

# DUBAI BIG5



**IESC Consultant**  
**Paul Lamoureux**  
**10/12/08**

## Dubai Big5

The Big5 is the largest comprehensive trade show in the Middle East, and this year they had record visitors of over 57,000 with all available spaces sold out. The Dubai Big5 is a great opportunity for companies and countries to present themselves to some of the biggest and best construction companies in the world.

For the first time ever Afghanistan was, one of among the hundreds of exhibitors, at the convention hall to compete for the attention of potential marble costumers. Equity Capital Mining Co. brought their white dove marble; know as Doost White Marble, dedicated to their late father Mr. Ewaz Doost , from the Chesht-e-Sharif area in Herat region. Nasim and Adam were both there along with representatives of the Dubai processing plant they contract in Dubai. They offered finished white marble tiles of assorted sizes plus blocks of marble from the quarry at the port in Banar-e-Abbas in Iran and other locations depending on the needs of the customers.



**Dubai Big5 display**



**Adam and Nasim Doost**

It was a proud five days for Afghanistan, especially the Marble Sector, with ECM being in the lead and having so much interest in their Doost Marble. The second day was very eventful with Khaled Monawar, International President of AMGPA, signing the MOU with the President of Confindustria Marmomacchine, Mr. Flavio Marabelli. Confindustria Marmomacchine is the Italian Association of manufacturers and users of machinery and other equipment for natural stone processing. Some of the points of the MOU are as follow:

- 1) Organizing initiatives aimed toward industrial cooperation;
- 2) Supplying possible sponsorships and/or collaborations in projects already programmed by the respective counterparts (training courses, fairs, etc.);
- 3) Jointly organizing CONFINDUSTRIA MARMOMACCHINE/ AMGPA – Afghanistan Marble and Granite Processors Association, studies and researches, seminars, fairs cooperation, etc.



**Signing of the MOU**



**Participants**

In conversations with Flavio and Carlo Zerlia, Vice-President of the Association, they were very impressed with Equity Capital Mining, Nasim and Adam Doost, and the White Dove Marble.

This White Dove marble is in high demand worldwide and did not go unnoticed by Flavio and Carlo. The association would like to work with ECM and AMGPA in the future and made numerous offers to help with more training in Italy. Both men thought that if a delegation of quarry operators, that had some previous training, travelled to Italy they could assist in developing their expertise to a much higher level. The knowledge of the Italian Association members in quarry operations and equipment selection is some of the best in the world. AMGPA should take advantage of their offer for expert advice and training in Italy. AMGPA and ASMED could also explore the possibility of inviting some members of the association to Kabul for the March convention to share their expertise with AMGPA members. We believe the Italian Embassy would also be a willing donor and very helpful in assisting AMGPA in this endeavor.

The interest and orders for Doost Marble over the five days of the Big5 was amazing considering this was the first time for Afghanistan and ECM to be represented at the Big5. I have to say that for the five days of walking around the show I truly believe that ECM had the most interest than any other exhibitor. Not only because of the beauty of Doost Marble, but because out of a war torn country they were able to function and make an impact in the marble world. This should not go unnoticed and will become the benchmark for other Afghanistan companies to achieve.



**Customers/Investors**



### Customers/Investors



The interest and support from other countries, marble associations and competing companies was very encouraging for first time exhibitor ECM. A lot of this was due to the quality of Doost marble and the professionalism of ECM and their quarry operations. I also believe a lot of it was due to the ability of Afghanistan to be able to function in the present day business environment on the world market.

A tremendous amount of interest was shown by the Italian Association, US Rock of Ages, Dakota Granite, Nassar of Bethlehem, Members of the Jordanian Association, and Investors from Saudi Arabia, Greece, and most interesting was the newly formed APMIA {All Pakistan Marble Industries Association}



## **APMIA**

APMIA has almost an exact duplication of the problems facing AMGPA. They met with ECM with a number of marble and granite samples that show a lot potential in the market place and a few samples even caught the attention of Nassim Doost.

APMIA have not reached the same expertise in the quarries that ECM has, but are hoping to work with ECM in some way to exchange knowledge and ideas to promote both Associations.

The government of Pakistan has taken a bold step to become globally competitive in the dimensional stone industry.

Some of the incentives by the Government of Pakistan:

100% equity ownership

Obstacles free business setup

Zero percent Custom Duty on Import of Plant, Machinery & Equipment

Zero percent sales tax on imported machinery

Full repatriation of capital, capital gains, dividends and profits is allowed

Low royalty fees

They also are introducing “Pakistani Brand”

Not all of the above will fit in the vision of AMGPA, but it does show the willingness of the Pakistan Government to take major steps to promote an industry that has so much potential for increasing national employment.

This is the type of leadership needed by the Afghanistan Government if they truly want to move forward in the Marble/Granite sector. With the removal of government road blocks and adding incentives for the industries, companies like ECM can flourish and become a major employer to thousands of people in Afghanistan.

The Italian Association has offered to help AMGPA in attending the Verona Trade Show, 30 Sept 09 to 03 Oct 09 of next year. I would think by this time next year AMGPA would be able to have a very impressive display of Afghanistan Marble/Granite.

The benefits of this show are:

### **Event Profile:**

Marmomacc is a major showcase highlighting the best production traditions and innovation on a national and international scale, international projects, with many initiatives promoting the special features and wealth of natural stone and the expressive potential of stone materials in architecture and design.

Marmomacc is also focusing on **continuing educational courses, technical seminars** and programs for architects.

**Exhibitor's Profile:**

Major processors and exporters of stones from worldwide. Exhibits Range includes: granite, marble, tiles, special-shaped materials, slabs and blocks, stone-carved crafts, tomb stones, garden stones, artificial stone products; stone-mine exploitation equipments, stone processing machinery, polishers, crocuses and abrasives, chemical technologies and equipments for stone maintenance, scientific research, professional magazines.

As AMGPA continues to follow their strategic plan over the next few months they must be in position to show a presence at a number of the world wide trade shows. To secure a booth at some of the high profile trade shows with high visibility, a decision must be made now. The work by AMGPA must also start once a commitment to attend is established. AMGPA should also attend shows as visitors in order to have a better understanding of what it takes to make an outstanding presentation.