PM's speech at 11th International Day of Yoga celebrations in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh Governor Syed Abdul Nazir Ji, the popular Chief Minister of this state, my dear friend Chandrababu Naidu Garu, my colleagues in the Union Cabinet, K. Rammohan Naidu Ji, Prataprao Jadhav Ji, Chandrashekhar Ji, Bhupati Raju Srinivas Verma Ji, the state's Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan Garu, other dignitaries and my dear brothers and sisters! Namaskar to all of you!

Best wishes to everyone in the country and across the world on International Yoga Day. Today, for the 11th time, the whole world is doing yoga together on 21 June. Yoga simply means to connect and it is wonderful to see how yoga has connected the whole world. When I look back at the journey of yoga over the past decade, I remember many things. The day when India proposed in the United Nations that 21 June be recognised as International Yoga Day and then in the shortest time 175 countries of the world stood with our proposal. Such solidarity and support are not a common occurrence in today's world. This was not just support for a proposal, it was a collective effort of the world for the good of humanity. Today, after 11 years, we see that yoga has become a part of the lifestyle of millions of people around the world. I feel proud when I see that our Divyang friends read Yoga Shastras in Braille, scientists do yoga in space, young friends in villages participate in Yoga Olympiad. Look here, a very wonderful yoga program is going on in all the Navy ships. Be it the steps of the Sydney Opera House, or the peak of Everest, or the expanse of the ocean, the message everywhere is the same – Yoga belongs to all, and is for all. Yoga is for everyone, beyond boundaries, beyond backgrounds, beyond age or ability.

Friends,

Today I am happy that we all are in Visakhapatnam. This city is a confluence of both nature and progress. The people here have organised this event so well. I congratulate Chandrababu Naidu Garu and Pawan Kalyan Garu, under your leadership Andhra Pradesh took a great initiative of YogAndhra Abhiyan. I would also like to specially praise the efforts of Nara Lokesh Garu. How should be the social celebration of yoga, how should every section of the society be connected, he has shown this in the YogAndhra campaign of the last one and a half months, and for this brother Lokesh deserves many congratulations. And I would also like to tell my countrymen that the work done by Lokesh brother should be seen as an example of how such opportunities can be taken deeply to the social level.

Friends,

I have been told that more than two crore people are associated with the YogAndhra campaign. This is the spirit of public participation which is the main basis of developed India. When the public itself comes forward and takes up a campaign, owns a goal, then no one can stop us from achieving that goal. This good will of the people and your efforts are visible everywhere in this event.

Friends,

The theme of this year's International Day of Yoga is 'Yoga for One Earth, One Health'. This theme reflects a deep truth. The health of every entity on Earth is interconnected. Human well-being depends on the health of the soil that grows our food, on the rivers that give us water, on the health of the animals that share our eco-systems, on the plants that nourish us. Yoga awakens us to this inter-connected-ness. Yoga leads us on a journey towards oneness with the world. It teaches us that we are not isolated individuals but part of nature. Initially we learn to take good care of our own health and wellness. Gradually, our care and concern extend to our environment, society and planet. Yoga is a great personal discipline. At the same time, it is a system that takes us from Me to We.

Friends,

This sentiment of 'Me to We' is the essence of the soul of India. When a person thinks about the society above his own interests, only then the entire humanity is benefited. Indian culture teaches us, सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः, that is, the welfare of all is my duty. This journey from 'Me' to 'We' is the basis of service, dedication and co-existence. This thinking promotes social harmony.

Friends,

Unfortunately, today the entire world is going through some kind of tension. Unrest and instability are increasing in many areas. In such a situation, yoga gives us direction to peace. Yoga is the pause button that humanity needs to breathe to balance to become whole gain. I would like to make a request to the world community on this important occasion. Let this Yoga Day mark the beginning of Yoga for Humanity 2.O, where Inner Peace becomes Global Policy. Where yoga is not just a personal practice but becomes a medium of global partnership. Where every country, every society makes yoga a part of lifestyle and public policy. Where we together give impetus to a peaceful, balanced and sustainable world. Where yoga takes the world from conflict to cooperation and from tension to solution.

Friends,

To spread yoga in the world, India is further strengthening the science of yoga through modern research. Major medical institutions of the country are engaged in research on yoga. It is our endeavour to ensure that the scientific nature of yoga finds a place in the modern medical system. We are also encouraging evidence-based therapy in the field of yoga in the country's medical and research institutions. AIIMS, Delhi has also done very good work in this direction. AIIMS research has revealed that yoga plays an important role in the treatment of cardiac and neurological disorders and in women's health and mental well-being.

Friends,

The mantra of yoga and wellness is also being promoted through the National Ayush Mission. Digital technology has also played a big role in this. Through the Yoga Portal and YogAndhra Portal, more than 10 lakh events have been registered across the country. Today, events are being organised at so many places in every corner of the country. This also shows how much the scope of yoga is expanding.

Friends,

We all know that today the mantra of Heal in India is also becoming very popular in the world. India is becoming the best destination for healing for the world. Yoga also has a big role in this. I am happy that a Common Yoga Protocol has been created for yoga. More than 6.5 lakh trained volunteers of Yoga Certification Board, 10-day yoga module in about 130 recognized institutes and medical colleges, many such efforts are creating a holistic ecosystem. Trained yoga teachers are being deployed in our Ayushman Arogya Mandirs across the country. Special e-AYUSH visas are being given so that people from all over the world can benefit from this wellness ecosystem of India.

Friends,

Today on Yoga Day, I would like to draw everyone's attention towards obesity once again. Increasing obesity is a big challenge for the whole world. I had also discussed this in detail in Mann Ki Baat programme. For this, I had also started a challenge to reduce 10 percent oil in our food. I once again appeal to the countrymen and people across the world to join this challenge. We need to spread awareness on how we can reduce oil consumption in our food by at least 10 percent. Reducing oil consumption, avoiding unhealthy diet and doing yoga is the key to better fitness.

Friends,

Let us together make Yoga a mass movement. A movement that takes the world towards peace, health and harmony. Where every person starts the day with yoga and finds balance in life. Where every society is connected to yoga and is free from stress. Where yoga becomes a medium to bind humanity together. And where 'Yoga for One Earth, One Health' becomes a global resolution. Once again, while congratulating the leadership of Andhra, congratulating the people of Andhra and congratulating the yoga practitioners and yoga lovers spread across the world, I wish you all a very Happy International Yoga Day. Thank you!