

Yoga is India's precious gift to the world,
says UNIC Director Derk Segaar

Brahma Kumaris Rajyogis meditate at Red Fort in the largest gathering marking the 4th International Yoga Day in Delhi

Yoga should be adopted for both healthy mind and body: Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs

Yoga means connection with the one Supreme: Dadi Janki

New Delhi: A grand gathering of 50,000 people, including practitioners of Rajyoga meditation from the Brahma Kumaris and nearly 2,000 women personnel from Indian paramilitary forces, thronged the historic Red Fort on Thursday, June 21, to mark the fourth International Day of Yoga.

Stating that yoga was India's precious gift to the world, **Derk Segaar, Director, United Nations Information Centre**, said: "The International Day of Yoga was adopted in the United Nations General Assembly in 2014, and was probably the most widely supported resolutions in the history of the United Nations. In its first year itself, it was celebrated by every single country around the world. This illustrates how deeply the ancient Indian practice of yoga resonates with everyone all around the world."

He said that the two qualities of yoga that stood out for the United Nations were that it is a holistic way to wellbeing, combining physical, mental and spiritual elements. It is also very inclusive, and can be practised by anyone irrespective of age, gender, religion or nationality. "Yoga provides an opportunity to disconnect from the busy world today, and connect with things that truly matter, and that is why this ancient practice is so relevant today," he said.

Sudarshan Bhagat, Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs, said that it was a matter of great pride that the Indian culture of yoga was being promoted around the world through the efforts of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said that yoga is a way to keep both the mind and body healthy, to be free of stress and disease. He also lauded the Brahma Kumaris for its grand initiative on yoga day.

BK Asha, Director, Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram, said that through the practice of ancient yoga of India, one could get both a healthy mind and

body, create harmony between mind and intellect, and gain victory over one's mind and senses and the five elements of nature. This is the yoga, she said, through which one could make the impossible possible.

She said that **Dadi Janki, the 102-year-old chief of the Brahma Kumaris**, was a living proof of the miracles of Rajyoga.

Dadi Janki said that yoga means 'connection' or 'relation' with the one Supreme Soul, our father, teacher and guide. She said that those practising Rajyoga regularly become strong and unshakeable, and are instrumental in spreading peace, love and power to the world.

Dadi termed Rajyoga "easy yoga", one that could be practised effortlessly anywhere. Its attainments included perennial happiness, mental stability and experience of peace and love. She also encouraged everyone to follow the mantra of caring, sharing and inspiring.

Congratulating all participants for being part of a historic moment at a historic location, **BK Brij Mohan, chief spokesperson of the Brahma Kumaris**, said: The Red Fort symbolises the union of all religions. In this very vicinity lie the Digambar Jain Mandir, Gauri Shankar temple, Jama Masjid, Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib, Fatehpuri Shahi Masjid, and a church. This reminds us that God is one, and it is significant that we are celebrating the International Day of Yoga here."

Among the other esteemed guests and speakers on the occasion were Dr. A.K. Merchant, National Trustee of Bahai Community of India; Janab Firoz Bakht Ahmad, Chancellor of Maulana Azad National Urdu University; Ven. Lama Lobzang, Secretary General of International Buddhist Federation; and Ven. Ezekiel Isaac Malekar, Priest and Honourable Secretary of Judah Hyam Synagogue

During the programme, the audience listened to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address, which was telecast live from Dehradun. They also performed several exercises and hath yoga kriyas.