

Bihar handmade products go global

First consignment flies from Begusarai to Europe



Shri Giriraj Singh, Hon'ble Minister of Textiles, Govt. of India, at the bag making facility facilitated in Begusarai by EPCH in collaboration with the JEEViKA (Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society) and Exmart International Pvt. Ltd.

In a landmark achievement for Bihar, handmade bags crafted by JEEViKA Didis have officially entered the global market, with the first consignment flying from Begusarai to Europe. This milestone comes as the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) intensifies its efforts in Bihar, following the recent inauguration of its Patna office by Shri Giriraj Singh, Hon'ble Minister of Textiles, Government of India. Facilitated by EPCH in collaboration with JEEViKA (Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society) and Exmart International Pvt. Ltd (an EPCH member exporter), this export of 5,000 handcrafted bags highlights Bihar's artisanal heritage and reinforces the "Local for Global" vision. ■

US Home sector gets a boost in Q4 from budget-minded and premium buyers

The U.S. home and garden sector saw its best quarter since 2022 as the bedding, décor and rent-to-own sectors experienced single-digit growth at the end of the year, according to new data from the Consumer Edge Q4 2024 Home & Garden Digest.

Within the décor arena, off-price brands thrived on lower-ticket, more frequent transactions as shoppers searched for budget-friendly home refreshes, said Michael Gunther, vice president and head of insights. Among the top 10 décor retailers, Homesense was the best performer, while sibling brand HomeGoods ranked third. Diversified sellers, which for Consumer Edge includes Wayfair, Crate & Barrel, CB2 and Grandin Road, faced challenges, as did flooring and rug companies. Flooring was down 10% for the quarter, according to Consumer Edge's research, while diversified sellers were off by about 7% vs. the same quarter a year earlier.

Furniture retailers were also in the negative column, down about 3%. The leader among furniture brands tracked by Consumer Edge

was Bob's Discount Furniture, followed by Ashley, Rooms to Go, Raymour & Flanigan and La-Z-Boy, while Ikea was cited as having its spend down by double digit percentages for the quarter.

With the high cost of homes, Consumer Edge has seen a trend toward renovations and other home-related investments, including do-it-yourself projects. DIY home improvement spending was up 1% in the fourth quarter, reversing a two-year decline. Regionally, it was highest in the South — up 3% year-over-year — with spending concentrated in retailers such as Lowe's, Tractor Supply and Floor & Décor.

"Q4 marks the strongest performance in the home and garden industry since Q3 2022, as consumers refocus on their homes amid post-pandemic normalization," said Gunther. "Looking ahead to 2025, the industry continues to stabilize, with particular attention on home improvement retail in the South as well as the mattress, bedding and décor categories." ■ *Source: Home Textiles Today*

Council extends support to exporter's bereaved family



A cheque of Rs 10 lakh was presented to the family of late Mr. Babulal Jangid by Mr. Hansraj Baheti, Member, COA, EPCH; Mr. Lekhraj Maheshwari, past Chairman, EPCH; Mr. RK Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Additional Executive Director, EPCH, in the presence of prominent exporters

Jodhpur, Rajasthan 23rd January 2025: EPCH extended financial assistance to the family of one of the handicraft exporters from Jodhpur. This act of support emphasises EPCH's commitment to the welfare and well-being of handicrafts exporters.

The late Mr. Babulal Jangid of M/s Gayatri Arts, Jodhpur, Rajasthan,

was a valued exporter, tragically passed away on 14th June 2023. Recognising the significant contributions made by Mr. Babulal Jangid to the industry and the community, EPCH has initiated this financial assistance to ensure that the family receives the necessary support during this time of loss. ■

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EPCH takes representation to UP Govt. Discusses issues being faced by exporters in the state



A delegation lead by Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Vice Chairman, EPCH, along with Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Chief Mentor in a role of Director General, EPCH & Chairman, IEML; member exporters, Mr. D Kumar; Mr. Naved Ur Rahman; and Mr. Suresh Gupta, with Shri Suresh Khanna, Hon'ble Minister of Finance & Parliamentary affairs, Govt of U.P.; Shri Manoj Singh, IAS, Chief Secretary, UP Govt.; and (below left) Shri Alok Kumar, IAS, Principal Secretary, MSME & Export Promotion, UP Govt

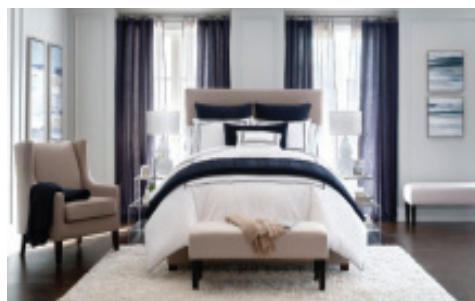


Lucknow; 1st January 2025: A delegation lead by Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Vice Chairman, EPCH, along with Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Chief Mentor in a role of Director General, EPCH & Chairman, IEML; member exporters, Mr. D Kumar; Mr. Naved Ur Rahman; and Mr. Suresh Gupta, submitted a representation containing issues of exports and the handicrafts sector, to Shri Suresh Khanna, Hon'ble Minister of Finance & Parliamentary affairs, Govt of U.P. Meetings were also held with Shri Manoj Singh, IAS, Chief Secretary, UP Govt.; and Shri Alok Kumar, IAS, Principal Secretary, MSME & Export Promotion, UP Govt. On behalf of EPCH, Dr. Neeraj Khanna briefed about issues being faced by UP exporters. ■

JCPenney makes a play for bulk order B2B market

JCPenney is looking to boost sales of home, apparel and footwear with a new digital tool for businesses and non-profits.

The retailer's new business-to-business website offers current and potential bulk order customers access to JCPenney's catalog of



products across several divisions, including products from its home and footwear departments as well as school uniforms for kids and apparel

for men and women. After registering, businesses, nonprofits and government agencies can browse the online catalog for products, then work with JCPenney's Commercial Solutions team to place an order.

The company is also launching more capabilities in the second quarter of this year to support online voucher purchasing programs. Since the 1980s, JCPenney has supported voucher purchasing programs in-store only for agency partners that serve those in need in the community. By expanding the program online, JCPenney will be able to offer this solution to every nonprofit and agency nationwide regardless of where they or their clients may reside. ■

Source: Home Textiles Today