

PRESS RELEASE

Australian High Commissioner to India Mr Patrick Suckling meeting with Hon'ble Chief Minister on 26.11.2014

Mr Patrick Suckling, Australian High Commissioner in India met the Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru O.Panneerselvam today (26.11.2014) at the Secretariat.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister recounted that Australia and Tamil Nadu have had strong economic and sporting relations for many years and highlighted that they share a geographical destiny as Tamil Nadu and Australia are both Indian Ocean territories. The Hon'ble Chief Minister characterized it as a relationship of considerable potential and a great future.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that there is considerable potential for co-operation with Australia in the area of agriculture and allied activities. Fisheries, in particular, deep sea fishing was identified as an area of interest to Tamil Nadu which has to promote more deep sea fishing by the one million strong marine fishermen community as that would lead to more sustainable livelihoods for them and better utilization of India's Exclusive Economic Zone.

Dairy was another sector which Tamil Nadu is strongly encouraging through several initiatives including Beloved Leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's flagship scheme of free distribution of milch animals. Technical assistance from Australia to further promote the dairy sector was also sought.

Australia is an attractive destination for students from Tamil Nadu. English language and lower costs compared to other countries enable this. The Hon'ble Chief Minister called for a structured arrangement to enable students from poorer families to benefit from such exposure to be explored and expressed confidence that Australia with its strong egalitarian ethos would welcome such an initiative.

Skill development which is a very high priority area under the Vision Tamil Nadu 2023 enunciated by Beloved Leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma was also identified as an area of co-operation. Hon'ble Chief Minister called for greater collaboration in research and development in emerging areas like renewable energy, bio-technology and sports medicine.

The discussions also explored possible areas of collaboration in infrastructure development. Roads and highways is another important focus area for Tamil Nadu. As Australia is one of the leaders in adopting Public Private Partnerships in infrastructure development, the models and processes adopted there would be useful learning for officials from Tamil Nadu. The Australian side submitted notes for further cooperation in the area of Road Safety Initiative, Sustainable Fisheries Management and in the Dairy Sector. These areas, along with Skill Development, Solar Energy, Capacity Building for Public Private Partnerships and attracting investments in the Funds proposed to be raised by the Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund Management Company would be followed up through structured interactions.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister also invited investors and the business community from Australia to participate in the Global Investors Meet to be held on 23rd and 24th May 2015 in Chennai.

The High Commissioner was accompanied by Mr Sean Kelley, Deputy High Commissioner of Australia in Chennai, Mr.Staurt Campbell, Deputy Counsul-General, Mr.Grayson Perry, Trade Commissioner and Ms. Radhika Satkunathan, Vice Consul.

Thiru Mohan Verghese Chunkath, I.A.S., Chief Secretary to Government, Tmt Sheela Balakrishnan, I.A.S (Retd) Adviser to Government, Thiru K.Ramanujam, I.P.S.,(Retd.) Adviser to Government, Thiru C.V. Shankar,IAS, Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Industries Department, Thiru S.Krishnan, I.A.S, Principal Secretary to Government, Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Department and Thiru T.Udhayachandran,I.A.S., Principal Secretary to Government i/c , Finance Department were present.

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