High Commission of India

Colombo

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PRESS RELEASE

**President joins Yoga Day celebrations**

H.E. President Maithripala Sirisena joined thousands of yoga enthusiasts at Independence Square in Colombo on June 17 to celebrate the International Day of Yoga 2017. He performed a number of yoga asanas and encouraged yoga institutions in Sri Lanka to continue their good work. The event was attended by a number of Sri Lankan Ministers and officials, apart from public at large, including professionals, doctors, academicians and cultural personalities, cutting across all religions and ethnicities.  Messages from Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj were telecast.

Speaking on the occasion, High Commissioner Taranjit Singh Sandhu highlighted the efforts led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the United Nations declaring June 21 as the International Day of Yoga, and the world now recognizes yoga, as a human treasure - a  key to good health. High Commissioner underlined the interest of H.E. President Maithripala Sirisena in health issues and admired his support to promote yoga, as a powerful tool for both, preventive and curative healthcare.

          The event was organized by the Indian Cultural Centre in collaboration with eminent yoga institutions of Sri Lanka such as Astanka Yoga Mandir, Institute of Human Excellence, Sethsada Yoga Institute, Dhamma Yoga Academy, Hatha Yoga Centre, Art of Living, Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga Centre, Aum Kriyababaji Yoga Aranyam, My Yoga Lounge, Sudasuna Yoga Yathanya, Shakthi Ananda Yoga School and Saddharshi Yoga.

This event followed weeks of yoga activities across Sri Lanka, including the first ever Yoga Road Show, a unique event that saw dozens of yoga instructors travel by bus to various locations across Sri Lanka including Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Kataragama, Galle, Jaffna and Colombo to promote, popularize and teach yoga. The journey connected thousands of minds, spreading the message of yoga for well-being.

Yoga, an invaluable gift of ancient Indian tradition that embodies unity of mind, body and soul. Yoga, like Ayurveda, forms a part of shared heritage of India & Sri Lanka. In recognition of its global appeal, the United Nations General Assembly had adopted a resolution piloted by India declaring June 21 each year as the “International Day of Yoga”. The resolution was supported by more than 170 countries, with Sri Lanka being one of the first co-sponsors.

Colombo

June 17, 2017