

EPCH takes new show concept to member exporters through curtain raiser programmes

The Autumn edition of the Indian Handicrafts & Gifts Fair is being launched as a mega trade show, renamed as IHGF Delhi Fair that would be grander in display with over 1200 product types & styles, 12 segmented product groups from 2750 exhibitors in a much bigger space of 1,50,000sq. mtrs., Instead of the usual 4 days, the fair would be spread over 5 days.

The show will broadly cover all types of homeware and houseware requirements including, Houseware, Decoratives & Gifts; Furniture & Home Accessories; Home Textiles, Furnishings & Floor Coverings; Fashion Jewellery, Accessories & Bags; Christmas Decorations, Candles & Incense sticks; Lamps & Lighting; Corporate Gifts; Sports Goods; Educational Toys; Stationary; Luggage & Travel Goods; Pet Accessories, etc.

A Curtain Raiser of the show was organized at New Delhi on 7th April, 2014, wherein the features of the show were explained to member exporters through a presentation by Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Executive Director, EPCH. Well Known Filipino lifestyle designer, Mr P J Aranador, explained the concept of the show. The gathering posed various queries pertaining to space, product profile, layout, marketing & promotion of the show and issues regarding various other fair facilities.

Guests at the programme, Mr. Prabhat Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India and Ambassador designate to Colombia, were welcomed and a presentation was made regarding opportunities for handicraft exports in the Colombian market. Mr. Prabhat Kumar in his address, appreciated EPCH's initiatives in Latin American Countries and also welcomed many more initiatives in the region during his future tenure.

A similar Curtain Raiser was held at Kolkata on 9th April, 2014 wherein member exporters from the Eastern



A glimpse of the programme held at New Delhi and Kolkata



Region were presented a panel discussion on 'roadmap for exports from the Eastern Region'. This was initiated by Mr. O P Prahladhka, COA Member, EPCH. Mr Rakesh Kumar, Executive Director, EPCH, presented a roadmap for the growth of handicraft exports, focusing on the present status of the sector, challenges as well as action to be initiated in terms of product development, design development, tapping new markets, packaging, retail marketing, e-commerce, market intelligence, compliance, etc. The panelists included Mr. S C Panja, Addl. Director, WBSEPS; Mr. M Prabhakaran, Deputy Director, Eastern Region, O/o DC(H); Mr. Arijit Banerjee, Secretary, National Jute Board; Mr Vikram Tantia, Chairman, Silk Association of India; and Mr. D C Baheti, Chairman, IJIRA. ■

EPCH guidance seminars in Kolkata

1st March, 2014

Statutory Compliances-PF, ESI, Minimum Wages, Factory Act, etc.

Present on the occasion were, Mr. Nirmalendu Pal, Ex PF Asst., Commissioner; Smt. Sumita Mukherjee, Deputy Labour Commissioner (Enforcement), Govt. of WB; Mr. Supriyo Dey, Deputy Chief Inspector of Factories, Govt., of WB; Mr. Amitava Dutta, Asst., Director & Public Relation Officer, ESIC, WB; Mr. A K Hota, Asst., Director, DC (Handicrafts); Mr. O P Prahladka - Convenor, Eastern Region, EPCH; and Mr. Amit Sultania, member exporter, Eastern Region, EPCH.

Mr. OP Prahladka summarized the purpose of the seminar, stating that statutory compliance is not a liability, but a more effective and useful employee engagement and retention tool. Mr. Supriyo Dey elaborated on the Factories Act that regulates the working conditions. Mr. Nirmalendu Pal explained about Employee Provident Fund and that the tax free interest (compounding) and maturity ensures a good growth of the money, if continued for a very long term. Smt. Sumita Mukherjee highlighted that the term Minimum Wage Fixation, implies the fixation of the rate or rates of minimum wages by a process or by invoking the authority of the State. Mr. Amitava Dutta, Asst., Director & Public Relation Officer, ESIC, WB, spoke about the Employees State Insurance Act. 1948, tailored to suit health insurance requirements of workers to provide full medical facilities to insured persons and their dependents, as well as cash benefits to compensate for loss of wages or earning capacity. Mr. A K Hota, shared that employees are the most vital assets of a company. Fair, adequate and timely recompense is the best way to retain human talent.

8th March, 2014

Social Compliance & Skilling your Organisational Team

The objective of the seminar was to have an interaction on Social Compliance and Social Accountability that are important parameters in international business today, as buyers from major global markets, are increasingly insisting on adherence to social compliance norms. Present on the occasion were Mr. B V Rao, Product Manager -

ATTENTION MEMBERS

**Renewal of Annual
Membership
Subscription for Year
2014-15**

**Payable on 1st April,
2014**

Annual Membership of the Council for the year 2014-15 will expire on 31st March 2014. The Annual Membership subscription for the year 2014-15 will become payable on 1st April 2014. (Last date for renewal of membership is 30th June, 2014). You are therefore requested to renew your Membership for the year 2014-15 by remitting the Renewal Amount of Rs. 2,809/- (Rupees two thousand eight hundred nine only) including service tax 12.36%, by a Cheque/Demand Draft/Banker's Cheque/RTGS in favour of "Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts" payable at New Delhi. Also forward your Export Performance for the last 3 years (Proforma on website: www.epch.in).



SA 8000 & TAPA, SGS India Pvt. Ltd.; Mr. Arup Jana, Product Manager - CAS Technical, SGS India Pvt. Ltd.; Mr. G. Sunil, Independent Consultant - Proprietor, GBL Consultants, Kolkata; Mr. Bikash Dey, Handicrafts Promotion Officer, O/o DC (Handicrafts); and Mr. Anil Kothari, member exporter, EPCH. Participants included members from the region, aspiring entrepreneurs, women's Self-Help Groups, artisans and NGOs.

Mr. Anil Kothari welcomed the dignitaries and conducted the seminar. While summarizing the purpose of the seminar, he stated, to break into new markets and exceed the stakeholders' expectations, one needs to make sure that all aspects of the business are socially responsible. Mr. B V Rao spoke on Social Accountability and how it is reflected in the organization's verifiable commitment to factors such as employment health & hygiene, safety and environment laws; respect for basic civil & human rights, betterment of community and surroundings, etc. Mr. G Sunil detailed about compliance and that organizations are to abide by all applicable laws, regulations and standards applicable to its particular industry under the national laws of the countries where the organization is doing business. Should the legal requirements and the standards of the industry conflict, organizations must comply with the laws of the country in which the products are being manufactured.

Mr. Bikash Dey stated that to uplift the living & working conditions, the govt. is implementing programmes.

14th March, 2014

How to safeguard your business from Cyber Crime & IT Solutions

Present on the occasion were, Mr. Jyotirmoy Biswas, Officer, O/o ADG, CID, Govt., of West Bengal; Mr. Bharat Jajoo, specialist Advisor, Proprietor, Aryans Computer, Kolkata; Mr. A K Hota, Asst., Director, O/o Development Commissioner (Handicrafts); Mr. Amit Sultania, prominent member exporter from the region. The objective of the seminar was to encourage participants towards optimum use of the internet but aware of potential risks like cyber-crime. Mr. Amit Sultania welcomed the dignitaries and conducted the seminar. Mr. Jyotirmoy Biswas, shared that cyber

8th March, 2014



criminals have ways to infiltrate and harvest valuable data. He elaborated on the kind of information these offenders try to access. Mr. Bharat Jajoo explained that cyber-crime is evolving at a shocking pace, following the same speed of the predictable saturation of computer technology and communication into all walks of life. To avoid giving cyber criminals the initiative, it is important for those involved in the fight against cyber-crime to try to anticipate qualitative and quantitative changes in its underlying elements so that they can adjust their methods appropriately.

Mr. A K Hota, shared how despite several laws and awareness programs, lakhs of people get hacked by fraudulent people. While concluding, Mr. Amit Sultania said, it is easy to connect to a large number of people using the internet, but the strength of the internet is working as a tool for the hacker. With the internet they can fool a large number of people in a short period of time and before realization common people become victims. One of the best ways to prevent you from such frauds are to learn about how to control the online fraud and what measure one should take while using internet for sharing sensitive information.



Interactive session on Export Promotion and Facilitation

3rd April, 2014; Moradabad



EPCH organized an Interactive Session on Export Promotion and Facilitation on 3rd April, 2014, at Moradabad.

This was chaired by Mr. Mahender Singh, Chief Commissioner of Customs (Meerut Zone); Mr. Sumeet Jerath, Addl. DGFT(Delhi CLA); Mr. Mahendra Ranga, Commissioner of Customs (Meerut); Mr. R P Goyal, Jt. DGFT; Mr. Ajay Kumar, Commissioner (Income Tax); Mr. Venu Gopal, Group GM (CONCOR); Mr. Abdul Azim, Vice Chairman, EPCH; Mr. K L Katyal, Member COA, EPCH; Mr. Arvind Vadhera, immediate past Chairman, EPCH; and Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Executive Director, EPCH. Besides, other government officials from various departments such as Customs, Central Excise, DGFT, Concor, etc. were also present during the interactive session.

Mr. Abdul Azim initiated the programme by welcoming the delegates as well as member exporters. Mr. Rakesh Kumar gave an introductory address prior to the session. Mr. Satya Pal, General Secretary, Moradabad Handicrafts Exporters Association, moderated the interaction.



*Mr. Sumeet Jerath,
Additional Director General of
Foreign Trade(Delhi CLA)*

*Mr. Mahender Singh, Chief
Commissioner of Customs
(Meerut Zone)*

Among service tax issues discussed were, booking of stall space in exhibitions outside India for the period prior to 01.03.2011; travelling /lodging expenditure of members' participation in overseas fairs; buying agent commission paid to overseas agent in foreign currency for providing services; refund of service tax to be done in

a time bound manner; and service tax registration issues that fall under the jurisdiction of Moradabad and Hapur.

Mr. Mahender Singh, Chief Commissioner of Customs (Meerut Zone), gave a patient hearing to the issues and offered a point wise reply to the exporters. He said that some matter such as booking of stall space, travelling / lodging and commission to the buying agent overseas raised during the session may be forwarded to Board & TRU (Central Excise and Customs) because the issues were

raised on an all India basis. Mr. Singh also informed the gathering that an amount of Rs. 5 crore towards pending drawback claim and refund of service tax has already been released.

The other issues raised during the discussion included, drawback claims at ICD Moradabad, pending since January 2013; classification of handicrafts-which includes representatives from custom department going to factory for stuffing the containers and getting samples to be sent to the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) for classification; thefts and pilferage at ICD Moradabad and the need to install CCTV cameras at ICD premises as pilferage of export goods and repacking in original form after pilferage is a serious matter and damages the goods as well as reputation of the exporters of our country; need for construction of meeting rooms at ICD, Moradabad; non-availability of trollas at ICD, for carrying containers to factory site for factory stuffing, despite ICD having trollas in their possession; and container stuffing problems at ICD Moradabad where the padlock system has fully stopped so all the stocks are stuffed at ICD. The ICD staffs are not taking due care to stuff the goods, leading to damage of the cartons as well as the goods.



A glimpse of the participating member exporters at the interactive session

Mr. Mahendra Ranga, Commissioner (Meerut) heard all the issues and said that all pending duty drawback claims would be processed before 30th April 2014. He also insured that he will instruct to the field formation staff to look into the matter related to classification issue for factory stuffing and FPS license. He assured that the issues would be examined and instructions given to Custodian at ICD.

Mr. Venu Gopal, Group General Manager (CONCOR), Custodian at ICD, answered the queries related to ICD. He assured that CCTV cameras would soon be installed and meeting room will be made available at ICD. He clarified that trollas are available to those exporters who have a permission of factory stuffing and a limit within 25 km. The padlock system is provided for exporters as a special facility for container stuffing.

Issues related to DGFT were raised and Mr. Sumeet Jerath, Additional DGFT, responded to the queries. Some of the issues related to DGFT such as Change in ITC HS Code, BIS certification, export through E-commerce, expiry of FPS license within 2 years, software of incremental export, sale of export house license, deduction in realization amount by bank in E-BRC and progress of advance license were also raised. ■