PRESS RELEASE

GUATEMALA HOSTS WORLD'S LARGEST YOGA GATHERING OUTSIDE INDIA WITH 10,000 ENTHUSIASTS IN SAN PEDRO CARCHÁ

In a landmark moment for India-Guatemala relations and the global Yoga movement, the Embassy of India in Guatemala, on behalf of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR), in collaboration with the Municipality of San Pedro Carchá, the Association of Don Bosco Center, and with the strong support of the Governor of Alta Verapaz, hosted the largest International Day of Yoga celebration in the region, perhaps ever held outside India, on 13 June 2025 in San Pedro Carcha, Coban, Guatemala. This mega event drew an unprecedented gathering of over 10,000 yoga enthusiasts, making it a day of pride for Guatemala and a historic milestone in the global promotion of Yoga. To build momentum ahead of June 13, the Embassy had also organized two separate & well-received Yoga sessions in Izabal (550 participants) and the Municipality of Chalal (1,500 participants) on 11th June, 2025, demonstrating Yoga's growing reach in Guatemala's interior regions.

2. The celebration witnessed the full support and partnership of key local institutions, including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Defence, Municipality of San Pedro Crcha, Associations of Don Bosco Center, Talita Kumu and numerous Indian companies like, HCL Tech, TCS, Grupo Uma, Caplin Point, 24X7 a.i., Lukham Pharma, Krishper Healthcare S.A., Strikar Pharma, Grupo Karims, Lakshmi Capital, Pradilsha, Khushi Enterprizes, Grupo Uma and Sierra Textiles operating in Guatemala. Their involvement was instrumental in ensuring the success of the event, from mobilization to logistics and outreach. Notably, the youth were at the heart of the celebration, with over 10,000 students from educational institutions across the region forming the core of the audience—testament to Yoga's growing appeal among Guatemala's next generation.

3. This achievement was not a one-off event but the result of sustained efforts over the past four years by the Embassy of India to promote Yoga across Guatemala. Starting with 2,500 participants in 2022 at Mariscal Zavala, the numbers steadily grew to 3,500 in 2023 and reached 5,000 in 2024. With more than 10,000 participants this year in San Pedro Carcha, Guatemala has now entered the elite global league of countries championing Yoga with unmatched enthusiasm and commitment. These celebrations have helped bring Yoga to the remotest corners of the country, particularly through youth-focused outreach programs, free workshops, and community-based events.

4. The grand event began with a one-minute silence in memory of the 274 lives lost in the tragic airplane crash in Ahmedabad, India on 12 June

2025. The dignitaries present, including local Guatemalan leaders, expressed their heartfelt condolences and solidarity with the people of India. The solemn atmosphere was followed by a moving performance of the national anthems of Guatemala, India, and the Municipality of San Pedro Carchá, performed by the orchestra band of Music School of Carcha. The event was officially opened by Mr. Erwin Alfonso Catún Maquin, Mayor of San Pedro Carchá, who warmly welcomed the gathering. Remarks were delivered by Governor of Alta Verapaz, representatives of the Don Bosco Association and Ambassador of India to Guatemala Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, who emphasized the significance of Yoga as a universal tool for peace and wellbeing. The Ambassador also ceremoniously presented three busts of Mahatma Gandhi to Don Bosco institutions, symbolizing India's enduring message of peace and nonviolence. In recognition of outstanding contributions, commemorative plaques were presented to key sponsors, municipal leaders, and Indian companies who helped make the event a reality.

5. In his heartfelt address at the International Day of Yoga (IDY2025) celebration in San Pedro Carchá on June 13, 2025, Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra expressed profound gratitude to all stakeholders, including ICCR, for their pivotal role in making the event the largest yoga gathering outside India, with more than 10,000 participants. He extended special thanks to the Municipality of San Pedro Carchá, led by Mayor Lic. Erwin Alfonso Catún Maquín, for their unwavering commitment and logistical support, which ensured the event's monumental success. He also lauded the Association of Don Bosco for their enthusiastic partnership, noting their dedication to youth engagement, which saw a significant turnout of young participants. Ambassador Mohapatra commended the Ministry of Defence for their exceptional efforts in mobilizing such a massive crowd, ensuring safety and coordination, and acknowledged the invaluable contributions of local vendors who provided seamless transport, nutritious food, and essential logistics, including t-shirts for participants, fostering an inclusive and festive atmosphere.

6. Mayor Lic. Erwin Alfonso Catún Maquín expressed his gratitude to the Embassy and ICCR for the opportunity to be part of this historic occasion. He stated that the Municipality was honored to support such a meaningful initiative and pledged to continue promoting Yoga as a part of community life in the future. Sponsors and representatives from Indian companies expressed pride in supporting a movement that fosters wellness, inclusivity, and stronger India-Guatemala bonds. Their contributions—ranging from T-shirts, water bottles, yoga mats, and refreshments—played a key role in making the event accessible to all.

7. The yoga session, led by Embassy Yoga teacher Ms. Ruth Morales, followed the Common Yoga Protocol, embodying the theme "Yoga for One

Earth, One Health." Participants—from students and teachers to military personnel and civilians—enthusiastically joined in, turning the Juan Ramón Ponce Guay Stadium into a sea of synchronized movement and mindfulness. Ms. Morales guided the participants through a series of asanas, pranayama, and meditation, tailored to promote physical vitality, mental clarity, and ecological awareness, resonating with the theme's call for holistic well-being. The stadium, bathed in the morning light, became a sea of synchronized movement, with participants from all walks of life, particularly youth, embracing yoga's universal appeal.

8. Embassy is now schedule to host IDY 2025 events in San Salvador and Tegucigalpa on 21 June, in partnership with local governments and sponsors. These events are expected to further reinforce India's message of global well-being through Yoga. India has undoubtedly left a remarkable impression in Guatemala, not just through diplomacy, but through the soft power of Yoga—uniting people in health, peace, and purpose.

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San Padro Carcha, Guatemala City. 13 June 2025