**Consulate General of India**

**Jaffna**

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**Press Release**

**Commemorating 60 Years of India-Sri Lanka Capacity Building Partnership through ITEC**

 The Consulate of India in Jaffna celebrated ITEC Day on December 11, 2024, at the Jaffna Cultural Centre to mark the 60th anniversary of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program, a capacity-building partnership between India and Sri Lanka. NP Governor N Vedanayagam, NPC Chairman C. V. Sivagnanam, Chief Secretary to Governor L.Ilaangovan, Vice Chancellor of University of Jaffna Prof. S Srisatkunarajah and ITEC alumni from Jaffna, as well as officials and professionals representing various sectors, all of whom had benefited from a range of training courses in India under ITEC programs participated in the event. The event also featured a tribute to the 143rd birth anniversary of the renowned Tamil poet Subramania Bharati, celebrated alongside the ITEC Day program.

2. NP Governor Vedanayagam, Chief guest of the event, thanked the Indian government for facilitating the ITEC programme noting that it has played a pivotal role in enhancing human resource skills of Sri Lankan officers while at the same time giving them a significant edge in their professional capacities. He commended India’s network of over 100 institutions offering diverse training programs and urged more officers, especially those in the agricultural sector, to leverage this opportunity. The Governor also called for continued Indian assistance to support the development of the Northern Province.

3. Prof . Srisatkunarajah, UoJ, Prof. Srisatkunarajah lauded the visionary works of Subramania Bharati and applauded India’s remarkable advancements in fields such as space exploration and nuclear technology. He acknowledged India’s post-independence development journey, describing it as "Incredible India." Stressing the importance of capacity-building programs like ITEC, he noted their vital role in equipping Sri Lankan officers to contribute to SL’s brighter future.

4. NPC Chairman C. V. Sivagnanam reflected on India’s achievements, attributing them to India’s discipline and foresight. He shared his positive experiences of collaborating with Indian diplomats and praised the vision of Subramania Bharati, noting that the connectivity between India and Sri Lanka envisaged by the poet is now becoming a reality. He extended his gratitude to the Consulate of India, Jaffna, for facilitating ITEC programs that shape the careers of Sri Lankan officers and encouraged alumni to promote these opportunities among their peers.

5. NP Chief Secretary Ilangovan expressed appreciation to the Government of India for its enduring support through ITEC programs. Quoting the Pareto Principle, he observed that even if 20% of Northern Province officers gain exposure through such training, it could benefit 80% of outcomes. He acknowledged the challenges posed by brain drain in the Northern Province but stated that ITEC initiatives have significantly contributed to regaining human resource adequacy.

6. Consul General Shri. Sai Murali underscored the significance of ITEC day celebration coinciding with the birth anniversary of Tamil poet Subramania Bharati. He elaborated on the ITEC program, initiated by the Ministry of External Affairs in 1964, which has facilitated training through more than 400 courses, benefiting over 100,000 individuals globally. Consul General emphasized that even during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the program was offered digitally. Consul General stated that particularly the young officers of Northern Province trained under ITEC in India, are actively working towards societal betterment in their region. He expressed optimism that the program’s ongoing impact would further strengthen the bilateral ties between India and Sri Lanka in the coming years.

7. A few representative photographs are enclosed.

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**Jaffna**

**11 Dec 2024**