

New Initiatives

Directorate of Handlooms & Textiles Department of Textiles, Commerce & Industry

1.0: Introduction:

Handweaving formed a part of socio-cultural tradition of the peoples of Manipur which has a rich cultural heritage. Handloom industry in the State, which has a legacy of unrivalled craftsmanship, is spread throughout the length and breadth of the State. As a matter of fact, there is no surplus produces of Manipur other than handloom cloths. Many women are taking the activity of trading with these products both in the local market and outside the State. This activity is a supplementary to the handloom production and additional employment generated through the handloom sector.

2.0: Density of Handlooms activity in Manipur vis-a-vis in India:

National Handloom Census 2010 reported that Manipur has highest density of weavers and loom in country. Top Ten of India in respect of density of loom and weaver population in 1000 man with Manipur in the TOP of all is shown hereunder:

| Name of States | Population in 2011 | Loom in 2010 | Weaver in 2010 | Loom/ 1000 man | weaver/ 1000 man |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| MANIPUR | 2721756 | 190634 | 204319 | 70 | 75 |
| TRIPURA | 3671032 | 139011 | 131742 | 38 | 36 |
| ASSAM | 31169272 | 1111577 | 1483864 | 36 | 48 |
| NAGALAND | 1980602 | 47688 | 65303 | 24 | 33 |
| MIZORAM | 1091014 | 24136 | 41189 | 22 | 38 |
| ARUNACHAL PRADESH | 1382611 | 27286 | 29566 | 20 | 21 |
| WEST BENEAL | 91347736 | 307829 | 665006 | 3 | 7 |
| TAMIL NADU | 72138958 | 154509 | 318512 | 2 | 4 |
| ANDHRA PRADESH | 84665533 | 124714 | 306465 | 1 | 4 |
| UTTAR PRADESH | 199581477 | 80295 | 217015 | 0 | 1 |

3.0: New Initiatives: Taking this density as advantageous for Manipur, the Directorate of Handlooms & Textiles, Department of Textiles, Commerce & Industry took various initiatives steps for facilitating the weavers and artisans of Manipur. Some of the important initiatives taken up by the Directorate HQ are given hereunder:

3.1: Solar Support Powerloom: On initiative of the Directorate of Handlooms & Textiles, MANIREDA has started the installation of 13 KWA solar power supply for 7 powerloom (3 branded and four local made) at Industrial Estate, Imphal.

3.2: Handloom and Handicrafts Delivery Scheme: Weavers and Artisans are facing shortage of raw material and sale of their products at the time of various natural and artificial calamities. In order to address and relieve the burden of weavers and artisans, Department had approved to introduce "Handloom and Handicrafts Home Delivery Scheme" to deliver yarn and raw material of handicrafts at the door steps of weavers and artisans with buy back arrangement of their products. Registration and enrolment already started with a formal notification.

3.3: Revival of Manipur Spinning Mill: The Manipur Spinning Mills Corporation Ltd was wound up due to various technical and economical reasons. Consequent upon the shortage of raw material at the time of bandh and blockade as well as difficulties faced by the weavers, the Department initiated to revive the Manipur Spinning Mills. The erstwhile Corporation installed and produced only cotton yarn with maximum count of 40^S or 2/40^S. It is now planned to installed new and advanced spinning machines for both cotton and synthetic yarn which will make available of various counts to weavers throughout the year.

3.4: Revival of Grievance Redressal Cell for weavers & Artisans: Grievance Redressal Cell for weavers and artisans will be revived to redress the various grievances came across by Weavers and Artisans of Manipur. All issues and grievances of weavers and artisans can contact personally or over phone.

3.5: Office Automation System: Attendance of officers and staff initially recorded in the attendance register which was gradually developed other time machine, biometric attendance, etc. But the ultimate aim of employer is to check physically the signature appended at the time of arrival in the office. In order to monitor all activities of all official working in the Department, a software of Office Automation System has been developed which will be launched formally shortly.

3.6: Manipur Dyeing Institute: The Manipur Mechanized Dye House at Iroishemba, Imphal will be converted as Manipur Dyeing Institute for providing advanced technology in wet processing, like, Bleaching, Scouring, Dyeing and Printing technology to weavers of Manipur for various natural fibre and yarn

3.7: Promotion of Banana Fibre: What was earlier regarded banana as agricultural waste and a nuisance for farmers is now a raw material for good quality silk grade fibre yarn. That's the story of banana fibre and is one of the strongest natural fibres. This biodegradable natural fibre from the bark of the banana plant is so durable that if we make currency notes from it, the notes can be used for more than a hundred years. It can be used to make silk grade saris and just as it can be used in car tyres. In order to tap the bananas grown in many parts of the State, the Department initiated for promotion of banana fibre.

3.8: Scheme for Handicrafts Awardees:A new scheme for awardees of handicrafts has been initiated for implementation in 2017-18. Under this, national and merit awardees will be provided financial assistance for conducting training so to enable them to produce their award winning item on commercial scale.

3.9: Market Promotion: Merchandising and Marketing have been recognized as being central to the growth and development of the handloom and handicrafts industry. Domestic and National/International marketing is important for providing linkage between the producer and the consumer of handloom products. The Department initiated to organize 10 Nos. of National Level Handloom Expo in 2017-18 to support and facilitate the weavers and artisans in the promotion of marketing of handloom and handicrafts products.

3.10: Welfare Schemes: Weavers and artisans were informed to migrate from Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar BimaYojana to Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana which is implemented with LIC of India to provide enhanced insurance cover to the handloom weavers in the case of natural or accidental death, total or partial disability and also scholarship to the children of parents who are covered under the scheme.

3.11: Cluster Development Program: In view of the growing competitiveness in the textile industry both in the national and international markets, a growing need has been felt for developing in Cluster Approach to facilitate handloom weavers and handicrafts artisans to meet the challenges of a globalize environment. The Department has, thus, focus on formation of groups as a visible production group in a selected Handloom and Handicrafts Clusters for becoming self-sustainable. Initiative has been taken to develop cluster under National Handloom Development Programme, North Eastern Region Textile promotion Scheme and Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana in 2017-18. Priority will be given to such clusters where the weavers and artisans have not yet been covered earlier.

3.12: Implementation of Policy: Department of Textiles, Commerce & Industry introduced the Manipur Use and Procurement of Local Handloom & Handicrafts Products of Manipur Policy 2016 to boost up the marketing avenue of local handloom and handicrafts products. Memorandum was issued on 21-4-2017 for promotion and development of handloom & handicrafts products at competitive prices. The State Govt. circulated instruction on 15-6-2017 to all Government Agencies for supply of the local products to Government establishments.

4.0: Conclusion:

With this initiative, the State Government is planning to achieve the Vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India for daily earning of Rs.1000/- by a weaver and artisans in 2022. It is also expected that the textile sector will flourish further in the near future.

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