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**MSMEs Must Embrace Technology to Move Ahead Post-COVID-19 and Beyond**

Technology has played a major role helping trade and industry to connect during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the light of this development, World Trade Center (WTC) Goa organised a webinar on 'Strategies for MSMEs for Long-term Success in Post-COVID-19 Era' with the objective of assessing new technologies and other aspects that could help MSMEs succeed given challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Bharat Kamat, Chairman, Green Buildings Council, Goa Chapter spoke on Green Buildings Technologies that could benefit and empower MSMEs to meet challenges during the pandemic. These buildings could be energy efficient while providing different kinds of automation for minimising touch and thus effectively block the virus from spreading. Air Handling Units (AHU) can prevent spread of droplet nuclei by effectively trapping them through their processes. Mr. Kamat further stated that Green Buildings Technologies and better air quality among other services would lead the fight against COVID-19. Mr. Ravindra Manerkar, Operations Head, Ignite - EDC Innovation Hub spoke on role of startups in the fight against COVID-19. Mr. Manerkar said that startups could help MSMEs in manufacturing new technologies and products that would be of greater demand such as access cards, biometric scanners and contactless mobile applications. Shorter supply chains would be more in demand and startups could move into this area to service the needs of MSMEs. Mr. Manerkar also called for a better industry academia partnership enabling effective training of students to satisfy requirements of the industry. Mr. Ashutosh Karangate, Founder / Managing Director of Mangal Analytics & Research Pvt. Ltd. said that 50% of fortune 500 companies were started during times of recession. Mr. Karangate said that this pandemic-driven recession too would bring about new opportunities for success. He said that shorter supply chains would necessitate the removal of the middle men and call for skill driven knowledge. He added that import substitution would be able to cut costs and also help in speedy delivery of products manufactured by MSMEs to secondary market, thus making products more competitive in the global markets. Mr. Karangate remarked that sectors such as agriculture, pharmaceutical, light engineering, food processing and logistics could see reasonable rate of success in the long run post-COVID-19. Mr. Cyril Desouza, Assistant Director - Trade Promotion, World Trade Center Goa said that the Center would periodically organise webinars, virtual trade meetings and facilitate virtual trade delegations that would meet the needs and also help facilitate MSMEs in their quest to reach global markets.

The webinar was held on April 30, 2020.