World Book of Records** We are delighted to announce that the Ganga Aarti at Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh, has been recognized by the World Book of Records for its unbroken daily performance over the past 28 years. Initiated by H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati Ji, this sacred ritual frequented by pilgrims and visitors from across the nation and across the world involves the chanting of mantras, ringing of bells, and lighting of lamps as devotees offer flowers and incense to the holy river Ganges. The certificate of listing was presented to H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati Ji and Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati by World Book of Records officials. The Ganga Aarti transcends language and culture, connecting to the touch of the divine and Mother Ganga and offering a profound spiritual experience.

**Evening Kirtan Concert** After the sacred Yagna and divine Ganga Aarti, internationally recognized kirtan singer Visvambhar Sheth soulfully blended guitar, harmonium, bansuri flute, sitar, and cajon, as participants hearts filled with love and peace, with several encores requested was an immersion that none wanted to end, leaving the closed of the second last day of IYF with everyone's hearts full of love, gratitude, and devotion.



# IYF 2024 Concludes with Holi Celebration

Day 7

Sacred Prayer Circle for World Peace & an Eco-Friendly Holi Celebration on the banks of Ganga

Enlightening discourse with Dr. Ishwar Basavaraddiji

Conclude the day with a concert by Sivamani, and celebrate Pujya Sadhviji's 53rd birthday IYF 2024



The final day of the International Yoga festival was a true celebration and culmination of an incredible week of living in the unity of yoga with vibrant colors and music filling the air. Parmarth's Holi celebration used natural, organic colors and flowers, which showered participants in the Yoga Gardens. Drum beats vibrated through the sacred gardens as world famous percussionist Drums Sivamani and Soulful Sufi Singer Runa Rizvi sang Holi songs as delegates from more than 90 nations danced in ecstasy for over an hour as HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, President of Parmarth Niketan, and Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji, Director of International Yoga Festival applied pure sandalwood paste (chandan) as blessed tilak on the foreheads of all the participants, showering flowers of love and peace during the closing and final day of the annual International Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh which has been organized with the support of the Incredible India, Ministry of Tourism, in association with the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India.

Afterwards, participants joined Pujya Swamiji, Pujya Sadhviji, and Sivamani in rallying down to the holy banks of Mother Ganga for an incredibly special and deeply refreshing Maa Ganga Snan. World peace was the message of the day as over 1500 participants, revered saints, spiritual masters, yogacharyas, artists

and musicians gathered on the Parmarth Ganga ghat to offer their prayers and pledge to uphold and spread peace, under the divine blessings and leadership of H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanad Saraswati Ji, the President of Parmarth Niketan. "If you love the creator, love the creation," Pujya Swamiji said. "India believes in allness, in oneness, and togetherness. The spirit of India always believes in "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," the great mantra given by the sage from this land. Sitting is important, so Ganga aarti is necessary, but we must remember we are all one." "Let this beautiful color on our skin also permeate our hearts," Pujya Sadhviji said.

The day's yoga program was followed by the sacred Yagna and divine Ganga Aarti, during which the festival gathered together to celebrate Pujya Sadhviji Bhagawati Saraswati Ji's 53rd birthday.

"I am so proud to see how Pujya Sadhviji has dedicated her entire life like a sacred yagya in the selfless service of Bharat Mata," said her Guru, H.H. Pujya Chidanand Saraswati Ji. "She is a Guru and guide to so many people across the world bringing light, love, peace and yoga to wherever she goes. Her journey from Hollywood to the Himalayas is a journey that inspires countless many to offer everything they have to the service of humanity. Her life is yoga in action and yoga in its truest essence."

**Closing ceremony** The International Yoga Festival closed a vibrant and action packed day with an ecstatic concert with the legendary Sivamani and Runa Rizvi, who enthralled listeners with his wide array of percussion instruments, from the conventional cymbals to the timbale to the batajon to the vastly unconventional shells and conches and "Biryani Kadai." His performance was deeply profound and mysterious; tantalizing and exuberant at the next accompanied with the majestic vocals of Runa who thrilled the audience. And thus the curtain closed on another remarkable International Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan on the holy banks of Ma Ganga, in the lap of the Himalayas, in the sacred land of Rishikesh, birthplace of yoga.



**Seva Celebrations** On March 15th, Parmarth Niketan Ashram hosted a Seva Celebration, the day after the International Yoga Festival. Attendees visited the Free School, experiencing the vibrant culture and talents of the students. They participated in the DSF School Program, then traveled to Mayakund, where they joined an ongoing Medical Camp and enjoyed a Sattvic Feast (Bhandara) where over 700 people were served. The event showcased the empowering work being done by Parmarth Niketan, to uplift the community and gave the foreign guests the opportunity to be of service in a powerful way.



With profound gratitude the Festival thanks all those who traveled from across India and across the world to make this festival a resounding success, we look forward to welcoming all once again to the Festival in 2025.





# Media Coverage

# Social Media Highlights



## What People Are Talking About



# YOGA OFF THE MAT & INTO THE WORLD

Here are some ways that we strive to live Yoga and practice it in action by working to create a healthier, happier and more sustainable world for all.

Some of the areas in which we serve are:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  <b>Education</b>                  |  <b>Water, Sanitation &amp; Hygiene (WASH)</b> |
|  <b>Medical care</b>               |  <b>Protecting Environment</b>                 |
|  <b>Animal care</b>               |  <b>Climate action</b>                        |
|  <b>Women Empowerment</b>        |  <b>Cultural protection and preservation</b> |
|  <b>Vocation training skills</b> |  <b>Hosting at the Ashram</b>                |
|  <b>Youth Empowerment</b>        |  <b>Hosting free meals</b>                   |

[parmarth@parmarth.com](mailto:parmarth@parmarth.com)

[parmarth.org/how-you-can-help](http://parmarth.org/how-you-can-help)



## Global Interfaith WASH Alliance

Launched at the UNICEF Headquarters, GIWA brings the world's faith traditions together for improved water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) for all.

[www.washalliance.org](http://www.washalliance.org)



## Divine Shakti Foundation

Divine Shakti Foundation (DSF) is dedicated to uplifting and empowering women and children with education, skills-training and holistic wellness to enable them to flourish and thrive.

[www.divineshaktifoundation.org](http://www.divineshaktifoundation.org)



## Ganga Action Parivar

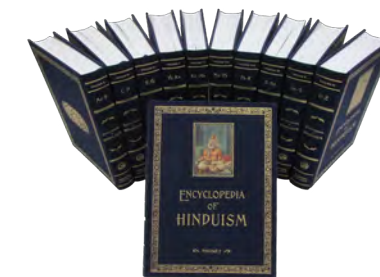
GAP brings together networks and partnerships of the world's preeminent researchers, environmentalists, engineers, religious and business leaders, and the general public. We work towards creating thoughtful solutions to the numerous problems plaguing the Ganga and Her tributaries.

[www.gangaaction.org](http://www.gangaaction.org)



## Interfaith Humanitarian Network/ Project Hope

Dedicated to reducing the impact of natural disaster, building bridges to prevent conflicts, and responding in times of crisis, IHN works both in prevention-based development, advocacy, and community building as well as immediate- and long-term relief intervention in times of crises.



## Encyclopedia of Hinduism

An unprecedented encyclopedia, drafted by some 1,000 experts over a 25-year time-span.



Incredible India



संस्कृति मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
CULTURE



आयुष मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
AYUSH



# INTERNATIONAL YOGA FESTIVAL

8-14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH

PARMARTH NIKETAN ASHRAM  
RISHIKESH (HIMALAYAS), INDIA

[www.InternationalYogaFestival.org](http://www.InternationalYogaFestival.org)  
[www.Parmarth.org](http://www.Parmarth.org)

  @intlyogafest  @internationalyogafestival

    @parmarthniketan

#IYFPARMARTH #IYF2024