

Remarks by Ambassador at the International Yoga Day Celebrations

Budapest

21 June 2026

Excellencies, Representatives of the Government of Hungary, corporate partners, members of the Indian Community in Hungary and most importantly, the wonderful community of Yoga enthusiasts gathered here today,

Namaskar, Jó reggelt kívánok, and a very warm welcome to you all.

We are gathered today in the heart of this magnificent city, surrounded by the inspiring energy of this sports university stadium, to celebrate the grand finale of the 12th International Day of Yoga. It is deeply fitting that we conclude our national celebrations in a space entirely dedicated to the pursuit of physical excellence, health, and human potential.

Over the past several weeks, the energy of Yoga has truly swept across the beautiful landscape of Hungary. This morning's gathering in Budapest is the beautiful peak of a remarkable journey. Leading up to today, the Embassy of India, working side by side with dedicated local communities, organized over 100 smaller events to spread the message of wellness across the country.

We saw hundreds of people roll out their mats at large regional gatherings in Győr, Eger, Nyíregyháza, and along the serene shores of Balatonfüred. From the rolling hills of your wine regions to the quiet lakesides, ordinary Hungarians took time out of their busy lives to breathe, stretch, and find their center. The sheer scale of this enthusiasm across the country is staggering. To put it into perspective, right here in Budapest alone, there are now over 600 active yoga studios. Watching so many of you embrace this tradition with such genuine passion is incredibly moving. It shows the true depth of the friendship our people share.

But what is it about Yoga that draws us, across different continents and entirely different cultures, to sit together on these mats?

Yoga is India's cherished gift of heritage to the world. Born thousands of years ago in the quiet ashrams of India, its wisdom remains startlingly relevant to the loud, fast-paced world we live in today. Often, when people hear the word "Yoga," they picture physical flexibility—someone bending, stretching, or balancing. And those physical benefits are very real. Standing here in a premier institution of athletic study, it is wonderful to see modern science embrace ancient wisdom. Just recently, Hungarian sports scientists published compelling research formally validating the deep physical and physiological benefits of a regular Yoga practice.

But while the physical rewards are now scientifically proven, Yoga is so much more than mere exercise. The postures are simply the visible surface of the practice. Beneath that surface, Yoga is a profound discipline of the mind. It teaches us how to quiet the noise, how to navigate daily stress with grace, and how to find a deep, unshakable inner peace. For many, it also opens a door to spiritual well-being, helping us realize that we are connected to a much larger universe, bringing harmony between ourselves and the natural world around us.

The theme for this year's International Day of Yoga is **"Yoga for Healthy Ageing."** Growing older is a journey every single one of us shares. But healthy ageing is not just about adding years to our lives; it is about adding life to our years. As our bodies change, Yoga offers us a gentle, sustaining strength. It preserves our physical mobility, keeps our minds sharp, and protects our emotional balance. It teaches us that ageing does not have to be a decline, but can instead be a period of grace, wisdom, and immense personal peace.

Because of this universal power to heal and elevate, India's Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, felt a deep responsibility to take this ancient science to the global stage. He recognized that the modern world desperately needed the holistic medicine of Yoga. His passionate appeal at the United Nations struck a chord across the globe, leading to a historic UN resolution—which was enthusiastically co-sponsored by Hungary—establishing June 21st as the International Day of Yoga.

The way Yoga has taken root here in Hungary speaks to something very specific about the Hungarian character. You are a people defined by a remarkable intellectual curiosity and an open mind. For centuries, Hungarian scholars, scientists, and everyday citizens alike have looked at the world, and at Indian philosophy, with a genuine desire to understand it deeply. You do not just adopt the physical routines of Yoga; you ask questions, you study its philosophy, and you respect its origins.

That mutual respect is the bedrock of the warm and trusting ties between India and Hungary. We are two nations bound by a shared belief in democratic values. We both cherish the voice of our people and the freedom to chart our own course. As a new government now assumes its responsibilities here in Hungary, representing the will and the hopes of the Hungarian people, I want to share a clear and simple message: India stands with you. We are deeply committed to our enduring friendship, and we look forward to working closely with your new leadership to build an even brighter future together.

As Hungary takes on its vital role within the European Union, India sees incredible opportunities for our two countries. India and the EU share a comprehensive Strategic Partnership, and with our newly finalized Free Trade Agreement, we are entering a new era of economic integration. We intend to use this dynamic European context to expand our bilateral ties with Hungary in ways that tangibly benefit the everyday lives of our citizens.

We see this economic partnership at work right here, right now. Hungary has become a highly valued home for Indian investments. Many of the corporate sponsors supporting today's Yoga event are Indian enterprises that have proudly set up operations in Hungary. They are bringing advanced technologies, creating high-quality jobs for Hungarian professionals, and helping local enterprises compete on the global stage. It is a partnership of real, shared prosperity.

Yet, even with all our growing political and economic ties, it is our cultural connection that remains the true heart of the India-Hungary relationship. Economics and politics are the branches, but culture is the root. Our cultural ties—whether it is your love for Indian dance, literature, or the very Yoga we practice today—humanize all our other interactions. They remind us that before we are diplomats, politicians, or business leaders, we are human beings seeking connection, joy, and understanding.

Before I conclude and we begin our practice, I want to say thank you. Thank you to the Government of Hungary for your constant support. Thank you to the leadership of this wonderful sports university for hosting us in this magnificent stadium. And most of all, thank you to the people of Hungary and the citizens of Budapest. Your warmth and your welcoming spirit have made this entire celebration possible.

As you settle onto your mats today, I invite you to leave your worries at the edge of the stadium. Breathe deeply. Let the practice bring you physical health, mental clarity, and spiritual peace.

Thank you for being here, and I wish you all a very happy International Day of Yoga.

Dhanyavaad. Köszönöm szépen.