



PRESS RELEASE



June 13-21, 2016

**Italy celebrates
International Day of Yoga 2016
(IDY 2016)**

"Yoga is an invaluable gift of ancient Indian tradition. It embodied unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfilment; harmony between man and nature and a holistic approach to health and well-being. Yoga is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with ourselves, the world and Nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help us to deal with climate change. "

With these words, Honourable Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, spoke in September 2014 at the 69th session of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), elaborating on the holistic aspects of Yoga and urging the global community to adopt an International Day of Yoga, devoted to this ancient and highly beneficial practice. International Day of Yoga (IDY) was celebrated for the first time on 21st June, 2015 that coincides with the day of Summer Solstice. Millions of people in India and across the globe participated in the 1st IDY celebrations. Two Guinness World Records were created – for biggest yoga lesson involving 35,985 participants and maximum number of Nationalities (84) participating in a single yoga lesson. A 2-day International Conference on "Yoga for Holistic Health" was organized on June 21-22, 2015 in Delhi, with almost 1300 delegates from numerous countries participating. Italy was represented by a delegate of Federazione Italiana Yoga, who spoke about the celebrations organized around the 1st IDY in Italy.

Outside India, IDY was celebrated in all the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) member countries except the war torn-Yemen. Italy also joined the celebrations with an overwhelming response. The Embassy of India collaborated with many prominent Yoga associations in Italy to organize a series of events. During the days preceding the IDY, Italian Federation of Yoga organized yoga sessions in primary public schools in various parts of the country. Hundreds of participants took

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part in the pre-events organized by the Embassy in Rome. On the 1st IDY i.e. June 21st, 2015, teachers and volunteers from all partner yoga associations simultaneously performed Asanas mentioned in the Protocol at 12:00 hrs, making a record of sorts.

For the 2nd International Day of Yoga, Embassy will again open its doors to yoga enthusiasts from Italy. Every day, from the 13th to the 20th June, different forms of Yoga and Meditation techniques will be taught for the benefit of all. Renowned Yoga teachers and Meditation practitioners from our partner Yoga and Meditation associations in Italy will be available for demonstrations, training and advice. Separately, seminars on Ayurveda and Yoga will also be organized, where reputed Ayurveda exponents in Italy, like Dr Nancy Mylador, will lecture.

The week long celebrations will culminate in Rome with two important events on June 21st, 2016. In the morning of the 2nd IDY, Italian Hindu Union will organize a Yoga practice session cum conference at the prestigious venue - *CONI's Scuola dello Sport*. In the evening, Indian colours, taste and atmosphere will welcome the participants for an evening of Yoga practice and Music at the *Hanging Gardens of Auditorium Parco della Musica* from 17:30 to 20:00.

Thanks to the collaboration of India-Europe Foundation for New Dialogues (FIND), concert of renowned flute Maestro Pundit Hariprasad Chaurasia will be organized in the Cavea of the Auditorium Parco della Musica on the evening of the IDY. Ustad Kamal Sabri (sarangi) will also grace the evening.

The tryst with yoga will not end on the 2nd IDY: India-Europe Foundation for New Dialogues (FIND) plans to organize a Yoga practice at Filarmonica Romana on June 28th, 2016 on the sidelines of another major event of the prestigious 'Summer Mela', the concert Ganges Riverbanks Trio with Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt. The Embassy will host seminars and yoga classes for all in its auditorium for the whole of 2016.

Yoga events will also be organized in various other cities of Italy. All our partner associations and their events will be listed in Embassy's website www.indianembassyrome.in and Facebook page.

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The Embassy of India would also like to acknowledge the contribution of following organizations whose support is key to all the events being planned for the second IDY in Italy: **Ananda Europa** (www.ananda.it), **Brahma Kumaris** (www.brahmakumaris.org), **Centro Yoga Swami Vishnu** (<http://www.cyswamivishnu.com>), **International Art of Living Foundation** (www.artofliving.org), **Federazione Italiana Yoga** (www.yogaitalia.com), **LOYI for Iyengar Yoga** (www.iyengaryoga.it), **Unione Induista Italiana** (<http://www.hinduism.it>), **Self-Realization Fellowship - Centro di Meditazione di Roma** (www.yogananda-roma.org) and **Tor Vergata University** in Rome. A special word of thanks to **Satyananda Ashram** (www.satyanandaitalia.net) that will organize the 2nd IDY event in San Marino.

Finally, the Embassy hopes that the week-long celebrations centered around the 2nd International Day of Yoga, will create ample interest and better awareness about Yoga and Meditation in Italy.

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