

# **PEMBARTHI** METAL CRAFTS

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National Institute of Fashion Technology, Hyderabad

**Craft Cluster Documentation**

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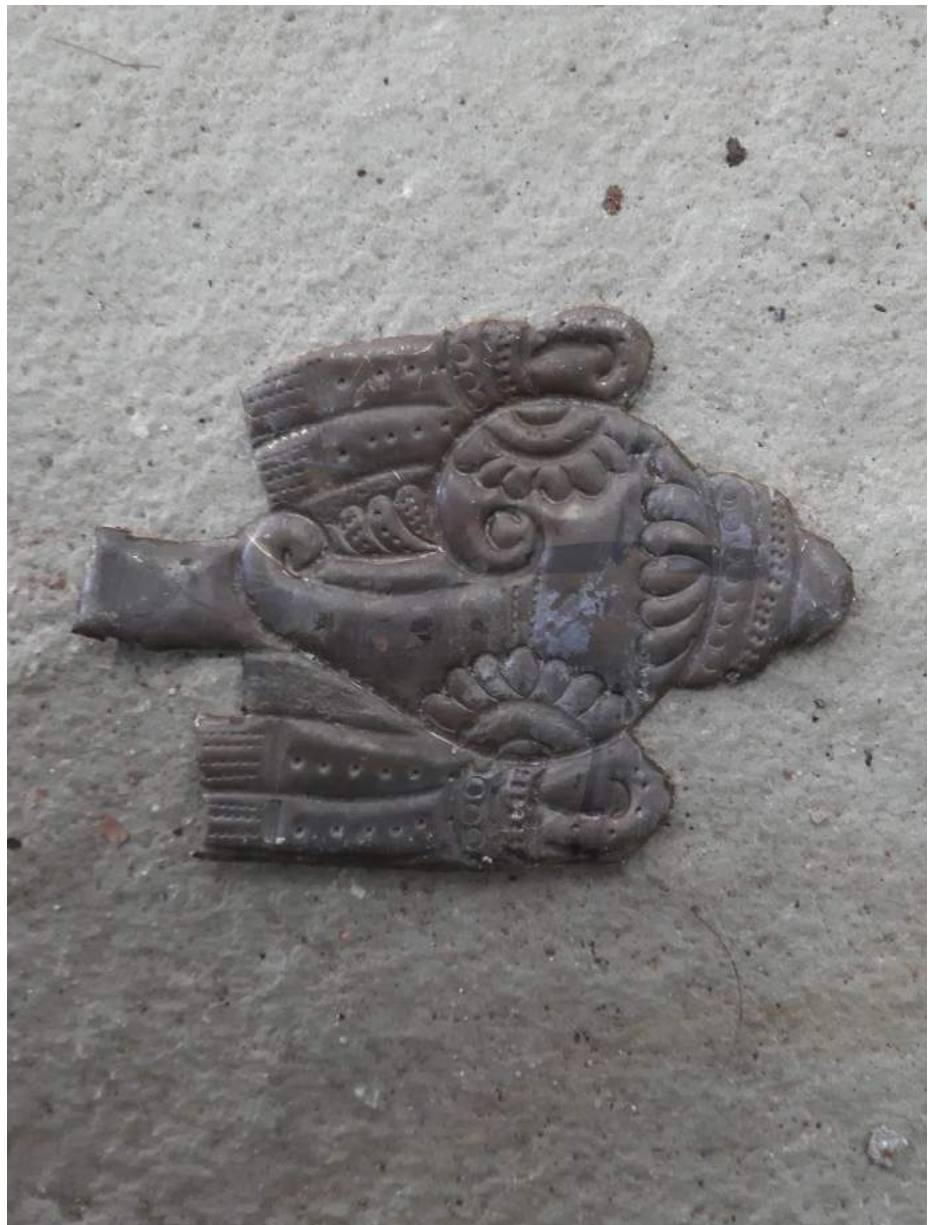
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# PEMBARTHI METAL CRAFTS



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Pembarthi Metal Craft is a metal handicraft manufactured in Pembarthi, Telangana State, which is well-known for its sheet metal artworks.

## INTRODUCTION







More than 800 years of exquisite sheet metal brass engravings and relics can be found here, in Pembrothi. Pembrothi is a village situated about 80 km from Hyderabad. The region has witnessed glory during the period of the Kakatiya dynasty which had spanned 500 years. Pembrothi has a rich history of outstanding workmanship of the **Metalworkers** or the **"Vishwakarma"**.

Sheet metal craftsmanship became famous as a result of its use on the viagra has (statues) and vahanas (chariots) of various Hindu temples. Pembrothi Brassware has retained the vital nuances of both Hindu and Muslim influences over the years, allowing it to mix smoothly into both cultures. The famous Geographical Indication has been bestowed upon the craft form.

### Objectives

- The project revolves around aiming to know more about the craft and its rich and varied culture.
- Inculcate insights about Pembrothi metal craft and how it is practised till date.
- To gain interest in the craft regarding the upliftment of the rural india and provide us the means to contribute.

### Methodology

We began with researching about the the metal handicraft and pembrothi village. Then we gathered our secondary research through books, and internet this also included our questionnaire. In our Visit to Pembrothi village we interviewed three artisans who have been practicing this handicraft for many years. The artisans' workplaces, their homes, their shops, and other aspects of the village visit were all carefully studied, from the collection of raw materials to the final result. The entire experience was overwhelming looking at how the artisans work in reality knowing the market situation and the after effects of the pandemic.

### Chapterisation

The document is divided in 6 parts starting with introduction about the metal craft then the history followed by the present status of the craft, going ahead to the process which includes collection of raw materials that is pre production to post production. Then comes the marketing techniques which include promotion and sale of the products. The last chapter is the conclusion about the document, ending it with references to everything.

The Origins

## HISTORY AND PATRONAGE



Pembarthi Village is known across the world for its brassware, artefacts, metal tools, and everyday goods, as well as **statues, carvings, and castings** created from **copper alloys** such as brass and bronze.

Pembathi Village's Metalworkers, or "Vishwakarmas," have a long history of outstanding craftsmanship dating back to the **Kakatiya Kingdom's** majesty and glory. This Metal Craft attained the peak of perfection of highest degree of skill which is demonstrated by the master craftsmen.

The rulers of Pembarthi patronised the Vishwakarmas for building temples, making 'Vigrahas' - deity idols, 'Vahanas' - chariots, and other creative accessories of temple sculpture. The exquisite Vigrahas, which are examples of moulded crafts, and the 'Keerthi Mukha', 'Prabha' - Pinnacles, which adorn many notable temples in South India. The beauty and glory of the Kakatiya dynasty gradually gave way to the **Nizam's power**, resulting in a shift in Pembarthi art. As a result, during the Nizam period, the Vishwakarmas created

and crafted household and decorative objects like as Pandans, Nagardans, Itar pots, and Sangaridans. The rise of the craft led to an increase in the number of artisans families in Pembarthi who were involved in it at this time. The number of artisan families involved increased to around 600 during this time.

Because of the mastery and ability displayed by the craftsmen, the craft has endured political ups and downs as well as natural disasters. Following independence, the craft had a renaissance, resulting in a shift in demand



The origin of Pembarthi Metal Craft dates back to more than 5000 years.



toward the creation of utilitarian goods rather than exotic ones.

Many villagers have taken up brass craftsmanship, and their wares are now exported to other countries. Copper and alloys were used to make metal tools and everyday goods before iron was discovered. Later on, the early social-historical ability continued to make art artefacts. Copper alloys such as bronze and brass are still used to create statues, sculptures, and castings. Although the raw material originates from contemporary mines and furnaces, the methods

employed are still ancient and traditional.

In the year 1958, a co-operative society namely **the Vishwakarma Brass, Copper and Silver Industrial Co-operative Society** was established to support, strengthen and promote the craft. The craft then got a major boost. The sincere efforts of **Mr. Ayla Achary** in obtaining Government assistance for the promotion of craft enabled it to flourish to its present glory. Presently more than 60 families of craftsmen are involved in making of the Pembarthi Metal Craft.









Adaptation and Modern Changes

## PRESENT STATUS

The artisan takes part in welfare and awareness programs for the artisans.

100 families are practicing currently, (besides Vishwakarma, other communities practice as well).

Online business via Facebook, WhatsApp, promotions via exhibitions.

### Adaptation of the Artisans

During different festivals like Muharram, Mr Khalid one of the pembarthi artisans gave us an insight into how he sells products according to that particular festival, and for the rest of the year, they sell trophies, utensils, vases, worship idols. Presently their main focus is home decorative items as there is no much demand for brass utensils.

Instead of making devatha designs on some decorative products, they replaced them with other designs such as birds and animal designs so that the products can be purchased by people of different religions and communities and can be sold globally.

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### Pembarthi Village

Pembarti Village is located at a distance of about 65 Km from Warangal. Situated in Jangaon district, Telangana, India, the village is known for its brassware, artifacts, metal objects and tools of brass among all the tourists. A lot of people visit the place not only to buy these artifacts to decorate their home, but also for getting acquaintance with the artists who make these crafts and to see the entire process of crafts making.

Price of these crafts cannot be defined as it depends on the design, size and structure of your purchase, but the range of the crafts varies between INR 50 – 20,000.

One can reach at Pembarti by Road and Rail both. Either you can take a train to Pembarti from Warangal or you can take a bus to Pembarti from Warangal. Also if you decide to visit Pembarti by your own vehicle or a hired taxi, it is recommended to visit Cheriya as well on the same trip, as both of these villages showcase excellent art work of Indian history.

Location coordinates : 17.6899°N 79.1167°E





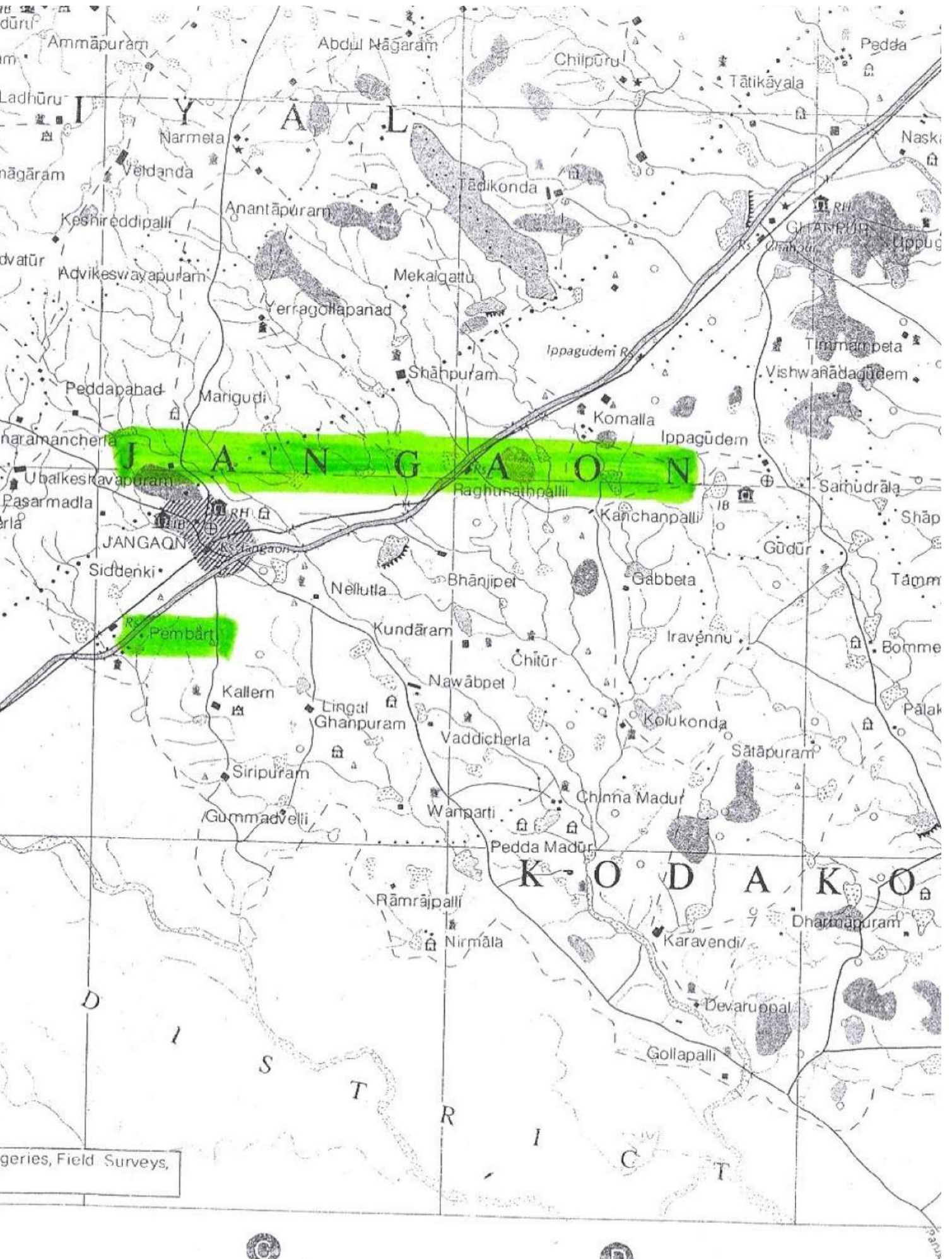
Shri Narasimha Chary (top)  
Pembarti Map (right)



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Series, Field Surveys,

# PROCESS

## Sheet Embossing: Pembarthi

### **Tools and raw material:**

- A metal sheet of brass is required to emboss the design on it.
- Lac (Lakka) is spread on the wooden plank that holds the metal sheet and more delicate design surfaces. It is a mixture of Beeswax, resins, castor, mustard oil, brick and dust.
- Chisel (Kila) is required to carve the design on the metal sheet.
- Gas torch burner- needed to melt the lac and join the metal pieces.
- Concentrated Acid (Nitric acid, Sulphuric acid etc.) and tamarind- used to wash the product.
- File and buffer- To smoothen the edges and enhance its lustre.
- Diluted Gum- to stick the design on the metal sheet.

### **Sheet Embossing/Flat ornamentation**

In this technique, a Brass or copper sheet is cut according to the requirement. Later they shape and fix it on a wooden table with the four sides of the sheet covered with Lac (Lucca). It effectively sets the sheet on a wooden plank or table. The design is drawn on a paper sheet and later pasted on the brass sheet. They are carved on the sheets using

fine instruments (chisel and hammer). After carving the basic design, the paper sheet is removed. Lac is heated, and the carved sheet is removed from the plank. Further, delicate carvings are added by hammering the sheet with different shapes and sizes of chisels. Ash powder is used to clean the sheet, and detailed embossing is added respectively. Some parts are designed and embossed individually and later welded together using a gas torch burner.

To provide the shine, acid and tamarind are used to wash the embossed sheet. It is later filed to smoothen the edges and buffed to give illumination and lustre to the surface.

### **Hollow Sheeting**

This process is used to make hollow utilitarian or decorative items. In this process, the sheet takes the shape of a hollow container according to the mould of POP used. A4\*4' sheet of brass is taken as the raw material. It is weighed in kilograms and is taken as per the customer requirements. The metal Sheet is measured as per the mould required; An extra two inches of the sheet is also measured. The sheet is beaten with a variety of tools and a hammer to give it a proper shape. It is heated using a blow torch and beaten until the form

is achieved. Almost 75% of the work is completed in this stage. It is then washed in the Conc. Acid to clean the surface. The next step is to heat Lak and pour it into the shaped metal. Upon cooling, the desired design is made on the shaped metal as per the artisan's views. The Lak is then heated and removed. Once the product is ready, it is either delivered to the customer or showcased in the showroom.

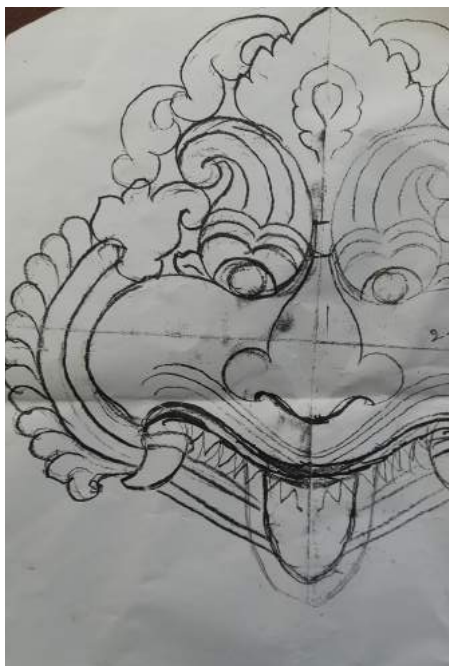
## Casting: Pembarthi

It is the process of creating a solid three-dimensional figure by pouring molten metal into a wax mould.

### **Tools and Raw Materials-**

- Puttmstti (black soil), the box mould is filled with this soil, imprinting the pattern.
- Metal Scraps are required for casting
- Wax model
- Furnace
- Box Mould- a hollow iron container in which black soil is kept
- Concentrated acids like Sulphuric and nitric acids are used to clean the object is obtained after it is solidified
- Chisel (Kila), mallet, file and buffer.







# MARKETING

They get orders through various networks, including B2B and B2C channels. Presently, they can easily share and ship the designs to the customers for selection thanks to the internet. They take orders from multiple retail shops, societies, go-betweens and other commissioned assignments, respectively. The most prominent items include temple items like Makaratoranalu statues etc.

Instead of making devata (god) designs on some decorative products, they replaced them with other designs such as birds and animal designs so that people of different religions and communities can purchase the products. To attract more customers, they have even started including modern art in some designs instead of traditional designs.

Many artisans take part in various exhibitions as well, which helps them promote their work. Some of the craftsmen have personal shops while the others can display them in the society's showroom. Artisans have a tie-up with the society, a part of the Telangana Government, Golconda Handicrafts (Lepakshi). A government order issued by the Telangana tourism department ensures that all government orders for brassware products are placed directly to the Pembarthi village to ensure

the craft's sustainability.

The Vishwakarma society plays a significant part in the processing of orders and money transactions. The community receives an advance to procure the raw materials and to start the assignment work. The entire amount is transferred upon completion of the work and is distributed amongst the craftsmen associated with the society equally.

Most artisans are still not familiar with the online business but are willing to learn and train themselves with the help of various organizations.

Artisans need to work 8-10 hours a day, according to the consignment. For a traditional design, they charge 75% for the raw material and 25% making charges, and for a customized design, they charge 25% for raw material and 75% making charges. The raw materials like Brass, copper sheets are purchased from Secundrabad, while silver bars from a nearby retailer later mould them into a sheet.

Jangoan is the nearest place which provides them with all the facilities. Even though the sales of handmade products have increased over the years, many artisans still cannot make a minimum profit.







# CONCLUSION

During this craft study cum exploration we came to know, that merely studying the dynamics of a traditional and/or induced craft cannot help such craft to upgrade its present craft-scenario, until and unless its existing potentials and skill sets get fresh interventions with a professional approach. Studying and exploring interventions in joint mode was an interesting experience for all of us, and it helped aid the learning of different digital systems and their uses.

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