Parmarth
A Divine Month of Yoga, Music and Magic

H.H. Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji
Autumn, 2015 News Special

Uttarakhand: Simply Heaven

The World's First Jageshwar Yoga Festival and Indo-China Yoga Festival Make History

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www.washalliance.org (Global Interfaith WASH Alliance),
www.projecthope-india.org (Project Hope),
www.divineshaktifoundation.org (Divine Shakti Foundation),
www.ihrf.com (India Heritage Research Foundation)
The first ever, two day Jageshwar International Yoga Festival, held on November 5 and 6, was jointly organized by the Government of Uttarakhand, KMVN and Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh). Parmarth Niketan Ashram is well known for organizing and hosting the world famous annual International Yoga Festival, from March 1-7 each year, attracting hundreds of Yogis from across India and across the world, which is now in its 17th year. Together with the department of Tourism, Government of Uttarakhand, it was decided that the inspiration and transformation of Parmarth's International Yoga Festival should also be extended to the Kumaon region during the beautiful Autumn season.
The Jageshwar festival was inaugurated by HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, President of Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh), Hon’ble Speaker of Government of Uttarakhand, Shri Govind Singh Kunjwal, Bharat Mitraji, Founder-President of Organic India, Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji, Director of the International Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh), and senior members of the Ministry of Tourism and KMVN.

The two-day Yoga celebration brought together yoga practitioners and enthusiasts from over 15 different countries, including America, Australia, Belgium, China, Czechoslovakia, Colombia, Lithuania, Kenya, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Israel, South Korea, United Kingdom, Vietnam and many others. The two day festival was filled with Yoga asana, pranayama, meditation classes by expert Yogacharyas, divine discourses by Yoga Masters, international and interfaith musical programmes by world-renowned Musicians, special aarti and puja, nature walks and much more.

Pujya Swamiji shared, “Uttarakhand is the birthplace of Yoga and Lord Jageshwar, or Lord Shiva, is the ultimate Yogi, so it is very fitting to host the first ever Jageshwar Yoga Festival in this sacred land, one of the twelve holy jyotirlings. With the promotion of such festivals not only will the locals get employment, a great sense of pride in their heritage, as it attracts so many participants from abroad, but also the participants will be deeply touched and uplifted by the warmth and hospitality of its people and by the awakening that comes from practicing Yoga and meditating in this holy land. In this way it’s a mutually beneficial relationship for all.”

He also added, “While the promotion of such sacred heritage sites is essential we must ensure that we develop them as eco-tourist spots in which solid waste and waste-water are effectively managed and energy is conserved as much as possible so that all our festivals and celebrations are green, leaving the least amount of carbon and water footprint. In this way, the rivers can

**Uttarakhand: Simply Heaven**
continue to flow unpolluted, the forests can still be lush with indigenous trees and the biodiversity can be maintained and sustained.”

Sadhvi Bhagawatiji welcomed participants by adding, “You have all been called here to India, to Uttarakhand, to this sacred Jageshwar Dham for a special reason. This is not like a yoga conference in London or Paris or New York or Sydney. In this sacred land of Jageshwar, you not only receive teachings but you also receive the divine touch and divine transformation.”

The festival was also geared at highlighting the historic and sacred Jageshwar Dham, as part of the rich and abundant natural and spiritual heritage of the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand. As an integral part of the Festival, the participants visited and meditated at the Jageshwar Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva, also known as the Lord of Yoga, one of the most ancient and sacred 12 Jyotirlingas. All participants were deeply inspired and touched by the holy sanctuary in the lush Deodar forests.

A special song for world peace was sung by internationally renowned musicians, in the spirit of Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam, bringing together a global family with the sacred chanting of Om Shalom Salam Amen, signifying a yogic union of countries, cultures, colors and creeds.

See more photos! Click:
http://tinyurl.com/Jageshwar-2015-A
Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawati led a special Aarti, evening lighting and thanksgiving ceremony, at the sacred Jageshwar Temple, joined by all Yoga Participants.

A sacred Rudraksh sapling is given by Jageshwar Yoga Festival participants from many nations to the Hon’ble Speaker of Government of Uttarakhand, Shri Govind Singh Kunjwal, the District Magistrate of Almora and Commissioner of Almora.
Hon’ble Speaker of Government of Uttarakhand, Shri Govind Singh Kunjwal, Deputy Director of Uttarakhand Tourism Shri V.S. Chauhan and the District Magistrate of Almora Shri Savin Bansal join Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawatiji to light the inaugural lamp for the first ever Jageshwar Yoga Festival.
Respected dignitaries and officials of the Government of Uttarakhand join Pujya Swamiji, Sadhvi Bhagawatiji and Bharat Mitra to open the Jageshwar Yoga Festival.

Beautiful water blessing ceremony and pledge for improved WASH with participants from around the world and respected dignitaries.
Pujya Swamiji blesses local youth performers for sharing their beautiful culture and an inspiring tale of Lord Shiva with festival participants.

Participants from many countries enjoy the rich cultural programme of the Kumaon region.
During the festival, Pujya Swamiji met with local priests and community members of Jageshwar to discuss how to develop Jageshwar as a Green Pilgrimage and world-renowned center of spirituality and awakening.

Pujya Swamiji was cordially invited and requested to perform sacred Rudra Abhishek and Aarti in the divine and ancient Lord Jageshwar sanctum sanctorum.
Yoga festival begins at Jageshwar, may be held every year

Almora: The two-day International Yoga Festival kicked off at Jageshwar on Thursday with much fanfare. About 100 foreigners from 16 countries, including China, Mongolia, Hong Kong, Belgium, Israel, UK, America, Columbia, Kenya and Mexico, have come all the way to participate in the two-day event.

The festival has been organised by Rishikesh-based Parmarth Niketan, which hosts yoga festivals every year, and Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam. It is backed by Uttarakhand Tourism Development Council.

Uttarakhand assembly speaker Govind Singh Kunjwal and Chidanand Swami, spiritual head of Parmarth Niketan, inaugurated the festival in the presence of international delegates.

Kunjwal told TOI, “From now on, Jageshwar has come on the global map of yoga festival. Every year, the government will conduct a yoga festival at Jageshwar. This is an attempt to develop Jageshwar as the fifth religious and spiritual spot after Char Dham. This is also an attempt to encourage spiritual tourism in Kumaon region.”

Chidanand Saraswati said, “Parmarth Niketan and the government of Uttarakhand are mulling together to create a brand of Uttarakhand as an ‘organic’ state. This is a land of organic horticulture. We will like to organize international yoga festivals of 300 members at Jageshwar where participants can be put at homestays of local people, so that local people can also get business. Parmarth Niketan has connections throughout the world while the government has the infrastructure. Together, we can develop Jageshwar as a spiritual spot in the state.”

Yoga festivals will also be organized at the Ardh-Kumbh 2016, Saraswati said.

... the foreigners hoped to hear divine discourses, learn about "pranayama", attend meditation classes, practise yoga "asana and participate in aarti and puja besides going for nature walks.

The evening saw a performance of a special song bringing together the world faiths with the sacred chanting of “Om Shalom, Salam, Amen”, signifying a yogic union of countries, cultures, colours and creeds in the heart of the sacred Himalayas.

The second day will start early morning with meditation and “pranayama” and “asanas”. There will be a tree-planting session, heritage visits and a question-answer session at the end.

For the first time, a yoga festival is being held in the hills of Kumaon region. Its also the first time that a yoga festival of an international stature is being held away from Rishikesh.
International yoga fest begins in Jageshwar

Sonia Gandhi to attend state day here tomorrow

BD Kasniyal
Pithoragarh, November 5

The first-ever International Yoga Festival began at Jageshwar today.

Chief Minister Harish Rawat took stock of the preparations today. While talking to mediapersons afterwards, he said “We are aiming to develop Jageshwar as a Yoga Sadhana Kendra on the lines of Char Dham pilgrimage centres of the state. People from across the world could come to have yoga sadhana in this place, which is enlisted in ancient puranas as an eminent religious centre.”

Congress president Sonia Gandhi will visit the venue on November 7 to take part in yoga and state raising day ceremony, which will also be held by the state government here. Gandhi will also lay the foundation stone of Rs 100-crore Hariram Tamta Shilp Unnayan Sansthan and inaugurate the Uday Shankar Natya Academi built near Almora town.

“Swami Chidanand Muni of Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh, will come with 15 of his yoga experts to guide over 125 foreign participants in practicing various asanas for two days,” a source from the Almora district administration said.
कल्पनाओं से भी सुंदर जागेश्वर धाम

प्राकृतिक सौंदर्य से अभिमूर्त दिखे सैलानी • पारंपरिक संस्कृति से किया विदेशियों का स्वागत

जागेश्वर धाम में विदेशियों की ध्यान मुद्रा

जागेश्वर धाम में की पूजा-अर्चना • वायाद्वार को संजीवन करने हुए योग साधक
Almora gears up for int'l yoga, Kumaon food fest

Almora: Almora is gearing up for two major festivals to be held, the International Yoga Festival and the Kumaon Food and Cultural Fair which will be held in the month of March.

The Uttar Pradesh Tourism Development Council (UPTDC) is organizing the yoga festival which will see participation from more than 40 countries including Malaysia, Belgium, China, Colombia, Kenya, Israel and South Korea.

Almora-based Parmarth Niketan has been roped in to collaborate with the government for the event. The Parmarth Niketan Yoga Ashram (PNYA) is the nodal agency which will provide facilities such as boarding and lodging to the visitors.

To ensure that all preparations are in place, chief minister Harish Rawat visited Almora on Wednesday.

He also addressed the district administration officials to finalise all arrangements to avoid inconvenience to the visitors. Stating that he was delighted to have Javdev Singh, a tourist spot for yoga and spiritual activities, Rawat added, “Excuse that all security arrangements are in place for the event. We need to provide proper facilities and facilities to the tourists.”

Giving information, an official of PNYA, said, “Representatives from around 50 countries including Malaysia, Belgium, China, Colombia, Kenya, Israel and South Korea will take part in the event. Participants from Israel and Arab countries are also likely to be in attendance.”

Almora district magistrate Suresh Bansal told UPTDC, “Preparations for the yoga festival have been completed. Police officials have been deployed at various places.”

KFN general manager Tejinder Singh Maratha said, “The event will comprise yoga sessions, heritage walk, nature protection session, water charity, question-answer session and cultural evenings. The KFN and all partner hotels have been booked for the event. More than 100 hotels and guesthouses have been made available to tourists.”

Meanwhile, the CM also inspected the site at Gunna Banj, 8 km away from Almora, where the Kumaon Food and Cultural Festival will be organized.

The Kumaon Food and Cultural Festival will be inaugurated by Congress party president Sonia Gandhi in Gunna Banj.

Almora DM Sonal told UPTDC said preparations were on as well for the Kumaon fair.
Indo-China Yoga Festival: A Historic First

The first ever Indo-China International Yoga Festival in India took place on the holy banks of Mother Ganga in Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh), with participants from 31 nations. The festival ran from the 5th through the 9th November with the first 2 days in Jageshwar Dham organized and run jointly by the Government of Uttarakhand and Parmarth Niketan (see pgs 15-25), and the second 3 days at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh.

It was inaugurated by Pujya Swamiji, Hon’ble Minister of Agriculture Shri Harak Singh Rawatji, Shri Rajeev Swaroop, SP Rishikesh, Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji, Mr. Zhu Thai, CEO, Keep Yoga, Beijing, China, Dr Yuva Dayalan, Founder-President of Yuvaa School of Yoga, Hong Kong and many others.

Every day participants took part in a plethora of Yoga classes from 6am-5pm, joining each evening in the yagna/havan and Ganga Aarti, in which they sang and chanted joyfully.

See more photos! Click:
http://tinyurl.com/Indo-China-2015-A
Some of the main leaders, organizers and yogacharyas at the Indo-China International Festival were:

Mr. Zhu Thai, CEO, Keep Yoga, Beijing, China
- Mr. Zhu Feng, Assit CEO, Keep Yoga, Beijing, China
- Ms. Sharmila Mahesh Kumar, Grand-daughter of Prattabi Jois, Mysore, India
- Sadhvi Abha Saraswati, Senior Yogacharya, Head of Parmarth Yoga Department
- Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, Director of the International Yoga Festival- Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh)
- Mr. Zhao Te La, Famous Yoga Teacher in China with hundreds of Yoga studios in China
- Ms. Liu Je, Famous Yoga Teacher in China, First Yoga Beauty of Asia
- Dr. AM Moorthy, Vice Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Physical Education Sports University
- Dr. R Elangovan, Professor and Head, Department of Yoga at Tamil Nadu Physical Education Sports University
- Mr. Brian Siddhartha Ingle, Eminent Yogacharya from America
- Mr. David Jumbo Troung, Yoga Teacher from America
- Shri HS Arun, Senior Iyenger Teacher, Bangalore, India
- Dr Yuva Dayalan, Founder-President of Yuvaa School of Yoga, Hong Kong
- Dr. Indu Sharma, Yogacharya, Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh)
During the festival, Dr. AM Moorthy and Dr. R Elangovan from Tamil Nadu Physical Education Sports University proudly presented Pujya Swamiji with a lifetime achievement award for His contributions in the field of Yoga and selfless service. There was also a launch of Radhika Khanna’s book on Yoga, entitled “Yoga: The Ganges to Wall Street.” During the writing of the book earlier in the year, Radhikaji had come to Parmarth Niketan for support in gathering material, pictures and inspiration for her book which seeks to find the spirituality in everyday life and also includes a special chapter on Yogic food by Master Chef, Vikas Khanna. Radhika and Vikas Khanna joined for the launch.

All of the Yoga Festival participants were so deeply touched and transformed as they learned yoga, pranayama and meditation in Rishikesh in the birthplace of yoga, on the banks of the sacred Ganga river.

On the final evening, they expressed their wishes to also have a Lord Shiva statue in Beijing, similar to those at Parmarth Niketan. In response, Pujya Swamiji gifted them with a beautiful Shiva murti, which was taken back to China for installation in in their yoga centre. A larger one will also be prepared and sent to their beautiful nation.

Said Pujya Swamiji, “This Shiva statue symbolizes a bridge between India and China. It is a bridge between countries, cultures and creeds. The Shiva murti is a symbol of the joining of our hearts together in true yoga. It is a symbol of the Power of Peace. That is the power we need today – not power for power but power for peace! India and China, together, joining hands and hearts in a true yoga, or union, of “Power of Peace” can change the whole world!”
A Divine Meeting: Indo-China Yoga Festival participants with Pujya Swamiji and Pujya Swami Ramdevji in Haridwar
Yogacharyas of the Indo China Yoga Festival participate in GIWA's water blessing ceremony, pledging to work for improved WASH.

International artist, Ragunath Manet from Paris, inspires Yogis from 31 nations to bring the music of peace and harmony through their practice of Yoga.

Yoga Festival participant offers a beautiful flower to Lord Shiva, the Lord of Yoga.

Naad Yogacharya, Anandra George, and Sadhvi Abha Saraswati, Head of Parmarth Niketan’s Yoga Department, lead a beautiful chanting session with festival participants.

A senior official from India’s External Affairs Ministry is honoured by participants on her visit to the festival.
Renowned Yogacharyas from China are blessed by Pujya Swamiji with a beautiful certificate and sacred Rudraksh sapling.

Volunteers of the Tamil Nadu Physical Education Sports University’s Yoga Department are blessed with a sacred Rudraksh sapling by Pujya Swamiji, joined by Mr. Zhu Tai and Dr. Yuva Dayalan.
A Divine Month of Yoga, Music & Magic
A Divine Month of Yoga, Music & Magic
Uttarakhand’s Hon’ble Agriculture Minister Shri Harak Singh Rawat lights the inaugural lamp.
Uttarakhand’s Hon’ble Minister of Agriculture, Shri Harak Singh Rawat, inaugurates the Indo-China Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh
During the festival, an MOU was signed between Tamil Nadu’s Physical Education Sports University, renowned Yoga Department, and Parmarth Niketan Yoga Department.

Radhika Khanna’s beautiful book, "Yoga: The Ganges to Wall Street," was also launched.

Later, Dr. AM Moorthy and Dr. R Elangovan from Tamil Nadu’s Physical Education Sports University proudly presented Pujya Swamiji with a lifetime achievement award for His contributions in the field of Yoga and selfless service.
The Danube River and Ganga River Meet
For A Divine Concert with Two Ambassadors

The Danube River met Mother Ganga on the evening of 30 October 2015 at Parmarth Niketan for a forever-memorable concert on the Ganga’s divine banks.

All were honored with traditional European classical musical selections in addition to inspiring Indian bhajans, performed by the Spring String Quartet and Ensemble Pasticcio from Austria, along with Parmarth’s Rishikumars. The conductor was the esteemed Gerald Wirth, President & Artistic Director of the Twice Grammy Award Winning Vienna Boys Choir. H.E. Bernard Wrabetz, Ambassador of Austria and H.E. Deep Kumar Upadhyay, Ambassador of Nepal were in attendance along with Joana Daniel Wrabetz, wife of the Ambassador of Austria, and Michael Heinz, Director of the Cultural Forum of the Austrian Embassy. Along with the beautiful music, a highlight of the evening was the ceremonial merging of the Danube into Ganga performed by Ambassador Wrabetz and Pujya Swamiji.
See More Photos! Click:
HTTP://TINYURL.COM/GANGA-DANUBE-2015
Pujya Swamiji visited Rudraprayag recently to inaugurate a beautiful Chatra Vas (Hostel) and Meditation Centre at the Sanskrit Mahavidyala Rudraprayag at Sangam Ghat. These buildings were devastated in the floods of 2013 and new construction by the Swaminarayan Gurukul Parivar, with the blessings of HH Pujya Swami Madhavpriyadasji, in collaboration with the Divine Shakti Foundation-Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh, took place to restore the building.

The opening programme was joined by the Hon’ble Education Minister of Uttarakhand, Shri Mantri Prasad Naithaniji, head Acharyas of the school as well as all the students and their families.

The school seeks to bridge the gap between culture and computer, in essence preserving the Indian culture while also maintaining our strength technology. Pujya Swamiji also shared His vision of a sacred Ved Dham in this location, creation a Centre of Excellence and a world-class Priest Training Centre in this historic heritage site, which would attract people from across India and the world to stay rooted in their sanskriti while also be given the tools and flexibility through innovative spirituality to navigate through changing times.

After the inaugural programme there was a divine Ganga Aarti ceremony on the Sangam, joined by Pujya Swami Durganandaji and members of more than 15 countries. Pujya Swamiji emphasized that time has come to develop Uttarakhand as an eco-tourism destination for the world by inviting and sustaining spiritual, cultural and wellness tourism.
See More Photos! Click: HTTP://TINYURL.COM/RUDRA-PRYAG-SCHOOL
Artists from Israel, Turkey and Australia and many other countries, led by Bharat Mitra, Founder-President of Organic India and eminent Israeli artist Gill Ron Shama and his interfaith band from Israel, shared their music with their global family.

They joined Pujya Swamiji on the yatra to Devprayag and Rudraprayag as well as for the first ever International Yoga Festival in Jageshwar.

They shared their music of love and harmony along with a special song for world peace, called One Source Waking Up in the spirit of Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam, bringing together the world's faiths with the sacred chanting of Om Shalom Salam Amen, signifying a yogic union of countries, cultures, colors and creeds. This special song was recorded in each location and will be part of a unique music video. The song will ultimately be chanted by one billion people from all over the world, singing together.....

The artists were so deeply touched by the beauty, spiritual-cultural heritage of the Himalayan state that they have planned to return back for the 17th Annual International Yoga Festival and Kumbha Mela in Spring 2016.
A Divine Month of Yoga, Music & Magic
Om Shalom Salam Amen: the Music of Harmony on the banks of Mother Ganga
Special Announcements
By God’s Grace
The Life & Teachings of Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati

In this compelling biography, Pujya Swamiji’s divine life is beautifully detailed chronologically. Upon its release, this book held the NUMBER ONE position as the best-seller in Amazon.com’s Hinduism section, out of a total of over 17,000 books!

Illustrated with exquisite photos of Ganga, the Himalayas, and all of the saints and world leaders with who Pujya Swamiji has spent the first 60 years of His life, it tells the inspiring, uplifting and transformative stories of Pujya Swamiji’s whole life – from meeting His Guru at the tender age of eight, to His youth filled with intense sadhana in the Himalayan forests and jungles, including standing on one leg for 11 hours a day. By God’s Grace then goes on to beautifully describe Pujya Swamiji’s arrival into Rishikesh and choice of stay there, followed by the history of His life at Parmarth Niketan, first as a young student and then as head of one of India’s largest spiritual institutions. You will read about His travels around the world, touching and teaching people of all religions, all cultures and all walks of life.

Pujya Swamiji’s very life is His message; the book also includes special “teaching” sections. Each special teaching spread takes one of Pujya Swamiji’s most fundamental teachings and shares it, in His own words, through His own voice, on gorgeously illustrated pages.

Published by Mandala Earth Publications of California, USA, this book is perfect for personal reading and for gracing the top of your coffee table, and it is also the perfect gift for any friend or loved one who, whether they know Pujya Swamiji personally or not, is looking for a glimpse into the life of one of history’s truest, wisest, deepest, funniest and most down-to-earth spiritual leaders. Laugh, cry, look at yourself and your life in a brand new way.

For more information including ordering information for this beautiful book, please click: www.bygodsgracebook.org.
Volunteer With Us
Join hands in a global interfaith mission of peace

We are always looking for caring, hard-working volunteers to join us here at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh.

As our projects grow, so has our need for professional, inspiring, and productive individuals who wish to dedicate their time, talent, technology and tenacity for our mission to achieve a greener, cleaner, and safer tomorrow for all humanity.

If you would like to get involved and volunteer in any one of our projects, please download our Volunteer Application Packet and send us your application.

Click here to download the application.
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