



## **Report on CIS Outreach Programme held at Cochin on 04 July 2014** **from FICCI Kerala State Council**

‘Eurasian countries are growing rapidly with its economic strength is almost equal to US market and it is among the fastest growing economic sectors of the world ‘stated Mr. Ravi Capoor, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Commerce while addressing participants of the CIS Outreach Program at Cochin.

Joint Secretary of Commerce was making presentation on "India's trade with Eurasian countries and opportunities in key sectors" at the Outreach program jointly organised by Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India along with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) with the support of affiliated chambers of FICCI- Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Sea Food Exporters Association of India and Kerala Merchant’s Union. ‘While doing business with this region, the biggest hurdle that we face is information deficit. Many people do not know about the business opportunities this region has to offer’ added Mr.Capoor.

Mr. Ajay Bisaria, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India gave an overall picture on “India's Focus on CIS Policy.” As the global business engagement with Eurasian countries has remained below potential, FICCI in partnership with Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Commerce would like to sensitise the Indian companies in select states about the business potential of the CIS region.

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was established in 1991 to ensure continued cooperation in trade and military policy and recognition of borders between the States which formed part of the erstwhile USSR (except Baltic States). Russian Federation, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan are the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Relations between India and countries of the CIS Region have remained cordial since the Soviet era. However, bilateral trade and commercial relations are still miniscule and does not reflect the true potential. They would be encouraged to engage in a more comprehensive manner with the CIS. Doing business with CIS countries have its own challenges and structural problems. Lack of information on the existing opportunities, logistics, language blockade, concerns over getting

payment, finding the right partner etc. are some of the major challenges that ought to be overcome.

Mr. Alikhan Akhmetov, Commissioner Counsellor, Embassy of Kazakhstan, gave detailed deliberations on “Business opportunities in Kazakhstan” and a short film on Kazakhstan was also shown.

In his welcome address, Mr. M.G. George Muthoot, Chairman, FICCI Kerala State Council commented about the steps taken by FICCI along with Govt. of India and Govt. of Kerala to promote more and more trade, business and investment opportunities in Kerala.

CIS Outreach programme was also addressed by heads of major Exim trade related segments.

Ms. Leena Nair IAS, Chairperson, MPEDA, Dr. Safeena IAS, Development Commissioner, SEZ, Cochin, Dr. K N Raghavan, IRS, Commissioner, Customs House, Cochin, Mr. T. K. Shahal Hassan Musaliar, Chairman, Cashew Export Promotion Council, Mr. C.V. George, General Manager, RBI, Cochin, and Mr. Amol Saraf, Director, Saraf Trading Corporation Pvt. Ltd, Cochin and Mr. Savio Mathew, Head FICCI also spoke on the occasion .

Large number of audience numbering to 130 participants comprising of exporters-importers, business community, professionals, Government officials and media participated in the event.

### **Photo Caption**

**Mr. Ravi Capoor**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Commerce addresses the gathering on the CIS Outreach Programme jointly organised by Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India along with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

Seen on the dais are: **Mr. Amol Saraf**, Director, Saraf Trading Corporation Pvt. Ltd, **Dr. Safeena** IAS, Development Commissioner, SEZ, Cochin, **Ms. Leena Nair** IAS, Chairperson, MPEDA, **Mr. M.G. George Muthoot**, Chairman, FICCI Kerala State Council, **Mr. Ajay Bisaria**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India, **Mr. Alikhan Akhmetov**, Commissioner Counsellor, Embassy of Kazakhstan, **Dr. K N Raghavan**, IRS, Commissioner, Customs House, Cochin, **Mr. T. K. Shahal Hassan Musaliar**, Chairman, Cashew Export Promotion Council and **Mr. C.V. George**, General Manager, RBI.