

Indian Innovations are heading to Rwanda
**Over 200 Indian entrepreneurs express interest in taking their
innovations
to the East African nation through the India-Rwanda Innovation
Growth Programme (IRIGP)**

Kigali, Rwanda, 24 August 2017: The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) is leading a 25 companies strong Indian trade and technology led business delegation to Kigali, Rwanda from 22nd – 25th August 2017, which also includes the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

The visit follows the recent successful launch of the India-Rwanda Innovation Growth Programme (IRIGP). The program was launched in February this year as part of the visit of the Hon'ble Vice President of India Shri Hamid Ansari to Rwanda. IRIGP is a first of its' kind initiative between the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India; FICCI and the National Industrial Research and Development Agency (NIRDA), Government of the Republic of Rwanda. It aims to address the socio-economic needs of Rwanda by linking the Rwandan enterprises with cutting-edge Indian technologies and innovations; ultimately creating a mutually-beneficial ecosystem. Through a wide outreach campaign in India, IRIGP has received an enthusiastic response from over 200 Indian entrepreneurs willing and able to take their innovations global in wide-ranging focus sectors from agriculture, packaging & food processing to renewable energy & ICT.

The delegation visit this month is being supported by the Rwanda Development Board (RDB), Private Sector Foundation (PSF), National Industrial Research and Development Agency (NIRDA), Indian Embassy in Rwanda as well as other Chambers of Commerce & Trade Bodies in Rwanda Indian technologies/innovations will be showcased at the 20th Rwanda International Trade Fair (RITF), a multi-sectoral trade event which is being organized by the Private Sector Federation (PSF) in partnership with the Ministry of Trade, Industry and East African Community Affairs (MINEACOM) at Gikondo Expo Grounds, Kigali, Rwanda from 22nd August – 6th September 2017.

Through their presence at RITF, the delegates seek to establish, build and develop contacts and business ideas with the local Rwandan counterparts. Additionally, over the course of the next few days, the delegation would also be participating in an India-Rwanda Business Forum, B2B meetings, interactions with senior government officials and industry visits.

The visit continues to strengthen the bilateral relationship between the two nations with a focus on the key pillars of science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Hon'ble Ms. Clare Akamanzi, CEO of Rwanda Development Board (RDB) and a Cabinet Member, inaugurated the India Rwanda Business Forum under the aegis of the India Rwanda Innovation Growth Programme (IRIGP) on 22 August 2017 at the Hotel Lemigo in Kigali. 25 delegates representing a variety of companies across sectors excelling in technology and innovation led businesses attended from India.

Ms Akamanzi said she was confident of the validated Indian technologies, adding “if they work in India, they will work in Rwanda”. Welcoming the delegation and the unique IRIGP, Akamanzi said Rwanda had a special partnership with India, and particularly thanked FICCI for having worked with the Rwanda government and Private Sector Federation over the years. She complimented the 12-month cyclic IRIGP and looked forward to the matched India-Rwanda enterprises creating impact development in Rwanda.

Dr. Joseph Mungarulire, Director General, National Industrial Research and Development Agency (NIRDA), Ministry of Industry, Trade and East African Community Affairs, welcomed the Indian delegates, Rwanda government representatives and Rwanda Private Sector Federation and its members at the inauguration. Dr. Mungarulire said “IRIGP represented a unique program that could deliver impact development across sectors”, adding the Program offers existing enterprises and start-ups the opportunity to acquire appropriate technologies for competitiveness and to scale.

Speaking on the India-Rwanda Innovation Growth Programme, **Mr. Harkesh Mittal, Adviser, Member Secretary, National Science & Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board (NSTEDB), Department of Science and Technology, Government of India** quoted “The India-Rwanda Innovation Growth Programme is a first of kind initiative based on technology collaboration for shared prosperity. Since its launch in February this year, the Programme has progressed at an impressive speed with proactive support from National Industrial Research and Development Agency (NIRDA) in Rwanda. An overwhelming response has been received from over 230 Indian companies desirous of scaling their innovative solutions to Rwanda in response to the technology needs shared by Government of Rwanda.”

Dr. A. Didar Singh, Secretary General, FICCI stated “The IRIGP demonstrates a strong commitment from both sides to strengthen collaboration based on Science, Technology and Innovation. The Programme provides new international markets to Indian businesses and at the same time builds entrepreneurial opportunities for Rwandan entities with an end aim of socio-economic development of both nations.”

Mr. Nirankar Saxena, Assistant Secretary General, FICCI shared “The response from Indian companies both for the IRIGP and the visiting delegation strongly indicate the interest of Indian businesses to scale in Rwanda by partnering with entrepreneurs in Rwanda. We are confident that the Programme will rapidly scale to other regions of Africa”

Mr. Munish Gupta, Adviser of IRIGP and among the founders of the Program, thanked the Government of Rwanda and CEO RDB for the deep involvement and rapid progress in the Program in just 6 months. Gupta said the first results of the Program will be delivered by December with the matched and skilled India-Rwanda enterprises.

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