

Address by Shri CH.Vidyasagar Rao, Governor of Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra at the inauguration of the International Day of Yoga celebrations organized by the Isha Yoga Foundation at Coimbatore on 21st June 2017

Dr.Mahesh Sharma, Hon'ble Union Minister of State(Independent Charge), Tourism & Culture, Most respected Padma VibhushanSadhguruji, Isha Volunteers, guests and visitors from India and abroad, friends from media, sisters and brothers,

Good Morning and Vanakkam !

I am indeed delighted to join you at the celebrations of International Day of Yoga at the Isha Yoga Centre.

I was here earlier this year accompanying the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on the occasion of MahaShivaratri.

I was uniquely privileged to witness the unveiling of the 112- feet face of Adiyogi – The Source of Yoga- by the Hon'ble Prime Minister in the benign presence of Sadhguruji and thousands of Isha volunteers from across the world.

I was pleased to know that this face of Adiyogi has entered the Guinness Book of World Records as the World's Largest Face. I would like to congratulate Sadhguru and Isha Foundation for creating this magnificent idol of Adiyogi.

Today, I congratulate and compliment each one of you, once again, for being a part of this worldwide celebrations of International Yoga Day being held in the esteemed presence of Sadhguru. It is heartening to see the Yogic joy on the face of each one of participants.

For the last many years, Sadhguru has been spreading the spiritual, ethical, cultural and universal thought of India to the world. I consider him as one of the greatest ambassadors of India's cultural and spiritual heritage.

You will agree with me that Sadhguru is not a conventional Sadhu. He is a Yogi, a mystic and spiritual master with a difference. His perception is very clear, so is his communication. His talks are passionate, insightful, logical and at the same time witty.

Through his talks and the work of Isha Yoga Foundation, he has been impacting the life of millions of people, which is truly remarkable.

I offer my pranams to Sadhguruji for his services to the nation, to the universe and to mankind at large.

Sisters and brothers,

In his address to the United Nations General Assembly on 27th September 2014, the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi had appealed to the United Nations to declare 21st June as International Day of Yoga.

Responding to the appeal made by our Prime Minister, the United Nations declared 21st June as the International Day of Yoga. A record 192 countries celebrated the World Yoga Day and have since continued the tradition.

The International Day of Yoga is a tribute to the Adiyogi and to all the past great masters who invented Yoga and to those who practiced and propagated yoga selflessly for all these years.

Yoga is India's gift to the world. As recipient of this great intangible heritage from our sages, it is our collective responsibility to practice yoga and also to propagate it, in the world.

India is known for its rich culture and heritage. Religious diversity and religious tolerance are our nation's hallmark. The very soul of India, the life blood of its ancient civilization and culture lies in its unity in diversity and its philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. That is why our Prime Minister had said that India won't claim the patent rights of Yoga.

The world is looking up, to India to provide leadership in the training of Yoga. It is incumbent upon us to produce good teachers who will teach yoga to the next generation. I have great expectations from Isha Yoga Foundation, as I believe that Isha Foundation can produce an army of Yoga teachers who will maintain the purity of yoga while passing it on to the new generation.

Friends,

Yoga is not just a set of physical exercises to keep the body healthy. The word Yoga comes from the Sanskrit root 'Yuj' which means to connect or to join.

Swami Vivekananda had said, and I quote, **"The ultimate goal of all mankind, the aim and end of all religions, is but one – re-union with God, or, what amounts to the same, with the divinity, which is every man's true nature. But while the aim is one, the method of attaining may vary**

with the different temperaments of men. Both, the goal and the methods employed for reaching it are called Yoga.” (unquote)

Sadhguru has given a new perspective to Yoga, namely Inner Engineering. This was most timely and much needed. Every age needs a leader who would interpret and relate the ancient wisdom to the people. I am happy that through Isha Yoga, Sadhguru has connected the modern intelligent person, with the divine, through Inner Engineering.

Sisters and Brothers,

I look at Yoga from a different perspective. Through Yoga, we are sowing seeds of tolerance in every mind. As these seeds germinate, we will have a complete human being. Such an individual will be broadminded. He will respect the viewpoint, region, religion, philosophy and ideology of fellow human being, howsoever diverse it may appear. At the same time, the individual will achieve and maintain good health.

I believe that the quality of self-restraint and tolerance that one develops through the practice of yoga can help us create peaceful and harmonious societies and communities, which is all the more necessary in today's world which is on the verge of war and strife.

Today we see stress at all levels. Elders are stressed, and so are young men and women. Mothers are stressed and daughters are stressed too. Even students and children have not been spared. The stress brought in by changing lifestyle is creating havoc in our personal and private lives.

Yoga alone can help us prevent the epidemic of diabetes and other lifestyle diseases from spreading. Yoga is not a matter of choice. Yoga has become an imperative.

The biggest strength of India is its youth power. We have the largest young population in the world. By 2020, the average age of an Indian will be 29 years, almost 8 years younger than an American or a Chinese. If empowered by yoga, this youth power can make its fullest contribution to the progress and development of the nation and even the world at large. It can help us achieve the goal of Healthy India.

Thanks to the celebration of Yoga Day, massive awareness has been generated in favour of yoga. We have to take forward the momentum generated so far with greater and more active participation of all sections of the society particularly the youth. All out efforts should be made to make yoga a

people's movement by highlighting the benefits of yoga for better physical and mental health and social harmony.

A growing number of youths are falling prey to addictions and abuse of substance. Yoga can help prevent the youth from becoming victims of such addictions. It can also help in rehabilitating those who wish to come out of addiction.

There is a need to take Yoga to schools and Colleges. I was delighted to know that Isha Foundation will be teaching yoga in 5000 schools across Tamil Nadu. I wish and hope that Isha Foundation will reach out to maximum number of schools in Tamil Nadu and rest of India.

As Chancellor of 40 universities in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, I find a near disconnect between our universities and colleges and institutions like Isha Foundation which are engaged in spreading Yoga.

I wish to see an institutional arrangement for exchange of knowledge on Yoga between our Universities and organizations like Isha Foundation.

I will appeal to all of you to make Yoga a part of your daily life. Let this day be the beginning of a new life, full of health, good thoughts and Godliness.

With these words, I congratulate Sadhguruji, Isha Foundation and to each one of you on the occasion of International day of Yoga and wish good health and happiness to all.

Thank you