

## インド大使スピーチ原稿

I am very happy to be in the midst of all of you today as we celebrate 40 years of the establishment of the Yamamoto Yoga Institute. As you are all aware, the Institute, in collaboration with our Consulate in Osaka-Kobe, played foremost role to mark the International Day of Yoga (IDY) on 21 June, 2015, as mandated by the United Nations in December 2014, affirming the call made by the Prime Minister of India, H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi, in his address to the UNGA on 27 September 2014. The event was celebrated in over 190 countries around the globe, including many cities in Japan.

2. I appreciate with much awe the resilience that Ms. Yamamoto showed to overcome her personal hardship and find Yoga as a way of life. With firm resolve, not only did she find her calling in Yoga but also helped propagate Yoga in a big way in Japan. It gives me immense pleasure to learn that today Yamamoto Yoga Institute has 40 studios all over Japan and have imparted instructor-level training to nearly 800 instructors till date. We look forward to continued cooperation with the Institute in celebrating the International Day of Yoga and other related events, in the years to come

3. An estimated 300 million people practice yoga globally. It is very satisfying to see Yoga being widely practiced in Japan as well. Yoga is not a belief system or religion but it is a technique. It is understood and practiced by many in different ways. For some, it is the physical benefits from stretching exercises, which attract them. For some, it is the meditative aspect, which attracts them. However, the significance of Yoga is much deeper.

4. As our Prime Minister articulated at UN General Assembly on September 27, 2014, “*Yoga embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; 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.*”

5. While declaring June 21 as the International Day of Yoga, the UN recognized that, “*Yoga provides a holistic approach to health and well-being*”, and called for “*wider dissemination of information about the benefits of practicing Yoga for the health of the world population*”.

6. In recent years, medical research, corroborating experiences of yoga practitioners has validated many physical and mental benefits including physical fitness, cardio-vascular health, antidote for stress, lifestyle related disorders and anxiety disorders.

7. My special thanks to Mr. Ryuko Hira, Hony President, ICIJ who always makes special efforts to promote India.

8. In Tokyo, the Vivekananda Cultural Centre (VCC) at the Indian Embassy offers yoga classes, which are attended by more than 260 students every week. For those having Tokyo connection, I encourage all of you to learn yoga at VCC and other yoga organizations for your good health and happy life.

9. Thank you for your kind attention and wishing you all good health, peace, prosperity and happiness, I hope you will enjoy the yoga session and events that follow.

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