

**Speech by Ambassador Nagma M. Mallick at the 12th International Day
of Yoga celebration at Tsukiji Hongwanji Temple, Tokyo
21 June 2026**

**Mr Hakubun Shimomura, Member of House of Representatives &
Chairman, Parliamentary League for the Promotion of Yoga;
Mr Hiroshi Yamada, Member of House of Councillors & Secretary
General, Parliamentary League for the Promotion of Yoga;
Rev Tomohiro Kimura, Deputy Director General, Tsukiji Hongwanji
Temple;
Hon'ble Ambassadors, Members of Diplomatic Corps;
Members of the various Yoga organisations and Yoga enthusiasts in
Japan;
Ladies and Gentlemen!**

It is a true joy to be back here at Tsukiji Hongwanji Temple - a place that has, since 2023, been our home for the International Day of Yoga in Tokyo. For the fourth consecutive year, we have gathered here, and each year this celebration grows a little larger and a little warmer.

Yoga is one of India's most enduring gifts to the world. With roots going back more than five thousand years, the word yoga comes from the Sanskrit yuj - meaning to unite - a union of body, breath and mind. Systematised by the sage Patanjali in his Yoga Sutras, Yoga has always been far more than physical exercise. It is a complete path toward inner harmony. Further, what makes it truly remarkable is its universality. It asks nothing of you in terms of nationality, faith, or background. That is why hundreds of millions of people across every continent practice yoga today and feel, in some quiet way, that it is their own.

In September 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed to the United Nations that the world come together each year to celebrate Yoga. The response was remarkable. On 11 December 2014, the UN declared 21 June the International Day of Yoga, with a record 177 nations co-sponsoring the resolution. Today, millions of people in virtually every country celebrate this day.

Check Against Delivery

This year's theme, "Yoga for Healthy Ageing", could not be more fitting for Japan. As a nation that understands the art of living long and well, Japan knows that true health is not merely the absence of illness - it is vitality, balance and purpose at every stage of life. Yoga offers exactly that. Its practice builds strength and flexibility, sharpens the mind, steadies the breath and nurtures a sense of inner calm. It is a companion for life, growing more valuable with every passing year.

The spirit of this day did not arrive only this morning. In the months preceding IDY 2026, the Embassy with various Yoga Partners took Yoga across Japan - to Yamanashi, Saitama, Kanagawa, Ishikawa, Shizuoka, Hokkaido and several other prefectures. In each of these places, people came together on the mat, many for the very first time, and experienced something that we hope will stay with them long. Our Vivekananda Cultural Centre also offers regular yoga classes throughout the year, making it a part of daily life in this city.

And the bond runs deeper still. At the first World Yogasana Championships held in India recently, both India and Japan emerged among the top 2 performing nations - a testament to the seriousness and excellence with which Japan has embraced this discipline.

As we practise together this morning, in this spirit of unity and openness, let us remember what Yoga truly teaches us: that stillness is strength, that breath is the bridge between body and mind, and that when we are in harmony within ourselves, we are better able to live in harmony with one another.

I thank the Tsukiji Hongwanji Temple, our yoga partners and each one of you for making this celebration possible. On behalf of the Embassy of India, I wish you a joyful and meaningful International Day of Yoga.

Thank You. Arigato gozaimasu
