

Manohar Lal Khattar and Sukhbir Singh Badal assure FICCI members for conducive business environment in their states

CHANDIGARH, 7 May 2015: India currently stands at the cusp of a transformation spearheaded by continuous positive policy action by the government. With the new Government at the Centre working full steam on its development agenda, the country is moving towards an accelerated economic growth. The World Bank expects India's economic growth to climb to 8% in 2017-18, on the back of a 7.5% expansion in the current fiscal year and 7.9% in the next. The socio-economic agenda being pursued by the Government through mega plans like 'Make in India', 'Digital India', 'Skill India', 'Swacch Bharat Abhiyaan', 'Clean Ganga' and 'Jan-Dhan Yojana', will lay the foundation for long term growth and inclusive development of our nation. Efforts are being made towards easing the conduct of business through greater use of technology, facilitating labour law improvements and developing world-class infrastructure.

Some of the States that can benefit the most from this improved environment include Punjab and Haryana. Chandigarh, the capital city of both these States, ranks first in India in the Human Development Index, quality of life and e-readiness. It is emerging as a regional hub in the areas of service industry, food and vegetable processing, education, health, information technology, etc. In the backdrop of potential investment opportunities in these States and Chandigarh in particular, FICCI, as a first-time initiative, organized its National Executive Committee Meeting (NECM) in Chandigarh today on May 7, 2015. The NECM featured special interactive sessions with Shri Sukhbir Singh Badal, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Punjab and Shri Manohar Lal Khattar, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Haryana.

Shri Sukhbir Badal responded to delegates questions and informed that Punjab state enjoys not only surplus power today but also plans to sell it to other states too. The single window clearance system in his state is unique in which a single authority signs on all clearances and clear projects in 37 days straight. He also invited **FICCI President Dr. Jyotsna Suri** that FICCI can build a world standard convention cum business facilitation center in Mohali with all help from his Government. He also invited FICCI to consider Amritsar city to do its national executive committee meeting in the future.

Haryana Chief Minister **Shri Manohar Lal Khattar** assured the business leaders to look into all teething problems they are facing in Haryana. He further assured that the upcoming Industry Policy of Haryana state will be able to provide better 'ease of doing business' environment. He also responded with great positivity for upgrading the existing infrastructure, law and order situation and safety of women employees in the popular business hubs of Haryana like Gurgaon city. Haryana's new Industrial Policy, expected to be announced shortly, will also focus on the development of MSMEs.

On the eve of the NECM, **Shri Prakash Singh Badal**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab attended a formal dinner with FICCI executive committee members in Chandigarh. There he urged the industry to setup skill development centers in Punjab as it was the need of the hour for employment generation and growth of industry. On the advice of Chief Minister Badal, FICCI has chosen to adopt "Burj Sidhwan" (in district Muktsar, Punjab) which falls under his constituency, Lambi. **Mr. Rajinder Gupta, Chairman**, FICCI Regional Advisory Council & Chairman, Trident Group has come forward to fund the village adoption project.

In recent years, the Chandigarh Administration has taken a number of steps to upgrade the infrastructure in Chandigarh and boost economic growth in the region. Initiatives have been taken to bring all-round development in agriculture such as Extension and Farmers training study tour, Organic Cultivation of Seeds & Horticulture, Supply of Wheat and Fodder Seeds at 25% discount and Grant of

Insecticide License for sell, stock etc. The two governments are also laying emphasis on the development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). There are about 2950 Small Scale and 15 Large and Medium Scale Units in Chandigarh alone. FICCI's office in Chandigarh is working on specific projects in the areas of Smart Cities, Medical Technology & Food Processing Sector. It will also undertake activities in other focus sectors of Punjab and Haryana and continue to work in the area of investment promotion.

With both the Central and the State governments laying special thrust on Agriculture, Food Processing and development of MSMEs, there are huge opportunities for private investments in these areas. Taking a cue from this, the NECM agenda also included focused sessions on the role of Agriculture & Food Processing and MSMEs in the country's economic development. Further, Punjab and Haryana possess rich natural resources, good infrastructure and abundant skilled workforce, which makes them an attractive investment destination for several other sectors like agro based and food processing industries, textiles, automobiles and auto components, light engineering goods, IT, ITeS, telecom, pharmaceuticals, biotech, real estate, construction and retail.

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