

**REPORT ON THE PARTICIPATION OF COIR BOARD IN THE
INTERNATIONAL SPRING FAIR, HELD AT INTERNATIONAL
EXHIBITION CENTRE, BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND
FROM 05 – 09 FEBRUARY, 2006.**

Introduction



The International Spring Fair from 05-09 February 2006 conducted at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, England is mainly meant

for general commodities, mats and carpets, electronics and service sector. The Ministry of Agro & Rural Industries, Government of India approved the proposal of Coir Board for participation in the exhibition vide their letter No.F.4(40)/2005-Coir dated 02nd February, 2006. Shri M.Kumara Raja, Secretary, Coir Board was deputed for the exhibition representing the coir sector of India.



Participation



Coir Board took its pavilion at Hall No.16, stand No.D1, D9 and D4 at WEC, Birmingham. The stalls were provided by I.T.P.O., New Delhi. The Board established a stall at Stand No.D4 and all kinds of coir products like mats, mattings, rugs, carpets, garden articles, pith plus, coir handicrafts, new diversified products developed under R&D efforts of the Board etc., were exhibited. The following export firms participated in the exhibition reserving space along with the Coir Board:

- 1) M/s. Eastern Rug Mills, Alleppey.
- 2) M/s. Seven Seas Trading Company, Alleppey.
- 3) M/s. Madhavan inc., Alleppey.
- 4) M/s. Wallace Langeford & Associates, Alleppey.



The following export firms participated in the same exhibition by reserving space directly:

- 1) M/s. Duro Fibretex, Alleppey.
- 2) M/s. Bobji Emporium, Alleppey.
- 3) M/s. Indus Consumer Products, Cherthala.



The International Spring Fair is one of the most important fair which normally conducted in Spring and Autumn at Birmingham and also at London where many of the industries based India, China, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Italy and other European countries established their stalls to promote all kinds of general commodities and house ware items. As far as Coir is concerned, fibre mats, frame mats, PVC tufted mats, rubber moulded mats, rugs and carpets are most attractive among the U.K. buyers specifically . The Coir Board stall was designed and fabricated as per international standards and materials were exhibited in an eye-catching manner for promoting coir as the prime natural product in the UK market. The stall was equipped with sufficient publicity materials such as coir products, catalogues, brochures, list of leading coir exporters, various schemes of Coir Board etc. A video presentation on lap top on various products was also arranged at the stall for the reference of visitors. The exhibition continued for 5 days and the Board's and other exporters' stalls were the piece of attraction for the business visitors as coir products were exhibited for the first time in the International Spring Fair, 2006. Most of the business visitors shown keen interest in coir mats specifically rubber moulded PVC tufted and also in coir garden articles and coir pith. The product catalogues and brochures were

also displayed in the catalogue counter of fair and made available to all visitors through fair authorities.

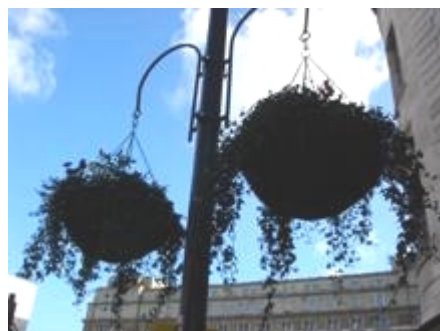
Market



U.K. is ranking next to US in the export of coir products to the tune of 12% on the global share which faced down trend comparing last 3 years. As suggested by the exporters in many forums, a team of interaction was held with various buyers and sellers to understand the reason on the down trend and to build the scope of promotion. In spite of the requirement in UK for coir products which is enormous, the retailers are in a very small way available. UK is the country comes under cold weather latitude, the coir products necessarily required for their indoor floor furnishing, they are preferring to have anti skid with novel designs preferably so called “British colours”. To meet these requirements the PVC tufted rubber backed mats are required to be marketed more for which traditional coir products manufacturing industry of India need to have sufficient infrastructure upgradation. In order to attract more and more retailers and wholesalers where they required products like coir in huge quantity, we have to promote coir in more number of consumer fairs in UK preferably in the Spring Fair in Birmingham and the Autumn Fair in London and selective other fairs in Scotland and the coastal regions of UK.



Conclusion



To understand better taste and design of consumer needs in UK the designers of coir products need to study the customer need for which they have to be put in fairs/study tour to find out the right choice of the products and other colour combinations. The visitors from China and Italy were shown keen interest in the coir garden articles, coir

pith and coir geo-textiles to prevent soil erosion and developing the organic farming of agriculture and flower culture sector.



It is witnessed in the streets of Birmingham and London that the entire lamp posts are being filled with coir pith and used to grow the flowers and orchids. On enquiry with M/s. Dmiex UK the major importer of coir products, it is understood that the materials made from Sri Lanka are being marketed by the Korean companies in the UK market. It shows huge potential for coir pith and garden articles which is the new source of energy for coir industry in India to expand its export market from Rs. 30 crores to Rs. 100 crores in the forthcoming years. We have received around 25 number of enquiries and the list of potential customers is attached herewith along with the photographs. The exporters participated in the Fair from India received about 10-12 containers of coir products as the spot order (worth Rs.1 crore) and another 20-22 containers of enquiries as on process which benefited to the Indian exporters to process export of coir products worth Rs.6-7 crores.

The fair was made successful because of the guidance of Chairman, Coir Board and timely cooperation and kind approval of our Ministry.

Kochi
Dt. 14.02.2006

Sd/-
M.KUMARA RAJA
Secretary, Coir Board