

ATI RUDRA MAHA YAJNA

Krnjak (near Zagreb), Croatia, from 17th to 27th of July 2018

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Program Overview

1.1 What are the exact dates of the program? How many days? Why is 12-days mentioned in registration?

Ati Rudra Mahayajnam is a 11-day event entailing homa (offering into sacred fire) and eka dasa (11 times) rudram chanting by at least 121-individuals + 12 priests. This would be from 17th of July to 27th of July, 2017. A commitment of 12-days is required to fully participate in the offering as a Ritwik (from July 16). In addition to chanting Rudra ekadasini (11x rudram), at least 121 Ritwiks along with 11 priests will offer 1 cycle of Rudram as homam at 11-homa kundas (sacred fire pits) every day for all 11-days. Japa (chanting), Homa (offering into sacred fire), Abhishekam (offering of holy liquids) completes the Ati Rudra Maha Yajna. An ARMY at Krnjak, Croatia, commemorating the 100th Aradhana year of Shirdi Sai Bhagawan, will be an offering at the lotus feet of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, for Universal Peace, Unity and Prosperity of all beings in all the worlds.

1.2 What is the overall program structure and schedule for the 11-days in the morning and evening?

Regular daily program (17th of July to 27th of July) will consist of aruna parayanam, mahanyasam, ekadasa (11-times) rudra japam along with abhishekam and homam. Everyone can join the chanting of the Rudram. Homam will be led by 11 priests along with at least 121 ritwiks. Each day event in the morning will be 5-6 hours; followed by lunch prasadam from 12:00 – 13:00 hrs. Evening program will be archana (with Ghana patham) along with special programs. First day of the program (July 16) there will be Ganapathi and Navagraha Homams (for removal of all obstacles and the auspicious alignment of planetary forces and energies) as is traditionally done at the beginning of all great pujas, yajnas etc. Sai Maheswara Lingam that was consecrated during Badrinath ARMY in 2015 and Tiruvannamalai ARMY in 2017 will be worshipped during this Yajnam. Grand finale will be on day 11, auspicious Gurupurnima Friday 27th of July, that will have the morning program, mahapurnahuti (supreme offering), and felicitations expected to conclude by afternoon 14h (2 PM). Devotees may depart after 15h (3 PM) on 27th of July.

1.3 I only know Rudram Chanting, am I supposed to learn how to do Homam?

You do not need to know how to do homam. Every homa kundam will have a priest who will be fluent with the procedure and instruct you when to offer into the sacred fire along with “svaha-kara” at the end of each mantra in Namakam and Camakam. We request you to familiarize when the “svaha” comes during Rudram chanting. Please go to below website and find learning tools – pdf and mp3 files.

<http://vedaunion.org/projects/rudram11/material/>

1.4 What does it mean to be a Ritwik? How is that different from being a chanter, devotees, volunteer?

Each of the 11 homakundam Ritwik is given the opportunity to do both chanting and also, offer into the homam. Chanters will be given the opportunity to do chanting and also, offer abhishekam to the lingam. Ritwiks and Chanters are expected to be fluent in chanting Rudram and comfortable in doing each cycle in roughly 11 to 13 min per cycle. It is a unique blessing to be part of this event in any capacity. Being a volunteer is also doing Yajna of service.

EVERYONE WILL BE UNIQUELY BLESSED!

1.5 I signed up as Ritwik and when will I know if I am confirmed to be a Ritwik? You said 11 homa kundams, how will I know where I would be sitting?

Ritwik assignments will be finalized during 1st week of May. We are working through the logistics to maximize opportunity for everyone from all corners of globe - independent of caste, creed, religion, and gender. Each homakundam will have a specific name and at least 11 spots for Ritwiks. You will be assigned to a specific homakundam and allocated a specific spot. Your registration package will have the details when you arrive.

1.6 Are there any special privileges for Ritwiks like reimbursement for expenses, etc.?

No special privileges are offered and all participants including Ritwiks have to pay for their travel and accommodation costs. Devotees are requested to make their own travel and lodging arrangements. List of lodging options and distance from the Yajnasala are provided below. We are all obliged to pay 50% of a deposit by 15th of May via Agency. Please contact your country lead.

We are planning to provide bus service to Yajnasala. Pickup and drop off locations will be announced later.

1.7 How much would it cost for travel and accommodation?

Travel costs depend on where you are coming from, the mode of transportation, and the choice of your accommodation. Please review the following sections for planning purposes.

1.8 Can I share my Ritwik assignment with my spouse, family member or friend when they arrive?

No. Ritwik privileges are not transferable. You are also required to take your assigned spot every day.

1.9 What is planned in the evening for all the 11-days?

We are planning the evenings for the special pujas, cultural events, as well as distinguished speakers. Details will be announced in the following communications. We will give opportunity to devotees that attending all the 11-days to participate and / or lead the evening events.

1.10 What is the dress code for Ritwiks?

In order to respect the local community, all Ritwiks can wear simple but clean white clothes. Men, shirts and long pants. Women, no tight clothes, covered upper body. Devotees that are comfortable wearing saris and dhotis can do so as well. If you prefer wearing traditional Indian attire, please inform your leads by May 15th so that we can purchase such clothes on your behalf. You can pay and obtain those (at cost) when you register.

2. Travel

2.1 Do I have to pay for my travel and accommodation?

All participants will book their travel and accommodation on their own. Along with this FAQ, please find attached nearby accommodation list and also Google map showing the accommodation and the ARMY location with distances. Kindly book your accommodations ASAP.

2.2 When should I arrive and when can I depart?

- **Arrival Date:** 15th of July. All Ritwiks and chanters are required to be present by no later than late evening of July 15th. Ritwiks take up Deeksha (commitment for the yajna) on July 16 morning. If you miss Deeksha, you will miss the opportunity to be a Ritwik. It is recommended that you arrive at least a day prior to the event.
- **ARMY Dates:** Starts on Tuesday, 17th of July and concludes with Mahapurnahuti on Friday, 27th of July.
- **Departure Date:** The event will conclude on 27th of July by 14h. Please plan an hour and a half driving time from the venue to Zagreb Airport. Kindly create your itinerary based on this information.

More detailed schedule of the daily events will be provided at a later date.

2.3 What Airport should I book my tickets to?

The closest international airport to Krnjak is Zagreb <http://www.zagreb-airport.hr/en> (ZAG). A distance from Zagreb airport to Krnjak is 83 km and it takes around 1h of driving with a car. Please let us know your arrival date and time so we could organize a group transfers from the airport to your chosen hotel/hostel.

2.4 What about ground travel?

DUE TO THE LIMITED PARKING SPACE AROUND YAGNASALA, IF YOU ARRIVE BY CAR, WE REQUEST TO PARK AT THE HOTEL / LODGING AND TAKE THE SHUTTLES TO YAJNASALA ALONG WITH OTHER DEVOTEES. ONLY CARS WITH THE SPECIAL PERMISSION WILL BE ALLOWED TO PARK AT YAJNASALA GROUND. THANK YOU FOR UNDERSTANDING.

2.5 How can I know who else is coming from my area? Is there a plan to communicate within locations / group?

Local Leads for each area are already announced. Your Local Lead will be the point of contact for questions regarding the event and group spiritual activities (sadhana).

2.6 How is the weather during this period?

Second half of July is the beginning of the hottest period in the calendar year. The climate in this area is moderate continental. Temperature fluctuates between 25 and 35 degrees Celsius (77 F to 95 F). <https://www.accuweather.com/en/hr/krnjak/113355/month/113355?monyr=7/01/2018>

3. Accommodation & ARMY Venue

3.1 What are the accommodation options?

Country coordinators will contact all registered attendees from their respective countries and arrange the most appropriate accommodation. Overview of available accommodation near Krnjak can be downloaded from below. Payment upfront is required as per the specification in the document.

<http://vedaunion.org/static/pdf/ARMY-Accommodation-All.pdf>

Country leads should get in contact with Mrs. Kristina or Mrs. Ksenija from the Agency at sai@talesofcroatia.com and book the accommodation for their respective group.

3.2 What is the distance between selected accommodations and ARMY Venue?

| No. | Name of accommodation | Distance to ARMY Venue |
|-----|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Hostel Bedem, Karlovac | 23 KM |
| 2 | Hotel Duga Resa | 22 KM |

| | | |
|----|---|-------|
| 3 | Hunter's home Muljava | 18 KM |
| 4 | SAN MARCO, private accommodation, Tušilović | 10 KM |
| 5 | B&B CINDRIČ (family house), Karlovac | 23 KM |
| 6 | Apartment and rooms 4 rivers (apartment), Karlovac | 23 KM |
| 7 | HIPSTER HOSTEL, Duga Resa | 22 KM |
| 8 | RESTAURANT DP B&B (B&B) and Mrežnica house, Duga Resa | 15 KM |
| 9 | Zen Oaza Tara (guest house), Duga Resa | 20 KM |
| 10 | Robinson camp | 26 KM |
| 11 | Camping Radonja, Tušilović | 8 KM |
| 12 | Camping Slapić, Duga Resa | 17 KM |

For a detailed map please visit:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1sCXVJSrOkLpC7czvXexDXwIIcK6H2GcW&usp=sharing>

3.3 How will I travel from my hotel to the ARMY Venue?

Special shuttle buses will be arranged from each selected hotels to the ARMY Venue several times a day. Approximate costs per person for all 12 days will be UP TO 108 EUR (precise cost will be announced later this month).

3.4 What are the VISA requirements for Croatia?

You may find complete VISA requirements on below address:

<http://vedaunion.org/static/pdf/ARMY-Visa.pdf>

3.5 Are there any special requirements for Visa for Indian passport holders?

Indian passport holders kindly get in touch with Mr. Devaraj Rangaswamy from Croatia at devarajvakkalu@gmail.com or Mr. Prabhakara Yellai from US at pyellai@yahoo.com.

3.6 My family is joining me for all the 12 days do I have to register them?

All individuals above 5 years of age joining you from your family for all the 12-days, you must register each of them at <https://goo.gl/forms/7EYZuR9fhaGtSgil2>.

3.7 If I would like to participate only for a couple of days, should I also need to register?

EVERYONE NEEDS TO REGISTER. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT. Everybody will get registration card at the entrance of the Yajna venue. Kindly add the dates of your participation during on-line registration process in the question "Do you intend to participate all 12 days from 16th of July to 27th of July?"

3.8 When is the deadline for registration?

The registration for Ritwiks is closed. The only exception is if your daily sadhana includes already Sri Rudram chanting and you still haven't registered yet. The registration for devotees, volunteers and chanters are open until 1st of June.

3.9 What are the directions to ARMY Venue by car?

As noted above, parking is limited at the Venue. We request all the devotees to arrive at their hotels and utilize the shuttles to arrive at the Venue.

4. Sadhana – Spiritual Preparation & Practice

4.1 Is there a prescribed daily sadhana?

WE REQUEST ALL REGISTRANTS, SPECIFICALLY RITWIKS, TO ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING DAILY SADHANA (MAR 18 TO JUL 16).

- Dedicate 30 min for daily prayers (see below) without multitasking with other activities such as driving, daily chores, etc.
- Daily Prayers are a must. Adhere to a specific time and place as much as possible.
- Practice Ceiling on Desires minimizing sensual distractions and conserving food, money, time, energy, and utmost reverence to the 5 elements of nature.
- Absolutely No Alcohol, No Meat, No Eggs, and No smoking. Minimize distractions of watching television, movies, and even over indulgence in social media apps.
- Observe Spiritual Silence to the extent possible.

4.2 What is a proposed daily prayer format?

Daily Prayer format:

- 3 Oms
- Gananam Tva
- 3 Gayatri
- Sri Rudram
- Durga Suktam
- 3 Sai Gayatri
- Kshama prarthana
- Svasti Prajabhyah

4.3 Is group sadhana also encouraged?

Along with individual sadhana for upcoming ARMY, we cordially encourage you to start with the **group sadhana** in your respective countries as well.

Globally, there will be 3 consecutive monthly Ekadasini Rudrabhisekas (11 times Rudram + Abhisheka on the lingam) on **12th of May**, **9th of June** and **7th of July** at **16:30 CEST**. Please organize these events in your respective countries (you can do only the chanting) so we can all connect throughout the Europe and world in our prayers and devotion prior to ARMY. If you would not be able to join, You can watch the live stream of this event from California (US) at <http://tiny.cc/vedastudylive> and join the chanting from your homes. Please join your country team of Ritwiks and chanters and gather at these particular dates in chanting and prayers.

4.4 Should I register as a Ritwik or a devotee or volunteer?

If you are able to do the above sadhana for 121 days (Mar 18 to Jul 16), with love, sincerity, and strict discipline, then kindly register as Ritwik. If not, please register as devotee or volunteer. We will finalize Ritwiks during the 1st week of May. Please visit <https://goo.gl/forms/7EYZuR9fhaGtSgil2> to register.

5. Contribution

5.1 Whom should I contact for providing a contribution to this endeavor?

All those who wish to contribute with labor, material or make financial contribution, please contact Mr. Branimir Gonan at branimir@vedaunion.org.

6. Country leads

6.1 How do I know who my country lead is?

| Country | Name | Email |
|------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Želimir Milosević | zelimir.milosevic@gmail.com |
| Croatia | Borna Lulić | borna.lulic@gmail.com |
| Germany | Marlene Hildebrandt | marlene.marie.hildebrandt@googlemail.com |
| Hungary | Ildikó Győri | ildi.gyori@gmail.com |
| India | Prabhakara Yellai | pyellai@yahoo.com |
| Italy | Fabio Gobbo | sitaram23@libero.it |
| Russia | Alexandra Koptelova | koptelova.am@gmail.com |
| Serbia | Spomenka Simeunović Marki | spomenkasmarki@gmail.com |
| Slovenia | Vojko Kerčan | vojko@vedaunion.org |
| Switzerland | Stefano Pedrazzi | pedrazzistefano@gmail.com |
| Turkey | Taya Kahraman | apocryphataya@gmail.com |
| USA | Pavan Jella | pavan.jella@gmail.com |

6.2 My county lead is not on the list, whom should I contact?

If your country lead is not on the list, kindly contact army@vedaunion.org.