

Toy safety at the focus of the Spielwarenmesse Dialogue in India

- Spielwarenmesse India holds first-ever Panel Discussion
- High-profile panellists from trade, industry and testing institutes

The Spielwarenmesse Dialogue takes members of Spielwarenmesse eG to 20 countries every year, where they forge new contacts and provide industry representatives with an exclusive insight into the next Spielwarenmesse. Against this backdrop, subsidiary Spielwarenmesse India staged a Panel Discussion in New Delhi at the end of July, marking the approach to the fifth edition of Kids India, scheduled to take place from 20 to 22 September 2017. The discussion focused on toy safety, which was followed with interest by 60 decision makers from India's toy and retail sectors.

The event was moderated by Vivek Jhangiani, Executive Director of Pleasantime and President of The All India Toy Manufacturers' Association (TAITMA). He and the panelists – comprising leaders from the toy industry, accreditation bodies and testing laboratories – demonstrated that manufacturers and retailers of repute had already taken steps to adopt practices that guarantee market-safe and high-quality products. There is general consensus in the industry that strict guidelines for production and testing processes are essential for raising the bar of safe toys. Similarly, the sector acknowledges the need to educate consumers, particularly parents, about what is safe by providing the right information.

The discussion laid emphasis on the research, processes, quality standards and safety protocols required to create innovative toys that offer a balanced mix of learning and fun. Ernst Kick, CEO, Spielwarenmesse eG, stated: "We have witnessed a paradigm shift in India in the nature of toys and their impact on child development. Amidst this evolving market, the need for quality and safety remains consistent. Through this informative platform, we aim to raise awareness across all levels on the imperative subject of developing and distributing safe toys."

Speaking on behalf of the manufacturing industry, Ishmeet Singh, Country Manager India, Mattel Inc, said: "The design behind every one of our toys is deeply rooted

in research. Our internal product safety procedures are designed to meet or exceed regulations and laws enforced by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and their regulatory counterparts around the world." E-commerce supplier Snapdeal is also aware of the responsibility that rests on its shoulders. Nikhil Dua, Category Head Toys & Stationery, explained that, as a marketplace platform, Snapdeal encourages its seller partners to provide as much information as needed on product display pages, also enabling customers to receive answers to their specific questions: "We are committed to providing our customers with the best possible experience with quality products."

Market demand for safe toys is steadily on the rise. Today's consumer is digitally savvy and discerning, with access to information and products like never before. This raises expectations and public scrutiny on many brands to ensure that products are authentic and safe. Anil Jauhri, CEO, National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB), told the audience at the Panel Discussion: "It is government's duty to bring in mandatory standards on grounds of health, safety and the environment etc. The impediments in notifying regulations for toys have been removed in the new Indian BIS Act 2016 and we should expect a regulation on toys shortly."

The urgent need for a standardised solution for India was emphasised by Sarbajeet Mukherjee, General Manager South Asia, Consumer and Retail Services, UL, an independent body that tests and certifies toy safety: "As the toy market is a highly sensitive segment, given the tender age of its consumers, the government, manufacturers, third-party certification companies and the media must collaborate in raising consumer awareness." Charan Singh, Vice President and Regional Director Softlines (India, Middle East & Africa), TUV Rheinland, added that, irrespective of the child's age or toy type, these products must not cause any risk to health resulting from compromises on quality. The institute always aims to provide the best for children to guarantee quality and safety in toys.

"Focused on bringing together leading minds in the Indian toy industry, our Spielwarenmesse Dialogue gave a perspective on the importance of providing safe and

quality toys in India,” concluded Ernst Kick. This important discussion will be taken forward along with other hot topics at the upcoming fair Kids India 2017, which is scheduled to run in Mumbai in September.

Text length: 4,497 characters

Note for editors: Reprint free of charge. Images are available at www.spielwarenmesse.de/photos (World of Toys – Kids India). Please provide us with a voucher copy on publication.

3.8.2017 – ta/sw

About Spielwarenmesse India Pvt. Ltd

Spielwarenmesse India Pvt. Ltd. is the Indian subsidiary of Spielwarenmesse eG which is the organizer of the world-leading Spielwarenmesse® (www.spielwarenmesse.de) in Nuremberg. The company was founded on 1 April 2016 to consolidate the position of Spielwarenmesse eG in one of the world's largest growth markets. The main objectives of the company, which is headed by Ms. Katharina Janotta as its Managing Director, include representing Spielwarenmesse eG and staging the Kids India fair. Kids India is supported by SGEPC (Sports Goods Export Promotion Council), TAITMA (The All India Toy Manufacturers' Association) and IGCC (Indo-German Chamber of Commerce). More information on www.kidsindia.co.in.

Spielwarenmesse eG

Spielwarenmesse eG is the fair organizer and marketing services provider for the toy sector and other consumer goods markets. The Nuremberg company organizes the world-leading **Spielwarenmesse®** in Nuremberg, **Kids India** in Mumbai, **Kids Turkey** in Istanbul and **Insights-X** in Nuremberg. The range of services provided by the cooperative also includes industry campaigns and the international fair programme, **World of Toys by Spielwarenmesse eG**, which enables manufacturers to exhibit at pavilions featured at trade fairs in Asia and Russia. Spielwarenmesse eG operates a worldwide network of representatives in over 90 countries. It also has several subsidiaries, including Spielwarenmesse Shanghai Co., Ltd., responsible for the People's Republic of China, Spielwarenmesse India Pvt. Ltd., covering the Indian market and Spielwarenmesse Middle East Fuarçılık Ltd. Şti., which looks after Turkey, the Near East and the Middle East. The cooperative holds a major stake in the Russian exhibition company Grand Expo, which organizes **Kids Russia** in Moscow. **Die roten Reiter GmbH** subsidiary with headquarters in Nuremberg works as communication agency for the consumer and capital goods industry. The complete company profile of Spielwarenmesse eG can be seen on the Internet at www.spielwarenmesse-eg.com.