

**Embassy of India
Yerevan

**Opening Remarks on Yoga at the Armenian State Institute of
Physical Culture and Sport (ASIPCS)
[Yerevan, 18 October 2024]**

Dear Friends!

Barev Dzez, Namaskar! A very good morning to you all. First of all, I would like to thank the Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture and Sport for giving this opportunity to Svetlana and myself to talk about Yoga and its role in holistic living leading to a disease-free world and society.

Yoga needs no introduction. It has been an integral part of Indian civilization and culture since time immemorial. The first archaeological evidence of existence of yoga is found in Stone seals excavated from the Indus valley. Yogic literature has been found in the Vedas, Upanishadas, Indian epics and Puranas etc. Although there are various ancient texts available but the classical Yoga has been advocated by great sage Patanjali who lived around 200 BC. Patanjali wrote a book known as “Yoga Sutras’ which contain 195 sutras. (Sutras are short verse or scriptures). Yoga advocated by Patanjali is one of the Shad Darshana (six ancient school of Vedic philosophy). Yoga is essentially spiritual and it is an art and science of healthy living which focuses on bringing harmony between body, mind and soul. Yoga is being practiced as part of healthy lifestyle and has become part of our spiritual heritage.

In the present era, Yoga has become popular worldwide because of its spiritual values, therapeutic credentials, its role in the prevention of diseases, promotion of health and management of lifestyle-related disorders. Several clinical studies have demonstrated the therapeutic potential of Yoga in the treatment of many lifestyle-related or psychosomatic disorders.

Traditional systems of medicine or AYUSH earlier formed a part of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. It was the Government under PM Modi that a separate Ministry of AYUSH was set up on 9th November 2014. AYUSH actually stands for Yoga and Indian tradition systems of Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa and Homoeopathy. The Ministry of AYUSH is responsible for policy formulation, development and implementation of programmes for the growth, development and propagation of Yoga and Naturopathy, Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa and Homoeopathy.

Its objectives include providing Ayush health care services to all, effective human resource development by providing quality education in Ayush Systems, clinical practices, encouragement to scientific research and education, laying down pharmacopoeia standards to ensure quality drugs, evolving good laboratory practices, following good manufacturing practices, regulating education standards and collaboration with International bodies/countries to undertake joint research/studies/international seminar etc.

To popularize the AYUSH Systems of healthcare worldwide, the Ministry of Ayush observes the International Day of Yoga (IDY) on 21

June every year since 2015. This has now become a global event with mass appeal. Similarly, we observe the International Ayurveda Day two days before Diwali or on Dhanteras, Naturopathy Day on 18 November and the World Homoeopathy Day on April 10 (on the birth anniversary of Dr. Hahnemann, the Founder of Homoeopathy).

In addition, the Ministry of AYUSH has been establishing Ayurveda Research Institutions in India to promote scientific research in the efficacy of the traditional system of medicine including Yoga. We have two premier institutes - the Institute of Teaching and Research (ITR) in Ayurveda in Jamnagar, Gujarat and the National Institute of Ayurveda in Jaipur. The ITR in Jamnagar is a leader in research work in traditional medicines. In 2022, the Ministry of AYUSH signed a Host Country agreement with the World Health Organization for the establishment of WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicines at Jamnagar, Gujarat. This Centre is poised to become a centre of global wellness which will promote the development of medicines and research related to traditional medicines.

The Ministry of AYUSH, through the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), offers 104 scholarships to eligible foreign national from 101 countries including Armenia, for pursuing undergraduate, post graduate and Ph.D courses in AYUSH in premier institutes in India. The Ministry has also launched the “Ayush Grid” project for creating a comprehensive technology (IT) backbone for entire Ayush systems. The AG platform envisages digitization of service delivery across the six functional areas (Education, Research, Drug Administration, Medicinal

plants, Capacity Building and Media outreach) to enhance access to Ayush services.
