

Topic: When Rajpath turned into 'Yogpath'

International Yoga Day, **June 21**, was declared as the International Day of Yoga by the **United Nations General Assembly** on December 11, 2014. The Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his UN Address suggested the date to be June 21 as the International Day of Yoga as it is the **longest day of the year** (Summer Solstice) in the Northern Hemisphere and has special significance in many parts of the world. The declaration of this day came after the call for the adoption of 21 June as International Day of Yoga by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his address to UN General Assembly on September 27, 2014.

"Yoga is an invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition. This tradition is 5000 years old. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfilment; harmony between man and nature; a holistic approach to health and well-being. It is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with you, the world and the nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help us deal with climate change. Let us work towards adopting an International Yoga Day."

—Narendra Modi, UN General Assembly

The first international day of Yoga was observed world over on June 21, 2015. About 35985 people, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and a large number of dignitaries from 84 nations, performed **21 Yoga asanas (postures) for 35 minutes** at Rajpath in New Delhi. The day devoted to Yoga was observed by millions across the world. The event at Rajpath **established two Guinness world records** awarded to 'Ministry of Ayush' received by Ayush Minister Shripad Yesso Naik.

1. Largest Yoga Class having **35985 people**
2. Nationalities Participating with **84 nations**

In Taipei, more than 2,000 participants rolled out mats and performed 108 rounds of the "sun salutation" - the sequence of yoga poses often practiced at the beginning of a routine as the sun rises. Guinness representatives hired more than 1,500 members of a global accounting firm to count the number of participants at the Delhi venue.

Indian soldiers on the Siachen Glacier, the world's highest battleground in the Himalayas, and naval cadets on navy ships at sea also participated in the Yoga Day events. Although Modi's message was **one of peace and harmony**, many in India were concerned that the push for yoga was an attempt by Hindu groups to give a boost to Hinduism. In the run-up to Yoga Day, many Muslims objected to the government's exhortations to join in the public exercise programs. Some Muslim leaders said yoga was a Hindu practice.

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Introduction

The government quickly dropped a plan for the "sun salutation" exercise, which many Muslims found objectionable because it implied the sun was a deity. Also dropped was the Hindu "om" chant. Some Christian groups were upset that the mass yoga sessions were being held at a time when they usually attend Sunday Mass. Others were skeptical about the time and money spent by the government on Yoga Day.

In this event all participants of all ages had performed various yoga exercises on the **entire two-km stretch** from Rafi Marg crossing near Vijay Chowk to India Gate.

### **SOME FACTS:**

1. This mass yoga event has **broken previous world record** on mass yoga exercise which was set by 29,973 students from 362 schools on November 19, 2005 led by Vivekananda Kendra at Jiwaji University Gwalior.
2. The government of India has released **stamps and coins** of the denomination of Rs.10 and Rs.100 on International Yoga Day (IYD) on June 21. The Department of Posts is bringing out stamp and the finance ministry coins.
3. Also, on IYD, the Discovery Channel has telecasted a short film '**The Story of Yoga**' to take viewers through a journey of rediscovering the Indian ancient practice.

### **Read further:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_Yoga\\_Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Yoga_Day)

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/live-international-yoga-day/article7337696.ece>

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/international-yoga-day-yoga-is-important-for-evolution-of-humans-says-pm-narendra-modi/articleshow/47753496.cms>

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Millions-across-the-world-mark-inaugural-International-Yoga-Day/articleshow/47759923.cms>

<http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2015/06/21/415769144/bending-over-backwards-for-international-yoga-day>