

**Embassy of India**
**Belgrade**

**Press Release**

# International Day of Yoga (IDY), June 21, 2015

Embassy of India, Belgrade held a Press Conference on June 11 along with the Government of the Republic of Serbia and United Nations Office in Serbia, to announce the Joint Celebrations of the first International Day of Yoga on **June 21, 2015** in Serbia.

Ambassador of India, H.E. Mrs Narinder Chauhan, said that “June 21, has been declared as the International Day of Yoga (IDY) by the United Nations. Government of India has decided to celebrate the First International Day of Yoga (IDY) on June 21 all over the world in a wholesome manner. The esteemed Government of Serbia was one among the 177 nations that had co-sponsored India’s Resolution in the United Nations to declare June 21 as the International Day of Yoga. Hon’ble Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi addressed warm letter of thanks to the Hon’ble Prime Minister of Serbia H.E. Mr. Aleksandar Vucic. Prime Minister of India launched a dedicated IDY website <http://idayofyoga.org> at UNESCO on 10th April. The Government of India has also designed a logo for the IDY which reflects harmony and peace for humanity, which is the essence of yoga. Yoga experts have created a Common Yoga Protocol, a set of morning exercises that can be performed easily by all.

In pursuance of this cause, Embassy of India Belgrade is organizing joint celebration of the IDY all over Serbia in a befitting manner. For this, we are coordinating with yoga schools, yoga practitioners/teachers, experts and other relevant stakeholders in Serbia to undertake training sessions/yoga camps immediately, leading to final celebrations all over Serbia on 21st June, 2015 at 7 a.m. as per the common yoga protocol prepared by yoga experts. Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Serbia has extended support for the IDY celebrations by issuing a press release and by providing a letter of support and commitment to participate in the celebrations and its preparations. Similar support has been received from United Nations office in Serbia and several municipalities of Serbia. All the relevant details of the IDY celebrations are updated on Embassy’s website [www.eoibelgrade.gov.in](http://www.eoibelgrade.gov.in) (under What’s New Column).”

H.E. Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, UN Resident Coordinator in Serbia said that “following the Resolution passed by the United Nations in its 69th session to declare June 21 as the International Day of Yoga, the United Nations Country Team welcomes the celebrations of the International Day of Yoga in Serbia. Yoga brings harmony in all walks of life and is effective in health improvement, management of lifestyle-related disorders and prevention of diseases. The first International Yoga Day celebration on 21 June 2015 can be considered as the beginning of 70th anniversary celebrations of the UN and our joint work in raising awareness on the importance of social and cultural values, harmony, peace and security for the sustainable development of society. On behalf of the United Nations Country Team in Serbia we congratulate you on the celebrations of the first International Yoga Day and look forward to our future cooperation.”

Mr. Uros Zekovic, Assistant Minister for Sports, Ministry of Youth and Sports said that “Ministry of Youth and Sports supports celebrations of International Day of Yoga in Serbia, as well as all other manifestations aimed at promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyle, and will invite all citizens to massively take part in this manifestation.

Mr. Dusan Pajin, Indologist and eminent author, said that “adoption and practice of yoga worldwide is due to its capacity to link with lifestyles and affinity to improve them. Yoga is flexible in its ways and methods of practice. Yoga has thus unique quality with specific goals of improving the body capacities, psychic condition, and general life conditions of the individual. It can be easily adapted, and can be of interest for all religions, and cultures, around the globe. The practice of yoga started in Serbia in 1961, and the founder was late Mrs. Jasmina Puljo (1915-2008) – this year is her hundredth birth anniversary. Serbian Yoga Union participates in various international activities initiated by the European Yoga Federation, like "Yoga days of good deeds", and Yoga Festival, and also public presentations of yoga during summer months in various parts of the country. This year it will participate in European and Serbian festivities related to the International Day of Yoga.  In order to bring the traditions and background of yoga to the fore and to support interest for yoga in this region, I contributed with my book Yoga - spirit and body, published in 2014, by the International Yoga Academy in Belgrade, and supported by the Indian Embassy and the Government of India. Yoga Federation of Serbia will contribute to this grand celebration providing yoga classes in public places in 42 cities throughout Serbia on The International Day of Yoga, 21 June”.

Prof. Vuk Stambolovic, Vice President of the Republic Committee for Traditional Medicine (with Ministry of Health) said, “our preparation of  the program of the International Day of Yoga was based on the assumption that India itself, as well as United Nations,  visualized that Day  as both  opportunity  and incitement , for  all states, to look upon Yoga  from the point of their own relevant  characteristics and potentialities. In the case of Yoga, the outstanding characteristic of Serbia is  that Yoga, which is itself a method of Indian Traditional medicine, is recognized by Serbian health  legislature which means that it could be practiced as a therapeutic method in health institutions. The characteristic of Serbia is also that its health legislature is recognizing two additional methods of Indian Traditional medicine: Ayurveda and Homeopathy. That is why we have decided to celebrate The International Day of Yoga by presenting together  Yoga, Ayurveda and Homeopathy to   both general public and medical professionals. So, the presentation for medical professionals will be organized on the 19th of June. In Belgrade, in The Clinical Center Zvezdara, and in Novi Sad in the Institute for health protection of students. To general public all three methods will be presented in Belgrade in the hall of the Municipality of Zvezdara on the 20th of June, and in Novi Sad in the Yoga studio “Hypocrat”, on the 21st of June. In addition, we have organized a demonstration of Yoga exercises in Belgrade and Novi Sad, as well as in 9 other cities: Sremska  Mitrovica, Sombor, Apatin, Ruma, Šabac, Niš, Kragujevac, Smederevo and Obrenovac. Inspired by the IDY, we thought that activity connected with that Day, should not stop on the 21st of June.  We thought that the 21st of June could be turned from The Day to The beginning of the Process.”

Among other personalities present at the press conference included Ms. Ivana Stoiljkovic, Hon’ble MP and Chairman, Serbia-India Parliamentary Friendship Group; Mr. Dusan Ignjatovic, President of the Municipal Assembly Zvezdara; Princess Elizabeth; journalist Ms. Mira Adanja Polak, Film Director Mr. Goran Paskaljevic; and experts from the fields of yoga, homeopathy and ayurveda. The DVD film on Common Yoga Protocol was shown on the occasion.

**Embassy of India has invited all citizens in Serbia to participate in the IDY celebrations on 21st June in their respective cities. The celebrations in Belgrade will be held at 7 a.m. on 21st June at Studentski Park (Entrance from Brace Jugovic BB st), Belgrade**.

**Belgrade**
**June 11, 2015**

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**Embassy of India**

**Belgrade**

**IDY Joint Press Conference with Government of Serbia and**

**United Nations Office in Belgrade**

**June 11, 2015**

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**Programme**

1130 Hrs : Arrival of Guests

 Registration

1200 Hrs : Welcome remarks by H.E. Mrs. Narinder Chauhan,

Ambassador of India

1205 Hrs : Short Introductory audio-visual clip on IDY

1210 Hrs : Remarks by H.E. Ms. Irena Vojackova-Sollorano,

UN Resident Coordinator & UNDP Resident Representative

1215 Hrs : Remarks by H.E. Mr. Uros Zekovic, Assistant Minister for

Sports, Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Government of Serbia

1225 Hrs : Short audio-visual clip on Philosophy of Yoga

1230 Hrs : Remarks by Prof. Dusan Pajin, Indologist and author of

 ‘Yoga – Spirit and Body’

1235 Hrs : Audio-visual clip on Common Yoga Protocol

1245 Hrs : Remarks by Prof. Vuk Stambolovic, Vice President of the

Republic Committee for Traditional Medicine

(with Ministry of Health)

1250 Hrs : Q&A

1300 Hrs : Lunch

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