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150TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OUTSIDE BHARAT



SWAMI Vivekananda's 150th birth anniversary celebration received tremendous response in abroad also. More than 700 functions were held in 26 countries. Common themes suggested on the basis of guidelines from Bharat as adapted to local environment and needs were:

- p Programmes especially meant for youth to enhance their understanding of Hinduism
- p Programmes to reach out to the host/non-Hindu community with the message of spirituality in life
- p Reach out to various Hindu/Indian organisations and appeal for joint programmes
- p Programmes and use of various media to disseminate Swamiji's message of *sewa*
- p Identify one day as Sankalp Divas when participants take individual *sankalp*.

Following is a brief detail of the programmes held so far:

**USA:** In the US, a total of 110 programmes were organised in which 265 local organisations and 7600 people participated. Similarly, 3306 students participated in a three-level quiz contest 'Dharma Bee – Sri Krishna Vivekananda'. Grand prize distribution ceremony was organised at Chicago in the presence of Congresswoman Tulasi Gabbard. A total of 29 Dharma and Yoga Festivals (DYF) were held which were joined by 400 organisations and 45000 participants including over 4000 Dharma followers.

VHP America organised World without Borders on September 29. It was inaugurated by Baba Ramdev at Art Institute Chicago, the place of Swamiji's 11 September, 1893 speech. Apart from it 12 laser shows by were also organised by Sewa International USA for awareness about Swamiji and fundraising. 150 Sanskrit related activities were also conducted by Sanskrit Bharati.

**UK:** Ten major cities of UK viz London, Manchester, Edinburgh organised programmes on January 12, 2013. Swamis from Ramakrishna Mission, Bharat Sewashram and Members of Parliament participated in the programmes. 6 SV/Hinduism exhibitions organised 97 exhibitions on Hinduism and Vivekananda all over UK attracting more than 25000 people. The birth anniversary was also celebrated at Palace of Westminster (British Parliament) on January 24, 2013 on behalf of Metropolitan Police Hindu Association (MPHA).

**Kenya:** About 40 Hindu organisations took part in the 12 January programme attended by 800 at



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Nairobi-Kenya where Shri KS Mathew, Head Chancery of Indian High Commission was Chief Guest. Yogathon were organised at 5 cities of Kenya on February 17. In Nairobi Yogathon, 1150 participants performed 18000 Suryanamaskars.

**Gulf Countries:** About 75 programmes were held in many emirates of the UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman etc. Consulate officials, businessman, dignitaries from Kerala graced the programmes.

**Sri Lanka:** (Celebrations held in 2012-13); 140 conferences were held countrywide in which nearly 100,000 of Hindus participated. Mammoth gathering of 1, 00,000 Hindus was witnessed at Colombo on February 10, 2012. Ministers, MP's, Prominent Swamis from Ramkrishna Mission and Chinmay Mission, Buddha Bhikkhus and Adhikaris from Bharat graced the occasion on February 10. Sri Lanka Government issued a commemorative postal stamp on Swami Vivekananda.


**Other Countries:** In Canada, 200 children participated in Dharma Bee. Hindu Institute of Learning organised a programme on December 13 with 15 other organisations where Consul General was key speaker. Two exhibitions on Swamiji were held at Peder Lykke Skolen and Hørsholm in Denmark. Exhibitions and talks were held in Uganda and Tanzania.

In Singapore, Vivekananda Jayanti programme was held on 12 January in association with local Ramkrishna Mission in which 400 people participated. Vivekananda Yoga Olympiad was organised at Seoul – South Korea on October 20 on behalf of Vedanta Society – Korea. Blood donation camp was organised on 15th December at Bangkok Thailand. A 3-day youth camp was held in Malaysia in which 89 youth participated. In Sydney, Swami Atmeshanandaji of Vedanta Society spoke on 'Swami Vivekananda's contribution to the Modern Society & his relevance with a Youth Perspective'.

### The celebration outside Bharat

- No of Countries** 26
- No of Participants** 250,000
- No of Public Programs** 700
- No of Dharma followers** 20,000 (non Hindus)

### Participated

  
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