

EMBASSY OF INDIA HUNGARY

AMRITA SHERGIL CULTURAL CENTRE

REPORT ON CELEBRATION OF ICCR'S FOUNDATION DAY---APRIL 9, 2019

The Embassy of India in Hungary celebrated The **ICCR FOUNDATION DAY** on April 9, 2019 at the Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre.

This was the first ICCR Foundation Day celebrated at the Embassy of India and was attended by a number of ICCR alumni and scholars, including some eminent scholars like Dr. Gyula Wojtilla, Professor emeritus, University of Szeged and Honorary professor of Eötvös Loránd ELTE University in Budapest (expert of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archeology); Dr Gergely Hidas, Indologist, (expert of Buddhism), Professor at ELTE

University; Dr Ferenc Ruzsa, Indologist, (expert of Classical Indian Philosophy, History of Buddhism), University teacher at ELTE University, Faculty of Humanities; Dr Zsuzsanna Renner, Indologist, Art Historian; Dr Ágnes Pap, National Szechenyi Library, Deptt. of Information, (expert

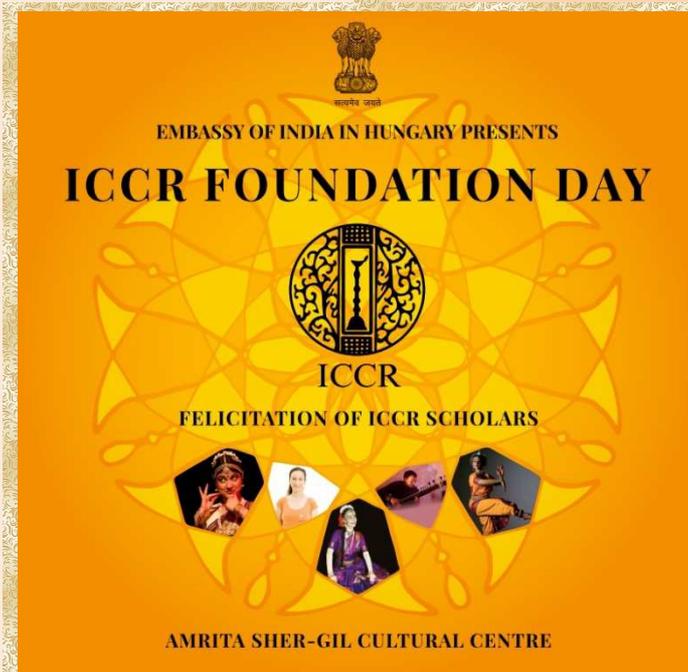
of Indian Religious History, History of Hinduism, Ancient Indian History); Mr Szabolcs Tóth, Sitar artist and performer, teacher of ASCC; Dr Beáta Kakas, Indologist, Lecturer at Dharma Gate Buddhist College, Budapest; Ms Virág Túri, Odissi dancer, teacher of ASCC; Mr András Kozma, Sitar artist, disciple of late Pt Ravi Shankar, member of Calcutta Trio group; Ms. Gabriella Tóth, Kuchipudi artist and Dr Csaba Kiss, Indologist, teacher at ELTE University.

Apart from the Embassy officials, some students aspiring for ICCR scholarship also attended.

The programme for the event was prepared keeping in view the principal objectives behind the event, namely, to provide a platform for the ICCR alumni to share their experience and advice, to network with each other and to strengthen their connections with India, as well as to create a common forum for those interested in learning in India and to spread the information related to these scholarships.

The programme started with a welcome speech

given by Ms Tanuja Shankar, Director of Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre who spoke about the importance of strengthening cultural relations with other countries and peoples through soft power. After this, a message from Ambassador of India, Mr. Kumar Tuhin touching upon the history of ICCR, its objectives and its journey, was delivered to the audience.



A film titled **Soft Power - Idea of India** received from the ICCR was screened which was followed by self-introduction of ICCR Alumni members. This part proved to be very valuable as it not only worked as an ice-breaker, but also elicited some useful inputs on the experience of these ICCR scholars in India, about the programme they underwent, as well as on the usefulness of the skills acquired in India at their respective workplaces.



Speaking at the occasion, alumni members warmly applauded the initiative by the ICCR and the Embassy of India in organizing this event, which they said would play a pivotal role in bringing together the ICCR alumni in Hungary and in reinforcing their connections with India.



The ICCR scholars in their speech also described this as a very timely move, and said that it would help in smooth flow/transmission of experience and information between the alumni and the Embassy.



After the initial remarks by the participants and their introduction, some prominent alumni who have made exemplary contributions in their fields, were felicitated.



The event then moved on to some scintillating performances from ICCR alumni. It may be noted that a number of scholars from



Hungary are in Yoga and performing arts. Some of these outstanding alumni have studied Indian classical dances like Bharatnatyam, Odissi, Kuchipudi and are now running their own dance schools, promoting Indian culture here. Mr Szabolcs Tóth, who is a prominent Sitar artist here, organizes and performs at professional cultural events.





A scintillating fusion of classical Kathak and Flamenco from Spain was presented that truly mesmerised the audience.



One important suggestion which came out in the remarks from a few alumni members was that the regional offices of ICCR were making immense efforts in helping the scholars studying in India, and it would be perhaps better to organize their interaction with the scholars more regularly. This would help in not only making scholars feel at ease in India during their initial days, but will also help in early ironing out of some adjustment matters.



The Embassy had also invited a few aspiring participants (planning to join ICCR courses in India), and the event was useful in providing an opportunity to brief them about the prospects.



It was a very colourful and vibrant programme where scholars, artists, academics from different fields of art and professions rendered account of their experiences talking about how the scholarship has affected their professional life and development. The Amrita Shergil Cultural Centre (ASCC) not only plans to stay in touch with the ICCR alumni to follow up on the various matters, but will also bring out an audio visual record of the event, including interviews and vox pops from the alumni. The Mission would like to sincerely thank the Council for providing the requisite support to ASCC for organising this event successfully.