

Kerala Footwear Exhibition, Dubai, March 17, 2015

A Report by R. Ramesh Kumar I.A.S, Executive Director, Council for Leather Exports

Kerala Footwear Exhibition

The Second edition of the Kerala Footwear Exhibition was held on 17th March 2015 at Traders Hotel, Dubai. The Expo was organized by Kerala State Small Industries Association (KSSIA), Kerala Footwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association, Confederation of Indian Footwear Industries and Footwear Design and Development Centre in association with Council for Leather Exports. Around 20 companies based in Kerala had participated in the Expo displaying exclusively Non-Leather Footwear.

The first edition of the Kerala Footwear Exhibition was held on 18th March 2014 at Dubai. CLE has undertaken the publicity and buyer mobilization campaign by engaging the marketing agency, M/s India Trade Exhibition Centre. The show was highly successful with an impressive buyer turnout of more than 150. Considering the overwhelming response of the buyers, this year too, the Council has extended the necessary support for publicity and buyer mobilization.

Kerala Footwear Industry

Kerala Footwear Industry is making rapid strides over the years and has created a niche in the Indian Footwear industry. Kerala is the centre for producing Non-Leather Footwear made of Poly Urethane and is a major caterer to the domestic market in India. The global import of non-leather footwear has shown an impressive growth over the years, occupying 49% share in the total footwear import of US\$102.90 bn in 2012. In terms of value, the global import of non-leather footwear has grown from US\$ 37.08 bn in 2008 to US\$ 50.71 bn in 2012, with a compounded annual growth rate of 8.15%. Non-Leather footwear almost accounts for about 50% in the global footwear import. Globally, the percentage of consumption of Non-leather footwear is comparatively higher than the leather footwear. Hence, the global demand for Non-Leather Footwear would con-



Shri Anurag Bhushan, IFS, Consul General, Consulate General of India, Dubai along with Shri R Ramesh Kumar, IAS, Executive Director, CLE inaugurating the Kerala Footwear Expo

tinue to grow in the coming years.

India's Export of Non-Leather Footwear to UAE

In line with the increasing global demand, India's export of Non-Leather Footwear has shown a phenomenal growth in the last five years with the export value increasing from US\$ 43.43 million in 2009 to US\$ 203.46

million in 2013-14, growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 47.12%.

India's export of Non-Leather Footwear to UAE has increased from US\$ 9.77 mn in 2008 to US\$ 50.78 mn in 2013, growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 39.04% in these five year period.



Shri R. Ramesh Kumar, Executive Director, Council for Leather Exports addressing the inaugural session

Inauguration of the Expo

The Kerala Footwear Exhibition was inaugurated by Shri Anurag Bhushan, IFS, Consul General, Consulate General of India, Dubai by a formal ribbon cutting on March 17, 2015 at 9.30 AM. Shri R Ramesh Kumar, IAS, Executive Director, CLE, Shri V Noushad, Chairman, Expo Organising Committee, Ms Sripriyaa, Director-General of ITEC, Sharjah and the Members of the Kerala Footwear Association were present during the inauguration.

The Executive Director, CLE and the members of the Kerala Footwear Association extended a warm welcome to the Consul General by presenting flower bouquets. The Executive Director in his inaugural speech, thanked the Consul General for inaugurating the event. The Executive Director conveyed the wishes of Smt Neeta Bhushan, IFS, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India, UAE who was not able to attend the inaugural function due to an important official meeting.

The Executive Director further stated that Shri M Rafeeqe Ahmed, Chairman, CLE, who was very supportive to this show, though not able to attend, has conveyed his best wishes for the success of the Expo.

Shri Anurag Bhushan, IFS, Consul General, CGI, Dubai while addressing the gathering has congratulated the Kerala State for making rapid strides in the development of the country. He appreciated the efforts of the Kerala Footwear Association



Consul General, CGI, Dubai and Executive Director, CLE, moving around the stalls

for organizing the Expo in Dubai and also assured the Consulate's support towards development of trade between India and UAE.

Shri V Noushad, Chairman, Organising Committee in his address has thanked the Chairman and the Executive Director of Council for Leather Exports for their support in organizing the Kerala Footwear Expo. He also thanked the Consul General for his gracious presence in the show and for inaugurating the show. Shri Noushad further stated that the Expo is a collective effort of all their members and thanked them for their cooperative efforts towards making a successful show.

The Consul General along with Executive Director, CLE, then moved

around the stalls and viewed the wide collection of the non-leather footwear displayed in the stalls.

CLE's Marketing Support

M/s India Trade Exhibition Centre, m.e., Sharjah, was engaged by the CLE for undertaking the Buyer mobilization campaign. The agency undertaken buyer mobilization efforts through invitations to the database of buyers, E-mail blasts and telephonic follow up. As part of publicity measure, advertisement was released in Khaleej Times, the leading business journal in Dubai. The CLE Representative visited the Murshid Bazaar, the centre for non-leather footwear retailers and extended personal invitations to them.



Interaction of Consul General with the exhibitors





Buyer Turnout

In response to the Council's buyer mobilization effort, the Expo was successful with buyer turnaround of around 120. As per the feedback of the participants, serious potential buyers visited the show and they had series of business meetings resulted in placing huge orders. All the participants thanked CLE for its efforts and wished that such events are to be organized every year in Dubai.

Pre – Event Meetings for BSM in Dubai, December 2015



Shri R. Ramesh Kumar, IAS, Executive Director, CLE in discussion with the ITEC officials

The Council is organising the Second edition of Buyer Seller Meet in Dubai during December 2015 under the MAIS 2015-16. The Council organised the first edition of BSM in Dubai during December 2013 with participation of 35 companies. The show was highly successful with an impressive buyer turn out of 180. Considering the potential of the UAE market for the Indian leather and leather products, the Council is organising the second edition during Dec 2015.

The Executive Director, CLE met Ms Sri Priyaa, Director-General, India

Trade Exhibition Centre, ITEC, Sharjah and discussed on various pre-event arrangements including the best strategies towards publicity and buyer mobilisation campaign to be adopted to ensure large number of buyers footfall.

Minutes of the Meeting held between CLE & ITEC on Sunday, March 15, 2015 at 11:00 hrs at ITEC m.e. premises

Present

1. Shri R Ramesh Kumar, IAS, Executive Director, CLE
2. Ms Sripriyaa Kumaria, Director

General, ITEC

3. Ms Ivy Majumdar, Director – Business Development, ITEC
4. Ms Shine Thomas, Project Manager, ITEC

The meeting of CLE with ITEC m.e. was held at DG's office at ITEC m.e. premises. Shri R. Ramesh Kumar, IAS, Executive Director, CLE called upon Ms Sripriyaa Kumaria, Director General, ITEC m.e. on Sunday, 15th March 2015.

The following were the points of discussion :

1. Ms Sripriyaa Kumaria briefed the Executive Director about the current BSMs/Trade Shows organized by ITEC m.e. and the BSM calendar for the year 2015. Ms Kumaria updated the ED that ITEC proposes to organize state specific BSMs in the focus sectors. She also updated ED about the various activities of ITEC m.e.

2. The Executive Director discussed the plan of action for the proposed Buyer Seller Meet on 15th & 16th December 2015. The ED emphasized to extend invitations to potential buyers from neighboring countries namely Iran, Turkey, GCC countries. The Executive Director also suggested to send invitations to all Business Councils in UAE especially Turkish & Iran Business Councils. ITEC m.e. shall send CLE the complete publicity budgets for the above proposed activity.

3. DG ITEC m.e. suggested that ITEC m.e. can also arrange for structured/focused B2B meetings of potential big buyers/brands with the exhibitors etc

4. It was agreed that CLE would send the Exhibitors Profile to ITEC at least a month in advance to make suitable matchmaking with the potential buyers. ITEC would update CLE on potential sectors in leather and leather based products predominant in UAE.

5. DG ITEC m.e. also suggested that the hotel / BSM venue is booked on time to get the venue on desirable dates suitable to CLE and the local market to conduct the BSM in UAE.

6. For wider coverage & publicity it was also suggested by ITEC m.e. to place advertisement in Leather / fashion Magazine/Journals. The proposal for complete publicity shall be sent to CLE.

7. Ms Sripriyaa Kumaria briefed the Executive Director on "India City" concept wherein ITEC is working in close association with Indian Consulate, Dubai and the Sharjah Government on the project. The project is likely to be firmed up within 6 months

thereafter ITEC would send the details to CLE.

8. To organise a Press Conference before the inaugural day of the event. The press release along with the inaugural photo to be published on the next day of the event.

Venue Finalisation

As per the suggestion of ITEC, the Executive Director along with ITEC made a personal visit to the venues for an assessment on the location, easy accessibility etc., as the first edition of the BSM received remarks on the venue selection as number of buyers footfall would still be more, if some other venue was chosen. Hence in order to ensure a successful BSM in December 2015 in all aspects including the venue selection, the team inspected three reputed star hotels namely Sheraton, Radisson Blu & Crown Plaza and Hotel Radisson Blu was finally identified as the best venue in terms of its locality, accessibility and the ambience.

