

WHEN THREADS REMEMBER WHAT THE WORLD FORGOT, ONLY THE YOUNG CAN DISCOVER THE HIDDEN SECRETS!

THE QUEST FOR THE SACRED CLOTH



THE QUEST FOR THE *SACRED* CLOTH

SYNOPSIS

When five children discover an ancient cave during their school trip, they meet a holy monk and are chosen as Keepers of the Sacred Weave. Guided by legendary figures from India's textile past and a mystical dog, they journey across the country—through temples, forests, deserts, and ghats—to recover six heritage fabrics, each encoded with healing secrets. From sabotaged looms in Kanchipuram to sacred brocades buried beneath Varanasi Ghats, they must face natural disasters, dark forces, and cultural erasure. But as the threads come together, they discover a powerful truth: India's textiles don't just clothe the body—they restore the soul.

COMMISSIONED BY

Dr. M Beena, IAS

Development Commissioner (Handlooms)

CONCEPTUALIZED BY

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Managing Director, NHDC

STORY BY **PRASAD BIDAPA**

ART BY **NAGENDRA PRASAD**



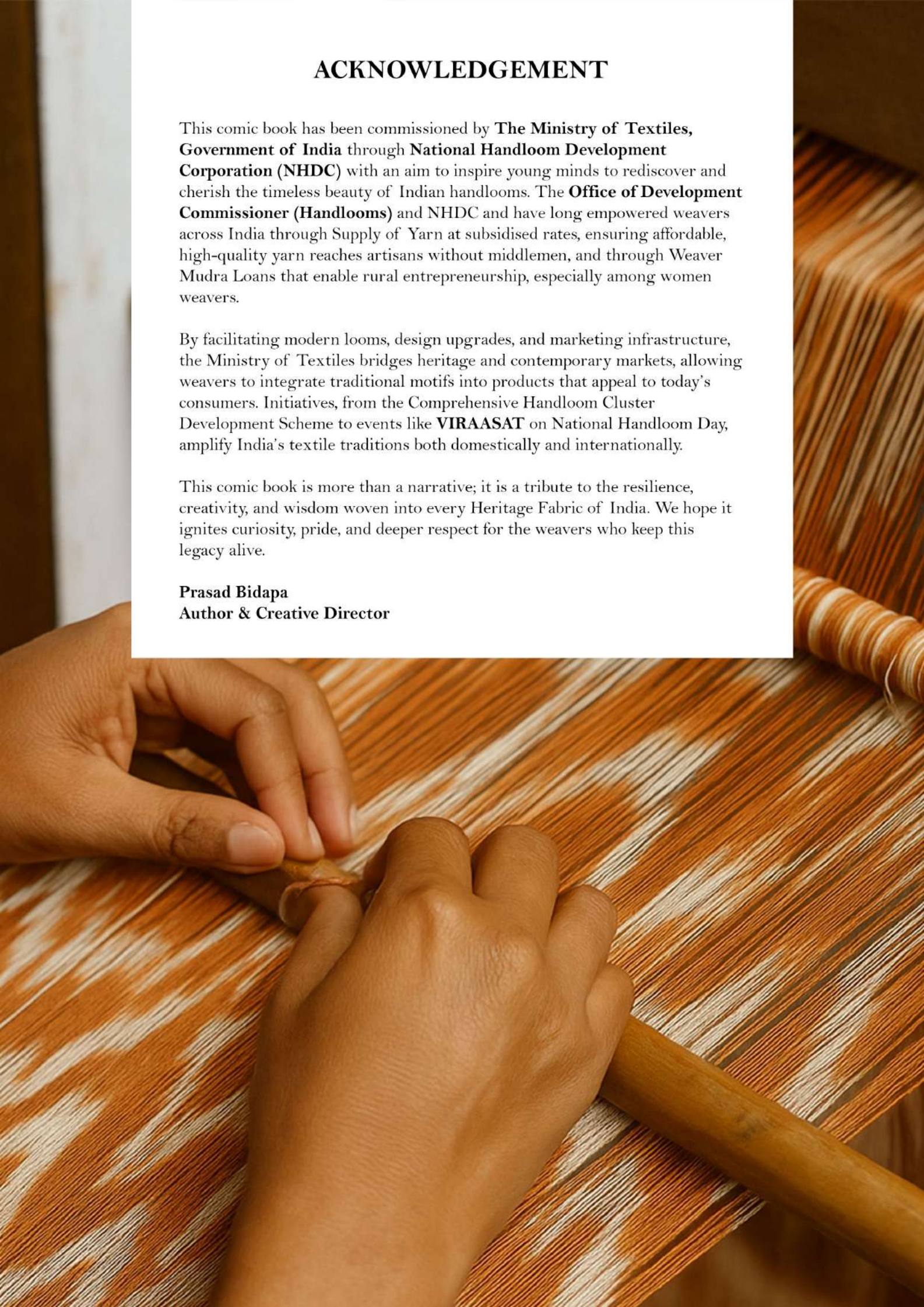
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This comic book has been commissioned by **The Ministry of Textiles, Government of India** through **National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC)** with an aim to inspire young minds to rediscover and cherish the timeless beauty of Indian handlooms. The **Office of Development Commissioner (Handlooms)** and NHDC have long empowered weavers across India through Supply of Yarn at subsidised rates, ensuring affordable, high-quality yarn reaches artisans without middlemen, and through Weaver Mudra Loans that enable rural entrepreneurship, especially among women weavers.

By facilitating modern looms, design upgrades, and marketing infrastructure, the Ministry of Textiles bridges heritage and contemporary markets, allowing weavers to integrate traditional motifs into products that appeal to today's consumers. Initiatives, from the Comprehensive Handloom Cluster Development Scheme to events like **VIRAASAT** on National Handloom Day, amplify India's textile traditions both domestically and internationally.

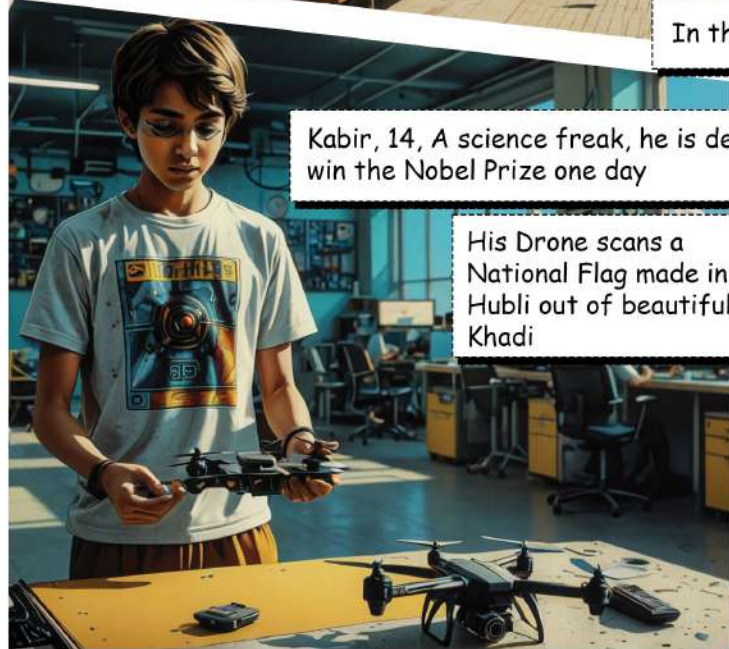
This comic book is more than a narrative; it is a tribute to the resilience, creativity, and wisdom woven into every Heritage Fabric of India. We hope it ignites curiosity, pride, and deeper respect for the weavers who keep this legacy alive.

Prasad Bidapa
Author & Creative Director





In the bustling Bharat International School, five children stand out



Kabir, 14, A science freak, he is determined to win the Nobel Prize one day

His Drone scans a National Flag made in Hubli out of beautiful Khadi



Kabir: "Mars can wait. Threads have codes too"

Annika, 13, is a bookworm and believes that reading books is better than screentime. She's highly intelligent and good with solving riddles



Annika: "Turmeric. Indigo. Not just dyes. Medicines"

Aryaman, 12, is the joker in the pack—fun, fearless, and full of wild ideas. He might be cracking jokes, but his mind's always building something brilliant.



Aryaman: "One small bite for man, one giant crunch for mankind!"



Mira, 7, may be the second smallest, but her heart beats in harmony with nature. Animals listen when she speaks



Vamika, 6, is the baby of the group. Dreamy and capable of interpreting hidden science and symbols.



Her hand glides over a 200-year-old shawl

Vamika: "It's alive"



During a school nature trek to visit ancient caves, the group veers off-track into thick foliage.

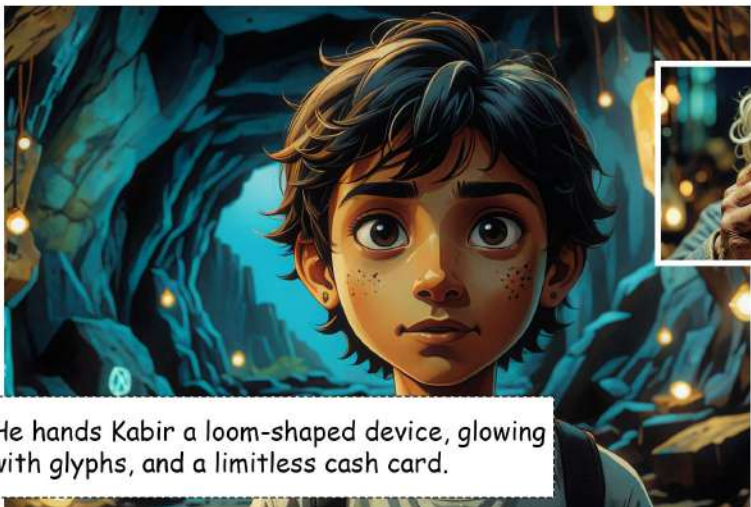


Behind vines, they uncover an ancient cave with intricate carvings of looms, charakas, natural dyes, and Sanskrit codework. A beam of light activates a statue of a seated monk. Rishi Vasanta manifests.

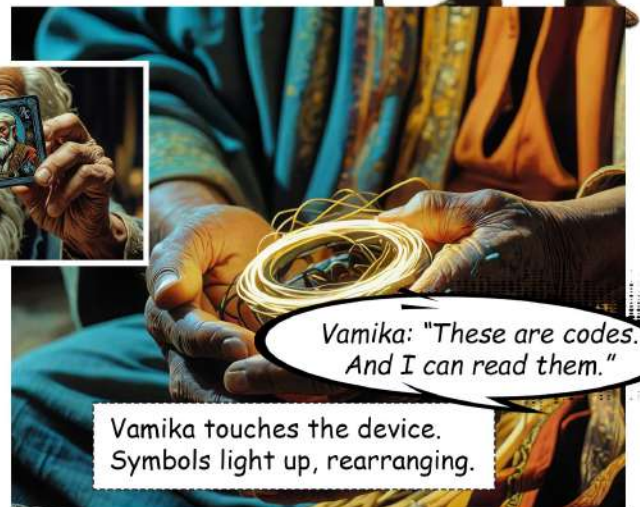
Rishi Vasanta: "You are the chosen ones. Six sacred handlooms under threat from powerlooms. If they vanish, we lose more than cloth—we lose memory, medicine, and meaning."

"If you children discover the hidden secrets of our beautiful textiles, you can make the world a better and healthier place."

THE CAVE

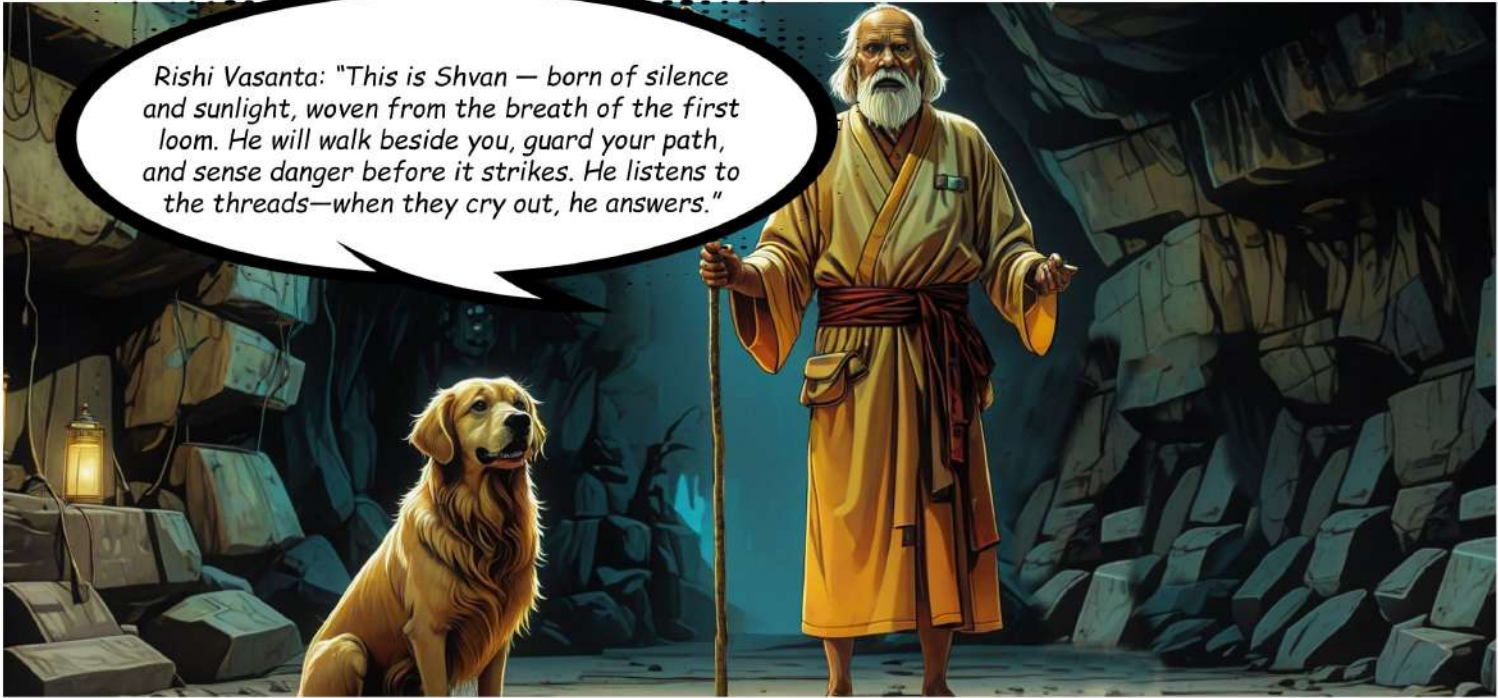


He hands Kabir a loom-shaped device, glowing with glyphs, and a limitless cash card.



Vamika: "These are codes. And I can read them."

Vamika touches the device. Symbols light up, rearranging.

A scene in a dark, rocky cave. An elderly man with a long white beard, wearing a yellow robe and a red sash, stands holding a wooden staff. A golden retriever sits on the ground, looking up at him. A small lantern is visible on the left.

Rishi Vasanta: "This is Shvan — born of silence and sunlight, woven from the breath of the first loom. He will walk beside you, guard your path, and sense danger before it strikes. He listens to the threads—when they cry out, he answers."

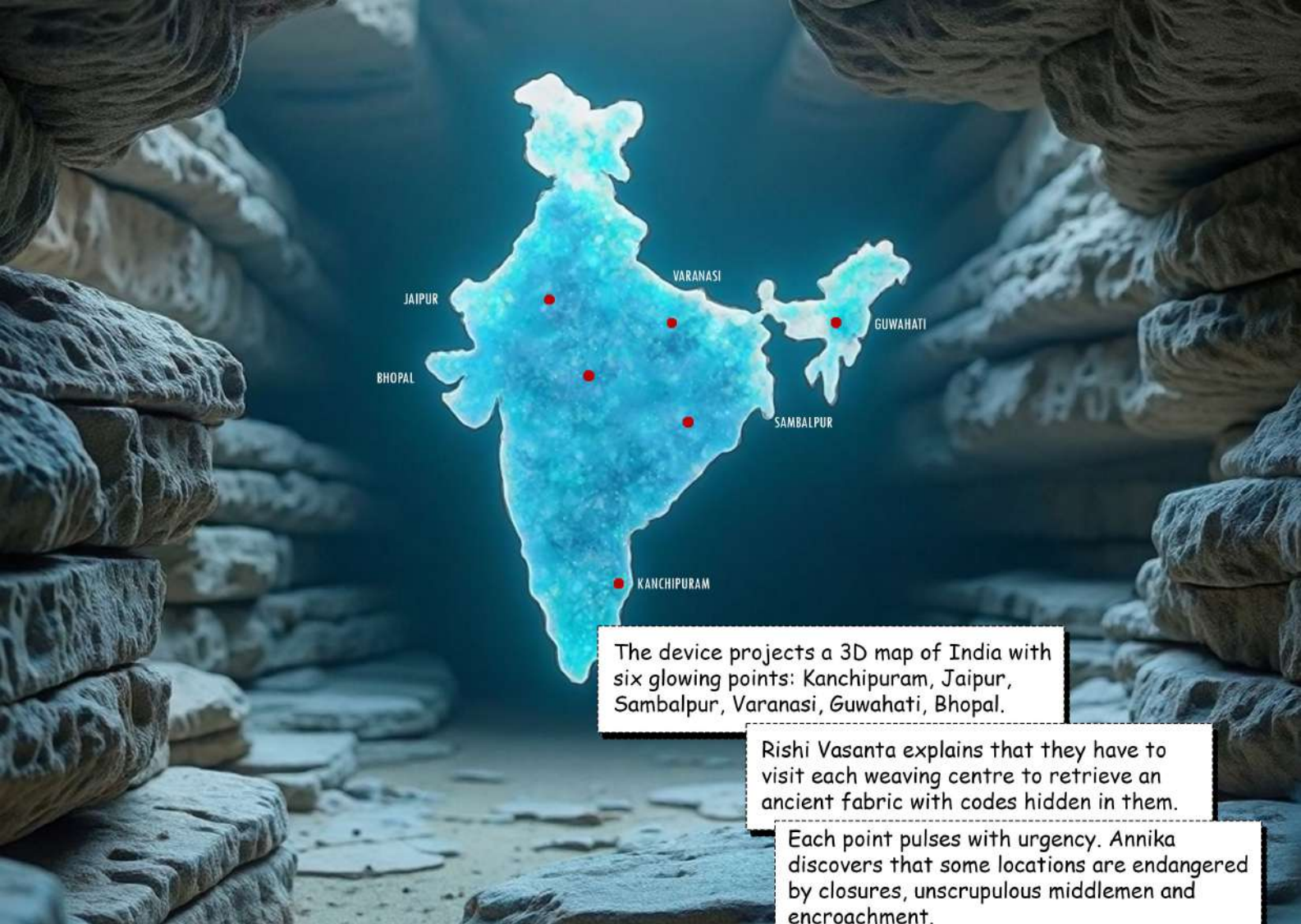
A close-up of the golden retriever, Shvan, standing in the cave. He has a dark collar with a small bell. The background shows rocky walls and some glowing blue light patterns.

Shvan looked into the group with eyes ancient and wise, a quiet trust glowing immaculately from within — as if he had known them across lifetimes, and was ready to begin again.

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a light blue dress, is kneeling on the ground. She is holding a small, glowing object in her hand, offering it to the golden retriever, who is sitting and looking at her. The background shows the cave's interior with some stone structures.

Mira: "He's... not like any dog I've ever known."

Mira and Shvan form a instant bond.



The device projects a 3D map of India with six glowing points: Kanchipuram, Jaipur, Sambalpur, Varanasi, Guwahati, Bhopal.

Rishi Vasanta explains that they have to visit each weaving centre to retrieve an ancient fabric with codes hidden in them.

Each point pulses with urgency. Annika discovers that some locations are endangered by closures, unscrupulous middlemen and encroachment.



Aryaman questions: "Why Us?"

Rishi Vasantha : "Because you see beyond the fabric. You see what binds. You are the chosen youth"



The group accepts the task and starts packing the essentials: Gadgets, notebooks, snacks and clothes.



They begin their journey, following the first thread To Kanchipuram

Kanchipuram silk, is the heaviest in the country combining a three ply body with four ply borders in Tamil Nadu and is celebrated for its opulence and grandeur. Kanchipuram weaving has a rich history spanning over 1,500 years, with its origins dating back to the Pallava dynasty in the 6th century CE. Its most significant feature was the ability to intertwine a different set of threads to the body warp colour, thread by thread so that the pallu/end-piece could be woven in a contrast colour which also highlighted the weft patterns that were woven into the pallu. The contrasting coloured borders were achieved by weaving with at least three shuttles (one for the body and at least two for the borders which could be of different colours) and their interlocking was visible as bold temple- spires of various forms or even a clean subtle joint. Checks, stripes, and florals, in the body and borders combined with pure zari made of silver dipped in gold. Legend says the Devangas and Saligars migrated from Andhra Pradesh to Kanchipuram under royal patronage. Known for durability, these sarees are heirlooms passed down generations. Mythological motifs like the yali, peacock, Rudraksha beads, and coins reflect South Indian temple sculpture traditions. Kanchipuram silk sarees remain an essential bridal trousseau item, symbolizing prosperity and elegance, and are often worn by classical dancers for their dignified drape and resplendent colours. In 2005-2006, the Government of India recognized Kanchipuram silk as a Geographical Indication, acknowledging its unique craftsmanship and heritage.

KANCHIPURAM



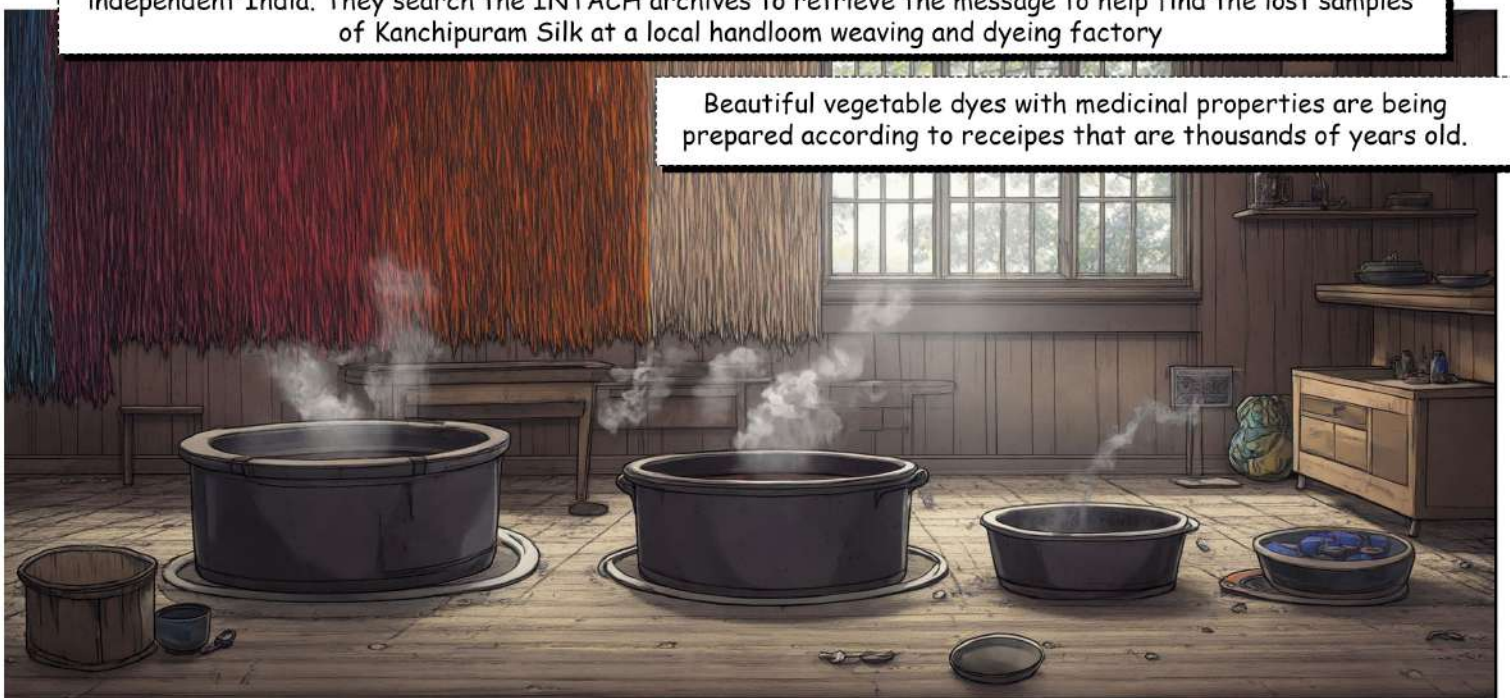


The kids step out of a train onto a sun-washed platform.

Kabir: "Feels like the past never left."



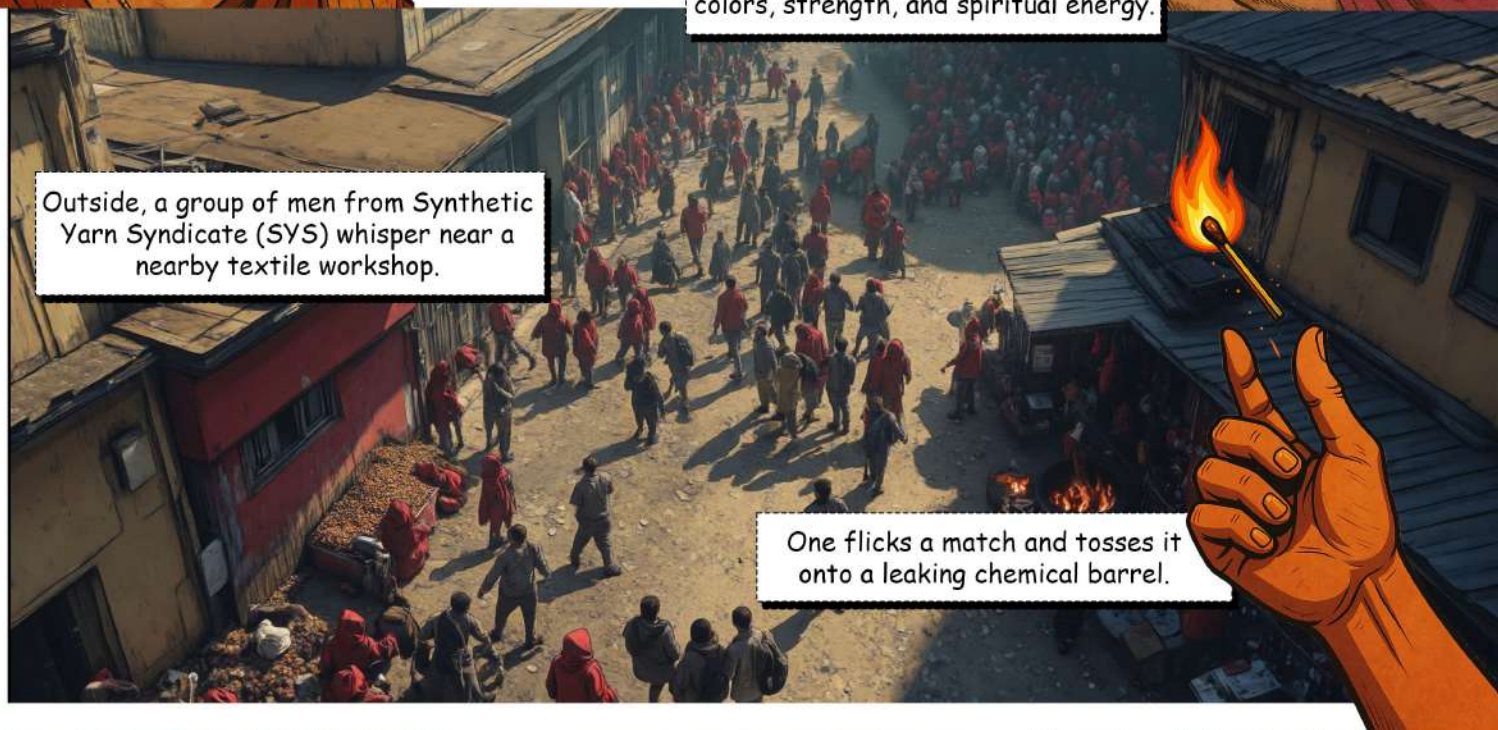
They arrive at the home of silk to meet the legendary Jaya Jaitly, a great textile conservationist to access a video recording of their second Guide, Pupul Jayakar, who was the doyenne of handloom revival in post independent India. They search the INTACH archives to retrieve the message to help find the lost samples of Kanchipuram Silk at a local handloom weaving and dyeing factory



Beautiful vegetable dyes with medicinal properties are being prepared according to receipts that are thousands of years old.



Kanchipuram silk is known for vibrant colors, strength, and spiritual energy.



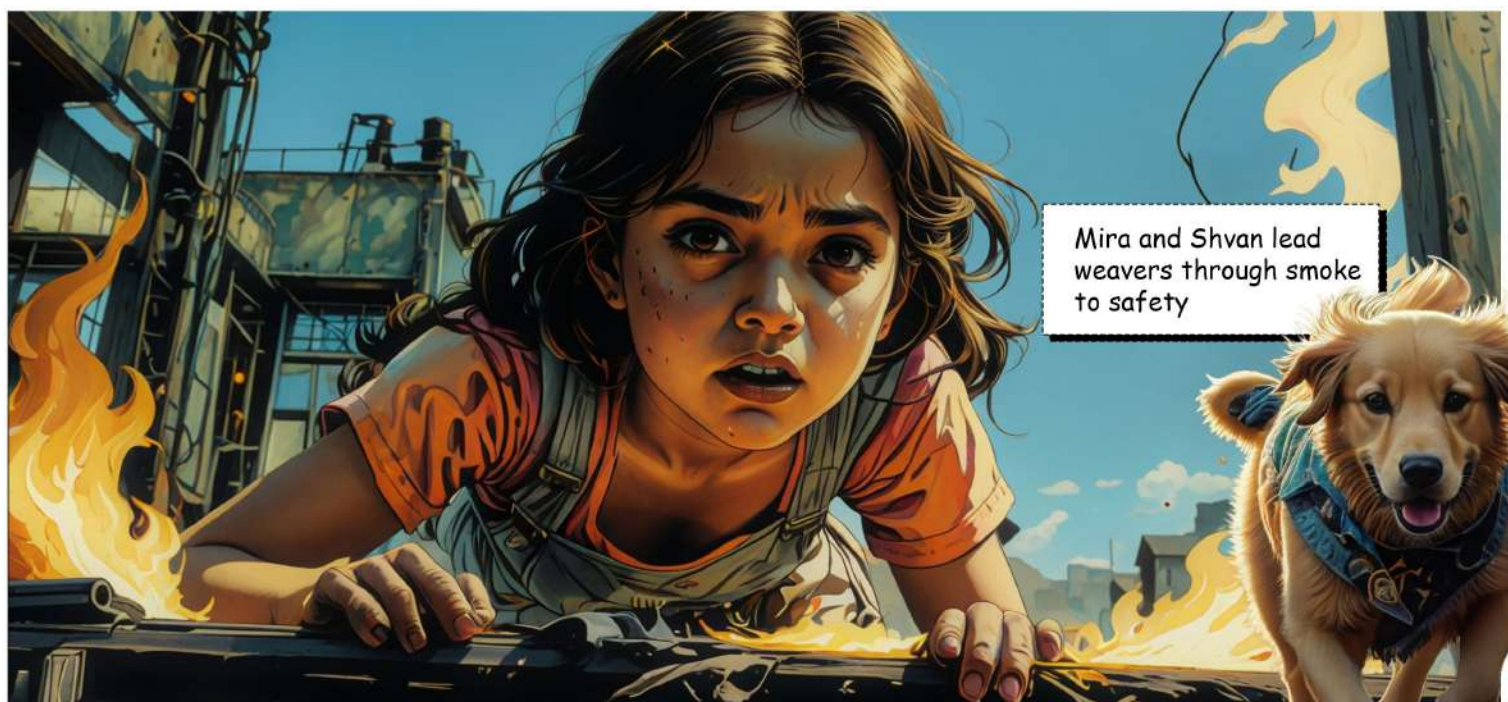


The group acts fast

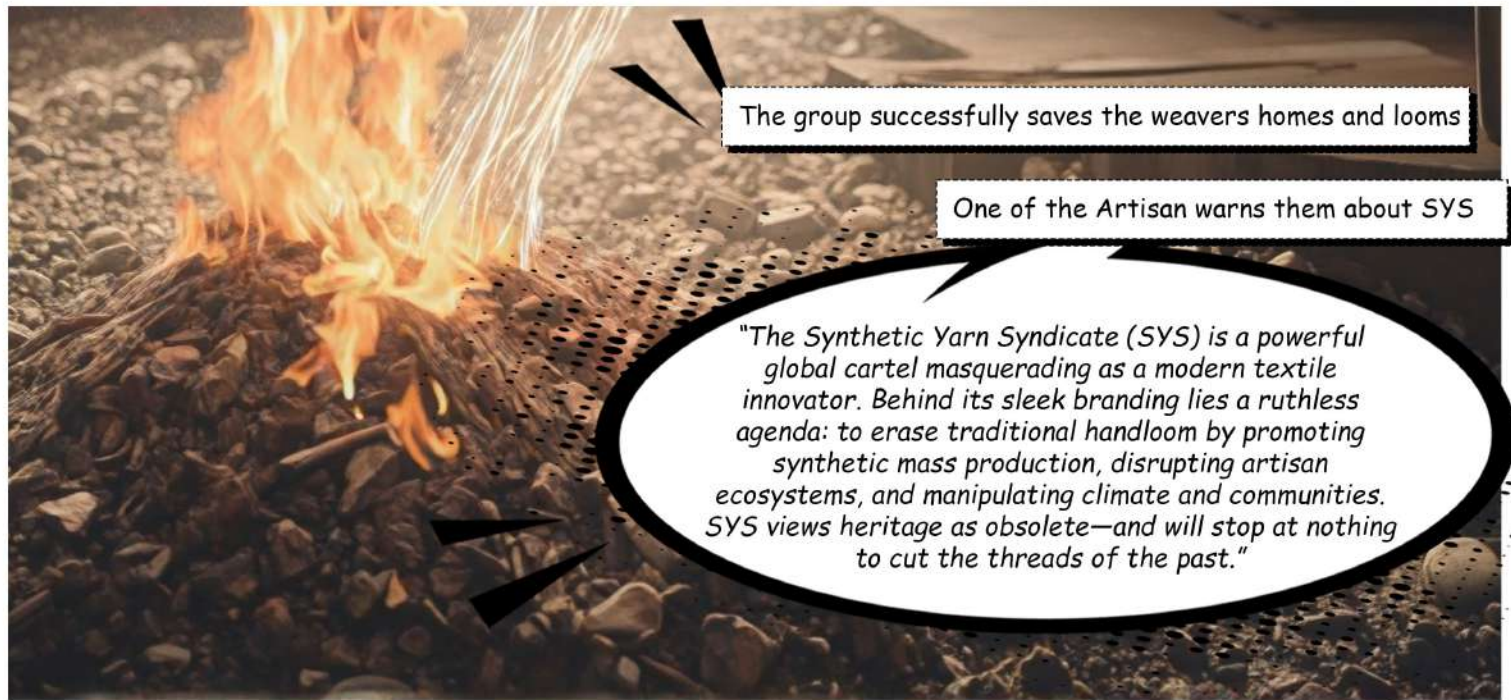
Kabir sends his drone to find exit paths to escape.



Aryaman hacks the water systems to quell the flames.



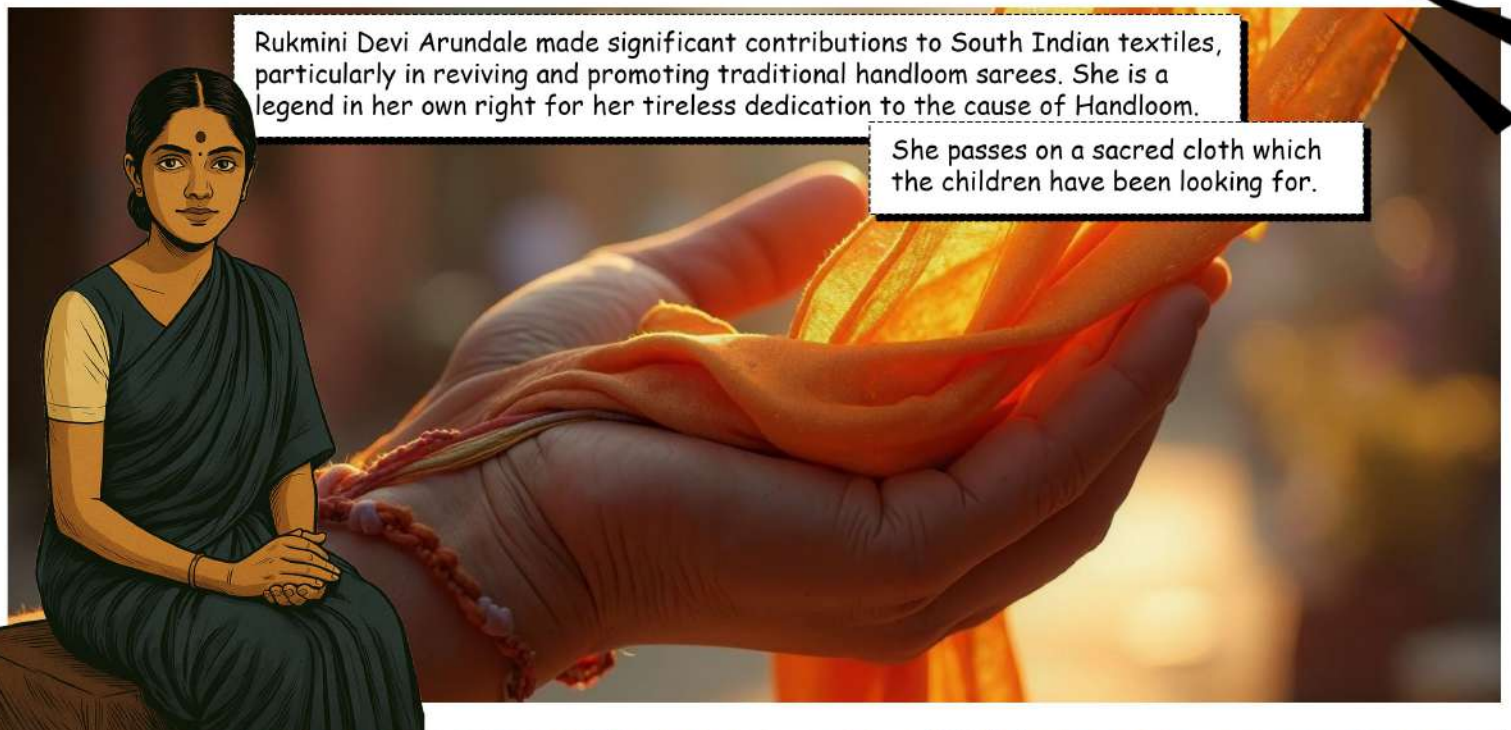
Mira and Shvan lead weavers through smoke to safety



The group successfully saves the weavers homes and looms

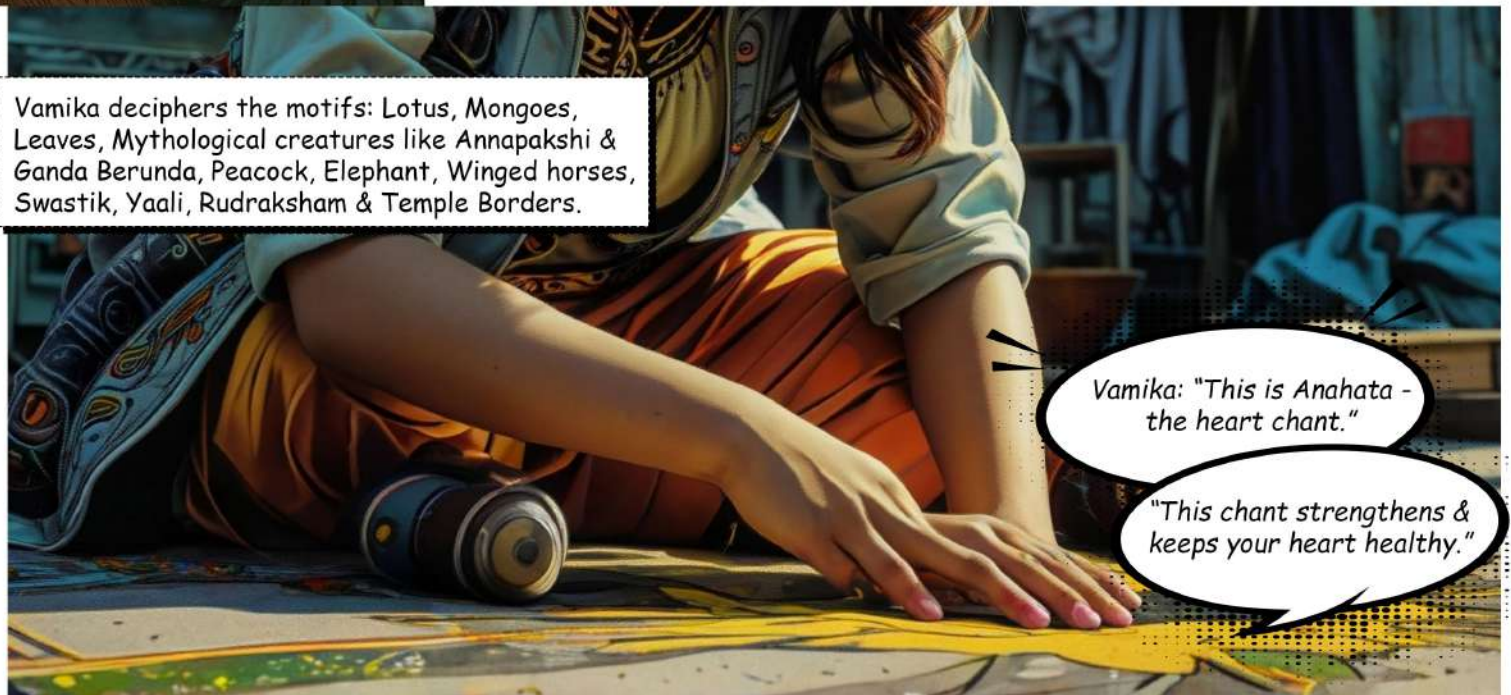
One of the Artisan warns them about SYS

"The Synthetic Yarn Syndicate (SYS) is a powerful global cartel masquerading as a modern textile innovator. Behind its sleek branding lies a ruthless agenda: to erase traditional handloom by promoting synthetic mass production, disrupting artisan ecosystems, and manipulating climate and communities. SYS views heritage as obsolete—and will stop at nothing to cut the threads of the past."



Rukmini Devi Arundale made significant contributions to South Indian textiles, particularly in reviving and promoting traditional handloom sarees. She is a legend in her own right for her tireless dedication to the cause of Handloom.

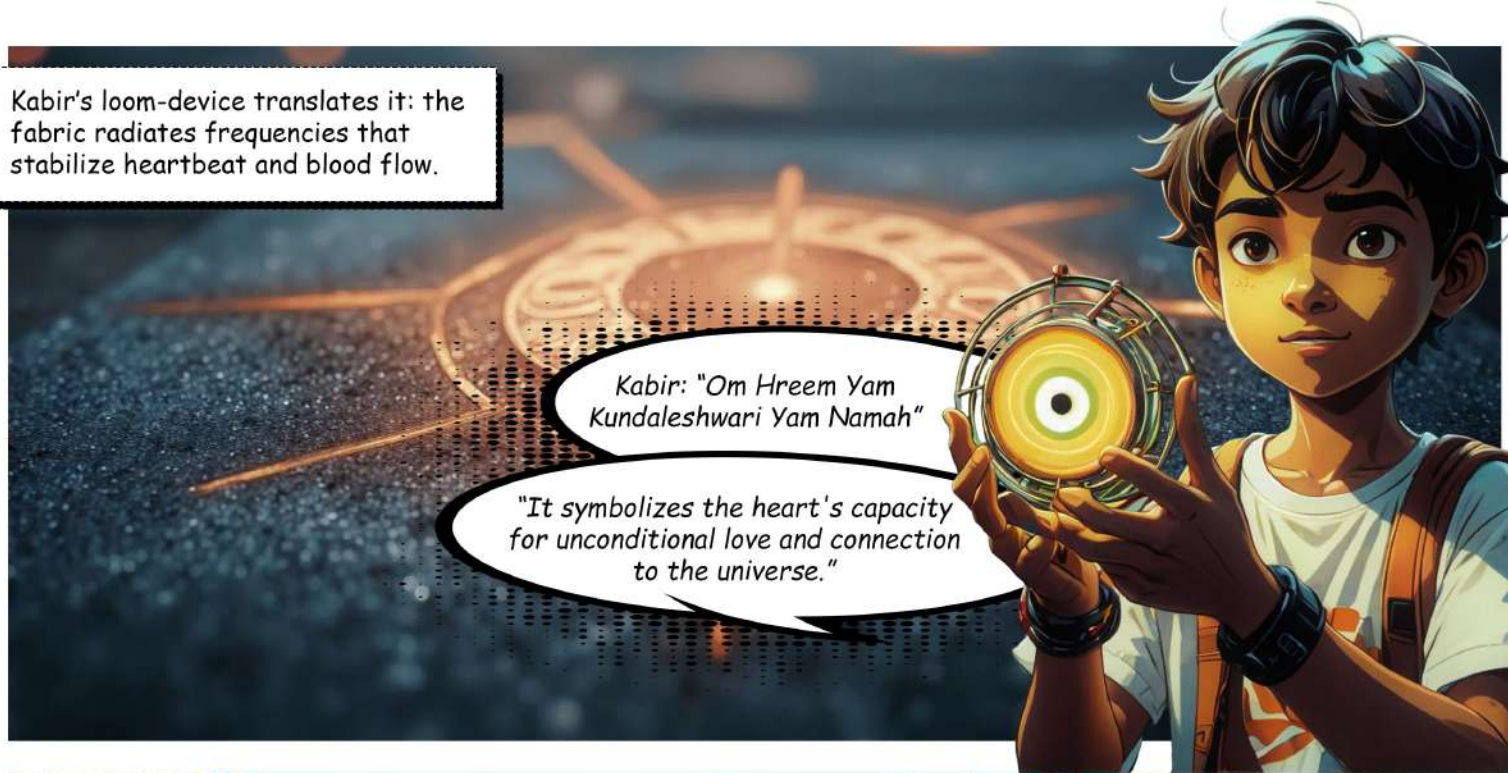
She passes on a sacred cloth which the children have been looking for.



Vamika deciphers the motifs: Lotus, Mongoes, Leaves, Mythological creatures like Annapakshi & Ganda Berunda, Peacock, Elephant, Winged horses, Swastik, Yaali, Rudraksham & Temple Borders.

Vamika: "This is Anahata - the heart chant."

"This chant strengthens & keeps your heart healthy."



Kabir's loom-device translates it: the fabric radiates frequencies that stabilize heartbeat and blood flow.

Kabir: "Om Hreem Yam
Kundaleshwari Yam Namah"

"It symbolizes the heart's capacity
for unconditional love and connection
to the universe."



As they leave, an agent bribed by the SYS
warns them:

"You're trespassing on historical
property. Stop scanning."



Jaya: "Let them scan. Threads
remember what empires forget."

Pupul: "These Children will help us save
the beautiful fabric treasures of India"

Pupul Jayakar (1915-1997) was a visionary cultural activist and writer who played a pivotal role in reviving India's traditional arts and crafts post-independence. As the founder of the Handicrafts and Handlooms Export Corporation (HHEC), National Craft Museum and Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), she spearheaded numerous crafts councils and national exhibitions. Jayakar organised the Festival of India series globally, showcasing Indian textiles and crafts to the world. Her initiatives preserved indigenous weaving traditions, empowered artisans economically, and positioned Indian handlooms as an integral part of national identity and soft power diplomacy.

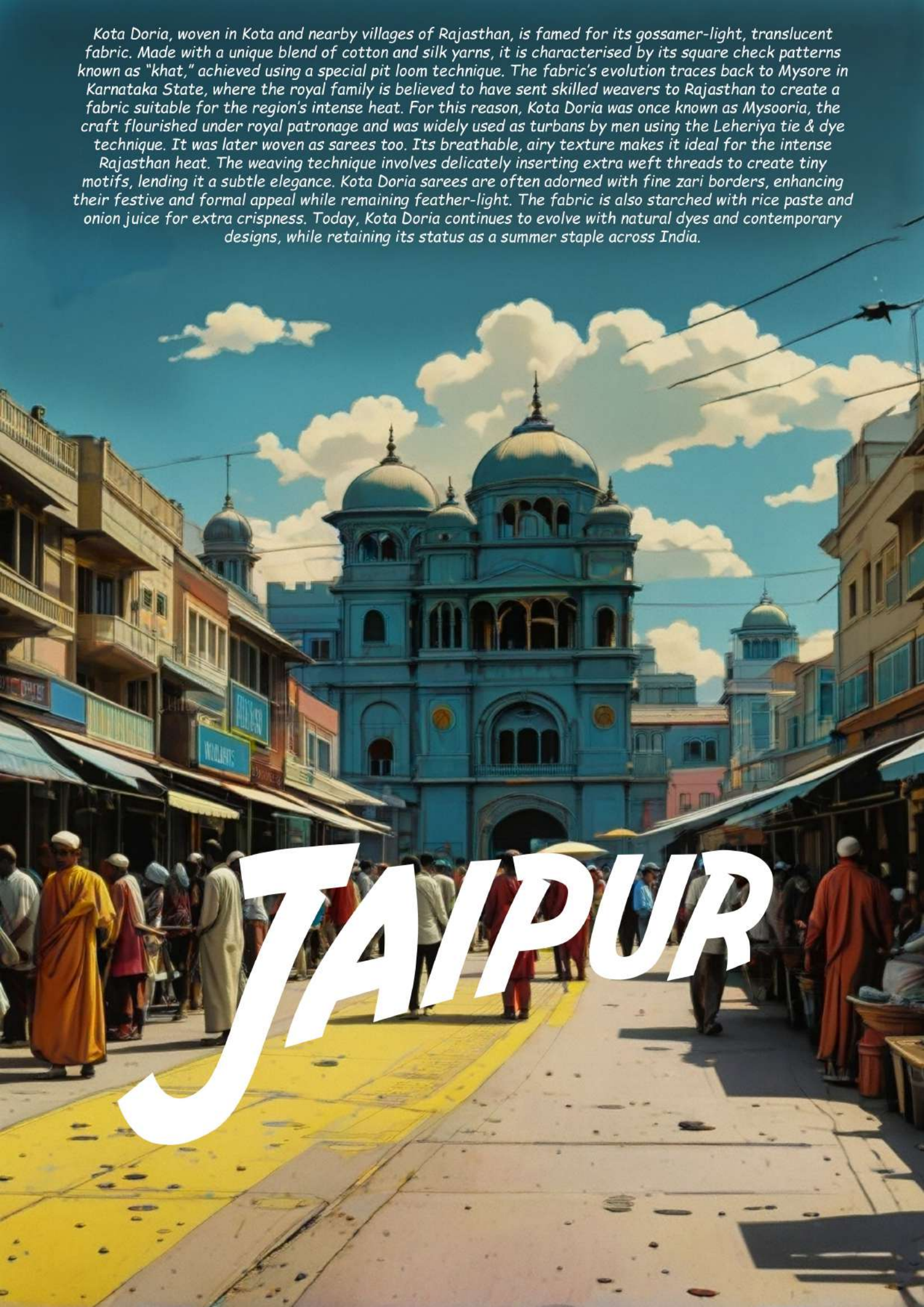
A large white commercial airplane is shown in flight, banking to the right. The background features a range of rugged, reddish-brown mountains under a warm, orange-hued sky, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall scene conveys a sense of journey and achievement.

MISSION 1

COMPLETE

Jaya Jaitly is a leading advocate for India's handloom heritage, with over four decades of pioneering work in craft promotion and artisan empowerment. As founder of the Dastkari Haat Samiti, she has curated global platforms for over 1,500 artisans through vibrant crafts bazaars. Passionate about uplifting weavers, she champions literacy, skill development, and policy reform to ensure sustainable livelihoods. Jaitly's initiatives—like reimagining the humble gamcha—blend tradition with innovation, making handlooms relevant for today's markets. Tirelessly defending the sector against exploitative systems and taxation, she remains a visionary force preserving India's cultural fabric while empowering those who weave it.

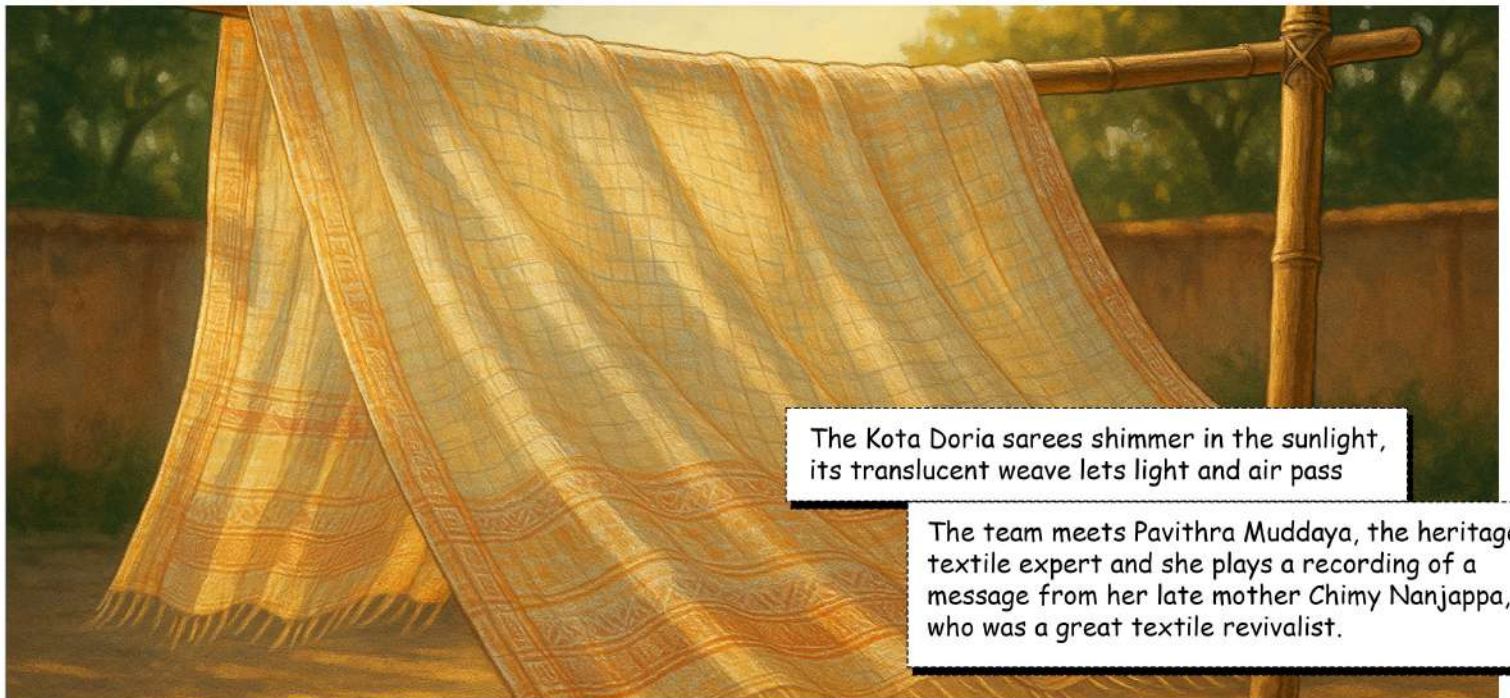
Kota Doria, woven in Kota and nearby villages of Rajasthan, is famed for its gossamer-light, translucent fabric. Made with a unique blend of cotton and silk yarns, it is characterised by its square check patterns known as "khat," achieved using a special pit loom technique. The fabric's evolution traces back to Mysore in Karnataka State, where the royal family is believed to have sent skilled weavers to Rajasthan to create a fabric suitable for the region's intense heat. For this reason, Kota Doria was once known as Mysooria, the craft flourished under royal patronage and was widely used as turbans by men using the Leheriya tie & dye technique. It was later woven as sarees too. Its breathable, airy texture makes it ideal for the intense Rajasthan heat. The weaving technique involves delicately inserting extra weft threads to create tiny motifs, lending it a subtle elegance. Kota Doria sarees are often adorned with fine zari borders, enhancing their festive and formal appeal while remaining feather-light. The fabric is also starched with rice paste and onion juice for extra crispness. Today, Kota Doria continues to evolve with natural dyes and contemporary designs, while retaining its status as a summer staple across India.



JAIPUR



In Rajasthan, they reach the Kota village outside Jaipur



The Kota Doria sarees shimmer in the sunlight, its translucent weave lets light and air pass

The team meets Pavithra Muddaya, the heritage textile expert and she plays a recording of a message from her late mother Chimy Nanjappa, who was a great textile revivalist.

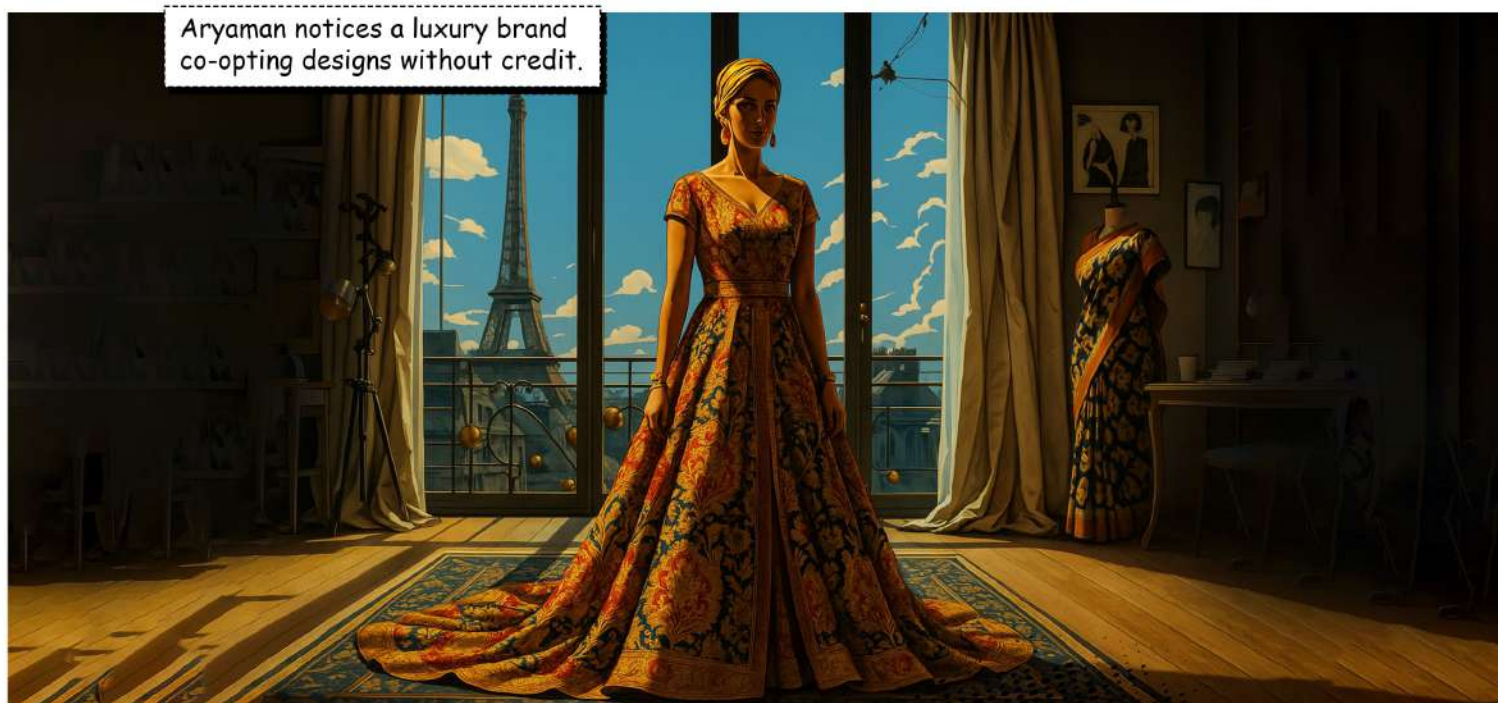


Pavithra: "Welcome, children. Here, the weavers do not just weave cloth — they weave breath itself. This is Kota Doria. Light as air, strong as resolve."

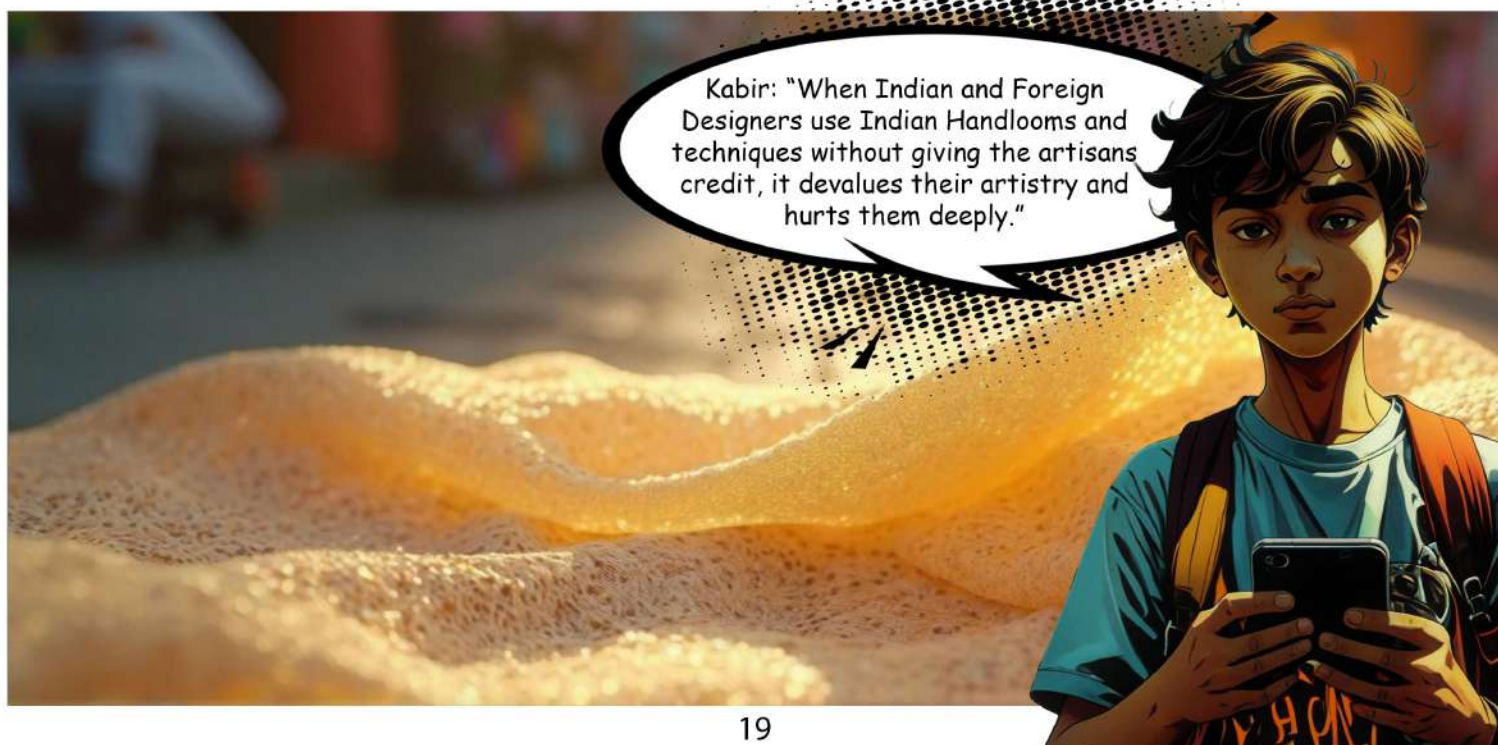
Chimy: "Each thread is bathed in neem, aloe, and marigold. It cools the skin, soothes the nerves, and lets the spirit rest easy. Feel it against your palm... it carries the blessing of the wind."



Annika discovers colonial-era journals describing wearing Kota Doria as a cure for "nervous fever."



Aryaman notices a luxury brand co-opting designs without credit.



Kabir: "When Indian and Foreign Designers use Indian Handlooms and techniques without giving the artisans credit, it devalues their artistry and hurts them deeply."



Masked men from the Synthetic Yarn Syndicate force their way in and steal herb-dyed bolts of Kota Doria from the weavers together with a sacred book that the children need.



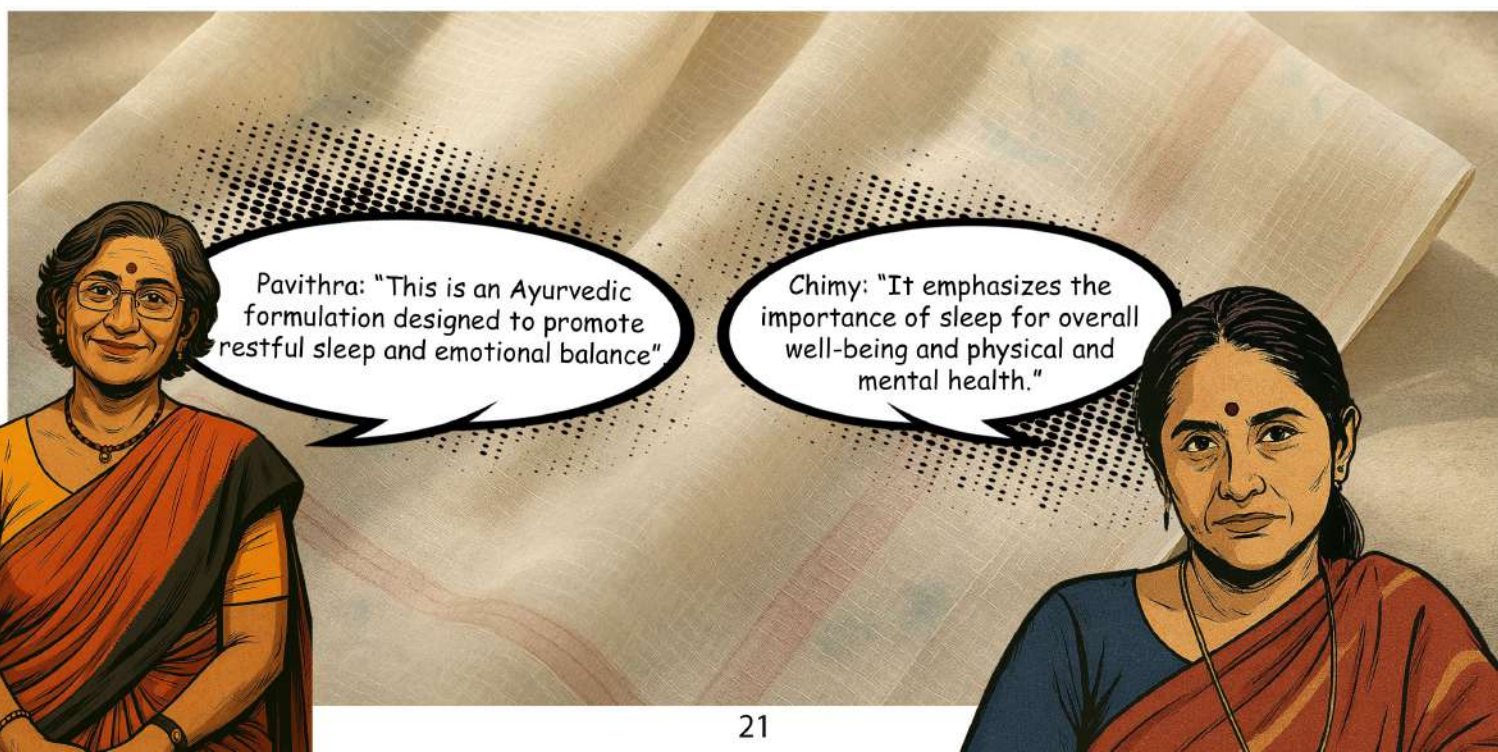
Shvan corners them barking fearlessly creating a glowing barrier



Aryaman uses a powder bomb made from a chilli powder stands nearby that stops them in their tracks.



The masked men drop the book and Mira retrieves it.



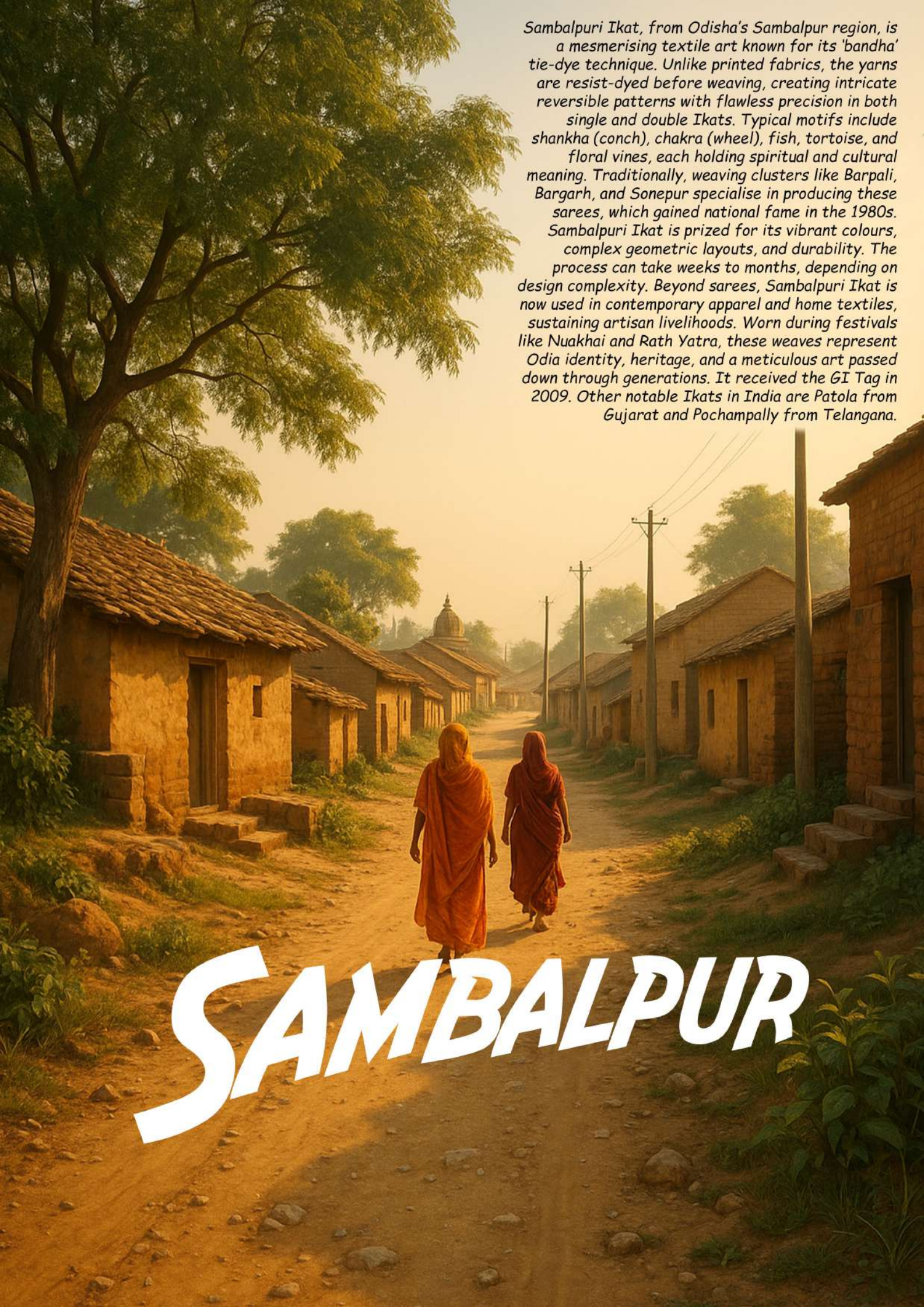
Pavithra: "This is an Ayurvedic formulation designed to promote restful sleep and emotional balance"

Chimy: "It emphasizes the importance of sleep for overall well-being and physical and mental health."

Chimy Nanjappa, along with her daughter Pavithra Muddaya, founded Vimor in 1974 in Bengaluru. Vimor has played a critical role in documenting, reviving, and sustaining vanishing saree designs and weaving traditions, especially lesser-known South Indian weaves. Chimy Nanjappa was known for her personal relationships with weavers, ensuring fair wages and respect. Her practical revival approach—adapting designs to market tastes while retaining heritage—has helped create livelihoods for weaving communities and preserve priceless textile knowledge for future generations.

MISSION 2 COMPLETE

Pavithra Muddaya, continuing the legacy of her mother, Chimy Nanjappa, upholds a deep commitment to India's textile and cultural history, preserving it through education, innovation, and sustained livelihood creation for artisans. She is a leading voice in the revival of South India's handloom traditions and the empowerment of weavers. Through her organizations, Vimor & Vimor Museum of Living Textiles, she has brought renewed attention to heritage saris like the Molkalmuru of Karnataka, ensuring their survival through thoughtful design revival and community support. A curator and designer, she showcased iconic motifs like the Gandaberunda and Kannada script at Karnataka Fashion Week, blending heritage with contemporary appeal.

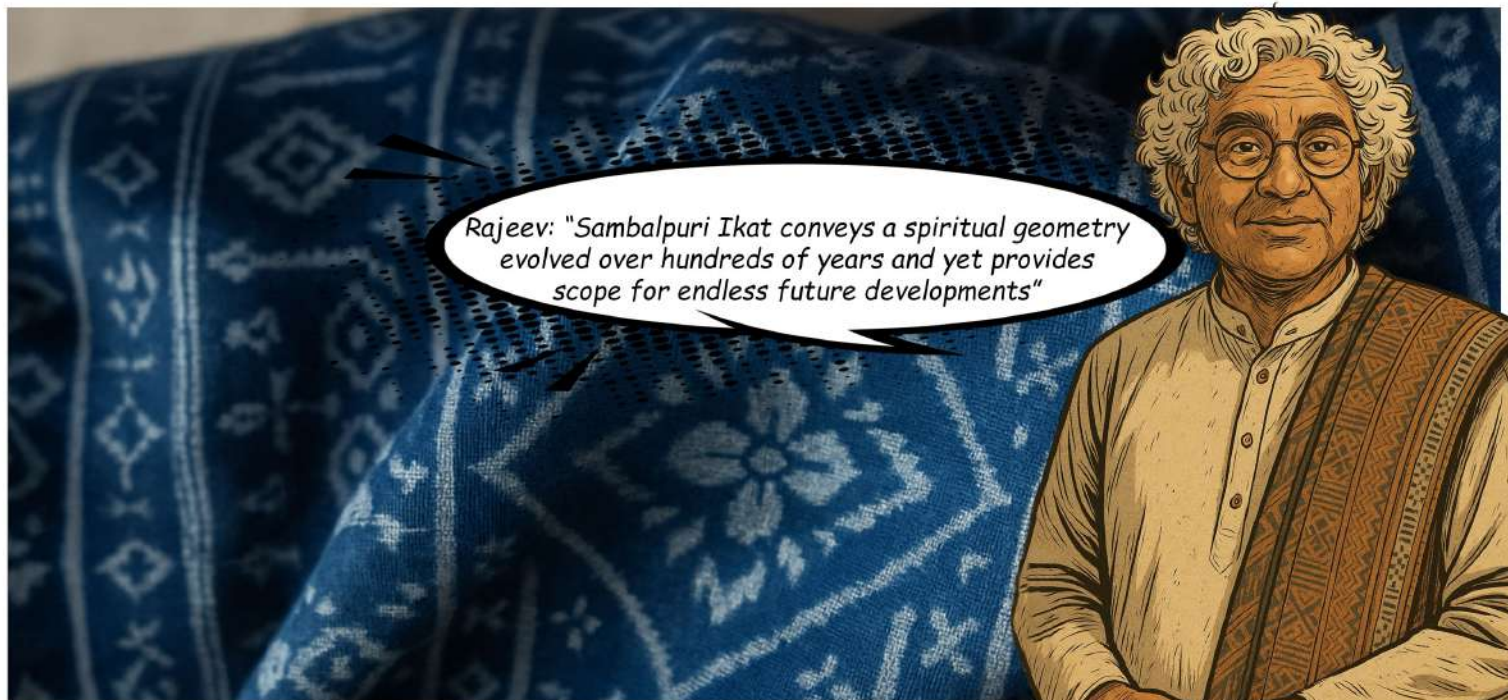


Sambalpuri Ikat, from Odisha's Sambalpur region, is a mesmerising textile art known for its 'bandha' tie-dye technique. Unlike printed fabrics, the yarns are resist-dyed before weaving, creating intricate reversible patterns with flawless precision in both single and double Ikats. Typical motifs include shankha (conch), chakra (wheel), fish, tortoise, and floral vines, each holding spiritual and cultural meaning. Traditionally, weaving clusters like Barpali, Bargarh, and Sonapur specialise in producing these sarees, which gained national fame in the 1980s. Sambalpuri Ikat is prized for its vibrant colours, complex geometric layouts, and durability. The process can take weeks to months, depending on design complexity. Beyond sarees, Sambalpuri Ikat is now used in contemporary apparel and home textiles, sustaining artisan livelihoods. Worn during festivals like Nuakhai and Rath Yatra, these weaves represent Odia identity, heritage, and a meticulous art passed down through generations. It received the GI Tag in 2009. Other notable Ikats in India are Patola from Gujarat and Pochampally from Telangana.

SAMBALPUR



In Sambalpur, the team visits the weaving villages and are lucky to meet Rajeev Sethi, India's best known Designer, Scenographer and Cultural Activist.



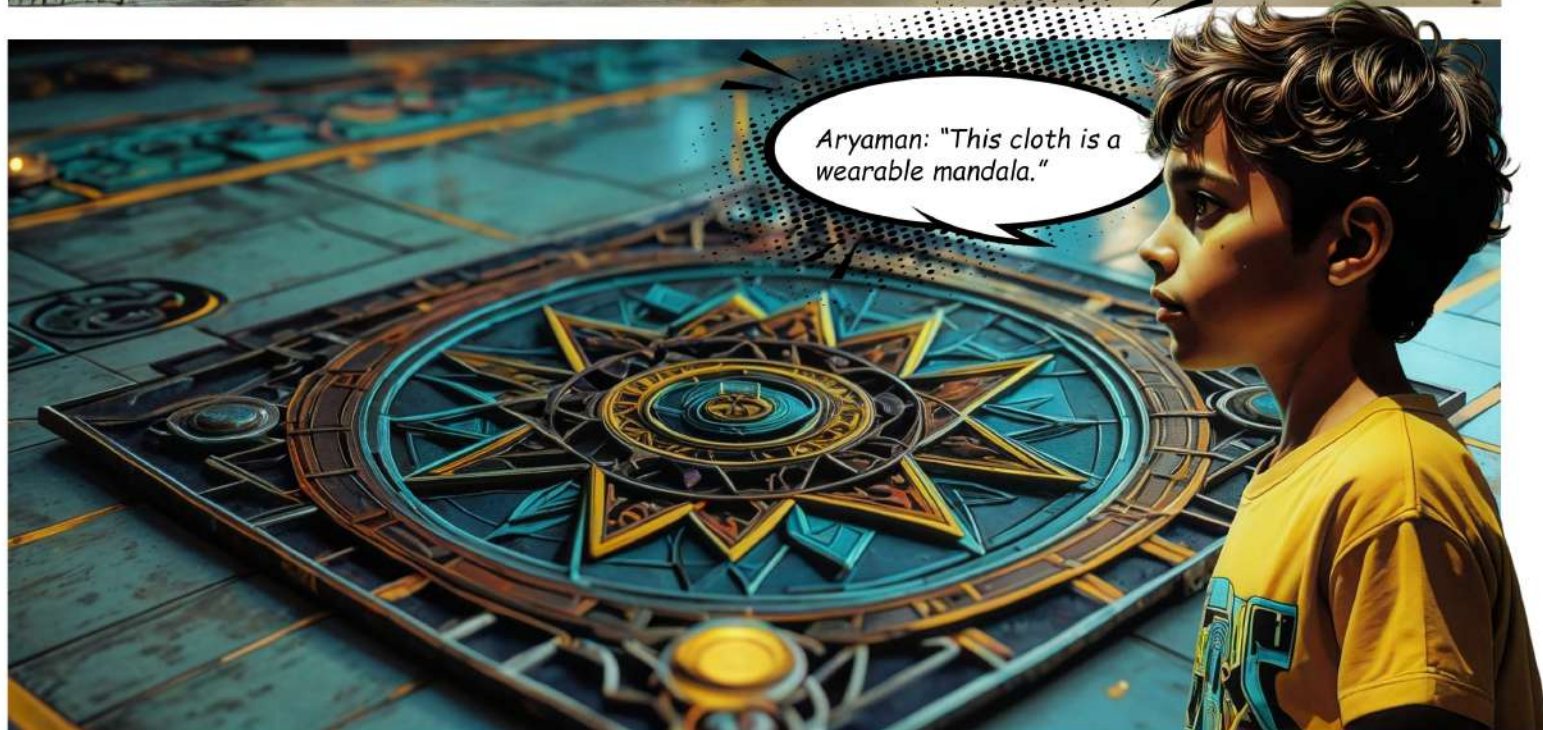
Rajeev: "Sambalpuri Ikat conveys a spiritual geometry evolved over hundreds of years and yet provides scope for endless future developments"



Rajeev communicates with weavers showing them how simple design innovations can help provide fresh life for their art of yarn tying, dyeing when effectively combined with extra warp and weft patterning as well, which distinguishes Odisha from other Ikat weaving areas.



Vamika overlays Ikat motifs with sacred yantras.



Aryaman: "This cloth is a wearable mandala."



A mining company's illegal dam created by the Synthetic Yarn Syndicate releases water in a deliberate move to harass the weavers. A Flash flood strikes, threatening the homes, looms and livelihood of the weavers.



Kabir flies his drone to look for elevations to guide the villagers to safety.



Shvan leads the animals of the village to safety.



Annika gathers all the villagers to move uphill to get away from the flooding until it recedes.



After the flood recedes, the sacred cloth still glows in a soaked workshop.

Malvika Singh, the distinguished editor and publisher of Seminar magazine, has been a powerful voice in documenting and advocating for India's cultural and textile heritage. Through thoughtful curation and critical discourse, she has helped shape the national conversation around handlooms, crafts, and indigenous design.

She gifts the children a beautiful Sambalpur Ikat Scarf.



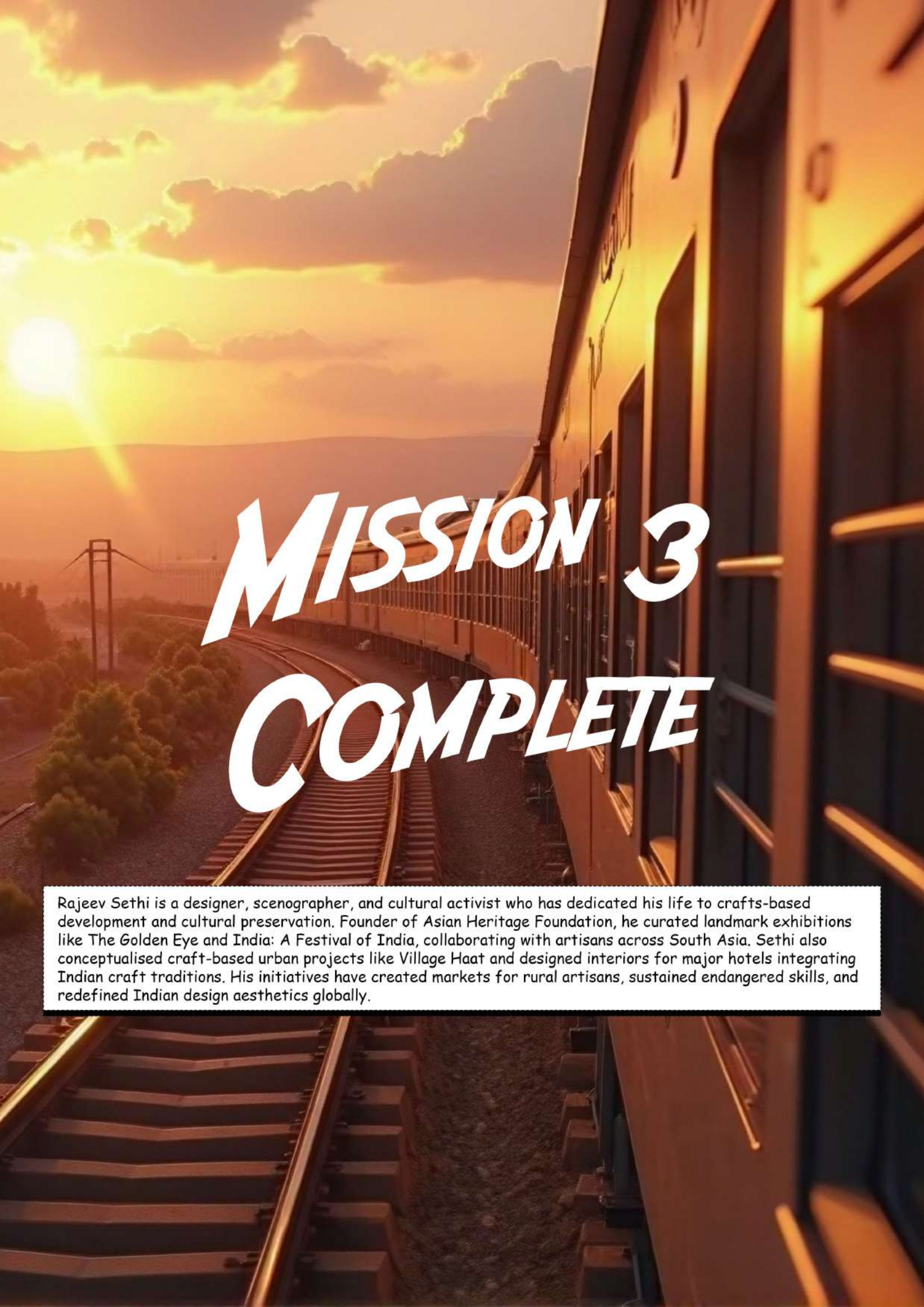
Vamika: "Haldi, neem, madder—woven antibodies. These dyes help us to cure skin disorders."

The Villagers fear the theft of their beautiful designs by digital printers. Rajeev Sethi reassures them.



Rajeev: "That's why they are here, to protect the thread, not profit from it. These designs will not fall into hands of unscrupulous designers and brands who copy your work and have it digitally printed."



A photograph of a train at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm orange glow over the scene. The train is on the right side of the frame, moving away from the viewer. The tracks curve into the distance on the left. The sky is filled with soft, orange-tinted clouds.

MISSION 3

COMPLETE

Rajeev Sethi is a designer, scenographer, and cultural activist who has dedicated his life to crafts-based development and cultural preservation. Founder of Asian Heritage Foundation, he curated landmark exhibitions like *The Golden Eye* and *India: A Festival of India*, collaborating with artisans across South Asia. Sethi also conceptualised craft-based urban projects like Village Haat and designed interiors for major hotels integrating Indian craft traditions. His initiatives have created markets for rural artisans, sustained endangered skills, and redefined Indian design aesthetics globally.

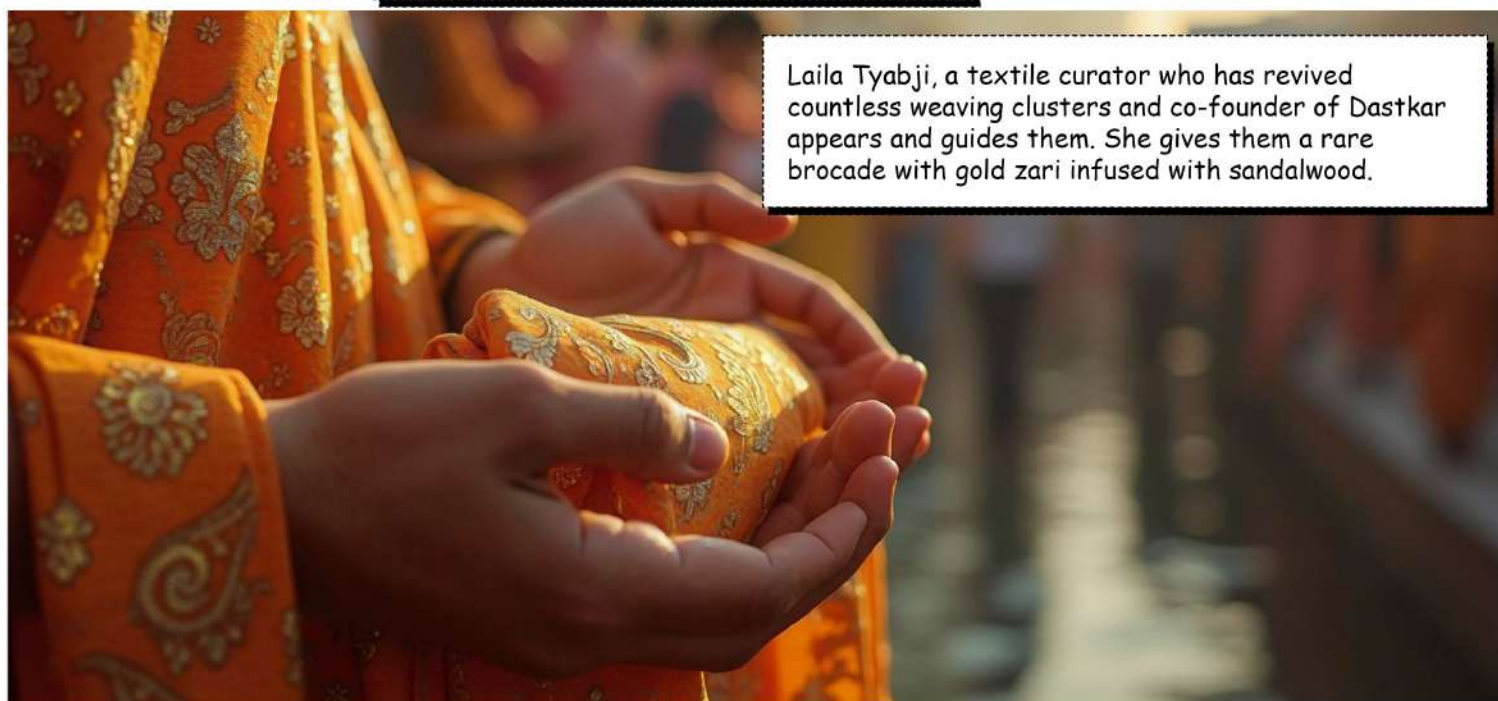


BANARASI

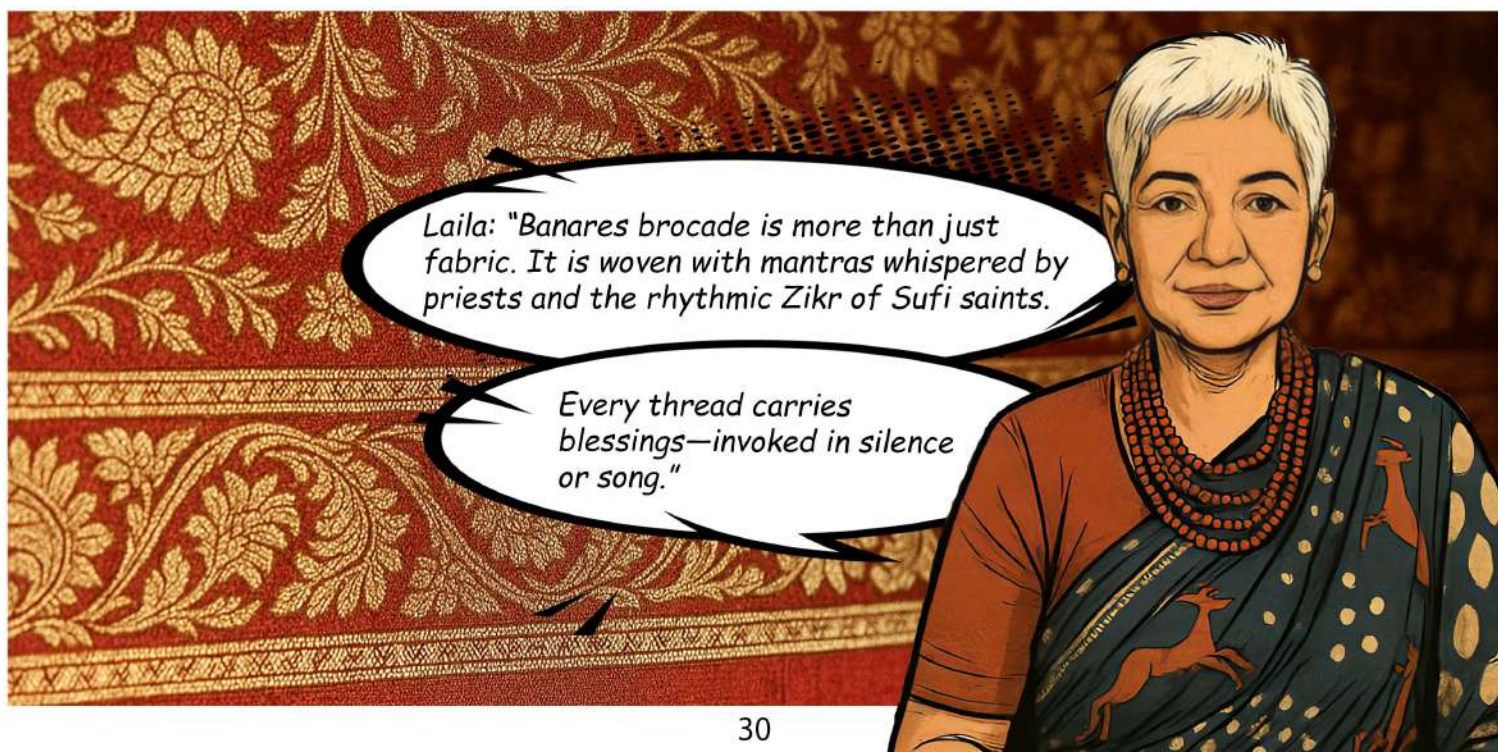
Banarasi, synonymous with luxury and timeless elegance. Traditionally woven with pure cottons and silks of varied texture combined with real gold or silver zari threads. Its recent history spans back to the Mughal era, when Persian motifs blended with Indian aesthetics to create elaborate floral jaals, paisleys, bells, and intricate Mughal-inspired minakari/inlay work. Skilled artisans from Gujarat migrated to Varanasi in the 17th Century, bringing with them weaving techniques and designs that merged with local traditions. Each saree can take 15 days to six months to complete, depending on intricacy. Famous for its durability and heavy drape, Banarasi brocade was historically reserved for royalty and brides. Historically, the weaving process uses draw looms referred to as Jala, predating Jacquard, to achieve detailed patterns. Contemporary designs now integrate geometric and modern motifs to appeal to younger generations while preserving traditional craftsmanship. Recognised with a GI tag, Banarasi brocades remain a prized possession, symbolising opulence, heritage, and the continuity of India's finest textile traditions that have enchanted the world for centuries.



In Banarash, the team sails down the Ganga to a hidden Ghat to visit a workshop



Laila Tyabji, a textile curator who has revived countless weaving clusters and co-founder of Dastkar appears and guides them. She gives them a rare brocade with gold zari infused with sandalwood.



Laila: "Banarash brocade is more than just fabric. It is woven with mantras whispered by priests and the rhythmic Zikr of Sufi saints.

Every thread carries blessings—invoked in silence or song."

Mira places it on her head and begins to hum a Zikr unknowingly.

Laila: "She's harmonizing. It's considered a means of purifying your heart & soul, bringing the practitioner closer to God; promoting spiritual growth and fostering a sense of inner peace and calm."

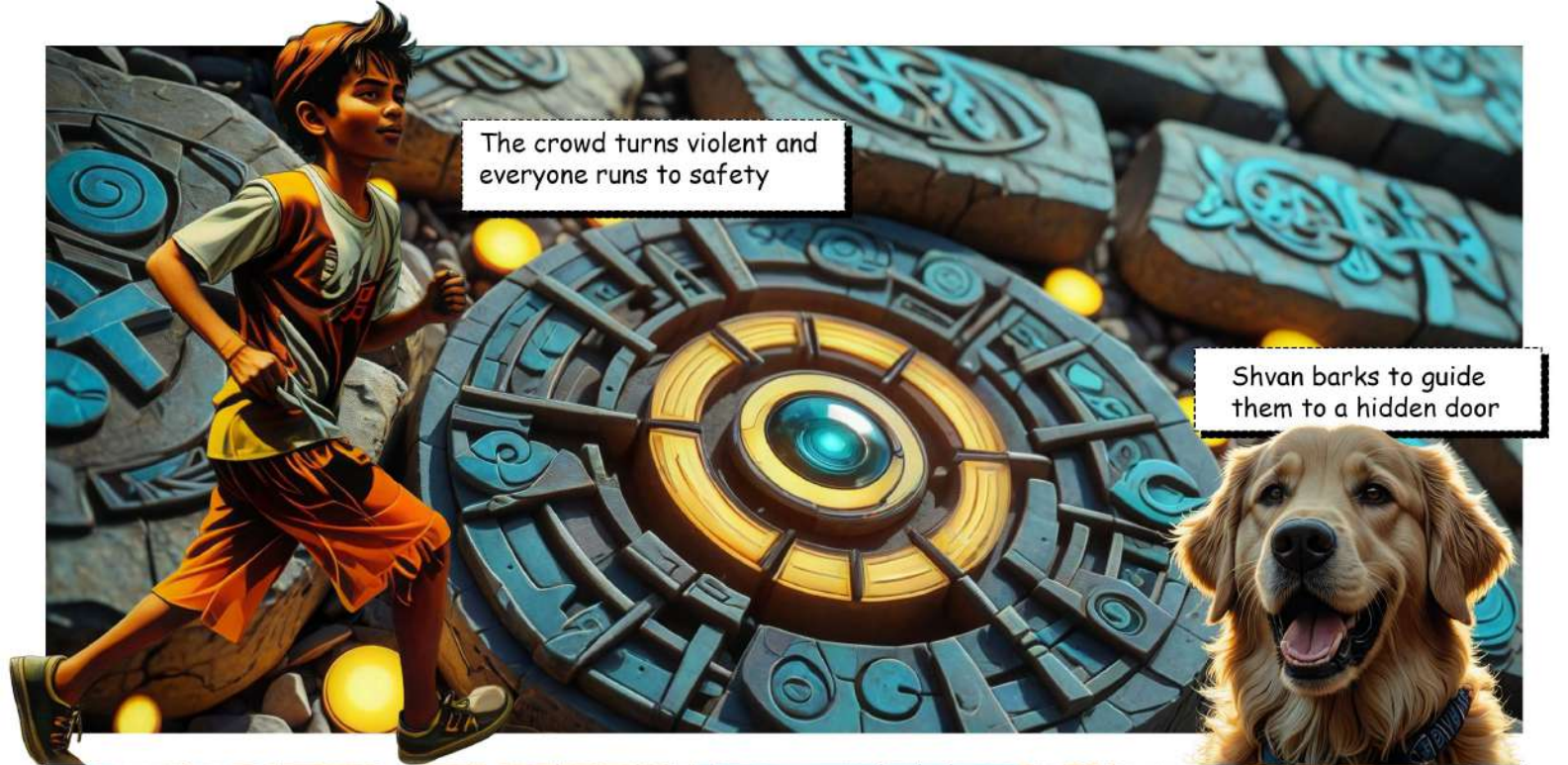


Kabir scans the fabric: it calms the hypothalamus and hormone systems

Suddenly a restless crowd gathers as the Synthetic Yarn Syndicate incites locals, spreading false rumours

"They're Foreign Agents trying to replicate Benares fabrics on a powerloom"



A young boy with brown hair, wearing an orange and white t-shirt and orange shorts, is running through a stone structure. In the background, there is a large, circular, ornate mechanism with a glowing blue center and yellow rings. The scene is lit with warm, yellow light.

The crowd turns violent and everyone runs to safety

A close-up of a golden retriever dog's head. The dog is looking forward with its mouth open, appearing to bark or speak. It has a blue collar with a tag.

Shvan barks to guide them to a hidden door

A young boy with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt, is holding a glowing, circular, ornate object in his hands. He is standing in a stone chamber with a large, ornate doorway in the background. The chamber is lit with warm, yellow light.

Kabir unlocks the hidden door leading into a sanctum, where ancient brocade Thankas hide the message they are searching for.

Two young girls are standing in a stone chamber, looking at a brocade cloth hanging on a rack. The girl on the left is wearing a yellow dress and the girl on the right is wearing a brown dress. The chamber is lit with warm, yellow light.

Annika reads the *Chetana Mantra* which is hidden in the brocade cloth

Annika: "It is used to energize every cell of the body and awaken Kundalini."

"Om Hreem Mam Pran
Deh Rom Pratirom
Chaitanya Jagraya Hreem
Om Swaha"

Mira: "This Cloth... it remembers who we were"

MISSION 4 COMPLETE



Laila Tyabji is an acclaimed craft designer, writer, and social activist who co-founded Dastkar in 1981. Through Dastkar, she has facilitated craft fairs, design interventions, and marketing support for artisans nationwide, reviving traditions like Lambani embroidery, Madhubani, and natural dye block printing. Tyabji champions the idea of craftspeople as entrepreneurs rather than mere labourers, empowering them with design, financial, and marketing skills. Her empathetic leadership has transformed countless artisan lives while ensuring Indian crafts remain vibrant and economically viable.

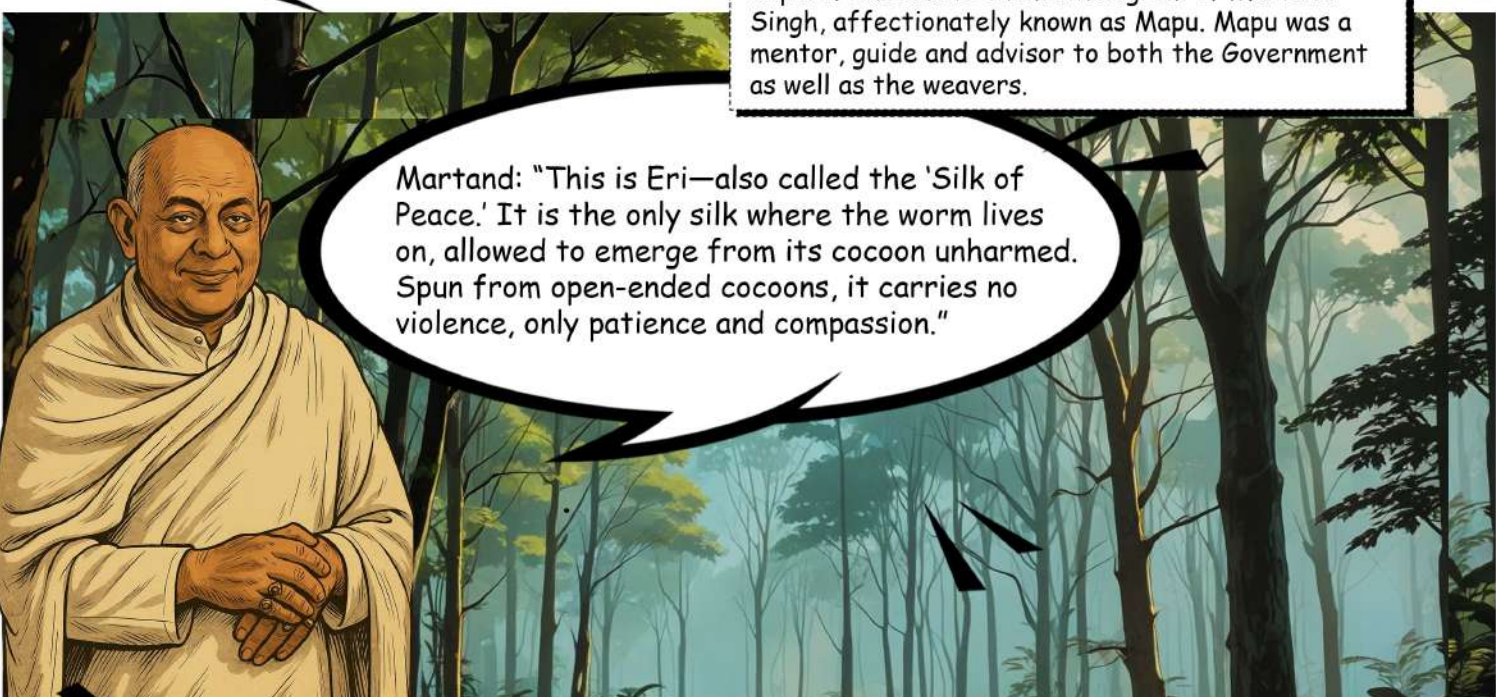


CUWAHATI

Eri silk, often called "Ahimsa silk" or the "fabric of peace," originates from Assam and the Northeast, where silkworms spin open-ended cocoons that do not require killing the moth. Derived from the castor-fed Philosamia ricini worm, Eri silk is heavier and warmer than mulberry silk with a matte, cottony texture. Its thermal insulation makes it ideal for winter shawls and wraps. Traditionally woven by tribal women, Eri garments are part of Assamese identity, especially among the Bodos and Karbis. It is now recognised globally for its sustainability and cruelty-free production. Naturally dyed in earthy reds, blacks, and creams, Eri is also blended with cotton and wool for innovative textiles. Its resilience, softness, and hypoallergenic properties make it perfect for modern sustainable fashion, while preserving a centuries-old tradition that honours nature and indigenous knowledge.

A group of six elderly tribal men are sitting on the forest floor, surrounded by tall trees. They are wearing traditional headbands and beaded necklaces. One man in the center is holding a small object in his hands.

In Guwahati, the team meets the tribal elders, as they search for their textile guides, Martand Singh & Rta Kapur Chishti. The elders give them directions.

A woman, Rta, is standing and showing a glowing hologram to a group of people. The background is a misty forest.

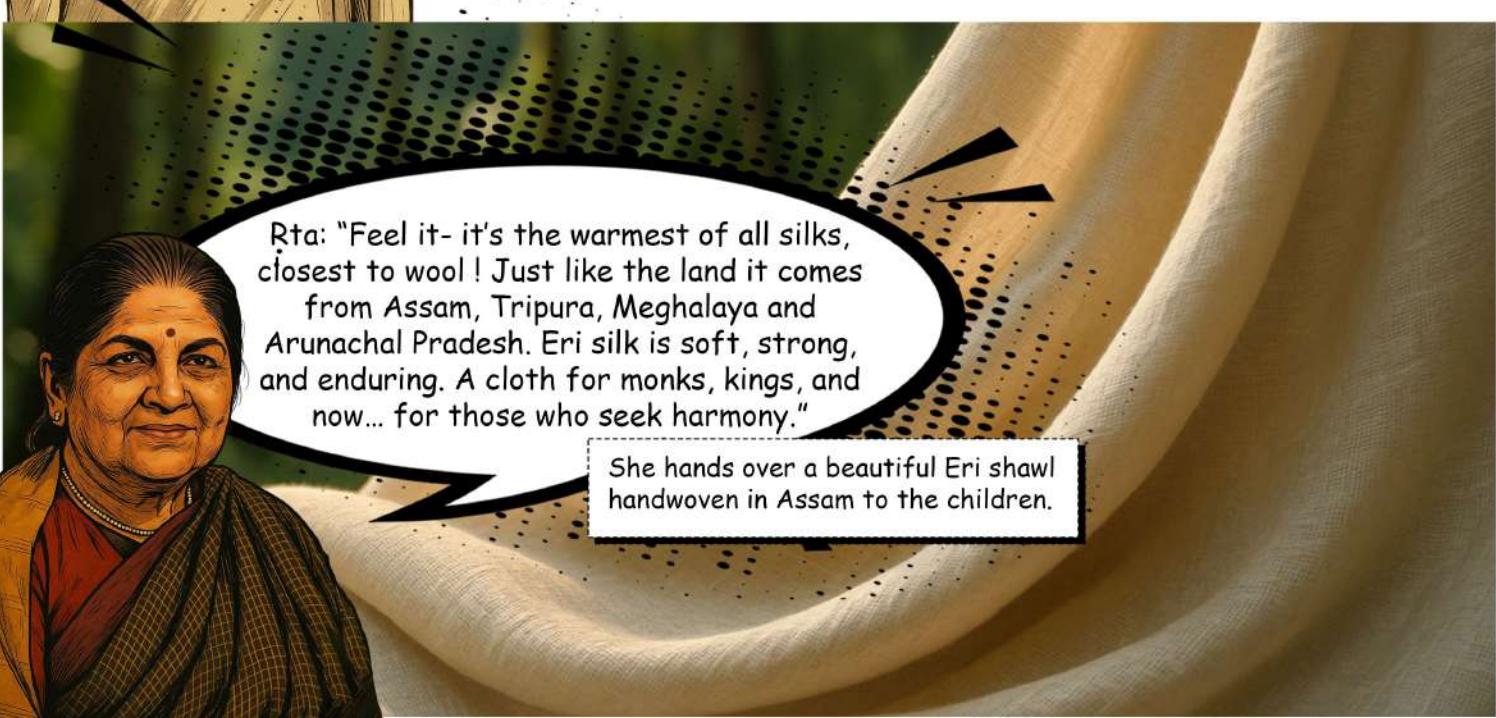
They find Rta - author, textile promoter and expert. She shows them a hologram of Martand Singh, affectionately known as Mapu. Mapu was a mentor, guide and advisor to both the Government as well as the weavers.

A man with a bald head and a white shawl is standing in a forest. He has his hands clasped in front of him.

Martand: "This is Eri—also called the 'Silk of Peace.' It is the only silk where the worm lives on, allowed to emerge from its cocoon unharmed. Spun from open-ended cocoons, it carries no violence, only patience and compassion."

A woman with dark hair and a bindi is wearing a brown shawl over a red top. She is looking towards the camera.

Rta: "Feel it- it's the warmest of all silks, closest to wool ! Just like the land it comes from Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. Eri silk is soft, strong, and enduring. A cloth for monks, kings, and now... for those who seek harmony."

A close-up shot of a light-colored shawl with a dark, patterned border. The shawl is draped over something, creating soft folds.

She hands over a beautiful Eri shawl handwoven in Assam to the children.



The earth shakes—rocks crumble—an unexpected landslide crashes down the mountainside.

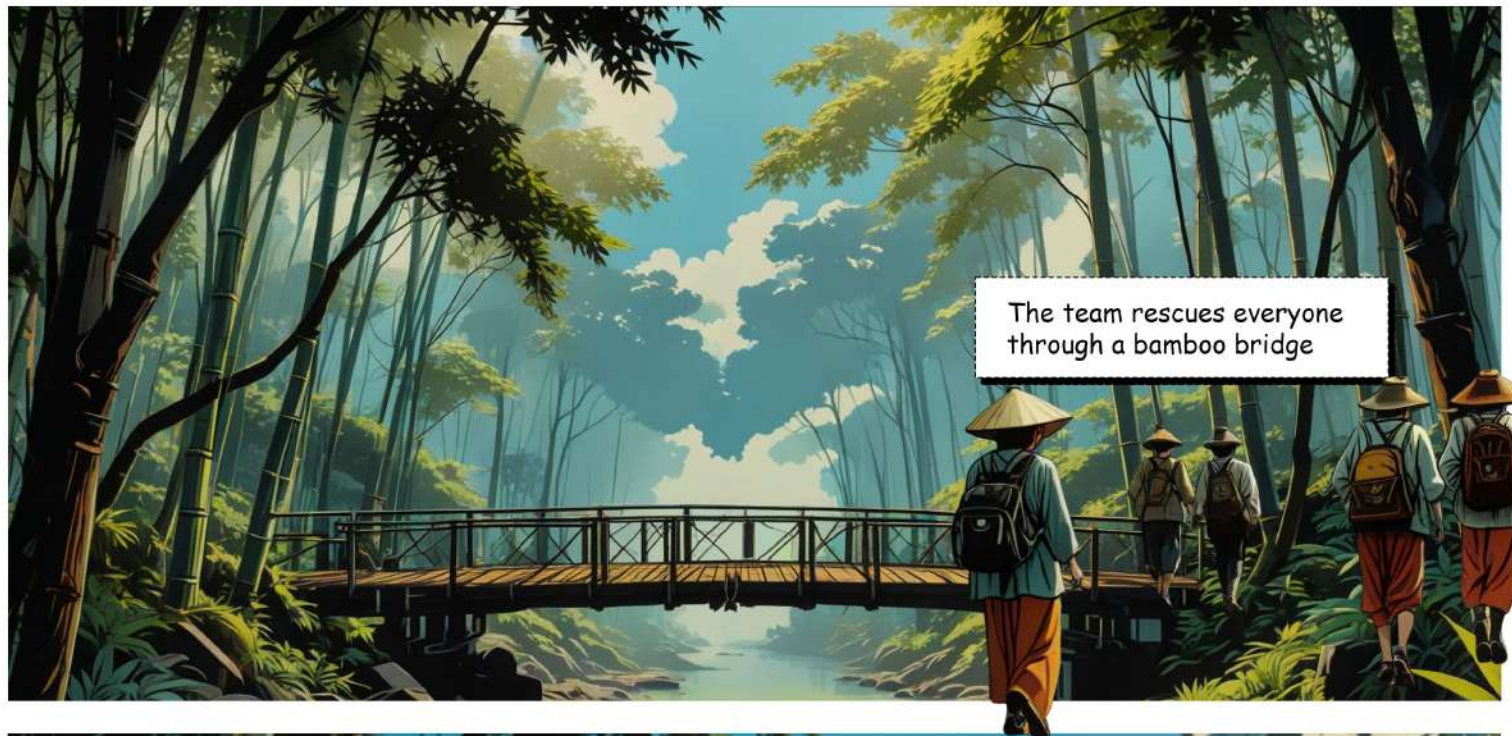
Locals: "This was no natural landslide. Synthetic Yarn Syndicate agents have been clearing bamboo groves illegally. The roots held the earth together. Now... it crumbles."



Kabir: "Quick everyone follow my lead, I found a safe space near the river"



Shvan barks to lead everyone towards safety



The team rescues everyone through a bamboo bridge



Shvan guards the bridge till all the villagers have passed to safety.



Vamika wears the luxurious Eri Fabric and prays for everyone's safety

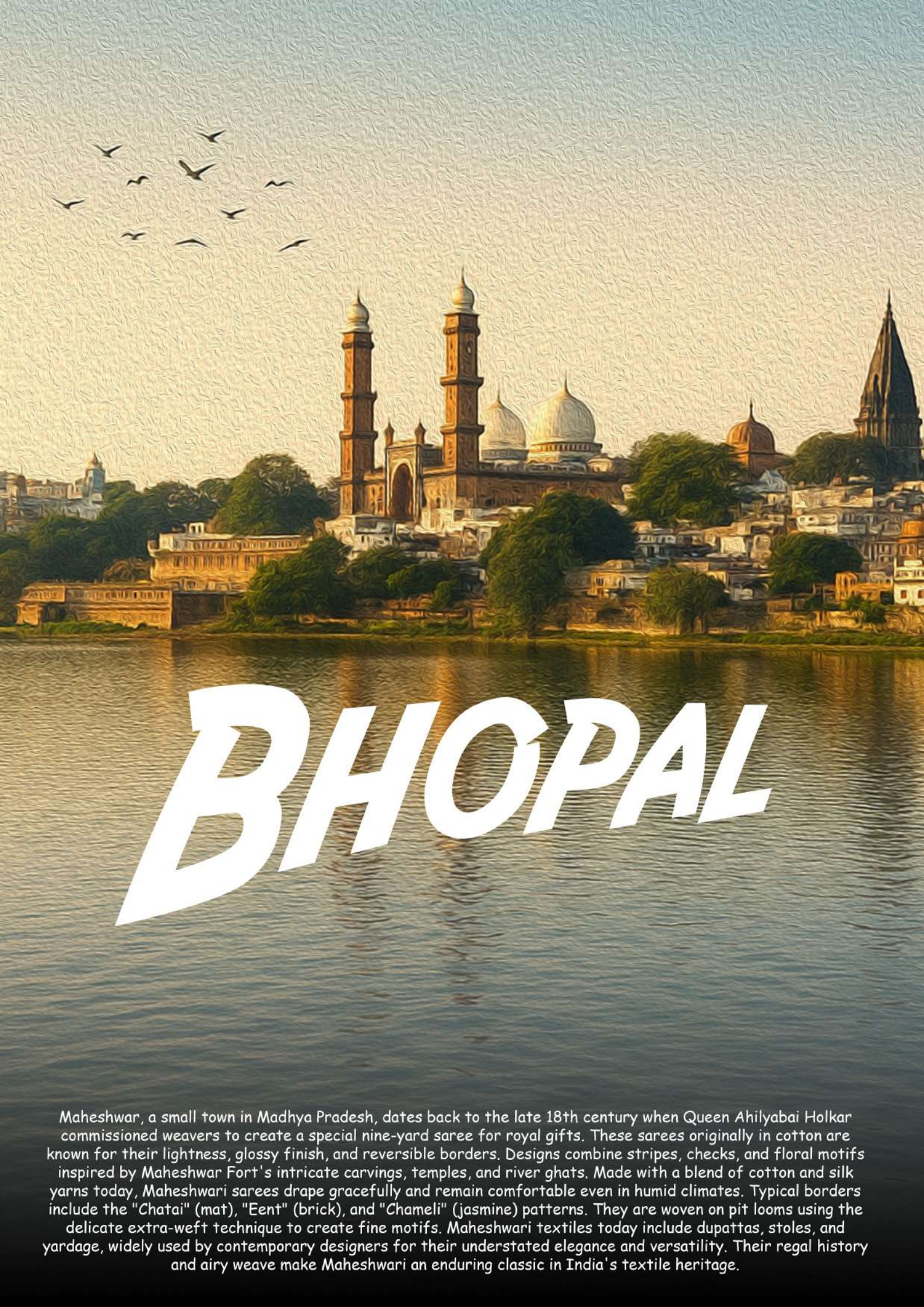
Vamika: "This silk, it's Swasthya Shvas - Breath Therapy.

This mantra is dedicated to Lord Dhanvantari, the Hindu God of medicine and Ayurveda, and is chanted for healing and good health."

Martand Singh (1947–2017), affectionately called Mapu, was a celebrated textile scholar, curator, and revivalist. As Director of Calico Museum and later consultant to the Handloom Board, he curated seminal exhibitions like Vishwakarma and Costumes of Royal India. Singh worked extensively with weavers across regions, reviving techniques like Mashru, Himroo, and fine Jamdani. His rigorous research, aesthetic vision, and diplomatic skills connected designers, policymakers, and artisans, ensuring India's textile heritage remained relevant in contemporary markets while preserving authenticity and craftsmanship. He was the principal mentor for the Rajasthan Heritage Week by Prasad Bidapa which modernised the many beautiful textiles and processes of Rajasthan. He co-authored Handcrafted Indian Textiles along with Rta Kapur Chishti and Rahul Jain.

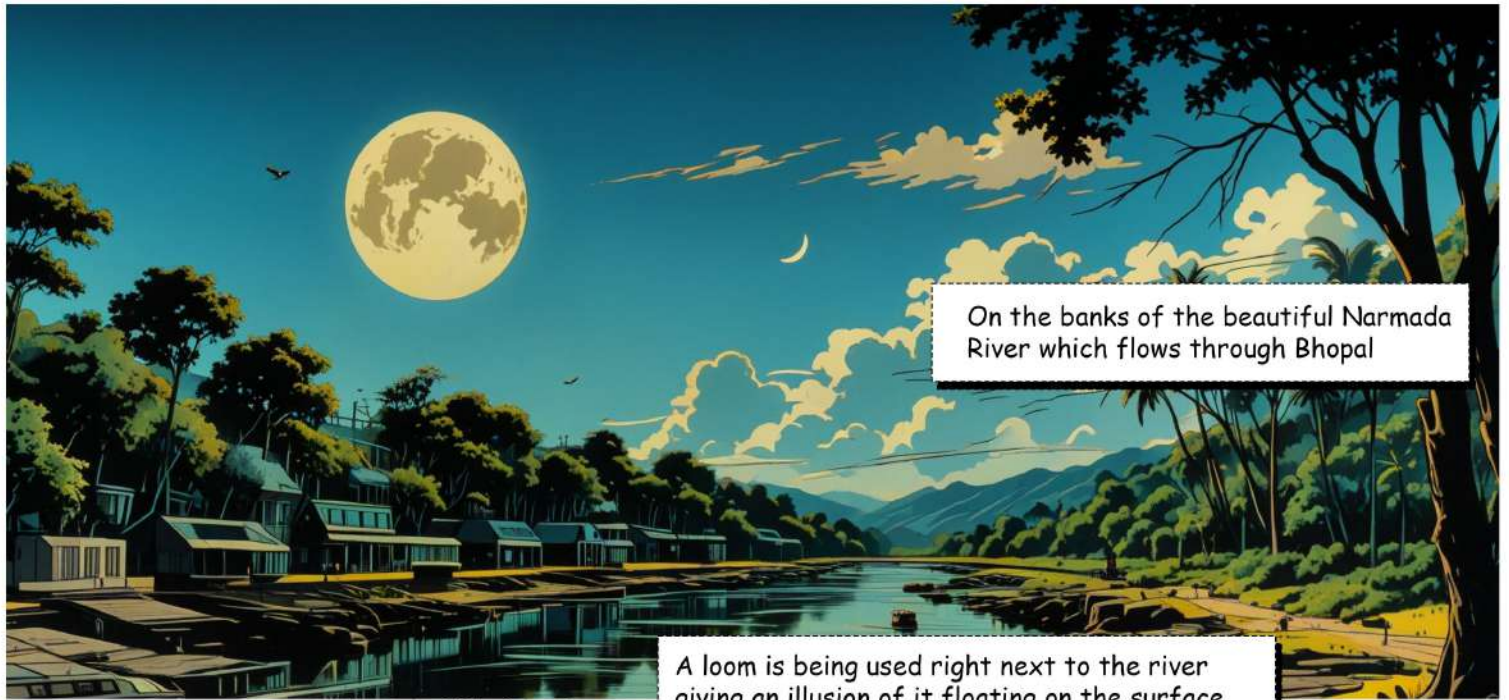


Rta Kapur Chishti is a textile scholar, historian, author, and master drape stylist, renowned for her deep research into Indian textiles and sari draping traditions. A co-author of *Saris: Tradition and Beyond*, as well as *Handcrafted Indian Textiles* along with Martand Singh and Rahul Jain. She founded Taanbaan, working with natural dyed hand-spun fabrics and reviving indigenous cotton weaving traditions. Her drape workshops across India and abroad have reintroduced the sari as versatile, contemporary, and culturally rooted attire. Chishti's work bridges academic research and practical revival, preserving the intangible heritage of Indian textiles for future generations.



BHOPAL

Maheshwar, a small town in Madhya Pradesh, dates back to the late 18th century when Queen Ahilyabai Holkar commissioned weavers to create a special nine-yard saree for royal gifts. These sarees originally in cotton are known for their lightness, glossy finish, and reversible borders. Designs combine stripes, checks, and floral motifs inspired by Maheshwar Fort's intricate carvings, temples, and river ghats. Made with a blend of cotton and silk yarns today, Maheshwari sarees drape gracefully and remain comfortable even in humid climates. Typical borders include the "Chatai" (mat), "Eent" (brick), and "Chameli" (jasmine) patterns. They are woven on pit looms using the delicate extra-weft technique to create fine motifs. Maheshwari textiles today include dupattas, stoles, and yardage, widely used by contemporary designers for their understated elegance and versatility. Their regal history and airy weave make Maheshwari an enduring classic in India's textile heritage.



On the banks of the beautiful Narmada River which flows through Bhopal

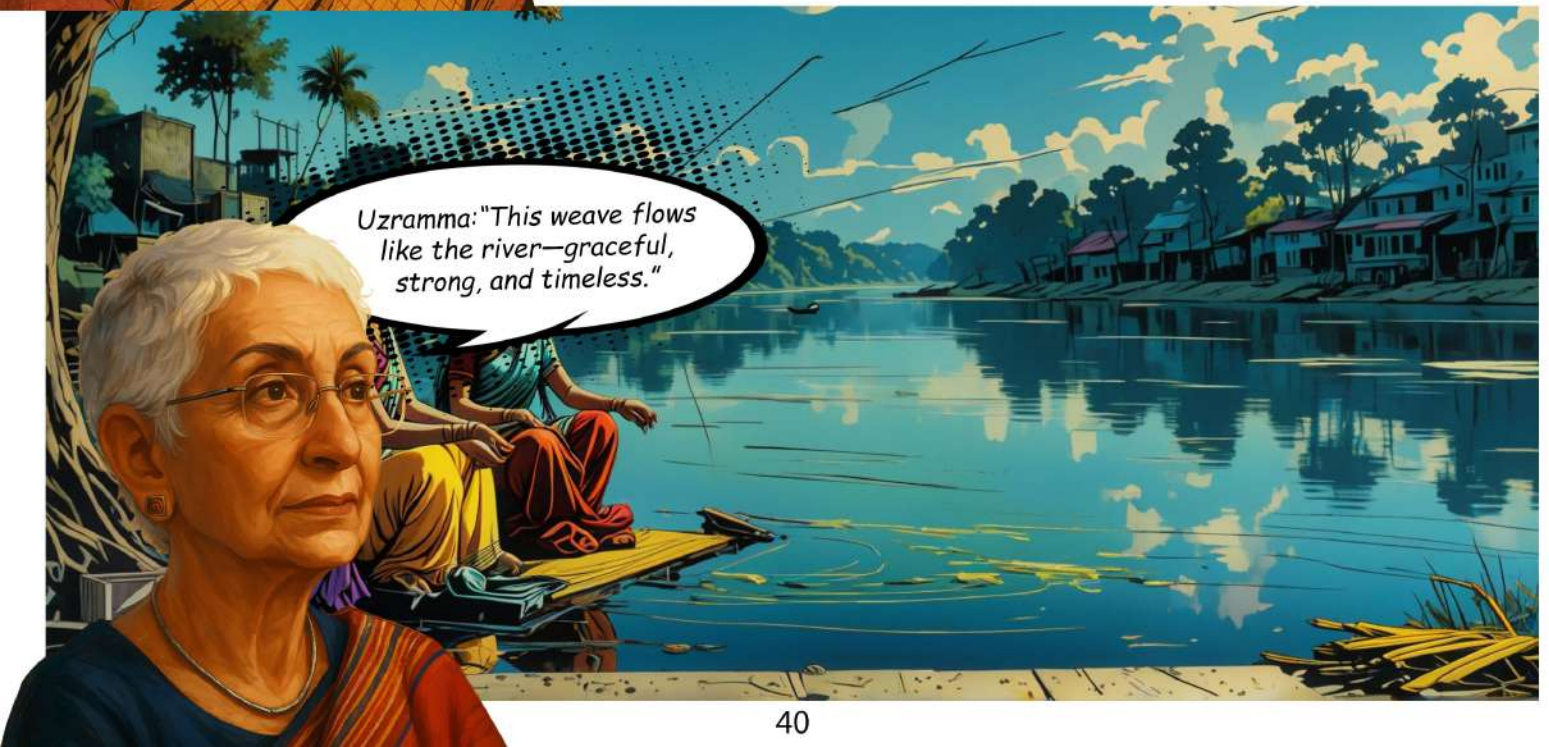
A loom is being used right next to the river giving an illusion of it floating on the surface of water.

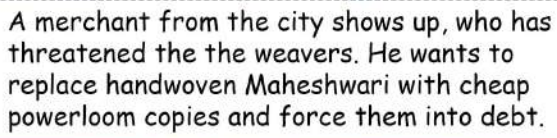
Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, one of India's greatest revivalists appears as a hologram along with textile expert Uzramma

Kamaladevi: "These Sari yarns were dyed with natural ingredients, flowers, barks and roots. They create a pastel palette which is healing."

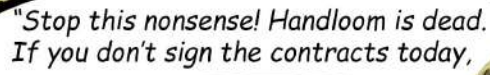


Uzramma: "This weave flows like the river—graceful, strong, and timeless."



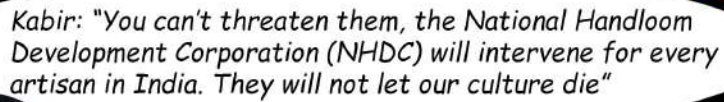


A merchant from the city shows up, who has threatened the the weavers. He wants to replace handwoven Maheshwari with cheap powerloom copies and force them into debt.



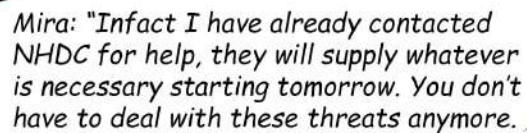
"Stop this nonsense! Handloom is dead. If you don't sign the contracts today,

I'll cut off your yarn supply. Synthetic Yarn Syndicate is not to be messed with,"



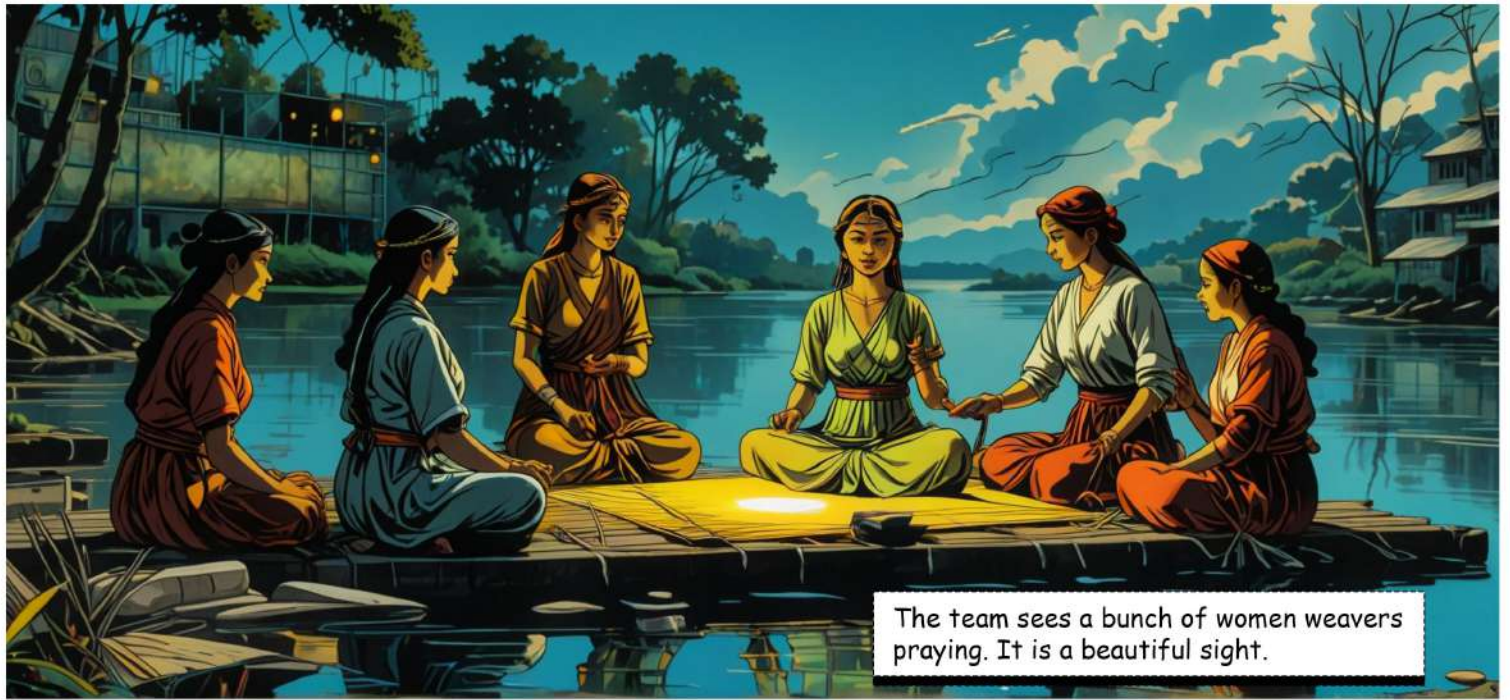
Kabir: "You can't threaten them, the National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC) will intervene for every artisan in India. They will not let our culture die"

The team reassures the weavers that they can continue their work and they will help with their yarn supply.



Mira: "Infact I have already contacted NHDC for help, they will supply whatever is necessary starting tomorrow. You don't have to deal with these threats anymore.

The Synthetic Yarn Syndicate can try whatever they want, we will not let our heritage textiles die."

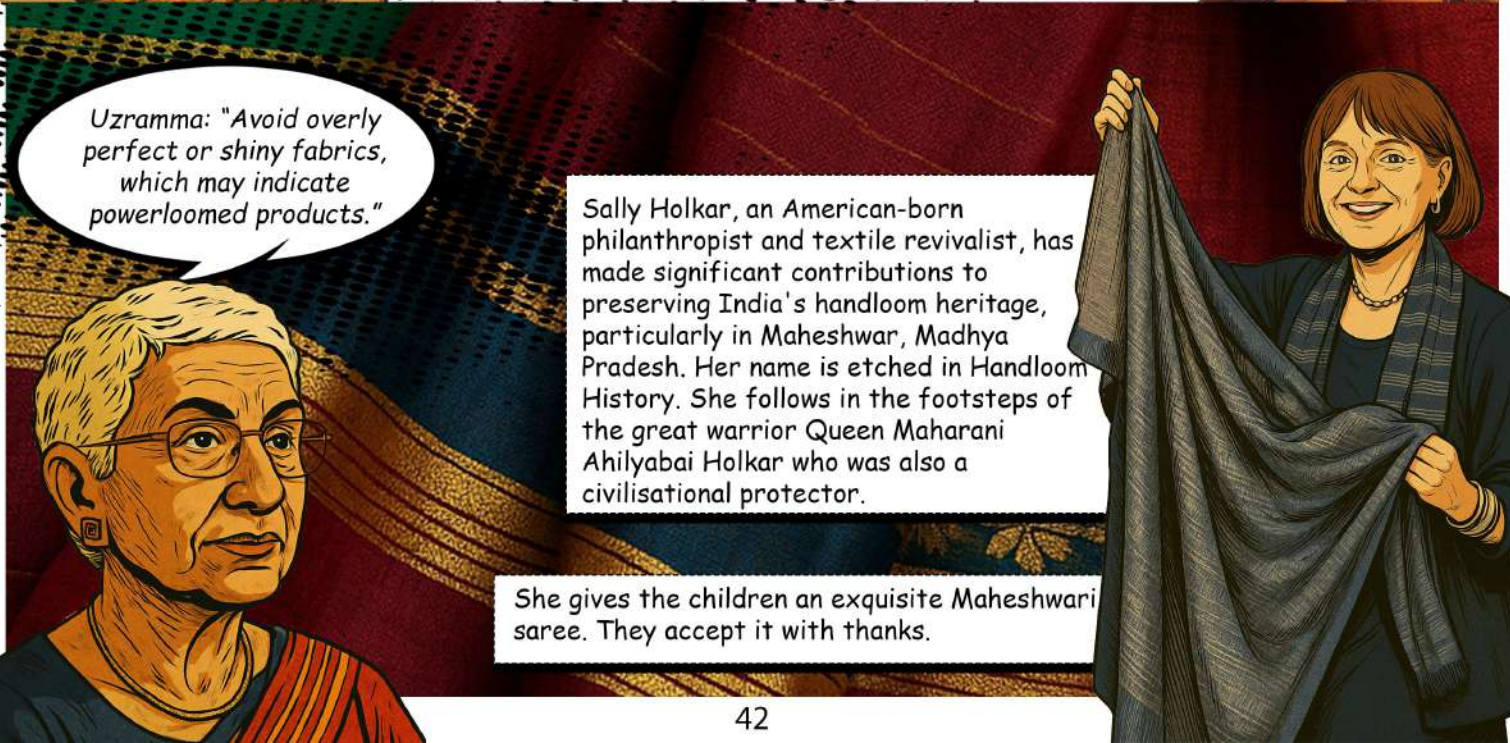


The team sees a bunch of women weavers praying. It is a beautiful sight.



Kamaladevi: "The Maheshwari weave was never just cloth, the fabrics of India are more than a metaphor, they reveal the purpose of life."

Mira: "The threads on the loom look like the river reflecting the sky"



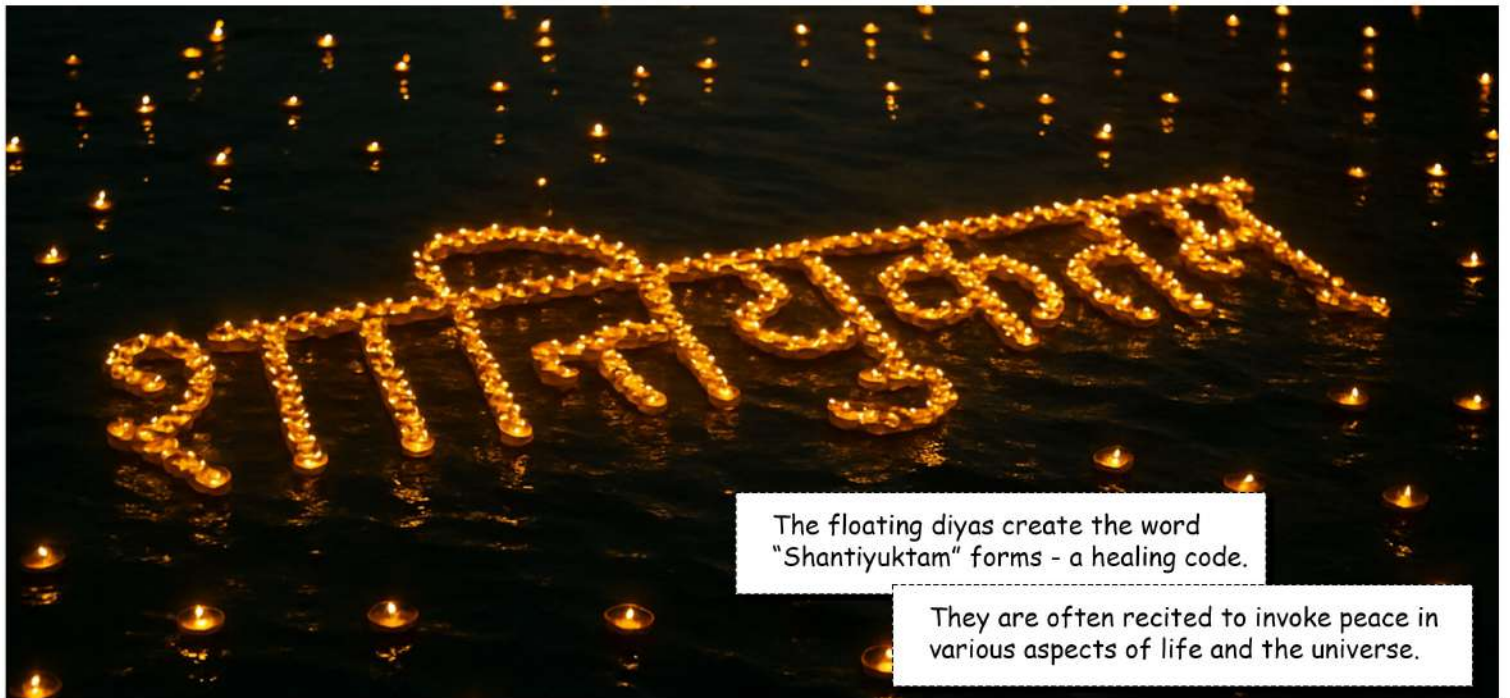
Uzramma: "Avoid overly perfect or shiny fabrics, which may indicate powerloomed products."

Sally Holkar, an American-born philanthropist and textile revivalist, has made significant contributions to preserving India's handloom heritage, particularly in Maheshwar, Madhya Pradesh. Her name is etched in Handloom History. She follows in the footsteps of the great warrior Queen Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar who was also a civilisational protector.

She gives the children an exquisite Maheshwari saree. They accept it with thanks.

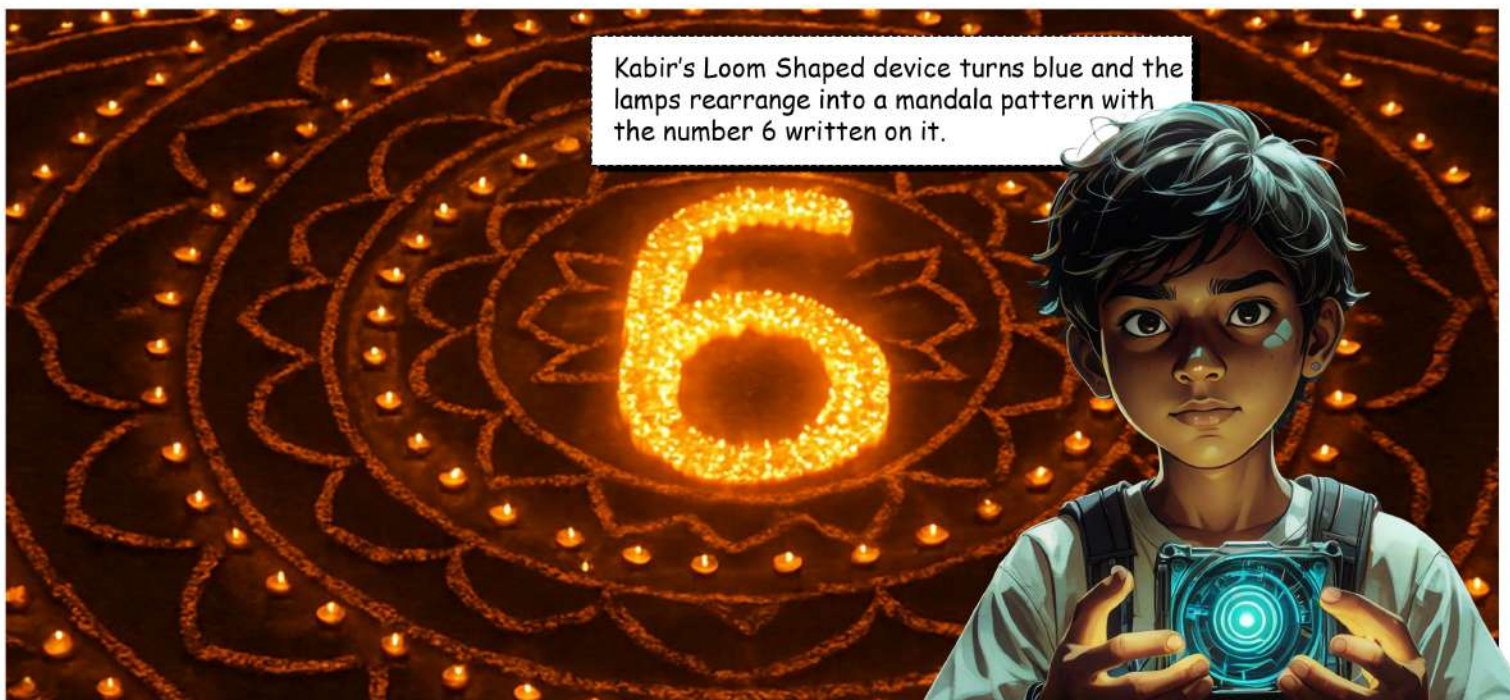


The stars begin to emerge, lanterns float on the river. The looms are set up beneath this golden light.



The floating diyas create the word "Shantiyuktam" forms - a healing code.

They are often recited to invoke peace in various aspects of life and the universe.



Kabir's Loom Shaped device turns blue and the lamps rearrange into a mandala pattern with the number 6 written on it.





Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay (1903-1988) was an influential freedom fighter, social reformer, and craft revivalist. She was instrumental in establishing institutions such as The All India Handicrafts Board, Central Cottage Industries Emporium, and Crafts Council of India, focusing on rural employment through crafts. Her efforts rejuvenated countless textile traditions like Ikat, Kalamkari, and Khadi. Kamaladevi believed craft revival was crucial to post-independence nation-building, restoring dignity to craftspeople and preserving India's cultural heritage as a living, evolving tradition rather than museum relics.

MISSION 6 COMPLETE

Uzramma is a textile activist who has worked in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh for 35 years, promoting small-scale decentralized spinning units located close to farmers' fields. She has founded the Dastkar Andhra Trust, the Decentralized Cotton Yarn Trust, and the Malkha Trust. The Malkha process eliminates the pre-spinning baling of cotton lint, giving Malkha fabric its distinctive quality. The Malkha Trust also promotes natural dyeing and sets up indigo vats that use traditional fermentation techniques. Uzramma's work aims to achieve sustainable and inclusive craft production rooted in the living craft practices of India.

The kids are finally home and immediately go to the sacred cave to meet Rishi Vasanta, who is overjoyed to see them.



Rishi: "They have returned to where thread and destiny first touched hands."

The kids present all the 6 fabrics to Rishi Vasanta who is extremely thrilled to see them return with these treasures.



Benares Silk



Sambalpuri Ikat



Eri Silk



Kanchipuram Silk



Maheshwari Silk

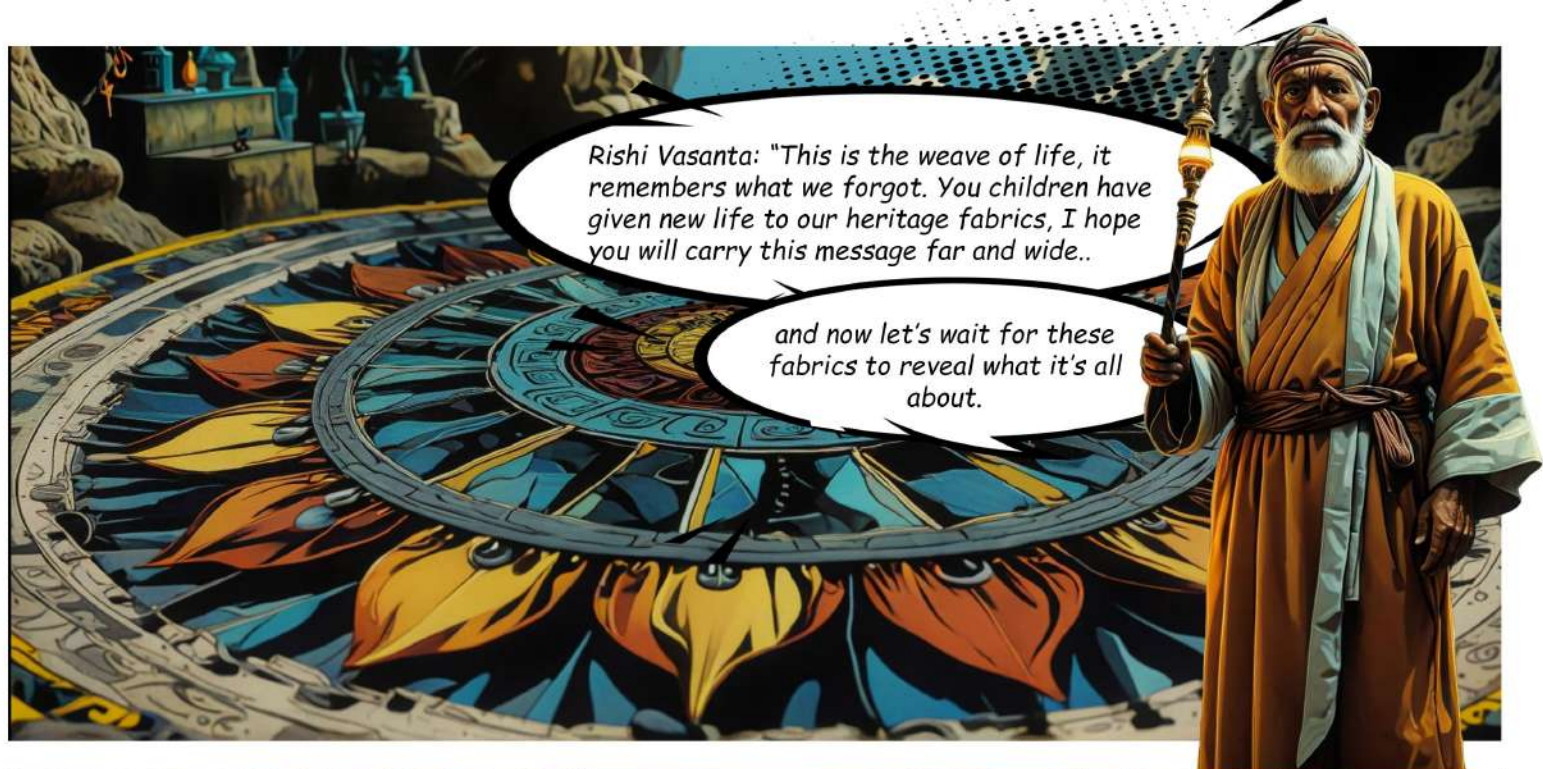


Kota Doria

All 6 fabrics come together and create a Mandala through the loom device which Rishi Vasanta had given the kids.

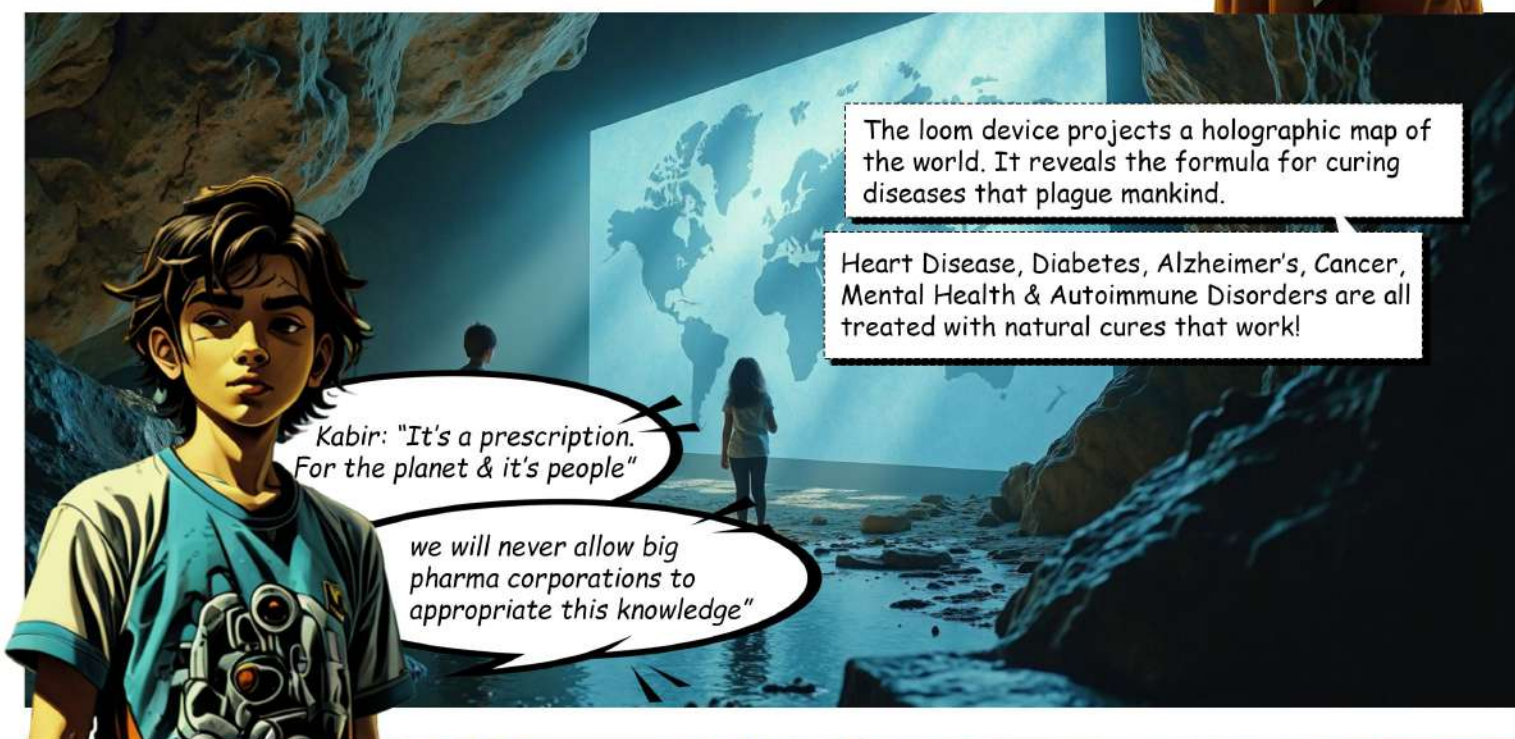


Kabir: "What does this mean?"



Rishi Vasanta: "This is the weave of life, it remembers what we forgot. You children have given new life to our heritage fabrics, I hope you will carry this message far and wide..

and now let's wait for these fabrics to reveal what it's all about.



The loom device projects a holographic map of the world. It reveals the formula for curing diseases that plague mankind.

Heart Disease, Diabetes, Alzheimer's, Cancer, Mental Health & Autoimmune Disorders are all treated with natural cures that work!

Kabir: "It's a prescription. For the planet & it's people"

we will never allow big pharma corporations to appropriate this knowledge"



Rishi Vasanta: "You kids have followed the threads through many dangerous situations and now...these secret is yours to reveal. You did not save a cloth. You saved the world's future and helped to find a cure for it's people.

Destiny trusted you to do what's right and now the world's fate is in your hands. You must help humanity save itself"

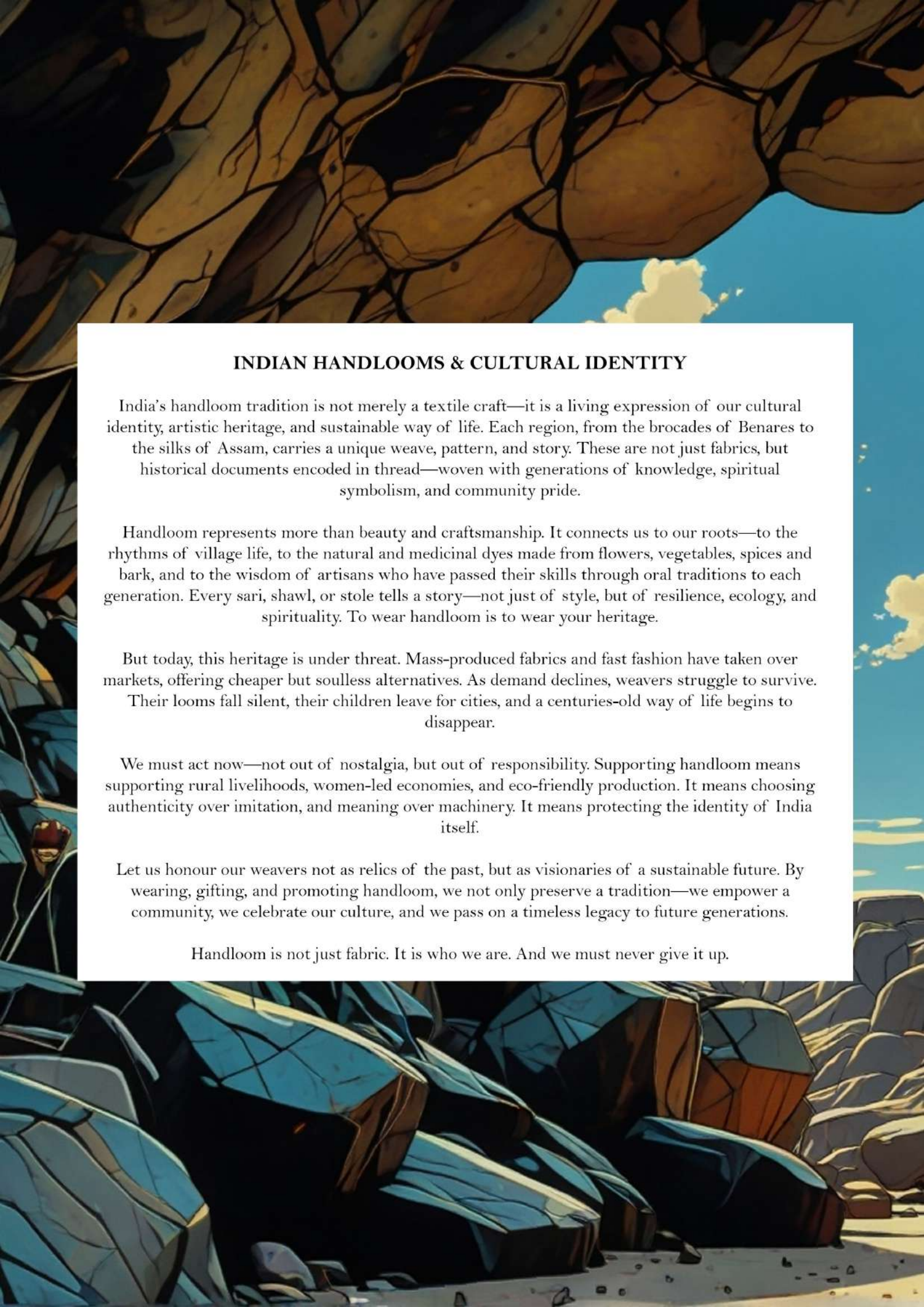




And so, as the ancient threads secrets were revealed and reweave themselves into the fabric of modern life, the world began to shift—no longer seeing handloom as just tradition, but as truth, medicine, and memory. What was once forgotten was now revered. The children, now hailed as national heroes, stood beside their glowing companion Shvan, continuing their mission to heal with the wisdom hidden in every weave. Across continents and cultures, the Sacred Fabric inspired a new age—where cloth became cure, and the loom led humanity toward a gentler, wiser and more peaceful world.



THE END



INDIAN HANDLOOMS & CULTURAL IDENTITY

India's handloom tradition is not merely a textile craft—it is a living expression of our cultural identity, artistic heritage, and sustainable way of life. Each region, from the brocades of Benares to the silks of Assam, carries a unique weave, pattern, and story. These are not just fabrics, but historical documents encoded in thread—woven with generations of knowledge, spiritual symbolism, and community pride.

Handloom represents more than beauty and craftsmanship. It connects us to our roots—to the rhythms of village life, to the natural and medicinal dyes made from flowers, vegetables, spices and bark, and to the wisdom of artisans who have passed their skills through oral traditions to each generation. Every sari, shawl, or stole tells a story—not just of style, but of resilience, ecology, and spirituality. To wear handloom is to wear your heritage.

But today, this heritage is under threat. Mass-produced fabrics and fast fashion have taken over markets, offering cheaper but soulless alternatives. As demand declines, weavers struggle to survive. Their looms fall silent, their children leave for cities, and a centuries-old way of life begins to disappear.

We must act now—not out of nostalgia, but out of responsibility. Supporting handloom means supporting rural livelihoods, women-led economies, and eco-friendly production. It means choosing authenticity over imitation, and meaning over machinery. It means protecting the identity of India itself.

Let us honour our weavers not as relics of the past, but as visionaries of a sustainable future. By wearing, gifting, and promoting handloom, we not only preserve a tradition—we empower a community, we celebrate our culture, and we pass on a timeless legacy to future generations.

Handloom is not just fabric. It is who we are. And we must never give it up.

CHILDREN & ADULTS CAN SUPPORT HERITAGE HANDLOOMS IN THESE WAYS:

Wear Handloom Clothing:

Choose to wear clothes made from handloom fabrics, promoting the traditional textile industry.

Learn About Handlooms:

Educate themselves about the history, significance, and craftsmanship of handlooms.

Support Artisans:

Encourage parents or guardians to buy handloom products directly from artisans or local markets.

Spread Awareness:

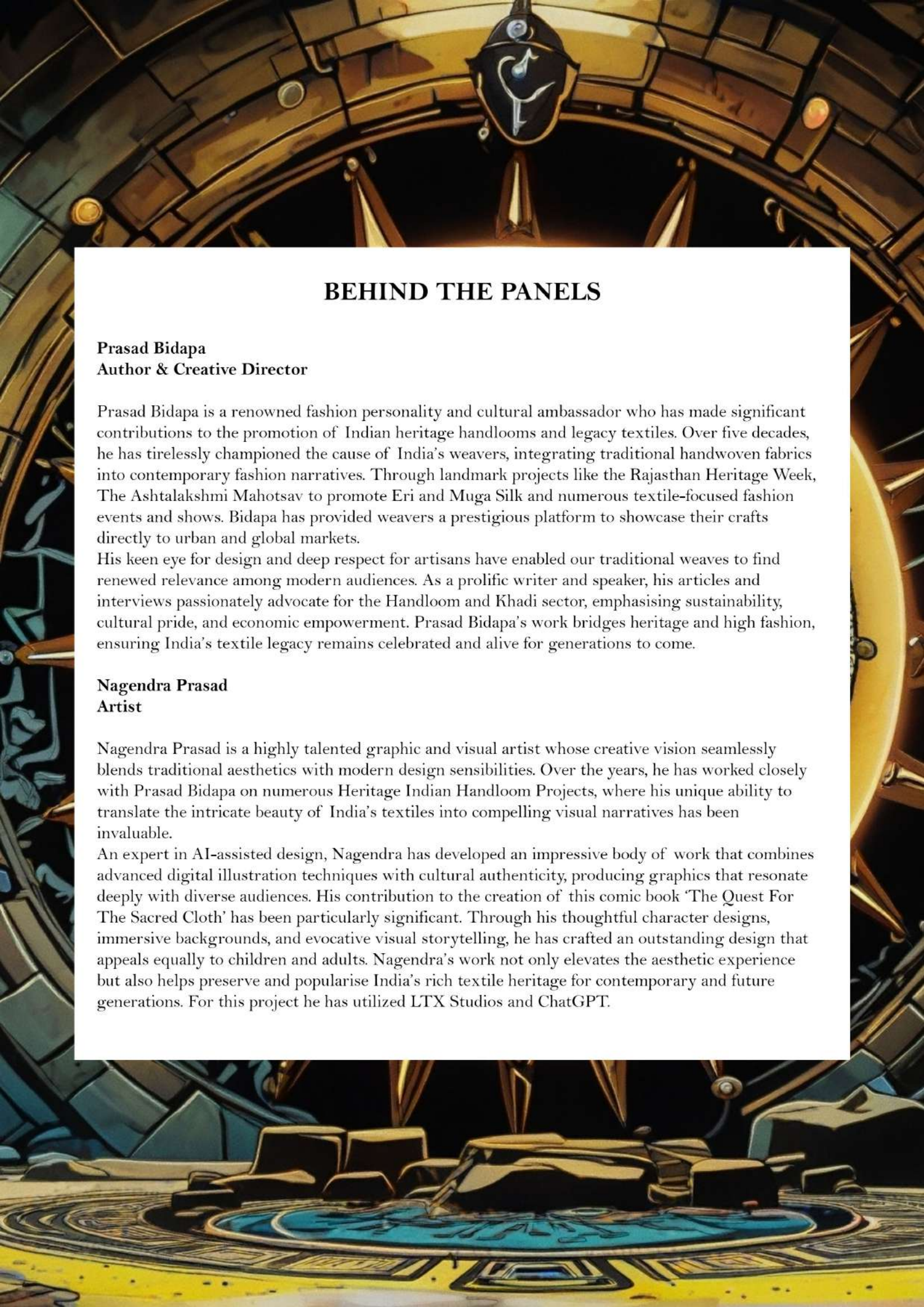
Share knowledge with friends and family about the importance of preserving India's handloom heritage.

Participate in Workshops:

Attend workshops or classes to learn traditional handloom weaving or embroidery techniques.

Promote on Social Media:

Share pictures or stories about handloom products on social media platforms
(with parental guidance).



BEHIND THE PANELS

Prasad Bidapa
Author & Creative Director

Prasad Bidapa is a renowned fashion personality and cultural ambassador who has made significant contributions to the promotion of Indian heritage handlooms and legacy textiles. Over five decades, he has tirelessly championed the cause of India's weavers, integrating traditional handwoven fabrics into contemporary fashion narratives. Through landmark projects like the Rajasthan Heritage Week, The Ashtalakshmi Mahotsav to promote Eri and Muga Silk and numerous textile-focused fashion events and shows, Bidapa has provided weavers a prestigious platform to showcase their crafts directly to urban and global markets.

His keen eye for design and deep respect for artisans have enabled our traditional weaves to find renewed relevance among modern audiences. As a prolific writer and speaker, his articles and interviews passionately advocate for the Handloom and Khadi sector, emphasising sustainability, cultural pride, and economic empowerment. Prasad Bidapa's work bridges heritage and high fashion, ensuring India's textile legacy remains celebrated and alive for generations to come.

Nagendra Prasad
Artist

Nagendra Prasad is a highly talented graphic and visual artist whose creative vision seamlessly blends traditional aesthetics with modern design sensibilities. Over the years, he has worked closely with Prasad Bidapa on numerous Heritage Indian Handloom Projects, where his unique ability to translate the intricate beauty of India's textiles into compelling visual narratives has been invaluable.

An expert in AI-assisted design, Nagendra has developed an impressive body of work that combines advanced digital illustration techniques with cultural authenticity, producing graphics that resonate deeply with diverse audiences. His contribution to the creation of this comic book 'The Quest For The Sacred Cloth' has been particularly significant. Through his thoughtful character designs, immersive backgrounds, and evocative visual storytelling, he has crafted an outstanding design that appeals equally to children and adults. Nagendra's work not only elevates the aesthetic experience but also helps preserve and popularise India's rich textile heritage for contemporary and future generations. For this project he has utilized LTX Studios and ChatGPT.

SIX FABRICS. FIVE CHILDREN. ONE GLOWING DOG. AND A MONK WITH A MISSION.

WHEN A HIDDEN CAVE REVEALS AN ANCIENT LOOM AND A TIMELESS MONK, FIVE YOUNG CHILDREN—AND A LUMINOUS DOG—ARE CHOSEN TO REDISCOVER INDIA'S HERITAGE TEXTILES. THEIR JOURNEY TAKES THEM ACROSS SACRED TEMPLES, WEAVING VILLAGES, AND WILD RIVERS, WHERE EVERY FABRIC HOLDS A SECRET: MEMORY, MEDICINE, AND THE SOUL OF A FORGOTTEN WORLD.

TO REUNITE THE SACRED CLOTH, THEY MUST FACE DANGER, DECODE ANCIENT WISDOM, AND WEAVE THEMSELVES INTO THE LEGACY THEY WERE BORN TO PROTECT.



वस्त्र मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
TEXTILES



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prasadbidapa
ASSOCIATES