

FICCI CEOs visit Japanese Parliament/Diet

CEOs highlighted the huge investment opportunities for Japanese companies in India

Tokyo, 30 May 2016: A high powered FICCI CEOs mission accompanying Shri Arun Jaitley, Finance Minister, Govt. of India visited Japanese Diet (Parliament) and met distinguished Parliamentarians of Japan India Parliamentary Friendship League today.

The FICCI CEO mission is being led by **Mr. Harshavardhan Neotia**, President-FICCI and Chairman, Ambuja Neotia Group.

Various potential areas of collaboration and partnership between the two countries came up during the discussion. Besides the on-going high level collaboration projects such as Bullet Train, it was proposed to extend the co-operation in other mega infrastructure projects. A possible investment by Japanese long term funds in Indian infrastructure was cited as a very positive and mutually rewarding opportunity for the two sides.

Amongst the other key areas of potential collaboration, the delegation highlighted the need to enhance partnership in the area of Information Technology, which has a huge potential but has not yet been effectively tapped. The Japanese Parliamentarians were interested in understanding the usage of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in India and were informed by the Indian delegation about the increasing usage of Artificial Intelligence in India, especially in the financial services. In-fact, the Unique Identification System i.e. *Aadhar* too utilizes Artificial Intelligence.

The Parliamentarians of Japan expressed anxiety over the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax in India. They were however apprised that there is a strong likelihood of GST being implemented in the next six-seven months. Another area of concern that came up during discussion related to the wastage in agro-production. The Parliamentarians were apprised of various steps that have been taken for agro and agro processing in India's latest Union Budget, including 100 per cent FDI being allowed through FIPB route in marketing of food products produced and manufactured in India. The Japanese investors can thus consider investments in the related agro-supply chain infrastructure, which is critical to reduce the agro-wastage and facilitate development of the sector.

Earlier in the day, FICCI CEOs mission attended the Inaugural session of Nikkei Conference at Hotel Imperial, Tokyo and also had a meeting with Mr. Hiroyuki Ishige, Chairman, Japan External Trade Organization, JETRO.

During their meeting with JETRO, FICCI CEOs highlighted the huge investment opportunities for Japanese companies in India especially SMEs. In the next ten years, India is poised to be a five trillion dollar economy, offering the largest consumer market with huge absorption capacity.

They also proposed FICCI's possible collaboration in identifying suitable Indian partner for the Japanese companies. Mr. Ishige highlighted the need to educate Japanese companies pertaining to various investment opportunities in India particularly in sectors: IT, Pharmaceuticals, Infrastructure (Smart cities), and Renewable Energy.

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