INDIA COMMISSIONER APPRECIATES ESWATINI FOR COOPERATION

BY SIMON SHABANGU

Indian High Commissioner to Eswatini, Radha Venkataraman has extended words of appreciation to His Majesty King Mswati III and the government of Eswatini for cooperation as they established a permanent High Commission in Mbabane which just turned a year.

The high commissioner was speaking at her residence during the commemoration of India’s 74th Independence Day on Saturday.

She said with the office now fully set-up, there will be smooth cooperation and implementation of more projects between the two countries. The event was also attended by Indians residing in the country as well as

“I convey my gratitude to His Majesty and the government of Eswatini for all the cooperation and support in our successful completion of one year in Eswatini.

“We are looking forward to increased interaction with the leadership of Eswatini for the benefit of the citizens of both our countries. It would be remiss of me if I do not specially thank Mrs. Mona Ashraff and the Ashraff family for making the high commission team most welcome in Eswatini and for assisting us in establishing ourselves quickly and smoothly,” she said.

She said now that they have fully fledged offices based at the United Nations Complex in Mbabane, they will be better coordinating various development cooperation programmes of the government of India, being undertaken and implemented in Eswatini.

She said due to the presence of a resident mission, timely donation of more than E3 million medical supplies by the government of India to Eswatini during COVID-19 pandemic was possible despite the lack of commercial air-connectivity.

“We have also successfully processed and sent many Eswatini students and government officials for the various scholarships and ITEC programmes in a timely fashion and would have done much more in this regard if it was not for the COVID-19 disruptions. As recently as last week, at short notice, we were able to secure nominations of six senior officers of Royal Eswatini Police and His Majesty’s Correctional Services for an ITEC programme on ‘Policing during Pandemic Times’ held virtually on 10-11 August 2020,” she added.

The high commissioner also noted that her office was able to repatriate 15 nationals of India who were stranded in Eswatini and wanted to go back to India.

She said there was vast scope for improving cooperation between India and Eswatini, not only bilaterally but at various international forums.

“With the establishment of the High Commission of India, we expect this cooperation to reach new heights.

“Finally, I convey my heartfelt gratitude to the Indian Diaspora for their cooperation and support. I hope they will continue extending the same support and cooperation in future,” she said.