

Peacecraft is an organisation that assist the poor of the Third World and also the United states through self-help projects, providing a fair and just market for handmade crafts and clothing. Peacecraft provides educational material about the root causes of poverty and addresses issues involving injustice, human rights, and cultural awareness.

Most of the crafts and clothing sold by Peacecraft come from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The handcrafted items are made in a labor-intensive manner, requiring long hours of individual craftsmanship. Emphasis is on traditional handicrafts of cultural significance. The artisans differ greatly in their Language and culture, but share a desire for dignified work to provide a secure family income and freedom from hunger.

Peacecraft seeks to encourage the environment of co-operation and organisation of craftsmen into groups . The purchase of a handcrafted item from Peacecraft is an opportunity to participate in this struggle against worldwide poverty in a permanent way. These beautiful products are a lasting reminder of an investment in a grassroots community effort to end world hunger and bring us further up the road to world peace.

Peacecraft works only with suppliers and democratically run community co operatives who meet the following criteria:

- The supplier must be an organisation run and owned by Community
- The supplier must be a non-profit organization or a cooperative where profits are distributed to members
- The supplier must be a member of the Fair Trade Federation , the International Federation of Alternative Trade

Peacecraft purchases products from these cooperatives at a fair price and guarantees against child labor and other exploitations.



Source: www.peacecraft.com

Craft Development Institute, Srinagar

March 2005

News

No Ready made Answers...

On completing a year of functioning of CDI, Srinagar, it is perhaps time for a critical retrospection.

From a slightly tedious start and initial anxiety of finding focus, the Institute has now gained adequate stability for normal functioning and implementation. Much of the first year has gone into operationalising the temporary premises, identification & recruitment of core HR and development of basic infrastructure for the institute. Several short-term activities like skill up-gradation workshops, design development projects and professional consultancy have also been initiated in the last year. Alongside, substantial time has been invested on networking with artisans & business community, to generate awareness of the objectives, activities and programme of the CDI, Srinagar.

Like in any new initiative, the challenges have been those of addressing & influencing closed mindsets, old practices and fixed attitudes, especially relating to the concerned focus groups. Given the context of past decade of extensive disturbance & decline in the state, it is understandable that the

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common masses reflect considerable sarcasm, disbelief and passive response towards proposals & ideas referring to development and future prospects. Receding economic opportunities, broken business & supply-chain networks and an overall sense of deprivation, especially among the self-employed and unemployed, has generated extended dependence on the administration. In response, the approach commonly followed by the govt. to provide financial compensation, has become popular with potential scope of use and misuse. There are high expectations and an unfair hope of receiving ready-made answer and prepared road maps of immediate success without necessary effort or struggle.

Responding from a perspective of an institution engaged in training & development of people towards occupational sustenance, it seems appropriate to mention, late economist, E.F.Schumacher, stressing the cause of teaching a poor man, to catch a fish rather than giving him one. Policies & initiatives need to be framed with a fundamental objective of facilitating self-reliance. Education & training needs to be encouraged for innovative thinking and free decision making rather than rely on fixed alternatives of provisional help.

The worst already appears over. Memories of fear, depression & hopelessness must be washed away with fresh struggle for a positive future. Sparsely scattered incidences of unwithered perseverance & integrity through difficult times must be collected to reinforce new commitments to work harder, learn better skills and acquire further know-how to develop competence and sustain livelihoods independently. The illusive notions of dependence and apparent disability to move without help or interventions of the state must be abandoned as soon as possible.

There are more than enough opportunities to be maximized, within reach & regional vicinity, provided there is a continual effort to seek, discover and actualize the same. Guidance & facilitation help is in close quarters, provided there are keen & responsive recipients.



Workshop on Leather Accessories

There are around a thousand small scale production units in Srinagar, engaged in manufacturing of leather based accessories of various types. In most cases, waste cut pieces of suede finished leather is brought to the city, from other production centres, and used in making low to medium value, fashion products like ladies handbags, purses, wallets, coin pouches and other similar items. These leather products find an extensive market based on the USP of decorative value addition through hand embroidery, typical of Kashmir. However, the potential of this product-mix is not fully maximised because of low quality & un-thoughtful use of leather scrap, as well as poor production & design alternatives.

A 15 days workshop was conducted at CDI, Srinagar, which involved artisans & manufacturers of leather products and provided inputs on up-grading the quality of production using better designs & construction techniques in the above context. The new explorations were done keeping in view the present constraints of available raw material, hardware and infrastructure in the city. The workshop was conducted by a technical expert, Mr. Abdul Kalam, formerly associated with NIFT, and Design inputs from Ms. Shivani Kumar, a well established Accessory Designer from Delhi.

All products with production specifications, evolved during the workshop are available for referencing at the Institute.

It became clear from the above workshop that the area of Leather based accessories with further value addition through hand embroidery, has huge market potential and must be given appropriate support for establishing better infrastructure facilities and improved designs to engaged as well as aspiring entrepreneurs in the state.



News in brief

Workshop on Dyeing techniques for Bamboo

A short term workshop was organised at Jammu for artisans involved in Bamboo craft products. The workshop exposed the artisans regarding techniques of dyeing bamboo with various vegetable based colour dyes.

Use of additional colours over bamboo will bring a better variety and appeal to products already in production by the artisans.

The workshop also included training in different weaving techniques using bamboo strips combined with yarn to find additional product items like chicks & screens.

Extension of CDI's Resources

The Institute is all set to extend its infrastructure & resources with additional workshop machinery and digital & IT equipments. The workshop will have additional metal & wood processing machinery suitable for prototype development and hands-on skill up-gradation training. The additional IT facilities will enhance functioning of the Information Resource Cell and also be used to provide IT based training services.

