

The Slovak-Indian Yoga Vedanta Society, the oldest non-profit organization in Slovakia, was founded in December 1989 and registered with the Ministry of the Interior in March 1990 (under registration number NVVS/2-184/1990); on May 13, 1997, it was transformed into the Civic Association "Society of Slovak-Indian Friendship" (SSIP). Its founder is PhDr. Anna Galovičová, who remains the society's chairperson to this day.



Following the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, the organization continued the tradition of the Indian Association at the Oriental Institute—founded in Prague in 1934 by Prof. V. Lesný. Lesný was a personal friend of such figures as Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Rabindranath Tagore (a Nobel laureate in Literature). He also founded the School of Oriental Languages and the Indian Section of the Society for Cultural and Economic Relations with the Orient in 1945. Prof. Lesný bridged Eastern and Western thought—most notably through his translation of the **Bhagavad Gita** (the "Bible of yogis")—and played a pivotal role in fostering Czechoslovak-Indian friendship. He helped many experts travel to the East to draw knowledge from this ancient, enduring wellspring of wisdom.



PhDr. Anna Galovičová successfully defended her master's thesis, "Psychological Aspects of Yoga" (1975), and her rigorous thesis, "Study of the Application of Yoga in Daily Life for the Psychic Development of the Human" (2009), at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University. This research work by PhDr. Anna Galovičová was published by the Embassy of India under the title **Yoga – Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow** (2019).

SSIP is an international organization based in Ujjain, India, and has been part of the United Consciousness organization since 2021. This international organization focuses on fostering cooperation among those who understand "interconnectedness"—the concept of the One in all and all in the One. Without cooperation with others, we could not achieve any of what is described here. Knowledge, experience, ideas, and visions alone are not enough; what is required is interconnectedness, mutual trust, cooperation, and synergy. Our activities, as described here, are grounded in this spirit. Without others, we would not be the successful and internationally recognized organization that we are today.



Pictured: A. Galovičová, PhD, and Dr. Vikramt.



Photo from the Ujjain conference.



SSIP has been a member of the European Yoga Federation (EYF) since 2020. Anna Galovičová represents the two internationally recognized organizations that currently host the world's largest yoga gatherings, programs, and conferences. In 2020, PhDr. Anna Galovičová and her team carried out the international project "Senior Restart." This initiative included an international Zoom conference attended by the presidents of *Yoga in Daily Life* —

Vishwaguruji Mahamandalishwar Maheshwarananda and Mahamandalishvar Suryananda (Amadio Bianchi) from Italy. Since 2011, SSIP has been a member of the Slovak Anti-Poverty Network (SAPN)—the largest network of its kind in Slovakia—which has been part of the major European non-governmental organization, the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), since 2004. Under the leadership of PhDr. Anna Galovičová, SAPN serves on the Government Council of the Slovak Republic for the Non-profit and Non-governmental Sector. It assists in formulating the Action Plan for Societal Development and the vision for Slovakia through 2035. In this way, the ideas of the *Yoga in Daily Life* lineage are disseminated further, helping to foster peaceful coexistence among people, cultures, nations, ethnic groups, and the rich and poor alike. This work continued during the 20th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty, held in Brussels during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, a proposal submitted by the Slovak delegation—"strengthening the physical and mental health of all age groups, including vulnerable individuals and excluded communities"—was approved as a priority among all proposals from EU member state national networks. This initiative incorporates yoga and other spiritual practices—such as the exercises of the Jesuit St. Ignatius, Schultz's autogenic training, mindfulness, Buddhist meditation, and Christian contemplation.



Since 2015, PhDr. Anna Galovičová has served as the Chair of the Slovak Anti-Poverty Network (SAPN) and as an executive coordinator for EAPN. Her goal is to reduce poverty in Slovakia and worldwide, and to ensure a dignified life for everyone on the planet.

Through her long-standing work with SAPN members, PhDr.

Galovičová bridges East and West, North and South, connecting socially oriented NGOs with organizations focused on human equality, human rights, and social equity—as well as the universal right to health and the highest standards of physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being, in accordance with UN Resolution 69/131.

As part of the "Restarting Seniors After the Pandemic" project, SAPN published a collection of papers titled *Healthy Planet. Europe for People.* The collection was prepared by PhDr. Anna Galovičová and her team (2020). Slovak title: *Zdravá planéta. Európa pre ľudí* (Healthy Planet. Europe for People).

Anna Galovičová et al. *Reštart seniorov* (Restarting Seniors). 2020.



Photo from the parliament in Freiburg.

In 2021, the Slovak Anti-Poverty Network published **Dotyk svätca** (The Touch of a Saint) by Anna Galovičová.

On the life of the greatest Christian missionary and saint Francis Xavier, a co-founder of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuit Order). (English title: **Touch of the Saint**; author: Anna Galovičová). He was a Jesuit saint—much like the current Pope—who committed himself to a vow of poverty, akin to St. Francis of Assisi. This represents one path toward alleviating global poverty.



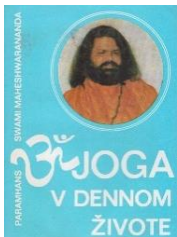
Dotyk svätca

PhDr. Anna Galovičová



As the founder and promoter of the "Yoga in Daily Life" system in the former Czechoslovakia, PhDr. Anna Galovičová initiated and co-implemented the introduction of this practice into the spa sector starting in 1985. This enabled patients to officially practice yoga in Slovak spas under the guidance of doctors, nurses, and rehabilitation specialists—a practice that continues to this day. Additionally, working

alongside a team of physicians—Dr. Sedláková, Dr. Zelenayová, and Dr. Rohová—PhDr. Galovičová successfully conducted research focused on treating patients with Bechterew's disease (ankylosing spondylitis). From 1986 onwards, she initiated and co-implemented the integration of "Yoga in Daily Life" into rehabilitation programs as part of an initiative titled "Innovation of Rehabilitation through Yoga."



In December 1989, the Czechoslovak State Spas in Piešťany published the first book in the former Czechoslovakia by Paramhans Swami

Maheshwarananda, the creator of the "Yoga in Daily Life" system (with a print run of 9,800 copies).



Last year, the Slovak-Indian Friendship Society organized the 37th edition of the "India Full of Colors" festival (an event held since 1985–86). This festival began even before the fall of the totalitarian regime, under the leadership of Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda. PhDr. Anna Galovičová compiled lectures from the "India Full of Colors" festivals, and the Slovak-Indian Yoga Vedanta Society published the book **India Full of Colors** by Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda in Piešťany in 1991 (5,000 copies). Later, in 2002, **India Full of Colors** was reissued by the civic association "Society for Slovak-Indian Friendship" (10,000 copies).





Mutual cultural exchange is an integral part of the festivals. For decades, the Society for Slovak-Indian Friendship (SSIP) has organized traditional Indian dance performances—led by Bhaktideva and featuring other Indian dancers and musicians playing traditional instruments—as well as tours of Indian ensembles across Slovakia.

In 2023, we organized this festival in conjunction with the celebration of the 50th anniversary of "Yoga in Daily Life" in the former Czechoslovakia. The event was attended by the system's creator, Vishwaguruji Maheshwarananda, who had first visited Piešťany during the inaugural "India Full of Colors" festival in 1985–86.



In 1988, he personally trained rehabilitation specialists from all Slovak spa resorts in the "Yoga in Daily Life" system. He participated in and led dozens of "Yoga and Health" conferences at Slovak spas, and in 1993, he was awarded the Dr. medal. ...the František Ernest Scherer Award, presented to Swamiji by representatives of the Piešťany Spa for his contributions to and development of the field of rehabilitation.

In addition to conducting yoga sessions at the spa, PhDr. Anna Galovičová led yoga classes at various educational institutions—including kindergartens, secondary schools (such as the Piešťany Grammar School, the Sports Grammar School in Trenčín, the Mojmirova Elementary School in Piešťany, and a hockey-focused class at an elementary school in Trenčín), and universities (such as the Faculty of Education in Nitra).



For a long period, she conducted training and yoga sessions—accompanied by vegetarian meals—for school principals, physical education teachers, and other interested educators from across Slovakia at the Ministry of Education and Science training center in Budmerice. During that time, yoga was incorporated into physical education curricula under the category of "relaxation exercises." Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda was awarded the "Viribus Unitus ad Astram" medal in recognition of his contribution to the development of education in the Slovak Republic; the award was presented by Deputy Prime Minister Roman Kováč, acting on behalf of the Minister of Education and Science.





In 1989—prior to the fall of the totalitarian regime in Czechoslovakia—PhDr. Anna Galovičová and her colleagues at the Municipal Cultural Center (MsKS) in Piešťany founded the Czechoslovak Vegetarian Union under the auspices of the MsKS. This organization subsequently enabled the publication of vegetarian cookbooks. SSIP initiated the introduction of vegetarian dining options in Slovak health resorts. Vegetarian restaurants gradually began to appear, partly driven by the introduction

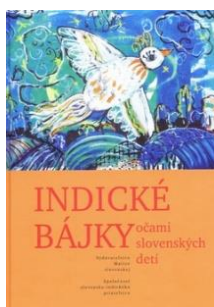
of yoga in these resorts and in schools; one of the first opened in 1990 at the Ivan Krasko Small Stage (*Malá scéna*) in Piešťany. The first shops selling vegetarian food and snack bars also began to emerge.

Under the EU's "Youth in Action" program, we carried out dozens of international projects, training sessions, and European exchanges focused on healthy living—incorporating vegetarian diets, yoga practice, and "karma yoga" for the community (such as litter collection). We also hosted year-long "Guardian of Life" stays for over a dozen volunteers from the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Germany, Lithuania, Turkey, Finland, and Egypt. These international projects were implemented in collaboration with partner organizations (which provided the volunteers) and IUVENTA, a Slovak youth organization. Together with the Icelandic partner organization Sibshops, we executed the "All in One Boat" project in both Iceland and Slovakia; this collaboration focused on supporting the siblings of children with disabilities, strengthening their mental health through psychological methods and yoga. SSIP published educational materials texts for these international projects:



- In a healthy body - a healthy spirit. 12-part documentary within Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, Italy. Piešťany 2004
- Multicultural education (Close to each other. Open to the world). Authors PhDr. Anna Galovičová et al. Trenčín 2009
- Multicultural education (Close to each other. Open to the World.) PhDr. Anna Galovičová and team, Trenčín 2010
- Help and do not fight! PhDr. Anna Galovičová . Topics and tasks for teaching in secondary schools. Also video. Piešťany 2012
- All in the same boat. Anna Galovičová, Brynhildur Bjornsdottir, Hanna R Bjonsdottir, Vilborg Oddsdottir. Prievidza 2014
- All in the same boat. Anna Galovičová, Brynhildur Bjornsdottir, Hanna R. Bjonsdottir, Vilborg Oddsdottir, Prievidza 2014

This year, 2024, the Slovak-Indian Friendship Society is organizing the 10th annual India through the eyes of Slovak children - drawings by children in kindergartens and primary schools in Slovakia, based on Indian fairy tales, of which the best will be evaluated and published together with the fairy tales. In cooperation with schools, kindergartens and the Indian Embassy.



We have published 9 books for children, with children's winning illustrations under the title India through the eyes of Slovak children. The project was created by Anka Galovičová in collaboration with the "Zelený strom" (Green Tree) sanatorium for children with disabilities in Piešťany. As part of art therapy sessions, children undergoing long-term hospitalization listened to Indian fairy tales and created paintings.

The Slovak-Indian Friendship Society is a member of the Sri Swami Madhavananda World Peace Organization. We participated in the Sri Swami Madhavananda World Peace Summit and events dedicated to the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi in Vienna and Brno. Together with Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda, we took part in the first Czech interfaith dialogue—organized by Prof. Halík, President of the Czech Christian Academy—held at Prague Castle. We also attended the Parliament of the World's Religions in Barcelona (2004) and the Sri Swami Madhavananda World Peace Summit in Zagreb (2005), among other interfaith conferences. with Indian Vice President Krishan Kant

In 2014, the Parliament of the World's Religions (PWR) in Chicago (USA) approached the SSIP with a request to organize a Parliament of the World's Religions in Slovakia—a former Eastern Bloc country—for the first time. The SSIP took the lead, and preparations for the 2017 Parliament in Bratislava began with the participation of a PWR delegation from Chicago. On that occasion, the Society organized the Central European Religious Forum in Nitra, attended by yoga instructors, representatives of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization, and leading pioneers of interfaith dialogue from the Baha'i community. ...with Buddhist organizations and representatives of monotheistic religions—Judaism, Islam, Christianity, etc.



In 2015, Anna Galovičová, together with Mário Nicolini and Peter Petrovič, founded the Parliament of the World's Religions – Slovakia, initiating cooperation with Czech experts such as those from the Forum 2000 Foundation (established by President Václav Havel).



In 1990, we attended a gathering of Friends of Tibet in Dharamshala, the seat of the government-in-exile. Anna Galovičová became the first Slovak woman to participate in teachings led directly by the 14th Dalai Lama—specifically the "Transmission of Enlightenment"—as well as a longevity ceremony.

In 1992, the "Guru Deep Centre of Spiritual Development"—founded by Anna Galovičová, an instructor of the JDŽ method—published the book *Opening the Inner Eye* by Gelong Tenzin Gyatso (the 14th Dalai Lama) through the Živena publishing house. This was the first book by the Dalai Lama to be published in Central Europe following the fall of the totalitarian regime, under which religion had been dismissed as the "opium of the people." SSIP adopted an eight-year-old Tibetan boy from the SOS Children's Village in Dharamshala; he continues to be raised in India and is being prepared for university-level medical studies in Slovakia. In 1992, the Slovak Spa Piešťany hosted the two-week 1st World Conference on "World Peace through Spirituality (Revolution of Heads and Hearts)." This event featured workshops organized in collaboration with the International Institute of the Integral Sciences of the Consciousness (IISC)—based in Montreal, Canada—and was led by Anglican priest Prof. John

Rossner, psychologist Dr. Marilyn Rossner, the shaman Parisha, and other IISC members and Nobel laureates, alongside representatives from various global spiritual and religious organizations.

The goal of the World Religions Forum – Slovakia is "united consciousness"—"One in all, all in One"—and the realization of the ancient Vedic mantra *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*: "One World, One Human Family, One Future." This mantra became the motto of India's G20 presidency, representing two-thirds of humanity, and the SSIP became a sister organization. We have been repeating this mantra for decades; it also featured in a psychological project by the prominent Austrian psychiatrist and concentration camp survivor Viktor Frankl, who termed the concept "monanthropism." He emphasized that just as humanity had attained monotheism, it was time to attain monanthropism. Our partner organization of Esperantists also strives to achieve this goal.

Part of the activities of the Slovakia-India Friendship Society offerings include yoga courses for both beginners and advanced practitioners, as well as yoga seminars, workshops, and training sessions. International seminars and conferences (held via Zoom when necessary) on the topics of yoga, Ayurveda, and homeopathy have been highly successful. SSIP regularly organizes educational trips to India for those interested in the country's spiritual culture and yoga—journeys that follow in the footsteps of the *Rishis* (Indian sages). A current highlight is the "OM Ashram," which celebrated its grand opening in February 2024.

