



PARTICIPATION OF

COIR BOARD

IN



2012

1-3 May, 2012
Las Vegas, USA

**REPORT ON COIR BOARD'S PARTICIPATION IN
THE NATIONAL HARDWARE SHOW 2012
HELD AT LAS VEGAS IN U.S.
FROM 1ST TO 3RD MAY 2012**

Introduction

USA is the single largest export market for Home Improvement products, including hardware items and natural fibre products. The National Hardware Show in Las Vegas is North America's most important Hardware and Homeware Show



Las Vegas by night

being held every year since 1945. It is the leading time and place based face-to-face, sourcing, trading and learning event. About 3000 exhibitors participate in the fair and the fair will be visited by a worldwide audience of more than 25,000 industry professionals which include buyers, opinion makers, designers and engineers. This show was an excellent platform for Indian entrepreneurs to explore their potentials not only in the North American market but also in other parts of the world as buyers from all over the world visit the show. The product profile for this annual important event included hardware and tools, housewares, lawn & garden products, paint & home décor, flooring & carpets, electrical & plumbing and other home related products and services.

Board's Participation

Coir Board, as part of its export promotion activities to boost the export of coir and coir products from India to U.S, has

participated in the National Hardware Show, at Las Vegas in U.S held from 1st to 3rd May, 2012. The Board was represented in the Fair by Prof. G. Balachandran, Chairman, Coir Board as per the sanction accorded by the Government of India, Ministry of M.S & M.E vide letter No.4(11)/2012-Coir/324 dated 27.04.2012. Accordingly, the Chairman, Coir Board proceeded to Las Vegas on 28.04.2012 and returned on 04.05.2012 after participating in the Show which was held during 1st – 3rd May, 2012 at Las Vegas Convention Centre, 3150 Paradise Road, Las Vegas, NV 89109 .

This year's fair, which was the 67th edition of the National Hardware Show, commenced in the morning of 1st May 2012 with a bang as exhibitors and attendees crowded around the Stage for the official grand opening ceremony. The dignitaries gathered on the stage to usher in the start of the Show. The Show drew to a close in the afternoon of 3rd May.

Coir Board Stand



A total floor space of 200 sq.ft. was hired by the Coir Board by taking two booths of 100 sq. ft. each i.e. Booth Nos. 1127 and 1128 through the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), New Delhi. The following exporters participated in the fair along with Coir Board:

- (1) Shri. Anil Madhavan,
Artisanns Guild, Kochi.
- (2) Shri. Prabhu Soundararajan,
M/s. Techno Coir, Pollachi.
- (3) Shri. Suseel Thomas,
M/s. Madappat Exports, Pollachi.
- (4) Shri. K.S. Gangadhara Iyer,
M/s. K.S. Gangadhara Iyer & Co.
Alappuzha.
- (5) Shri. Baiju Satyapalan,
M/s. Coco Fibrolex, Alappuzha.

In the fair, altogether there were four booths which were occupied by the Indian Coir entrepreneurs and they formed part of the India Pavilion set up by the ITPO at the Central Hall of the NHS exhibition centre.

A wide range of coir products were exhibited in the stands allotted to Indian Coir Sector in an attractive manner. Apart from display of exhibits, publicity materials like product literature and brochures, blow-ups, pamphlets, leaflets, etc. were arranged for distribution to the visitors.

Visitors to the stall and trade enquiries/orders received

There was a good number of visitors to the Board's stall and the exhibitors could obtain sufficient trade enquiries. Most of

the enquiries were for new products with new design and also for coir geotextiles. The exporters could obtain certain export orders also.



Unfortunately, the Indian Pavilion set up by ITPO where the Coir Board's stands located was in the 'Tool & Hardware' segment. Most of the visitors came to this segment were interested in tool and hardware products. This was a setback for the coir exhibitors from India. It was felt that the India Pavilion of the ITPO should have been included in the 'Lawn & Garden Homeware' segment where there was a heavy traffic of visitors showing keen interest in homeware including floor covering materials and other natural fibre products. The matter has already been



taken up by the Coir Board with ITPO, New Delhi.

Notwithstanding the locational disadvantages, the overall responses of the visitors to the co-exhibitors of Coir Board were really good enough to justify the participation.

Interaction with visitors/buyers/importers

The co-exhibitors and myself could interact with the visitors, buyers and importers who visited the Board's stands. The general observation made by the visitors to Coir Board stands is that there should not be frequent revision of prices as it was done during 2010. The prices of Indian coir products were revised upward



three times last year due to the increase in the labour wages and cost of fibre. This has badly affected the market for coir in the U.S. They were of the opinion that the market is ready to absorb one revision every year that too before the month of January. According to them, the real threat that faced by coir products is from synthetic products which are low-priced, weightless and easier to clean in comparison with coir products. The importers said that the major hotels and other entrepreneurs prefer synthetic products and this trend weakens the demand for coir products. To overcome this situation, we have to make global publicity highlighting the advantages of natural fibre products.

The interactions with the different foreign buyers who visited the Coir Board's stand also revealed that stiff competition is faced by Indian coir products from the Chinese products in the U.S market. It is worthy to mention that China's main source of raw-material for making value added coir products is their large scale import of



coir fibre from India. Indian coir fibre is very popular and known for its unique qualities and advantageous features. Using the Indian coir fibre, the Chinese entrepreneurs are making value added products by applying their own technology and such products are being exported in large scale to the U.S and other countries. Like any other Chinese products, their coir products are also very attractive in appearance and cheaper in cost, but not having the quality standards compared to the Indian coir products. However, due to the external appearance, these Chinese coir products are being sold out quickly in the foreign markets, thereby posing severe threat to the Indian coir products. To prevent such an unhealthy competition, we have to think of resorting to measures to control our export of coir fibre to China.

Cost benefit analysis

The trade enquiries received and the extent to which the Board could popularize the coir and coir products in the U.S through the participation of this fair could establish that the expenditure incurred for organizing the fair is worth more than cost. If the trade enquiries received by the exporters could be converted into export orders, the venture would be a remarkable one in terms of money for value.



Interaction with Indian Mission in New York.

I had occasion to meet the Indian Consul General Mr. Prabhu Dayal at the Indian Consulate General, New York on my return from Las Vegas on 04.05.2012 and discussed with him on the possibilities of enhancing the exports of Indian coir products to U.S. He promised all kind of help to promote the market for coir products in U.S.

Conclusion

USA is the single largest export market for India's coir and coir products. 22% of the India's coir export goes to U.S. and our effort was to increase this level to a considerable extent. Las Vegas is one of the world's largest tourist centres, and it was a great advantage for the Indian coir sector that it could popularize coir and coir products in such a place. The Board should continue to participate at the Las Vegas Fair but in the 'Lawn & Garden Homeware' segment.

Suggestions

- In future, the Board should get stalls in the 'Lawn & Garden Homeware' segment so that the stall can attract more number of visitors and the exhibitors will be able to get sufficient number of trade enquiries and export orders
- The Coir Board has to get sufficient time to undertake a thorough homework and proper planning, before going to participate in each foreign exhibition.

Cochin,
14.06.2012

Prof. G. Balachandran,
Chairman, Coir Board