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Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal Represents India as Chief Guest at Oman National Day Reception in New Delhi

NEW DELHI – 21 Nov, 2026 Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, represented the Government of India as the Chief Guest at the National Day Reception of the Sultanate of Oman, hosted at the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, today. Sonowal was received by H.E. Issa Saleh Al Shibani, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to India, in the presence of senior diplomats, government officials, and distinguished guests.

Addressing the gathering, Sarbananda Sonowal extended warm greetings on behalf of the Government and the people of India to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Government, and the friendly people of Oman, wishing the Sultanate continued peace, progress, and prosperity.

Underscoring the deep-rooted historical ties between the two nations, the Union Minister noted that for nearly five thousand years, sailors and merchants have crossed the Arabian Sea, connecting ancient Indian ports with Muscat, Sohar, and Salalah. “The Arabian Sea has never separated our countries. It has always connected us,” Sonowal said, adding that these centuries-old exchanges built bonds of trust long before formal diplomatic ties were established.

Recalling his visit to Muscat in January this year to welcome INSV Kaundinya following its maiden voyage from Porbandar, Sonowal described the vessel, inspired by a fifth-century ship depicted in the Ajanta caves and built using



traditional stitching techniques, as a living symbol of the enduring maritime, trade, and people-to-people ties between India and Oman.

Highlighting the renewed momentum in the India-Oman Strategic Partnership following Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Oman in December 2025, Sonowal pointed to two landmark milestones: the entry into force of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in June 2026, and the adoption of the Joint Vision Document on Maritime Cooperation.

“India and Oman are natural maritime partners occupying strategic positions along major shipping routes connecting Asia, Africa, and Europe. Oman’s ports at Duqm, Sohar, and Salalah, together with India’s expanding port network, can support stronger trade connectivity and more resilient supply chains,” the Union Minister stated. He emphasised vast opportunities for bilateral collaboration in port-led development, shipbuilding and ship repair, green fuels, digital port systems, maritime training, logistics, and the blue economy.