

Second International Scientific Conference on Gheorghianism,
Bucharest, 10 November 2023

Speech from H.E. Mr. Sanjay Verma, Secretary (West),
Ministry of External Affairs of India

I am delighted to learn that the Second International Scientific Conference on Gheorghianism is being held today in Bucharest to honor the legacy and memory of the esteemed Roma Sociologist, Mr. Nicolae Gheorghe, a trailblazer in contemporary Roma civic activism in Europe.

2. The Roma community is a testament to the enduring human spirit, to the power of resilience, and the remarkable ability to keep traditions alive, no matter where life's journey may lead. Your vibrant culture, music, art, and heritage have touched hearts across the globe, leaving an indelible imprint on the world's cultural mosaic. The Roma people's origin is widely accepted and traced to Northern India.

3. In India, we firmly believe that every community, every individual, deserves equal opportunities and respect. Our commitment to inclusivity and diversity is at the heart of our nation's ethos. In the light of this spirit, the Indian Presidency of G-20 was guided by the theme of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" or "One Earth One Family One Future". Together, as global citizens, we must strive to create a brighter, more inclusive future where diversity is cherished, and every community, including the Roma, is treasured and celebrated.

4. Our collective mission is to break down barriers, challenge stereotypes, and create a world where the Roma community, like every other, can fully realize their potentials and fulfill their aspirations.

5. Our common past is a strong bond, but the future beckons that we vitalize our current links. For this purpose, I would like to inform you that

Government of India conducts short to medium term training courses under its flagship development partnership assistance programme Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC). Fully-funded in-person training opportunities are offered through nearly 400 courses organised by 100+ eminent institutes in India each year. Similarly, Indian Council for Cultural Relations offers scholarships for undertaking graduate and post graduate studies in India. The members of Roma community can make use of these programmes to enhance their skills. Our Embassy in Bucharest has more details.

6. Friends, India is a civilisational nation state: we are pluralistic, assimilative and peace loving. We have never had imperialistic impulses, nor have we ever coveted foreign lands. Our only exports have been culture, material goods and services and goodwill. Our diaspora world-wide stands at around 30 million, and is known for being a model-diaspora that has added significant value wherever they have settled.

7. To conclude, I express my thanks to the Ambassador of India to Romania, the Roma Education Fund, and SNSPA, a leading Romanian university specializing in political studies and public administration for organising this Conference. I extend my best wishes for a successful Conference.
