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Gov. Haley traveling to India to lure jobs to SC

By SEANNA ADCOX

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By SEANNA ADCOXThe_Associated_Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Newly re-elected Gov. Nikki Haley is leading South Carolina's first trade trip to India in hopes of persuading companies in her parents' native country to bring jobs to South Carolina.

The Republican governor leaves Tuesday, one week after her landslide victory, for a 10-day mission trip involving the state's commerce and tourism agencies.

"Of course, Gov. Haley is pretty well known to people in India now," said Commerce Director Bobby Hitt.

"There's a lot of excitement among our partners in India in advance of her visit, and we think this trip will go a long way toward putting our state on the map with Indian companies and decision-makers."

It marks Haley's first visit to India since she was 2 years old. Her parents emigrated from India in the early 1960s. Born Nimrata Nikki Randhawa in rural Bamberg, South Carolina, Haley is the first woman of Indian heritage to become governor of a U.S. state.

When Haley won election in 2010, the small town of Verka in the Indian state of Punjab exploded in celebration. Her win became the top story on Indian TV stations.

But there are no plans for Haley to visit relatives on this trip. Instead, Haley is slated to attend 40 of the delegation's 90 scheduled meetings and events. The delegation's 18 members, which also include representatives of businesses interested in exporting to India, are splitting their time between seven cities in six states. Haley will be traveling to New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, and in Punjab, Chandigarh and Amritsar.

In her first post-win availability with reporters Thursday, Haley said her immediate focus includes the India trip, but she declined to say what it means to her personally.

"It's a brutal schedule, but we'll work hard and hopefully have something to show for it when we get back," she said.

Haley's trip comes six weeks after she traveled to New York to meet with India Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Embassy of India invited Haley to visit Modi as he spent five days in the United States. Her husband and parents joined her then.

But only her husband, Michael, is accompanying her to India, and he's paying his own airfare. Commerce expects to spend about \$50,000 on the trip, Hitt said.

Tourism officials will work to brand South Carolina as a tourist destination, while Commerce officials meet with business leaders, particularly in the automotive and pharmaceutical industries, Hitt said.

India, an emerging market with more than 1.2 billion people, ranks 16th in capital investment in South Carolina. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, South Carolina ranks 14th nationally in total exports to India, at \$352 million last year, up from \$110 million in 2005.

Indian-Americans across the United States take pride in Haley, said Sanjay Puri, who leads a Washington-based bipartisan political action committee that seeks to elect Indian-Americans. Dignitaries attending Haley's 2011 inaugural included India's ambassador to the U.S., Meera Shankar.

"She's going to get a tremendous response," Puri said, adding that South Carolina will benefit from her celebrity status.

"Before Nikki Haley, I have a feeling if you asked 90 percent of the people in India, they couldn't point out South Carolina on a map, but now they probably can," said the chairman of the US India Political Action Committee. "The South Carolina brand will be much more visible in India."

Haley, 42, has mostly downplayed her gender and Indian-American heritage publicly. But she has said she understands the pride and recognizes her role-model status, particularly to girls.

In her victory speech Tuesday, she said, "As an Indian girl who grew up in Bamberg, I always looked to that small town of 3,500 people and wanted to know how I could make a difference. What makes me proud is what we proved four years ago and what we prove tonight, that there are no boundaries for any little girl or any little boy in the state of South Carolina."

Read more here: http://www.thestate.com/2014/11/07/3796901_haley-traveling-to-india-to-lure.html?rh=1#storylink=cpy

Nikki Haley to visit India to lure jobs & promote tourism

PTI Nov 8, 2014, 06.38AM IST



("Next week, the State of...")

WASHINGTON: Fresh from her emphatic re-election, South Carolina's governor Nikki Haley is to visit India next week to bring investment and promote her state as a tourist destination in her parents' native country. During the 10-day trip beginning November 11, Haley and her delegation are scheduled to have as many as 90 meetings in New Delhi, Hyderabad, Amritsar, Mumbai and Chennai.

"Next week, the State of South Carolina is launching our first trade and investment mission to India," Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt said yesterday.

The delegation includes Commerce personnel, the state's Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, private-sector economic development allies and several South Carolina-based companies looking to make export connections, he said.

"The goal of the trip is to put South Carolina on the map with Indian businesses.

"We will be introducing the advantages of doing business in South Carolina to Indian companies in order to enhance our trade ties and to encourage domestic investment by Indian companies," Hitt said.

During the visit, Haley would also be positioning South Carolina as a top tourism destination.

India sends one of the largest numbers of tourists to the US, but a small fraction of them come to South Carolina.

Haley and Duane Parrish, Director of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, will pitch South Carolina tourism to a gathering of India-based travel media.

"From the business side, foreign-direct investment has been a key economic development strategy for the state," Hitt said adding that international companies like Michelin, BMW, FUJIFILM, Honda and many others have established a presence in our state and they continue to grow.

This is nothing short of a grueling schedule for the delegation, with more than 90 individual meetings and events planned, he said.

South Carolina Government would be spending around USD 50,000 for the trip.

During her India visit, in addition to meeting top Indian leaders and officials, Haley will make several public

addresses including Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

According to official figures, from 2011 to present, foreign-based companies contributed 34 per cent of new jobs and 60 per cent of investment in to South Carolina.

Companies based in Japan, Germany, France, China and Canada represented the top five contributors to foreign-direct investment in South Carolina from 2011-2013.

South Carolina's Indian-American Governor Nikki Haley to visit India



Image Courtesy Gage Skidmore

Arun Kumar | IANS| November 7, 2014| 10.24 am IST

Washington: South Carolina's Indian-American Governor Nikki Haley will lead a 10-day trade mission to India in November, hoping to attract more foreign investment and sell the state as a tourist destination

The Nov 12-22 trip is intended to make a “first impression” that sells South Carolina as a tourism destination and a place to do business, local newspaper The State reported citing an official.

Haley, who met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New York in September, was cited by the State as telling reporters Thursday that she did not know what to expect from the trip.

“But when I met with the prime minister, we had a lot of conversations.”

Haley said she sees opportunities in pharmaceuticals, automobiles and agriculture.

“There's a lot that India is doing very well that they now want to start investing in the United States,” she said.

“That's really where my goal is: where can I get them to invest and do more of those things.”

India is South Carolina's 16th-largest trading partner, according to state Commerce Secretary Bobby Hitt.

Last year, the state's exports to India were valued at \$352 million, up from \$110 million in

2005, ranking South Carolina 14th in the nation for its exports to India.

US exports to India have increased by 127 percent since 2006, outpacing the growth in all other foreign exports combined, which only grew by 50 percent during the same time period.

The trip's schedule is "nothing short of grueling" with 90 planned meetings and events, including 40 on Haley's itinerary, Hitt said.

State Commerce officials have traveled to India four times in two years to prepare for the trip, but Haley's visit will garner media attention there, he said.

The trip next week is a chance for South Carolina to make a "first impression" on India businesses and commerce officials, Hitt said.

"This is our way of pushing out a message that we're serious about our relationship with India."

South Carolina economic development organizations such as the Upstate Alliance, The LINK Alliance and the S.C. Power Team, as also companies interested in exporting goods to India will join the trip.

Hitt said state officials are keying in on the Indian manufacturing and pharmaceutical sectors while there, hoping to tap into an "emerging" market.

While in India, Haley will address several business organizations and, with Duane Parrish, state Parks, Recreation and Tourism director, pitch the state as a tourist destination to several India-based travel media.

A group of state legislators also will attend the Aeromart Summit, an international business summit for the aerospace industry.

Haley will travel to New Delhi, Chandigarh, Amritsar, Mumbai and Chennai. Others in the delegation will travel to New Delhi, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Chennai, Hitt said.

The trip marks the second time Haley has travelled to her parents' homeland that she last visited when she was 2 years old.

Source: IANS

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