

Roadmap for Handicrafts Export Growth from Uttar Pradesh discussed at EPCH's 1st Central Regional Committee Meeting



The virtual meeting in progress : Seen are Mr. Ravi K. Passi, Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH; Mr. Raj Kumar Malhotra and Mr. Kamal Soni - Vice Chairmen EPCH; Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; Mr. Nabeel Ahmed, Convener of the Central Regional Committee and COA Member, EPCH; and Mr. Avdesh Chandra Agarwal, Coordinator of the Central Regional Committee and 2 women entrepreneurs from the region

The first meeting of the EPCH Central Regional Committee was held on **2nd November 2020**, over video conference. This was attended by Mr. Ravi K. Passi, Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH; Mr. Raj Kumar Malhotra and Mr. Kamal Soni - Vice Chairmen EPCH; Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; Mr. Nabeel Ahmed, Convener of the Central Regional Committee and COA Member, EPCH; Mr. Avdesh Chandra Agarwal, Coordinator of the Central Regional Committee; as well as 32 nominated members of the EPCH Central Regional Committee including two women entrepreneurs.

Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH, put forward the objective of creation of the Regional Committee and also expectations from the Committee so as to augment exports of handicrafts from Uttar Pradesh. Dr. Kumar requested all the committee members to actively engage in the discussions and place the problems and the suggestions before the Committee which can be addressed and taken up at the highest level so that solutions to problems can be achieved. Some of the key issues discussed during the meeting include: Norms & procedures of pollution & fire department; Regularisation of Factory Maps by Moradabad Development Authority (MDA); High charges by forwarding & shipping lines; Identification of alternate varieties of wood for usage by the sector with FRI & state forest department;



Non-availability of containers for exporters; Delay in settlement of ECGC claims; Non-provision of container freight subsidy; CFC requirement at Firozabad handicrafts cluster; High electricity charges; Maximisation of the benefits of ODOP schemes for U.P. exporters; Requirement of industrial land for Aligarh exporters; Providing skill and design support to the artisans; and Identification of new and latest technologies by the exporters to be introduced in handicrafts sector. The meeting concluded with thanks to all the participants and with a resolve that with active participation of everyone, the exporters will be able to garner maximum support from the Government. ■

CHEMS classes take virtual route successfully, 3rd batch in progress



Ms. Rita Nahata, Dean, CHEMS, seen facilitating the orientation session alongwith Mr. Anuj Narain

EPCH's education initiative - CHEMS, offering Certificate Course in Handicraft Export Management has launched its entire

programme online with overwhelming response from students across the country and export fraternity. The 3rd batch commenced

on 26th October 2020. Khadi Gramodhyog Samiti, Sikandra has nominated 5 candidates for the course under their SFURTI scheme supported by KVIC. A dedicated counselling and orientation session for the nominated candidates was conducted for a full day on 21st October 2020.

Ms. Rita Nahata, Dean, CHEMS, facilitated the orientation session. The artisans were given a complete outline of the course, what to expect from it and to make use of the learning in their own day-to-day businesses. The artisans also interacted positively and welcomed the fact that after completing the course they will have soft skills necessary for direct selling in domestic and international market. The educational kits were also distributed. The CHEMS team consisting of Ms. Rita Nahata and Mr. Anuj Narain also visited the facilities at the stone park at Sikandra and saw some of the handcrafted products made by the artisans. ■

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epch
An educational initiative of
Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts

EPCH launches CSR initiative for cancer care and awareness to women crafts persons

EPCH has been committed in its endeavour to support artisan welfare programs/activities through social initiatives by organising eye screening and health check-up camps, providing COVID-19 safety kits, etc. in various craft clusters in different parts of India. Under its CSR initiative, EPCH is now supporting “bcpcb - The Cancer Foundation for organising GRIT FOR LIFE”, a unique fundraising endeavour in total support of economically underprivileged cancer afflicted Indians.



LtoR: Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH; Mr. Manjit Singh, Senior Vice President, Cycling Federation of India; Mr. Sandeep Gupta, Owner, JW Marriott, Aerocity, New Delhi; the challenger, Mr. Vicki Bedi; Mrs. Rony Yedidia Clien, Deputy Ambassador of Israel in India; Mr. Ravi K Passi, Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Purshottam Bhaggeria, Moldavian Counsel General in India, on the occasion of the launch of 'Grit for Life'

'bcpcb - The Cancer Foundation is a not for profit organisation working for providing medical services for treatment of Breast Cancer to those who cannot afford the treatment and to increase knowledge among those unaware of the disease, by reaching out to them through awareness camps, public lectures, seminars, corporate health checks, etc. Currently, the organisation is managed by its President, Dr. Sameer Kaul and its General Secretary, Ms. Mridul Arora, along with a team of medical professionals.

The program formally launched on **17th November 2020** at JW Marriott, Aerocity, New Delhi, in the presence of Mrs. Rony Yedidia Clien, Deputy Ambassador of Israel in India; Mr. Purshottam Bhaggeria, Moldavian Counsel General in India; Mr. Ravi K Passi, Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH; and Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH, along with Mr. Sandeep Gupta, Owner, JW Marriott, Aerocity, New Delhi, Dr. Sameer Kaul; Ms Mridul Arora; Mr. Manjit Singh, Senior Vice President, Cycling Federation of India; and Mr. Vicki Bedi, The Challenger. Together, they pledged their support to GRIT FOR LIFE. India TV has pledged its support to the program.

Flagging off the Desert Cyclathon-Challenger, Mr. Vicki Bedi by Mr. Sandeep Gupta, Owner, JW Marriott, Aerocity, New Delhi



Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH, further informed that this “Desert Cyclathon” saw the challenger, Mr. Vicki Bedi, an eminent Logistic Entrepreneur, cycle 2800 kms from Delhi on 18th November 2020 to various cities in 14 days (Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Ajmer, and Jaipur) in Rajasthan and back, in a bid to raise money for cancer management amongst economically deprived communities in India. This gruelling solo cyclathon, also saw corporate leaders cycle stretches with the challenger, also encompasses Cancer Detection Camps at EPCH's artisans cluster in Barmer on 23-24th November 2020; Cancer Awareness Public Lecture at Jaisalmer on 21st November 2020 and at Jodhpur on 27th November 2020. ■

DG EPCH's contributions by academia, conferred Honoris Causa D. Litt.

In a well-attended convocation ceremony held at Madurai, Tamil Nadu, on 8th November, 2020 at International Tamil University, Honolulu, Hawaii, United States, conferred a

Honoris Causa D. Litt. to Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General-EPCH. This was conferred by the university's Chancellor, Dr.Selvin Kumar.



L to R: Dr. Selvin Kumar, Chancellor- International Tamil University; Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH and Dr. Ravi Tamilvanan, MD, Manimekalai Pirasuram, Chennai

In the citation read on the occasion, Dr. Rakesh Kumar's contribution to the handicrafts sector and the handicrafts Industry were lauded as a game changer for millions of artisans as well as the positive impact on the export industry.

In his acceptance speech, Dr. Rakesh Kumar said, "as for the honour conferred on me today I can only say to this august gathering that I accept it with humble modesty. I have been sincerely and passionately involved with the livelihood of 7 million crafts persons spread over the length and breadth of the country. My job is satisfying and compassionate. At EPCH, in the last

30 years, we have carried out various activities to give a fillip to Indian handcraft exports by continuously upgrading skills, backward integrations, forward integrations and imparting training at various levels." Soon after the convocation ceremony, Dr. Kumar was felicitated by the Handicrafts Association of Tamil Nadu, both for receiving the Honoris Causa D. Litt. for his contribution to the handcraft sector. ■

NRF Expects Holiday Sales to Grow

With retail sales rebounding strongly due to continued consumer resilience, the National Retail Federation forecast that holiday sales during November and December will increase between 3.6 percent and 5.2 percent over 2019 to a total between \$755.3 billion and \$766.7 billion. The numbers, which exclude automobile dealers, gasoline stations and restaurants, compare with a 4 percent increase to \$729.1 billion last year and an average holiday sales increase of 3.5 percent over the past five years. NRF expects that online and other non-store sales, which are included in the total, will increase between 20 percent and 30 percent to between \$202.5 billion and \$218.4 billion, up from \$168.7 billion last year.

The forecast comes as NRF's latest research shows 42 percent of consumers started their holiday shopping earlier than usual this year. NRF's "New Holiday Traditions" campaign has urged consumers to shop safe and shop early amidst the pandemic, and 59 percent had begun by early November, up from 49 percent at that point a decade ago.

NRF expects retailers to hire between 475,000 and 575,000 seasonal workers to help accommodate additional demand during the holiday season. That compares with 562,000 in 2019. Some of the hiring may have been pulled forward into October as many retailers have implemented holiday sales campaigns earlier than in the past. ■

Source: Gifts & Decoratives