



STONE POST

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8 International
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Exhibition

INDIA STONEMART 2015

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Jaipur Exhibition & Convention Centre, Sitapura, Jaipur

Here for big business

With 40 companies spread over 750 sqm, China has a visibly strong presence among the foreign exhibitors with ancillary tools, spares, big CNC machines and hunt for business agents

India StoneMart 2015 has seen an increased presence of international players who are here to showcase their product range. Dominating much of the hall space, there are 10 participating countries. Some of these companies are repeat exhibitors to StoneMart, while some are first timers.

After Turkey, China has managed to garner a visible presence at India StoneMart. With companies from all over China displaying their products, the visitor interest has been a lot at these stalls. There are companies selling everything from ancillary tools and spares to big CNC machines. Stonetek, and their Chinese partners Yongda have an operational waterjet CNC machine on display. Says Hardik Patel of Stonetek, "We believe in Mr Modi's Make in India vision," adding that they are inviting their principal channel partners to set up a manufacturing unit in Dholera near Ahmedabad. "With our product range, we intend to provide complete solutions to the stone industry." Ms Lily, export manager, Yongda, seconds him. "We are here to try our best to garner maximum sales and business for our company. Having been in the Indian market for 10 years, we are looking forward to generate newer opportunities in the next 3-5 years."

Companies from Italy are also showcasing their finest marble at India StoneMart. Marcello Peretti, sales manager of Gruppo Tosco Marmi, while pointing out that their marble products, Palissandro and Grey Flurry, are aimed at a niche

market, says that they are looking for tie-ups with architects, who can promote their products. "We achieved USD 1 million worth of business with India last year. This is our first time at India StoneMart and the visitor response as well as buyer response has been very good," he says with satisfaction. Ditto for Giorgio Pica of GV Orsei Marbles srl, here for the second time. "Last year, we exported 3000 tonnes to India. Our marble, Danio Italia, has received a very good response so far," he informs Stone Post.

At StoneMart for the first time, the Iranians are aggressively marketing their natural stone and are looking forward to creating new channels for import and export. "We are open to investors. We want to tell them that Iran is safe for conducting business as reported otherwise," says Maryam Fallahi, commercial manager of Avid Sobh Parslan Co. "The response so far has been good, but we would also like to see better infrastructure, service and organisation next time at India StoneMart." ■

Afghanistan does biz worth USD 12 mn

"From Afghanistan to StoneMart, the travelling was surely worth the effort," says Shoukatullah Khuraam, a member of the Afghan delegation. With over 10 companies exhibiting raw stone, machinery and tools this year, these traders from Afghanistan have been able to impress the buyers from India and abroad with their stone and machinery. A big hit with visitors are the big blocks of rock from ANA Group.

With India as the nearest business destination for Afghanistan, this is a major factor that pulls traders from distant lands. And they like the country's white marble, onyx, travertine and granite. In just two days, they have done business over USD 12 mn. "StoneMart is important for international business. We have visited a few sites in Udaipur and Jodhpur, and we look forward to doing good business with them," beams Khuraam. ■



L to R: Shoukatullah Khuraam & Ahsanullah Pazir

Linkage

Shilpgram is all this and more for the of their centuries' old craft and their



Each year, RUDA selects 28-30 artisans and helps them exhibit their talent at StoneMart at nominal costs. This year, the Shilpgram is spread over an area of over 500 sqm.

This year's theme 'rural', which synergizes with RUDA's vision of 'promoting sustainable livelihoods in the rural non-farm sector' has also seen a change in the architectural use of a few stones moving towards ornamental designs from flooring, like the Jaisalmer stone and black limestone. What is also new this year is the mix of contemporary and traditional designs.

"The thriving architecture industry has encouraged the artisans to come out of

A big draw at India Stonemart, as usual, is the stone artisans' pavilion Shilpgram, a joint initiative of CDOS and RUDA. A regular feature of the fair since its inception, Shilpgram is aimed towards providing a platform for artisans to showcase their talent and develop direct business links with domestic and international buyers. With the middlemen out of the picture, artisans find it easier to sell their products to serious buyers and art connoisseurs.



FROM THE DRAWING BOARD

Stone in contemporary vocabulary

The recent project at Mayo College, Ajmer is strong on articulate architectural detailing with the use of stone to define a strong visual character to the school. Contemporary techniques have been used to create the classical details, which make the building look contemporary without taking away from the original, says Ali Ahmad Shah



Ali Ahmad Shah is an architect with the New Delhi-based Abhimanyu Dalal Architects and has worked on the Mayo College project

Abhimanyu Dalal Architects have the privilege of working for Mayo College, Ajmer and residential projects in Delhi, which were completed using traditional detail and methods. The use of local craftsmen having traditional style of working has given us the opportunity to interact with and

understand their working. Mayo College was built in 1875 for the education for the princes of Rajasthan. Every building built by the royal families is a classic example of the Indo-Saracenic style with most designed by well-known British architects of the time like Major Charles Mant and Samuel Swinton Jacob.

Our objective is to preserve and maintain the unique identity of the physical environment while making changes through the addition of new buildings and facilities. The character needs to be sustained and built upon. For our buildings at Mayo—The Pavilion 74 at tennis courts, Sawai Man Singh polo pavilion, Kangra amphitheatre with

a capacity of 1800 students, Staff Quarters for 12 families (G+1) and restoration works at Colvin House staff quarters—stone has been used extensively in our buildings with classical details of putting stones together. The stone for the buildings, including like Red Karauli, Khatu, Dhund, Makrana, has been sourced from the mines in the vicinity of the old mines from where the stone was initially sourced. Traditional detailing with help of local craftsmen has been used. For example, the fixing of chajja was done using the counterweight of the stone itself, stone brackets and bands (dasa) have been used which helps integrate the buildings with their



Pavilion 74 on tennis court side

es for livelihood...

Artisans exhibiting at India StoneMart 2015. It is their passport to survival – very existence. **Stone Post** takes a walkabout to find out more

their confines and experiment with textures, designs, stones, applications of the products, etc.” says Sanjay Saxena, DGM RUDA. Many of the exhibiting artisans have seen a growth in the number of sales and new orders pouring in through India StoneMart. “Exhibitions like this have helped us gain recognition and appreciation for our hand work,” says craftsman Suraj Sharma from Kanota. “There are many players in the industry manufacturing the gold gilding artwork. Even though we offer unique and authentic handcrafted products, sales or bulk orders are difficult,” says Sharma.

Visitors to Shilpgram should look forward to sandstone carving and panel-making from Dausa, yellow stone carving and lathe work from Jaisalmer, pareva stone carving from Dungarpur, marble carving from Udaipur, inlay work, marble products and gold painting from Jaipur, white marble carving from Makrana, black stone carving from Bhaislana and soapstone and jaali work from Agra. ■

Their toys, chisel and hammer

Indian artisans are well-known for their expertise with chisel and hammer.

Carrying the tradition forward is Suresh Chandra Sompura, native to Dungarpur (Rajasthan), who creates marvellous pieces from the locally mined bluish-grey Pareva stone. Sompura learnt to use the abundantly available stone to its fullest from his father. Working with this stone for more than 15 years now, calls it “a family custom and belief, not just business. Our dedication pushes us to keep the tradition going.” Many

of these sculptures are beautifying the walls and pedestals at Swami Narayan temples around the world. “My spirit finds solace when people appreciate my work,” says the artisan, who has his roots in Somnath, Gujarat. Growing up in Jaipur, surrounded by the beautiful art of inlay, chisel and hammers were Khaled Ahmed’s first toys and the impetus to learn the intricacies from his father at an early age. Not interested in studies, he learnt to play with and create

masterpieces. “When one receives state and national awards for one’s work, the motto of life is achieved. I think about new designs and patterns even when I am not working on stone,” says the man whose dedication towards this work has inspired future generations too. Entirely handcrafted, with no use of any machinery, this Mughal artistic tradition is sustained by Ahmed and others like him and its glorious manifestations find honourable placement in many monuments and homes across the globe.



Artwork of humans, and of ROBOTS!

A stone block being carved by a programmed robotic arm is a sight to behold. Working in collaboration with a Spanish company, Ahmedabad engineering firm Shusha Mechantronics has added a robotic dimension to India StoneMart this year. Working on the principle of coordinates and pre-programmed codes, this robot can carve all types of wall panels, structures and statues. Shusha Mechantronics is known for designing and manufacturing of carving CNC machines. “Having been in this business for past 7 years, we have created our own niche,” says Paresch Patel. While this adds a dimension to mechanization, it is critical to not lose sight of lakhs of artisans toiling with their hands to craft objects. ■



surroundings.

Another important aspect of work at Mayo College is the different lime pointing existing in the campus. We studied how the pointing can act as a design element and how pointing can add to the character of stone; initially white, lime, however, changes with weathering to dark yellow gradually making it more dynamic. Recessed, flushed, overlapped and racked over stone are some of the ways how we tried to experiment with the lime pointing.

In the residential projects at Delhi, both having stone of variable thickness in the elevation adds to the depth to the building façade. Stone from 100mm to 200mm are used, with special elements like stone columns, chajjas and domes. Craftsmen from Rajasthan were involved with the cladding as well as intricate inlay work in Makrana

marble for interiors. The Roman technology of putting through pieces of stones at random intervals in walls as anchors to hold the brick and stone together is a technique frequently used. Random dressed masonry is used with each stone treated with transparent water proofing layer and plinth protection has been done using granite to check the water movement through capillary action in the stone. ■



Lime pointing with ashlar masonry



Staff quarters



Sawai Man Singh Polo Pavilion

LOOK OUT FOR THESE

Smaller is better too!

While the international presence in the machinery segment is to be lauded, the presence of SMEs is heartening and pretty heavy duty too, **Stone Post** discovers



The limelight in trade shows is generally on big brands. However, India Stone Mart 2015 is seeing new trends. This year, there is a bold presence by homegrown SME Indian machinery manufacturers, especially from Ajmer and Udaipur. Apart from the massive earth-moving machines, considerable stall space has been taken up by all types of multiline stone cutters, line polishing machines

and other stone processing equipment.

And it is not just the domestic market that these players are looking at. Says CP Sharma of Rosava Engineering, "We export to Ethiopia, Egypt and Vietnam," he informs, besides the 60 Indian units that buy from them. Rosava Engineering has a separate mining and quarry machine division apart from its engineering division. "We have recently developed an indigenous gang saw machine for black granite and we can proudly say it is India's first," he smiles.

"It is an achievement for the government if our products are exported to

various parts of the world," says Nitin Maheshwari, of Shree Tanishq Machineries, whose premier product is a diamond gang saw machine. KMT Pvt. Ltd, a sister concern of Sehmi Technique, also exports to China, Egypt, Bangladesh and all over South India.

Cutters, cranes and other machines from the indigenous product range of Ajmer-based Shri Bhagwati Machines have been exported to Italy, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka and Nepal and it is Yashwant Sharma's grand vision to become a premier manufacturer.

JCB, SANY and KOBELCO, all global giants associated with heavy earth moving equipment, have an impressive presence too at India StoneMart 2015 with a range of their products on display. "We are regularly participating in shows around the country. This is our first time at StoneMart," says Pradeep Sharma, Jaipur marketing head of KOBELCO. With more and more dealerships with sales and service supports being established in India, the growth potential is tremendous in Rajasthan, he says talking about making inroads into the stone industry.

Another first timer is the Jade Group from Gujarat, showcasing its heavy duty forklift loader. And chairman Jaydev Patel is impressed. "The infrastructure is great and this feels like an international show." With a huge stone slab on the loader, it makes for an impressive display when the machine lifts it high up in the air. ■



BUYER SPEAK

The sheer variety enthralls her

What brings her to India StoneMart 2015 is variety! Dr. Ananya Gandotra, eminent architect and head technical services group, corporate projects, Taj Group, seems really excited to see the extensive range of natural stone from both India and abroad.

"We all know about Indian stones, and we have been using them in our projects, but getting to know about these exotic stones from outside India has given us a different perspective altogether," she says. Direct interaction with exhibitors

including quarry owners from Turkey, China, Italy and other participating countries has impressed her enough to visit StoneMart every year from now!

Platforms like StoneMart allow traders and buyers across the world to interact and do business beyond their geographical boundaries. "We have really liked some products at these international pavilions and we wish to use to them in future projects. It's a step towards global business," she beams. What has enthused her, besides, is

interacting with quarry owners about the selection, manufacturing and quarrying of these exclusive stones. ■

Dr. Ananya Gandotra
Architect

