

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Meeting of Hon'ble Chief Minister with Ambassador Kathleen Stephens, Charge'd Affaires, US Embassy, New Delhi**

Ambassador Kathleen Stephens, Charge d'affaires of the Embassy of the United States of America to India, called on Hon'ble Chief Minister, Thiru O.Panneerselvam today (21.10.2014) in the Secretariat. The Ambassador was accompanied by Phillip A. Min, Consul General of the United States in Chennai, Ms Kalpana Murthy, Political and Economic Officer and Mr Adrian Pratt, Ambassador's Special Assistant.

The historic and deep ties between United States and India and specifically Tamil Nadu were mentioned. It was noted that Chennai has one of the busiest US Consulates anywhere in the world and it issues the largest number of employment related visas. Investments made by some of the large American companies including Ford and Caterpillar in Tamil Nadu were cited as some of the most successful US investments into India since the 1990s.

The Chief Minister indicated that Tamil Nadu is proud to be a favoured destination for foreign investors and welcomes more investment from the United States in the coming years. Tamil Nadu is a well administered and progressive State which has been set on a high growth path under the Vision Tamil Nadu 2023. This document is intended as a road map to achieve the vision to make Tamil Nadu the most favoured investment destination in India, and one of the top three investment destinations in Asia. This Vision Document envisages the substantial strengthening of infrastructure, including human capital, in the State by the year 2023 with an investment of 15 lakh crore rupees (US \$ 245 billion). In Phase II of the document 217 specific projects have been identified for implementation and work on some of the projects has already commenced. Many of these projects are intended to be implemented in the Public-Private-Partnership mode and entirely by the private sector with some facilitation by the Government.

Some of the key projects and areas where there could be significant synergy between what the United States and some of its large companies have to offer in terms of experience and expertise and the needs of a State like Tamil Nadu include:

- The development of a Finance City in Chennai which can complement what is happening in other regional financial centres and provide necessary back up support.

- Development of industrial parks, nodes and clusters including as part of the Madurai-Thoothukudi Industrial Corridor project which the Government of Tamil Nadu intends to develop.
- Greater collaboration in provision of urban infrastructure and services including Intelligent Transport Solutions, Waste Water Management, Desalination and Solid Waste Management.
- Renewable energy projects including solar energy and wind energy.
- Entrepreneurship Development initiatives so that we encourage a generation of youthful entrepreneurs who not only find themselves good jobs, but are in a position to generate investment and jobs in the State's economy.

The Chief Minister specifically drew attention to the 3 years of historic development and constructive work done by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. He highlighted the manner in which law and order was maintained and peace and tranquillity in the State was ensured which allowed for greater industrial investment and socio-economic development of the people to take place. He highlighted the role that availability of skilled labour played and specifically that Tamil Nadu had one of the highest number of technical and professional institutions including Engineering Colleges, Polytechnics, ITIs and Medical Colleges in the country. The work done by Hon'ble Amma in the area of rural poverty alleviation and provision of social security was also highlighted.

It was also mentioned that Tamil Nadu is a resilient State with a strong tradition of capable administration and the Government is strongly committed to sustaining the growth and dynamism of the State. Tamil Nadu is open for business and looked forward to a substantial participation by American companies in the Global Investors Meet proposed to be held during 2015.

The Ambassador mentioned that the fact that the US Consulate Chennai issues the largest number of employment visas in the world, is a reflection of the skill level of the people in the area. She indicated that the United States shares Tamil Nadu vision on growth and the Embassy's intention is to promote investment and greater people to people contacts. She indicated that US companies would be very keen to participate in the Global Investors Meet and that the Principal Commercial Officers in the US Embassy and the Consulate in Chennai would be very happy to be involved in the planning of the event. She specifically mentioned that the spirit of positivity and optimism that she found amongst the people she had

interacted with in Chennai was in no small measure due to the considerable development work done by Hon'ble Amma. She also mentioned the innovativeness of the younger generation of engineers who work seamlessly with colleagues anywhere in the world. She also admired the talent and strength of the women in the State who had built up many small businesses. She specifically mentioned that in future teams of senior officials and investors who normally visit only Delhi and return would be persuaded to also travel to Chennai and see for themselves the opportunities for greater economic relations in Tamil Nadu.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Secretary, Adviser to Government, Principal Secretary, Finance and Principal Secretary, Planning and Development.

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