

INDIAN DELEGATION APPLAUDS ADM FOR BEING A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITIES.

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By Judy Ngoloyi

(Picture taken by Gail Pullen)

EAST LONDON: A delegation hailing from the National Small Industries Corporation (NSCI) in India has applauded the Amathole District Municipality for being “a place of opportunities”. This is a result of a memorandum of understanding signed by the two parties in July 2007. Since their arrival at ADM last month the delegation worked tirelessly to formulate a SMME Strategy report which they have so far tabled to senior management within the institution. The strategy concerns how SMMEs should be developed within the entire district.



In an exclusive interview with the leader of the delegation, the Chief General Manager of NSCI, Ravindra Nath, said they were so impressed by the beauty, and warmth of the district and the people of the Amathole region. He said business opportunities within the district were much more than just “promising”. He said when people start to realize that there are challenges they also acknowledge the fact that there are opportunities that could be created for everybody. “Opportunities that can be exploited and used to the advantage of every individual that resides in the entire district,” said Nath.

Asked about the lessons learnt during their visit, Nath said they were taking with them some very fond memories and impressions about ADM. “We are carrying with us hopes that we will be back again to join hands with Amathole District Municipality, to really help those that require our services. We also believe that this area has a lot of potential for skills and entrepreneurship development which can ultimately solve the problems of poverty and unemployment which this district faces,” he said.

He said they strongly believe that ADM could be the front runner in the Eastern Cape for setting examples of how opportunities could be used to the best advantage.

Narrating the highlights of their visit, Nath said both parties needed to build a culture of entrepreneurship and that would be a major turning point. He said it is then that people would wake up and realize that they can be self employed.” It is a culture where people can believe in themselves and that will come when we exploit other opportunities that are available at our disposal,” he said.

The delegation also visited a number of projects, institutions of higher learning and factories during their stay at Amathole. He said they were deeply touched by some of the dilapidated factories they had seen at Dimbaza and Butterworth. “Some of these are lying in a dilapidated condition. This infrastructure can be gainfully used to change the lives of ordinary people that are struggling to make ends meet,” said Nath.

On a more positive note Nath said Amatole is blessed for having a very good and large industrial sector. “Some of the leading giants in the automobile sector are playing a significant role over here,” he said.

Comparing their institutions of learning to the ones of ADM, Nath said in as far as infrastructure is concerned in some instances ours are much better than theirs in India. “However, the education levels and the content of various syllabuses, and the curriculum need to be improved,” he said.

Asked about the possibility of an exchange programme for personnel Nath said they had tried to sell this idea to the newly-appointed ADM Municipal Manager, Mlamli Zenzile. He said this idea was proposed as they had discerned that the district is still lagging behind in terms of capacity building.

“The quickest possible solution is to bring in some expert from outside on a staff exchange programme. Some staff can be sent from here to India to learn how things are done in that part of the world – whether its project, financial management or SMME development. We believe our experiences can turn the situation around”, he said. **END**