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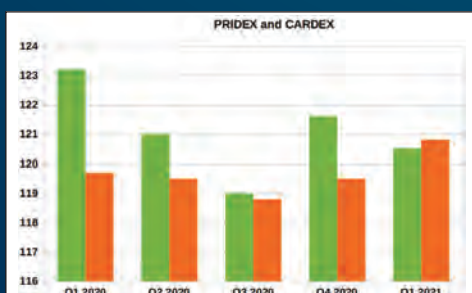
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AIFMP Team 2020-21



AIFMP Indices

■ Pridex
■ Cardex

PRIDEX and CARDEX

The input cost variation has been a lot more volatile, and thereby, difficult to predict for the commercial print vertical as compared to the carton packaging sector. For a detailed analysis on page number 24.

ALL INDIA FEDERATION OF MASTER PRINTERS



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Manoj Agnihotri (West)

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PRINTING TIMES

Founder Editor:

Late V N Chhabra



1927-2017

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MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT



PROF. KAMAL CHOPRA
President

First of all, let me thank all the esteemed members for having faith in my working style and giving me another opportunity to serve the Federation and associate with you all on this additional term. At the same time, I wish to welcome you all in 2021, maybe the year of survival.

Covid-19 pandemic infected almost 92 million people and killed nearly 20 lakh humans worldwide to date. Economies around the world collapsed, loss of jobs are at a peak and several sectors already witnessed doom. Apart from the physical impact, Indian printers are also facing an economic crisis badly due to this pandemic. The Indian printing industry is dominated by the Micro and Small units, let us assume if there are 250,000 printers in India, I can say that more than 85 percent of these are facing a deep crunch due to this longest ever lockdown in India. Our printers, especially commercial printers, and mainly micro and small printers have suffered the most. Almost every printer remained more active online as compared to their schedule before lockdown.

Internet and digitizations both are hitting normal printing badly. We have also got to know that the government of India notified not to get printed the calendar and diaries etc. Though in a country where the internet is yet to reach 51 percent population, such decisions can say to be tying horse behind the cart. Though AIFMP is working on it, to ease the convenience of the central government and to withdraw such steps on these grounds. But, since it is a state subject, printers may actively approach the state governments not to issue or to withdraw such instructions.

These days many of us start saying, the internet is killing printing. Let's get the past misconception i.e. "print is dead". The future of print is embracing the exciting new waves of communication and media innovation more than you might expect.

The industry is now set to ready to expand, especially with the oversaturation and privacy issues at digital platforms that we have experienced today.

During lockdown, AIFMP, and some other affiliates conducted various webinars, the consensus was that big changes are approaching. The top printing companies are embracing innovations, integrating with digital technology, and getting more customized. As companies merge and streamline in record numbers, there will be fewer manufacturers, merchants, and printers. However, the ones that vigorously adopt new technology will thrive and grow.

There are surprising numbers of new opportunities on the way, but the printers must be willing to make significant changes to take advantage of them. "A well-positioned printer really becomes a communications company, offering solutions well above and beyond a traditional print facility." My perception is printing is not only ink on paper, we will have to adopt new and innovative ideas may be textile and garment printing also which can lead to the survival of micro and small printers.

Perception has been a major element of the problem with misdiagnosing the decline of print. "When you look around today, everything you see is printed, but people don't connect it with the printing industry. And that's the future. The future is yet to be written, because it's whatever the demand will be, whether it be printing wall coverings, the printing of table cloths or other so many things." I will advise that we should try to adopt new and innovative ideas for printing that is the utmost survival of micro and small printers. And that is how we can save not only the PRINT but also the printers of the country.

During this term we thought of many new ideas to support PRINT, starting with subsidy to micro/small printers for the purchase of original software, we are trying to reach every printer member at the virtual platform to understand his problems and expectations from AIFMP. The standing committee meetings are being conducted virtually so that all can share their viewpoints. ■

EDITORIAL



P. CHANDER
HON EDITOR
FORMER PRESIDENT-MPLA
& AIFMP

Thanks to all of you who expressed your enthusiasm and support for our vision. Well, what a year it has been. This time in 2019 we had no idea what was heading towards us. The year 2020 started on a gloomy note, with Covid 19 spreading through nations like wildfire, bringing the whole world to a standstill. While the fight with the virus is far from over, we all have learned to live with it. On the other hand, for the occasion of the Festival of light, Diwali, Government restricted the use of firecrackers to decrease the combined effect of COVID and air pollution that can spell havoc for the public. Many people have decided to keep it low-key, worried about their family, spent quality time as a family together to prepare Diwali feasts at home and decorate the house with lights and diyas. There was a large scale distribution of sweets and Diwali greetings to friends and family by courier.

The articles in this issue, starting with our summary for the virtual 250th Governing Council Meeting held on Oct 29, 30 & 31, 2020 along with the 67th election & Annual General Meeting which was conducted virtually for the year 2020-21 as it slated first time ever in the history of the Federation. With this issue, we are thrilled to be able to announce the New Office Bearers Team 2020-21. Our outgoing team bid goodbye and welcome the new office bearers' team, respectively. Printers throughout the country are looking forward to the new teams initiatives in the troubled pandemic times

Excited to share with you all that we have initiated a new column from this issue i.e. "Printer's achievement beyond the industry". This will surely make us proud and set a perfect example of courage and strength.

The AIFMP office started functioning at its premises as the entire complex housing AIFMP was shut during the pandemic our office staff were relentlessly working from home to fulfill the tasks assigned to them.

Christmas-2020 is knocking at the door, We are always looking for the possibility of fulfilling, our sweet dreams with blessings of Santa, in corona virus, gripped universe. As New year is approaching we hope that it will bring peace and sunshine to many people as possible. ■

250th GC Meeting

The 250th meeting of the Governing Council of All India Federation of Master Printers was held on 29th October 2020 through Video Conferencing from 11.00 AM onwards under the Chairmanship of Mr. Dibyajyoti Kalita, President AIFMP.

President wished good morning to everybody present at the virtual meeting. He expressed his sincere thanks to all OBs for working as a well knotted team without any arguments, he further stated that he was lucky to have such a nice team.

President welcomed all the GC members who attended the 250th virtual GC meeting and he spoke that all were unable to hold physical meeting due to COVID-19 pandemic. He gave the chronological details of the activities performed by the Office Bearers team during the year 2019-20.

HGS once again welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting and explained that second time the virtual GC meeting held successfully despite of pandemic.

Mrs. Medha Virkar, GC, MMS Mumbai sought clarification from the President regarding no response from Government authorities. She further stated that whatever representations sent to Government must also be marked to affiliates so that they can also send similar representations to Govt authorities.

Later, HGS appealed to all the Presidents of affiliates to send independent representation to their state authorities to build pressure on Govt authorities for repressing grievances of Print Industry.



Mr. Raveendra Joshi further shared that some of the foreign Governments has classified printing essential activity in their respective countries. He proposed that our Federation should also request to Central Government to declare printing to be essential activity.

Mr. V K Malik, PP, wished better for the industry and expressed that many webinars were held during the lockdown period, even GC meeting were held through virtual platform in such challenging times. Moreover, he expected that virtual meetings should be held in future in such order that Federation may move forward.

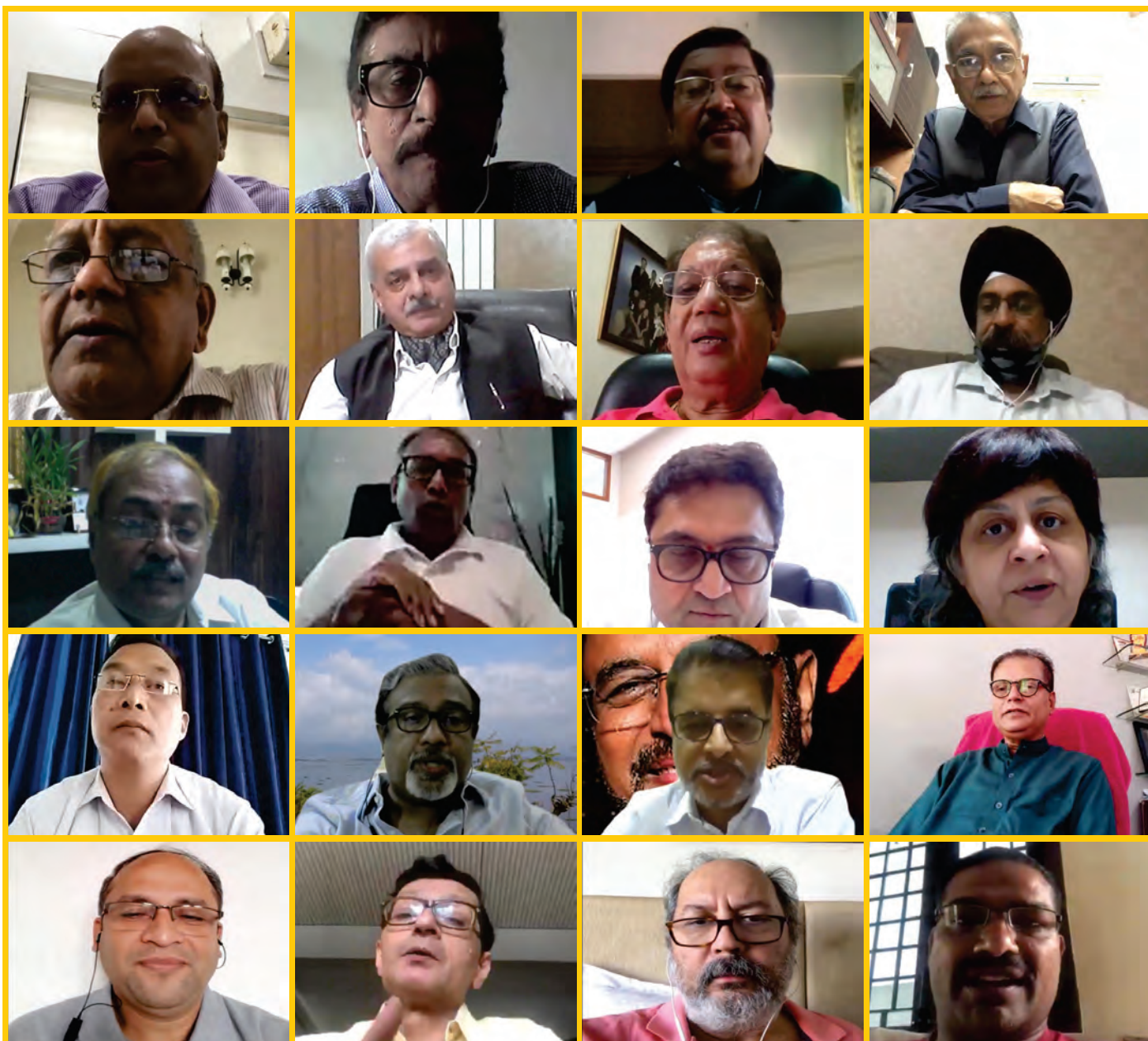
Mr. C R Janardhana, Past President appreciated HGS and his team for their activeness in works even in such pandemic period. He requested HGS to convey the periodic representations to Government authorities and problems as well faced by the printing industry and asked for their

intervention to receive the consequent solution.

Prof Kamal Chopra also encouraged OBs for their hard working even during lockdown.

Mr. Manoj B Mehta, PP complimented the OPA Ludhiana for organizing 50 webinars during the lockdown to educate the printers. He expressed his thanks to Prof Kamal Chopra, Past President, and the Federation for organizing Export Promotion webinar.

Mr. Manoj Mehta expressed his thanks to everybody at the meeting. He complimented HGS for conducting virtual meeting efficiently. He also praised the OBs for effectively managing the affairs of Federation during lockdown and for organizing a lot of webinars. He thanked entire Federation for supporting the GC members. ■



AIFMP 67th AGM



The 67th Meeting of the General Body of All India Federation of Master Printers was held on Friday 30th October 2020 through Video Conferencing from 11.00 AM onwards under the Chairmanship of Mr. Dibyajyoti Kalita, President AIFMP.

Mr. K. Rajendran, Hon General Secretary requested President to deliver his presential address.

Mr. Dibyajyoti Kalita, President AIFMP welcomed all PP's, fellow OB's and all GC members and stated that Laxmi Puja was being performed throughout eastern region including Assam on 30th October 2020 safely as it is marked as an auspicious day. In his welcome address he narrated the work done by his OBs team for the whole year. He further shared that the 67th AGM held through Virtual platform for the first time in the history of Federation due to COVID-19 pandemic since they were unable to conduct physical GC meeting. He congratulated the under mentioned GC members for elected unopposed OB's for the year 20-21. He wished them all success in their endeavor.

- Mr. G N Visvakumar, Hon General Secretary
- Mr. Harjinder Singh, Hon. Treasurer,
- Mr. Vihu Meyase, Vice-President (East)
- Mr. Manoj Agnihotri, Vice-President (West)
- Mr. Prakash Babu Vice-President (South)

He further mentioned that Federation held E-Elections as physical holding of the meeting was suspended till the restoration of the normalcy. E-Elections for the post of President, VP North & Joint Secretary began from 12 noon & E-voting process continued till 12.00 pm i.e., 31st Oct 2020.

He once again expressed his sincere thanks and gratitude on the behalf of all the OBs and Federation to all the GC members for giving him an opportunity to serve the printing fraternity. With this he concluded his address. President requested HGS to commence the proceedings of the AGM.

HGS informed the participants that no request for leave of absence was received. Later, he presented his annual report for the year 2019-20 for their kind consideration. He expressed his sincere thanks and gratitude to all the GC members for electing him for two consecutive terms. The other routine items of Agenda were discussed, consideration and passed. Mr. Biju Jose proposed the Vote of Thanks and the meeting was concluded well.

The e-election for the post of President, Vice President (N) and Hon Joint Secretary commenced at 12 noon. The names of Office bearers elected for the year 2020-21 are as under:

President	:	Prof. Kamal Chopra
Hon. Gen. Secretary	:	Mr. G N Visvakumar
Hon. Treasurer	:	Mr. Harjinder Singh
Hon. Joint Secretary	:	Mr. Tirthraj J. Joshi
Vice President (N)	:	Mr. Ashwani Gupta
Vice President (E)	:	Mr. Vihu Meyase
Vice President (W)	:	Mr. Manoj Agnihotri
Vice President (S)	:	Mr. C Prakash Babu



Prof. Kamal Chopra
President

Mr. Kamal Chopra is a Gold Medallist in Printing Technology from NRIPT, Allahabad. His life has been full of awards, the President of India conferred National Award for excellence in Designing in the year 1980. In the year 1997 he was nominated for Udyog Rattan Award by Institute of Economic Studies which was presented by the speaker of Lok Sabha in New Delhi. He was also declared 'Man of Achievement' in the year 1999 by the International Publishing House and awarded him plaque for his highly commendable services and most meritorious performance as the leading and most quality conscious printer. He is recipient of Prof. Puran Singh Dhami Award for the year 2008-09 in the field of Communication, Printing and Print Education. Global Print Leadership Award was presented to him in 2013 at Chicago USA by NPES. Indian Solidarity Council also awarded him 'Man of Excellence' award in the year 2013.

Besides being the President of AIFMP, he is also the Chairman of World Print and Communication Forum (WPCF). He is Governor of Haryana nominee on the Court of Deenbandhu Chhotu Ram University of Science & Technology, Murthal (Sonapat) India, Honorary Professor, Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication, Beijing, China, Adjunct Professor, Dr Baba Sahib Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad, India, Member, Board of Studies, Guru Jambheshwar University of Science and Technology (GJUST), Hisar, India, Member, Publication and Graphic Tech. Committee, BIS, Govt. of India, Member Development Council for Pulp, Paper and Allied Industries, Govt. of India, Ministry of Commerce. Besides being the General Secretary of Offset Printers' Association (OPA), Printing and Packaging Cluster Development Company (PPCDC) and NIPA Educational Trust, he is also the President of Printers' Club of India and the life member of the Asian Society of Film & Televisions. He is also the Chief Editor of 'Punjab Print' the official journal of OPA.



Mr. G N Visvakumar
Hon Gen Secretary

At 55, Mr. Visvakumar, is a printing industry veteran with more than 35 years of experience under his belt. An Arts graduate from the Madras University, he made his industry foray by setting up a letter press unit way back in 1985.

He is the proprietor of Rajams Digital Offset Prints, which specializes in designs, print production and photo albums. Located on Peter's Road, Royapettah, the print hub of Chennai, Rajams caters predominantly to Chennai, besides serving some overseas markets.

The unit is one of the first in the city to acquire Brand New HP Indigo Digital Press, Heidelberg Anicolor, Heidelberg Supra Setter CTP. & Heidelberg SX74 and allied finishing equipments. Bagged a Gold Award at the National Awards for Excellence in Printing 2020 (NAEP Awards) conducted by AIFMP.

An active Governing Council Member served in various committees of AIFMP as member and Chairman. Currently, Mr. Visvakumar is the Honorary General Secretary of All India Federation of Master Printers (AIFMP) and Immediate Past of President of the Madras Printers' and Lithographers' Association (MPLA). ■

His contribution - the unique 13 page calendar offering a complete history of Printing that goes back to over 100,000 years was appreciated world over. He received appreciation letters from the President Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. He was also felicitated at Birmingham (UK) in the year 2006 by the BUMPSA for this achievement. Considering its importance as a valuable article and a huge contribution to the history of printing this calendar found place at the Gutenberg Museum, Mainz, Germany and the Printing History Museum in Beijing, China. ■



Mr. Ashwani Gupta
Vice President (North)

Ashwani Gupta born on May 1, 1965, is a commerce graduate from DAV College, Jalandhar, and Law Graduate from Guru Nanak Dev University. He joined the family printing business of his father Sh. Baldev Gupta under the name M/s Standard Printers in the year 1984 as letter press printer, who is well known as the founder of Jalandhar Printers Association in the year 1965 as the first General Secretary of JPA. Ashwani Gupta started his own printing press in the year 1994 under the name

Innovator and entrepreneur in central India's printing industry. With an experience of over 34 years in the print business.

Mr. Agnihotri has made his firm a one-stop solution for all business needs pertaining to publishing, packaging, and all print-related promotional requirements. Relentless in achieving new goals and a stickler for quality, have always kept the need of his clients above everything else.

A graduate of the Vikram University, Ujjain he holds Bachelor of Commerce in 1982. He founded Mesh Prints Bhopal in December 1989 and Mesh Prints Indore in April 2001.

Founder Secretary, Surendra Garden Residence Welfare Society 2005, President, Surendra Garden Residence Welfare Society since May 2017 to till date, Founder Member, Bhopal Master Printers Association since 2016,

and style of M/s Instant Printers, later converted into M/s Choice Books & Printers Pvt Ltd. and leads as Managing Director of the company. He was very much involved in cultural activities in school and college days, he played Inter school Table Tennis, captained inter-college Badminton and Cricket team. Also played squash in club.

He expanded his unit by keeping pace with the state-of-the-art technology of multicolor web and sheet fed offset printing along with pre-press and post-press machines. He is doing printing jobs of various state govt textbook boards and leading private publishers of India along with packaging customers.

At present he is the General Secretary of Jalandhar Printers Association, Jalandhar. He served the federation as Hon. Treasurer in the year 2014-2015, 2017-2018 and served as Standing Chairman MSME and Co-Chairman Constitution Committee of AIFMP on different occasions. ■



Mr Manoj Agnihotri
Vice President (West)

Hon. Sec. Bhopal Master Printer Association since 2016 to till date, Governing Council Member, All India Federation of Master Printers (AIFMP) since 2016, Co-chairman, Data Collection Committee at (AIFMP) 2018-2019, Co-chairman International Relations at (AIFMP) 2019-2020, Vice President, West (AIFMP) 2020-2021 ■



Mr. Vihu Meyase
Vice President (East)

Mr. Vihu Meyase started his business in 1992 in a letter press unit and adapted to the changes he converted to Offset Printing Press in 2008.

Mr. Vihu Meyase was elected as Vice President for two terms in Nagaland Master Printers Association. Currently he is holding the position of Treasurer in Nagaland Master Printers Association. ■



Mr C Prakash Babu
Vice President (South)

Managing Partner of M/s. Ramesh printing press and M/s. Prakash Print Park. Pioneer in Foil stamping and Label printing, held different position in various Trusts &

Associations., Worked in position of AIFMP as Governing Council Member since 2004.

Patron Member & Managing Committee Member of Karnataka State Printers Association (KSPA) since 1996, Winner of National Award for Excellence in Printing. Recipient of Karnataka State Award for Foil printing. Recipient of Best Foil Printing & Post Press Activity Award from Karnataka Offset Printers Association (KOPA). Life member of KASSIA. Founder Member & Treasurer of Sri Nirvana Bhaghavathi Seva Mandali Trust, Bangalore. Served as Jt. Secretary, Hon. Secretary (2015-16) and Treasurer (2016-17) for AIFMP. One of the Promoter of Printech Park, Bangalore & Director of Print Training and Testing Center, Bangalore. ■

With 23 years of robust experience in the field of printing, Mr. Tirthraj Joshi, is a trusted entrepreneur and is highly proficient in the language of printing. Born and brought up in Pune, he has a Diploma in Printing Technology.

It has been 14 years since he started Shrikrishna Arts, a printing press in Pune which offers the best of services in the field. Hardworking, persistent, and passionate in nature, Tirthraj always strives for the betterment of the printing fraternity and believes in teamwork. He has been the editor of the magazine, Mudran Prakash for last 9 years. Now he is a Secretary of PPOA.

He is a high-spirited, energetic personality always ready to work for Printing Industry and has been pursuing the sport of mountaineering since his childhood. With great communication and networking skills, Tirthraj has



Mr. Tirthraj J Joshi
Hon Jt Secretary

garnered great trust of many customers over the years. He believes not just in printing but leaving impactful imprints on people's minds. ■



Mr. Harjinder Singh
Hon Treasurer

Mr. Harjinder Singh is a Graduate in Chemistry Honors from University of Lucknow and Director, Swastika Printwell (India) Pvt. Ltd. and Managing Partner, Varasto Warehousing LLP. He is well connected with many social,

religious and technical organisations. A well versed personality, Mr. Singh is the National Vice President (North Bharat) of MSME & Start-up Forum and State Vice President of Uttar Pradesh Adarsh Vyapar Mandal.

He is Vice Chairman International Relations & Industrial Development & Taxation Committee, Associated Chambers of commerce & Industries of U.P. and part of the organizing committees for 'Investor Summit' organised by the Uttar Pradesh state government for inviting investors to invest in the state. He was part of the team which managed to bring investments worth Rupees ten thousand Crore during the summit. Mr Singh is the President (Lucknow City) of Uttar Pradesh Adarsh Vyapar Mandal. Mr. Singh also remained the State Organising Chairman and now General Secretary at the Small Industries & Manufacturers Association

(SIMA). He is Chairman state advisory committee of Industries & Traders Welfare Association and is the Executive Member of Vijay Shree Foundation. He is also the General Secretary of Lucknow Printers' Association.

Work and dedication of Mr. Harjinder Singh is always appreciated he is also serving at various government bodies such as Sectional Committee Member, Bureau of Indian standards (BIS) MED25 & CHD14, where he has played a key role in preparing the formulations for the printing industry of India as well as for the ISO certifications. Organising Chairman, Faculty of Lucknow University for providing training to the students for "START UP" programme, Govt. of India. Under his Chairmanship an agreement was signed with the Vice Chancellor of Lucknow University for providing training to the University students in the above-mentioned program. This is the first pilot program being initiated in any University under him in the country. He is also the Technical committee member of ZED certification, M.S.M.E.

Mr. Harjinder Singh is the member of Gurdwara Sri Hemkunt Sahib Management Trust consisting of eight Gurdwaras in the state of Uttarakhand and he is responsible for preparing the road map on E-management of domestic & International donations handling through customized software created for accepting donations through FCRA. He was instrumental in successfully establishing computer for accepting donations at an height of 15220 ft. one of the highest peaks of Uttarakhand where the main Gurdwara Sri Hemkunt Sahib is located.

Mr. Harjinder Singh also participated in various international events of repute and represented India in USA, England, Germany, China, Israel, Malaysia etc. He was part of a VVIP event in ISRAEL in July 2017 and represented INDIA amongst delegates from 35 other countries. He signed MOUs in 2018 - 19 with international exhibition organizers in USA, Malaysia, Bangkok, Germany for cooperation agreement to support their printing exhibitions in their countries and co-operation in printing education and trade. ■



ALL INDIA FEDERATION OF MASTER PRINTERS

251ST GC MEETING
(VIRTUAL)

21 - 22 January 2021



RTGS Payment System will Be Available 24X7

16th December 2020: The Real Time Gross Settlement System (RTGS), which is often used for high-value transactions, will be available 24*7 on all days.

The news comes months after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), announced the development that RTGS will be available round-the-clock on all days of the year. The activation of the service makes India one of the few countries to entertain this service.



**Govt extends deadline to file annual GST
returns to February 28, 2021.**

Prof. Kamal Chopra becomes the first **Indian** to Head the **World Print & Communication Forum (WPCF)**



In a special first for the country, Prof. Kamal Mohan Chopra has been appointed as the Chairman of the World Print & Communication Forum (WPCF). On December 8, 2020 he took over the reins from the past president, Mr. Michael Mikken (USA). Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Raveendra Joshi, Former President of

AIFMP said, "It is a proud moment for the nation and its printing industry, as for the first time an Indian will run this international organization."

Headquartered in Brussels, Belgium, the WPCF is a collaborative platform for the world's major transnational and national printing associations to work together, promote the development and prosperity of the global printing industry. WPCF also facilitates and encourages communication with other parts of the print value chain to further develop the print and communication market through international and cross-industry collaboration and knowledge-sharing. The WPCF was officially founded in 2004 because of an initiative supported by the world's major transnational and national printing associations. The founding members of the WPCF were Conlatingraf, representing South America; Intergraf, representing European interests; PIA, the Printing Industries of America for the North American continent; and national associations from Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, and South Africa.

Having chaired All India Federation of Master Printers (AIFMP) India's highest printing federation twice, Prof Kamal (72) is ready for the new test: "It is a proud moment for me and altogether a new challenge as well," he said. He further added that: "It is a huge honor that can be bestowed upon an individual, having experienced chairing at AIFMP has given me some valuable experience. I hope it will prove to be beneficial for me in WPCF as well."

The owner of one of the top printing presses Foil Printers in Ludhiana, Kamal Chopra has been a jack of all trades in the printing industry. He is an inspirational figure for everyone not only in the printing industry, but in general as well. Having been an honorary professor in three international

universities and Governor's nominee in the board of a national university. His life has been penned down in his biographies, namely "Life in Print" and releasing shortly "Imprint of a Printer." These books detail his journey from humble beginnings to rare honors like 'President of India Award' and 'Hon. Professor at world's leading printing institute in China.'

"The feeling of being the first Indian to reach this level is unmatched. I hope this will bring more opportunities for Indians in this industry at this level. I will try my best to be a good representative for the nation and work sincerely towards the responsibility assigned to me," concluded Prof Chopra.



The World Print & Communication Forum is a collaborative platform for the world's major transnational and national printing associations to work together to promote the development and prosperity of the global printing industry. WPCF also facilitates and encourages communication with other parts of the print value chain to further develop the print and communication market through international and cross-industry collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

The objective of the WPCF is to form one single, global platform for the printing and related industries in order to promote business opportunities and the image of the print. The WPCF facilitates the exchange of information on economic and other relevant business indicators, sharing best practices on environmental issues, and providing intelligence to support business opportunities for its members. To achieve these objectives, the WPCF stages the World Print & Communication Congress, as well as other smaller conferences, providing a platform for the exchange of information and cooperation between users and suppliers of technology and services in related sectors. ■

Are we ready for sustainability?

By **PIOTR WNUK**

Modern consumers demand sustainability. Over the past few years, it has become a key factor considered when making a purchase decision. According to a recent Accenture sustainability survey, 87 percent of consumers prefer an eco-friendly packaging option when purchasing products.

Environmentally friendly packaging has an enormous potential to add value to products, shape brand image and develop customer loyalty. Sustainability and environmental responsibility, for brand owners contending for leading market positions, are nowadays a necessity, not merely a luxury or simply a buzzword. Plus, with the public increasingly aware of the waste caused by packaging, wasteful brands are often named and shamed on social media.

Global corporate giants such as McDonald's are now pledging to make their packaging fully recyclable by 2025. Governments around the world are implementing stringent legislation and imposing sustainability deadlines, which brand owners will have to meet.

There is no doubt about it. The pressure is on.

Is sustainability here to stay?

Many of us were brought up with the phrase 'reduce, reuse, recycle' in our vocabulary. Today, it is essential for businesses to reflect these values. Not only to help the environment, but also increase brand loyalty among eco-conscious consumers.

'Responding to changing consumer attitudes, sustainability has become a greater priority for both brand owners and suppliers to the packaging industry,' says Jonathan Sexton, marketing manager, energy curing products for Europe at Sun Chemical, one of the largest producers of printing inks. 'Brand owners have played an important role in the push for more sustainable packaging by committing to being more environmentally friendly. As part of that commitment, many have adopted a responsible packaging policy, which also includes the design and production of packaging for a circular economy.'

Yohann Froment, Marketing Director of Armor, French manufacturer of thermal transfer ribbons, thinks that sustainable packaging and labeling is still emerging, 'though it has recently gained increased focus, driven by the corporate social responsibility policies of major brand owners.'

Is this wave of sustainability accountability from brands and the general population here to stay? 'In my 30 years of experience in the packaging industry, this is the third wave of sustainability that I have seen, and I believe this one is here to stay,' asserts Dan Haney, president and co-founder

of Haney, the Packaging Micro factory, which has recently launched the VIA Resolve sustainable packaging program. 'Right now, many label

manufacturers are moving towards more sustainable practices offering eco-friendly label materials, thinner films, liner recycling programs, etc. We at Haney are seeing increasing interest from brands in composting: compostable adhesives, films, containers. I think there needs to be more emphasis on adhesive technologies, specifically when it comes to the advancements in bio films; if you are going to use a bio film you have to have a bio adhesive and that bio adhesive can't leave a residue or should be compostable if the label material itself meets those standards.'

Indeed, material science, packaging and label engineering are developing at incredible speed. As a result, more eco-friendly options are on the market that can take care of a wide range of products. There have also been breakthroughs in plant-based and biodegradable plastic packaging.

'Sustainability labeling options are growing and being adopted by brands. At Avery Dennison we started with FSC face sheets (responsibly sourced) and now have grown our Clear Intent Portfolio to include products that have reduced environmental impact, include recycled content and products that focus enabling the recyclability of the substrates they are applied to,' comments Sarah Sanzo, compliance and sustainability manager at Avery Dennison. 'We work with partners (APR, SPC How2Recycle) that help educate consumers on how to correctly recycle their packaging and this continues to push the sustainable packaging market forward.'

Factors shaping the market.

According to Robert Taylor, sustainability director at UPM Raflatac, the most important factors shaping the sustainable packaging market are climate change, the plastics discussion, packaging recyclability and resource efficiency. 'As a company, UPM Raflatac has taken a number of steps to address these. Through our commitments, we are doing our part in reducing unnecessary plastic packaging and setting concrete targets to create future innovative circular materials.'

Sarah Sanzo adds: 'Consumers are a large part of shaping the environmentally responsible labeling market. Expectations from consumers that the brands are hearing loud and clear have made brands rethink their packaging. Out of the complaints it has created an opportunity for the labeling market to bring forth innovations to meet the needs of consumers and brands.'



Sun Chemicals echoes this statement: ‘The main factors are consumer demand, social responsibility and regional regulatory frameworks. However, the cost will also become an issue as sustainable solutions go mainstream,’ says Jonathan Sexton.

Yohann Froment is also concerned about the economic side and thinks that as long as recycled raw materials remain more costly than new raw materials, the trend towards sustainability will not develop at a fast pace. ‘Consciousness of manufacturers will progressively contribute to increase demand volume, and will reach at one stage, the price required for a viable economical model,’ he says. ‘Innovation can also drive this trend. Innovative products and processes can lead to demand and can impose standards to the market. For example, at Armor, we have recently launched a new thermal transfer ribbon, APR1 which is manufactured with 12 percent less plastic. Though it is positioned as a competitive ribbon compared to the other products of its family, this industrial innovation will necessarily make an impact on the mind of resellers and brand owners using it. So, it is the responsibility of the industry to innovate with economically viable, sustainable options because it will progressively shape the buying intentions of the market.’

One of the key challenges is the number of different assessment criteria for sustainability, which includes recyclability, compostability, bio-sourcing and carbon footprint, and within recycling there are also different processes and guidelines.

‘This not only means there is no single technology approach, but also that there can be challenges with sustainability criteria such as the recycling of bioplastics and with the functionality and cost of the package in question,’ confirms Jonathan Sexton. ‘Label and packaging converters and their supply chains are having to adjust to evolving consumer and brand owner demands and priorities in this area. The supply chain is reacting to these evolving needs, but the industry needs to move to a more proactive approach, which requires greater investment.’

According to Dan Haney, one of the biggest issues is the infrastructure for recycling and composting. The lack of consistency makes it difficult for brands and material manufacturers to develop products that are universally recyclable or compostable.

‘The intentions are here, recycling initiatives exist, but not strong enough to make them a reality or to develop fundamental changes like compostability,’ says Yohann Froment. ‘Cost effective options (versus non-sustainable alternatives) will be a key driver to the speed of adoption. Currently sustainable initiatives are sometimes polluted with rather “fake” sustainable packaging, giving a green image to packaging rather than being truly sustainable products. Most brand owners are not willing to pay a premium for the existing environmentally friendly solutions. This is slowing down the investment and development from the labels and packaging makers.’

‘The biggest challenge in the US is getting consumers to recycle their packaging,’ adds Sarah Sanzo. ‘Education is needed. Low rates of recycling make it hard to source enough post-consumer recycled content to help brands achieve their goals.’

‘There has been a huge surge in advancements in materials and adhesives, but if the facilities aren’t there to properly recycle or compost that product it will just end up in a landfill,’ agrees Dan Haney. ‘To reiterate, at Haney, we are getting a lot of requests for compostable and bio-based adhesives, which is tricky because these adhesives are being asked to do a lot while still maintaining the necessary characteristic to achieve the BPI or TUV standards.’

Circular economy

Jonathan Sexton considers the circular economy to be an achievable target and one that is certainly worth achieving. ‘It will be a long and challenging road to get there. Nevertheless, we are committed to it – as a member of Ceflex, for example, Sun Chemical is working closely with the organization to advance its sustainability and circular economy roadmap for flexible packaging in Europe,’ he says.



Armor is also positive about the circular approach: ‘In Armor’s business unit working on consumables for office printing, the product is sold, collected once used, and finally rebuilt as new one,’ says Yohann Froment. ‘All waste is recycled into new products, therefore as soon as the value of recycled raw materials is competitive, the same model can be implemented across labeling and packaging.’

‘For the circular economy to be successful, we need to continue and work with industry partners up and down the value stream,’ adds Sarah Sanzo. ‘We see a path to success, especially with recycling our liners back into new liner products. Making a market for our byproducts is key to keeping circularity in motion. Other countries are seeing great success with circularity, but they have a more robust recycling infrastructure, but as consumers are eager to learn we all have an opportunity to improve how we manage our recyclables.’

UPM Raflatac goes as far as calling it a ‘new way of doing things. ‘Simply put, we have no other option. It’s the only way forward,’ says Robert Taylor. ‘Fortunately, there are already things that are happening to bring this to life. Take, for example, UPM Raflatac’s Label to Label product in the Americas, which is the label industry’s first paper face material constructed from recycled label materials. Or our RW85C wash-off film labeling materials, which allow the label to cleanly wash off from a PET container during the recycling process. This gives you contaminant-free flakes that can be turned back into another PET container, thus closing the loop. These are just a few examples of the circular

economy already in action. But there is still so much more we need to achieve. UPM Raflatac will be one of the key solutions providers in this game, which is central to our company's strategy. As part of UPM, it strengthens our position to be able to do this. For example, with our Forest Film materials, we are able to leverage our sister company UPM Biofuels' resources to find new ways to innovate for a future beyond fossils.'

According to Dan Haney, circular economy does come off as a buzzword, but that does not make it any less of an important goal to strive for. 'I would like to see more companies providing liner recycling programs, such as Raf Cycle from UPM Raflatac. Nearly 50 percent of the label is the liner. While consumers may not think about this portion of the label it is a huge part of the process and it is important to divert this waste from landfills. Additionally, it is important to address the business case for a full circular economy to warrant the investment from brands and manufacturers alike.'

'Companies like The Loop are experimenting and figuring out the value of taking products out of landfills with permanent packaging,' continues Dan Haney. 'If they can identify sufficient financial gain for the business to do that then programs like these will gain momentum with the brands. But ultimately it goes back to what do consumers want- are they willing to pay a slight upcharge for something that improves sustainability, takes something out of a landfill, or reduces greenhouse gas emissions? Unfortunately, I do not believe now that is the case – typically consumers don't want to pay more if the only tradeoff for their dollar is sustainability.'

'Our philosophy at Haney is to pair sustainable advancements with product innovations to entice the consumer to pick that more sustainable product up off the shelf – that's when we see consumers be more receptive to paying a slight upcharge of 6-12 percent.'

Recycling, PCR or CO2

There is no singular answer. The only way to move forward to a more environmentally friendly future in labeling and packaging is to attack the problem from all sides.

'You have to be looking at all options,' says Sarah Sanzo. 'If you cannot recycle your package, then it's harder to get post-consumer recycled content. When you cannot purchase post-consumer recycled content for your products industry is forced to purchase virgin raw materials which increases carbon footprint instead of decreasing it. As a society we need to focus on the "Reduce, Reuse, recycle" model and shift the general mindset.'

According to Robert Taylor, all three aspects are important, but a fourth – renewables – also needs to be considered. 'They all have their role in the drive towards more sustainable products and none of them are mutually exclusive elements,' he says. 'For example, by ensuring recyclability, we are keeping raw materials in the system, and that eventually

allows you to use more post-consumer recycled (PCR) content. In doing so, you are reducing the carbon footprint. So, they are totally interlinked; you cannot separate them, and you should not. Instead, we need to understand the links and make informed choices. Resource efficiency is at the core of UPM's and UPM Raflatac's Biofore strategy.'

Jonathan Sexton adds: 'Our own discussions with stakeholders suggest that there is currently a market focus and priority on recycling. This focus is also being driven by regulation and is generating questions around recyclability that will impact increasingly also on inks and other materials used in label and packaging manufacture.'

'A carbon footprint is also important and has several aspects, one of which is operational regarding manufacturing processes and energy consumption and is a clear focus of label and packaging converters and supply chain manufacturers. Another increasing priority is bio sourcing, i.e., using raw materials based on "natural" renewable organic carbon sources rather than on ancient or petrochemical carbon sources. This is particularly true, where paper-based materials are favored in new applications.'

Some producers such as Armor are focusing on carbon footprint reduction, so that newly developed products have significantly lower environmental impact.

'The trend is a combination of all these sustainability factors, depending on what part of the packaging they refer to,' says Yohann Froment. 'We definitely invest in production processes to use less solvent, less plastic, and less raw material so, for example, some of our ribbons are developed using 12 percent less plastics, others are 100 percent solvent-free. We are committed to recovering any post-production waste from our customers. From Armor's flagship plant in France, 100 percent of our PET waste is recovered and along with 91 percent of the solvent we use is turned into energy for our own plant, which currently uses electricity made of 58 percent renewable sources.'

'Brands need to collaborate with the material manufacturers who need to work with the printers and converters and ultimately with the MRFs and composting facilities as well,' says Dan Haney. 'Collaboration is key to identifying options that tackle environmental issues at every step in the process. Right now, from a developmental standpoint utilizing post-consumer recycled content (PCR) is the easiest first step. The problem there is that the supply is not consistent. A refocus on recycling in the United States and developing a system that enables businesses to generate both revenue and a consistent supply of the right materials is needed. In addition, label companies, such as Avery Dennison and UPM Raflatac have developed wash-off adhesives that advance PET recycling. The greatest challenge is greenhouse emissions. I think a lot of work has already been done there – many of the big companies have stepped up and changed their manufacturing over the past few years and they have identified efficiencies in their facilities and the facilities of their supply chain.' ■

Opportunities

Jonathan Sexton believes sustainability is one of the key opportunities and drivers for new product development, especially around supporting the social imperatives of ensuring food safety and reducing food loss and packaging waste. 'Continuing to help our customers to achieve their sustainability goals, Sun Chemical already has programs related to deink ability and recyclability of printed materials as well as bio sourcing and sustainable printing technologies such as LED, and these will become more important in the future. Our future developments will all need to integrate sustainability criteria.'

'We work with the APR, MRF's and recyclers to ensure our pressure sensitive labels do not hinder the recycling process,' says Sarah Sanzo. 'With these insights the entire label industry is working toward the same goal thus creating a larger economy for recyclers.'

'UPM Raflatac's role in the packaging value chain is to offer label options and services that enable brands to make their packaging more sustainable. But we are not just offering product-based options; we have services available to help enhance a brand's sustainability,' says Robert Taylor.

The company runs RafCycle label waste recycling service with over 150 partners around the world. 'With RafCycle partners, we coordinate the recycling of spent label liner waste and have it recycled into a new resource. Additionally, our Label Life tool helps educate on the environmental impacts of our label materials by providing life cycle assessments and showing three fundamental ways they impact the environment: greenhouse gas emissions, energy use and water consumption,' adds Taylor.

Armor has also set up a complete collection and recycling program for its thermal transfer ribbons. 'At the moment it is running in France, where the program called RecPET is offered by our resellers to their end-users,' says Yohann Froment. 'Some of the large brand-owners have embraced this initiative to reduce their waste and participate to reduce their own carbon footprint. We are currently preparing similar RecPET programs in other countries like the USA with intentions to go faster and stronger everywhere we are present in the world.'

Dan Haney also can see a significant potential in implementing sustainability: 'If permanent packaging is becoming a sustainable revenue platform for companies and brands then they have to address premium print. The ability to use and remove a label easily would become imperative for brand messaging on permanent packaging. I think that labels are going to play a significant role in this market and be the primary communication vehicle here.'

Positive, but cautious outlook

There is no doubt that the focus on sustainable packaging and labeling will continue. Already it is growing several percentage points faster than non-sustainable packaging.

'You can see where the future is headed, and we want to be part of that future,' says Robert Taylor. 'This growth is in large part due to consumer demand for sustainable packaging. In turn, brands are working to keep up with this demand by announcing their sustainability targets and launching more sustainable sub-brands. There are the leading companies who are not just meeting consumer and customer demand but go beyond the targets. Our job is to push the agenda and create an innovative new label stock that turns heads. That is what leaders do. We just want to reiterate that the green recovery is undoubtedly the path forward, not just in the post-COVID-19 period, but well beyond.'

'This market has an enormous future but will only gain full momentum once governments enforce stricter environmental regulations and develop clear recycling channels,' says Yohann Froment.

Sarah Sanzo adds: 'The future is indeed very bright for the sustainable packaging and labeling market; value stream partners are collaborating, and new technologies are being created and tested. Chemical or advanced recycling technology is growing and being adopted which will help offset the hard to recycle materials that end up in a landfill.'

According to Dan Haney, the best way for a positive future is through collaboration and understanding where the value lies. 'What we are trying to fix is something that has to work in a much larger system, and the only way is if all the pieces of the system are working together. The power of marketing is tied into incentive programs. Consumers want to do the right thing and know they need to do the right thing, but they are lazy sometimes. If you can create an incentive system to get part of the process done at home instead of at the plant, that makes it easier for the manufacturers and investors to invest in high-speed lasers for reading the right materials versus grinding machines. It will have to be a collaborative process at the manufacturing level, the brand level, and the consumer level.'

However, alongside this positive outlook comes some caution: 'As the momentum behind the adoption of sustainable packaging and labeling picks up, current products and processes may quickly become obsolete, so the industry will need to accelerate innovation,' warns Jonathan Sexton. ■



“ PIOTR WNUK: Piotr is a part of the global team of editors and comes to the magazine with extensive experience in journalism. He has background in print and digital media spanning different countries and industry sectors. He is based in the London office, reporting on European label market. **”**

Prof. Kamal Chopra felicitated



Prof. Kamal Chopra is elected as the President of All India Federation of Master Printers (AIFMP). During his first visit to OPA office after being named the new president of AIFMP Prof Chopra is felicitated by the executive body of Offset Printers' Association on 4th November 2020.

Printers & Box Makers Facing Raw Material Cost Shock

Apart from COVID-19 related challenges, the printing industry is facing the twin blow of four price hikes in kraft paper in a short span of two months and substantial rise in other input cost. Offset Printers' Association (OPA) condemn the sharp increase in the prices of raw material, especially kraft paper for packaging industry. OPA passed a resolution today and said, the unprecedented steep escalation of price of Kraft Paper by the paper mills is the major hurdle while consuming industries are not willing to pass on the cost making their business unviable.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Parveen Aggarwal, President OPA said, the corrugated paper box industry is facing a crisis as prices of raw material have shot up by 30-35 per cent threatening to turn the business unviable. He further

added that, in addition to the increase in kraft paper prices, all other input cost such as manpower, starch, freight and other overheads have also witnessed a huge increase of 60-70 per cent in last few years.

Mr. Amarjot Arora said, the survival of the industry would be at stake unless the box users including large FMCGs absorb the rise in cost partially. It may not be practical for us to supply the material without an increase of at least 20 per cent. Printers are dying a slow death on the one side due to COVID-19 it is not possible to run in full capacity and this increase in the raw material prices will ruin the industry if no attention is given by the government immediately. ■

OPA Calendar Released

The annual Calendar of Offset Printers' Association (OPA) was released during its AGM on 20th December 2020. The calendar was released jointly by Mr. Ashwani Gupta, Vice-President (North) at All India Federation of Master Printers; Mr. Parveen Aggarwal, President OPA, Mr. Manoj Kumar, Project in charge and Prof. Kamal Chopra, General Secretary of OPA. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Manoj Kumar said, that OPA calendar is the most desirable event of OPA. Considered to be the Printers' Jantri the demand of OPA calendar is increasing year after year. ■



Releasing the OPA Calendar 2021

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GDMPA Felicitates Newly Elected Office Bearers

A Felicitation function for Newly Elected Office Bearers of All India Federation of Master Printers was organized by Greater Delhi Master Printers Association. The function was held at the Ethiopian Embassy, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi on 6th November 2020.



Felicitations @ DCRUST, Sonapat

Prof. Rajendra Kumar Anayath, Vice-Chancellor, Deenbandhu Chhoturam University of Science & Technology, Murthal, Sonapat, Haryana also felicitated Prof. Kamal Chopra, President and Mr. Ashwani Gupta, Vice-President (North) on 7th November 2020 at Sonapat.



Protest by The Ahmednagar Press and Allied Owners Association



The global pandemic of Novel Corona virus had impacted all the living angles of life globally. May it be your household, schools, or the business small or big.

The lockdown taken by the centre in the month of March, April and May have impacted the whole economy and many have lost there lives and jobs in meeting the daily ends of life. Not a single business in India shielded itself from the crisis. The whole season of marriage and its allied industries like catering, flower decorators, event management companies, baggiwalas, card printing press etc. was washed away amid the crisis.

The marriage season is hardly of 2 months depending on the mahurats which generally starts from the month of Chaitra and ends up in the month of Jyesta including the biggest mahurat of AKSHYA TRITIYA all over India. The whole industry depending on these 2 months worked was completely at home due to lock down and was jobless. There are savings too diminished slowly. By the end of the lock, they were left with nothing neither with the nuances and nor with the work since there were no mahurats at all.

Pertaining to this crisis of NO JOBS NO FINANCES, unions of these

unorganized sector called for a protest in Ahmednagar district to catch the attention of the Government bodies to give an ear to problems and handed over an application to District collector.

The Ahmednagar Press and Allied Owners Association which is an important part and parcel of this segment too supported the protest by participation.

In the press note released by the association it said that the situation of the press and printing industry is grave and needs immediate attention of the centre and the state govt. The printing work is at a stalemate due no printing jobs from the Government (the biggest customer) and from the private sector also like schools and colleges, industries etc. Nearly 85% of the labour has been laid off due to lack of demand for printing material like calendars, diaries, information brochures etc.

And above all these crises the daily financial needs like pay outs to the existing labors and the interest to banks is on. There is no relief in the government taxes like GST also.

The sitting protest led by Shri.Girish Baccha President of the Ahmednagar Press and Allied Owners Association along with his subordinate Shri.Manoj Bankar Vice President Maharashtra Mudran Parishad and Shri. Vinay Chhajed Secretary Maharashtra Mudran Parishad handed over a note to the District Collector demanding immediate attention to the questions and the sufferings of the people and the industry on priority basis. ■





Ms. Nivetha N. **‘Top Print Student of South Zone’**

The national level and the biggest talent hunt in printing was organized by Offset Printers’ Association (OPA) this time under the aegis of All India Federation of Master Printers (AIFMP). The brainchild of Prof. Kamal Chopra, ‘Print Olympiad’ is the only event of its kind for the printing students anywhere in the world. Print Olympiad is a national Level talent hunt contest for students of printing technology across Engineering Degree, Diploma, D. Voc and B. Voc. Programmes. In 2020 during the pandemic, the event was most successfully conducted at virtual platform. To give equal opportunities to the students of different regions and to make the competition more meaningful, widespread, and approachable to all, separate competitions were conducted for the students studying in different zones, i.e. North Zone: (for the students of Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Chandigarh), East Zone: (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Sikkim, Tripura, West Bengal and Andaman and Nicobar Islands), South Zone: (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Lakshadweep and Puducherry) and West Zone: (Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Dadra-Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu)

The finale for the Print Olympiad – South Zone was held on 20 September



2020 where Ms. Nivetha N a student at College of Engineering, Anna University, Chennai was declared as the ‘Top Print Student of South Zone.’

Giving details of the Print Olympiad – South Zone, Dr. (Mrs.) TKS Lakshmi Priya, HoD Printing Technology, Avinashilingam Institute for Women, Coimbatore, and Coordinator for South Zone said, “Print Olympiad – South Zone was inaugurated on 26th August 2020 by Dr. (Mrs.) Pemavathy Vijayan, Vice-Chancellor, Avinashilingam Institute for Women, Coimbatore.” Dr. Pemavathy appreciated the organizers for doing a one-of-the-kind task of an online talent hunt. She advised the students to follow values and to make use of the expertise of the industry persons who are attending and are rendering support to the student community. In her address as Guest of Honor Dr. (Mrs.) Kowsalya, Registrar appreciated

the well-organized online event and the stern effort put in conducting the event during the pandemic.

The contest began when the Chief guest shared the link to the google forms containing MCQs. Degree and diploma students were given separate online multiple choice question paper consisting of 50 questions, to be completed in 30minutes. 114 Engineering and 71 Diploma level students from various printing institutions from South Zone participated in this level one virtual test.

For the sake of complete transparency, eminent judges were invited from the industry and academia viz. (i) Dayakar Reddy, President, IPAMA, (ii) T Ravindhran, Retired Manager, Govt of India Press, (iii) Thiru. J. Arul Cholan, Deputy Works Manager, High Court Branch, TN Stationery and Printing Department, Chennai, (iv) Pradeep Kumar, Founder and CEO of Future Schools, Cochin, and (v) Dr. M.Nandakumar, Principal Arasan Ganesan Polytechnic, Sivakasi.

The test for Diploma level students was held again on 29th August 2020 because due to some confusion diploma students were not able to receive the link properly on time. O. Venugopal, Past President KMPA and MD Aneswara Press Ernakulam, was the Chief Guest. In his inaugural address, Mr. Venugopal, proudly announced this as an ‘International Event’ because Prof. Kamal Chopra has made arrangements to broadcast

the finals of this series through 22 countries around the globe. He insisted that the students take their printing career as a passion and not merely as a mundane job.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Amruthraj Krishnan, HoD, Printing and Media Technology, MIT, Manipal who was the Guest of honor recalled the participation in the previous year's Print Olympiad and compared with the advantages of this virtual one. He said the virtual mode has enabled a greater number of students to take part, each zone had over 100 students, whereas, in previous years, we had less than 100 student participation.

After the test, the marks obtained by the students of Diploma and Engineering level were accumulated and judges approved top 20 per cent students qualified for the level two test. The list of 21 qualified students was submitted to Mr. A. Senthil Kumar, Past VP-South AIFMP, who declared the results and said, students should keep updating their knowledge by visiting printing units and print exhibitions. He suggested that they also think of writing books on printing since there are very few books on printing.

Round 2 for the 21 qualified students, was organized on 31st Aug 2020 at 11.00 AM. The Chief Guest on the occasion was Mr. Tarkeshwar Prasad, Former Principal NRIPT, Allahabad. While inaugurating the event he said, the industry is growing extremely fast and we must keep pace with the advancements. 3D printing, voice assistance technology, computer-based workflow management, are all some of the modern technologies that enhance quality with less time.

The Guest of Honor was Prof. K. N. Raja Rao, Director, School for Engineering, Avinashilingam Institute for Women, Coimbatore. In his address, Prof. Rao believed that such competitions are necessary for the overall development of printing students and he appreciated the efforts of OPA and AIFMP in this regard.

During level two test all the students were given the same set of multiple-choice question paper consisting of 50 questions, to be completed in 30minutes. They remained to remain online and connected during the test. Finally, the jury selected top 5 students with a score of more than 25 marks to be qualified for the Finale.

Mr. Suresh Reddy, PP-AIFMP and MD STR & Sons Printing Unit, Kochi, declared the names of 5 top students of the South Zone, i) Haritha C, Institute of Engineering & Technology, Calicut, ii) Jaganathan V, College of Engineering, Anna University, Chennai iii) Nivedha N, College of Engineering, Anna University, Chennai, iv) Sarukrishna A, College of Engineering, Anna University,

Chennai and v) Sri Krishnan M, College of Engineering, Anna University, Chennai. All these students are awarded the certificate of finalist and a cash prize of Rs. 5000/-. In his address, Mr. R. Suresh congratulated the organizers and the students for this event. He highlighted the need for updated syllabus periodically in print education, practical knowledge must be given immense priority. With his global connect, he foresees Indian printing students having a lot of potential than other countries and therefore they must be prepared for the future.

The south zone finals were held on 20th Sept 2020. The Chief Guest was Dr. V. Ramachandran, Former Vice-Chancellor, Anna University, Trichy. His inaugural speech was on Essential Guidelines for Education through the Internet. It was an eye-opener covering technologies required for e-learning and content creation. Mr. C R JANARDHANA, PP-AIFMP, and Mr. P. Chander, PP-MPLA were the guests of honour. The two International judges were: (i) Mr. Ahmad Mughira Nurhani, President of Indonesian Print Media Association, and (ii) Mr. Delan Francis Silva, President, Sri Lanka Association of Printers. The three Indian Judges were (i) Mr. Anubhava Shiksharathi, Senior Printer Nagpur, (ii) Mr. Nitin Wani, MD, Smart Solutions and (iii) Dr. Soumen Basak, Former HoD, Dept of PT, Jadavpur University.

After the inauguration, the presentation of the five contestants took place. Each contestant was given a topic 10 minutes prior and could speak for 10minutes, after which the juries posed a question each. Prof. Bijendra Kaushik was the Technical person for the event who manages sharing the data and scoring process between the judges.

There was an audience poll too. The combined marks of audience poll and Jury's decision was used to determine the winner.

The winner of the south zone was Ms. Nivetha of CEG, Anna University, Chennai. Mr. G.N. Visvakumar, Proprietor - Rajams Digital Offset Prints, Chennai, Past President - MPLA, and Mr. C. Ravinder Reddy, Vice-President-South, AIFMP, were the AIFPM representatives who announced the results and rendered the vote of thanks.

Thanking all the dignitaries, Prof. Kamal Chopra said, "I would like to thank all the valuable people without whom this Print Olympiad wouldn't have been possible. First kudos to our four regional coordinators, Sri Shankhya Debnath, Prof. (Dr.) Anjan K. Baral, Dr. TKS Lakshmi Priya and Prof. Madhura P. Mahajan. They could not have backed themselves without the technical support provided by Mr. Bijender Kaushik. Our campus partners Avinashilingam Institute for Women, Coimbatore, deserve an applause too." ■

Our member excel in other field



Dr. K. Narayan

Span Prints, KOPA Member

Dr. K Narayan of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was elected unanimously to the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka Legislative Assembly. Dr. Narayan, a businessman with the BJP and RSS background and also Editor of "Tuluvere Kedige" Tulu magazine.

Printing Times wish to congratulate not only Dr K Narayan whole the printing fraternity



HARJINDER SINGH

Hon Treasurer - AIFMP

has been nominated as National Vice President (North Bharat) - MSME & Startups Forum



VINOD KUMAR JAIN

Alumnus Award 2020

from IIT Khargpur



Mr. A Senthil Kumar, GC- Pollachi Master Printers Association had won the runner up position in the Pollachi VIP tournament Badminton Cup of 2020.

Find predictability in these unpredictable times

What are the latest numbers? CRISIL has recently published the Q1 2021 results for the indices PRIDEX and CARDEX. In the Q1 of FY2021, PRIDEX stands 120.5 and CARDEX at 120.8. The rise in PRIDEX between Q3 and Q4 2020 has been sharp compared to CARDEX. Quarter-on-quarter PRIDEX has decreased by 1.1 per cent between Q4 2020 and Q1 2021 and CARDEX has recorded a rise of 1.3 per cent. Despite the volatility, PRIDEX has dropped by 2.7 per cent while CARDEX recorded a 1.1 per cent rise year-on-year.

What do these indices tell us? The long-term trends for PRIDEX and CARDEX are complex. After reaching the peak at 126.2 in Q3 2019, PRIDEX reached its lowest precisely a year later at 119 in Q3 2020. CARDEX' trajectory has been remarkably stable compared to PRIDEX; it peaked at 122.7 in Q3 2019. And since it has remained in the range of 119 to 121. "In conclusion: the input cost variation has been a lot more volatile, and thereby, difficult to predict for the commercial print vertical as compared to the carton packaging sector," says Sanjay Patel, the brain behind the duo AIFMP indices and the Project In-charge.

The pandemic challenge Sanjay further observes and advises the printers and the packaging converters to take every opportunity that comes their way, albeit with usual business cautions. While the commercial printing input costs have lowered, it is most certainly because of the drastic

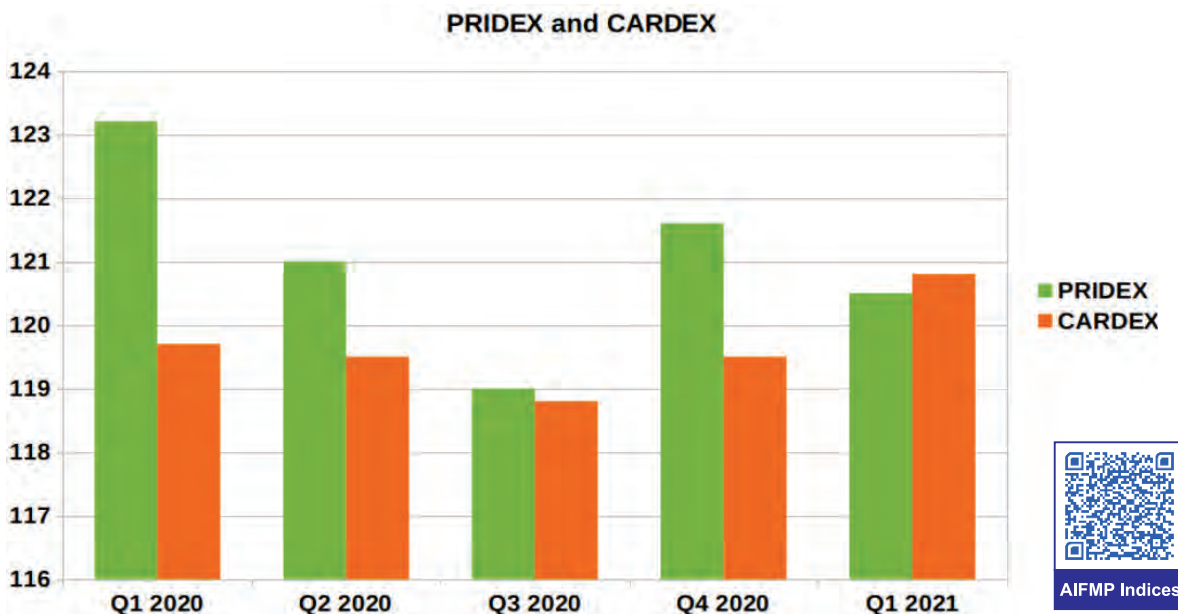
demand drop for the sector. "Commercial printers must make the most of the decline in the input costs. However, as the more and more printers would resume operations, the input costs will likely go up, so it is essential for each business to keep a close watch and tightly control costs and enhance profitability," advises Sanjay.

"For the carton packaging converting business, the rise has been steady for almost a year, and the year-on-year rise has been mere 1.1 per cent. The business has been good for many packaging printers, even though the prolonged lockdowns. Across the industry, however, aligning business pricing to the input cost trends demonstrated by CARDEX has proved to be a wise strategy in past in protecting financial sustainability for packaging printers," shares Sanjay.

Where can you find the indices? To know more about PRIDEX and CARDEX follow the link: <https://tinyurl.com/yayqnp2k> OR scan the QR code on the cover and bookmark it on your smartphone's Internet-browser for quick access. The detailed methodology used at computing PRIDEX and CARDEX is readily available at <https://tinyurl.com/yaqrr65m>.

Please note that FY2013-2014 is the base year for the twin indices with the index value at 100.

More power to all print company owners through AIFMP-CRISIL indices! ■





International Exhibition on Printing and Allied Machinery Industries
Of the Printers - For the Printers - By the Printers

PAMEX Continues Promotional Activities for Edition 2022



The exhibition industry is slowly making a comeback with real-time experiences and PAMEX was a participant in the tentative beginning at Print Innovation 2020. The table-top exhibition was held on 3 & 4 December at Vadodara and Vapi, Gujarat, respectively. The event was organized jointly by ScreenTex and Screen Printers Association of India.

The event followed the Covid-19 specific guidelines to ensure safety of the exhibitors and the visitors. At both the venues, the PAMEX 2022 booth was visited by 75+ visitors from the printing and label segments of the industry. The Show in total recorded a footfall of 150+ visitors at Vadodara and 135+ visitors at Vapi.



“It is important for the industry to start organizing and attending exhibitions with necessary precautions. People are willing to get back to normal. The promotional activities for PAMEX 2022 have started and we have 150+ exhibitors already signed up for the exhibition. In edition 2022, we have also dedicated a separate hall to Label Converting and Printing,” said Kamal Chopra, President, All India Federation of Master Printers (AIFMP) and Chairman, PAMEX.

PAMEX 2022 is scheduled from 23-26 March 2022 at Bombay Exhibition Centre, Mumbai. ■

Konica Minolta India expands production print portfolio with the launch of Accurio Press C14000/C12000 Series High-volume Production Presses

The latest machines ensure higher total productivity and efficiency with its fastest cut-sheet toner device

Konica Minolta Business Solutions, a leader in world-class printing technology, has rolled out AccurioPress C14000/C12000 series to strengthen its existing production print portfolio. As part of the launch of its latest series of high-volume production presses, the company has introduced two machines: a 140 ppm AccurioPress C14000 and 120 ppm AccurioPress C12000.



Designed from the ground up to be digital print factories, these machines demonstrate Konica Minolta's mission to support the transformation of its clients. The launch also underlines the company's vision of creating solutions that expand and streamline its businesses through various factors. These include advanced automation, fewer human touchpoints, and higher productivity with tangible effect, leading to increased, high-quality output with less waste.

Commenting on the launch, Mr. Tai Nizawa, Managing Director, Konica Minolta Business Solutions India said, "At Konica Minolta, we strive to innovate and advance at every step we take, to create and deliver cutting-edge printing solutions for our stakeholders. The launch of our latest machines is in sync with this vision, and further reaffirms our commitment to meeting the changing needs of our

customers and offering them products that ensure higher quality and productivity with minimal waste of resources and time. Going forward, we

will continue to follow an agile approach, innovate our existing portfolios, and offer the best to our customers in the following years."

Opportunities for business expansion

The new machines are designed to help customers ramp up the productivity levels of their businesses through speed and efficiency. Sporting resolution equivalent to 3600x2400 dpi and an enhanced media capability of up to 450 GSM, not only do these products ensure speed to operations, but also offers outstanding image quality and unparalleled media flexibility.

Equipped with new duplex banner printing up to 900 mm, simplex banner length capability of 1,300 mm, combined with envelope and embossed media printability, these products enable customers to offer new types of work, including four-panel gatefold brochures and book covers for finishing offline. Consumers can also do envelope printing using the standard fuser in a much seamless manner. Besides, the technology used in the machine improves image quality on textured paper stocks. ■

Durst Bags EDP Awards For Rho 2500 Printer And Workflow

Durst has been awarded with two European Digital Press Association (EDP) for its Rho 2500 in the Best Flatbed/Hybrid Printer > 250 sqm/h category and the other for Durst Workflow (Best Workflow Technology). The awards are further recognition of Durst's innovation as it continues its journey to become a complete solutions provider in line with its 'Pixel to Output' strategy. Recent announcements have included the P5 350 High Speed printer, together with Durst 'Automat', and expansion of workflow, analytics, automation, and ink solutions for printers. The award-winning Durst Workflow is also available for non-Durst printers. Durst Workflow is part of the company's world-class software.

These awards are another strong reference point and third-party endorsement to what Durst has achieved through

our mission to innovate. The EDP Technical Committee referenced the increasing importance of software and workflow. According to a source from the EDP, it is said that the important is not only the device or software itself, but also the impact of the product on people and users. ■



PRINTPACK INDIA 2021 Postponed – New Dates to be Announced:



On Saturday, November 07, 2020, the Governing Council of Indian Printing Packaging & Allied Machinery Manufacturers' Association (IPAMA) has passed a Resolution for postponing the upcoming PRINTPACK INDIA 2021 Exhibition which was earlier slated to be held at India Expo Centre, Greater Noida from February 03-08, 2021.

Since the opening of the booking, 285 companies had reserved space for participation by remitting the requisite charges. They had also been given Priority Numbers. The preparation was in full swing till February 2020. Even during the peak period of Corona between March and September

2020, 22 companies had booked space. The tremendous response for participation in PRINTPACK INDIA 2021 Exhibition from the trade and the industry shows its indispensable popularity. In the meantime, IPAMA had identified various service providers for execution of the works relating to the Exhibition. IPAMA had also executed partnership agreements with various Associations/Federations etc., associated with Printing and Packaging Industry for promotion of the event. Foreign agencies were also engaged for promotion of the Show in different countries. The Members of Asia Print and Global Print were also expected to participate or visit the Exhibition.

However, keeping in view the impact of Corona virus Worldwide and specifically in India, safety and healthcare of Exhibitors & Business Visitors, prevailing market conditions, travel restrictions etc., IPAMA had conducted a detailed Survey. On receipt of the survey reports, it was noted that 85% of the companies had suggested postponement of PRINTPACK INDIA 2021. Accordingly, the subject matter was placed before the Governing Council of the Association for consideration. After due deliberations and keeping in view all the pros & cons as also in consultation with the concerned stake holders, the Council had decided that the 15th edition of PRINTPACK INDIA Exhibition and the concurrent INDIA SIGN & LED EXPO event, be postponed and be organized, preferably during a safer period. The exact dates will be finalized and conveyed to the concerned, in due course of time. ■

Four Indian Companies Among Winners Of FESPA Awards 2020

FESPA has announced the winners of this year's FESPA Awards, its annual celebration of excellence in the global specialty print and visual communications community. The awards are open to PSPs and sign-makers looking to highlight outstanding projects. This year entries were from 27 countries across 18 categories. The winners were announced during an online ceremony hosted by FESPA's Technical Support Manager, Graeme Richardson-Locke, in lieu of the live Gala Awards event which would have taken place during this year's Global Print Expo in Madrid.

The Gold Winners in the 17 application-specific categories (in bracket) are: Ability Diseño Gráfico, Spain (Display and POP on Paper



and Board); Perfect Packaging, India (Packaging on Paper and Board); Screen line, South Africa (Display and POP on Plastic); TOPdesign Topolcany s.r.o., Slovakia (Packaging on Plastics); GRAFISER, S.A, Spain (Posters); Christian M Walter – Taller de Serigrafía – Edición, Spain (Serigraphy and Fine Art); Classic Stripes Pvt Ltd, India (Decals and Printed Labels); Vermeulen & Vermeulen Reclame, Netherlands (Wrapping); Sakawa Printing Co Ltd, Japan (Creative Special Effect – Paper, Board and Plastics); Elixir Unlimited, India (Special Effect

on T-Shirts, Garments and Other Textiles); iMaika, Russia (Printed Garments); The Look Company, Qatar (Roll-to-roll Printed Textiles); Schitterend.eu, Netherlands (Glass, Ceramic, Metal and Wood Products); HAAS Die Werbemanufaktur, Switzerland (Direct Printing on Three Dimensional Products); HNS Signs, UK (Non-printed Signage); Protolab Electrotechnologies Pvt Ltd, India (Functional Printing) and BOBO1325, UK (Printeriors).

The categories 'Packaging on Paper and Board', 'Packaging on Plastics', 'Wrapping' and 'Printeriors' were new to this year's awards scheme, recognizing four important growth applications for specialty print and signage businesses. ■

drupa 2021 stand cancelled and goes online as 'virtual.drupa'



Following close consultation with exhibitors and partners, the 2021 edition of drupa, the world's leading trade fair for Printing Technologies, will be cancelled due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. The next event will take place as scheduled from 28 May to 7 June 2024. To maintain the momentum until then, the organizers will be holding a four-day digital event titled 'virtual.drupa', to take place from 20 to 23 April 2021 during the time frame drupa was originally scheduled for.

"The pandemic has caused a great deal of uncertainty among exhibitors and visitors in terms of their attendance at drupa 2021. Travel restrictions and budget constraints have further exacerbated the situation in the printing industry", explains Erhard Wienkamp, COO at Messe Düsseldorf. "We have taken this decision in consultation with our partners, who are entirely supportive of it. It was preceded by a detailed process of considering the current conditions and the needs of the industry."

Sabine Geldermann, Project Director Print Technologies, adds: "Our primary goal remains to support the industry in any way we can to keep in contact at a national and international level, further develop their network and generate leads. To this end, we will be holding an interim event from 20 to 23 April, providing our exhibitors and visitors with an additional sales channel and allowing them to make reliable plans."

Claus Bolza-Schünemann, Chairman at König und Bauer and president of drupa, welcomes this approach: "A virtual event is exactly the right format in the current time", he says. "Attending drupa under the usual parameters was just too great a risk for many exhibitors, given declining export and turnover figures, as well as significant travel restrictions, which would also affect visitors. The new digital forum is a virtual platform, providing a reliable pillar and an opportunity to maintain valuable communications within the industry until 2024."

Launched in October, the drupa preview platform already offers an impression of what 'virtual. drupa' will look like. It will give companies the opportunity to showcase themselves and their innovations virtually, as well as maintain existing contacts and establish new ones via the matchmaking feature. In addition, the conference schedule of the five drupa hot spots will provide key incentives and

set the agenda for an online transfer of knowledge. For instance, international speakers from vertical markets will present success stories of Future Technologies in the Cube, outlining the future of our industry.

"Our members are telling us, that trade fairs to drive their business forward are still in great demand. The value and appeal of drupa remain intact. The decision to suspend it in 2021 is entirely down to the pandemic", stresses Dr. Markus Heering, Managing Director of the VDMA Printing and Paper Technology Association. "In the long run, it is important for all of us to maintain drupa as an international platform in Europe, as it displays the diversity of our industry. 200 years of expertise are rooted in Europe and must continue. However, we welcome the introduction of the new digital platform as an interim solution until 2024."

The printing industry continues to fully back its leading global trade fair, whose international reach remains unbroken. As a platform demanding open and competitive market comparison, it is a driving force for innovation, benefiting exhibitors and visitors in equal measure. Through direct contact, people can experience and compare technology trends and innovations and discover new synergies. Replicating its impetus, selling power and unique atmosphere, as well as the ability to exchange ideas with like-minded industry colleagues and nurture relationships, has certain limits when conducted in an online format. The organizers are aiming to satisfy this demand with 'virtual.drupa' as well as the annual 'Print & Digital Convention' in Düsseldorf, which was developed in cooperation with the Fachverband Medienproduktion e.V. (fmp), until drupa returns as a live event in 2024 with new, valuable parameters and hybrid propositions.

"Today's decision to cancel drupa 2021 and present it in a different format has been an event- and industry-specific one", Wienkamp concludes. "Messe Düsseldorf remains in close contact with the authorities and its partners of all other events, and we will evaluate the circumstances in a timely manner to take the responsible decision." ■

Congratulations!



Ramesh K. Mittal

has been re-elected as Chairman of Books, Publications and Printing Panel of CAPEXIL.

Heidelberg Wallbox awarded Top Brand seal

▪ **Guidance for growth market of electromobility – EUPD Research seal goes to top brands based on independent customer surveys**

▪ **Heidelberg Wallbox Energy Control with load management qualifies for KfW support in Germany**

Germany's electromobility market is growing strongly, as demonstrated by the latest figures from the Federal Motor Transport Authority (KBA). Over 23,000 new cars with all-electric drives were licensed in October 2020, representing a market share of 8.4 percent. As sales of electric cars increase, so do charging infrastructure requirements. The investment grant available from the KfW bank with effect from November 2020 also underlines how vital the extensive expansion of charging stations is. A recent end customer survey by the Bonn-based market and economic research company EUPD Research clearly demonstrated the importance of private charging stations. Just under 2,000 existing and potential electric car owners took part in the survey,

82 percent of whom indicated that having a private charging station was "important" or "very important" in the context of their purchase. Around 700 of the respondents already own an electric vehicle and those among them who had installed a Wallbox from Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG (Heidelberg) said they were highly satisfied with the product and would recommend it to others. On this basis, the Heidelberg Wallbox is being awarded EUPD Research's Top Brand Wallbox seal, which the company gives to makes and products identified as top brands in independent customer surveys.

"We're delighted to have been awarded the Top Brand Wallbox seal for the Heidelberg Wallbox systems, as it reflects the high level of user satisfaction with our charging solutions. The positive feedback from our customers underlines that Heidelberg has established itself on the key future market of electromobility with a competitive portfolio," says Ulrich Grimm, Head of Electromobility at Heidelberg.

EUPD Research seal provides consumer guidance.

As the electromobility market grows, the choice of Wallbox solutions is increasing significantly. There are already 100 Wallbox suppliers on the German market and this number is expected to rise further still. This alone emphasizes the need for consumer guidance, and EUPD Research has been a specialist in the field of sustainable technologies for 20 years.

"This is now the tenth year in succession that EUPD Research has used its Endkunden Monitor survey to ask German end customers for their views on topics including electromobility. Based on this year's survey, we are delighted to present Heidelberg with the established Top Brand Wallbox seal for its outstanding performance in terms of being recommended to others," says Dr. Martin Ammon, Managing Partner of EUPD Research.

Heidelberg charging solutions represent excellent value for money.

Like the Heidelberg Wallbox Home Eco – the standard model that came out top in tests by German automobile association ADAC last year – the recently unveiled Heidelberg Wallbox Energy Control with load management, which qualifies for KfW support, benefits from high-end, robust industrial manufacturing, including a high-quality stainless-steel front. With prices starting at EUR 490 for the Heidelberg Wallbox Home Eco and EUR 790 for the Heidelberg Wallbox Energy Control (RRP including VAT in each case), both systems offer excellent value for money. They are available from electrical retailers, wholesalers, and certified electricians. ■



MSME dues over Rs 21000 crore paid upto November: Nirmala Sitharaman



New Delhi, Dec 10 (KNN) Finance Minister has lauded concerted efforts resulting in higher procurement and payment of over Rs 21000 crore to MSMEs up to November.

Union Minister of Finance Nirmala Sitharaman reviewed the situation about payment to the MSMEs and expressed satisfaction and appreciation on the excellent work done by the Ministry of MSME. As part of Prime Minister of India's vision the Finance Minister had announced Atma Nirbhar Bharat package in May 2020, it was also stated that the MSME dues should be paid in 45 days.

Since the month of May 2020, regular follow-up and concerted efforts have been made by Government of India, particularly by the MSME Ministry for payment of these dues. Particular ly focus was placed on Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and the Central Government Agencies for payment of dues to MSMEs. As a result, over Rs 21000 crore of MSME dues have been paid in past 7 Months since May 2020 by the Central Govt Agencies and CPSEs.

The highest level of Procurement was achieved in October of over Rs 5100 crore and payment of over Rs 4100 crore. Going by the reports received in first 10 days for November 2020, this level of performance is expected to be surpassed as Procurement of about Rs 4700 crore and payment of about Rs 4000 crore have already been reported.

Efforts made in respect of clearing MSME dues include several rounds of letters written to the GoI Ministries and CPSEs by the Secretary, MSME, followed by personal talks and persuasions. The efforts of the MSME Ministry found strong support from PMO and Cabinet Secretary, who wrote letters to the CPSEs and Government agencies. An on-line reporting system was developed by the Ministry for the CPSEs and Government of India Ministries to

report details of total transactions, total payment as well as pending dues at the end of every month.

Report of seven months (May-November, 2020) indicates that procurement by Central Government Agencies and CPSEs from MSMEs is on the rise and in fact, it has gone up by almost 2.5 times since May 2020; Payments to MSMEs have also gone up proportionately; The pendency of payment has gone down in terms of percentage against procurement value; The report for October had shown maximum transactions since May; However, reports in December show better trend in November as per just 10 days of reporting.

The Ministry of MSME has complimented the Government of India Ministries, Departments and the CPSEs for their support to the MSMEs. This support was important particularly in the months of September and October. Because with these cash flows, the MSMEs were supposed to produce goods and services which could be particularly sold during the festival time.

MSME Ministry had requested the Corporate sector to help the MSMEs during the festival season because the earning during these festivals would sustain many MSMEs for the whole year. This support has also helped many MSMEs and Village Industries to do better business than even the previous year. ■

Govt to provide 15 per cent equity to MSMEs with good tax record: Nitin Gadkari

New Delhi, Dec 11 (KNN) In a bid to facilitate Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) to raise funds in capital market, the central government will provide 15 per cent of the equity to successful MSMEs and those with a good record of GST and income tax and bank turnover, said MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari.

"Presently we are all facing the problem due to COVID-19. We need liquidity investment in MSME and investment in MSME is extremely attractive, hence we ruled out a soft loan of Rs 3 lakh crore," Gadkari said at an event organized by The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) for the run-up to the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) Convention 2021 on Monday.

"There is an immediate need for investments into the MSME sector," he said. ■

MSME must upgrade and accept new technologies: Nitin Gadkari



New Delhi, Dec 14 (KNN) Union Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Nitin Gadkari has said that MSME must upgrade their technology and accept new technologies in order to make products that can substitute imports and increase India's exports.

While speaking at the 10th MSME Convention of All India Management Association (AIMA), Gadkari said, "We have to identify the products that are indigenous, import substitute, innovative, of good quality and that can be made at a lower cost and made available to the international market," he said.

Gadkari shared his ideas on innovation needs and potential of Indian MSMEs. Gadkari also applauded AIMA for bringing industry focus on innovative solutions for the MSMEs.

Mr. Harsh Pati Singhania, President, AIMA and Vice Chairman & Managing Director, JK Paper appreciated the minister's efforts to save India's MSME sector during the COVID-19 crisis.

"The MSME sector was the key to raising the contribution of the manufacturing sector to 25% of the GDP and creating 5 crore additional jobs in the coming five years," he stressed.

However, he added, for that to happen, Indian MSMEs needed to take advantage of new technologies.

The minister declared that the government's mission was to raise the MSME sector's contribution to GDP growth to 40% from the current 30% and increase its share in India's exports to 60% from the current 48%. He said that the MSMEs were the key to increasing GDP of the rural and the tribal areas.

On technology upgrade and adoption, the minister said that Indian enterprises and research organizations needed to upgrade domestic technologies and source technology from foreign research institutes through joint ventures. He said that a lot of research in India was conducted by the defense labs, such as DRDO, and they needed to share their technology with common people.

To increase exports, India's MSMEs must align with technological changes introduced by the government, especially in the automobile sector, the minister said. He pointed out that while the government was prioritizing electric vehicles, the country was dependent on imports for components. "We have to develop vendors for e-vehicles."

Gadkari pointed out that Amazon was exporting products of Indian MSMEs worth Rs 70,000 crore, which included handlooms, handicraft, and honey etc.

"We need to present and market in a proper way in international market," he said.

Highlighting the government's mission of import substitution, Gadkari said that India could substitute the import of Rs 8 lakh crore of petroleum with ethanol made from sugar cane, rice, and corn, which were surplus in the country.

"To meet the need of ethanol on such a scale, he suggested creating mills that directly made ethanol instead of sourcing it from sugar mills," he added.

He also pointed out that the market price of corn was Rs 1,000 per quintal compared to the government's MSP of Rs 1700 because of surplus output.

"We can make the Rs 25,000 crore ethanol industry a Rs 2 lakh crore industry and we can create employment opportunities in rural areas," the minister said.

Dr. JS Juneja, Chairman MSMEs and Past President, AIMA requested the minister to accept the suggestion of the Prabhat Kumar Committee for creation of an MSME Innovation Fund of Rs 1000 crore and sanction the amount promptly. ■

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