



Parmarth Niketan

Quarterly Newsletter

March, 2011



Featuring

Yoga Festival 2011, Project Give-Back Medical Camps,
Ayurveda Conference & Pujya Swamiji's Yatra Abroad





On December 8th, Pujya Swamiji traveled to Kanpur to inaugurate the new Lakshmi Devi Auditorium in the Jagran College of Management, run by the Dainik Jagran family -- Shri Yogendra Mohan, Shri Mahendra Mohan and Shri Sandeep Gupta.



Sadhvi Bhagawati, Pujya Swamiji, Shri Yogendra Mohan, Shri Mahendra Mohan and Shri Sandeep Gupta



Pujya Swamiji cutting the inaugural ribbon.



Pujya Swamiji garlanding Shri Yogendra Mohan and Sri Mahendra Mohan



Pujya Swamiji lighting the inaugural lamp.



Shri Yogendra Mohan gave a beautiful inaugural speech.



Pujya Swamiji at the function in Allahabad

On December 11th, Pujya Swamiji traveled to Varanasi to speak at a large Ganga clean-up function, the “Aviral and Nirmal Ganga: Issues and Challenges” national workshop, which brings together scientists, spiritual leaders and environmentalists to present ideas and share information on how to clean up the Ganga. The function was organized by Center For Environmental Science and Technology at Banaras Hindu University in Varanasi.



Speakers at the Varanasi function

On December 12th, Pujya Swamiji spoke at a related Ganga clean-up function in Allahabad, and earlier in the week at a function in Kanpur.



Lighting the inaugural lamp at the function in Rishikesh (Oct. 2010)

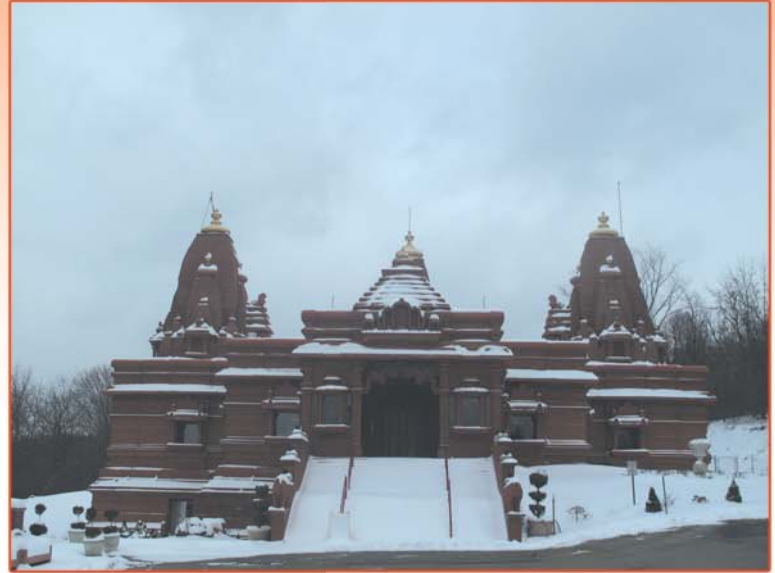


Speakers and sevaks from the Rishikesh inaugural function in October





In January, Pujya Swamiji traveled to the United States, regarding the upcoming completion and release of the Encyclopedia of Hinduism project, and also to spend time in Pittsburgh, where He is the founder & spiritual head of the Hindu Jain Temple. He visited began in Toronto, Canada and then traveled to Pittsburgh, Louisville, Atlanta, New York and New Jersey.



The Hindu Jain Temple in Pittsburgh, of which Pujya Swamiji is the founder and spiritual head.

Below: Jyotindrabhai Patel. Pujya Swamiji, Vaishali Patel, Sujal Popat, Krupali Patel and Shyam and Isham Popat.





On January 29th, Pujya Swamiji traveled to New York for a large function at the beautiful and historic Angel Orensanz Foundation, the oldest synagogue in NYC.

The event was arranged by Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa and Gurushabd Khalsa of Golden Bridge Yoga. Pujya Swamiji's lecture on how to be "happy, healthy and holy" and the question and answer session which followed were warmly received by the growing New York audience.

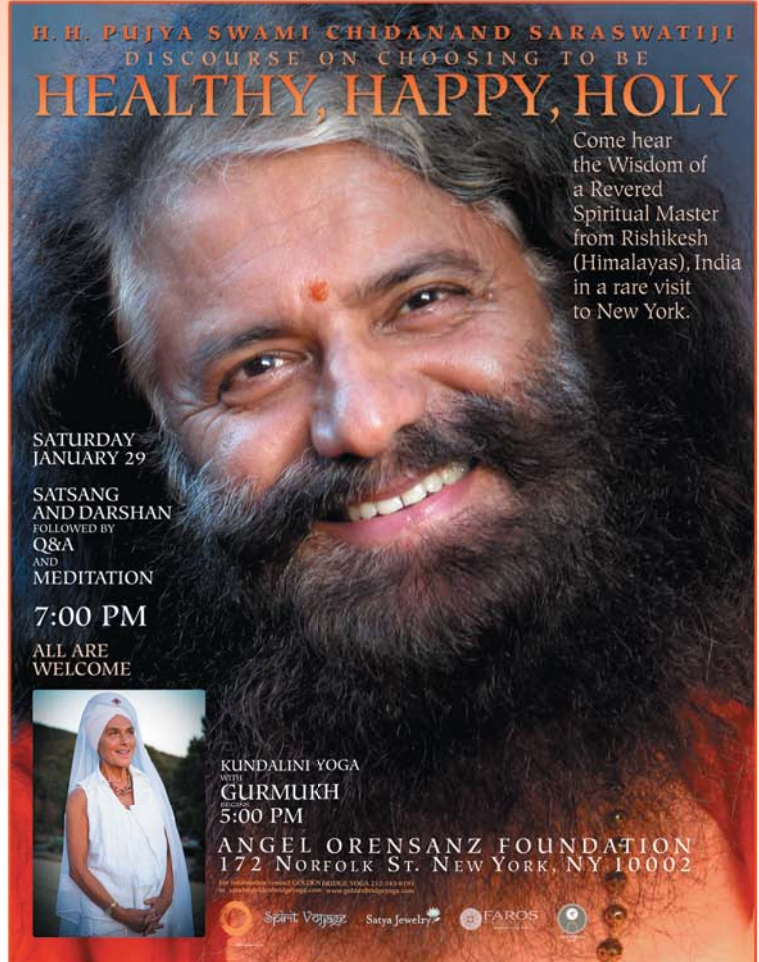


Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawati with Bawa Jain, Hanan Jain and Kalicharran



Gurunam Singh, Pritam Hari Eller, Pujya Swamiji, Sadhvi Bhagawati, Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa and Gurushabd Khalsa

To listen to Pujya Swamiji's New York discourse, [click here](#).



H. H. PUJYA SWAMI CHIDANAND SARASWATIJI
DISCOURSE ON CHOOSING TO BE
HEALTHY, HAPPY, HOLY

Come hear the Wisdom of a Revered Spiritual Master from Rishikesh (Himalayas), India in a rare visit to New York.

SATURDAY
JANUARY 29

SATSANG
AND DARSHAN
FOLLOWED BY
Q&A
AND
MEDITATION

7:00 PM

ALL ARE WELCOME

KUNDALINI YOGA
WITH
GURMUKH
5:00 PM

ANGEL ORENSANZ FOUNDATION
172 NORFOLK ST. NEW YORK, NY 10002

For more information contact GOLDEN BRIDGE YOGA 212-943-8194
or www.goldenbridgeyoga.com

Spirit Voyages Satya Jewelry FAROS

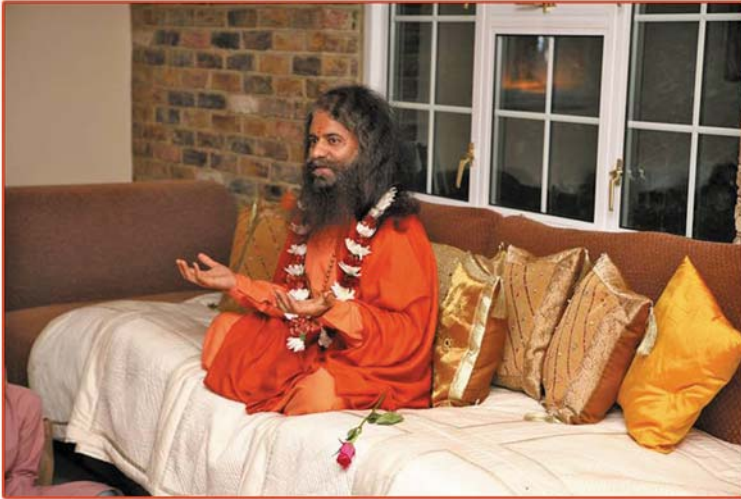
The event was sponsored by Golden Bridge Yoga



Clipping of the event from a local New York paper.



On February 1, Pujya Swamiji arrived in London and blessed His London devotees with His darshan in Rickmansworth



Satsang in Rickmansworth.



Pujya Swamiji demonstrating “the universal language of sweets” with the children.



A special moment with devotees.



Special Events | Patanjali Yoga Peeth With B.K.S. Iyengar



On January 2, Pujya Swamiji was one of the chief guests and speakers at the inaugural function of Pujya Swami Ramdevji's conference on Yoga for Social Transformation. The event, which drew two-thousand delegates, took place at Swami Ram Devji and Acharya Balkrishna's Omkarananda Patanjali Yoga Peeth in Haridwar.

Another special guest was 93 year-old yoga acharya Dr. B.K.S. Iyengar, who has millions of students worldwide and was named by Time Magazine as one of the world's most influential people in 2004 for his contribution to yoga.

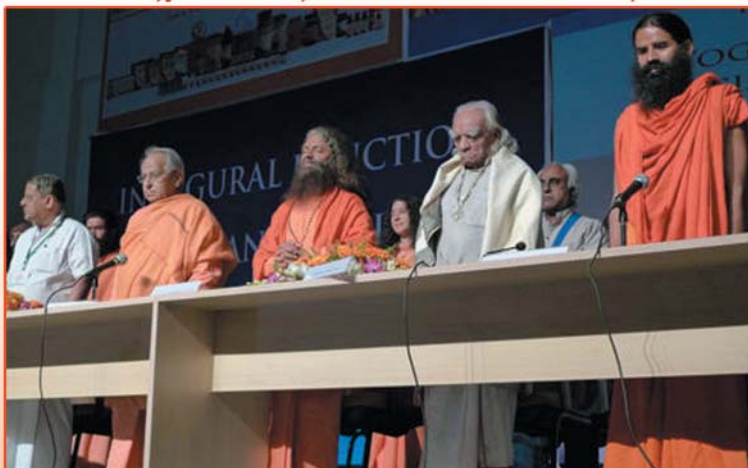
The purpose of the conference was to prove the effectiveness of yoga as a healthcare system and to demonstrate that yoga can be used for healing the FULL system - body, mind, society and nation! Swami Ram Devji and Acharya Balkrishna are presenting scientific evidence through clinical trials conducted abroad and at their Yoga Research Foundation at Patanjali University.



Pujya Swamiji and Swami Ram Devji



Pujya Swamiji, Pujya Swami Ram Devji & Dr. Iyengarji



Pujya Swamiji, Dr. Iyengarji and Swami Ram Devji



The saints and acharyas inaugurate the event.

On January 6, Pujya Swamiji attended the inaugural function of the Guru Sangamam, a newly-formed organization which will promote harmony and cooperation between the indigenous religions of India-- (Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and Buddhism).

Some of the most highly-esteemed religious leaders from all over India have come together to serve in this wonderful, new organization, which is committed to usher in a new era of peace and understanding throughout India.

The following members were unanimously elected to be the office bearers:

- Chairperson: Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendraikendra Mahaswamiji – Sri Jagadguru Veerasimhasana Suttur Math, Suttur
- President: Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev – Isha Foundation, Coimbatore
- General Secretary: Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji Maharaj – Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh.
- Treasurer: Dr. Pranav Pandiyaji – Gayatri Pariwar, Haridwar.



The esteemed delegates at the joyous inaugural event



The following members were unanimously elected to be the members of the Governing Body.

- Anandmurti Gurumaaji
- Swami Baba Ramdev ji
- Dr. Shivamurthy Swamiji
- Jagadguru Sri Sri Sri Balagangadharanatha Maha Swamiji
- Sri Sri Ravishankarji
- Sri Sri Sri Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji
- B K Brij Mohan Bhaiji (representative of the Bramhakumaris)
- Mata Amritanandamayi Devi



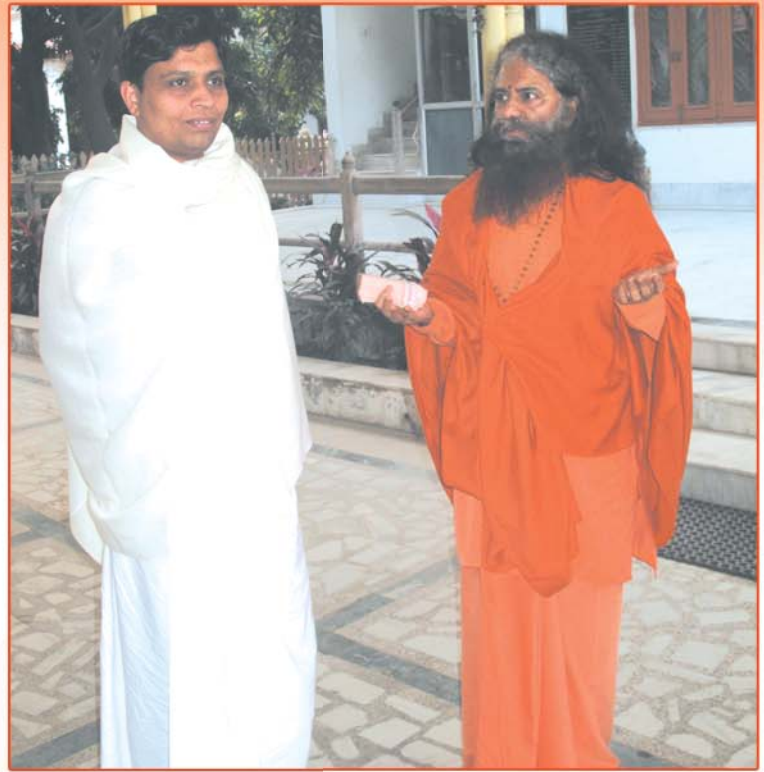
Pujya Swamiji, Pujya Swami Ram Devji, and Pujya Jaggi Vasudevji traveled together from Haridwar to Delhi



Press conference after the inaugural event

On February 5th, Pujya Swamiji spoke at the 3rd International Conference on Integrating Spirituality and Organizational Leadership in Haridwar.

After the meeting, Pujya Swamiji visited Acharya Balkrishnaji's ashram, also in Haridwar.



Acharya Balkrishnaji & Pujya Swamiji



L to R: Sadhvi Bhagawati, Pujya Swamiji, Acharya Balkrishnaji & Sri Sudarshan Sharma

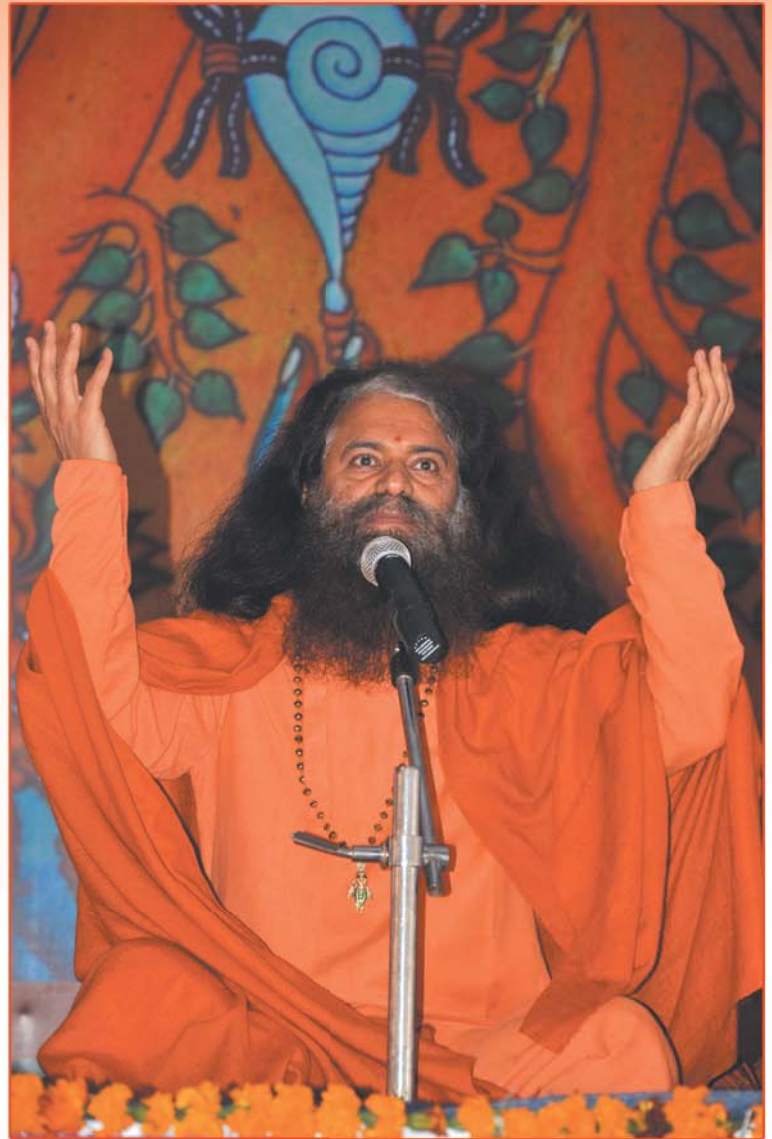
Special Events | 3rd Annual Ayurveda & Yoga Conference

On February 17-21, Parmarth Niketan hosted the third annual Conference on Ayurveda and Yoga, "Where Science Meets Consciousness." The Honorable Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishankji graced the inaugural celebration, which was organized by Punarnava, Coimbatore.

Pujya Swamiji spoke on the true meaning of health -- not just physical health, but also spiritual health through yoga in all aspects of life.



Pujya Swamiji and Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishankji



Pujya Swamiji at the inaugural celebration.



Pujya Lokesh Munij, Pujya Swamiji and Vice Chancellor Satendra Misra



Pujya Swamiji arrives at inaugural function.



Sadhvi Bhagawati lectures at the conference.
(Click [here](#) to download)



Above and below, Pujya Swamiji and Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishankji



(left to right) Sadhvi Bhagawati, Mother Maya, Pujya Lokesh Muniji, Pujya Swamiji, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Dr. Ramesh Nishankji, Ram Kumar and Robert Svoboda



Seva and Sanskaras



Each month, numerous activities take place at Parmarth Niketan demonstrating the meaning of Parmarth: "Dedicated to the Welfare of All." Health care camps, conferences, environmental projects and other seva activities are ongoing.

Individuals and families also regularly come to Parmarth to perform sacred rites ceremonies (sanskaras), such as mundan (first hair cut), and sacred thread. Guests also come for the auspicious occasions of weddings and ash immersion puja.

To see how these events are performed at Parmarth and to read about the meaning and significance of each rite, please *click here*.

So many people come to Parmarth to perform these sanskaras or to perform seva (selfless service) in our humanitarian projects, it's impossible to list them all; but on the following pages are some of those who have come during this recent time period.





On December 14-24th, 2010, a special eye surgery camp was held at Parmarth Niketan Hospital, led by Dr. Purnima Roy and Dr. Jay Chandra with doctors from Australia and the US, as well as local doctors from Rishikesh. Over 1000 cataract surgeries were performed, using the latest phaco techniques and equipment the doctors brought from abroad. This camp is an annual divine seva event which grows and expands each year.

All of the surgeries were performed free of charge, and patients traveled to Parmarth from many miles away for the divine opportunity to restore their vision. Cataracts are a major problem in the high Himalayan regions, with thousands of new cases each year. The doctors worked tirelessly, seeing each and every patient, despite the long hours and enormous crowds of people who arrived.



The whole team with shawls from Pujya Swamiji.



Doctor Purnima Roy.





Receiving darshan with Swamiji.



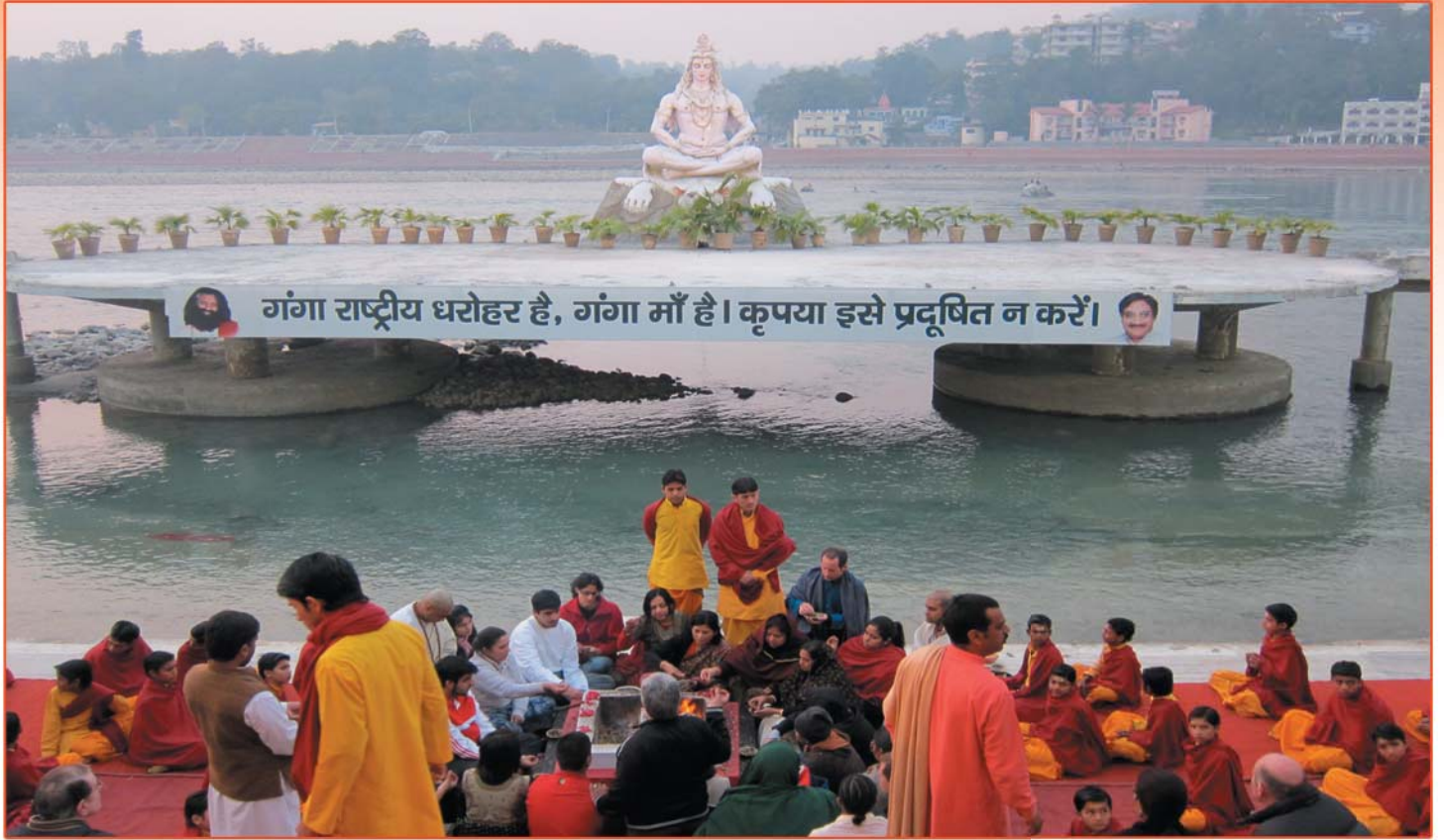
Doctors Greg Downey and Simon Irving with Dr. Alka Patel and Parmarth rishikumars.



Doctor Simon Irvine with his team.



The team was aided by doctors from Rishikesh.



Above: the team at havan. Below: the team with Pujya Swamij.





On February 7-12, Parmarth Niketan hosted a large and extremely successful medical camp, “Medical Yatra 2011.” The camp was organized by AIPNO (Association of Indian Physicians of North Eastern Ohio) and “Project Give-Back,” a new initiative started by Pujya Swamiji.

The yatra was a beautiful example of “voluntourism” in action. A team of seventeen physicians and fifteen volunteers from the US and the UK, along with volunteers from Parmarth

Ashram, brought their knowledge and expertise into the remote villages around Rishikesh, along with thousands of dollars of free medicine and medical supplies.

The doctors treated about a thousand people each day, providing dental care and surgery, pediatric and gynecological care, cancer diagnosis, optometric care, general and internal exams, as well as blood pressure and blood sugar checks.



The team from the U.S., the U.K. and Rishikesh.



Seva | “Medical Yatra 2011” - Uttarakhand Villages (cont.)



Medicine, glucometers, glucose strips and 750 pairs of eyeglasses were donated by Direct Relief International, PDM Healthcare and Med Wish International.

Some of the villagers had never been to a doctor prior to the camp, and the patients were profoundly grateful for the love showered from these professionals from far away. Dr. Shashi Marwah, Shri Ashok Marwah and Drs. Ramesh and Jaya Shah.

coordinated from the U.S., and Dr. Alka Patel and Dr. Ravi Kaushal from Parmarth managed the team in Rishikesh, joined by Prem Bhai, dentists from Seema Dental College, Dr. Anil, sevaks Nancy and Shanti from Parmarth and several of Parmarth's gurukul students.

In addition to medical care, yatra participants volunteered funds for a variety of other needs they encountered in the remote villages.



Volunteers set up tent examination rooms and managed the large crowds of patients.



750 patients were given free eyeglasses.



Thousands of dollars worth of medicine and supplies were donated.



Many patients had never before seen a doctor.



Team members have pledged ongoing support for the villages, including sanitation and hygiene projects as medical prevention. In addition, team members donated educational supplies -- books, pens, etc. -- to the schoolchildren in the schools.

The next camp is scheduled for the autumn of 2011, which will include a great increase in the quantity and quality of service, including more than 100 cataract surgeries.

In addition to volunteering at the camps, the yatriis enjoyed visits to Neelkanth and Bhootnath

Temples, Ram Jhula and Lakshman Jhula, the ropeway to Mansi Temple and Phulchatti (the sangam of Ganga and Himganga).



Right: Neelkanth Temple
Below: The yatriis outside Neelkanth Temple.





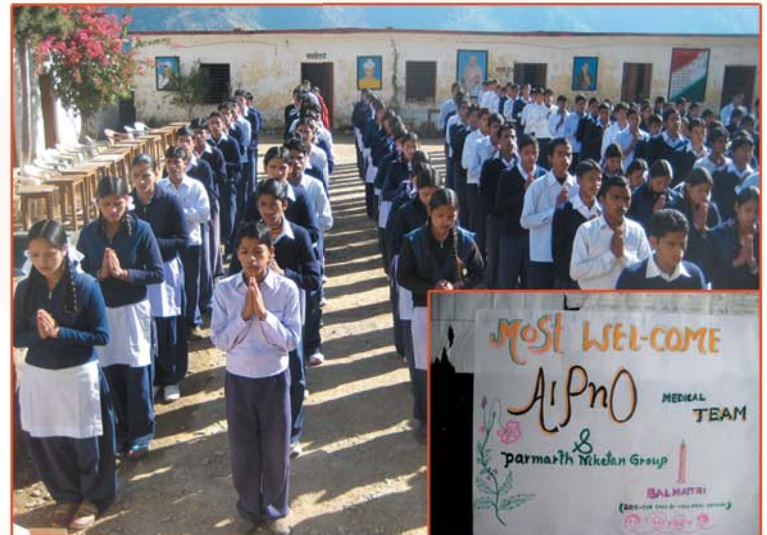
The team in shawls given to them by Pujya Swamiji.



Darshan with Pujya Swamiji.



Dr. Shashi Marwa with patients at the camp.



A warm welcome from the schoolchildren at Diuli.

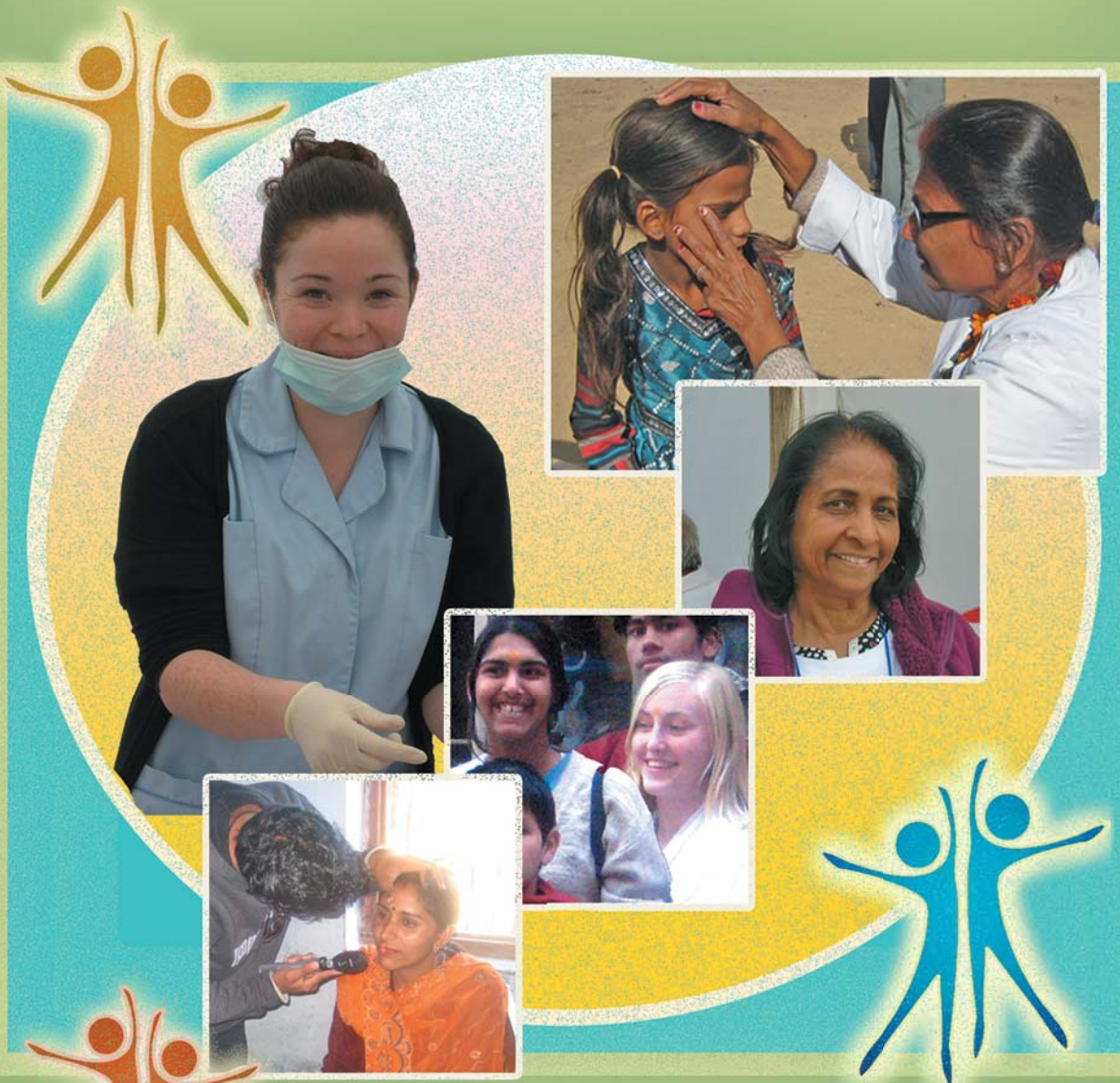


Even with long hours of travel and so many patients, the team's energy and enthusiasm was joyful



Aarti on the banks of Ma Ganga.

Project Give-Back



make a difference!
"Give Back, Feel Good"

To be a part of Project Give-Back and donate your experience and expertise -- whatever your field -- in the service of the needy, please email shanti@parmarth.com.





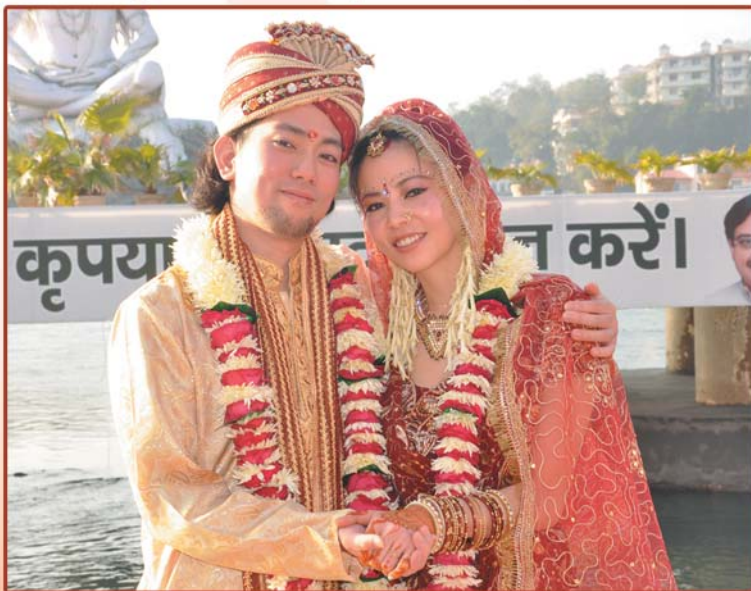
On February 12th, the Project Give Back doctors donated new trash cans to kick off Pujya Swamiji's "Clean, Green and Serene" campaign in Rishikesh. This wonderful contribution will help keep the area from Parmarth Niketan Ashram to the Ram Jhula Bridge clean and litter-free. Trash cans will also be placed in needed areas of Laxman Jhula.

The garbage will be emptied regularly by Parmarth Niketan Ashram.





On January 4th, a beautiful wedding was held on the banks of Ma Ganga. The couple, from Japan, chose a traditional Hindu wedding with Sanskrit mantras and Vedic rituals. It was attended by several family members, who traveled to India and Parmarth for the occasion.



The bride and groom in traditional Indian wedding dress.



Receiving Pujya Swamiji's divine blessings.



On the 21st of December, the family of late Dr. Sadanand Singhji came to perform his final rites ceremony. Sadanandji was associated with Pujya Swamiji, Parmarth and the India Heritage Research Foundation for decades, and -- as someone with great experience in the publishing industry -- was one of the first pillars of advice and guidance for the Encyclopedia project.

His beautiful final rites ceremony was performed by his family with Pujya Swamiji and the extended Parmarth parivar at the holy feet of Bhagawan Shiva, in the lap of Mother Ganga. His passing is a great loss to not only his family but also to everyone who was graced by his presence and wisdom.



Dr. Sadanand Singhji's family performed the sacred puja conducted by the Parmarth rishikumars.



A divine aarti concluded the beautiful ceremony.



Pujya Swamiji gives his prayers.





Special Events | International Yoga Festival, 2011



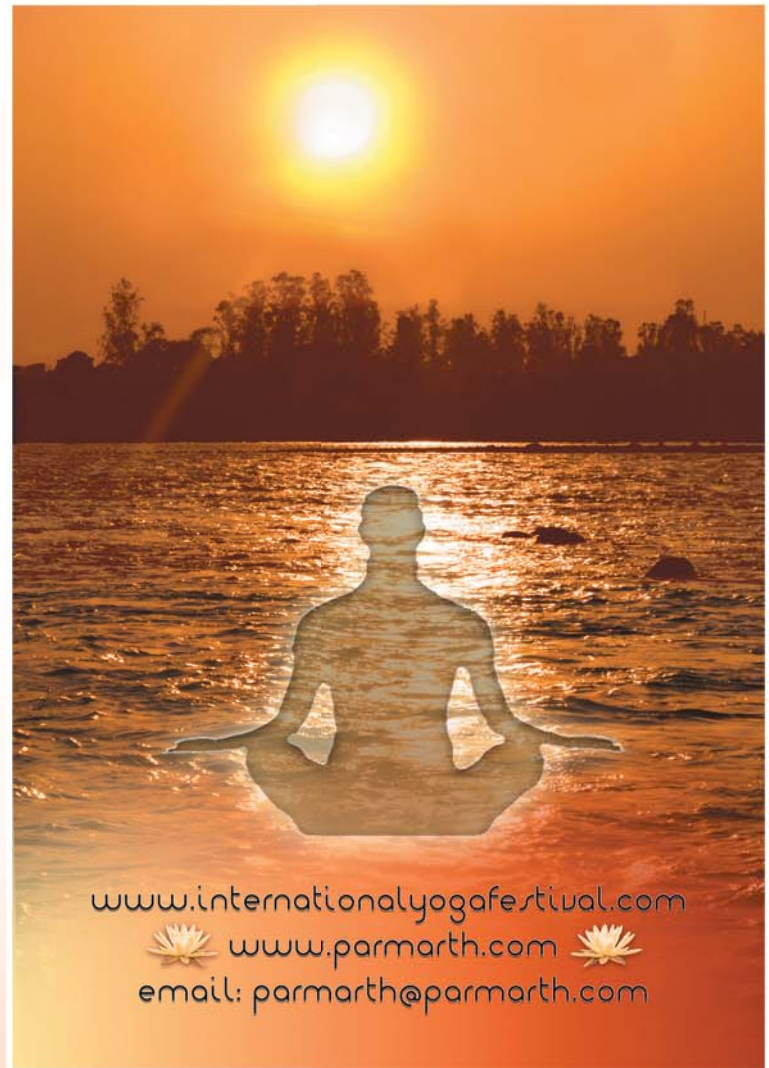
In the first week of March, Parmarth Niketan hosted the 11th annual International Yoga Festival. The Uttarakhand Tourism Department and Parmarth Niketan Ashram jointly organized the event.

The International Yoga Festival originated at Parmarth Niketan in 1999 and increases in size and scope each year. This year, the festival featured more than thirty world-renowned teachers from fifteen countries, including Shiva Rea, Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa, Sadhvi Abha Saraswati, Deepika Mehta, Mohan Bhandari, and Dr. David Frawley. The festival drew more than four hundred participants from thirty-six countries, including Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Pakistan, New Zealand, Romania, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The weeklong festival offered around twenty classes a day, spanning many disciplines and branches of yoga, including kundalini, Iyengar, ashtanga, meditation, pranayama, kriya yoga, yoga nidra, nada yoga, reiki and more.

In addition, as Pujya Swamiji is committed to karma yoga, Parmarth Niketan arranged a surprise Ganga Clean-Up, allowing over one hundred yogis to take their yoga “off the mat” and practice the yoga of selfless service. Participants collected trash found along the banks of Ma Ganga in Swargashram, an area that does not yet have a garbage collection system, then gave all the ghats a much-needed cleaning.

Another “yoga in action” event that took place at the International Yoga Festival this year was the fourth annual Yoga Aid Challenge. In this event, participants from all levels of ability gathered to complete 108 sun salutations. The event was a real yogic union, as the 108 salutations were broken down into nine groups of twelve salutations, each group being taught by a different teacher from a different lineage.



www.internationalyogafestival.com
www.parmarth.com
email: parmarth@parmarth.com





Music and cultural events organized by Parmarth Niketan Ashram and Uttarakhand Tourism filled the evenings. Some of the festival favorites were Momo Loudiyi with his unique Moroccan-styled kirtan, Uttarakhand Tourism's troupe of Garwhali dancers and singers, and Parmarth's own rishikumaras, who wowed the audience with various dance styles from around India and their sublime yogic feats.

Yoga festival attendees also got to participate in the spiritual activities of the ashram, such as aarti every night and a special abhishek puja, along with chanting and bhajans, on Mahashivratri.

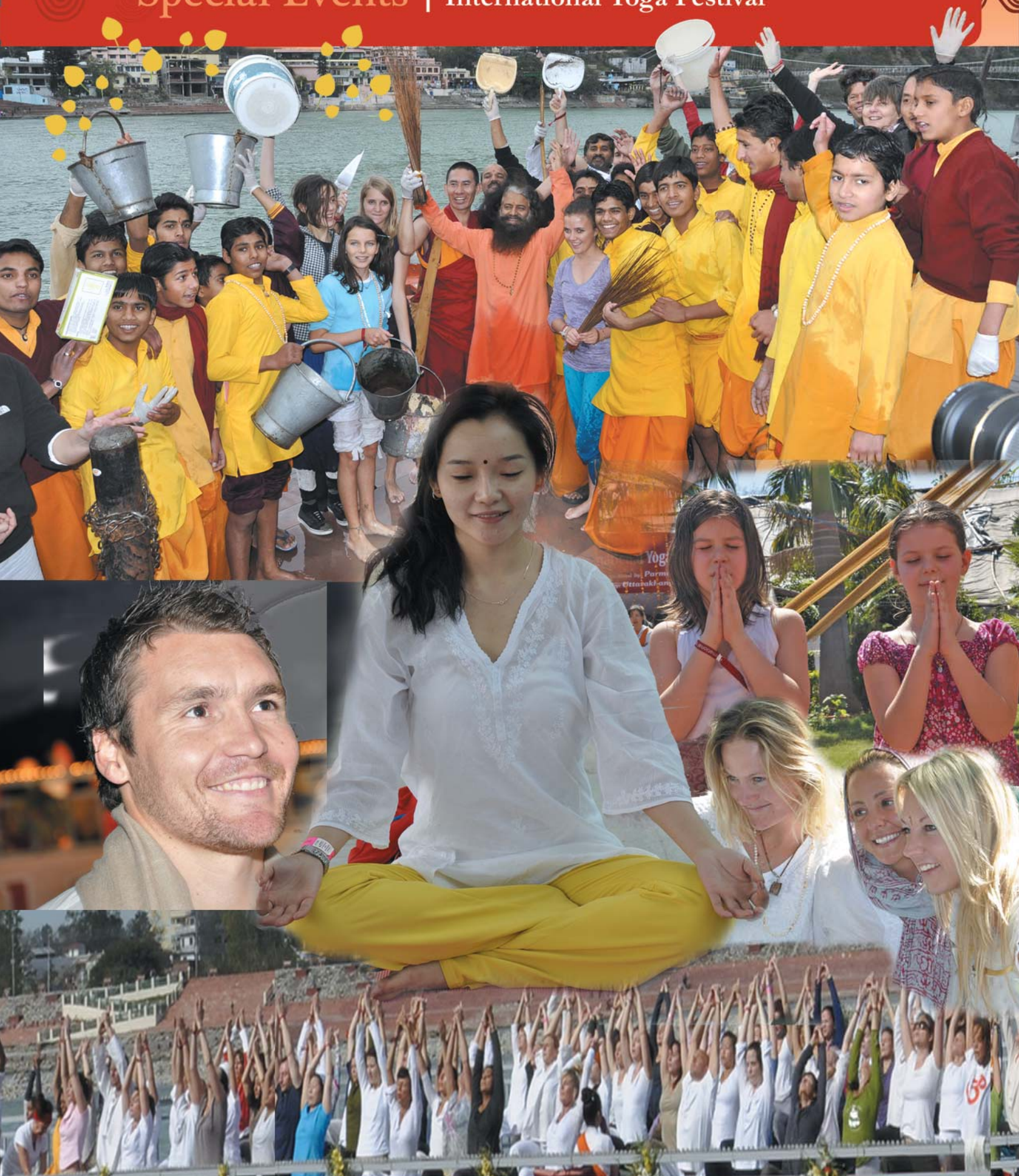
In addition to their classes, participants had the rare blessing to receive satsang and divine words from spiritual masters. In addition to Pujya Swamiji, the group was blessed by the presence of Pujya Sri Shankaracharya, Bhanpura Peeth (Swami Divyanand Teerthji) and Swami Dayananda Saraswati.

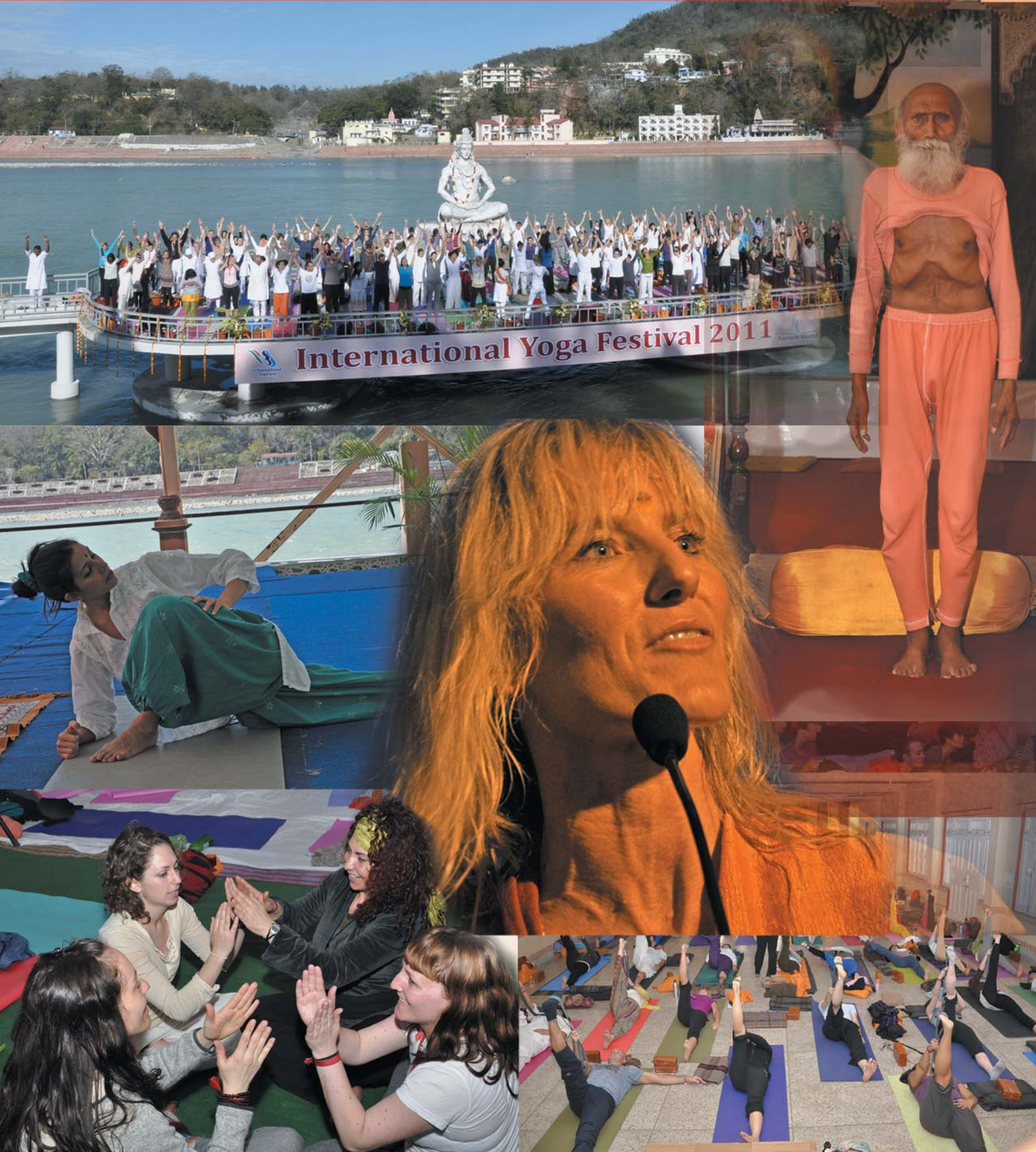
The Honorable Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishankji graced the closing ceremony and blessed many of the divine teachers.

Overall, participants truly enjoyed their experience of the International Yoga Festival, and felt they gained a lot of inspiration while here to continue their yoga practices. "Being at Parmarth is a feeling of a big family gathering in one wonderful home," said one participant.

Yet, much deeper than that, by living at Parmarth Niketan Ashram, by being in the satsang of so many of India's greatest spiritual masters, students were able to completely immerse themselves in the ancient culture and spirituality of yoga and of India, a priceless gift that can only be received here in this beautiful land along the banks of Ma Ganga, at the source of yoga. Participants were able to leave with not only fit and flexible bodies, but also with a new sense of joy, peace, and spiritual connection in their hearts and minds.

Special Events | International Yoga Festival







Special Events | International Yoga Festival /Classes (cont.)









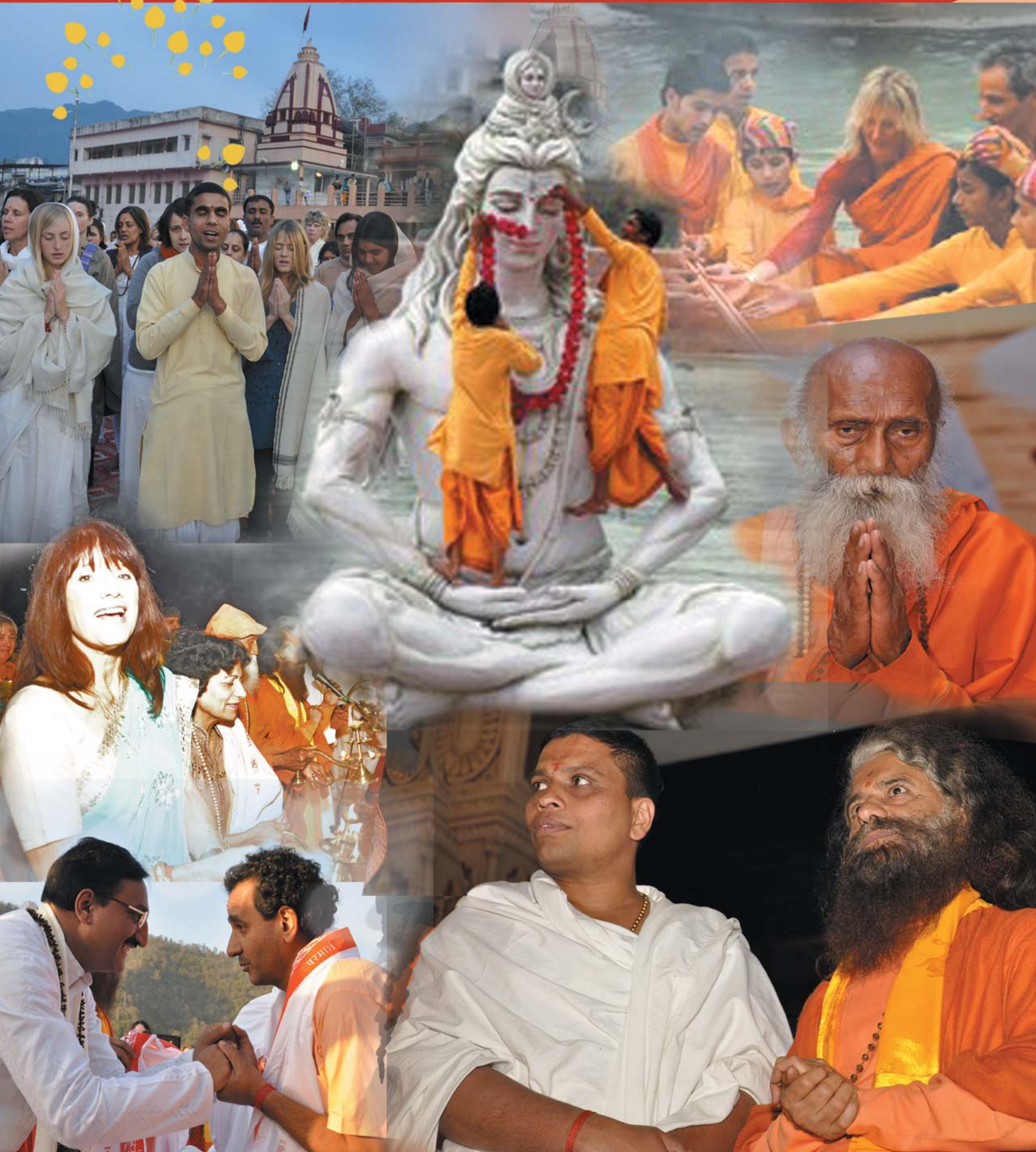


Special Events | International Yoga Festival / Ceremonies









Special Events | International Yoga Festival - Cultural Performances







Special Events

| International Yoga Festival / Happy Yogis



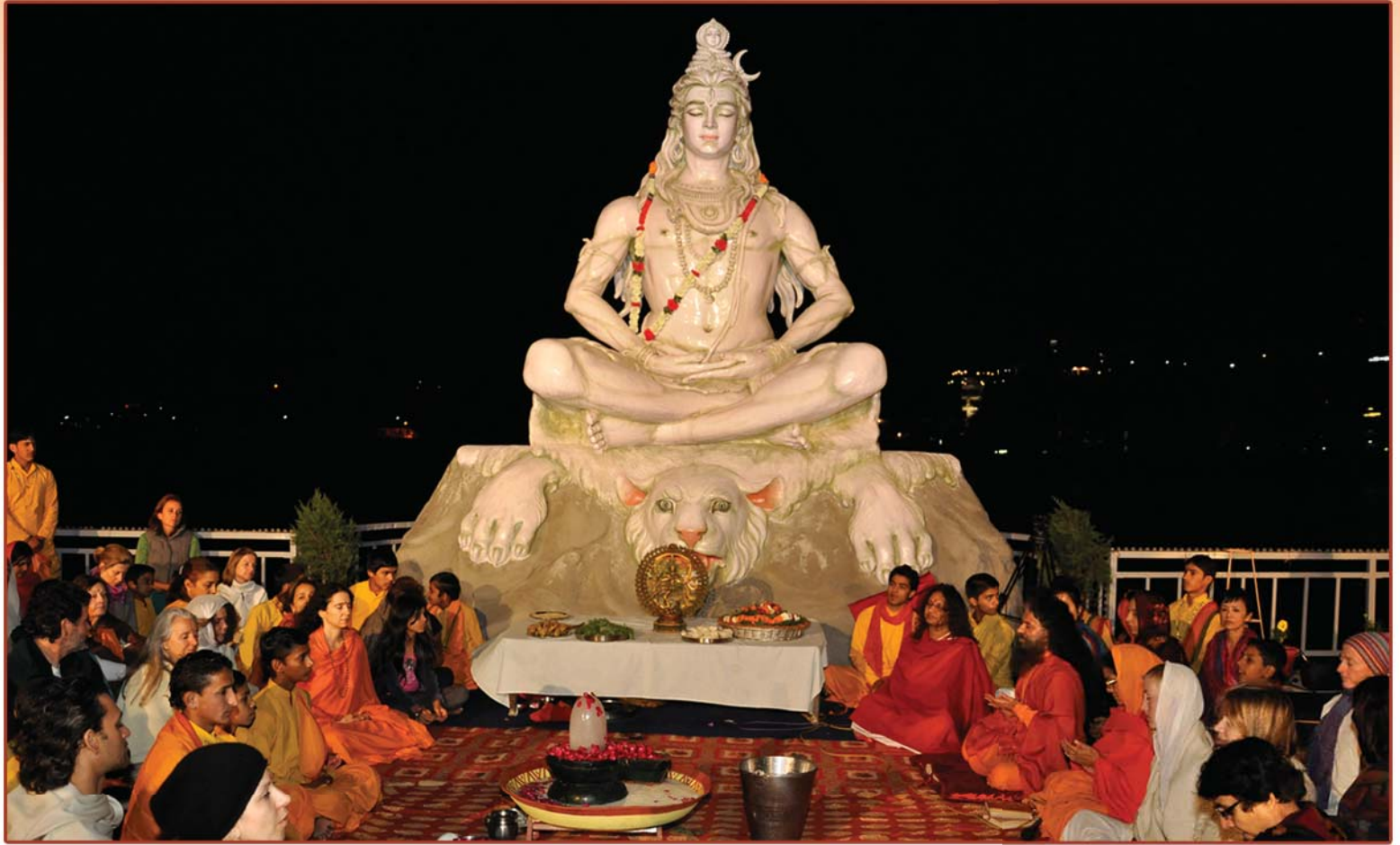


Special Events | International Yoga Festival / Sari Night



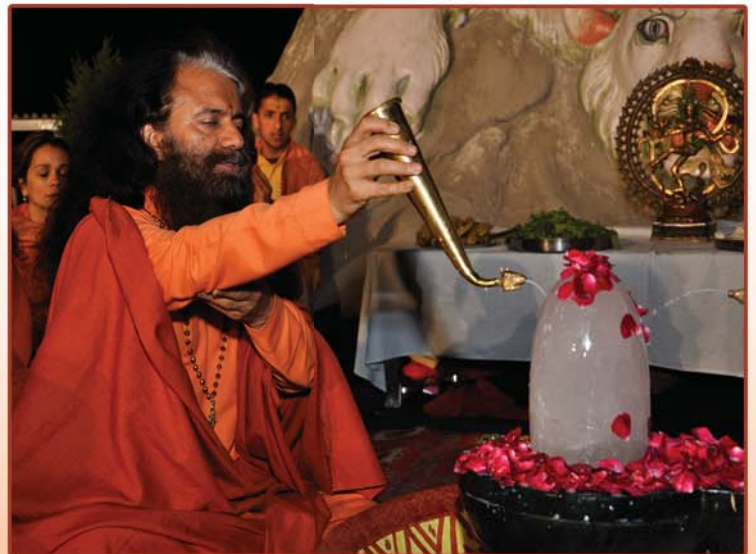


Mahashivratri



On March 2nd, a beautiful ceremony was held on the banks of Ma Ganga for Mahashivratri. A special abhishek puja was held out on the Parmarth ghat, along with Vedic prayers and bhajans.

Pujya Swamiji led the ceremony, and ashram residents as well as participants in the International Yoga Festival got to participate in this very special, sacred ceremony.



Pujya Swamiji's Itinerary



April

1-30 Rishikesh

May

1-31 Rishikesh

June - July

Abroad in the UK,
USA, and Europe

Keep checking www.parmarth.com/swamijisitinerary.html
for details of His yatra abroad



Divine Message From Pujya Swamiji

The Practice of “No-Reaction”

Spiritual health is measured by our ability to remain calm, focused and loving when life throws difficulty onto our paths. The practice of “no-reaction” is a something we should practice all day. We must learn to be like the ocean, whose waves come and go, but the ocean remains the same. Even a large, heavy rock thrown into the ocean causes only temporary ripples on its surface. The ocean’s depths remain unaffected.

One of the best ways to learn no-reaction is through silence. When we are anxious, angry or frustrated, we say things we later regret; we let our words fuel the reaction in our hearts.

So let us learn the power of silence. Silence on the outside will lead to silence on the inside. Silence is a time of remembering that we are more than our reactions, a time of charging our inner batteries.

If we become quiet and still, we notice that between every thought and action there is a space, a brief moment of time, a gap. First there is the thought that we want to act, then a space, then the action. The action may seem instantaneous if we are not aware, but by practicing awareness, we find that there is always a space after the thought or emotion and before the action. It may only be a split-second, but it is there. Grab that space. In that space, we must find the restraint not to act.

The more we practice focusing on the space, the more we are able to catch it. At first it will seem elusive, but with time, the space becomes longer and more conscious. We see that we really do have a choice about whether to spread pieces or peace.

The Buddha said that he was like a river. Even the strongest, raging fire cannot last a moment if it is placed into the deep waters of a river. Similarly, if someone came to him full of burning flames of anger, the flames were immediately extinguished by the flowing river of his love.

If we want to be torchbearers of peace, we must first become rivers of love, dousing all flames of discord in the waters of our own compassion and serenity.



Links

Please visit us on the web for videos, podcasts and music from Parmarth Niketan, as well as information on upcoming programs and seva opportunities.

