

!ndia czech



Ambassador of India in Prague

July 2018 to March 2020



Foreword

Forging a Stronger India and Czech Republic Relationship



India's trade and cultural relations with the Czech Republic have a long history. In the medieval ages, the Kingdom of Bohemia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire traded precious goods including Indian spices with India through marine and land routes. The relations between the two countries have continued to flourish in later centuries with frequent exchanges between academicians, artists, business people and political leaders.

India's relations with the former Czechoslovakia, and with the Czech Republic, have always been warm and friendly. Diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia were established in 1947 which has smoothly transitioned into a vibrant relationship with the Czech Republic after the peaceful bifurcation of Czechoslovakia in 1993 into Czech Republic and Slovakia. This strengthening of the relationship has been fuelled by trade, regular visits, interactions and exchanges between prominent Indian and Czech scholars, journalists, politicians, business people and artists.

In the light of this strong India-Czech history of relationship, it has been a privilege for me to be assigned the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of India to the Czech Republic in 2018, providing me the opportunity to steer this relationship to greater heights. The visit by the President of India to the Czech Republic took place after a gap of 22 years and the visit of the Czech Prime Minister to India happened after a gap of 12 years.

As we celebrate 75 years of bilateral relations, this publication brings out some of the key moments of my tenure in the Czech Republic which I share with you as I look back fondly.

Mrs NARINDER CHAUHAN

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
of the Republic of India to the Czech Republic
2018-2020

Indiaczech



Meeting with Hon'ble President of the Czech Republic
With Hon'ble President of Czech Republic, H.E. Mr Miloš Zeman,
during Credentials Presentation Ceremony at the Prague Castle



Meeting with Hon'ble Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, September 2018
With Hon'ble Prime Minister of Czech Republic, Mr Andrej Babiš

Meeting with Hon'ble Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, , September 2018
Celebrating *Diwali* with Hon'ble Prime Minister of Czech Republic, Mr Andrej Babiš, in the ceremonial way through pooja, exchange of gifts and an Indian meal with the entire PMO, September 2018



Visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister of the Czech Republic to India

Hon'ble Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Mr Andrej Babiš met with Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind during an official visit from January 17th to 19th, 2019 during which he travelled to Ahmedabad, Pune and New Delhi. He also launched the Centre for European Studies at the Symbiosis International University and inaugurated the ŠKODA and Volkswagen Group India Technology Center in Pune.

Visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister of the Czech Republic to India

Official talks between Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi and Hon'ble Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Mr Andrej Babiš at Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit, 2019.

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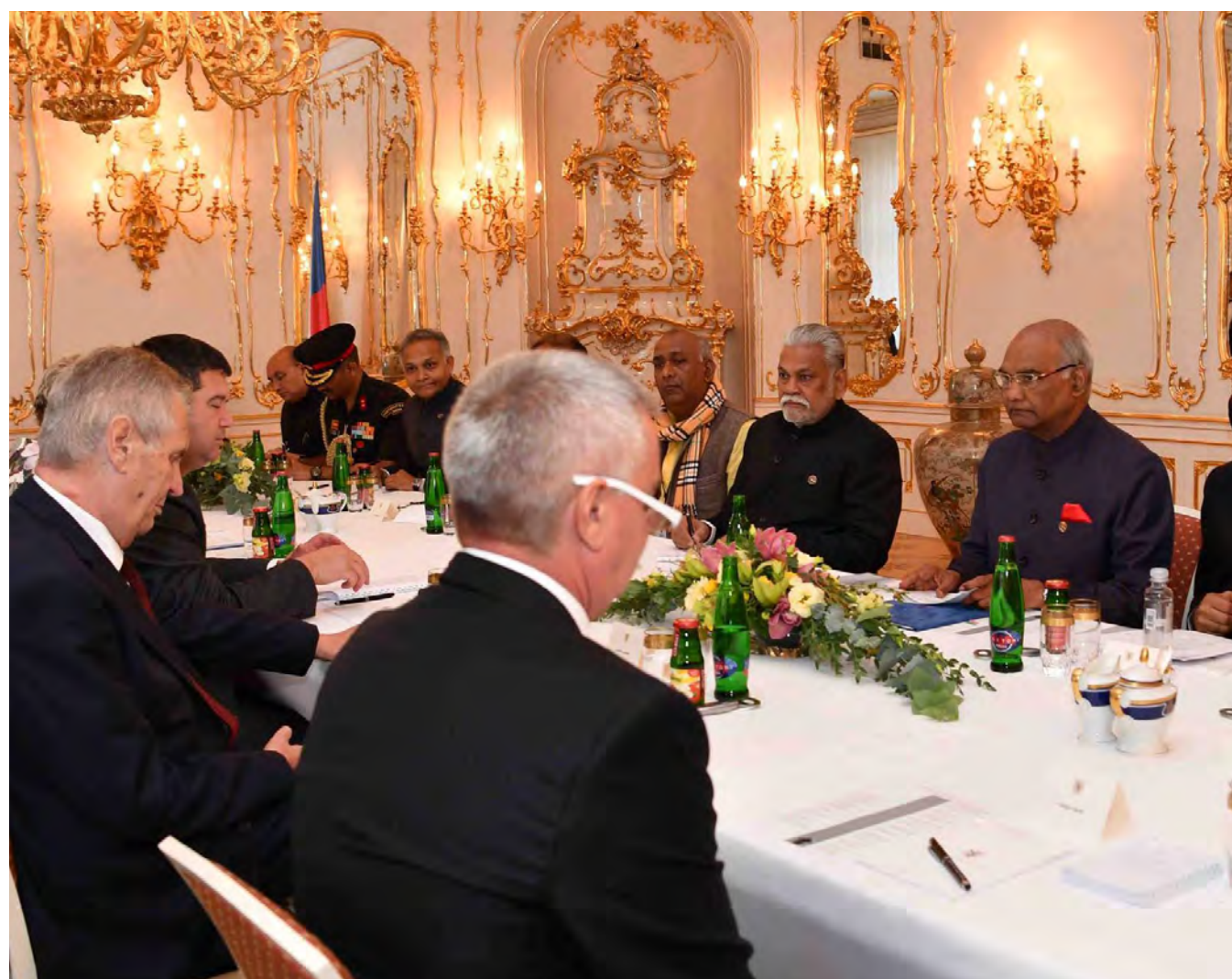


Welcoming the Czech delegation to India
With Hon'ble Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Mr Andrej Babiš,
during his official visit to India. January 2019.



State Visit of Hon'ble President of India to the Czech Republic, September 2018

Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind being received by Hon'ble President Mr Miloš Zeman of the Czech Republic. It was a landmark visit which turned the course of bilateral relations. The visit demonstrated the like mindedness and political bonding of the two countries and their world view on all major issues of interest, including international, regional and bilateral.



State Visit of Hon'ble President of India to the Czech Republic, September 2018
Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind during official talks and interactions

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State Visit of Hon'ble President of India to the Czech Republic, September 2018
Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind visits The National Library of the Czech Republic



State Visit of Hon'ble President of India to the Czech Republic, September 2018
Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind addressing the Indian community in Czech Republic



State Visit of Hon'ble President of India to the Czech Republic, September 2018
Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind visits the Laser Institute – a centre of excellence of the Czech Republic



State Visit of Hon'ble President of India to the Czech Republic, September 2018
Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind and delegation enthralled by the musicians led by Indo-Czech maestro Shri Debashish Chaudhuri



Visit of Czech Defense Minister to India

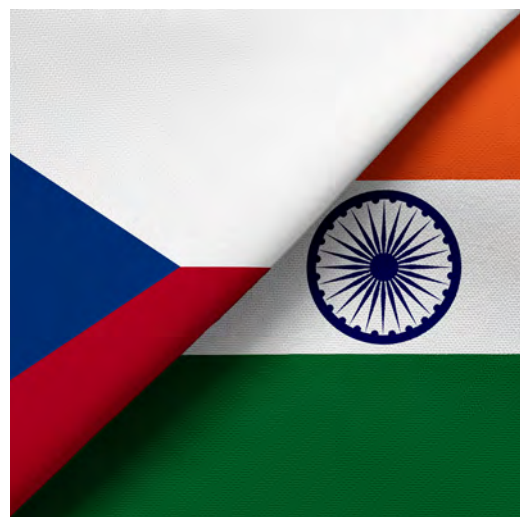
During his visit to India at the Aero India 2019 Show in Bangalore, Defense Minister of the Czech Republic H.E. Mr Lubomír Metnar met with Defense Minister of India H.E. Smt Nirmala Sitharaman and Indian Armed Forces representatives and personally supported Czech-Indian cooperation in the defense and aerospace industries. Czech aircraft manufacturers and providers of air transport technologies and services presented themselves at the fair in the joint exhibition pavilion.



Visit of Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs to India

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic H.E. Mr Tomáš Petříček visited Republic of India from January 13th to 17th, 2020. On this occasion, he met Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister of India H.E. Shri Subrahmanyam Jaishankar with other Cabinet members. He also participated as a keynote speaker at the prestigious international forum Raisina Dialogue 2020. The Minister was accompanied by the Czech Business Delegation.

Indiaczech



Visit of Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs to India

On 14th January, 2020, Czech Member of European Parliament, Mr Tomáš Zdechovský had a bilateral meeting with External Affairs Minister of India H.E. Shri Subrahmanyam Jaishankar.



Republic Day Reception 2020

Singing of national anthems at the Republic Day reception.
The Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies H.E. Mr Radek Vondráček
and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic H.E. Mr Tomáš Petříček, greet the audience.

Republic Day Reception 2020

Addressing the distinguished gathering at the Republic Day reception at the historic Klementinum.
Welcoming an august gathering including Hon'ble Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies
Mr Radek Vondráček and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic H.E. Mr Tomáš Petříček.



Celebrating 70th Anniversary of Republic Day of India
Flag hoisting ceremony with Indian community
Rendition of Indian patriotic songs by the Czech military band



Meeting with Minister of Industry and Trade

With Minister of Industry and Trade H.E. Ms Marta Nováková during the Meeting of Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation during visit of H.E. Shri C R Chaudhary, the then Minister of State of Commerce, Government of India, in October 2018.



Meeting with the Head of the Foreign Department

With Head of the Foreign Department, Office of the President of the Czech Republic
H.E. Mr Rudolf Jindrák



Meeting with Head of the Foreign Relations Committee

With Head of the Foreign Relations Committee of Czech Parliament
H.E. Mr Lubomír Zaorálek



Meeting with State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

With State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and former Czech Ambassador to India
H.E. Mr Miroslav Stacek



Meeting with State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

With State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and former Czech Ambassador to India
H.E. Mr Miroslav Stacek



Meeting with the Czech Minister of Culture
With Czech Minister of Culture H.E. Mr Lubomír Zaorálek



Meeting with the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports
With Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, Czech Republic H.E. Mr Robert Plaga



Meeting with Hon'ble Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament
With Hon'ble Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament Mr Radek Vondráček



Meeting with the Czech EU Commissioner
With Czech EU Commissioner H.E. Ms Věra Jourová



Meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs

Meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic H.E. Mr Tomáš Petříček, to invite him on a visit to India



Meeting with the Mayor of Prague

With Mayor of Prague Mr Zdeněk Hřib



Visit of Indian Business Delegation to the Czech Republic

Official talks between the Czech Minister for Trade and Industry H.E. Mr. Karel Havlíček and Shri A R Sihag, Secretary, Heavy Industry, Government of India during Brno Engineering Trade Fair, Oct 2019. This was followed by the meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Heavy Industry.

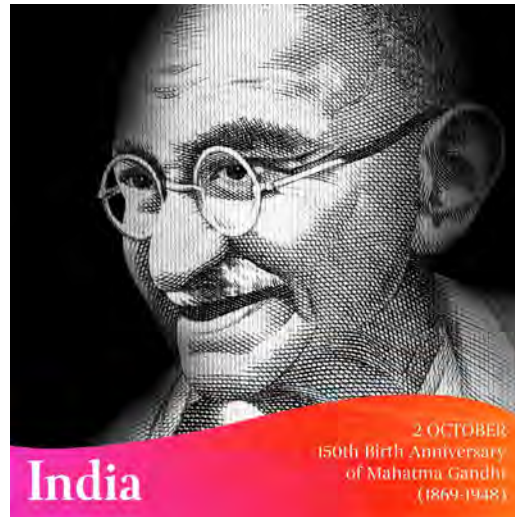


Visit of Indian Businesses to the Czech Republic

More than 60 Indian companies, led by Engineering Export Promotion Council of India (EEPC India), participate in Brno Engineering Trade Fair 2019

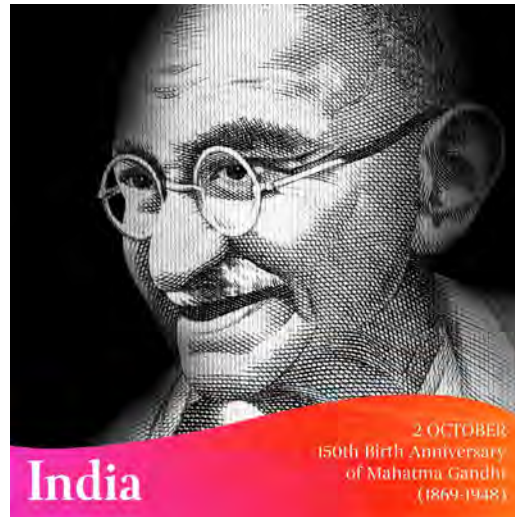
India at Brno Amper Fair

Over 60 Indian companies participated at Brno Amper Fair led by ASSOCHAM



Tree Plantation by the Hon'ble Czech Prime Minister

In a rare gesture, Hon'ble Czech Prime Minister Mr Andrej Babiš, leads the world in planting one hundred and fifty trees to create an orchard in a picturesque Czech village for Bapu@150. Czech Minister of Environment H.E. Mr Richard Brabec, is also present.



Celebrating 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in Czech Republic

A classical musical tribute to Mahatma Gandhi led by maestro Debashish Chaudhuri in four Czech cities as part of Bapu@150 celebrations. The President of India conferred the *Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award* in the field of Art and Culture on maestro Debashish Chaudhuri in Jan 2021.

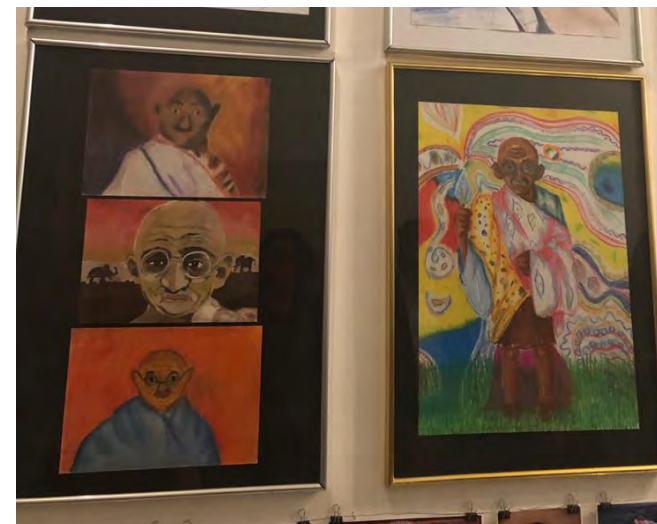


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Celebrating 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in Czech Republic

With maestro Debashish Chaudhuri, his wife Jana, and other dignitaries during the Bapu@150 concert



Celebrating 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in Czech Republic

Organized a Painting Exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi as part of Bapu@150 Celebrations in collaboration with the Elementary Art School in Revnice.

Seen on bottom left is the Czech painter with the award-winning portrait of Mahatma Gandhi.

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Czech Post Releases a special Bapu@150 Commemorative Postage Stamp

A commemorative postage stamp marking the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled on 26 June, 2019 as a joint effort of Czech Post and the Embassy of India, Prague. The ceremony was held in the presence of Czech Post's Director General, Mr Roman Knap and was attended by the stamp designer, Mr Jan Kavan.

ROZHOVOR

Indická velvyslankyně si Prahu zamilovala

Získali jsme pozvání z ambasády Indické republiky v České republice. Naší hostitelkou byla sama indická velvyslankyně Narinder Chauhan. Během rozhovoru jsme se dozvěděli, co společného mají indický a český státní znak, čím ji potěšili čeští studenti během návštěvy indického prezidenta v Praze nebo jaké destinace v Indii by doporučila našim turistům.



V Indii žije přes 1,3 miliardy lidí, je to druhá nejlidnatější země světa a co do rozlohy sedmá největší. Kousek indického území však najdete i v Praze. Pochopitelně jde o indickou ambasádu se sídlem v pražské ulici Milady Horákové. Do areálu Pražského hradu je to odtud patnáct minut chůze, na Staroměstské náměstí dvacet.

„Mám velké štěstí, že si mohu prohlížet pražské památky. Během vánočních trhů jsem denně chodila na Staré Město, dokonce i když byla zima a pršelo,“ usmívá se velvyslankyně Narinder Chauhan, která pracovní procestovala bez nadsázky celý svět: působila v Japonsku, Kanadě, Belgii, Thajsku i Srbsku. Na stůl od indické hostitelky dostávám čaj a také barfi, tradiční sladkosti z mléka a cizrnové mouky. Můžeme začít.

Paní velvyslankyně, máte v kanceláři něco osobního, co si berete vždy s sebou?

Vždy musím mít v kanceláři fotografii Mahátmy Gándhího, otce mého národa. Jeho narozeniny se slaví po celém světě, 2. říjen, datum Gándhího narození, je totiž zároveň Mezinárodním dnem nenásilí. Letos oslavíme 150 let od jeho narození a k tomuto výročí se budou vydávat památeční známky, a to nejen v Indii, ale i v České republice.

Je ještě něco dalšího, podobně cenného?

Důležitá je pro mě také indická vlajka a její symbolika: bílá barva značí mír, ta zelená zemědělství a prosperitu a oranžová oběť našich zakladatelů (Indie získala nezávislost na Velké Británii v roce 1947, pozn. red.). Ve středu vlajky můžete vidět dharmu čakru (ta reprezentuje pravdu, zákon – pozn. red.). Dharmu čakru mimochodem najdete také na indickém státním znaku, kde je



ROZHOVOR



Mahátma Gándhí, letos 2. října uplyne 150 let od jeho narození.



Tádž Mahal je vyhledávaným turistickým cílem.

i heslo Satyameva Jayate neboli „Pravda vítězí“, tedy stejně, jaké je i na vašem prezidentském státním znaku.

Prozrad'te prosím čtenářům, jak jste se dostala k diplomacii a následně do Česka.

Narodila jsem se v Novém Dillí, hlavním městě Indické republiky. Po studiích práva a politických věd na tamní univerzitě jsem nastoupila do diplomatických služeb. Každý nový pracovník v diplomacii se musí povinně naučit jeden cizí jazyk, mně připadla japonština. Po roce tréninku jsem pak byla vyslána přímo do Tokia, kde jsem tři roky pracovala na indické ambasádě. V další kariéře jsem působila například v thajském Bangkoku, belgickém Bruselu či kanadské Ottawě.

A jako velvyslankyně?

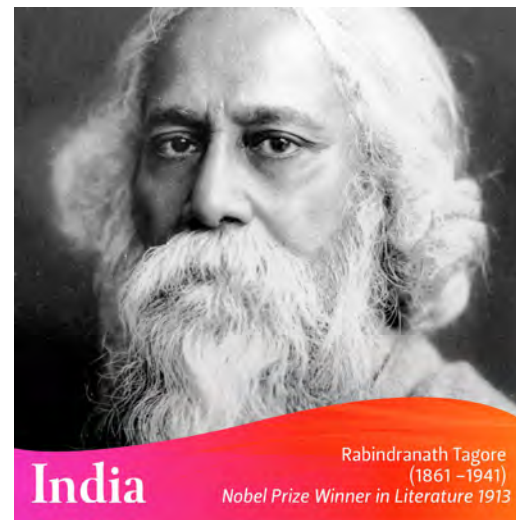
V pozici velvyslankyně jsem poprvé pracovala v Srbsku, kde se moji kamarádkou stala velvyslankyně České republiky v Srbsku Ivana Hlavsová. Vždy když jsem potřebovala s něčím pomoci, mohla jsem se obrátit na ni. V červenci loňského roku jsem pak nastoupila na ambasádu v České republice. V září měl Česko navštívit náš prezident, Jeho Excecence Rám Náth Kóvind. Byla to historická událost, protože poslední taková návštěva se konala před 22 lety, a vše se muselo řádně připravit.

Co se vám tehdy vybavilo pod pojmem Česká republika?

Například české sklo. Vlastně mi přijde, že je ve světě známější než v České republice. Díky Ivaně Hlavsové jsem si kupovala český křišťál, ještě když jsem pracovala v Srbsku. A když jsem tu pak začala působit, vůbec jsem podobné věci neviděla v obchodech. Samozřejmě jsem také znala české značky jako Škoda Auto. V Indii dnes působí okolo šedesáti českých značek a mimochodem právě Škoda Auto se chystá v Indii investovat miliardu eur. Auto bude v naší zemi nejen vyrábět, ale také vyvíjet. Až se vrátím do Indie, ráda bych si jeden vůz značky Škoda koupila.

Je ještě něco, co vás v Praze zaujalo?

Když teď v Praze žiji, užívám si například náplavku s výhledem na Pražský hrad. Byla jsem na koncertech v Rudolfinu, na představeních v Národním divadle. Samozřejmě jsem také chodila na vánoční trhy, myslím, že ty v Praze jsou nejkrásnější na světě. A všechny ty historické budovy, které máte... Musíte být hrdí.



Celebrating Rabindra Jayanti at Thakur Square in Prague

Rabindranath Tagore belongs to the world and the Czech acknowledge it. The Czech have named a region in Zone 6 of Prague as *Thakurova* as a tribute to the Indian Nobel laureate. Right in the middle of *Thakurova* is a bronze bust of Rabindranath Tagore with an inscription below it.



Celebrating Republic Day of India in the Czech Republic
Addressing the Indian community during flag hoisting at Republic Day, 2019



Ahmedabad World Peace Rally visits the Czech Republic

Meeting the twentyfive members of the World Peace Rally and flagging off the onward journey from Prague. The World Peace Rally was flagged off on 1st July, 2019 from Gandhi Ashram, Ahmedabad. The Rally was organised to spread the message of peace by Mahatma Gandhi as part of India's celebrations of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Visit of the Surat Biking Queens to the Czech Republic

Meeting the three Women Bikers from India – Dr. Sarika Mehta, Founder, Biking Queens, Ms Jinal Shah and Ms Rutali Patel, from the Female Biking Club, "Biking Queens" during the stop of the expedition at Prague. The enthusiastic women bikers rode 25,000+ kms for 89 days, in 25 countries across 3 continents to promote the noble cause of "Nari Gaurav" (Women Pride) along with a message from the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi.



Celebrating Independence Day of India in the Czech Republic
Celebration of Independence Day 2019 with Indian athletes and Indian community

Celebrating Independence Day of India in the Czech Republic
Celebration of Independence Day 2019 with Indian athletes and Indian community



With Indian and European Chess Grandmasters

At the welcoming ceremony of the Prague International Chess Festival 2019 at Don Giovanni.
Seen with the three participating Indian chess grandmasters – Vidit Gujarathi, Harikrishna Pentala
and the 13 year old Praggnanandhaa.



Celebrating International Day of Yoga in Czech Republic

Speaking at the Sri Swami Madhavananda World Peace Council that promotes peace through Yoga and the message of Mahatma Gandhi



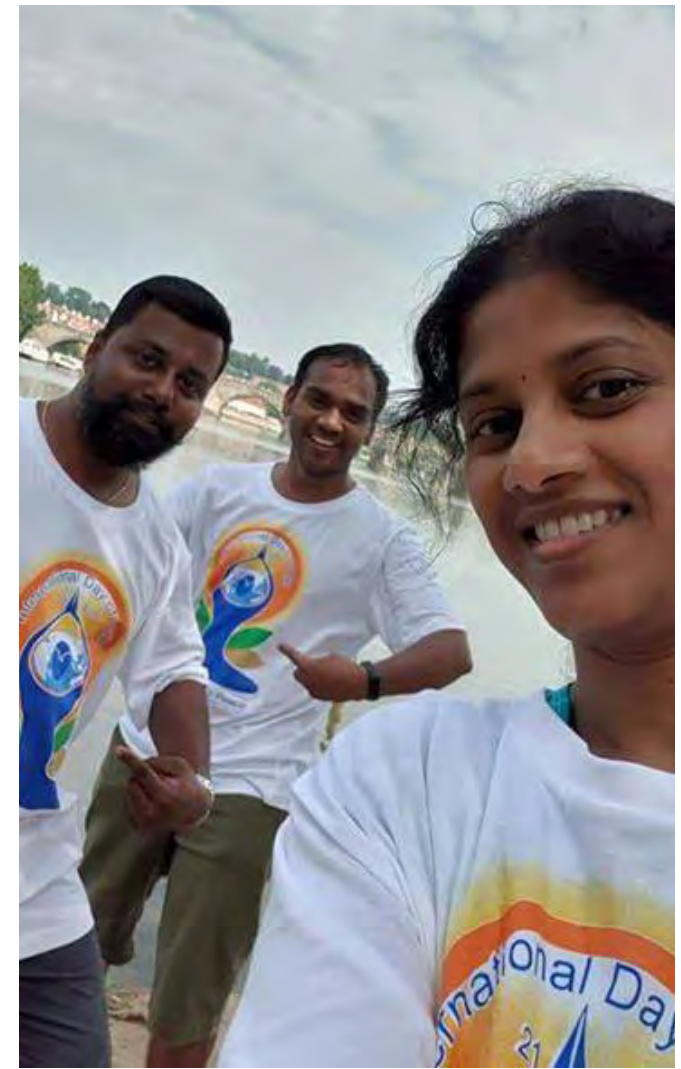


Celebrating International Day of Yoga in Czech Republic

Yoga enthusiasts participate in the International Day of Yoga proceedings at multiple venues

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Meeting with the Czech Minister of Health
In discussion with Czech Minister of Health H.E. Mr Adam Vojtech, to create awareness about Yoga in the Czech Republic



Celebrating the Festival of India in the Czech Republic

Organised the Festival of India in Czech Republic from 24 June to 29 June, 2019 in three different cities – Prague (24 June); Brno (26 June); and Ostrava (Ostrava Street Festival, 28-29 June).

The EMBASSY OF INDIA IN PRAGUE
and the
INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS
presents

Festival of India

Featuring Dance Performances by

KATHAKALI
Madhava Kurup
Rajasekharan

KATHAK and BHARATANATYAM
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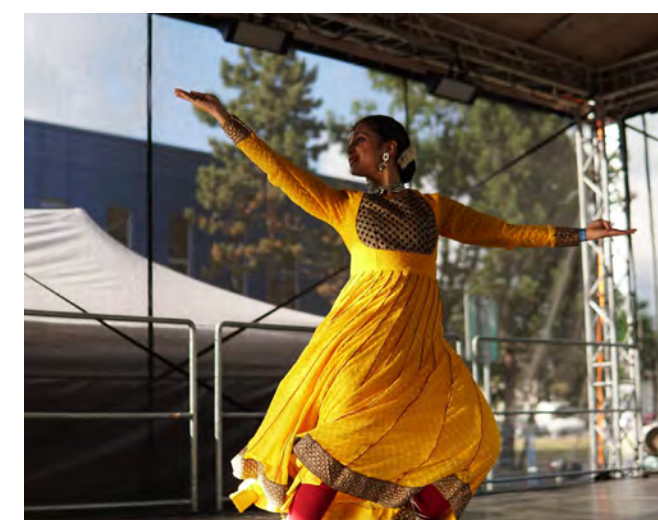
Celebrating the Festival of India in the Czech Republic

The Festival of India in the Czech Republic was inaugurated by Minister of Finance, Government of the Czech Republic H.E. Ms Alena Schillerová at Karlin Divadlo, Prague.

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Celebrating the Festival of India in the Czech Republic

The Festival of India featured *Bharatanatyam* and *Kathak* performances by Ms. Neha Seshadrinath

Celebrating the Festival of India in the Czech Republic

Kathak performance at Festival v ulicích by Ms Neha Seshadrinath performed the *Kathak* with *Chaturang*. *Chaturang* or *Chaar ang* is the coming together of four aspects of music and dance – *sahitya*, *sargam*, *bol* and *tarana*.

MASARYKOVO NÁMĚSTÍ
ČERNÁ LOUKA

GENERALNÍ PARTNER: ArcelorMittal
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ZA PODPORY: OSTRAVA!!! Moravskoslezský kraj

OSTRAVA

Festival v ulicích

28.–29. ČERVNA 2019
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Koncerty na dvou scénách
SAN SALVADOR /FR/
TA DHOM PROJECT FEAT. SHRI /IND/
MICHAL HRŮZA • VOXEL • NEDIVOČ
OREADA /PL/ • BALKANSAMBEL /SK/ • PRAGUE CELLO QUARTET a další

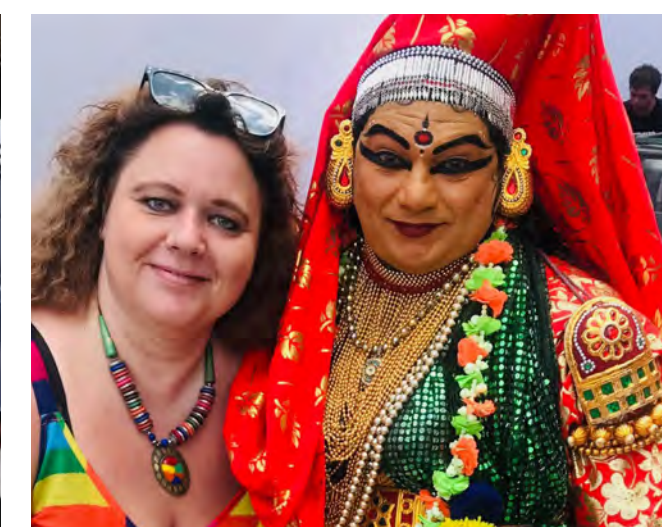
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KATHAKALI tanec v maskách Tamil Nadu
skupina tanečníků **RAIBENSHE** poprvé v Evropě – lidový bojový tanec s akrobatickými prvky • tradiční tanec **KATHAK** vyprávějící indické příběhy
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Celebrating the Festival of India in the Czech Republic

Kathakali performance at Festival v ulicích led by Kalamandalam Shri Rajasekharan Madhava Kurup. The performance depicts the story of Kirata from Mahabharata, the Indian epic.

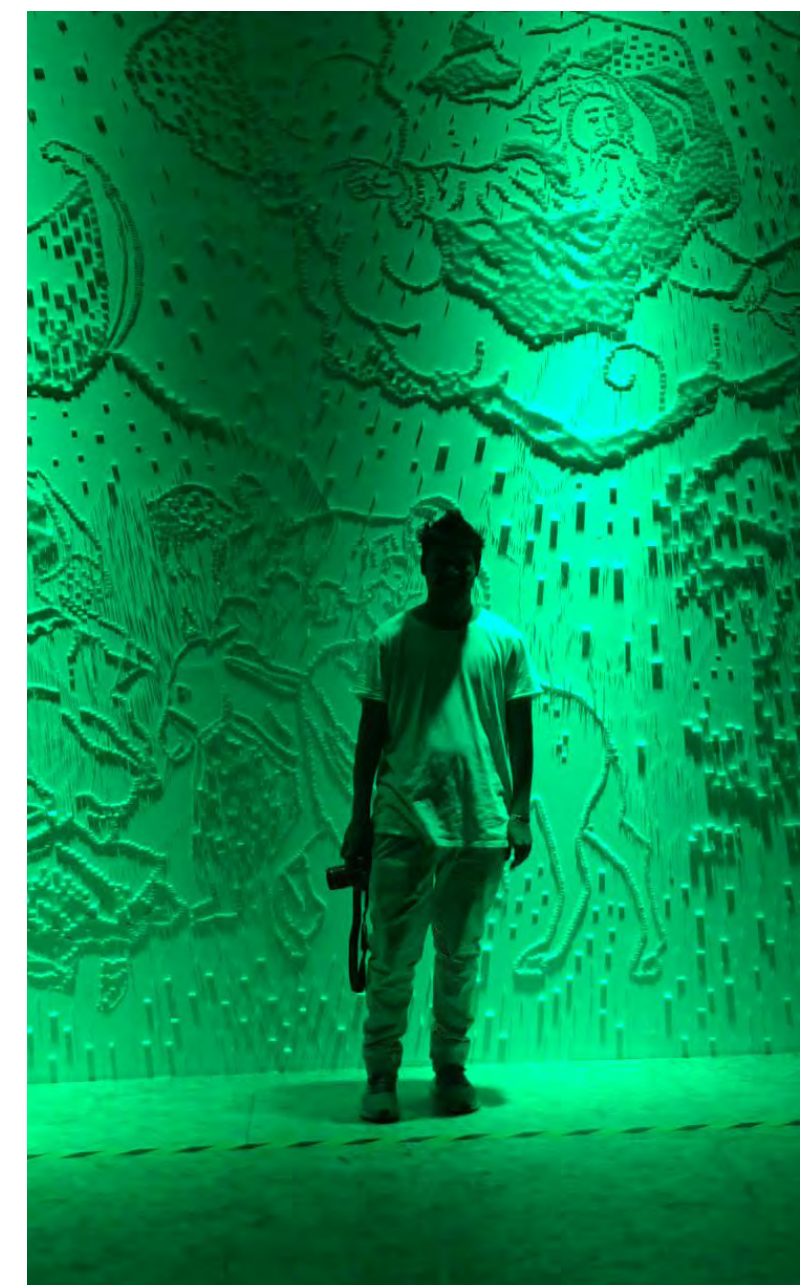


Celebrating the Festival of India in the Czech Republic

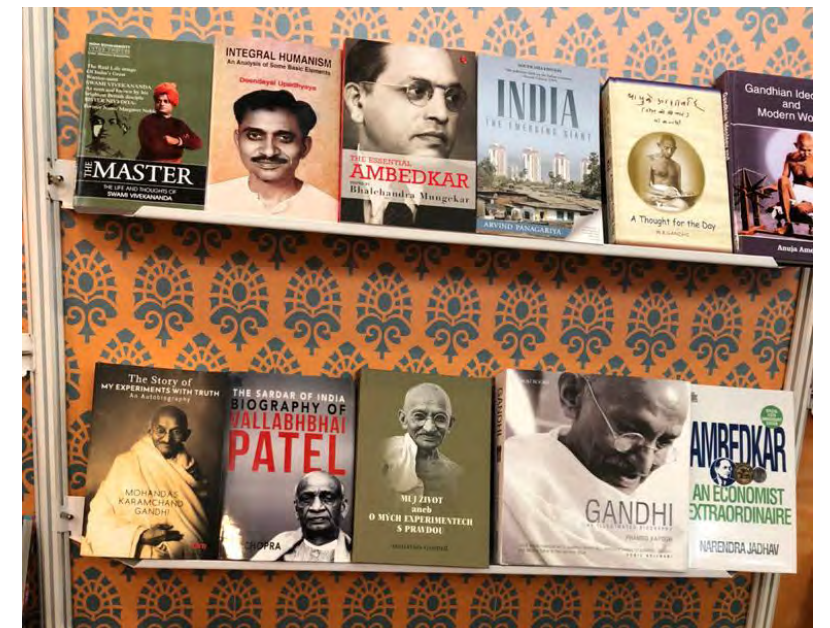
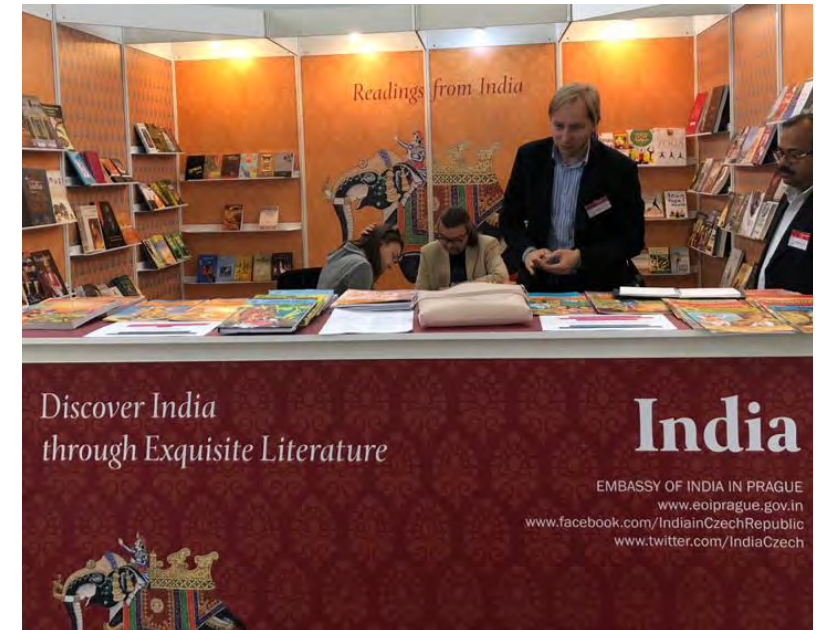
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Celebrating the Festival of India in the Czech Republic

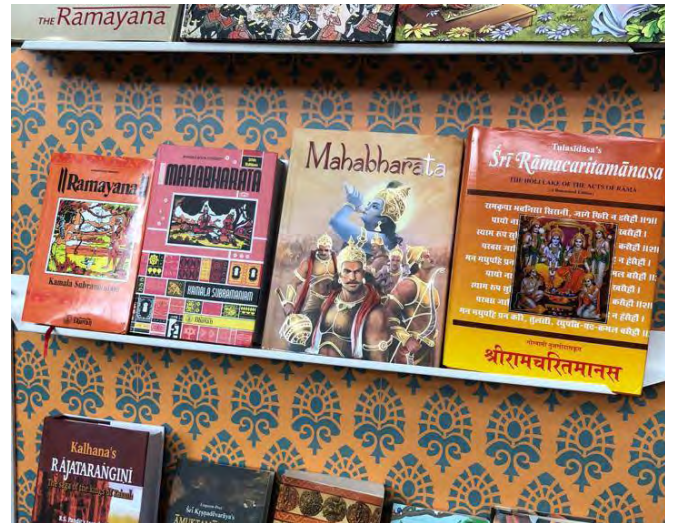
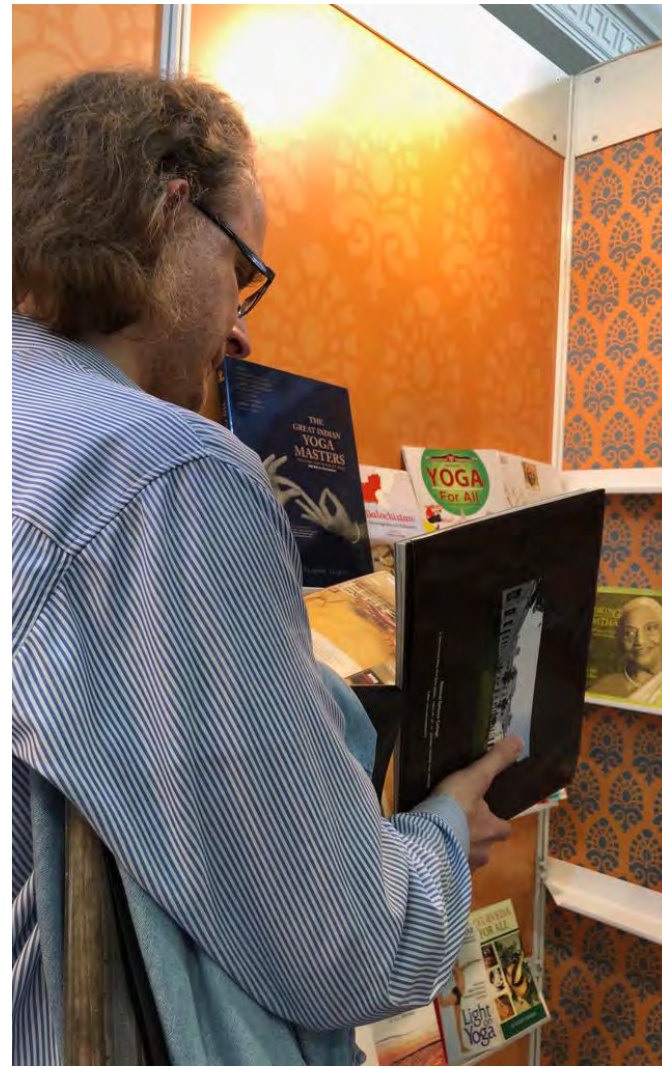
Indian folk dancers perform at Festival v ulicích



Indian Art in Czech Republic
Street painting installation by celebrated Indian artist Shri Mantu Das

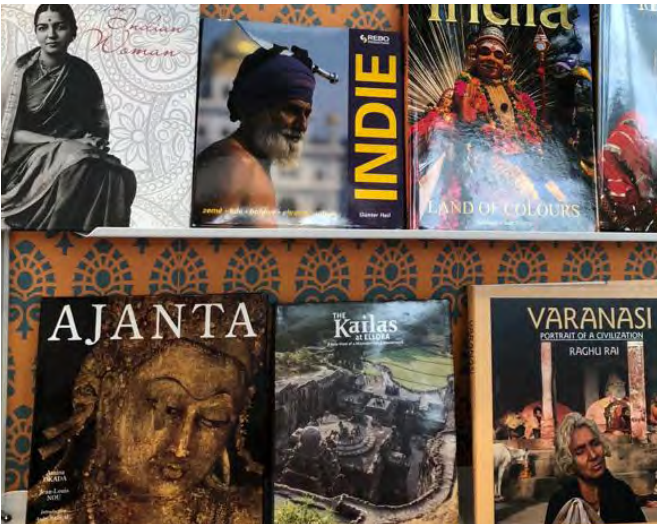


India at the Prague International Book Fair, May 2019
Indian books and literature at display at the India Pavilion



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Celebrating Bapu@150 in the Czech Republic

Satya vaarta by former Czech Culture Minister and Member of Parliament H.E. Mr Daniel Herman

Promoting Indian literature and culture in the Czech Republic

Gifting books from India to the Czech Academy of Sciences Library



Promoting Indian literature and culture in the Czech Republic
Gifting books from India to the University of Pardubice

Promoting Indian literature and culture in the Czech Republic
Gifting books from India to Masaryk University



Visit to Czech University of Life Sciences

An interaction with the Rector, Prof. Petr Sklenicka, Vice Rector and the Indian students at the Czech University of Life Sciences on 27 March, 2019.

Promoting Indian literature and culture in the Czech Republic

Gifting Indian library to Metropolitan University, Prague



Promoting Indian Tourism in the Czech Republic
Creating awareness about Indian tourism destinations and culture

Promoting Indian culture in the Czech Republic
With Foreign Minister H.E. Mr Tomáš Petříček and Mrs Petříček at Christmas Charity Bazaar Indian stall



Commemorating the 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Devji
Gurbani function at the Indian chancery to commemorate the 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Devji

Celebrating Indian festivals with the Indian diaspora
Participating in Navratri celebrations with the Indian community organised by Bharat Sangh



Celebrating Diwali in the Czech Republic

Participating in Diwali celebrations with the Indian community in Brno



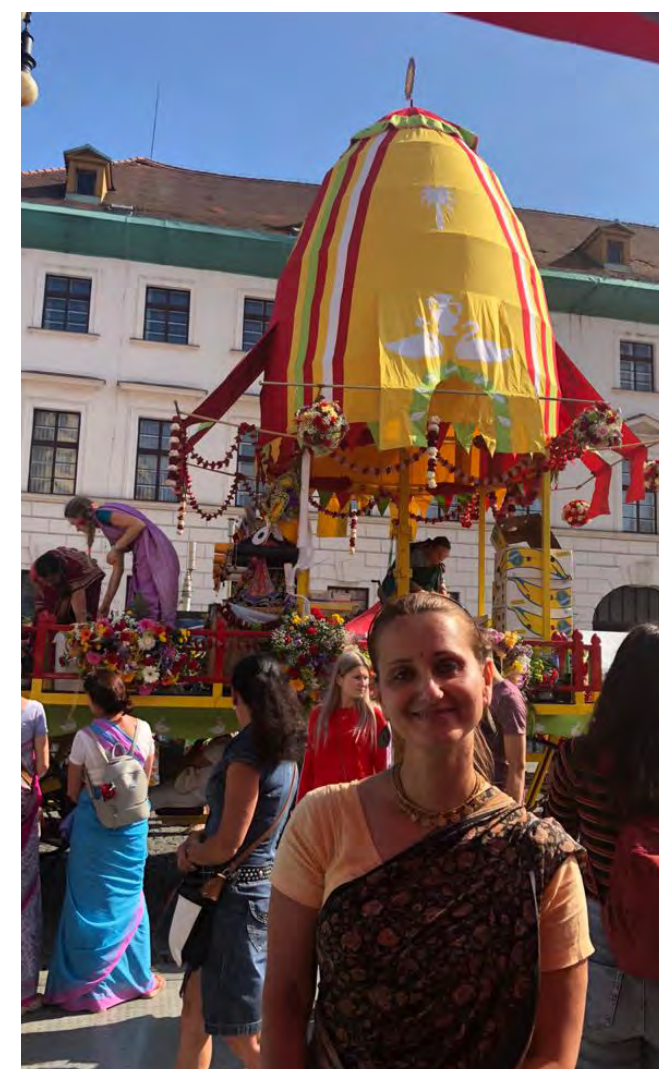
Celebrating Indian festivals with the Indian diaspora

With Indian community ladies at *Karva Chauth* celebration



Celebrating Indian festivals with the Indian diaspora

Celebrating *Diwali* with the Indian community at the celebrations organised by Bharat Sangh



Celebrating Indian festivals with the Indian diaspora

With devotees and followers at the *Ratha Yatra* in Prague



Concert at Rudolfinum by Sri Chinmoy Group

To mark the 100th Anniversary of the foundation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, members of the Sri Chinmoy Centre offered three special concerts with the final concert at Dvorak Hall, Rudolfinum in Prague.

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Indian Literature Heritage in the Czech Republic
Rare Indian manuscripts at the National Library, Prague

India in the Czech Republic
With Indian motifs and iconography at the Prague Zoo





Ambassador of India in Prague

July 2018 to March 2020



**MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**