

Embassy of India
Budapest, Hungary

**Felicitation Ceremony of Mr Neeraj Chopra
at Embassy of India, Budapest, Hungary**

(Press Release)

Felicitation Ceremony of Mr Neeraj Chopra for securing Gold in World Athletics Championship 2023 on 28 August 2023.

Sports is one of the priorities of the Government of India. 29 August, the birth anniversary of India's Hockey legend, Major Dhyan Chand is celebrated as the National Sports Day every year. Marking the National Sports Day of India 2019, Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi launched the "Fit India Mission", which led a mass movement to inculcate culture of sports and fitness in the country. "Sports as an enabler for an inclusive and fit society" is the theme for the National Sports Day 2023.

27 August, 2023 was an historic day when India's sports icon, Mr. Neeraj Chopra won the Gold Medal in Javelin at the World Athletics Championship 2023 held in Budapest. Neeraj is the first Indian to achieve this honour. Marking this rare feat, the Embassy of India, Budapest, Hungary felicitated Mr. Neeraj Chopra. The Felicitation Ceremony began with welcome remarks by Ambassador of India, HE Mr Partha Satpathy, who congratulated the Indian sports icon, his family, his Coach, entire Indian team and his fans, who were present in good number at the Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre (ASCC) auditorium.

Ambassador Satpathy remarked that "it is a very different feeling to win at international level because of the international spotlight". He highlighted that Neeraj's achievement is more special for us as people living abroad always carry India in their hearts. Ambassador Satpathy highlighted Neeraj Chopra as "Rajdoot" (Goodwill Ambassador) because of his unique achievement in sports.

Ambassador highlighted three significant points of his win: First, drawing an analogy of India's rise at the international level, he said, that the trajectory of India's rise and javelin are quite similar because we soar high, yet we are firmly rooted at our feet". "India is the largest democracy, highest economic growth, science and technology enabler, striving in education, health and sports; yet India is a country which recognises its global responsibility". Second, he added, "When you win a medal for India, the win is for the 1.4 billion Indians because you carry the hopes of these people who pray for you". "You share the glory and pain with 1.4

billion people". Third, he remarked that Neeraj Chopra aptly exemplifies, in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "Be the change you want to see in the world". He remarked, "Neeraj is the change we are seeing in India. Neeraj today has shown with his dedication and efforts that sports in India is at the forefront. There are numerous sporting events alongside cricket and hockey such as athletics which are getting lot of support not only from the government and corporates but also from strong athletes in India". He concluded by congratulating him and wishing him success in all his future endeavours.

Speaking at the felicitation ceremony, Neeraj Chopra thanked Indian Embassy as well as the audience for showering him with such love and respect. He added that it is very special to win for India and even more special to win a medal abroad. The playing of the Indian National Anthem after winning a gold and the respect others pay to the National Anthem is what motivates us to work even harder and win more medals. He added, "Over the years, tremendous transformation has come in Indian sports, particularly athletics including javelin, sprinting and long-jump." He concluded by saying, "In every field there is a gradual improvement in India and I believe that in the coming future we will emerge as an important power in various fields."

Event concluded with participants taking the "Fit India Pledge" as part of the celebration of the National Sports Day of India.
