



Ministry of Textiles

Engagement of Designer in Handloom clusters takes Hand-woven fabrics to new heights

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As a result of an initiative launched by the Ministry of Textiles on the second National Handloom Day (7th August 2016), the traditional hand-woven products of West Bengal Handloom clusters have been transformed into high-profile fashionable fabrics. Due to the involvement of a reputed fashion designer (identified by MoU partner IMG Reliance) in training and product development, “Beyond Boundaries”, a garment range produced from the handloom products of West Bengal Handloom Clusters in Coochbehar and Udaynarayanpur, is being showcased in the Lakme Fashion Week, being held in Mumbai from February 1-5, 2017.

The engagement of the fashion designer was done under a pioneering initiative taken by the Ministry of Textiles, to engage reputed designers in handloom clusters for product development/diversification, improved marketability and better returns. MoUs were signed with IMG Reliance and other similar organizations on the 2nd National Handloom Day i.e. 7th August 2016, in Varanasi.

Ministry of Textiles has sanctioned a large number of projects for comprehensive development of handloom-concentrated blocks across the country. 273 such projects have been sanctioned with 2,30,133 weavers as beneficiaries. These include Coochbehar and Udaynarayanpur Handloom Clusters in West Bengal, which respectively cover 505 and 640 handloom weavers. Financial assistance has been provided for various interventions, including design development. In order to develop new designs/products in the clusters, an MoU was signed with a group of designers in partnership with IMG Reliance. Among them, Shri Sayantan Sarkar, Fashion Designer has come out with a range of garments, which is being showcased in the Lakme Fashion Week. It is expected that the products developed will go a long way in supporting handlooms, with the weavers getting higher wages. Mr. Sayantan Sarkar worked in association with Weavers’ Service Centre, Kolkata in Coochbehar Handloom Cluster in Coochbehar district and in Udaynarayanpur Handloom Cluster in Howrah district.

Bengal is known for its Jamdanis and Balucharis but a larger number of weavers presently produce in plain weaves and basic “Tangail” or plain weave sarees with jacquard borders or even the local towels “gamchas” and the “Lungis” which constitute a large segment in Bengal.

This initiative has introduced Linen yarn to weave the “gamchas”, colour palette was changed to pastels instead of the stark contrasting combinations and the check formation was changed to an uneven gradation according to the forecast which all of a sudden made the same weave look like an upmarket fabric with extreme drapability and also difficult to replicate in powerlooms.

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