

Ambassador's remarks at launch of Gita translation

Sivananda Yoga Centre, Budapest

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Namaskar. Jó napot kívánok.

Distinguished guests, scholars, friends of India, and the dedicated members of the Sivananda Yoga Centre,

We gather here for an occasion that is at once a celebration of literature, of spiritual inquiry, and of a deep, abiding friendship between two nations. Today, we are unveiling a new Hungarian translation of one of the world's most revered philosophical texts: the Gita.

That we are releasing this sacred text today is no mere accident of the calendar. We do so on the International Day of Yoga. This convergence is beautiful, and it carries immense meaning. Over a decade ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi took a vision to the United Nations, driven by the conviction that India's ancient heritage is not a possession to be guarded, but a gift to be shared with all of humanity. The establishment of the International Day of Yoga was born from this exact spirit—a desire to offer the world a holistic pathway to physical health, mental clarity, and inner peace.

To see that vision thriving here in Hungary fills me with immense pride. And much of the credit for that reality belongs to the hosts of today's gathering. The Sivananda Yoga Centre has been nothing short of a lighthouse for Indian heritage in this country. Your stellar contribution to the popularization of yoga in Hungary is recognized and deeply appreciated. You have not just taught postures; you have cultivated an environment where the holistic values of the Indian tradition are lived, breathed, and shared with immense generosity.

Your work falls on fertile soil, because the Hungarian people possess a rare and remarkable intellectual curiosity. Throughout my time here, I have been continually struck by your open-mindedness. Whether it is embracing Yoga, exploring the healing systems of Ayurveda, or even appreciating the complex, vibrant flavors of Indian cuisine, Hungarians do not merely skim the surface. You seek to understand the essence of things.

When Hungarian practitioners approach yoga, they quickly move beyond the manifest benefits to the body and the mind. You seek out its spiritual dimensions. You ask the deeper questions about consciousness, about presence, and about the nature of the self.

It is this shared affinity for deep, philosophical inquiry that forms the true bedrock of our bilateral relationship. The warm and multi-faceted ties between India and Hungary are underpinned by mutual respect and shared democratic values. Today, our political and commercial relations are growing stronger than ever before. With the landmark conclusion of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement, our economic destinies

are becoming increasingly intertwined, opening new avenues for prosperity, innovation, and trade. Yet, even as our economies merge and our political dialogues expand, culture remains our most vibrant, beating link. Economics can build roads between nations, but it is culture, literature, and philosophy that build bridges between hearts.

And there is no sturdier bridge than the Gita.

We live in a complex, often turbulent world. If we look at the current geopolitical scenario, we see a landscape fractured by conflict, rapid technological upheaval, and deep uncertainties about the future. Leaders and citizens alike find themselves grappling with competing moral imperatives and a sense of profound overwhelm.

In such a world, the global appeal of the Gita is more apparent than ever. The Gita does not offer a retreat from the world; it demands engagement with it. It is a dialogue that takes place on a battlefield—the ultimate symbol of human crisis and moral dilemma. Through the conversation between Prince Arjuna and Lord Krishna, the Gita addresses the core anxieties of the human condition. It teaches us how to act with courage when the path is unclear, how to uphold our duty without being paralyzed by the fear of outcomes, and how to find an unbreakable inner stillness amidst the deafening noise of the world.

It is entirely fitting that it is a Yoga Centre bringing this translation to the Hungarian public, because the Gita is, fundamentally, the ultimate manual on Yoga. Often, in the modern world, we reduce yoga to a physical discipline. The Gita expands it to its true, magnificent scale. It teaches the Yoga of Knowledge, the Yoga of Devotion, and the Yoga of Action.

To illustrate this intrinsic link, I am reminded of a vital verse from the second chapter of the Gita, where Lord Krishna defines the very essence of the practice.

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।

सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥

“Yogasthah\ kuru\ karmani\ sangam\ tyaktva\ dhananjaya,

Siddhy-asiddhyoh\ samo\ bhutva\ samatvam\ yogal uchyate.”

“Perform your duty equanimously, O Arjuna, abandoning all attachment to success or failure. Such equanimity is called Yoga.”

This is the great value of the text. Yoga is not about escaping our responsibilities; it is about achieving a state of internal balance so perfect that we can walk through the fires of our daily lives—our personal struggles, our professional duties, our global crises—with clarity, compassion, and grace.

I am aware that this may not be the very first time the Bhagavad Gita has been translated into the Hungarian language. But let me assure you, this new translation is as valuable and necessary as any that has come before it. The Gita is an endless ocean of wisdom. No single dive, no single interpretation, can possibly bring up all its treasures. Every generation must approach it anew. Every translator brings their own unique spiritual resonance to the text. We can mine this ocean again and again, and

we will always surface with new gems of knowledge, newly relevant to the times we live in.

To the authors, the translators, and the editors who dedicated themselves to this painstakingly beautiful work: I offer my deepest compliments. Translating a spiritual text requires more than linguistic skill; it requires a tuning of the soul. You have taken on an extremely important task in spreading the light of the Gita to the people of Hungary.

I wish this book all the success it so richly deserves. May it find its way into classrooms, onto bedside tables, and into the quiet moments of reflection of countless readers across this great country. May it serve as a faithful companion to those seeking equanimity, and may it forever stand as a testament to the beautiful, enduring friendship between India and Hungary.

Thank you. **Köszönöm szépen.**