

Issues of Handicrafts Sector taken up with Minister for Industrial Development, Export Promotion, NRI, Investment Promotion, Govt. of UP Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh; 4th January 2024



Left: Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Vice Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Chief Mentor, EPCH & Chairman, IEML; Mr Avdesh Agarwal, General Secretary, Moradabad Handicrafts Exporters Association (MHEA) interacting with Shri Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi', Hon'ble Minister for Industrial Development, Export Promotion, NRI, Investment Promotion. Right: Shri Nandi, addressing the gathering at the meeting

Shri Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi', Hon'ble Minister for Industrial Development, Export Promotion, NRI, Investment Promotion along with Shri Durga Shankar Mishra, Chief Secretary, Uttar Pradesh; Shri Amit Mohan Prasad, Additional Chief Secretary, MSME & Export Promotion U P; Shri Anil Sagar, Principal Secretary, Infrastructure and Industrial Development Deptt and IT, Govt of U.P.; Shri Pranjal Yadav, Secretary, MSME and Export Promotion UP; Mr. Nitish Suri, Jt. DGFT; and Mr. Amit Kumar, Jt. DGFT, met the heads of various Export Promotion Councils on 4th January 2024, at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, to discuss about export performance and export promotion strategies.

The EPCH representation included Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Vice Chairman II, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, IEML; Mr. Avdesh Agarwal, General Secretary, Moradabad Handicrafts Exporters Association (MHEA); Mr. Rajat Asthana, President, Handicraft Exporters Association (HEA); Mohd. Ausaf, General Secretary, Saharanpur Wood Carving Manufacturing Association; Mr. Anwar Ahmad, Secretary, Saharanpur Wood

Carving Manufacturing Association; Mr. Vishal Agarwal, General Secretary, Young Entrepreneur Society (YES); prominent member exporter from Uttar Pradesh like, Mr. Rajesh Jain and Mr. Anurag Mittal, along with Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Addl. Executive Director EPCH.

Shri Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi', Hon'ble Minister for Industrial Development, Export Promotion, NRI, Investment Promotion, spoke about the export target required to be reached from the current level of Rs. 1 lakh crore to Rs 3 lakh crores over the next three years, as set forth by the Government of Uttar Pradesh. He pledged unwavering support to the trade and industry sectors to facilitate the attainment of this ambitious target. Mr. Durga Shankar Mishra, the Chief Secretary of Uttar Pradesh, delineated the visionary goal of propelling the state's economy to the trillion-dollar mark under the esteemed leadership of the Chief Minister. He elaborated on the manifold infrastructure initiatives underway to catalyze export growth from Uttar Pradesh. Additionally, Mr. Amit Mohan Prasad, the Additional Chief Secretary overseeing MSME and Export Promotion in Uttar Pradesh, addressed the

prevailing challenges confronting both national and state-level exports amid global uncertainties. Nonetheless, he exhorted exporters to persevere diligently towards realizing export expansion in the years ahead. Furthermore, he encouraged exporters to proffer actionable suggestions for state government consideration, aimed at catalyzing export growth initiatives.

Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Vice-Chairman, EPCH, highlighted critical issues impacting the handicrafts industry, a sector pivotal in safeguarding traditional art forms, fostering employment, and bolstering regional economic development. He spotlighted concerns such as nominal industrial house tax charges, grants for compliance schemes (including VRIKSH, REACH, C-TPAT, ROHS, etc.), and the rejuvenation of Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman-IEML, discussed the evolving landscape of e-Commerce, focusing on omni-channel exports and the significant role of third-party logistics (3PL) in shaping the future of trade. He emphasized India's substantial opportunity to capitalize on the remarkable growth in the e-Commerce sector. Dr. Kumar stressed the importance of adopting omni-channel strategies for exports to seamlessly integrate online and offline channels, thereby enhancing customer experiences and expanding market reach. Additionally, he advocated forming strategic partnerships with reliable 3PL providers to optimize logistics, reduce costs, and improve overall operational efficiency.

Mr. Avdesh Agarwal, General Secretary, Moradabad Handicrafts Exporters Association (MHEA) advocated for the establishment of a "Handicrafts Park" in the Yamuna Expressway Area, proposing a 30% land price rebate, akin to initiatives approved for the textile sector. He also called for augmented financial aid towards domestic and international fairs and interest subsidies for exporters in Uttar Pradesh. Mr. Rajat Asthana, President of the Handicraft Exporters Association (HEA), stressed the importance of manpower upskilling through training programs, waste management initiatives, and technical and quality management support systems, supported by the Uttar Pradesh government. Mohd. Ausaf, General Secretary of the Saharanpur Wood Carving Manufacturing Association, advocated for subsidized raw materials for the handicraft sector to enhance export competitiveness vis-à-vis China.



Photo 3: Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Vice Chairman II, EPCH; along with Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, IEML; and Mr. Avdesh Agarwal, General Secretary, MHEA, addressing the handicraft sector's concerns to Shri Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi', during the meeting

Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Addl. Executive Director - EPCH, presented the sector's export performance, indicating signs of recovery and



highlighting Uttar Pradesh's potential and sustained endeavors to bolster India's handicrafts position in the global market.



Furthermore, Export Awards were bestowed by the Honorable Minister, recognizing the outstanding achievements in exports from Uttar Pradesh, with recipients including M/s Dewan & Sons, M/s Malhotra Handicrafts, M/s Exmart International, M/s Famous Art & Antique International, M/s Transparent Overseas, M/s Chopra Musicals, and others. ■



Awards for Export Performance: Mr. Rajesh Jain, M/s Exmart International; Mr. Mohit Chopra, M/s Chopra Musicals; and Mr. Rajeev Malhotra, M/s Malhotra Handicrafts