

REGIONAL REPORT

2013-14

BANGLADESH

BHUTAN

INDIA

NEPAL

SRI LANKA

At the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the World Craft Council, I would like to begin my Report by remembering Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, an Indian Social Reformer and freedom fighter. She is considered to be responsible for the great revival of Indian handicrafts and handlooms and that is considered her greatest legacy to Modern India.

She was a woman ahead of her times and was instrumental in setting up the Crafts Council of India and was the President of the World Craft Council, Asia Pacific Region.

REGIONAL REPORT

A Report for 2013-14 for 5 countries of South Asia –

- **Bangladesh** - The National Crafts Council of Bangladesh (NCCB)
- **Bhutan** – Handicraft Association of Bhutan
- **India** - The Crafts Council of India (CCI)
- **Nepal** - Federation of Handicraft Association of Nepal (FHAN)
- **Sri Lanka** - National Crafts Council

All of us have what is perhaps the world's greatest resource of innovation and creativity through millions of artisans, we continue to ignore our huge craft advantage – an advantage that is economical, cultural, social, political, environmental, educational and even spiritual. Despite our legacy of millennia, we had to wait for the European Union to offer the world a new slogan – **The Future is Handmade**. Our Golden Jubilee offers an opportunity for reflection and preparation and celebrating a heritage that still awaits true understanding of the centrality of craftsmanship and its future survival.

In each of these countries there has been a lot of work done in craft production and craft development initiatives like skill development, protection of intangible cultural heritage, market access through trade fairs and craft competition. We have all made significant progress in projects with out Master Craftspersons as well as inspired the next generation of artisans to follow their craft heritage.

The work has been done in the areas :

Advocacy

The year 2013-2014 was very significant for handicrafts and handlooms in all the 5 countries of the Southern Region.

In Bangladesh The National Crafts Council of Bangladesh (NCCB) established in 1985 with multidisciplinary membership from across the country, consisting of craftspeople, researchers, writers, museologists, educationists, designers, marketing experts, development organisations - government and non government - and a host of others. The main objectives being craft development and promotion through workshops, marketing events and most importantly, to acknowledge and honour master craftspeople.

In India, the move to change the definition of handlooms, under the pretext of making life easier for the weavers, came to light during visits of official teams to weavers' clusters. The proposed change in definition of 'handloom' production would be that even if one process is done by hand, and all the others motorized, the product would be declared as 'handloom fabric' and made eligible for 'handloom' incentives.



India

The Crafts Council of India (CCI) took the lead in discussions with government representatives to shelve the proposals for the change. This was a close call, but brought NGOs from across the country together with the realisation that there is strength in numbers. On the 9th of January a statement was released to the press by the Ministry of Textiles stating that there was no move to change the definition of Handlooms under the Handloom Reservation Act. Despite the Ministry's assurance, the threat remains

CCI awaited the results of the 6th Economic Census in which it played a key role of training. Trainers of enumerators were educated to recognize handicrafts and handlooms which were included in the census for the very first time. The preliminary results augur well for the craft sector which constitutes the second largest source of Indian livelihood.

In Nepal Federation of Handicraft Association of Nepal (FHAN), a business membership organization, is the sole agency dedicated for craft development in Nepal. Its member associations, to the tune of twenty-five, are actively involved in various craft development activities in Nepal. It coordinates with relevant Government and Non-Government agencies to pursue craft development initiatives like skill development, protection of intangible cultural heritage, market access through trade fairs, craft competitions and the like.

In Sri Lanka, National Crafts Council was established on a vision of Nurturing and Preserving Traditional Handicrafts for their sustainable existence with a mission of preservation, development, encouragement and Promotion of local handicrafts with a traditional and cultural value and enhancement of economic and social status of craftsmen.

The objectives are:

- Preservation of handicrafts with a traditional and cultural value.
- Encouragement and promotion of indigenous handicrafts.
- Organization of handicraftsmen.
- Enhancement of social and economic status of handicraftsmen.
- Promotion of technical skills and knowledge of handicraftsmen.

Promotion of products of the handicraftsmen by facilitating abundant availability of local raw materials required for handicrafts

GI Issues

In Bangladesh, we are extremely proud to share with other members of WCC APR that NCCB's sustained lobbying of relevant ministers and policy makers over the last two years has led to the enactment of the GI Act in our Parliament in November 2014. This new law will enable Bangladesh to register its intangible heritage with WTO. As a first step, Jamdani the unique textile tradition of this country, has been given citation by UNESCO as the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Bangladesh in December 2014.

In India, a geographical indication is a mark used on goods that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities, reputation or characteristics that are essentially attributable to that place of origin. They may be used for a wide variety of products, natural, agricultural or manufactured.

They may highlight qualities of a product which are associated with the place of origin of the products, such as specific manufacturing skills and traditions.

Geographical indications are understood by consumers to denote the origin and the quality of products. Many of them have acquired valuable reputations which, if not adequately protected, may be misrepresented by dishonest commercial operators.

A geographical indication tells consumers that a product is produced in a certain place and has certain characteristics that are due to that place of production.

A geographical indication (GI) acts as a mechanism that helps producers differentiate their products from competing products in the market and enables producers to build a reputation and goodwill around their products that will fetch a premium price. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) study has revealed that GI registered agricultural products can fetch a price premium of 10–15 per cent whereas for non-agricultural products it would be to the tune of 5-10 per cent.

Since the first Indian GI was registered in 2004, 172 GIs have been registered with the GI Registry of India. Of these, more than half (64 per cent) are handicrafts, more than one fourth (26 per cent) are agricultural products, and the remaining are food and manufacturing products. Handicrafts have been the most registered GIs consistently.

Although **Nepal** is geographically close to India, craftspersons of either country have very limited opportunity to participate in other country.

India offered such opportunity to participate in Dilli Haat during April 1-15, 2014. The Office of the Development Commissioner for Handicraft, India has assisted for arrangement of space. Seventeen craftpersons along with their associate participated in this event.



Nepal - Inauguration of Nepal pavilion in Dilli Haat

In Sri Lanka registration of craftsmen engaged in the field of handicrafts industry being scattered throughout the island is done by the National Crafts Council. What is expected out of it is to maintain a continuous co ordination with craftsmen by selecting those who are engaged in the field of handicrafts and establishing their identity.

By that it is expected to intervene at state level for socio-economic promotion of the handicraftsmen and to provide them with instructions and facilities required for their productions

Education

In Bangladesh, NCCB/Aranya organised a Training of Trainers Workshop on Natural Dyes with 10 organic dye experts from the region as a part of WCC APR's Natural Dye Programme. It was a very valuable exchange programme in which every participant learnt new colours and technique. We hope this experience will be repeated in other countries of the Region.



Bangladesh - Training of Trainers Workshop

In India, children of artisans who show promise in studies alongside crafts receive an annual scholarship from CCI to pursue high school, in an environment that also nurtures the traditional skills of their community. The intention is to provide a value added link between formal education and future enterprise/employment, preferably in their traditional craft.



India - Educate to Sustain

The Clusters covered under CCI Educate to Sustain programme are

- Veeravanallur and Chettinad in Tamil Nadu
- Puri,Raghurajpur,Bhubaneswar and Karamul in Odisha
- Jawaja and Beawar in Rajasthan
- Sandur in Karnataka
- Puttapaka in Andhra Pradesh
- And several villages in West Bengal.

In May, 2013 a summer camp was held at the Bharathiar High School Premises, Veeravanallur. Learning was designed to be interactive, creative and holistic. The Curriculum included –

- Introduction to design and weaving
- Computer training in internet usage, Photoshop and Corel Draw
- English language through storytelling and theatre
- And Yoga



India - How to Weave ?

All the 25 children were given certificates at the end of the Camp. A month later a room was rented to house three computers which CCI had received as a donation. With internet connection set up, the children now have access to this room every weekend. Ms.Balachitra has been appointed from the village to regularly interact with the children.

In January, Nokkam, an Education Fair was organized in the school. Speakers from well-known institutions conducted interactive session with the students and parents to inform them of future education opportunities. Resource persons taught children how to make informed choices.

In Nepal, FHAN pursued for an integrated project for Handicraft Development in Nepal and SAARC Secretariat supported the initiative. So far five SAARC countries have supported this project. As a result the concept of establishing SAARC Handicraft Centre in all SAARC countries got the momentum. However, although targeted for inauguration during SAARC summit in November 2014, establishment of SHDC is jeopardized as the SAARC Development Fund (SDF) has changed its stance for supporting this project. SDF has now requested the member states to provide building apart from the land to support this project. In case of Nepal, the Government has not yet responded to SDF request. FHAN believes that this Centre is envisaged to be pivotal in developing handicraft in all SAARC countries and WCC APR should support this endeavor.

In Sri Lanka, the National Crafts Council operates the Master Craftsmen Training scheme with a view to preserving traditional handicrafts by introducing them to the young generation, directing unemployed persons to self-employments in the field of handicraft and thereby promoting their social-economic status.

Under this programme, the well practiced craftsmen of each of the field of handicraft are chosen as Master Craftsmen and under them the knowledge of traditional handicrafts is provided to the apprentices and each of such training class is conducted as full time courses running for 06 to 12 months.

Crafts Training Centers

Providing the necessary practical training and theoretical knowledge to the unemployed youth for making new creations in field of handicrafts, upgrading the traditional handicraft products to suit the modern markets, providing the necessary knowledge and training in order to train the skilled handicraftsmen required to the field of handicrafts through training sessions and seminars are the main functions of the Crafts Training Division managed by NCC.

Basic and Intermediate Technology Training Programmes

Workshops for the introduction of modern designs, equipment and also the modern market requirements to craftsmen are held as another priority programme.

National Craft Council organized advanced training programme for those who completed the basic training programme or for those passes basic skills in craft production. These programs are organized provincial.

Foreign Crafts Training Programmes

The intention of this programme is to provide trains on the new craft knowledge and to make awareness on usage of substitute material for craft productions proposal how been already submitted to Indonesia & India. The assistance have been already extended Indian Handicraft Development commissions office, India.



Sri Lankan Handicrafts

Foreign Crafts Exchange Programmes

Under this crafts exchange programme it is expected to exchange skills on craft productions, new designs and technology among participating countries. It is expected to train more of craftsmen by obtaining services of foreign resource persons.

Marketing / Bazars

In Bangladesh, NCCB has organized a major 5-7 day craft bazaar where more than 20 craftspeople demonstrate and sell their crafts directly to visitors. They provide an excellent opportunity for artisans to interact with visitors and gain marketing experience. Large numbers of enthusiasts, including students, visit the bazaars which is invaluable for raising public awareness about crafts and the rare skills of the artisans. Workshops are conducted by the artisans for students and others, making the whole event a great success.



Bangladesh - Craft Bazar

In India, CCI's annual Crafts Bazaar this year was held in the last week of September. With over a 150 artisans from across India, the Bazaar was a grand celebration of our country's rich heritage of arts and crafts. The Bazaar was inaugurated on Friday, 27th of September 2013, at 4.00 pm by Shri. Mallikarjunaiah, Regional Director (SR), Office of the Development Commissioner of Handicrafts, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India and Padmashree Shri. Kailash Chandra Meher, mastercrafts person in the craft of Pattachitra paintings.



India - Craft Bazar

Of the 150 artisans who took part this year, 22 of them were National Awardees and 5 State Awardees. 18 States were represented and each product carried the identity and tradition of the region from where it originated and is practiced.

The response from the public was tremendous as it is year after year. The steady rise in sales stands as a testimony for the popularity the Crafts Bazaar enjoys. The total sales for the 10 days this year was Rs.1,64,43,293/-.



India - Craft Bazar

In Nepal, FHAN organized 11th Handicraft Trade fair with the theme "Handicraft: Creation from Inner Self". In addition to local participation, exhibitors from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Oman also participated. There were 188 stall exhibiting various craft products. The Chief inaugurated the Trade Fair by unveiling a metal statue from its clay mold with the help of a hammer.



Nepal - Handicraft Trade Fair

In Sri Lanka, the Government and numerous organization supported FHAN in this event. More than 250,000 people visited the trade fair and the exhibitors had transaction of more than 1.25 million US Dollar equivalent. WCC partners also supported the promotion of the event. During the Trade Fair, FHAN also organized an interaction program with visiting delegation of 17 artists from Kazhakistan.

The 12th Handicraft Trade Fair is scheduled for November 20-24, 2014. It will be encompassed with craft competition on silver and wood products.

The National Crafts Council organizes Market Promotion Programmes locally and internationally, in order to introduce their handicrafts products directly to buyers and upgrade the living standards of the craftsmen by providing local and foreign market facilities.

- Foreign Trade Fairs
- Local Trade Fairs

Awards

In Bangladesh, in 2013 and 2014 the Shilu Abed Lifetime Achievement Award has been given to Ganesh Chandra Pal and Chandi Charan Das for terracotta and silk weaves respectively. The Award consists of \$1500.00, a crest and a certificate. Certificates of Merit are also given to other participants of the programme



Bangladesh - Shilu Abed Lifetime Achievement Award – Ganesh Pal

In India, the name of Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay is synonymous with the resurgence of traditional crafts in post independent India .The Kamala Awards conferred annually were instituted in the year 2000 in the memory of our Patron Founder Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay to recognize and honor outstanding merit in the field of traditional Indian handcrafts.

The Kamala Award for Excellence in Crafts recognizes the high level of proficiency and skill achieved by a craftsman as exhibited in the body of his work done over the years. The Kamala Award for Excellence in Craftsmanship for the year 2013 was presented to Shri. Giriraj Prasad, a skilled potter from Alwar, Rajasthan.

The Kamala Award for Contribution to Crafts honors a senior artisan for his contribution to the development of his traditional craft and the training of younger people in the field. The Kamala Award for Contribution to Craft for the year 2013 was presented to Smt. Shantha Bai Kalhalli. Smt. Shantha Bai Kalhalli belongs to the Lambani tribe of Karnataka. Smt. Shantha Bai Kalhalli has trained more than 200 artisans in various training programmes.

The Kamala Samman Award honours a senior person for his dedicated work done over many years in the field so as to significantly benefit craftspeople and transform their lives. In deep appreciation of a lifetime dedicated to the cause of crafts, CCI bestowed the Kamala Samman Award, 2013 to Shri. Brij Bhushan Bhasin.

For over 40 years, Shri. Bhasin has worked with single minded commitment towards the improvement of the craftspersons' social and working conditions, expansion of markets both national and international for their products, and towards poverty alleviation of artisans through income generation schemes.

Since the year 2005, the Crafts Council of India has been administering the conferring of the Shanta Prasad Award. The award has been instituted in memory of late Smt. Shanta Prasad, CCI member and treasurer, by her family.

The Shanta Prasad Award for the year 2013 was presented to Shri. Jyotish Debnath, of Kalna district in Burdwan, West Bengal who has been working on the craft of Jamdani design in Khadi muslin for the past 35 years. Part of CCWB's Kalna project, Shri. Debnath has rediscovered the almost lost process of making Jamdani from home spun yarn. Another innovation by Shri. Debnath is the use of vegetable dyes on khadi muslin.

The Kamala Samman Award consists of a Silver Medallion and a citation. All other awards carry a cash prize, citation and a shawl.



India - Kamala Awardees

For the first time in **Nepalese** history, the Department of Postal Service published a stamp of an artist, Late Mr Moti Kaji Shakya. To publicize this stamp, FHAN also published a commemorative issue in collaboration with Nepal Philatelic Society.



Nepal

In Sri Lanka, the National Handicrafts showroom constructed in 1985, is being maintained as a contemporary handicrafts showroom for collecting handicrafts items which have received awards from the national competitions and exhibitions up to this day.

Opportunities have been provided for conservation of indigenous handicrafts and for the local and foreign tourists, schoolchildren and any person interested in indigenous handicrafts to gain knowledge about it. Winning items of craftsmen at the National Handicrafts Exhibition in various fields annually are purchase whenever required for the showroom. It is proposed to renovate the Art Gallery to add several new features in future.

Competition & Exhibition

In Bangladesh, Young Craftspersons Competition is in its second year of practice, combined with NCCB's Annual General Meeting adding excitement and celebration to the event. The awards are named after the finest artists and founder members of NCCB - Zainul Abedin, Quamrul Hasan and Rashid Choudhury. In 2014 another award in the name of folk art researcher Md Saidur was added to the list. In 2013 selected craft medium was Jewellery, while in 2014 it was Jamdani textiles.

In India, CCI's yearlong celebration of its Golden Jubilee year was a Quilting Exhibition showcasing beautiful handcrafted quilts from West Bengal, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and historian Gita Khandelwal's quilt collection. Gita Khandelwal also unveiled her book "Godharis of Maharashtra" on the occasion.

Best of Odisha (June 29 – July 6):

The works of some of the leading master artisans of Odisha were on view at the 'Best of Odisha' exhibition. Soft stone sculptural pieces and icons, pattachitra art panels, brilliant dhokraware and the best of Odisha's Sambhalpuri ikats, and torans were on display.



India

A superbly conceived Craft Film Festival, not only told brief craft stories within moving frames but led to much brainstorming on the present and future of handcrafts by a panel of eminent personalities. The craft films were provided by Aadhar, who run the Gujarat Heritage film festival. Their Collection had the audience spell bound with “ Taana Bhana “ and brief films on ‘Mata ni Pachedi’, Phad art, Gond art, etc.

To generate a buzz around crafts and craft films, a contest titled, “Moving Art-Films on Crafts-calling for one minute video films on crafts was organized. It was open to the general public and students. The winners were announced at the festival and the winning entries screened.

Sari Sale - CCI bi annual sari sale was held at My Fortune Hotels on the 12th & 13th of September. It was a very successful exhibition and well appreciated.

Craftepreneur – an eclectic exhibition titled Craftepreneur was held in Lalit kala Academy from the 25th to 27th of September. Craftepreneur was an exhibition that showcased 21 of India’s most promising designers of contemporary arts, crafts and textiles. Designers who desire to integrate the Indian handcrafted traditions and present them in a contemporary vocabulary.

The Exhibition was curated by our members Kiran Rao and Matangi.. All the major newspapers and the radio covered the event extensively. It was a huge success.

Events waiting to happen are the

North East Exhibition- An exclusive exhibition of the best of N. E crafts and textiles will be showcased at Lalit kala Academy from the 29th of October to the 2nd of November. This is a DCH funded exhibition.

An exhibition of Embroidery –is an exquisite exhibition of Phulkari, a rural tradition of handmade embroidery from Punjab being held at Amethyst from 26th to 29th of November, 2014. The exhibition is being curated by Jasleen Dhamija and Mala Aneja, will feature old and new pieces from Bharany's collection.

There is going to be a Parsi evening which will feature an interaction between Ashdeen Z Lilaowala, designer / author and Pheroza Godrej, distinguished author/Philanthropist on the Parsi way of life and the crafts of the Parsi's. The evening will also feature a display of elegant Parsi embroidery pieces and a delicious parsi food.

Crafts Bazaar- The much awaited Crafts Bazaar will be held at Valluvar Kottam Hall from the 5th December to 15th of January. There will be a100 stalls. This is a DCH funded exhibition.

Craft tour – Chettinad – Our member Smt. Vislalakhi Ramaswamy is arranging a craft tour to Chettinad.

Natural Dye exhibition- A natural dye exhibition is coming up at Valluvar kottam hall. There will be 60 participants from all over India. This is a DCH funded exhibition.

Sari sale – The second show of our fund raiser will be In March.

Kamala Exhibition- To conclude our 50th year celebrations, CCI plans to get together with its State Councils and have a retrospective 'Kamala' exhibition. We have suggested showcasing of crafts that our sister councils have worked with over the years, in a contemporary form. Tradition reinterpreted for today.

CCI plans to have the exhibition at Lalit Kala Academy, Greems Road in March,2015. The exhibition will be for 5 days.

In Nepal, With a view to improve designing ability using locally abundant natural fibre, HANDECEN organized design competition on decorative from natural fibre. The competition resulted in 43 new decorative products. The best designers were awarded.



Nepal - Products made by the competitors on display

Metal statue is one of the highest value added products in Nepal's export basket. The production process involves wax molding, casting, carving and finishing. The best carving work on a metal statue fetches very high price for the product. However, only the mold makers were considered as artist in Nepalese society for a long time.



Nepal - A contestant carving the statue

In this backdrop, FHAN organized a competition of carving skill on metal statue. The competitors were given two months time to work on a given piece of unprocessed metal statue. Altogether 18 artists participated and the best artists were awarded.

In Sri Lanka, the artisans' success largely depends on pride in his vocation. Being commercially successful does not necessarily bring pride; recognition and respect is what counts. To encourage artisans to continue their tradition, excellence in work, and contribute to the community, the National Craft Council presents awards, prizes, medals, and certificates in all fields of creative work to honour quality, merit, and excellence in creations. Such awards are, distributed at the Provincial, National, and Presidential levels.

Provincial Exhibitions

Sri Lanka has nine provinces. Annual exhibitions are held in, each province. Awards, Prizes, Medals, and Certificates are, distributed to works of quality according to merit. The best exhibits are, selected for participation at the National level. Workmanship, creativity, design, innovation are the criteria applied in selection.

“Shilpa” National Handicrafts Exhibition

“Shilpa” is a celebration of our handicrafts heritage. Held annually, in a mood of fun, frolic, entertainment, and exclusive shopping for handicraft products, visitors convert it into a celebration of merriment and festivity. Shilpa captures the hearts and minds of visitors and blossoms forth, resplendent and alive, with crafts and craftspeople.

At this National Handicrafts Exhibition, 54 fields of handicraft classified under 20 basic sections are, represented. Gold Awards are, presented for traditional and modern segments that preserve tradition. National Awards are categorised as Silver and covers every field. In addition, financial awards and certificates for the first, second and third places are given.
