

Indian Exhibition in Djibouti

ASSOCHAM organized an Exhibition in Djibouti between 21st– 24th January 2008 at prestigious venue of People's Palace in which 25 Indian exporters participated. The participants were mainly from the SMEs sector and medium rank. ASSOCHAM had the support of Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. Some major industrial entities such as Videocon, JSW Steel and Vestas RRB also participated with their impressive stalls.



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On 20th January 2008, India's Honorary Consul Mr. Nalin Kothari hosted a reception in the gala environs of the town's most prestigious Hotel Djibouti Kempinsky where all the exhibitors, prominent members of Indian community in Djibouti, ASSOCHAM team, important Djibouti officials, economic Counsellor of Djibouti Embassy in New Delhi and the Indian professionals working in international companies operating in Djibouti were invited. Ambassador of India to Ethiopia, concurrently

accredited to Djibouti, Mr. Gurjit Singh, accompanied by First Secretary (Commercial) Dr. Rajesh Ranjan were also present.

On 21st January 2008, Djibouti's Minister of Industry and Trade H.E. Mr. Rifki Abdoukader inaugurated the exhibition. Senior officials of Djibouti headed by President's advisor and secretary, Ambassadors and diplomats of various countries, media persons from Radio, T.V., and the Arabic & French Newspapers were also present.



Djiboutian Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr. Rifki Abdoukader cutting the ceremonial ribbon to declare open the ASSOCHAM exhibition alongwith India's Ambassador to Ethiopia and Djibouti Mr. Gurjit Singh. Also seen in picture: President of Djiboutian Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Said Omar Moussa.

Addressing the audience, Ambassador Mr. Gurjit Singh said that he was greatly pleased to be at the inauguration of the first Indian Trade Fair. He described the exhibition as a tribute to the growing economic relationship between India and Djibouti. It was also a tribute to growing importance of Djibouti for economic interaction and the growing trade, FDI and enhancement of economic cooperation that Djibouti extends particularly to Asia. He also mentioned that India has provided US \$20 million line of credit to support the Ali Sabeh Cement Plant. Complimenting ASSOCHAM for taking the initiative and organizing this exhibition, he urged the Djiboutian entrepreneurs to take note of this event and establish closer relationship.

Djibouti's Minister of Industry and Trade, Mr. Rifki Abdqulkader expressed his pleasure to officially open this commercial and industrial exposition organized by ASSOCHAM. His government attached great importance to this first Indian exhibition. He thanked the Ambassador of India Mr. Gurjit Singh, India's Honorary Consul Mr. Nalin Kothari and ASSOCHAM for having organized this exhibition.

Prime Minister of Djibouti also paid visit to the Indian Exhibition. He visited the stalls and made inquisitive enquiries about the companies and their products. Addressing the exhibitors, he expressed that his officials were ready to extend any help required to promote India-Djibouti economic relations.

In the evening session, the exhibition was particularly thronged by a large number of families and business representatives. There was good radio and T.V coverage about the exhibition.

The stalls representing textile, food, electronic & electrical gadgets and kitchenware attracted a lot of

visitors. Some of the exhibitors engaged local businessmen to negotiate deals for regular supplies. The visitors to the exhibition also included a group of businessmen from Ethiopia and some other African countries who maintain their trade offices in Djibouti for coordinating imports for their country.

With the help of the Djiboutian authorities, ASSOCHAM arranged a tour of the Djibouti port facilities and Douraleh Port Container Terminal,

Djibouti Free Zone and the seaport Oil Terminal. Djibouti is fast building state-of-the-art facilities managed by Dubai Port World. As mentioned, earlier landlocked countries in East Africa, particularly Ethiopia largely depend for their imports on Djibouti seaport facilities.

The exhibition has particularly given publicity mileage to Indian industry through repeated broadcast of bulletins with Djiboutian Minister of Trade and Industry inaugurating



Prime Minister of Djibouti (center), Mr. Daleita Mohammad visited the Indian Exhibition along with senior officials. In the picture, Djiboutian PM is flanked by Mr. Abdul Khalique, ASSOCHAM Advisor (left) and the First Counsellor, Embassy of Djibouti in New Delhi, Mr. Aden Daleita.

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the Exhibition. Djibouti's two main newspapers, one each in Arabic and French, also gave prominent coverage to the event. Djibouti radio made announcements, in the form of social activities, about the Indian exhibition for all the four days.

The Embassy of Djibouti in New Delhi sent its first counsellor Mr. Aden Daleita to Djibouti one week before the exhibition. He conveyed to us that the Djiboutians were keen to make it a success and offered to extend every support which was highly appreciated by all.