



*The Festival was inaugurated with the Indian traditional lamp lighting by Ms. Karina Rabolini from the Province of Buenos Aires in the presence of H E Ambassador of India in Argentina, Mr. Amrendra Khatua; Mr. Lekhraj Maheshwari, Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Roger Halua, President, Cultural Center Borges and Mr. RK Verma, Director – EPCH and officials from the EPCH and Embassy of India, local Argentinean Government, buyers and participants.*

## Argentina revels in Indian Handicrafts Bazaar

**FESTIVAL OF INDIA; 14TH - 24TH NOVEMBER, 2014; BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA**

EPCH organized the 6th edition of the 'Festival of India' in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina, with strong support from the office of H E, the Ambassador of India, Argentina. The 10-day festive extravaganza held from 14 - 24 November, 2014 observed a vibrant exhibition of handicrafts titled - "Handicrafts Bazaar" at the culturally prominent & prestigious Borges Cultural Centre in the heart of Buenos Aires, Argentina. 29 exhibitors and 6 award winning artisans from all parts of India showcased their creations. A wide spectrum of handicraft products including Christmas decoration, costume jewellery and accessories, incense sticks, home decoration and giftware, Kashmiri shawls and textiles were showcased.

The EPCH delegation was led by Mr. Lekhraj Maheshwari, Chairman, EPCH. This Festival was part of the EPCH strategy and policy to aggressively promote Indian products in Latin American Region and was a follow-up of the successful organization of

the previous Festivals organized in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 2008 to 2013. The Festival also included an Indian Food Festival, Film Festival and Incredible India Campaign. This was supported by the India Tourist Development Corporation, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.





Seen LtoR: Mr. RK Verma, Director – EPCH; Mr. Lekhraj Maheshwari, Chairman, EPCH; Ms. Karina Rabolini from the Province of Buenos Aires; H E Mr. Amrendra Khatua, Ambassador of India in Argentina; and Mr. Roger Halua, President, Cultural Center Borges

### The Festival

The main venue of the Festival - Borges Cultural Center- the most prestigious cultural icon of the city, was decorated with varieties of Indian products like Indian textiles, ethnic decoration materials like appliquéd lamp shades and umbrellas, bandanvaar, puppets and other decorative handicrafts. The federal Government of Argentina gave a special permit of duty free import of handicrafts for the exhibition, recognizing the Festival as an "event of national interest".

The Festival received support and collaboration from the city government of Buenos Aires who provided venues for the seminars and exhibitions and publicity support through posters all over the city.

### The Handicrafts Exhibition

The Handicrafts Exhibition spread out beautifully at the main venue, featuring a total of 29 EPCH member exporters and 6 master crafts persons proficient in traditional soft stone carving of Orissa, decorations from Gujarat, metal engraving from Uttar Pradesh, clay art from Rajasthan, wood carving from Karnataka and miniature painting from Rajasthan. The live demonstration attracted a huge footfall of visitors.



### Other Features

Among events conducted at the same premises during the festival, there were seminars concerning Indian business, Philosophy, Spirituality, Ayurveda and Yoga. The Embassy of India also held a Cricket tournament in Buenos Aires to commemorate the Festival of India. The Indian Food Festival organized by the ITDC was held at Hotel Sheraton, targeted at high end consumers and persons of eminence with the intention of generating their interest in Indian Food & tourism. Apart from the handicraft exhibition, Indian Dance and Indian Film Festival were held at the Borges Cultural Centre and were attended by a large number of the Argentine Public.

### The Feedback

The variety and intensity of various activities made the Festival the talk of the town in Buenos Aires and much of the federal capital region of Buenos Aires. It further added to the efforts of creating a Brand Image of Indian Handicrafts in order to explore exports into the Latin American Region. Argentina has emerged as an important market for Indian handicrafts. With a strong positive feedback, the fair concluded with optimistic note. As per the feedback from the participants and the artisans, on spot business worth US\$ 375,500/- was generated during the 11 days long fair. ■