

## **Not just Games, there's business too**

*Alexandre Moniz Barbosa, TNN Dec 16, 2013, 03.59AM IST*

PANAJI: January 2014 promises to be an interesting month for Goa, especially where its Portuguese ties are concerned. Just days before the Lusofonia Games begin, Goa is set to host a business conference that will bring together business leaders from the Lusophone (Portuguese-speaking) countries.

A two-day international congress titled 'India and the Lusophone Market' is scheduled to take place on January 14 and 15, 2014, that will give Indian corporates the opportunity to interact with industry leaders from Lusophone countries.

"The world being a global village and there being over 250 million Portuguese speakers in the world, the congress aims at being a common platform of the Portuguese speaking countries of the world. India, because of Goa's ties with the Portuguese world, can take advantage of this," says Lusophone Society of Goa (LSG) president Aurobindo Xavier.

Organized by LSG in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Institute of Asian Studies (IdEA ) and Friendship Association Portugal-India (AAPi), the conference will focus on India and the markets of the Portuguese-speaking countries of Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, East Timor, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe, and the Chinese special administrative region (SAR) of Macau.

Xavier adds that the conference will give established and budding entrepreneurs from Portuguese-speaking countries and from India a platform where they can meet and discuss to "learn about the possibilities of exchange of goods and services".

As Portugal had a major presence in Africa, Xavier says that it is in this continent that India can expand its business ties by looking at the Lusophone market. The growing trade between India and the African countries and Indian investments in Africa have helped both to develop better skills and wealth, he says. "Much more can still be done to support in each other's development. It is expected that the India-Africa trade will exceed \$100,000 million in 2015," says Xavier.

Some of the business associations that have already confirmed their participation are the Portuguese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, International Confederation of Portuguese Entrepreneurs, Chamber of Commerce Brazil India, CII and All India Association of Industries. Added to these are various private companies from the various countries.

The conference will see presentations by industry of products and projects and also of possible partnerships. Some of the areas where delegates that have already registered for the conference and expressed an interest in finding business partners are pharmaceuticals, orthopaedics, veterinary, infant accessories, hospitals, supply of salt packaging, fishing material, power, refrigeration, air conditioning, welding joining and brazing technology in dissimilar metals, investment and financial products, supply and recycling of tyres, agricultural tractors and spare parts, logistics projects and solutions and assistance in import and export.

To facilitate discussions among delegates, the conference will have simultaneous translation from English to Portuguese and vice-versa.