

डॉ. पेम्मासानी चंद्र शेखर
Dr. Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar

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राज्य मंत्री
संचार एवं ग्रामीण विकास मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार
Minister of State for Communications
and Rural Development
Government of India

Dear Shri Manoj Kumar Ji,

27 NOV 2024

Under the visionary leadership of Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Khadi and Village Industries (KVI) have emerged as symbols of self-reliance, sustainability, and cultural heritage. The Prime Minister's relentless advocacy for Khadi as a "Brand for India" and his emphasis on handmade, eco-friendly products have rejuvenated the sector, making it central to the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiative. The success of campaigns such as "Khadi for Nation, Khadi for Fashion" and "Vocal for Local" has instilled a renewed sense of pride in Indian artisanship and boosted demand for village industry products nationally and globally. KVIC has been instrumental in realizing this vision, achieving remarkable milestones over the last decade. The Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), implemented by KVIC, has created millions of jobs, including 32,120 employment opportunities in Andhra Pradesh in 2022-23 alone.

To achieve the ambitious target of ₹2,00,000 crore in sales, a comprehensive strategy that combines national-level initiatives, global best practices, and regional empowerment is essential. My suggestions regarding the same are as under:

1. Enhancing Village Industries Nationally

India's village industries can benefit immensely from an integrated approach. Establishing *specialized craft and production clusters* across states, equipped with shared facilities, advanced tools, and training programs, can significantly improve productivity and reduce costs. These clusters can be modelled on Thailand's One Tambon One Product (OTOP) initiative, which successfully integrates rural artisans into the national and global economy.

Export Promotion Zones (EPZs) dedicated to KVI products can ensure that village industries meet international standards. These zones should offer support with quality testing, packaging, and logistics to facilitate seamless global trade. Additionally, the launch of a centralized e-commerce platform for KVI products, integrated with blockchain for traceability, can provide artisans with direct access to global consumers. Partnerships with e-commerce platforms like ONDC can further expand market reach.

2. Leveraging Technology and Sustainability

Technology must play a pivotal role in modernizing village industries. Providing artisans with **AI-driven design tools** can help them create innovative products while preserving traditional craftsmanship. Digital training programs can enable artisans to participate in e-commerce platforms and virtual craft bazaars, where consumers can interact with them and purchase directly.

Sustainability should remain a cornerstone of KVI growth. Developing zero-waste production clusters, where by-products are repurposed into new goods like handmade paper or bio-packaging, can align with global eco-conscious trends. Certifications for eco-friendly practices can enhance the credibility of KVI products in international markets. Introduce carbon credits for industries adopting eco-friendly production techniques, generating additional income streams for artisans.

3. Empowering SHGs and Leveraging NRLM

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) under the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) have immense potential to scale village industries. Integrating SHGs into KVI production through targeted training, toolkits, and market linkages can significantly enhance productivity. Establishing Common Facility Centres (CFCs) with shared production facilities for SHGs can reduce costs and improve efficiency. Facilitating affordable credit for SHGs and linking them to structured markets, including exports, will ensure sustained growth and income.

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4. Promoting Indian Village Industries Globally

Positioning Indian village industries as global symbols of sustainability and cultural heritage requires focused branding and marketing efforts. Launching international campaigns to showcase KVI products as "*Crafted in India*" can build a strong global identity. Participation in international trade fairs and expos, inspired by Japan's success in promoting artisanal traditions, can connect artisans to buyers worldwide. Collaborating with global designers to create fusion product lines blending Indian craftsmanship with contemporary aesthetics can further boost international appeal.

5. Guntur as a Model District for Village Industries

Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, with its rich cultural heritage and agricultural resources, can serve as a model for the development of village industries. The revival of traditional crafts like *Kondapalli toys, handlooms, and stone carvings* through dedicated clusters and branding initiatives can ensure their relevance in modern markets. Agro-based industries can capitalize on Guntur's strengths by establishing processing units for chilies, cotton, and tobacco, creating value-added products.

Integrating tourism with village industries in Guntur can further boost demand. Developing artisan trails and craft workshops can offer visitors immersive cultural experiences while providing artisans with direct market access. Setting up an export facilitation centre in Guntur can ensure that products meet international standards and are efficiently marketed abroad.

6. Engaging Youth and Building Consumer Awareness

Engaging the youth is essential for the sustained growth of village industries. Introducing *vocational training in schools* and colleges can ensure the transfer of traditional knowledge to future generations. *Digital campaigns featuring artisan stories and product origins* can foster an emotional connection with consumers, especially younger ones. Use QR codes on products to narrate the stories of artisans and the cultural significance of their work, building an emotional connection with consumers. *Collaborating with influencers and entrepreneurs* can bring fresh energy and innovation to the sector.

By combining the visionary leadership of Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the proven expertise of KVIC, and global best practices, India's village industries can become a global benchmark for sustainability, cultural preservation, and rural empowerment. These strategies will not only transform the lives of artisans across the nation but also position India as a leader in the global handmade and sustainable product market.

I am confident that KVIC's continued leadership will drive this transformation, creating a self-reliant, prosperous India. I look forward to collaborating with you to implement these initiatives and achieve our shared vision.

Warm regards,

Yours sincerely,



(Dr. Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar)

Shri Manoj Kumar
Chairman, Khadi and Gramodyog Commission,
Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India,
K.V.I.C. Pavilion, Gandhi Darshan,
Rajghat, New Delhi- 110 002