

Ambassador's Message on the occasion of Independence Day of India 2020

On the occasion of 74th Independence Day of India, I extend warm greetings and heartiest felicitations to all members of the Indian community living in the Sultanate of Oman. On behalf of the Government and people of India, including the Indian community in Oman, I extend best wishes to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik and the Government and people of Oman for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of Oman.

2. The world is in the midst of COVID19 pandemic situation. Global challenges of this magnitude can be addressed effectively only through concerted global action. India believes in the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – the entire world is one family. Accordingly, we have always extended support to our friends and partners in need - be it earthquakes, cyclones or any other natural or man-made crisis situation, we have responded with speed and solidarity. In this fight against COVID too, India has extended medical assistance to over 130 countries. Our research institutes are actively participating in the global efforts in search for a vaccine.

3. The COVID crisis has also demonstrated the resilience of India-Oman strategic partnership. Indian health professionals are working hand-in-hand with their Omani brothers and sisters to provide health-care to the affected. Government of Oman has taken very good care of the Indian Diaspora residing in Oman which we deeply appreciate. Both countries have facilitated repatriation of each-other's nationals. India remained a reliable supplier of food and other essential items to Oman at a time when global supply chains were severely disrupted.

4. In the 73 years of independence, India has come a long way. It has evolved as a modern and dynamic nation, with over 1.35 billion Indians working together to fulfill their dreams and aspirations. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, major initiatives have been taken for rapid socio-economic transformation of India. India has made great gains in areas such as total financial inclusion, housing & infra construction, Ease of Doing Business, tax reforms, roll-out of the world's largest health care initiative - Ayushman Bharat, among others. These gains have set the foundation for the next round of development initiatives.

5. In the wake of COVID-19 pandemic, Prime Minister Modi has called upon the world community to work for human-centric development and for a more resilient and prosperous world. India will make its contribution through the realization of "Atmanirbhar Bharat", a self-reliant and resilient India, integrated with the global economy.

6. As we celebrate our achievements, we are also conscious of our responsibilities towards the planet. Our motto is Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas, Sabka Vishwas - meaning “together, for everyone's growth, with everyone's trust”. It is in this spirit, we have been extending support to our friends and partners for their development efforts. India’s development cooperation ranges from commerce to culture, energy to engineering, health to housing, IT to infrastructure, sports to science, disaster relief and humanitarian assistance to restoration and preservation of cultural and heritage assets. India has extended grant-in-aid of around US\$ 4 Billion and more than 300 Lines of Credit worth US\$ 30.66 billion to support projects in more than 60 countries. India also supports capacity building through its unique Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme. For us, the most fundamental principle in cooperation is respecting development partners and be guided by their development priorities.

7. The Sultanate of Oman is a close friend and trusted partner of India. Our vibrant strategic partnership is based on our shared values, common interests and convergence in approaches. High-level visits and exchanges in recent years have helped us move forward and strengthen cooperation in all key areas including trade & commerce, defence & security, science & technology and people-to-people contacts. Prime Minister Modi’s visit to Oman in February 2018 at the invitation of Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said was a milestone in our relationship. A thorough review of our cooperation was undertaken during the highly successful visit of Dr. S. Jaishankar to Oman in December 2019. In a recent telephone conversation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with HM Sultan Haitham, both leaders discussed the health and economic challenges posed by the ongoing pandemic and reaffirmed commitment to work together.

8. As we look ahead to post-COVID19 era, there are immense opportunities for the expansion of India-Oman partnership. India can be a strong and resilient partner for Oman in all priority areas identified under Vision 2040. There are strong complementarities in the areas of mining, logistics, food and agriculture, and fisheries. Oman can benefit from India’s capabilities in the new areas of Space, IT and Cyber technologies. India is already partnering with Oman in its capacity building efforts through the ITEC Programme, which we plan to scale up.

9. It is our hope and strong belief that India-Oman bilateral cooperation will reach new heights in the coming years. The Embassy of India looks forward to working closely with the Government and people of Oman as well as the Indian diaspora in Oman towards this objective.

Muscat, August 2020

Munu Mahawar
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