

# 'Set up more manufacturing zones'

Special Correspondent

**CHENNAI:** Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry E.M. Sudarsana Natchiappan on Thursday underscored the need for the Tamil Nadu government to come forward with proposals for setting up National Investment and Manufacturing Zones (NIMZ) in the State.

Besides its role as a facilitator of such projects, which essentially are integrated industrial townships with state-of-the-art infrastructure, his Ministry was willing to provide financial assistance for the initial stages, Mr. Natchiappan told presspersons here. He was speaking at a function organised by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations, Southern Region (FIEO-SR) to present the first Southern Region Export Award (2012-13).

Highlighting the importance of NIMZ for economic growth and increasing exports, he said the State gov-



**RECOGNITION FOR SERVICE:** E.M. Sudarsana Natchiappan (second from left) presents the award to Mallika Mohandas of MIOT Hospitals Ltd. M. Rafeeque Ahmed (left) and Walter D' Souza are also in the picture — PHOTO: V. GANESAN

ernment was required to contribute land. Referring to the proposed Chennai-Bangalore industrial corridor, the Minister said: "We want to extend the industrial corridor... make it like a garland starting from Thiruvananthapuram and connecting Nagercoil, Tirunelveli, Virudhunagar, Madu-

rai, Villupuram, and Kancheepuram. On the other side, the plan was to connect Kochi, Coimbatore, Salem, Namakkal, Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri."

At the function, he presented over 15 awards in various categories. The winners included Ashok Leyland (pre-

**Union Minister E.M. Sudarsana Natchiappan said the State should come up with proposals for NIMZ**

mier trade house-southern region category); MIOT Hospitals Ltd (best service provider-southern region); and Rajathi Biotech Pvt Ltd (best multi-product exporter - Tamil Nadu and Puducherry).

FIEO president M. Rafeeque Ahmed said 2014-15 would be a good year for exports. FIEO-SR Regional Chairman Walter D'Souza said the southern region was the first to launch the awards. Director General and CEO of FIEO Ajay Sahai, Indian Overseas Bank chairman and managing director M. Narendra, and Additional Director General of Foreign Trade A.K. Choudhary, hailed the achievement of the exporters.