

Visit of Joint India-South Africa Delegation to AAU, Anand

Joint India-South Africa Delegation visited Anand Agricultural University, Anand on **12th July, 2017** for discussion on possible bilateral cooperation in the field of agricultural education and research between South Africa and India. The South African delegation comprised of **Mr. Daan Du Toit**, Dy. Director General, International Cooperation and Resources, DST, SA; **Ms. Punkah Mdaka**, Overseas Bilateral cooperation (Asia and Americas) DST, SA; **Mr. Kagiso Moloto**, Asst. Director, Overseas Bilateral Cooperation, SA; and **Ms. Nombuso Madonda**, Professional Officer, International Relations and Cooperation, NRF, SA. The **Indian delegation** who accompanied them was led by **Dr. Vipin Kumar**, Director, National Innovation Foundation (NIF) – India, Ahmedabad; **Dr. Naman Upadhyay**, Representative from Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi; **Dr. Sulakshana Jain**, Scientist D, DST, New Delhi; and **Dr. Naushad Parvez**, Fellow, NIF. An interaction meeting was held with the Hon. Vice Chancellor, **Dr. N.C. Patel**; Director of Research and Dean Post Graduate Studies, **Dr. K.B. Kathiria**; Director of Extension Education, **Dr. Arun Patel**, and all other University Officers and all the Deans of AAU, Anand. **Dr. R.S. Pundir**, Prof. & Head, Dept. of Agribusiness Economics and Policies, IABMI, AAU, Anand made a brief presentation about various educational, research and extension activities of AAU and highlighted significant achievements made by the University. **Dr. N.C. Patel** welcomed all the dignitaries and briefed them about the salient achievements of AAU in recent past, especially the involvement of AAU in farmers fair, exhibition programs, etc. He highlighted the significance of scope of generating employment through formation of mutual cooperation between Universities of S. Africa and AAU. **Mr. Daan** asserted that

they wished to strengthen the cooperation between the two countries with regard to Science and Technology, Research and innovation. Agriculture is an important sector of South African economy, as is the case with India. He wanted his team to identify new opportunity in formulating possible exchange program between the two Universities for students as well as staff. **Dr. Vipin Kumar** lauded the prompt response given by AAU, Anand for holding the visit for the South African delegation. He was highly impressed learning that Vidya Dairy, Anand was managed by the final year B.Tech. (Dairy Tech.) students. He reminded our Hon. Prime Minister's visit to South Africa laying emphasis on 'Grass root innovation'. **Dr. Sulakshana Jain** asserted that DST will take active participation in collaborative research between the two countries in the arena of Agriculture biotechnology. The visit of the Joint delegation started with Sardar Patel Educational Museum, followed by Biofertilizer unit, Plant Tissue Culture Laboratory, Regional Research Station, Pesticide Residue Laboratory, Food Quality Testing Lab, Vidya Dairy and finally Animal Biotechnology laboratory. The delegation was highly impressed by the educational system and allied activities being carried out at AAU, Anand.

A plenary session was held at Conference hall of Veterinary College, AAU, Anand chaired by Hon. Vice Chancellor, AAU, Anand, who expressed that Dr. Daan looked highly satisfied with his visit to AAU. He assured that AAU can render support to South African Universities in specific areas such as developing bio-fertilizers based on microbes, soil testing, rainwater harvesting, micro-irrigation, devising farm machineries, use of renewable energy, germ plasm exchange, etc. Hon'ble Vice Chancellor also asserted about venturing into collaborative research and possible exchange program for the students, and for staff. **Dr. Daan** lauded

the fact that Hon. Vice Chancellor himself mobilized his time to spend the entire day with them. He was also highly impressed by the extension activities of AAU in which the research done in the lab are made available at the farm level. **Dr. Vipin Kumar** profusely thanked the officials of AAU for the time spent by them. He was especially impressed by the students' involvement at Vidya Dairy, Anand. **Dr. Sulakshana** opined that the AAU units seemed highly professional. She wished to support future action plan of the delegation with the Ministry of Agriculture, DST, etc. The media persons took interview of **Dr. N.C. Patel, Hon. Vice Chancellor, AAU, Anand** and of **Dr. Daan, Dy. Director General, S. Africa** related to the objective of the visit and the future plan of action by AAU, Anand with South African Universities.







