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Ambassador:

Danish businesses overlook gigantic export market

By: Peter G. H. Madsen

India's growing population and large economy create export opportunities for many Danish businesses. But especially the small and medium enterprises overlook the possibilities, according to India's Ambassador to Denmark.

The Indian economy has grown to six times its size over the past 15 years. And when the Corona crisis has let go of the world, this development is going to continue, driven forward by a quickly growing and young population, and a stable democratic rule.

This is the assessment of the Indian Ambassador to Denmark, who does not hide the fact that he would be pleased to see Danish businesses offer solutions in India, which in few decades is going to overtake China as the world's most populous country.

"There are enormous possibilities to strengthen the economic and business related ties between India and Denmark", says Ajit Gupte, Ambassador of India to Denmark since 2017. "I perceive Danish businesses as technological leaders. In India, the Danish businesses will be able to make a difference for hundreds of millions of people", he says.

The great reconciliation

The invitation for more cooperation between Indian and Danish companies must also be seen as a natural consequence of the political reconciliation which has taken place between Denmark and India.

"The political relations have improved significantly within the last three years, says Ajit Gupte, highlighting that meetings between then Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmissen and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi have paved the way for cooperation.

The positive tunes have been reinforced by Minister for Foreign Affairs Jeppe Kofod's recent visit to India, numerous Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), and most recently conversations between Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Modi.

Danish solutions make a move in India

There is only one problem. Many Danish companies have yet to discover the opportunities awaiting them in the country with 1,352 billion inhabitants.

"Some of largest Danish companies are active in India. But generally the country has not had a very high profile in Denmark — and especially not among the small and medium enterprises", the Ambassador says.

He highlights that there are many opportunities for Danish companies, especially those dealing with waste management, air pollution, and water renewal.

"There are many areas in which Denmark and the Danish companies have the skills, while India has the scale. Danish companies can really make a difference for billions of people", he says.

After more than two years in Denmark, Ajit Gupte has also seen how Danish architects and engineers excel at transforming buildings, so that they become more than mere decorative items.

“In India we do not use the old buildings and monuments. In Denmark, you do. Here the buildings are more than just museum artifacts”, he says.

English will get you very far

Ajit Gupte understands how it may seem intimidation for a small Danish company to enter the Indian market. This is why he suggests that the companies focus on one of India’s 28 States to begin with.

“That is more than enough. Even a mid size Indian state has 50-60 million inhabitants. That should be enough to start with, says the Ambassador.

Nonetheless he recommends that for the smaller companies it may be a great advantage to enter into a partnership with a local company that has the knowledge of the local market and the ability to break down any potential barriers between the Danish company and the customers and Authorities.



From a cultural point of view there should also be a great potential for a beneficial cooperation between Danish and Indian companies, according to the Ambassador.

“Culturally speaking, Danes and Indians are similar. Both Indians and Danes are democrats with their own opinions.“