

BIS Procedures and Quality Control Orders (QCOs) for the Furniture Sector

Awareness Seminar at Jaipur, Rajasthan; 4th February 2026

The program saw the presence of Mr. Girish Agarwal, COA Member and Regional Convenor, NWR, EPCH; Mr. Lekhraj Maheshwari, former Chairman, EPCH; and representatives from BIS including Ms. Kanika Kalia, Director & Head and Ms. Sangeeta Choudhary, Scientist C. This was well-attended by prominent member exporters from the wood and furniture sector in and around Jaipur



The technical session was led by Ms. Kanika Kalia and Ms. Sangeeta Choudhary from BIS, who provided a comprehensive overview of the upcoming QCOs, detailing the technical standards and compliance procedures required for the industry. The session was well-

EPCH organised an interactive seminar on “BIS Procedures and Quality Control Orders (QCOs) for the Furniture Sector” at the EPCH Handicrafts Productivity Centre & Wood Test Lab, Jaipur.

The program was attended by Mr. Girish Agarwal, COA Member and Regional Convenor, NWR, EPCH; Mr. Lekhraj Maheshwari, former Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Jaswant Singh Meel and Mr. Vinod Bothra, member exporters, EPCH; and representatives from BIS including Ms. Kanika Kalia, Director & Head and Ms. Sangeeta Choudhary, Scientist C.

attended by prominent member exporters from the wood and furniture sectors.

Ms. Kalia emphasised that QCOs are not just regulatory requirements but key steps towards integrating the Indian furniture sector into the global “Quality Ecosystem”. She assured members of BIS’s continued support to help Micro and Small Enterprises transition smoothly to ensure that Micro & Small enterprises can achieve compliance without disruption.



Ms. Sangeeta Choudhary delivered a comprehensive presentation outlining the entire procedure, including step-by-step instructions on how to apply for the license. She detailed the technical requirements and compliance framework, ensuring clarity for the participants.

A key development was the official inspection of the Wood Test Lab at the Handicrafts Productivity Centre, Jaipur. Ms. Kalia reviewed the infrastructure and assured full support for granting BIS recognition as a Cluster-Based Test Facility (CBTF). Once recognised, the lab will function as a Common Testing Facility for the Jaipur furniture cluster, enabling member units to access authorised testing without investing in individual in-house facilities. ■

Entrepreneurship Promotion Program

Awareness Seminar at Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh; 5th February 2026

An Entrepreneurship Promotion Program was organised at the Common Facility Centre, Saharanpur by Saharanpur Enterprise Promotion Foundation in association with EPCH.

The session began with an engaging presentation by Mr. Bhuvnesh Chaturvedi from the Saharanpur Enterprise Promotion Foundation, who offered valuable real-world insights into entrepreneurship, effective business planning, and avenues for startups and business expansion.



Mr. Bhuvnesh Chaturvedi from the Saharanpur Enterprise Promotion Foundation addressing the audience

Following this, Mr. Naveen Gaur, Deputy Director, EPCH, addressed and motivated the participants, encouraging them to explore emerging opportunities in the handicrafts sector. He also provided

an overview of the key initiatives of the EPCH. The event concluded with a certificate distribution ceremony, which left the attendees inspired and enthusiastic about pursuing future entrepreneurial ventures. ■

India's Gateway to Europe - Shortening the Supply Chain, Connecting Indian Manufacturers with European Retail

EPCH-ExpoBazaar-TICA Initiative



Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH; Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH & Chairman IEML; senior representatives from TICA - Mr. Roger Uivel, CEO, Co-owner, TICA and Ms. Sanne Uivel, Founder & Creative Director, Berries Agency; Mr. Jitin Prashar, Senior Vice President, ExpoBazaar; Mr. Mohit Chopra, President, Reception Committee, IHGF Delhi Fair - Spring 2026; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Executive Director, EPCH

16th February 2026: EPCH congregated exporters and industry stakeholders at the India Expo Centre, to a special presentation on the EPCH-ExpoBazaar-TICA collaboration, focused on promoting Indian handicrafts in European markets through warehousing, fulfilment and Justin-Time (JIT) delivery models. A large gathering participated to learn how Indian products can gain a stronger foothold in the EU through this platform, connecting exporters and global buyers seamlessly. The session aimed at strengthening trade linkages between Indian exporters and European retail platforms, while positioning India as a dependable and competitive sourcing destination for Europe.

EPCH × ExpoBazaar × TICA Collaboration - India's Gateway to Europe



Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman, EPCH

"EPCH today is no longer confined to the role of a traditional export promotion body and is evolving into a facilitation and fulfillment platform supporting exporters across the value chain—through market access, buyer connect, capacity

building and alignment with global trade requirements," said Dr. Neeraj Khanna. He noted that buyers increasingly prefer direct engagement with manufacturers while seeking simpler import procedures. In response, EPCH is working to reduce reliance on intermediaries and build transparent, efficient buyer-seller

interfaces. Dr. Khanna added that as global sourcing models rapidly evolve, organised platforms will help MSMEs and emerging exporters access international markets more easily. Referring to the scale of TICA's business in the Benelux region that he observed during his recent visit as part of a delegation, he emphasised that the EPCH x ExpoBazaar x TICA partnership offers a forward-looking export framework that enables direct global reach, better value realisation and stronger integration of Indian exporters into European supply chains, reinforcing India's position as a reliable sourcing destination.

Strengthening Sourcing Linkages between Indian exporters and European retail and wholesale market

Mr. Roger Uivel, CEO, Co-owner, TICA

Mr. Roger Uivel spoke about the evolving global retail landscape, highlighting the increasing integration of physical retail spaces with digital platforms. He noted that modern buyers rely on efficient



logistics, strong infrastructure and dependable supply chains, requiring exporters to align with these changing models to remain competitive. He explained that TICA, one of Europe’s largest retail and wholesale platforms with a strong presence in the Netherlands and Belgium, operates large-format

wholesale centres that function as permanent sourcing hubs for professional buyers across home décor, lifestyle, gifts and interior categories.

He further outlined TICA’s wholesale model, where products are displayed in stores with flexible volumes based on demand, enabling steady business flow and long-term supplier partnerships. Serving retailers, interior designers and hospitality buyers from multiple global markets, TICA sees strong potential in India due to its quality craftsmanship, customisation capabilities, sustainability and competitive pricing. He appreciated the role of ExpoBazaar in facilitating structured B2B engagement with reliable Indian exporters and reaffirmed TICA’s interest in expanding sourcing from India, positioning it as a key gateway for the European market.

TICA Business Models operate to the exporter audience

Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH & Chairman IEML



Dr. Rakesh Kumar welcomed the business occasion for EPCH members and highlighted the growing importance of strategic international collaborations in the current global trade environment. He noted that such partnerships help shorten supply chains, improve efficiency and create direct, sustainable market access for Indian

exporters. He also highlighted EPCH’s role in facilitating exporter-buyer engagement through curated platforms, market intelligence and capacity-building initiatives. He explained TICA’s two distinct business models—cash-and-carry and project-based sourcing—and how they function for exporters, noting that evolving buyer behaviour, particularly post-COVID, has accelerated the need for such models to reduce lead times and improve profitability. He also informed participants that ExpoBazaar is in discussion with EPCH to potentially subsidise warehousing charges, drawing a

positive response from the audience. Dr. Kumar appreciated ExpoBazaar’s structured B2B approach in connecting Indian manufacturers with global buyers and acknowledged TICA’s interest in sourcing from India. Observing that Indian exporters hold strong advantages in quality, craftsmanship, customisation, sustainability and competitive pricing, he encouraged exporters to leverage this collaboration to enhance innovation, strengthen compliance with international standards and expand their global market presence.

Scaling Beyond Borders: Taking Indian Products to Global Markets

Jitin Prashar, Senior Vice President, ExpoBazaar

Mr. Jitin Prashar outlined the growth and operations of ExpoBazaar and its expanding reach across the US, EU and UK markets, highlighting multi-mode delivery options, including drop shipments, to ensure efficient last-mile delivery. He described ExpoBazaar as a product-agnostic B2B global commerce and distribution platform designed to help Indian manufacturers and exporters scale sustainably in international markets by moving beyond fragmented, transaction-based exports toward structured, long-term global engagement.

The platform follows an end-to-end supply chain model, covering the entire process from supplier onboarding and product curation to quality control, packaging, compliance, consolidation,



warehousing, logistics and delivery. “Key focus is direct market access, enabling Indian exporters, particularly MSMEs, to connect directly with international retailers and institutional buyers, thereby reducing dependency on intermediaries, improving margins and building long-term partnerships. In Europe, ExpoBazaar has developed strong

operational experience through its collaboration with TICA, successfully navigating supply-chain disruptions and evolving compliance requirements while establishing stable sourcing and distribution networks.” He added that ExpoBazaar acts as a scaling partner by aggregating demand and creating repeat order cycles, helping exporters plan production more effectively and transition from sporadic exports to sustained global participation. Through collaborations with EPCH and TICA, the platform also strengthens India’s visibility in international markets and supports deeper integration of Indian exporters into global value chains. ■

Sustainability - More Than a Trend!

Why Everyone Should Invest into This Topic Now!

15th February 2026: The seminar focused on positioning sustainability as a long-term responsibility rather than a passing global trend. The speaker, Mr. Gunnar Hoffrichter, Independent Consultant, Hamburg, Germany, through an illustrative and engaging session with physical product examples, underlined that environmental degradation, climate change and shifting consumer expectations demand immediate and structured action from businesses, particularly in production and manufacturing sectors.

Mr. Hoffrichter has over 30 years of experience across Asia in strategy development, trend forecasting, product development, visual merchandising, and marketing. His extensive industry exposure brings a global perspective to sustainable transformation in manufacturing and trade. Key points discussed in the seminar:



Gunnar Hoffrichter,
Independent Consultant,
Hamburg, Germany

Sustainability and Climate Impact

Severe consequences of even a 2°C rise in global temperatures, was highlighted with explanation on how such an increase could trigger irreversible environmental damage. By comparing present-day climate conditions with the pre-industrial era, the speaker demonstrated the urgency of collective and industrial action. "Sustainability, is now fundamental to economic resilience and ecological survival," it was emphasised.

Circular Economy – The 8 R's-

Rethink. Reduce. Reuse. Repair. Refurbish. Repurpose. Recycle. Recover. These principles aim to minimise waste, extend product life cycles and reduce dependence on virgin resources. Businesses were encouraged to embed these principles within their operational models.

Waste as a Resource - Emphasis was placed on transforming waste into usable products, such as: Metal scraps, Olive waste, Egg trays and other discarded materials. The key message was that sustainability must begin at the design and conceptual stage rather



Mr. O P Prahladka, COA Member and Eastern Region Convenor, EPCH; Mr. Mohit Chopra, President, Reception Committee, IHGF Delhi Fair-Spring 2026; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Executive Director, EPCH, presenting a memento Mr. Gunnar Hoffrichter, Independent Consultant, Hamburg, Germany

than being introduced as an afterthought. When sustainability is integrated early, waste becomes a resource rather than a liability.

Sustainability in Product Development - The speaker stressed the importance of: Using environment-friendly raw materials; Adopting eco-friendly packaging solutions; and Designing products for durability and recyclability. Sustainable production, he explained, should be viewed as a mindset and guiding philosophy rather than merely a marketing strategy.

Business Responsibility - Companies were urged to integrate sustainability into their core vision and long-term strategy. Ethical responsibility should drive sustainable transformation - not profit alone. The speaker suggested that future trade fairs dedicate at least 50% of exhibition space to sustainable products, reinforcing sustainability as an industry standard rather than a niche category.

Case Studies & Examples - Reference was made to the KPMG Sustainability – Value Creation 2025 Study, which highlights that sustainability contributes directly to long-term business value & competitiveness. An Indian example, A Good Life, founded by designer Ashish Tagra, was also discussed - his brand creates sustainable lifestyle products from industrial waste and promotes mindful living, simplicity and emotional connection with products, demonstrating how sustainability can align with both design excellence and commercial success. ■

Leveraging India's Recent FTAs

Free Trade Agreements for Enhancing Exports Growth

15th February 2026: This informative session aimed to equip exporters with practical strategies to effectively leverage India's recently signed Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), including: India–UK CETA; India–EU FTA; and India–UAE CEPA. It focused on helping businesses understand how to access tariff benefits, comply with regulatory requirements, and strategically diversify into new global markets. This was conducted by Dr. Tamanna Chaturvedi, Vice President, Global Trade Promotion, Department of Commerce, Govt. of India. She has over two decades of experience in trade policy consultancy with various organisations under the Government of India. Her work spans participation in India's FTP formulation and representation of industry interests, particularly MSMEs across multiple FTAs. She served as a faculty member at IIFT under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, handling research assignments for several ministries. She was also part of the core team for Hon'ble PM Modi's Doubling Farmers' Income initiative. She also provided export consulting to EPC members and helped curate an Incubation Centre to promote export startups. Key points from her seminar:

Understanding Levels of Competition - Dr. Chaturvedi explained that exporters face competition at three levels: Nearby stalls (direct competitors within the same trade fair or category); Competing countries offering similar products; and Major global markets such as Europe. She urged exporters to strengthen their competitiveness through better pricing strategies, improved quality standards and enhanced production capacity.

India's Expanding FTA Network - The speaker highlighted India's recent trade agreements with countries such as the UAE, Australia, Norway, Switzerland, Mauritius, New Zealand, Oman and the European region. Zero-duty market access under these agreements provides a strong advantage to signatory nations. However, she cautioned that not all products automatically qualify for zero duty.

HS Codes & Product Eligibility - Exporters were advised to verify product eligibility through HS codes on the Ministry of Commerce website. The complete process of checking whether a product falls under the open list or the excluded list under a specific FTA was demonstrated. The concept of MFN phase reduction, where certain product categories receive immediate benefits while others gain tariff reductions gradually over a defined timeline was explained.

Leveraging India's Recent FTAs



Mr. O P Prahladka, COA Member and Eastern Region Convenor, EPCH; Mr. Mohit Chopra, President, Reception Committee, IHGF Delhi Fair-Spring 2026; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Executive Director, EPCH, presenting a memento to **Dr. Tamanna Chaturvedi**, Vice President, Global Trade Promotion, Department of Commerce, Govt. of India

Rules of Origin - A key compliance aspect discussed was the Rules of Origin. For a product to qualify for FTA benefits, it must be substantially manufactured in India, meeting specified percentage criteria. Exporters were urged to carefully maintain documentation to prove compliance.

Market Diversification - Dr. Chaturvedi encouraged exporters not to focus exclusively on Europe. While many exporters target European markets for Christmas sales, she pointed out that countries such as the Philippines celebrate Christmas for up to six months, offering extended business opportunities. Diversification, she emphasised, reduces dependency and enhances resilience.

Consumer Behaviour & Cultural Sensitivity - Understanding cultural nuances and consumer behaviour was highlighted as essential for export success. She cited examples such as Brazil, where the colour green may be avoided in certain product categories due to associations with the Amazon forest and disease. Such insights can significantly impact product acceptance. Exporters were encouraged to track global festivals like Valentine's Day and align product offerings accordingly, while ensuring regulatory compliance and detailed market research. ■

Market Diversification

Emerging Destinations and Trend Drivers

15th February 2026: The session aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of emerging market trends and buyer behaviour relevant to Indian handicrafts, while helping MSME exporters diversify their market base beyond traditional destinations.



Dr. Ashish Gupta, Ph.D., Senior Associate Professor, Faculty of Management, South Asian University (SAU)

The discussion was led by Dr. Ashish Gupta who initiated the session by questioning India's heavy dependence on the United States as its primary export market. Dr. Gupta, is Faculty in Marketing Area at Faculty of Management, South Asian University (SAU), New Delhi (an international university established by Government of SAARC Nations) and Supported by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Govt. of India.

Dr. Gupta noted that the US accounts for 38.69% of India's handicraft exports, followed by the UK at 7.73%, emphasising the need to explore emerging and under-tapped markets. He described handicrafts as India's strongest competitive advantage, largely operating under a B2B model where scale and container-volume orders are crucial. Current dominant markets include the USA, Germany, UAE, Netherlands, France, Italy, Australia and Canada.

He stressed the **importance of having a clear go-to-market (GTM) strategy**, rooted in market segmentation and precise audience targeting. According to him, identifying the target age group and understanding consumer behaviour across regions is essential for sustainable export growth. Drawing from HS Code-based data analysis, he explained how product-market fit is

determined through volume potential, compliance requirements and consumer preferences.

Region-wise insights revealed distinct value propositions:

USA & UK: Driven by eco-conscious Millennials and Gen Z, demanding sustainable, personalised, and DIY-friendly products such as eco-textiles, pottery and wood décor.

Europe: Focused on heritage, ethics and authenticity, with demand for timeless woodwork, embroidered textiles and glassware; highly compliance-driven with GI tags, fair-trade labels and GOTS certifications.

Middle East: Oriented toward luxury, hospitality and premium gifting, favouring ornate metalwork and rich textiles.

Australia: Growing demand for handmade, eco-friendly products such as bamboo, jute, rustic wood and jewellery suited to modern and outdoor lifestyles.

Discussing **market entry strategies**, Dr. Gupta emphasised the importance of adopting an e-commerce-first approach, leveraging platforms such as Amazon, Etsy, Wayfair and region-specific marketplaces. He highlighted participation in B2B trade fairs, including IHGF Delhi Fair and international exhibitions like Ambiente Frankfurt and Maison & Objet Paris, as critical gateways to global buyers. Digital storytelling through social media platforms, artisan-focused content and QR-based narratives were identified as powerful tools for brand building and market penetration.

He also underlined the critical role of **marketing and positioning**, stating that while Indian products are inherently strong, strategic presentation and storytelling can unlock new markets. Dr. Gupta stressed the need for marketers to act as bridges between artisans and global consumers, especially by spreading awareness about certifications, GI tagging and international compliance among artisan communities. He further highlighted the importance of cultural adaptability and customisation.

Concluding the session, Dr. Gupta emphasised that **authenticity remains highly valued** in international markets, but adaptability is equally important. He highlighted the growing influence of the Indian diaspora in promoting Indian handicrafts abroad and reiterated that a balance between tradition, innovation and market intelligence is essential for long-term global success. ■

Design Futures 2027

Spring Summer Trends & Autumn Winter Insights

16th February 2026: This seminar focused on the evolving intersection of sustainability and innovation in craft-based design, in alignment with global trend directions for S/S 2027 and A/W 2027, through forward-looking material trends, growing influence of eco-conscious aesthetics and the integration of modern artisanal techniques. Prof. Balbir Singh, Dean, School of Design, WUD, highlighted that 2027 presents a strategic opportunity rather than just a seasonal shift, as consumer behaviour increasingly values emotional appeal, authenticity and clarity over mere aesthetics.



Prof. Balbir Singh, Dean,
School of Design, WUD

He noted that craft-led honesty positions India strongly in the global market, while creativity must be supported by longevity, relevance and value. Sustainability, he added, is moving towards tangible proof and accountability, making 2027 more about a mindset refresh than simply a style refresh, with products needing to be market-ready, meaningful and emotionally resonant. He

outlined **four key future directions** :

Future 1: Grounded Earthcraft-centers on calm, nature-connected living. Features mineral and dry neutrals, raw material authenticity and minimally processed textiles like cotton. Emphasis is on earth-inspired palettes and material honesty.

Future 2: Playful Contrast - Optimistic, expressive and youth-leaning, this creates strong visual memorability. Particularly suited for gifting and lifestyle segments. Stable base tones combined with bright accents, colour blocking and stripe momentum.

Future 3: Crafted Memory - Celebrates beauty in irregularity and process-led finishing. Uneven surfaces, oxidized depth, repaired detailing, raw edges and textile layering create emotional value. Focus is on reuse and recovery, emphasising heritage and handcrafted authenticity.

Future 4: Restorative Belonging - Soft minimalism and calm dominate this direction. Matte finishes, tonal and monochromatic palettes and clean forms with warm textures create soothing, balanced environments. It reflects a desire for comfort and

emotional grounding. The session concluded with a strong message: India's craftsmanship, when aligned with global behavioral shifts and sustainable proof, holds a powerful position in the international design landscape moving toward 2027.



Dr. Preetha Hussain, Professor,
Fashion & Lifestyle Accessories,
NIFT-Delhi

Dr. Preetha Hussain Professor, Fashion & Lifestyle Accessories, NIFT-Delhi, focused on transdisciplinary design learning and the evolving consumer personas that will shape markets by 2027. According to her, 2027 will not just be about product trends but about understanding deeper psychological and cultural consumer patterns. She identified **four consumer personas** :

The Energisers - Drawn toward silliness, humour and lightness in what they perceive as an overly serious and unfriendly world. Rather than depending heavily on artificial intelligence, they value imagination, creativity and playful human expression. For brands, this means injecting joy, wit and spontaneity into design narratives.

The New Independents - Living in an era of distrust where opinion often outweighs expertise, these consumers adopt a rebellious stance - actively question mainstream narratives and combat disinformation with critical thinking. They seek authenticity and transparency, expecting brands to take clear and bold positions.

The Conventionalists - These consumers consciously reject fast-paced culture. They prioritise rest, personal comfort, slower living and creative self-expression. Products that encourage mindfulness, warmth and familiarity will strongly resonate with this segment.

The Privacy Keepers - Driven by technological skepticism, this group prioritises data protection, cultural heritage preservation and mental well-being. They are cautious about digital overexposure and value products that respect tradition, identity, and ethical practices.

Dr. Hussain also highlighted the growing importance of crafting from local culture. She noted a revival of retro and ancient crafts, storytelling elements and heritage techniques being reinterpreted for contemporary markets. ■

What Buyers Want

Key Expectations in Product Presentation, Communication & Compliance

16th February 2026: This seminar aimed to bridge the gap between Indian handicraft suppliers and international buyers by elucidating critical buyer expectations across three core dimensions: product presentation standards, effective communication protocols and compliance frameworks.



Deepak Swaroop,
Managing Director, Nine
United Pvt. India

Mr. Deepak Swaroop, Managing Director, Nine United Pvt. India shared about aspects that define evolving global buyer expectations and how businesses must adapt to a rapidly changing buying landscape :

Changing Buying Behaviour -

Today's buyers are largely self-directed. Most of the buying process happens independently, with buyers researching products before contacting suppliers. Therefore, businesses must provide fast, accurate and relevant information supported by strong digital presence.

Proof Over Promises - One of the key

messages was that evidence outweighs claims. Buyers prefer documented proof such as certifications, case studies, clear specifications and measurable outcomes rather than general promises about quality.

Product Presentation Expectations - Buyers expect Clear product specifications and measurements; Material and construction details; Proper packaging and compliance documentation; Alignment between samples and production capability. Personalisation and interactive presentations were highlighted as essential in influencing buying decisions.

Communication & Transparency - Effective communication was identified as a critical success factor. Buyers value Prompt and professional responses; Clear written communication; Early disclosure of risks or delays; Regular updates on production and shipment; Transparency and reliability build long-term trust.

Compliance as Non-Negotiable - Global buyers demand strong compliance, ethical standards and proper documentation. Businesses must ensure integration readiness and procurement-driven processes to remain competitive.

With 25+ years of leadership in global sourcing, Mr. Deepak Swaroop's expertise spans home textiles, furniture, home décor and general merchandise. He has led end-to-end sourcing operations, supplier development, quality and compliance across US, Europe and Australasia, delivering value through cost optimisation, supply chain efficiency and sustainable sourcing while building partnerships with global retailers / manufacturing partners.



François Delannoy, Founder & Director, INDITIME

Mr. François Delannoy, Founder & Director, INDITIME, began by introducing his company's journey, explaining how he started by sourcing products from India and later expanded imports from India, Indonesia, Vietnam and other countries. This brief background set the context for his topic. He emphasised that businesses must understand what international buyers want before entering exports. This requires studying dynamic and evolving markets, focusing on delivery timelines and analyzing global economic conditions and complex markets.

Knowing Your Buyers - Understand buyers of all sizes. Make buyers' lives easy and maintain transparency. Build trust through clear communication. Understanding every side of the customer is essential for long-term relationships.

Importance of Feedback - A key point is the importance of asking a simple question: "How was it?" "How would you like to rate it?" "What improvements can you suggest?" He explained that this can be done through email, SMS, or a quick call. Very few businesses take this small step, yet it is extremely important for improvement and customer satisfaction.

Market Adaptation & Digital Tools - He highlighted the need to adapt to new government policies, follow market trends and

match competitive pricing. The use of digital communication tools was described as essential.

Building Partnerships, Not Just Supplying - Understand buyer problems and provide solutions. Make their lives easier to build loyalty and trust. He noted that creating real value strengthens relationships and ensures long-term customer loyalty.

Quality, Innovation & Sustainability - Quality is not just about a good product; it is a mindset and mindfulness in production. He encouraged businesses to bring innovation and new designs, as practiced by Inditime. He also introduced eco-packaging as an emerging area that requires further study and exploration.

Mr. Delannoy concluded by wishing everyone success in business and expressed confidence that India is already performing well and will achieve even greater success in global trade in the future.

INDITIME specialises in sourcing and imports from India for independent homeselector professionals, having managed over 350 container shipments through a network of 60 manufacturers across India, Indonesia and Vietnam. Supported by a 20-member team, Mr. François Delannoy also leads STUDIO FRANÇOISE, a French design studio creating furniture and décor, while advising clients on sourcing, quality enhancement and production optimisation. ■

Expo Digital

Sourcing Redefined Just in Time

17th February 2026: This session explored how India's manufacturing ecosystem can evolve into a global supply network through the ExpoBazaar framework. By linking Cash & Carry hubs across India with global marketplaces under a Just-in-Time model, ExpoBazaar bridges Indian producers and international buyers seamlessly. The session highlights how technology, curation and agile fulfillment can make Indian exports faster, smarter and globally competitive. Excerpts from the presentation by Mr. Jitin Prasher, Senior Vice President, ExpoBazaar:

ExpoBazaar is redefining how Indian products reach global markets by shifting exports from simple shipment to **strategic supply-chain positioning**. It addresses key exporter challenges - high MOQs, 60–90 day shipping cycles, lack of overseas warehousing, limited digital visibility, and dependence on seasonal trade fairs - by creating a structured, always-on global commerce ecosystem.

Built on a **cross-border e-commerce and just-in-time supply model**, ExpoBazaar enables Indian products to be stocked in international warehouses and sold continuously through physical distribution and digital channels. Products are distributed not only via traditional distributors but also through e-commerce platforms, ensuring sustained market presence rather than sporadic order cycles.

A core strength lies in its **integrated ecosystem, supporting exporters across the value chain**—from global trend-based product curation, logistics and supply-chain management to SKU performance analytics, demand forecasting, production planning, vendor dashboards with transparent sales visibility and structured payout systems. This data-driven framework helps optimize assortments, improve margins, and reduce risk.

ExpoBazaar **caters to a broad customer base**, including cash-and-carry centers, independent retailers, boutique stores, regional chains, gift shops, wellness centers, cafés, interior designers, architects, hospitality players and national retail accounts. Collections are designed for adaptability and scalability across these varied formats.

To empower smaller buyers, overseas warehouses - operational in Europe, including the Netherlands - enable **faster delivery and purchasing in smaller quantities** (typically 500–600 units), significantly reducing lead times and widening access to Indian products. Following a first-mile to last-mile approach, **ExpoBazaar supports exporters from design ideation and production to warehousing, distribution, and final sale**. With added drop-shipping capabilities, design studios, showrooms, and catalogue development support, the platform combines digital sourcing, physical infrastructure, and global reach. In doing so, ExpoBazaar enables MSMEs and small exporters to scale efficiently in Europe and the USA, positioning Indian manufacturers as dependable partners in global supply chains and fostering sustainable international growth. ■



Jitin Prasher,
Senior Vice President, ExpoBazaar

Management Development Programme on Export Management & Documentation Awareness Seminar at Kolkata; 23rd - to 27th February 2026

The EPCH Kolkata office organised a Management Development Programme (MDP) on Export Management & Documentation from 23rd to 27th February 2026, to strengthen export capabilities among entrepreneurs, MSMEs and budding exporters, particularly from the handicrafts sector and allied industries including packaging, textiles, chemicals, export logistics and financial services. The five-day programme was attended by 30 participants representing emerging exporters, established manufacturers, packaging professionals, textile exporters and chemical suppliers.

The programme aimed to enhance understanding of export procedures and documentation, build awareness of export marketing strategies, educate participants on packaging, labelling and quality compliance, explain risk management in international trade, familiarise them with Foreign Trade Policy 2023 and IEC procedures, guide them on export finance and government incentive schemes, and promote sustainable and compliant export practices. The sessions were structured across five days.

Day 1 focused on export orientation and global trade overview, inaugurated by Mr. P.K Das, Joint Director, HoO MSME-DFO, Eastern Region, emphasising the importance of exports for MSME growth and strategies for entering global markets.

Day 2 covered export marketing tools, market potential analysis and documentation procedures.

Day 3 addressed packaging standards (with inputs from IIP Kolkata), risk mitigation through ECGC schemes, and GST guidelines related to exports.

Day 4 highlighted exports through Indian Post and e-commerce, Incoterms, Foreign Trade Policy 2023 and export incentives.



The programme had a strong sectoral focus on handicrafts, including product positioning, quality compliance, packaging standards and sustainable material usage. Allied industries such as export packaging, textiles, chemicals, financial institutions, export consultants and designers were actively engaged.

Day 5 focused on identifying overseas customers, product-market fit, export finance options (with SBI representation), MSME schemes and concluded with a valedictory session.

The programme had a strong sectoral focus on handicrafts, including product positioning, quality compliance, packaging standards and sustainable material usage. Allied industries such as export packaging, textiles, chemicals, financial institutions, export consultants and designers were also actively engaged.

The core message emphasised that strengthening MSMEs is not merely about scaling production but about building resilience, compliance, digital readiness and sustainability — shifting from volume-driven to value-driven and compliant export ecosystems. Key outcomes included improved understanding of export documentation, enhanced awareness of risk mitigation tools, clarity

on GST and policy frameworks, exposure to export finance mechanisms, better knowledge of packaging standards and strengthened networking among participants.

The programme successfully empowered participants with structured knowledge and practical insights into export management. It concluded with encouragement to adopt best practices, leverage government schemes and build export-ready enterprises aligned with sustainability and digital transformation goals. ■

