

## Spotlight

- Indian Handicrafts and Gift Fair (IHGF) 2007 is being held in New Delhi from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> of October. IGHF is not only an international fair for potential business but also a very effective source of understanding craft related design trends and future directions.
- Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industries (KCCI) in collaboration with J&K Bank Ltd., Government of India and J&K State Government (Department of Handicrafts) is organizing a Buyer-Seller meet, **Kashmir Expo 2007**, at SKICC, Srinagar from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> of October, 2007. CDI is planning to participate in this Meet to present innovative designs and concepts developed at the Institute and hence test the commercial potential of the same. A good number of foreign buyers are expected to visit the proposed meet.



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# News

## Branding of Kashmir Crafts

Kashmir handicrafts need protection! Due to several negative factors and unfair practices in the production and trade of crafts, there is an increasing need to benchmark and protect them. Such practices are detrimental to our handicraft sector, which is characterized by the purity of materials, traditional techniques and quality of craftsmanship. The need for branding and quality certification of Kashmir handicrafts has been late compared to such initiatives in the other parts of the world.

The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 provides an opportunity for geographically specific handicrafts to be legally protected. The registration means an acknowledgment of the fact that a handicraft is unique and is produced with traditional knowledge and skills that are specific to an area. Hence, only registered manufacturers can claim to produce that particular handicraft or sell it under the name recognized by the registration. GI Act also provides for penalties for possible misuse of the Mark.

The required initiative has been entrusted to CDI, Srinagar in terms of

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necessary research and following a procedure under law to register short-listed traditional handicrafts of Kashmir under the GI Act. This initiative has received considerable attention from the related trade and industry as well as various govt. organisations.

The subsequent issue of bench-marking and quality certification arises a need for establishing a regulatory body or agency in order to facilitate implementation of required activities for the development of trade in regional handicrafts.

As the quality certification and brand building initiative is for the benefit of the handicraft trade, the trade itself needs to take a proactive role towards establishing the proposed regulatory body. The government may extend some support but the actual work needs to be done by the people directly concerned.

In this regard CDI, Srinagar has initiated a process of setting up of TAHAFUZ as a registered society of artisans, in fulfillment of the requirements under the GI law. 'TAHAFUZ' will subsequently be the authorized proprietor of GI Registration of all crafts proposed for protection.

The research and documentation has already been done for six craft areas, namely Kashmir Pashmina, Sozani embroidery, Kani shawl, Amlikar shawl, Paper Machie and Walnut wood carving; and applications have also been filed to the Registrar of Geographical Indications for seeking registration. The GI Registry has already published the three cases of 'Kashmir Pashmina', 'Sozani embroidery' and 'Kani Shawl' in the Geographical Indication Journal (No 13 & 14). It was open for receiving any suggestions or opposition within the stipulated time of four months, which ended in January 2007. An opposition was filed by an organization called the Kashmir Handmade Pashmina Promotion Trust. This Trust is also working towards the cause of protecting Pashmina products and artisans and has now been invited to become a member of TAHAFUZ, in order to amicably settle the matter. Now, another opposition with regards to 'Sozani Kashmir' has been filed by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), Pakistan.

In view of the entire scenario, this issue needs to be

addressed seriously without any delay. It requires the efforts and interest of all the stakeholders. Instead of opposing the common cause, all should work toward the attainment of the goal, that is, protection of our Kashmir crafts.



- Students of CDI attended the **Enamel Painting** workshop in Women's Polytechnic, Bemina. They were exposed to various processes such as designing of jewelry and other metal items, application of enamel paints and firing in the kiln.
- First trimester of the flagship programme, **Craft Management & Entrepreneurial Leadership**, was successfully completed, followed by a jury evaluation. This has been a highly satisfying experience for the Institute and has inculcated confidence in the CDI team for future initiatives.
- **Active Learning** session was conducted by Frank De Caries wherein all students and faculty members of CDI participated. It exposed them to the effective approaches of learning, methods of active learning and participatory methods of working.

