

**Embassy of India  
Bucharest**

**Press Release**

**Ambassador's Participation in Cultural and Academic Engagements Strengthens India-Romania People-to-People Ties**

Dr. Manoj Mohapatra, Ambassador of India to Romania, recently participated in two significant events in the cities of Pitești and Craiova, underscoring the deepening cultural, educational, and economic bonds between India and Romania. These engagements, at the vibrant Simfonia Lalelelor Festival in Pitești and with Indian students at the University of Craiova, exemplify how grassroots initiatives are weaving stronger people-to-people ties, while reflecting the interconnected economic and academic dynamism of Romania's southern regions.

In Pitești, the Ambassador was warmly received by His Excellency Mr. Cristian Gentea, Mayor of Pitești, at the renowned Simfonia Lalelelor (Symphony of Tulips) Festival. This annual spectacle transforms the city into a kaleidoscope of colors, with over 100,000 tulips meticulously arranged into intricate floral displays that draw thousands of visitors. The festival celebrates Pitești's rich cultural heritage and its tradition of community-centered events that unite citizens and guests in joyous harmony. The Ambassador highlighted the shared cultural spirit between Romania and India, drawing vivid parallels with India's Holi festival, a nationwide explosion of colors symbolizing renewal, forgiveness, and social unity. "Just as Holi brings communities together through vibrant celebrations of life and diversity, Simfonia Lalelelor reminds us of the universal language of joy and creativity that transcends borders," he remarked.

This cultural bridge is no coincidence. Pitești, in Argeș County, stands as a cornerstone of Romania's industrial heartland, home to global automotive giants like Dacia and Ford, which produce vehicles exported worldwide, including to India. The city's economic vibrancy, fueled by manufacturing, innovation, and a skilled workforce, mirrors India's own industrial powerhouses like Pune and Chennai. Such synergies open doors for enhanced trade and investment; Indian firms, from pharmaceuticals to automotive components, are increasingly eyeing partnerships here. The Ambassador's presence at the festival signaled India's commitment to these ties, fostering not just cultural exchange but also economic collaboration that benefits both nations' growth stories.

Complementing this cultural outreach, the Ambassador's visit to Craiova further amplified the educational pillar of India-Romania relations. At the University of Craiova, a leading institution renowned for its faculties in engineering, medicine, and humanities, he interacted with a group of dedicated students from KIIT & KISS Universities, Bhubaneswar, India, who are pursuing academic exchange

programs. The Ambassador commended their academic rigor and adaptability in this international setting, urging them to embrace Romania's rich history and multicultural ethos. "You are not just students; you are cultural ambassadors building the future of our bilateral partnership," he encouraged them.

Craiova, in Dolj County, is a beacon of academic excellence and economic prowess, hosting the University of Craiova alongside the massive Dacia-Renault plant, Europe's largest car factory by volume. This duality positions Craiova as a hub where education fuels industry: graduates often feed directly into high-tech manufacturing roles, driving Romania's export-led economy. Economically, Craiova's automotive sector aligns seamlessly with Pitești's, forming a southern Romania corridor of innovation that accounts for a significant share of national GDP. Indian companies, including those in IT, renewables, and auto ancillaries, stand to gain from joint ventures here, much like Sun Pharma's past expansions in Eastern Europe.

The Pitești-Craiova axis exemplifies regional interconnectedness. Just 150 kilometers apart, these cities share transport links via the A1 highway and rail networks, facilitating trade flows and student mobility. Educationally, initiatives like the KIIT & KISS-University of Craiova exchange program, one of several under India's growing footprint in Romanian academia, promote knowledge sharing in fields like AI, sustainable engineering, and public health. Economically, they represent untapped potential: Romania's automotive output complements India's component manufacturing expertise, with bilateral trade already surpassing €1.5 billion annually, poised for growth through the EU-India FTA conclusion.

These events connect to the larger tapestry of India-Romania relations. Amid global shifts, people-to-people ties serve as the bedrock of strategic partnerships. Cultural festivals like Simfonia Lalelelor humanize diplomacy, while student exchanges cultivate future leaders who will drive collaboration. The Ambassador emphasized that such grassroots engagements amplify institutional frameworks, including the India-Romania Joint Commission and recent MoUs on education and trade. By nurturing youth mobility, with over 120 Indian students now in Romania, and cultural dialogues, both nations are investing in a shared future of mutual prosperity.

India's diplomatic outreach in Romania extends beyond capitals, embracing dynamic regions like Wallachia's southern hubs. Pitești and Craiova, with their blend of tradition and modernity, embody this spirit: tulip fields beside assembly lines, classrooms fostering engineers for tomorrow's industries. These visits reinforce India's vision of a multipolar world anchored in friendship, where economic complementarity, from EVs to pharma, meets cultural empathy.

The Embassy of India reaffirms its commitment to expanding such initiatives, inviting more exchanges, business delegations, and cultural festivals. As the Ambassador noted, “In the symphony of tulips and the rhythm of student aspirations, we hear the melody of enduring India-Romania friendship.”

Bucharest

18 April 2026



Ambassdor warmly welcomed at Festivalul Lalelelor by Mayor of Pitesti, Cristian Gentea



Ambassador at Festivalul Lalelelor in Pitesti



Ambassdor met the KITT exgange students at University of Craiova



Ambassdor talking with the KITT exgange students