Unfair to see yoga as a set of exercises: PM

Inaugurates 112-foot bust of ‘Adi Yogi’ at Isha Yoga Centre in Coimbatore

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said it was unfair to see yoga as just a set of exercises, that it brought about inner peace and helped one live in harmony with nature.

Speaking at the Mahashivratri celebrations after inaugurating the 112-foot bust of the ‘Adi Yogi’ at the Isha Yoga Centre near here, he said that yoga helped one live in peace with himself or herself, for it ushered harmony in body, mind and intellect.

“Yoga is a journey from me to we,” the PM said. “There is ample evidence to suggest that yoga helps combat stress. It is a passport to health assurance. More than a cure, it is a means to wellness.”

“The people of this country, who worship trees and animals along with gods, lived in harmony with nature,” Mr. Modi said, adding, “Another Indian virtue is to accept truth from whichever direction it comes, and being open to ideas. These are the virtues that hold India together. But a select few tend to reject ideas only because they are ancient. They should have the openness to analyse and then accept those ideas if there was truth in them.”

Isha Yoga’s founder Jaggi Vasudev said that man, in his pursuit of happiness, was looking everywhere but not within.

“Pain and pleasure, agony and ecstasy etc., are all within man,” he said. Mr. Vasudev complimented the PM for “taking to the street to promote the ancient science [of yoga].”