



**INAUGURAL ADDRESS
Of
SHRI KUMMANAM RAJASEKHARAN**

**GOVERNOR,
MIZORAM**

On the occasion of

**“Conference on Startups and MSMEs in Food Processing”
Organized by ASSOCHAM in collaboration with MoFPI, NABARD and
Mizoram University**

On
12th September, 2018
At
Hotel Regency, Aizawl

Thian duhtakte u
Chibai

I'm delighted to be here and inaugurate this prestigious Conference on "Startups and MSMEs in Food Processing".

The food processing industry is one of the largest industries in India and ranks fifth in terms of production, consumption and exports. The availability of raw materials, changing lifestyles and appropriate policies has given ample scope for Startups and MSMEs in Food Processing sector. The Food processing industry is indigenous to India, because simple home-based techniques such as fermentation have resulted in creation of world-wide acknowledgment of Indian pickles, papads, chutneys etc.

The Food Processing Industry has emerged as one of the important segment in terms of its contribution to Indian economy and is one of the major employment intensive industries. The sector serves as a vital link between the agriculture and industrial segments of the economy. The establishment of food parks will make way for a unique opportunity for entrepreneurs, including foreign investors to enter in the Indian food processing sector. Nivesh Bandhu, an investor friendly portal of Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India brings together Central and State Government policies and incentives provided for the food processing sector. It is a one-stop platform for all stakeholders of the industry, including farmers, processors, traders, and logistics operators.

Mizoram, the state of India's north-eastern region (NER) is endowed with various sorts of fruits, vegetables, and other agro-products, and has the potential to be a sunrise zone for food processing and other agri-businesses. There are immense opportunities present in food processing in the region. It is observed that simple value addition like cleaning, sorting and packaging can increase income of farmers.

Agriculture forms a primary sector of the economy of Mizoram. More than 55% of the state's total workforce is dependent on agriculture for their subsistence. Food processing industry especially agro-horticultural base has been identified as a thrust area of development. In fact, during the last decade, the State has recorded impressive growth rates. The State has good agro-climatic conditions, suitable for a large variety of Agro/ Horti. crops. Most of the indigenous local inhabitants of the state are engaged in the traditional occupation of cultivating fruits, and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables, like Jackfruit, Orange, Pineapple, Banana, Litchi, Lemon, Kharif Vegetables, Patato, Rabi Vegetables, Cashewnut, Coconut, Arecanut, Turmeric, Ginger, and Chilly have good marketing scope in this region if properly harvested, processed and packaged. Fruits have grown to become the second largest category, followed by condiments and spices.

In horticulture and floriculture, Mizoram is a significant producer and global exporter of Anthurium (over 7 million a year) and roses. It is also a significant producer and domestic supplier of banana, ginger, turmeric, passion fruit, orange and chowchow.

There is a significant business opportunity in processing of fresh fruits, vegetables, medicinal and aromatic plants, spices and herbs. Besides facilities have to be created for primary processing and secondary processing in the region by infusion of proper technology. Proper marketing linkages between farmers and manufacturers have to be established, so also technological support. Agro-based economy has failed to flourish due to limited utilization of technological and innovation.

The north-eastern region with its agro-friendly climate and agrarian roots has the potential to be a sunrise zone for food processing and other agri businesses. The weather and availability of water are conducive for food cultivation and is especially suitable for growing horticultural. There is also a need for partnerships for training and competence building, marketing, processing,

projects and infrastructure development to accelerate growth and development of Food processing Sector in this region, leading to more jobs, incomes and opportunities for the people of this region.

I, congratulate **ASSOCHAM** for conducting “**Conference on Startups and MSMEs in Food Processing**” which helped us in addressing the various issues related to Food processing sectors in state and also creating awareness about opportunities in Food processing sector including many scheme of various department involved in this sector.

I am also sure that this initiative taken by **ASSOCHAM** will act as a first step in identifying these challenges, thus providing a roadmap for all the stakeholders to work on, and thus contributing in realizing the immense potential of this industry.

I wish this conference a great success.

Ka lawm e-
-Jai Hind-