

## Singapore to teach state trade

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Tripurari Sharan and (right) SP Sinha at the signing of the MoU. Telegraph picture

Singapore, ranked number one by World Bank on ease of doing business, will now help Bihar do the same.

The state government today entered into a tripartite agreement with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Singapore-based Lee Kuan Yew School for Public Policy (LKYSPP) to create a conducive environment for doing business in the state and also building a master plan on Ease of Doing Business in Bihar: Vision 2020.

Saugat Mukherjee, regional director, CII (Eastern Region), told **The Telegraph** the CII entered into an agreement with LKYSPP in this regard early this year. "According to the report of the World Bank, Singapore stands first in the list of countries when it comes to ease of doing business. And this organisation has helped the country in achieving the same. Now, with India also talking about ease of doing business in the country and setting up goals for the same, the CII has roped in the school and is now in the process of extending its services to interested states of the country. Bihar has now become the fourth state after Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh to have signed this agreement," Mukherjee said.

The World Bank report has put India in 142nd place.

The MoUs were exchanged between Tan Kong Yam, co-director, LKYSPP, Tripurari Saran, principal secretary (industries) and S.P. Sinha, chairman, CII Bihar State Council. The MoU will also enable Bihar to utilise the Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI) of Singapore as a platform for investment research, study economic situations and explore investment opportunities in ASEAN and China. ACI is a part of LKYSPP.

Sharan congratulated CII on bringing LKYSPP to Bihar and the deal.

In talks with **The Telegraph** earlier, the senior official said the state government had initiated studies and schemes aimed at strengthening the ease of doing business in Bihar and streamlining single window system in the state.

"The department is working towards strengthening the same and making it very investor-friendly and hassle-free. The DFID (department for international development) has offered help for free and we are taking their assistance. The centre has charted out 98 parameters aimed at ease of doing business and the DFID is presently studying them. A diagnostic study is on presently and DIFD has appointed two agencies, namely PwC and IPE Global, for the studies. One of the aims of the department is to ensure that approval applications should be able to move seamlessly across the government department," Sharan had said earlier.

Authorities at CII said LKYSPP would study the current industrial and ease of doing business scenario in the state and give suggestions and assistance. "The state can now take the help of the school and strengthen areas that need nourishment so that it is recognised by investors," another official said.

"The state is at least working towards making Bihar investor-friendly. These agreements give one hope for the future. Investors will come to Bihar only when they are convinced they won't run into hassles while doing business in Bihar," Ramesh Jain, a resident industrialist, said.