

**Speech by H.E Mr. Piyush Srivastava,
Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Bahrain
Indian University & ITEC Alumni Meet**
[Venue : MP Hall; 04.12.2022; 1600 hrs.]

Your Excellency Mr. Abdulnabi Al Shoala, Former Minister & Member of Shura Council and Patron of Indian University Alumni Society, Bahrain;

Excellencies, Hon'ble Members and former Members of Parliament;

Dr. Abdulhassan Al Dairi

&

Executive committee members of IUAS;

Our esteemed Indian University & ITEC Alumni;

Colleagues from the Embassy,

Good Evening!

I welcome all of you to the Embassy. We were planning to organize this get-together for a long time; however, due to Covid as well as other scheduling issues, it got delayed. I am so happy that finally, we all are able to meet today in an informal setting to exchange notes, to share ideas on how to take forward Indian University Alumni Society as well as to further cement bonds of friendship between peoples of India and Kingdom of Bahrain.

2. Our civilizational relationship dates back to millennia, forged by traders, travellers, intellectuals and people seeking education, who travelled freely across the Arabian Sea. Some of you have travelled to India almost half a century ago for education!

3. The Indian Alumni in Bahrain is an exceptional and diverse group. They include Ministers, Members of Parliament, representatives from Government, private sector, businesses and academic and cultural institutions, to name a few. In addition to a large number of Bahraini people who have studied in India on their own, there are close to 80 people who have benefited from Government of India scholarships including Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) scholarships since 2009.

4. You have played key role in enhancing goodwill for India among people of Bahrain, and vice versa. This has been felt by the members of Indian community, whenever they approach any institution, authority or the friendly Bahraini people.

Distinguished dignitaries,

5. India has made tremendous strides in Education. World class universities have made India an educational hub. Students from all over the world today study at premier institutions like IITs, IIMs and universities offering niche courses in space and hi-tech areas. Further, applied professional courses have generated considerable interest from students abroad. We welcome more and more students from abroad including Bahrain to come and study in India, both on self-financing basis as well as through Government of India scholarships and ITEC program.

6. Kingdom of Bahrain has highly developed education infrastructure and hosts a number of Bahraini as well as international universities of repute. I see a lot of synergies and complementarities in pushing forward bilateral cooperation in education sector, by way of collaboration between universities, students and faculty exchange, opening up of Indian technical university campuses in Bahrain, and more and more Bahraini students travelling to India for higher education.

Friends,

7. When students come to India, they might come as foreigners, but over time they become our family. They take back a bit of India with them when they return. For India, the whole world is one family with the spirit of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”. The same is also reflected in the theme of the upcoming G-20 Summit, as India takes over the Presidency of the Group of world’s twenty most powerful economies. The theme ‘One Earth, One Family, One Future’ very aptly demonstrates Indian ethos, development paradigm and foreign policy.

Dear Indian Alumni,

7. We have carefully chosen two themes for tonight’s events. One is, of course, study in India. The other theme is the State of Maharashtra, which has hosted a large number of Bahraini students over the years, and avenues of tourism in that state. I am sure the video, that will be played later in the programme, will tickle some veins of nostalgia for those who have studied in that state.

9. I am sure that discussion and exchange of ideas in today’s meeting will prove to be an important catalyst in further strengthening friendship between people of two countries, in this year of Golden Jubilee of establishment of our diplomatic relations. We highly value this Dialogue and intend to continue the same on regular basis.

10. Let me once again thank all of you for your presence today. I look forward to having greater interaction with each one of you during the course of the event.

Thank you,