

October 2025

Monthly in-house journal of



EPCH

Export Promotion Council
for Handicrafts

Connecting. Empowering. Transforming.

Craftcil

Volume XXXVII Issue 9



IHGF Delhi Fair
Autumn 2025

Splendid Wrap Up to Fabulous Milestone Edition

Inauguration Ceremony



IHGF Delhi Fair-Spring 2026
Overseas Promotions in Full Swing



Wood Testing Laboratory now in Jaipur

(Accredited NABL Lab)



Evaluation and Tests for Woodware

Structural Strength and Durability

Moisture Content

Drop Impact

Transportation Vibration

Chair Seating Impact / Durability

Hardness of Coating / Film

Tension, Compression Force / Durability

Load Capacity / Impact / Durability

Craftcil

October 2025

Editor

R.K. Verma

Executive Director, EPCH

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EPCH House, Pocket 6&7, Sector C,
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Tel: +91 11 26135256

Fax: +91 11 26135518/19

E-mail: mails@epch.com

Website: www.epch.in

Compilation & Presentation:
Establishments Promotion Bureau

Production: **Chapakhana.com**

Tel: +91 9811746094

Email: mail@epbureau.com

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EPCH
Export Promotion Council
for Handicrafts
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Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH)

S2033-A, Ramchandrapura, Sitapura Extn., RIICO Industrial Area,
Near JECRC University, Jaipur-302022, Rajasthan

Mob: +91-9983321833; Email: jaipur@epch.com

Chairman's Message

Dear Fellow Exporters,

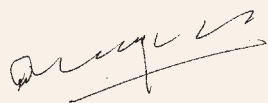
From a spectacular and aesthetically enhanced show attended by our valued patrons and new enthusiasts from 112 countries, to an inspiring wrap-up featuring insightful panel discussions, informative seminars and a significant 'Manthan' session on brainstorming and ideation with industry leaders to formulate Vision 2035, we have truly commemorated the 60th milestone edition of the IHGF Delhi Fair in style.

Standing united in spirit and determination amidst evolving market challenges, we have collectively raised the benchmark with this edition-presenting India's handicrafts sector as a formidable contributor to the nation's journey towards a \$5 trillion economy and its aspiration to be among the world's top three. I wholeheartedly commend all our members for showcasing a vibrant, high-quality range of handcrafted products, reflecting the creativity, skill and excellence that defines our industry.

Carrying forward this momentum, your Council is now focused on making the IHGF Delhi Fair-Spring 2026 an even more impactful and well-curated edition. With an exclusive focus on furniture, this show will reflect India's growing strength in this segment. Our pre-show promotions began right after the Autumn edition and are well on track. Buyers who left with promises to return have already expressed their desire to visit. Your Council has also set up engaging information booths and promotional campaigns at leading international furniture and lifestyle platforms such as the High Point Market in North Carolina, USA; Brussels Furniture Fair, Belgium; and Hong Kong Mega Show - with more initiatives planned in the coming months. I urge all members to take full advantage of the opportunities at the Spring 2026 edition, due early next year. Together, let us make India's handicraft exports sector, truly unstoppable!

Your Council remains steadfast in supporting you with strategic insights to strengthen product propositions, enhance brand presence and expand global market reach. Our ongoing journey of growth and transformation continues through focused initiatives on sustainability, responsible value chains, skill development, design and trend interventions, packaging and self-sufficiency. A series of seminars, training and skill development programs are being conducted across various clusters in preparation for the upcoming seasons.

I welcome your suggestions and feedback and invite you to share your thoughts with me at chairman@epch.com.



(Dr. Neeraj Khanna)
Chairman, EPCH



EPCH takes representation in an Interactive Industry Meeting with Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Mr. Piyush Goyal

29th October 2025, New Delhi: Mr. Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, held an interaction with industry leaders representing various Textiles Export Promotion Councils (EPCs) and Industry Associations. EPCH was represented by Mr. Prince Mallik and Mr. Arshad Mir, COA Members, EPCH, along with Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Additional Executive Director, EPCH.

The objective of the meeting was to bring together trade associations, export promotion councils and policymakers to deliberate on current challenges, identify actionable solutions and explore strategies to enhance India's export competitiveness.

During the discussions, Mr. Prince Mallik proposed several key measures to safeguard exporters and strengthen India's trade resilience in light of the recent US tariff developments. His suggestions included: Introduction of a 30% Cost Equalisation Incentive to offset increased export costs; Enhanced benefits under the Interest Equalisation Scheme; Income Tax exemptions on export earnings, similar to the erstwhile Section 80HHC of the Income Tax Act; Extension of the export realisation period from 180 days to 360 days without penal interest; and A moratorium on loan repayments to ease liquidity stress on exporters. Mr. Arshad Mir further emphasized the urgent need for the implementation of



Mr. Prince Mallik and Mr. Arshad Mir, COA Members, EPCH; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Additional Executive Director, EPCH, with Mr. Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Government of India

the Export Promotion Mission and proactive government intervention on the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) to safeguard the interests of Indian exporters. The Hon'ble Minister gave a patient hearing to all the issues raised by the representatives and assured appropriate consideration by the Ministry. ■

Outreach Programme on UK FTA organised by DGFT and DIC, Bareilly

29th October 2025, Bareilly: An Outreach Programme was organised by the Office of the Additional Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) and the District Industries Centre (DIC), Bareilly, to

hold consultations on the UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

The programme was chaired by Smt. Vrunda Manohar Desai, Additional DGFT, and Mr. Avinash Singh, District Magistrate, Bareilly.

It was also attended by Mr. Birender Kumar, Joint Commissioner, Industries Department, Bareilly.

EPCH was among the councils invited for the consultation. Representing EPCH, Mr. Naveen Gaur, Deputy Director, EPCH, made a presentation on the UK FTA and briefed participants on the Council's activities, export promotion initiatives and support mechanisms for handicraft exporters. He also addressed queries raised during the interactive session. The event also saw participation from other key institutions, including FIEO, ECGC and Union Bank of India. ■





SPLENDID WRAP UP TO FABULOUS MILESTONE EDITION

60th IHGF Delhi Fair - Autumn 2025; 13th to 17th October 2025, India Expo Centre & Mart.



Looking spectacular in its vibrant presentation, the grand 60th edition of the IHGF Delhi Fair–Autumn 2025 clearly made an impact, evident from the energy and bustling business activity across the fairgrounds. It concluded on a high note, marking another successful chapter in India's premier handicraft trade event. It brought together over 3,000 exhibitors and more than 6,700 buyers and buying representatives from 112 countries. Spread across 16 grand halls, it featured an extensive range of product segments covering Home, Lifestyle, Fashion, Furnishing, Furniture and Interior products. A special theme decor accentuated the milestone edition commemoration.

Buyers from leading global brands sourced innovative, sustainable and design-driven collections, while exhibitors showcased exceptional craftsmanship, blending tradition with contemporary appeal. The fair stood out for its vibrant displays, sustainability focus and seamless organisation, drawing appreciation from returning and first-time visitors alike. They enjoyed a seamless experience with a user-friendly app, dedicated lounges, refreshment zones and cultural showcases. Alongside dynamic business engagements, expert-led sessions offered insights on design trends, sustainability, digitalisation and business strategies. The event reaffirmed IHGF Delhi Fair's position as a world-class sourcing platform and a driving force for India's handicrafts exports. Organisers, exhibitors and the entire handicrafts sector alike collectively raised the benchmark with this edition. The upcoming Spring 2026 edition, scheduled from 14th to 18th February, promises to build on this success with a special focus on the furniture segment.

NEXT EDITION : 14TH to 18TH FEBRUARY 2026 WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON FURNITURE

Reflects the immense potential of India's handicraft sector and its enduring commitment



Giriraj Singh
Hon'ble Union
Minister of Textiles,
Govt. of India

The IHGF Delhi Fair reflects the immense potential of India's handicrafts sector and its enduring commitment to quality, creativity and sustainability. It is a true expression of 'Make in India, Make for the World' and demonstrates how our artisans and MSMEs embody the principle of 'Zero Defect, Zero Effect', delivering quality products with care for the environment. I

commend EPCH for its contribution in promoting regional clusters, enhancing Brand India, and ensuring fair value for our artisans' skills. I am confident that this edition will strengthen India's role in global supply chain diversification and contribute significantly to our aspiration of a \$5 trillion economy.

Fair supports our broader agenda of ease of doing business and improving livelihoods



Pabitra Margherita
Hon'ble Union Minister
of State for External
Affairs and Textiles,
Govt. of India

The fair reinforces India's image as a trusted sourcing partner and aligns with our vision of 'Trade, Technology and Tourism (3T)' and 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'. It celebrates the craftsmanship of Indian artisans, especially MSMEs, who are now job creators, blending tradition with innovation, through e-commerce and modern marketing strategies.

As global markets evolve, the sector must continuously upgrade in design, technology and sustainability to meet international standards. This supports our broader agenda of ease of doing business and improving livelihoods.



Amrit Raj, IPOS, Development Commissioner (Handicrafts),
Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India

One of the world's largest sourcing platforms with access to India's diverse exporting community

By integrating artisans and MSMEs into international trade, the fair supports the vision of MSMEs as the backbone of New India. My Office, the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) would be facilitating artisans to make most of this unmatched opportunity for our artisans to connect with global buyers. Handicrafts are a celebration of our unity in diversity. At its core are artisans and crafts people whose skills preserve heritage while creating sustainable livelihoods.

I commend EPCH for consistently driving reform, support, digitization, skilling and finance in the sector. I am confident the fair will expand local-to-global opportunities, generate meaningful business, and further India's march towards 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.



Dr. Beena, IAS, Development Commissioner (Handlooms),
Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India

Craftsmanship exemplifies the diversity and strength of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'

The O/o Development Commissioner (Handlooms) views this as a significant opportunity for weavers to connect with international clientele and align with the vision of 'Vocal for Local, Local to Global'. At the Autumn 2025 edition, 20 select handloom weavers from the North-East will be facilitated by this Office who will showcase their craftsmanship, exemplifying the diversity and strength of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'. Such participation strengthens India's cultural diplomacy and supports the 3T mantra – Trade, Technology and Tourism. It also empowers artisans as job creators, linking them to formalized markets and ensuring long-term livelihoods in line with Digital India and financial inclusion.

3000+ leading manufacturer exporters from India congregated as exhibitors for the 60th milestone edition of IHGF Delhi Fair, with emphatic representation of manufacturing hubs, mega craft clusters, artisan crafts and product lines from primary producers as well as inventive lines from EPCH's Integrated Design Development Projects. 900 Mart Showrooms of India's leading exporters further added value to the sourcing experience.

Exquisite products featured in Regional Displays, theme showcase on fashion jewellery from Eastern region and Maharashtra, handloom weavers from India's North eastern states, handicraft artisans and designpreneurs from Pan India. "The Higher Quest" during the fair featured Panel Discussions, Seminars and Awareness Sessions. Craft Demonstrations and Cultural Performances were also organised in course of the fair.

Set in a special thematic decor in rich ochre and vibrant tones to mark the milestone edition, IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2025 was inaugurated on 13th October 2025 by Shri Tarun Rathi, Vice President, Film Development Council), Government of Uttar Pradesh, Film Producer and President - Pravasi Sangh (NGO), in the presence of Shri Ramveer Singh, Hon'ble MLA, Kundarki (Moradabad); and Dr. Evgeny Grivia, Deputy Trade Commissioner, Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation. The fair was visited by esteemed guests including Shri Jitin Prasada, Union Minister of State for Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Govt. of India; Shri Rakesh Sachan, Cabinet Minister for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, Khadi and Villages Industries, Sericulture Industries, Handloom and Textile, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh; and Shri Nand Gopal 'Nandi', Cabinet Minister for Industrial Development, Export Promotion, NRI and Investment Promotion, Government of Uttar Pradesh. Several government dignitaries and special guests like, Shri Mithlesh Kumar Kataria, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha from Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh; Shri Alok Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises and Export Promotion, Government of Uttar Pradesh/Export Commissioner, IDC; Ms. Neelam Shami Rao, Secretary, Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India; Dr. M Beena, Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India; and Ms. Medha Roopam, IAS District Magistrate Gautam Buddh Nagar (Noida) visited. They interacted with the exhibitors and commended them for the excellent range of products on display.

Awards for Best Stall Design & Display at IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2025 were given away in 10 categories. The fair received the patronage of overseas buyers, buying houses, buying agents and domestic volume buyers. It saw busy field days with buyers from almost all of India's export markets.

Reshaping livelihoods, empowering communities and strengthening India's economic story



Neelam Shami Rao,
IAS, Secretary, Ministry
of Textiles,
Govt. of India

By connecting artisans and entrepreneurs with international buyers, the IHGF Delhi Fair strengthens India's role in the global supply chain diversification. This directly supports our vision of export-led growth and contributes to our journey toward a \$5 trillion economy. The Government remains committed to empowering handicraft MSMEs, through initiatives focused on reform, support, digitization, skilling and finance. This approach aligns with our agenda of promoting the ease of doing business and ease of living, which enhances our competitiveness in global markets. To further enhance their appeal, it is essential to place greater emphasis on Brand India through quality certification, storytelling and sustainability.

Excellent opportunity to engage with global buyers and establish business collaborations



Rajesh Agarwal, IAS,
Commerce Secretary,
Govt. of India

The IHGF Delhi Fair is a premier sourcing event for global buyers, showcasing India's rich craftsmanship and innovative designs reflecting the essence of 'Make in India, Make for the World'. The Fair provides an excellent opportunity for our cottage industries, MSMEs, and artisans to showcase their skills, engage with global buyers and establish long-term business collaborations.

The Handicraft sector is of immense significance in India's economy. Being labour-intensive, it provides a livelihood to artisans across the country. I am confident that this edition will generate meaningful business opportunities, accelerate 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', and reinforce India's standing as one of the world's top three economies in the making.

Inauguration by Shri Tarun Rathi, Vice President, Film Development Council (MoS Rank), Govt. of UP

Shri Tarun Rathi, Vice President, Film Development Council (MoS Rank), Government of Uttar Pradesh, Film Producer and President - Pravasi Sangh (NGO), inaugurated the 60th edition of the IHGF Delhi Fair calling it the "World's Most Beautiful Fair", in the august presence of Shri Ramveer Singh, Hon'ble MLA, Kundarki (Moradabad); and Dr. Evgeny Grivia, Deputy Trade Commissioner, Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation, on 13th October 2025, at a well-attended ceremony at the India Expo Centre & Mart.

The inauguration ceremony was also graced by Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, IEML; Mr. Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Avdesh Agarwal, Chief Convenor, EPCH; Mr. Rajat Asthana, President, IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2025; Vice Presidents, IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2025 - Mr. Simrandeep Singh Kohli, Mr. Rohit Dhall and Mr. Mohit Chopra; Former Chairmen & COA Members, EPCH - Mr. Ravi K Passi and Mr. Raj Kumar Malhotra; Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; and other prominent overseas buyers, buying agents from India as well as leading member exporters of EPCH.

Shri Tarun Rathi, Vice President, Film Development Council (MoS Rank), Government of Uttar Pradesh, Film Producer and President - Pravasi Sangh (NGO), expressed pride in being part of this globally acclaimed platform that celebrates India's rich handicraft heritage and congratulated EPCH for transforming the fair into a premier sourcing destination, attracting global buyers, designers and industry leaders. Commending the presence of buyers from Russia and China at the Fair, he opined that with the US imposing twice the Tariff on China, compared with India, not only revives US buyers to increase their sourcing from India, it also opens wider doors for Indian exporters to cater to China as a significant market. He also assured of the continued strong support of the Govt. of India and of Uttar Pradesh to EPCH, IEML and the Handicrafts sector as a whole. Shri Ramveer Singh, Hon'ble MLA, Kundarki (Moradabad) expressed his happiness to learn that 40% of the exhibited products at this grand fair are from Moradabad region.

Dr. Evgeny Grivia, Deputy Trade Commissioner, Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation, called IHGF Delhi Fair, an excellent medium to promote the handicrafts industry and provide an opportunity for buyers to explore assortments and innovations in multiple categories, as suited to their individual markets. "This is also a significant knowledge sharing, inspiration gathering and



networking platform," he added and emphasised, "India and Russia share a 70-year-long trade relationship. While there have been gaps in certain years, we are now witnessing a strong revival and remarkable growth. We see real potential to fully realise this partnership under the capable leadership of both nations, and we aim to include the Indian handicraft sector as part of this expansion. We invite our Indian counterparts to visit exhibitions in Russia, as new geopolitical developments are set to usher in a promising era for our bilateral trade."

The dignitaries also visited the exhibition halls and interacted with the participants. They commended the scale of the displays and the diversity of products showcased through well-executed visual merchandising.

"It is a privilege to welcome all participants to this milestone 60th edition of the IHGF Delhi Fair, organised in a refreshed and innovative format to mark this special occasion," said Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH, in his welcome address and added, "several enhancements in the show have been made possible with the support of our Committee Members, and I commend the EPCH team for presenting the fair so beautifully and aesthetically. This edition carries forward our illustrious journey, providing a rich sourcing platform for some of India's finest crafts. Each edition acts as a powerful catalyst for new business opportunities, building fresh buyer relationships while showcasing an ever-expanding product range." Speaking about buyer traffic to the fair, he added, "in recent months, EPCH delegations participated in major European

...continued on page 10

Glimpses from the Inauguration Day...

Shri Tarun Rathi, Vice President, Film Development Council (MoS Rank), Government of Uttar Pradesh, Film Producer and President - Pravasi Sangh (NGO); Shri Ramveer Singh, Hon'ble MLA, Kundarki (Moradabad); and Dr. Evgeny Grivia, Deputy Trade Commissioner, Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation at the inauguration ceremony and at the exhibitor stalls at fair.





fairs, connected with international buyers, and many accepted our invitations to attend this edition. Some show organisers also expressed interest in visiting IHGF to witness the scale of the fair and capabilities of India's manufacturing sector. We are pleased with the strong buyer registration so far, reflecting the fair's global appeal and the growing confidence in Indian handicrafts. Domestic volume buyers are traveling from across India to conduct business at the fair, aided by reduced GST costs on handicrafts, which will help expand domestic trade as well." Dr. Khanna also informed that the US imposing additional tariffs on Chinese imports, opens a significant opportunity for Indian exporters. "We are engaging US buyers to capitalise on this shift, as the situation could potentially redirect demand toward India, creating a level playing field and opening substantial export opportunities," he added.

Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman-IEML, warmly welcomed all dignitaries. Making a special mention of the Chief Guest's association with the film industry he said, "we are delighted to have Mr. Tarun Rathi present at the fair. The upcoming Film City near Jewar Airport, Uttar Pradesh, will also benefit the handicrafts industry, as our manufacturers will have opportunities to supply props for film sets." Speaking about the fair and the present evolving business landscape he added, "we must work collaboratively to adapt and stand up to these changes. Many of our exporters, just like the 60 years old IHGF Delhi Fair, are senior citizens in their golden years, and by leveraging their experience, we can mentor the next generation to navigate the renewed business dynamics. Though the fair celebrates its 60th edition, it retains the zeal and enthusiasm of a vibrant young fair, growing in scale and stature with each edition. Our buyers feel the momentum as soon as they enter the fair venue."

Affirming this sentiment, Mr. Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH, added, "our exhibitors have invested considerable effort in product design & development, ensuring their offerings reflect evolving market trends and international buyer preferences. This proactive focus on innovation and quality is being well received." Mr. Avdesh Agarwal, Chief Convenor, EPCH remarked, "this event stands tall as one of the largest and most prestigious of its kind. Credit also goes to the international buying community, whose trust and consistent participation over the past 30 years have strengthened this platform." Mr. Rajat Asthana, President, IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2025, added, "the fair resonates with the vision of fostering new ventures while encouraging artisans and exporters to present bold, design-led collections."

In course of the fair, senior and veteran EPCH member exporters were felicitated as Pioneers of Handicraft Sector, acknowledging their long-standing association with the IHGF Delhi Fair: Mr. D Kumar, M/s Orient Art and Crafts, New Delhi; Mr. Karan Jethwani, M/s International Trade Linkers, Mumbai; Mr. Ashok Kumar Gupta, M/s Banaras Beads Ltd., Varanasi; Mr. Sunil Gupta, Ms. Simran, M/s Century Exports Inc, Moradabad; Mr. Gagan Duggal, M/s Duggal Sons, Moradabad; Mr. Satish Dhir, M/s Highland Exports, Moradabad; Mr. Ikram Ul Haq, M/s Haq Brothers, Moradabad; Mr. Vinay Gulati, M/s Gulati Exports, Moradabad; Mr. Vikas Arora, M/s Guildart, Moradabad; Mr. Anuj Garg, M/s Garg Sons Exports, Moradabad; Mr. Atul Poddar, M/s Poddar Associates, Jaipur; Mr. Rahul Aggarwal, M/s Laaj International, New Delhi; Mr. Shalib Rehman, M/s Meba Brass, Moradabad; Mr. Ankur Aggarwal, M/s J.O. Exports, Moradabad; and Mr. Vaibhav Khatri, M/s Khatritex, Jaipur. Mr. Naresh Bothra from M/s Bothra International, was felicitated as pioneer of Rajasthan and Mr. Karan Patel, in the Next-gen Young Entrepreneur category.

Reaffirms India's position as a reliable and creative partner in global trade



Dr. Neeraj Khanna
Chairman, EPCH

This was a grand edition with big displays and a monumental outlook. The upcoming February 2026 edition is poised to go even further. Buyers who leave with promises to return have already expressed their anticipation. Over the past three decades, the IHGF Delhi Fair has grown into a trusted sourcing platform for global buyers and

Indian exporters. This edition continued that illustrious journey, offering a rich resource to source some of India's finest crafts. Trade visitors experienced not only timeless traditions but also innovations in design, technology and sustainability. Many of the showcased products resonated with global trends, embracing eco-conscious lifestyles, digital integration and contemporary aesthetics.

The fair commemorated its notable 60th milestone as India's handicrafts sector positions itself to contribute more significantly to the vision of a \$5 trillion economy and our aspiration of becoming one of the world's top three economies.

Uniting buyers and suppliers through exceptional talent showcased at the fair



Dr. Rakesh Kumar
Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, IEML

For over 30 years, IHGF Delhi Fair has been at the forefront of its game, showcasing exceptional talent from across India. It unites buyers and suppliers from the home, lifestyle, fashion, furnishing, furniture and interior segments, creating endless opportunities for growth and collaboration. Today, for all involved global buyers and passionate manufacturers in India, we have become an 'Unmissable Event'.

The Indian handicrafts sector stands at the crossroads of tradition and transformation. On the one hand, it embodies centuries of heritage, skill and artistry. On the other, it is rapidly adopting digital technologies, sustainability practices and modern business models to meet the demands of today's global economy. Regular buyers have associated with the Indian handicrafts trade through this fair. Just like the fair, the handicraft sector has grown from strength to strength with inclusivity and advancements.

Inspired Designs & Innovative Product Propositions: A Symbol of India's Global Eminence

The IHGF Delhi Fair, a cornerstone of global sourcing calendars, once again welcomed its patrons from around the world. Its strength lay in the powerful representation of India's leading manufacturing hubs and artisan clusters, brought together through distinct product stories and remarkable craftsmanship. Rooted in heritage yet aligned with changing lifestyles, the fair featured product lines crafted from diverse raw materials by highly skilled artisans. These collections reflected the evolving needs of the time in terms of redefined homes, multifunctional workspaces, new routines and contemporary aesthetics, while retaining the soul of traditional artistry. For collectors, curators and connoisseurs, the fair offered an abundance of rare, authentic and finely crafted pieces.

The fair showcased abundant diversity of products for different lifestyles and living spaces. It opened up many prospects for sustainable living too. This edition was structured with 16 expansive halls, housing 16 major display segments of Home, Fashion, Lifestyle, Furnishing, Furniture and Interior Products. The product assortment

included Home Decor and Accents; Home Furnishing, Carpets & Rugs; Textiles & Linen; Gifts & Premiums; Interiors; Furniture; Fashion Jewellery; Bags & Accessories; Lamps & Lighting Accessories; Outdoor and Garden; Aroma, Spa & Lifestyle; Christmas and Festive Décor; Kitchen and Dinnerware; Bathroom Accessories; Cane,



Exceptional variety, customisation capabilities and competitive pricing



Sagar Mehta
Vice Chairman, EPCH

Renowned for its scale, diversity and dynamic offerings, each edition of the IHGF Delhi Fair draws buyers from over 100 nations, to its exceptional variety, customisation capabilities and competitive pricing. The Autumn 2025 further elevated the sourcing experience with immersive product displays from India's

leading manufacturers, innovative design concepts, dedicated theme pavilions, artisanal showcases, live craft demonstrations and knowledge sessions.

Our exhibitors worked tirelessly to present fresh product ranges aligned with upcoming seasons as the fair came alive with innovations and handcrafted fusions traversing from classics to contemporary influences, transitional elements to simple yet surprising lines inspired by nature and everyday life. EPCH fostered a vibrant business environment through this fair, uniting leading exhibitors in home, fashion, lifestyle, furnishings, furniture and interiors.

Bamboo, Paper & Eco-Friendly Products; Kids & Babies Toys & Accessories. Focus was on innovation, handcrafted value additions, artistry and sustainability. Offering an immersive space to discover new products, gain fresh insights and forge valuable partnerships, this season's show marked so many exciting new endeavours including deco-utility lines and furnishing from major manufacturing clusters, a lineup of innovative new products and introductions by start-ups. Exhibitor stalls were abuzz with energy, brought to life by a refreshing array of colours, textures, forms and merchandise, for showrooms around the world.

The immersive four-day event offered an enriching experience for both industry professionals and design enthusiasts. Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH, noted, "Continuing its rich legacy, this edition presented a thoughtfully curated sourcing platform that brought together exceptional handicrafts and gifts from across India. Buyers discovered innovative and distinctive products from reliable suppliers, taking advantage of the country's diverse raw materials, skilled craftsmanship, and growing manufacturing strength. The showcased collections, tailored to evolving consumer preferences, seamlessly combined style, quality and value."

This fair embodies the collaborative spirit that defines India's handicrafts sector



Avdesh Agarwal
Chief Convenor, EPCH

With over 30 years of history and 59 successful editions, this fair brought together the extraordinary diversity of crafts from across India onto a single, globally sought after platform. From leading export houses to small and medium enterprises, and from rural clusters to urban innovation centres, it embodied the collaborative spirit that

defines our handicrafts sector- a sector that has been steadily modernising and equipping itself to meet global challenges.

Today, our exhibitors are more future-ready, sustainable and digitally enabled, aligning their offerings with evolving international markets. By infusing innovation, creativity and exceptional craftsmanship, the fair offered an unparalleled opportunity to discover new products and generate meaningful business momentum. Designed to serve both first-timers and seasoned buyers, the curated spaces provided an engaging way to explore the fair.

Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, IEMF, added, "Our exhibitors, now part of a global fraternity through EPCH led participations in prominent international fairs across India's key export markets, bring back valuable insights into buyer expectations and market trends. They apply this learning to their products and visual presentations at the fair. This year, their extra effort was clearly visible in the unique and compelling displays designed to engage and attract buyers. New product innovations translated into increased business, with many exhibitors expanding their buyer lists. Regular visitors shared that every edition offers something new to be amazed by. The expansive scale and seamless layout, with clearly defined product segments and spacious displays, made this edition particularly impressive. For many IHGF patrons returning after a few seasons, it felt like a refreshing and welcome change."

Exhibiting manufacturers understood the challenge of innovating within tradition, delivering remarkable and viable collections that fused traditional materials and techniques with contemporary design language. Every product reflected this balance between heritage and modernity, with a strong focus on sustainability,

handcrafted value and artistry. The fair offered a dynamic space to discover new collections, gain insights and forge valuable partnerships. This edition of the fair presented a vibrant selection of home textiles and furnishings, from sustainable lines and contemporary styles to traditional weaves. The collection highlighted techniques such as dyeing, printing, embroidery and hand painting. Embroidered cushions, rugs and flooring from over 12 craft clusters across eight states showcased rich artistry and regional flair. Furniture and outdoor products reflected intricate craftsmanship, while Indian bathroom accessories blended ethnic charm with modern elegance. Spa and wellness items such as dry flowers, incense, and candles were offered in thoughtfully designed packaging that told a story. Lighting ranged from minimal to ornate, and festive décor captured cultural expressions with a global appeal. Houseware, gifts and decoratives combined innovation and style, offering everything from elegant tableware and kitchen solutions to creative hospitality concepts.

For a furniture manufacturer from Jodhpur, his work is nothing short of a passion that began two decades ago with starting of a manufacturing unit specialising in fusion furniture combining stone, glass and wood. With over 300 artisans and engineers, his company exports to more than 20 countries. This edition of the fair was his best experience ever. Another exhibitor from Jodhpur, who specialises in handcrafted furniture made from sheesham, mango and acacia wood said, "every edition of the fair brings new opportunities and we keep innovating while staying rooted in traditional woodworking." With in-house facilities for seasoning, chemical treatment, automated systems, and design development, they offer globally relevant yet timeless Indian designs.

Another exhibitor from Jodhpur, a first generation entrepreneur of furniture makers shared about creating designs that tell a story through craftsmanship and material integrity. With an emphasis on quality construction and enduring appeal, their collections feature bespoke pieces crafted from mango, acacia, oak, pine and teak wood. Catering to a wide range of interiors, from homes to cafés and hotels, they work closely with clients to deliver custom solutions within defined timelines. Events like this fair continue to serve as insightful platforms, offering exposure to diverse design sensibilities and opportunities for creative collaboration.

Among them were artisan furniture makers who brought flora and fauna to life through hand-painted designs on mango wood. Specialising in unique motifs like animal prints and traditional regional patterns, their handcrafted pieces combined artistic expression with functional design. With a skilled team and a focus on international markets, this enterprise participates in this fair to

An important step towards building stronger international partnerships



Rajat Asthana
President, IHGF Delhi
Fair - Autumn 2025

It was an incredible opportunity for us to host the visiting overseas buyers, buying & sourcing consultants and domestic volume buyers to the 60th edition of our 'Mother Fair', where we gathered once again as a community to showcase, network as well as source. The Council, along with the Reception Committee, made all necessary arrangements to ensure convenience and business

comfort of participants and trade visitors during the fair. As India positions itself as a hub in global supply chains, this fair became an important step towards building stronger international partnerships.

Through this vibrant and comprehensive showcase, the fair provided buyers with exclusive opportunities to source the widest variety of Indian handicrafts in home, lifestyle, fashion, furnishing, furniture and interior segments. New developments in eco-friendly, heritage-inspired, innovative and contemporary product lines were emphatically on display.

showcase their craftsmanship, connect with global buyers and expand their presence, noting continual improvements in organisation and outreach at each edition.

A leading exporter of incense and aromatics from Bangalore, who continues a 40-year-old tradition of fragrance-making rooted in nature, shared, "we take pride in being the first to introduce the honey fragrance in incense sticks." Renowned for its agro-based and natural incense, the brand has long been a regular participant



Each IHGF a journey of empowerment for MSMEs and Craft Clusters



Mohit Chopra
Vice President,
IHGF Delhi Fair
Autumn 2025

This iconic platform reflects India's continued journey of empowering MSMEs and craft clusters to expand their global footprint. The fair also stands as a

strong symbol of 'Vocal for Local', where regional crafts and skills converge in an international marketplace, further strengthening Brand India. It is indeed a matter of pride that the IHGF Delhi Fair has played such a significant role in this endeavor. The fair demonstrates how Indian exporters seamlessly blend traditional skills with contemporary design, upholding the promise of innovation, sustainability and competitiveness. This edition continued to open new avenues for export-led growth by fostering meaningful connections between Indian businesses and global buyers.

Reflects the strength of India's young workforce and demographic dividend



Rohit Dhall
Vice President,
IHGF Delhi Fair
Autumn 2025

This event reflects the strength of India's young workforce and demographic dividend, who continue to transform challenges into opportunities through innovation and

entrepreneurship. The fair also resonates with the vision of fostering new ventures while encouraging artisans and exporters to present bold, design-led collections. As the world's largest congregation of handicraft exporters, IHGF Delhi Fair highlights India's growing role in global supply chain diversification, reinforcing our position as a preferred sourcing destination. With significant international buyer participation, the fair has been instrumental in expanding market reach and enhancing global penetration for Indian handicrafts. This edition further strengthened partnerships.

Strengthens Brand India and reinforces our identity as a trusted partner



Simrandeep Singh Kohli, Vice President,
IHGF Delhi Fair
Autumn 2025

Over the years, this fair has brought together India's diverse craft traditions into a unified showcase for the world. By nurturing artisans, MSMEs and

exporters, the fair not only promotes commerce but also safeguards our cultural and creative heritage. This edition also reflected India's transformation through Digital India, with exhibitors integrating design, technology and sustainable practices to meet global benchmarks, reinforcing our identity as a trusted partner. With well designed facilities for visiting buyers, including well-appointed lounges and refreshment areas, to further enhance the experience, this edition unlocked new opportunities, helped fortify existing business ties to contribute meaningfully to India's presence in global markets.

at the fair. They term IHGF Delhi Fair not only a well-organised event but one that connects them with a large, diverse audience.

A Moradabad based exporter offering premium candles & aromatics shared of their participation in this fair that dates back to 2016 when he started his company. They make, supply and export luxury candles and aromatics. They have hi-tech infrastructure spread over a large area with operations powered by advanced technology machines that enable production of a flawless range of products. They also have a dedicated quality-control unit and a large warehouse, ensuring that the products are stored systematically and maintain their high quality. For the fair, they got along a combination of both festive and daily use aromatics.

A metalcraft exporter from Moradabad attributes their success to craftsmanship, consistency and the marketing platforms of EPCH. Established in 1989, the company is known for its house and garden décor, bath and bar accessories and intricate metal handicrafts. "This fair provides an excellent platform to connect with international buyers and showcase the diversity of Indian metalwork," they said.

Crafting lights that brighten homes, a Moradabad based exporter shared about their specialisation in lightening booths and handcrafted décor pieces made from brass and aluminium. Every item they create is 100% handmade, requiring immense skill and patience. They have a dedicated team of around 80 artisans, each bringing years of experience to their craft. "Started as a small venture,

we have developed into a well-established business with customers from across the globe," she mentioned.

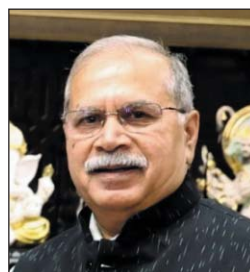
With generational expertise in handmade furnishing, a regular participant at the fair shared that since the early 1990s they've been here and it's always a wonderful experience. They work with wool, cotton and jute to create rugs and floor coverings. They praised the fair's improved infrastructure and thoughtful arrangements that rival international standards.

Offering design excellence in rugs, a Jaipur based exporter shared their journey of over 35 years with a strong global presence in furniture, textile and rugs, working with around 35 international buyers across continents. "For a long time, the U.S. was our primary export market. But with changing trade dynamics we've shifted our focus to Europe and the UAE. It's a strategic move to stay ahead in the global market," he emphasised.

Offering themes in papercrafts, packaging and decorating with sustainability and creativity, an exhibitor who has been part of the IHGF Delhi Fair since its beginning said, "it's always a rewarding experience to connect with global buyers here." Their company specialises in recyclable materials for paper crafts and packaging. Despite global trade challenges, "we continue to receive steady orders from loyal and new clients," they said, highlighting their commitment to eco-friendly innovation and quality craftsmanship. Another exhibitor offering products in this category highlighted their founder's vision of elegance and sustainability, reflected in their collections. With a strong commitment to sustainability and empowerment, a significant portion of their workforce comprises women artisans. Guided by an ethos of eco-conscious growth and aligned with the 'Make in India' vision, these initiatives exemplify how style and sustainability can coexist seamlessly in modern packaging.

A textile crafting enterprise based in New Delhi dedicated to empowering women through the development of sustainable employment opportunities through a cluster based model had got along an emphatic representation of their upcycled and recycled fabric jewellery business. A Kolkata based enterprise shared how they are redefining luxury gifting with their handcrafted home décor range. Specialising in handmade décor created from polymer and acrylic, this design-led enterprise creates exquisite placemats, coasters and gifting accessories produced by a team of skilled artisans. For them this fair continues to serve as a valuable avenue to engage with international buyers, with exports reaching destinations such as Paris, Spain and the U.S. The brand exemplifies modern elegance rooted in craftsmanship and design sensibility.

Strengthening Brand India through Creativity, Authenticity and Sustainable Growth



R K Verma
Executive Director,
EPCH

Our exhibitors aligned their collections with contemporary lifestyles while preserving the artistry of their heritage. This balance between continuity and change is the hallmark of India's handicraft sector. Drawing collective strength from handicraft hubs, handloom and handicraft artisan units across the country, this edition was well-versed to meet the demands

of upcoming seasons. Our exhibitors welcomed both volume-driven and customised, design-oriented orders, providing flexibility in sourcing for diverse buying preferences.

Constantly working with evolving designs, colours, trends and forecasts, they cater to retail brands, chain stores, hoteliers, architects, interior designers, home builders and e-commerce sellers worldwide. These products have carved a niche in the global market, proudly carrying forward the Made in India brand. EPCH's Committee of Administration acknowledges IEML's full cooperation in making the 60th edition of IHGF a grand international sourcing fair.



Handloom Traditions from North East Region and Vibrant Regional Crafts from PAN India

This edition of the show featured handwoven and handspun crafts presented by about twenty weavers, mostly women, from India's North Eastern Region (NER), sponsored by the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India.

Dedicated to preserve traditional mizo art and weaving, a team of two handloom entrepreneurs shared about workforce of 10 women and their collaboration with weavers from small villages, providing them opportunities to earn and sustain their craft. Each piece takes 10 to 15 days to complete, and every design carries a unique significance, from patterns inspired by forest plants, animals, and birds to motifs reflecting our traditions. An exhibitor specialising in Assamese 'gamosa' craft shared about traditional Assamese textiles, especially the iconic Gamosa. Each piece is handwoven with skill and dedication using local threads and traditional motifs that reflect culture.

Manipuri handloom crafts like Shaphee Lanphee and Moirang Phee, each carrying cultural symbolism and identity, were also featured along with ready-made garments that blend comfort with tradition. They use handmade weaving, preserving the manual art form even as mechanisation grows. The exhibitor representing this craft form trains unskilled workers and gives them work, helping them become self-reliant. In Manipur, weaving is entirely the work of women, traditionally, a primary qualification of a Meitei woman. The treads, an integral part of this craft, are manually dyed before weaving, ensuring consistency, vibrancy and durability.

Handlooms entities from Sikkim highlighted their focus on community empowerment through skill development and

entrepreneurship. They produce cotton-based textiles that reflect the traditional styles of the region's ethnic communities—Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali. Techniques include the intricate Lepcha vertical-striped fabrics woven on backstrap looms, Bhutia carpet weaving inspired by Tibetan designs, and ceremonial shawls such as the Thara and Thigma.

Traditional Naga weaving preserved and promoted through handcrafted textiles such as cushions, shawls and bed sheets were highlighted by a dedicated team of artisans. These enterprises aim to sustain Naga cultural heritage while producing high-quality, authentic handloom products. Participation in trade fairs has expanded their reach from domestic to international markets, providing exposure to new buyers and reinforcing the global appreciation for Naga craftsmanship.

Artisan enterprises from Assam blending tradition with contemporary design to create distinctive home textiles and apparel had showcased products include cotton shawls, dupattas, sarees, cushions, fabrics and pillows made from materials such as cotton, mulberry silk and eri silk. Designs are inspired by Assamese weaving and painting traditions, featuring motifs drawn from nature, like tree bark, cork and tiger patterns, each carrying its own aesthetic significance. Production is detailed and time-intensive, often involving small teams of skilled artisans, with additional support brought in for bulk orders. These initiatives highlight both cultural heritage and craftsmanship while catering to modern tastes and global markets.

Handloom made-ups using natural dyes indigenous to Assam, curated by an established entrepreneur, illustrated his work on

natural dyes and their unlimited scope for home aesthetics. Transforming handloom waste into functional and stylish products, an artisan, through her products, demonstrated how sustainability and creativity can go hand in hand. By upcycling leftover fabric from local weavers, she makes bags, pouches and everyday accessories. This approach reduces textile waste while creating meaningful employment opportunities, particularly for women artisans.

About 40 artisans from Pan India, sponsored by the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of



Textiles, Govt. of India, presented regional riches from a variety of raw materials. Exhibits ranged from textiles and embroidery, such as Banjara art from Karnataka and handwoven home furnishings from Bihar and Delhi, to handcrafted jewellery and decoratives from Rajasthan and Moradabad. Specialty crafts included candle-making, mosaic and glass décor, Himalayan fibre products and eco-conscious handcrafted packaging. Artisans also presented innovative approaches, self-taught painting traditions, jute crafts and upcycled products.



Sustainable Statements

The IHGF Delhi Fair showcased assortments highlighting the sustainable aspects of the handicraft industry demonstrating both the industry's commitment to green practices and the mentorship provided by EPCH. The collections highlighted circular design principles and the use of often wasted natural and recycled materials, reflecting a forward-thinking approach to responsible manufacturing.

Jal Kumbhi Crafts, Bihar - Capitalising on the abundant availability of water hyacinth to train and empower a weaver community in Begusarai, Bihar, a skill development program was initiated in April this year. Under the Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles and implemented by EPCH, this program aimed at addressing an environmental challenge by converting invasive water hyacinths into valuable handicraft products. The project envisions community empowerment through sustainable livelihood creation, especially for women artisans. 210 women and 10-15 men have been trained to create beautiful home utility products. Each product on display carried details of its maker (artisan), ensuring transparency and authenticity.

Artistry in Cane & Bamboo - A representation of the Northeast



Cane and Bamboo Development Council through a collaboration with the Japanese agency JICA, brought to the IHGF Delhi Fair platter, sustainable bamboo and cane-based products from Assam. The organisation supports over 800 artisans, both men and women across



the region, including 12 women artisans from Meghalaya. The artisans associated with these initiatives have been engaged for over a decade, creating sustainable and eco-friendly bamboo crafts.

Stories with Recycled Wood - A Rajasthan based enterprise is dedicated to preserving India's rich cultural heritage by restoring and refurbishing antique wooden pieces, rather than manufacturing new products. The initiative emphasises giving a second life to old furniture and decor, allowing each item to carry its own unique story and reflect the traditions and history of India. Skilled artisans work meticulously to maintain the original charm and craftsmanship while adapting the pieces for contemporary homes and modern lifestyles. This approach not only preserves heritage but also highlights the timeless relevance of traditional artistry. By



treating each antique with care and respect, the enterprise demonstrates that the old never truly goes out of style; instead, it gains renewed value and meaning.

Natural Fibre Crafts for Home & Pets - A Tirunelveli, Tamil



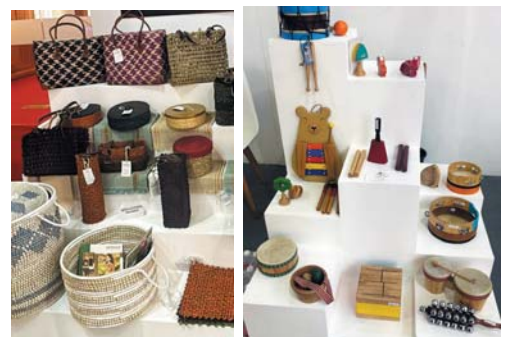
Nadu based enterprise made its debut at the fair, showcasing a diverse range of eco-friendly products crafted entirely in-house from locally sourced natural fibres such as banana fibre, banana rope, water hyacinth, raffia, bamboo, cane, coir, rice husk, corn husk and sisal. The collection included trendy and functional items like pet holders, pumpkin-

shaped baskets, birdhouses, laundry baskets and carry bags, all finished with industry-approved colours. The initiative not only emphasises sustainability but also promotes women's empowerment by supporting home-based female artisans. The first-time participation proved fruitful, with a good number of orders received, and the fair was praised for its excellent organisation and supportive staff.

Custom made, Sustainable and Ethical Bags - A Kolkata-based company, with additional production lines soon to be operational in Dehradun, specialises in sustainable and ethically made bags crafted from cotton and jute. The organisation emphasises a process-driven, compliance-oriented approach, with around 80% of its factory workforce comprising women, reflecting a commitment to progressive work culture. With 34 years of experience, the company exports to nearly 44 countries, focusing on delivering the right product at the right time for buyers, and ensuring reliability and competitiveness for selling partners. A regular exhibitor at the fair for the past twenty years, the company reported a positive experience, receiving couple of orders during this edition.

Sustainable Narratives from East India - Sustainable innovation products by enterprises combining eco-conscious practices with rich craft traditions and entrepreneurial spirit were on display at IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2025. These enterprises, through their products, demonstrated how sustainability, creativity and heritage can coexist across a variety of products. There were eco-friendly home and

kitchenware, such as chopping boards and trays made from 100% recyclable materials. Others blended fashion with sustainability, creating fashion



accessories from natural fibres, grass and fabrics, proving that style and conscience can go hand in hand. Home furnishing and lifestyle products, from bags and wallets to decorative boxes and trays, showcased meticulous craftsmanship and a commitment to conscious production. Toys and musical instruments crafted from selected woods highlighted an innovative approach to education and play, while household essentials like brooms were designed to minimise plastic use and reduce environmental impact. Even shell-based and bamboo-based products demonstrated the potential of natural materials to create functional and beautiful designs.



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for Handicrafts
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For more details, contact:
Email: designregister@epch.com
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Buyers from across the globe converged, show's scale and spirit captivated all

Regular buyers continued their business with exporters, maintaining consistency over the years. Sustainability remained a key focus, with many buyers specifically seeking eco-friendly and compliant collections in home and lifestyle products. European buyers sourced a diverse range of items, including furniture, home accents, giftware, houseware, bags and Christmas accessories. Basketry and utility products made from natural materials such as jute, hemp, coarse riverside grass, cane and bamboo also drew considerable interest. Textile buyers appreciated the wide selection of home furnishings and kitchen linen, while those sourcing fashion accessories—including scarves, stoles and shawls—expressed satisfaction with the variety on offer. Gift items, paper products, interior hardware, and components likewise provided buyers with ample choice.

Both longstanding and new visitors expressed a growing preference for Indian suppliers, praising their ability to deliver handcrafted value addition in stylish product lines aligned with emerging trends. While contemporary aesthetics were widely appreciated, buyers consistently affirmed that India's handcrafting skills and intricate workmanship would continue to attract global aficionados. With Indian culture, heritage and civilizational history reaching every corner of the world, many believed that India had emerged as a source of both inspiration and tradition-led sophistication, offering grounded and authentic products.

6,736 buyers and buying representatives from 112 countries, along with domestic volume buyers, visited the fair. Buyers came from USA, UK, France, Germany, Australia, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Spain, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Argentina, South Africa and many more. Brands such as The TJX Companies (USA),

XXXLutz (Germany), Landmark Group (Dubai), VCNY Home (United States), Benjara Inc. (USA), Kalalou Inc. (USA), Lolo Inc. (USA), Target (USA), Intratuin (Netherlands), Kave Home (Spain), Maya Collective (Canada), Pomax (Belgium), Sugita Ace Co. (Japan), Tabrez, The Dressing Room (Saudi Arabia), Amedeus (France), Artisan Furniture (United Kingdom), Bauhaus Pty (Australia), ReteHome (Russia), Dantone Home (Russia), Midbar (Israel), LP Imports (Brazil), LonLo (Japan), Leruche (Turkey) and Le Forze (New Zealand) had their sourcing representations at the fair.

Hans Holterman from the Netherlands, visiting the fair for the fifth consecutive time, shared that he was keen to source furniture from India and had already begun finalising orders. He also appreciated the new look of the fair and the enhanced buyer services. Lopez Mariane, a buyer from France, attended the fair in search of decorative items showcasing intricate Indian craftsmanship. She described the fair as energetic, full of life and beautifully decorated. Jo Littlejohn, a buyer from the UK, who visited the fair after a gap of six years, expressed her delight at being back to meet her Indian exporter friends and to source lighting and home products for her departmental store in London. Charlie Selechnik from Guatemala, a second-generation buyer, remarked that India remained his key sourcing destination for furniture and home décor products. Gemma Robertso from Australia, on her maiden visit to the fair, showed keen interest in Indian handmade jewellery and women's fashion, including bags.

IHGF Delhi Fair also continued to host Buying/Sourcing consultants as well as visitors from major Indian Retail/online brands and domestic volume buyers.



Glimpses from the Fair

Shri Nand Gopal 'Nandi', Cabinet Minister for Industrial Development, Export Promotion, NRI and Investment Promotion, Government of Uttar Pradesh, visited the fair on 14th October 2025. He toured the exhibits, engaging with the exhibitors and praised the sector's dynamism and competitive spirit, evidently reflected in the event. Shri Alok Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises and Export Promotion, Government of Uttar Pradesh/Export Commissioner, IDC, also visited the fair and met the organisers as well as exhibitors. They are seen with Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, IEML; Mr. Rajat Asthana, President, IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2025; Mr. Mohit Chopra, Vice President, IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2025; Mr. R.K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Additional Executive Director, EPCH.





Mr. Jitin Prasada, Union Minister of State for Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Govt. of India; and Shri Rakesh Sachan, Cabinet Minister for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, Khadi and Villages Industries, Sericulture Industries, Handloom and Textile, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh visited the IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn on 16th October 2025. They also graced the ceremony for Ajai Shankar Memorial Awards for Best Stand Design and Display. They are seen with Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, IEM; Mr. Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Avdesh Agarwal, Chief Convenor, EPCH; Mr. Rajat Asthana, President, IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2025; Vice Presidents, IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2025 - Mr. Simrandeep Singh Kohli, Mr. Rohit Dhall and Mr. Mohit Chopra; Mr. Rajesh Jain, COA Member & Northern Region Convenor, EPCH; Mr. Najmul Islam, eminent EPCH member exporter from Moradabad; and Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH.



feature-IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2025

Mrs. Neelam S, Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India, at the fair. She is seen with Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, IEML; Mr. Avdesh Agarwal, Chief Convenor, EPCH; Mr. Lekhraj Maheshwari, Co-opted Member, EPCH; Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Additional Executive Director, EPCH



Dr. Beena, Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India, visited the fair on 14th October 2025. She is seen with Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, IEML; Mr. Avdesh Agarwal, Chief Convenor, EPCH; Ms. Jesmina Zeliang, COA Member & Regional Convenor, NER, EPCH; Mr. Najmul Islam, eminent EPCH member exporter from Moradabad; Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Additional Executive Director, EPCH





Glimpses of Buyers at Work



MANTHAN FOR GREATER EPCH

Brain Storming and Ideation sees Indian Handicraft Industry Premiers formulate Vision 2035



THINK TANK: **Dr. Neeraj Khanna**, Chairman, EPCH; **Mr. Sagar Mehta**, Vice Chairman, EPCH; **Dr. Rakesh Kumar**, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH & Chairman IEM; **Mr. Avdesh Agarwal**, Chief Convenor, EPCH along with former Chairmen, EPCH and members of Committee of Administration

16th October 2025: 'Manthan' a brain storming and ideation for Greater EPCH was organised as a high-energy interactive session with member exporters, buyers and other stakeholders to create an expanded EPCH 'Vision 2035' with focus on new markets & product categories, buyer-acquisition programs, digital services, sustainability & compliance support, logistics and finance enablement, etc. The Think Tank included Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH & Chairman IEM; Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH; and Avdesh Agarwal, Chief Convenor, EPCH. Other industry leaders including former EPCH Chairmen like, Mr. Ravi K Passi, Mr. Raj K Malhotra, Mr. O P Prahladka, Mr. Lekhraj Maheshwari and Mr. D Kumar participated and offered experience based valuable insights for shaping the future of EPCH and the handicraft sector as a whole. Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Additional Executive Director, EPCH and senior officials of EPCH were also present. Besides participation from the handicraft exporting trade, there was notable presence of next generation and young exporters symbolising 'young bloods - the sign of continuity of legacy', who also engaged with the gathering and shared their opinions.

"4 decades of Made for global, available to global - from Cottage Industry to Global Mainstream"

Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH & Chairman IEM



Sharing EPCH's journey of nearly four decades in being the bridge between India's craft traditions and the world's markets and his privilege of walking this journey for more than thirty years, Dr. Rakesh Kumar touched upon the journey of the Council with 27 exporters and its present growth to represent over 11,000 members and countless artisans, serving

as a credible platform to promote Indian handicrafts & craftsmanship excellence, globally. He highlighted the evolution

of India's handicrafts sector, from cottage clusters to international markets and landmark initiatives such as IHGF Delhi Fair, VRIKSH certification, Common Facility Centres as well as design and testing infrastructure. He acknowledged Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH's equally long journey and support throughout. Speaking on the present global market situation, he mentioned of India's small share of USD 3.9 billion despite the global USD 700 billion handicrafts market. Citing heavy dependence on the US market, modest growth, fragmented production and rising compliance demands, Dr. Kumar made an emphatic call for structural reform with the active participation of the young generation- the "Cubs of EPCH," rather than incremental change for the Indian handicraft exports sector, unveiling the Greater EPCH Vision.

The Way Ahead: Greater EPCH

EPCH's future vision, Dr. Rakesh Kumar emphasised, extends to 2035, with defined goals to strengthen financial growth, restructure its operations, and widen its market reach. It will be an ecosystem-centric transformation built on two pillars: **A Decentralised Three-Tier Governance Model** - Regional, state, and city chapters will enhance responsiveness, representation, and ground-level engagement. **Cluster++ Framework** - A hub-and-spoke model connecting major clusters like Moradabad, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Panipat and Narsapur with smaller adjoining clusters. Each hub will house a Business Development Centre providing services such as registration, GST support, logistics, design libraries, digital onboarding, and market intelligence.

The organisation aims to reach \$9 billion in targeted business growth while entering the \$300 billion global market. To support this, EPCH plans to provide financial and training assistance to small vendors through a new skill committee that will train about 20 lakh individuals. The Council also aims to develop regional offices and a mini-secretariat for better coordination, supported by 16 experts who will handle diverse product categories. Major handicraft hubs such as Moradabad, Jodhpur and Jaipur will be strengthened with end-to-end supply chains and open skill centres to ensure smooth operations and skill development.

A strong emphasis is placed on **artisan welfare and skill development**. Through initiatives like 'Karigari Samrakshan,' EPCH seeks to preserve traditional craftsmanship while enhancing artisans' skills. CSR funds and government schemes such as PM Vishwakarma Kaushal Samman (PM-VIKAS) will be utilised to empower artisans. Around ten large and forty small **clusters have been identified to create strong production bases**, each expected to generate about 7.5 lakh employment opportunities.

In terms of market and buyer strategy, EPCH **aims to strengthen long-term relationships with buyers** by shifting focus from trading to direct manufacturing links. The system will follow a Just-in-Time approach, ensuring efficiency and reliability. Programs such as the EPCH Retail Pavilion and "Aurran" will promote private label products and ensure consistent product availability.

The Indian handicraft sector holds a unique advantage in a world dominated by machine-made goods. EPCH aims to leverage this strength by transitioning from a cottage industry model to a more structured and scalable industrial framework. This evolution will allow Indian artisans and exporters to combine creativity with modern business practices, securing India's position as a global leader in handmade artistry.

Reviving Momentum and Market Expansion

Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH



The discussion moved to IHGF Delhi Fair's current status, leadership changes and future plans. Against the backdrop of the current market scenario efforts are being made to explore new markets and expand international ties, with delegations from Saudi Arabia and Russia showing interest. Exhibitors who invested heavily in their product presentations are seeking stronger support and motivation.

Dr. Neeraj Khanna envisioned to bring back positivity and enthusiasm. Having visited Germany, Greece, and Saudi Arabia, he aims to **apply global best practices to improve the fair's standards**. Emphasising that young skills are vital for the present industry, he introduced the "Manthan" initiative to engage with the younger generation's business ideas and expectations.

Despite the slowdown, the organisation remains optimistic about **achieving the dream of a cooperative EPCH**. The upcoming February show is expected to be much improved. Interactive sessions such as Q&As and quizzes are planned to encourage greater participation and communication. Under Dr. Khanna's leadership, the focus will be on positivity, collaboration and innovation to make future fairs more vibrant and impactful.

Go Global with Confidence, Strengthen Brand India

Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH



He shared an inspiring vision to take India's handicraft industry to new heights. His dream is simple yet bold – to **make the world see India as “The Home of Handicrafts”** and push the industry's export value to an incredible \$9 billion. To make this happen, he believes the industry needs to **evolve with**

time and think bigger. The first step, he said, is to cut out the middlemen and connect directly with buyers abroad. This not only gives artisans and exporters better control over their products and prices but also ensures that the real creators, the craftsmen, get the reward they truly deserve. The next move is to go global with confidence. Instead of limiting themselves to old, familiar markets like the US or Europe, the plan is to reach out to new regions like

the Middle East, Eastern Europe, East Asia, Africa, and Latin America and **claim a strong share of these growing markets.**

But the heart of the vision lies in building 'Brand India'. The world to not just buy Indian handicrafts, but feel their story, the tradition, the skill, and the passion behind every handmade piece. Through smart branding and storytelling, he hopes to make Indian craftsmanship stand out on the world stage. In essence, Mr. Mehta's vision is clear: Indian handicrafts are ready to take the global stage. By embracing smarter business strategies, forging direct connections with international buyers and showcasing rich heritage and skill behind every creation, India can transform its timeless craft traditions into a worldwide success that resonates with both hearts and markets.

EPCH: Each Person Collectively Holds 'responsibility'

Avdesh Agarwal, Chief Convenor, EPCH



The discussion focused on IHGF Delhi Fair's current status, leadership changes and future plans - a role of mentor perfectly done for a greater EPCH. "We would like every person to be responsible for a collective good."

Interactions with Young Invitees

The 'Manthan' had next-gen exporters among the

audience who voiced their thoughts and ideas. They emphasised that the domestic market must now become a core focus, with exporters beginning to design specifically for Indian consumers. One second generation exporter with international exposure and training in Italy, noted that ancient Indian crafts should be globalised while also being adapted to the local market. A first-time exhibitor who won a Best Display award at this fair shared how live crochet weaving became the focal point of her display. Another spoke about developing an incubator design centre and stressed that collaboration with new designers is essential for future growth. A regular exhibitor focused on product mixing and packaging, integrating international-style combinations, which has yielded positive results. Another emphasised the importance of meeting compliance standards and maintaining high factory benchmarks, stating that buyers are drawn to companies that are compliant and well-prepared for new challenges. The evening ended with a Q&A. ■



PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Beyond Seasons: Trends for Next Generation



Dr. Kaustav Sengupta, Associate Professor, NIFT; Head, VisioNext

14th October 2025: This panel discussion brought participants together for a thoughtful exchange on building a timeless, seasonless roadmap for conscious luxury, textiles and fashion. The moderator, Dr. Kaustav Sengupta, Associate Professor, NIFT; Director, VisioNext, began with how the industry is looking at a different cohort generation that is evolving with time and how 75% of the consumers today are not looking for a particular niche and rather, are buying all year long. The discussion also ventured into the digital frontier, exploring how AI and design are now intertwined forces of change. As technology aids trend forecasting, the panelists aimed at the role of human intuition, emphasising that emotion remains at the heart of creative decision-making. The future of fashion, they said, is not just digital but deeply personal, a seamless

blend of heritage and innovation, craft and consciousness. Dr. Sengupta has over 25 years of experience at the intersection of fashion, technology and strategic foresight. As Faculty and Link Chairperson at NIFT and Director of the VisioNxtTrend Research and AI Lab, he leads pioneering work in fashion forecasting and AI-driven insights.

Dr. Sudha Dhingra, Professor of Textile Design, NIFT Delhi, emphasised that passion lies in stories and not in seasonal, social or digital trends. Social media has become a major influencer, with nearly 50% of Gen Z forming emotional connections with digital creators. She highlighted that India continues to serve as a global inspiration in fashion, and stated that many brands remain loyal to their signature styles instead of following fleeting trends. Citing her work at the Khadi Center in



Dr. Sudha Dhingra, Professor-Textile Design NIFT, Delhi

NIFT, she shared how her team is creating new trends out of tradition with Indigo, Katran and Anjora to craft modern designs.

With over three decades of teaching experience, Dr. Dhingra is a leading expert on Indian and global textiles and crafts. She has co-edited key publications, including Textile Crafts of India and Anant – Sustainable Handloom Textiles of India, commissioned by the Office of the DC (Handlooms). As Director of the Centre of Excellence for Khadi, she has established it across eight NIFT campuses under a Ministry of MSME initiative supporting KVIC, driving efforts to help Khadi institutions design, produce, and market high-quality, distinctive products.



Anuradha Kumra,
Design & Business
Consultant

Ms. Anuradha Kumra, Design & Business Consultant, emphasised that fashion is fundamentally about the consumer and also, that consumer behavior today is highly unpredictable, as individuals are both wardrobe-conscious and value-driven. She reflected on how 'The Kunj', in Vasant Kunj is a unique space celebrating Indian handicrafts, fostering conversations and connections among artisans and brands. It serves as a platform

where emerging trends can be observed. Modern consumers are seeking immersive shopping environments and a deeper understanding of the products they purchase, she said and highlighted that social media's success depends on the target audience, regional context and the consumer's willingness to invest in sustainable fashion.

With over 30 years of experience across retail, academia, social, and government sectors, Ms. Kumra currently collaborates with organisations creating grassroots impact. She has served as an advisor to The Asian Heritage Foundation and IIM-Mumbai and is presently a Subject Matter Expert with Deloitte India for the Ministry of Textiles, focusing on the handloom and handicraft sector. She also serves on the Advisory Boards of Shades of India Craft Pvt. Ltd. and Good Earth Heritage Foundation. As former President–Apparel & Accessories at Fabindia Ltd., she drove new revenue models, expanded brand portfolios, and led strategies impacting over 35,000 artisans through cluster-based livelihood programs. Earlier, she taught at NIFT, New Delhi, for over a decade, leading international projects and design-led cluster initiatives as Curator and Consultant.

Mr. Parth Parikh, Founder & Design Lead, Design Clinic India mentioned that designing beyond seasons means creating work



Parth Parikh, Founder
& Design Lead,
Design Clinic India

that outlives time and trends. True design involves evolving with honouring heritage while adapting it to contemporary contexts. He also reflected that inspiration exists everywhere and also that in a family of pharmacists, he decided to be a 'design doctor'. Mr. Parikh shared insights into his celebrated furniture collection, "Phool Mandi," which draws inspiration from the Dadar Flower Market in Mumbai. His work blends artistry with functionality, drawing deeply from India's rich traditions while presenting them in a contemporary global context. Mr. Parikh, a Delhi-based product designer, is a postgraduate in Product Design from Domus Academy, Milan. He founded Design Clinic India - a multi-disciplinary studio specialising in furniture and lighting inspired by Indian art, craft and culture. His work blends tradition with contemporary design and has been showcased at leading international platforms. At HireDesigners, he continues to shape the design ecosystem and is a lifetime member of The Guild of Designers & Artists.



Aditi Vitasta Dhar,
Lifestyle and
Accessory Design
Consultant

Ms. Aditi Vitasta Dhar, Lifestyle and Accessory Design Consultant, discussed the evolving dynamics of design shaped by forces of change such as sustainability, AI, fast fashion, and online shopping. She emphasised that today's consumer-led forecasting determines industry direction. She outlined key emerging trends including micro and macro trends focused on localised, organic products, the Neo-Renaissance celebrating creativity, and AI-powered forecasting, signaling the growing AI domination in predicting styles and demands. She also spoke about future directions of design driven by demand intelligence and the idea of creating "worlds within worlds," where technology and tradition merge seamlessly. With over 20 years of experience in lifestyle and accessory design, known for seamlessly combining strategic vision with creative execution, Ms. Dhar currently consults for leading leather brands and Indian businesses. She is also visiting faculty at NID, Pearl Academy and IICD. As the Founder and Creative Director of VITASTA (2011–2018), she built the label into a benchmark for homegrown leather brands in India. She continues to consult for leading leather brands and Indian businesses. ■

From Maker to Market: Decoding Brand Narrative, Visual Merchandising & Retailing

15th October 2025: This session aimed to help participants build an appealing brand by crafting product stories rooted in provenance and translating them into effective visual displays, through sightlines, focal points, colour and material harmonies, and booth or retail planograms.

Ms. Aartee Roy, Brand Strategist, Retail Innovator, Founder - The Creators Guild (TCG India), moderator, actively guided the discussion, interacting with the speakers and drawing out key insights throughout the session. She asked thought-provoking questions, encouraged elaboration, and shared her own perspectives.

Highlighting India's potential, she emphasised "Learn from the best, invest in your own



Aartee Roy, Brand Strategist, Retail Innovator, Founder - The Creators Guild (TCG India)

India, Make in India, Consume in India, Celebrate India." She encouraged participants to leverage local skills and resources, combine creativity with ethical practices, and take pride in Indian design. Arti's facilitation ensured a dynamic dialogue, helping the audience understand global trends while inspiring them to elevate Indian brands and craftsmanship on the international stage. Ms. Roy, a seasoned leader with over 20 years in branding, retail, and design-led business growth, has held key roles at Fabindia, Lifestyle (Dubai), Monsoon Accessorize, and William E Connor India. As Founder of The Creators Guild (TCG India), she mentors brands and craft clusters to build scalable, culturally rooted businesses.



The panelists (LtoR): Mr. Bertrando Di Renzo, CEO, Les-Ottomans; Ms. Anupama Singh Independent Consultant; Ms. Aartee Roy, Brand Strategist, Retail Innovator, Founder - The Creators Guild (TCG India); Mr. Ashish Tagra, Founder, A Good Life; and Mr. Gunnar Hoffrichter, Independent Consultant, Hamburg, Germany with Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Additional Executive Director, EPCH

Mr. Bertando Di Renzo, Founder and Creative Director of Les - Ottomans, shared the journey of his Italian home décor brand.



Bertrando Di Renzo, CEO, Les-Ottomans

Founded 11 years ago, it began as a one-man venture driven by Di Renzo's passion for colours, patterns, and handcrafted design. Living in Istanbul at the time, he discovered Ikat textiles from Uzbekistan, which became the foundation of his early collections. Despite starting during the peak of minimalism, his bold, maximalist aesthetic soon gained attention for its vibrant mix. The brand's growth was gradual but consistent from textiles and cushions to tableware, despite initial market resistance. He emphasized "perseverance, creativity and staying true to one's vision rather than chasing trends." "We bring new things into the market which are durable and quality wise, superb". Over the years, Les Ottomans has

collaborated with renowned designers including Vito Nesta, Marco Parmigiani, and Matthew Williamson, whose partnership brought the brand into leading stores like Harrods, London. He described his brand as an "incubator of ideas", valuing originality and continuous innovation. Today, it is celebrated globally for its vibrant, eclectic style that blends cultural influences with Italian craftsmanship. With 40% supplies from India, the products are 95% handmade.



Anupama Singh
Independent
Consultant

Ms. Anupama Singh, Independent Consultant and a veteran with over 30 years of experience in the handicrafts, gifts and furniture industry, shared her insights on India's evolving design landscape. Attending the fair for the sixth year, she expressed delight at the visible transformation from innovative furniture to improved booth presentations and market-aligned designs. Speaking on the "maker-to-market journey", she emphasised understanding the artisan's perspective and preserving the pride and craftsmanship that define Indian handicrafts. Ms. Singh highlighted India's strengths its rich artists heritage, handmade products and diverse materials.

Encouraging originality, she urged the industry to adapt traditional crafts for modern markets rather than imitate others. She also called for greater collaboration with young designers and interns, stressing their role in bringing fresh ideas and aligning design



Gunnar Hoffrichter,
Independent
Consultant, Hamburg,
Germany

with global trends. Addressing exporters, she underlined the need to overcome quality control issues, supply chain delays and improve infrastructure and transparency, ensuring sustainable sourcing and compliance with government norms. With technology and AI redefining design possibilities, Ms. Singh concluded by urging the industry to balance innovation, sustainability and craftsmanship.

Mr. Gunnar Hoffrichter, Independent Consultant, Hamburg, Germany emphasised the need for passion, creativity and innovation in India's craft and manufacturing sectors. He observed that while Indians are naturally passionate, this energy often appears only during festivals like Holi or Diwali, and encouraged designers to channel the same enthusiasm



consistently into product development. He urged artisans and entrepreneurs to move beyond imitation, explore global trends, invest in technology and create unique, concept-driven products that reflect both skill and originality. He highlighted the importance of authenticity, belief in one's vision, and storytelling to make products stand out internationally. He also stressed curation and concept-based presentation, showcasing products as cohesive collections rather than isolated items. Mr. Hoffrichter called on Indian creators to blend skill, innovation and sustained passion, fostering a culture of creativity that elevates their craftsmanship on the global stage.



Ashish Tagra,
Founder, A Good Life

Mr. Ashish Tagra, Founder, A Good Life, shared his journey of establishing a sustainable and holistic home décor brand that transforms industrial wood waste into handcrafted décor pieces. By upcycling discarded pine wood sourced from industrial areas in Noida and Sidkul, his brand promotes ethical design and environmental consciousness, turning waste materials into elegant, functional products ranging from small décor items to larger furniture pieces. With over 15 years of experience in design and branding, he emphasised that every successful brand must be built around a core narrative a clear sense of purpose and impact. He urged creators to move beyond product aesthetics and focus on usability, purpose, and social value. Highlighting India's immense creative potential, he encouraged entrepreneurs to tell authentic brand stories rather than merely following global trends. Reiterating that "the customer is the king," he stressed the importance of understanding consumer needs and feedback in shaping a brand's growth. Mr. Tagra concluded by motivating young designers and exporters to blend innovation, sustainability and storytelling in their work, thereby creating meaningful, distinctive brands that reflect both craftsmanship and conscience. ■

SEMINARS

Digitalization for Exporters: Application of AI in Making Presentations and Design Mockups



Dr. Kaustav Sengupta,
Associate Professor,
NIFT; Head, VisioNxt

15th October 2025: This hands-on session showed how to use AI to turn product specs and photos into buyer-ready pitch decks, line sheets and design mockups in minutes. Dr. Kaustav Sengupta described the modern designer as a “firelighter”, one who initiates ideas, guides creative direction and bridges human imagination with evolving digital processes. The session delved on the growing adoption of technology in design. “Around 61% of designers are currently using advanced digital tools, which have improved overall efficiency by nearly three times. Although approximately 92 million traditional jobs have been replaced, about 170 million new opportunities have emerged, indicating a positive transformation in the job market. The design field, while heavily affected, continues to evolve and adapt to these rapid changes,” said Dr. Sengupta and remarked that by 2050, one-third of present human work is expected to be carried out through

automated systems, giving professionals more scope for innovation and conceptual thinking.

The core of the seminar centered on prompting techniques. A prompt was defined as a direct instruction in natural language used to generate specific outcomes. One-shot prompting, where a single clear example or direction is provided, was highlighted as an efficient method. The six essential components of effective prompting include the task, context, example or D-example, persona, format and tone.

The concept of the “Chain of Thought” was introduced, emphasising logical reasoning and step-by-step idea development. The session also touched upon digital agents - systems that function autonomously and respond intelligently based on memory and data. Several platforms were mentioned, including Sora, Midjourney, Leonardo and Perplexity, recognized for their growing significance in visualisation, research and creative production.

The seminar reflected on how technology has become integral to the design ecosystem. While digital tools continue to evolve, the foundation of design remains rooted in human imagination, originality, and adaptability. Designers are now seen as facilitators of creativity, using technology as a collaborative partner to enhance innovation and expand creative possibilities. ■

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Local Cash & Carry to Global Supply Chain: 1platform, endless possibilities



Jitin Prashar,
Senior VP, Expo Bazaar

15th October 2025: Cash and Carry platforms have evolved from simple wholesale markets into launchpads for small businesses seeking global reach. They enable local sellers to showcase unique products such as home décor, furniture, toys and interior items that were once limited to neighborhood markets, connecting them with buyers

across the world. This shift has opened new opportunities for artisans and entrepreneurs, allowing local creativity and craftsmanship to gain international recognition.

What sets these platforms apart is their focus on adding value beyond basic selling. They emphasise high-quality product photography to enhance online visibility, maintain agile operations that quickly respond to market trends, and craft creative product descriptions and brand stories to engage customers. Each platform highlights the uniqueness of small businesses, ensuring their individuality stands out in a crowded marketplace. These platforms

are managed by professionals with decades of experience in exports and logistics. They rely on strong global supply chains, advanced infrastructure in regions like Europe and the United States and efficient digital systems. By using catalog-based sales, ready-to-ship models and flexible order systems such as Just-in-Time (JIT) and drop-shipping, they simplify the buying and selling process. This approach enables even a local artisan's creation to reach premium international destinations with ease and efficiency. The overall vision is to build modern, visually appealing digital marketplaces that make global commerce simple and accessible. By combining technology with end-to-end service, these platforms support local business growth, job creation and sustainable global trade. They connect cultures and markets through authentic, handcrafted products, turning local creativity into a global success story. This seminar explored how India's manufacturing ecosystem can evolve into a global supply network through the ExpoBazaar framework. By linking Cash & Carry hubs across India with global marketplaces under a Just-in-Time model, ExpoBazaar bridges Indian producers and international buyers seamlessly. The session highlights how technology, curation, and agile fulfillment can make Indian exports faster, smarter and globally competitive. ■

Best Industrial Practices: How to adopt Technology for Cutting Costs

16th October 2025: This session explored how leading export hubs can achieve success through lean workflows, standardised processes and quality at source; and how these practices can be adapted to the handicrafts sector. Addressing key areas such as cost leakages, rework and returns, energy efficiency, packing density, logistics and sustainability to drive business growth, Mr. Dhanesh Sharma, CEO, STC India, explained the concept of smart factories, where technology minimises manual intervention and supports real-time data monitoring to reduce costs and errors. He discussed key components such as factory layout design, mechanical-electrical-plumbing systems, energy efficiency, sustainability planning and compliance readiness under global standards like SADEX and SA8000.

A highlight of the seminar was the introduction of Momda, an IoT-based innovation developed by Matazo Soft, designed to monitor machines in real time. The device connects multiple machines within a single factory grid, tracking temperature, humidity, and production efficiency. This technology helps reduce downtime by

up to 30% and increase productivity by 25–30%. Mr. Sharma also presented the Pre-Inspection System, a closed-loop offline software that ensures consistent quality control through digital SOPs and customisable checklists for every production stage. The seminar concluded with an emphasis on STC India's mission to increase productivity, reduce costs,



Dhanesh Sharma,
CEO, STC India

and promote sustainable, technology-driven manufacturing practices in the handicraft and allied sectors. Mr. Sharma brings 25 years of experience in furniture manufacturing, factory setup, merchandising and process engineering. ■

Best Stand Design and Display Awards

Awards in 10 Display Categories

The Ajai Shankar and P.N.Suri Memorial Awards for Best Stand Design and Display at the 60th IHGF Delhi Fair Autumn 2025 were given away at a well attended ceremony on 16th October 2025 at the India Expo Mart & Centre, Greater Noida. This was convened to honour exhibitors across 10 product categories for excellence in stand design and display. It was graced with the august presence of Shri Jitin Prasada, Union Minister of State for Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Govt. of India; Shri Rakesh Sachan, Cabinet Minister for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, Khadi and Villages Industries, Sericulture Industries, Handloom and Textile, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh. Also present were, Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, IEM; Mr. Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Avdesh Agarwal, Chief Convenor, EPCH; Vice Presidents, IHGF Delhi Fair- Autumn 2025 - Mr. Simrandeep Singh Kohli, Mr. Mohit Chopra and Mr. Rohit Dhall; Former Chairmen and COA Members, EPCH - Mr. Raj K Malhotra and Mr. Ravi K Passi; Mr. Rajesh Jain, COA Member & Northern Region Convenor, EPCH; Past Chairman and Co-opted Member, EPCH, Mr. Lekhraj Maheshwari; Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Addl. Executive Director-EPCH.

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M/s UDAY DESIGN, New Delhi



M/s ARTSY CRAFTS, Moradabad



M/s BANSAL IMPEX, Moradabad

ILTC Narsapur Celebrates Gandhi Jayanti with 'Swachhata Hi Seva' program

On 2nd October 2025, the Southern Region Branch Office of ILTC, Narsapur, observed Gandhi Jayanti by organising the 'Swachhata Hi Seva' program. The event was held under the leadership of Mr. K N Tulasi Rao, COA Member and Southern Region Convenor, EPCH, along with exporters like, Mr. K Ra jeev Chandra and Mr B Uday.

Lace artisans and ILTC staff actively participated in the cleanliness drive, spreading awareness about the importance of hygiene and community responsibility among local residents. The team also cleaned the surroundings outside the ILTC campus, reinforcing the message of collective action for a cleaner environment. As part of the outreach, Mr. K N Tulasi Rao and the exporters visited the Govt.



Hospital, Narsapur, where they distributed fruits and bread to patients and lace artisans. The gesture reflected the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi's ideals of compassion, service and social responsibility, inspiring everyone to contribute for a better society. ■

U.S. Consumer Sentiment Points to a Less Predictable, More Extended 2025 Holiday Shopping Season

U.S. consumer sentiment and intentions suggest that the 2025 holiday shopping season will be less predictable and more spread out than any other year. Most holiday shoppers plan to spend about the same as last year, but there is an increase in those planning on spending more, according to the annual holiday purchase intentions consumer survey from Circana™. More than 80% of holiday shoppers expect prices to be higher this year as a result of tariffs and other economic factors. That expectation of higher prices will impact what, where and when consumers shop, with more holiday shoppers planning on getting an earlier start to avoid possible future price increases and take advantage of early season promotions.

"The volatility of consumers is evident in their feelings about the holiday shopping season, which means the flow of the 2025 holiday shopping season will be less predictable," said Marshal Cohen, chief retail advisor, Circana. "While consumer spending has demonstrated resilience, final retail holiday results will be greatly influenced by timing of everything from promotions to news of the day."

Consumers plan to spend more, and they are planning ways to mitigate that additional spending. Going hand-in-hand with the expectations of higher prices, on average, consumers plan to spend \$796 on holiday shopping this year, which is 3% higher than last year's spending intentions.

More than a third (34%) of holiday shoppers say they will take advantage of more deals this year. Higher prices may result in fewer gifts to wrap, as 31% of shoppers say they will buy fewer items this holiday. Holiday shoppers have expanded the duration of their shopping season with an early start. Almost half of consumers plan on starting their holiday shopping before Thanksgiving and 24% have already started or even finished, up nearly 4% points from last year. Black Friday remains most popular of traditional shopping days, with 19% planning it as the kick-off to their holiday shopping. The number of consumers planning to wait till December, thereby getting a late start to holiday shopping, is the lowest (19%) it has been in recent years. Practicality takes center stage as consumers are planning on spending more on things like home appliances, housewares, and sporting goods. Consumers plan to spend more on lower cost indulgences like beauty products, but planned spending is down for some of the traditionally higher ticket purchases like technology, electronics and home improvement products. Nearly two-thirds of consumers indicate that their household grocery costs will have an impact on their holiday shopping this year. Marketers will need to be diligent in their efforts to inspire the consumer, whether it is tapping into pent-up demand for products from key industries or appealing to the consumer's core value of the moment. ■ Source: Circana

Australia: Record Black Friday weekend bonanza tipped to hit \$6.8 billion as shoppers chase value

Australians are poised to spend a record \$6.8 billion over the Black Friday–Cyber Monday weekend, according to the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) in partnership with Roy Morgan — a 4% increase on last year. ARA CEO Chris Rodwell said the four-day event from 28 November – 1 December plays a vital role in boosting momentum for retailers across the crucial peak season trading period. “Black Friday has firmly cemented its place on Australia’s retail calendar — delivering critical cashflow to discretionary retailers and small businesses who’ve faced subdued consumer activity for the past two years.”

The survey reveals women are almost evenly split between using Black Friday to buy Christmas gifts (17%) or for themselves (16%), while men are around four times more likely to shop for themselves (27%) than for Christmas gifts (7%).

Overall, around 6 million Australians are expected to take part in Black Friday sales this year. Women make up 3.5 million of this group, men 2.5 million.

The survey also shows that two-thirds of shoppers (66%) plan to buy both gifts and items for themselves, with the main motivations being low prices (42%), great deals (38%) and saving money on Christmas gifts (25%). Average planned spending is \$804 per person – \$750 for women and \$882 for men.

Mr Rodwell said shoppers remain intentional with their spending. “Shoppers are savvy and more deliberate — they’re waiting for big sales events like Black Friday to make larger purchases — but it’s not just about price. Australians are looking for value, reliability and a trusted retail experience.”

Recent research highlights consumers focus on key gift categories. Afterpay reports 45% of Australians are holding out for discounts on big-ticket purchases. However, clothing and shoes (45%), toys (34%), books (33%), and interiors and décor (32%) topped sales wish lists.

According to Deloitte, participation in Black Friday is also growing among Australian retailers — with 44% expected to take part this year, up 3% from 2024.

“Retail is Australia’s largest private sector employer, contributing \$430 billion or 18% of national GDP. Every dollar spent with a local retailer or national brand this Black Friday helps build confidence, employment and long-term resilience across the sector,” said Mr Rodwell.

“Unlike overseas ultra cheap digital platforms, our local and national retailers invest in training, wages, innovation and community connection — that’s worth backing this season.” ■

Source: Australian Retail Association

Furniture feels pressure as U.S. manufacturing extends slide

US factory activity shrank in October for an eighth straight month, driven by a pullback in production and tepid demand. The Institute for Supply Management’s manufacturing index eased 0.4 point to 48.7, according to data released recently. Readings below 50 indicate contraction, and the measure has been stuck in a narrow range for most of this year. The group’s production index slid 2.8 points to 48.2, marking the second month in the last three that output has contracted.

Meanwhile, inflationary pressures continued to ease. The index of prices paid for raw materials fell 3.9 points to 58, the lowest since the start of the year. Since a recent peak in April, during the height of the tariff rollout, the price gauge has dropped nearly 12 points. Economists and policymakers are relying more on private reports such as the ISM survey for clues on the economy and job market in the absence of official data because of the US government

shutdown. Friday’s scheduled employment report is also poised to be delayed as a result.

Manufacturing industries contracted in October, led by textiles, apparel and furniture. Six industries, including primary metals and transportation equipment, reported growth. The survey illustrates general malaise among the nation’s manufacturers who are contending with lingering uncertainty around trade policy. Producers are navigating evolving supply chains as they source materials. The ISM measure of supplier deliveries rose to a four-month high, indicating longer lead times. Bookings shrank for a second month in October, though at a slower pace, the ISM report showed. Order backlogs, another indicator of demand, also contracted. Inventories at manufacturers shrank by the most in a year. Customers’ stockpiles also remained low, suggesting some scope for orders to pick up and support production. ■ *Source: Furniture Today*

EPCH leads Indian contingent to Hong Kong Mega Show

Highlights India as a Prime Sourcing Destination

Hong Kong; 20th - 23rd October 2025



Ms. Surbhi Goyal, Acting Consul General of India in Hong Kong, inaugurated the India Pavilion at Hong Kong Mega Show, in the presence of Mr. Aman Agarwal, Consul (Commercial), Consul General of India in Hong Kong; and Mr. Ashok Kumar Verma, Deputy Director, O/o DC (Handlooms), Govt. of India. She also met the exhibitors and the Master crafts persons at the Pavilion

EPCH set up an exclusive India Pavilion in Hong Kong Mega Show, held at Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, from 20th to 23rd October 2025. This participation emphasised India's position as a premier global sourcing destination for diverse handicraft products. The EPCH India pavilion was inaugurated by Ms. Surbhi Goyal, Acting Consul General of India in Hong Kong, in the presence of Mr. Aman Agarwal, Consul (Commercial), Consul General of India in Hong Kong; Mr. Ashok Kumar Verma, Deputy Director, O/o DC (Handloom), Govt. of India; and Mr. Sushil Kumar Agrawal, Deputy Director, EPCH, along with participating member exporters, Master crafts persons and representatives from the fair organiser.

During her inaugural address, Ms. Surbhi Goyal praised efforts of the Council for bringing Indian Handicrafts to the world markets and promotion of handicraft exports from the country. She also interacted with member participants and showing particular interest in live craft demonstrations by Master crafts persons.

The Council participated with 10 member exporters featuring a curated selection of Indian handicrafts, exclusive products display including artmetalware, home textiles, home furnishings, leather products, Christmas decoratives, kitchen accessories, etc. along with three Master crafts persons of Shazar Stone Craft, Banda, Uttar Pradesh; Pattachitra, Odisha and Sikki Art, Delhi, deputed by O/o Development Commissioner (Handicrafts).

EPCH also undertook a Road Show for the promotion of the forthcoming IHGF Delhi Fair-Spring 2026. These initiatives are

designed to enhance awareness of India's position as a leading sourcing destination for handicrafts, furniture and lifestyle products, while reinforcing the IHGF Delhi Fair as one of the world's largest and most trusted sourcing platforms.



Road Show for the promotion of the IHGF Delhi Fair Spring, 2026, to be held in February next year

Hong Kong Mega Show is a major marketing platform and sourcing hub for Asian products. Mega Show is in its 32nd edition showcased an array of gifts and premiums products, housewares, lifestyle products, toys, festive supplies and sporting goods within the Asia-

Pacific region. The show is a cross-industry event, bringing together the diversity and innovative power of Asian products under one roof and promotes international trade by creating networking opportunities, facilitating business initiation and exchanging knowledge and trends between exhibitors and visitors. ■

Live Demonstration by Master Crafts Persons enthuses visitors

India Mela 2025, Osaka, Japan; 11th - 20th October 2025

EPCH participated in the 14th edition of the annual India Mela 2025, held at Meriden Park, Kobe City, Japan, from 11th to 20th October 2025. The event was organised by the Consulate General of India, Osaka, Japan.

EPCH showcased India's rich handicraft heritage through the participation of five Master crafts persons deputed by the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. Among them were one Padma Shri awardee, one Shilp Guru and three National Awardees, representing diverse crafts – Bandhani Tie

& Dye from Gujarat, Sholapith craft from West Bengal, Muria Wood Craft from Chhattisgarh, Handmade Dari craft from Uttar Pradesh and Molela Craft Works from Rajasthan.

The India Mela was inaugurated by Mr. Chandru Appar, Consul General of India at Osaka, Japan, in the presence of Mr. Masao Imanishi, Deputy Mayor of Kobe City; Mr. Yoshinori Sugano, Chairman, Kobe Assembly; Mr. Akihito Shiomi, Director General; and other distinguished guests, including representatives from the Indian Chamber of Commerce-Japan (ICCJ) and the India Club, Osaka.

The Consul General extended special appreciation to the national awardee Master crafts persons and invited the citizens of Osaka-Kobe to visit their stalls to experience live demonstrations of Indian handicrafts, which were also available for sale. The event served as a vibrant platform to promote India's traditional craftsmanship and cultural exchange between the two nations. ■



The India Mela was inaugurated by Mr. Chandru Appar, Consul General of India at Osaka, Japan, in the presence of Mr. Masao Imanishi, Deputy Mayor of Kobe City; Mr. Yoshinori Sugano, Chairman, Kobe Assembly; Mr. Akihito Shiomi, Director General; and other distinguished guests, including representatives from the Indian Chamber of Commerce-Japan (ICCJ) and the India Club, Osaka



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IHGF Delhi Fair Promotions at High Point Market, USA

North Carolina, USA; 25th - 28th September 2025



EPCH booth being inaugurated by veteran & respected buying agent, Mr. C S Unni along with Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman EPCH; Mr. Naved Rehman, COA Member, EPCH; senior buying agents Mr. Prashanth Vasudevan and Ms. Radhika Kukreja; and Mr. Alfred L Bolton, Managing Director, High Point Exhibitions Inc. USA

In its continual efforts to promote Indian handicrafts globally, EPCH launched an extensive promotional campaign for the special edition of its 61st IHGF Delhi Fair Spring 2026 - focused on Furniture. The campaign began on a high note at the High Point Market, North Carolina, USA – known to be the world's largest international business hub for furniture.

EPCH promotional booth at "Suits at Market Square" was inaugurated by veteran & respected buying agent, Mr. C S Unni along with Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman EPCH; Mr. Naved Rehman, COA Member, EPCH; senior buying agents Mr. Prashanth Vasudevan and Ms. Radhika Kukreja; and Mr. Alfred L Bolton, Managing Director, High Point Exhibitions Inc. USA.

Dr. Neeraj Khanna also had an interactive luncheon meeting with leading trade publications and officials of High Point Authority and they agreed to collaborate with EPCH and IHGF for reaching out to a larger sourcing community who are yet to explore Indian furniture & home furnishings.

Dr. Neeraj Khanna and Mr. Naved Rehman visited and had a meaningful discussion with some leading and established brands showrooms. IHGF Delhi Fair is a well-recognised brand amongst the American importers, and they were pleased to accept the invitation to visit the 61st IHGF Delhi Fair - Spring 2026. The EPCH delegation also interacted several member exporters and buying agents who were walking the High Point Market and meeting their customers.



A series of business magazine advertorials, email and publicity campaign with special focus on furniture were showcased by EPCH during the High Point Market week in October 2025 at two adjoining international airports: Piedmont Triad International Airport, Greensboro; and Charlotte Douglas International Airport, North Carolina. ■

Export and Business Opportunities for MSMEs in Bikaner District

National Seminar at Bikaner; 8th October 2025



Mr. Joyjeet Dutta, Director, International Sales, Global Brand Partners Pte Ltd., Singapore; and former Senior General Manager, Benetton Group

A National Seminar on Export and Business Opportunities for MSMEs in Bikaner District (especially for women) was organised by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, in association with EPCH, GeM Portal, Laghu Udhog Bharti, Bikaner, FIEO, KVIC, NABARD and other government and private sector organisations on 8th October 2025 at Hotel Rajmahal, Bikaner. This saw the presence of Prof. Akhil Ranjan Garg, Vice Chancellor, Bikaner Technical University, Bikaner; Mr. Tarun Bhatnagar, Assistant Director, MSME, Jaipur;

Ms. Rakhi Jain, Zonal President, Laghu Udhog Bharti Women Wing, Bikaner; Mr. Rajesh Goyal, President, Laghu Udhog Bharti, Bikaner; Mr. Rohit Jain, IPR Attorney, Jaipur; Mr. Ramesh Tambaria, DDM, NABARD; Mr. Jai Kulshrestha, Assistant Director, KVIC, Bikaner; Mr. Gopal Sharma, EPCH Jodhpur Representative, along with officers from FIEO, JIESM and other institutions.

The session was moderated by Mr. Tarun Bhatnagar, Assistant Director, MSME, Jaipur, who welcomed all dignitaries, officials and industrialists. He highlighted the role of the MSME Department in promoting industrial development across India and informed participants about various subsidies and schemes available to support MSMEs. Officials from DIC, IPR, FIEO, GeM Portal, NABARD, KVIC, JIESM and other organisations shared information about their respective departmental schemes during the session. The EPCH Jodhpur representative spoke on the Council's role and services, including seminars, workshops, international fairs and exhibitions, design development, overseas promotion, CHMS and multifaceted initiatives undertaken by the Council. A corporate video on EPCH's activities was also screened during the session. ■

Global Market Trends and Product Strategies for International Competitiveness

Interactive Session at Kolkata; 26th October 2025

The Eastern Regional Office of EPCH organised an interactive session with Mr. Gunnar Hoffrichter, a renowned German senior consultant and advisor in the crafts products industry, on 26th October 2025 at The Fern Residency, Kolkata. The session offered valuable insights for handicrafts exporters from Kolkata, focusing on emerging global market trends, visual merchandising and product development strategies to enhance their competitiveness in international markets.

A highlight of the event was an engaging question-and-answer session, where participants interacted directly with Mr. Hoffrichter to seek guidance on real-world business challenges and opportunities. Key topics discussed



Mr. O P Prahladka, COA Member & Eastern Region Convenor, EPCH; and Mr. Gunnar Hoffrichter, renowned German senior consultant and advisor, seen interacting with the audience at the seminar

included: Overcoming challenges in entering new international markets; Adapting products to align with global consumer preferences; Leveraging sustainability and ethical sourcing as strategic marketing tools; and Strengthening communication with

international buyers. The session served as a practical learning platform, enabling participants to better understand the evolving dynamics of global trade and refine their strategies for sustained growth in the international handicrafts market. ■

Cost & Competitiveness of MSMEs in India

Cluster Level Workshop at Jodhpur; 27th October 2025

A Cluster Level Workshop on “Cost & Competitiveness of MSMEs in India” was organised on 27th October 2025 by the MSME-Development & Facilitation Office (DFO), Ministry of MSME, Government of India, in association with EPCH, at the Trade Facilitation Centre, Jodhpur.

Dignitaries present on the occasion included, Mr. Pradeep Ojha, HoO & Joint Director, MSME-DFO; Mr. Dindayal Gajbhiye, Joint Director, Ministry of MSME, New Delhi; Mr. C B Naval, Additional Commissioner, O/o Industries and Commerce, Government of Rajasthan; Mr. S L Paliwal, Joint Commissioner & General Manager, DIC, Jodhpur; Mr. Hansraj Baheti, COA Member, EPCH; Mr. Ghanshyam Ojha, Former National President, Laghu Udhog Bharati; Mr. Pankaj Bhandari, President, Laghu Udhog Bharati, Jodhpur; Mr. Ashish Mehta, Coordinator, Jodhpur Handicrafts Exporters Federation; Mr. Rajesh Gupta, Chairman, Young Entrepreneurs Society (YES), Jodhpur Chapter; Mr. Anurag Lohiya, President, Jodhpur Industries Association; Prof. G H S Prasad, Director, NIFT, Jodhpur; Mr. Ravi Veer Choudhary, Assistant Director, O/o DC (Handicrafts), Jodhpur; Mr. Suresh Bishnoi, Joint Coordinator, Laghu Udhog Bharati; Prof. Richa Singh, Department of CSE, IIT Jodhpur; and Mr. Dharmendra Bishnoi, AGM, SIDBI, Jodhpur. The workshop was also attended by several stakeholders from various organisations and industry bodies.

The session began with a welcome address by Mr. Ajay Sharma, Assistant Director-I, MSME-DFO, Jaipur. Mr. Pradeep Ojha, HoO & Joint Director, MSME-DFO, Jaipur, delivered a presentation on the theme of the workshop, while Mr. Dindayal Gajbhiye, Joint Director, Ministry of MSME, New Delhi, extended a warm welcome to all dignitaries and participants. Mr. Hansraj Baheti shared his inputs and suggestions with the MSME Department on key areas such as interest subvention, fair subsidies, RoDTEP benefits, and subsidy on container transportation. Mr. Rajesh Gupta expressed his gratitude to the MSME Department for organising this valuable platform,

enabling exporters to interact directly with government departments and discuss challenges and suggestions.

Officials from various departments presented details of their respective government schemes and support programs. Representatives from multiple industry associations discussed their challenges and recommendations on topics such as GST, duties and taxation, land and utilities, financial and capital costs, cost of inputs and raw materials, marketing, compliance, logistics, quality standards, technology, innovation, and R&D.

Mr. Dharmendra Bishnoi, AGM, SIDBI, Jodhpur, made a presentation on GIFT and SPICE schemes of SIDBI. The workshop concluded with an Open House Discussion, during which all stakeholders actively participated, sharing insights and recommendations to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of MSMEs in India. ■



Mr. Hansraj Baheti, COA Member, EPCH, addressing the gathering



A participant raising a query at the workshop

Entrepreneurship and Export Opportunities for Handicraft Products

Awareness Seminar at Villupuram, Tamil Nadu; 28th October 2025

EPCH's Southern Regional Office organised an awareness programme on the topic "Entrepreneurship and Export Opportunities for Handicraft Products" in association with the District Industries Centre - Villupuram, Tamil Nadu on 28th October 2025.

In this programme Mr. Arul, General Manager DIC; Mr. Jaikumar, Deputy Director FIEO; Mr. Vibith, Director Start up Tamil Nadu; Ms. Jayapriya, Senior Manager TNAPEX; Ms. Tamizmani Subramniam, Chief General Manager, Indian Bank; and Mr. Nazir, Lead District Manager, DIC Villupuram, were present.

The main objective of the seminar was to provide budding entrepreneurs from Villupuram district with insights into export procedures, documentation, and ways to access overseas marketing



platforms through the Council. The EPCH Regional Officer addressed the gathering, elaborating on the Council's role and the various opportunities and support initiatives available for the growth of handicraft exporters. Officials from other organisations also shared information about their respective schemes and departmental activities. The event concluded with an interactive session. ■

Entrepreneurship and Export Opportunities for Handicraft Micro Entrepreneurs

Awareness Seminar at Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu; 29th October 2025

EPCH's Southern Regional Office, Bangalore, in association with MSME, Chennai, organised a seminar on "Entrepreneurship and Export Opportunities for Handicraft Micro Entrepreneurs" of Kumbakonam District, Tamil Nadu.

The event was graced by Dr. Palanimuthu, Director, NIFTEM; Mr. Suresh Babu, IEDS, Joint Director, MSME Chennai; Mr. C P Reddy, MSME; Mr. Banavath Punnam Kumar, ITS, JDGFT Chennai; Mr. Subramaniyan, President, TANDISTA Kumbakonam; Mr. N. Subramaniyan, Zonal Manager, Indian Bank Kumbakonam; and Ms. Madhumati, Regional Head, APEDA.

The main objective of the seminar was to provide exposure and valuable insights to budding entrepreneurs, particularly those engaged in GI handicrafts from Kumbakonam and nearby clusters, on entrepreneurship development, export procedures, documentation and accessing global markets. The Regional Officer addressed the gathering and delivered a detailed presentation on the Council's activities, highlighting the various opportunities and support mechanisms available for the growth and upliftment of handicraft exporters. Officials from other organisations, including DGFT, Walmart, ZOHO, APEDA and the Postal Department, also presented their respective schemes and initiatives. The event concluded with an engaging interactive session, allowing participants to clarify queries and exchange ideas for business growth and export enhancement. ■



This column is compiled by Consultant [EXIM Policy] of EPCH. It contains recent Public Notices, Notifications and Circulars of DGFT, CBIC and Department of Revenue. If a handicraft exporter has question[s] to ask on Foreign Trade Policy, he/she may please write / e-mail to EPCH at policy@epch.com

Impex # 1

DGFT notified updates to the SCOMET (Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies) list

On 23rd September 2025, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) issued Notification amending the SCOMET (Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment, and Technologies) list under the Foreign Trade Policy 2023.

The update incorporates changes to India's export control framework in line with international non-proliferation commitments and national security objectives, introducing new entries, amendments, and restructured classifications that exporters must carefully review for compliance.

The revised SCOMET list, notified through the said notification, will come into force 30 days from issuance, i.e., from 23rd October 2025.

Copy of Notification No. 31/2025-26 - DGFT Dated: 23 September 2025

Subject: Notification on Revision of SCOMET List under Appendix-3 of Schedule-II(Export Policy), ITC(HS), 2022 - regarding.

S.O. 4505(E): In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 3 read with Section 5 and Section 14A of the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992, and in accordance with Para 1.02 and Para 2.01 of the Foreign Trade Policy 2023, as amended from time to time, the Central Government hereby notifies an amendment to Appendix-3 (List of SCOMET Items) of Schedule-II (Export Policy) of ITC(HS) 2022.

2. The revised Appendix-3 (List of SCOMET Items), as annexed, will be uploaded on the DGFT website (<https://dgft.gov.in>) under the heading "Regulatory Updates" and subheading "Import, Export and SCOMET Policy."

3. To allow adequate transition time for industry stakeholders, this Notification shall come into force 30 days from the date of issuance.

Effect of this Notification: The SCOMET List in Appendix-3 of Schedule-II has been updated in line with multilateral export control regimes. The revised SCOMET List shall come into effect 30 days from the date of this Notification.

Impex # 2

Import Policy on certain Articles of Jewellery and Parts under Chapter 71 has been Revised

The Import Policy on HSN 71131141 which relates to "Other Jewellery Studded" and 71131149 - Other Jewellery Other has been revised from "FREE" to "RESTRICTED"

The change is effective immediately and will continue till 31.03.2026.

Copy of Notification No. 34/2025-26- DGFT Dated: 24 September, 2025

Subject: Amendment in import policy of specific ITC (HS) codes under Chapter 71 of Schedule-I(Import Policy) of ITC (HS) 2022.

S.O. 4374(E): In exercise of powers conferred by Section 3 and Section 5 of Foreign Trade (Development & Regulation) Act, 1992, read with paragraph 1.02 and 2.01 of the Foreign Trade Policy 2023, as amended from time to time, the Central Government hereby amends the import policy of specific ITC HS codes under Chapter 71 of ITC (HS), 2022, Schedule - I (Import Policy), with immediate effect, till 31.03.2026, as under:

ITC(HS) Code	Description Policy	Existing Import Policy	Revised Import Policy
7113	Articles of jewellery and parts thereof, of precious metal or of metal clad with precious metal.		
711311	- Of precious metal, whether or not plated or clad with precious metal : - Of silver, whether or not plated or clad with other precious metal		
71131141	- Other Jewellery : -- Unstudded	Free	Restricted
71131149	- Other Jewellery: -- Other	Free	Restricted

Effect of the Notification: The Import Policy of ITC (HS) code 71131141 and 71131149 has been amended from "Free" to "Restricted" with immediate effect, till 31.03.2026.

This is issued with the approval of the Minister of Commerce & Industry.

Impex # 3

RoDTEP Scheme is extended till 31.03.2026

DGFT has extended the RoDTEP Scheme, ensuring continued support for exporters across sectors. This move provides much-needed stability and predictability till 31st March 2026.

The benefit under the RoDTEP scheme for both DTA as well as AA/EOUs and SEZ both as per the applicable rates under Appendix 4R and Appendix 4RE will continue till 31.03.2026.

Copy of Notification No: 35/2025 - DGFT Dated: 30 September, 2025

Subject: Extension of RoDTEP Scheme for DTA Units beyond 30.09.2025 and Applicability to DTA/AA/SEZ/EOU Exports till 31.03.2026 - reg.

S.O. 4499(E): In exercise of the powers conferred under Section 5 of the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992, as amended, read with Para 1.02 of the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023, the Central Government hereby notifies the extension of the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) Scheme beyond 30.09.2025. Accordingly, the RoDTEP Scheme shall remain in force and be applicable to exports made from Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) units, Advance Authorisation (AA) holders, Special Economic Zone (SEZ) units, and Export Oriented Units (EOUs) up to 31.03.2026.

2. The existing RoDTEP rates, as notified, shall continue to apply for all export items. The operation of the scheme shall, however, remain subject to the budgetary framework provided under Para 4.54 of FTP 2023, so that the remissions during the financial year are managed within the approved allocation.

3. The list of eligible export items, along with the applicable rates, and per-unit value caps wherever applicable, is available in Appendix 4R (for DTA units) and Appendix 4RE (for AA/SEZ/EOU units) at the DGFT website (dgft.gov.in) under the link: "Regulations> RoDTEP". Effect of this Notification: The RoDTEP Scheme stands extended and shall be applicable for eligible exports from DTA, AA, SEZ, and EOU units up to 31.03.2026.

Impex # 4

Syncing of ITC(HS) 2022 with Finance Act 2025

DGFT has aligned the list of ITC(HS) codes and its related policy conditions by inserting / deleting / amending / splitting/ merging the ITC(HS) 2022 Schedule I (Import Policy) in sync with the Finance Act 2025

Refer to the Updated ITC(HS) Import Policy or Annexure I of the said Notification.

Annexure II of the said notification as updated Section Notes, Chapter Note and other details in Sync with the Finance Act 2025.

Copy of Notification No. 44/2025-26- DGFT Dated: 15th October, 2025

Subject: Syncing of ITC (HS), 2022- Schedule-1 (Import Policy) with Finance Act 2025 (No. 07 of 2025) dated 29.03.2025 -reg.

S.O. (E): In exercise of powers conferred by Section 3 read with Section 5 of the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992 (as amended from time to time) read with paragraph 1.02 and 2.01 of the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023, the Central Government hereby amends 'ITC (HS) 2022, Schedule-I (Import Policy)' in sync with the Finance Act 2025 (No.07 of 2025) dated 29.03.2025.

2.The List of ITC(HS) Codes and related Policy Conditions inserted/deleted/amended/split/merged under ITC(HS) 2022, Schedule-I (Import Policy) in sync with the Finance Act, 2025 and is annexed herewith (Annexure-I).

3. The amendments in the Section Notes, Chapter-wise Main Notes, Supplementary Notes, Chapter heading, sub-headings and description of ITC (HS) codes in sync with the Finance Act, 2025 are annexed herewith (Annexure-II).

4.The updated ITC (HS) 2022 Schedule-1 (Import Policy) shall be available on the website of DGFT (<https://dgft.gov.in>).
Effect of this Notification: ITC (HS) 2022, Schedule-I (Import Policy) is amended in sync with the Finance Act. 2025.

This shall come into force with immediate effect.

Impex # 5

Extension of filing of Annual RoDTEP Return (for 2023-24)

Exporters who have claimed Rs. 1 Crore or More of RoDTEP in FY 2023-24 are required to file the Annual RoDTEP Return.

The date of Annual return was upto 30.06.2025 and with compensation fees of Rs. 10,000 it was 30.09.2025.

The date with compensation fees extended from 30.09.2025 to 30.11.2025

Exporters, who are required to file the annual return, must do so at the earliest.

Copy of Public Notices No. 24/2025-26- DGFT Dated: 3rd October, 2025

Subject: - Extension of filing Annual RoDTEp Returns _reg.

F.No.01/61/180/166/AM24/PC-3. -In exercise of the powers conferred under paragraph 1.03 &2.04 of the Foreign Trade Policy, 2023, as amended from time to time, the last date of filing Annual RoDTEp Returns for Financial Year 2023-24 with composition fee of Rs 10,000 is extended till 30.11.2025

Effect of this Public Notice: The date for filing of Annual RoDTEp Return (ARR) has been extended from 30.09.2025 to 30.11.2025 in the interest of export promotion and ease of doing business.

Impex # 6

India-EFTA TEPA Kicks Off Oct 1

The India-European Free Trade Association Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (India-EFTA TEPA) taking effect on October 1, 2025, exporters can now obtain electronic Certificates of Origin (eCOO) via the Trade Connect platform

Exports to Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland can apply for Preferential Certificates of Origin (CoOs) through Trade Connect.

The FTA Agreement provides 2 methods for issuance of COO

a. Self-Declaration (by exporters with valid DSC linked to IEC).

b. Authorised Agency Issuance (via notified issuing agencies).

Copy of Trade Notice No. 13/2025-2026- DGFT Dated: September 30th, 2025

Subject: Electronic filing and Issuance of Preferential Certificate of Origin (CoO) under India-European Free Trade Association Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (India-EFTA TPA) with effect from October 01, 2025 - regarding.

It is informed that upon coming into force of India- European Free Trade Association Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (India-EFTA TEPA) on October 01, 2025, Preferential Certificates of Origin for exports to Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland under the above said agreement will be rolled out on Trade Connect ePlatform (www.trade.gov.in) which serves as the unified digital platform for application and issuance of all electronic Certificates of Origin (eCOO) for Indian exports.

2. As per the agreed terms of the India-EFTA TEPA, eCOO will be available via the "Certificate of Origin" service on Trade Connect ePlatform for issuance on the basis of: (i) self-declaration, as well as (ii) by an authorised agency.
3. The following key points may be noted regarding the issuance of Preferential eCOO for India-EFTA TEPA on self-declaration basis:
 - i. Digital Signature (DSC) is a mandatory requirement for generation of Self-Declaration based eCOO. Only those users (referred to as applicant in this section) whose profiles are linked with the IEC with a valid DSC will be able to complete this process.
 - ii. Uploading of scanned copy of ink signed signatures of the applicant is also a mandatory requirement for generation of Self-Declaration based eCOO. The option to upload the same will be available during the generation stage of the self-declaration based eCOO.
 - iii. The applicant may proceed with the application for self-declaration based eCOO by selecting Agreement name as "India EFTA TEPA (Self-Declaration)".
 - iv. All necessary details may be filled as per the application form available, and the application may be submitted using Digital Signature (DSC) or Aadhar authentication without payment of any fee.
 - v. During the application, applicant will also select the necessary branch address as available in the corresponding IEC details. Based on the branch selected, mapping of the jurisdiction Regional Authority of DGFT or the jurisdictional SEZ will be automatically fetched and registered in the application. The concerned authority mapped will undertake verification activity in case of concerns raised by the partner countries as per the agreement.
 - vi. Once submitted, the application appears with file status as "Auto Approved Pending Issuance".
 - vii. The applicant may then proceed by clicking on "Generate Self-Declared CoO" against the submitted application. The system will also prompt for uploading scanned copy of signature of the applicant (if not already uploaded during a previous application of the same type) which needs to be saved.
 - viii. With the mandatory use of the linked DSC of the applicant, the Self-Declaration based eCOO may then be generated.
 - ix. Self-Declaration based eCOO will be generated in two copies, both with QR code and digital signature, that can be downloaded and utilised by the applicant: "Electronic Copy" with scanned signature in the place available for signature. "Physical Copy" with blank space for the applicant to physically sign after printing the certificate.

- x The above copies may be submitted to recipient EFTA country as required by the concerned authorities.
- 4. The following key points may be noted regarding the issuance of Preferential eCOO for India-EFTA TEPA by authorised agency:
 - i. The applicant may proceed with the application by selecting the agreement name as "India EFTA TEPA (Agency Issued)"
 - ii. The list of authorised agencies as per the terms of the agreement and duly notified will be available for selection by applicants.
 - iii. On submission of the completed application and approval by the authorised agency, an "Electronic Copy" of the eCOO with QR code and digital signature will be generated by the system.
 - iv. The "Electronic Copy" shall bear the image of the signature of the issuing officer as well as the stamp of the issuing agency which can be downloaded and utilised by the applicant.
- 5. The following common guidelines are to be followed by all IEC holders and associated users/applicants:
 - i. Existing user credentials for DGFT website (dgft.gov.in) may be used for login on Trade Connect ePlatform (www.trade.gov.in) without creation of new login credentials.
 - ii. Additional user accounts for the same IEC, if necessary, may be created and linked using DSC on dgft.gov.in and the credentials can be used on Trade Connect ePlatform for login including for filing/generating eCOO.
 - iii. The types of digital signatures accepted in the DGFT common digital ecosystem and the process of linking DSC to IEC can be perused at dgft.gov.in by navigating to the "Learn" tab, selecting "Application Help and FAQs" (<https://www.dgft.gov.in/CP/?opt=application-help>), and going through the help documents and videos under "IEC Profile Management" section.
 - iv. All users may ensure that their name in the DGFT/Trade Connect user profile matches completely with the name in the Digital Signature (DSC).
 - v. All IEC holders may ensure that that updated details related to the IEC are available in the DGFT system in order that the correct details are available for selection during application for eCOO.
- 6. The authenticity of any eCoO issued from Trade Connect ePlatform may be verified by scanning the QR code on the certificate or by navigating to "Verify certificate" option under the Certificate of Origin service on Trade Connect ePlatform and keying in the certificate number.
- 7. Support Channels: Exporters and stakeholders are encouraged to reach out to the Certificate of Origin (CoO) Helpdesk for assistance with any queries, suggestions, or feedback. Support is available through the following channels:
 - i. Ticketing system is available under the option "Log a ticket" under the Certificate of Origin service of Trade Connect ePlatform.
 - ii. Toll-Free Assistance may be availed on the following phone numbers: 011-23061495 / 011-23061499.
 - iii. Email inquiries may be sent to coo-dgft@gov.in.

This notice is issued with the approval of competent authority.

Impex # 7 Auto-approval of Incentive Bank Account and IFSC Code Registration requests across all customs locations

Bank account registration is required for IGST refund /drawback purpose and the option is available in ICEGATE portal for applying registration of incentive bank account for every port, where exporter intends to transact.

In order to further streamline the process, it has been decided that the system will automatically approve requests for registration of the same incentive bank account and IFSC code for an Importer Exporter Code (IEC) at different customs locations, provided that the same combination has already been approved at any one customs location.

The existing workflow of submission of requests shall remain unchanged. However, in the above-mentioned cases, the approval will be granted directly by the system, and such requests will not be routed to the Port officer for manual approval.

Copy of Circular No 24/2025-Customs (Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs)

Subject : Auto-approval of Incentive Bank Account and IFSC Code Registration requests across all customs locations - reg.

Reference is invited to instruction No 25/2023-Customs dated 28.07.2023 which stipulates list of documentary requirement and timeline for approval of AD code and IFSC registration for incentive bank account at the port. It is stated that, with respect to bank account registration for IGST refund /drawback purpose option is available in ICEGATE portal for applying registration of incentive bank account for every port, where exporter intends to transact. Vide the said instruction it directed to put in place a suitable mechanism the application for AD Code/bank account registration dealt on same day when made before 2 PM. In other cases, the application should be disposed before 2PM on next working day.

2. The Board has examined the IFSC code approval requests at different ports in consultation with the Directorate General of Systems. In order to further streamline the process, it has been decided that the system will automatically approve requests for registration of the same incentive bank account and IFSC code for an Importer Exporter Code (IEC) at different customs locations, provided that the same combination has already been approved at any one customs location.
3. The existing workflow of submission of requests shall remain unchanged. However, in the above-mentioned cases, the approval will be granted directly by the system, and such requests will not be routed to the Port officer for manual approval. Once approved by the system, the request will continue to flow to PFMS (Public Financial Management System) for validation, as per the existing process.
4. This initiative is expected to further improve the efficiency of customs procedures and better Customs experience for the trade.
5. Any difficulties or issues faced in this regard may be brought to the notice of the Board for necessary redressal.

Impex # 8 RBI Eases Compliance for Small Exporters & Importers under EDPMS & IDPMS

On October 1, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued a fresh circular (A.P. DIR Series Circular No. 12 / 2025-26) simplifying the process for Export Data Processing and Monitoring System (EDPMS) and Import Data Processing and Monitoring System (IDPMS) entries, especially for small-value transactions.

Entries valued at ₹10 lakh or below (per bill/entry) can now be closed based on a declaration from the exporter (confirming realization) or importer (confirming payment).

This applies even to outstanding entries.

Exporters and importers can submit quarterly consolidated declarations (covering multiple bills together) to close bulk entries under EDPMS/IDPMS.

Authorised Dealer (AD) Banks are directed to review their charges for handling these small-value transactions in line with the relaxed norms.

Importantly, no penal charges are to be levied for delays in following regulatory guidelines.

The Master Directions - Export of Goods & Services has also been suitably amended to add new para C.31.

Copy of RBI/2025-26/89 A.P. (DIR Series) Circular No.12 October 01, 2025

Export Data Processing and Monitoring System (EDPMS) & Import Data Processing and Monitoring System (IDPMS) - reconciliation of export /import entries - Review of Guidelines

Attention of Authorised Dealer Category - I banks (AD banks) is invited to the instructions in the Master Direction - Export of Goods & Services and Master Direction - Import of Goods & Services, related to processing of bills in EDPMS and IDPMS respectively.

2. To facilitate timely closure of entries in EDPMS & IDPMS, and to reduce compliance burden on small exporters and importers, the following directions are being issued.
3. Notwithstanding anything contained in the aforesaid master directions, AD banks shall adopt the following procedure while closing entries (including outstanding entries) in EDPMS & IDPMS of value equivalent to ₹10 lakh per entry/bill or less:
 - a. Such entries shall be reconciled and closed based on a declaration provided by the concerned exporter that the amount has been realised or by the importer that the amount has been paid.
 - b. Any reduction in declared value or invoice value of the shipping bills/bills of entry shall also be accepted, based on the declaration by the concerned exporter or importer.
 - c. The declarations referred above may also be received on a quarterly basis from the exporters and importers in a consolidated manner (by combining several bills in one declaration) for bulk reconciliation and closing of EDPMS/IDPMS entries.
4. Accordingly, AD banks shall also review the charges levied for handling these small-value export and import transactions, keeping in view the revised procedure/relaxations mentioned above and ensure that the same are commensurate with the services rendered. AD banks shall not levy any penal charges (penalty) for delays in adherence to any regulatory guidelines.
5. The above instructions shall come into force with immediate effect. The Master Direction - Export of Goods & Services and Master Direction - Import of Goods & Services shall accordingly be updated to reflect the above changes.
6. AD banks may bring the contents of this circular to the notice of their constituents concerned.
7. The directions contained in this circular have been issued under sections 10(4) and 11(1) of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999 (42 of 1999) and are without prejudice to permissions / approvals, if any, required under any other law.



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EPCH Offices & Contact Points

Headquarter

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH)

"EPCH House", Pocket-6 & 7, Sector 'C', L.S.C., Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110 070

Tel: +91-11-26135256/57/58/75; E-mail: mails@epch.com; Web: www.epch.in

Important Contact Points at EPCH Headquarter

Section	Email	Ext. No.	Section	Email	Ext. No.
Membership	membership@epch.com	121	Accounts	accounts@epch.com	132
Policy	policy@epch.com	118	Trade Complaints	projects@epch.com	130
Fairs	ihgf@epch.com	110			

Regional / Representative Offices

Bangalore

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
302, 3rd Floor, Cears Plaza, No. 136,
Residency Road, Bangalore-560025
Tel: +91-80-22107367, 22107369
Email: bangalore@epch.com

Guwahati

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship
Near Game Village, Basistha Chariali,
Guwahati-781029
Mobile: +91-9401844963
E-mail: ner@epch.com

Jaipur

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
IS-2033-A, Ramchandrapura, Sitapura Extn.,
RIICO Industrial Area, Near JECRC University,
Jaipur - 302022
Mob: +91-9983321833
E-mail: jaipur@epch.com

Kolkata

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
53/1, Sambhunath Pandit Street, First Floor,
Kolkata-700025
Tel: +91-33-24191744, 24191745
E-mail: kolkata@epch.com

Moradabad

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
12A, C-86, New Moradabad Yojana, Delhi Road,
Moradabad-244001
Tel: +91-591-2480075
Email: moradabad@epch.com

Mumbai

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
3rd Floor, Y. B. Chavan Centre,
Gen. J. Bhosale Marg, Mumbai-400021
Tel: +91-22-22814796
E-mail: mumbai@epch.com

Narsapur

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
International Lace Trade Centre (ILTC), Rustumbada, Narsapur-534275,
West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh
Tel: +91-9959405413; E-mail: narsapur@epch.com

Patna

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
C/o Upendra Maharathi Shilp Anusandhan Sansthan
Press Road, Patliputra Industrial Area, Patna - 800013, Bihar
Mob: +91-9891469898, 9971822606; E-mail: patna@epch.com

Common Facility Centres

Jodhpur

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
SPL-1, Behind Krishi Mandi, Basni Phase-1, Jodhpur
Tel.: +91-291-2720373; Mob: +91-8766006937
E-mail: jodhpur@epch.com

Saharanpur

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts and Wood Seasoning Plant
National Centre for Photo and Picture Framing Technology
Mandi Samiti Road, Saharanpur-247001; Tel: +91-132-2613093
Mob: +91-9027463858; E-mail: saharanpur@epch.com

Trade Facilitation Centre

Jodhpur

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
EP-1, EPIP, Boranada, Jodhpur; Tel.: +91-291-2720373
Mob: +91-8766006937; E-mail: jodhpur@epch.com

Extension Counter

Agra

Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
1/129, Bagichi Tulsiram, Shahganj Parchkuiyan Road, Agra-282010
Tel: +91-562-2210246; Mob: +91-9837067762; E-mail: agra@epch.com

Member exporters are requested to update EPCH with their in-use Email ID by sending an Email to membership@epch.com updating Email details, so that they continue to receive Circulars/Notifications and other communication from EPCH.



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Mr. Mohd Asif - CFC incharge

Email: saharanpur@epch.com

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Mandi Samiti Road, Saharanpur- 247001, Uttar Pradesh

www.epch.in

For any further assistance

Mr. Rajesh Singh

Deputy Director



+91- 8800722199

Email: rajesh.singh@epch.com