

13<sup>th</sup> January 2017

### PRESS NOTE

This has reference to the News Item, which appeared in various News Papers i.e. Economic Times, Times of India, etc. regarding replacement of the photograph of Mahatma Gandhi Ji by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modiji on the Diary and Calendar of KVIC for the year 2017.

In this context, it is informed that there is no policy for mandatory use of photograph of Mahatma Gandhiji on the Diary and Calendar of KVIC and the design and creative are prepared every year based on the requirements and the developments that took place in KVI Sector. In fact, during the following years the Cover Page of the KVIC Diary did not carry the photograph of Mahatma Gandhiji:-

1. Year 1996
2. Year 2002
3. Year 2005
4. Year 2011
5. Year 2013
6. Year 2016

During the current year 2017 the cover page of the Diary carried the photograph of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, since he was kind enough to grace the 'Khadi Event' held at Ludhiana where he distributed 500 Charkhas to the needy Khadi artisans of Punjab and the same photograph was carried on the Diary as a source of encouragement to the KVI sector. In the photograph in the inner page of the Diary of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, the bust of Mahatma Gandhiji is displayed prominently behind the Hon'ble Prime Minister's photograph symbolizing the source of our inspiration. The quotes of Mahatma Gandhiji have also been printed in different pages of the Diary. Almost all photographs within the Diary contain the quotes of Mahatma Gandhiji. 'Charkha' which was the potent weapon of Mahatma Gandhiji is also prominently displayed on the first page of the Diary. On the Calendar of 2017 also the quotes of Mahatma Gandhiji finds center place in each of the pages of the Calendar.

The PM and the picture shows commitment to khadi at the highest level in the government. Because of the appeal made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his efforts at promoting Khadi, sales have gone up by 34% in 2015-16.

## Khadi and Village Industries Commission

PM emulating the Father of the Nation is an unmistakable image of dedication to the core national values. Does it not showcase commitment to Khadi at the highest level of governance? How can anyone replace the Father of the Nation?

Needless to mention that Mahatma Gandhiji is the soul and essence of the Khadi movement and shall remain so forever in the heart of the artisans and KVI sector.

Apart from it, as regard to the criticism by eminent persons through social media, I would like to mention here that on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2008, I discovered that the statue of the 'Father of the Nation' Mahatma Gandhi, who is undoubtedly amongst the greatest leaders of humankind, was not placed in the wing where the statues of other illustrious world leaders were exhibited, at London's Madame Tussauds Wax Museum. The statue was placed on the second floor near an Ice Cream Parlour close to a dustbin. Moved by this plight of apathy towards the Mahatma Gandhi, I took up the matter with the political leaders in UK & India. Through a letter to the then British Prime Minister Mr. Gordon Brown, I wondered " is this not a paradox that the memory of the man who rallied world attention on the evil of apartheid in South Africa over a century ago is now subjected to the same scandalous contempt that we thought the world has overcome? I requested the British Prime Minister to initiate immediate action to see that this anomaly is rectified and the "Pride of India" is restored in Madame Tussauds Wax Museum. I pursued the issue until an apology was offered by the Museum office, and the Mahatma Gandhiji's statue was shifted to the "World Leaders' Exhibition' Hall there, then no one raised the issue for such treatment with Mahatma Gandhiji. The then Prime Minister Mr. Manmohan Singh has not even acknowledged the receipt of my letter. Where was Mr. Tushar Gandhi, the great grandson of Mahatma Gandhi who is crying now on publishing PM's photo on KVIC's Calendar and Diary, when Gandhiji was treated so badly in Madam Tussauds Museum.

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