

EDI plans centres in Africa

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: Through a project assigned by the ministry of external affairs, city-based Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI) will work towards enhancing trade between India and Africa. While the institute will set up Entrepreneurship Development Centers (EDCs) in African countries, it will also help entrepreneurs from the continent access Indian market.

The initiative is an outcome of a recent Africa-India Forum Summit held in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, Africa, where Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced implementation of several projects in the African continent. EDI has been assigned the task to set up the EDCs in five selected African countries. The institute will identify the countries in consultation with the Association of African Countries.

Director of EDI Dinesh Awasthi said, "We will help entrepreneurs develop in Africa. In the process, we will help them choose the right kind of technologies and procure those technologies from India. There is tremendous opportunity in exporting simple technologies to African countries. For example, the farmers there still use wooden ploughs. We can export agricultural machinery and tools which are hand driven as there is no electricity in most parts of the continent."

Talking about the project, Awasthi said, "The 1st half of the 21st century will belong to India and China and the 2nd half to Africa. So the initiative becomes very important for our country. The way in which Africa is growing, by 2050 they will have a large population of skilled population and resources. China has already started investing there and has



AFRICA BOUND

The initiative is an outcome of a recent Africa-India Forum Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia where Manmohan Singh announced implementation of projects in the African continent

grabbed almost half of Africa by giving huge grants, particularly in areas like Angola that has enormous resources."

"While India cannot compete with China in terms of money power, we can take advantage of better English language proficiency in our country and focus on lending services like human resource development to strengthen relationships with Africa," said Awasthi.

The African countries in which the EDCs will be set up will be identified in July. EDI will visit the countries and start the process of setting up centers soon after the countries are identified.