

**'BORNEO BULLETIN' 22 June 2015.**

## Indian High Commission hosts Yoga Day

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| Fizah HAB |

IN CONJUNCTION with the first International Yoga Day, the High Commission of India in Brunei Darussalam yesterday hosted an event at the 'Indian House' in Bandar Seri Begawan.

The International Day of Yoga was declared by the United Nations with 177 countries co-sponsoring the resolution put forward by India at the 69th General Assembly of the United Nations last October.

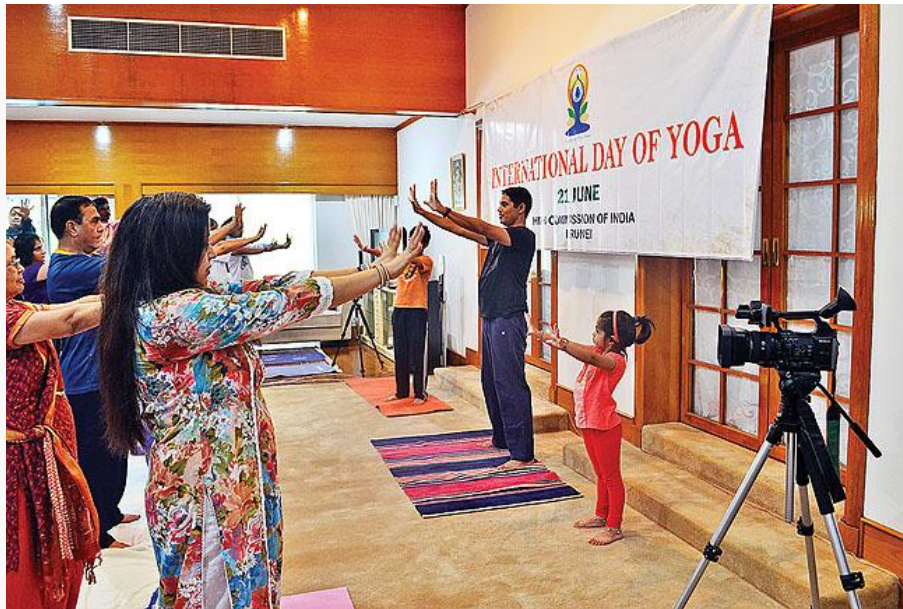
This was followed by an initiative by the prime minister calling for international recognition for yoga as a physical, mental and spiritual practice, which can change lifestyles, create consciousness, and help deal with climate change.

The International Day of Yoga was celebrated all over the world on June 21 and the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, launched the commemoration in India.

"Yoga is an invaluable gift from our ancient tradition. Yoga embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action ... a holistic approach (that) is valuable to our health and our well-being. Yoga is not just about exercise, it is a way to discover the sense of oneness with yourself, the world and the nature," Narendra Modi said in his speech.



A section of the participants of the event



The guest lecturer leading the yoga



Organising members of the event. – PHOTOS: FIZAH HAB

The event continued with a short briefing from the guest lecturer, followed with a session of yoga joined by the guests at the event.

Yoga is an ancient physical, mental and spiritual practice that originated in India. The word 'yoga' derives from Sanskrit which means to join or to unite, symbolising the union of body and consciousness. It is practiced in various forms around the world today and continues to grow in popularity.

Another separate event also took place at the Indian Belait Hall, Kuala Belait hosted by the Indian Association Belait (IAB), under the patronage of the High Commission of India in Brunei Darussalam.



**'THE BRUNEI TIMES', 22 June 2015**

## **India High Comm marks Int'l Yoga Day**







NORLIHA DIN  
BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN

Monday, June 22, 2015

AROUND 120 members of the Indian community took part in an event to mark the first International Day of Yoga at the Indian High Commissioner's residence in Kota Batu yesterday.

Wearing comfortable sports attire and armed with colourful yoga mats, they were greeted upon arrival by Acting High Commissioner P Harigovindan.

Prior to the activity, he presented a short video to introduce a background of the event followed by a video message delivered by the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi.

In the prime minister's statement, he explained that yoga is a 5,000-year-old practice rooted in Hindu tradition that applies a holistic approach to health and well being. It embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action, restraint and fulfillment, and harmony between man and nature.

As the video presentation ended, guests rolled down their mats neatly at the hall of the residence and adjusted their space before performing the yoga session led by the Kuala Belait-based Yoga Instructor, Bramhanand Tichkule.

Prior to the session, Bramhanand gave a brief presentation on the basic information of yoga and its benefits.



He also demonstrated the common protocol of yoga beginning with stretching, sun salutation pose, meditation with different stages of breathing techniques before concluding it with the Laughter Yoga technique.

Before the event ended for the day, the acting high commissioner presented the yoga instructor with a token of appreciation. Meanwhile, guests got to go home with a free book related to yoga fitness, which were arranged on a table near the door.

Held for the first time in the Sultanate, the celebration originated from a proposal that was passed in the High Level Segment for the 69th United Nations General Assembly last year to declare June 21 as the auspicious date for yoga.

A similar fete was held at Kuala Belait by the Indian Association of Belait (IAB) at its premise officiated by the President of the society, Devarajan N, which gathered around 80 participants including members from the Chinese community and some expatriates from Australia.

**BORNEO BULLETIN, Brunei, 22 June 2015.**

## **Millions across India, world bend and twist in 1st Yoga Day**

Posted date: June 22, 2015In: Features

| Nirmala George |

NEW DELHI (AP) — Millions of yoga enthusiasts bent and twisted their bodies in complex postures across India and much of the world on Sunday to mark the first International Yoga Day.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who had lobbied the UN to declare June 21 as the global Yoga Day, spread his mat among rows of people, including his Cabinet members and foreign diplomats, at New Delhi's main thoroughfare that has been transformed into one sprawling exercise ground.

Thousands of people dressed in white sat on yellow mats under the Eiffel Tower, and similar events were held in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Seoul, Beijing, Manila and other places.

"We are not only celebrating a day, but we are training the human mind to begin a new era of peace and harmony," Modi told participants. "This is a programme for the benefit of mankind, for a tension-free world and to spread the message of harmony."

Tens of thousands of schoolchildren, bureaucrats, homemakers, soldiers and ordinary folk took part in the exercise, which was repeated in all Indian state capitals. In Modi's home state of Gujarat, public yoga events were organised at nearly 30,000 places, state officials said.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, centre, sits on a mat as he performs yoga along with thousands of Indians on Rajpath, in New Delhi, India, Sunday, June 21



**Bollywood actress and national ambassador of yoga Shilpa Shetty performs yoga at an event to celebrate International Yoga Day in Bangalore, India, Sunday, June 21**



**Thousands of people participate in a yoga exercise at Chulalongkorn University field, marking the International Day of Yoga in Bangkok, Thailand, Sunday, June 21**



**Chinese perform yoga under the instructions of Indian yoga teachers at a hotel banquet hall to mark the International Yoga Day, in Changping District, on the outskirts of Beijing, China, June 21**





Taiwanese perform yoga poses at the start of International Yoga Day in Taipei, Taiwan, June 21



Participants perform yoga at an event to celebrate the International Yoga Day under the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France, Sunday, June 21



Participants stretch their arms during yoga poses as they join the International Yoga Day inside a mall in suburban Taguig, south of Manila, Philippines on Sunday, June 21



Hundreds of people perform yoga to mark the International Day of Yoga in downtown Seoul, South Korea, Sunday, June 21 – PHOTOS: AP

In Taipei, more than 2,000 participants rolled out mats and performed 108 rounds of the “sun salutation” — the sequence of yoga poses often practiced at the beginning of a routine as the sun rises.

“They give themselves a piece of time to observe their mind and their heart, which I think in the modern society we need a lot,” said practitioner Angela Hsi.

Fazel Shah, an Indian pilot working for a Middle Eastern airline, rushed from the airport on his stopover in Taiwan to join the event.

“Isn’t it awesome? I mean, just look at the number of people who are here, embracing it,” he said.



He said yoga was probably born in India but belongs anywhere. "If you go up from where I am and look from the sky down, you don't see borders, you don't see religions, you don't see nationalities, you just see one group of people. So, I just go down and meet up with them, that's all".

Many believe that yoga, the ancient form of exercise, is the best way to calm the mind and the best form of exercise for the body.

Indian officials said more than 35,000 people participated in the New Delhi event that was also an attempt to set a Guinness World Record for the largest single yoga class at a single venue. Guinness representatives said they hired more than 1,500 members of a global accounting firm to count the number of participants at the Delhi venue.

India's Defence Ministry said that soldiers on the Siachen Glacier, the world's highest battleground in the Himalayas, and naval cadets on navy ships at sea also would be participating in the Yoga Day events.

Although Modi's message was one of peace and harmony, many in India were concerned that the push for yoga was an attempt by Hindu groups to give a boost to Hinduism.

In the run-up to Yoga Day, many Muslims objected to the government's exhortations to join in the public exercise programmes. Some Muslim leaders said yoga was a Hindu practice.

The government quickly dropped a plan for the "sun salutation" exercise, which many Muslims found objectionable because it implied the sun was a deity. Also dropped was the Hindu "om" chant.

Some Christian groups were upset that the mass yoga sessions were being held at a time when they usually attend Sunday Mass.

Others were skeptical about the time and money spent by the government on Yoga Day.

"The government organises these hyped-up events," said Sumita Rani, a primary school teacher in South Delhi. "Last year was the Clean India Campaign. What came of it? This city is as filthy as ever."