

## Poland seeks strategic Indian investor for USD 3 billion green



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### Proposed airport will be a bridge connecting Asia and Europe

Since many Indian businesses have formed joint ventures with Polish businesses over the past four years, I'm pleased to see that the two countries' business ties have grown considerably. An increasing number of Indian students are choosing to pursue higher education in Poland. Our consulate office in Mumbai guarantees every assistance to expedite your visa application for travel to Poland for business, education, or pleasure. In order to oversee business contacts, we will shortly have a new Consul General in Mumbai. A committed team at our Embassy in Delhi works to enhance commercial, academic, and cultural exchanges with India. Poland is a stunning country, and the eastern part of Podlaskie is ideally situated at the meeting point of the Baltic nations. In the Podlaskie area, Poland is constructing its first private, environmentally friendly airport. The Consul of the Republic of Poland in Mumbai, Mr. Mateusz Reszczyk, said at an interactive meeting hosted by the All India Association of Industries and WTC Mumbai, "I invite Indian companies to invest in this proposed airport as it is the perfect opportunity to strengthen investment, trade, and tourism ties between India and Europe." The purpose of the meeting was to invite Indian businesses to invest in this proposed airport project and to raise awareness of it.

In his remarks, Mr. Karol Kalicki, President of the Podlaskie Chamber of Aviation and Chairman of the Board, Airport Bialystok pointed out, "We are looking for strategic Indian investors for this USD 3 billion green airport project in Podlaskie, Eastern Poland, with connection to the New Silk Road Rail Line and the Rail Baltica corridor. This will be the first private airport project and it will be used for civilian, military and air cargo operations on commercial terms. We are looking for partners to build and finance this airport, which can handle the booming air cargo traffic between Asia and the Europe. Asia-Europe trade is growing leaps and bounds and the proposed airport is strategically located to handle air cargoes between these regions."

Speaking on this occasion, Mr. Bernard Huber, Board Representative with French countries, Podlaskie Chamber of Aviation mentioned, "There is a need for a new airport in Eastern Poland as the existing two airports in Warsaw are not enough to meet the growing demand of tourists and cargo traffic. The proposed airport in Podlaskie is close to the highway linking Baltic countries. The airport will have single runway which is 4,000 meter long and 60 meter wide. The airport is projected to handle 1 lakh tonne of cargo and 5 lakh passengers in the first year. In the next ten years, the airport is projected to handle 30 lakh passengers and if the geopolitical situation normalises in this region, it will increase passenger traffic upto 80 lakhs per annum."

Mr. Huber informed that the proposed airport will be Asia's gateway to central and eastern Europe, which is a fast growing economic region and it is also the perfect point of entry for Asian cargoes to eastern and western Europe. The airport will handle military cargo and civilian cargoes such as agriculture and industrial goods, besides handling passengers.

Mr. Huber emphasised that the proposed airport is strategically located with excellent connectivity to highways and railways. The airport project will have low cost of operations as cost of living in Podlaskie region is lower than that in rest of Poland.

Earlier in his welcome remarks, Dr. Vijay Kalantri, President, All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and Chairman, WTC Mumbai mentioned, "The historic visit of Indian Prime Minister to Poland in August this year marks a new era in our relations as we elevated our ties to Strategic Partnership. Indian Prime Minister has made a landmark declaration announcing 5-year Action Plan to deepen ties in technology, trade, agriculture, air connectivity, mining, energy and environment. Both countries agreed to strengthen partnership in cultural, education, science, research, and healthcare sectors. India and Poland also reaffirmed commitment to deepen India-EU Strategic Partnership."

Dr. Kalantri mentioned that in the past AIAI and WTC Mumbai have hosted two Polish Prime Ministers and former Polish President and Nobel Prize Laureate for Peace Mr. Lech Wałęsa. WTC Mumbai led a 178-member trade delegation, the largest such business delegation from India to any country, including 110 companies, to develop trade and investment relation with Poland. Of these, 12 Indian companies started operations in Poland.

Dr. Kalantri informed that AIAI and WTC Mumbai launched the Indo-Polish Chamber of Commerce 20 years ago and since then bilateral trade has grown from a mere USD 0.7 billion to more than USD 5.7 billion last year. "Still, there is USD 4.8 billion worth untapped export opportunity for India in Poland," Dr. Kalantri added.

Dr. Kalantri suggested Poland to partner with India in its vision to become USD 40 trillion economy by 2047 by collaborating in agriculture, mining, energy and other competitive areas of Poland. He also hinted at potential for collaboration in tourism and film shooting. Dr. Kalantri mentioned, "Both countries share strong cultural and people-to-people ties. There are around 300 Indian restaurants in Warsaw and more than 300 Indian families are residing in the country."

Ms. Rupa Naik, Executive Director, WTC Mumbai proposed vote of thanks for the event. Ms. Naik mentioned, "Poland is one of the most beautiful countries that I have ever visited. WTC Mumbai and AIAI launched the 'India Initiative' exhibition in Poland 20 years ago to promote trade and investment in chemicals, textile, pharmaceuticals, agriculture and other sectors. I hope this meeting will pave the way for fruitful economic partnership between both the countries."

The event was attended by academic experts, financial institutions, investors, infrastructure developers, and other stakeholders of trade and industry.

Mr. Karol Kalicki, President of the Podlaskie Chamber of Aviation and Chairman of the Board, Airport Bialystok (left) being facilitated by Dr. Vijay Kalantri, President, All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and Chairman, WTC Mumbai. Also seen in the photograph are: Mr. Mateusz Reszczyk, Consul of the Republic of Poland in Mumbai and Ms. Rupa Naik, Executive Director, WTC Mumbai