

MAHA CHIEF MINISTER ANNOUNCES FIVE POINT PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPMENT

Mumbai, 7 August 2014: Maharashtra Chief Minister Shri Prithviraj Chavan today announced a five point programme for the state's development. He was delivering a valedictory address at MASSMERIZE 2014, 4TH edition of retail and FMCG conference, organised here by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

First, he intends to spread industrial development more evenly in the state. Maharashtra is India's most industrialised state, but 75 per cent of its gross state domestic product (GSDP) comes from five out of 35 districts. He plans to accord high priority to backward areas, piggybacking on the Delhi-Mumbai industrial corridor.

Agriculture is his next priority. 82% of the state relies on rain fed agriculture, and should be made sustainable. Related to agriculture is drought management. The government is trying to mitigate drought, address climate change related issues and reduce its carbon footprint.

Since Maharashtra is Mumbai's most urbanised state, urban infrastructure takes priority. He declared that his government has already made huge strides in developing Mumbai's infrastructure, and will continue to do so. He wished more people would be able to walk to work and not commute. He also assured industry representatives that his government would remain engaged with them and will address issues that come up, so as to ensure that Maharashtra remains the most important destination for investment from within India and abroad. In this context, tourism was also being looked at very seriously.

Replying to a question, Mr Chavan pointed out that with the growth of per capita incomes, consumer needs would increase, and an organised retail community with better backward linkages was the need of the hour. He concluded by saying that despite the huge land crunch that the state faces, the government is trying to open more industrial estates and create space for economic housing. The government is also moving towards single window approval of business related clearances, he said.

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