

Indian delegation participates in Kabul AGFAIR



A section of Kabul AGFAIR.

For many it was a record participation from India at any commercial event in Afghanistan, in the recent past. For the first time, a team of 40 Indian businessmen took part in the three-day Agricultural Fair (AGFAIR) in Kabul from October 23 to 27. Held on the famous “Bagh-e-Bala” fair grounds in Kabul, the exhibition attracted a large number of domestic and foreign visitors.

At three exhibition booths, the Indian delegation displayed an impressive range of specialties, including agricultural machinery and implements, seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and machinery for food processing and packaging among others products.

Many Afghan visitors showed a keen interest in the wide range of products on display.

AGFAIR also demonstrated the potential for foreign investors in Afghanistan. The Kabul Dairy Union, set up a few months ago with technical know-how and machinery imported from India, is already attracting a growing number of customers with its range of milk products.

The delegation was quite impressed by AGFAIR and the opportunities it offered to discerning businessmen. Krishna Murthy of the Andhra Pradesh-based Pratishta Industries says, “Afghanistan is an excellent area for processed food and fruit imports. Once a right partner in Afghanistan is identified, India has a ready market.”

Jagat Shah of Global Network, Ahmedabad, who was among those instrumental in bringing the Indian business dele-

gation to the fair, regards the direct land link and access through Pakistan, the key to unlocking the doors for trade between Afghanistan and India. Others like Sastry, a large-scale fruit trader from south India, meanwhile, are keen to explore the economics of cargo flights as an alternative option.

The Indian delegation used its visit to explore trading opportunities in dry/fresh fruits, medicinal herbs and carpets. At the end of the fair, the delegation signed Afghan export deals worth \$2 million, which includes supply of machinery and equipment, dry fruits, nuts, hing (asafoetida), pomegranates, grapes and pharmaceuticals. For Shah, “It is just the beginning. We are confident of more such deals in the future.” ■