

- **NIMZ to change face of country: Anand Sharma**

A National Investment and Manufacturing Zone (NIMZ) will change the face of the country, Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma said in Thiruvananthapuram Friday.

Sharma was in the Kerala capital to participate in the meeting of industries ministers of the southern states.

He said with Kerala being a state where land is scarce, the centre would relax certain rules and would support the setting up of the Kochi-Palakkad corridor, where industrial and other clusters would come up. The corridor will have all benefits of a NIMZ.

"I see a maximum of 15 or at the most 18 such zones in the country. These integrated standalone green field townships will create 100 million skilled jobs in the coming years. Of these proposed NIMZ, three are going to come in the southern states with Bangalore becoming a dedicated city for electronics and hardware," Sharma said while addressing the media after the meeting.

"The state government will have to identify the land, while the centre would provide the trunk investment. A committee would be set up to monitor this project, which will include officials from the centre and the state. These zones would have world class facilities which are seen in countries like Japan, South Korea and China, besides offering numerous tax relief," said Sharma.

The meeting was attended by two ministers from Tamil Nadu and top officials from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.