

## **Silicon Valley plans Madison Square Garden like reception for PM Modi**

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**Washington:** Indian-Americans in California have begun preparations for a grand reception similar to last year's Madison Square Garden event for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who would be the only second Indian premier to visit the state with a trip planned in September to Silicon Valley.

Representatives of Indian-American organisations held their first full-fledged preparatory meeting in Sunnyvale, California to accord the grand reception to Modi at Silicon Valley, during the September visit.

Modi is to attend the Annual General Assembly meeting of the United Nations in New York in September-end.

After that, he is set to visit Silicon Valley and address Indian-Americans, including technology entrepreneurs, there though an official announcement is yet to be made.

"We have planned a community reception on the evening of September 27 at the SAP Centre, San Jose where close to 20,000 people are expected to gather to hear him speak," Khanderao Kand of newly-formed Indo-American Community of West Coast USA told PTI.

The meeting was addressed by the Indian Ambassador to the US, Arun K Singh, via a video conference.

Among others, it was attended by Consul-General of India in San Francisco, Venkatesh Ashok, and Dr Vijay Chauthaiwale, in-charge foreign relations department of BJP.

Chauthaiwale is on a visit to San Francisco Bay Area to oversee the preparations for the reception.

"The event is a historic moment for the Indian community in Silicon Valley and the diaspora in general," he said.

The Prime Minister's visit is considered significant, especially with regard to his "Digital India" initiative that aims to use technology in connecting people and transforming governance in India, said a media note by the organisation.

Modi would be the second Indian Prime Minister to visit San Francisco-Bay Area after Jawahar Lal Nehru's trip in 1949.

San Francisco-Bay Area, of which Silicon Valley is a part, is home to about half-a-million-strong Indian-Americans.

Last year when Modi visited the US, he was given a grand reception at New York's historic Madison Square Garden. He addressed nearly 20,000 Indian-Americans there.

- PTI