

EPCH signs MOU with Hunarmand - an association in Uzbekistan

New Delhi; 4th February 2020: EPCH signed an MOU with "Hunarmand", an association in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The main objectives of Hunarmand include enhancing the role of arts and crafts in the development of national culture; restoring old traditions and distinctive types of manufacturing handicrafts; coordination of the activities of craftsmen, artisans and professionals in applied art; organising fairs and exhibitions in Uzbekistan and abroad; providing artisans with domestic raw materials and other materials; new and modern technology.

The reason behind signing of this MOU is that objectives of both the organisation are the same to promote arts and crafts of the country to the world markets and to further create favourable conditions for development of handicraft sector and support the artisans of both the countries.

The MOU is based on mutual interest in expanding cooperation in the field of handicrafts, better acquaintance with cultural life of the population of both nations. Both the nations will provide bilateral support and cooperation in the field of crafts and culture as a partner for each other; festivals are to be organised mutually, allowing crafts persons of both countries to participate in festivals organised by each other; and will provide free workspace for the sale of artifacts and products to each others' artisans/crafts persons and exporters. The MOU shall be valid for a period of up to three years. Signing of MOU will be beneficial for the both the nations as under the MOU, Uzbek artisans will participate in IHGF Delhi Fairs and in exchange Indian artisans



Seen exchanging the MoU are HE Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to India, Mr. Farhod Arziev; Mr. Abdullayev Ulugbek Takhirovich, Vice Chairman, CCI of Uzbekistan & Chairman of "Hunarmand" Association; Mr. Ravi K Passi, Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH; and Mr. Siddhartha Tyagi, Asstt. Director, EPCH

and exporters will be participating fairs and exhibitions to be organised in Uzbekistan in the near future.

During IHGF Delhi fair held in October 2019, EPCH had provided space to the Uzbekistan Embassy to showcase arts and crafts of their country. Mr. Ravi K Passi, Chairman, EPCH and Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH had also visited Uzbekistan thereafter, to explore possibilities of expanding exports of handicrafts in Uzbekistan.

The Republic of Uzbekistan is one of the largest countries in the CIS region, which has a special geographical and geopolitical position in Central Asia with abundance of natural and human resources. National arts and crafts in Uzbekistan occupy a prominent place in the cultural heritage of Uzbekistan. ■

Textile Recycling: the numbers are in

About 20 percent of recycled textiles are used as a fiber for producing home furnishings, furniture and other items. Recycling textiles is a \$1.2 billion industry in the United States, according to the 2019 Recycling Industry Yearbook.

Released by the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries Inc., the organisation of 1,300 member companies reported that each year US textile recyclers process billions of pounds of cotton, wool, synthetics and blended fabrics, and exported about \$715 million in used textiles and clothing in 2018.

Home furnishings manufacturers and textile mills are counted among the sources for these scrap materials along with apparel

makers and consumers. The report noted about 45 percent of recycled textiles are sold as secondhand clothing, mostly for exportation to developing countries, while 30 percent it turned into polishing and wiping cloths.

Another 20 percent is transformed into fiber that is used as raw material by the home furnishings, furniture, mattress, automotive, paper and other industries. Textiles is among the smaller of the recycling industries in terms of economic impact, with categories such as paper/fiber (\$34 billion), plastics (\$6 billion) and electronics (\$5.45 billion) ahead of it. ■ Source: HFN



Buying Agents Association of India joins hands with EPCH to make sourcing from India a hassle-free process

New Delhi; 15th February 2020 : A meeting of the Buying Agents Association(BAA) was organised at the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, New Delhi on 15th Feb, 2020. Addressing the members of the association, Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH, updated them with plans for the upcoming IHGF Delhi Fair, scheduled from 15th -19th April, 2020. He interacted with all the members to know about their concerns and come up with innovative ideas to make sourcing from India, a hassle-free process. Present on the occasion were President, BAA- Ms. Christine Rai, CEO, Indian Inc.; Ms. Mandira Malik, CEO, Something Else; Ms. Aarti Bartholomew, CEO, Kairos Krimson Pvt.Ltd.; Ms. Puja Rautela, CEO, Flat World Buying Services; Mr. P Vasudevan, India Merchandising Services; Mr. Vikas Dhingra, Speciality Merchandising Services Pvt. Ltd.; and other members of BAA; Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH; Mr. O P Prahladka, ex-Chairman, EPCH , COA Member and Eastern Region Convenor, EPCH; Mr. Rajesh Jain, COA Member, EPCH and President, Social Media-IHGF Delhi Fair-Spring 2020.



Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH; Mr. O P Prahladka, ex-Chairman, EPCH and Eastern Region Convenor, EPCH; Mr. Rajesh Jain, COA Member, EPCH and President, Social Media-IHGF Delhi Fair-Spring 2020, seen with BAA members



3rd Batch of CHEMS Jodhpur launched



Mr. Hansraj Baheti, COA Member, EPCH, inaugurating the program and addressing the students



Ms. Rita Nahata, Dean, CHEMS, made an informative Power Point presentation on the various activities of EPCH.

After successful completion of the 2nd Batch, EPCH launched CHEMS Jodhpur's 3rd batch on 16th February 2020 at Common Facility Centre, Basni-1, Jodhpur. Dignitaries present on the occasion were, Mr. Hansraj Baheti, COA Member, EPCH; and Ms. Rita Nahata, Dean, CHEMS. At present 18 students have joined this certificate course.

Addressing the students, Mr. Hansraj Baheti said that hard work is the key to success in any business. There are many ups and downs but one who is courageous and who has the ability of not giving up will sustain in this business. He shared his journey to become a leading exporter from an entrepreneur. He also offered his support and guidance to the students.

She continued her lecture with useful information of handicraft classification.



Ms. Rita Nahata, Dean CHEMS, addressing the students

Millennials lead the way in major purchases, bank study finds

US Millennials have been the major spenders, and that trend is expected to continue, according to the TD Bank Retail Experience Index. According to TD's research, Millennials were the generation to make the most major purchases in the last year—four on average—and are the most likely to make another major purchase, defined as a purchase of \$500 or more, in the next six months.

Although Millennials are leading the way, survey results showed spending is up across the board, with Americans spending \$245 more per major purchase than in 2017, and the average price take for the most recent major purchase coming in at \$1,884. And nearly 70 % of Americans are planning to make a large purchase in the next six months, up about 10% for 2017. As for shopping categories, furniture continues to be the top one for major purchases, increasing to 26% in 2019 versus 22% two years ago. While they buy more, Millennials also are doing more research, spending nearly 4.5 hours on this task, and also doing more research on financing options. And Millennials are taking advantage of retail store credit cards. The average number of cards held by

Millennials is 2.9 vs. 2.5 for all shoppers. They also use their cards more frequently, using their cards 3.1 times per month versus 1.8 and 1.3, respectively, for Gen X and Baby Boomers. "The myth that Millennials aren't out there putting money into the economy is just that—a myth," said Mike Rittler, general manager of retail card services, personal lending and business development at TD Bank. "Millennials are a discerning and price-conscious set of consumers, and while it may not be easy to earn their business, retailers should take notice."

One key to success is to generate brand loyalty. The survey found satisfied cardholders spend more than nonengaged customers—about \$700 more on average for major purchases. And more than half of consumers (57%) pick the same brands when making major purchases. The survey was conducted by Maru/Matchbox, which sampled a targeted panel of 998 Americans who participated in holiday shopping. The online survey was fielded between Sept. 25 and Oct. 1, 2019. ■

Source: Home Textiles Today

Furniture stores off to stronger start in 2020 than 2019

January retail sales for the furniture and home furnishings stores sector is off to a better start in 2020 than at the start of 2019, when the sector posted a 2.7% decline in sales year-over-year for the month of January, according to a report from the U.S. government. Climbing to \$9.75 billion this January, sales increased by 1.8% year-over-year from January 2019's adjusted total of \$9.58 billion for the furniture and home furnishings stores sector. Sales also rose 0.6% month-to-month for the category from \$9.69 billion in December, with the month's total adjusted down from the previously reported \$9.89 billion.

Overall, US retail and food services sales are on an upswing, too, with total sales topping \$529.8 billion in January, a 4.4% increase over January 2019 at \$507.5 billion and a 0.3% increase from December's revised \$528.4 billion total. Retail trade sales alone were up 4% year-over-year and up 0.1% from December.

Contributing to this high start for January totals were all but five sectors that saw year-over-year sales decreases last month. Among the falling sectors were electronics and appliance stores, down 3.2%; building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers, down 1.3%; health and personal stores, down 1.9%; and department stores, the long-struggling subset of general

merchandise stores, down 5.5%. While department stores fell year-over-year, the general merchandise stores sector as a whole actually grew sales by 2.1% year-over-year. Coming in at the top this month for retail sectors was gasoline stations, with a sales increase of 10.4% year-over-year. Just behind it were miscellaneous store retailers at a 9.5% increase in sales and non-store retailers, which include e-commerce and mail-order catalog businesses, which saw an 8.4% increase from January 2019.

For the months of November 2019 to January 2020, furniture and home furnishings stores sales were up 1.4% from November 2018 to January

2019, according to the report. Combined retail and food services sales increased 4.4%, and all retail sales were up 4.1%. During the three-month period, non-store retailers saw the greatest year-over-year increase, up 11.5%, while department stores saw the greatest decrease, down 6.1%. ■ *Source: Furniture Today*



Consumers spent nearly \$1 billion more on housewares and small appliances in 2019

US dollar sales of small appliances grew 4% in 2019, and sales of non-electric housewares increased 2% compared to 2018, according to The NPD Group, a leading global information company. Combined, this growth amounted to an additional \$952 million in sales for the industry in 2019, demonstrating the consumer's continued focus on enhancing their homes, and the core needs related to healthy living, convenience, sustainability, entertainment, experience, and taste that are being addressed by these products.

Home products continue to be a bright spot at retail because of their relevance to the key consumer trends driving growth. Products for the home have the ability to meet the demands and desires of the key life moments in the consumer, and that has been the primary driver of the home industry's growth over the past five years. Healthy living and convenience were once again front-and-center in the top performing small appliances of 2019, spanning kitchen electrics, personal care, and home environment. The top non-electrics housewares growth drivers of 2019

demonstrated the consumer's increased focus on how they live, both in and outside of the home. Dollar sales of portable beverage ware - offering the consumer the ability to connect the dots between convenience, sustainability, healthy living, and potentially



cost-efficiency - increased 6% compared to 2018. A nod to today's more casual consumer aesthetic, housewares dinnerware sales grew 11% in 2019. Canister and jar food storage deliver a sustainable and potentially aesthetically pleasing way to go beyond the basic food storage function, and captured 13% more dollars than in 2018 ■ *Source: NPD*