



Theme Presentation Northern Region



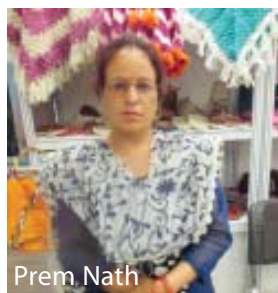
A thematic presentation of crafts practiced by SC community in Northern India was put up on the ground floor of the India Expo Mart. There were products from around 22 artisans from Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and New Delhi NCR. Woodcrafts, brassware, leather crafts, embroidery products, artistic textiles, papier machie, miniature painting and kantha needlecraft products comprised their collective display at Home Expo India.

Embellished Home Textiles and Textile Crafts

Third time participant, **Dev Raj** from Himachal Pradesh got along bed covers, cushions and curtains. He is grateful to EPCH for such initiatives and opportunities where entrepreneurs of regional crafts are brought together for a collective showcase. "These help us professionally and also build our confidence," he said and added, "we have been in this business since three generations. Right now we have a team of 120 women workers and the entire work is done on hand operated looms. This is our traditional craft form so we strive to continue it and keep it original. Contemporary touch is limited to few designs while we focus on preserving old designs for the future generations." They also deal in yak wool shawls, Himalayan sheep wool shawls & stoles and meditation shawls, all of which are 100% natural and organic. Also from this state was **Prem Nath**, dealing in shawls and artistic textile crafts since 15 years. He has participated in EPCH fairs earlier and



Dev Raj



Prem Nath



Vinita Devi and Kamal Singh

has always returned happy. Appreciating the show organisers' initiative to feature regional artisan crafts among other products, this stall's representative said, these not only spread awareness about handmade and hand crafted goods but also connect us with suitable markets.



Jyoti

Vinita Devi and Kamal Singh from Delhi were first time exhibitors with their lines in hand block printed textiles. With a team of 6-7 workers they carry out the laborious process of seasoning the raw fabric and embellishing it with prints & patterns. Another first time participant, **Jyoti** from New Delhi deals in embroidery, knitting and crochet crafts. She felt, such an initiative of collective participation is beneficial for small entrepreneurs. "Out of 25 years of my artisan life, I have worked for others for years and have now started my own enterprise. EPCH is helping me grow." Her product line included bags, dresses, blouses, T-shirts and neck design patches. She has a good buyer base in her local market.



Kalpna Das

A line in hand embroidery textile crafts - 'kantha' adorned the stall of **Kalpna Das** from New Delhi. She is originally from Bengal. This was her first time participation at an EPCH fair though she has been into this craftwork since the past six years. She explained, "our product specialisation is 'kantha stitch' from Bengal. Also, the handloom local towel from Bengal - 'Gamcha' is customised into items of utility like shopping bags, hand bags, textile jewellery, pouches, wall arts and cushion covers," and added, "responses towards my products in and around Delhi is small but satisfactory as of now. The different ideas our crafts carry with them, say the embroidered images of local Bengali rickshaws and that of flowers and blossoms, make our products unique."



Raman & Ramesh

Embroidery from Punjab came in from **Raman & Ramesh**. These first time participants were learning a lot from this market exposure opportunity and how EPCH guides upcoming entrepreneurs. They were seeing how handicrafts are being appreciated at an international platform. They have already resolved to learn from EPCH's skill development and export guidance workshops. Their work comprised Punjab's regional needlecraft techniques like 'phulkari', 'sindhi tanka', 'janjiri tanka' and 'macchi tanka'. Since five



Binal Mondal

years, they have been working through a self-help group and earn from local market demand of embroidered 'dupattas' and related products, especially during wedding seasons. **Binal Mondal** from Delhi is another 'kantha' specialist and a State awardee in Kantha stitching. Though this was her first time participation at Home Expo India, she gained a lot from EPCH's buyer-seller meets held earlier. Her enterprise makes pillow covers, handkerchiefs and artisanal clothing with 'kantha' embroidery. She informed that this was her husband's family business since years and they have

women artisans back home in Bengal, working for them. Besides playing a major role in this business, Binal also teaches embroidery to young girls. She is keen that youngsters take up the responsibility of keeping traditional craft forms alive,



Nathi Ram

lest these languish within two decades. **Nathi Ram** from Haryana is into artistic textile craft. A second time participant at the fair, he was here owing to the very encouraging buyer response he got during his previous participation. He has been into this venture since 2008. They buy yarn, dye it, knit it and design it according to the prevalent market demand. Later the cloth is sent to their factory, where 25-30 workers weave them into finished products like cushions, table mats, bed covers and wall arts. Another exhibitor **Nisha Kumari** from Delhi, runs her firm- Ethnic Crafts Vastaram as well as an NGO that teaches embroidery, cutting and sewing to young children. She is a State awardee as well.



Nisha Kumari

When one talks of textile crafts a mention of Rajasthan's famed applique & embroidery work becomes imperative. Women artisans, **Sita Devi and Pawani Devi** from Rajasthan's Barmer region were representing several women artisans who are making their mark in the international market with their intriguing needlecraft skills in embroidery & applique crafts. Cut work, patch work, mirror work and typical Rajasthani folk motifs are common in this 98% hand labored worked with the sewing machine restricted to stitching and fortifying corners / borders of the products. "We are here due to Gramin Vikas evam Chetna Sansthan (GVCS) and its association with the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts, they said, expressing gratitude for the grooming and fine tuning of their skills that are in turn making their products suitable for various international markets and as a result, empowering women in the region.



Sita Devi and Pawani Devi

Leather Crafts

The desert state of Rajasthan is known for leather crafts among many other age-old craft traditions. Some artisans from this state displayed their leather crafts at this collective display. **Harish Haldania** from Jodhpur based firm-Maa Bhawani Leather Art & Craft has participated in EPCH shows earlier as well and has earned buyers from Europe, especially Germany. Explaining his work he shared, "we have been into making of different kinds of leather bags, from wallets to sling bags, since the past 6 years." **Hukum Chand Kahkla** from Rajasthan had leather chairs and bags among his exhibits. "This is my first time at an EPCH fair and so far I am really impressed with the buyer response. They are fascinated with my



Harish Haldania



Hukum Chand Kahkla

butterfly chair and I have got many enquiries for that," he shared. With a team of 100 workers, his enterprise produces almost 3000 pieces a month. "I am here on behalf of my father, Prema Ram who started this business," confided **Laxman**, another leather craft artisan from Rajasthan. They deal in goat leather bags, bracelets, belts and wallets and have a good local market demand in Udaipur. **Seema**, also from Jodhpur was on her first time participation at an EPCH fair though she is a third generation entrepreneur in this business. "My brother has attended several EPCH skill development seminars and we have benefited," she shared and added, "apart from an enterprise named, 'OP & RK Mojari' which deals with leather bags, joothies (leather ballerina shoes), coaties(half coats/jackets),



Seema



Laxman



we have an NGO focusing on helping artisans with gainful employment through hand embroidery craft on leather. Along with manufacturing, we also aim at teaching the younger generation to master this handicraft art, under several



Inderjeet

programs." Their works include velvet work, wool work, zari work and mirror work on all types of leather. Through the opportunity EPCH is providing, she looks forward to take their work to international markets. "The response we have obtained from buyers at this show till now is more than satisfactory," she concluded. A leather craft specialist from Delhi-**Inderjeet** got along leather handmade footwear. "My footwear is light weight, durable and long lasting. We sell this all over India and apart from the sole of the footwear, the entire structure is hand-made and hand stitched. It is a family business and I have been involved in this since a very long time," he shared.

Decoratives & Gifts



Sunita Arya

"This is not my first time in an EPCH fair. I have attended this fair two years back and because response was good, I have come back with higher hopes," said **Sunita Arya** from New Delhi-another textile craft entrepreneur. This is her family business of a decade. Explaining their craft form she said, "during the making of our articles the frames of 'loha' or 'addhey' are pricked, shaped and poked with needle like hard tools to give the product a design and texture. Our product with embroidery or 'kardhai' with pearls or 'moti', is the most in demand."

Wastewood forms the basis of Delhi based artisan and first time Home Expo India participant, **Raghunath Prasad's** line up



Raghunath Prasad



Vivekananda Bagchi



Mahendra Phariya



Harsha Kohli

of wooden birds and vegetables. He informed, "I started this work in 1994. My craft is made out of waste wood, bamboo and parts of the coconut tree. All products are totally hand made. He has a reasonable local market and also caters to exporters who source his products for their buyers. "The sale of my products is good considering the fact that I have no knowledge of advertising, social media or anything other than my craft," he exclaimed.

Delhi based **Vivekananda Bagchi** and his firm- V.B. Handicraft marked their fifth participation at an EPCH fair. He already exports and his product lines-mostly show pieces, baskets and jewellery made of bamboo and cater to buyers in the Middle East, Italy, Kolkata and Delhi. "I have also started making bamboo dresses off late," he informed. Delhi based artisan, **Mahendra Phariya** manned a stall of miniature paintings- an art form using fine brushes to create paintings inspired by mythology, nature and daily life. Also from Delhi was **Harsha Kohli** who got along papier machie crafts for home decor. She has been in this business since three years and felt, participation at Home Expo India helped her with an enriching experience & learning. ■



Dhritiman Borah



Sonam Tyashi Gyalsten



The thematic presentation of crafts from North Eastern Region at Home Expo India showcased artistic tribal textiles, dry flowers, water hyacinth products, wood carving, bamboo and cane products, home accessories, home furnishing & artistic textiles, made ups, candles, incense, fabrics, textiles, gifts, trimmings and embellishments, etc. With a team of 25 artisans & entrepreneurs, this display included crafts from Assam, Nagaland, Tripura, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim.

A regular exhibitor, **Dhritiman Borah** who manufactures all kinds of bamboo products, especially furniture under his brand name-DB Industries, Assam said, "since the last time I participated in this fair, I have gained more buyers but they are usually from India. The initiative of theme pavilions to showcase regional crafts at EPCH shows is very much appreciated by all of us, we have gained more information about our field of work and learnt a lot through EPCH." Talking about his products, he shared that everything they create is made of locally procured bamboo. Their exclusives this time included kitchen furniture and he has already got an order for 2000 pieces.

"We don't have proper marketing platforms in our region and when EPCH came to us, they were scouting for more potential companies, artisans and enterprises. For us, it was like a game-changer. I think it is one of the best platforms for handicrafts. For EPCH to really push handicrafts forward, I think this is a great thing," said **Sonam Tyashi Gyalsten**, head of his firm - LA from Sikkim. Regular

exhibitors at EPCH shows since over three years, they deal in elegantly hand crafted lifestyle products like lamps, string lights, bottle jackets, desk top utilities, etc. created using the nomadic weaving technique of 'Yakult'. The tea infusers are made by a community called the Chunda, who live near the riverside. These products are made by a machine which is powered by the river without any electricity. Brand LA, primarily focuses on making mountain made products and also happens to be a social enterprise connecting with communities in the mountains following a 'buy-back' system with artisans.

Another participant, an NIFT alumni, **Narendra Borah**, heading his handlooms exclusive enterprise - Oi Qua LLP, Assam, has been in business since the last three years. "I am a regular exhibitor here and I have sold my products and have buyers from India as well as countries like Korea, Japan, Peru, USA and Australia," he shared and added, "we produce our own yarn and cocoons. All our material is naturally hand spun and woven by us."

First time participant, **Hemanta Kumar Adhikary** representing Adhikari Pat Muga Udag, Assam, feels that the buyer response has been good and there have been enquiries to his line of muga silk textile crafts. "I have been doing this work since 2002 when my wife and I started this together," he informed and added that their products are loom made and hand crafted. They make shoes, sarees, shawls and kurtas out of muga silk.

A regular participant at EPCH shows since 2008, **Haider Ali**, from Dibrugarh, Assam started working with Muga and Eri silk in 2004, initially catering to boutiques in the local market and moving on to export markets like France, Germany and Russia. Though he deals in silk jackets, shawls, cushion covers, quilts and runners, his main focus is on silk stoles and king size shawls that include use of natural dyes in the fiber stage and traditional hand spinning techniques thereafter.

T T Lepcha from Sikkim is happy with the learning and exposure. "We learn a lot during our short stay here. I've even received a few queries. It is a very good platform for the exposure. I would like to thank the Govt. of India, Ministry of Textiles and EPCH for having us here and taking care of us," he said emphatically. They are working on one particular kind of hat that is traditional to the Lepcha tribe of Sikkim and are training people towards its production. "The population of Lepcha tribe is deteriorating so we are trying to save its culture and the beauty associated with it. This particular stylised hat is our invention and is extremely magnificent in its structure and detailing," explained T T Lepcha and added that this requires a lot of hard work and patience. The **Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Assam** was represented by Jyotimoy Choudhury who reported that the buyer response has been okay. His stall had textile patches/cutting in traditional designs - all cotton or eri silk and hand loomed. They are working with village based



Narendra Borah



Hemanta Kumar



Haider Ali



T T Lepcha



Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Assam



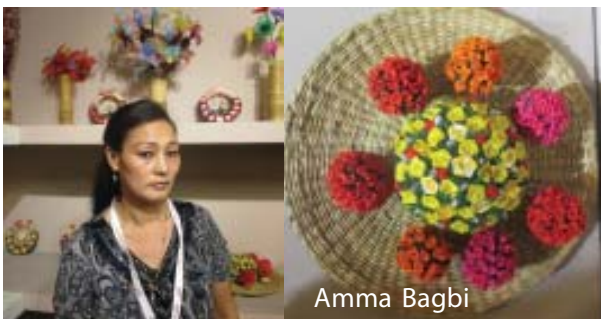
Kiulam



Chandrani Sarmah



Keisham Babita Devi



Amma Bagbi

artisans and are also bringing out water hyacinth based bags and utility products. **Kiulam** representing Keningunuo Neikha of Keni Krotho Silkcocoon Crafts, Nagaland was enjoying his learning experience and attention to his craft like bamboo showpieces, silk cocoon earrings, paintings, etc.

There was a strong representation from women entrepreneurs. Some were regular participants and old timers too. **Chandrani Sarmah** from Artcore, Assam showcased her candles and related products many times at EPCH shows. "This time too, the response has been really good so far. I have brought hand-crafted and hand-made candles. We have abundant high quality raw material in Assam for my candles and they are all world class," she said and informed that she has trained many people in this skill as well. She has been commissioned by the Assam Govt. to impart training to women artisans on candle making. "EPCH has given us a huge opportunity because marketing is always a challenge for us due to our geographic location. This platform is a very good opportunity," she added.

Keisham Babita Devi from Manipur, manufacturer exporter of bags, baskets and purses made of jute and other natural fibers, said, "I formed this self-help group and have been working in this craft since past 10-15 years. The responses have been healthy and good but I am expecting more. This initiative of EPCH to showcase our regional craft is very useful in bringing out the NER tradition to the world." A crusader of kauna craft goods, she offered a range in bags with pom-poms, trims & tassels through her firm-Natural Textile Collection. This entrepreneur working primarily with women artisans, exports to Europe, Australia and USA. **Amma Bagbi** from Arunachal Pradesh represented a welfare society called Donyi Ane Weaving Multipurpose Society. She specialises in making dry flower decoratives using a combination of cloth, bamboo, flowers and other dried plant parts, and has been involved in this craft category since five years. "I sell these articles all over India and we also train others in the production of these goods," detailed Amma.

Baby Sarkar from Tripura brought to Home Expo India, bamboo based items like lamp shades alongside decoratives, mats and handbags. She has been in business since decades and this was her second participation at this fair. "We basically use bamboo to make our products like lamp shades, mats, handbags and other bamboo products, she shared and added that she has a team of 50 workers and caters to buyers in India and South Africa. "EPCH has helped in increasing our sales and production," she emphasised.



Baby Sarkar

Karma Sonam Bhutia and her firm-Kuzu from Assam were on their maiden participation at Home Expo India. They specialise in natural fibers -hand loomed as well as hand-spun. She tries to keep her styling and colour scheme exclusive from what one can easily find in the market, she said. Karma also informed, "we are also working on Angora and other kinds of natural materials." She is presently working with different clusters, each with 15-20 people, all over Sikkim. "The initiative of theme pavilions to showcase regional crafts at EPCH shows will help us in expanding our craft's reach and awareness," she said.



Karma Sonam Bhutia

Dakge Lomri was a first time participant. She represented a self-help Group from Arunachal Pradesh and specialises in artistic textiles. "I am learning a lot. We have received some enquiries so far. I formed this SHG where we initially made traditional jewellery and gradually included other items. It feels really good to be here. Learning & market exposure is a slow process but I think it is a very good opportunity for all of us," she shared.



Dakge Lomri

R. Pamringla Vashum representing six years old Phamei self-help group, Manipur felt that buyers need to be sensitised about heirloom products that take time to be made. Her firm deals in pure cotton cushions, mats, scarves, table mats and curtains. "I believe that in this generation too, women of my village should know how to weave so that they can weave for their families and further teach others," she said and added, "our village is very small and we don't really get to interact with the outside world. EPCH's intervention has got us connected to the world."



R. Pamringla Vashum

Nagaizahat Kuki

Nagaizahat Kuki from Genesis Tailoring Centre, Manipur displayed tribal textiles. They are pure cotton handloom fabrics with tribal designs. "This is a good experience for me and I have learned a lot just by looking at everyone's work. In my local area, my design has a high demand because I have received a State award in Manipur for my work," she informed. **Thaoroijam Radhamani Devi** specialising in embroidered cotton and woolen clothing felt that the buyer response has been good. "A buyer from France would soon be working with me," she shared. ■



Thaoroijam Radhamani Devi