

Update on Goa State Innovation Council (SInC): Meeting chaired by Dr. S.W.A. Naqvi, Chairman, SInC, Goa on 27th September, 2013.

The Fourth Meeting of the State Innovation Council (SInC) held under the chairmanship of Dr. S.W.A. Naqvi, Director, National Institute of Oceanography (NIO), and Chairperson, Goa SInC on 27th September, 2013 was attended by the NInC Mentor, Mr. R. Gopalakrishnan and Ms Veena Upadhyaya, Expert, NInC, on behalf of the NInC. Among other participants were the members of the SInC, recently constituted vide State Govt.'s Order dated 12th September, 2013. These included Mr. J.M. Noronha, Chairman, Goa Pollution Control Board and a pioneer innovator in the State of Goa; Dr. Jayant Umarye, Ph.D from the TIFR and working in the State Bio-Science Research Institute, and a specialist in fungal infection of plants; Mr. Kaustabh Priolkar, Dept. of Physics, Goa University; Mr. Dinar Bhatkar, an entrepreneur, and a Member of the Executive Council of the Goa Science Centre; and Mr. Sandeep Varnekar, Ananta Infotech, Panaji, all members of the newly constituted SInC. From the State Govt. side, the Meeting was attended by Mr. Pawan Kumar, Secretary, Mines on behalf of the CS of the State as the CS was out of headquarters, and the ACS was pre-occupied with prior commitments; Mr. Bhaskar Nayak, Director, Higher Education (the Dept. is the administrative Dept. concerned and allocates the budget for the innovative activities to the SInC); and Mr. Levinson Martins, Director, Dept of S&T, Member-Secretary of the SInC. Mr. Atul Pai Kane, the CII representative was also present on behalf of the CII.

2. A distinctive feature of the Goa SInC is that it has very marginal association of the State Govt in terms of participation by the CS, and association of the Pr. Secretaries/Secretaries of the Depts, perceived to be key ones by the State Govt. Going by the normal pattern prevalent in most other States, the Depts of Planning, Finance, IT, Urban Development, Agriculture/Horticulture, Industries, and School and Technical Education are generally associated as members of the SInCs. Besides such Depts./sectors as are perceived to be of specific relevance to the State's economy, e.g. Fisheries, Tourism, and Forests and Environment should also ideally be associated.

3. Mr. R. Gopalakrishnan, the NInC Mentor, said that India has been historically outward-looking and innovative. Goa, with its inherent advantages of a small size (the State has the smallest area in the country), high literacy rate, and a strong network of educational institutions is ideal State for acting as a Laboratory for experimenting with innovative models. He apprised the participants about the national initiative 'One M.P., One Idea'. He suggested that considering the coastal topography, and tourism potential of the State, the thrust areas for innovation could be Ecology, Hospitality, and Tourism. Going by the role of the MSME in the economy of the country and the State, formation of clusters for over-all technological upgradation of the industries may also figure high on the agenda. He emphasised the need to aim for short-term goals. He also offered his services for helping the SInC in formulation of the Innovation Action plan for the XII Five Year Plan.

4. The Expert, NInC observed that there is a situation of communication vacuum on the part of the State Innovation Council (SInC), State Govt. of Goa with National innovation Council (NInC), considering that the SInC was constituted on 4th August, 2011 and three Meetings have already been held. The NInC has not been in receipt of the Minutes of any of the proceedings of these meetings nor of any communication in this regard so far. It is

through the internet that one learns about the conducive innovation climate in Goa as a result of the efforts undertaken by the Fr. Agnel Education Society and the Centre for Innovation and Business Acceleration (CIBA), a technology incubation centre funded partly by the DST. Mr. J.M. Noronha, the Chairman of the Goa Pollution Control Board and a Member of the SInC has made pioneering contribution to the nurturing of the innovation in the State through his individual efforts so far.

4.1 She said that the **three objectives** of the Interactive Dialogue are formulation of the Innovation Action Plan (IAP) for the XII Five Year Plan, and identification of the short-term and medium-term goals along with their timelines; securing a more representative and balanced composition of the SInC so as to acquire the required breadth and depth in its reach by encompassing the fields of Education, Industry and Public Governance at large; and ensuring a continuous interflow of information between the SInC and the NInC. The undersigned dwelt upon the national level initiatives taken by NInC; some of the notable initiatives taken by some of the SInCs like Karnataka, Rajasthan, Punjab and Bihar; and suggestions on augmentation of the SInC so as to be able to draw up a comprehensive Innovation Action Plan for Goa. At present the SInC has a predominant private sector association, with only the Director, S&T from the State Govt. side as Member-Secretary. Since a number of initiatives are expected to be taken by the State Govt, particularly at the policy initiatives level, including for promotion of entrepreneurship and employment, a more substantial association of the Secretaries from the State Govt. level will be eminently desirable.

4.2 Continuing further, I made a suggestion to consider launching of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) as proposed by the CII in one of the recent interactive meetings in Bihar, and name it as Goa Centre for Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness (GCIEC), a PPP vehicle for any or all of the six initiatives namely, Industrial R&D Fund; Post-Doctoral Fellowship Scheme for industrial R&D; Technology Acquisition Assistance Fund; Technology Demonstration Scheme; Techno-preneurs start-up Support Scheme; and Intellectual Property Credit Guarantee Scheme.

5. During the discussion that ensued, the **following points** emerged:

(i) The SInC had earlier agreed to launch two initiatives namely, giving free Science Kits to school students, and to establish a Science Laboratory and Learning Centre in the Goa Science Centre. However no headway had been made due to the change of incumbency both at the level of the Director, Science & Technology who was ex-officio Member-Secretary of the SInC, and in the Chairman of the SInC. First of all these initiatives that had received consensual endorsement may be implemented.

(Mr. Dinar Bhatkar and others)

(ii) At present, the institution-industry connect is almost non-existent. SInC should come up with a mechanism to ensure establishment of a platform that provides the platform for collaboration.

(iii) Measures be thought of for a more practical and viable Business Model to make the Biotech Incubator in Goa University run. It has been there for the last nine years, and an

amount of Rs. five crores has been incurred already. However there has been no realization of the objectives for which it had been set up.

(iv) The Intellectual Property laws are too complex and time-consuming to motivate entrepreneurs to seek patents for the protection of intellectual property rights.

(v) There is an acute dearth of risk capital in the market for financing innovative and relatively high-risk enterprises.

(vi) Emphasis should be on igniting young minds and effecting reforms in the Schools.

(Mr. Atul Pai Kane, CII)

(vii) A web portal of SInC, Goa be created to have the convergence of entire innovation-related information on the portal, and to have the desired visibility effect among the people.

(Mr. Sandeep Varnekar, Ananta Infotech)

(viii) A National Workshop/Seminar on Innovation Eco-system for adducing new ideas and proposals for improvement in the quality of life for the common man be held in the beginning of January, 2014. It will also have the desired dissemination effect if the event is webcast and generally publicized.

6. The Centre for Innovation and Business Acceleration (CIBA) is a part of the Father Agnel's Education Society at Verna, South Goa. **Mr. J.M. Noronha, the CEO of the said Society and the Centre** highlighted the activities and achievements of the two entities. He informed that Fr. Agnel Education Society had been working since 1979. CIBA had been established in April, 2012 and had admitted incubates in May, 2012. It has space for 10 incubatees at a given time. The identified thrust areas are Food Processing, Solid Waste Management and ITES. 04 incubatees have graduated already. CIBA has developed collaborations with Goa Small Industries Association (GISA), Asia-Pacific Innovation Network (APIN) and IIM-A's Centre for Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness (CIEC).

6.1 The Director, Higher Education (Mr. Bhaskar Nayak), which provides the administrative and budgetary support to the SInC, informed that the State had provided a budget of Rs. one crore for the SInC. Of the allocated amount, only an amount of Rs. 20 lakhs had been utilized by the SInC, and the rest had to be surrendered. He said that providing adequate funds for the well-thought out proposals of SInC will not be a constraint.

7. Dr. S.W.A. Naqvi, Director, NIO, and Chairman, SInC, Goa said that this was the first meeting under his chairmanship. They had had a preliminary meeting for the sake of continuity, with Dr. Shetye, the former Director, NIO and Chairman of the SInC, and at present Vice-Chancellor of Goa University. He said that the interactive meeting had been extremely useful in putting things in the right perspective, and that he will ensure the desired action is taken as per the decisions taken in today's meeting within the agreed upon time lines.

8. The following decisions were taken at the end of the meeting:

(i) The multi-sectoral Innovation Action Plan (IAP) will be formulated latest by January end, 2014. The observations made by all the participants will be taken into account while drawing up the IAP.
(State Innovation Council)

(ii) Going by the normal pattern prevalent in most other States, the Depts of Planning, Finance, IT, Urban Development, Agriculture/Horticulture, Industries, and School and Technical Education will be associated as Members of the SInCs. Besides such Depts./sectors as are perceived to be of specific relevance to the State's economy, e.g. Fisheries, Tourism, and Forests and Environment may also ideally be associated.

(iii) Among the low-hanging fruits, i.e. activities that can be accomplished within the next three to four months, the following five areas were agreed upon;

--Providing science kits to school students **(Mr. Levinson Martins, Director, Directorate of S&T, Member-Secretary, SINC)**

--Opening the Science Lab and Learning Centre at the Goa Science Centre **(Director, S&T, and Director, Goa Science Centre)**

--- Opening a web-portal on Innovation-driven initiatives by the SInC and other organisations in Goa, and other relevant information **(Mr. Sandeep Varnekar, Ananta Infotech)**

--- Organising a National Workshop/Seminar in the beginning of January, 2014. **(Mr. Levinson Martinz, Director, Directorate of S&T, Member-Secretary, SINC).**

---Identifying one or two MSME clusters for qualitative improvement of the products and socio-economic uplift of the artisans and workers. The units making fenny-liquor (made from cashewnuts) may be a good cluster to begin with. This will be done by end of October, 13 in view of the proposed national level ramp-up of the national pilot initiative of the MSME Clusters.**(Mr. Atul Pai Kane, CII, and the representative of the State Dept. of Industries as suggested by the State Govt. Mr. Pawan Kumar, representing the CS was requested to get the needful done).**

8.1 The Meeting ended with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

**Veena Upadhyaya
Expert, NInC
03.10.2013**