

# India High Commission commemorates ITEC Day

BY SIPHOSETHU DLAMINI

The High Commission of India this week commemorated significant contributions of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme to the development of Eswatini.

Speaking on the occasion, High Commissioner of India His Excellency N.Ram Prasad said the event was part of India's engagement with Africa in general and the Kingdom of Eswatini in particular.

His Excellency said, India has been a proud partner of Eswatini's developmental journey, highlighting that more than 370 local government officials have benefitted from the programme so far.

Prominent institutions whose officers have benefitted from the programme are the Umbutfo Eswatini Defence Force (UEDF), His Majesty's Correctional Services (HMCS), Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS) besides various government departments.

"In the current training year, in addition to the annual allocation of 50 civilian ITEC training slots, Government of India has also allocated 15 defence training slots for the Kingdom of Eswatini," he said.

ITEC is a demand-driven and response oriented programme with the objec-



tive of sharing knowledge and skills with fellow developing countries.

Its objective is to merge available resources with skills to achieve prosperity and was an excellent example of fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange among nations.

This programme was based on voluntary cooperation, free from conditionalities and national ownership aligned with priorities of Eswatini.

The guiding principles of this were solidarity, mutual respect and the spirit of sharing. His Excellency further stated that the High Commission of India remains committed to strengthening the India-Eswatini partnership and expanding the scope of the pro-

gramme to meet the evolving needs of Eswatini.

Minister for Public Service, Mabulala Maseko who represented the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Pholile Shakantu, said the programme has been a beacon of hope for the Eswatini, providing its citizens with unparalleled opportunities for capacity building and skill enhancement.

## Professionals

"The scholarships have enabled Eswatini professionals to acquire cutting-edge knowledge and expertise in a wide range of fields, from information technology to agriculture, healthcare to engineering," said the minis-

ter, highlighting that their impact extend far beyond individual beneficiaries.

Minister Maseko said by empowering the country's workforce, it was strengthening the very foundations of Eswatini.

"The skills and knowledge gained by Eswatini scholars were being applied to address critical challenges and drive sustainable development in Eswatin," the minister further stated.

He said that government is particularly grateful for the flexibility and responsiveness of the ITEC programme, which has allowed the country to tailor its training needs to specific priorities.

"The programme's emphasis on practical learning and hands-on experience has ensured that the scholars return home well-equipped to make a tangible difference," said Mabulala.

He said that as government looked to the future, they are confident that the programme would continue to be a catalyst for progress in Eswatini.

The minister said government is committed to maximising the benefits of this partnership and working closely with the Government of India to identify new areas of cooperation.

The event was also graced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Principal Secretary, Sizwe Newman Ntshangase, acting Ministry of Education and Training Principal Secretary Naniki Mnisi, HMCS Commissioner General, LaMakhosini Phindile Dlamini, REPS National Commissioner, Manoma Vusie Masongo, representatives from the UEDF Lieutenant General Mfanawenkhosi Khumalo and Major General Michael Ranft and ITEC and ICCR scholarships alumni.

The programme has been instrumental in capacity building in Eswatini, providing opportunities for Eswatini to acquire valuable skills and knowledge in various fields, including:

- Information Technology
- Agriculture
- Healthcare
- Engineering
- Management