

*Parmarth  
Newsletter*

**JULY -  
SEPTEMBER 2009**

# Interfaith Harmony and Positive Development for India & the World

## Meeting with President

Pujya Swamiji, Pujya Swami Agniveshji, Pujya Maulanna Wahiduddin Khan Sahib, Pujya Goswami Sushilji and other leaders of the Sarva Dharma Sansad (Parliament of Religions) met with Honorable Smt. Pratibha Patilji, the Honorable President of India to discuss ways the government can help the sansad attain its goals of preservation and protection of life, (particularly for women/girls, children, animals and the environment).

The Honorable President was very impressed to hear the Sansad's tenets, goals and plans and she offered her full support.

Pujya Swamiji presented her also with sacred water from the holy Lake Mansarovar.



*Pujya Swamiji gives Mansarovar water to the Hon. President, with Pujya Swami Agniveshji & Pujya Goswami Sushilji*



*Pujya Swamiji and Pujya Maulanna Wahiduddin Khan Sahib*



*Sarva Dharma Sansad members with the Hon'ble President*

# Parliament of Religions

On the 9th July and again on September 17, there were large functions in Delhi (at Kamani Auditorium and then at Siri Fort) under the banner of Sarva Dharma Sansad (Parliament of Religions) regarding the sanctity of life and the need to protect it, particularly at this crucial time. Dharma-gurus of many religions (including Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Jainism and Sikhism) and several Central Ministers of the Government of India were present.



(left to right) Archbishop Vincent Concessao, Swami Agnivesh, Sadhvi Bhagawati, Goswami Sushil, Shri Gulamnabi Azaad, Swami Chiidanand, Lokesh Muni, Swami Aryavesh



Lighting of the lamp



Pujya Swamiji with Goswami Sushilji & Shri Gulamnabi Azaad



The theme of the functions was the sanctity, preservation and protection of all life on Earth, primarily focused on the following issues in India:

1. Eradication of Oppression and Injustice Against Women and Children including female foeticide and infanticide and child labor
2. Eradication of Drugs and Alcohol
3. Eradication of Exploitation of the Environment and Animals

Through committing ourselves and our seva to these three goals, we can -- with God's grace -- bring about a significant change not only in the mindset of people, but also in the actual quality and span of life of millions. Female infanticide and foeticide, oppression of impoverished children, the scourge of addiction to toxic substances and the systematic pillaging of our natural resources to satisfy our personal desires, are all leading humanity down a path of self-destruction. Ahimsa is one of the greatest tenets of nearly all the religions of the world. Through truly examining and eradicating the ways in which our society is currently engaged in himsa, we can lead people back onto the right track and create a brighter, beautiful future.



# Parliament of Religions

Main speakers at these 2 functions included the following, in addition to many more:

- Pujya Swami Agniveshji, World Council of Arya Samaj
- Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh
- Pujya Maulanna Wahiduddin Khan Sahib
- Pujya Goswami Sushilji
- Pujya Roopchandra Muniji
- Archbishop Vincent Concessao, Archbishop of Delhi
- Father Dominic Emmanuel, Spokesman of the Catholic Diocese
- Shri RK Pachuri, noble laureate
- Shri Gulamnabi Azaad, Minister for Health, Government of India
- Hon'ble Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansariji, Vice President of India

The speakers were all of the opinion that there should be a major shift in the paradigm of development from a greed based model to a need based model. The Dharmacharyas were of the opinion that choosing a vegetarian lifestyle is the most important choice for life that each of us has the chance to make.

The Dharmacharyas vehemently opposed the practice of female foeticide and urged the government to expedite the enactment of the Women's Reservation Bill. They also strongly emphasized the need for a National Alcohol Policy and value based education system.

The functions were great successes and all of the leaders pledged to take the messages to their devotees, followers and congregations.

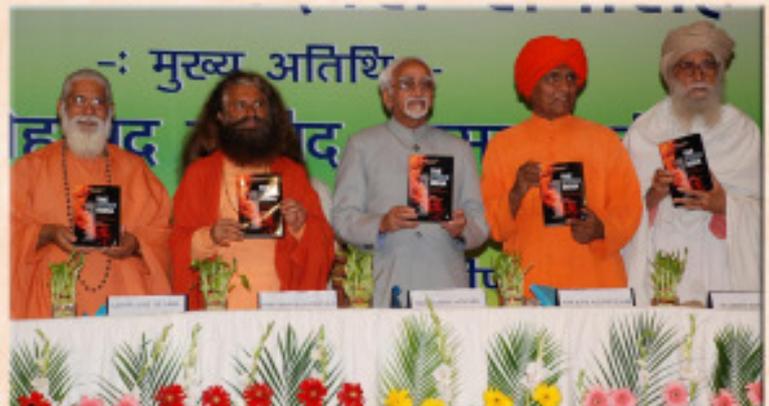
The function on the 17th September was also in honor of the 70th birthday of Pujya Swami Agniveshji and a special book was released on the occasion.



*Pujya Swamiji and Hon'ble Vice President*



*Father Dominic, Goswami Sushil, Swami Chidanand, Hon. Vice President Swami Agnivesh*



*Goswami Sushil, Swami Chidanand, Hon. Vice President, Swami Agnivesh, Maulanna Wahiddudin Khan*

# Parmarth Niketan



## *Pujya Swamiji's Travel, Functions & Events*

### Scotland, UK

Pujya Swamiji spent 2 days on Wee Cumbrae island in Scotland, off the coast of Glasgow for the inauguration of the Yog Center on the island being opened by Swami Ramdevji.



*Pujya Swami Ramdevji, Pujya Swamiji, North Ayrshire Provost Bobby Rae, Shri T.S. Rawat, Minister Agriculture, Uttarakhand*



*Pujya Swamiji & Pujya Swami Ramdevji on the boat*



*On the boat to Wee Cumbrae*

Smt. Sunita and Shri Shrawan Poddar have purchased the island on which they plan to establish a Patanjali Yog Peeth yoga, pranayama and ayurveda center.

Pujya Swamiji traveled there on the 26th September together with Pujya Swami Ramdevji, Pujya Acharya Balkrishanji and the Poddar family. The 26th afternoon / evening were spent enjoying the natural beauty of the island. The 27th began with a beautiful yagna/havan and then the official inauguration ceremony. Thousands of people came from India, USA and of course from across UK for the great event.

The island will be nicknamed "Island of Peace." Scotland already has an Isle of Man, and now hopefully the Isle of Peace will help man (and woman...) find a way of living in peace and balance of body and mind.

The function was also attended by Mohammad Sarwar MP and local North Ayrshire Provost Bobby Rae.



*In the old castle, overlooking the sea*



*Overlooking the sea with mainland Scotland behind*



*Pujya Swamiji with Pujya Swami Ramdevji, Pujya Acharya Balkrishanji and Shri Shrawan Poddar*



*(left to right) Provost Bobby Rae, Pujya Swamiji, Pujya Swami Ramdevji, Mohammad Sarwar MP*



*On the boat to Wee Cumbrae*



The function was also attended by ministers from Uttarakhand, India and also distinguished members of the local government and city council.



*Inaugural havan/yagna ceremony*



*On top of the old castle*

# Golden Jubilee of Bhagirathi Devi Arya Girls' School

On the 25th July Pujya Swamiji was a Special Guest of Honor at the Golden Jubilee Celebration of the Bhagirathi Devi Arya Girls' Senior Secondary School in Delhi. Shri Kapil Sibal, Honorable Minister of Human Resource and Development was the Chief Guest. Other guests of honor were Shri Haroon Yusuf, Minister, Government of Delhi and Shri Jai Prakash Agarwal, MP.

Pujya Swamiji gave a beautiful talk about the meaning and importance of education, not just to achieve and get ahead in the professional world, but the true education of culture, values, spirituality (of any religion) and sanskaras. He urged all the girls of the school to "Be number 1, no problem. You should be number 1. But never forget the real Number One, God....".

He talked about the temptations and distractions of youth and the importance of maintaining a single-minded focus on our goal -- to perform our particular duty, to fulfill our dharma to the very best of our ability, but always in a spirit of cooperation with others, not competition.

He told the girls that they are the future, and whatever that future may hold is up to them. They are the creators of tomorrow and hence they must ensure that their minds and hearts are pure and filled with compassion, dedication and sincerity.

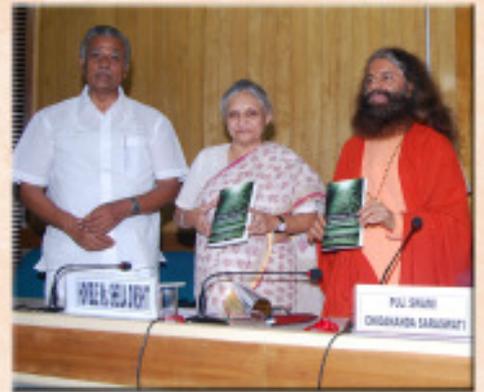


## Book Release

On the 10th July, Pujya Swamiji was a Guest of Honor at a book launch with the Chief Minister of Delhi, Smt. Sheila Dikshit. It was a beautiful program hosted by Life Positive Magazine to launch the book, Travelling Light, by Life Positive Editor Suma Varughese. The book is a beautiful collection of Sumaji's essays which she's published in Life Positive.



Pujya Swamiji gave a wonderful talk about "traveling light" in life and how to let go of the baggage we carry around with us. He spoke about how excess baggage in travel slows us down, costs us money and generally eliminates the joy inherent in travel. Similarly, in our lives, our grudges, anger, expectations all weigh us down, preventing us from truly enjoying the journey of Life which the Divine has gifted to us.



Following the book release and speeches there was a lively question-answer session with members of the audience.



# Kailash- Mansarovar Yatra Preview

From August 30 - September 15, Pujya Swamiji led a group of over 150 yatis from across the world on the sacred pilgrimage to Mt. Kailash and Lake Mansarovar in Tibet, where the Parmarth Kailash-Mansarovar Ashram in Dirapuk (at a staggering height of 17,000 feet) was inaugurated!

See the Kailash-Mansarovar yatra special, coming soon, for all the details of the divine yatra as well as beautiful photographs of darshan of this holy land.





## Special Events and Guests at Parmarth

*Every month there is an innumerable number of special guests -- political leaders, social leaders, celebrities, dignitaries -- from India and abroad who come to Parmarth, drawn to have a bath in the holy waters of Mother Ganga and to have Pujya Swamiji's darshan and satsang. It is, of course, impossible to cover them all in the newsletter as every day seems to bring a new special guest. However, we try to give a sampling here of those who have come and been particularly touched and transformed by the divine atmosphere.*

### Uma Thurman

Uma Thurman, famous actress from USA and daughter of the highly respected Professor of Religion at Columbia University, Robert Thurman, came to Parmarth with her fiancé, Arki Busson, a distinguished and reputed financier from UK. Uma's parents and brother Dechen are all close to Pujya Swamiji and urged Uma to come to Parmarth during her vacation in India.



Uma had spent many years in India in her childhood, as her parents have spent most of their lives dedicated to the teachings, the life and the mission of H.H. the Dalai Lama. Hence there were many years that they lived in India before moving back to USA and founding the Tibet House in New York.

She and Arki were very touched by the aarti and then by their time together with Pujya Swamiji following aarti in which they asked Him many spiritual questions which had been in their minds and hearts.





## Shri Vilasrao Deshmukh

### Former Chief Minister Maharashtra

On August 1, the Honorable former Chief Minister of the State of Maharashtra and current Minister, Government of India for Union Heavy Industries, Shri Vilasrao Deshmukh came to Parmarth Niketan with his wife Smt. Vaishaliji.



On a visit to North India, they came to Parmarth as they had heard about its divinity, sanctity and uplifting environment.

Although they stayed only a few hours, the visit was filled with special puja and inspiration.



They performed puja of the Kalpa Vreksh tree, otherwise known as the “wish fulfilling tree”, and also beautiful Shiv abhishek puja on the banks of Ganga. Of course, they participated in the evening divine Ganga yagna/havan and the aarti with Pujya Swamiji. Shri Deshmukhiji said it was one of the most beautiful experiences he had ever had.



They spent time with Pujya Swamiji also, discussing the numerous projects for India and the world which are taking place under His leadership, guidance and inspiration. He shared with them also about the ashram in Dirapuk, Tibet, on the holy Mt. Kailash where He would be traveling the following month, in September. Shri Deshmukhiji was amazed to hear how Pujya Swamiji had built this ashram at 17,000 feet in the sacred land of Mt. Kailash.



They enthusiastically said that whenever they come back to the North, to this area, they will definitely return to Parmarth for such divine, inspiring and uplifting experiences.



## Hinduja Family

In July, Shri Ashok Hinduja and his wife Smt. Harshaji came to Parmarth. The Hinduja family is very close to Pujya Swamiji and all four brothers regularly come to this sacred land. In fact, they celebrated their respected and beloved father's centenary birthday here with a huge, beautiful program in 2001, followed by their respected and beloved mother's centenary birthday in 2004.



As all four brothers are very spiritually inclined, at any opportunity -- and particularly the holidays -- they are pulled to come to the holy banks of Mother Ganga for a bath in her waters and puja on her shores.



Shri Ashokji and Smt. Harshaji performed a full, elaborate Shiv Abhishek puja in the ashram's main mandir as well as puja of the Kalpa Vreksh (wish fulfilling) tree, in addition to the divine Ganga yagna and aarti.



Pujya Swamiji also took them out onto Parmarth's new ghat, in the middle of Gangaji where there is a beautiful, huge statue of Lord Shiva. They offered flowers and devotion at His holy feet.





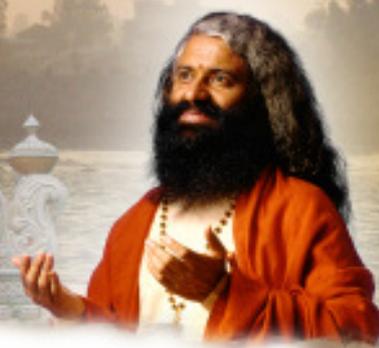
## Senior Citizens Group

On September 20, a function was held at Parmarth, organized by the Senior Citizens Welfare Association of Rishikesh and the Association's President Shri D.K. Vashney.

They held the event after Pujya Swamiji's return from Mansarovar as they wanted Him to be the Chief Guest.

Pujya Swamiji gave a beautiful talk to all the seniors about the "landing phase" of life, and how one should live it. He also spoke about the importance of continuing to use our abilities, facilities and experience for the benefit of humanity for as long as we can. Nearly 200 senior citizens attended.





## Holidays

*The Indian calendar has more holidays than days! However, amidst these hundreds of annual holidays, there are some which are of prime importance. This includes Krishna Janmashthami, Ram Navami, Navratri, Diwali, Holi, Mahashivratri, Guru Purnima and Raksha Bandhan. All holidays are celebrated with great devotion and piety at Parmarth.*

### Guru Purnima

The 7th July was the sacred day of Guru Purnima, the day we give our love and devotion at the feet of our beloved Guru. At Parmarth it is celebrated not only with puja for the Guru but also with five days of continuous Ramayan Paath as Nirvana Mahotsava of His Holiness, the late Shri Swami Shukdevanandji Maharaj. This beautiful function is celebrated from the 15th of Asadhasukla to the 5th of Shravana (in July). Pujya Swamiji led the chanting of the Ramayana Paath for several hours on Guru Purnima, offering His devotion at the holy feet of H.H. Pujya Swami Shukdevanandji Maharaj, the founder of Parmarth Niketan.

[Click here](#) and [here](#) to read Pujya Swamiji's articles on the meaning of the Guru, and [click here](#) to read an article about the role of the Guru in our life.



*Pujya Swamiji chants Ramayana Paath with rishikumars, ashram residents and devotees on Guru Purnima, in the Samadhi Mandir*

## Raksha Bandhan

Raksha Bandhan is another important, beautiful holiday in the Indian calendar. It is the day upon which sisters tie a “rakhi” or thread bracelet upon their brothers’ wrists, as an offering of their love. They feed their brothers sweets and put tilak on their foreheads. The brothers promise to always protect their sisters and to always be there for them. It is a beautiful holiday, celebrated by Indians across the world, even who are thousands of miles apart. Inevitably all brothers will receive rakhis - - either in person or by post -- from not only their blood sisters but from all girls/women who consider them as brothers. [click here](#) to read Pujya Swamiji’s article on the meaning of Raksha

At Parmarth, rakhis are always tied on the hands of our beloved rishikumars, and of course on Pujya Swamiji, the Divine Brother of everyone..... This year, as He was out of the ashram, the rishikumars received the physical rakhis and Pujya Swamiji received the devotion-filled, heart-felt rakhis through prayer.

Dr. Alka Patel and all the female sevaks at the ashram tied rakhis and put tilak on all the rishikumars.





The team of devoted doctors included:

**Chest medicine** - Dr. Arpan Shah

**ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat):** Dr Gauri Mankekar and Dr Kashmira Chauhan

**General Surgery** -- Dr Avinash Katara and Dr. Vishwanath Gawda

**Orthopedics** - Dr Abhay Nene and Dr. Uday Pawar

**Ophthalmology**- Dr Sunil Morekar and Dr. Rupali Sinha

**Psychology** -- Dr. Swapna Oovlekar..

**Physiotherapy**- - Dr Amit Kohli

It was so beautiful to see the way the doctors tirelessly and lovingly performed their divine seva for all the patients.





***Pujya Swamiji's Itinerary  
November '09 - January '10***

**November**

1-3 Rishikesh  
4-6 Lucknow & Ayodhya  
7-8 Delhi  
10-11 Ranikhet/Almora  
12-29 Rishikesh  
30 Indore

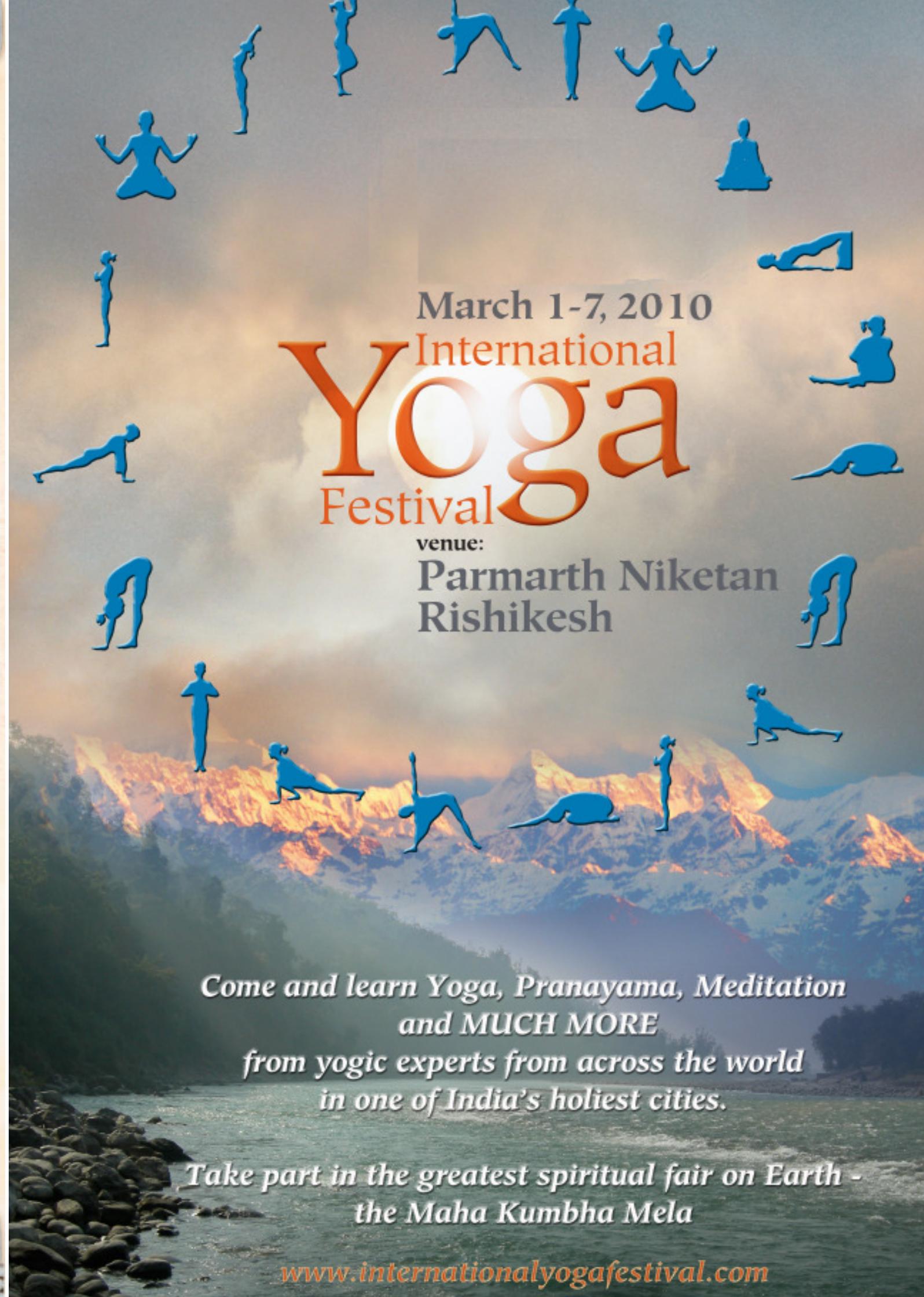
**December**

2-14 Australia  
15-31 Rishikesh

**January**

1-31 Rishikesh

*Pujya Swamiji's itinerary is always subject to change. For any itinerary questions please email to [bhagawati@parmarth.com](mailto:bhagawati@parmarth.com)*



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