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**German Symposium: Minister Patowary calls upon German delegation to invest their advanced engineering mechanisms in Assam**

**Dipsur, February 26:** Industries and Commerce Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary said that Assam is slowly but surely, making its presence felt as a state with immense potentialities to be among the front runners in the various industrial sectors and is emerging as the manufacturing hub of North East India. ‘Sustained efforts over the last few years by the State Government to enhance and strengthen the state’s infrastructure is paying dividends today as investors, and those aware of the state's massive investment opportunities, are now showing a keen interest in setting up industries here,’ stated Patowary while attending a symposium on German technology at a city hotel today.

The meeting was also attended by Dr. Micheal Feiner, German Consul General, Kolkata. Around 8 German companies and around 70 senior representatives from the manufacturing industries of Germany participated in the day-long symposium. To promote German technology in North East in general and Assam in particular, *Verband Deutscher Maschinen-und Anlagenbau –* German Engineering Federation (VDMA), organized a symposium for the first time on ‘German Technology for the Industrial Development of Assam’. VDMA is a network of around 3,200 engineering industry companies in Germany, headquartered at Frankfurt.

Highlighting the fact that prior to independence, Assam’s per capita income was higher than the national average, Minister Patowary said that the Government has been successful in reconnecting with the old routes with access to Chittagong Ports in Bangladesh and the ocean beyond to boost trade and commerce in the region. He added that Assam can be a natural choice for investors as the state is the gateway to South East Asia with a rich market of 80 crore population and with its advantage of a 4,800 km long international land border.

Minister Patowary called upon the German delegation to invest in Assam which has a huge market for the country’s advanced engineering mechanisms in transport and communication, health, energy and power, industries and human resource development. He added that skill development initiatives has received a tremendous impetus from the Government of Assam through the Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM). ‘Germany’s dual educational programme focusing on both theory and practical training can be used to ensure that the skilled manpower can start their own entrepreneurial ventures in the sector utilizing the technical benefits of German technology and developments’, said the Minister.

Patowary also requested Dr. Micheal Feiner to open a German business chapter in Guwahati which would exclusively work with the state’s Industries and Commerce department to take forward and expand the initiatives at the next level.

Acknowledging the warm hospitality that he and his team received in Guwahati, Dr. Micheal Feiner, in his address commended Industry Minister’s gesture that more than B2B or G2G meetings it is the H2H (Heart to Heart) connection that matters for building a strong partnership. Recalling his experience at the Global Investors’ Summit, Dr. Feiner said, ‘Advantage Assam opened my eyes in understanding the state’s immense potentialities, abundant resources, educated workforce and strong connectivity with ASEAN.’ He mentioned that total investment by Germany in India upto September, 2017 is US$ 10.63 billion (upto September 2017). There have been over 1600 Indo-German collaborations and 600 Indo-German Joint Ventures. Dr. Feiner hoped that the technological co-operation between German technology and industry will go a long way in fostering mutual benefit and in achieving development goals in the near future.

It may be mentioned that total trade between India and German is US $ 18.95 billion. Major Indian exports to Germany include textiles, metal, rubber anḍ leather products, food and beverages, gems and jewellery, pharmaceuticals etc. Major Indian imports from Germany include machinery, electro-technology, chemicals, auto components, medical equipment etc.

Besides, Germany is the 7th largest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India. Major Indian operating in Germany include Infosys, Wipro, TCS, Ranbaxy, Piramal, Hexaware Technologies, Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories, Biocon etc. while major German companies operating in India include Robert Bosch, Volkswagen, Siemens, Daimler, BMW, SAP, Deutsche Bank, Merck etc.

SS. Meenakshi Sundaram, Commissioner and Secretary of Industries and Commerce Department; Manjula Saikia Bhuyan, Secetary and senior officials of the Department were present in the meeting.

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