

Rajnath and Adityanath review preparations for Yoga Day event

OUR CORRESPONDENT

LUCKNOW: Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday reviewed preparations for the main function to mark International Yoga Day on June 21 to be attended by the prime minister here. Besides Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other dignitaries, nearly 55,000 people are expected to participate in the Yoga Day event at Ramabai Ambedkar Maidan in the state capital.

A spokesperson of the UP government said Singh met Adityanath to discuss and review the preparations. Union AYUSH Minister Shripad Yesso Naik was also present.

The AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy) Ministry is the nodal agency for Yoga Day celebrations.

Praising the presentation made for the event, the home minister exuded confidence that the International Yoga Day celebrations will be successful.

Adityanath said LED screens would be installed at different parks in the city so that visitors could also take part in the celebrations simultaneously. He issued directions to hold a 28-day workshop for the participants prior to June 21.

The Union AYUSH Ministry had proposed Lucknow as the venue for the main function for International Day of Yoga

(IDY) celebrations this year.

Earlier, the government was considering Bhopal, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Ranchi and Bengaluru as possible venues for the main event.

The ministry is also planning to organise a major yoga event in at least one city in each district across the country.

The ministry zeroed in on Lucknow as the possible venue at a review meeting on the preparations for IDY which is observed on June 21.

The official website of the ministry on its webpage pertaining to IDY also requests the people visiting the page to make the following pledge -- "I pledge to make yoga an integral part of my daily life." So far, 30.14 lakh visitors have taken the pledge.

The first IDY celebration was organised at Rajpath in New Delhi on June 21, 2015 in which representatives of 191 countries had participated. Last year, the main function took place in Chandigarh.

The United Nations General Assembly, heeding to a call by Modi, had made a declaration in December 2014 to observe June 21 as IDY.

On March 29, Adityanath, while addressing a three-day UP Yoga Mahotsava in Lucknow, had said that 'surya namaskar' was similar to namaz (prayers) offered by Muslims and those opposing the yogic exercise wanted to divide the society on religious lines.



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath welcoming Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh in a meeting in Lucknow on Sunday