

Portuguese ambassador for encouraging trade between India, Lusophone nations

Published on: January 16, 2014 - 00:28



PANAJI: The two-day international congress of ‘India and the Lusophone Market’ ended on Wednesday with Jorge Rosa Oliveira, Ambassador of Portugal in India in his valedictory speech hoping that the fruits begin “showing soon.”

Thanking the Lusophone Society of Goa (LSG) for all the efforts and energy in making the assembly of businessmen and policy makers from seven countries a success, Ambassador Oliveira said that in the new context of better political relations between India and Portugal “it is possible to build relations and further trade links between India and Portuguese speaking companies.

Commenting on the deliberations, the Ambassador said that a common theme of all discussions was the low level of trade between India and Lusophone countries. The economic distance between the two was surprising, he said considering that countries are politically close. However, the Ambassador promised that in future the Portugal embassy in Delhi as well as the consulate in Goa would go all out to support collaborations between the two groups.

Bidding adieu to the congress was also Prof Aurobindo Xavier, president, Lusophone Society of Goa (LSG) who said that holding the event was a daunting task and a fearful prospect as it was being organized for the first time. The coming together of individuals with business interests from seven nations, he said was an untested idea and he was unsure whether it would work.

In all about 100 international delegates participated in the congress, he said which although a modest figure was productive because it was sure to bring results.

Earlier in the day, delegates were busy listening to strong pitch for investment by industrialists from Angola, Mozambique and Portugal. Several delegates speaking to the Navhind Times said that the congress needed to be an annual event to monitor progress and follow up on initial talks.

Others like Prof Eugenio Viassa Monteiro, president, Friendship Society of Portugal-India said that India has a lot to offer to Portuguese speaking countries especially in industry and Lusophone countries would benefit from tapping India's expertise. The outcome from the Congress is bound to be positive said the professor because of several commonalities as well as heightened trust between the two.

A paper presented by Constantino Xavier, John Hopkins University, Washington DC revealed that although trade between India and Lusophone countries was increasing and stood at US \$ 20 billion in 2012-13, it was nowhere compared to China which had US \$ 90 billion worth of trade in 2012-13.

Among Lusophone countries and India, Brazil heads the list in trade followed by Angola and Mozambique. While Portugal ranks fourth as a trading partner with India.