

Integrate Rural Areas with Economic Processes: Anand Sharma

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INVC,, New Delhi,, Anand Sharma, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, while addressing the India Rural Business Summit here today, has stated that nearly 70% of India's population resides in the rural areas and nearly two-third of the population is still dependent on the agriculture sector for sustenance. "If we are to ensure that growth is both inclusive and equitable then we will have to align and integrate our rural areas with the economic processes that are transforming our country at a rapid pace", he added. The Summit has been organized by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in collaboration with Department of Commerce. During his address, Shri Sharma informed that the Department of Commerce regularly supports Export Promotion Councils focussed on the rural sector such as Handloom Export Promotion Council, Shellac EPC, Carpet EPC, Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts, Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) etc. The Department is aiming to build a coalition with the Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, MSME, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Food Processing Industries etc. to create export opportunities for rural entrepreneurs through sustained market promotion and market access initiatives in coming years. Highlighting the details of various steps taken by the Department of Commerce to promote rural business, the Minister informed that under the Foreign Trade Policy 2009-2014, the focus is on increasing our percentage share of global trade and expanding employment opportunities. He further said that under Special Focus Initiatives, rural employment intensive sectors such as (i) agriculture & village industries, (ii) handlooms (iii) handicrafts (iv) leather & footwear (v) exports from North-Eastern region, (vi) sports goods & toys etc. have been identified. Benefits under Vishesh Krishi & Gram Udyog Yojna are available for fruits, vegetables, flowers, minor forest produce and village industries (Gramodyog) products, he added. During the occasion, Shri Sharma also visited the exhibition which showcased products across sectors - Ceramics & Pottery, Leather & Fashion Accessories, Wooden & Wrought Iron Furniture, Textile Furnishings, Handlooms, Woollen Products, Home Accessories, Fiber, Coir & Jute based Products like Carry Bags, Hand Bags, Decoration Items etc, Fashion & handcrafted Jewellery, Metal Products, Paintings, Wooden crafting, Handicrafts - Aluminum, Brass, Marble, Silver, Glass, Iron, Paper, Terracotta, Beaded and Traditional Handicrafts, etc. [caption id="attachment_10340" align="alignnone" width="500" caption="The Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Anand Sharma addressing the India Rural Business Summit Building Rural Enterprises, in New Delhi on March 23, 2010.INVC"][/caption]

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