

Permanent Mission of India
New York

PRESS RELEASE

First World Meditation Day in the United Nations

Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations in New York organized “Meditation for Global Peace and Harmony” to mark the First World Meditation Day at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 20 December 2024.

2. The landmark event was attended by H.E. Philemon Yang, President of the General Assembly, Under Secretary General Mr. Atul Khare and several other dignitaries. Keynote address on the occasion was delivered by Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, who also gave a special meditation session during the event to more than 600 enthusiastic participants.

3. Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, in his welcome address, underscored the importance of the ancient Indian practice of Dhyana as an instrument for personal fulfillment and inner peace, rooted in the civilizational dictum of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – the whole world is one family. He added that the United Nations General Assembly resolution on World Meditation Day acknowledged the link between yoga and meditation as complementary approaches to health and well being. President of General Assembly noted that meditation cultivates compassion and respect for people. Speaking on the occasion, Under Secretary General Mr. Khare outlined the inherent connect between mental health and meditation and the profound impact of meditation on United Nations Peacekeepers. Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar highlighted multiple benefits and dimensions associated with meditation in his keynote address.

4. It may be recalled that on 6 December 2024, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution, declaring 21st December as World Meditation Day. India was instrumental in the unanimous adoption of the said resolution. Adoption of the resolution at such a time highlights the importance of promoting calm, peace and overall human well being when the world is facing conflicts and suffering. It also marks a significant milestone in global recognition of meditation's transformative potential.

5. 21 December marks the Winter Solstice and in the Indian tradition, Uttarayana begins with the Winter Solstice and is considered as an auspicious time of the year, especially for meditation and inner reflection. It also falls exactly six months after the International Day of Yoga on 21 June, which is the Summer Solstice.

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