

# EPCH's relentless efforts yield relief for woodcraft exporters

## EPCH's Vriksh Certification to absolve adverse effects of CITES amendment on Indian handicrafts industry

In view of the CITES Amendment moving all species of Dalbergia(rosewood and sheesham) to Appedix II and adverse implications on the handicrafts trade thereof, EPCH and handicrafts industry representations were made to concerned Ministries and government officials in India as well as authorities in the CITES Secretariat, Geneva; Permanent Mission of India in Geneva; and Indian Mission in EU to UN at Brussels, Belgium. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international treaty ratified by 182 countries and the European Union since it entered into force in 1975. Its aim is to prevent species from becoming endangered or extinct because of international trade. Once implemented, this could directly affect survival of the woodware industry as well as the livelihood of thousands of artisans and skilled workers employed in the small scale sector who would be rendered jobless if appropriate measures are not taken.

A delegation of handicraft exporters led by Mr. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, MP from Jodhpur and including Mr. D Kumar, Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Executive Director, EPCH; Mr. Rajesh Jain, COA Member, EPCH; and member exporters like Mr. V S Goel, met Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (IC), Mr. Anil Madhav Dave to discuss issues related to the CITES notification wherein the entire genus on Dalbergia species



*Industry delegation led by MP from Jodhpur, calls on Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (IC), Mr. Anil Madhav Dave*

has been placed in Appendix II of the CITES leading to controlled trade of the products produced from the Dalbergia spp. The Hon'ble Minister assured that his Ministry will exercise the clause given in the CITES notification for reservation against the amendments so that the matter can be kept on hold and non applicable to India.

ED, EPCH calls on Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology and Law & Justice, Mr. P P Chaudhary



Executive Director, EPCH, Mr. Rakesh Kumar called on Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology and Law & Justice, Mr. P P Chaudhary. Mr. Kumar presented the concerns on behalf of the sector and requested the Minister for his intervention.

The delegation also met Dr. Sharad Singh Negi, DG(Forest) and addressed their concerns not



*The delegation meets Dr. Sharad Singh Negi, DG(Forest) and shares apprehensions*

only about loss of job for crafts persons engaged in Sheesham wood handicrafts but also of farmers from the State of Punjab, loosing advantage of their crop.

EPCH representatives visit Permanent Mission of India (PMI) in Geneva, Indian Mission to the EU at Brussels, Belgium and CITES Secretariat at Geneva, to seek relief for Indian handicrafts industry from the likely effects of the CITES amendment



Mr. Anil Kumar Rai, Counsellor & Head of Chancery, Permanent Mission of India (PMI), Geneva; Dr. Virander Kumar Paul, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of India, Geneva; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Deputy Director, EPCH



Meeting at CITES Secretariat - Mr. David Morgan, Chief, Governing Bodies and Meeting Services, Mr. Anil Kumar Rai, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of India at Geneva; Mr. Sachin Raj, Technical Expert; and Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Deputy Director, EPCH



Meeting with Mr. Sarvesh Rai, Advisor, Indian Mission to the EU at Brussels, Belgium

A team of EPCH representatives raised the matter with the CITES Secretariat through the Permanent Mission of India in Geneva and have been able to get the reservation wherein India is no longer party to convention w.r.t. two Dalbergia species namely of Dalbergia latifolia and Dalbergia sissoo. The Government of Swiss Federation i.e Swiss Depositary of the CITES has accepted our reservation and is going to notify the following:

“With note received on 27 December 2016, the Republic of India enters a reservation with reference to the inclusion of Dalbergia spp. in Appendix II of the Convention. India declared at the same time that its Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) is the competent authority of the Republic of India to issue comparable certificates according to Article X of the CITES.”

Further, the CITES Secretariat is going to notify the CITES Management Authorities in different countries regarding the reservation as well as the comparable document to be issued by India.

A press release of CITES dated 2nd January 2017 in this regard is issued and the press appears on :

[https://cites.org/eng/new\\_CITES\\_trade\\_rules\\_come\\_into\\_effect\\_as\\_2017\\_starts\\_02012017](https://cites.org/eng/new_CITES_trade_rules_come_into_effect_as_2017_starts_02012017)

The relevant para is reproduced:

#### Reservations

The Convention allows any Party to enter a reservation with respect to the amendment to the Appendices within 90 days. Any Party that entered such a reservation would then "be treated as a State not a Party" to the Convention with respect to trade in specimens of the species concerned. The deadline for entering reservations on the new listings adopted at CoP17 ended today. Although the full picture is not yet

clear, India has entered a reservations concerning the inclusion of all rosewood and palisanders (Dalbergia species.) in Appendix II and Indonesia has done the same, but only until 4 July 2017. The Democratic Republic of the Congo has entered a reservation concerning the inclusion of the African grey parrot (Psittacus erithacus) in Appendix I.

