**Embassy of India**

**Muscat**

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**Press Release**

**Indian Embassy Celebrates Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) Day’ 2018**

The Embassy of India, Muscat, celebrated ‘Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation’ (ITEC) Programme Day on Tuesday, 6th March 2018. Around 150 ITEC Alumni from Oman, comprising Omani Officials and professionals, who have participated in various training courses in India under ITEC Programme during previous years, attended the celebration.

The ITEC Programme was launched in September 1964 as a bilateral programme of assistance of the Government of India for capacity building of friendly developing countries. It has emerged as a key vehicle for India’s contribution to Human Resource Development of partner countries. Under ITEC Programme, Officials from 161 countries from Asia, Africa, East Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean as well as Pacific and Small Island countries are invited to benefit from India’s developmental experience. Under the ITEC Programme, every year India provides around 12,000 scholarships for around 300 short, medium and long-term training courses conducted in 47 state-of-art institutions of learning & excellence.

In view of India’s exceptionally close relations with Oman, Government of India has offered 100 scholarships for Oman under the ITEC Programme for the period April 2017- March 2018. Over the years, ITEC Programme has received a good response and hundreds of Omani Government officials have attended ITEC courses.

The ITEC Programme covers a diverse range of subjects from traditional areas like agriculture, SMEs, management, English language to IT, Science & Technology, biotechnology, etc. The skills which are being provided under ITEC Programme facilitate human resource development, capacity building, skill upgradation and empowerment.

‘ITEC Day’ celebration is India’s annual endeavor to bring ITEC alumni together so that they can share their experiences and views on India with one another. The ITEC Day provided an opportunity to the ITEC Alumni, who have been trained in India under this Programme, to get-together at the Embassy to interact among themselves and learn from their experiences. ITEC Alumni were invited to speak to share their experience of training under the ITEC Programme in India. They spoke about the benefits of ITEC courses not only in providing knowledge and expertise but in giving them an opportunity to interact with trainees from other countries and learn more about India and its culture and traditions.

Speaking, on the occasion, Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman, Shri Indra Mani Pandey, highlighted various facets of India’s strategic partnership with Oman, underlining the desire of the Governments of India and Oman, as reflected in India-Oman Joint Statement, issued during the visit of Prime Minister of India to the Sultanate of Oman (11-12 February 2018), to expand the bilateral cooperation to new areas, including human resource development. He highlighted India’s achievements in human resource development, including its focus on skill development, development of SME’s and entrepreneurship and promotion of innovation and startups. He reiterated the commitment of Government of India to share its experience in these areas with Oman, stressing that training under ITEC Programme also serves this purpose. He conveyed the readiness of External Affairs Ministry of India to design customized courses for Oman under its ITEC Programme.

**Muscat, 7th March 2018**