

HANDICRAFTS AND KHADI INDUSTRY

The handloom, industry has been one of the oldest industries in India. Although the industry was ruined was ruined during the British colonial rule.it got tremendous boost after India attained independence, especially hen the Five-Year Plan started. The industry today provides employment to about 10 million people and contributes over 23 per cent of the total cloth production in the country .

The handloom industry is widely distributed in the country, mostly concentrated in small towns and rural areas. Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Andhra Pradesh Account for over 50 per cent of the production capacity. Among other states Manipur, Maharashtra , West Bengal, Nagaland, Kerala, Rajasthan, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka are important for handloom industry.

Problems of Handloom and Khadi Industries

The handloom and khadi industry faces a number of problems. These include the following:

1. The raw materials available for this industry are neither adequate nor of satisfactory quality.
2. The craftsmen employed in this industry belong to poor families and have no technical skills.
3. The technology used in these industries is old and obsolete.
4. The goods produced y these industries are no match to the modern fast changing fashions and designs.
5. These industries have to face competition from mill-made cloth.
6. These industries lack capital as few facilities exist for providing cheap credit.

The Kutch embroidery of Gujarat or Zari-Zardozi and Chikankari of Uttar Pradesh, wooden toys of Karnataka or bamboo craft of Assam, puppets of Rajasthan or Sikki, Tikuli and Madhubani arts of Bihar are not only the traditional arts of the respective provinces but also form an important source of alternative income for the artisans. This is one of those market segments that have led India to establish its distinct identity in the international market.

- In non-agricultural or lean seasons, handicrafts become an alternative means of subsistence for the rural population and safeguards them from food insecurity. In this way, handicrafts become an important source of livelihood for a large chunk of the Indian population.
- There were 68.86 lakh artisans as per the census of handicrafts conducted during 11th Five Year Plan. The magnitude and strength of this sector can be very well understood from this fact.

Role of handicrafts in the tourism sector:

- Souvenir is a tourism ritual.
- Handicrafts add value to the tourist spots and attract tourists providing an income for local artisans and other petty vendors/service providers in the surroundings.
- Despite the scarcity in data, it is evident that there is an important contribution of handicrafts to the tourism sector of the country.

Promoting and Marketing Handicrafts:

- Due attention has also been given on the marketing of these valuable products.
- Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) organises product-specific shows and also 'Indian Handicrafts and Gifts Fair bi-annually.

- There have been efforts like product based-exhibitions and live demonstrations by artisans for promoting these products abroad.
- Market Development Assistance (M.D.A) and Market Access Initiative (M.A.I.) envision better marketing of these products through fairs, exhibitions and producers-buyers meets.
- 'India Handloom Bazaar', an online marketing portal is based on marketing of the handicrafts through facilitating direct interaction between buyers and sellers.
- The focus is now on the artisans and their enterprises to utilise the facilities enabling them to contribute towards our economy as well as socio-economic upliftment of the community.
- On a macro level, initiatives to strengthen the sector will support in preserving this cultural heritage and transferring it to the next generation as a potential source of livelihood.
- While on the micro level, various socio- economic issues like unemployment, poverty, migration and indebtedness will be addressed.
- In turn, these will add to strengthening of the Indian economy and thereby ameliorating the conditions of Indian society.
- Geographical Indication (GI) tag enhances the credibility of the products.

GI tag is the sign on the product showing its region of origin. Some of the handicrafts which have received GI tag are-Kangra paintings, Varanasi brocades and saris, Bustar wooden craft, Villianur terracotta works etc.

VARIOUS CRAFTS IN INDIA

Zari:

- Zari is an even thread traditionally made of fine gold or silver used in traditional Indian, Pakistani and Persian garments and curtains, etc.
- Four types of zari are produced in India, namely, real zari, semi real zari, imitation zari and plastic zari.
- Real zari is made of silver and electroplated with gold, whereas semi real zari has a composition of copper coated with silver and gold electroplating.
- Surat is the home of zari industry in India.
- Other clusters producing zari are Bareilly, Varanasi, Agra, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Vadodara, Lathur, Jaipur, Barmer, etc.

Leather Footwear and other Leather Articles:

- The leather industry, including leather footwear, is one of the oldest traditional industries in India.
- The major Production centres in India are Chennai and Ranipet in Tamil Nadu, Mumbai in Maharashtra, Agra, Lucknow and Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh, Jalandhar in Punjab, Delhi, Kamal and Faridabad in Haryana, Kolkata in West Bengal, Jaipur and Jodhpur in Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, and Calicut in Kerala.
- India is also known worldwide for its leather products.
- Leather products such as jackets, lampshades, pouches, bags, belts, wallets, and stuffed toys are exported from India in large quantity.
- Leather bags and wallets account for major portion of total exports.

Carpet:

- Carpet industry is one of the oldest industries in India, and is primarily an export oriented industry.
- Various kinds of carpets include hand-knotted woolen carpets, tufted woolen carpets, handmade woolen durries, and pure silk carpets.
- Major centers of carpet production are Bhadohi, Varanasi, Mirzapur, Agra, Jaipur, Bikaner, Kashmir, and Panipat, Gwalior, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Karnataka and Elluru in Andhra Pradesh.

Rugs and Durries:

- India is one the leading producers of rugs in the world.
- Various kinds of rugs produced in India are namda (felted rugs), gabba (embroidered rugs), wooden pile rugs, cotton rugs, etc.
- Rug production is concentrated in Agra, Bhadoi, Mirzapur in UP, Jaipur in Rajasthan, Panipat in Haryana, and Kashmir in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Regions known for durrie making are Panipat, Bhavani in Tamil Nadu, Navalgund in Karnataka, Warangal in Andhra Pradesh and Jaisalmer and Barmer in Rajasthan.

Handloom:

- India is a major handloom producer in the world, accounting for 85 per cent of the total production globally.
- Handloom contributes 14.6% to the total cloth production in the country (excluding wool, silk and yarn).
- Major clusters in India are Bahraich, Bhuj, Karimnagar, Patan, Varanasi, Nawan, Shaher, Boudh, etc.
- Handloom industry is the second largest employment generator in India, next only to agriculture.

Textile Hand Embroidery:

- In textile hand embroidery, embellishment is made on fabric with threads and sometimes with other materials.
- There are many popular embroidery clusters such as chikankari and zardozi of Lucknow, katha of Bengal, pulkari Of Punjab, kutchi embroidery of Gujarat and kashidakari of Kashmir.
- Zardozi has been traditionally prevalent in Lucknow and the six surrounding districts of Barabanki, Unnao, Sitapur, Rae Bareli, Hardoi and Amethi.

Textile Hand Printing:

- Hand printed textiles is a craft in which cloth is dyed with hand or printed using shapes.
- Various types of hand printing practiced in India are block printing, batik, kalamkari (hand printing by pen) and bandhani (tie and die).
- Some of the important centers of this craft are in Hyderabad, Machalipattnam, Varanasi, Farrukabad, Bagh, Behrongarh, Indore, Mandasar, Burhanpur, Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Kutch, Bagru, Chittroli, Sanganer, Jaipur and Jodhpur.

Cane and Bamboo:

- Cane is largely used for furniture making, whereas bamboo is used for making jewellery and decorative utility items like lamp-stand, umbrella handles, partitions, screens, flower pots, baskets, walking sticks, tool handles, fishing rods, tent poles, ladders, toys, fans, cups, mugs, mats etc.
- Assam (Lakhimpur, Bongaigaon, Guwahati, etc.) and Tripura (Agar-tala, Nelaghar, etc.) are recognized as prominent places for cane and bamboo products both nationally as well as internationally.
- Assam is home to about 50 species of bamboo.
- Other major cane and bamboo handicraft centers are Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh in North Eastern region, West Bengal, Kerala, and Odisha.

Filigree and Silverware:

- Filigree is an extremely ancient technique dating back to 4000 years ago.
- Filigree work is performed on silver and involves significant precision and technicality.
- Two major clusters of silver filigree in India are Karimnagar in Andhra Pradesh and Cuttack in Odisha.

- The practice in Karimnagar is about two centuries old. However, it is also practiced in Warangal in Andhra Pradesh.
- Key raw materials used are silver wire, tracing sheet, copper, charcoal, dilute sulphuric acid.

Metal Ware:

- The metal crafts of India display intricate craftsmanship and fine art in shaping gold, silver, brass, copper into exquisite designed images, idols, jewellery, and utility items.
- Different categories of handicrafts that come under metal ware are brass metal ware of Moradabad, metal bidri work and bell metal in Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and so on.
- India is the largest brassware producer in the world.
- Major clusters of brassware are Moradabad, Murshidabad, Madurai, Salem, Cuttack and Haryana.
- Bidriware is a metal handicraft that originated in Bidar, Karnataka.
- The term ' Bidriware' originates from the township of Bidar, which is still the main centre of the unique metal ware.
- It is a form of encrusted metal ware, where one metal is inlaid on to another.
- Bidri products include a diverse range of objects including hukka bases, bowls, boxes, candle stands, trays, jewellery and buttons.
- It travelled from Iran to Ajmer in Rajasthan in the 13th century AD, and from there to Bijapur and flourished during the reign of the Deccan Sultanate.
- It is also practiced in Aurangabad district in the state of Maharashtra and Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh.
- The basic metal used for Bidri is the alloy of zinc and copper.

Jewellery:

- Jewellery making is considered as the most distinctive and highly artistic craft in India.
- India has well-established capabilities for hand-made jewellery, both in traditional and modern designs.
- Major centers of handmade jewellery are Delhi, Moradabad, Sambhal, Jaipur, Kohima (Tribal), Nellore, Mysore, Naigonda, estimated to be present in India.

Pottery and Clay Objects:

- There is a wide range of pottery and clay crafts in India.
- Most popular forms of pottery include blue pottery, black and red pottery, roulette ware, and dull red and grey ware.
- India has a rich tradition of clay crafts and Pottery throughout the country.
- Asharikandi in Assam is the largest cluster in India, where terracotta and pottery craft is found.
- Other clusters are Bhadrawati, Bulandshahar, Nizamabad, Pune, Chandrapur, etc.
- Potters are the fourth largest amongst the artisanal groups in India. It is estimated that about 10 lakh people are involved in this craft.
- The main raw material for this craft is ordinary' clay, derived from the beds of water bodies.

Terracotta:

- Terracotta is similar to pottery, in which craftsperson use local clay available in river beds to make items such as lamps, candle stands, figures of deities and animals, etc.

Folk Painting:

- Indian Folk paintings are pictorial expressions of village painters which are marked by the subjects chosen from epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata, Indian Puranas as well as daily events.
- There are several vibrant folk painting types in India in different stages.
- The Gond tribe of Madhya Pradesh is engaged in floor and wall painting.
- Warli is vivid expression of daily and social events of Warli tribe in Maharashtra.
- Rajasthan is famous Phad painting done on cloth.
- Other types of paintings are:
 - Pithora painting in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.
 - Madhubani painting of Bihar
 - Chitrakar painting of West Bengal
 - Patachitras in Odisha
 - Kalamkari in Srikalahasti, Andhra Pradesh.

Coir Twisting:

- Coir is a natural, eco-friendly, water proof and exceptionally tensile fibre extracted from the nuts of coconut palms.
- It is found in abundance and is used for manufacturing a wide range of eco-friendly toys, mats, brushes, mattresses, wall hangings, key rings, pen stands and other home decoratives.
- This craft is primarily produced in Odisha (Sakhigopal, Puri, Pipli, Bhubaneswar, Batamangala and Kendrapara).
- It is also produced in Kerala (Ernakulam).

Theatre, Costumes and Puppets:

- This craft involves making objects related to festivals and for use in performing arts.
- Making puppets is one of such crafts, which has a rich tradition in India.
- There are four types of puppets – glove, rod, shadow and string.
- Puppets from different parts of the country have their own identity.
- These are produced in several states including
 - Odisha (Kundhei nach, Kathi Kandhe, Ravanachhaya)
 - Karnataka (Gombeyatta, Togalu Gombeatla)
 - Andhra Pradesh (Tholu Bommalata),
 - Tamil Nadu (Thol Bommalattam, Tolpavaikoothu),
 - Rajasthan (Kathputli),
 - Bihar (Yampuri)
 - Kerala (Tolpavakoothu, Pava-kathakali)

Grass, Leaf, Reed and Fibre:

- Traditionally, natural fibres have been used in all cultures for making utilitarian products.
- Different parts of the plant are used for preparing various handicrafts such as footwear, basketry, mats, chiks, bags, lampshades and boxes.
- Fibres can be extracted from the bark (banana, jute, hemp, ramie), stem (banana, palm, bamboo), leaf (palm, screw pine, sisal, agave), husk (coir), seeds (cotton), and grass (sikki, madhurkati, benakati, munj).
- Fibre is found in many states including Maharashtra (sisal), Kerala (palm leaf, korai grass), Tamil Nadu (palm leaf, korai grass), Assam (shitalpatti), Meghalaya (shitalpatti), Bihar (Sikki and Munj grass), etc.

- Major centers of this craft are Almora and Dehradun in Uttarakhand, Goa, Ernakulam in Kerala, Kullu in Himachal Pradesh, Midnapur in West Bengal, etc.

CONTRIBUTION OF NORTH-EAST

North-east is one of the biggest contributors. North-east India occupies a unique and important place in the indigenous textile culture of India. The people of the hilly areas and the valley areas of North-east India display heterogeneity in terms of varied eco-cultural and ethno-linguistic characteristics though all of them generally belong to the same Mongoloid ethnic group. However, each ethnic group has its own distinct, dynamic set of traditions, mythology, history and social structure.

- Textiles and dresses are probably dominantly identifiable cultural aspects which show the resemblances as well as the differences among the ethnic groups that are produced and used by them.
- The traditional dress of an ethnic group plays a major role in showcasing the ethnic identity.
- Each ethnic group has its own designs and colour combinations.
- Different motifs and designs of textiles have relationship with the rituals and religious life of the people of North-east India.

There are multiple traditional crafts prevalent in the region which are governed by the local conditions. A Common thread that binds all the States is

Weaving:

- It is practiced alike by all tribal groups in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and in the valley of Assam.
- There are only a few exceptions, such as the Nokteys Of Tirap in Arunachal Pradesh and the Khasis of Meghalaya who do not weave.
- Meghalaya is known for establishing tradition of high quality weaving.
- Arunachal Pradesh weaves are famous their beautiful colour combinations.
- Exceptional are the Sherdukpn shawls, Apatani jackets and scarves, Adi skirts, jackets and bags, Mishmi shawls, blouses and jackets and Wan-cho bags and loin cloths.
- Naga shawls also known as the angami naga, are famous for their bright colours and embroidery of animal motifs.
- Dress material generally depicts ancient Naga tales.
- The handlooms of the tribes of showcase traditional patterns and the rich, vibrant colours have successfully fused with modern garments.
- Traditionally, every household in Tripura had a handloom and locals rarely ever purchased cloth from market
- The striking feature of Tripura handlooms is the vertical and horizontal stripes with scattered embroidery in different colours.
- It is the women who are the real clothiers of this north-eastern region.
- Whether it the Monpas and Sherdukpens of Kameng, the Mishmis and Khamtis of Lohit or the wives of the Wanchoo chieftains of Tirap in Arunachal Pradesh, or any of the Naga tribes, or even the in the plains, it is the women who weave unlike the rest of India, where men predominate the weaving profession.

Silk:

- Northeast India has the potential to produce the country's finest silk products, the same of which can be exported Outside the country.

- Assam is the 3rd largest producer Of silk in the country and leading among the north-east states.
- On the other hand, Manipur produces almost 100% of the country's Oak tussar silk and is the highest producer of Mulberry silk among the North east States
- Whereas, Tripura focuses on production of only Mulberry silk end to end solutions.

Bamboo and Cane Craft:

- This is another traditional art form which runs through various states of the region.
- Due to the weather conditions of the region, it creates a conducive environment for the growth of bamboo.
- Mizos (people from Mizoram) take great pride in their cane and bamboo work.

Carpets:

- Most ancient form of carpet weaving can be found in Sikkim.
- The traditional pattern of weaving is done by the 'Bhutia' community which requires a frame and an exclusive manner Of weaving.
- Arunachal too is well known for carpets. Arunachal Pradesh is divided into 3 major groups depending on their culture and handicrafts: the Buddhist tribes consist of the Sherdukpens and Monpas and also to some extent the Khowa.
- Each tribe has a unique culture and their handicrafts are great as souvenirs for those visiting Northeast India.

Wooden and Metal Products:

- Known as a symbol of true art of India, Sikkim excels in wood carving.
- Sikkim brims with beautiful monasteries, heritage buildings and temples, the architecture of which is adorned with symbols and icons carved in wood.
- Not only that, one can see the special wood carving with papier-maché in the mask dances of Sikkim.
- Pemayangtse Monastery is a fine illustration of carved wooden sculptures and wood carvings.
- Wood carving is also associated with the culture and tradition of the various tribes in Arunachal Pradesh.
- Wood carving is a significant hobby of the Wanchos of Tirap.
- Their skilfully crafted and designed wooden articles have a special place in Arunachal handicrafts.
- As far as skill of wood carving is concerned, some of the finest woodcarvers in India come from the Wancho, Konyak and Phom tribes in Nagaland.
- The icons that best define the Naga's skill in woodwork are carved mithun heads, hornbills, human figures, elephants, tigers.
- Woodcarving is also associated with their religious beliefs.
- In fact, Naga arts and crafts-black smithy or metal craft is popularly found among the local tribes because of their affinity towards weapons such as spears and daos.
- The Rengma tribe is considered to be the best Naga black smith and one can beautifully decorated spears as take- aways.