

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Chinese nationals participate in event ahead of International Yoga Day in Beijing



BEIJING, JUN 19 : A large number of Chinese nationals took part in an event held at the Indian Embassy premises here on Friday, ahead of the International Yoga Day. Indian Embassy officials said more than a thousand yoga enthusiasts, mostly Chinese, took part in the event. Over the decades, yoga has become immensely popular in China, with yoga training institutes employing Indian teachers flourishing in most

Chinese cities. Addressing the event, the Indian Ambassador to China, Vikram Doraiswami, said the large presence reflects the growing popularity of yoga and its universal appeal. "I am particularly pleased that yoga continues to gain friends and practitioners in China. Through the efforts of teachers, institutions and enthusiasts, it has become an important bridge between our peoples and cultures", he

said. This year's theme, "Yoga for Healthy Ageing," is especially relevant in today's world. "As societies around the globe, including India and China, adapt to changing demographics, yoga can contribute significantly to healthy and active ageing. It offers a simple and accessible way to support physical health, mental well-being and quality of life at every stage of life", he said.

Yoga offers a holistic system that brings together physical exercise, healing and preventive health practices, breathing techniques, meditation and mindfulness. "It offers insights into how we live, how we relate to ourselves and how we cultivate balance in our daily lives", he said. The Day is celebrated around the world on June 21 every year, ever since it was adopted by the United Nations in 2014.

Yoga, acupuncture, martial arts embody India-China civilisational connect: senior Chinese official

BEIJING, JUN 18 : Yoga, the ancient Indian spiritual and physical wellness practice, together with China's acupuncture and martial arts, embody the shared civilisational connect of the Dance of Dragon and Elephant, a senior Chinese official said.

"In recent years, Yoga has become very popular in China. Likewise, Chinese acupuncture and martial arts are well known in India", Luo Zhaohui, Chairman of the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), said, releasing the book titled "My Five to Thrive", written by former UN diplomat Siddharth Chatterjee, on the techniques of breathing and Yoga at a function here on Wednesday.

The civilisations of China and India now shine together symbolising the "Dance of the Dragon and the Elephant," Luo, former Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, who also worked as China's Ambassador to India, said.

Chatterjee practised controlled breathing and meditation. "Through physical movement and his own unique practice, he sought to purify his mind and find inner freedom. This reflects the Indian philosophical spirit of the 'Unity of Brahman and Atman,' and it also resonates with the Chinese ideal of the 'Unity of Heaven and Humanity,'" Luo said.



Luo's comments came ahead of International Yoga Day, which every year is celebrated enthusiastically in China. The Day is celebrated around the world on June 21 every year, ever since it was adopted by the United Nations in 2014.

The Indian Embassy in Beijing is holding a big Yoga Day event on Friday, followed by the other Indian missions in China.

Luo said as UN Resident Coordinator in China, Chatterjee worked closely with the Chinese government, academia, and the media.

"He frequently attended forums and gave interviews. He spoke highly of China's rural revitalisation and sustainable development achievements, and became a

true TV star and popular commentator," Luo said. Chatterjee, in his speech, said breathing is a quintessential part of human life, and breathing techniques help for better living.

"Every second of our lives is accompanied by a breath. We draw our first breath at birth and release our final breath when we leave this world. Between those two moments unfolds the entire story of our lives", he said.

"Every emotion we experience is reflected in our breathing. When we are anxious, our breath becomes shallow. Breath is the silent bridge between body and mind, between the outer world and our inner selves", he said, adding that his book begins with a "simple propo-

sition: by learning to breathe better, we can learn to live better". Chatterjee was an alumnus of India's National Defence Academy Pune, served in the Indian Army and was decorated for gallantry in 1995.

He later joined the UN and served in leadership positions with UNICEF in Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Indonesia and UN Peacekeeping in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

He retired as UN Coordinator for China last year. During his tenure in China, he became famous highlighting his high-intensity fitness regime and yoga exercises.

Chatterjee is also a visiting Professor at Schwarzman College and Tsinghua University in China. (PTI)

Israeli Military Says It Struck Southern Lebanon As US-Iran Talks Postponed

JERUSALEM, JUN 19: Israel's military said Friday its forces struck targets throughout southern Lebanon overnight as Hezbollah reported intense fighting in the area, threatening the nascent agreement between Iran and the United States to end their war.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported at least 16 people were killed in Israeli airstrikes, which the Israeli military said were ongoing. Breaking news alerts

Continued fighting in Lebanon could unravel the newly signed deal, which calls for an immediate halt to military operations "on all fronts, including in Lebanon," where Israel has been battling the Iran-backed Hezbollah militant group, and for ensuring Lebanon's "territorial integrity and sovereignty."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who faces elections later this year, has refused to withdraw, saying Israeli forces will remain in Lebanon until the threat from Hezbollah

has been eliminated.

The attacks came as planned talks in Switzerland between Iran and the United States over their efforts to reach a permanent end to the Iran war were delayed.

US Vice President JD Vance on Thursday put off his trip to Switzerland where he had been set to lead the talks. The White House blamed logistical issues, but the announcement came after a report from Al-Mayadeen, a pan-Arab satellite channel that is politically allied to Hezbollah, that Iran was delaying sending its del-

egation to Switzerland over Israel's ongoing military campaign in Lebanon.

US President Donald Trump signed the initial pact with Iran on Wednesday while dining with French President Emmanuel Macron at the Palace of Versailles, which took immediate effect.

In comments following the signing, Vance offered a blunt warning to Israel, saying Trump was "the only head of state in the entire world who is sympathetic to the nation of Israel at this moment in time." (AP)

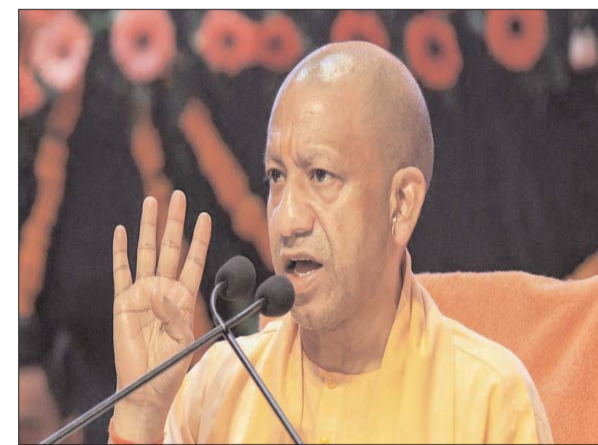
SIT Probe Into Ram Temple Fund Row Will Bring Truth To Light: Adityanath

LUCKNOW/AYODHYA (UP), JUN 19: Expressing confidence that the SIT probe into the alleged embezzlement of funds at the Ram temple in Ayodhya will bring the truth to light, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday urged all parties to refrain from making baseless comments that could hurt the feelings of devotees.

He encouraged anyone with evidence related to the case to present it to the SIT for examination. Adityanath warned that anyone found guilty, regardless of their position, would not be spared.

Adityanath made the remarks in Ayodhya on Friday, where a three-member SIT constituted by the UP government is investigating the alleged embezzlement of funds at the Ram temple.

"I have an appeal for all devotees of Lord Ram regarding the news reports concerning Ayodhya. At the trust's request, we have ordered an SIT investigation, and I can assure you that this probe will bring the absolute truth to light. There is no doubt about that," Adityanath said.



On the same day, Adityanath laid the foundation and inaugurated 126 development projects worth over Rs 378 crore, as well as the statue of warrior Jhalkari Bai.

Making a fervent appeal to the devotees of Lord Ram, Adityanath said, "I humbly request all devotees of Lord Ram to remember that he has taught us the lesson of 'maryada' (righteous conduct). He has shown us how to live with dignity and restraint. For 500 years, our ancestors struggled to reclaim the sacred site of Lord Ram. Let us wait just another 15 days. Do not worry. However, we must not be misled

by those who seek to defame Ayodhya or insult the Ram Janmabhoomi temple."

the Samajwadi Party and the Congress, Adityanath said that these parties would never want Ayodhya to gain prominence or receive the honour it deserves, simply because they lacked the capability themselves and were unable to achieve it.

He also accused them of spreading malicious propaganda.

"These are the people who fired upon devotees of Lord Ram and wielded lathis against those who chanted 'Jai Shri Ram'. They questioned the very existence of Lord Ram and created every

type of hurdle by deploying their lawyers in court to stall proceedings. They should stop lecturing us," Adityanath stated.

Reiterating his appeal to avoid making unwarranted statements and comments with the SIT probe underway, Adityanath requested that any attempts to assassinate someone's character must be discouraged. "Do not try to unnecessarily tarnish the reputation of Ayodhya Dham," he said.

On June 13, the Uttar Pradesh government constituted an SIT following a request from the temple trust to probe allegations of misappropriation of donation money.

The probe follows allegations raised by Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, who, on June 7, cited reports claiming that crores of rupees from donations offered at the temple were missing and urged the courts to take cognisance of the matter.

The fund embezzlement row has triggered political sparring between the ruling BJP and the opposition parties. (AGENCIES)

India can eradicate sickle cell disease before 2047 through collective efforts: President

OMKARESHWAR (MP), JUN 19: President Droupadi Murmu on Friday expressed confidence that India would eradicate sickle cell disease well before its national target year of 2047, underscoring the need for concerted efforts to raise awareness about the genetic blood disorder, particularly among tribal communities.

She was addressing a state-level programme on the occasion of World Sickle Cell Day. Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel and Chief Minister Mohan Yadav were also present on the occasion.

"I am confident that with the collective strength and active participation of all states, we will certainly achieve our national goal of eliminating sickle cell disease



from the country much before 2047," the President said.

Sickle cell disease is an inherited blood disorder in which red blood cells become sickle-shaped instead of their normal round form. The condition affects the flow of oxygen in the body and can

cause pain, anaemia, infections and other health complications.

Murmu said studies have shown that the prevalence of sickle cell disease among tribal communities in India is several times higher than that in the general population.

"I would like to appeal from this platform to all state governments and officials that this disease should not be taken lightly because it is passed on from one generation to another. Efforts should be made to eradicate it completely because treatment is possible. This disease can be eliminated. Such a claim has come to light," she said. Madhya Pradesh and Odisha are among the states with the highest prevalence of sickle cell disease among tribal populations in the country.

Observed annually on June 19, World Sickle Cell Day aims to raise awareness about the disease, promote timely screening and treatment, and improve the quality of life of those affected by the condition. (Agencies)

2 Khalistani Operatives Involved In Targeting Rail Corridor In Punjab Deported From Malaysia



Chandigarh, Jun 19: Punjab Police apprehended two wanted operatives linked to the banned Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF) at the Delhi airport following their deportation from Malaysia, a top official said on Friday.

The deportation of the two accused, Gurwinder Singh of Ambala and Manjeet Singh of Patiala, was secured by Punjab Police with the cooperation of central agencies and Royal Malaysia Police. They were brought to Delhi on Wednesday.

Gurwinder and Manjeet were key Malaysia-based

nodes of a KZF-backed terror module involved in targeting critical railway infrastructure, including the Dedicated Freight Corridor lines in Punjab, Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said in a post on X.

The accused were apprehended by Punjab Police at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi, upon their arrival and brought to Punjab for further investigation, he said.

Earlier, Punjab Police had successfully busted the terror module responsible for the January 23 IED blast on

the Railway Freight Corridor line near Sirhind, Fatehgarh Sahib, and an attempted explosion on the same corridor near Shambhu, Patiala, on April 27.

During the investigation, four accused were arrested and significant militant hardware was recovered, including an RPG launcher, an IED, RDX, hand grenades and high-end pistols with ammunition, the DGP said.

"Subsequent investigations into the transnational conspiracy uncovered the involvement of KZF handlers and financial facilitators operating from Malaysia.

"The deported accused were found to be instrumental in channelling terror funds through offshore accounts to KZF operatives in Punjab, facilitating plans to execute terrorist attacks and disturb peace and public order in the state," Yadav said.

"Both accused were produced before the competent court in Patiala on June 18 and have been remanded to police custody for further interrogation. Investigations are ongoing to unravel the broader network and identify all individuals involved in the conspiracy," the officer said. (AGENCIES)