

INDIA SETS UP JAPAN PLUS INVESTMENT TEAM TO SPEED UP PROPOSALS

NEW DELHI: India has set up a Japan Plus management team to facilitate and speed up investment proposals in a bid to augment economic ties between the two countries. The team set up by the Department Of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) is made up of officials from both governments.



During the recent visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Japan, the latter had offered to invest \$35 billion over the next five years by way of public-private partnerships and overseas development assistance. Japan also offered to provide financial, technical and operational support to India for the introduction of bullet trains. "Japan Plus has been operationalised with effect from October 8, 2014. Japan Plus will be coordinated by Kenichiro Toyofuku from METI (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry) and will comprise four Indians and two Japanese officials," the government said on Thursday. The team will support the Indian government in initiating, attracting, facilitating, fast tracking and handholding Japanese investments across sectors. Japan is the fourth-biggest foreign investor in India, contributing about 8% to total foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows.

Japan accounted for \$1.7 billion of FDI in the 2013-14 fiscal, and \$16.2 billion between 2000 and 2014. It has invested \$4.5 billion in the first stage of the Delhi-Mumbai industrial corridor with 26% equity. It is also working closely with the government for the development of other industrial corridors. In June, Tokyo sought government intervention to clear policy related hurdles to the operations of Japanese companies in the country, besides fast-tracking of some projects. The mandate of the Japan Plus team runs through the entire spectrum of investment promotion, research, outreach, promotion, facilitation and aftercare. The team will also be responsible for providing updated information on investment opportunities across sectors, in specific projects and in industrial corridors in particular.

"In addition, the Japan Plus team will identify prospective Japanese companies, including, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and facilitate their investments in India," the government said. India has also constituted a India-Japan Investment Promotion Partnership core group chaired by the cabinet secretary. This group will comprise the chairman, Railway Board, foreign secretary and secretaries of DIPP, revenue, economic affairs, financial services, urban development, information technology and others. This group will coordinate and closely monitor the process to ensure that investments from Japan as envisaged in India-Japan Investment Promotion Partnership are facilitated in various sectors and opportunities of investment and technology transfer are fully exploited, the government said.