**Embassy of India**

**Manila**

**Celebration of 8th International Day of Yoga in the Philippines**

 The 8th International Day of Yoga (IDY) was celebrated in Manila on 21 June 2022 with a specially curated event in partnership between the Embassy and local Philippine institutions, yoga teachers & schools as well as the Indian Community organisations.

 The celebration was organised at the Music Hall of SM Mall of Asia in Pasay, Manila. The highlight of the event was the practice of the comprehensive Common Yoga Protocol by over 200 participants led by leading yoga experts and teachers in the Philippines.

 Ms. Janice Cuevas a certified Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga teacher opened the yoga practice with Suryanamaskar (sun salutation). Mr. Chandru Mahtani a yoga teacher with an experience of over 35 years, led the participants through a sequence of Yogasanas. Ms. Clara Day Herrera, a yoga and wellness expert based in Manila helped participants explore yoga as a tool for relaxation and vitality through Pranayama practice. To close the yoga session, Ms. Jennifer Aguas Non shared her meditation practice inspired by her experience of self-transformation through yoga and meditation.

 Recognising their contribution towards creating awareness about yoga and making yoga practice more accessible in the Philippines, Ambassador of India to the Philippines, H.E. Shambhu S. Kumaran felicitated local yoga teachers and yoga schools present at the event.

 The book “How to Never Diet Forever” written by Ms. Clara Day Herrera, Philippines’ Yoga, Ayurveda and Wellness Expert was also launched by Ambassador Kumaran during the event. The book provides the readers a step-by-step system on achieving holistic health, longevity, beauty, and a life of fulfillment and service to others. The book draws on Ms. Herrera’s education in nutrition and wellness including her extensive training in the ancient Indian system of Yoga, and Ayurveda in Mysore, India.

 In run-up to the IDY, several pre-events were also organised in Manila. These included yoga workshops at the Miriam College, Quezon City and the Asian Centre of the University of the Philippines, Diliman. The workshops consisted of yoga webinars and practical classes for university students, faculty and staff.

 India’s unique and civilisational pathway to well-being, Yoga is practised in various forms around the world. In the Philippines, yoga continues to grow in popularity with increasing number of instructors and passionate practitioners going beyond the physical aspects of yoga, and engaging with it as a potent tool of self-refinement. Over the last few years, several Filipino yoga enthusiasts and teachers have traveled to India; some to receive the required authorization as a teacher, others in search for greater depth and authenticity.

 Recognizing its universal appeal and its efficacy as a tool for experiencing well-being across age groups, nationalities and social backgrounds, the United Nations proclaimed 21 June as International Day of Yoga in December 2014.

 This year International Day of Yoga is being celebrated with the theme "Yoga for Humanity”. While unveiling the theme last month, Hon. Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi said, “the theme appropriately portrays, how during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, yoga served the humanity in alleviating the suffering and in the emerging post-COVID scenario too, it will bring people together through compassion, kindness, foster a sense of unity and build resilience among people world over.”

 This year the International Day of Yoga is being celebrated as India commemorates 75 years of Independence. As a tribute to the occasion, Common Yoga Protocol (CYP) demonstrations were held simultaneously at 75 national-level iconic sites in India on 21 June.

 Another innovative feature of the 8th edition of International Day of Yoga was the programme named ‘Guardian Ring’. The *Guardian Ring* — a relay Yoga streaming event underlines the idea of “One Sun, One Earth”. The programme showcased participation of people from across the world synchronised with the movement of the sun, beginning from the east and marching towards west. Celebrations in the Philippines are also a part of the Guardian Ring.

 With the annual celebration of IDY, the Embassy aims to facilitate a definitive change in the way we perceive and approach health and well-being by making the holistic well-being practice of yoga accessible to a large cross-section of people in the Philippines.

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