From India with love

BY BONGIWE DLAMINI

The High Commission of India has extended warm greetings to His Majesty King Mswati III, the government, and the people of the Kingdom of Eswatini on the proud occasion of the 57th Inde-pendence Day.

Post-independence from British colonial rule on 6 September 1968, Eswatini has continued to chart a unique path, safeguarding its traditions while striving for socio-economic development and prosperity.

India and Eswatini established formal diplomatic relations in 1970, when accreditation was ex-tended through the High Commission of India in Maputo. This cooperation took a significant leap forward when the first resident High Commission was inaugurated in Mbabane in August 2019.

Over the years, the two nations have strengthened their ties through several high-level exchanges. His Majesty King Mswati III has travelled to India on multiple occasions, most recently in 2017 for the CII India-Africa Business Conclave, and in 2015 for the India-Africa Forum Summit in New Del-hi.

The Honourable President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, paid a State visit to the Kingdom in 2018, underlining the strategic importance of bilateral engagement.

The year 2025 has been especially active in advancing cooperation. In July, India's Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Pabitra Margherita, visited Eswatini and paid a courtesy call on His Majesty the King, and also met Prime Minister Russell Mmiso Dlamini and other government offi-cials.

Minister for Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) Savannah Maziya also visited India in August to attend the CII India-Africa Business Conclave, where she also addressed a session on "Accelerating Digital Future through Innovation and R&D."

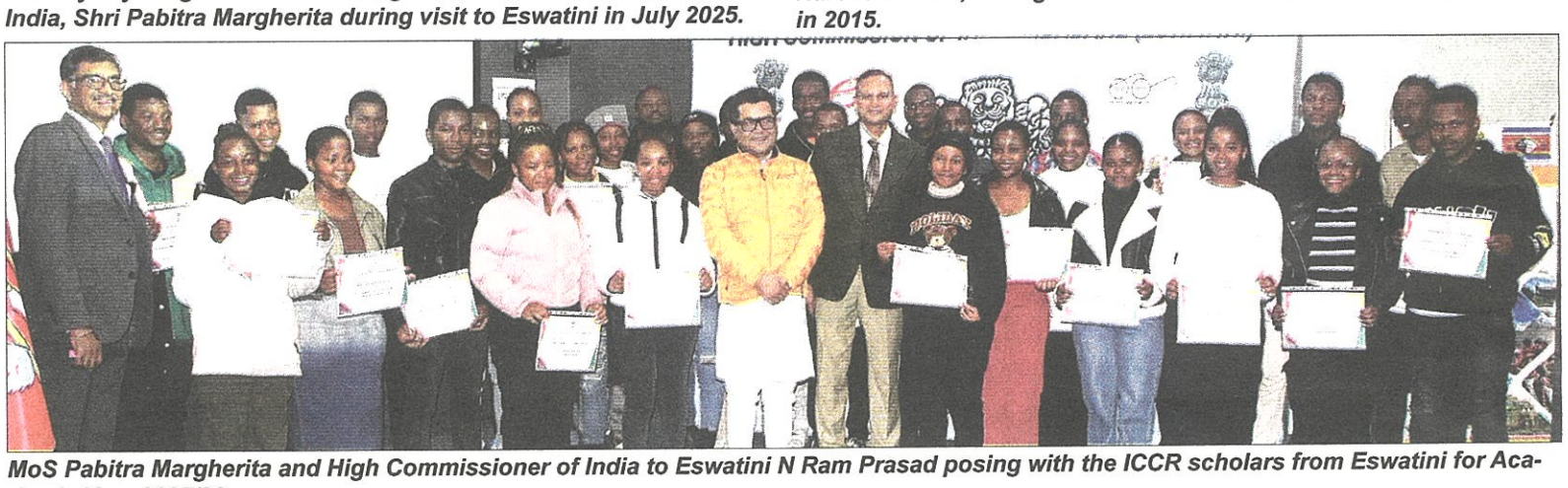
Earlier in May, Minister of Foreign Affairs Senator Pholile Shakantu led a delegation of officials and media representatives to the inaugural World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit in Mumbai. During this historic visit, the first ever by an Eswatini Foreign Minister to India, Shakantu held bilateral talks with India's External Affairs Minister, Dr S Jaishankar, focusing on deepening ties. Minister of Health Mduduzi Matsebula also participated in the International Health Dialogue held in New Delhi in February 2025.



His Majesty King Mswati-III meeting Hon. MoS for External Affairs of India, Shri Pabitra Margherita during visit to Eswatini in July 2025.



His Majesty King Mswati-III meeting Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, during the India Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi in 2015.



MoS Pabitra Margherita and High Commissioner of India to Eswatini N Ram Prasad posing with the ICCR scholars from Eswatini for Academic Year 2025/26.



Hon.MoS Shri Pabitra Margherita toured the RSTP during his visit to Eswatini in July 2025

rice and 300 tons of beans, and medicines and medical equipment worth US$3 mil-lion in 2018.

The Lubuyane Irrigation Project, worth US$400,000, continues to benefit farmers in the Hhohho region. Notably, India was the first country to donate 20,000 doses of Covid-19 vaccines to Eswatini in March 2021, at a time when vaccine supplies were scarce globally. Beyond these, India has sup-ported welfare initiatives such as donations of blankets to the Philani Maswati Foundation and medicines worth Rs.10 million.

Capacity building and education remain central to bilateral cooperation. Between 2024 and 2025, India has trained approximately 98 Emaswati personnel under its Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. Training covered diverse fields such as infrastructure develop-ment, disaster management, wildlife preservation, sustainable development, crime investigation, road safety, social welfare, artificial intelligence, and digital technologies. Eleven government of-ficers have also benefitted from India's prestigious Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats.

Pursue

Further, 31 students from Eswatini secured fully funded ICCR scholarships in 2025 to pursue higher education in science, agriculture, and commerce across Indian universities.

The High Commission has reinforced this knowledge exchange by setting up "India Corners" at the National Libraries in Mbabane and Manzini, offering books, digital content, computers, and inter-net access. Mini-India Corners have also been established at the University of Eswatini, Sifundzani High School, Good Shepherd College of Health Sciences, Purity High School, Woodlands High School, Matsanjeni Community High School, and Waterford Kamhlaba High School.

These initiatives ensure that young people gain access to global learning resources. Opportunities for higher education have also been broadened through the Indian Institute of Technology Madras' new offshore campus in Zanzibar, providing Eswatini's youth with regional access to world-class training in technology.

Cultural ties remain an integral pillar of the relationship. Both India and Eswatini attach great im-portance to preserving cultural heritage while embracing modern development. Each year, Eswa-tini artists and artisans are supported by the High Commission of India to showcase their talent at the Surajkund International Crafts Mela in Faridabad, India. In February 2025, a 20-member dele-gation from Eswatini participated in the prestigious event, further cementing cultural exchange.

Beyond official partnerships, the vibrant Indian expatriate community in Eswatini plays a small yet significant role in national development. Active across education, healthcare, commerce, and pro-fessional sectors, Indian-origin residents have embraced the Kingdom as their home, contributing meaningfully to its growth and prosperity.

Bilateral

As Eswatini marks its 57th Independence anniversary, the High Commission of India once again extends its greetings and reiterates its firm commitment to deepening bilateral cooperation. India looks forward to continuing its role in Eswatini's progress, sharing expertise and resources in digi-tal technology, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, education, trade, and capacity building to benefit the nation and its people.

India has consistently positioned itself as a reliable partner in Eswatini's development journey. The Royal Science and Technology Park, constructed with a US$20 million line of credit, stands as a landmark of this partnership, having been inaugurated by President Kovind during his 2018 visit. Additionally, the Agriculture Development and Mechanization Project, financed through a US$37.9 million line of credit, significantly improved the country's maize productivity. India has also pro-vided extensive humanitarian assistance, including a cash grant of US$1 million, in-kind donations of 700 tons of