Professional Design Project

PDP-13-271

Design and development of mask making and bamboo craft of Sivasagar, Assam

MSME name - Shanti creation
City - Guwahati
State - Assam
Zone - North-east

Designer/Firm - Siddhartha kam deuri
City - Guwahati
State - Assam

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PHASE 1 – RESEARCH
DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MASK MAKING AND BAMBOO CRAFT OF SIVASAGAR, ASSAM

Design Project
PHASE ONE

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Design Clinic Scheme for Design Expertise to MSMEs, a unique and ambitious design intervention scheme for the country’s large micro, small and medium scale enterprises, is an initiative of Ministry of MSME, Government of India has been launched under National Manufacturing Competitiveness programme. The scheme is being designed keeping in mind the objective of design awareness, design interventions and competitiveness improvement for largest group of industrial sectors, Micro, small and medium enterprises of the country which contributes to approximately 45% of total industrial production and 40% exports. They are major contributors to the GDP growth, accounting to about 8%. They are also the largest employers after agriculture, employing an estimated 41 million people.

The main objective of the Design Clinic Scheme is to bring MS&ME sector and design expertise into a common platform and to provide expert advice and solutions on real time design problems, resulting in continuous improvement and value addition for existing products. This model brings design exposure to the door step of industry clusters for design awareness, improvement, evaluation, analysis and design related intervention. Design clinic scheme will assist industrial clusters to open a channel for design information inflow for creative, innovative and futuristic approach towards the product, process, operations, manufacturing and business design. The scheme will help generate insight for opportunity identification and design intervention for competitive and breakthrough solutions for MSMEs.

The total scheme budget will be Rs. 73.58 crores, out of which Rs. 49.08 crores will be GoI assistance and the balance amount will be contributed by the beneficiary MSMEs. The scheme provides great opportunity to the large sector of MSME (Associations and Units) as well as Indian design fraternity – the design consulting firms, independent designers, various design institutes of the country and also the design students to engage them to assist the country’s large MSME sector move up the value chain through increasing the value and competitiveness of their products and services.

The scheme targets to reach out to about 200 MSME clusters over the next two and half years. This will be achieved through organization of about 200 design sensitization seminars, 200 Design Clinic Workshops and 400 design projects including 100 student design projects (final year thesis projects).

National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad will assist the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, as a nodal agency for implementing the scheme. As part of the scheme a Design
Clinic Centre and its regional centres are being set up to reach out to all parts of the country. For easy percolation of design thinking and philosophy and maximum benefit for MSME units the Design Clinic Scheme is divided at 3 broader levels.

These activities are helpful in smooth transition in to several levels of design intervention in industrial and business activities of MSMEs.

1. Design Sensitisation Seminar
2. Design Awareness programme
   a. Need Assessment Survey
   b. Design Clinic Workshop
3. Design Projects

Introduction

Design Projects

As part of the Design Clinic Scheme for Design Expertise to MSME sector, practicing Design Professionals/Design houses/Design firms/Design education Institutions offering full time UG/PG (degree/diploma) courses in design are encouraged to provide design expertise to the MSMEs in the form of consultancy projects to orient MSMEs to design thinking and process application and generate innovative design solutions for MSME sector.

Under the Scheme, the design professionals will work closely with MSMEs in their specific domains to generate insights, through design research, concepts and prototypes for design solutions, which will help MSME unit, improve/diversify their products and services, to achieve competitive edge through design intervention and strategies in all domains of design application.

The Scheme aims to:
* Facilitate access of MSMEs to design expertise in the form of consultancy;
* Facilitate MSMEs to develop new design strategies and/or design-related products and services through project interventions;
* Improve the quality and marketability of existing products/services and/or diversify products and services of MSMEs through design intervention
* Create visible impact and effectively develop the capabilities of the local enterprise.
About
National Institute of Design

The National Institute of Design (NID) is internationally acclaimed as one of the foremost multi-disciplinary institutions in the field of design education and research. The Business Week, USA has listed NID as one of the top 25 European & Asian programmes in the world. The institute functions as an autonomous body under the department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India. NID is recognised by the Dept. of Scientific & Industrial Research (DSIR) under Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India, as a scientific and industrial design research organisation.

NID has been a pioneer in industrial design education after Bauhaus and Ulm in Germany and is known for its pursuit of design excellence to make Designed in India, Made for the World a reality. NID’s graduates have made a mark in key sectors of commerce, industry and social development by taking role of catalysts and through thought leadership.
About Shanti Creation

The objective of the Society “SHANTI CREATION” is to promote Design, Development and Marketing of Rural Product which reflects Rural Weavers and Artisans and JLG’S to develop their economic and social benefit. In continuance of its objectives either by itself or in collaboration with other cooperative, financial, government, development and banking organisations or corporate bodies, the “SHANTI CREATION” is involved in following activities:

* To promote activities for the educational & socio-economic development of the unemployed youth specially rural & urban youths.
* To facilitate marginalized community in accessing formal, non formal, vocational education etc, especially targeting the most deprived vulnerable children and woman.
* To work for Skill up gradation to small scale industries and to Rural People
* To check and ensure that maximum level of profit margin should reach to the weavers and the Artisans of the cluster through marketing of Handloom and Handicraft products.
* To inculcate legal awareness among the poor and vulnerable section of the society in regard to their right.
* To work for socio economic empowerment of the woman and Create Awareness and to prevent of Domestic Violence and Child, Women trafficking.
* To organize legal Awareness Camp, Free Medical Camp, Blood Donation Camp, Health Awareness Camp about HIV/AIDS, Cancer etc.
* To work for the poor and marginalized by enabling to access safe drinking water and hygiene and sanitation.
* Encouraging all marketing efforts to boost sales generation in the different cluster such as participating in Exhibition, sales event held at local level and outside the state, order generation of buyers and direct marketing by forming a marketing team with selected members of the cluster.
* To fight for environment protection by facilitating awareness generation on environment degradation and work for preservation of eco-system by implementing forestation projects and programme.
* Registration and renewal at regular activity under the Joint Director of Foreign Trade Import-Export Certificate (IEC).
* To take steps for Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal husbandry for the development of rural poor people and thereby encourage them to take-up livelihood independently.
* To generate the self employment opportunities.
* To ensure technological assistance to the people of the NE region in different sector.
* To support the physically, mentally and emotionally challenged people for their better livelihood.
* Undertake any activity and provide necessary services for the welfare of the employees of the consortium.
* To take steps for cultural enrichment of the region and to give a global view.
Popularly called as the land of the red river and blue hills, Assam is the gateway to the northeastern part of India.

Assam is a northeastern state of India. Its capital is Dispur, a city located on the outskirts of its largest city, Guwahati. Located south of the eastern Himalayas, Assam comprises the Brahmaputra and the Barak river valleys along with the Karbi Anglong and the North Cachar Hills with an area of 30,285 square miles (78,438 km²). Assam is surrounded by six of the other Seven Sister States: Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Meghalaya. These states are connected to the rest of India via a narrow strip in West Bengal called the Siliguri Corridor or “Chicken’s Neck”. Assam also shares international borders with Bhutan and Bangladesh; and cultures, peoples and climate with South-East Asia.

Assam is known for Assam tea, large and old petroleum resources, Assam silk and for its rich biodiversity. Assam has successfully conserved the one-horned Indian rhinoceros from near extinction, along with the tiger and numerous species of birds, and it provides one of the last wild habitats for the Asian elephant. Assam was also known for its Sal tree forests and forest products, much depleted now. A land of high rainfall, Assam is endowed with lush greenery and the mighty river Brahmaputra, whose tributaries and oxbow lakes provide the region with a unique hydro-geomorphic and aesthetic environment.

FESTIVALS:
There are several important traditional festivals in Assam. Bihu is the most important and common and celebrated all over Assam. Durga Puja is another festival celebrated with great enthusiasm. Muslims celebrate two Eids with much eagerness all over Assam.

DEMOGRAPHICS:
Total population of Assam was 26.66 million with 4.91 million households in 2001. Higher population concentration was recorded in the districts of Kamrup, Nagaon, Sonitpur, Barpeta, Dhubri, Darang and Cachar. In 2001, the census recorded literacy in Assam at 63.3% with male literacy at 71.3% and female at 54.6%. The major religions are Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jains.

CLIMATE:
With the “Tropical Monsoon Rainforest Climate”, Assam is temperate (summer max. at 35–38 °C and winter min. at 6–8 °C) and experiences heavy rainfall and high humidity. The climate is characterized by heavy monsoon downpours reducing summer temperatures and affecting foggy nights and mornings in winters. Thunderstorms known as Bordoicila are frequent during the afternoons. Spring (Mar-Apr) and
Autumn (Sept-Oct) are usually pleasant with moderate rainfall and temperature.

LANGUAGE:
Assamese and Bodo are the major indigenous and official languages while Bengali holds official status in the three districts in the Barak Valley and is the second most widely spoken language of the state at around 27%.

BIO DIVERSITY:
Assam is one of the richest biodiversity zones in the world and consists of tropical rainforests, deciduous forests, riverine grasslands, bamboo orchards and numerous wetland ecosystems; Many are now protected as national parks and reserved forests. The Kaziranga, home of the rare Indian Rhinoceros, and Manas are two UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Assam. The state is the last refuge for numerous other endangered species such as the Golden Langur (Presbetis geei), White-winged Wood Duck, Bengal Florican, Black-breasted Parrotbill, Pygmy Hog, Greater Adjutant and so on. Some other endangered species with significant population in Assam are the tiger, elephant, Hoolock gibbon, Jerdon’s Babbler and so on to name a few. Assam is also known for orchids.

SIVASAGAR:
Sivasagar previously spelled Sibsagar (”the ocean of Lord Shiva”), is a town in Upper Assam, about 360 kilometres (224 mi) north east of Guwahati. It is the district headquarters of the Sivasagar district.

It is well-known for its Ahom palaces and monuments. Sivasagar today is also an important centre for the tea and oil industries.

Sivasagar, formerly known as Rangpur, was the capital of the Ahom Kingdom from 1699 to 1788. The Ahoms ruled Assam, virtually without interruption, for six centuries, until their kingdom fell to the Burmese in 1819 and their ruling class was all but wiped out. The province was liberated by the British in 1825 but, owing to the state of anarchy which prevailed, it was completely annexed in 1826. For administrative purposes it was divided into three sub-divisions. It is said that the original name of Sivasagar was - ‘Kalansupar’ after the name of ‘Kalansu Gohain’ who resided in a village originally existed in the place where currently the Sivasagar tank is located.

This town’s main feature is the water body from which it takes its name. This is a 257-acre (1.04 km2) tank, also known as the Borpukhuri, which is at a higher elevation than the rest of the town, with three temples (”Dol”s in Assamese) on its banks. Of these temples, the most prominent is the Sivadol, standing tall at 104 feet (32 m), drawing large crowds on Shiv Ratri. The other
Temples are the Vishnudol and Devidol. The temples were built by Kuwori Ambika, wife of Swargadeo Siba Singha, in 1734.

DEMOGRAPHICS:
As of the 2001 India census, Sivasagar had a population of 53,854. Sivasagar has an average literacy rate of 81%, higher than the national average of 59.5%: male literacy stands at 83%, and female literacy at 79%.

Most of the inhabitants of the town are Assamese, comprising Ahom, Assamese Hindus, Assamese Muslims, and other ethnic groups.

TRANSPORT:
Road
Sivasagar is well connected by road with the rest of the state. State-run buses connect it to Guwahati, Dibrugarh, and Jorhat from the Assam State Transport Corporation’s (ASTC) bus station in Sivasagar. Private buses are also available. Taxis are also available for hire.

Auto-rickshaws and other modes of transport are available in and around the town. Cheaper modes of transport, like Tata Magic and Tempos, are available through Nazira, Mechagarh, and Joysagar to Sivasagar.

Airport
The closest airport is located at Jorhat, 75 km away from Sivasagar. The airport is connected, via regular flights, to cities like Guwahati, Kolkata, Bangalore, and Delhi. Sivasagar is also connected to Dibrugarh and Shillong. Another option for getting here is via Dibrugarh Airport, located at a distance of 80 km from the city. There are frequent flight services to both Jorhat and Dibrugarh. Taxis to Sivasagar are available from either airport.

Railway
The Dibrugarh –Yesvantpur Express connects through Sivasagar Railway Station. The nearest railway station on the Tinsukia-Guwahati sector of the North East Frontier Railways is located at Simaluguri, 16 kilometres (9.9 mi) from Sivasagar. Buses ply regularly from Simaluguri towards Sivasagar. It is approximately a half-hour bus ride from Simaluguri town.

CLIMATE:
The weather in Sivasagar is pleasant throughout the year. Temperatures range from 10°C in winter to 40°C during summer (due to high rainfall during the summers, the weather normally remains pleasant). Due to the Brahmaputra following quite close to the region, Sivasagar is characterised by high humidity, and the average rainfall is about 90 to 94 inches (230 to 240 cm) a year.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS:
Tanks
Joysagar Pukhuri
Joysagar, said to be the biggest man-made lake in the country, is spread over 318 acres
(1.29 km²) of water on the edge of the town in an area called Rangpur, 5 kilometres (3.1 mi) away from the present town of Sivasagar. This lake was built by Swargadeo Rudra Singha in honour of his mother, Joymoti.

Gaurisagar
The Ahom queen Bor Kuwori Phuleshwari Devi built this tank, which is spread over 150 acres (0.61 km²).

Rudrasagar
Swargadeo Lakshmi Singha built this tank, and dedicated it to his father Swargadeo Rudra Singha, in 1773. A Shiva Temple was also built on the bank of this beautifully constructed tank. It is 8 kilometres (5.0 mi) away from the town of Sivasagar.

Temples
Sivadol Temple
It was built in 1734 by Kuwori Ambika, wife of the Swargadeo Siba Singha. Dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva, this is the most sacred of the three temples. Rising to a height of 104 feet (32 m), it encircles an area of 195 feet (59 m). It is thronged by devotees during the festival of Shivratri.

Vishnudol
This was also built by Kuwori Ambika. It is dedicated to the Hindu god Vishnu. According to the Hindu calendar, the month of “Bhada” is considered auspicious and sees a greater number of visitors to the Dol, although it remains open throughout the year.

Devidol
This is dedicated to the Hindu Goddess of Power, Durga. Durga Puja, the most important festival marked at the temple, is celebrated twice a year: in the months of Chaitra (April–May) and Ashwin (September–October).

Amphitheater
Rang Ghar
Of Sivasagar’s famous Ahom ruins, the Rang Ghar is a double-storied, oval shaped, amphitheater with a roof shaped like an inverted boat. It was constructed by Swargadeo Pramatta Singha. The Rang Ghar is said to be amongst the largest of amphitheaters.

Palaces
Talatal Ghar
The Talatal Ghar is a palace which was initially built as an army base. It houses two secret tunnels, and three floors below ground level which were used as exit routes during the Ahom wars (and which give the structure its name).

The Talatal Ghar constitutes the below-ground structure of the Rangpur Palace, whose four floors above-ground make up the Kareng Ghar.
In all, the Rangpur Palace is a seven-storied building. Bakhar Bengena: it is a rare breed of tree is situated at Bokota Mouza, and the place name is known as a Bakhar Bengena.

Museum
Sivasagar Tai Museum
A new addition is the Tai Ahom Museum on the banks of the Sivasagar. It stores artefacts from the Ahom kingdoms and their rulers, including vestments, swords, manuscripts, goblets, and household utensils.

Panidihing Bird Sanctuary
A rich wetland eco-system of 33.93 square kilometres (13.10 sq mi) on the southern bank of the river Brahmaputra, in Sivasagar district. Birds: A paradise of migratory and resident birds, over 165 species of birds have been identified and recorded here. Among these is a high concentration of geese and other migratory birds. Common species include bar-headed goose, grey leg goose, spot billed duck, mallard, gadwall, wigeon, gargany, shoveller, red-crested pochard, common pochard, ferruginous duck, adjutant stork, lesser adjutant stork, open-bill stork, and the white-necked stork. Aquatic fauna: Several varieties of fish have been identified here, along with various species of frogs, snakes, and other amphibians and reptiles.

Other Attractions
The ancient capital of the Ahoms is Gargaon, about 13 km east from Sivasagar, home to the Kareng Ghar, a seven-storied palace built by 18th-century architects. Charideo, situated nearby, is another old capital which was built by Sukaphaa, the founder of the Ahom dynasty. There are Maidams, or vaults for kings and other members of the royal families here. Travellers cross the Namdang stone bridge, carved out of a single boulder hundreds of years ago, over which the busy national highway (NH 37) still runs today.
Toran (main gain of Khatpar Satra)
The traditional art of bamboo mask making is practiced at various places in Assam including Sivasagar. Currently there are two neo vaishnavite Satras in Sivasagar district where this art is still practiced whole heartedly despite the loss of interest regarding these ancient art forms in today’s society.

The two Satras are namely Khatpar Satra and Katonipar Satra. The artisans at Khatpar satra are involved only in bamboo masks making whereas the artisans under Katonipar Satra are involved in several other religious art and utility products along with mask making like Xingakhon(traditional wooden thrones for the Deity), wooden / cement sculptures, welcome gates of Satras, thoga (religious book stand), gosa (religious lamp stand), Doba/Khul (musical drums), Eikia (tripod for bronze alloy cymbals).

The artisans in Khatpar Satra have been practicing the art of mask making since last four generations. Shri Gopikanth Mahanta could be called one of the starting pillars of mask making in Satpar Satra and Shri Rebokanta Mahanta went a step ahead and displayed the beauty and aesthetics of this traditional Assamese art to the world. Whereas the artisans of Katonipar Satra have been doing it for last two generations ever since the path was shown to them by Shri Jatin Mahanta.

Presently only two families in the two Satras are keeping this tradition of mask making alive but not as a full time profession. They have a strong inclination towards their age old tradition which is still keeping the fire burning, but because of less wages and alternative careers the current generation in these households are losing interest. One reason why the art is not flourishing is its strong religious association which forbids instant experimentation although it has got a huge potential to make it to the modern homes in forms of utility and art.

Therefore introduction of new design interventions and broadening the scope of the industry beyond only the religious boundaries to which it is currently limited, would definitely help in creating a potential industry in the district.
Design Project Phase One

The Sivasagar Design Project has been divided into three phases which include market research, concept development, prototyping, branding and packaging.

The Phase One of the Design Project includes
* Market Research

The main objective of Phase One was to carry out an extensive market research to find out the existing scenario in the bamboo product market. The aim was to study various existing products available in the market and popular players. Also research involved identifying immediate competition for the cluster and the opportunity areas where they could market existing and newly developed products. Research also led to analysis of existing customer demographics and also the target audience for the newly designed masks and bamboo products. Trends such as organic and eco-friendly have been going strong for a while and thus the bamboo products would fall rightly in the category.
Existing market/ stores scenario selling bamboo and allied products

Konyak | Guwahati

Konyak is located in the Uzan Bazar area in Guwahati city, known as the gateway to North-East. The store has exquisite collection of handcrafted products of northeast India that includes textiles, souvenirs, jewellery, bamboo and cane products. The products in bamboo and cane include furniture pieces, decorative items, table top accessories, table mats, laundry baskets to mention a few.

Cane Craft & Allied Industries | Guwahati

Cane Craft and Allied Industries, located on Guwahati-Shillong Road in the heart of the Guwahati city has been into the business of production and retail of cane and bamboo products since 1993. They manufacture cane and bamboo products such as furniture, utility baskets, home decor products, lighting, souvenir items, wall hangings etc. They cater to both local customers as well as tourists who visit Guwahati.

Bamboo Canopy | Ahmedabad

Bamboo Canopy is an in-house bamboo line designed by Rhizome, a sustainable design firm based in Ahmedabad with the support of design associates and NGO and INGO collaborators. Bamboo Canopy has its own line of cane, bamboo and sustainable products. They sell through their store located at Jay Shefali Park in Ahmedabad. The product range includes furniture, home accessories, lighting, nick knacks, hangers, mirror frames etc.
Hathikuli Tea Shoppe | Kaziranga

Hathikuli Tea Shoppe located in the Kaziranga, habitat to infamous one horned Rhino of Assam. Hathikuli Tea Shoppe is a TATA enterprise that retails Organic Tea, species and bamboo and cane products. Their range of cane and bamboo products include furniture items such as chair, side tables, lighting etc.

NIDUS | Ahmedabad

NIDUS, located in the premises of National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad showcases various products from designers across India. The products are handpicked and store helps to promote Indian design. The store retails wide range of products such as furniture, stationery, textiles, home decor, books, nick knacks and a wide range of cane and bamboo products. They include furniture, home accessories, lighting etc.

Fab India | Pan India

Fabindia is India’s largest private platform for products that are made from traditional techniques, skills and hand-based processes. Fabindia links over 80,000 craft based rural producers to modern urban markets, thereby creating a base for skilled, sustainable rural employment, and preserving India’s traditional handicrafts in the process. Fabindia’s products are natural, craft based, contemporary, and affordable. They also retail cane and bamboo products which include baskets, furniture, lighting etc.
**The Ants Store** is located in Indiranagar, Bangalore. Its mandate is to showcase the handlooms & crafts mainly of the northeast region, not just to generate and sustain livelihoods but also to stress on the positive stories of the people living there. Product range includes WOMENS-WEAR & MENS-WEAR wear hand-woven by the Bodo tribes in Assam, HOME FURNISHINGS hand woven by the Naga women, KAUNA BASKETS hand-crafted in Manipur, BAMBOO PRODUCTS hand-crafted by the Khasis & Jaintias of Meghalaya, BLACK POTTERY/LONGPI POTTERY from Manipur and many more.

**Mother Earth**’s ranges are best described by its brand promise- living, giving, being!. Mother Earth’s furniture and home accessories promise chic, comfortable and sustainable lifestyles in Living. Giving embodies the wide range of innovative gifts at great prices. Being showcases Mother Earth’s fashion, personal accessory and personal care lines that encourage each one of us to be uniquely our self, and at the same time, one with humanity. Bamboo and cane products generally include baskets and home decor.

**Good Earth** provides an array of beautifully designed products such as fine tableware and glasses, cane and bamboo products, luxurious bed linen, cushions and pillows, pure authentic skincare and home fragrances, silver plated accessories and a unique line of apparel based on natural, hand-spun fabrics, using traditional craft skills.
Dhoop - A Boutique | Mumbai

Dhoop is a store for hand-crafted Indian products - a one stop store for everything hand made. They constantly feature exquisite craft collections from different parts of India that represent our unique and vibrant Indian culture! Product range includes lamps, furniture, table and desk accessories, cane and bamboo products, bath products, brass art and artefacts, clothing and wearable accessories, jewellery etc.

Contemporary Arts & Crafts | Mumbai

The CAC initiative is to enable you to re imagine Indian Art and Crafts. CAC affirms to offer you a new range of luxury products & promoting Indian Crafts. CAC today is to encourage and educate young people to support Indian arts and crafts. CAC has a craft gallery where we can hold talks, have karigars demonstrate their skills and help young designers to showcase their products.

Mohura | Guwahati

Mohura has been promoted to play a vital role in marketing of handloom and handicrafts from the North Eastern region of India. It has an extensive grassroots connection and involvement of various handloom and handicrafts artisans from various villages from the different states of the North Eastern Region of India. Mohura believes in fair trade practices and thus believes in providing quality goods while building on the strengths of marginalised rural communities to create sustainable livelihoods and overall prosperity.
Cane & Bamboo - Indian Handicrafts | Chennai

**Cane & Bamboo** is a store that stocks some of India’s finest Handicrafts. Founded in August, 1971, by Mr. C.T.Philip a veteran of 37 years in the handicrafts sector and his son, Thomas Philip, Cane & Bamboo is part of C T PHILIP ASSOCIATES. The Firm is currently managed by Thomas Philip and his wife Thangam. Products are lovingly produced by Artisans, usually working from their homes, thus the term “cottage industry”. Most of the range is procured directly from these Craftspeople.

Jagaran | Guwahati

**Jagaran** in Ambari area in Guwahati offers a wide range of products from traditional handloom and silk items like “pat”, “muga” and “endi”, the famous “mekhla chadar”, traditional Assamese Jewellery, traditional souvenirs like “Gamosa”, “Japi” and “Xorai”, decorative pieces made of bamboo and cane, tribal arts and handicrafts and then even trendy artificial jewellery.

Purbashree | Guwahati

**Purbashree** is also located in the Ambari in Guwahati. It offers a wide range of products from traditional handloom and silk items like mekhla chadar, traditional Assamese Jewellery, traditional souvenirs, decorative pieces, tribal arts and handicrafts and then even trendy artificial jewellery. Run by The North Eastern Handicraft and Handloom Development Corporation shop also stocks laichampi (quilt material), Naga and Kuki shawls and cane and bamboo crafts.
Bamboo handicraft products currently available in the local market
Designed bamboo products currently available in the Indian Market

by Rhizome

by Rhizome

by Rhizome

by Rhizome

By Sandeep Sangaru
Designed bamboo products currently available in the International Market

By Bo Reudler

By Bambu

By Modern Bamboo USA

By Alessi
Existing Bamboo and Cane Craft products in various states

India has got a wide range of Bamboo and Cane products. Most of its states produce Bamboo and Cane products, specially the states of north east India where it grows in abundance. These products are mostly hand crafted and readily available in the market at a good reasonable price. The improving demands in organic and eco-friendly products is slowly increasing the demand of Bamboo and Cane products both in the domestic as well as international market. Already a diverse range of Bamboo and Cane crafted products are available in the market. The products produced in the Sivasagar cluster are sold in the local and other north eastern states. Some of the artisans are even able to sell them in the national as well as international market. The major competitors are the local clusters in the north east and in the other parts of the country.

The various states producing Bamboo and Cane products:

Bamboo and Cane products of Tripura

Cane and Bamboo products of Tripura are acknowledged to be among the best in the country. Their exquisite designs, beauty and elegance have impressed both domestic as well as international customers. A vast range of items is produced such as furniture, panels, partitions, table mats/mat products, lamp shades, false ceilings, plaques, pot containers (planters) etc. Also household items have blended utility with artistic beauty. Tripura Cane/bamboo products are also exported to various countries, the much talented skills of artisans has been directed to produce a wide range of more than 200 exquisite products. Presently, about 10,000 skilled artisans are engaged in production of various handicrafts in the state.

Bamboo and Cane products of Mizoram

The tribal belts of Mizoram are Christians and have a tradition of crafts. Women are mostly involved with weaving and the men are into cane and bamboo crafts. Like in other states of the hilly north-east, Mizoram also has this raw material in plenty and so the inhabitants of this place are into it for ages. Mizo, the inhabitants of Mizoram make different use of this fibre. Different use includes house making and furniture apart from baskets, weaving tools, umbrella-handles, mugs, hats, fish baskets, pipes, toys etc. In furniture they make everything from sofas to chairs to tables and mooras etc.
The craftsmanship of the Mizos in cane and bamboo is best displayed in the different shapes and sizes of the baskets that are easily found. Baskets are made for different purposes. Broad baskets are meant for cotton, vegetables, firewood etc. The closed baskets are used for grains. Sometimes other fibres and leaves are also used along with cane and bamboo.

**Bamboo and Cane products of Meghalaya**

Meghalaya has got an abundance of cane and bamboo. The Cane and Bamboo craft of Meghalaya has a uniqueness of its own. The artisans, mostly from the Khasi tribe, use this resource to build their houses, baskets and objects of everyday needs. Both the Khasis and the Garos are known for their skill in cane and bamboo product making. The bamboo and cane products of Meghalaya are very intricately made and beautiful to look at. The significant items of cane and bamboo in Meghalaya are baskets, mats, hats, moochars, headgear, trays and fans, bamboo comb, bamboo pipes, chairs, utensils, knives and Khasi umbrellas among many others. Baskets like “Meghu Khoks” are made in the Garo hills. Khasi people are very fond of baskets. They are skilled in making Khasi pig basket, Khasi fruit basket, Khasi Shallo basket, small Khasi storage basket, coiled cane containers and so on. Khasi conical baskets “Khoks” are a common sight in Meghalaya. Basic khoks or thogis, and artistic baskets are very common among the local people. Musical instruments like mouth organ, tobacco pipe, flute, cup violin, tribal weapons and so on are made of cane and bamboo. A special type of cane mat called “tlieng” is also made which lasts for 20 to 30 years.
Bamboo and Cane products of Manipur

Cane and bamboo craft in Manipur is an integral part of their daily life. It is a traditional craft and has been practiced from time immemorial. Initially these natural fibres were used to make products of daily use. Every tribe and community makes materials of aesthetic yet functional use, their skills evolved over centuries of usage. Manipur is the second largest producer of bamboo products after Tripura in the north east. Some of the bamboo products are sofa sets, murhas, mats, basketry, tray, chair, table, flower vase, ashtray and other decorative and utility articles. Bamboo and cane is also used in housing, fencing and even clothing. Another variety of baskets, the chengbon (a square body of checks and squares in black and white, and rest on four prominent legs and are used for storing clothes) have a domed lid made of bamboo. The tribal people of Manipur and the adjacent areas use a container basket called ‘Rashakok’. This basket is finely woven in the open weave style with thin bamboo splits.

Bamboo and Cane products of Nagaland

Cane and bamboo grows in abundance in Nagaland and it is said, very correctly that in Nagaland, life begins in a cot of bamboo and ends in a coffin of bamboo. The Nagas are excellent at making, cane and bamboo tables, chairs, cots and sofas. It is a traditional art which every individual Naga is supposed to carry and this has kept the traditional craft integral till today. It is prestigious for a Naga woman to carry a beautifully woven basket which is woven in the most traditional method. Each basket has its specific use. The baskets of Nagaland vary in size and shape. While the Angami tribe make cylindrical baskets, the Ao are proficient in making conical shaped baskets. An essential household good of the local inhabitants of Nagaland, the baskets are generally used for keeping vegetables, clothes, and crops. Baskets of Nagaland also serve as decorative items. Most of the tourists who visit Nagaland prefer to buy the beautiful baskets for imparting an ethnic look to their house.
Bamboo and Cane products of Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh has 16 major tribes of whom the Adi group is the largest in number, followed by Nishi, Wancho, Monpa, Nocte, Tagin, Apa Tani, and Hill Miri. Every tribe has its own customs and traditions and each uses cane and bamboo to fulfil its everyday needs. The weave and the designs of the articles fashioned from cane and bamboo are distinctive in each region but what is common across the entire northeast is that cane and bamboo is strictly a man’s craft. The high level of workmanship has transformed these everyday utility items into works of beauty. The Adis are known to use cane and bamboo to build houses and suspension bridges. The bridges are sometimes over 200 metres in length, spanning a river from bank to bank. Bamboo is used for the walls and floors of houses. However, more commonly, cane and bamboo are used by all the tribes for fashioning articles of daily need, such as baskets for storage and for carrying produce, vessels for water or liquor, and articles for personal use such as belts, hats, rain shields, daos (flat-bladed multipurpose knives) sheaths, smoking pipes, knee bands, and bows and arrows. Ornaments and necklaces made of fine strips of cane and grass are also popular and burnt poker work can be found on bamboo articles.

Bamboo and Cane products of Gujarat

In Gujarat the tribals of Baroda make baskets, masks, flutes. Jodija Pahwai special double flute, is made in Banni and Kutch. Tribals in Dahod and Dangs area are famous for their baskets, trays, boxes, mats and musical instruments. In a majority of the villages in Gujarat traditional bamboo work provides articles required by the agrarian community. The western part of Gujarat is engaged in the making of cane and bamboo products. Ambapada is famous for decorative articles made from bamboo roots.
Bamboo and Cane products of Karnataka

Bamboo is cultivated all over Karnataka and gets ready for use in three to four years. Craftsmen design wall hangings, baskets, furniture, lamp shades, mats, coasters and stands. Items made are of good quality bamboo and the finished products are prepared in many designs. Baskets are made in coiled and plaited pattern. Today bamboo products have captured the urban market and provided job opportunities to the craftsmen involved in this art.

Bamboo and Cane products of Goa

Cane and bamboo craft is believed to be the oldest creation of man and is considered to be the oldest craft which was initiated in Goa region by a community called Mahars. The Mahars introduced items such as valli, which is still used for washing rice and grains, patlo means a basket which is used for multi purposes and it is available in many different sizes, mats or chicks used as curtains or sun protectors and furniture. These craftsmen mainly made cane items which were of use to fishermen during catching of fish and also fabricated a Dalli in which they could store the dry grains and other food items. Today there is great demand of bamboo products worldwide and to keep pace with the general public products like bags, mats, rugs, flower holders bags, magazine stands and straw hats of Goa which are very famous and protect the tourist from the Sun. Apart from this many other items are made which have the traditional touch with the modern designs.
Target Consumer Profile

Modern yet Rooted
Art and Craft Appreciator
Values Traditions and Culture
Independent
Career Oriented
Traveller
Collector
Creative and Innovative
Conclusion

* The research findings were interesting and a lot of new opportunities for the products from the cluster.
* Converting existing products into more utility based items is the need of the hour.
* Stores that promote Indian design and craft are blossoming, thus giving lot of options to market the products.
* New customer profiles need to tapped for new product ideas, especially people who understand and respect art and craft.
* A lot of competition from various states is good, as it provides a healthy competition to improve and produce better.
PHASE 2 – CONCEPTS
PHASE 4 – PROTOTYPING
FINAL PRODUCT
Prototype One - Nesting Triangular Tray - Small

Prototype Two - Nesting Triangular Tray - Medium

Prototype Three - Nesting Triangular Tray - Large

Prototype Four - Nesting Rectangular Tray - Large

Prototype Five - Nesting Rectangular Tray - Small
Prototype Six - Circular Bamboo Mat Tray - Small

Prototype Seven - Circular Bamboo Mat Tray - Large

Prototype Eight - Ornamental Tray

Prototype Nine - Rhino Tray
Prototype Ten - Laundry cum Storage Basket

Prototype Eleven - Momo Serving Bowl
Prototype Twelve - Serving Bowl

Prototype Thirteen- Fruit Bowl
Small

Prototype Thirteen- Fruit Bowl
Large
Prototype Fourteen - Breakfast Bed Tray
Prototype Fifteen - Bamboo Letter Box

Prototype Sixteen - Floor Lamp/ Table Lamp
Prototype Seventeen - Floor Lamp

Prototype Eighteen- Key Holder
Prototype Nineteen - Mirror Frame

Prototype Twenty - Book Shelf
Conclusion

* Artisans were happy to see new products and were quite excited to see them bettering their own capabilities.
* Artisans felt that new product ideas have lot of market potentials.
* Even better finishing and quality has been insisted on.
* Artisans were excited to see a new identity and new packaging designs.
* Having their own visiting cards gave them a lot of motivation.