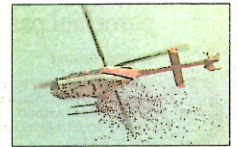
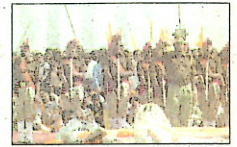


# HT Allahabad Live

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## Tearful adieu to Yogi



BK Singh  
Allahabad, February 11

THE MORTAL remains of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, one of the greatest Indian seers of the 21st century who mesmerised nearly 200 countries with his Transcendental Meditation (TM), was consigned to flames with State honour at his Arail Ashram on the banks of Ganga here on Monday afternoon.

Rose petals were showered from a helicopter before the Agni Samadhi of TM Guru. The ceremony was performed on a specially erected platform amid chanting of Vedic hymns.

The mukhagni was given by Girish Srivastava, Maharishi's nephew, exactly at 12.50 pm. The sandalwood laden pyre was up in flames within seconds.

The last rites, though closely watched by a massive crowd with tears in eyes, including hundreds of foreigners and dignitaries was not restive. The gesture was in consonance with what the Yogi had preached throughout his life - peace.

Maharaja Hari Raj Raja Ram alias Dr Tony Nader who has been given this title by the seer stood up from the chair along with 32 Rajas and the Prime Minister to offer floral tributes

to their spiritual Guru who left them behind to further his holy mission.

This was followed by the lighting of the pyre amid chanting of Jai Guru Dev. For the next nearly two hours the crowd remained glued to its place watching in silence the body being reduced to ashes.

The Central government was represented by Union Minister for Food Processing and Industry, Subodh Kant Sahai who paid floral tributes to the Yogi along with Mayor Chaudhary Jitendra Nath Singh and Shekhar Bahuguna, said that such great men are born after centuries. The country is proud to have been blessed with a seer like Mahesh Yogi who has followers all across the world.

VHP international president Ashok Singhal was the next to offer flowers to the body. Senior BJP leader Kesari Nath Tripathi paid floral tributes on behalf of former PM Atal Behari Bajpai and Leader of the Opposition, LK Advani. Divisional Commissioner PK Jha and DM Ashish Goel placed wreaths on behalf of the state government.

Another great seer and Maharishi's disciple Sri Sri Ravi Shankar also sat through the ceremony after offering ghee to the body. Shankaracharya Jy-

otirpeeth Swami Vasudevanand Saraswati offered sandalwood to the body of the Maharshi.

The 'asthi' will be immersed in the Sangam on February 12 around 10.30 am while the 'bhasm' (ashes) will be collected in pitchers to be immersed in rivers at all the holy places in the country, said the Shankaracharya.

According to Indian time, the Maharshi left for heavenly abode on February 6 when it was February 5 in Holland. As such 'pind' and 'ghnt' ceremony will be held on the sixth day, ie February 12, said the Shankaracharya. Daswa will be held on February 14 followed by Ekadashi and Dwadashi on February 15 and 16. Shodashi will be observed on February 21 followed by Bhandara, he added.

Commenting on his death VHP president Ashok Singhal said, Maharshi was perhaps the greatest Indian spiritual leader of the century who took the West by storm.

He preached Vedas and transcendental meditation in easy to follow style that endeared him to all. He preached world peace through Vedic science which alone has the capacity to lessen violence and make administration better.



(From top to bottom) Dr Tony Nader and followers performing 'parikrama' after the cremation, different 'Rajas' paying tributes and VVIPs including Union Minister Sobodh Kant Sahai, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Shankaracharya Vasudevanand Saraswati and Ashok Singhal at the Agni Samadhi venue. (Right) State honour being given, rose petals being showered from a helicopter and foreign devotees watching the ceremony.

PICTURES BY KAMAL KISHORE/HT

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