



Flipkart and IIM Sambalpur ink MoU for research to provide insights to enable greater market access to artisans and weavers with IIM Sambalpur

To research the challenges faced by artisans, weavers and offer training on sustainable scaling up of business

Bengaluru - February 7, 2022: Flipkart, India's homegrown e-commerce marketplace, today signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Management, Sambalpur to undertake research to provide market insights to artisans and weavers to help bring them online. This MoU follows the partnership announced between Flipkart and IIM Sambalpur in August 2021 to support and promote small businesses, artisans and weavers by leveraging technology, e-commerce platform and market insights.

The MoU was signed virtually in the presence of Smt. Usha Padhee, IAS, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India, Prof. Mahadeo Jaiswal, Director, IIM Sambalpur, and Mr. Rajneesh Kumar, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Flipkart Group. .

As part of this MoU, IIM Sambalpur will identify clusters of artisans and weavers within Odisha to onboard them with Flipkart's Samarth program, thereby connecting their businesses to a pan-India customer base. In addition to this, the artisans and weavers will also be offered training on business management, marketing, accounting etc., by IIM Sambalpur while conducting research on their pain points and challenges.

According to India Brand Equity Foundation, the Indian handicrafts industry has more than seven million regional artisans and over 67,000 exporters/export houses promoting regional art and craftsmanship in the domestic and global markets. The state of Odisha has a rich history of various forms of handicrafts such as the popular Pipli and stone craft called Sukuapada among many more. With this partnership, these art forms and their makers will get exposure to a large customer base while contributing to significantly improving their earnings and understanding of business management.

"The Indian handicraft industry is one of the largest employment generators and accounts for a significant share in the country's export. However, the artisans and weavers who constitute a large part of the industry lack relevant skills to sustainably grow their business and are limited by geography. Through our partnership with Flipkart, we will be solving certain fundamental challenges faced by this section of the society by offering them business insights and understanding challenges in their value chain while bringing them online through Flipkart's Samarth program. Such industry-academia collaboration for artisans and weavers is one of the first-of-its-kind in India and highlights the inclusive vision of Flipkart which is taking definitive steps to improve their live," **Prof. Mahadeo Jaiswal, Director, IIM Sambalpur** said during the MoU announcement.



Commenting on the collaboration, **Rajneesh Kumar, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer at Flipkart**, said, *“As a homegrown company, we are committed to creating opportunities for our artisans and weavers through technology and in collaboration with our ecosystem partners. The MoU with IIM Sambalpur is a testament of our efforts towards truly solving the challenges of these artisans and weavers by providing insights, market access and building business management skills for them. Our team’s expertise, technology, learnings and insights serving a pan-India market will come very handy for MSMEs, artisans and the Indian handicraft industry in Odisha through this partnership with IIM Sambalpur.”*

Under Flipkart’s Samarth initiative, the company has partnered with several states across the country, including Odisha. The partnership with Odisha State Government’s State Institute for Development of Arts & Crafts (SIDAC) is helping onboard renowned Odia brands such as Boyanika, Utkalika and Sambalpuri Bastralaya, among others, to access a pan-India marketplace through the Flipkart platform. .

About Indian Institute of Management Sambalpur (IIM Sambalpur)

Indian Institute of Management Sambalpur (IIM Sambalpur) is a leader in the field of management education, interfacing with the industry, government and PSUs. It is promoted and nurtured by the Ministry of Education, Government of India and is an Institute of National Importance under the Indian Institutes of Management Act 2017. IIM Sambalpur seeks to be a contextually relevant business school with world-class academic standards that develops socially-conscious managers, leaders and entrepreneurs. IIM Sambalpur is committed to excellence in management education, research, and training, Use of contemporary participant-centric pedagogies and teaching methods, presence in emerging segments of management education

About the Flipkart Group

The Flipkart Group is one of India's leading digital commerce entities and includes group companies Flipkart, Myntra, Flipkart Wholesale, Flipkart Health+ and Cleartrip. The Group is also a majority shareholder in PhonePe, one of the leading Payments Apps in India.

Started in 2007, Flipkart has enabled millions of consumers, sellers, merchants, and small businesses to be a part of India's digital commerce revolution, with a registered customer base of more than 400 million, offering over 150 million products across 80+ categories. Our efforts to democratize commerce in India, drive access and affordability, delight customers, create lakhs of jobs in the ecosystem, and empower generations of entrepreneurs and MSMEs have inspired us to innovate on many industry firsts. Flipkart is known for pioneering services such as Cash on Delivery, No Cost EMI and easy returns – customer-centric innovations have made online shopping more accessible and affordable for millions of Indians. Together with its group companies, Flipkart is committed to transforming commerce in India through technology.

For more information, please contact media@flipkart.com

