

Speech by the Ambassador

Occasion: Launch of the 8th Yogaraja Excellence Award

23 January 2026

Budapest

Namaste!

Rector of Bhaktivedanta College, Distinguished Guests, Faculty, Scholars, Dear Colleagues, Friends of India and Students,

It is a pleasure to join you for the launch of the 8th Yogaraja Excellence Awards. I am grateful to the College for organizing this meaningful event and inviting me to be part of it.

I am particularly delighted that today coincides with Vasant Panchami—a day marking the arrival of spring and dedicated to Goddess Saraswati, the embodiment of knowledge, wisdom, and creativity. It is a most auspicious moment to celebrate the values of learning and spiritual inquiry that Bhaktivedanta College College so admirably upholds. I commend the Rector and the entire academic community for your dedication to promoting tolerance, mindfulness, and holistic education.

Yoga is India's invaluable gift to humanity, a 5,000-year-old tradition that transcends physical exercise to unite the mind, body, and spirit. It is a holistic path to wellness that fosters inner peace and harmony with nature. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Yoga has evolved into a global mass movement, most notably marked by the United Nations' declaration of June 21st as the International Day of Yoga. His efforts have democratized this ancient wisdom, transforming it from a niche practice into a universal language of health that binds millions across borders in a shared pursuit of well-being.

The Yogaraja Excellence Awards are a tribute to those who have made outstanding contributions to this discipline, as well as to its philosophy, culture, and education. In our fast-paced world, this

timeless wisdom offers essential balance. Recognizing such excellence honors the awardees and inspires others.

It is heartening to see Yoga flourish in Hungary. Our countries share deep-rooted cultural bonds that go back centuries. From the scholarly journeys of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös to the artistic legacy of Amrita Sher-Gil and the visits of Rabindranath Tagore, our nations have always found common ground in intellect and spirituality. The Indian Embassy, particularly through the Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre, has played a catalytic role in deepening these ties, working tirelessly to bring our people closer through art, language, and dialogue.

Bhaktivedanta College stands as a pillar of this relationship, serving as a vital bridge between India's ancient traditions and contemporary European discourse.

On this auspicious Vasant Panchami, may the spirit of wisdom continue to guide us. I congratulate Bhaktivedanta College on this initiative and extend my best wishes to all participants.

Thank you. Dhanyavaad.