

SA pledges to help Indian companies, create jobs

PRETORIA: Trade and Industry (dti) Deputy Minister Elizabeth Thabethe has pledged to help two Indian companies to expand their operations in South Africa as part of efforts to address job creation.



She was speaking during a tour of two special economic zones in the state of Tamil Nadu in India on Tuesday where Infosys and Cognizant, India's two leading global technology companies are situated.

Assisting the companies would in turn help South Africa with skills development, job creation as well as technological development.

"I was greatly impressed and inspired by the successes attained by Infosys and Cognizant in creating employment, skills development and innovation in rural parts of India. If one company can create 16 000 jobs in one area alone through the provision of technology solutions as Infosys does, I cannot imagine what positive impact such an initiative can make in South Africa in terms of dealing with unemployment," explained Thabethe.

Thabethe's tour forms part of the dti's five-day international Investment and Trade Initiative (ITI) that kicked off with a business seminar in Chennai, southern India, on Monday. The deputy minister is accompanied by 45 South African business people.

Skills development has been identified as a priority by government.

The South African Consular-General in India, Pule Malefane, also pledged government support for Indian companies willing to invest in South Africa.

Infosys senior engagement manager Abhimanyu Sinha said his company was in the process of expanding operations in South Africa. The company would appreciate collaboration and support from the South African government in training deserving students.

Meanwhile, Manager at the Gauteng Economic Development Agency (Geda) Elliot Mbiko said the agency would assist Infosys in setting up a facility in Gauteng.

"This is in line with the mandate of Geda to recruit foreign direct investment into the Gauteng province and create employment opportunities, amongst others," said Mbiko.

Earlier on Tuesday, Thabethe chaired a meeting between businesswomen in the South African delegation and their Indian counterparts belonging to the Tamil Nadu Corporation for the Development of Women.

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