

Footwear & Fashion Matters



LEATHER
SECTOR
SKILL
COUNCIL

Team LSSC wishes you a
**HAPPY & PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR**

2019



January 2019

Newsletter from LSSC

Message from the Chairman, LSSC

“ Leather industry has been contributing remarkably to India's export revenues, making it one of the most prominent sectors on the growth trajectory to improve our presence in global markets. As the New Year unfolds, let us look at some key numbers pertaining to the exports. During April - October 2018, exports from India stood at US\$ 3.30 billion, with major markets in US (15.14%), Germany (11.71%), UK (10.99%), Italy (7.01%), and France (5.37%). And during the same period, exported products included leather footwear (US\$ 1291.24 million), leather garments (US\$ 295.52 million), finished leather (US\$ 465.98 million), leather goods (US\$ 801.77 million) and non-leather footwear (US\$ 156.74 million).

In 2019, we have great scope to improve and out-do our performance by focusing on capacity building through skilled workforce and technology enablement. Equipping workers with latest skills and knowledge translates into greater productivity and high quality outcomes. At the same time, it is important to invest in right technologies and adopt right processes to ensure that we deliver as per global standards. I wish you great success in all your endeavors this year as you grow your business and expand your network globally. I hope your employees get many opportunities to learn and earn more through skill-based training, RPL and apprenticeships. Happy New Year! ”



Shri. Habib Hussain, Chairman
Leather Sector Skill Council (LSSC)

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Shri P R Aqeel Ahmed, Chairman
Council for Leather Exports (CLE)

Message from the Chairman, CLE



As you all know, the leather industry creates “Wealth from Waste” as it produces huge value added products from hides and skins, which are a by-product of the meat industry. Also, leather is unique because it is fashionable and durable. Hence, I have no doubt about the immense opportunities available for the leather industry to significantly enhance its share in the global market.

Though Europe has been our traditional market, we have made huge penetrations in recent years in the US market and also in potential markets like Japan, Russia, Africa and Latin American countries. Efforts will be made to further enhance our share in these markets through active engagement with the industry associations and through market promotion programmes.

Besides this, efforts are being made to promote investments in the industry. Recently, I had the opportunity to participate in the Investment Road Shows organized by Invest India in China (Guangzhou and Jinjiang) during December 26-28, 2018 with the focus on Leather & Footwear sector. These Shows were attended by more than 250 persons which reflects the huge interest among Chinese entrepreneurs to invest in Indian leather and footwear industry.

Initiatives are being taken by CLE to further augment the raw material base by organizing a Raw Material Sourcing meet in Chennai (Feb. 1, 2019) wherein about 30 suppliers of hides, skins and leathers from 13 countries will be presenting their range of leathers to Indian manufacturers and exporters. Besides, CLE is organizing a Designers Fair in Chennai during Feb. 1, 3, 2019 wherein about 44 designers from 9 countries will be presenting their design prototypes.

The industry is expecting 5% to 6% growth in exports during this year (2018-19) in Rupee terms but the industry has the potential to achieve higher growth levels in the coming years.

Message from the Vice-Chairman, CLE



The Indian leather and footwear industry has achieved significant transformation in the recent years in terms of value addition and has now become one of the major sourcing points. There is huge potential to achieve further growth and development.

Being a fashion and design oriented industry, we must ensure quick adaptation to the rapid changes in the global market so as to consolidate and expand our share amidst intense competition. I am sure that through optimum utilization of our strengths and with active support from the Government of India, we will make substantial progress in the coming years in the key areas of capacity modernization and technological up-gradation, skill development, environment management and also in establishment of new production hubs as per global standards.

Let us all strive to achieve further milestones by reaching double digit growth levels, both on exports and in the domestic market in the coming years.



Shri Sanjay Leekha, Vice-Chairman
Council for Leather Exports (CLE)



Shri Ramesh Kumar, IAS
CEO, Leather Sector Skill Council (LSSC)

Message from the CEO, LSSC



The New Year marks the beginning of new projects and fulfilment of new dreams. With continued upward growth, the leather industry will demand many skilled workers who can deliver as per global standards and quality. As you are aware, the agenda for skilling them is being implemented on a mission mode with several programs for short term training, RPL, B.Voc., and Apprenticeships. LSSC has been at the forefront of recognizing the skills and knowledge of existing employees in the companies through RPL4. I would like to see more participation for Best in Class companies for certifying their workforce under RPL Type-4.

I am happy to inform you that LSSC, as National Monitoring Unit (NMU) under HRD sub-scheme of Indian Footwear Leather and Accessories Development Program (IFLADP) Scheme will play a crucial role in monitoring skill development projects. This includes providing technical support, evaluation and maintaining the database of all the trainees for all the projects and verification of placements and periodic submission of report. This is a great opportunity to impact the industry through skilled workforce and contribute to the success of Skill India mission. I congratulate Shri. P. R. Aqeel Ahmed for taking over the role of Chairman, CLE and I welcome Shri. Sanjay Leekha, Vice-Chairman, CLE. I wish you all a great success in 2019!

Design, branding and continuous innovation is the key to growth and profitability - An interview with Mr. Tauseef Ahmed Mirza, Director, Mirza International Limited



To be successful in the leather industry, a holistic strategy to produce and sell various products in domestic and global is a prerequisite. Mirza International Limited, India's leading producer of leather footwear and finished leather has their presence across 30 countries with state-of-the-art company owned facilities. With design, innovation and brand building as key parameters for customer engagement, Mirza International has set high standards for professional culture with trust and customer commitment. We spoke with Mr. Tauseef Ahmed Mirza, Director, Mirza International Ltd, to learn about many aspects of their business and global impact.

Creating a delightful customer experience

Our knowledge of styling, fashion trends and products that sell internationally form the basis on which we design our products. The data is collected from our sales and this knowledge is used to study customer preferences. Our product range is very wide and diverse spreading across men, women and children. We cater to the mid and upper tier of the market primarily in Europe, America and India, in addition, we have smaller markets in eastern Europe, Middle East and South Africa. The category of footwear we work with is mainly casual, formal and semi sport urban wear collections. We have a very strong research and fashion forecasting team that travels around the world to major fashion destinations like New York, London, Milan, Amsterdam, Hong Kong and Tokyo.

To meet international standards, we have a very strong marketing and strategy team as well as quality control team. The marketing strategy team defines the standards and quality control team follow and control the standards. This forms a key principle of our policy based on a deep understanding of the meaning of acceptable quality and standards.



The success story of Red Tape shoes

There are many factors for the success story of red tape and it goes back to the tradition of maintaining quality and seriousness of customer commitments which has lead to reputation building of the brand over the last 25 years. The first factor is the freshness and newness of design on which the company spends a lot of resources to bring new trends and new designs to the market on a daily basis. Then comes the development of the formidable sales force along with heavy investment in the last mile infrastructure of online distribution warehouses and finally retail stores. Another important factor is the customer experience inside the store as well as buying online.

Challenges of footwear retailing and building capacity

Your product should score well on aesthetics and technically it should of great quality. Let the product do the talking! Retailers can't afford to send the customer back and they have to come with new concepts to increase their sales. This is very crucial in building capacity. However, there is never a right capacity as when the going is good, one would find that there is not enough points of sale counters and would therefore, work on adding new counters and additional channels of sale. We have a very proactive sales department divided into 2 sections, where one section works on sales growth and the other works on development of new channels.

Attracting and retaining the right talent and importance of training

Identifying the rightly skilled talent is a continuous process and our HR team recruits trainees on a regular basis. We have a robust and interactive company administration which looks into the staff welfare, which in-turn helps in retaining the talent. Industry has to come forward to participate in many skill-based training initiatives to ensure greater productivity. We have been training our workforce on the shop floor and it has been an integral part of our policy. We are now extending it by collaborating with FDDI to set up the training schools within the factories and for re-skilling and up-skilling we will seek support from LSSC.

Impact of technology and automation

Technology should increase productivity and complement manual output. For instance, cutting and stitching processes are automated to improve productivity. However, there hasn't been much of serious automation or new technologies in the leather industry in the last 30 years. Major commercialization of the technology happened in this sector in the late 80s and since then there have been minor improvements. It's only now that some serious technological advancements are being experimented in the leather industry and the results of those improvements are yet to be seen.

At the same time, we have to understand that, leather being a natural product, has many limitations with technology as each skin is different from the other and a shoe or a handbag requires demonstration of manual craftsmanship as opposed to machine made craftsmanship which offers point of differentiation in its ability to sell. Demand for new skills and knowledge is always there and we need to build the confidence of the new generation to build a career in this industry.



Advice to new and young entrepreneurs

I believe the true spirit of an entrepreneur is when, he or she is not really looking for too much of government support apart from development of infrastructure. I would definitely advise new entrepreneurs to come to this industry but before doing that they should have some work experience of at least 5 years especially on the product front. Before jumping into this industry, they must have a clear understanding of the product and the market where they are going to sell before setting up any production facility.



Leather industry has a huge potential to create jobs locally and reduce migration, in fact, its potential is probably one of the biggest after garment industry. But, it needs to be supported with training infrastructure and rational control over minimum wages plus availability of easy finance and/or leasing of machinery and equipments by the banks or specific industry development institutions.

Government should provide access to microfinance, lease machinery to reduce investment; entrepreneurs should focus on the factory and product and they should know that it takes time to build the brand. The commitment has to be demonstrated. India is a large country with a large market. We can fight competition with support from the government. To double the exports we need more raw material, better

infrastructure like industrial parks, pollution treatment plants, promote animal husbandry, breeding buffaloes. Clusters should be in proximity to the leather industry, for example, tannery cluster should be outside Ambur and not in Haryana.

Maintaining eco-friendly production environment at factory premises

We comply to measure social and ethical standard setup by the various agencies across the globe, in addition we also comply to restrictive substances use of REACH Norms from Europe as well as Proposition 65 from USA. We have state of the art, secondary effluent treatment plant for a large capacity of 1.65 MLD at our tannery premises at Unnao. In addition, we also dispose off our solid effluent through incineration companies in and around our shoe factories. We have adopted the highest health and safety standards and all ethical trade practices as per the ETI base code.

FDDI - Design Education in Leather Sector

Arun Kumar Gaikwad, Center-In Charge, FDDI, Hyderabad

Leather industry has great potential for innovation in product design and development for catering to domestic and international markets. And, this is largely unexplored in our country! India needs many footwear and leather accessories designers who can cater to new markets by coming up with innovative designs that set the trend. We have mostly been following the trends from other countries and it is time we set standards and benchmarks in leather fashion and footwear. For example, a footwear boutique has good potential to attract discerning customers who value the craft and design and are willing to experiment. This can pave the way for more such endeavours from designers and leather fashion enthusiasts.



Arun Kumar Gaikwad

To create the right environment for entrepreneurship, leather crafts have to be positioned appropriately to recognize the manual effort and the craftsmanship. Many cobblers create products of high value but they are not linked with the market or shown a path to grow their business and earn substantially. With the rural markets catching up, we have a great need for a wide range of footwear and accessories using leather and non-leather materials, meeting the needs of urban and rural customers.

FDDI is geared towards preparing youth as job creators rather than mere job seekers in the leather industry. As a premier academic and training institution, FDDI is committed to the development and growth of footwear, leather products, retail and fashion merchandise. This is achieved by imparting industry-integrated education in order to make them employable and promote entrepreneurship. Alumni of FDDI are associated with the industry and academia in prestigious positions, impacting the sector with their expertise and experience.



As a key stakeholder in the emerging leather ecosystem, our goal is to bring the industry and academia closer by facilitating continuous interaction between the students, the faculty and industry experts. The students are taught to appreciate manual work and many skills that go into creating a leather product along with how latest technologies have impacted the design and production processes.

We provide foundation course in the first year of B.Des to sensitize students to different aspects of leather, its uses along with principles of design and visualization. Later, the students are introduced to mass production process, CAD, use of advanced technology in cutting, stitching, quality testing, marketing, pricing and so on. Factory visits are an integral part of the curriculum where in the students are required to spend considerable time on the shop floor to appreciate various skills.

After completion of the course, our students have many options to choose for their careers. They can start on their own and launch their own enterprise. They can take up jobs in the leather industry as designers or in retailing, auditing and sourcing. There are many new job roles coming up in e-commerce that demand formal qualification in merchandising with domain knowledge in leather. We encourage them to explore the entrepreneurial route since this can bring out the best in them as designers. Of course, it still remains a challenge to attract the youth to this sector since they face a lot of parental pressure to tread the known career paths and design education in leather is yet to gain popularity. Hence, one of our focus areas is to create awareness about the jobs in this sector and evangelize about the benefits of entering an industry that provides an opportunity to combine their creative zest with commercial success.

3 ways to make RPL and RPL Type-4 a success in leather industry

Abhijit Das, Mirams Training Services (I) Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and RPL Type- 4 for Best in Class Employers (BICE) are two important schemes from the government in extending formal recognition and certification of existing skills and knowledge. In the leather sector, we have been implementing these schemes systematically with support from the industry. However, to scale our impact by certifying more workers in different job roles, we will need many more employers to participate in this scheme. Here are 5 essentials for successful implementation of RPL and RPL Type-4.



Abhijit Das

- 1 Systematic utilization of infrastructure to enable practical assessments of the workers without hampering the normal production processes on the shop floor. This implies allocation of production space for practical activities that form a part of the requirements for RPL 4 certification.
- 2 Readiness to recognize the certified workers with increase in wages and salaries and other forms of appreciation that keep them engaged with the company. This may include an annual increment which is linked with certification or a promotion and enhancement of responsibilities
- 3 Maintenance of proper records of unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers to map their skills and channelize them towards RPL certification. Since most employees would have started as unskilled workers, it would be imperative to record their skill gaps and map them with NSQF levels.



LSSC has been using different communication and engagement strategies to collaborate with the industry for RPL and RPL Type- 4 implementation. We sensitize the employers about how certification leads to increase in motivation levels of the employees. We also make a comprehensive presentation to the industry with regard to benefits by briefing the HR managers and the management team. We also present case studies of companies where certification has already been done along with candidates testimonials. We also take help from local organizations in creating awareness among the small enterprises in different leather clusters about the need for certification and its benefits, both for the employers and the employees.

Productivity Management Center opening ceremony at CFTI, Chennai

Central Footwear Training Institute (CFTI) Chennai inaugurated a Productivity Management Centre (PMC) at CFTI Chennai campus on 14th December 2018 in association with URS. Shri. Habib Hussain, Chairman, LSSC was the guest of honor at the event.

The Leather and Footwear industry needs to improve productivity and enhance manufacturing competitiveness for global market penetration. Besides cost of manufacturing, other key factors include labor productivity, material productivity, quality delays in shipment.

A unique, context specific, Productivity Improvement Program (PIP) for the leather and footwear sector has been structured by CFTI Chennai and URS (URS). The implementation of PIP will be carried out through Productivity Management Center (PMC), in collaboration with URS in the premises of CFTI Chennai.



RPL BICE Certification event held at Bata India Ltd., Hosur

The event was held on 31st December 2018 in the presence of Mr. Ranjan Kumar, General Manager - Manufacturing and Mr. Rishikesh Kumar, Sr. Manager – Personnel & Admin. Mr. Ranjan presented the history of Bata and their employee's contribution and how RPL helps in recognizing the skills and knowledge. He also spoke about RPL Type 4 scheme and its benefits to the employer and the employees and stated that Bata is the first employer to receive RPL Type 4 certificate from LSSC. He informed the employees certified under RPL Type 4 that they can avail the accidental benefit for 3 years up to Rs. 2 lakhs.



Gorakhpur Job Fair



In the job fair held at Gorakhpur on 14th January 2019, LSSC selected 122 candidates for various job roles. A total of 179 candidates from the ITIs attended the interview. The event was held at Convention Hall & Deeksha Bhawan Meeting Hall, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gorakhpur University and it was attended by Honorable Chief Minister Yogi Aditya Nath.

LSSC participates in Youth Edge Age 2019



LSSC took part in Youth Edge 2019 held in Bengaluru, commemorating the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, celebrated as National Youth Day on 12th January 2019. Youth Edge is a platform for the youth to gain exposure on critical issues from thought leaders and achievers in the state. This initiative is organized by Dr. C.N. Ashwathnarayan Foundation to inspire the youth to reflect, transform and create. On this occasion, speakers shared their advice on Personality Development, Character Building and importance of Soft Skills for the 2000+ youth who participated in the event.

RPL Type-IV Best in Class Employers

Company Name	Location	No's in LOI's	Company Name	Location	No's in LOI's
AFPL Global Pvt. Ltd.	Kanpur	900	Mahajan Boot Factory	Agra	370
Atarv Trading	Agra	400	Manufex	Agra	410
Bankey Bihari & Company	Agra	350	Mirza International Ltd.	Delhi	200
Bata India Ltd.	Hosur	102	Mitra Leathers	24 Paragnas	400
BBK leathers Pvt. Ltd.	Ranipet	750	Mohib Shoes	Vellore	3800
BPS Oversea Pvt. Ltd.	Kancheepuram	1250	Moumita Enterprises	24 Paragnas	500
Carson Overseas	Agra	550	N.M Zakariah	Ambur	600
Cheyyar Lotus Ltd.	Cheyyar	17455	Neelson Overseas	Agra	350
Das Enterprises	24 Paragnas	400	Northern Tannery	Kanpur	1200
Dawar Footwear	Agra	850	Patel & Associates	Agra	360
Educational Club	Kolkata	3500	Pioneer Inc.	Chennai	306
Everest Tanning Industries	Kanpur	1000	Popular Sales Corp.	Agra	320
Farida Group	Ambur	10000	Prime Shoes	Chennai	797
Fuzail Shoes Pvt Ltd	Ambur	650	Rajpal Shoe Co.	Agra	350
Green Leaf	Agra	300	Sachdeva Overseas	Agra	400
H.P. Rural Entrepreneurship	Shimla	20000	Santhinikethani Artistic	West Bengal	6000
Habib Tanning Footwear Div	Gudiyattam	400	Sara Soule Pvt. Ltd.	Bangalore	500
Habib Tanning Shoe Division	Gudiyattam	450	Shiv Sai International	Agra	500
Hommara Tanning	Kanpur	480	SM Lulla industries	Chennai	824
India Shoes Pvt. Ltd.	Ambur	3000	Superhouse Ltd.	Kanpur	700
Irus International	Kanpur	400	Supreme Overseas Ltd.	Bangalore	520
J K Trading	Kanpur	350	T. Abdul Wahid & Co	Ambur	2000
Jama Corporation	Kanpur	445	Tarun Textiles	Kanpur	350
K. V. Enterprises	Agra	400	Tata International Ltd.	Chennai	2500
K.H. Exports India Pvt. Ltd.	Ranipet	1000	Tej Shoe tech	Agra	900
Karam Udyog	Agra	1000	Triton Leather	Chennai	350
Karthikeya international	Kanpur	250	Ujjal Shoe	24 Paragnas	300
Magnum	Agra	370	Vinith Gloves	Kolkata	270

Contact us

Reach us for any suggestions and feedback, write to our complete address with phone and email.

Leather Sector Skill Council

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