

Atlanta community celebrates 2nd International Yoga Day with enthusiasm

By Ravi R. Ponangi
Atlanta, GA: Thanks to sunny weather, hundreds of yoga enthusiasts and visitors from all over South-East thronged the Hammond Park, Sandy Springs, Georgia, on June 26 to celebrate the Second

D.V. Singh, Consul of India in Atlanta; Louise Blais, Consul General of Canada in Atlanta, Councilman Gabriel Sterling from the City of Sandy Springs, and Dwarkalaji Maharajshree of Gokul Dham lighted a tradi-

in India and 30 million in the United States. He urged the participants to join hands to spread the message of peace, harmony and understanding among communities. He expressed his gratitude to the city of Sandy Springs

the gathering to practice non-violence to change the world. Later she joined hundreds of others in the demonstration of yoga postures. While conveying greetings on behalf of the Mayor of City of Sandy Springs, Councilman

Indian classical dances by students of Nritya Natya Kala Bharati, together with *Asanas* (yoga postures), *Surya Namaskar* and music. Tech Mahindra, Oasis (AT&T), IACA, Softpath, YesM Systems, Global Mall,



Left: Participants performing Surya Namaskar; Center: Louise Blais, Consul General of Canada in Atlanta, lighting a lamp. Others seen in the photo are D.V. Singh, Gabriel Sterling and Dwarkalaji Maharajshree; Right: Students of Nritya Natya Kala Bharati presenting a dance number.

International Yoga Day with enthusiasm. Working together with various yoga and community organizations in Georgia, the Consulate General of India in Atlanta organized the celebration of the day in Atlanta as well as in other seven territories in the jurisdiction of the Consulate. Members of the Indian community, members of other communities, diplomatic corps as well as students joined the event.

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Gabriel Sterling spoke about facilities available in Sandy Springs and welcomed the community members to make use of them. He conveyed his best wishes and assured them of all support from the City of Sandy Springs for future events. Dwarkalaji Maharajshree of Gokul Dham explained the salient features of yoga citing several verses from scriptures. The programs included

Simsam I.L.C., Gandhi Foundation and IAF sponsored the celebration in Atlanta. Sewa International, HISS, Bijal Doshi, Isha Foundation, Art of Living, Atlanta Vedic Temple, Gayatri Parivar and several individuals put up their booths. More than 100 volunteers put enormous efforts to make this program a grand success. Abhay Joshi of Art of Living and Raeha Kim emceed the celebration.

Gandhi Foundation celebrates 240th Independence Day of USA

By Ravi R. Ponangi
Atlanta, GA: The Gandhi Foundation of USA (GFUSA) celebrated the 240th Independence Day of United States of America with patriotic fervor in front of the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, here on July 4. Chief guest Swami Adhyatmanandaji, president of the Sivananda Ashram, Ahmedabad, kicked off the celebration by rendering Bapuji's favorite song *Vishwanav Janato*. Then dignitaries present, D.V. Sing from the Consulate General of India in Atlanta, Greg Pridgeon, former public official of City of Atlanta, Swami Adhyatmanandaji and Swami Yatidharmanandaji from India paid rich tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at his statue, and forefathers of America, who have given

their lives for the freedom of the country. Addressing an impressive gathering at the Mahatma Gandhi statue, Swami Adhyatmanandaji said: "As we now you are enjoying the fruits of that effort; you have fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, fairs, picnics, concerts, baseball games, family reunions, and colorful cloths, These great leaders stood for nonviolence, purity, character, and unity. While we rejoice the fruits of freedom, we should not forget the sacri-

participated in a peace walk from the Mahatma Gandhi statue to King Crypts and paid homage there. Earlier, Antony Thaliath, executive director of GFUSA, welcomed the gathering. Subash Razdan proposed a vote of thanks. The event ended with rendering of both American and Indian National Anthems.

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Above: Dignitaries and organizers of July 4 celebrations at Gandhi statue; Right: Swami Adhyatmananda and Swami Yatidharmananda garlanding the Mahatma Gandhi statue. Also seen are Consul D.V. Singh and Greg Pridgeon.

