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## Crafting a Sustainable Future by Nurturing the Crafts and the Craftspersons of India

by Our Correspondent - Dec 11, 2023



**Mumbai:** Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad organised a Thought Leadership Seminar and Thematic Fashion Show on 8th December, and an Exhibition on 8th & 9th December 2023 at World Trade Centre, Colaba Mumbai under Project Handmade in India (HMI) supported by HSBC. Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad is the implementation partner in the project HandMade in India (HMI). Six clusters - Kamrup in Assam, Bargarh in Orissa, Bhuj and Surendranagar in Gujarat, Maheshwar in Madhya Pradesh and Salem in Tamil Nadu are being supported and handheld under the project HandMade in India.

The Exhibition has products on display from the six clusters covered under the project HMI. A total of 25 stalls have been set up with EDII-trained artisans and craftspersons participating in it.

The event was inaugurated by Chief Guest, Mr. Romit Sen, Sr. Vice President, Corporate Sustainability, HSBC India and Guest of Honour, Shri Satya Prasad Verma, Additional Textile Commissioner and CEO of Textiles Committee, Mumbai. Also present on this important occasion were: Dr. Sunil Shukla, Director General, EDII; Dr. Raman Gujral, Director, Department of Projects (Corporate), EDII and other senior officials from government ministries/departments and corporate leaders & entrepreneurs from noted organizations.

The event began with a thematic Fashion Show which emphasized sustainability under the theme of 'Crafting a Sustainable Future: Handmade in India' and 'Inspiring Heritage, Empowering Futures: Handlooms in Modern India.' Every ensemble narrated a tale of timeless artistry, honoring India's rich cultural heritage while giving a message of embracing sustainability and empowerment. The designers used the fabric developed by EDII-trained artisans under project HMI to make garments for models.

A Thought Leadership Workshop was organized post the fashion show which was attended by stakeholders including policy makers, industry professionals, practitioners, weavers and artisans. Panel discussion topics included 'Inspiring Heritage, Empowering Futures: Handlooms in Modern India' and 'Crafting a Sustainable Future: Handmade in India'. EDII's model of reviving certain crafts on the verge of extinction was elaborately shared. The replicability of the model for different crafts in different states was evaluated as well as best practices were reviewed.

In his address, Chief Guest Mr. Romit Sen, Sr. Vice President, Corporate Sustainability, HSBC India said, "HSBC's HMI project has focused on skilling and empowering artisans by ensuring sustainable livelihood options for them. Today these trained craftspersons are financially independent and are in a much better place to think creatively and implement winning business strategies for growth. They are the custodians of India's art and craft."

Shri Satya Prasad Verma, Additional Textile Commissioner and CEO of Textiles Committee, Mumbai said, "The textiles sector plays a pivotal role in the economic and cultural development of our nation. Through concerted efforts and strategic initiatives, we are witnessing tangible progress in this sector. The exhibition featuring products from diverse clusters is a testament to the success of collaborative endeavours. The government remains committed to supporting such initiatives."

Dr. Sunil Shukla, Director General, EDII in his opening remarks said, "In the pursuit of a sustainable future, EDII is committed to bringing about progress and development in the lives of artisans through its various initiatives under Project HMI. Nurturing and empowering artisans and weavers of the country is a dire need as this is the only way we can preserve the rich cultural heritage of India."

According to Mr. Raman Gujral, "I am happy at the success of this programme. The fashion show and the exhibition depict the potential of our crafts and craftspersons. We need to nurture their skills and ensure their growth as business people."