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Aaghaaz
Inspiring
CHANGE

Uniform Profit Sharing in the Craft Industry

Historically, with the prevalent practices in different times, it is evident that the artisan class creating the most exquisite craft products from Kashmir, was always marginalized and featured in the lowest income bracket of the entire supply-chain. This is equally true even today, where the actual creators and producers of most of the crafts from Kashmir, retain the minimum of profit margins and the larger shares are enjoyed by those at the advanced end of the value addition sequence. For example, a Pashmina shawl can be purchased at Rs. 6000.00 from an artisan in Kashmir, while the same sells at about Rs. 46,000.00 in the 5-Star Metropolitan Hotel, at New Delhi.

Over years, this aspect of the regional craft industry of Kashmir, has greatly influenced the motivation and aspirations of the artisan community and is now increasingly discouraging the younger generation to join the profession. Further due to the same reason the original quality of most crafts has also gone considerably down and is progressively degenerating.

As per the available information, the valley of Kashmir was known to have 23 practicing crafts as recently as the year 1970, which have now steadily fallen to just 18 that are currently under production, including about 3 that have already disappeared from the main-stream commerce.

Some of the main reasons that may be attributed to the above mentioned aspect of the Kashmir craft industry are, firstly the inherent high value associated to a craft, due to the nature of the given raw material and technique, such as that in

THINK A WHILE

CREATING A MIND-MAP

Structuring your thoughts enables you to control and apply your mental strength. The first step is to choose your topic and draw and /or write this topic in the centre of a piece of paper. Then you must identify your Basic Ordering Ideas, or key concepts, which should be written on branches or legs of the idea. An easy way to remember this is to think of the topic as the trunk of a tree, the key concepts as the branches, and the ideas that stem from the branches as the leaves. Spend about 10 or 15 minutes creating your map, let your ideas flow freely and jot down whatever comes into your head, be it a word, picture or sign. Make sure that you mark any associations with arrows, colours or codes.

It is not just enough to know how to create a Mind-Map you must practice this technique on a regular basis. Your mind is like any other muscle in your body, it needs to be exercised or it will not perform to the best it can.

(To be continued..)

References: www.mind-map.com
www.braindance.com

DO YOU KNOW ?

Walnut plant grows at an altitude of 5500 to 7500 feet above sea level.



The intrinsic worth of the wood from each part of the tree differs, wood from the root being the most expensive.



It can take a carver from few days to six months to produce a carved product.

Hand-Knotted Carpets, Pashmina or Jamawar Shawls and secondly that the existing supply-chain is overcrowded with too many stakeholders including middlemen, traders and retailers, who try to reserve a profit margin at each step, without adding any significant value from raw material procurement to the finished goods. This ultimately results in bringing a very expensive product cost to the end consumer and as mentioned above, a very low profit margin for the primary producer.

Traditionally, due to the costly nature of the crafts, artisans could rarely go to the markets directly, as it required not only an adequate financial capacity to build a suitable stock but also a high-end retail where such products may be purchased by potential consumers. As a matter of fact, artisans were also limited by their lack of formal education and exposure that made it more difficult for them to break out of their conventionally set boundaries and explore possible opportunities.

Adding to this problem, many artisans with slightly better financial capacity and also misled by the perception of earning easy money, attempted to become entrepreneurs and traders themselves. This brought further addition to the essential members of the supply-chain as well as an unrewarding struggle to compete for direct marketing where availability of avenues was greatly limited.

It may be argued that the present scale of the regional craft production, market and practitioners could be significantly enlarged by systematically addressing the issues explained above. In this regard, two propositions are made that could bring the desired transformation.

At the onset it involves bringing-up of an ethical work environment and introduction of best practices such as ensuring of minimum wages for the artisans, fixation of a standardized cost parameters with respect to genuine craft products, through necessary legalization, awareness building and procedures. Preliminary steps in this context have been taken through registration of selected crafts under the Geographical Indications of Goods Act, subsequent quality certification and brand building.

Secondly, the structuring and organization of the regional craft industry would also play a decisive role in accomplishing the given objectives. This would mean that the practitioners at every phase of the supply-chain are mobilized to form collectives, in order to create better efficiency and a more practical access for direct marketing as against each individual struggling for the same.

Such initiatives are at present easier than before. This is because that a better percentage of artisans are now educated and aware. At the same time, on the other hand the global consumers are striving to be in direct and closer link with the primary producers, along with growing appreciation for regionally characterized goods or practices.

News-in-Brief

CDI participated in a three-day Bharat Nirman Information Campaign organized by Press International Bureau Government of India, Srinagar in Kulgam from 16th February to 18th February 2009. The selected prototypes developed at CDI like Khatamband panel, papier-mâché products, copperware, wood carved products etc were kept on display. Such campaigns have been held by Govt. of India to create awareness among the people about various available schemes and other programmes.

Students of first batch of the CM&EL program completed their second Internship after the completion of fourth trimester successfully. They were placed in various reputed organizations like Karika, Creatnet and Fabindia from 16th January to 20th February 2009. They have collected sufficient information for everyone has been cooperative, helpful and friendly at these organizations.

Dastkar organized an exhibition called “Basant Bazaar” at IGNC, New Delhi. CDI participated in the said exhibition and exhibited its prototypes. The students of CM&EL batch 08-10 also attended the exhibition in order to get oriented towards craft. It was the first step towards building up the network with “Dastkar” organization.

The All India Artisans and Craft workers Welfare Association (AIACA), New Delhi organized its annual India Market Readiness Program (IMRP) from 23rd -26th February 2009. It was an integrated approach to business, product development and marketing training that is based on the idea that rather than simply learning about the market, participants should learn by experiencing the market through a highly interactive and practical learning process. From CDI Mr. Rouf wadera and Mr. Naseer Zargar participated in the IMRP training programme. For understanding the modern business methods and strategic planning to be implemented in CDI, which in turn will help in imparting practical knowledge to our budding entrepreneurial students of CM&EL programme.



1. CDI stall at three-day Bharat Nirman Information Campaign, at Nowgam, Srinagar.
2. CM&EL program Student with MD, Dilli Karigari (SRC Fabindia) Ms. Shella, during the internship.
3. Students of CM&EL batch 08-10 interacting with Coilln Pendelton of “Aid To Artisans” in New Delhi.
4. CDI Participants having a group discussion in IMRP training program at New Delhi.
5. (L to R) Dastakar Chairperson Laila Tyabji, Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit appreciating CDI prototypes at Basant Bazaar.

Spotlight



Zak Salaam India-ZAK India Handicrafts & Handlooms Expo-melbourne
ZAK Trade Fairs and Exhibitions Private Limited is organizing an exhibition at Sydney Trade Centre, Sydney, Australia, the Zak Salaam India - ZAK India Handicrafts & Handlooms Expo-Melbourne is 3 days event from 17th April 2009 - 19th April 2009 for providing a trusted platform to exhibit various handlooms & handicrafts products.

Profile for exhibit includes Houseware, Decoratives and Gift Items, Home Textiles, Furnishings, Furniture, Floor Coverings & Home Accessories, Christmas and Floral decorations including eco-friendly Crafts, Fashion Jewellery, Accessories, Bags & Clocks.

Fashionista Lifestyle Exhibition Nagpur

Fashionista Lifestyle Exhibition (22nd April 26th April 2009) - Nagpur offer the various cities bringing a large contingent of renowned exhibitors displaying best of the best products in the field of Lifestyle, Fashion & accessories, from all over India-all under one roof.

Exhibitor profile include designer stuff ranging from Jewelry, Clothing, Accessories, Home Furnishing, Interiors, Handicrafts and much more in variety of hues, styles, trends and designs with exquisite color and contour which beautifully blend the Indian culture with contemporary styles, Today's Man, Today's Woman, Kids World.

INACRAFT (Jakarta International Handicraft Trade Fair)

Inacraft (22nd April 26th April 2009) is an international scale promotional and sales activity of Indonesian handicraft products for domestic and foreign markets. The annual INACRAFT exhibition has become one of the international events and target of foreign buyers' and importers' visit. INACRAFT is an annual event held on April as it is the period when foreign buyers and importers come to Asia and ASEAN regions.

Profile for exhibit includes National and international wide handicraft producers/manufacturers & SME ranging from gift item, houseware, home garden decorative, toy & game, batik, embroidery, jewelry & germ stone, pottery, etc.

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