

Dehradun institute all set to roll out the yoga mat for Modi today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

DEHRADUN, JUNE 20

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi will lead the fourth International Yoga Day celebrations at Dehradun-based Forest Research Institute (FRI) on Thursday.

Joining the Prime Minister will be at least 50,000 yoga enthusiasts from institutions such as yoga guru Ramdev's Haridwar-based Patanjali Yogpeeth, Haridwar-based Shanti Kunj, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's Art of Living, participants from the "spiritual organisation" Brahma Kumaris, and yoga practitioners from Swami Chidanand Saraswati's Rishikesh-based Parmarth Niketan, according to officials.



Preparations at venue in Dehradun for celebration of International Yoga Day .AP

Amid tight security of up to 3,000 police personnel, Modi is scheduled to arrive at the FRI ground at 6.30 am on Thursday. He will perform yoga along with other participants and government officials on a 400 square metre area.

"The Prime Minister will leave

the venue by 7.50 am, ADG (Law & Order) Ashok Kumar said.

Modi had visited Uttarakhand on October 20 last year — he had laid the foundation stone for construction works in Kedarnath, in Rudraprayag district.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Rawat said that Modi's presence in Dehradun on Yoga Day will give the state the "much-needed recognition as a yoga destination". This, he said, will eventually enhance the tourism potential of the state.

But former CM and senior Congress leader Harish Rawat told *The Indian Express* that celebrating Yoga Day in Dehradun was a "mere gimmick" by the BJP to divert people's attention from crucial issues in the country.