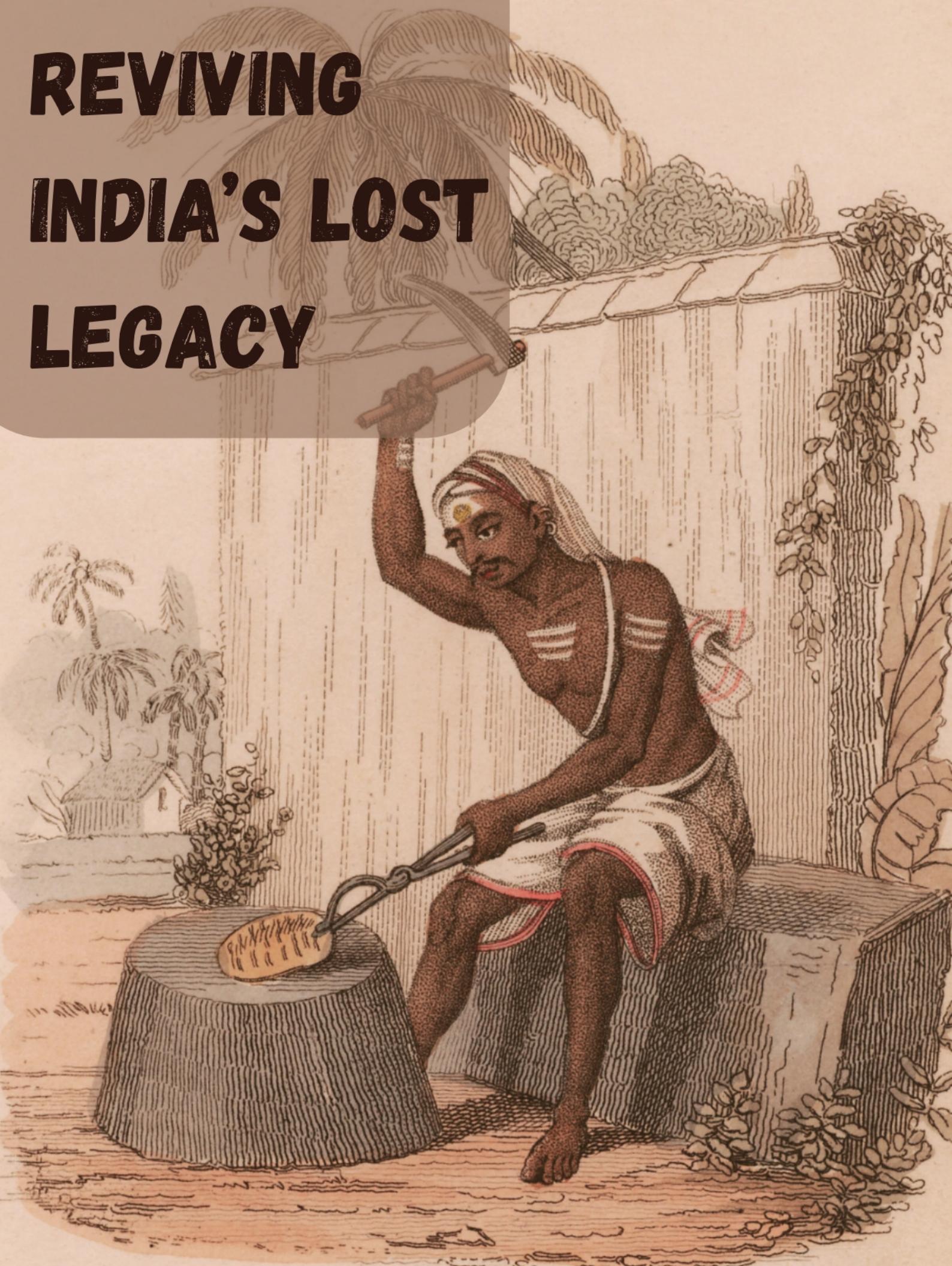


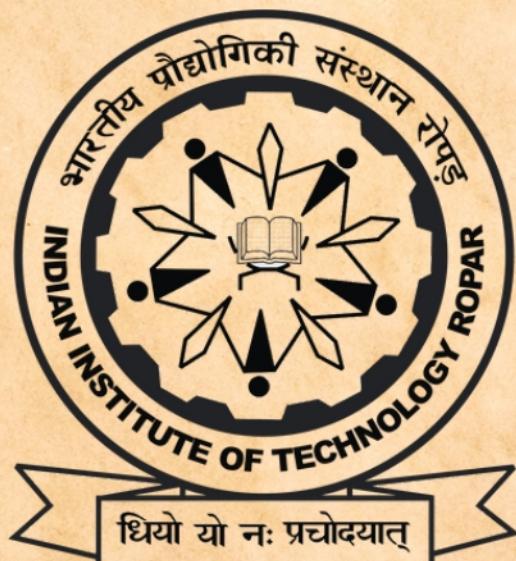
# REVIVING INDIA'S LOST LEGACY



CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF ARTISANS AND THEIR CRAFTS

**B. Tech Project Report**  
Human Geography and  
Societal Needs  
(HS202)

# **REVIVING INDIA'S LOST LEGACY**



**Submitted to**

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar

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This project stands as a testament to the collective effort, dedication, and collaboration of all involved parties. Together, we have taken significant strides towards addressing critical societal needs and fostering positive change within our communities.

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# ABSTRACT

Artisans are indispensable pillars of society, imbuing it with cultural vibrancy, economic dynamism, and sustainable practices. Their craftsmanship serves as a repository of cultural heritage, preserving traditions, techniques, and aesthetics passed down through generations. Economically, artisans contribute significantly to local and global markets, generating income, creating jobs, and fostering entrepreneurship. Moreover, artisans inspire innovation and creativity, pushing boundaries in design and sustainability. The artisans of India are an integral part of the country's rich cultural tapestry, contributing to its diversity and heritage through their unparalleled craftsmanship and artistic traditions. Spanning a vast array of skills and techniques, Indian artisans create exquisite handicrafts, textiles, pottery, jewelry, and more, each reflecting the unique cultural identity of their region. From the intricate embroideries of Gujarat and Rajasthan to the vibrant paintings of Madhubani and Pattachitra, Indian artisans showcase a breathtaking range of artistic expression rooted in centuries-old traditions.

However, such important pillars are being eroded through continual poverty. Artisanal poverty is a multifaceted phenomenon that intersects with socio-economic, cultural, and environmental factors, impacting the livelihoods of individuals and communities globally. Despite the inherent cultural and historical significance of their work, artisans frequently find themselves marginalised within broader economic systems, facing obstacles such as limited market access, unfair pricing structures, and lack of infrastructure and resources. This report looks into this problem and suggests its possible solutions.

## DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM

### Problem Statement

In the culture-rich society of our country, there are many prevalent art forms belonging to different regions and followed by different sections of society. Artisans practicing these regional art forms often struggle with poverty due to various socio-economic factors, despite possessing exceptional skills and carrying forward cultural heritage. This persistent poverty undermines their livelihoods, perpetuates cycles of deprivation, and threatens the preservation of valuable cultural traditions.

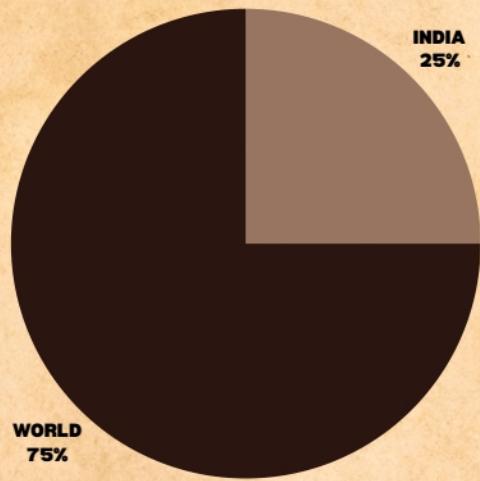


# *Origin of the problem*

The history of artisanal poverty in India is a multifaceted narrative shaped by centuries of exploitation, colonialism, industrialization, and socio-economic structures. Artisans in India, renowned for their craftsmanship in various traditional crafts such as weaving, pottery, metalwork, and carving, have often faced precarious economic and social conditions marked by exploitation and marginalization.

During the colonial rule of India by the British Empire, artisanal communities experienced significant exploitation. British colonial policies systematically undermined indigenous industries to promote the export of raw materials to Britain while flooding the Indian market with cheap British manufactured goods. This led to the decline of artisanal production and the impoverishment of artisan communities as they faced stiff competition.

**India's global share in export of fabric  
Before 18th Century**



**India's global share in export of fabric  
After 18th Century**



The colonial administration actively discouraged local industries that could potentially compete with British manufacturers. Traditional Indian textiles, for example, faced heavy taxation and import restrictions, contributing to the decline of artisanal hubs such as Bengal, renowned for its muslin and silk textiles. Moreover, the loss of patronage from indigenous rulers and nobility further weakened the economic position of artisans.

The advent of industrialization exacerbated the challenges faced by Indian artisans. Mechanized production in British factories undercut traditional handmade goods, leading to widespread poverty among artisan communities. Handloom weavers, in particular, faced intense competition from British textiles produced in mechanized mills.

Despite gaining independence in 1947, the legacy of colonial exploitation continued to affect artisanal communities in India. Bad decisions like Article 370 also hindered the trade of artisanal goods from Kashmir. The shift towards a modern industrial economy marginalized traditional crafts further, as the government prioritized industrialization over support for artisanal industries.

100

LARGE SCALE INDUSTRIES

HANDICRAFT INDUSTRIES

80

60

40

20

0

1900-1901

1946-1947

1974-1975

1999-2000

In recent decades, globalization has presented both opportunities and challenges for Indian artisans. While increased access to global markets has expanded opportunities for some artisans, others have struggled to compete with cheap mass-produced goods from countries with lower labor costs. Additionally, social discrimination against artisan communities, often belonging to marginalized social groups, exacerbates their challenges by limiting their access to resources, markets, and opportunities for advancement.

Addressing the historical exploitation of artisans in India requires a comprehensive approach. Efforts to revive traditional crafts, support artisanal livelihoods, and promote inclusive economic development policies are crucial. Initiatives such as providing access to credit, training programs, marketing support, and fair trade practices can empower artisans and preserve India's rich cultural heritage.

The identification of the problem of artisanal poverty in India has evolved over time through various lenses, including historical accounts, academic research, government reports, and civil society initiatives. Key moments and developments, such as the nationalist movement, post-independence policies, academic research, and civil society advocacy, have contributed to understanding and addressing artisanal poverty in India. These efforts continue to be essential in empowering artisanal communities and improving their socio-economic conditions.

## *Detailed description of identified problem*

The problem encompasses several key aspects:

- **Economic Marginalization:** Artisans face limited market access, fair wages, and financial resources. They often lack bargaining power, leading to exploitative practices by middlemen or buyers.

- **Lack of Demand and Recognition:** Many traditional art forms face challenges from modernization, globalization, and changing consumer preferences. As a result, there is a decline in demand for regional art products, leading to reduced income and recognition for artisans.
- **Vulnerability to External Shocks:** Artisans are highly vulnerable to external shocks such as natural disasters, economic downturns, and health crises. These events can disrupt production, destroy inventory, and further exacerbate economic instability.
- **Social and Cultural Stigma:** Despite their cultural significance, artisans often face social stigma and discrimination, limiting their opportunities for growth and integration into mainstream society.

Overall, the combination of these factors perpetuates a cycle of poverty among artisans of regional art forms, threatening the sustainability of these traditions and the well-being of the communities they belong to. Efforts to eradicate poverty among these artisans must address these multifaceted challenges comprehensively, focusing on empowering artisans economically, improving infrastructure and resources, fostering demand and recognition for their craft, enhancing resilience to external shocks, and combating social and cultural barriers.

## *Current Developments in the domain*

- **National Handicrafts Development Program (NHDP):**

**Program (NHDP):** Supports the development of handicrafts and handlooms in India, with a focus on aiding handloom weavers' children through the NHDP Scholarship Component, offering up to ₹2,00,000 annually.



- **Handicrafts Artisan Credit Card Scheme (HACCS):**

Provides artisans with credit facilities for working capital, tool procurement, raw materials, and product marketing.

- **Cluster Development Program for Handicrafts and Handlooms:**

Aims to cultivate artisan clusters by offering infrastructure, training, marketing support, and credit access.

- **Marketing Support and Export Promotion:**

Encourages the marketing and export of handicrafts and handloom products through various avenues such as trade fairs, exhibitions, and financial aid.

- **Trade Fairs/Mela:**

Notable events like the Mahalaxmi Saras Exhibition and Hunar Haat serve as platforms for artisans to showcase their work.

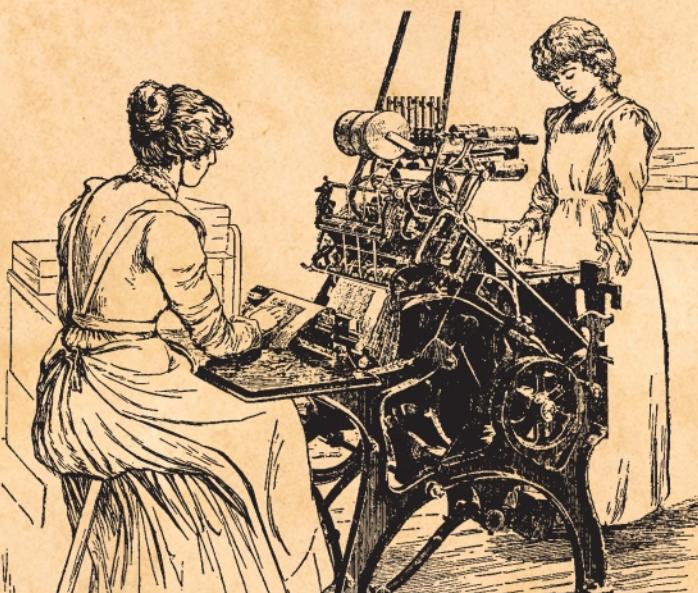
- **PEHCHAN Scheme:**

Introduced in 2016, it grants identity and access to government scheme benefits for handicraft artisans through Aadhar-linked Pehchan Cards.

- **PM Vishwakarma Scheme:**

PM Vishwakarma Scheme aims to provide financial assistance and skill development opportunities to artisans for promoting traditional crafts and enhancing their livelihoods. Launched by the Indian government, it supports artisans with training, credit facilities, and marketing assistance, thereby fostering economic empowerment and preserving cultural heritage.

## *Need and significance for resolving the problem*



- **Preservation of Cultural Heritage:**

Regional artisans are often the bearers of traditional craftsmanship and cultural heritage. Their skills and techniques have been passed down through generations, contributing to the rich tapestry of Indian culture. By alleviating poverty among artisans, we ensure the preservation and continuation of these invaluable cultural assets.

- **Economic Empowerment:** Artisanal activities form a significant part of India's informal economy. When artisans earn a sustainable income, they contribute to local spending, which in turn boosts other businesses and creates a ripple effect of economic growth.
- **Social Cohesion:** Artisan communities are often tightly knit social units. By addressing poverty among artisans, we promote social cohesion and stability within these communities, fostering a sense of belonging and solidarity.
- **Rural Development:** Many artisans reside in rural areas where economic opportunities are limited. By investing in the prosperity of artisans, we contribute to the overall development of rural economies and promote balanced regional development.
- **Promotion of Sustainable Practices:** Traditional artisanal practices often embody principles of sustainability and environmental stewardship. By supporting artisans, we encourage the continuation of these eco-friendly practices, which are increasingly relevant in the context of global environmental challenges.
- **Boost to Tourism and Cultural Industries:** Handicrafts produced by artisans are often sought after by tourists both domestic and international. By investing in artisanal communities, we enhance the attractiveness of local tourism destinations and contribute to the growth of cultural industries, thereby generating employment and income opportunities.

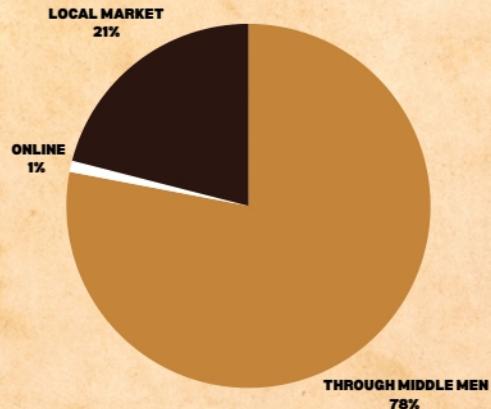
# AIM

The aim of this project is to implement sustainable strategies aimed at minimizing artisanal poverty in India. Through targeted interventions, capacity-building initiatives, and holistic support systems, the project seeks to uplift artisanal communities, enhance their socio-economic status, and preserve India's rich cultural heritage. By addressing the root causes of artisanal poverty and fostering inclusive economic development, the project aims to create pathways for artisans to achieve sustainable livelihoods and thrive in the modern economy.

## TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES PERCEIVED TO BE EFFECTIVE FOR RESOLVING THE ISSUE

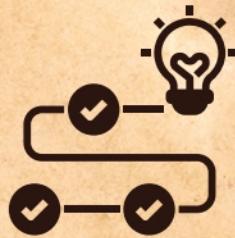
- **Access to Markets:** Facilitating access to broader markets, both locally and internationally, enables artisans to sell their products at fair prices and in larger quantities. This often involves partnerships with fair trade organizations, e-commerce platforms, or collaborations with retail stores.
- **Microfinance and Financial Inclusion:** Providing access to microloans, savings accounts, and financial literacy programs helps artisans manage their businesses, invest in equipment or materials, and smooth out cash flow.
- **Technology Adoption:** Introducing appropriate technology solutions, such as improved production tools or digital platforms for marketing and sales, can increase efficiency and reach for artisanal businesses.
- **Value Chain Integration:** Strengthening the links across the entire value chain (from sourcing raw materials to production, distribution, and retail) can create more stable and sustainable market opportunities for artisans.
- **Policy Support and Advocacy:** Engaging with governments and policymakers to create an enabling environment through supportive policies, regulations, and infrastructure (e.g., transportation, electricity) can facilitate artisanal entrepreneurship.
- **Social Entrepreneurship and Community Development:** Promoting social enterprises and community-driven initiatives that reinvest profits into community development projects (e.g., education, healthcare, infrastructure) can have long-term positive impacts on artisanal communities.
- **Collaborations and Partnerships:** Fostering collaborations between artisans, designers, businesses, NGOs, and government agencies can create synergies that amplify the impact.

CURRENT SCENARIO OF ARTISAN'S ACCESS TO MARKET



- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track impact, gather feedback, and adapt interventions accordingly ensures that efforts are effective and sustainable.

## *DETAILED WORK PLAN & APPROACHES FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION*



### *Ideation*

We searched for the policies introduced by the centre and state governments which aim to uplift the artisans' economic conditions and help prevent their exploitation.

After identifying the relevant policies and perusing their information and data, we learnt about the most effective policies but realized that despite having a positive effect, they have not achieved their full potential. This was due to the fact that policies do not collaborate among themselves for a more effective implementation.



### *Establishment of a Public Sector Unit*

A Public Sector Unit (PSU) will be established such that it will work for the economic upliftment of the Indian artisans. It would be a great breakthrough for the problem as it would be solely work for the upliftment of the artisans which will at the benefit our country.



### *Identification of the traditional and artisanal products of that district*

The PSU will ask the BDO to submit a report for his block which would be consisting the data of the various artisans present there, their crafts & goods and the artisan's economic conditions. It needs to be submitted at the change of every financial year which will depict and monitor the change in the number of artisans and their economic condition to the PSU.



## *Artisans Exploited by Traders/Middlemen:*

The data will now be divided into two groups one of which would be the craftsmen who are exploited by big monopolistic traders who buy the goods from artisans at meagre prices and sell them to the consumers for a hefty profit



## *Small scale Artisans who directly sell to consumers:*

This would be another group which would consist the craftsmen who produce and sell their own goods. These artisans are often plagued by lack of accessibility to the larger national and international market and are confined to their local village or district markets. This makes them miss out on greater opportunities for sale



## *Certification of the Identified artisanal products*

The established PSU will look at the artisanal goods and certify them for their authenticity. They will establish the history and cultural heritage of the various handicrafts and ensure that the artisans producing the goods still adhere to the traditional practices. The certification process of the goods will also prevent machine-made counterfeit goods from flooding the market, providing additional market security to the artisans it will create a sense of trust and authenticity among the buyers.



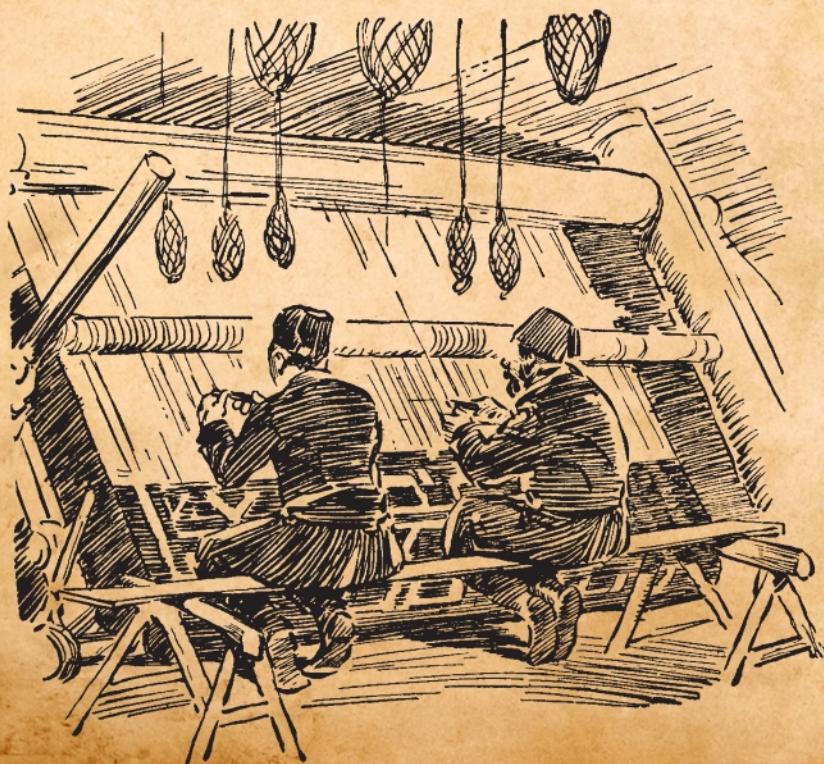
## *Procurement and Sales of the goods*

The established PSU will be having its own warehouses where the artifacts would be kept. The PSU would collaborate from E Commerce platforms such as AMAZON and FLIPKART for selling purposes to the consumer. This would help the PSU to get the reach of the consumer market more easily rather building its own platform for the same as it would be difficult for the PSU to make people aware of that platform. It would be easy for the consumer to get aware of the government certified artisans' goods available in the market.



## *Marketing of the goods by PSU*

1. By making compulsory to give regional artisans' goods as the replacement of mementos as a token of respect to people at any events organised by government or government institutions like IITs, NITs, Ministry events etc.
2. By collaborating with the government colleges and putting stalls in their Cultural Fests which would be showcasing the local artisans' goods certified by the PSUs.
3. By making advertisements casting famous celebrities.
4. By Opening exclusive stores at the Tourist Destinations, airports & then at metro cities.





## Why a PSU, not a scheme?

A scheme is more welfare-oriented than a PSU. Implementing a scheme that is aimed at improving the income of artisans by direct procurement of their products may lead to financial burden on the government and will also be subjected to political instability.

Whereas, a PSU will be a better option as it will be a separate entity aiming to maximize its business. This will lead to a self-sustainable model benefiting the artisans and boosting the Indian economy. A PSU is also capable of tapping foreign markets (leading to greater economic prosperity) as opposed to a scheme.

**Certification of the local artforms by the government:** This will be huge step towards building the trust among buyers and a sense of authenticity for the artform.

**Classification of the artisans on the basis of their product selling techniques:** That includes either selling directly to the consumer or to the trader

## BARRIER IN IMPLEMENTATION



- Political interference and inconsistent government policies can disrupt long-term planning and strategic initiatives.
- Competition from private sector counterparts, which often operate with greater freedom and efficiency, poses a significant challenge to PSUs.
- **No Guarantee of procurement :** No guarantee can be given as to the number of artefacts that will be acquired.

**Identification the artisans:** As per the PEHCHAAN scheme under the ministry of textiles registered artisans are 3.1m and from the official sources there are around 7m artisans identified in India. But if the reports are to be believed there are about 200m artisans

in India that means more than 95% of the artisans community in India is still unorganised. Through this action plan our aim will be to identify all these artisans and organise them under one banner and help them access to the market than includes Indian subfield as well as foreign market.

- **Ensuring reach to the remotest of the areas:** For the procurement of the artifacts from the remote places will be the major barrier.
- A general apathy of the government towards the artisanal community can be seen as evident in the lack of a census towards the economic condition of the artisans and the poor implementation of the existential policies
- **Reluctance from the existence traders :** As the establishment of the PSU will be successful there will be movement of the artisans from the existence traders towards the PSU rather than selling in low prices to the traders, so there businesses will be bearing losses hence they would be very much against this.

# EXPERTISE AVAILABLE WITH EACH STUDENT



## Hardik Jain

Understanding and applying economic concepts to build a more self sufficient model and possesses language skills as to clearly portray the idea

## Dhruv Agarwal

Great leadership skills and social skills. Also, has great connections which were critical for overcoming the problems our group faced.

## Dharmansh Vyas

Expertise evaluating data trends and using numerical techniques like interpolation and regression to solve problems like determining the ideal incentive value, machine cost, and so on.

## Akshat Srivastava

Possesses great leadership skills and logical abilities that can aid in the completion of many minor project aspects. His social skills will come in handy while collaborating with external entities. He also possess great Graphic Designing skills.

# EXPECTED OUTCOME



The establishment of a PSU with the above plan will have a lot of benefits to the artisans, consumers and the Indian Economy.

According to a formal report, about 7 million artisans are identified in India; however, according to various think tanks and other informal surveys, there are about 200 million artisans in India! As proposed in this report, establishing a formal system will help vastly bridge the gap and bring order and organization to an otherwise informal sector.

According to a UN report, the current income of artisans in India is about 3.4 to 4.5 USD per day on average, with artisans in rural India earning about only 89 cents, an amount far less than sustainable. The aim of establishing a model, as suggested, is to improve this artisanal income and bring the average income of the artisan to about 600 INR per day (an amount sufficient to live comfortably in India) over the course of 10 years.

Considering a Marginal Propensity to Consume of about 0.75, as suggested by a World Bank report, and an increase in the income of about 250 rupees per day i.e. inr 91,250 per annum we do the following calculations

As shown in the given calculations

Considering that the policy has benefited about 50 percent of artisans,

MPC of artisans (according to World Bank) = 0.75

Assuming taxes = 18%

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Economic output} &= \Delta A \left( \frac{1}{1-c(1-TA)} \right) \\ &= 91250 \times 100000000 \left( \frac{1}{1-0.75(1-0.18)} \right) \\ &= 23701298700000 \text{ INR}\end{aligned}$$

Where,  $\Delta A$  = change in autonomous consumption

c = Marginal Propensity to Consume

TA = Taxes

Considering there is no increase in income of artisans the MPC of the consumer class is 0.41. So, for the same amount,

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Economic output} &= 91250 \times 100000000 \left( \frac{1}{1-0.41(1-0.18)} \right) \\ &= 13746610420000 \text{ INR}\end{aligned}$$

Therefore, an increase in the artisanal income will lead to an economic growth of about 9,95,468.82 crores INR.

This amount turns out to be about 120 billion USD increment in the GDP, which, expected over a span of 10 years, can become a massive contributor to India's rising growth and help India achieve its aim of *Viksit Bharat*.

The Indian handicrafts market was valued at US\$ 3,968.0 million in 2022, and The global handicraft market size was valued at USD 915.93 billion in 2022. That is, Indian Handicrafts account for 0.43 percent of the international handicraft trade. We lag behind due to lack of proper tools connecting the artisans to this market. By establishing a formal PSU, we open a gateway to this huge foreign market, and by subsequent growth, if we are even able to capitalize on 2-3 Percent international market, we bring in a lot of income to our nation

The proposed economic model looks for the growth and welfare of the artisans and the consequent development of society as a whole, and considering that most of the artisans live in rural India, successful implementation of the proposed plan and corresponding increment in the income of artisans will lead to rural development. This will reduce the disparity in the development of the urban and rural regions leading to a more overall sustainable national growth.

- **Delivery Jobs:** As the PSU facilitates the marketing and distribution of artisanal products, a significant need for delivery and logistics services will arise. Delivery jobs will encompass a variety of roles, including drivers, warehouse staff, packaging specialists, and logistics coordinators. These positions will be crucial in ensuring that artisanal products reach domestic and international markets efficiently and in optimal condition. Delivery jobs offer opportunities for individuals to earn income through transportation and logistics services, contributing to the overall success of the PSU and the livelihoods of artisans.

This will also eradicate disguised unemployment in the sector. As there will be an increase in demand, all the artisans that were underemployed will be able to utilize their full potential.

# CONCLUSION

Through the implementation of the proposed PSU, artisans would benefit from increased opportunities to showcase and sell their crafts on a larger scale. This initiative supports local artisans and promotes cultural heritage and traditional craftsmanship.

As artisans earn more from their crafts, their household incomes rise, contributing to an overall improvement in per capita income of our country. As artisans grow, there is a consequent growth in the rural regions. This leads to a reduction in the disparity between the urban and rural growth, making it more sustainable. Increased sales of artisanal products would add to the country's GDP by generating revenue and stimulating economic transactions. Furthermore, the growth of the artisanal sector can have multiplier effects on other sectors of the economy, such as transportation, packaging, and retail, further boosting GDP growth.

Artisanal products often have a unique appeal in international markets due to their cultural significance and craftsmanship. By facilitating the sale of artifacts from artisans to both domestic and international markets, the proposal can lead to an increase in exports of these products. This would contribute positively to the country's balance of trade, leading to an increment in net exports and potentially reducing trade deficits

# CONTRIBUTION BY EACH STUDENT

Each and every aspect of the problem statement and its solution was extensively thought upon, discussed and critically analyzed by each of the team members. Through this process we identified all the possible points of errors that could arise in our proposed solution and worked collaboratively to troubleshoot it to the best of our knowledge and understanding.

All the team members spent multiple hours looking through all information available on various government schemes and policies devised to alleviate the current suffering of the artisan class. We brainstormed various possible solutions, debated and discussed on it and through all these efforts worked out a best possible solution to our understanding. We then noted down all the possible outcomes of our solution along with necessary calculations.

Each of the members have spent equal hours and hardwork to bring this project to fruition.