

Regional flavour at IFJAS

This edition of IFJAS brought in a regional flavour with participation from artisans and crafts persons from the North East in an exclusive Theme Pavilion, those from East, West, North, Central India as well as Uttarakhand, in collective representations. These special demarcated areas had on display, products by NGOs/welfare groups as well as artisans and crafts persons. This thematic congregation had participants from clusters that wait to be tapped for export oriented manufacturing.

Priding in a rich cultural legacy, plentiful amount of natural minerals, and great literary personalities and artists, the Eastern Region of India was represented by West Bengal, Odisha, Jharkhand and Bihar with jewellery, bags and stationery products as well as handmade artistic jewellery from Telangana. Artisans from the Central Region comprising craft clusters of Uttar Pradesh brought in enticing collections in imitation jewellery, glass, wooden as well as metal jewellery; beaded purses, bags, clutches and pouches; jewellery boxes and related products. The Western Region brought in tie & dye shawls, embroidered & crocheted goods, embellished leather bags, shoes, etc.; bead craft from Gujarat; as well as imitation jewellery, thread jewellery and jewellery made from mediums like wood, terracotta and metal from Maharashtra. The Northern Region's display included jewellery, shawls, scarves & stoles, purses & bags, neck ties, caps, belts, buttons, cuff links and related region specific crafts in this category. Participants were from the desert State of Rajasthan to the hilly state of Himachal Pradesh as well as Delhi NCR. From North Eastern Region there were participants specialising in crafts like cane & bamboo jewellery, jewellery made from stone, plastic & bone beads, handloom products like wool cotton, cotton bags, shawls, Naga jewellery craft forms in necklaces, earrings, bracelets belts, etc.

Uttarakhand's Theme Presentation at IFJAS included primary producers from various craft towns and cities of this State like, Almora, Bageshwar, Chamoli, Dehradun, Haridwar and Nainital. They got along jewellery, bamboo products, copper products, wool and cotton shawls, rudraksh products, jute bags and the traditional aipan painting embellished jewellery and dresser accessories.

Eastern Region

First time participant, Parul Bajoria from Durgapur, West Bengal, brought with her a vibrant range in **dhokra jewellery combined with thread work**. She is working on the revival of the lost artform of 'Dokra' by giving it a contemporary twist. She



Parul Bajoria



Putul Das

explained, "we use the wax method of mould making and then replacing it with recycled brass. It takes 15-20 days to produce a batch of pendants or earrings." They also make stoles and scarves out of 'Baluchari' silk in the traditional method using hand operated looms. They have around 25 crafts women working with them. They have been in this business since 5 years and look forward to a broader market base.

Another woman entrepreneur was National awardee and recipient of many other awards, Putul Das Mitra from Kolkata. She was happy with this opportunity of displaying her passion

for designing and hand crafting **paddy jewellery**. She has no prior training but her discovery came in with rakhi making way back two decades ago. Today she trains women and engages them in her enterprise.

Another exhibitor was Bengal based NGO, Kadam Haat that supports the livelihood of more than 100 artisans (around 72% women). Kadam aims at creating viable employment opportunities at the village level for youth and women through training and gainful employment. This was their third participation at IFJAS. With **sitalpatti products** as their forte, their collection includes bags with leather trims. They also offer recycled plastic bags, bamboo bags, coloured sling bags and tiny pouches in natural fibers alongside a selection in sitalpatti products. They export to USA, Canada and Europe, said their representative, Mugdha Goswami.



Mugdha Goswami

With a Masters in jewellery designing, Puja Agarwal has created her forte in **nature and city inspired jewellery** with collections using semi precious stones, metal and wood. Her

statement pieces with a line of metallic birds and large dangles with small bicycle figurines stood out in her stall that displayed a colourful collection."This time we have a range of jewellery representing freedom," said Puja.



Puja Agarwal



Videesh Agarwal

All the way from Telengana was first time exhibitor Videesh Agarwal representing Hema's Creations, that specialises in making rings and necklaces using Hyderabad pearls, kundan, glass beads, faux flowers and semi-precious stones."Our speciality is **faux flower necklaces**," emphasised Videesh and added that this is a family business and the entire work for this category is done by members of his family.

M.Chanda from Tatanagar, Jharkhand, had got along costume jewellery using wood, metal, bamboo and thread."There are



M. Chanda



Maheshwar Bhamachari

four artisans working for us and it takes around 4-5 hours to make one big and detailed piece. We are working on our online store," he informed. **Dhokra containers and jewellery** made from oxidised brass, oxidised silver and silver coated jewellery in this region's display came from Raigada, Odisha based Maheshwar Bhamachari. They work with Maha Shakti Foundation under TATA and have a Jaipur based

designer working with them. They were happy to be at this show and informed of initiating presence on online platforms soon.



Ankit Kumar



Prasanta Dey



Piyali Dutta

Ankit Kumar from Patna, Bihar had a stall brought alive with products like bags, file folders, sarees, suit pieces, etc. **embellished with Mithila painting**. He got a good visitor response. Jewellery maker since 1995, Prasanta Dey, shared that his forefathers have been engaged in jewellery making."This is my first time in the fair and I sell my products in India through exhibitions and such," he said and added that platforms such as IFJAS help connect to the right buyers. Fascinating **sea shell jewellery** and other products adorned the stall of Kolkata based entrepreneur, Piyali Dutta. "I make sea shell products and this is my first time at the trade fair. It is a family trade and it dates back to 20-25 years back. All my products are made from sea shells. I want to do business online and I want to find buyers and exporters as well, for which IFJAS has been a great platform. I currently do all my business through exhibitions only, apart from a little share of products which I sell from home," she shared.

Northern Region

All the way from Kullu, Himachal Pradesh was Dolma and her enterprise, Jeewan Prakash- a two year old start-up that is into making **gloves, woollen hats and shawls** as well as taking gainful employment to farm workers (mainly women) during non crop seasons. The sourcing and manufacturing process spans across the hills and mountains. Informed Dolma, "we buy wool from 'Changpas', the nomads of Ladakh. Then the wool is woven at the Spiti valley of Himachal Pradesh by the women who work on crops during the summers and are jobless during the winters." Fourth time IFJAS participant, Sheela Rajora and her enterprise, Ranjeeta specialise in



Dolma



Sheela Rajora

making jewellery using glass beads that are mostly imported. "We have a big international market and are wholesalers with products selling in Sri Lanka, Japan, Australia and some major European countries," said Sheela and added that their business is over 25 years old and employs a total of 75 female workers—mostly jobless housewives trained and absorbed in the work force. "This show helps us a lot with our world-wide sales," concluded Sheela.

"Our company deals in jewellery like **earrings, rings, necklaces, made of glass beads, bone, resin**, etc. as well as handbags," shared Delhi based Adil Akhtar who was on a maiden participation at IFJAS. All their products are handcrafted. Adil further informed that they work with self-help groups by training artisans and employing them, batch by batch. Jaipur based wholesaler, Ajay Agarwal was at the show with a line up in **handcrafted jewellery made of brass, copper and semi-precious stones**. He counts Singapore, Dubai and Malaysia, among his regular export markets. "This is my first time at IFJAS and I love the experience here," said Disha Bansal who specialises in **stone & copper jewellery**. She has been marketing and selling her products online, in local markets and to buyers in Thailand and Singapore. Artisan Mangi Lal from Rajasthan had got along **handmade pure leather footwear and bags**. "I have been in this business for 10-15 years and my entire family is involved in this," he said and hoped to get connected with



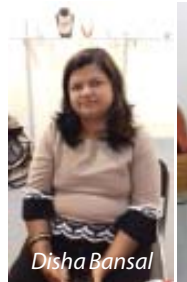
Adil Akhtar



Ajay Agarwal



Kapil Vaidya



Disha Bansal



Mangi Lal



Muhammad Sadiq

exporters and buyers through this participation. Shawls specialist Kapil Vaidya from Kullu had displayed a line in **hand woven shawls** in wool and natural fibers. He said, "IFJAS is a very nice initiative and it gives us a chance to display our artisan products as well. It also provides us exposure to the foreign markets," and informed that he has been in the craft industry for 10 years now. They have a work force of 120 women artisans. The production process includes

getting the raw material and moving it through several stages like making the yarn and hand spinning. It generally takes 1-2 days to make one shawl. He has a showroom of his products in Himachal and sells through retailers also. His export markets include Europe, Japan and USA. First time participant, Muhammad Sadiq looked visibly elated as he shared of his jewellery & accessories work in **zaricraft**. It's his family business since his grand father's time and at present has a team of 20 artisans. While he works with three regular buyers in USA, he gets a lot of demand from his local market in Delhi.

Central Region

Spiritual city, **Mathura's tulsi garlands and prayer beads** were showcased with a live demonstration by Sapan Das. He informed, "we are working in a cluster for past 5 years. We make spiritual *malas* of different kinds using tulsi wood. This time we have used Shyama tulsi. We have around 500 artisans working with us in our workshops in Jait Radhapur, Govardhan and Vrindavan," and informed that this time they have a *mala* which contains the Bhagwat Gita, 10,000 Sant's names, Radha Rani's clothes, Jagannath ji's prashad, etc. It takes around 15 days to make one *mala*. They already cater to markets in UK, Russia and Singapore, besides India.



Sapan Das



Another exhibitor, entrepreneur Nitesh Rastogi from Bareilly, UP, who deals in **embossed jewellery** and brass jewellery made with stones, chemicals, wood and plastic as



Nitesh Rastogi

raw materials shared, "we have around 40 artisans working with us. Each neck piece that we make is different from the other. No two pieces are same and that is appreciated by our buyers."

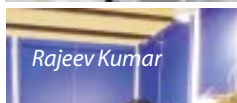


Dilshad Hussain



Huma Akhtar

Moradabad based Dilshad Hussain is a national awardee for **brass engraving**. He also specialises in **nakashi** - a



Rajeev Kumar



Ravindra Kumar

painstaking hand work like engraving and that is what he had displayed for an extended market reach. Jewellery maker Huma Akhtar from Aligarh was of the opinion that IFJAS is a great platform to showcase one's art. "I have already communicated with exporters who are interested in my handicraft of **jewellery using pearls, garnets and stones** with a metal base," she added.

For Varanasi based Ravindra Kumar Patel, "this was the first participation at IFJAS and the experience has been very good." He deals in **Rudraksh jewellery** and engages rural women artisans for crafting them. "Each product is passed through the hands of several artisans before its finished," he said and added that most of the raw material for his products comes from Indonesia. Rajeev Kumar from Noida had displayed a sustainable line in bags and jewellery. "We make fashion accessories using natural raw materials," he said and shared, "I have a team of 200 artisans and have been more than 18 years in this trade. Through this platform, I have met a few buyers but a good number of exporters. I hope this provides me further chances to expand my business."

Western Region

"This is my first time at IFJAS and I am really happy with the response," said Damayanti Kambli of Mumbai. She specialises in



Damayanti Kambli

terracotta jewellery, fabric bangles, fabric jewellery and hand-painted jewellery including Kalamkari, using Rudraksh, shell, cotton and thread as raw materials. Kutch, Gujarat based Karan Handicrafts' Karan shared that they have zaad, rabari, iahir communities of the Kutch region working with them. They specialise in traditional embroidery and needle craft adorned bags using mushroom and cotton as the raw material. "Our best sellers include **products embroidered by the zaad community**," informed Karan.



Karan

Shekha Parvati, another participant from Gujarat shared that this was her first exposure to an international trade platform like IFJAS. "I really like the experience here," she exclaimed and shared that she sells her products directly through retail as well as orders and exports to Russia and Thailand at present. She deals in **hand embroidered bags & accessories** and has a work force of 80 artisans.



Shekha Parvati

"This is the first time that I am here at the IFJAS and I am looking forward to buyers and exporters for the expansion of my trade. I hope this platform helps my business grow," said Mohammad Sohil from Bhuj, Gujarat, who deals in **bandhani fabric**. He has buyers across India and sells through wholesalers and retailers. Narayan Premji Chauhan, an artisan from the Kutch region of Gujarat shared, "we used to make knives but now we have started making jewellery out of copper and brass." Participation at this show gave him lot of exposure and learning on design development, buyer markets and co exhibitors.



Mohammad Sohil



Narayan Premji

North Eastern Region

Sanathoi Singha and Sujit Pallithara representing their Assam based enterprise-humanity+design+nature had displayed bags and stoles. Talking about their **eri silk stoles** they informed that they do silkworm rearing themselves, so right from the raw material to the finished goods, everything is done in one unit. They use natural products like indigo, turmeric and onion dyes for their products. They further inform that they have around 200 women artisans working for them. Their line of bags are made of sheetal-patti and cane. They already export to USA, Australia and South East Asian countries. The duo also shared of good enquiries from exporters as well as buyers in course of IFJAS.



Sanathoi Singha and Sujit Pallithara



Nengneithem Hengna



Kirpi Loyi and Tasser Ani

Nengneithem Hengna, representing Runway Nagaland, was a second timer at IFJAS and was keen to reach out to international buyers through this platform. This business is their family tradition that specialises in **handmade traditional beaded, natural seeds and stone jewellery & bags**. "Our products are mostly sold in India. It is popular among foreigners (tourists). They love the vibrant colours and the traditional look," she mentioned.

From Arunachal Pradesh, there was artisan duo- Kirpi Loyi and Tasser Ani, with **jewellery made from semi-precious stones** sourced from the region as well as imported from suppliers in Tibet. They cater to locals and tourists. This was their first participation at IFJAS and they hoped to get connected with overseas buyers.

A crusader of **kauna craft goods** and promotor of regional crafts from her home State, Keisham Babita Devi from Manipur offered a range in fashionable youthful appeal bags of various kinds and shapes with trims & tassels through her firm-Natural Textile Collection. This entrepreneur working primarily with women artisans, exports to Europe, Australia and USA. "EPCH gave

me the guidance to initiate this process. Then, I formed a self-help group and have been working in this craft segment since past 10-15 years," she informed and added that she has a retail store in Delhi and is in the process of launching her online store. From this IFJAS she got business from buyers from France, Spain and UK. Sikkim based Chimi Ongmu Bhutia representing her



Keisham Babita Devi

firm Lagstal brought to IFJAS, a neat display of **multi-functional elegant bamboo boxes**. An NIFT Calcutta graduate with a purpose to bring regional crafts to the forefront, Chimi uses her time designing products, training artisans and engaging them in gainful employment. Right now her raw

material base includes handloom, bamboo and other eco-friendly materials. "I will be working with corn husk very soon," she informed. Baby Sarkar from Tripura got to IFJAS, bamboo based multi-purpose boxes. She has been in

business since two decades. She says, "I have attended this fair before and I like the experience here. She uses bamboo as the base to make products like lamp shades, **mats, handbags and other home decor** items. She has a team of 50 workers and caters to buyers



Baby Sarkar

in India and South Africa. "EPCH has helped in increasing our sales and production," she emphasises. Jintu Shill from Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Guwahati said, "we have participated in IFJAS before and it is a very good platform for displaying our



Jintu Shill

handicrafts. At our institute of entrepreneurship, all the products are made under a project- Compelo. All of the money that we make by selling our products goes to the forest communities. We make water hyacinth bags, shitalpatti bags and eri silk stoles. We look forward to expanding business through this platform which will benefit forest communities in Assam."

Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand was represented at IFJAS with over 20 artisans from various craft towns and cities of this State like, Almora, Bageshwar, Chamoli, Dehradun, Haridwar and Nainital. They got along jewellery and related products made of rudraksh, bamboo, copper, etc. as well as wool and cotton shawls, jute bags and the traditional aipan painting embellished jewellery and dresser accessories.

Dulap Ram Tamta from Bageshwar was on his second participation at the show. He specialises in **copperware** like *puja* items, altar accessories and musical instruments that he sells in the local market through his shop back home. "I am here with a desire to expand my business and earn more," he said and informed that he works on customised orders as well. Among his bestsellers are small souvenirs and plates. IFJAS brought him closer to the international buying community and he has received a few enquiries too. He has already worked with a UK based buyer some time in the past. Based on recent learnings through buyer seller interactions, Dulap ram plans to add toys and decorative cum utility boxes to his product range.

Namita Tiwari from Almora brought with her, the languishing traditional folk art of aipan. She strives to keep it alive and take it to a wider customer base. Though this is a traditional art form used to adorn homes and festive essentials, enthusiasts are bringing this craft's application to contemporary products. Namita uses **aipan** to embellish laptop cases, file folders, sarees, purses, pen stands, etc. and most recently artisanal apparel and wood based products. "We are getting really good response from people and so many buyers have come with enquiries," she shared. Through her firm 'Cheli (means daughter) Aipan', she caters to the domestic market in Uttarakhand as well as some buyers in USA. Another such aipan artisan is Kirti Singh from Haldwani, Nainital. The initiative



of EPCH to showcase regional crafts is going to help lost regional art to come out of confines and reach new generations, she felt and said, "my main focus is to retain the traditional elements in a product, mostly paintings, bags and apparel, while giving it a contemporary appeal." She exports to France, besides catering to the domestic market pan India. Neetu from Dehradun working with an NGO called Khadi Udyog says that is where she learnt the craft skill of making **jute bags** that are customised for buyers like Patanjali, etc. Another artisan Lucy and her team from Haridwar had got along artificial jewellery made using **wood, plastic, pearls and thread**. They are working under an NGO called Sadhna and have learnt this art through workshops organised by the Govt. Manish Gupta from Rishikesh had got along jewellery pieces made from **rudraksh** and semi-precious stones. He shared, "it has been 8-9 years that we are into this business. We make around 30-40 neck pieces in a day." Mahesh Chandra Arya from Almora had lined up jewellery boxes, lamp shades and pen stands made from **ringal bamboo** of Uttarakhand, in his stall. He is already in business in the local market and looks forward to explore exports. Mukund and his team from Nainital were at IFJAS with **jute bags** embellished with traditional kumaoni paintings on it. "We create some new designs every season,"

they said. They also make jackets, pen stands and scarves for buyers in Germany, France and Canada. "Our products are supplied to big hotels

and our file folders are in great demand," they conclude. Sunita Devi from Chamoli had got along **hand woven textile products**. Their work comprises of making shawls, carpets and wall hangings.