

Kaivalyadhama Hosts National Conclave on Yoga, Celebrating Interfaith Harmony and Spiritual Unity

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The National Conclave: Yoga – An Instrument of Cultural Symphony, Spiritual Dimension successfully concluded recently at Kaivalyadhama, Lonavala. Over the course of two days, the event brought together spiritual leaders from diverse faiths, including Jainism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, and Parsi traditions, to discuss the unifying and spiritual aspects of yoga.

(L to R) His Eminence Chokyong Palga Rinpoche, Acharya Lokesh Muni ji, Swami Vishweshwarananda ji Giri, Shree OP Tiwari Ji, Shri Suresh Prabhu, Maa Hansa ji Yogendra, Shree Satyapal Singh, Shree Subodh Tiwari at The National Conclave: Yoga – An Instrument of Cultural Symphony, Spiritual Dimension

Paramacharya, Paramahansa Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati,

Padma Bhushan awardee and head of the Bihar School of Yoga, delivered the valedictory address. He said, *"Yoga is not a philosophy, it is knowledge, and yoga should be seen as a lifestyle and not as practice or exercise. Culture is the constructive and positive expression of the human nature and there is a need of qualitative change in life, and our life has to be regulated by connecting with creative, constructive, uplifting and positive behaviour. Self-observation and self-correction are two important facets of Yoga and are the basic starting points for yoga practitioners in Dhyana, where comprehension and contemplation i.e. intellect and mind both are addressed."*

The conclave was organised on 18th & 19th October 2024 by prominent spiritual leaders including Swami Vishweshwarananda Ji Giri, President of Suratgiri Bangla, Haridwar, and His Holiness Acharya Lokesh Muni Ji, founder of Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti. Other dignitaries included His Eminence Chokyong Palga Rinpoche, Tibetan Buddhist Lama, Maa Hansa Ji Yogendra, President of The Yoga Institute, and Shri Suresh Prabhu, Chairman of the Centenary Committee & former Union Minister. The event opened with discussions on how yoga serves as a powerful tool for fostering cultural unity and spiritual growth.

Dr. O.P. Tiwari, Chairman of Kaivalyadhama, in his keynote address, highlighted the unifying force of yoga. He stated, *"Yoga is a binding force for cultural harmony, cutting across communities, regions, traditions, and religions. We are grateful to all the enlightened spiritual masters who presented their views and insights views at this conclave. The sessions were enriching for all the participants who learnt from the spiritual masters on how Yoga can facilitate achieving higher purpose in life."*

The event included panel discussions and experiential sessions, allowing participants to delve deeper into the spiritual and cultural dimensions of yoga. Esteemed speakers

such as Swami Parmatmananda Saraswati Ji, founder of Arsha Vidya Gurukul, Swami Anubhavananda Ji, founder of Sat Bhavana Trust, Swami Atmapriyananda Ji, Pro-Chancellor of Swami Vivekananda Yoga University, and Dr. Satya Pal Singh, an eminent scholar and former MP, contributed to the dialogue on yoga's role in personal and collective transformation. Dr. Mickey Mehta, a global wellness guru, also shared his perspectives on the importance of yoga for holistic well-being.

One of the panel discussions moderated by Prof Sabir Shaikh, founder of Yog Sadhana Mandir, explored the alignment of yoga with different faiths. Fr. Blany Pinto, Rector Director at Don Bosco, Lonavala, emphasized the connections between yoga and biblical teachings, while Prof Sabir Shaikh drew parallels between yoga and Islamic principles. These discussions reinforced the idea of yoga as a universal principle that bridges different spiritual traditions.

Founded in 1924 by **Swami Kuvalayananda**, Kaivalyadhama remains one of the oldest and most pioneering yoga institutes in the world. It continues to uphold the traditional principles of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga while also conducting scientific research on the benefits of yoga, making it a globally respected institution.