

Speech by H.E Mr. Anshuman Gaur, Ambassador of India

India Day event by ELTE Alumni Association

Budapest 10 October 2025

Excellencies, esteemed faculty and staff of the ELTE Faculty of Humanities, distinguished scholars, distinguished Alumni, dear students, and friends of India,

Namaskar, Good evening everyone!

It is a profound honour to be here at the India Day celebrations, hosted by the ELTE Alumni Association. ELTE stands as a beacon of learning and intellectual curiosity in Central Europe, and to dedicate a day to the depth and diversity of India is truly heartwarming. This gathering is not merely an annual event; it is a reaffirmation of the timeless spiritual and intellectual connection that links the Danube and the Ganga.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the people of Hungary and this institution on the announcement that Hungarian author László Krasznahorkai has won the Nobel Literature Prize. It is matter of joy for literature lovers across Hungary and India.

The friendship between India and Hungary is built on an enduring foundation, cemented by a long and scholarly tradition of Indian studies. Hungarian Indology is not a recent phenomenon; it is a venerable discipline pioneered by intellectual giants. How can one speak of this field without immediately invoking the name of Alexander Csoma? His epic journey two centuries ago, in search of the ancient homeland of the Hungarian people, led him to the heart of the Himalayas, where he became the founder of Tibetology and an early, monumental figure in Indology.

This academic tradition continued through the works of scholars like Ervin Baktay, the celebrated Indologist and art historian, whose dedication ensured that the classical wisdom and vibrant culture of India reached the Hungarian people. This deep historical engagement

shows that India is not foreign terrain here; it is a familiar landscape of the mind, nurtured by generations of Hungarian scholars and explorers.

And this connection thrives today. Whether through the global popularity of Yoga, the widespread appreciation for Indian cuisine, or the immense affection Hungarians show for our cinema and music, the receptivity and curiosity of the Hungarian people towards India is truly remarkable. This curiosity reflects a deep-seated open-mindedness and a genuine thirst to understand the world's most ancient, yet rapidly modernizing, and its largest democracy. For this warm welcome and embrace of Indian culture, we are eternally grateful.

The India you study today is experiencing a profound and rapid transformation. Under the leadership and vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we are now the world's fourth-largest economy, driven by a massive youthful demographic dividend and revolutionary digital public infrastructure. Initiatives like the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and the Aadhaar biometric system have allowed us to leapfrog traditional development models. India's recent successful G20 Presidency and our ambitious space missions, such as the successful Chandrayaan lunar landing, underscore our commitment to global responsibility, technological leadership, and multilateral cooperation. This synergy of deep tradition and blazing innovation defines the new India—a nation ready to lead and partner globally.

It is precisely this enthusiasm that institutions like the ELTE Faculty of Humanities are so brilliantly fostering. By integrating the study of India into their curriculum, organizing these focused events, and supporting young scholars, you are not just teaching history or language; you are equipping future Hungarian diplomats, journalists, economists, and thinkers with critical knowledge about a nation that will define the 21st century.

Your work ensures that the next generation understands India not just as a cultural reservoir, but as a key strategic, economic, and technological partner. You are forging the intellectual expertise necessary for our nations to collaborate meaningfully on the global stage.

This shared academic, cultural, and forward-looking foundation provides the bedrock for our rapidly maturing bilateral relations. Our bilateral trade has recently surpassed \$1.2 billion, with significant Indian investments flowing into Hungary, from sectors as diverse as automotive tyres to digital technologies.

On behalf of the Government of India, I reaffirm the Embassy's commitment to encouraging and supporting Indian studies here in Hungary. We view this as a strategic priority and are here to partner with the ELTE Faculty of Humanities and every dedicated institution. We will continue to facilitate academic exchanges, provide resources for bilateral programs, and ensure that the Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre remains a dynamic hub for people-to-people connections.

Let us carry forward the torch lit by Csoma, ensuring the bridge between India and Hungary, built on ancient wisdom and modern ambition, grows stronger with every passing year.

Thank you. *Dhanyawad.*