

The Island, Saturday 26th July, 2003

Boost for Lanka-Egypt trade ties

Trade ties between Sri Lanka and Egypt have received a tremendous boost with the recent mission to Egypt organized by The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (CCC).

A CCC spokesman said that the highlight of this mission was signing of the MOU between the CCC and the Egyptian Businessmen's Association and the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce.

The MOU between the CCC and the Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce, which was signed in 1996, was revalidated on June 29, 2003.

The mission was organised at the invitation of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and the Egyptian Businessmen's Association, with whom The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce had been corresponding for over a year. These two organisations were very keen on signing an MoU with the CCC.

"To make this mission more focused, an

extensive study was undertaken by the Sri Lankan Embassy on the potential for Sri Lankan products in Egypt. The CCC targeted only organisations handling the following products, which had potential in Egypt. The products identified by the Embassy were: -Coconut, Products - Desiccated Coconut, Coco Peat, Coir doormats and coir fibre, Spices - Black Pepper, Nutmeg, Cloves, Cardamom, Cinnamon, Cashew nuts, Pineapple, Fruit Juices, Cocoa Powder, Confectionery, - Chocolates, Biscuits, Extracts of Essence, Activated Carbon, Mattress Supports, Stuffed Toys Gems and Jewellery, Artificial Flowers, Apparel and Clothing, accessories, Handicraft of wood and Rutile."

The twelve member Sri Lankan delegation which was headed by Mission Leader K. Dayaparan Per Stassen Exports Ltd., comprised, P. B. Yatawara, Business Development Manager and R. Welikala,

General Affairs Manager, Ceylon Grain Elevators, R. P. Senanayake, Business Development Manager, Freight Links Intentional (Pte.) Ltd., R. Wakwella, Managing Partner and Ms. A. L. Gajasinghe, Partner, Ijna Gem and Jewellers, J. Karunaratne, Director, Imperial Tea Exports (Pvt.) Ltd., K. Ramachandran, Commercial Executive, Jayes Trading Company, A. S. Munasinghe, Commercial Manager, Samson (Exports) Ltd. And M. H. Saifudeen, Managing Director, Zafar Exports (Pvt) Ltd. Senior Assistant Secretary General, Puvu Domingopillai, represented the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

The spokesman said that the delegation from Sri Lanka was interested in sorting contacts for export of Desiccated Coconut, Fresh Coconuts, Coco Peat, Cashew Nuts, Spices - Black Pepper, Nutmegs, Cloves, Cinnamon, Rubber Based Products, Tea,

Gems & Jewellery, Poultry products, Food products, canned finite, Freight Forwarding and import of chemicals, Machinery and other accessories related to manufacturing of rubber products and forging Joint venture to set up a Jewellery workshop in Sri Lanka.

The delegation met with the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, (Cairo Chamber of Commerce, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, Egyptian Businessmen's Association and the G 15 Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry One-to-one business meetings at all the Chambers followed the General Meetings.

Apart from the business meetings, the delegation met key government officials responsible for trade related matters in Egypt. The Delegation also had the opportunity of visiting factories producing Ceramic tiles, Household appliances,

Chemicals and Garments in these zones.

Speaking on behalf of The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, Domingopillai who co-ordinated the mission from this end said that she was pleased to report that the entire mission was successful in obtaining suitable contacts.

"The Mission concluded with the success story of positive responses, confirmed orders, constructive business contacts. In addition to this it has also generated employment opportunities to our craftsman", she maintained.

The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce looks forward to organising similar trade promotional missions in the near future and facilitating Sri Lankan business representatives to penetrate more effectively into international markets.

The programme was co-ordinated by Sidath Kumar, Counsellor (Commercial) of the Sri Lankan Embassy in Cairo.

'Meaningful opposition debate could have saved Intellectual Property Bill'

Commerce and Consumer Affairs Minister Ravi Karunanayake said that Wednesday's Intellectual Property Bill debate has proven that the civil society of the country is far ahead of the opposition, commenting the opposition had failed to bring any core issues out of the Bill, except the provisions challenged by the civil society at the Supreme Courts earlier.

"I'm really thankful that Rohan Edirisinghe came forward and challenged the Bill, doing a yeomen's service to the country as a citizen no legislation is a perfect piece and the government appreciate

if other citizens could also come forward to point out if there is any lapses in what we are doing" he said.

The minister said that he was disappointed that some opposition members who participated in the debate could not grab the essence of the Bill, the core issues which it is intended to remedy.

"Debating this type of technical Bill needs lot of homework including some serious reading to get familiar with the subject matter. Sometimes you must consult relevant experts to check whether your knowledge if is sufficient for debate" the minister added.

Appollo workshop on interventions for congenital heart disease

Apollo Hospitals Colombo recently commemorated the completion of one year in operation by conducting a live workshop for doctors on Interventions for Congenital Heart Disease with hands on interactive participation through the demonstration of the procedure in 6 patients.

The workshop encompassed many elements of correcting various types of congenital heart disease through interventions with several lectures and live demonstrations by key practitioners in the Cardiology and the Paediatrics fields. Present at the workshop were Dr. Rana Mehta - General Manager, Dr. Rohit Sharma - Director Medical Services, Dr. Vinay Kumar Bahl - Head of Department of Cardiology, Dr. Sivakumar- Paediatric Interventional Cardiologist, all of Apollo Hospitals Colombo. The workshop was attended by many cardiologists from private and government hospitals.

This workshop was hosted by Apollo's Interventional Cardiology department on the occasion of the completion of their first year of operations in Sri Lanka. Birth defects of the heart, known as congenital heart disease, affect 8 out of every 1,000 children born. Atrial Septal Defect (ASD) and Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA) are the common congenital heart defects. If these defects are left untreated they can lead to symptoms like enlargement of heart chambers, heart failure or raised blood pressure (Pulmonary Hypertension) and irregularity of heart beats (Arrhythmias) and many others outcomes that are equally life threatening. According to, Sivakumar, many of these defects can be successfully corrected by cardiac catheter interventions without surgery

Apollo became the first hospital in Sri Lanka to successfully treat an (ASD) or heart

defect without surgery. Interventional Cardiology team lead by Dr. Sivakumar carried out the procedure on August 2002. This non-surgical procedure only required two days of hospitalisation with the patient walking out of the hospital with minimal discomfort and no scarring. Meanwhile, routine surgical procedures require patient hospitalisation for more than a week with pain and scarring due to the invasive and traumatic nature of the surgery. This nonsurgical method of closing ASD is suitable for most of the ASD types. Similar non-surgical interventions can also correct Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA) as well as other types of heart disease. Since this first procedure conducted in August 2002, there have been 75 patients with ASD and 40 patients with PDA who have had their heart defects repaired successfully without surgery.

Apollo Hospitals Colombo commenced its operations in Sri Lanka in June 2002. Spread over a built-up area of more than 350,000 square feet in Narahenpita (Colombo 5), the hospital is equipped with over 350 beds expandable to 500 beds. It is geared to provide round-the-clock, 365-day services in Emergency, Cardiac, Neurological and Orthopaedic care as well as over 50 other medical services. Apollo showcases the very synergy of medical technology and advances in IT through Telemedicine, providing access to the best medical professionals from across the world. With medical experts, a highly skilled nursing staff, technologists and administrators, all of who will provide a congenial atmosphere and a reliable infrastructure for their medical professionals to work in, Apollo Hospitals Colombo offers healthcare of the most superior international standards to Sri Lanka.



From right to left-Dr. Ananda Gunawardena chairman and chief scientist of TextCENTRIC Technologies, Mr. Douglas Kelsall, executive vice president and chief financial officer of collage answering a question raised by a member of the audience. Mark Resmer Chief Technology officer from e-college. Extreme left is Vance Allen the head of the product development team at e-college.

Text CENTRIC Seminar on 'Empowering People to cross Digital Divide'

TextCENTRIC Technologies a pioneer in e-Learning in the country conducted a seminar last week on Human Resource Development through e-Learning: 'Empowering People to Cross the Digital Divide'.

The seminar was held at the JAIC Hilton in collaboration with e-college Inc. a USA based NASDAQ listed company.

"TextCENTRIC Technologies actively involved in the "e-Lanka" project initiated by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has conducted a series of such seminars in the past with the objective of making awareness on e-Learning and related aspects of it". A spokesman for the company said.

e-College provides integrated technology and service solutions that support the success

and growth of online educational programs. The Company supports some of the fastest growing and largest online degree; certificate and professional development programs. e-College serves public and private universities, career colleges, community colleges, school districts, and state departments of education.

e-College solutions help institutions meet their academic, enrolment and financial goals for their online programs. While supporting the individual needs of administrators, faculty, students and IT staff, e-College is the only provider to offer single-point assurance that the program will be up and running, and one-call accountability to meet any support needs.

Amongst the distinguished presenters

were Mark Resmer, Chief Technology Officer, and Douglas Kelsall Executive VP and CFO, both of e-College and Dr. Ananda Gunawardena Chairman and Chief Scientist, TextCENTRIC Inc. and senior lecturer at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh along with Gihan Wanigasekara from the Post Graduate Institute of Management.

The Presentation were on e-Learning Systems and Trends, Financial Considerations implementing e-Learning, Corporate learning, Empowering People to Cross the Digital Divide through e-Learning and Web Services (Inter operability).

TextCENTRIC said it plans on conducting similar seminars in future as well.

Elephant House introduces diet ice cream

With local consumers becoming increasingly health conscious, Ceylon Cold Stores, manufacturers of the family favourite, the Elephant House range of ice creams, have now introduced Vanilla Diet ice cream. The new Vanilla Diet has been carefully manufactured to match the original Vanilla ice cream which is to date the number 1 seller in Sri Lanka.

Containing only 50% of the number of calories present in regular ice creams, Vanilla Diet is completely free of the common sugar sucrose, while it contains only 40% of the normal quantity of vegetable fat that is present in regular ice creams.

According to Director Marketing of CCS, Billy Walpola, the other ingredients used in the manufacture of Vanilla Diet ice cream are Oligofructose and Insulin which act as dietary fibre. "In addition these two ingredients have been found to reduce serum cholesterol, while facilitating the absorption of calcium and are widely used by international ice cream manufacturers" said Walpola.

The Diabetes Association of Sri Lanka confirms the fact that Oligofructose and Insulin which are present in Vanilla Diet, and manufactured by Orafit Active Food Ingredients of Belgium can be used in the

manufacture of diabetic food products and because of their specific properties are in fact eminently suitable for diabetics. In fact according to the last census report, the diabetes prevalence rates are as high as 13.5% for IGT and 7.7% for Type 2 diabetes amongst the rural populace while it is 14.4% for IGT and 12.1% for Type 2 diabetes amongst the urban populace.

The Elephant House Vanilla Diet ice cream which comes in 1 litre packs is available at all leading stores and supermarkets and could be enjoyed by the health conscious who albeit still have a sweet tooth.