

**High Commissioner Dr. Rajesh Ranjan's speech on the occasion of 4<sup>th</sup> International Day of Yoga on Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at Open Arena, University of Botswana, Gaborone**

- **Hon. Ms Gladys K.T. Kokorwe, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Botswana**
- **Diplomatic Corps**
- **All heads of Indian Association in Gaborone**
- **Protocol observed**
- **Media personnel**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

1. **I am delighted today to be** with you all to celebrate the 4th International Day of Yoga. At the outset, I would like to thank the Government of Botswana for supporting the celebration of 4th International Day of Yoga. I would also like to recognize their invaluable support during the adoption of UNGA Resolution, 2014 to declare June 21 as the International Day of Yoga.

2. **It is very encouraging** to see you all here to celebrate Yoga Day at Botswana University in spite of this chilling cold morning when the temperature is still approximately 5<sup>0</sup>C. I would like to quote the words of Prime Minister Modi at the UNGA Assembly in September 2014 mentioning **“Yoga is an invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition. This tradition is 5000 years old. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfilment; harmony between man and nature; a holistic approach to health and well-being. It is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with yourself, the world and the nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help in well-being.”**

3. **Excellency, Yoga is a** way of living that aims towards a healthy mind in a healthy body. Yoga as a holistic approach to our complete well-being has immense potential for achieving peace, internal and external harmony and happiness. The observance of the International Day of Yoga seeks to reinforce this message for every individual and motivate them to join our collective pursuit of these aspirations.

4. **The true essence of yoga** revolves around elevating the life force or 'Kundalini' at the base of the spine. It aims to achieve this through a series of physical and mental exercises. At the physical level, the methods comprise various yoga postures or 'asanas' that aim to keep the body healthy. The mental techniques include breathing exercises or 'pranayama' and meditation or 'dhyana' to discipline the mind. Yoga, which connects body, mind and soul has played a big role in connecting the world too.

5. **Yoga is a science.** It is an applied science, a systematized collection of laws applied to realise our full potential. It takes up the laws of psychology, applicable to the unfolding of the whole consciousness of man on every plane, in every world, and applies those rationally in a particular case. This rational application of the laws of unfolding consciousness acts exactly on the same principles that you see being applied around you every day.

6. **Young people have** accepted Yoga as a profession. I am happy to see that lots of yoga centres has come up in Botswana to promote Yoga.

7. **So let's unleash the power of yoga,** feel energized and develop a zest of living.

**Thank You All**