

Brussels beckons Indian small firms

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Brussels-Capital Region is offering aspiring small business units from India a vantage point in Brussels, capital of Europe, to talk business with the pan-European market.

The multi-lingual and multi-cultural population presents ideal setting for companies to test products and services made for larger European market, said Kathlijn Fruithof, Chennai-based trade and investment attaché for Brussels Invest and Export.

SOUTH BASE

Speaking to Business Line here, she said her office looked after trade and export prospects in the States of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh.

It also scouted for investment opportunities in Brussels for companies operating out of these States in IT and ICT, healthcare research and development and financial

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services.

In Kerala, seafood exporters and spice traders are on the radar, said Alex T. Koshy of SAS Partners, transactions and consulting partner for Brussels Invest and Export.

According to Fruithof, centrally-located Brussels could be the sales and marketing outpost for companies looking to engage with larger Europe.

The scope is much less with a base in either London or Paris, where the company is most likely to be looked at merely as a 'British' or 'French' company with localised marketing scope.

Brussels-Capital Region and its ecosystem is also being pitched to pharma and life sciences companies in Hyderabad and Bangalore to base their R&D work and

clinical trials.

Spice traders would do well to assess threat to their perceived monopoly in Western market from smart and fleet-footed counterparts Vietnam, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, Koshy said.

Physical presence in the European market would help them monitor the market from up close, he added.

Brussels Invest and Export offers foreign companies who are considering relocation to Brussels to opportunity to appraise their choice in situ at low cost and without commitment.

The city's reputation is largely due to presence of the European Union and other international institutions. It is also the seat of the European Parliament.

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