

## International Yog-Day to Integrate Global Humanity

UN declaration to commemorate the day of summer solstice, falling every year on June 21, as the International Day of Yoga, gives ceaseless cheers and immense pride to all Indians and millions of Yoga practitioners spread across the globe. It becomes all the more delighting that this proposal of Yog-Day, moved by India, was co-sponsored by a record number of 175 nations of the world, altogether unprecedented in the 69 years' history of the United Nations' General Assembly (UNGA). And, moreover, the resolution was passed without the need to put it to vote as it was approved by a consensus of the 193 member UN General Assembly. June 21 is the day of summer solstice which marks the beginning of the sun's southward declination or Dakshinayan which precedes the Guru Purnima Parva. It is also the longest day in the Northern Hemisphere on which Lord Shiva, the first proponent of Yoga considered the Sapt-rishis (seven sages) eligible to be given the first discourse on Yoga. On finding the Sapt-Rishis suitable disciples to be taught Yoga, Lord Shiva began the discourse on the succeeding full moon day i.e. Poornima of Aashadh month of the Hindu calendar. That is why, the full moon day falling on the Poorvashadha constellation i.e. Aashadhi Poornima is called Guru Poornima from that year when the Lord had transmitted Yog-Shastra to the Sapt-Rishis. Later on, after several millenniums, Ved Vyas is also believed to have been born on the same full moon day and thereby it is also termed as the Vyas Poornima. Therefore, declaration of June 21, which is the day of summer solstice and also the day of beginning of Dakshinayan, as the World Yoga Day and its being celebrated by all Yog-Kendras across the globe wherever people practice Yoga on the basis of Indian scriptures is all the more rejoicing for us as it symbolizes the respect and regard for our scriptural descriptions.

Endeavours for declaration of June 21 as the 'Yog-Day' have come from across the globe. It was the Portuguese Confederation of Yoga which celebrated it on a grand scale much before, in 2013, and the Portuguese Parliament was the first to formally accord formal recognition to Yoga at national level and propose to UNESCO for the declaration of a Yoga Day, as Portugal has the highest share of its population who practices Yoga.

Further, it was also a record creating event in another respect that this resolution was passed within the shortest span of time in the UN history on December 11, 2014, after our Prime Minister Narendra Modi had proposed a motion for declaration of an International Yoga Day in his address to the UN General Assembly on September 27, 2014. It was also very heartening to note that immediately after this suggestion by PM Modi, the Prime Minister of the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal, Mr. Sushil Koirala supported it. The final text of the proposal got the consensus of 130 nations as its co-sponsors by November 7, 2014, when it was circulated by the UN secretariat as an L document and the number of co-sponsoring nations grew to 175 by December 5, 2014, out of 193 members States of the United Nations. The co-sponsors of the proposal included all five permanent members of the UN Security Council, nearly all members from the African continent, Latin America, Europe, most countries from Asia, the Caribbean Community, and most of the Small Island Developing States including the Pacific island states, who interacted with the Prime Minister at the recent First Meeting of the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation.

So, it is a matter of explicit delight for us for having received such a wide and unprecedented support for the ancient Indian Wisdom of Yoga, and also for a proposal moved by India. Indeed, the World Yoga Day would go a long way to reinstall strong familial sensitivity across the world through Yoga- a potent vehicle to invoke amity to integrate global humanity, again, with our age old sense of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (Global Family) which we have been striving to propagate since time immemorial. Therefore, all of us should earnestly engage in further and quick spread of Yoga among the masses as the means for making every human being happy and healthy.



**(Prof. Bhagwati Prakash Sharma)**

**Editor in chief**