**Embassy of India**

**Muscat**

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**Press Release**

**Painting competition to celebrate India@70**

Indian Embassy in Muscat has been organising a series of cultural, economic and community events as part of celebration of 70 years of India’s Independence, including dance and music performances, essay and quiz competitions, exhibition of paintings, seminars and workshops with a view to highlight the journey of India as a nation since its Independence in 1947.

2. In celebration of 70 years of India's Independence, Embassy of India, Muscat, in collaboration with Bhavalaya, organized a painting competition for students of Indian Schools in Oman to paint their image of ‘India@75’. 16 Indian Schools participated in the painting competition. A large number of students participated in the competition to win the Award for the Best Painting in Junior and Senior categories. A ceremony was held on 10th May 2018, at Embassy premises, to award the best paintings and felicitate students who participated in the painting competition. The competition was organized by Bhavalaya in collaboration with 16 Indian Schools in Oman.

3. Ms. Maryam Al Zadjali, Art Specialist and Director of Omani Society for Fine Arts; Mrs. Radhika Hamlai, Art Specialist and Mr. Sheffy Thattarath, Art- Specialist, were the members of Jury for Paint Your Image of ‘India@75’. Renowned Omani painter, Mr. Ahmed bin Said Al-Adawi, spoke about his experience as a painter. Ms. Hamda Al Shamsi spoke on how art has changed her life. Mrs. Sushmita Gupta made a presentation on evolution of painting in India since ancient times. The ceremony was attended by around 400 members of the Indian community. Dr. Retnakumar, Chairman of Bhavalaya, spoke about the importance of the competition.

4. Paintings made by three students under junior category: Mythri Jadon- Indian School Sohar; Bhadra Jayakrishnan- Indian School Seeb and S. M. Nizamudeen- Indian School Sur; and by three students under senior category: Divyaaunshi Praveen- Indian School Ghubra; Manya Sunil Talati- Indian School Wadi Kabir and Anshitha Ficel- Indian School Sohar, were awarded as ‘Best Painting’ by Shri Indra Mani Pandey, Ambassador of India, to the Sultanate of Oman. The judges selected a painting by Meghna Venkat, Indian School Nizwa, for a ‘Special Mention’. These seven best paintings are being exhibited at the Embassy premises.

5. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador underlined the importance of educating Indian students in Oman about the commitment of the Government and the people of India to build a ‘New India’ of their dreams by 2022, when the country would be celebrating 75 years of freedom. Ambassador referred to, in this context, New India Manthan, which the Embassy had organised earlier with participation of Indian community. Ambassador stressed that the initiative of Honourable Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, is aimed at energising and motivating the people of India to join the hands with their fellow Indians in building a New India, which is clean and “Free of Corruption, Casteism, Communalism, Poverty, and Terrorism.

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**Muscat, 13th May 2018**