

# EPCH seeks Government Intervention on European Union Deforestation Regulations (EUDR) to Safeguard Indian Wooden Handicrafts Exports

Trade Speeds up representation for Early Solution - calls on Shri Giriraj Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of Textiles, Govt. of India; and Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Hon'ble Union Minister of Tourism and Culture, Govt. of India, for intervention



*A delegation of handicrafts exporters led by Mr. Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH and Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor, EPCH and Chairman, IEML, met Shri Giriraj Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of Textiles, Govt. of India and Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Hon'ble Union Minister of Tourism and Culture, Govt. of India. The meetings also saw the presence of Mr. R K Verma, Executive Director, EPCH; Mr. Rajesh Rawat, Addl. Executive Director, EPCH; and prominent member exporters from Saharanpur - Mr. Manoj Bothra, Mr. Rajendra Bansal, Mr. J P Jain, Mr. Ashish Mehta, Mr. Parminder Singh, Mr. Gaurav Jain and Mr. Manish Purohit.*

**21st August 2025, New Delhi:** A high-level delegation of handicraft exporters led by Mr. Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman, EPCH, and Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Director General in the role of Chief Mentor EPCH and Chairman, IEML, met Shri. Giriraj Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of Textiles, Government of India, and Shri. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Hon'ble Union Minister of Tourism and Culture, Government of India, to discuss and request government intervention on compliance requirements under the European Union Deforestation Regulations (EUDR).

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Concerning the impact of EUDR, Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Chairman-EPCH, said, "while we appreciate the EU's commitment to combating deforestation, the EUDR compliance requirements could severely impact our wooden handicrafts exporters. Our wooden handicrafts are primarily made from Mango, Acacia and Sheesham wood which are sourced largely from agroforestry. These species are grown

outside natural forests and do not contribute to deforestation. He further cautioned, "if implemented without contextual adjustments, such stringent requirements could disrupt the sector. Many artisans and MSME exporters may lose access to EU markets, leading to reduced production, cancelled orders, and widespread unemployment among artisans and their families."

Emphasising policy-level support, Dr. Rakesh Kumar noted, "the handicrafts sector is the economic backbone for millions of artisans in rural and semi-urban India. Despite sustainable sourcing practices, EUDR applies uniform obligations to all timber exporters, disregarding country-specific realities. Without government support, compliance could become prohibitively complex for our exporters. We need a collective approach combining regulatory backing with proactive engagement with the EU."

He urged the Ministry of Commerce & Industry to engage with the EU to seek exemptions for Mango, Acacia, and Sheesham wood, and requested the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change and the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare to issue directives enabling geo-location data collection at the time of harvesting, thereby helping exporters establish a verifiable deforestation-free chain of custody. ■