

Thematic Display - Jodhpur Mega Cluster

Desert folklore and tradition inspired artisan crafts from Jodhpur



The thematic display of Jodhpur Mega Cluster at IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2018 stood pretty with a thoughtful spread-out from 25 artisans and entrepreneurs, mostly experiencing their maiden participation at the fair. In conversation with Team EPB, they expressed their hope to get connected with the international market as well as at learnings from interacting with trade visitors at the fair.



Collective Success - Jodhpur Mega Cluster Participation

Woodcraft - Gulab Singh from Jodhpur offered wooden home décor embellished with metal work. He informed that he is continuing a family trade of over 15 years and shared, "seminars and workshops by EPCH have been quite helpful as they have



taught us about marketing and how to showcase our products. Besides, the learning has helped me improve my product range." At present he has a good market base in Jodhpur and Delhi. **Raju Ram** shared that his work gets buyers because of the aesthetic appeal and home utility value. He had displayed double-sided tables, boxes and other very interesting wood work.

Ram Kishor Prajapath who was happy with a buyer enquiry that came right at the start of the fair shared of his 7 years old firm and the process of bringing out the products that involve cutting the wood, designing and painting. He said, "we also specialise in natural art where the wood is cut and designed without any painting or polishing. In fact, we have added a new piece to our creation- a natural wood coffee table." Appreciating the learnings EPCH offers through its seminars & workshops, Ram said, "they are very helpful in expanding our knowledge base."

Toga Ram specialises in furniture made of mango wood, like chairs, dressers, wall units, stools with leather seats, etc. He had also



displayed decoratives like totally hand carved figurines. He belongs to the Suthar cast of Rajasthan who have inherited a heritage of exquisite carpentry. This is their family tradition and the inception of business dates back to decades. "The dressing



of the wood is done manually and the processes of polishing and shaping are done by machines," he informed.

Leather Craft - Dealing in leather bags and shoes, **Mohanlal Gujjar** had an interesting story to reflect back when asked about his journey. "EPCH trained me and as a result of that, I trained 40 women and artisans for the work of embroidery and intricate designing on leather." The products that they created after the training, were displayed at his very picturesque stall. He informed



of his association with EPCH since 5 years now and that EPCH has helped in bringing his craft products "out of the four walls of his house". He added that his mother had taken all this work to other marketing platforms in India and even overseas through EPCH. They also offered a line in leather canvass blends for buyers who want a lower priced range with the same craft work.

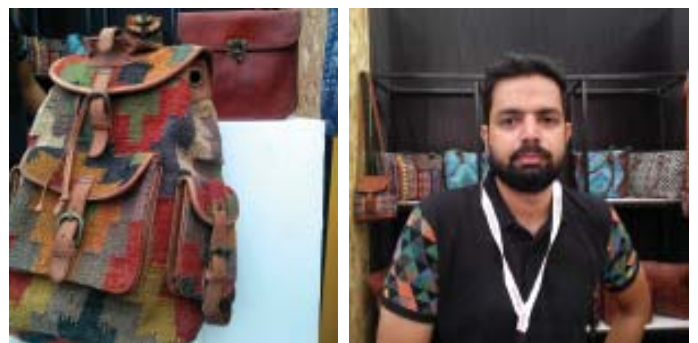
Kavita Panwar had displayed a line up of hand embroidered leather bags, juttis, other footwear and pillow covers. "I have been associated with EPCH since the past 8 years, and have participated in its fairs," she shared and added "EPCH recognised me for what I am as an artisan and that my talent can



be worked on for a wider business scope for exporting and trading. EPCH officers have been really cooperative in helping me continue my family tradition." At present, she has a workforce of 20 women. Another artisan, **Ramesh Kumar** shared that they deal in 100% leather products like bags and related accessories that are seeing a good demand in their buyer markets like Germany and USA. "EPCH's initiative to showcase our handicrafts is a chance for us to increase our reach," he added. **Waseem**



Khan was of the opinion that "EPCH's training program has been very beneficial for us and gives us the much needed motivation." He has been associated with EPCH since 6 months and it has helped promote his work. With a team of 15 people and with just over two years into this business of leather products like pencil covers, mats, bags, cushion covers, laptop bags and backpacks, Waseem already has a receptive market in Jodhpur area. He has recently introduced hand painted products and wishes to work with iron and wood.



Horn & Bone Products -

Hand carving on camel bone to bring out home décor and gifting products is another craft Rajasthan's Jodhpur region is famous for. At this collective display, it was represented in form of intricately carved decoratives, dresser items, utility boxes, etc. embellished with fine detailing by **Barkat**



Ali. Excited at the buyer traffic and magnitude of the fair, he said, "such initiative and exposure will go a long way in encouraging us towards a new recognition for our work and guide us to enter the global market." Another horn & bone entrepreneur, Javed Akhtar shared that his father **Zakir Hussain** has been associated



with EPCH since 1993 when he was given an artisan card by epch office. Work expanded as he started attending 'melas' in different regions financed totally by epch. "This has gone a long way in motivating us and bettering our skills. My father has received numerous awards and his work has been displayed in Italy too," Javed proudly shared.

Iron Craft - The craft of art metalware was represented by **Vaishali Gehlot** and her firm, Marwar International. She said, "The fair offers a great opportunity for an entrepreneur towards



market exposure and learning by seeing what other exhibitors are doing. This inspires us and gives us the courage to innovate." Her product line included iron lamps, coffee tables, study tables, etc. They use a blend of wood and iron.



Manoj Saini representing Jyoti Handicrafts informed that their work includes metal crafts as well as wood products. This was his first time participation and it was "a very good experience". Their work involves manual processes like casting of raw materials, punching and cutting. Manoj further informed

that they enjoy a good local market demand and also export to Netherlands, Malaysia, Canada and UAE.

Rugs & Durries - This product line was represented by Jamaluddin who has been in this trade since 30 years and been associated with epch since 3 years. He shared that his firm 'Dhata Durry Udhog' for home décor items is famous for its 'durry'



whose special count (20) and natural dye processing makes it have a life long ensured color and durability. He has his own showroom and gets the manufacturing done at different places. "Around 100-150 people work with us," he added and informed that at this fair they have already received good buyer response.

Hand Block Printing - Rajasthan's globally acclaimed hand



block printing at this display came from **Mohomad Arif Chhipa** who proudly shared about the people of his caste- 'Chhipa' who are carrying a textile craft inheritance forward. Besides enjoying a good demand overseas, this craft is eagerly embraced by connoisseurs in India, he said,

showing his display range of hand block printed sarees, *kurtis* and *dupattas*. Another artisan dealing in block printed textile products and a National awardee in this field, **Ranamal Khatri** was on a maiden participation at this fair. He works with a team of 60 people with the sewing work done by a team of women artisans. This is his family business which started in 1729 and has been honed across generations.

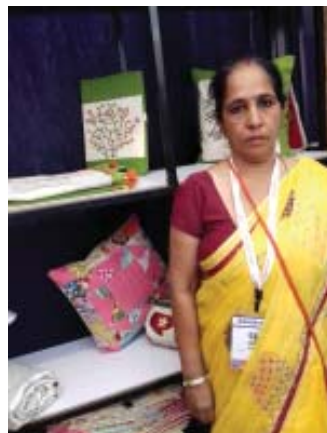


Embroidery -Woman artisan, **Saraswati Devi**, specialising in hand embroidery represented a self-help group-Mahila Mandal Barmer Agor that has 50 ladies working together. Her work of 10 years involves making scarves, cushion covers, pillow covers, bed sheets and other handicrafts. A similar product line was also offered with Kantha embroidery by **Sonu Rajawat**. She represented a trust that has several women artisans working on



Kantha products. **Sarna Akhtar** learnt about EPCH through their representative who visited his village. The training that followed was very beneficial as 40 women were trained in hand embroidery. He displayed a vibrant line in cushions, bedsheets, mats, *dupattas* and *kurtis*. They are venturing into applique work as well.

A few years ago, a skill development programme was initiated by some 150 women, which was joined, later on, by more women, resulting in Shristi Sambal Sewa Sansthan that gives employment and training to over 4000 women artisans today. **Premvati**, their Secretary was at the fair with a product display including hand embroidered jackets with *Gudri Tanka* - their special technique.



Applique -"Applique has been in our family since ages and I myself have been doing this since 15 years. Earlier this work was only carried while making items for dowry, a lot later it got into market as a commercial product," said applique artisan, **Kevla Ram**.



Also around were, artisans Mohan Lal and Chail Bihari work who under a NGO called SURE(Society to Uplift Rural Economy) that has been working and expanding its network since 25 years and gives employment to 11k rural women who do hand embroidery. Talking about their participation they said,"we have received good buyer enquiries so far and are looking forward to more."



Woman artisan, **Mamta Devi** who too was from Barmer specialises in applique craft. She had got along, cushion covers, bedsheets and other furnishing and made-ups. "We are here due to Gramin Vikas Evam Chetna Sansthan (GVCS) and its association with the Export Promotion Council," said her associate, **Ajay Chowdhury**. 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. They train artisans to enhance their skill sets and cater to a competitive market. Explaining their production process, another applique artisan, **Renuka Gangwan** said,"the making of applique work involves many processes like choosing the fabric, dipping it in colour and doing hand embroidery after cutting the fabric. We choose a very thick fabric and experiment with dark and light contrasts." They have an established local market and she was here to explore international opportunities. Samda Devi was another artisan carrying on a family tradition and specialises in sarees and made-ups with applique work. ■



Thematic Display - NER

Home Lifestyle lines from North Eastern Region

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

An exclusive showcase of crafts from India's North Eastern Region (NER) was set up at a Theme Pavilion at IHGF Delhi Fair-Autumn 2018, with a team of 23 artisans and entrepreneurs as well as representation by welfare organisations.



Manipuri Longpi stone pottery specialist **Mathew Sasa** was on his second participation at the IHGF Delhi Fair. His work is based on a traditional art form of his village-the Longpi district of Manipur. He had lined up new products conforming to new trends and international market demands. The raw materials used are weathered rock and serpentine rock, crushed to a powder and



mixed with water in a ratio of 5:3 to form a clay-like consistency. The dull-brown mixture is kneaded the entire day and flattened on a

wooden board for the initial slab work. Uniquely, Longpi pots are not crafted on a potter's wheel. Every item is shaped by hand with the help of molds and tools. Mathew's display at the fair included pots, kettles, bowls, cups, etc. that have export markets

in Australia, Belgium, USA and Japan. "I hire and train the people from our district through sessions that last for upto three months," he informed.

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. They are made primarily from water hyacinth, cane and bamboo in many sizes and to serve many purposes. Runners, baskets, mats, purses, wallets, carry bags and much more are offered with varied range at the stall of Guwahati, Assam based Nature Trade. "We have a



team of 100 artisans. They are already skilled artisans, we polish their skills further. Our export market spreads across Netherlands, UK,



Switzerland and parts of Europe. 30% of our trade is because of our participation in EPCH fairs," informed Priyom.

Second time IHGF participant, Assam based A Khila Paat which means a sheet of paper, was represented by **Kaishma Kayal**. The assortments comprised stackable and multi-utility boxes, stationery and table top lines in vibrant compositions using raw materials like waste from tea and jute, banana as well as sugarcane waste fibers. "Our products revolve around the concept of incorporating different North East weaves into value-added products reflecting our endeavour to incorporate all weaves of the North East in our work. What we do is a fusion between recyclable handmade paper products using the North East textiles. We also provide many packaging solutions," said Kaishma and added that the theme pavilion gives a very good opportunity to all entrepreneurs and provides a great exposure, helping us in developing our business. They work with a group of around 200 people who can bring out 500-1000 products daily. At their stall at the fair, their woven folders attracted many buyers, especially from Germany and USA.



leather. Their workforce includes artisans from three clusters. Kraftinn trains them and makes them aware of latest designs and trends from time to time. They have an online retail sales presence and have regular buyers.

LA from and Kuzu from Sikkim were represented at IHGF by their Director, Marketing, **Sachin**. Their display included elegant lamp shades, created using the nomadic weaving technique of 'Yakult'. As part of this line, they also make bottle jackets, lamp shades, desk top utilities and tea infusers, in similar minimalist styles. They deal in handicrafts made of wood and bamboo. Brand LA, primarily focuses on making mountain made products and also happens to be a social enterprise connecting with communities in the mountains following a 'buy-back' system with artisans. From Kuzu was a line up in cushions made of natural fibers -hand loomed as well as hand-spun. Their styling and colour scheme is exclusive from what one can easily find in the market. All of Kuzu's products are designed in Sikkim and created in collaboration with weavers and artisans from the marginal communities, whilst working in complete harmony with nature, using hundred natural yarns.



Kraftinn represented by **Parikshit Borkoyoky** specialises in kauna products like lamp shades, bags and home decor. For this sourcing season they are making iphone and ipad covers. This Assam based company's core focus is on design and manufacturing of handcrafted products using sustainable material like bamboo and water hyacinth (kauna), wood and



Arunachal Pradesh based Ajin Arum Self-help group was represented by regular IHGF exhibitor, **Amma Bagbi**. She specialises in making dry flower decoratives using a combination of cloth, bamboo, flowers and other dried plant parts, and has been involved in this craft category since five years. "I sell these articles all over India and we also train others in the production of these goods," detailed Amma who works with a team of over 50 artisans. Regular exhibitor, **Dhritiman Borah** and his family business, DB Industries, Assam, manufacture all kinds of bamboo



products, especially furniture, home and garden decor products. "Since the last time I participated in this fair, I have gained more buyers but they are usually from India. The initiative of theme pavilions to showcase regional crafts at EPCH shows is very much appreciated by all of us, we have gained more information about our work and learnt a lot through EPCH," he said. Talking about his products, he shared that everything they create is made of locally procured bamboo and he designs them all himself. This time a major attraction at his stall was a bamboo bottle that works like a flask, especially to keep water at a cool temperature.

Assam based HDN Handicrafts represented by **Nayan Moni Bharali** was on his second participation at IHGF. His stall's display included wooden decoratives and serveware made of Burmese teak as well as a line in tie & dye textile products replete with cushion covers, home furnishing, stoles, etc. all dyed using natural

colourants derived from onion skin, turmeric bark, indigo, etc. Presently working with a team of around 100 artisans, they have a buyer market base in USA.

Cane Concepts from Dimapur, Nagaland was represented at the Theme Pavilion with a display of cane and bamboo home utility products like baskets and trays. "Our designs are dynamic and every time we introduce new colour palettes," said their representative, **Ram Yadav**. They have been participating in this fair for the past decade and it has helped them connect with many buyers who are among their regular importers now. They export to USA, South Africa, Japan, Italy and UK. Their sister concern, Heirloom Naga specialises in handloom home textiles and furnishing.

Kaustav Varun Borbora from Silk Culture, Assam, said, "for a place like North East that is not covered by all trade visitors wishing to source, EPCH has provided a really good platform to showcase products. Besides it was very difficult for us to get exposure, especially in silk, far away in our region." Such participation allows us to diversify our work and encourages us to experiment more by providing market exposure. Their display included knitted woolen silk scarves, silk bags and belts blended with the softest Nappa leather. Informing of their specialisation in Muga silk, he said, they buy and process muga cocoon and treat it at their production facility. "We do knitting, weaving and reeling in house and are independent in our production. Our concept is basically 'soil to silk'. We want to be connected with



the end customer as manufacturers and take care of their requirements. In the near future, we expect to establish our

label and brand. This type of platform helps us achieve that," explained Kaustav and informed of his firm being awarded with the 'Silk Mark of India' label, in recognition of the purity of their silk.

The Women Empowerment and Rural Development, Manipur, was represented by **Meghabarna Singh**. Their work involves crafts of hand embroidery, wood carving and making decorative items using water hyacinth, all made by women artisans in Manipur. "This is the second time that we are participating in this fair and buyers are responding well to our displayed products," he informed.



Mawlai Kynton Massan from Shillong Bamboo got along a line in wood and bamboo products. He felt that the theme pavilion provided by EPCH is a good initiative towards promoting NER crafts. Mawlai's firm specialising in bamboo toothbrushes, brushes, lampshades, speakers and office organisers, caters to local markets and also exports to Europe.

The Regional Design & Technical Development Centre, NER, had got a collective participation of some artisans and entrepreneurs. **Keshav Bora** and his firm Boober from Assam were part of this contingent. "It is my second time at this fair. Last time our company was small, we had less products and I was just experimenting," he said and added that EPCH fairs have helped him learn a lot about trends, products, market demands, etc. With a product line of chairs, bags, lamps and trays made of cane, bamboo and water hyacinth, Keshav's stall generated good



enquiries at IHGF. **Vijaya Lakshmi Rai** was another such participant, representing Mizoram Mahila Sangathan, a firm that focuses on working with women artisans across villages and empowering them through craft. They make shawls and dresses with traditional embroidery patterns as well as baskets from cane and bamboo.



Brahmaputra Valley represented by **Jibon Ch. Paul** had a display of terracotta serveware and decoratives. They were initially only into decorative pieces but gradually included dining items like cups, glasses and containers. The products are made of Kummadi mitti-an organic material that benefits the user. Colours used to bring in shade variations are all organic as well. Jibon and his artisans are based in village of Khoridagossaigaon, Chapar, Dist. Dubri. The entire village is involved in the art of pottery. ■

