

Virtual Buyer-Seller Meet (VBSM)

EPCH

27-29 Jan 2021

Remarks

Ambassador Tanmaya Lal

- Chairman, Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts, Mr. Passi; Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Mr. Shantmanu, my colleagues and all the distinguished business persons participating in this event, my greetings to all of you.
- I would like to thank the EPCH for giving me this opportunity to say a few words.
- This is the first Buyer-Seller Meet that is being organized by the EPCH in a virtual format, which is the new normal these days.
- The challenges of COVID have also opened the door to many opportunities with the help of digital communication technologies and this virtual meeting is a demonstration of that.
- I am new to Sweden having arrived around a month ago.
- But it is encouraging to note the growing momentum between India and Nordic countries, especially in India-Sweden context. The first India Nordic Summit was hosted by Sweden here in Stockholm in 2018 and His Majesty King visited India in late 2019. Despite COVID, ministerial interactions have continued in a virtual format.
- Trade and investment linkages along with technology and innovation provide the strong basis for this relationship.
- It is exciting to note the rapidly intensifying business linkages although COVID has stalled the progress a little bit.
- All the participants here are experts in this business.
- I understand that more than 900 Swedish buyers have engaged in some fashion in this broad sector of handicrafts which basically includes interiors, fashion, textiles, lightings, jewellery and other consumer home items. Some of them may be present in this event.
- I also understand that three earlier editions have been held in the last 4 or 5 years.
- In the last one month, one of the big news was the opening of the second megastore IKEA in Mumbai after their first store in Hyderabad. IKEA sources a large number of its products from India so do many other major Swedish brands like H&M, Indiska, Rusta, Hemtex and many others.
- It shows that Indian suppliers are able to provide the kind of products that the discerning Swedish buyers are looking for. I also understand that many of these products are also in the category of eco-friendly products which is gaining salience around the world, especially in Sweden and also in India.
- I hope that this online event will be useful for both buyers and sellers and will help in making new linkages.
- Thank you.