

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**UNION HRD MINISTER GIVES AWAY PRIZES TO WINNERS OF ‘1ST YOGA
OLYMPIAD’**

New Delhi, June 20th, 2016

Giving away prizes to winners of 1st National Yoga Olympiad in New Delhi today the Union HRD Minister, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani exhorted the participants of Yoga Olympiad to make Yoga as an integral part of their life. She emphasized that Yoga is the only source to ensure peace and stability in life and to remove academic stress. Scientific evidence shows that Yoga improves motor skills and betters hand-eye coordination. It ensures good health as well as peace of mind. The Minister appealed to parents as well as teachers to spare time for Yoga themselves so that children imbibe the habit of Yoga on regular basis. Announcing revamping of Yoga departments from this academic session in 6 Central Universities she expressed hope that seeds of Yoga being sown at school level today will fructify at university level tomorrow.

Making a special mention of participants in Yoga Olympiad from Andaman & Nicobar Islands she hoped participation from every State/UT in next year’s Yoga Olympiad. Smt. Irani asked all parents/guardians and students to convey special thanks to Hon’ble Prime Minister for his unique initiative of organizing international Yoga Day on June 21st throughout the world.

State/UT teams were divided into four categories viz., Upper Primary Girls, Upper Primary Boys, Secondary Girls and Secondary Boys. A total of 322 students along with their 80 teachers from 21 states/UTs participated in the Yoga Olympiad Performance on June 18 and 19. Students belonging to different communities took part in this event with the spirit of yoga. In the four categories, a total number of 48 participants, 4 each for Gold, Silver and Bronze medals were selected.

AYUSH Minister, Shri Shripad Yasso Naik said that practising yoga in daily life promotes health by fighting with ailments in natural way. Referring to various medical science studies, he said Yoga has fostered the process of learning in a speedy way. He acknowledges the collaborative efforts of AYUSH and NCERT under the aegis of Ministry of HRD popularising yoga among the youth.

Quoting a shloka from our ancient Indian philosophy, 'yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam', Secretary, Ministry of HRD, Dr. Subhash Chandra Khuntia explained that focus and dedication to Yoga is a key to bringing equilibrium in physical, mental, emotional and social developments,

Dr. H. R. Nagendra, Vice Chancellor, S-VYASA University, Bangluru said that yoga is not only about asanas, its holistic way includes asanas, kriyas, bandha, mudra, etc. He expressed his happiness over the NCERT's initiative to cover all these in Yoga Olympiad.

Director, NCERT, Prof. H.K. Senapaty, also addressed the gathering.

GG/RK/1st YOGA OLYMPIAD