

Empowering the Global South: India's ITEC Programmes at Dr. MCR HRD Institute of Telangana

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Introduction

In light of changing power dynamics and the evolving importance of the Global South in global affairs, India working to promote cooperation between nations can be seen as a message for holistic growth and mutually-beneficial collaboration. The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme is a shining example of this commitment by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

Among the prominent institutions executing these capacity-building initiatives, the Dr. MCR HRD Institute under the Government of Telangana has carved a distinguished name for itself. Since joining hands with the ITEC initiative, the Institute has consistently delivered high-quality training programmes for diplomats and professionals from ITEC partner countries. Focusing on areas such as media, public relations, and commercial diplomacy, these programmes have helped reinforce India's strategic relationships across Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean, while fostering a spirit of knowledge sharing and mutual progress.

A Vision Based on Collaboration Rather Than Patronage

India's role in the Global South is fundamentally informed by a unique philosophy—one that resolutely breaks with the heritage of hierarchical donor-recipient relations. Rather than providing aid as a superior entity, India embraces a model premised on equality, solidarity, and mutual empowerment. This is informed by the historical experience of India as a post-colonial state and its conception of global development as inclusive.

The core of this vision is the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme initiated in 1964 by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. ITEC has emerged since its inception as one of India's most significant diplomatic programs with a diverse range of training programs, technical support, study visits, and project consultancy

service. Now, over 160 partner nations from Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Oceania actively engage in ITEC, thus making it a keystone of India's South-South cooperation landscape.

The driving philosophy of ITEC is to develop human and institutional capacities in partner nations through experience-sharing of India's developmental history, technical know-how, and administrative innovations. India does not export fixed models but adapts its programmes to the exact needs of participating countries, again strong evidence of the belief that development has to be context-specific and locally initiated.

Against this larger context, the Dr. MCR HRD Institute, Government of Telangana, has evolved as an important regional player. The Institute has assumed a central position in providing ITEC training in priority thematic areas of governance practice, e-governance, institutional reforms, public relations and media, diplomacy, and leadership in public administration. With its carefully selected courses, the Institute not only builds technical capabilities but also a profound appreciation of democratic values, public accountability, and citizen-friendly service delivery, values that resonate throughout the Global South.

By placing this training in Telangana, a state that is renowned for its administration's innovations, technology-based solutions, and inclusive governance models, India asserts its devotion to taking the objectives of foreign policy and rendering them meaningful, grass-roots-level development cooperation. The ITEC program is hence not merely a diplomatic instrument; it is an embodiment of India's faith in empowering its partners by means of collective growth, practical knowledge, and human-oriented development.

A Seven Cohorts Journey and Beyond

The experience of the ITEC training programmes at Dr. MCR HRD Institute has been nothing less than revolutionary. The Institute has had seven heterogeneous cohorts of participants from various continents over the past year, each with varying insights, knowledge, and cultural backgrounds.

The initial participants to attend were from South Africa, establishing a strong foundation for India's increasing interaction with the African continent. This was followed by Vietnamese participants, demonstrating India's connection to Southeast Asia, and subsequently Sri Lanka, further establishing the nation's neighbourhood-first policy.

Subsequent batches received commercial diplomats from Egypt, marking an increasing interest from West Asia. Guyanese delegates (in two groups), Suriname, and Tanzania introduced representation from Latin America, the Caribbean, and East Africa. Second-time entry from countries such as Nepal and Sri Lanka served to highlight the programme's increasing popularity and its serious influence on participants.

A turning point occurred in June 2025, when the Institute welcomed a remarkably diverse group of delegates representing 14 countries from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This experience was not merely quantitative, it represented India's growing standing as a trustworthy international partner in terms of knowledge exchange and capacity building.

Telangana's Strategic Significance

In India's larger development and diplomacy outreach, the Telangana state has gradually become an important contributor. From its inception as the newest Indian state to its transformation into a model of effective governance, Telangana's trajectory has been remarkable.

Lying at the core of this success story is Hyderabad, a city that comfortably blends its royal heritage with contemporary ambitions. Famous for its cultural heritage, Hyderabad is today also a centre of innovation, technology, and policy-making. Strategically positioned here is the Dr. Marri Channa Reddy Human Resource Development Institute of Telangana (Dr. MCRHRDIT), providing international delegates with an opportunity not only to acquire administrative expertise but also to imbibe India's democratic values and inclusive development philosophy.

Telangana is unique in the sense that it is able to bridge India's vision for external affairs with ground reality. The ITEC scheme under the aegis of the Ministry of External Affairs discovers in Telangana an active partner which gives more than it takes in the way of hosting. With well-crafted modules for training and rich cultural exposure, Telangana has been able to create a community of international professionals bound together by their quest for good governance and effective communication.

A moving instance of this synergy was seen in November 2024, when the Indian Prime Minister visited Guyana, at the same time that Guyanese delegates were present at Dr. MCRHRDIT. This convergence was greater than coincidence; it underscored India's smooth integration of diplomatic efforts and development outreach.

This momentum was carried forward in July 2025 as the Prime Minister of India visited Trinidad and Tobago. At the time when we recently concluded the 14 countries' diplomatic visit to our institute, Although visits at the top level invite notice, it is the sustained work of institutions such as Dr. MCRHRDIT which creates lasting connections through exchange, training, and interaction.

In the broad picture of Indian international ambitions, Telangana is a pragmatic and visionary partner that embodies the country's ethics while acting energetically in the world. As international geopolitics keeps changing, Telangana demonstrates that sincere diplomacy frequently germinates not only in summits but also in the mundane dialogue that occurs across training rooms and cultural landmarks.

Building Bridges through Knowledge Diplomacy

The programmes conducted at Dr. MCR HRD Institute, Government of Telangana, go beyond traditional classroom teaching. They are dynamic environments for cultural interaction, policy debates, and collaborative learning. Modules designed bespoke contain expert talks, experiential sessions, interactive discussions, and exposure visits, each designed to meet the unique developmental requirements of the participating nations as well as to exchange India's best practices in governance and media.

Delegates had the opportunity to engage with top Indian civil servants, subject-matter experts, and media workers. Tours to major organisations like Telangana Police Command & Control, Tribal Welfare Museum, All India Radio, Doordarshan, T-Hub, Ramoji Film City, Golconda Fort, Charminar, Chowmohalla Palace, Hussain Sagar Lake, Shilparamam, Birla Science Museum, and several government offices also heighten their awareness of India's working systems.

The participants tend to go back to their homelands as goodwill ambassadors, armed with skill sets and imbued with a rich experience of India's democratic traditions, pluralism, technological advances, and inclusive policies. These interactions form sound foundations for long-term collaboration and cooperative diplomacy.

The Ministry of External Affairs' initiative to make Dr. MCR HRD Institute of Telangana a principal training partner under the ITEC scheme speaks volumes about Telangana's rising stature in the realm of administrative excellence and innovation.

Telangana's governance model that puts people first and is tech-driven holds great lessons for nations with similar developmental ambitions. The Institute, infused with state-of-the-art facilities and an enduring academic network, provides a learning experience that is both globally applicable and locally relevant.

This partnership between the central institutions and the state leadership is a demonstration of how India's federal structure allows for the growth of foreign policy through bottom-up initiatives and cooperation.

Looking Ahead: Enhancing South-South Solidarity

In a global community where issues such as climate change, public health crises, gaps in digitalization, and the integrity of information continue to present serious hazards, the importance of collaborative action on the part of Global South nations is greater than ever before. The ITEC training schemes designed at Dr. MCR HRD Institute, Telangana, in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs, GOI, are active attempts at responding to these international needs.

Each generation helps develop not only professional know-how but also a sense of teamwork among future global leaders. These programs are building a network of knowledgeable, interconnected professionals able to navigate the nuances of governance, diplomacy, and media across borders.

India's position, as a nation that has both endured and provided development solutions, puts it in a singular position to span the long-standing global divides. The training model at Dr. MCR HRD Institute illustrates this philosophy to perfection by presenting sustainable, people-based models of growth.

Conclusion

India's long-standing engagement with the Global South is grounded in respect, shared interests, and a pledge to empowerment. The ITEC Programme, and more so the powerful training sessions at Dr. MCR HRD Institute of Telangana, make this pledge real with skilful connections and goodwill that endures.

In the future, the arrival of subsequent cohorts will ensure to intensify these interactions. These interactions not only elevate individuals but also help to construct a multipolar and inclusive world order, a world where India and its like-minded partners from the Global South advance together in concert and purpose.