



**Brad Owen**  
Lieutenant Governor



**TRADE AND EDUCATION MISSION TO ORISSA, INDIA**  
**NOVEMBER 12-20, 2010**  
**LT. GOVERNOR BRAD OWEN**

Lt. Governor Owen and Congressman Jim McDermott led a group of twelve delegates representing government, higher education, and business to Orissa, India last autumn. The mission was organized, sponsored and managed by Debadutta Dash and Habib Habib of the Washington State India Trade Relations Action Committee (WASITRAC). Following are the lieutenant governor's personal observations and perceptions.

### **Business Interests and Opportunities**

Although Orissa is considered one of India's poorer states, it has a strong desire to advance. Orissa has more than an 8 percent rise in its GDP, funding for infrastructure development and education, rich mineral resources, 400 kilometers of coastline, and a solid system of higher education. Tourism is a focus for Orissa, with development of tourism based on ancient ruins, Buddhist sites, and the beautiful coastline. Advancements in tourism facilities, particularly hotels, will need to be in place for this to fully develop. There were also discussions of promoting Indian business investment in Washington state-based companies.

High potential for Port development projects include:

- Building a major commercial shipping port for ores and other minerals.
- Building a port-of-call for cruise liners to service key tourist sites (ancient Sun Temple, Konark)
- Airport Expansion: delegate Albert Shen of Shen Consulting in Seattle met with local officials and a business to discuss potential partnering on the construction project.

### **Educational Opportunities**

A significant portion of the itinerary was dedicated to touring all levels of schools. Schools demonstrated a desire to have exchanges of students, teachers, and professors. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was entered into between North Seattle Community College and two universities in Orissa — Kilanga Institute of Industrial Technology and Science and Kalinga Bharati Institute.

### **Other Areas of Opportunity**

The area is rich in mineral resources and there are opportunities to increase prosperity throughout the area by increasing mining activities. There is a potential opportunity for Washington State University to enter into a research project to increase crop production, and needed programs to assist the local farmers impacted by the development. It may be possible to have the mining companies provide grants. Further conversations could take place with the mining company we met with to see what other social service help might be provided in education and public health. Our state's global health industry could possibly also be brought into this discussion.

### **What Now?**

We should continue to develop relationships with the business and political leaders in Orissa. It would be helpful to identify people knowledgeable of regulatory, political, and cultural issues to assist business development, and identify trade and bureaucratic barriers. Our findings should be shared with the Department of Commerce, Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, and Governor Gregoire. We should provide assistance to institutions of higher education wanting to do MoUs. Ideally, we should identify barriers related to the Indian bureaucracy, health standards, government-set caps on business, and timely payments.

**In summary**, this was a very positive mission that yielded immediate and long term results for possible business and educational opportunities between Orissa and Washington State.

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