

# Growing pains



K Ramaswamy,  
CMD, Roots Group

Coimbatore's entrepreneurial culture has made it a premier industrial hub of India for a number of industries, ranging from textile machinery to auto components to pumps and garments. One of the 10 most industrialised districts in the country, Coimbatore supplies 60 per cent of all pumps used in India, 40 per cent of motors, and a significant percentage of auto parts. Today, Coimbatore's industrial sector is doing very well due to the overall growth of the Indian economy. Exports from the region are also growing rapidly.

Significantly, Coimbatore is on its way to becoming a trade fair hub, thanks to its geographical advantages viz. centrally located from other industrial hubs in the South and due to the unrelenting efforts of CODISSIA

(Coimbatore District Small Industries Association). CODISSIA's Trade Fair Complex and the Intec fairs are great accomplishments in this direction. In fact, this is the first trade fair complex in South India having all infrastructural facilities for conducting International level events.

However, it is also important to ensure that Coimbatore's infrastructure growth keeps pace with the industrial development. Discussions are on between the municipal administration and prominent citizens and industry organisations in Coimbatore to resolve this issue in the near future.

In the context of the industrial boom in Coimbatore and its emergence as a trade fair hub, there is also an urgent need to for a new Airport here. The existing Airport

is too small and even if it is expanded to accommodate growing passenger and cargo traffic, there will be shortfalls. In fact, there is need to set up a new international-standard airport in Coimbatore to cater to domestic and international traffic. For example, Germany is looking keenly at Coimbatore. We are seeing increasing number of visitors from Germany because they feel that there is a lot of engineering talent in Coimbatore. In the absence of requisite physical infrastructure, we will lose out on such opportunities. With regard to Airport, the private sector Cochin International Airport in Kerala is

a good role model. If they don't attend to this and other infrastructure problems now, it will be a problem later. I strongly feel that Coimbatore must gear up for the future if we are

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not to lose out.

There is also need for government support to transform Coimbatore into a trade-fair hub which will have positive spill over effect on the rest of the regional economy.

The small and medium industry is the blood stream of the Indian economy. They are the feeders of the large industries. In fact, the big industries cannot survive without the small units. The small and medium business entrepreneurs are also the main source of innovation in Indian industry. This is also the industry where lot of skills are nurtured and developed. Thus, they form the backbone of industrial development and should be supported and encouraged. Therefore, any law or regulation that helps the small and medium industries is welcome. **2.0**