

# Thematic Display Jodhpur Mega Cluster

Crafts persons from Jodhpur put up a variety on display at IHGF Delhi Fair



The thematic display of Jodhpur Mega Cluster at IHGF Delhi Fair-Spring 2017 stood pretty with a thoughtful spread-out from 10 artisans, mostly experiencing their maiden participation at the fair. All the way from Jodhpur were product lines in leather embroidery; horn, bone & MOP products; tie & dye crafts; embroidery & applique; hand block printing; punja durries; art metalware; and woodcraft. In conversation with Team EPB, at the fair they expressed their enthusiasm at the prospect of getting direct orders and at learnings from interacting with overseas buyers.

A seasoned artisan entrepreneur with 32 years in this business, **Pratap Singh Rawna Rajput's enterprise has been nurtured by two generations.** "Our secret is hard



work as most of the manufacturing requires proficient handwork," he emphasised and informed that with the passage of time and bigger order demands, finishing machinery is included in the

process. Their display had the famed craft of camel bone inlay in wood as well as intricate perforation & latticed work on wood ware.

Another woodcraft specialist, **Rajendra Suthar prides in a business experience of**

**sixteen years.** An artisan with skills inherited from his earlier generations and polished with experience as well as learning, this woodcraft enthusiast offers wooden furniture and exquisite home décor products made with combinations of steel, jute, etc. With confidence owing to a good clientele and patronage in the Jodhpur market, he is interested to move to the next level of business, i.e. the export market. "EPCH has made my dream of global recognition for my products come true," he says as he envisions of a farther market reach.

Innovations like contemporary and stylised leather bags using local materials and artwork results from a passion and



enthusiasm to take a family heritage forward for **Mohit Panwar, a graduate from NIFT.** Leather craft for this family has been a family tradition since his

grandmother's times and Mohit is carrying this forward quite well. He is also involved in manufacturing leather jewellery and other fashion accessories like bags, purses, dairies, decorative and handheld mirrors, with leather as a staple.



**Murali Lohar, an art metalware artisan** who has been in the business of wooden furniture and metal crafts since twelve years now, is full of appreciation

for EPCH's efforts towards encouraging artisans of his stature through guidance & grooming. "I have attended Skill Development programs organised by EPCH under the Skill India initiative. These have helped me understand many aspects of my work which will eventually help me in production for exports," he says. He started this work with a mission to deliver quality products and authentic handcrafted work that would not only gain accolade but also give him a stable market for his products. He informed, most of their work needs passion and efforts, right from collecting suitable raw material to moulding them into desired products. But since the demand is getting high now, he has started using machinery for parts of the production process. Though he has a local market he is keen to explore the international side now with his new products like wall-trees and woodcrafts.

**The craft of hand carving on camel bone was presented by Barkat Ali,** in the form of intricately carved decoratives, dresser items, wall painting frames, chess boards, utility boxes, etc. embellished with fine detailing as well as toys among new products. Excited at the buyer traffic and magnitude of the fair, Ali said, "such initiative and exposure goes a long way in encouraging artisans towards a new recognition for their work and aim to make efforts to enter the global market." His entire family is involved in this work and they have a team of workers to take care of bigger orders. With an established presence in the local market, Ali has few buyers from USA but a desire to reach other markets brought him to IHGF.



Another artisan, **Somraj Sisodia runs a leather accessories embroidery business** with the help of his entire family. The manufacturing is a long and arduous



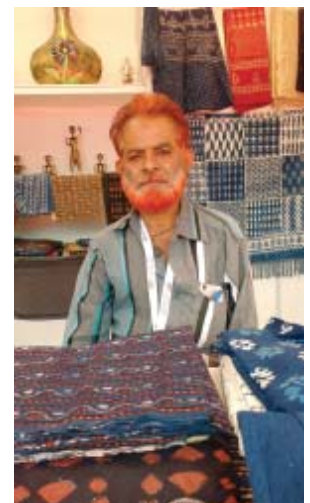
process as it involves complete handwork that starts with washing the raw leather and putting it through seasoning, cutting, stitching and embellishing. Vegetable oil gives a shine to the bags and retains the antique look. Somraj looks forward to gain knowledge from EPCH training programs.



**A selection in punja durries came from Mohd. Hasam,** who thanked the organisers for this platform and looked forward to interact with importers from across the globe. He has been in the business for the last ten years, assisting his father, who initiated this work at a small level. They manufacture handloom

durries made of cotton silk, wool jute and camel hair & goat hair as well as bags with Rajasthani vintage embroidery and block printing. The entire work is done by hand. Among new products they offered eco-friendly bags - reasonably priced cotton carry bags made out of waste. Hasam appreciated the efforts made by EPCH like offering skill training to bringing artisans to such a platform.

**Rajasthan's globally acclaimed hand block printing at this display came from Mohd. Ayub** who says he carries on his shoulders, a legacy of over







80 years as this craft technique has been honed in his family across four generations. He has been

working for the domestic market and this is a "great opportunity given by EPCH to reach buyers from other countries," informed Ayub. His product portfolio includes dabu print, sibori art and block printing, all using natural dyes.

Two women artisans, Imrati and Pampi Devi, specialise in textile crafts like embroidery and applique. For Imrati this was a third time participation while Pampi Devi was busy absorbing experiences from her first presence here. They specialise in applique work on cushion covers, bed sheets, bags and selections in women's artisanal apparel like dupattas. Mirror work and typical Rajasthani folk motifs are common in this 98% hand labour worked, with the sewing machine restricted to stitch-ing and fortifying corners / borders of the products. This craft is not taught in institutions but women in

Rajasthan's Barmer district just know it just like a "must-learn" recipe in their households. Traditionally, they practiced this craft to bring out products of everyday use or to give away as wedding gifts to daughters. Gradually, this was used to earn livelihood as women set out to make these products for sale in local markets and places of tourist interest. "We are here due to Gramin Vikas evam Chetna Sansthan (GVCS) and its association with the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts, they said, expressing gratitude for the grooming and fine-tuning of their skills that are in turn making their products suitable for various international markets and as a result, empowering women in the region.

Gramin Vikas Evam Chetna Sansthan (GVCS), a women oriented social enterprise, strives to rectify aspects of the value chain that discourage women to continue a tradition and to create a society void of exploitation and deprivation. Significant support came to them with the Ministry of Textile's Comprehensive Handicrafts Cluster Development Scheme for the Jodhpur Mega Cluster. This connected them to the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts that guides and supports skill development and training programs besides offering the platform of international fairs like IHGF Delhi Fair to connect directly with overseas buyers. npracticing this craft. ■

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Thematic Display

# NER abuzz with verve & zeal

Ethical & Sustainable lifestyle statements from Assam, Arunanchal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Sikkim



*A special showcase of crafts from India's North Eastern Region was set up at a Theme Pavilion at IHGF Delhi Fair-Spring 2017. The aura spelt sustainability with handcrafted, hand woven, handspun and hand embellished, all across the display area featuring 25 participants from Assam, Arunanchal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Sikkim as well as the region's welfare organisations like North Eastern Handloom and Handicrafts Development Corporation; Cane & Bamboo Technology Center, Assam; and Regional Design & Technology Development Centre of Office Of DC (Handicrafts). On display were cane and bamboo based basketry, lamp shades, gift items, decoratives and utility products as well as furniture; cushion covers, table runners & table accessories; artistic textiles, ethnic apparel, mufflers, shawls and stoles; water hyacinth products; silk based traditional artistic textiles; Muga silk stoles; hand loomed artistic textiles; sitalpatti handbags, jewellery boxes, incense, dry flowers and hand painted home decoratives; elegantly crafted bottle jackets, lamps and tea dispenser jackets made of bamboo; and handicrafts using local materials.*

Third time IHGF participant, **Shravanti Borah's passion for reviving the traditional silks of Assam, brought her into this field** and she brought in a floral and patterned collection on off-white and subtle backgrounds, vibrantly declaring 'Spring!' across her display. Her firm-Enajori that means 'the thread of love', took shape in Guwahati and she deals in Eri (ahimsa silk) and Muga silk sarees, mekhla chadars and stoles as well as fabrics, home furnishings, home linen and made-ups. Each piece is unique: subtly interwoven in different combinations of soft silk & wild silk fibers and hand dyed with substances like eucalyptus bark, tea leaves, onion skins, marigold petals, madder root and indigo. For variations to her existing home furnishings range, Shravanti uses

techniques like screen printing and hand printing to embellish her lines with animal and bird motifs, presenting a very summery feel. Part of this range are her jute & linen cushion covers sporting images of endangered animals. This is a





continuation from her past season's popular offering but they are in more variety this season, still eye-catching and very topical as a gesture of spreading awareness to protect and sustain nature's rich bio-diversity. "Our major export markets are Sri Lanka and the USA," Shravanti informed and added, "IHGF has been a great platform in terms of trade as without it we would have never imagined multiple buyers and sellers meeting at a common place. Small entrepreneurs who were unknown get a stage to display and sell their products. All sorts of buyers and sellers interact at this platform"

Nirmaan Fabrics by Sarah Fashion from Guwahati, Assam, wholesaler exporter of handloom products was represented at IHGF Delhi Fair by Bapan Sarkar. Handlooms are their forte with



products like cushion covers and stoles. Regulars at EPCH fairs since last four years, this time their theme was indigo and their stall looked awash with splashes of blue - very cool and summery,

almost bringing in a vision of the summer breeze and beach resort environs. They also got selections in exquisite Muga and Eri silk. **"We research consumer tastes world over prior to creating our designs," Bapan mentioned** and added that the response to their stall at IHGF Delhi Fair was good. Enquiries from UK and France based buyers came in. They have markets in Thailand, Australia, France, Delhi, Mumbai & Guwahati.

Lots of traditional Assamese Eri and Muga silk fabrics and saris on display, mulberry and tussar silk fabrics as well as colourful stoles and traditional cushion covers, jute folders, handheld purses and

**office accessories attracted attention to Anindita Kalita's stall.** At their Guwahati based firm-Vasundhara Handloom, they make their products



mostly using natural dyes. This season's specialties are hand block prints and onion bark (dyed) stoles. Guided by her mother & mentor, she works with 4 to 5 artisans and monitors her production process passionately. Japan and Ghana are their main export markets.

Second time IHGF participant, **Sruti Baruah representing Ptah's Craft exports handloom and handicraft items** like stoles, conference bags, I-pad bags, tote

bags, laptop bags, durries, yoga mats, T-shirts, caps, etc. Sruti informed, "our stoles made of Eri and Muga silk are tinged using natural dyes and our floor mats



are made of raw material derived from cane." The Autumn 2016 edition of IHGF got them Korean buyers who preferred bright colours, and this time they were approached by Japanese buyers. "IHGF is a good trading platform where we can interact with agents, domestic and international buyers. We are looking forward to Jodhpur and Delhi as our domestic buyer markets," she added. Heirloom Naga, manufacturers and exporters of native artistic textiles and crafts are based in Dimapur, Nagaland. **With a seasoned woman entrepreneur of the region Jesmina Zeliang at the helm of affairs,** they



also deal in bamboo & cane home utility and home decor products. Their premium range in made-ups are 100% cotton, hand woven using heirloom traditions and dyed with eco-friendly colours. Catering primarily to the high-end market, they had a tastefully done stall with unique pieces attracting attention. The products included many signature designs of the mother-son owner duo that also have domestic retail units in the North East. Their stall was visited by buyers from Russia, Australia, Tokyo, France and South Africa.





Sonam Tyashi Gyalsten and his firm - LA from Sikkim got along elegant bamboo bottle jackets, lamp shades, desk top utilities and tea infusers, in minimalist styles.

**"The NER Theme Pavilion is a great initiative, was much needed and is quite helping,"** said Sonam for whom IHGF has been a favourable platform in terms of business expansion. He started as a consultant, and eventually entered into entrepreneurship a year back. Brand LA focuses on making mountain made products. "We have been working for 11 Himalayan states, looking at their potential and our product has a good demand in the domestic market, especially in the hospitality sector," he shared. Their major export markets are Spain, France, China and Portugal as they look for eco-friendly goods. He suggests that the theme pavilion could have a darker section for lamps and lighting so that the product character could be accentuated.

**"Assam is the only place where the world comes for silk,"** proclaims Puberun Sarmah, with an air of local pride. Based in Nalbari, Assam, he deals in organically dyed, handspun Muga and Eri silk as well as cotton handloom stoles and intends to include sarees in the immediate future. He has a retail store and also caters to buyers in Singapore, New Zealand, Korea and USA. Having been in this profession since 8 years, Puberun appreciates overseas buyers who value organic and natural products. "Five to six years back, the market for Eri silk had diminished but now it sees a promising revival with changes in the traditional usage," he shares and adds about how shawls are modified into stoles to become user-friendly. As more colours are sought, natural dyes are mixed to attain new shades. He is concerned that as the products are handspun and artisan dependent, volumes are difficult to achieve in a limiting turnaround time. This at times, becomes the biggest hindrance in catering to seasonal demands.



**Keisham Babita Devi from Manipur, manufacturer exporter of aqua weaves, i.e., bags and baskets made of shitalpatti, water hyacinth and other natural fibers drawn from the river side,** offered a vibrant range in handloom bags with trims & tassels through her firm-Kayasam. This entrepreneur



working with women artisans exports to Europe, Australia and USA. Explaining the process, she said, Kauna or water reed is also known as phakin Meithei, a Manipuri tribal language. The plant is cut only when

it has reached maturity. Once cut, the stems are dried and become soft and pithy and quite brittle. A bunch of cut stems of the appropriate length are then woven to shape up as mats and other home utility products. According to preferences and tastes it is given the touch of modern or traditional. "This is a time-consuming product so we are unable to make more than 500 products in a go, she informs. This was her second participation at the fair and she is happy at the learning & exposure at IHGF as it connects her to buyers for whom NER is geographically beyond their reach.

**First time participant, Mayur Nath of D B Industries, Assam are manufacturers of all kinds of bamboo products,** especially furniture. They displayed garden sets, bar



table sets and sofa sets alongside lampshades and mirrors. Their products are all hand crafted and



have lifelong guarantee, he said and added that the green colours used in their goods are bamboo prime. IHGF is a big platform he says and shared that they got good enquiries. Assam based **society for rural economic development firm Creative was represented by Dipti R Sharma**



who informed that they deal in cane and bamboo products. Their product range comprising laptop covers, tablemats to tea cozies (kettle covers), files and folders, clips and baskets, are all made by specially-abled people. They use natural dyes from turmeric, indigo, tea leaves and cow dung derivatives. All products are handloom or handmade.

**Textile designer T. Doulianmang and her firm, ANai were around with home furnishing, wall art and table decor using linen, cotton and velvet in contemporary and**



bright shades, suitable for the international market. The inspirations for their bags embellished with beads and digital prints comes from tribes in NER.

They offered a selection in artisanal apparel like kaaftans that are appreciated by European buyers.

**Priyom Hazarika of Nature Trade has been associated with the IHGF Delhi Fair since 2005 and has benefitted from the market linkages she has established here. A plethora of natural fibers from the hills were at their glory at her stall with bags, baskets and yoga mats made of cotton fabric and wool.** "We are expecting more buyers from Italy," she said and added that IHGF is a very good trading platform as it gives us exposure to explore the international market."



**Khoda Yakam and her firm, Hulen Handicraft Proprietary from Aranchal Pradesh were at IHGF Delhi Fair for the first time.** They are manufacturer exporters of jute wall hangings, furnishings and made-up in cotton mix fabrics, knitted and crocheted woolen fabrics, articles made of bamboo and cane



as well as dry flowers, all 100% handmade. Weaving is done manually so the processes are time consuming.

They also embellish using hand painting techniques. Their focus this time was on handloom waist coats in varied forms based on different tribes of northeast and the materials they use in their traditional costumes. Khoda informed, "we offer nishi traditional coat and mishmi coat which are made of cotton, natural colors and muga silk. We also deal in cotton stoles and hand-bags." In business since 2009 to continue a family tradition, they work with the local market.

**Heritage Mizorama from Aizwal was represented by**



**Charlee Mathlena** who says they've been associated with this fair since the last 6 years. "We mainly have clothing items and home furnishing, all handmade using cotton and natural colours," he said and added that their German and other European buyers have been very satisfied with their work.

**Cane & Bamboo Technology Center, Assam** was represented by Puluk K Mondol and a display of lighting, lamps, baskets, wall-clocks, flower-vases and kettle covers, artisans post-training at the Center had produced. He informed, "the mechanism we employ for our cane & bamboo products is such



that after the bamboo attains maturity it is cut, exposed to sun for sundry and then treated to into a final product. That way it is sustainable and is replenished by nature."

**Vikili Hollohon from Nagaland and her firm, Aolemba Lomgkumer were on a second participation at IHGF.** "It feels so good here, she said and informed that they deal in handmade necklaces, pottery, baskets and bags. "We have added bags and neck adornments this year and as IHGF is good platform for sellers like us, we always try to give some unique things to our customers," emphasised Vikili. They also deal in traditional clothing which is very famous in Nagaland.



**Another entrepreneur from Nagaland was Neitshopeu Thopi** with a line in big size cushions, handmade bags and stoles. "Our aim is to link with more people because we come from a rural area where we have a group of women gaining livelihood through us," she says and thanks EPCH for a platform like IHGF.



**Dimpia Saikia Barooah from Jorhat, Assam is a design consultant** and is into manufacture and export of hand bags and garments made of traditionally used North Eastern fabrics, using new styles and hints of leather to make it

more attractive. She is expecting business from Denmark, Australia and USA as she feels her products are tuned to these specialised markets.

**Indeswar Konch representing Sarbu Gram Sewa Sangha,** participated with artisanal apparel. This time they tried to use a different type of fabric by mixing three of their traditional fabrics (Muga, Eri and cotton). Their designing techniques are purely ethnic as this maintains their domestic buyer base.



With products strongly based on organic products, Craft NE from Naogam, Assam, functioning under the support of Regional Design and Technical Development Centre of the Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Guwahati, had a representation at the fair.

**Craft and Development Society, Nagaland,** was represented by Medo Mudozhoi. They deal in wooden and bamboo products like bowls, wine glasses and spoons in natural colours and shaped by hand. The most popular is Khuro (a kind of ladle) that is available in different sizes and is widely used in the domestic market. The North Eastern Handloom and Handicrafts Development Corporation, Assam, with a display of cane & bamboo furniture was represented by B C Upreti who shared that they work with over 1000 artisans and their products are exported to many Asian countries.

