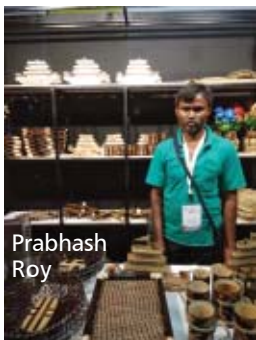


# Craft forms by skilled craftspersons from SC communities

A thematic presentation of crafts by craftspersons from SC communities that have made their mark in India's rich craft heritage, were presented at Home Expo India. There were 22 artisans from Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, West Bengal, Karnataka and New Delhi NCR. Hand painted terracotta lamps and home décor; hand printed and hand block printed textiles; home furnishing; shawls; embroidered home textiles; leather crafts; zari & zari goods; Pattachitra painting; Madhubani painting from Bihar; Lambani mirror embroidery; painted toys; cane & bamboo crafts; rugs & durries; Dhokra crafts; wooden handicrafts, wall panels, photo frames and candle holders; and wooden home utility products comprised the display.



A vibrant presentation of Madhubani paintings was in full splendour at the stall of **Pardeep Paswan from Jitwarpur, Madhubani, Bihar**. This is his family business that dates back to over 7 decades. "I was trained by my mother and joined the business at a very young age," he said and expressed his excitement of an opportunity to work with overseas buyers that participation

A display of handmade cane & bamboo crafts adorned the stall of **Prabhash Roy from Cooch Behar, West Bengal**. He started this work since over two decades and offers a product variety with beer mugs, wall hangings, flower vases and miniature decorative ships. He was very thankful to EPCH for providing him with this platform and all the other facilities. Odisha's famed art of Pattachitra painting and painted wooden toys were displayed by Mahendra Majhi from Bhubneswar, Odisha. "It's my first participation and I am really thankful to EPCH team for this opportunity," he said and informed that this art of traditional painting runs in his family and several members practice this even today. Mahendra added that he was trained by Guruji Bhawat Maharaj in 1978. He primarily works for Utkalika (Odisha government's craft emporium) and supplies his paintings to them. His specialisation is painting with the use of natural colours on a tussar silk or palm leaf base. "The tools used for these paintings are also made by us," he further informed and added that for art on palm leaves, a drawing technique is involved, using needles. The impression left by the needle helps the art work to emerge on the palm leaves base.

at EPCH shows can get him. Explaining about his craft he said, the emphasis is on 100% natural colours made from flowers and leaves or drawn from natural resources. All work is done on handmade paper. Naturally available gondh(adhesive) from Babool trees are used to give a finishing touch to the paintings and lend them a glossy look.

"This is not my first time in an EPCH fair. I have attended this fair a years back and because response was good, I have come back with higher hopes," said **Jyoti from New Delhi**. She brought in embroidery, knitting and crochet crafts. She feels such an initiative of collective participation is beneficial for small entrepreneurs. "Out of 25 years of my artisan life, I have





worked for others for years and have now started my own enterprise. EPCH is helping me grow." Her product line includes bags, table runners, cushion covers, other home furnishing and embroidered design patches. She has a good buyer base in her local market and also caters to exporters.

Another woman entrepreneur and second time participant, **Harsha Kohli from New Delhi** had got along papier mache crafts for home decor. She has been in this business since three years and feels this participation at an EPCH April show is helping her with an enriching experience & learning. She shared, "I was only 14 years old when I was trained in this craft by my mother and then I thought of making some products and participated in a trade fair where I got a very good response. Then I decided to take it further so, I established my NGO called Hunnar Foundation where I train people in this art and today I have a team of 50 people and my manufacturing unit in Delhi itself.

For **Bhawana Ch Janbandhu from Nagpur, Maharashtra**, this was a maiden participation at an EPCH show. She specialises in hand painted textiles. Sharing her journey she said, "I did my graduation in textile designing and then my MBA. In 2011, I decided to start my own business. I have established my NGO called Dhuandeep Shikshan Prasarak Mandal few years back where I train rural women living near jungles in the Nagpur area. I provide them with work so that they don't go deep into the jungle in search of firewood, etc. and get attacked by wild animals. My designs are also inspired by nature so that the women working with me feel connected to their land. Bhawana's product profile includes bed sheets, dupattas, borders that can be used in various applications.

The desert state of Rajasthan is known for block printed textiles, applique work, woodcrafts as well as leather crafts among many other age-old craft traditions. Some artisans from this state displayed their crafts at this collective display. A well spread display of applique craft was offered by **Kevla Ram from Rajasthan's Barmer region**. "The craft has been in our family, the Meghwar

community, since ages and I myself have been doing this since over 15 years. Earlier this work was only carried while making items for dowry, a lot later it got into market as a commercial product," he said and added that he and his working group of 12,000 women artisans spread across three production units in villages in Barmer area, carry out this hand crafting work that is manifested in home textiles and artisanal apparel. This was his second participation at the show and he got many enquiries. Besides enjoying a good demand overseas, this craft is eagerly embraced by connoisseurs in India, he added.

Another participant, **Bajranglal from the same region** had got along block printed fabric bags, purses and wallets. Very young for an exposure to the international market but radiating confidence because of an established domestic market, Bajranglal shared about his team of 6000 women artisans and a well organised manufacturing unit in Barmer.

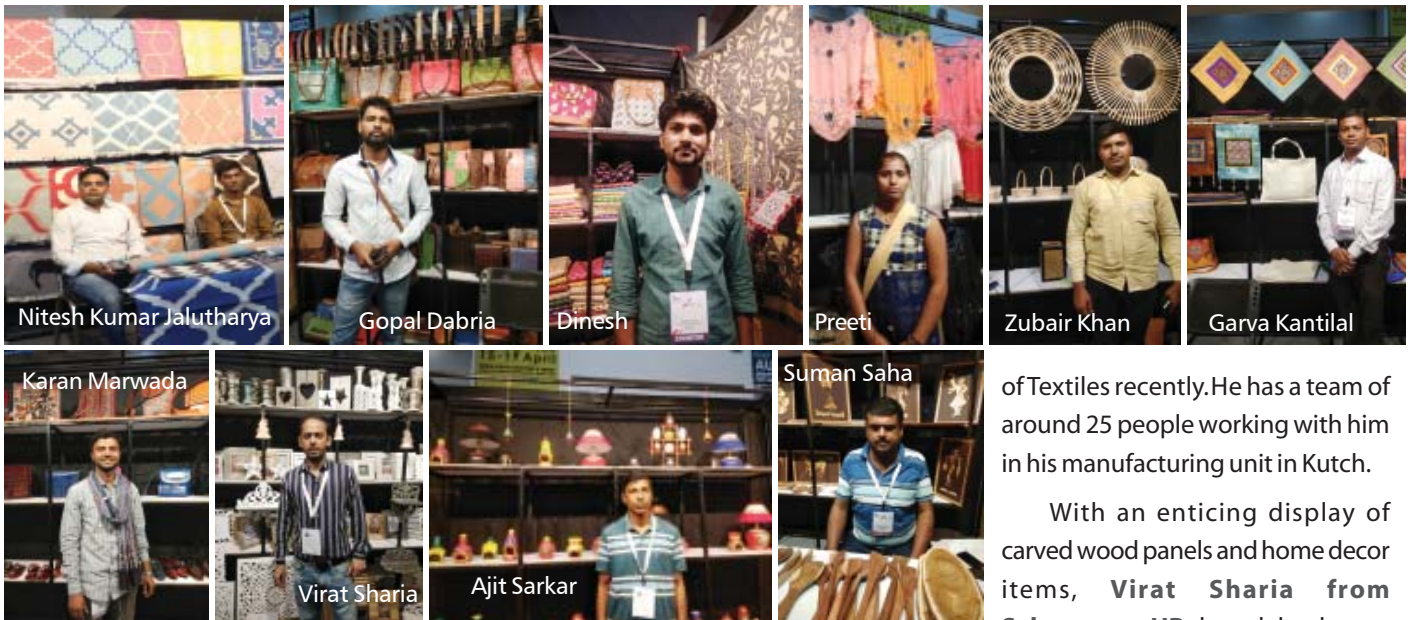
100% handmade rugs in geometric patterns and varied palettes in cotton and wool came from **Nitesh Kumar Jalutharya from Jaipur**. They have their weaving and manufacturing unit in Jaipur with a team of 50 artisans they have trained in-house. At present they cater to European and Middle East buyers besides selling in the domestic market. "We are planning to launch our website and online sales avenue very soon," said Nitesh. Through this participation at Home Expo, they have got enquiries from Argentina based buyers as well as "local biggies," informed Nitesh.

Leather craft was offered by **Gopal Dabria from Jaipur** for whom manufacture & trade in this product category is part of a family run business with (30 workers) that got the exposure of international market through trade platforms in 2011. "I participated in the different training programs and learned how to work with leather and different techniques to make the products. I am here for the first time and want to thank EPCH for this opportunity," said Gopal and informed of good domestic enquiries he got at the fair. He further added that they make all

kinds of leather products using genuine leather, mostly chrome and crazy horse leather."No two products are same in our store. We do free customisation according to the buyer's taste. While making our products we don't harm any animal, we use the leather of animals that die naturally. Our products are sustainable and long lasting," Gopal informed.

**Dinesh from Chanderi, Madhya Pradesh** had got along Chanderi city's famed chanderi fabrics for varied uses. Sharing his journey he said, "my dad and brother started this business 35 years ago and I joined it 11 years ago. We have our manufacturing unit in Chanderi and cater to customers through online sales platforms."

because some buyers also ask us for products for \$1." The material they use are dupion silk, mushroom cloth and resham anchor threads. Arvind has a team of around 75 artisans, all of whom have been trained by Arvind himself. **Karan Marwada, also from Kutch**, had got along leather items. He said, "I have participated here for the second time. Last time I got some business and this time I already got some enquiries on day one of the fair. We do genuine leather products like shoes, slippers, bags and folders, and in this process we don't harm any animal. We use goat, sheep and buffalo leather to make our products." Karan already caters to a domestic as well as an export market. He has also received a Certificate of Excellence from the Ministry



**Preeti from zari craft city of Uttar Pradesh - Bareilly**, had a display of zari craft on fabric-a skill she learnt from her mother and carries on today with a workforce of 30 people. "We mostly use net and silk fabric for our work. We supply to some big fashion houses," said Preeti and added that Home Expo participation got her some good business enquiries from overseas buyers. Zubair Khan, also from this Bareilly, had got along cane and bamboo products for home decor. They specialise in frames and borders besides table top decor and cater to some fashion websites at present. "We have our manufacturing unit in Bareilly that has 40-50 workers to handle all order sizes," he said.

Among participants from Kutch, Gujarat was **Garva Kantilal Arvind** who has "participated in the fair many times before this and got some big export orders from Spain and Canada through this platform". This time, his display focused on "simple embroidered products and also heavy embroidered products

of Textiles recently. He has a team of around 25 people working with him in his manufacturing unit in Kutch.

With an enticing display of carved wood panels and home decor items, **Virat Sharia from Saharanpur, UP** shared that he got

an order from an Argentinian buyer for panels and photo frames. His is a family business and they have been working for big exporters. This order will be a direct connect to the international market.

**Ajit Sarkar from Noida** shared that his and his wife's passion for crafts and painting made them start their enterprise. They mainly do home decorations and utility products made from terracotta and wood. They source their terracotta from Azamgarh in UP and Kolkata. At present they are working with the domestic market. Through participation in this fair, they got some overseas enquiries as well.

**Suman Saha from Kolkata**, had got along wood exclusive home products like, chopping boards, trays and salt and pepper cases. This business was initiated in 2013 with Suman's family members. They specialise in akashvani wood products and this participation got them good enquiries from buyers. ■