

Sri Lankan companies dominate Maldivian Construction Fair

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in Male

The Maldives Construction Fair was held in Male from April 20-23. The three-day mega event was opened by the Maldivian President Mohammed Nasheed at the Dharubaaruge Exhibition Hall. It was organised by the Maldivian Exhibition and Conference Services in association with the Maldives Association of Construction industry.

The trade fair which showcased the latest building products, materials and accessories imported from Sri Lanka and other countries attracted many buyers. The Fair was held for the fourth consecutive year in Male. A notable feature was that Sri Lankan companies dominated the Maldivian Construction Fair with several stalls displaying various Sri Lankan products. Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed, the Chief Guest was accompanied by the Vice President of the Maldives Dr. Mohamed Waheed Hassan

Maniku and other dignitaries.

President Nasheed visited several stalls and spoke to stall holders about products. He was enthusiastic about the products on display. Many visitors thronged the stalls displaying large posters of condominiums, modern apartments, machinery and sanitary fittings. The Maldivian President said the Maldivian system of Government had changed from authoritarian to a more democratic rule. The Government was planning to build 10,000 housing units and has set aside Rs. 14 million for other development projects as well. Sixty four tourism projects which are in the pipeline will be developed with private sector participation and the airport will be further developed, he said.

Bilateral ties

The Vice President of the Sri Lanka Maldives Bilateral Business Council Samantha Ranatunga said that they were encouraged by the response shown by the



Construction workers

Maldivian President by visiting the Sri Lankan stall. "We have had an excellent relationship with the Maldives and the visit further strengthened our bilateral ties. Sri Lanka has a good chance of being a strategic partner with the Maldives. The construction sector in particular can look forward to a lucrative export market

in Male," he said. The Sri Lanka Maldives Bilateral Business Council is an arm of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

There were several Sri Lankan businessmen stall holders at the Darubage Exhibition Hall. Chairman/Managing Director of True Value Products Ltd, Mohamed Faiz said he

floated the company five years ago after leaving United Tractors as a Senior Manager. "We tied up with a company that produces quality tiles. We were the first in Asia to produce environmentally friendly greener products in keeping with international standards. We are going to work with a company that

will build a ten storied project. We have qualified engineers for the job. I think we have taken the right decision to come to Male," he said.

Fairway Condominium (Pvt) Ltd, had a picture of their giant condominium project at the entrance to the stall. Marketing and Public Relations Manager Neluka De Alwis said their project named Fairmount is at Rajagiriya on the Buthgamuwa road. It is a 31 storied apartment complex with a super luxury finish.

Star attraction

We visited another Sri Lankan stall, Buddika Trading Group, the manufacturers of high quality paint brushes. Their stall was at the entrance to Darubage exhibition hall. A picture of a huge paint brush hung at the stall, a star attraction to visitors. Maximus Alles, the company marketing consultant said they are looking at exporting their product to Male. He said the company's market share had increased sharply during the past few months.

Managing Director of Delmege Interior Decor (Pvt) Ltd Nilantha Fernando, said they have displayed interior and exterior products launched recently. "We have displayed a wide range of flooring materials, hot water pipes and power tools.

We want to do a couple of projects in Male". He said their company also builds wooden cottages with fire proof roofing sheets ideally suited for resorts in the Maldives.

There is tremendous potential in Male with 10,000 villas to be built in the resort area in the future. The company plans to appoint a dealer in Male soon, he said.

Jananka Suriyapperuma of Foster and Reed (Pvt) Ltd, said theirs was a 16 year old company that specialises in the construction of swimming pools, Spas, water treatment plants and sewage systems.

"We have constructed around 3,000 pools and Spas over the years. We were involved in 30 resort hotel projects in the Mal-

dives. We will open a branch in Male and our technical staff stationed in Male will serve our customers. There is a big demand for swimming pools here. Every villa has a main pool and an individual pool and Spa centre," he said.

Chairman, Isuru Engineering (Pvt) Ltd, Mahesh Pasqual said they were in the construction business for 15 years and during the past eight years they had constructed several shopping complexes, super markets and factories, warehouses and buildings.

Reconstruction projects

He said they built four factories, in Gal islands close to Male. "In Hanhimadu, Male, we even built 12 factories for a US - Chinese joint venture," he said.

Director, South Asia Exhibition Services (Pvt) Ltd, Imran said it was the second occasion where the South Asia Exhibition services and the Maldives Exhibition and Conference Service was involved.