

**Brief Proceedings of the Interactive Session with H. E. Mr. Willy K. Bett, High Commissioner of the Republic of Kenya in India on 'Doing Business with Kenya' held on 15 November 2018 at the Conference Hall of MCCI.**

MCCI organised an Interactive Session with **H. E. Mr. Willy K. Bett, High Commissioner of the Republic of Kenya in India on 'Doing Business with Kenya'** on **15 November 2018** at the Chamber premises. **Mr. Pranay Poddar**, Hony. Consul of Kenya in Kolkata was present and spoke on the occasion. **Ms Mercelline Orindi**, Economic Counsellor of the Kenyan High Commission in New Delhi was also present and briefly spoke.

**Mr. Vishal Jhajharia, President, MCCI** in his welcome address said India was Kenya's largest trading partner in 2014-15 with bilateral trade of US \$4.235 billion. However, for year 2016-17, bilateral trade was US \$2.30 billion and for 2017-18, bilateral trade was US \$2.05 billion. Main Indian exports to Kenya include petroleum products, pharmaceuticals, steel products, machinery, yarn, vehicles and power transmission equipment. Main Kenyan exports to India include soda ash, vegetables, tea, leather and metal scrap.

According to the Kenya Investment Authority (KenInvest), India is the second largest investor in Kenya. Over 60 major Indian companies have invested in various sectors including manufacturing, real estate, pharmaceuticals, telecom, IT & ITES, banking and agro-based industries.

India is the third largest source of inbound tourists to Kenya. Over 60,000 Indian tourists visited Kenya in 2017. Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) has launched a marketing campaign in major Indian cities to increase tourist arrivals from India. Many Kenyans visit India for medical treatment.

**Mr. Poddar, Hony. Consul of Kenya in Kolkata** noted that India and Kenya are maritime neighbours and many people of Indian origin had migrated to Kenya and some have become proud citizens of that country. Both countries have a common legacy against colonialism.

The contemporary ties between Kenya and India have evolved into a robust and multifaceted partnership, marked by regular high level visits, trade and investment and extensive people to people contacts.

Kenya is richly endowed with wildlife and it has a lot to offer to tourists. E visas are available for Indians and hence travelling to Kenya is hassle free.

Kenya is a safe country for both business and travel. The country has a stable Government and its policies are business friendly.

**Mr. Bett, High Commissioner of the Republic of Kenya in India** said that Kenya offers excellent investment opportunities and investors should take advantage of the political stability of the country in the East African region, an area which has at times been unstable. Other tailwinds emanate from the spirit of cooperation fostered by the Prime Ministers of the two countries as well as the Indian diaspora in Kenya which is integrated in the economic and political streams of the country.

Prime Minister Modi visited Kenya on 10 and 11 June 2016 which was followed by state visit by President Uhuru Kenyatta to India in January 2017. Many deals were signed by sizeable business delegations of both countries.

Mr. Bett said that the Kenyan Government has decided to focus on four strategic areas for foreign investment : (1) The country wants investments in **agriculture** as it seeks food security. It wants to increase mechanization in farming. For this purpose, it is looking for suitable equipment which can be used by small scale farmers. Investors can invest in both primary production of food and food processing. (2) Kenya is seeking funds for its **healthcare** system. The country has a large number of people below poverty line. It is therefore looking at the Indian model in order to reduce cost of healthcare. (3) The country is encouraging investments in **manufacturing** as this will create jobs. At present, manufacturing has a low proportion in the economy and the Government wants to increase this figure. (4) Finally, Kenya is interested in investments in **housing**. It is seeking real estate developers who have the expertise in setting up low cost homes. Kenya needs one million homes.

Mr. Bett added that Kenya also welcomes investments in leather and textiles. With its abundant wildlife, tourism is a premium product of the country, he added and urged Indian tourists to explore the huge tourism potential of Kenya.

India was Kenya's largest trade partner. The top position is now occupied by China. While India - Kenyan business takes place on B2B basis, China and Kenya also operate on a Government to Government basis, apart from following the B2B model.

Kenyan Chambers of Commerce should be linked with Chambers of Commerce in India to develop areas of cooperation. Kenya seeks stronger links with West Bengal.

The balance of trade between the two countries is heavily tilted in India's favour. India and Kenya have discussed ways to reduce the Kenyan trade deficit to make economic relations more comprehensive. Pulses are a high potential export item from Kenya to India.

Lines of credit are available to support trade and more lines of credit are being opened. The Treasury of Kenya and EXIM Bank of India are cooperating in this regard.

With regard to the recent drop in trade between India and Kenya, **Ms Mercelline Orindi, Economic Counsellor of the Kenyan High Commission in New Delhi** said that as India shifts from exporting / importing to setting up plants in Kenya, the fluctuations will reduce.

Rajiv Mukerji  
(Deputy Secretary)