

Handicrafts Exporters Association, Agra organises Handicraft Summit honours DG, EPCH, with Lifetime Achievement Award

Agra, Uttar Pradesh; 30th November 2019

Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH and Chairman India Exposition Mart Ltd. has been conferred Lifetime Achievement Award for his tremendous contribution to the handicrafts sector, by the Handicrafts Exporters Association (HEA), Agra, during a Handicraft Summit organised by them on 30th November 2019. The award was given away by Chief Guest, Shri Choudhary Uday Bhan Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State of MSME, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh. COA members of EPCH and prominent members exporters from Agra and nearby areas were also present during the ceremony (pic on right).



A memorandum is being presented to the MOS of MSME, Govt. of UP by HEA, Agra; Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH and Chairman India Exposition Mart Ltd., addressing the gathering. On the dias: Shri Choudhary Uday Bhan Singh, Hon'ble Minister of MSME, UP, Uttar Pradesh; Mr. Rajat Asthana, President, HEA, Agra; and Ms. Christine Rai, President, Buying Agents Association of India

While speaking on the occasion Mr. Rajat Asthana, President, Handicrafts Exporters Association, Agra, said that under the able leadership of Mr. Rakesh Kumar, the handicrafts sector has achieved milestones such as in 1986-87 when the EPCH was set up, the export of handicrafts was just Rs. 387 crores which has reached to the tune of Rs. 26,529 crores in 2018-19 and membership from 35 to over 10,000. Mr. Asthana further said, the objective of holding this handicraft summit was also to bring the burning issues the sector is facing, especially in Agra, to the notice of concerned authorities. He said, while handicraft exports from the country are on increasing trend, those from Agra are experiencing tremendous pressure due to delay in refund of GST and holding of benefits under MEIS scheme by Govt. of India.

While receiving the award, Mr. Rakesh Kumar said that the stone and marble industry of Agra is providing employment to 75 thousand artisans families at local level but facing number of

challenges with regard to drawback, MEIS incentive. He further said that EPCH will work closely with the exporters of Agra and Firozabad and consider setting up of training centres, design centre and testing labs so that product development can be carried out as per the latest designs and buyer preferences. Mr. Kumar acknowledged that financial support for International participation and freight charges should also be provided to the exporters. Since a lot of tourists come to Agra to see Taj Mahal, sale to foreign tourists should be considered as deemed export and exempted from GST and urged the Minister to intervene in the matter. Mr. Kumar assured the exporters that all possible help will be provided by EPCH to resolve the MEIS incentive problem of the exporters of Agra by once again taking it up at the highest level. He thanked the Handicrafts Exporters Association, Agra for conferring the Life Time Achievement award and also appreciated the efforts being made by HEA to promote the handicrafts industry of Agra. ■