

The Warp eft



वस्त्र मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
TEXTILES

A TRIBAL YULETIDE, WOVEN

THE RAREST OF THE RARE
EAST, AS IT IS

EDITION 2

December
2025

Office of The Development
Commissioner for Handlooms

© Published in December 2025

Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms)

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EDITORIAL NOTE FROM THE WARP & WEFT TEAM

When Warp & Weft was first envisaged, the intention was neither novelty for its own sake nor nostalgia as an end in itself. It was, rather, an attempt to rethink how India speaks about its handlooms, moving beyond description toward understanding, and beyond preservation toward relevance. The response to the inaugural edition confirmed that this approach resonated with readers.

The second edition of Warp & Weft arrives at a moment that naturally invites reflection. The winter months slow the pace of making, allowing craft to be approached with care, patience, and deliberation. The handlooms embodying these qualities are not hurried objects, but thoughtful ones, formed through accumulated knowledge and sustained practice.

These pages ask something simple, and increasingly rare: attention to the intelligence of the handmade; to the people whose lives and labour give it form; and to the cultural systems within which it acquires meaning. As Warp & Weft travels beyond its point of origin, it seeks not to settle an argument or close a chapter, but to keep a conversation alive- one that recognises handloom as a thinking practice.





Warp & Weft

"Where tradition meets modern luxury"

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HERITAGE & LEGACY

VASTRA KALA: BHARAT KI VIRASAT

Vastra Kala: Bharat ki Virasat

Heritage and Legacy



Vastra implies textiles, whereas *Kala* is the art. Two words meet at one point, ***Vastra Kala: Bharat ki Virasat***, the way North, South, East, West converge into one nation. It stands for something larger than technique. It is rather an expression of aatmanirbhar Bharat shaped by hands from different states, cultures, traditions,... and different walks of lives. A force through which artisans and weavers become who they choose to be, grounded in the fibre they spin, the materials they honour, the colours they trust, the motifs they inherit, and the stories they refuse to let fade.

The luminous brocades of Varanasi, the narrative splendour of Baluchari, the ethereal finesse of Jamdani, and the regal geometry of Paithani are all in conversation with the wider world of Indian making: the meditative precision of Swamimalai bronze casting, the architectural sculpting of Mahabalipuram stone carving, etc.

Handloom gives India its lexicon of pattern.
Handicraft gives it its grammar of form.

This, then, is Vastra Kala.



TOWARDS NORTH

Where Light Learns to Rest on Silk

In the northern plains, light is never static. It travels through silk, mirrors itself in gold and silver zari that form vines, paisleys, and celestial gardens, and disappears into marble. Varanasi's weavers do not produce textiles; they choreograph reflection. The motif becomes a meditation on transience, the shimmer that vanishes as soon as it appears. Kashmir's papier-mâché, Delhi's meenakari, or Rajasthan's brasswork, all enact the same paradox: how to make permanence out of fragility. The North teaches that ornament is not excess; it is philosophy itself in pattern.



TOWARDS SOUTH

Where Devotion Becomes Design

In the South, making is a form of prayer...a conversation between proportion and devotion. The Kancheepuram saree repeats what Dravidian temples already knew that the divine resides in order. The weft follows the same discipline as the sculptor's chisel, both guided by rhythm and symmetry. Bronze casting in Mahabalipuram reminds us that material here breathes, waits, and listens. Every object, however small, holds within it the logic of ritual, the idea that beauty is not made, but revealed through surrender.



TOWARDS EAST

Where Stories Weave Themselves

The East does not rush. It moves at the pace of thought. Its crafts are not about precision but about remembrance. Baluchari and Jamdani do not decorate; they narrate. Myth, gossip, seasons, rituals find thread as their archive. Odisha's silver filigree, Bengal's kantha, Assam's muga are languages of repair, not representation. Every stitch and spiral carries a mnemonic intelligence: what we have lost, we reimagine; what we reimagine, we remember. Here, craft is one-of-a-kind resistance against forgetting.

TOWARDS WEST

Where Colour Speaks First

In the arid expanse of the West, colour becomes survival. Mud, mirror, and metal catches the desert sun and gives it form. Lippan kaam in Kutch, Pichwai painting in Nathdwara, and Paithani's woven peacocks all translate light into resilience. The West understands excess as equilibrium. Brightness here is endurance. Through repetition, the maker builds rhythm; through rhythm, he/she builds meaning, the will to create joy out of dust and heat.





Pashmina Shawl
Ladakh



Kani Shawl
Jammu & Kashmir



Kullu Shawl
Himachal Pradesh



Phulkari
Punjab



Tweed Weave
Uttarakhand



Panja Dhurries
Haryana



Kota Doria
Rajasthan



Banaras Brocade
Uttar Pradesh



Bhagalpur Silk
Bihar



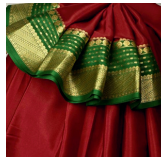
Ashavali Sari
Gujarat



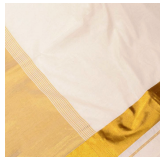
Paithani Sari
Maharashtra



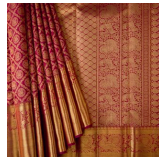
Kunbi Sari
Goa



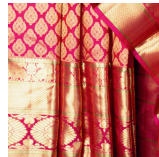
Mysore Silk Sari
Karnataka



Kasavu Sari
Kerala



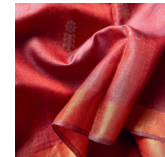
Kanchipuram Sari
Tamil Nadu



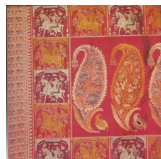
Dharmavaram Sari
Andhra Pradesh



Chanderi Sari
Madhya Pradesh



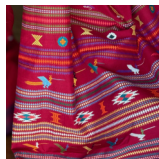
Kosa Silk Sari
Chattisgarh



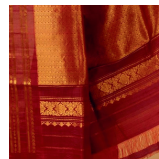
Baluchari Sari
West Bengal



Tussar Silk Sari
Jharkhand



Bomkai Sari
Odisha



Gadwal Sari
Telangana



Naga Shawl
Nagaland



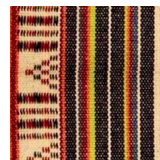
Aptani
Arunachal Pradesh



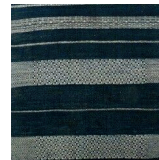
Muga Silk
Assam



Ryndia Shawl
Meghalaya



Lepcha Weave
Sikkim



Hmaram
Mizoram



Moirang Phee
Manipur

CRAFTS MAP OF INDIA

A Geography of Hands

The Crafts Map of India is not a map of borders. It is a map of hands. Hands that spin, carve, cast, weave, and paint, keeping alive what no machine can imitate, what no algorithm can recall.

Each region is an essay in material thought, a dialogue between the maker and the elements. The North teaches reflection, the South precision, the East memory, and the West radiance.

Look closely, and you will see that texture is where geography begins. Every motif carries a culture of Swadeshi; every pattern, a philosophy. From silk to stone, from loom to forge, India's crafts move through time like rivers - never still, never the same, carving paths of identity and inheritance across centuries.

Each dot on this map is a tradition sustained by weavers and artisans from every corner of the country. This map asks us to look at what we have inherited that intricate weave of soil, season, and skill that binds together the very idea of India.



TODAY IN THE HANDLOOMSCAPE

BHUBANESWAR HOSTED THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON HANDLOOMS & HANDICRAFTS 2025

National Conference on Handlooms & Handicrafts 2025

Today in the Handloomscape

The heartbeat of India's heritage resonated through Bhubaneswar as the National Conference on Handlooms & Handicrafts 2025 concluded its two-day deliberations. Organised by the Offices of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms) and Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles, the Conference brought together senior government officials, State representatives, weavers' institutions, and policy experts. Set against the backdrop of Odisha's rich textile legacy, the Conference balanced reflection with foresight, celebrating living traditions while designing a future-ready ecosystem for weavers and artisans.



Day 1: Mapping India's Craft Diversity

The first day focused on what exists, and what's already working. The Conference opened with an in-depth review of the country's handmade economy and the evolving needs of its stakeholders. Six thematic sessions allowed States and UTs to present models that have demonstrated innovation, resilience, and community impact

📈 Clusters as Growth Engines

Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka demonstrated how integrated cluster development can enhance productivity, incomes, and market exposure for rural artisans.

Inaugurating the event, Shri Manoj Ahuja, Chief Secretary, Government of Odisha, underscored the cultural power of crafts in nation-building. Observing the occasion of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, he also administered the Rashtriya Ekta Pledge, reinforcing the conference's message of unity through heritage.

A curated **Theme Pavilion at Taj Vivanta** offered delegates an immersive experience into Odisha's handloom and handicraft excellence, from timeless textile narratives to contemporary craft expressions, reflecting the state's role as a custodian of heritage.



🌐 Connecting Markets, Building Brands

Success stories such as Assam's Swanirbhar Naari, Uttar Pradesh's direct market-linkage strategies, and Rajasthan's export initiatives highlighted the sector's growing entrepreneurial momentum.

🏡 Infrastructure for Heritage

Madhya Pradesh's Craft Village, Odisha's museum-led heritage conservation, and Meghalaya's Integrated Textile Parks showcased infrastructure as a catalyst for both preservation and economic opportunity.

National Conference on Handlooms & Handicrafts 2025

Today in the Handloomscape



Welfare and Social Security

Success stories such as Assam's Swanirbhar Naari, Uttar Pradesh's direct market-linkage strategies, and Rajasthan's export initiatives highlighted the sector's growing entrepreneurial momentum.



Skills for Tomorrow

Himachal Pradesh and IIHT Salem spotlighted skilling models aligned with contemporary markets, bridging traditional knowledge with modern craft pedagogy.



Strengthening Raw Material Supply Chains

Discussions highlighted the importance of transparency and traceability in the yarn ecosystem. NHDC's collaboration with India Post, already achieving 90% adoption in Coimbatore, was presented as a scalable model for improving logistics, quality assurance, and access to sustainable fibres.

Day 2: Craft Ecosystem of Vikshit Bharat 2047



If Day 1 was about learning from the present, Day 2 was about daring to imagine the future. Chaired by Smt. Neelam Shami Rao, Secretary (Textiles), Government of India, the discussions shifted decisively towards long-term transformation. Calling for an equilibrium between tradition and technology, the Secretary emphasised:

- Adoption of ergonomic tools to **reduce drudgery.**
- The creation of a national taxonomy of designs and motifs, especially bringing **North-Eastern craft vocabularies into the limelight.**
- A proactive role for NIFT and IIHT in forecasting trends ahead of global markets.
- Stronger presence on digital platforms like IndiaHandmade for branding, exports, and **market outreach.**
- **Seamless inter-State movement** of raw material to reduce bottlenecks.

"The Government of India's foremost responsibility is capacity building," she said, urging States to convert best practices into actionable frameworks. She also announced that such national conferences will be held every six months to ensure continuous dialogue, cross-learning, and progress tracking.

National Conference on Handlooms & Handicrafts 2025

Today in the Handloomscape

Towards a Mission-Mode Future



The Conference unveiled two major blueprints for the sector: National Traditional Textile Mission (2026–31) presented by Dr. M. Beena, Development Commissioner (Handlooms), the mission envisions:

- **Cooperative** federalism
- Robust skilling and **design upgradation**
- **Women-led** development
- **Cluster-based** infrastructure
- **Financial inclusion** for weavers
- Innovation hubs linked to **GI crafts**
- Governance Reforms in Handicrafts



Ms. Amrit Raj, Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), proposed a three-tier National–State–District model with stronger digital governance, PMU-led monitoring, and outcome-based planning.

Additional initiatives highlighted included GI expansion, eco-textile promotion, documentation of traditional designs, model craft villages, and State-led branding through products such as Nabakoti and Madhuri.

Voicing Odisha's perspective, Smt. Anu Garg underlined the ecological and cultural value of crafts, showcasing Kotpad and Dongria shawls as icons of sustainable heritage. She advocated for artisan name-tagging, youth-led market research, and new Sustainability Cells in the State's craft ecosystem.

An open-house session captured policy inputs from multiple States, followed by field visits to Kala Bhoomi, Boyanika, and Utkalika, offering delegates a first-hand view of Odisha's vibrant craft economy.

The Conference concluded with a vote of thanks by Smt. Swayamprava Pani, Additional Development Commissioner (Handlooms).

Towards Vikshit 2047, a Future That Remembers Its Roots

As the curtains came down, one message stood clear that India's handmade sector is a premium economic force of the future. With coordinated governance, innovation-led growth, and sustained investment in artisans and weavers, the sector is destined to become a defining pillar of Viksit Bharat 2047. By knitting together tradition, technology, and policy, the National Conference on Handlooms & Handicrafts 2025 has laid the foundation for a resilient, inclusive, and future-ready craft epicentre where every hand that creates is valued, empowered, and globally celebrated.



A woman wearing a black headscarf and a striped shirt is seated, operating a traditional wooden loom. The loom is strung with threads, and a large spool of white thread is visible. The background is a simple, textured wall. In the foreground, there is a large, round, woven basket filled with light-colored, fibrous material, possibly raw cotton or wool. To the right, there is a white plastic basket and a blue and white container labeled 'PAINT'.

W&W VOICES

ODISHA, WOVEN FORWARD

EAST AS IT IS



There are designers who sketch with pencils, and then there are those who sketch with memory. Reemly Mohanty belongs emphatically to the latter. Her vocabulary was never confined to fashion schools or trend reports; it was learnt early, at home, from folded sarees that smelled of starch and sanctity, from walls alive with Pipli chandua and Pattachitra, and from the everyday poetry of Odisha's handloom life. Raised in a landscape where textiles are not commodities but confidantes, her design language, therefore, is fluent in inheritance and invention alike.

Known for her craft-forward practice and an unerring instinct for marrying traditional weaves with contemporary silhouettes, she approaches every handloom as an act of translation. Whether it is conjuring a stage-ready Ikat ensemble for Shreya Ghoshal in a span of 26 hours, or curating Sutranjali: Threads of Timeless Grace for Bhubaneswar Times Fashion Week 2025, Reemly's work bears the unmistakable imprint of intention. There is emotion in her choices, intelligence in her restraint, and a resolute pride in carrying Odisha's handloom legacy to the country's most visible platforms.

Reemly does not seek to “revive” tradition as though it were fading, she insists on its continuity. Her work resists spectacle for spectacle's sake, choosing instead a slower, more thoughtful elegance that allows craft to speak for itself.

In this exclusive conversation with The Warp and Weft, she reflects on Sutranjali, her design philosophy, and the layered, luminous ways in which she continues to interpret Odisha's handlooms... less as heirlooms of the past, and more as living texts still being written.



Her Early Life

You grew up in Odisha: a place where textiles are almost a living language. What is your earliest memory of cloth, colour, or craft that still influences you today?

My earliest memory goes back to watching my grandmother carefully unfold her treasured Odia sarees. I still remember the smell of starch, the warmth of the cotton and the way colours felt like they carried stories rather than pigments. Maybe those moments taught me that textiles in Odisha are not objects, they are living emotions and I think that has shaped every instinct I have as a designer.



Before you became a designer, what was the moment when you first realized that your life would somehow be connected to handlooms?

It wasn't a dramatic moment, it was more like a slow settling of truth. Every time I visited weaving villages or saw a shuttle move, I felt a sense of belonging I never felt elsewhere. Even before I formally stepped into design, I knew that the rhythm of the loom somehow mirrored my own inner rhythm. That is when I knew handlooms would be my lifelong companion.



Many creatives have a defining childhood experience that becomes their compass. Was there an incident, a person, or a saree that shaped your sense of identity?

Some of my most precious childhood memories are from the days I spent at my maternal grandmother's home. She would stitch little dresses for me and knit sweaters, socks and tiny caps with a kind of love-filled patience I understood only much later. She left us too early, and I still miss her deeply, but her hands, constantly creating something beautiful for me, shaped my earliest sense of craft.

Our home itself felt like a museum of **Odisha's soul, with a grand Nabagunjara Pattachitra at the entrance, Pipli chandua on the walls, conch-shell-hanging partitions**, and my grandmother draping stunning ikat sarees every single day before going to the temple. Growing up surrounded by that art, that devotion and that visual poetry quietly built the designer in me long before I knew the word "design."

About the Collection & Creative Direction

Sutranjali balances familiarity with modernity. At what moment in your process did the collection first "click" for you- when you felt the old and the new were speaking the same language?

Sutranjali clicked for me the moment I saw the first sample where the old-world irregularity met contemporary softness. It felt like two eras greeting each other with familiarity. That was when I knew the collection had found its language.

Many designers begin with silhouettes; others begin with weaves. For Sutranjali, what came first? The fabric story or the visual story?

For Sutranjali, the fabric came first. The yarns, the texture, the weight of the weave. They dictated the silhouettes. I let the textiles speak before I designed their form. The visual story evolved from that conversation.



You worked with clusters like Barpali, Bargarh, and Sonapur for different textiles. How do conversations with weavers influence your design decisions beyond just choosing handloom fabrics?

My conversations with weavers go far beyond choosing fabrics. Their lived realities, their memories of how certain motifs were once woven, their comfort levels with new experiments, all of that shapes my decisions. Many times, a design has changed because a weaver narrated a story that made me see a motif differently.

On Technical Innovation & Textiles



The stripe Ikat with Kotpad-inspired lifting patterns is extremely rare. What was the turning point that made you confident this hybrid technique would work?

The turning point came when I saw the first imperfect trial. Even though it wasn't perfect, it had soul. I realised the technique had potential not because it was flawless but because it had character.



You revived bapta with tissue yarn for sheen: a big shift from how it existed 40 years ago. How do you decide how far to push a heritage weave without losing its cultural truth?

Pushing heritage is always delicate. My rule is simple: If the essence is intact, innovation is respect, not disruption. When I introduced tissue yarn into bapta, I constantly checked whether the weave still “felt” like bapta. If the warmth remained, I knew I wasn't crossing the line.

The organza pieces hand-painted with Pattachitra are highly delicate. Did the material ever resist the idea? What trial-and-error moments shaped the final outcome?

Oh yes, many times. Organza has a mind of its own, it puckers, it moves, it breathes differently. We had to rework strokes, paints, pressure, drying techniques... It was a long dialogue between fabric and brush. But those trials shaped the elegance of the final pieces.

What technical detail in Sutranchali do you think most people will overlook, but is deeply important to you?

The play of weight. Every fabric, every panel, every trim was balanced so the drape feels effortless on the body. This invisible engineering is often overlooked, but for me, it's the heart of Sutranchali.

On Aesthetic Philosophy

Is there a misconception about Odisha's handloom ecosystem you wish more people understood?

I never dilute tradition, I reinterpret it. I see myself as a bridge. I soften palettes, adjust scales and restructure silhouettes, but I keep the emotional and cultural integrity untouched. It's a constant negotiation between honouring the past and embracing the present.



Is there a misconception about Odisha's handloom ecosystem you wish more people understood?

Many people still assume Odia textiles are limited to Sambalpur or Ikat. They don't realise the depth, diversity and technical brilliance of clusters like Sonapur, Barpali, Gopalpur, Nuapatna and Kotpad. I feel Odisha isn't a Single Weave, it's a full vocabulary, that's my say over the years of experience.



On Process & Personal Narrative

Which piece in the collection carries the most personal meaning for you and why?

The piece that holds the deepest meaning for me is the Sonapur masterpiece, the one where we brought together four intricate techniques and revived the traditional ikat weave with a delicate blend of tissue. This textile is not just a creation, it's a culmination of years of longing, searching and believing that a forgotten language of weaving could breathe again.

Working on it felt like reconnecting with a part of my own artistic identity, like meeting an old friend who still remembers you.

Every time I look at it, I'm reminded of why I started this journey in the first place to honour what was, while giving it a new heartbeat.

What was the hardest "no" you had to say during the making of Sutranjali? A silhouette, a colour, a motif that you loved but had to let go

I had to let go of a beautiful earthy ochre colourway that I personally loved. It didn't sit well with the rest of the collection's softness and saying no to something you love is heartbreaking but necessary.



Moving Ahead

Handlooms move slowly; fashion moves fast. Where do you see these two timelines meeting in your future work?

They meet in thoughtful design. Handlooms can't speed up but fashion can slow down to appreciate craft. My future work will continue to honour this middle ground, where time becomes a collaborator, not a pressure.

If Odisha's textile vocabulary were to add a "new word" in the next decade, what kind of weave or technique do you imagine that could be?

If Odisha's textile vocabulary were to gain a new "word," I imagine it emerging from the kind of explorations we are already nurturing, a weave that harmonises multiple heritages into one unified textile. **Something that blends revived bapta techniques, subtle tissue sheen, Kotpad-inspired lifting patterns and the softness of contemporary silhouettes into a single fabric language.**

A textile where ikat, texture, surface painting, and fine-count cotton coexist, not as separate crafts, but as one seamless narrative. This is the direction my work keeps pulling me toward, a weave that feels rooted in Odisha's past, yet unmistakably designed for today. A fabric that holds the depth of our clusters (Sonapur, Barpali, Nuapatna, Khurda, Jagatsinghpur, Kotpad) while offering the modern fluidity and lightness that contemporary India is asking for. A weave that doesn't just preserve tradition, but expands it.

Listening to her speak, one realises that collections or calendars do not drive her design philosophy. Her work exists at the intersection of memory and momentum, where handlooms are allowed to remain slow, expressive, and emotionally complete, even as they step into contemporary spaces. Through every conscious "no," Reemly continues to expand the language of Odia handlooms.



At 5:40 a.m., before shops open and phones begin to ring, a woman in Ukhrul district, Manipur tightens the warp threads on her loom. One strand snaps. She pauses, ties it back with practised impatience, and resumes. There is no backup thread. There never is. This is not romantic labour. It is skilled, repetitive, and unforgiving. Miss a count, and the entire pattern collapses. For years, this work has existed in a strange limbo: too traditional to be scaled, too slow to compete, too local to travel without losing its meaning. Younger weavers leave. Older ones adjust their expectations. The loom survives, not because it refuses to stop. EAST begins here as a decision to stay inside this tension.

What complicates things is proximity. You cannot talk about craft revival when you can see how easily it unravels. You cannot design from Ukhrul without encountering its limitations daily in uneven yarn, weather-dictated schedules, and people who will not bend production to meet market calendars. In cities, inefficiency is a flaw. Here, it is a condition. EAST does not attempt to clean this up for global consumption. It does not flatten handwork into neutral palettes or universal silhouettes. Mayhaps, it allows irregularity to remain visible, sometimes awkwardly so. Each decision carries weight because there is nowhere to hide failure. Their collections do not explain themselves or are not from borrowed inspiration; they unapologetically belong from the word go. In this conversation, the founder of EAST speaks about building from Ukhrul, protecting cultural sanctity, navigating visibility, and imagining a tomorrow where craft stands proudly as a base.

Origin & Identity

You left Delhi's fashion circuit and returned to Ukhrul to build EAST from the ground up. Was that a creative choice, an emotional pull, or a rebellion against the mainstream fashion system?

It was a bit of all three. The decision came from a place of purpose — to revive our traditional craft, make it relevant to modern shoppers, and create meaningful job opportunities back home. It wasn't just about fashion; it was about coming full circle to where my story began.



When you stitch or design a garment, what part of Tangkhul identity do you consciously try to protect, and what part are you comfortable reinventing and rediscovering?

What strikes me most about our craft is its nearly zero-wastage design approach. That's something sacred, and I hold on to it. But I also try to reinterpret our textiles with more functionality and fluidity, keeping the spirit intact while letting the form evolve.

Textiles, Reinterpretation & Responsibility

Many designers use indigenous textiles as “inspiration,” but you build from lived culture. What responsibilities come with translating community memory into couture?

To earn respect for our culture, we must first respect it ourselves. My intent has always been to value our craft wholeheartedly — to protect it from tokenism while presenting it with dignity. Once we do that, the world naturally begins to appreciate its depth and soul.

What is one motif or weave you refuse to commercialise — and why?

I never use all of our traditional motifs. They are sacred, layered with meanings that trace back to our ancestors — each created for a purpose and moment in time. I don’t have the liberty to use them casually. Instead, I explore the weaving language itself, creating new motifs that speak to today’s narrative while rooted in heritage.

Your reinterpretation of the Kashan sparked dialogue. How do you balance community pride on one side and creative freedom on the other?

Often people see our weavers only within traditional frameworks. My vision is to expand that — to help them see their skills through a contemporary lens. That’s where my creative freedom begins. It allows heritage to breathe in new ways while keeping its emotional truth alive.

Looking at your collections such as “Kashongwon /25,” “Dear Spring /24,” “Mekhala Journey /23,” and “Shim /23” — do you see them as separate chapters of a single story?

Every collection marks a moment in my journey. Shim was a tribute to my hometown — a personal new beginning.

Mekhala Journey was our first show outside Manipur, in Delhi, symbolising stepping into a wider world. **Dear Spring came after two hard years of conflict and represented hope and healing.** Kashongwon drew inspiration from the Kashong mountain bloom — a tribute to our weavers and land.

Our latest, **Patrons**, showcased in South Korea under Celebrating India, honors the clients who believed in us from the start. Each collection is both a memory and milestone — chapters of my growth and our community’s story.



Craft Process & Challenges

Take us inside your studio in Ukhrul. What does a typical day look like between weavers, patterns, and the mountain quiet?

We began with just two weavers; now there are ten remarkable women working alongside me. Because of space constraints, our studio and workshop operate separately, though I hope to merge them soon. Mornings begin at the workshop — checking on weaves, planning the day, talking with the team — before I move to the studio. It’s a close-knit environment where conversation comes first, work second. That intimacy is what keeps the energy alive.



What’s the most difficult challenge of working from a remote hill district — and how do you turn that into creativity?

Operating in a remote area isn’t easy — from courier hurdles to limited raw materials, everything takes effort. But these obstacles also make us innovate. We adapt to what’s available and reimagine how to use it. That process, though slow, gives our work its uniqueness and texture.

Celeb Moments & Cultural Visibility

When Sonam Kapoor wore EAST, what did that moment mean beyond fashion?

We've never sought validation, but that moment was bigger than our brand — it was a moment for the Northeast. **When Sonam wore EAST, she carried not just the garment but the story of our land and people.** It opened doors, started conversations, and reminded others that beauty and craftsmanship also thrive in places often unseen.



What part of that look — construction, textile, or psychology — do you wish mainstream audiences understood better?

Psychology, without question. Every weave holds the touch of someone's hand, someone's story. It's never just aesthetics — it's emotion turned into fabric, voice turned into thread.

Design Philosophy

Design is about memory, discipline, and instinct. Which is hardest to negotiate?

Discipline — it's the backbone of creation and often the hardest to sustain.

Is there a garment or weave from your childhood that still shapes how you think about silhouette or colour?

Not really. My design voice isn't nostalgic — it's intuitive. I create based on the moment I'm in, not from what I've seen before.



The Future

EAST now sits in global conversations — from Seoul showcases to celebrity styling. What's one thing you'll never change?

Our roots. Many people move toward comfort once they find success, but for us, Ukhrul will always remain our heart. We'll continue building here, a purposeful, community-driven hub of design that connects local voices to the global stage.

What would a fully realised EAST universe look like ten years from now?

A cultural institute — a living lab where craft, design, and knowledge coexist. I envision a space where traditional arts are preserved, reinterpreted, and taught — a world where young creators and master weavers work under one roof, shaping the future of our textile language.

Do you see EAST evolving into a larger ecosystem — perhaps beyond fashion, into home, craft, or collectives?

Yes, absolutely. EAST was never built solely as a fashion brand — it was born from a textile vision. Collaboration is at our core. We see a future where EAST becomes a creative ecosystem — weaving communities, disciplines, and dreams together.

While many creatives leave home to find opportunity, EAST chose to bring opportunity back. What sets EAST apart is not scale, celebrity, or speed, but clarity. A straightaway denial to treat indigenous textiles as trend material. A commitment to authorship over appropriation. A belief that fashion can be infrastructural, not just extractive.



The background of the entire image is a faded, artistic rendering of a Varanasi ghat. It shows the Ganges river with several small wooden boats moored near the shore. On the right, the stone steps of a ghat lead down to the water, with a few figures visible. The sky is hazy, and many white birds, likely seagulls, are scattered throughout the scene, some in flight and others on the water or the ghats. The overall tone is misty and atmospheric.

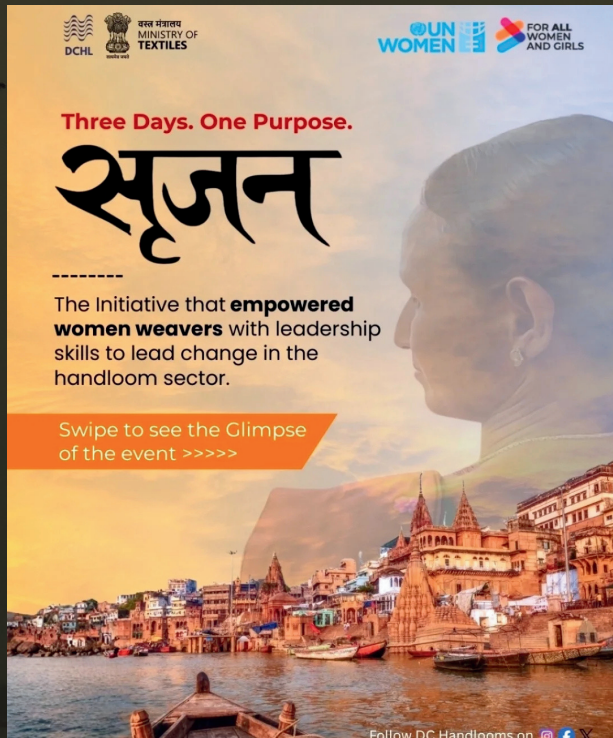
SRIJAN

AT

चरानवशे

Women Weavers Rise as Leaders

Srijan at Varanasi



In a culture-rich city of Varanasi, a quiet transformation unfolded this November. From 18 to 20 November 2025, the Indian Institute of Handloom Technology (IIHT), Varanasi, became more than a training space. It became a circle of voices, reflections, and resolve. The Women Artisans of Change (WeACe) Workshop in collaboration with the UN Women and Ministry of Textiles, aptly themed “Threads of Change: Empowering Women Weavers as Leaders and Entrepreneurs,” brought together women weavers and artisans from diverse clusters, villages, and districts. Each arrived with stories shaped by labour, tradition, and resilience. Over three immersive days, those stories began to shift towards confidence, consciousness, and collective leadership.



#DAY1 From Introduction to Introspection

The workshop opened with a simple yet powerful act: self-introduction. Names, villages, occupations- spoken aloud, listened to with intent. As expectation mapping and agenda-setting followed, participants collectively lead the purpose of their learning journey.

Ice-breaking activities dissolved hesitation, replacing it with laughter and connection. Soon after, conversations turned inward during sessions on gender awareness. Through group discussions and reflections, participants examined long-held assumptions- questioning the idea that gender determines capacity or worth.



#DAY2

Unlearning the Inherited

If Day One was about seeing, Day Two was about understanding. Through sociograms and participatory activities, women shared personal histories- education gaps, domestic responsibilities, silent struggles. These narratives revealed how deeply gender socialisation shapes everyday life. One of the most impactful sessions explored the gendered division of labour in weaving. Tasks were listed, roles examined, and inequalities laid bare. Women recognised how their contributions (often central to production) remain undervalued or unnamed.



Games like Kamal Kamli transformed complex ideas into lived experiences, making learning intuitive, memorable, and deeply personal. By the end of the day, stereotypes had begun to loosen their grip. In their place emerged awareness, and the courage to question.

#DAY3

From Awareness to Action

The final day shifted the focus from reflection to agency. Through interactive tools like a Snakes and Ladders game on gender discrimination, participants explored how social barriers hinder progress, and how solidarity and support help overcome them.

Sessions on Rights and Entitlements equipped women with practical knowledge- how to access institutional support, engage with local governance, and claim what is rightfully theirs. The workshop culminated in action planning, where participants articulated changes they wished to bring into their own lives and communities.

The closing ceremony was a celebration expressed through dance, music, and slogans. It was a beginning of confidence reclaimed, voices strengthened, and leadership awakened. In Varanasi, amid looms and learning, threads were into futures. And those futures, led by women weavers, promise a more equitable and resilient handloom ecosystem for generations to come.



A woman in a red and gold sari with a large gold necklace and bangles, holding a small object, with a child in the background.

FESTIVE FOREVER

THE YEAR HANDLOOM FINALLY TOOK
OVER THE MANDAP

THE RAREST OF THE RARE

The Year Handloom Finally Took Over the Mandap

Festive Forever

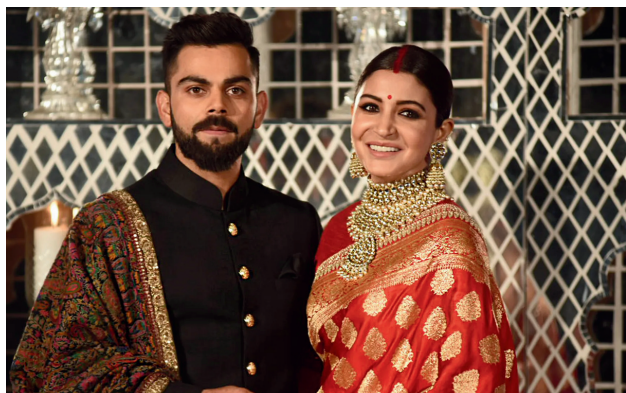
Wedding season 2025 is not whispering anymore. It is proudly desi. And with it arrives the joyful chaos we secretly live for. Indian weddings have always been a maximalist playground; haldi yellows so bright they stain memories, mehndi greens thick with laughter, metallics that catch disco lights, and sangeet sparkles that refuse to fade by sunrise. Whether your plans are meticulously colour-coded or magnificently messy, the ritual of getting ready has always been its own celebration.

Except now, something for sure has changed.

The thrill no longer lies in heavy machine embroidery or imported fast-fashion lehengas that look good once and disappear after. Weddings are not about “more bling” anymore. They’re about meaning. About lineage. About knowing where your fabric came from and who touched it before you did.

From Pinterest Perfect to Purposeful

Beyond the colour palettes and coordinated joda shopping, a bigger shift is unfolding. Today’s wedding-goers are dressing with intention. That now-legendary Tuscany wedding of Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli was indeed a cultural reset. Theme-based styling met Indian craft with confidence. Handwoven textiles stood centre stage. And suddenly, pulling out a handloom saree for a wedding was aspirational. Since then, the movement has converted into a Swadeshi revolution.



Handloom is No Longer Niche, It’s the Mood

Scroll through your feed today and it’s impossible to miss. Indian actresses and influencers are leading the charge, consciously spotlighting homegrown labels, weaving clusters, and craft practices that once lived quietly in remote corners of the country. Brands like Raw Mango, Gulmohar Calcutta, Ekaya and a new wave of contemporary handloom houses have surged in popularity because they tell stories of behind-the-



-loom reels, close-ups of shuttles moving, collaborating with master weavers at work, or a single 30-second video of hands weaving silk can now spark a full-blown wedding shopping spree. Handloom is definitely cultural currency. And if you’ve paused mid-scroll and saved at least one of these looks (be honest), here’s your decoded moodboard.



Left image credit goes to Vogue India
Top right image credit goes to @diamirzaofficial

The Year Handloom Finally Took Over the Mandap

Festive Forever

Layering, but Make it Craft

Heavy embroidery has been replaced by smart layers. A silk saree with a crisp shirt. A woven drape finished with an Ikat or brocade shawl. A fusion that looks styled, not styled-for-effect. This contrast (fluid handloom against sharp tailoring) is what instantly separates guests who get it from those who don't. The weave does the talking.



Kangana Ranaut's wardrobe may be fearless, but her Ladakhi moment felt special. Her layered ensemble by Namza Couture was geography, weather, history, and identity stitched together. Inspired by the traditional Goncha (also known as Kos or Suleman), the silhouette echoed the long robes worn by Ladakhi women to brave harsh mountain climates. The Banarasi-woven Mogos, layered with a mustard Bok shawl, told stories of cross-regional craft, from Ladakh to Banaras to Bhutan and Nepal.



Top left image credits go to @kanganaranaut
Bottom left image credits go to @deepikapadukone

At the Swadesh store launch, **Deepika Padukone** wore a handcrafted ensemble with a neutral base and a bold floral-patterned shawl, instantly owning the look.

The Multicolour Moment



Kaleidoscopic pallus, geometric borders, power saris that don't play safe. Multicoloured Ikat brings movement and personality to wedding wardrobes, perfect for day functions, pheras, or even experimental receptions. **Madhuri Dixit's** mustard-and-black Sonepuri silk saree, complete with ikat bandha patterns and woven butis, was a masterclass in letting the textile lead. No unnecessary drama- just powerful weaving and confident draping.

Draped Silhouettes Are Taking Over Wedding Wear

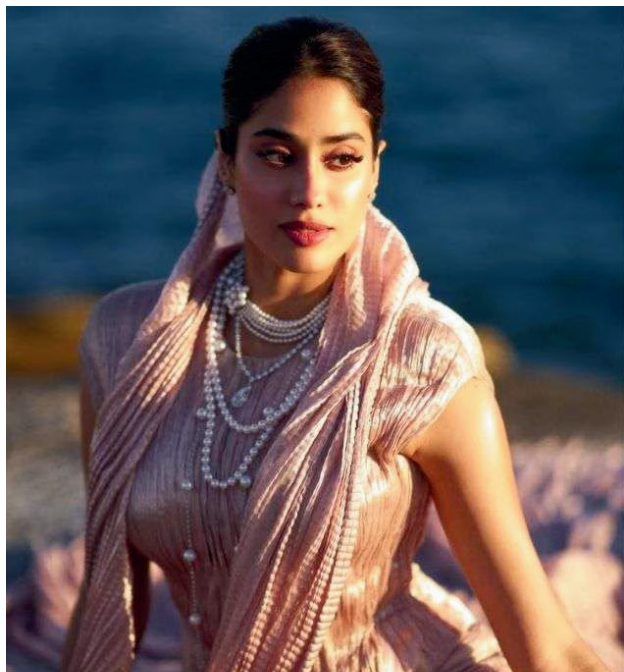
If you are a lazy person who shows up at a wedding at the last minute, then draped silhouettes can save you from the constant confusion of "what to wear". Handloom is now all about engineered drapes that borrow from sarees, dhotis, and couture construction.



Top right image credits go to @madhuridixitnene
Bottom right image credits go to @ananyapanday

The Year Handloom Finally Took Over the Mandap

Festive Forever



Seen in runway-led looks like **Janhvi Kapoor's** custom handwoven Banarasi tissue ensemble by Tarun Tahiliani at Cannes, or **Ananya Panday's** coral blue Ekaya Banarasi Tanchoi saree styled with a sculpted blouse, the focus shifts to form, fluidity, and movement. These pieces retain the soul of handloom while embracing sharp tailoring, contemporary silhouettes, and jewellery-forward styling making them ideal for cocktail evenings, receptions, and fashion-forward wedding moments.



Aneet Padda's brown metallic draped outfit at the Swadesh launch got a growing preference for fluid, robe-like constructions that feel effortlessly very occasion-ready.

The key here is movement. If it doesn't flow when you walk, it's not the look.

Brocade is Going Gender-Neutral

Ranveer Singh's structured bandhgala, cut in Banarasi silk brocade, and **Khushi Kapoor's** brocade co-ord set reaffirm that brocade is not confined to lehengas or sarees. Weddings in 2025 are less about "his and hers" and more about shared texture.



Colour is Deep (Not Loud)

From mustard-black silks to deep maroons and woven lehengas, celebrities are gravitating towards jewel tones and grounded palettes over flashy brights.

Seen on **Aditi Rao Hydari** in a richly woven lehenga and a short-sleeved blouse.



Banarasi Comeback

When in doubt, return to that saree- clean, classic, and unapologetically Indian. Back-to-basics does not mean boring. Whether muted or bold, the classic Banarasi saree- when rooted in handloom and styled with intent, remains the strongest wedding statement of 2025. The look was restrained, proving that subtle detailing and a

Top left image credits go to @janhvikapoor
Bottom left image credits go to @aneetpadda_

Top right image credit goes to @khushikapoor & @thehouseofpixels
Bottom right image credits go to @kannasrihari

The Year Handloom Finally Took Over the Mandap

Festive Forever

confident drape can hold their own in a sea of statement outfits. This is the new power move at weddings, which is, familiar fabric, unfamiliar attitude.



Sharvari Wagh in Mehr lime-green silk tissue, letting her ensemble shimmer with every step. The gossamer silk-zari weave- hand-tinted in soft strokes of green, rust, lavender, and blue- created a poetic play of light and movement. She paired it with a custom baby-blue blouse trimmed with delicate zari borders, completing a look that felt as fresh as it was timeless.

Sonam Kapoor's black Banarasi saree with gold and silver zardozi borders proves that Banarasi is no longer about traditional excess. The silhouette was clean, the mood modern, and the drama stem from contrast. Intricate gold zari work brought celebratory energy without tipping into excess.



Top left image credit goes to @sharvari
Bottom left image credits go to @sonamkapoor

Ananya Panday wrapped in a bright orange Banarasi Brocade Saree with incorporating a subtle Christmas-inspired elements.



In a sky-blue Banarasi saree, **Rani Mukherjee** embodied a regal charm, the kind that transcends trends and defines her timeless elegance.



Why This Matters Like Never Before



Handloom returning to weddings, brings back a generation choosing roots over replicas, stories over sameness, and craft over convenience. All that's left is deciding how confidently you want to follow it. And that's exactly why, in 2025, the most stylish wedding guests are not asking "How heavy is it?" They're asking, "How does it fall?"

Top right image credits go to @ananyapanday
Middle right image credit goes to @yashrajfilmstalent

Raulane Festival: When the Mountains Are Thanked



High in the upper reaches of Kinnaur, where snow-fed apple orchards cling to steep mountainsides and slate-roofed homes catch the last burnished light of dusk, a ritual that comes in almost unnoticed by the outside world. Raulane does not compete with colour or clamour. It arrives softly, in the in-between, when winter loosens its hold and spring hesitates at the ridge.

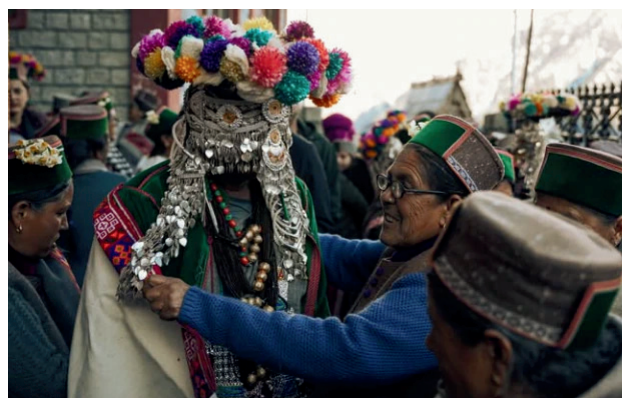
Observed across villages like Kalpa, Kothi, Sangla and surrounding hamlets, Raulane is believed to be one of the oldest living ritual traditions of the Western Himalaya. Locals speak of it not in dates or years, but as something that has “always been there”...older than memory, older than record. Whether it is truly 5,000 years old or simply ancient beyond counting matters less than the fact that it has endured, carried forward through song, silence, and shared belief. At its core, Raulane is a farewell ritual. Through the harsh winter months, the Sauni, mountain spirits believed to descend from the high alpine meadows, are said to guard homes, livestock, fields and families. When the season oscillates, the community gathers to honour these unseen protectors and guide them respectfully back to the high pastures where they belong.



Masks, Wool and Silence

Every village holds its own version of who the Sauni are. Some say they are luminous beings gliding across cliffs and forests. Others believe they are ancestral spirits whose presence shields the village from illness and misfortune. These narratives differ, but the obligation remains the same: gratitude must be expressed, and the bond renewed. The ritual centres around two figures- the Raula and the Raulane- chosen villagers transformed into a symbolic divine pair. They wear striking wooden masks, hand-carved with bold, almost austere features. Once masked, individual identity dissolves. The human becomes a vessel. The masks are sacred thresholds between worlds.

The garments worn during Raulane are woven locally using sheep and goat wool, spun and prepared within households. Traditionally, women handled much of the spinning and weaving, working on simple looms through the winter months when agricultural labour paused.



Textiles are naturally tend to be dense, slightly coarse, and intentionally heavy. This is durability designed for life at altitude. The weave is tight to trap warmth. Natural colours- greys, browns, off-whites- reflect the sheep breeds of the region and the absence of chemical dyeing. During Raulane, these woollens become visual extensions of the ritual itself. When the Raula and Raulane are dressed, they wear layered wool garments that restrict movement, slow the body and enforce a deliberate pace. The ritual's stillness is, in part, created by the weight of the cloth.

The famous wooden masks are important, but without the wool, the transformation would be incomplete. The fibre grounds the divine in the domestic. It reminds the village that protection begins at home- with what is spun, woven and worn.

The Rarest of the Rare

Festive Forever

Their attire is equally rooted in Kinnaur's handloom heritage. Heavy handwoven woollen garments, layered and practical, reflect the region's intimate relationship with climate and craft. Silver jewellery (often heirloom pieces passed down generations) adds weight and resonance. These elements ground the ritual firmly in the everyday material culture of the valley.

During the celebrations, villagers are dressed in traditional Kinnauri garments, *Dohrus* (shawls), *woven mufflers*, *Choli* (a coat-like layer), *Pattu* (decorative shawl tied around the waist), and *Thepang caps*. Each one of them is made from locally spun wool and woven on handlooms suited to the region's harsh climate. These textiles are instantly recognisable by their bold colours, bright contrasting borders and precise geometric patterns, a weaving language unique to Kinnaur. The weight of the wool, the tightness of the weave and the durability of the fabric all reflect generations of knowledge passed down through Kinnauri households, where weaving has long been both a necessity and a cultural marker. In Raulane, these garments move beyond daily wear to ceremonial significance, transforming handloom into a visible expression of identity, continuity and respect for tradition.



Once the Raulane is dressed, the Raula's face is wrapped in a red Gachhdi, handwoven wool wound tightly to conceal identity and signal restraint. Across his body falls a Dohrus, the traditional Kinnauri shawl, recognisable by its geometric bands and sharply defined borders. These patterns are not decorative flourishes. They belong to a regional weaving vocabulary refined over generations- tight weaves to hold heat, strong colours to withstand time, and borders that anchor the cloth structurally as well as visually. The Thepang cap and woollen mufflers complete the attire, each piece handwoven to serve a purpose long before it serves a ritual. Silver ornaments heirloom rests against the fabric, creating a dialogue between metal and wool that is common to Kinnauri ceremonial dress.



Once dressed, Raula and Raulane remain silent. They move slowly through village lanes, pausing at shrines, receiving offerings, acknowledging households. The silence is intentional. It shifts attention from spectacle to presence. To witness Raulane is to feel time stretch, to sense the collective breath of the village slow down. In many hamlets, Raulane also points to the conclusion of Suskar, another winter ritual associated with land, animals and seasonal blessings.

Handlooms and Handicrafts of Nagaland at the Hornbill Festival



If Raulane speaks in whispers, the Hornbill Festival of Nagaland speaks in song, colour and texture. Often called the "Festival of Festivals," Hornbill is an annual gathering that brings together the many tribes of Nagaland- each with distinct customs, histories and material cultures into one shared celebration. At the heart of this spectacle lies a tradition that is anything but ornamental.



Bamboo, Cane and the Art of Making

Nagaland's geography offers abundance where it matters most. Bamboo and cane grow widely across the state, making them primary materials for everyday life. From chairs and storage baskets to sofas, agricultural tools and interior decor, these materials are transformed through skilled hands into objects of quiet sophistication.

Cane baskets, tightly woven and remarkably durable, serve both utilitarian and ceremonial purposes. Bamboo furniture, light yet strong, reflects deep understanding of material behaviour. The forms are rarely excessive; elegance emerges from restraint and precision.

These crafts are not confined to workshops. In many villages, they remain integrated into daily life, knowledge passed down informally through observation and practice rather than manuals.

The Language of the Loom

Among Nagaland's most celebrated handloom traditions are its textiles, particularly the iconic Naga shawls. Each tribe has its own distinctive patterns, colours and motifs, often indicating age, marital status or social standing. Red, black and white dominate many designs, punctuated by symbolic elements drawn from nature, warfare, and mythology. Traditionally woven on the loin loom, a backstrap weaving technique that requires immense skill and physical control, these textiles are time-intensive and deeply personal. In recent decades, fly shuttle looms have also been adopted, allowing for greater efficiency while retaining traditional patterns. Beyond shawls, weavers create jackets, bags and contemporary adaptations that still draw from tribal visual vocabularies. While techniques evolve, the cultural grammar remains intact.

During the Hornbill Festival, these textiles come alive. Tribes arrive adorned in full ceremonial attire, beaded headgear, feathered crowns, handwoven garments layered with meaning. For visitors, it is visually arresting. For the communities, it is a reaffirmation of who they are.



Two Festivals, One Truth

Raulane and the Hornbill Festival could not appear more different: one hushed and inward, the other diverse and communal. Both reveal the same truth that India's handloom and craft traditions are not static displays of the past. In Kinnaur, wool and wood become bridges between humans and mountains. In Nagaland, bamboo, cane and thread become declarations of identity.



A wooden loom with white threads, set against a background of a stone wall and various tools. The loom is made of dark wood and has a large rectangular frame. White threads are stretched across the frame. The background is a stone wall with various tools and objects hanging on it, including a hammer, a saw, and some rope. The overall image has a warm, rustic feel.

101 SUSTAINABLE DIY

WHAT IF THE INVASIVE WEED CHOKING OUR WATERWAYS
BECAME THE WEAVE BLESSING OUR WARDROBES?

What if the invasive weed choking our waterways became the weave blessing our wardrobes?

The 101 Sustainable DIY

We're inspired by one such VOCAL FOR LOCAL story that weaves together waste, water-bodies, and handloom artistry.



Water hyacinth is often called the “terror of Bengal.” It multiplies relentlessly, forming dense mats across lakes and ponds. Sunlight can’t penetrate. Oxygen drops. Fish struggle. As a ramification of it, entire water ecosystems slowly suffocate under its spread. For decades, it was seen only as a problem- something to be removed, dumped, forgotten. But heritage handlooms have always worked with what nature renders. Cotton from fields. Silk from cocoons. Jute from riverbanks. This time, nature put forward its nuisance, and someone said, “LET’S TRANSFORM IT”

A Shift From Corporate Blueprints to Handloom Borders



Meet **Gaurav Anand**, a corporate engineer who walked away from a 16-year career to follow a quieter, more purposeful calling. Where others saw an invasive weed, Gaurav saw potential.

He began exploring how water hyacinth could be stripped, softened, and blended into yarn without che-

emical shortcuts, without industrial shortcuts. Those once-discarded plants form elegant sarees that carry temple borders, mango paisleys, and centuries-old weaving sensibilities while supporting hundreds of women weavers.

The process itself is deeply rooted in sustainability:



Harvesting the plant from infested water bodies, clearing choking surfaces



Sun-drying the stems and manually stripping them into usable fibres



Blending the fibres with fine cotton yarn



Weaving the fabric on traditional handlooms

The final textile contains 25% water hyacinth and 75% cotton.



Ripples Beyond the Loom

Over 450 rural women now earn stable livelihoods through this initiative; many returning to handloom work that was slowly fading.

Water bodies begin to breathe again as harvesting clears invasive growth. Aquatic life slowly returns. What was once environmental waste becomes economic worth.

Most importantly, handloom finds a new voice that speaks the language of today without forgetting the wisdom of yesterday.

FEATURES AND EXHIBITIONS

BHARATIYA KALA MAHOTSAV

MANN KI BAAT

HMOT | IN FOCUS

WRAPPED UP WITH IITF 2025

GLIMPSES OF THE EXHIBITIONS

Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav

Features and Exhibitions

(Hon'ble President of India)

Smt. Droupadi Murmu

inaugurated the

Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav

Rashtrapati Nilayam,
Secunderabad



Celebrating Handlooms & Heritage

The President highlighted the festival's role in showcasing the

Rich Handlooms, Handicrafts and Folk Traditions of Western India

(From Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Goa, Daman & Diu, and Dadra & Nagar Haveli)



Promoting Artisans & Weavers' Communities

The festival brings together master artisans, weavers, and craft clusters, offering visitors an

Authentic Glimpse of India's Vibrant Loom-to-Art Legacy

through exhibitions, demonstrations and performances.



Visit the Festival -

22-30 November 2025

10:00 A.M. - 8:00 P.M.

Rashtrapati Nilayam,
Secunderabad

Entry Free | Slot Booking Available

(On-the-spot bookings for walk-ins)

Follow DC Handlooms on



President's Address

The President emphasized that **connecting youth with India's textile heritage is essential for preserving our diverse traditions.**

Events like this deepen cultural understanding and inspire respect for traditional crafts.

The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu, inaugurated the 2nd edition of Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav at Rashtrapati Nilayam, Secunderabad, today (November 21, 2025). The nine-day-long festival is being organised by Rashtrapati Nilayam in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Textiles and the Ministry of Tourism. This festival aims to present the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Goa, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, and Daman & Diu.

Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav

Features and Exhibitions

*Celebrate
Handmade Heritage!!*



Hon'ble President of India,

Smt. Droupadi Murmu

engages with the nation's finest
handloom and handcrafted traditions.



Rashtrapati Nilayam,
Secunderabad

Swipe to view
highlights >>>>



Hon'ble President of India,
Smt. Droupadi Murmu, honoured the
occasion by witnessing the cultural
heritage of Western India.



Hon'ble President of India,
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Showcasing India's diverse heritage through crafts, dance, music, and food, focusing on Western India, featuring handlooms prominently alongside handicrafts and performances, promoting weaver/artisan empowerment and cultural exchange

Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav

Features and Exhibitions



Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav
2025

Step in before it wraps up!

22nd - 30th Nov 2025 10:00 A.M - 8:00 P.M.

Rashtrapati Nilayam, Secunderabad

A vibrant celebration of western India's culture, handlooms, handicrafts, and performing arts.

ALL IN ONE PLACE



Highlighting the rich handloom and handicraft traditions of western India, the pavilion highlights exquisite textiles and artisan skills.

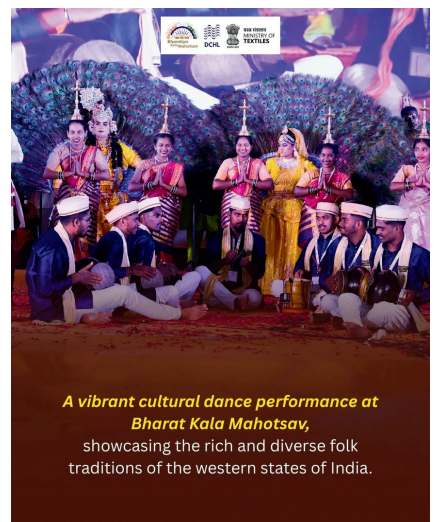


A captivating fashion show highlighting contemporary designs infused with the rich textile heritage of western India at the Bharat Kala Mahotsav.



visitors enthusiastically explored **exquisite textiles, artisanal creations, and culturally inspired products** at the bustling exhibition stalls.

Follow DC Handlooms on [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [Twitter](#)



A vibrant cultural dance performance at Bharat Kala Mahotsav, showcasing the rich and diverse folk traditions of the western states of India.



I urge all of you to be a part of the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam.

Here I would like to reiterate:
Tamil Kalachaaram Uyarvanad
Tamil Moli Uyarvanad
Tamil Indiavin Perumidam

मन की बात
30 जनवरी 2025

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“

A new round of shopping is about to begin in the coming days for Christmas and New Year.

I will remind you again, remember the mantra of 'vocal for local', buy only what is made in the country, sell only what bears the hard work by a citizen of the country.

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**नई पहचान, नया सशक्तिकरण -
हैंडलूम ई-पहचान कार्ड**

- **35.5 लाख+** बुनकर जुड़े डिजिटल प्रणाली से
- सभी सरकारी योजनाओं का सीधा लाभ




नॉर्थ ईस्ट के बुनकरों को बीमा संरक्षण

- 2017 से अब तक - **3.36 लाख लाभार्थी**
- बुनकरों को प्रधानमंत्री जीवन ज्योति बीमा योजना और प्रधानमंत्री सुरक्षा बीमा योजना के तहत जीवन और दुर्घटना बीमा सुरक्षा प्रदान की गई है





10 साल में नॉर्थ ईस्ट हैंडलूम की नई गाथा

- 234 हैंडलूम स्मॉल क्लस्टर विकसित, 58,500 लाभार्थी
- 762 हैंडलूम मार्केटिंग इवेंट्स आयोजित, 16.5 लाख बुनकरों को लाभ





हैंडलूम क्लस्टर से बाजार तक मजबूत कड़ी

- देशभर में 797 स्मॉल हैंडलूम क्लस्टर
- अब तक 2453 मार्केटिंग इवेंट्स आयोजित
- 43.8 लाख से ज्यादा लाभार्थियों तक सीधा फायदा





नॉर्थ ईस्ट - भारत का हैंडलूम पावर हाउस

- देश के 35.2 लाख बुनकरों में से 18.5 लाख सिर्फ नॉर्थ ईस्ट में हैं
- 12.8 लाख बुनकर - सबसे ज्यादा बुनकर नॉर्थ ईस्ट में असम में हैं
- देश के कुल हैंडलूम फैब्रिक का 90% से अधिक उत्पादन नॉर्थ ईस्ट से होता है
- नॉर्थ ईस्ट में कुल हैंडलूम GI टैग - 31





डोबम गाँव की बुनाई शक्ति - नाबम यापी

- अरुणाचल के डोबम गाँव की नाबम यापी बचपन से लॉइन लूम पर बुनाई करती रही हैं और 2012 से इस परंपरा को नई दिशा दे रही हैं।
- 2012 में पहला फ्लाई शटल लूम लगाकर शुरू किया गया छोटा प्रयास आज 14 लूम वाले केंद्र में बदल चुका है, जहाँ 13 महिलाएँ आजीविका कमा रही हैं।
- समर्थ योजना के जरिए उन्होंने प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम चलाकर ग्रामीण महिलाओं को आत्मविश्वास और आत्मनिर्भरता दी।
- उनके उत्पादों में पारंपरिक जनजातीय आकृतियों और आधुनिक डिजाइन का सुंदर मेल है, जो अरुणाचल की समृद्ध पहचान दिखाता है।
- उनकी कला को राज्य हैंडलूम पुरस्कार और राष्ट्रीय हैंडलूम पुरस्कार 2023 से सम्मान मिला।





लालरमथंगी की कहानी - जब हुनर को मिला सही सहारा

- थेनजॉल, मिजोरम की बुनकर लालरमथंगी एक कुशल मिजो पुआन बुनकर हैं।
- पहले पारंपरिक लूम पर काम कर, महीने की आय सिर्फ ₹15,000-20,000 थी।
- 2021-22 में क्लस्टर डेवलपमेंट प्रोग्राम से उन्हें वर्कशेड, फ्रेम लूम, उपकरण और सोलर लाइट मिली।
- नए साधनों से उनकी उत्पादन क्षमता और गुणवत्ता दोनों बढ़ीं।
- उत्कृष्ट काम के लिए उन्हें वीवर्स सर्विस सेंटर, आईजॉल ने समर्थ ट्रेनिंग के लिए मास्टर ट्रेनर चुना।
- यहीं से वे आगे बढ़कर मास्टर वीवर बनीं और अब 10 फ्रेम लूम चलाती हैं व लगभग 20 बुनकरों को रोजगार देती हैं।
- मंत्रालय की योजनाओं से उनके पारंपरिक मिजो पुआन और आधुनिक स्टोल-शॉल की प्रदर्शनियों में लगातार मांग बनी।
- आज उनकी मासिक आय लगभग ₹85,000 तक पहुँच गई है और सालाना टर्नओवर करीब ₹10 लाख हो चुका है।



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एक बुनकर की मेहनत, सैकड़ों परिवारों की नई उम्मीद

- हरदोई के महाश्वर हुसैन ने NHDP के समर्थन से मल्लावां की पारंपरिक हैंडलूम बुनाई को नई दिशा दी।
- बुनकर इंडस्ट्रियल कोऑपरेटिव समिति के अध्यक्ष के रूप में उनके नेतृत्व में बुनकरों की आमदनी ₹250 से बढ़कर ₹500-600 प्रतिदिन हुई।
- NHDP क्लस्टर योजना के तहत ₹55 लाख की सहायता से 38 हैंडलूम और 31 उपकरण उपलब्ध कराए गए।
- 240 बुनकरों को बुनाई, रंगाई व डिजाइन प्रशिक्षण भी मिला।
- हुसैन का होम-बेस्ड हैंडलूम यूनिट अब हर महीने 5,000 प्रीमियम तैलिये बनाकर ₹4 लाख से अधिक रेवेन्यू अर्जित करता है।
- उनकी सहकारी समिति आज 200+ हैंडलूम संचालित करती है, जो प्रति माह 50,000 तैलिये बनाकर ₹40-50 लाख का टर्नओवर करती है।
- उनके प्रयासों को संत कबीर राज्य हैंडलूम पुरस्कार से राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर मान्यता मिली।



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हाथों की कला, डिजिटल की ताकत - बुनकरों का नया दौर

- 1.5 लाख+ बुनकर GeM पर, सीधे बाज़ार से जुड़ाव
- Indiahandmade पर 2,500+ विक्रेता और 11,500+ उत्पाद।
- 160 हैंडलूम प्रोड्यूसर कंपनियाँ बनीं, संगठित काम और अधिक आमदनी।



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हैंडलूम मार्केटिंग सहायता से बढ़ी आय, बढ़ा आत्मविश्वास

- ₹340 करोड़ की मार्केटिंग सहायता से बुनकरों को सीधी मदद मिली
- 43 लाख से अधिक लाभार्थियों को नए बाज़ारों तक पहुँच का अवसर मिला



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बिहार की शान - बावनबुट्टी की अनोखी कहानी

- नालंदा की बौद्ध विरासत से जुड़ी बिहार की अनोखी बावनबुट्टी बुनाई
- बसवांविधा, नेपुरा, खासगंज के बुनकर आज भी इसे जीवित रखे हुए हैं
- ज्यामितीय, प्रकृति-आधारित मोटिफ इसकी पहचान
- कभी लोकप्रिय बुनाई थी लेकिन 2010 तक सिर्फ एक मास्टर बुनकर तक रह गई थी
- उपेंद्र महारथी और डिजाइनरों ने इसे फिर से जीवंत कर नए बाजारों से जोड़ा
- आज साड़ियों के साथ दुपट्टों और होम टेक्स्टाइल में इसकी नई पहचान बनी है



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दुर्लभ पश्मीना से बनी शाही साड़ी

- पश्मीना चंगथांगी बकरी के मुलायम रेशों से बनता है, जो लद्दाख में मिलता है।
- साफ-स्फाई के बाद रेशा हाथ से काता जाता है, क्योंकि पश्मीना बहुत नाजुक होता है।
- कश्मीरी बुनकर लकड़ी के करघों पर इसे बुनकर हल्का, लेकिन बेहद गर्म कपड़ा तैयार करते हैं।
- शॉल से आगे बढ़कर अब पश्मीना साड़ी के रूप में भी अपनी पहचान बना चुका है।
- साड़ियाँ शुद्ध पश्मीना या पश्मीना-रेशम मिश्रण से बुनी जाती हैं, जो नरम और गर्म रहती हैं।
- बुनाई में ढ़िल, चश्म-ए-बुलबुल जैसे पारंपरिक पैटर्न और सोजनी या तिल्ला कढ़ाई का प्रयोग होता है।
- हर साड़ी कई हफ्तों की बारीक मेहनत और कौशल का परिणाम होती है।
- पश्मीना का GI टैग चंगपा समुदाय और कश्मीरी बुनकरों की परंपरा और विरासत को सुरक्षित रखता है।



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Wrapped up with IITF 2025

Features and Exhibitions



IITF 2025 DCHL **भारत मंत्रालय**
MINISTRY OF TEXTILES

Experience it all at
INDIA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR
November 14 - 27 2025

Time to discover the vibrant world of Indian Handlooms & Handicrafts

'Tis the season for stories woven, carved, and crafted by India's hands

Handlooms | Handicrafts | Home Décor | Gifts

Hall No. 5, Ground Floor
Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi

10:00 A.M – 7:30 P.M



IITF 2025 DCHL **भारत मंत्रालय**
MINISTRY OF TEXTILES

Brace yourself for an unforgettable experience!

INDIA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR
November 14 - 27 2025

India's finest handmades are coming your way from **handloom sarees to exquisite handicrafts**, curated by weavers and artisans across the country.

Hall No. 5, Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi

10:00 A.M. – 7:30 P.M.



IITF 2025 **भारत मंत्रालय**
MINISTRY OF TEXTILES

INDIA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR
November 14 - 27 2025

Enter the world's window into
स्वदेशी भारत
a journey through Indian Handlooms & Handicrafts, where every thread tells a story.

Hall No. 5, Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi

10:00 A.M. to 7:30 P.M.



The **Vastra Kala Pavilion** was inaugurated by

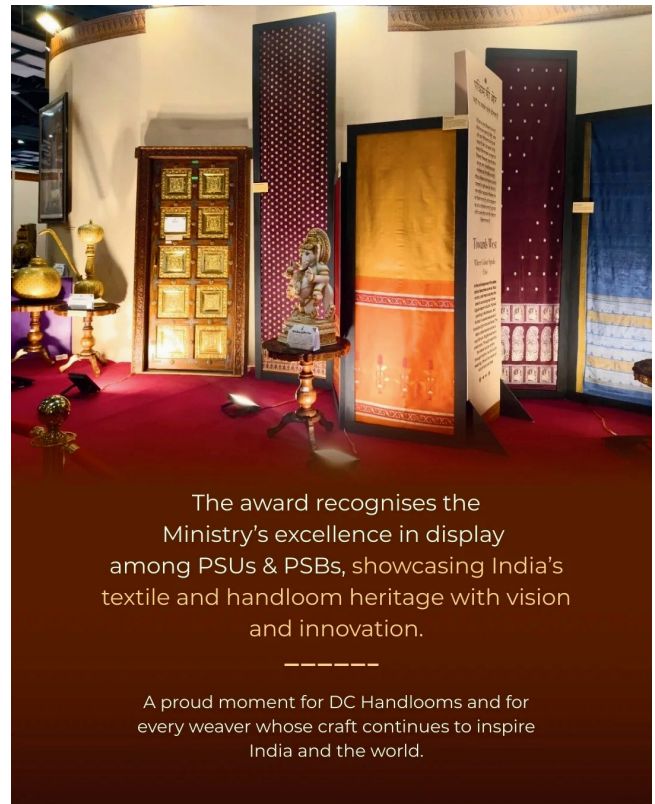
Shri Giriraj Singh
(Hon'ble Minister of Textiles)

Smt. Neelam Shami Rao
Secretary (Textiles)

Dr. M. Beena
(Development Commissioner (Handlooms))

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Features and Exhibitions



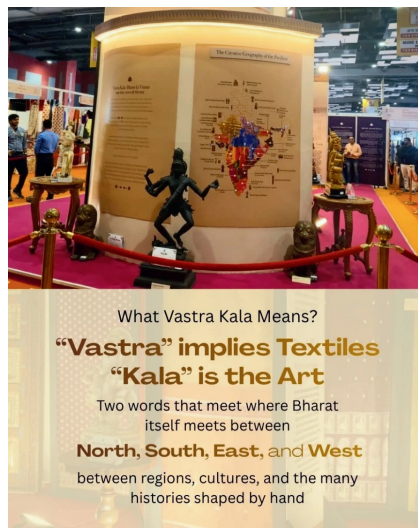
The award recognises the Ministry's excellence in display among PSUs & PSBs, showcasing India's textile and handloom heritage with vision and innovation.

A proud moment for DC Handlooms and for every weaver whose craft continues to inspire India and the world.



This Pavilion is a **conversation between handlooms & handicrafts** between those who weave, those who cast, those who carve, and those who imagine form from fibre, metal, earth, and light.

Handlooms gives India its lexicon of pattern
Handicrafts gives it its grammar of form



What Vastra Kala Means?
“Vastra” implies Textiles
“Kala” is the Art
Two words that meet where Bharat itself meets between
North, South, East, and West
between regions, cultures, and the many histories shaped by hand



Visit the **Vastra Kala Pavilion** at the 44th India International Trade Fair
Hall No. 5, Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi
Experience a space where stories are spun, heritage is preserved, & India's future of craft is being shaped.



INDIA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR

November 14 - 27 2025

Handlooms | Handicrafts | Home Décor | Gifts

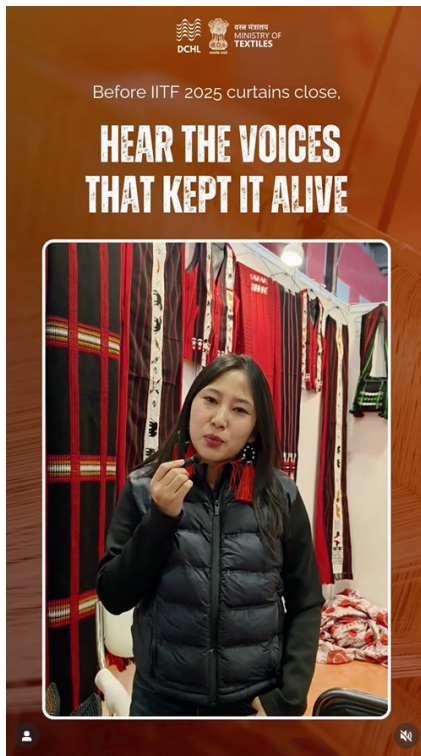
Hall No. 5, Ground Floor
Bharat Mandapam,
New Delhi

10:00 A.M – 7:30 P.M



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MINISTRY OF
TEXTILES



MAKE IN INDIA

**MAKE FOR
THE WORLD**

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Glimpses of the Exhibitions

Features and Exhibitions



Glimpses of the Exhibitions

Features and Exhibitions



वस्त्र मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
TEXTILES

DCHL

Special
Handloom Expo

सूतधारा

Flowing essence
of Threads

1st - 8th December
2025

Handloom Haat,
Janpath, New Delhi



वस्त्र मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
TEXTILES

DCHL

India's timeless handlooms take
center stage at the

**Special
Handloom Expo**

Handloom legacy unfolds in style.

Handloom Haat
Janpath, New Delhi

1st - 8th Dec
2025

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Glimpses of the Exhibitions

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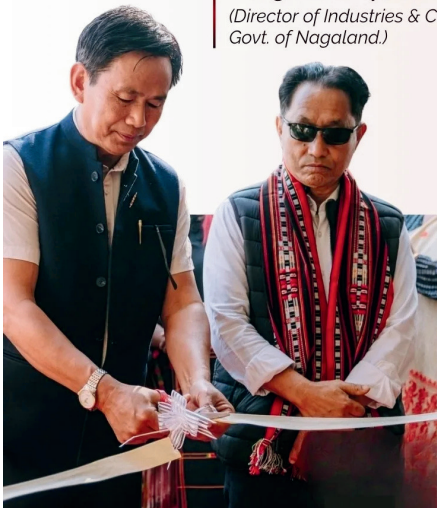


State Handloom Expo (SHE)

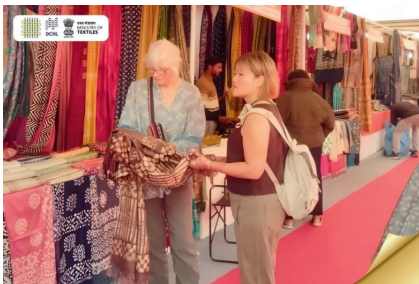
Hathkargah Mela 2025 is now open!

Inaugurated by **Shri P. Tokugha Sema**
(Director of Industries & Commerce,
Govt. of Nagaland.)

CT Square,
Chümoukedima,
Nagaland



Visit and celebrate the
*Rich handloom
heritage of Nagaland!*



INDIA'S HANDLOOMS CONTINUE TO CHARM VISITORS

At the **Special Handloom Expo, Janpath**,
shoppers explored vibrant colours, rich textures,
and the artistry behind every handcrafted weave.

*The expo celebrates the skill and creativity of our weavers
and the joy of discovering something truly authentic.*

Follow DC Handlooms on [Instagram](#) [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#)



Glimpses of the Exhibitions

Features and Exhibitions

*India's handlooms & crafts
crafts steal the spotlight at*
HGH India
2025

From weavers' hands to a national stage.

 **Bangalore Exhibition Centre,**
Bengaluru, Karnataka



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A curated platform bringing together
Top Brands, Buyers, & Innovators
across home décor, textiles, furniture,
houseware, and gifting, all under one place.



Special
Handloom Expo
सूतधारा

Flowing essence of Threads

 **1st - 8th December 2025**
 **Handloom Haat, Janpath, New Delhi**





सूत्र संगम
A Confluence of Threads
**Exclusive
Handloom Expo**

 **24th - 30th
Oct 2025**  **11 AM - 8 PM**
 **Ridge, Mall Road, Shimla**

Step into the world of
exquisite Indian handlooms










   

JOIN US AT
**Hyderabad
Saree Festival**
2ND EDITION

A celebration of
India's timeless handloom traditions!

 **24th - 30th
October 2025**  **11:00 AM - 8:00 PM**
 **Kamma Sangam, Hyderabad**

Glimpses of the Exhibitions

Features and Exhibitions



RISE IN INDIA 2025
The Mega Exhibition
Date: November, 2025
Timing: 10:30 AM To 6:00 PM
Ghaziabad (U.P.)
Dr. Anil Agarwal
Minister, Ministry of Textiles
Highlights of the Exhibition:
• More than 50 Departments of State, UT, Government & all top Govt. Schemes, Ministry & Institutions.
• Department of Textiles & Handloom, Ministry of Textiles & Handloom, Government of India.
• Department of Handloom, Ministry of Textiles & Handloom, Government of India.
• Department of Handloom, Ministry of Textiles & Handloom, Government of India.

Glimpses from
**RISE IN INDIA
2025 MEGA
EXHIBITION**

HRIT University,
Ghaziabad

Swipe to view moments



श्री अर्जुन राम मेघवाल
(माननीय केंद्रीय विधि एवं न्याय मंत्री)

ने बीकानेर प्रशासन एवं बीकानेर विकास प्राधिकरण
द्वारा आयोजित

“VIRASAT WEAVES”
Handloom & Handicraft Expo 2025
में सहभागिता की।



Cultural performances and widespread participation

marked the successful conclusion of the event.

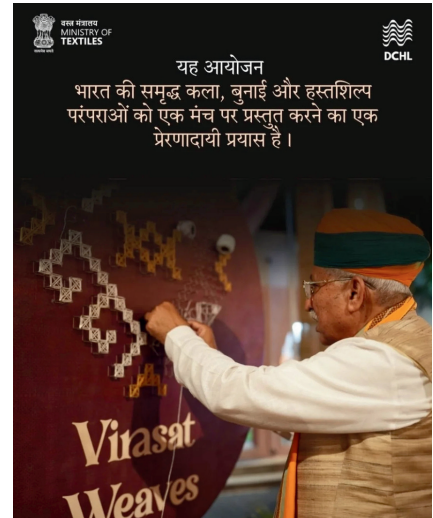
Follow DC handlooms



Showcase of student-led innovation and development themes.

All in all, an educational and cultural mega exhibition celebrating progress in India by 2025 at the university, highlighting academic achievements and community moments.

Swipe to view moments



यह आयोजन
भारत की समृद्ध कला, बुनाई और हस्तशिल्प
परंपराओं को एक मंच पर प्रस्तुत करने का एक
प्रेरणादायी प्रयास है।

Virasat Weaves

Glimpses of the Exhibitions

Features and Exhibitions




CLOCK IS TICKING

KASHI-TAMIL SANGAMAM

JUST 5 DAYS LEFT

To witness handlooms that speak of heritage, craft, and culture like never before.





  

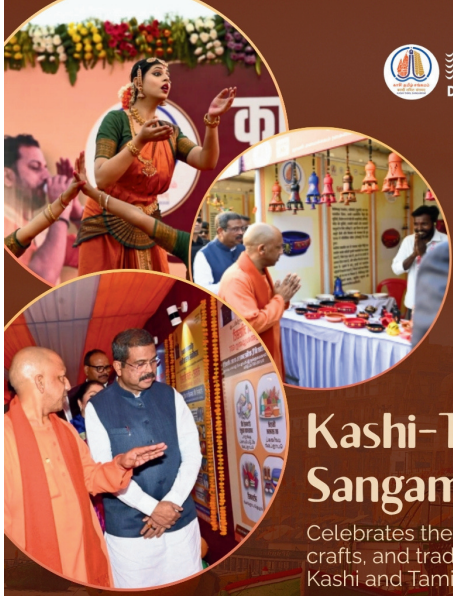
Kashi-Tamil Sangamam 4.0

Celebrates the rich handlooms, crafts, and traditional arts of Kashi and Tamil Nadu

Get to witness a diverse blend of culture, tradition, and artistic expression

 Dec 2 - Dec 15 2025

 Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh






  

Learn Tamil — Tamil Karkalam

KASHI-TAMIL Sangamam 4.0

Begins **December 2, 2025**
Bringing art, culture, and traditions together.




  




WHY IT MATTERS

Strengthening the spirit of
"Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat"

Connecting communities of artisans, spiritual leaders & scholars

Inculcating heritage, literature, arts & identity into everyday life




  

A grand opening to the Kashi Tamil Sangamam by

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan
(Hon'ble Minister of Education)

Shri Yogi Adityanath
(Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh)

uniting the cultural spirit of Kashi & Tamil Nadu.




Kashi-Tamil Sangamam


 **2nd -15th December 2025**
 **Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**



Glimpses of the Exhibitions

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 **MINISTRY OF TEXTILES**


 **DCHL**




HORNBILL FESTIVAL 2025

Where Weaving Lives On

A glimpse the stage where Nagaland's handloom traditions meet celebration.

 **Kisama, Nagaland**



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 **MINISTRY OF TEXTILES**

 **DCHL**


Nagaland HORNBILL Festival




10-day annual cultural event
 **Kisama, Nagaland**


December 1st to 10th


NORTH-EAST


 **MINISTRY OF TEXTILES**


 **DCHL**

Backstrap looms, precise colour codes, and clan patterns
come alive at Hornbill 2025





 **MINISTRY OF TEXTILES**

 **DCHL**




Drums, dances, and feathers draw the eye, but the rhythm of looms is what keeps the culture breathing

 **MINISTRY OF TEXTILES**

 **DCHL**

Every purchase, every demonstration
is an add on to Nagaland's weaving heritage.



Rashtriya Karmayogi

Features and Exhibitions



One-Day
**Rashtriya Karmayogi
Programme**
successfully conducted at
Weavers' Service Centre, Vijayawada

A total of 21 participants actively engaged in the sessions focused on professional ethics and service delivery in line with the objectives of the Karmayogi Mission.

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**Rule-based' to 'Role-based'
Governance**

**RASHTRIYA
KARMAYOGI
PROGRAMME**

WSC Chamoli

This programme aimed at enhancing efficiency, leadership, and service delivery among officials and staff.



**Rashtriya
Karmayogi
Programme**

A One day Training Program

Conducted by Sh. Vikram Singh (IIHT Jodhpur) and Shri Surendra Singh (WSC Meerut) for the officials of **Weavers' Service Centre, Jaipur.**

The session aimed to enhance -

- Efficiency
- Transparency
- Service delivery



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**Rashtriya
Karmayogi
Training Programme**

Weavers' Service Centre, Kullu conducted the Karmayogi training programme, with the active participation of all its officials.

Transforming government officials, Transforming India

Competency-Driven Capacity Building of Officials

Transforming & Empowering Civil Servants

From "Vision" to "Mission" Mode for a Naya Bharat



Rashtriya Karmayogi

Features and Exhibitions



RASHTRIYA KARMAYOGI PROGRAM

Initiative dedicated to fostering a competent, efficient, and citizen-centric civil service through continuous capacity building.



वस्त्र मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
TEXTILES

Successfully
conducted the one-day

**Rashtriya Karmayogi -
Large Scale Jan Seva training**
at IIHT Varanasi

Certificates awarded to all participants upon completion.

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**Rashtriya
Karmayogi**

**Large Scale Jan Seva Training
Programme**

successfully conducted with **enthusiastic &
active participation** from all participants.

 **Weavers' Service Centre
(WSC), Delhi**



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**RASHTRIYA
KARMAYOGI
TRAINING
PROGRAMME**

was conducted at WSC Srinagar

The sessions included **hands-on activities**
and **interactive discussions** with active
participation from officers and staff.



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Rashtriya Karmayogi

Features and Exhibitions



RASHTRIYA KARMAYOGI Programme

Conducted at
Weavers Service Centre (WSC), Hyderabad

Twelve participants took part with great enthusiasm, engaging in sessions focused on efficiency, professional ethics, and improved service delivery.



One-Day Rashtriya Karmayogi Programme

successfully conducted at
Weavers' Service Centre, Kannur

A total of 14 participants took part with great enthusiasm and actively engaged in the sessions.

The training aimed at enhancing efficiency, professional ethics in line with the objectives of the Karmayogi Mission.



RASTRIYA KARMAYOGI TRAINING PROGRAMME

Indian Institute of Handloom Technology (IIHT), Guwahati

Featuring interactive sessions and hands-on activities.

The Rashtriya Karmayogi Training Programme focuses on capacity building, teamwork, leadership, and service efficiency through interactive learning.



IIHT Salem successfully conducted RASHTRIYA KARMAYOGI Programme

A total of 16 participants took part with great enthusiasm

Trainers:

- Smt. R. Sasikala, WSC Chennai
- Shri Parmar Dharmendra Kumar, IIHT Salem



SUMMED UP

CINEMA ROLLED, SAREES SWIRLED AT IFFI 2025

Cinema rolled, Sarees swirled at IFFI 2025

Summed Up

And the red carpet became a LIVE reel of India's handloom legacy.

The red carpet at the **International Film Festival of India 2025** has witnessed countless moments of glamour—starlets in designer gowns, filmmakers in sharp tuxedos, the flashbulbs of a thousand cameras capturing every sequined detail. But on this particular evening in Goa, something extraordinary took the spotlight. The carpet itself became a runway, and the stars of the show were six yards of handwoven heritage, each saree telling an anecdote that spanned decades of Indian cinema and centuries of textile tradition. **"Handloom Sarees in Motion: 70MM on Runway"** was a love letter to Indian craftsmanship, a visual symphony that married the drama of cinema with the poetry of handloom, presented by DC (Handlooms) under the Ministry of Textiles.

As the lights dimmed and the music swelled, for 15 mesmerizing minutes, performed twice for an audience of international delegates and film personalities, it transported everyone present into another world of India through the golden



decades of Indian cinema, not through clips or montages, but through sarees. Each sequence echoed a cinematic era, from the soft, lyrical drapes of the 1940s to the experimental boldness of the 1970s, the romantic flourish of the 1990s, and the high-glam confidence of the 2020s. Every pleat, every swirl, mimicked the mood of its moment.

Weaves from Every Corner of India

The runway showcased over 40 handloom sarees, sourced from ac

-ross the country. From Chhattisgarh came the golden warmth of Tussar silk and the rustic elegance of Gheecha silk. Jammu and Kashmir contributed Ikat Pashmina sarees, their intricate patterns testament to generations of weaving expertise.

Uttar Pradesh sent its most treasured exports—the luminous Banarasi Butidar and the distinctive Mubarakpur Lachcha Buta sarees, heavy with tradition and craftsmanship. Madhya Pradesh's Chanderi added its characteristic lightweight luxury, while Andhra Pradesh's Venkatagiri brought its crisp cott-

on-silk blend. Kerala's Kuthampully sarees, with their distinctive golden borders, completed this geographical and artistic diversity. The innovation didn't stop at the weaving. Adding another layer of artistry, select sarees were hand-painted by award-winning artists, featuring iconic Indian art forms like Pichwai (Rajasthan), Pattachitra (Odisha), Warli (Maharashtra), Pen Kalamkari (Andhra Pradesh), Madhubani (Bihar), Gond and Bhil art (Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh). A breathtaking collision of fabric, paint, history, and imagination.

Cinema's Costume History

The relationship between Indian cinema and the saree deserves its own scholarly study. In the early decades of Hindi cinema, the saree was practically obligatory for heroines, reflecting societal norms but also creating an aesthetic vocabulary. Think of how Nargis wore her sarees in Mehboob Khan's films: the draping style became synonymous with a particular kind of strong, earthy femininity. The 60s and 70s saw experimentation. Actresses like Mumtaz and Hema Malini popul-



arized the "mumtaz style" of draping, worn low on the hips with the pallu pleated and pinned at the shoulder. Meanwhile, art cinema embraced the saree as a marker of authenticity. Smita Patil and Shabana Azmi wore simple cotton sarees that spoke of real India, far from Bombay's glamour. The 90s romance revival brought sarees back to the mainstream with renewed enthusiasm. Who can forget Mad-

-huri Dixit's purple saree in Hum Aapke Hain Koun, which reportedly sparked a national trend? Or Kajol's stunning array of sarees in Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge, each one more beautiful than the last? Today's cinema brings perhaps the widest range, from Vidya Balan's deliberate embrace of the saree as her signature look to Deepika Padukone's high-fashion interpretations on the table that grace international red carpets.

A Philosophy in Six Yards

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. M Beena, Development Commissioner (Handlooms), summed up the soul of the evening with equal eloquence: "...Rooted in tradition, Saree is a fashion statement and a philosophy- a philosophy of artistry, a philosophy of rural livelihood. Through IFFI, which celebrates cinema in the most glamorous way, we wanted to present our attire and the work of our weavers, artisans, and creative traditions before the global audience."

Dr. M. Beena's description of the saree as "**a philosophy**" resonates deeply. In its adaptability, appropriate for everyone from laborers to royalty, for daily wear and ceremonial occasions- the saree embodies democratic principles. In its regional diversity, it celebrates pluralism. In its unstitched form, it offers infinite possibilities for individual expression. In its endurance across millennia, it demonstrates cultural continuity. And in its creation through handloom, it represents a model



Cinema rolled, Sarees swirled at IFFI 2025

Summed Up

of production that honors human skill, environmental limits, and community bonds that seem increasingly relevant as we confront the consequences of fast-fashion capitalism's excesses.

The phrase she invoked "**Vikas Bhi, Virasat Bhi**" (development and heritage both) encapsulates India's complex negotiation with modernity. How do we grow economically while honoring our cultural roots? How do we participate in global fashion while supporting traditional crafts? This fashion show proposed an answer by giving traditional crafts contemporary platforms, by making heritage not a museum piece but a go-to part of our present.

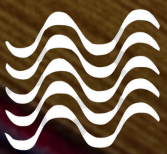


The Grand Finale

As the models took their final walk and the music faded, the audience at IFFI rose in appreciation. But the real test of such initiatives lies beyond the applause, in whether they translate into sustained interest and support. There are encouraging signs. E-commerce has opened new markets for handloom weavers, connecting them directly with urban and international customers. Government initiatives provide institutional support and marketing platforms. Celebrity endorsements create aspirational value. Design interventions help traditional crafts find contemporary relevance without losing authenticity. "Sarees in Motion" represents the kind of creative programming that can shift perceptions. By associating handloom with cinema, glamour, and international prestige, it challenges the notion that traditional crafts are old-fashioned or provincial. By showcasing the incredible diversity of Indian textiles in one curated experience, it educates even as it entertains.



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