

UP hopes to get \$120 mn investment in footwear industry

Uttar Pradesh delegation visits China; state government's policy for footwear industry expected soon

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LUCKNOW: With the state government stepping up efforts to woo investors in the footwear industry, some companies currently operating in China have shown interest in setting up their units in Uttar Pradesh.

If all goes well, the state may get investment of USD 120 million in the footwear industry in Kanpur or Agra in the next 18 months to two years, people aware of the developments said. The investment is likely to lead to the creation of job opportunities for one million people, they added.

The state government will soon bring out a policy for the footwear industry with attractive incentives to woo companies willing to set up their units out of China fearing the adverse impact of the tariff war between China and the USA, those aware of the development said.

"Yes, there is a definite interest from some companies that can invest, in the next one-and-a-half to two years, about USD 120 million and provide jobs to around one million people," said principal secretary, industry, Alok Kumar.

Kumar, along with director, Industry, K Vijayendra Pandian visited China from May 14 to 18 as part of the Council for Leather Exports delegation that included CLE chairman RK Jalan.

"If we want to be world leaders in footwear production, especially after the tariff war, and to occupy the space ceded by

China, the country and the state need big ticket investors from Taiwan, China and Vietnam, who at present are industry leaders in technology, innovation, product development and training," an officer said.

"We had a wonderful interactive meeting with a leading company making footwear for leading brands with its nearly 40 supply chain partners," said Alok Kumar. Pandian made a detailed presentation about the state government's upcoming footwear policy which is being given a final shape now. He said the footwear industry has a high potential for growth in the coming years.

Kumar further said the delegation visited Jinjiang International Shoes and Textile City in the Fujian Province of China, an integrated industrial park spread over 1532 acres having an output of US \$100 billion for footwear. If textile production is added to the same, the total employment provided comes to nearly 150,000 persons. The textile production will bring the total output to US \$800 bn.

The industrial park encompasses research and development, design, testing, manufacturing and trade of shoes and textile, raw materials and accessories.

The Industrial Park has a College of Technology for footwear, footwear material, textile, textile material and designing, primarily working with close industry linkages. The courses are designed in consultation with industry. The delegation also visited Guangzhou Shoe and Leather Fair that showcased the latest technological innovation, designing, fabrics, mould-making and shoe fittings.

Those who met the U.P. delegation raised the issue of visa for visiting India. They said the issue should be worked out soon if the investors finally make up their mind to invest in India. A senior officer aware of the development said India may consider granting visas to Chinese investors interested to set up manufacturing facilities, initially for the short-term and, thereafter, by the automatic route for six months, as is being done for the tele-communication industry.

THE U.P GOVT WILL SOON BRING OUT A POLICY FOR THE FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY WITH ATTRACTIVE INCENTIVES TO WOO COMPANIES