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### **India-UAE forum to focus on Knowledge Economy**

A high-level India-UAE panel will discuss the potential areas of cooperation between the two countries in the pursuit of developing a knowledge economy at the Emirates Palace Hotel in Abu Dhabi on Monday.

The conclave will be jointly addressed by UAE Minister for Higher Education Sheikh Nahayan bin Mubarak Al Nahayan and Indian Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal. This will be followed by an expert panel discussion comprising government officials, academics, businesspeople and mediapersons from both countries.

The forum is being organised by Dubai-based management consultancy Indian Expressions, in partnership with The Centre of Excellence for Applied Research and Training (CERT) – the entrepreneurial spin-off of the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) – and the Rajen A. Kilachand Knowledge Foundation, headed by the Chairman and President of Dodsai Group.

Moderated by Dr Tayeb Kamali, Group CEO, CERT Group of companies and Vice Chancellor, HCT, the forum will focus on the following themes: explore diverse perspectives on knowledge economy and discuss the importance of evolving a sustainable economy; address the strength and challenges of the two countries and deliberate on new technology, innovation, business strategy, as well as changing social and economic conditions; present the huge opportunities in skilled and semi-skilled vocational training; review international experiences; explore opportunities for public-private partnerships in education;

According to Founder & CEO of Indian Expressions Malini N. Menon “We are particularly interested in creating and nurturing a sustainable forum that explores public-private partnership in Education & HRD in the context of the exciting changes taking in both the UAE and India.” India recently passed a ground-breaking act that legalizes the right to free and compulsory education for all children between the ages of six and 14 years, as well as opened its doors to foreign universities and foreign direct investment in the education sector. It is forecasted that India would require about 30,000 new higher institutions of learning by 2020, necessitating about \$400 billion in investment.

Similarly, Menon explained that the UAE’s mindset revolving around building human capital is reflected in the government’s emphasis that “spending in education is the most feasible investment in the future” and made the UAE the perfect venue for such an important conclave. This has been translated into nearly 23 percent of the 2010 federal budget being allocated to the education sector. It has also been accompanied by a reform package that includes a new school curriculum, as well as opening of off-shore campuses of reputed international educational institutions.

Together, Menon – whose company showcases Middle East and UAE business that favors a ‘Look East’ strategy – explained that “this sector adds a fresh and modern dynamic to bilateral relations between the two countries. We are also excited at the prospect of Mr. Sibal, who is attempting to overhaul the Indian education system, coming to the UAE for the first time and exploring the possibilities for synergy with another visionary, Sheikh Nahayan.”

The Conclave takes place at the Emirates Palace Hotel in Abu Dhabi tomorrow and is to be attended by several government dignitaries and serious investors in the Education sectors of both India & the UAE. Minister Sibal, who is one of India’s best spoken Ministers is a law graduate from Harvard with over 20 years experience as a Statesman is the lead speaker at the Forum that will be moderated by Dr Tayeb Kamali of CERT, Abu Dhabi.

### ***About Indian Expressions***

Indian Expressions showcases Middle East and UAE business that favors a ‘Look East’ strategy in order to leverage their strengths in this exciting, evolving geo-economic configuration. Joint venture projects, M&A deals and big ticket investment proposals by various Middle East business organizations in India point to strengthening the traditional trading links between the two regions.

Indian Expressions brings together business forces from the UAE and India in ventures aimed at promoting cross investment opportunities and establishing networking forums that facilitate greater interaction between the business leaders of both countries. It owns, co-owns and manages on a turn-key basis several IP portfolios such as the ‘Asian Business Leadership Forum™’, ‘Asian Business Women’s Congress™’, ‘Asian Business Awards ME™’, ‘The Asian Festival of Films & the Golden Falcon Awards™’. The company consults on high-profile India-centric events, facilitates the launch of new businesses and offers professional counsel and start-up funding for businesses with an India-UAE focus.

Indian Expressions produces and publishes books and whitepapers that take inspiration from Asia-related subjects. Its most recent coffee-table book includes *India and the UAE: In Celebration of a Legendary Friendship*. Its forthcoming publications include *Images of Success*, a showcase of the achievements of 100 contemporary leaders from the Middle East, India and China, as well as *The Royal Passion and Pride of Arabia*, a photo commentary on the equestrian traditions and riches of the UAE.

### ***About CERT***

The Centre of Excellence for Applied Research and Training (CERT) is the entrepreneurial spin-off of the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT), the largest higher educational institution in the United Arab Emirates. The CERT Group of Companies leverages unique relationships with global leaders in education and business to provide a wide range of educational, applied research, training and consulting services to government and private sector institutions and businesses in the UAE and the region at large.

The CERT Group of Companies began as the commercial arm of the HCT in 1996, and has grown to be one of the largest private education providers in the Middle East. CERT is also amongst the largest investors in MENA region in the discovery and commercialisation of technology. The CERT Technology Park in the UAE is home to over 50 international companies such as Intel, Honeywell, and Lucent Technologies among others.

CERT leads human capital development by offering total education solutions to both corporate and individual customers and is involved in strategic alliances with a number of large multinational organisations in developing a diverse range of business and technology solutions.

### ***About Rajen A. Kilachand***

Rajen A. Kilachand's reputation as a visionary business leader is eclipsed only by his work as a career philanthropist. With a personal commitment of over \$45 million to philanthropic initiatives that span healthcare, vocational training and education, including building libraries and teachers training institutions, RAK, as he is known, is the Chairman and President of Dodsai Group, a \$3 billion trans-global multinational company with a diversified portfolio of businesses operating in several countries with a multicultural workforce. The Dodsai Group, is today one of the leading players in the engineering and construction business, with huge interests in mining precious metals. Rajen has steered the company on to this tremendous growth trajectory, earning himself and the company, many awards and accolades from around the world.

A great advocate of social development, Rajen, who hails from an ancient and aristocratic family in Gujarat, believes India with its vast human resource capital is a perfect partner for the UAE, in the shared vision of the metamorphosis from traditional trade economies to the revolutionary knowledge economies.

The Rajen A. Kilachand Knowledge Foundation that was established in January 2010 is in the process of bringing together researchers, historians, anthropologists and cultural sociologists from across the world to create the largest online resource centre for history, international relations, culture and cultural education. This unique initiative, a brainchild of Rajen, will open formally in 2011.

An Indian, immensely proud of his country and a believer in its future, Rajen's global perspective, however, has been strong. His social initiatives span a vivid spectrum – from being one of the key sponsors of the New Orleans Jazz Festival, to supporting healthcare initiatives in remote Indian villages, to sponsoring cultural and historical showcases of India across the world and funding community theatres, to being the first Indian who extended generous support to 'Dubai Cares' an initiative close to UAE Vice-President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum's heart.

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