

# વેસ્ટર્ન ટાઇમ્સ

<https://westerntimesnews.in/news/316559/shielding-the-craft-legacy-of-gujarat-the-gi-tag-felicitation/>

## Shielding The Craft Legacy of Gujarat : The GI Tag Felicitation

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- Four crafts of Gujarat secure Geographic Indication (GI) tagging
- The initiative was undertaken under the HastKala Yojana, an initiative of The Commissioner of Cottage & Rural Industries, Govt. of Gujarat, in collaboration with the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII)
- Till now 20 crafts have secured GI tagging under the project.

**May 16, 2024 – Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad** is happy to announce a significant milestone in the preservation and promotion of Gujarat's rich heritage crafts. The

Commissioner of Cottage & Rural Industries, Govt. of Gujarat, in collaboration with the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), facilitated the Geographic Indication (GI) tagging of four traditional crafts from Gujarat.

The recent GI tagging, marks a momentous occasion for Gujarat's artisanal community. The recognized crafts, sanctioned by the Geographical Indications Registry Office under the DPIIT-Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, include **Gujarat Soof Embroidery, Ahmedabad Sodagari Block Print, Surat Sadeli Craft and Bharuch Sujani Weaving**

As a key knowledge partner of the Government of Gujarat's Hastkala Setu Yojana, EDII has played a pivotal role in supporting craft-preneurs engaged in these crafts. From assisting in the formation of cooperatives to facilitating post-GI tagging interventions, EDII remains steadfast in its commitment to preserving and promoting Gujarat's cultural heritage.

The Felicitation and award of certificates to artisans, was ensured in an elaborate ceremony at EDII Ahmedabad campus. Present on the occasion were **Chief Guest: Shri Pravin Solanki, Commissioner & Secretary, Cottage and Rural Industries, Govt. of Gujarat; Guest of Honour: Shri B K Singhal, Chief General Manager/OIC, NABARD and Distinguished Guest: Shri Kartikeya V. Sarabhai, Founder Director, Centre for Environmental Education (CEE)**. Also present were **Dr. Sunil Shukla, Director General – EDII and Dr. Satya Ranjan Acharya, Project Director, Hastkala Setu.**

**Shri Pravin Solanki** said, *"The State gets its identity from its craft legacy. Gujarat is home to unique crafts, and it is our responsibility to nurture these. And, so, with the support of EDII, the Gujarat Government is committed to preserving the rich craft heritage and providing recognition to artisans. While skill training is helping artisans make a mark, I am happy that we have secured GI tag, establishing the uniqueness of these crafts."*

**Shri B K Singhal** opined, *"Traditional art and craftsmanship is our heritage, and needs to be nurtured and recognized. I am happy that 4 more unique crafts have been granted GI tag under the aegis of EDII. The project Hastkala and the GI tagging is a testimony to the fact that Gujarat's traditional art has a strong market and preference. Given NABARD's commitment to promoting small-scale industries, cottage and village industries, handicrafts, and other rural crafts, I am particularly delighted with this development."*

**Shri Kartikeya V. Sarabhai** expressed, *"India is rich in the diversity of its craft traditions preserved over generations by artisans. Each tradition*

*closely relates to the natural environment within which these crafts have evolved. These are the pride of our nation and a testament to India's unbroken tradition of several thousand years. GI tagging gives them both protection and recognition and opens up new markets without fear of unauthorized imitations. I am sure this development will create new avenues for strengthening the crafts and encouraging entrepreneurs from among the artisans to excel worldwide."*

Elaborating on EDII's role as an implementing agency of the Project, **Dr. Sunil Shukla** said, "*EDII is handholding entrepreneurs, under the Hast Kala Yojana Project, to enhance their skills & knowledge, give them newer markets and promote ease of reaching out to customers. Today, they are making innovative, marketable products with high demand, and are gaining visibility. GI tagging is a great step towards giving recognition to their unique crafts"*

## **About Hastkala Setu Yojana and the 4 Crafts that have been Awarded GI Certificate**

Launched in 2020, the Hastakala Setu Yojana has been instrumental in empowering artisans across 33 districts in Gujarat. With a focus on providing practical skills and market exposure, over 33939 artisans have been sensitized, and more than 22000 have received advanced training, underscoring EDII's commitment to nurturing entrepreneurship and sustainable development in the state.

### **Craft Spotlight: Celebrating Gujarat's Artisanal Traditions**

- **Gujarat Soof Embroidery:** Originating from the Banaskantha and Kutch regions, Soof Embroidery is renowned for its geometric count-based reverse embroidery technique, reflecting the cultural heritage of the Meghwal and Maaru communities.
- **Ahmedabad Sodagari Block Print:** A testament to Gujarat's floral heritage, Sodagari Block Print continues to captivate with its delicate patterns engraved on teak wood blocks, a cherished tradition upheld by skilled artisans of the Chhipa-Muslim communities.
- **Surat Sadeli Craft:** A fine woodcraft tradition dating back to the 19th century, Sadeli Craft showcases intricate patterns assembled from various materials, a testament to the Petigara families' mastery in Surat City.
- **Bharuch Sujani Weaving:** With its roots tracing back to the 1860s, Sujani Weaving from Bharuch exemplifies intricate geometric designs stuffed with cotton clouds, preserving the legacy of the Sujniwalas, Chistiyas, and Miya Mustafa's family.

### **About GI Tagging**

The GI tag serves as a hallmark of authenticity and quality, protecting products with unique characteristics originating from specific geographical

areas. It not only enhances market recognition but also fosters economic growth by preventing unauthorized usage and promoting responsible consumption.

Through the Hastakala Setu Yojana, EDII continues to empower communities, preserve traditions, and pave the way for a sustainable future.