

Going Dutch

Boosting Trade with Dutch Caribbean Territories



Dr. Miguel P. Goede, Professor of Economics, University of Netherlands Antilles; Mr. Dennis Lapar, Senior Consultant, Outsourcing and Offshoring, Finance Surinam; Mr. Amit Goel, Managing Committee Member of FIEO; Mr. Shrikar Dole, Jt. Dy. Director General, FIEO (WR); and Dr. Revinh Ramnananlall, CEO, B4 Concepts, Netherlands

FIEO (WR) in association with Interexpo and Marketdrive organized a conference on "Doing Business with Netherlands Antilles and Surinam" on 19 April, 2010 in Mumbai which was attended by a number of member exporters. A trade mission included companies from different industry sectors along with senior officials from the Netherlands Antilles and Surinam attended the conference.

Managing Committee Member Mr Amit Goel, while welcoming the delegates and the participants, said the kingdom of Netherlands is a territory in the Caribbean. The Netherlands Antilles are composed of two groups, Caribbean islands is the first group, composed of Curacao and Bonaire. The Dutch Lesser Antilles to the north Saint Eustatius, the southern part of St Martin-Dutch Saint Marten and Saba make up the remainder of the island federation. Surinam Netherlands Antilles, formerly Dutch Guyana, is a country in northern South America. He further informed that since gaining independence, Surinam has become a member of the United Nations and the Caribbean community. The country also belongs to the Economic Commis-

sion for Latin America, Inter American Development Bank, the World Bank and International Monetary fund. It became a member of the Islamic Development Bank in 1998. He stated that the speakers present will be able to highlight business opportunities, Government policies and tax rules, and other support which can be received while doing business in this region.

The conference was focused mainly on opportunities for exploring the potential of the Dutch kingdom and Surinam (Netherlands Antilles), acquire a deeper understanding of the local markets and the potential they offer, for developing successful partnerships.

The speakers including Dr Miguel P. Goede, professor of economics, University of Netherlands Antilles; Mr Dennis Lapar, senior consultant, outsourcing and offshoring, finance Surinam; and Dr Revinh Ramnananlall, CEO, B4 Concepts, Netherlands, briefed the participants on India's bilateral trade with the region, trends and opportunities. The issues of investment possibilities for the Indian industry on renewable energy and water in cooperation with the

Caribbean industry were also discussed. The following topics were discussed during the conference:

- Government policies and regulations & tax rates
- The Netherlands Antilles & Surinam - preferential trade arrangements with overseas countries and territories
- The benefits from the unilateral preferential tariff treatment
- The incentive schemes for four sectors – hotel, manufacturing, land development and e-commerce, & other positive support
- Direct gateway to Europe & America
- Business Opportunities.

There were active one to one discussions and interactions. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for organizations/companies to promote their products and services to the focused audience besides networking. Mr Shrikar Dole, Jt. DDG. (WR); thanked all the delegates and the member exporters for their active participation in understanding the bilateral trade relations and deliberations on the way to boosting trade between the two. ■