

Bhubaneswar, 15 June 2026:

Odisha has officially kicked off its countdown to International Yoga Day 2026. In a vibrant launch at Kalinga Stadium, the state government unveiled a week-long Yoga Festival designed to promote health and community wellness across the region. Leaders and sports officials joined citizens on the mat to inaugurate the event, setting a high-energy tone for the celebrations ahead.



It is a joint initiative by the Sports & Youth Services Department and the Odisha Yoga Mahotsav Samiti, officially opened at the Indoor Athletics Centre, Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar by Sports Minister Shri Suryabanshi Suraj and Department Commissioner cum Secretary Shri Bhupendra Singh Poonia. The daily yoga camps run from June 15 to June 20, 2026. The week-long festival will culminate in a massive, grand-scale celebration at Kalinga Stadium on June 21, 2026, to mark the 12th International Yoga Day. The initiative is being driven under the guidance of Chief Minister Shri Mohan Charan Majhi and managed on the ground by Odisha Yoga Mahotsav Samiti officials, including Alok Das, Dr. Debakanta Behera, and Premananda Nath.

Yoga is a long-standing tradition of Indian culture and a unique way to promote global well-being. The 12th International Yoga Day will be celebrated across the world on June 21. To make this day more widespread and impactful this year, the Government of India and the Government of Odisha have jointly taken several public welfare steps. Inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a "Yoga Mahotsav," Minister Shri Suryabanshi Suraj launched this "week-long yoga event" to take the initiative forward.

Speaking on the occasion, the Sports Minister said: "Today, we practiced yoga and pranayama for an hour. Although this is happening just before International Yoga Day, we need to make it a daily practice, as we pledged today. To keep society healthy, individual health is essential. Being personally healthy leads to collective health. There is no better way to achieve personal health than yoga."

The Prime Minister's vision has been key in turning International Yoga Day into a global mass movement. His main goal is to bring the whole world together as one healthy family under the idea of 'Vasudev Kutumbakam' (The World is One Family). Inspired by this goal, Odisha Chief Minister Shri Mohan Charan Majhi organized a massive yoga camp during last year's International Yoga Day, encouraging more than 10,000 people to participate.

The event emphasized using modern technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and mobile applications to make yoga easily accessible to every citizen at home. The main goal is to build conscious digital citizenship among youth and increase their interest in yoga. The initiative aims to make yoga an essential part of daily life rather than limiting it to a single-day celebration.

This year (2026), the Union Ministry of Ayush, through International Yoga Day and the Odisha Yoga Mahotsav, aims to bring the yoga protocol to people living in rural and border areas. Due to digital platforms and grassroots campaigns, a much larger crowd is expected to participate this year compared to previous years. By using modern technology to connect millions of people simultaneously online, the Ministry and the Prime Minister aim to create a new 'Guinness World Record'.

Among others, the department's Special Secretary Shri Ashok Kumar Panda, Additional Secretaries Shri Bijay Kumar Swain, and Shri Sudhakar Nayak, along with many senior officials of the department, were present at the event.

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