

Japanese Govt arm opens 'Business Support Centre' in Chennai

Our Bureau

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The Japanese External Trade Organisation (Jetro) has opened a 'business support centre' in Chennai, so that it could handle and service Japanese companies who want to invest in India.

The centre was formally inaugurated on Tuesday by Mr Yukio Edano, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan, and Mr S.P. Velumani, Minister for Industries, Government of Tamil Nadu.

In the last few years, there has been a surge in the number of Japanese companies who want to set up shop in the country.

It has been said by Japanese officials in the past that the Japanese, with a view to diversifying their business operations outside of China, have zeroed in on India, and within India, have found Tamil Nadu to be a good place to be.

There are nearly 400 Japanese companies in Tamil Nadu and various speakers at the function said that a large number of companies were looking at setting up shop in the State.

With a view to making things easier for them, the Japanese are building a 1,500-acre industrial-cum-residential township, 55 km south of Chennai.

The project is being put up

by the JGC Group of Japan and the Mizuho Corporate Bank.

The two companies have tied up with the Singapore-based infrastructure company, Ascendas, to implement the project.

ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Various Japanese speakers at the function repeatedly stressed on the need for the State Government to make sure there is adequate infrastructure for the Japanese companies to operate in the State. Two problems were highlighted - access road to Ennore port and stable supply of power.

A sore point with the Japanese has been - although this was not mentioned in today's function - the instance of Toshiba Corporation.

The company is putting up an Rs 800-crore turbine-generator plant near Manali, north of Chennai.

In its MoU with the Tamil Nadu Government, Toshiba was promised that the access road to the Ennore port would be strengthened, so that heavy turbines could be moved from the plant to the port.

While the plant is almost production-ready, the strengthening of the road, which has a few bridges including one over the railway lines, has not been done yet.

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