

## Meeting between the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the Consul-General of Thailand, Kolkata and staff in Bhubaneswar on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2013

An Interactive Session was held with Mr. Prasittidesh Vichitsorasatra, Consul-General, Royal Thai Consulate-General and his accompanying staff and the committee and members of the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Bhubaneswar on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2013, at the ICC office. The meeting was coordinated by Mr. Sanjeev Kumar Mohanti, the Resident Director of ICC at the Odisha state office. The meeting was attended by Mr. Tapan Nayak the Managing Director of FAB Food India Pvt. Ltd., Mr. Kamal Kanta Sahoo, head of Federation of Indian Export Organizations (set up by Ministry of Commerce, Government of India), Mr. Debashish Mitra, Chief Executive Officer of Huma Coastal Mega Food Park Pvt. Ltd., Mr. Debashish Bhattacharjee, Advisor-Media, PR and stakeholder Interface of United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, Mr. Prabhakar Rout, co-chairman of the Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industry Limited (UCCI) Expert Committee on Forest and Mining and Geology and others. It was highlighted that Thailand has many business opportunities, expertise in food processing sector and tourism. Mr. Debashish Mitra, the Chief Executive Officer of Huma Coastal Mega Food Park said that the food park is situated near Gopalpur in Odisha. The food park invites investments from food processing units. The location of the park is very good. Products such as pineapple, baby corn, maize and so on are being processed in this park. It is inviting Thai companies to invest in this sector. This food park is based on public private partnership. Direct funding is being given by the Central Government of India.

Another participant, Mr. Rajnish Das Dy. General Manager-corporate of Visa Steel Ltd. introduced his company in the meeting. This steel plant possesses a blast furnace. It is involved in the commercial production of special steel and mine steel. Their sale comprises of both domestic and foreign market. Mr. Rajen Padhi, director of M/S Exim Consultancy, another member stated that they were the first group to get associated with Charoen Pokphand (CP). Now it is working with Mayo Group of Seafood and Toyota. Representative from Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ltd. (UCCI) stated that the UCCI has 600 members coming from large, medium and small scale industry. They are basically exporter for seafood products, mining and other industrial outputs. Recently, there had come a delegation from South Africa to UCCI. Mr. Kamal Kanta Sahoo, head of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (set up by Ministry of Commerce) introduced his organisation. The main motive of the organisation is to create international trade and promote trade within the state.

Several issues came up in the discussion of the session. It was stated in the meeting that India supplied aluminium to Thailand. A number of aluminium parks were coming up in Odisha. These parks are going to manufacture stainless steel. Iron and steel are the areas where Thailand investors can come up and invest. Rice processing is another area where Odisha has been focussing over time. Rice processing plants and husk processing plants can be bought from Thailand as Thailand has a very good expertise in rice milling and cereal processing. Odisha knows what to be done but they need the help on method of how to carry out the food processing. Odisha desperately needs the method by which the farmers can be taught how to carry out this food processing as they lack this knowledge. They also appreciate Thai companies' production of good quality of equipments and the Indian side are in need of such

technology in food processing. Odisha would like to have food processing industry trade show in Odisha. Odisha would like to have food processing industry trade show in the state. Food packaging is also another area where Thailand has a good hold. Odisha would like to get Thailand's assistance in coconut water packaging, tea packaging, vegetable oil packaging and beverage can package. Recently, the state government has declared a food processing policy in the last month. 50 per cent grant on food processing machinery will be given by the Odisha government. Lot of investors are also interested in orchid farming. The state government is also giving grants to investors in India to come and invest in Odisha in different sectors. Eco tourism also has a great potential in the state. As Thailand has one of the best tourism it could give its help to Odisha to explore in this area. As Odisha has inadequate power supply it would like to invite Thai companies to look into the enhancement of solar power. This year in The Amazing Thailand, Grand Sale Fair which will be held at Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre, Bangkok two participants from Odisha for the first time will be attending.

The Consul-General of Royal Thai Consulate-General, Kolkata, Mr. Prasittidesh Vichitsorasatra stated that Odisha has a very wide potential to cooperate with Thailand. He informed that in 2015, Thailand with 9 other ASEAN countries will become a part of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). In this prospect rotation of people, investment and labour of 10 AEC member countries can take place. He spoke about the poultry feed and animal farming industry, Charoen Pokphand (CP) in the meeting. It is already involved in poultry feed in West Bengal and in Chennai they carry out shrimp farming. He also spoke about the Italian Thai Development Public Company Ltd. (ITD) which has constructed the new terminal in Kolkata Airport and is working on the East West Metro project in Kolkata and Delhi. He pointed out that Thailand has been actively involved in Myanmar's mega project deep seaports/ link road.

Thailand has always given lot of importance to India. Last year Prime Minister of Thailand visited India twice. This year Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Thailand from 30-31<sup>st</sup> May. He said that since Odisha has lot of Buddhist temple they would urge the Thai people to come and visit these temples. He said that the starting step is to lead the private sector to collaborate with its Thai counterparts and vice versa. He informed about the Business Information Centre (BIC) of the Royal Thai Consulate-General, Kolkata that can assist and provide information to the interested investors. He also spoke about the newly formed Board of Investment (BOI) office in Mumbai that has started this month. He invited investors to come and invest in Thailand. Every kind of investment and trade delegation will be welcomed in Thailand. He named some of the Indian companies like Tata, Aditya Birla Chemicals Ltd., Apollo Tyres and so on.

Thus the participants of the meeting showed a lot of enthusiasm to welcome Thai partnership. Food processing is a common area where the majority of the participants insisted on. They were very much keen to explore the business possibilities between the two partners.