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Headline: Indonesia accords priority to pharma industry, says Consul General

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Indonesia accords priority to pharma industry, says Consul General

Stresses more interactions with Indian business community

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HYDERABAD

Information technology (IT), pharmaceuticals, healthcare and education are sectors Indonesia has identified for growing the engagement with India, Indonesian Consul General in Mumbai Ade Sukender said here on Wednesday.

In doing so, Indonesia sought to draw on the expertise of India, an approach that assumes significance in the backdrop of the ambitious goal the two countries had set last year to more than double the bilateral trade by 2025.

"These sectors should be explored further," is an advisory from Indonesia to the Mission in India, Mr. Su-



Ade Sukender

kender said. This is to be achieved by having more interactions with the Indian business community, he said at an interaction.

Besides these sectors, Indonesia was keen on importing more rice, sugar, bovine meat, something that was highlighted by Kumara Jati, Director of Indonesian Trade Promotion Centre in Chennai, who, along with a few other officials, was present dur-

ing the interaction.

The Consul General said Indonesia was according top priority to development of the pharma industry as well as the healthcare sector, towards which it is open to collaborations. Highlighting the growth opportunities that existed in Indonesia for Indian IT firms, he said a few of the firms were already working on different projects in the area of banking and e-payment services. An Indonesian mobility solution provider had also set up an office in Bengaluru with around 200 engineers, he added.

Elaborating on the scope for Indian companies to set up operations, Director of Indonesia Investment Promotion Centre in

Abu Dhabi D. Rizky Novihamzah said the Indonesian government had eased the process of the approvals for investors with an online submission mechanism that aimed at integrating the licensing mechanism of 20 ministries.

Mr. Sukender expressed the confidence that the \$50 billion bilateral trade target was achievable by 2025.

On tourism, he said the number tourists from India to Indonesia last year was nearly six lakh and expected to increase with the proposed launch of air connectivity between the two countries.

Later, he addressed a meeting of members of the Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

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Hyderabad: Indonesia is pushing for cooperation in the information technology, education and pharma sectors in Telangana, said Ade Sukendar, consul general of the Republic of Indonesia in Mumbai, on Wednesday.

In an interview with **TOI** while on his trip to Hyderabad, the consul general, said Indonesia was also looking at exports of rice and sugar from Telangana. "We usually get these from Thailand and Australia, but the surplus here makes it a more affordable option."

Speaking about bilateral ties, Sukendar said bilateral trade reached \$18.74 billion in 2018 up from \$18.13 billion in 2017. While saying that imports from India increased to \$5.01 billion in 2018, a 24% increase from previous year, he said exports to India witnessed a decline of 2% settling at \$13.72 billion in 2018. "The reason has been high tariff rates applicable for Indonesian imports," he said. Sukendar said Indonesia was seeking a preferential trade agreement with India and talks were on in this regard. India has traditionally imported palm oil, copper, coal and rubber from Indonesia and exported petroleum products and telecommunication equipment.

Indonesia's investments in India are to the tune of \$629.11 million. Speaking about business ties, Sukendar said several big players including TATA group, Adanis and GVK were in Indonesia. "We are meeting GVK group on Wednesday. The Bali Airport was do-

The consul general also met members of the Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry regarding enhancement of investments. He then met members a delegation of travel agents

ne by them. Bidding has been opened for airports in other key cities and GVK group has been invited," he said. In connection to travel the country, he said talks were going on with Indigo Airlines about starting direct flights, which should pan out this year. Garuda Indonesia Airlines, which was operating a non-stop flight, halted services due to few passenger bookings on way back from Bali to Mumbai.

Regarding tourism, he said Indonesia has set a target of eight lakh tourists in 2019 from India. In 2018, this figure stood at just under six lakh, with around three lakh heading to Bali.

On education front, Sukendar said Indonesia would like to see more students come to India for higher studies. "Currently, our students are going to Saudi and the US. There is a lack of awareness regarding the internationally acceptable quality of education being provided in India which is also very affordable. Out of 40,000 students abroad, there are only 120 in India, with only 12 in Telangana," he said. The consul general had visited Osmania University on Tuesday, where some students are currently studying.