

## **Special Session addressed by Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat on 'Vibrant Growth Model'.**

The Chamber, in association with MCC Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Indian Chamber of Commerce organised a Special Session addressed by Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat on the 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2013 at 10:30 a.m. at The Oberoi Grand, Kolkata. The theme of the Session was 'Vibrant Growth Model' by Shri Deepak Jalan, President, MCC Chamber of Commerce and Industry delivered the Welcome Address which was followed by addresses by Shri Ashok Aikat, President, Bharat Chamber of Commerce and Shri Rajiv Mundhra, President, Indian Chamber of Commerce. Shri Modi was felicitated by Ms. Lila Swarup, an eminent author.

Shri Aikat stated that West Bengal has historically been the hub for culture and knowledge and has produced 5 Nobel Laureates of India. West Bengal is a blessed land that has Himalayan snow peaks in the north and Bay of Bengal in the south, criss-crossed by rainfed and snowfed mighty rivers which flow all through the year even during summer months. Our State has India's largest Mangrove Forests which are also home to the famous Royal Bengal Tiger. West Bengal perhaps, has the most fertile land in India and its industrious farmers contribute immensely to the nation's food security.

Shri Aikat continued that the Industrialisation of India also started in West Bengal more than hundred years ago with the commissioning of Jute Mills, Textile Mills and Foundries by the pioneer industrialists. The President further observed that the founding fathers of modern India which became independent on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947, and became a Republic on the 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1950, had enormous difficulties comprehending and defining India itself and in the end they ended up affirming both names India and Bharat which give different perceptions of our nation State. Whereas, India is the final evolution of various names by which foreigners had called this land, the name Bharat traces its roots to the epic Mahabharata. India after Swaraj following the British Raj has been ruled by Indians who are the urban elite with foreign education or western mind - sets based on a colonial heritage and Western ideas of governance. Basically, the system of governance remains the same from the colonial times to the post-colonial present, the President felt.

Shri Aikat stated that the National Anthem of India which was composed by Kabiguru Rabindranath Tagore mentions Bharat. Our National Flag identifies the Indian Republic has the Mauryan Dharma Chakra and our Nation's State Emblem is the Sarnath Lion of Samrat Ashoka with the motto in Devanagari script which means – "Truth alone Triumphs". In this background can we really comprehend India itself without a constant dialogue with it's past which has become increasingly difficult and near impossible as the most important connection being the Sanskrit language is now almost dead. Samrat Ashoka's edicts based on ethical sovereignty and human rights, announced between 269 BC and 231 BC, preceded the Universal Declaration of Human Rights made by the U.N. General Assembly on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1948 by more than 2500 years. With such a

depository of knowledge capital which the UN Resolution proved as being still very relevant, where should we look for ideas to re-invigorate India?

In conclusion, Shri Aikat requested Shri Modi to elaborate on his vision of a vibrant growth model from the perspective of lower poverty, increasing healthcare facilities, provisions of infrastructural facilities and security and thereby bringing about an all in all development in the country.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat, observed that Bengal has been one of the first States to witness the lights of Renaissance in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the rest of the country was under the darkness of ignorance.

It has produced great thinkers, both social and political and has also been the birth place of Indian struggle for freedom. Shri Modi stated that the provisions for women's rights which have now been incorporated as a movement was first adopted by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a son of Bengal. The lists of martyrs catalogued in the jails of Andaman & Nicobar Islands comprise Bengali revolutionary who have tolerated inhuman torture for many years before death came to them, over and above any other states. The fertility and the cultural standards of West Bengal had thus inspired British settlements in this part of India. Though the British, for the first time had set their foot in Surat but decided to settle in Bengal tantalised by its rich and varied heritage, Shri Modi observed.

With the onset of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Indians had hoped to give themselves a better condition of living and revolutionise sustainable growth with its widespread effects on the different sections of the society. However, failure to fulfill some of the socio-economic aspirations and a misbalance caused in the Constitutional orders of the country has reduced its growth rate. Another major cause for the failure of functioning of the national machinery is the large scale discrimination being made by the centre among states, Shri Modi felt.

Elaborating the conditions of the economy of Gujarat, Shri Modi stated that the State has been divided into three financial divisions each receiving one-third of the total financial allotment of the Government. These comprise among others Manufacturing, Agriculture and Services. These three sectors balance the economic growth of Gujarat in a proportionate manner. In case of failure of any one of the sectors, the other two balances the economic growth and prevents it from being adversely affected. The State has 18 lakh hectares of agricultural land which are being fully utilised and put under crop cultivation. None of these agriculturally productive lands has been reserved for industrial purposes. Since Gujarat is a water scarce and partially a semi arid state, conservation of the agriculturally productive lands can help satiate the State's food demands. For irrigational practices, the State Government has taken recourse to modern technology and has surpassed its aim of achieving 4 per cent growth in agriculture to achieve a magnanimous growth of 10 per cent. With the adoption of

micro-irrigation in 2001 an area of 12000 hectare has been brought under the ambits of irrigation.

According to Shri Modi welfare would come to common people only when their purchasing power is increased. Purchasing power in turn would increase with the rise in per capita income. The rise in the per capita income depends mainly on a strong growth model and thereby an overall growth of the economy of a State, Shri Modi observed. India being predominantly an agrarian country the growth of agriculture in any of its States has been dismal. Accordingly, the Government of Gujarat has divided the agricultural sectors into three sections. This comprise of cropping, forestry and horticulture and animal husbandry. Cattle and livestock, according to Shri Modi are items of value addition. In order to preserve the stock of livestock the Government of Gujarat organises 'cattle camps' at a distance of every 3 km. These camps also include cataract operation of cattle and dental and other diagnosis for livestock. By organising such camps Gujarat has been able to eliminate 112 animal diseases. The Government of Gujarat also organises Global Agricultural Summit every 2 years to gain an edge in technological knowhows from foreign countries and apply them to Indian agriculture, Shri Modi stated. This would enable the farmers to become globally competitive and reach international standards.

In case of agriculture, 'crop health cards' are issued to peasants after checking the soil fertility and the crop health. Such a provision helps maintaining high levels of both soil and crop quality. Along with efforts to increase the productivity of the agriculture, provisions of value addition by way of establishing cold chains, cold storages etc. has also boosted the economy of Gujarat, Shri Modi stated.

In regard of the industrial sector, Gujarat being one of the largest producers of cotton fibre a policy called '5F' has been adopted by the Government of Gujarat, Shri Modi observed. This is a project that aims at adding value to the textile sector. The 5 FS stands for 'Farm to Fibre to Fabric to Fashion to Foreign'. Gujarat, according to Shri Modi, has become one of the foremost solar power producers. By switching over to solar power it has increased its power supply and has also illuminated every part of the State. To encourage poor households to adopt solar power, the Government of Gujarat has formulated Roof Top Policy which aims to install solar panels over each house in the various towns and cities of Gujarat. The State is presently bringing up the largest solar power plant in Asia at Dahej, Shri Modi stated.

Tourism in the service sector has been boosted so as to employ large number of both urban and rural people. The festival of 'Navratri' has been publicised so as to draw tourists during the festive season. Shri Modi, stated. For this purpose Shri Amitabh Bacchan has been appointed as the Brand Ambassador for Gujarat Tourism.

Shri Sanjay Agarwal, Senior Vice- President, MCC Chamber of Commerce and Industry, offered a hearty Vote of Thanks to Shri Modi.

The Special Session was followed by a one-2-one interaction of Shri Modi with a select number of Members of the Chamber. At this Session, Shri Modi was presented

with a publication on 'India's Socio-Economic Development –A Few Challenges' that the Chamber brought out on the occasion.

Members present at the meeting, discussed the potentials of investment in different sectors of their interest in Gujarat with Shri Modi.

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