High Commission of India
Mbabane

Press Release

61st ITEC Day

The High Commission of India Mbabane commemorated the 61st anniversary of the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) in Mbabane on 19/9/2025. Instituted in 1964 by the Government of India, ITEC programme has completed six decades of transformative Global South-South partnership in capacity building and knowledge sharing, including between India and Eswatini. More than 220000 personnel from various countries, including around 500 from Eswatini, have undergone various training under ITEC in India. This event was to commemorate the ITEC alumni from Eswatini and share their experience.

2. Chief Guest at the event was Hon'ble Minister for Public Service H.E. Mr.Mabulala Maseko who delivered the Keynote address. Hon'ble Minister for Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, H.E. Sen. Pholile Shakantu had graced the occasion as the Guest of Honour. Senior Commanders from the UEDF, REPS, HMCS, around 70 ITEC alumni of the Kingdom of Eswatini who had received training over the past one year, and friends from the media attended the event.

3. The event commenced with introductory remarks by Second Secretary (ITEC) in the High Commission. Thereafter, the High Commissioner, Mr. Ram Prasad gave the Welcome Address extending his greetings to the Chief Guest, Guest of Honour and all the distinguished guests and ITEC alumni. In his address, he highlighted the growing popularity of the ITEC courses by the fact that the slots for ITEC were increased to 50 and 20 for the UEDF. HC also said that the courses covered a vast range of subjects from basic trainings to the latest technology such as use of Artificial Intelligence and GIS mapping, etc. He added that the demand for ITEC across the globe was evident from the fact that the courses were conducted through e-ITEC even during the Covid pandemic. High Commissioner concluded his address by offering to further deepen cooperation in education, capacity building and ITEC.

4. High Commissioner's address was followed by the ITEC alumni sharing their experiences. The first one was Commissioner Health from HMCS, Ms. Glory Sibandze, who recently returned to India after completing a Women Leadership Programme from Engineers India Ltd., Gurugram, India. Commissioner Sibandze appreciated the curriculum and the exposure it provided when participants from around 24 countries got an opportunity to exchange perspectives. She stated the course exposed participants to India's policy on women empowerment and especially appreciated the session with India's Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas that shed light on women-centric

policies being advanced under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government. She also appreciated her enriching visit to tourist places around Delhi.

5. The next ITEC alumni to share her experience was Officer Cadet Nzimbini Pertunia of the UEDF, who was adjudged the best foreign cadet amongst 21 other cadets, both male and female, from different friendly countries. A short video was played of O/Cdt Pertunia marching from the ranks and receiving the award from Chief of Air Staff of India, Air Chief Marshall Amar Preet Singh. O/Cdt Pertunia had undergone the Short Service Commission from one of the prestigious defence institutions in India, Officers Training Academy, Chennai. While sharing her experience, O/Cdt Pertunia shared her appreciation for the diversity of Indian culture, languages and population, yet unity and discipline which the training instituted. On a lighter note, she also shared her liking for the "Masala Dosa" – a savoury Indian dish made out of rice, lentils with potatoes and spices.

6. The next person to share his experience was Mr.Mtundzi Dlamini from the Eswatini Dairy Board, who was part of a delegation to a course on Dairy Development through Cooperative Business Model at the National Dairy Development Board. Mr.Dlamini shared his appreciate for the rich curriculum on the cooperative model and especially the field visits to study the breeds, feeding schedules, milk collection centres for each village, district and processing at a plant before packaging and delivery to the customers. Mr. Dlamini also highlighted that India was the largest milk producer in the world and had attained it through this model. It is pertinent to note that India had launched "Operation Flood" in the 1970s to 1990, through which milk cooperatives were formed leading to India attaining self-sufficiency in milk production.

7. Thereafter Ms. Nondumiso Tsabedze, Business Officer of Montigny narrated her experience of visit to the Institute of Chartered Accounts of India at Hyderabad for a course "Indian Accounting Profession Story". Another ITEC alumni from the Eswatini Water Services Corporation shared his experience of training under ITEC and visit to India.

8. There were several other ITEC alumni, who wanted to share their experience, which we would be collating and sharing for wider reach.

9. The sharing of experience was followed by an address by Capt. Atul Sapahia, Defence Advisor from Pretoria, who shared details of the training cooperation with UEDF under ITEC and further scope of cooperation. He specially commended O/Cdt. Pertunia for her achievement through dedication and discipline. Brig. Gen Elijah Shabangu, who represented the Commander UEDF, read his message appreciating the defence training opportunities for the UEDF personnel under ITEC. Senior Addl. CP Mr.Vusi Gama, represented the REPS and shared his appreciation for this course with all present.

10. After this Chief Guest for the evening, Hon'ble Mabulala Maseko addressed the gathering. In his address, Chief Guest hailed the ITEC programme as a model of South-South cooperation. He stated that several Emaswati officials had benefitted in governance, finance, telecom, defence, sustainable development, womens empowerment, etc. He also mentioned that even during Covid, around 166 officials trained online. Hon. Chief Guest said that several ITEC-alumni now held leadership roles in advancing Eswatini's development goals. Hon. Chief Guest concluded his address saying that ITEC programme continued to strengthen bilateral ties with future cooperation in digital transformation, climate resilience, etc.

11. The event concluded with a short vote of thanks by the Second Secretary (ITEC), Mr. Sriram, and a group photograph of all the ITEC alumni with the Chief Guest, Guest of Honour and the High Commissioner.

12. In the sidelines of the dinner, the Chief Guest, Guest of Honour and High Commissioner also interacted with the media personnel and answered their queries.

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