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### **Maha Annadhanam at Isha: An offering of food for lakhs of Mahashivaratri visitors**

**19 February 2020, Coimbatore:** As lakhs of visitors participate in the heady extravaganza of Mahashivaratri in the presence of Adiyogi at Isha Yoga Center, a few hundred volunteers toil for hours to ensure that no visitor goes without food during the nightlong celebrations. Maha Annadanam is the sacred offering of food for all who participate in person in the Mahashivaratri celebrations. And volunteers from around the world participate to make this sacred offering.

People converge at the Adiyogi at 6 p.m. on Mahashivaratri and will stay through the night till the program culminates at 6 a.m. the following morning. They come from all over India and all over the world.

In the Indian tradition, sharing of food has always been considered a sacred duty. No festival or ceremony is complete without offering food to all those who partake in the ceremonies. In keeping with this tradition, the Maha Annadanam is offered every year to visitors during Mahashivaratri. Apart from nourishment for the body, an offering of food prepared in consecrated spaces is said to have a significant impact on one's life energies.

From cleaning, cutting, pounding and grinding to cooking, transport and distribution, hundreds of volunteers from around the world immerse themselves in offering the Maha Annadanam for visitors. Foregoing the opportunity to attend the celebrations, these backstage heroes toil away in the steaming backrooms to ensure that everyone who visits Isha on this day is well fed and energized to participate in Mahashivaratri celebrations.

## **Mahashivaratri**

Mahashivaratri is significant because of the immense spiritual benefits it offers due to natural planetary positions. On this night, the northern hemisphere of the planet is positioned such that there is a natural upsurge of energy in the human system, pushing one towards their spiritual peak. It is therefore considered important to stay awake with the spine erect to benefit from this natural upsurge of energy. The forces of the night are agnostic to faith or religion making Mahashivaratri a universally significant night for all human beings, especially those on the spiritual path.

**If you would like to know more about this, please write to [mediarelations@ishafoundation.org](mailto:mediarelations@ishafoundation.org).**