

Export Promotion of Handicrafts from Himachal Pradesh

Awareness Seminar in Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh; 2nd June 2025

Design & Technology Development Workshop on Kangra Painting Fusion with Wood Craft inaugurated

EPCH organised an Awareness Seminar on “Export Promotion of Handicrafts from Himachal Pradesh” in Dharamshala on 2nd June 2025. The session brought together key stakeholders from the region's including Handicraft Exporter, young entrepreneurs and artisans, to bridge the gap between traditional craftsmanship and contemporary market demands, fostering sustainable development while preserving the rich artisanal heritage of Himachal Pradesh.

On this occasion, the Design & Technology Development Workshop (DDW) on Kangra Painting Fusion with Wood Craft was also inaugurated. This initiative is a significant step towards promoting design innovation and enhancing artisan skills.

The event witnessed the presence of Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, India Exposition Mart Ltd. (IEML); Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH; and EPCH Committee of Administration members : Mr. Ravi K. Passi, Mr. Raj Kumar Malhotra, Mr. Girish Agarwal, Mr. Avdesh Agarwal, Mr. Sharad Kumar Bansal, Mr. Salman Azam, Mr. Rajesh Jain, Mr. Prince Malik, Mr. Zeeshan Ali, Mr. O. P. Prahladka, Mr. Pradip Muchhala, Ms. Jesmina Zeliang,



Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, India Exposition Mart Ltd. (IEML) addressing the session. Seen on the dias are (LtoR): Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Additional Executive Director, EPCH; Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Ravi K. Passi, COA Member, EPCH; and Mr. Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH

Mr. Mohd. Ausaf, Mr. Simrandeep Singh Kohli; along with Mr. Santosh Anand, Assistant Director, Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts); and Mr. Najmul Islam, prominent member exporter. The gathering also included a large number of artisans and entrepreneurs from the region as well as senior EPCH officials including Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Additional Executive Director, EPCH.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Rakesh Kumar said, “at EPCH, we believe that the success of India’s handicrafts sector lies in

collaboration, innovation and knowledge-sharing. This seminar is a testament to our commitment to strengthening the handicrafts export ecosystem across the country, including the vibrant state of Himachal Pradesh. The inauguration of the DDW on Kangra Painting Fusion with Wood Craft, supported by



the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, is a major step forward in empowering artisans with design innovation and skill development. EPCH will continue to organise such initiatives across different crafts to further enhance and diversify the region's handicraft sector." He also encouraged designers and participants to create innovative new products for display at the upcoming IHGF Delhi Fair, to be held from 13th to 17th October 2025 at the India Expo Centre & Mart, Delhi/NCR.

Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH, shared, "Himachal Pradesh, a land of timeless traditions and natural beauty, is renowned for its exquisite handicrafts, from intricate wood carvings and handwoven shawls of Kullu and Kinnaur, to Chamba rumals, metal crafts, and the vibrant Kangra paintings. These crafts are a testimony to the rich cultural legacy and skilled craftsmanship passed down through generations."

Adding to the seminar's objectives, Mr. Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH, said, "our vision goes beyond promoting exports. It is about nurturing a sustainable ecosystem where the artisans of Himachal Pradesh can thrive. By harmonising their rich traditional skills with evolving global demands, we aim to empower them with critical knowledge and help them integrate into international value chains."

Prominent exporters present at the seminar shared their business experiences and highlighted the immense potential of Himachal Pradesh's crafts in both domestic and international markets. They encouraged artisans to leverage the opportunities provided by the DDW and align their products with evolving consumer preferences. Notably, Mr. Rajesh Jain urged artisans to embrace the spirit of "Abki Baar Himachal Se Vyapaar."

Mr. R. K. Verma, Executive Director, EPCH, underlined the broader mission of EPCH, stating, "our goal is not limited to export promotion. We are committed to enabling the long-term success of the handicraft sector and MSMEs. This seminar was designed to equip participants with practical insights and tools essential for navigating today's dynamic business environment."

Dr. Swati Sharma and Ms. Alka Rawat, Assistant Professors at NIFT Kangra, gave an insightful presentation on emerging global design trends. They encouraged manufacturers to incorporate these trends to attract modern consumers.

The session concluded with an engaging Q&A, where participants raised queries related to design, trends, forecasting and export procedures, which were addressed by the expert panel, fostering a spirit of collaboration and motivation among artisan entrepreneurs. ■