

MSME Minister urges key stakeholders to come together to boost the Khadi sector

The Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari has said that the Government has taken up a mission-mode project of creating 5 crore jobs in 5 years in the MSME sector. He said that the Government has decided to take the proportion of MSME exports to 50% and to increase the GDP contribution of the MSME sector from 29% to 50% in the next 5 years. The Minister said this while addressing a business summit “Globalizing the Brand Khadi: The Pride of India”, organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), in Mumbai today.



Addressing the gathering of industry and other stakeholders, the Union MSME Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari also said: “A distinction is often made between India and Bharat. There are many problems in villages due to which people migrate from villages to cities in search of jobs. We need to stop this phenomenon; we want that people do not have to come to cities due to lack of jobs. This would happen when we are able to provide good roads, schools, hospitals, farm revenue and economic viability for occupations in rural areas. This is why Gandhiji used to say that we need maximum production with the involvement of maximum number of people. Along with modernization and

mechanization, we need to look at employment opportunities as well. Innovation, entrepreneurship, science, technology, research and skill generate knowledge, which needs to be converted into wealth.”

The Minister said we need to strengthen the Khadi sector, the turnover of Khadi and village sector needs to be further increased; a large segment of the population is dependent on this.

Shri Gadkari informed that his Ministry is in talks with the Ministry of Railways to serve tea in kulhads made of terracotta. “Currently, this is available in two stations; I have written to the Railway Minister and to the Transport Ministers of all states to make these kulhads mandatory in all bus stations and railway stations,” He said.

Shri Gadkari further said that Khadi is the soul of Gandhiji’s thinking. Without compromising with its principles, we need to modernize Khadi – in product design, fashion design, weaving and other processes. New research needs to be incorporated and adopted. In particular, we need to look at how we can make better quality and low-cost yarn than what is made in the mills. There is a need for professional approach in fashion design, so as to improve quality of Khadi products.

The Minister called upon enterprising people in the private sector to come forward to promote Khadi. “This is not difficult from the point of view of technology and quality,” he said; “if we receive good inputs from industry, the brand Khadi can be made world-famous. Consumer choices have changed; this summit aims to garner industry cooperation in increasing the brand value and market value of Khadi.”

Shri Gadkari further said that as the facilitator, the Government is working on policies to promote growth. The government will provide support in measures such as reducing cost of capital, in bringing in mechanization and modernization, and in reducing logistics and power costs.

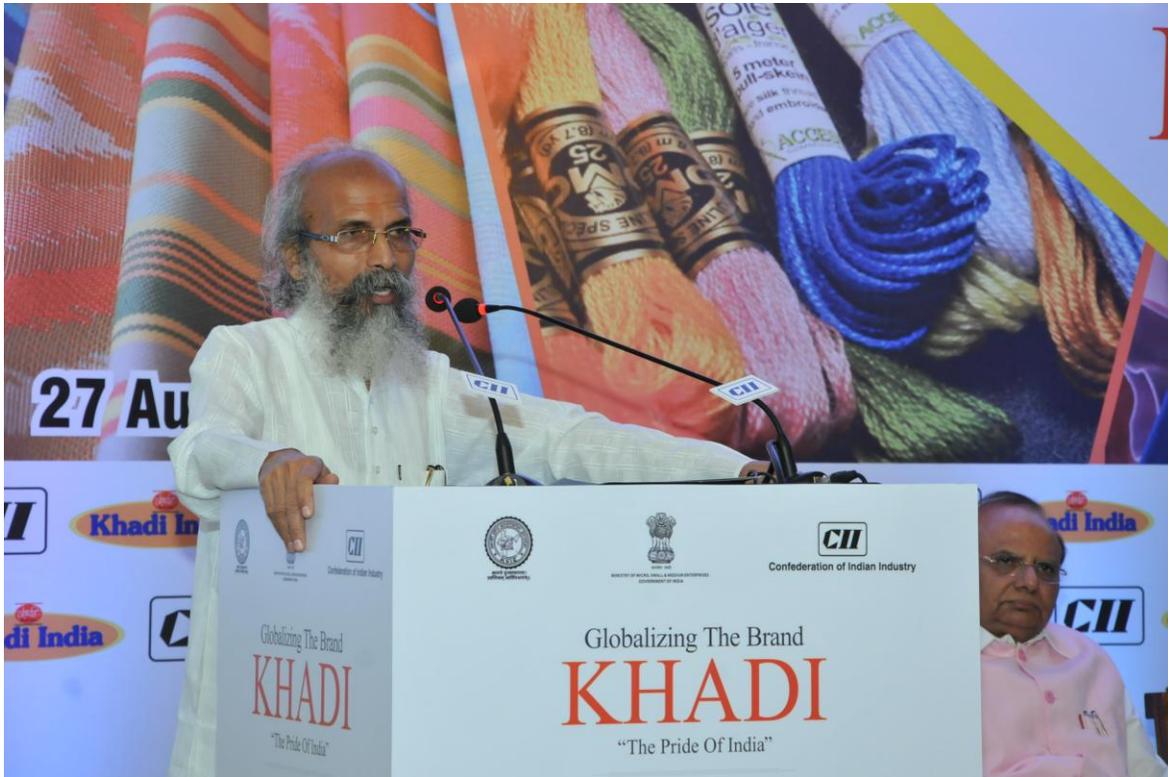
He said the Government is developing an e-market portal like Alibaba, by the name of Bharat Craft. This will provide a direct interface between buyers and sellers. We are also launching a Bank of Ideas and Innovations.

“The government is transparent, corruption-free, and trying to fast-track decision making. We seek your cooperation and suggestions in taking Khadi forward and in providing employment to maximum number of people. There is huge potential which can be unleashed using research and technology. As per Gandhiji’s dream, we need maximum production with involvement of maximum number of rural people. We need to ensure the presence of Khadi in every nation and take it to every corner of the world. We hope to achieve this with your cooperation”.

On the occasion, **the Minister also launched Tech Saksham, a CII Tech Project**, aimed at accelerating MSME growth through technology enablement.



The Minister of State for MSME Shri Pratap Chandra Sarangi said: “Khadi industry gained prominence during our independence struggle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji transformed a simple product into a symbol of national pride. A simple fabric became a great weapon for our national movement.



Now, our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi wants to advance this idea and globalize Khadi. Khadi has universal appeal. It is eco-friendly, hygienic for the body, uses less water and provides livelihood support to millions. I am confident that if 130 crore citizens use Khadi, it will provide employment opportunities to more than 15 crore people. So, we can serve the nation in a better way by purchasing Khadi.

The industry needs expansion, its scope is enormous. We need to think of ways to provide artisans their due, to improve market availability and access and to provide technology to artisans.

Khadi is the most suitable sector not only to provide employment but also to spread our culture. It acts as our national ambassador when Khadi is taken abroad. Khadi has the unique soothing quality of being warm in winters, cool in summers. The charm is that all fabrics are handmade.

The middle-men should be removed as much as possible, so that maximum profit goes to the artisans, enabling them to lead a dignified life. The beauty of Khadi needs to be spread all over the world. We can fight the evil of poverty through Khadi.”

Secretary, MSME, Dr. Arun Kumar Panda said: “Khadi is a cause which is important for the nation as well as for the people in the field. Khadi has great heritage and strengths. At the same time, Khadi faces a lot of challenges. I hope this platform with presence of experts from various verticals will help in coming up with a roadmap for Khadi. Please come up with ideas and solutions to strengthen the sector.



No two pieces of Khadi are identical. Khadi is hand-crafted, premium, niche.

We need to think differently and explore how technology can be used for the benefit of Khadi. After Aadhaar-seeding, the number of artisans involved in the Khadi sector has

come down to a realistic figure of around 4.75 lakh. Every incentive provided to artisans now goes directly to their bank account through Direct Benefit Transfer. We need to expand this, to bring in better standards, quality and international collaborations.

Can we use technology to ensure low-cost in-time credit availability for artisans? Technology should be used to improve market access, both inside and outside the country.

The government has decided to set up four design houses across the country, exclusively for Khadi. One challenge we need to address is how we attract young and aspirational people towards Khadi?

How can we reduce the weight and cost of the Charkha, so that drudgery of artisans can be reduced using technology? My request to the industry is to nurture Khadi as your own baby. The government is planning to produce two films – one for domestic and the other for the international audience. The Ministry would welcome volunteers too to get these films done. We need to look at niche markets where value addition happens and that money goes to artisans.

The media too has a huge role to play in positioning Khadi as a niche product in India and abroad.”

Chairman, KVIC, Shri Vinay Kumar Saxena said: “From around 889 crore rupees in 2014, the turnover of KVIC has gone up to 3215 crore rupees now, thanks in large part to the appeal by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to adopt Khadi; through this summit, our objective is to find ways to take this turnover to take to the tune of 20,000 crore rupees.



Khadi has certain inherent qualities which are not yet realized. We need to tell this to the public. Khadi is the most natural fabric. It is zero carbon footprint fabric, which no machine

can make. It is most environment-friendly; one metre of Khadi cloth requires 3 litres of water, while the same cloth when produced in a mill consumes 56 litres of water.

The turnover of Khadi and village industry has increased from 32,000 crore rupees in 2014-15 to 74,000 crore rupees now.

The acceptability of Khadi too has increased, which results in jobs for artisans. Khadi is the best example of Make in India.

I appeal to everyone to understand the feel of Khadi and its products, and give it a platform. KVIC has entered into joint ventures with corporates, which has had an impact on the corporates.

Khadi is a purely hand-woven product, given to us by Mahatma Gandhi. We need to take it to the heights it deserves.”

The Summit concluded with a Vote of Thanks by Chairman – Western Region, CII, Shri P. Nandkumar.

About CII TECHSAKSHAM

CII Tech-Saksham for MSMEs, a Ministry of MSME and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) partnered project, brings together technology majors Dell Technologies India, HP India, Intel India, Vodafone Idea Ltd, WhatsApp India & Yes Bank to address technological gaps faced by MSMEs in their growth. Aligned with the Ministry’s aspiration of generating value-added employment, the stated vision of CII TECHSAKSHAM is to bridge the gap in technology adoption for MSMEs so as to provide an impetus for them to be competitive on a global scale, increase their contribution to country exports and leverage cost efficiencies.

CII TECHSAKSHAM is a three-year long comprehensive project which, in its first phase, will focus on sectors that are labour-intensive and have propensity to respond positively to tech-adoption, and will spark a larger discussion in other MSME clusters. Through various policy recommendations, knowledge sessions, mentoring initiatives, and useful resource banks for MSMEs, TECHSAKSHAM will help the ecosystem address critical barriers such as awareness and cost of technology purchase/maintenance, resources and manpower required to run the technologies, return on investments, etc. The CII-Centre of Excellence for Competitiveness for SMEs would also play a key role in deploying technological interventions towards bringing in operational efficiencies amongst the MSMEs coupled with handholding & mentoring through its recognized cluster approach.

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