Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday gave a clarion call to create a new yoga of togetherness and harmony through yoga.

Unveiling the 112-ft tall bust of Adiyogi, the first yoga guru, consecrated by Isha Yoga Centre founder Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev in the foothills of the Velliangiri mountains in Coimbatore district on Friday, Modi said yoga could be the panacea for lifestyle diseases, stress and addiction.

He even suggested that yoga could be crucial for world peace. "The whole world wants peace, not just peace from wars and conflict, but peace of the mind," he said.

"Lifestyle-related ailments, stress-related diseases are becoming more and more common. It gives me immense solace, one that I cannot describe in words, when I read about people taking to exercise and shun alcohol because they are not able to live without it," Modi said.

There is evidence that practising yoga helps combat stress and chronic conditions. If the body is a temple, the mind yoga creates a beautiful temple, he said adding that more than being a cure to ailments it is a means to wellness.

"Practising and turning one’s body in different postures is not yoga. Yoga is far beyond physiological exercises. Yoga — it is ancient, not modern, it is constant, not evolving. The essence of yoga has not changed. It is of utmost importance to preserve this essence," he said.

Underlining the need for peaceful coexistence, Modi said, "Lord Shiva is everywhere, and is referred to the bull, peacock and mouse that were the vehicle of Lord Shiva and his son Godarthan and Kartik. He also talked about the venomous snake Vasuki curled around Shiva’s neck that symbolises the importance of peaceful coexistence. The family of Lord Shiva is a symbol of harmony in diversity." He stressed the need to protect nature which is part and parcel of our culture. "Each god is associated with an animal, bird or tree, which is also worshipped with the same spirit as the godworshipped. There cannot be a better reason to incorporate a spirit of reverence for nature. Nature equals to God, this has been firmly established by our ancestors, and this greatly enhances their religious sentiments that have been behind Indian civilization since the times of Rama, Akbar and Chandragupta Maurya."

The ritual of placing garlands of flowers on the busts of Adiyogi was conducted near Isha Yoga Centre.

A million yoga veeras in a year

Adiyogi is a model of human excellence, the Isha Yoga Centre would create one million yoga veeras who would impart the basic techniques of yoga to 100 people each. A book on Adiyogi was also released, which Sadhguru said was a mix of lectures, journals, anecdotes, short stories and experiences of people.

"As humans, we have always worshipped human elements and never understood the reasons. We looked at them as threats always. But Adiyogus taught us that we should look inside ourselves," he said. He added that "in pursuit of our well being, we have not once considered the importance of putting the essence of the mind before the body."

"Let the millions of people who have been able to do it now be the ones to own this event," said Isha Yoga Centre director Arvind Venkat.

The Isha Yoga Centre division of Isha Foundation welcomed 100 students from all over the world who were part of the event.

A million yoga veeras in a year

Stress Buster:

People who practice yoga have said they are experiencing a lot of change in their physical and mental abilities.