

Report on: “Doing Business in Poland – Discover Eastern Poland”

The World Trade Centre (WTC) Mumbai in association with the All India Association of Industries (AIAI) hosted the Poland-India Investment Dialogue on “Doing Business in Poland – Discover Eastern Poland” at the South Lounge of the WTC building on April 27. The event was followed by an informal meeting between the members of the WTC Mumbai and the business delegates from the eastern Poland.

YR Warerkar, Executive Director, WTC Mumbai delivered the welcome address at the event by recalling the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relationship between India and Poland in 2014. He said the World Trade Centre expects further business collaboration between the Small and Medium enterprises of India and the eastern region of Poland.

Warerkar also informed that both the countries have business partnership in several sectors including shipping, science and technology, defence, medical science, tourism, bilateral investment protection. He remarked that India and Poland not only have business partnership, but also strong cultural and diplomatic relationship.

Delivering the keynote address, **Leszek Brenda, Consul General of the Republic of Poland to Mumbai** invited Indian companies to explore investment and trade opportunities in the eastern region of Poland.

Speaking at the event, Arkadiusz Tarnowski, Deputy Director for the Bureau for Eastern Poland Economic Promotion Programme, Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency opined that Indian companies can choose Poland as an investment destination because of its strategic location, political and economic stability, availability of skilled human resources and encouraging policy support including EU funding.

Explaining further the benefits of investing in the country, Arkadiusz said Poland is the sixth largest consumer market in the EU and it is politically and economically stable. He said Poland’s competitive banking sector, huge share of youth adults in the total population are some of the assets of the country. He also informed that Poland was recognized 3rd in the world in terms of manufacturing capabilities and it is emerging as a major business process outsourcing hub.

He mentioned that Poland holds first position in terms of attracting investment in the Central and Eastern European countries. Inviting Indian companies to eastern Poland, he explained the government schemes to support foreign investment in the eastern part of the country.

He said 75% of Indian FDI into Poland originates from the three states of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Delhi and the investment is mostly into software services, plastic, automobiles and other sectors. Poland is the 8th destination in Europe to get Indian investment (22 projects worth 400 million euros) between 2003 and 2014, he added.

Giving an economic overview of Eastern Poland, Arkadiusz said besides BPO, food and dairy products industry, furniture, metal and machinery, yacht manufacturing are some of the dominant industries functioning in the region. He further said 31.8% of population in the eastern Poland is below the age of 25 years.

Marta Smulkowska, Head of the Investor Assistance Centre, Marshal office of the Lubelskie Region gave details of the logistic and infrastructure facilities available in the Eastern part of Poland. She said eastern Poland has the Pan-European transit hub connecting the neighbouring countries of Europe. Besides logistics and infrastructure, she said eastern Poland has the largest number of higher educational centre, scientific and research institutions, world class medical universities. She said the capital city of Lublin has three special economic zones and the available office space in the city has been rising at the rate of 30,000 square metre per year.

Joanna Augustyn, Consultant at the Rzeszow Regional Development Agency, Podkarpackie Region explained the infrastructure facilities available in this region. She mentioned that Rzeszow, which is the capital city of Podkarpackie region, has an international airport, 16 universities, special economic zones, technology parks and 50 clusters in the sectors of IT, renewable energy, plastic processing, and food processing. She said the SEZs and technology parks in the region are fully equipped with technology infrastructure and they are ideal locations for investment for small and medium companies. Companies that have set up base in this region are, among others, medical equipment manufacturers, aviation parts makers, glass and lighting producers, she added.

Anna Orzechowska, Inspector Investor Assistance Office, City Office in Bialystok, Podlaskie Region said the city of Bialystok houses 33,735 economic entities and it is a transport hub well connected with other parts of this region. She said her office promotes companies in medical equipments, electromechanical, agriculture equipments, construction. She informed that Bialystok subzone of SSEZ, which is a more than 60 hectare of investment terrain, houses nine companies at present and it has space for accommodating more companies.

Karolina Kaminska-Maslarz, Consultant, City Hall of Kielce said the city enjoys abundant availability of skilled manpower, excellent infrastructure facilities, low cost of real estate and a conducive policy environment. She mentioned that the city has companies in the sectors of business process outsourcing, trade fairs, construction sector, steel, machinery etc. She specially informed about the Swietokazyskie region, which is a leading supplier of horticultural products, besides supporting other sectors like construction, metallurgy and machinery.

Aleksandra Gajewska, Head of the Investor Assistance Centre, Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency in Olsztyn explained the five reasons why a company must invest in the region.

The five reasons include a vibrant ecological landscape (50% of land covered by forest), young and well qualified population (65% of the people are in the working age), the highest public support to investment in Poland, access to eastern countries (208 km of the external border of the EU with Russian Federation) and the growing economy.

Giving an overview of the priority sectors in the region, Aleksandra said wood and furniture, agro production, tourism, machineries and devices production are the sectors which are dominant in the region. She hinted that 250 investment opportunities are available in the two special economic zone, three science and technology parks, nine clusters and other commercial centres in this region.

Queenie Nair, Director, All India Association of Industries (AIAI) thanked the members of the Polish delegation for giving an opportunity to the association's members to understand the commercial opportunities in the European country.