

# States gear up to mark Day of Yoga

## HT Correspondents

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**NEW DELHI:** Thousands of people across the country are gearing up to celebrate the fourth edition of the International Yoga Day on Thursday with mass sessions of exercise and meditation.

Last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the celebrations at Ramabai Ambedkar Sabha Sthal in Uttar Pradesh's capital Lucknow as thousands of people across the country struck various poses and talked about the benefits of the ancient physical and spiritual discipline during events to celebrate the day.

The United Nations declared June 21 as the International Day of Yoga in 2014 after Modi called for the day to be adopted as a global celebration of yoga, an ancient practice that began in India more than 5,000 years ago.

Here's how the states are planning to mark the day:

## UTTARAKHAND

Modi will lead the main event at the sprawling campus of the Forest Research Institute in Dehradun, in which over 50,000 citizens are expected to participate.

Uttarakhand's minister of higher education Dhan Singh Rawat claimed the government has received registrations "more than expected". School and college students will also participate. The gate of FRI will be opened from 12am to 5am for the programme that would begin at 6.30am. The PM is scheduled to spend over an hour at the venue.

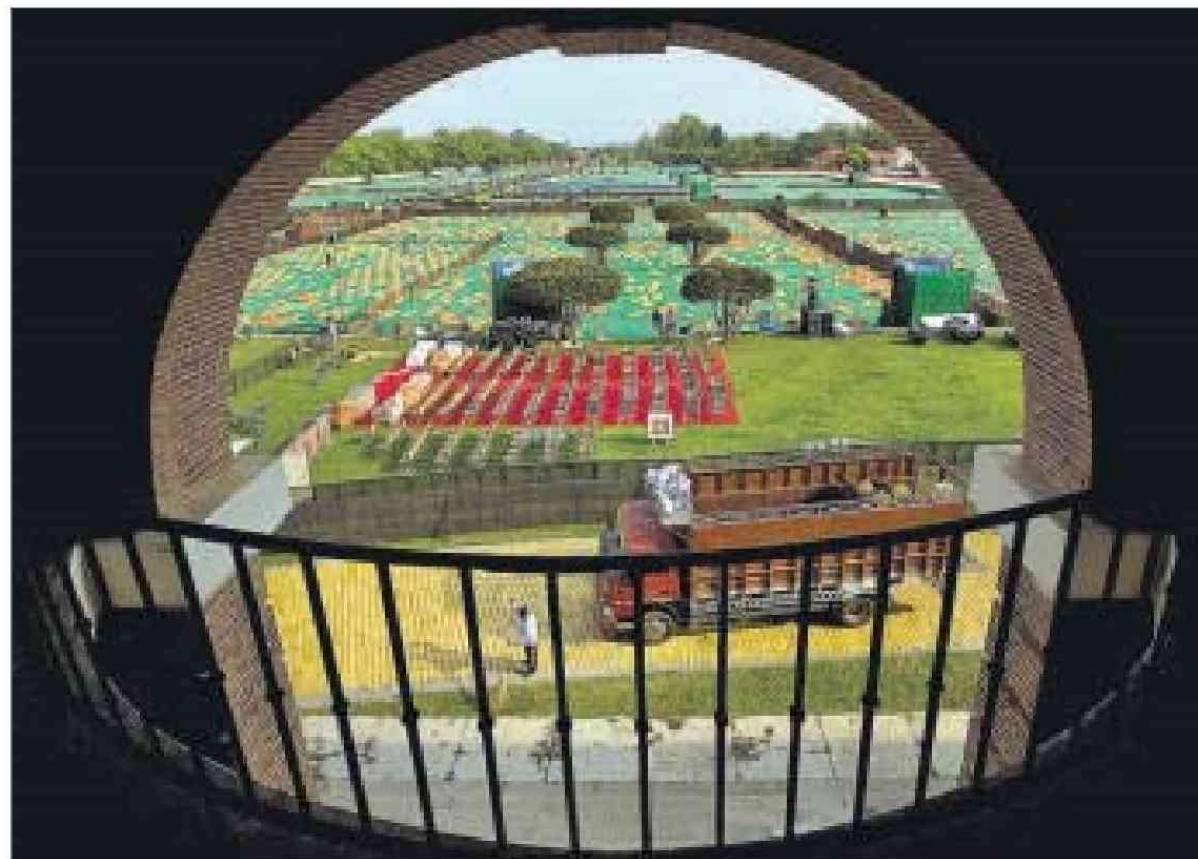
## TELANGANA

The main event in Telangana is being organised by the state government in coordination with the Union ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH). The GMC Balayogi Stadium at Gachibowli is the main venue in Hyderabad, where around 4,000 people are expected to participate from 6.30am to 8pm.

State AYUSH commissioner Dr Rajendra Reddy said similar events would be organised in all the districts of Telangana.

The Bharatiya Janata Party's state unit will also organise celebrations at the Amberpet Municipal Grounds in Hyderabad.

Bharatiya Prani Mitra Sangh, along with Jeevraksha Trust and other animal welfare organisa-



■ Workers prepare the grounds of the Forest Research Institute in Dehradun on Wednesday.

AP

tions, will hold yoga sessions from 8am to 9am for around 2,000 school students and other enthusiasts at Exhibition Grounds.

## RAJASTHAN

Kota, popular as the coaching hub of the country, is eyeing to make a Guinness world record for organising yoga event with maximum participants on International Yoga Day on June 21.

Around 200,000 people are expected to attend the main event at RAC ground, which will be led by Ramdev. There will be smaller events in other districts. The South Western Command of the army is also hosting an event at Cavalry Ground in Jaipur.

## GUJARAT

At least 12.5 million people in over 43,000 centres across the state are expected to participate.

In Ahmedabad's Sardar Patel Stadium, nearly 1,000 differently abled children will perform "silent yoga". They will be instructed through Bluetooth-enabled headphones at the event to be attended by state ministers and governor OP Kohli.

The participants will include 4,082 pregnant women and 8,732 differently abled children.

## BIHAR

Around one lakh people are expected to participate in Bihar.

Governor Satya Pal Malik and deputy chief minister Sushil Kumar Modi will also attend the event, which is being organised in collaboration with the state government at Patliputra Sports Complex, Kankarbagh, in Patna.

This will be the first time that the state government would organise the function. Earlier, when the JD(U) was part of the Grand Alliance, no functions were organised by the state government.

Swami Vaishampayan, a Yoga expert, has been invited to conduct the session.

## HARYANA

State's minister of sports Anil Vij has said nearly 120,000 people are expected to participate in events across Haryana. The main venues are Panchkula and Jhajjar where governor Kaptan Singh Solanki and chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar are the chief guests, respectively.

In Chandigarh, nearly 5,000 people are expected to gather at Sector 17's Plaza to attend the event by the AYUSH ministry. Union minister Smriti Irani will be the guest of honour and UT administrator VP Singh Badnore will be the chief guest.

"The budget for the event is ₹40 lakh, which will be spent on yoga mats, T-shirts, eight LED screens, drinking water, 16 loudspeakers, stage decorations, 10

single-seater VIP sofas and carpeting at the Plaza," an officer said. "Last year, we spent ₹30 lakh on the event," the officer added.

## WEST BENGAL

The main event in the state will be held at Esplanade, at the heart of Kolkata, where a gathering of more than 3,000 people is expected. Union minister of state for tourism and culture Mahesh Sharma and state BJP president Dilip Ghosh are slated to attend it.

The event is being organised by Krida Bharti, the sports wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which will hold events in 10 other districts.

## ASSAM

Chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal will lead the programme, expected to be attended by more than 6,000 people, at the Nurul Amin Stadium in Nagaon district at 6am. Union minister of state for railways Rajen Gohain, state ministers Himanta Biswa Sarma and Pijush Hazarika are expected to take part. Union minister of state for parliamentary affairs Vijay Goel would take part in another event in Guwahati.

## ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Chief minister Pema Khandu will join an event at the police headquarters in Itanagar. "#Yoga is the way to experience the reality

## GOING GLOBAL

■ From Japanese parliamentarians to yoga in front of iconic Eiffel Towers to seven cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, International Yoga Day celebrations have begun well in advance.

■ Hakubun Shimomura, chairman of the Parliamentary League for Promotion of Yoga in Japan; and Sujan R. Chinoy, Ambassador of India to Japan, addressed a gathering of yoga enthusiasts comprising many Japanese parliamentarians.

■ Hundreds of people participated in Bosnia and Herzegovina on June 16-17.

■ Irena Hadziabdic, chief election commissioner of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Rahul Chhabra, envoy to the country, inaugurated the main celebrations.

just the way it is. Come join me in celebrating," he tweeted. State officials said as many as 1,000 people are likely to take part.

## CHHATTISGARH

The Chhattisgarh government is aiming for a Guinness record by ensuring the participation of 10 million people across the state between 7am to 8am. Chief minister Raman Singh will attend an event in Raipur. The departments of social welfare and school education are organising the event. Chhattisgarh is the only state which has a yoga commission, formed in 2017.

## JHARKHAND

The main event will be held at 6:15am in Prabhat Tara Maidan in state capital Ranchi where chief minister Raghubar Das, local members of Parliament, ministers and government officers will perform yoga for "harmony and peace". It will be telecast live till the end at 7:45am.

## KERALA

Chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan will inaugurate the state-level yoga day celebrations at Rajiv Gandhi Stadium in Kochi on Thursday. At least 1,000 trained instructors will participate in the hour-long demonstration. Yoga trainers from 22 countries will also hold a session in Fort Kochi.