



# SILK MARK

Gateway to the Silk World

*Your Assurance of Pure Silk*

## Ericulture: Scope for Entrepreneurship Development



**Silk Samagra-2**  
Transforming the  
Indian Sericulture Industry



**YUGAMUGI  
SILK HOUSE**



**MANUFACTURER OF PURE KANCHIPURAM BRIDAL SILK SAREES, SOFT SILK SAREES,  
TUSSAR SILK SAREES AND ORIGINAL PENKALAMKARI SILK SAREES.**




**SILK MARK  
INDIA**

*Your Assurance of Pure Silk*

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## रेशम और फैशन



फैशन एक गैर-मुखर बयान है जो किसी व्यक्ति के व्यक्तित्व, पृष्ठभूमि और शैली के बारे में बहुत कुछ व्यक्त करता है। पुराने दिनों में यह विशेष रूप से समृद्ध, मशहूर हस्तियों और राजसी व्यक्तियों से जुड़ा था। हालांकि अब फैशन

आम आदमी खासकर युवाओं की पहुंच में है। वैसे भी, पोशाक का फैशन विचारों का एक विकास है, जो एक सनक के रूप में शुरू होता है, लेकिन समय के साथ समाज में एक शैली के रूप में स्वीकार किया जाता है, जो पोशाक, व्यवहार या जीवन शैली से जुड़ा हो सकता है। फैशन ज्यादातर ग्लैमर से जुड़ा होता है। यह लोगों को आत्मविश्वासी और साहसी महसूस कराता है।

रेशम और फैशन एक दूसरे के पूरक हैं। यह भी उतना ही सच है कि रेशम और स्त्रियाँ भी एक दूसरे के पूरक हैं, रेशम महिलाओं के लिए है और विशेष रूप से यह साड़ियों के लिए है। रेशम से जुड़ी यह आम धारणा और शाही विरासत है। इसका परंपरा से भी कुछ सरोकार है - एक कालातीत परंपरा, दुनिया को एक स्टाइलिश जगह बनाने वाला एक शानदार समय। लेकिन अब समय आ गया है कि इस परंपरा को तोड़ा जाए। बदलते युग के साथ, फैशन पुरुषों के जीवन में भी महत्वपूर्ण होता जा रहा है। फैशन पुरुषों के लिए उतना ही प्रासंगिक हो गया है जितना महिलाओं के लिए। अब पुरुष डिजाइनर, पुरुषों के लिए फैशन के सामान, पुरुषों के कपड़ों के लिए फैशन शो और पुरुषों के लिए विशेष फैशन स्टाइलिस्ट हैं। वास्तव में, पुरुषों के लिए फैशन डिजाइनरों की संख्या में वृद्धि हो रही है, और उन्होंने रेशम में विकसित अपनी अनूठी शैलियों के लिए उच्च फैशन की पोशाकों में एक बड़ा नाम कमाया है।

वास्तव में, भारतीय रेशम, विशेष रूप से वन्य रेशम, पुरुषों के कपड़ों के लिए बेहद अनुकूल है। देश भर में फैले हमारे रेशम-बुनाई समूह हथकरघों पर हाथों से बुने और हाथों से रंगे धागों से बने डिजाइन फैब्रिक की एक वृहद् श्रृंखला का उत्पादन किया जाता है जो फैशन के प्रति जागरूक युवा भारत की कल्पना को जागृत करेगा। वैसे तो हमारे पास पर्याप्त मात्रा में जनशक्ति और सामग्री है, लेकिन कमी है तो इस उच्च क्षमता वाले खंड का दोहन करने में फैशन और परिधान उद्योग में उद्यमिता के उत्साह की।

समृद्ध पश्चिम में पुरुषों के लिए फैशन के रुझान इतनी सुपरसोनिक गति से बदल रहे हैं कि पूर्व में फैशन महारथियों को रचनात्मक दिमाग के साथ हाई-टेक होने की जरूरत है, ताकि फैशन की अत्यधिक गतिशील दुनिया में प्रासंगिक बने रहें। इसके अलावा, अगर हम कुछ मूल्य वर्धित उत्पादों जैसे जैविक रेशम, प्राकृतिक रंग आदि की पेशकश, उत्पादन से फैशन तक पूरा ध्यान रखते हुए कर सकते हैं, तो हमारी युवा पीढ़ी ऐसे मूल्यों की काफी सराहना करती है और ऐसे सिद्धांतों को बनाए रखने वाले ब्रांडों के प्रति वफादारी प्रदर्शित करती है। और वे एक जिम्मेदार विकल्प बनाने के लिए थोड़ा और खर्च करने के विचार के लिए तैयार है तथा, हमारी धरती मां की सेवा में अपना योगदान दे रहे हैं। इसलिए हम एक नए युग की आशा करते हैं जो जल्द ही अमल में आएगा, जहां रेशमी पोशाकों के आराम को साझा करने में कोई भेदभाव या लिंग पूर्वाग्रह नहीं होगा।

आशा की किरण भी है। कुछ युवा उद्यमी जिन्होंने पुरुषों के रेशमी परिधानों में उद्यम किया है, वे भरपूर लाभांश प्राप्त कर रहे हैं। सिल्क मार्क ऑर्गनाइजेशन ऑफ इंडिया उनकी साहसिक पहलों की सराहना करना चाहता है, और उम्मीद है कि वे जल्द ही अपने खुद के आला बाजार तैयार करेंगे।

के. एस. गोपाल  
प्रधान संपादक

# SILK AND FASHION



Fashion is a non-vocal statement that expresses a lot about a person's personality, background and style. In days of yore it was exclusively the province of the affluent, celebrities and royalty. However,

fashion is now within the reach of the common man, especially the youth. Besides, dress fashion is an evolution of ideas, which begins as a fad, but in course of time gets accepted in society as a style, which could be in attire, behaviour or lifestyle. Fashion is mostly associated with glamour. It makes people feel confident and bold.

Silk and fashion complement each other. It is equally true that silk and women complement each other too, and that silk is for women and in particular it is meant for sarees. This is the common perception and a royal legacy associated with silk. It is also something to do with tradition - a timeless tradition, a scintillating time making the world a stylish place. Yet, the time has now come to break this tradition. With changing eras, fashion is gaining more and more significance in the lives of men. Fashion has become as pertinent to men as much it is to women. There are men fashion designers, fashion accessories for men, fashion shows for men's clothes and exclusive fashion stylists for men. In fact, fashion designers for men are increasing in number, and they have earned a huge name in Haute Couture for their unique styles developed in silk.

In fact, Indian silk, especially Vanya, is ideally suited to men's garments. Our silk-weaving clusters spread across the country produce an array of design fabrics made of handspun and hand-dyed yarns on handlooms that will ignite the imagination of fashion conscious young India. While we have the manpower and material in abundance, what is lacking is the zeal of entrepreneurship in the fashion and apparel industry, in tapping this high-potential segment.

Fashion trends for men are changing at such supersonic speed in the affluent west that the fashion pundits in the east need to go hi-tech with creative minds, so as to remain relevant in the highly dynamic world of fashion. In addition, if we can offer some value-added products like organic silk, natural dyes etc., taking care from farm to fashion, our young generations are quite appreciative of such values and display loyalty to brands that uphold such principles. And yes, they are open to the idea of spending a little more to make a responsible choice, contributing their bit to serve our Mother Earth. Let's therefore hope for a new era that will materialise soon, where there is no discrimination or gender bias so far as sharing the comforts of silk is concerned.

There are silver linings too. Some young entrepreneurs who have ventured into men's silk apparels are reaping rich dividends. Silk Mark Organisation of India wishes to compliment their bold initiatives, and hope they will soon carve out their own niche markets.

K. S. Gopal  
Editor-in-Chief

## National Workshop on SILK SAMAGRA-2 Scheme Inaugurated by Secretary (Textiles)

**Making India Atmanirbhar and Transforming Indian Sericulture Industry from Livelihood to Entrepreneur Level**

Central Silk Board organised a National Workshop on Silk Samagra-2 – an ambitious Central Sector scheme for making India Atmanirbhar in silk production and also in silk machinery manufacturing.

The National Workshop was organised on 6th May 2022 in Hotel Radisson Blu Atria, Bengaluru, followed by a field visit on 7th May 2022 to get exposure to various activities of the silk production chain. The day-long programme was chaired by Shri. Upendra Prasad Singh, IAS, Secretary (Textiles), Government of India, and attended by the planners and policy makers of the Government of India and various state governments.



Besides, stakeholders from diverse activities of the silk and sericulture industry, plus an expert panel from different fields shared their experiences, discussed on emerging challenges of the silk sector, initiatives taken by the planners/ policy makers and sericulture industry stakeholders. Smt. Prajakta L. Verma, IAS, Joint Secretary (Silk), Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India, Shri. R. R. Okhandiar, IAS, Member Secretary and Dr. Narender Rebelly, IAS, Director (Fin.), Central Silk Board were the eminent persons attending the Workshop from the Government of India. While Principal Secretary, Commissioners and Directors of 24 silk-producing states along with their senior officers marked their presence with valuable observations/ comments to move forward and make India a Global Leader in the silk sector with convergence of efforts/ development programmes.



The National Workshop was graciously inaugurated by the Secretary (Textiles), who unveiled the booklet on the Silk Samagra-2 Scheme Implementation Guidelines, and also launched the mobile app and digital platform for two valuable IT initiatives by the Central Silk Board viz., Android app for geo-tagging of the infrastructures created under the Silk Samagra-2 scheme, and providing a digital MIS platform for silkworm seed production and supply. Both the apps would make a significant impact on scheme planning and monitoring, and facilitate sericulture stakeholders in the procurement of silkworm seed of their choice, on time. These are also a move to ensure transparency in the delivery mechanism, and better outreach for both programme implementing agencies and end users.

The inaugural session was followed by an introduction to the Silk Samagra-2 scheme by Shri. R. R. Okhandiar, Member Secretary, Central Silk Board, on its objectives, quantum and scope of assistance, roles & responsibilities of CSB and state governments, stakeholders' participation etc. It was followed





by a technical session by the Directors and Scientists of Central Silk Board. A presentation was made on the Central Silk Board's core activities and its role to take forward the Indian Sericulture industry to achieve its vision and mission. Besides, details of assistance in pre cocoon and post cocoon sectors available for the various stakeholders and unit cost of the components were elaborated by the CSB's Directors and Scientists. Dr. V. Sivaprasad, Director (Tech) presented the roles of R&D, technologies developed and transferred to the field, the way forward for future R&D requirements for various eco-climatic zones, effective transfer of technology to the last mile in the silk production chain by using IT initiative, and providing digital platform for the stakeholders. Expounding further on this, Dr. S. V. Naik, Director, CSTRI, gave a presentation on the details of innovation and technology developed in the post cocoon sector, landmarks in silk machinery innovation, impact of machines on social and economic growth, cost reduction and efficiency improvement, future goal to improve quality and quantity of silk, and role/ future of non-textiles application of silk. Dr. V. K. Rahmathula, a senior scientist from CSB, also apprised of the future requirement of silkworm seed to achieve the goal of Silk Samagra-2, planning and strategy to meet the requirement, and also the support to be extended to the Silkworm Seed sector for enhancing the production of quality silkworm seed during the Silk Samagra-2 period.

After an exhaustive technical session, the Principal Secretary/ Secretary/Commissioners/ Directors of major silk-producing states representing mulberry and non-mulberry sectors gave their presentation on the efforts of the state governments for sericulture

development, support availed from previous Silk Samagra scheme, its impact and expectations from Central Sector Scheme "Silk Samagra-2", and way forward to achieve the goal envisaged for development of silk industry in the country in the next five years. The speakers were from the States of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir for the mulberry sector, and Assam (BTC), Jharkhand, Meghalaya and Odisha for the non-mulberry sector.

The final session of the Workshop was represented by a diverse range of stakeholders influencing the sericulture and silk value chain in India. The session was an eye-opener for the planners and policy makers to achieve the goal of the Indian Silk Industry to become Atmanirbhar in production, and to take forward the Indian Sericulture industry from livelihood option to enterprise level. There was a presentation on the use of geo information technology/ space technology for precise monitoring and implementation of sericulture programmes. Dr. B. K. Handique, a senior scientist from the North East Space Application Centre, Shillong, apprised the audience about the different roles of space technology in identification of potential areas, monitoring the expansion of area and creation of sericulture infrastructure. It could be possible to use land resources effectively for sericulture development through RS&GIS Technology and using the SILKS portal. At the same time, a change in sericulture host plantation area could be easily monitored through geo tagging and geo spatial dashboard.

Since silk has a premium market the world over, quality and quantity improvement alone is not enough for creating market pull and growth of

the silk sector. It also requires monitoring of fast-changing consumer preferences and the fashion industry, and strategy to capture niche markets for high-end silk product users across the world. Smt. Susan Thomas, Director, NIFT, Bengaluru and Shri. V. R. Srinivasan, M/s. Chamundi Textiles (Silk Mill) Ltd. gave a wider and pragmatic view of silk demand and product design diversification to sustain silk as an important textile commodity in the domestic and global markets.

The weakest link in the silk value chain is the unorganised and fragmented cocoon/ raw silk market and this is the major concern for growth of the Indian silk industry. Sericulture mostly being a livelihood and household activity, the sale of cocoon and raw silk with fair and transparent pricing remains a challenge for the planners. Shri. Mayank Tiwari, CEO, Resha Mandi gave an elaborate presentation and model for developing an ecosystem for silk marketing, to ensure fair and transparent pricing through a grading system for the primary producers.

A range of presentations on entrepreneurship in the silk industry was made by the speakers from Farmers Producer Organisation, SPV and Automatic Reeling Machine owners. Notable amongst them was the presentation by Shri. N. Y. Chigari, FPO from Karnataka, who gave details on scaling up of the activities through formation of FPO and thus ensuring increase in income. A large-scale sericulture farming model in Nagaland was presented by Dr. Venugopal, CEO, Samvrudi SPV. To improve quality silk production both in terms of quality cocoon and raw silk, the role of Chawki Rearing activity and use of automatic reeling machine was appraised by Shri. Jagadish, M/s. CRC Kirangere and Shri. Peddi Ravinder, ARM owner at Jangaon (AP).

Credit to sericulture has always remained a challenging task for policy makers. Unlike



other agriculture crops, sericulture is given least priority by the financial institutions. Fund mobilization for sericulture sector need a thrust and a confidence building for the financial institutions are the major task. A presentation by Shri Kartik Iyer, CEO & Director, Human Venture Private Limited was made on the problems and solution to this issue. He also shared his experience in Marathwada district in Maharashtra and Angul in Kandhamal district in Odisha, opening a new hope for sericulture financing by the various financial institutions.

The day-long proceedings of the Workshop gave an insight into sericulture development and achieving the goal of the Silk Samagra-2 scheme with collaborative efforts by the Central & State departments, stakeholders and policy planners/ implementing agencies. The Workshop was a grand success and outcome of the proceedings would certainly give a new dimension to the development and growth of the Indian Sericulture and Silk Industry. The Workshop would certainly help the country to fill the void created in the global silk market by the decline in production of silk in China, and also help India to become a Global Leader in Silk. The entire world sees India with the hope to carry forward the legacy of Silk as the Queen of Textiles.

Smt. Prajakta L. Verma, Joint Secretary (Silk), Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India summed up the day's proceedings and Shri. U. P. Singh, Secretary (Textiles), Govt. of India made his closing remarks and appreciated the role played by the sericulture industry stakeholders, Heads of States' Sericulture Departments and CSB's scientists. He also appealed for a concerted and collaborative effort by all for the development of the Indian Silk industry to become a global leader in silk.



Report: Shri. R. K. Sinha,  
Deputy Secretary (Tech.), CSB, Bengaluru



## Success Story



### M. RANGASAMY SILKS Silk Mark Supports Sales!

Greetings, silk lovers. I am Rangasamy from Vanavasi, Salem District. I have a store which is in Tamil Nadu. I would like to share the success story of my shop. For 25 years I have been running my shop, the name of which is M. Rangasamy Silks. I sell Kanchipuram and Arani silk sarees. My shop is both a retail and wholesale outlet. I not only sell silk sarees but also semi-silk cotton sarees, men's cotton dhoties and shirts and kids' shirts.

My customers always look for pure silk sarees and they generally have a doubt whether a saree is really a pure silk saree. After I got a Silk Mark accreditation for my store, my customers trusted me more and my sales increased from 25% to 55%. I now have customers worldwide.

Silk is the most-loved fabric, and is considered ultimately grand. Silk sarees are a part of every

special occasion in India. Silk is one of the most expensive fabrics in the world. So some people are cheating their customers for money. But I never thought about cheating my customers; I will always give them the original silk.

To increase their trust I used Silk Mark. I gained more customers as well as more sales for my store. Being a seller of silk sarees I always want to offer genuine quality with each and every product. Now I am really proud to tell everyone that my success was not only made by me and also by my family, my workers and the support of Silk Mark Organisation of India.

I am very thankful for my great supporter -Silk Mark - for my enhanced silk saree sales! 🙏

Interviewed by Shri. P. C. Johny, TA (R&S),  
SMOI, Palakkad



## Ericulture: Scope for Entrepreneurship Development



Silk is a symbol of elegance and luxury worldwide. North East India is rich in Seri biodiversity, being a natural abode for a number of sericigenous insects and their host plants. The Eri silkworm, *Samia ricini* (Donovan), is considered the most popular commercially-exploited Vanya silkworm, now receiving national as well as international limelight. Clothing made of silk is adored also in India including Assam since time immemorial. Eri sericulture holds an unmistakable distinction among other sericulture activities like Mulberry, Tasar, Oak-tasar and Muga due to its unique dual characteristics of softness and thermal property. Besides, Eri silk has good blending and dyeing property too. Due to immense popularity Eri silk is designated as “Silk of the Millennium”. The Eri silkworm, *Samiaricini* (Donovan), primarily feeds on the foliage of castor, popularly known as Era in Assamese. Unlike the cocoons of other silkworms, Eri cocoons cannot be reeled, as they are open mouthed and made up of entangled layers. Eri cocoons are usually spun to yarn without killing the insect. Thus Eri silk can be branded as non-violent silk or Ahimsa silk. Involvement of Ericulture in the socio-economic life of people of NE India is an advantage to get success in brand building as Non-violent or Ahimsa silk. Thus it gets more popularity globally, particularly in Buddhist and Islamic countries. The importance of building trust is often an underrated element of brand building. Compared to anywhere else, trust is fundamental for building strong brands in India. The Indian consumer is not pleased very easily, but once pleased, tends to display strong loyalty and affinity levels. Once, Ericulture was predominantly cultured in NE India only. But, due to its immense popularity, Ericulture has been spreading to different states of the country.



*Dr. Mridul Chandra Sarmah*

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Central Muga Eri Research and Training Institute  
Central Silk Board

It possess excellent thermal properties and exquisite qualities like natural sheen, inherent affinity for natural dyes and natural vibrant colours, and is mostly produced in the North Eastern States and other non-traditional states such as Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh etc.

The Eri silkworm is a multivoltine insect delivering 5-6 crops in a year depending on availability of food plants and prevalence of favourable climatic conditions. Ericulture in the northeastern region of India is widely practiced among around 3 lakh families, who contribute the lion’s share to the national non-mulberry raw silk production. Eri silkworms, being polyphagous in nature, feed on a number of food plants.

The Eri silkworm being hardy and tolerant to diseases, its productivity per acre/ crop is high. The culture is eco-friendly and is a low-investment enterprise. Unlike other silks, only spun silk can be produced from Eri cocoons and hence, boil-off loss during its spinning is very low. There are multifarious scopes for income generation through Ericulture.

The unemployment problem in both Government and private sectors is causing a serious problem among the younger generation. At this crucial juncture, Ericulture can play a pivotal role for socio-economic development through its diverse scope of entrepreneur development, both in the pre- and post-cocoon sectors. It is observed that most of the youth are starting businesses through different product development



channels in the whole North Eastern region. The pre-cocoon sector is primarily dominated by traditional Eri farmers. However, certain optimistic entrepreneurs adopted Eri rearers for smooth flow of raw material to their weaving units. There are different scopes for income generation e.g., through sale proceeds of leaf and food plant seedlings through raising nursery, sale proceeds of seed cocoons or silkworm eggs besides its primary product: Eri cocoons and silkworm pupae. It is fitting to mention that the Eri pupa is considered as a primary product by most rearers, with cocoons as a secondary one (Sarmah, 2011).

**Pre-cocoon Sector:** There are multifarious activities in the pre-cocoon sector of Ericulture. Thus it has great potential for income generation for example through sale proceeds of foliage for silkworm feeding, food plant seedlings, silkworm eggs etc. The main product is Eri cocoon but major income generation is also coming from Eri pupae: a chief byproduct of the Eri silk industry.

**Post-cocoon Sector:**

Traditionally, Ericulture is known as a simple household activity and cocoons are used only in manufacture of gents' chaddars and ladies' shawls, that too in the natural colour. Depending upon quality, different producers earn income through selling of primary Eri products – Eri fabrics. Through value addition, weavers can earn more income. Eri yarn selling also another income generation stream. The quality of yarn varies according to the spinning technology. Hand spun 'takuri' or 'takli' yarn is not uniform compared to machine or mill spun yarn. Eri fabric gains better sheen with each passing wash. It is comfortable in cooler climates. Blending with cotton, wool, jute or even mulberry silk makes exotic and high-quality home furnishing, shawls, stoles and fashion accessories. Matt-finished combination with a natural sheen makes it unique in appearance. Eri crepes using extra twist in both warp and weft are used for modern dresses like ladies' skirts etc. Nowadays, more Eri products like ladies' shawls, mekhela chadars, jeinsems,

dokhonas, and knitted garments like sweaters, dress materials for ladies and gents etc., are produced in large varieties. Cross stitch and embroidery work are done on Eri fabric for value addition. Fashion accessories like ties, scarves, stoles, kerchiefs, etc. are made with Eri yarn and these have a wider market. Bags, wallets, files, folders etc. are a few unconventional items of Eri produced for specific usage.

Traditionally Eri fabrics are prepared using simple country looms; nowadays, improved fly shuttle looms are also used in some places. Recently, mill spun Eri yarns are produced with finer counts like 120 etc. These yarns are used to manufacture quality fabrics using power looms. Diversified products like pure Eri silk sarees and denim fabrics using mill-spun, coloured Eri yarn are also produced in some places. During the current pandemic situation the 'Eri-mask' is gaining popularity in national as well as international markets. As on date, a number of diversified fabrics have been produced from Eri silk, taking advantage of its strong affinity to dyes and blending properties with other natural and synthetic yarns. The Eri silkworm is the exclusive prerogative of North Eastern India, and of late has been introduced to other parts of the country. However, sustainability of livelihood of this sector needs



more attention, for which product diversification is the promising venture. Besides silk and silk product diversification, there is immense scope for food diversification. The different recipes of Eri silk pupae are receiving huge demand in the tribal-dominated states of the NE region such as Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Assam and some parts of Manipur.

Ericulture is the most popular Vanya silk industry in India. The multifarious scope of income generation in the silk sector is unique in the Eri silk sector. Thus it plays a major role in the socio-economic development of the country. Emphasis should be placed on value-addition and product diversification of Eri products. 🍀



## Asavali, Bandhej and Patola

### Asavali, Bandhej and Patola Wrapped in ancient yet modern splendor!

Asavali, Ashaval, Ashawali... Call it whatever you may, these sarees are the toast of Ahmedabad. Popularly known as Ahmedabadi sarees, Ashavali is part of the textile vocabulary of Gujarat. Despite its popularity in Gujarat, it is not so popular in the rest of the country. It is not taken in the same breath like the Kanjeevaram or Banarasi. These brocades have several first to their credits. The now-famous



Radhika Lalbhai

weavers of Benares migrated from here and settled down in Varanasi and started the weaving tradition there. The jala loom also set its foot in India from here. Beyond that there was little information available. One name taken in the same breath with Asavali sarees is that of Radhika Lalbhai, who has spent over 30 years working the weaves of these sarees. My journey to track Asavali sarees was always met with limited availability of information. There was this brilliant article by Radhika Lalbhai in the issue of Marg edited by Jasleen Dhamija. The Lalbhai family is no stranger to textiles with Ahmedabad as their base. Radhika has



*Ms. Chitra Balasubramaniam*

(Freelance features writer, among other things, she writes on Textiles for the love of it.)

done pioneering and sterling work in reviving the Asavalis. I have seen many of her designs at the Craft Council's fairs in Delhi. Different and unique, the brocades are a class apart in terms of colours and designs. The designs have an old-world charm as many are recreated from old ones. There are also those with contemporary sensibilities. Though working with a lack of time, Radhika took time to answer some questions. Her knowledge is vast as someone who has worked with weavers and someone who loves handlooms and sarees. Read on...

Q1. When and how did your journey with sarees begin? With which form of weave did you first start off?

The story goes back a good 30 years. My mother-in-law had the most exquisite collection of Ahmedabadi sarees. They were excellent in terms of weaves, colour combination, the buttas, motifs in the borders and of course the zari. This was in the 1970s. As time went by, I saw what was being sold in the market as Ahmedabadi sarees; the quality of



the sarees was very different. Having seen what was once the mark excellence of those sarees, the ones available in the market seemed a let-down. It was then that the step was taken to document old sarees and of course work on their revival. I met with a lot of weavers whom we knew; they were shown the old sarees and asked if they could be reproduced. The answer was a 'yes', and then the journey began. At first we recreated from the old ones, then gradually newer variants were introduced. Now we work with Ashavali, Bandhej and some Patolas also.

**Q2. Can you tell us something about the history of the Ashavali sarees?**

Ashavali sarees were once the pride of Ahmedabad. This brocade weaving in Gujarat pre-dates weaving at Benaras. While writing an article for Marg, I researched the origins of Ashavali and its weaving in Ridrol. My mother-in-law called a lot of master weavers from whom she had bought, their sons and grandsons. What came out was how one weaver moved from Ahmedabad to Ridrol to set up a cluster of weavers to weave these brocades. The village must have offered him more space, more manpower and a flexibility to carry off weaving. It is the advantage which smaller villages or towns offer over a bigger city or town. The move proved successful and Ridrol has remained "the" place for weaving Ashavali sarees. Ashavali weaving or brocade weaving was not only for sarees. Given its patronage by Vaishnavites and Jains, a lot of religious textiles were woven in the Ashavali style especially the Pichwai; they were woven

as tapestries, as canopies, as decorative covers on camels, elephants and horses on which the King or royalty rode. Objects for puja like Gaumukhi, Chaklas and Torans were also woven.

**Q3. What is so unique about Ashavali sarees? How are Ashavali sarees different from other brocades?**

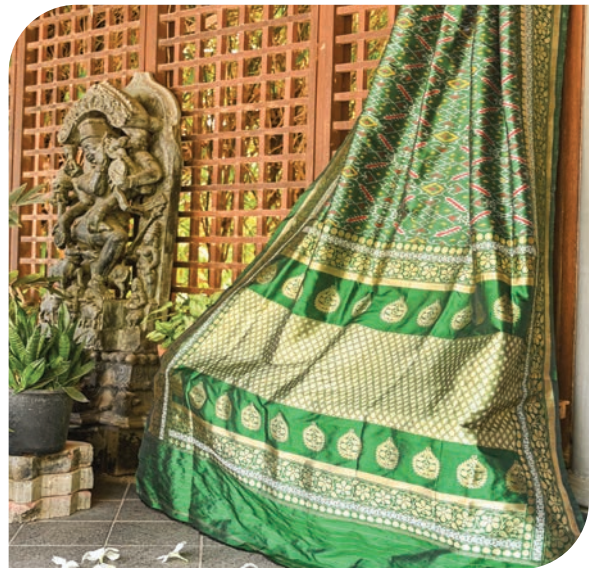
Ashavali is a twill weave done on the handloom. The border is in zari and incorporates 5-6 colours which are visible in the reverse, especially in the border. Apart from it, as one sees more Ashavali one can spot it just like one can spot a Benarasi or Kanjeevaram. Despite being the oldest form of weaving in India, it is not really known beyond Gujarat. My dream is that it is taken in the same breath as Benaras or Kanjeevaram. Ashavali traditionally was done on the jala loom. Even today, the breathtakingly intricate ones are made on the jala looms. Mechanisation resulted in jacquards being introduced to make Ashavali sarees. The time taken to weave the saree came down but the designs became repetitive. Once the graph pattern is affixed to the loom, then the same is used as long as it can last. The flexibility that



jala looms offer in using designs and motifs, jacquard looms does not offer similar variations. Another distinguishing character of Ashavali is that it uses a lot of animal and bird motifs, so we find the parrot (popat), peacock (mor), swan, deer, florals and more. Unlike other styles of weaving which were influenced by Mughal patronage, the motifs and borders in Ashavali remained traditional.

**Q4. Does the Ashavali saree have any similarity with the Baluchari sarees of yore?**

I have also traced the similarity of Ashavali to the Baluchari sarees of Bengal. The weaving has similarities especially the Badshah motifs and thematic presentation. The major difference between the two is the Baluchari sarees are done entirely with silk threads - both the motifs and the base of the saree. There is the marked absence of zari while in Ashavali zari is the highlight. Yes, maybe the weavers migrated from Gujarat taking with them this technique which they adapted to the taste of the population there. The themes also could have been drawn from those of that era by artists.



**Q5. How has the weaving of Ashavali sarees changed now when compared to the past? Also what new concept and changes have you introduced to this form of saree?**

Jacquard looms are more common while weaving Ashavali as it takes less time. The jala loom one is more time-consuming. Today, Ashavali sarees using the jala technique are woven. The geographical demarcation like earlier does not exist. Earlier this weaving in Ahmedabad and nearby areas was dominated by Muslim weavers and the Kanabi Patel community. Now the workers are majority from Benaras. We use 2 ply silk which we get from Bengaluru. One also gets them pre-coloured and if our scheme for the sarees fits in with the availability of yarn, it is used as such. Otherwise we dye the yarns to suit our colour combinations. We have experimented with georgettes and chiffons in Ashavali brocades. We have experimented with pastels which really look very nice in Ashavali. Now the modern women are open to try out many colours and styles. Experiments with natural dyes have been successfully carried out. Ashavali with Patola border and Pallu have also been made; sarees with borders or Ganga Jamuna where two contrast colours are used in the borders of the brocade are popular. Today, we use short colours for the body so that it gives the impact of two or three colours. There are practical problems at ground level when working with weavers but one is happy at the end of the day if good work is happening.



**Q6. Tell us more about your work with Bandhej and Patola?**

Today there is a craze for Bandhej which is just unbelievable. We are reviving some of the most intricate ones done earlier; this is both in silk and cotton. Over and above we make Sarees, Stoles, Dupattas, Abhas etc...

Patola we had done in Dupion silk, almost like Ghicha silk. The effect gives a raw dimension to Patola. Also double ikat is being made in Telangana and to an extent in Orissa, though the intricacy of Patan is not there.



**Q7. Anything you wish to add about handlooms and the future in the country?**

My request to the younger generation is that they must have some interest in investing in such timeless handwoven treasures and support the local artisan community. Lastly I feel that younger designers and creators can add a lot more value by putting forward their ideas on popularising this craft. 🍀

## If Silk is your business Silk Mark is your business advantage

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## SILK MARK ORGANISATION OF INDIA

Central Silk Board, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India

CSB Complex, B.T.M. Layout, Madivala, Bangalore - 560 068.

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## SILK MARK EXPO 2022, GUWAHATI

### An Exhibition of the Pure Silks of India

The Silk Mark Organisation of India (SMOI), Guwahati Chapter had organised the Silk Mark Expo 2022, Guwahati at the Convention Hall, NEDFi House, G.S. Road, Ganeshguri, from 06th to 10th April. The Expo showcased a spectacular collection of Pure Silks from the silk-weaving clusters of the North East as well as other parts of the country, just before the festival of Rongali (Bohag) Bihu.

In order to ensure that 'Silk Mark' gains further credibility and popularity, Silk Mark Organisation of India (SMOI) organised this exhibition for the benefit of Authorised Users of Silk Mark like weavers, manufacturers, NGOs, renowned boutiques, prominent dealers, exporters and Government-supported agencies from all over the country. The Expo was a huge success in terms of participation, awareness of Silk Mark, and involvement of local entrepreneurs in silk production and business. This event was an ideal platform not only to popularise Silk Mark labels and provide linkages to all stakeholders in the silk industry, but also to encourage local entrepreneurs to start businesses in silk.

The Expo featured 44 participants from 8 states, namely Assam, Tripura, West Bengal,

Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, New Delhi, Maharashtra and Karnataka, who showcased and displayed an eclectic range of attractive textures and rich designs of Pure Silk and Handloom products from different weaving clusters across India. It provided an ideal platform for the silk lovers of Guwahati to shop for their choice of all varieties of Silk under one roof.

Smt. Monalisa Goswami, IAS, Special Commissioner & Secretary, Handloom, Textiles & Sericulture Department, Govt. Of Assam inaugurated the Expo on 6th April at 11.30 AM, in the august presence of Dr. S. Deb, Zonal Head, KVIC, Govt. of India and Dr. P. Vasu, Director, Indian Institute of Handloom





Technology, Guwahati. During the inauguration Smt. Goswami in her address as Chief Guest said that Silk Mark Organisation of India should organise more such Exhibitions to create awareness about Pure Silk among the public, which will increase the demand for pure Silk in the domestic market, and create more job opportunities for the persons involved in the Sericulture industry. Dr. S. Deb expressed immense pleasure and gratitude to the Central Silk Board – Silk Mark Organisation of India for inviting him. Dr. P. Vasu expressed his best wishes for the success of the Expo.

Varieties of pure Silk Products ranging from mekhela chadar, sarees, dress materials and




consumers to reconfirm the purity of the products they bought, and thus reaffirm their faith in Silk Mark. On the closing day, mementos for 'Winner' & 'Runners Up' in the categories of 'Design & Display', 'Best Seller' and 'Jury's Choice Over All' were awarded to the deserving participants, which created great pleasure and enthusiasm among the participants.

There was a steady flow of visitors from all walks of life viz. The general public, buyers, entrepreneurs, weavers, textile and fashion students, school/ college/ university students, government officials, teaching professionals, designers, retailers, doctors, architects,



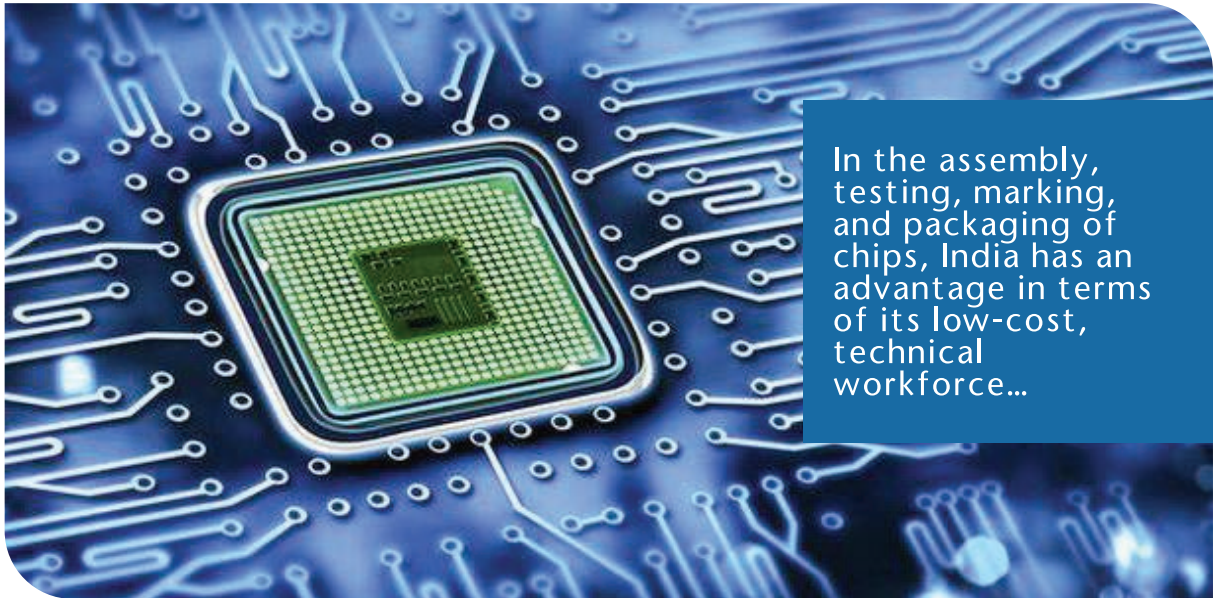
dupattas, to readymade garments, made-ups, shirts, etc., were displayed, showcasing the creative capabilities of the Indian Handloom and Silk Industries. The Registration cum Consumer Survey counter worked throughout the exhibition, taking consumer details, party-wise sale reports, purpose of purchase, consumer survey and Silk Mark quiz to educate the visitors on the varieties and types of silks, the Silk Mark scheme etc. Free silk testing facilities were extended to facilitate

artists, journalists, other stakeholders of the silk industry and representatives from the print media. The event was covered extensively by the local print and electronic media. In total, approximately 3,000 people visited the Expo and Rs. 1.4 Crores worth of business was reported by the exhibitors. 

Report by: Shri P. Modak, Assistant Director (Insp.), RO, CSB / SMOI, Guwahati



# India can be a Winner in Semiconductors!



In the assembly, testing, marking, and packaging of chips, India has an advantage in terms of its low-cost, technical workforce...

With the announcement of a \$10-billion Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for semiconductors, India has expressed its intent to become a serious player in the annual \$500-billion, high technology semiconductor business.

Which parts of the semiconductor value chain should India focus on? A quick understanding of the semiconductor business will be apt in this context.

The semiconductor business's core is the chip, also called a computer chip, an integrated circuit or IC. A chip contains transistors that help computations through a calibrated flow of electric current. Since more transistors on a chip mean a more powerful chip, chip-making firms are in a race to house as many transistors onto the small chip area as possible.

In 1965, Intel's Gordon Moore predicted that the number of transistors on a chip would double every year. High R&D expenditure made this possible year after year. Today, a thumbnail-sized chip contains billions of transistors. This led to a one-trillion-fold increase in computing power, while lowering the cost of the chip. Powerful chips have



*Shri Ajay Srivastava, I.T.S*

Retired Additional Director General of Foreign Trade  
(Took VRS from Government. Writes on technology and trade issues)

become the heart of most devices leading to a race among countries to control the semiconductor supply chain.

The semiconductor value chain has five broad segments. Let us understand each part's technology and key players, and how India should play its cards.

**One, chip design.** The chip-making process starts with designers developing circuitry for use in the latest devices. Three expertise areas are core IP, electronic design, and chip design.

The design captures 30 per cent revenue of the semiconductor business. The US has captured over half the share in core IP and chip design. While Intel and Samsung are present in most value chain parts, Qualcomm, Nvidia and AMD focus on design. India plans to set up 20 semiconductor design companies to get a share in the design business. Also, it will invest in developing

high-tech clusters and support over 85,000 researchers.

**Two, manufacturing of silicon wafers.** Silica sand is melted into large pieces called 'ingots'. These are then sliced into ultra-purified thin wafers. Such wafers make the base for chips. Wafer manufacturing captures 3 per cent revenue of the semiconductor business. Japan produces about 60 per cent of wafers. Patented high technology prevents easy entry into this segment.

**Three, chip fabrication tools.** Chip-making requires specialised equipment, chemicals and gases. Such tools convert the prototype designs into mass produced chips in the fabs. Only ASML (Advanced Semiconductor Material Lithography), a Dutch firm, makes the extreme ultraviolet (EUV) lithography devices that make advanced 3-5 nanometer chips.

A nanometer is one billionth of a meter. An EUV machine contains over 100,000 parts, is large and is shipped in 40 freight containers. Chip fabrication tools capture 15 per cent revenue of the semiconductor business. India like most countries may buy such machines for its own use.

**Four, chip fabrication units or fabs.** Fabs mass-produce chips from a prototype. The base is prepared by depositing thin films of semiconductors and materials like boron and phosphorous on wafers which serve as the base of the chip.

The coated wafer then enters the lithography machine inside a fab. It's a dust-free environment, a thousand times cleaner than a hospital ICU. What happens here is nothing less than technology magic. A pump sprays molten tin droplets into the machine chamber. A laser beam vaporizes tin droplets into a plasma, emitting extreme ultraviolet (EUV) radiation.

The EUV radiation is narrowed into a beam and reflected through several scanners containing the optimised chip blueprint. It then falls on a silicon wafer causing chemical changes in the wafer, drawing transistors into it, recreating the blueprint circuitry.

The wafer is taken out, cleaned to remove non-required materials, and baked to make changes permanent. Since advanced chips have up to 100 layers, the process is repeated to create an integrated circuit. Finally, the

wafer is diced into chips, ready for use.

A lithography machine converts a wafer into a powerful chip containing billions of transistors. Such changes occur at the nano level, making the process most complicated to copy. Fabs capture 40 per cent of the revenue of the semiconductor business. Taiwanese firms TSMC (Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company) and UMC (United Microelectronics Corporation) make chips for others.

So does Global Foundries with plants in Singapore, Germany, the US and Malta. India plans to enter the fab space by providing support for the setting up of two greenfield semiconductor fabs and two display fabs. It would also help modernise the brownfield fab facility of the Semi-conductor Laboratory (SCL) through a joint venture with a fab partner.


**Five, ATMP (assembly, testing, marking, and packaging) operations.** The fabricated chips need ATMP to weed out defects and package the chips. ATMP captures about 10 per cent revenue of the semiconductor business. Taiwan and China lead with 50 per cent value.

India hopes to capture this segment in a big way. It would support the setting up of 15 semiconductor ATMP units. The availability of a low-cost, skilled technical workforce will help capture part of the business in a few years.

The chip business is high technology and captured by few MNCs. According to the OECD, MNCs are good at extracting tax concessions and direct subsidies from the countries in which they operate.

The figures are staggering: Samsung (\$8 billion), Intel (\$7 billion), TSMC (\$4 billion), Qualcomm (\$3.8 billion), and Micron (\$3.8 billion). While playing the game, our focus should be on technology transfer.

Due to the ongoing US-China trade and technology rivalry, many countries, led by the US, are setting up an alternative semiconductor supply chains. India's window of opportunity lies in this space.

Success will rest on tie-ups with the supply-chain partners, developing the domestic ecosystem, and capturing business in a few critical parts of the supply chain. 



## Miss and Mrs. Bengaluru 2022 - Season 5 Exquisite, Exotic, Enthralling!



The Grand Finale of Miss and Mrs. Bengaluru 2022 – Season 5 (Beauty of Women) – a beauty pageant was directed and conducted by Alex Fashions at Davanam Sarovar Portico Suites, Bengaluru, on Saturday 26th February 2022. The show was organised in a grand manner and showcased the Beauty of Women in both Miss and Mrs. categories. Many models from the beautiful city of Bengaluru took part in the competition. The event was graced by many eminent personalities from the fashion, media and entertainment fraternity.

In the Miss category, Ms. Bandana bagged the Winner title, with Ms. Neelam K. B. as 1st Runner Up and Ms. Divya Bandi as 2nd Runner Up. In the Mrs. category, Smt. Soni Bhatt Mainali took top honours as the Winner; Smt. Deepa Lakshmi

won 1st Runner Up and Smt. Payal Patnaik was 2nd Runner Up. The Miss and Mrs Queens' titles were won by Miss Smitha Raju and Smt. Savitha Arun respectively.

The day began with an inspiring session on Yoga by Ms. Puja, followed by a refreshing session by Ms. Priyanka Sarkar on Skin & Nutrition. The sparkling event was kick-started by welcoming the prominent models who have made a mark in the fashion and sandalwood industry. Ms. Jaya Lakshmi Bai and Ms. Ann, the brand ambassadors of Beauty of Women; Ms. Puja K. B. and Ms. Priyanka Sarkar, the brand ambassadors for Alex Fashions; and show-stopper Ms. Manisha Rohit were present as the Jury Members of the event. The show also acted as a platform to showcase an innovative and fresh concept in shopping by being the launch pad for the brand "MyCashbackShop."

Alex Fashions was established in the year 2000 and is a renowned fashion house in south India now. With a total of 485 shows in its kitty, the fashion house is admired not only for its events but also for photoshoots with international brands, jewelry lines, portfolio shoots, grooming and counseling with personal attention.



The show was sponsored and promoted by Silk Mark Organisation of India (SMOI), an initiative of Central Silk Board (CSB), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. Shri. D. N. Sandeep, Assistant Director (Insp.) of SMOI, after inaugurating the event, explained that the Silk Mark labels are affixed only on pure silk products by the Authorised Users (AUs) of Silk Mark. Each label has a hologram, a unique number and QR code printed on it, which helps the consumer trace the product back to the Authorised User. He said the objectives of Silk Mark are to protect the interests of the consumer, to protect the interests of genuine traders and manufacturers of Silk and Generic Promotion of Natural Silk, while also requesting

consumers to look for Silk Mark while buying pure silk products. The contestants set the ramp ablaze with remarkable, strikingly colorful and beautifully woven Pure Silk Sarees sponsored by M/s. Nilima Silks, M/s. Sri Silks and M/s. Sri Kamakshi Handloom Weavers' Society, three Silk Mark AUs. They also co-sponsored the event along with Silk Mark. Shri. D. N. Sandeep was extended a token of appreciation and thanks for the great association from Alex Fashions during the event. Alex of Alex Fashions said he would look forward to a continued partnership with Silk Mark in events to unfold in the future.

Alex Fashions also extended its sincere thanks and reverence to the makeup team from Reshma's Artistry and Jewelry Partner Anikalan Jewelry by Ms. Babitha. The makeup artists did a fabulous job in adorning the beauty of contestants with their magical, professional touch. Big applause to the jewelry house for the lovely collection and careful pairing of jewels with the sarees, that had the contestants dazzle the audience and bewitch the jury!

The Grand Finale witnessed 30 Designer Gowns by Forever Naveen Kumar for Miss and Mrs. Bengaluru 2022 - Season 5 contestants. Renowned South Indian Actress and Super Model Ms. Samitha Vinya walked the stage as Celebrity Showstopper for Designer Forever Naveen Kumar, known for his shows worldwide.



Report: Shri. D. N. Sandeep,  
Asst. Director (Insp.), SMOI, CSB, Bangalore.



# SPIDER SILK FOR BURNS



*Dr. Vivekanand Shenoy,*

Ph.D. (Chemistry) Consultant

Silk fibroin coated with spider silk serves as an effective scaffold for healing burn injuries. Spider silk demonstrates excellent biocompatibility and when loaded with necessary biological factors promotes skin cell growth and adhesion.

"In 2019, more than 23,000 fire-related deaths were estimated in India, which is about 20% of the global mortality burden. Additionally, 1.5 million DALYs (disability-adjusted life-years) were attributed to burns." Spider silk can play a big role in the healing of burn-related wounds. Spider silk has been used in antiquity to heal wounds in ancient Roman medicine. However, the historical applications of spider silk in medicine were based on, concerned with, or verifiable by observation or experience rather than theory or pure logic.

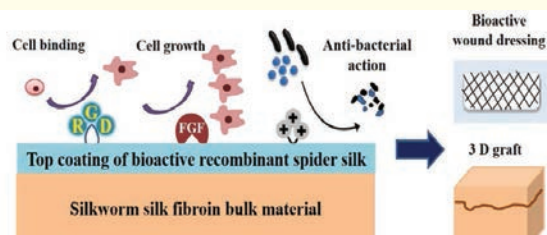
In more recent investigations, there is enough evidence to demonstrate the excellent biocompatibility of spider silk. Scientists are making spider silk in the lab and adapting it for the treatment of burn victims. Researchers found that human skin cells attach to the silk fibres and can grow. These skin cells growing on the structured spider silk could help in repairing damaged skin, for example in the treatment of burn victims.

Liebsch et al placed native spider silk in full-thickness skin wounds in a sheep in vivo-model. The wounds were evaluated after 2, 4, 6, and 8 weeks histologically as well as per quantitative real-time Polymerase Chain Reaction. Minimal inflammatory cytokine release indicating excellent biocompatibility

could be seen for spider silk. In-growth of single capillaries into bundles of spider silk and migration of keratinocytes as well as fibroblasts on spider silk fibres was proven. In histological evaluation, a thicker epidermis was observed in spider silk-treated wounds in comparison to collagen-treated wounds. In short, native spider silk was found to be highly biocompatible; it might represent an innovative alternative to common wound dressings.

Chouhan et al found that silk fibroin (SF) serves as a suitable bulk material for tissue engineering scaffolds due to favorable physicochemical and biological properties along with its compatibility to allow recombinant spider silk to self-assemble onto it. Bioactive moieties like the cell-binding motif from fibronectin (FN), the basic fibroblast growth factor FGF2, and the anti microbial peptides AMPs Lac and Mag were easily applied to SF substrates via spontaneous spider silk assembly. The coated silk mats provided necessary cues for cellular adhesion and proliferation, a pre-requisite for a wound dressing material. Culture of fibroblast, keratinocytes and endothelial cells revealed higher adhesion and proliferation of all cell types on the spider silk coated SF mats. In addition, functionalisation of SF mats with antibacterial peptides proved to be efficient in preventing bacterial growth.

Thus, in summary, multi-functional mats with antibacterial and cell recruiting properties could make them a potential candidate for treating complex chronic wounds. Dermo-epidermal grafts were easily developed using co-culture of skin cells in the spider silk-coated SF scaffolds. Considering the large availability and versatility of SF bulk material




From: Recombinant Spider Silkworm silk Matrices as potential Bioactive wound dressing and

Skin Grafts; Dimple Chouhan, Naresh Thatikonda, Limnea Nileback, Mona Widhe, My Hedhammar and Biman B. Mandal;

ACS applied Materials & Interfaces 2018 10 (28), 23560-23572.


and the various bioactivities that can be provided by coating with spider silk fusion proteins, the present study reveals a simplistic approach to fabrication of affordable tissue engineering products.

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## International Women’s Day: Celebrating the SMOI Way!

International Women’s Day was celebrated by Silk Mark Organisation of India (SMOI), Bengaluru on 08th March 2022, at the Centre of Excellence, Central Silk Board (CSB), Madivala. The event was sponsored and organised by Officers and staff of SMOI, for the women staff of Central Silk Board. Shri. R. R. Okhandiar, Member Secretary, Central Silk Board & Vice Chairman of SMOI, graciously inaugurated the event.

SMOI organised a Silk Identification Game and also a Quiz for the participants. About 50 women took part in the Silk Identification Game. The prize winners Ms. K. Valli, Ms. Bharathi E. and Thimmarajamma B. T. were awarded with gifts by Shri. Okhandiar at the end of the event. About 60-70 participants witnessed the event and appreciated the initiative taken by SMOI, Bangalore in organising the celebration. 

Report: Shri. D. N. Sandeep, Assistant Director (Insp.), SMOI, Bengaluru



## SILK MARK EXPO 2022, PATNA Pure Silks of India, Pure Delight!



The SMOI Kolkata Chapter had organised the Silk Mark Expo 2022, Patna, at Hotel Patliputra Exotica, Greenville Hall, Exhibition Road, from 27th April to 01st May, 2022. The Expo showcased a spectacular collection of Pure Silks from various silk-weaving clusters across the country, during the wedding season.

The Expo featured 26 participants from 6 states, who showcased attractive textures and rich designs of Pure Silk and Handloom products from different weaving clusters across India. The Expo provided an ideal platform for silk lovers of Patna to shop for their choice of all varieties of Silk under one roof.

Hon'ble Shri. Syed Shahnawaj Hussain, Minister of Industries, Govt. of Bihar, inaugurated the

Central Silk Board and Shri. Pankaj Dixit, IAS, Director, Handloom & Sericulture, Department of Industries, Govt. of Bihar. During his inauguration address the Hon'ble Minister said that Silk Mark Organisation of India should organise more such Exhibition to create awareness about Pure Silk among the public, and that will increase the demand for Pure Silk in the domestic market, while creating more job opportunities for persons involved in the Sericulture industry. He also expressed his wish to organise Silk Mark Expos at other places in Bihar State, to offer the exposure of the Exhibition to the state silk lovers, and also provide good business potential for exhibitors. Shri. K. S. Gopal, CEO, SMOI, Bengaluru, organised and conducted the event in a meticulous and grand manner.



Expo in the august presence of Shri. Rajit Ranjan Okhandiar, IFS, CEO & Member Secretary of

Varieties of Silk Products ranging from sarees and dress materials to readymade garments, made-ups, shirts, etc., were displayed, showcasing the creative capabilities of the Indian Handloom and Silk Industries. Consumer-facilitating counters and stalls worked throughout the exhibition, educating the visitors on the varieties and types of silks, the Silk Mark scheme etc. S.T.S.C., Central Silk Board, Bhagalpur, displayed reeling of Tasar yarn from Tasar Cocoons, intriguing many visitors. Silk testing facilities were extended to facilitate consumers to reconfirm the purity of the products they bought, and thus reaffirm their faith in Silk Mark. SMOI Kolkata Chapter also attractively





displayed products and varieties of readymade items, with the help of the P3D section of Central Office, Bengaluru.

The influx of visitors was slow during the first two days of the Expo, but the last three days saw good participation viz. general public, buyers, entrepreneurs, weavers, textile and fashion students, secondary school students, government officials, teaching professionals, university students, designers, retailers, doctors, architects, artists, journalists, representatives from the print media and other stakeholders of the silk industry. The event was covered extensively by the local print and electronic media. In total, approximately 2,000 people visited the Expo and Rs. 30-50 lakhs' business was reported by the exhibitors.

Fifteen Stalls were also allotted to the Director of Handicrafts, Govt. of Bihar, which were also presented beautifully; their handicrafts products were sought after. Of these 15 stalls five parties expressed interest to be enrolled in Silk Mark Family, as Members and Authorised Users. All the participants of the Handicrafts pavilion enjoyed our platform very much.

Overall, the Silk Mark Expo was a colorful and eventful show in every respect! 🎨



Report: Shri. G. K. Samanta, Joint Secretary (Tech.), RO, CSB/ SMOI, Kolkata Chapter



## Meeting Majid Khatri: Wonderful Ajrakh Work!



MAJID KHATRI

The pandemic and lockdown have helped me connect with several craftspeople in the textile sector; many from Kutch, Gujarat. What strikes me is the sheer professionalism which craftspeople from Kutch display - extremely courteous, great knowledge about their work, ability to innovate, a friendly disposition and of course strong business acumen. Majid Khatri is one such. I had loved his Ajrakh on sarees which he had shared on Pankaj Bhai's Craft Channel. He immediately sent me photos of stoles, sarees, the process of Ajrakh and then a set of similar sarees which he had sold to teachers at a Noida-based educational institution. The depth of workmanship in his creations made him a good choice for this issue's gallery.

Majid Khatri is the fifth generation of his family doing Ajrakh and yes, there is a sixth generation which has also taken to the craft. One of Majid's sons is involved in it; the other, though working in the Government sector, wants to quit and join the business.

Speaking to Majid is a revelation: With so much talk of natural colours, eco-friendly dyeing etc. that the world is returning to, it is a wonder that in their work with Ajrakh, they never ever went the chemical way. The craft was and is done using traditional natural colours. Majid



*Ms. Chitra Balasubramaniam*

(Freelance features writer, among other things, she writes on Textiles for the love of it.)


rattles off the colours – indigo for blue, madder for red, black using iron steeped in water mixed with jaggery and more. Using permutations/ combinations of these basic colours they bring out 7 shades which are used in the block printing process. Majid started working with traditional Ajrakh block printing after his tenth standard exams in the early 1990s. Since he was born into a family with the knowledge, picking up the nuances and working on his own was easy.

Talking about the traditional usage, Majid says, "Ajrakh was predominantly made for the Maldari community. They are cow herders who live in the Rann of Kutch area in the forests. This was used by the men for the turban and lungi. The women used it for making skirts which were de rigor for weddings." Apart from this, very little was made for the outside market and there was very little innovation. Majid recalls his grandfather speaking of 1979, which was the turning point for their craft. Till then traditionally Ajrakh in specific designs was made for the Maldari community. In 1979, a collector from Ahmedabad visited the area and asked them to make new designs which were sold through Gurjari; after that there has been no looking back. Majid has used this traditional design made for the Maldari community called





International Contemporary Craft.

Majid explains that the blocks for printing are made in the village of Prajapati, Petapur in Gandhi Nagar. Much discussion happens with both the parties suggesting options for design of blocks. A set of 4 or 5 blocks are made for a saree or stole. It is used in a number of permutations and combinations with natural colours to make as many pieces as possible. Unlike several manufacturers who cling on to blocks till eternity, Majid keeps getting rid of old blocks and using new designs to make new blocks. This also ensures that the block makers get continuous work. They are the backbone and support system of Ajrakh. This is constantly revamped for it is the blocks which are central to the novelty and newness of the design. And it is the design with colour combination which helps sell products faster. Majid says, "We work with tasar, mulberry silk, modal, cotton and more." He makes stoles, sarees, scarves, dupattas, bed spreads... Literally everything which can be worked with hand blocks, he does it. Recently for the State Award, he worked on a saree using a set of four 3x3-inch blocks. The small, detailed design adds to the charm of the piece. He is now working on another piece using a set of 7 blocks which will again be unique. It will contain the entire vocabulary of Ajrakh. 

Jumardi, to make a dupatta for which he was given the Seal of UNESCO Award for Excellence in 2008. This Jumardi design is made into fabric which is then made into skirts by the women of the community. Each skirt uses about 10 meters of the fabric. Inspired by this traditional design Majid has also made a stole which won him the award at the Nantong



# Global Spin Trade Conclave on Eco-handlooms, Eco-textiles and Apparels



The Global Spin Trade Conclave was organised successfully in three major Indian cities, New Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru, towards the end of March 2022. The events were attended by luminaries from several countries, and appreciated by all. The Conclave aims to work towards globalisation of the Indian textile industry by analysing best practices, new production techniques, innovative procedures and product qualities to satisfy all international eco-standards.

Several new ideas and innovative proposals sprang from these events, which would take Eco-handlooms, Eco-textiles and Apparels into the next phase of the future. These were also excellent networking opportunities for all attendees and participating institutions.

## BENGALURU

The Global Spin Trade Conclave was held from 21st to 22nd March, 2022, at the World Trade Center, Bengaluru, and was jointly organised by the National Institute for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (NI-MSME) and IAMKHADI Foundation (IAMKHADI); co-organised by NIFT Foundation for Design & Innovation; and supported by the World Trade Center. The event was inaugurated by Shri. N. Nagaraju, Hon'ble Minister for Municipal Administration, Small Scale Industries and Public Sector Industries, Government of Karnataka, who spoke about Karnataka being the Hub of Textiles specially Mysore Silk. In his Inaugural Address, the Minister spoke about the importance of the Textile Sector to the Indian economy. He also advocated the need for

handholding the MSMEs to tide over the crisis caused due to business uncertainties during the last two years.

Shri. Bhaskar Kalra, Under Secretary, Ministry of MSME, Govt. of India shared with the audience the various schemes of the Government of India and requested them to start integrating their thoughts and activities in line with the thinking of the Government. Shri. Rajit R. Okhandiar, IFS, CEO, Central Silk Board, talked about the need for Technology and Research Commercialisation in the Fashion and Textiles spaces. He added that the Handloom and Silk Marks are the new luxuries, and that India can lead the world through the use of technology in the Textiles and Fashion spaces.

A power point presentation on Silk and the Silk Mark scheme was presented by Shri. K. S. Gopal, CEO, SMOI, Bengaluru, which was greatly appreciated by the audience. The Conclave was a platform to interact with national and international experts on subjects such as technology, manufacturing techniques, packaging techniques and design innovations for enhancing textile exports. The sessions witnessed participation from various eminent stakeholders. Discussions centred around globalisation of the textile industry, considering sustainability and recyclability as a key value differentiator amongst international buyers. Representatives from nine countries participated in the Conclave.

Report: Shri D. N. Sandeep, Assistant Director (Insp.), SMOI, CSB, Bengaluru

## MUMBAI



His Excellency Shri. Bhagat Singh Koshyari, Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra inaugurated the Mumbai Global Spin Trade Conclave at the World Trade Centre, Mumbai on 25th March 2022. The Governor visited the exhibition of handloom products, textiles and eco-friendly apparel on the occasion. Speaking at the event, he said that ancient technologies must be conflated with new-age technology by weavers and MSMEs.

The Conclave and Exhibition, from 25th to 26th March, 2022 was organised by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in association with the Ministry of Textiles, IAMKHADI Foundation and World Trade Centre, Mumbai. Dr Glory Swarupa Sunchu, Director General of the National Institute for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises; Shri. Vijay Kalantri, Chairman, World Trade Centre; Shri. Yash Arya, Founder, IAMKHADI Foundation and Shri. Pavan Godiavala, Director, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Mumbai were present. The Conclave was attended by international delegates, captains of the textile industry and students of NIFT.

Talking about the opportunities opening up for MSMEs to capture new markets through digitalisation, Dr. Vijay G. Kalantri, Director, World Trade Centers Association and Chairman of World Trade Center, Mumbai said the Textile Industry is an employment potential industry with minimum capital investment. Explaining to the guests about how NI-MSME is helping MSMEs, Dr. Glory Swarupa, Director General of the National Institute for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (NI-MSME), spoke about adoption of new-age technologies and reengineering



the business process to be more profitable. "Apart from nurturing the first-generation entrepreneurs through a series of trainings, workshops, trade fairs and exhibitions," Dr. Swarupa added. Central Silk Board and SMOI, Mumbai Chapter had erected a stall in the Exhibition for publicity of the Silk Mark scheme. The Governor also visited the stall of Central Silk Board, Silk Mark Organisation of India. He was apprised of the benefits of the Silk Mark scheme to consumers and the stakeholders of the silk industry.

A power point presentation on Silk and the Silk Mark scheme was presented by Shri. Alok Kumar, Assistant Director (Insp.), SMOI, CSB, Mumbai which was very much appreciated by the audience.

NI-MSME partnered with the Ministry of Textiles as Knowledge Partner and NIFT Foundation for Design Innovation, with IAMKHADI Foundation and MVIRDC being co-organisers of the prestigious event.

Report: Shri Alok Kumar, Assistant Director (Insp.), SMOI, CSB, Mumbai



## NEW DELHI




This prestigious event was jointly organised by the National Institute for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (NI-MSME), Ministry of MSME, Govt. of India and IAMKHADI Foundation (IAMKHADI), at India International Centre (IIC), New Delhi from 29th to 30th March 2022, to focus on bringing technology and textiles fashion together on a single platform. Ethiopia partnered the event, along with other African countries. Local support was given by NFDI, Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India. The event was inaugurated by Shri. Rajesh Agarwal, IAS, Secretary, Ministry of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India, who graced the occasion as Chief Guest. He focused on the importance of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, towards job creation by creating first-time exporters and start-ups in the textile sector for enhancing exports. Dr. Prateek Kanakia, Founder, The Green Billions, talked about creating 10 million micro entrepreneurs in the next 5 years and creating a pool of investors for micro lending. Many start-ups participated, like ARRAS; M/s Hemp Affair Pvt. Ltd; M/s Raheli Sarkar, True Tomorrow (OPC) Pvt. Ltd; M/s Art India Pvt. Ltd; and M/s Fliqus Support System LLP.

The First Secretary for Economic Diplomacy of the Ethiopian Embassy made an extensive presentation on Ethiopian investment and

trade opportunities, with a special focus on Textiles, Garments and Apparel Manufacturing. The Founder & Creative Director of MISS.T.CAL Apparel Design, one of the youngest and newly-emerging fashion designers from Ethiopia, participated in a panel discussion focusing on customer-oriented designs and product development, and also delivered a workshop on digital marketing for fashion products.

The Speakers were Ms. Mercy Epao, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Govt. of India, Additional Chief Secretary, Govt. of Nagaland and Chief Resident Commissioner, Nagaland House, along with the Ambassadors and Diplomats from Egypt, Zimbabwe, Mauritius and Ethiopia who graced the Valedictory Session. Ambassador Tizita Mulugeta of Ethiopia spoke about the strong ties Ethiopia and India have enjoyed for millennia. These had begun from trading Silk, Spices, Gold and Ivory through the port of Adulis in the 6th Century AD. Diplomatic relations were established in 1948 and are now flourishing into people-to-people ties for education, trade and investment.

The Country Partners for the Global Spin Trade Conclave were Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Mauritius and South Africa. SMOI New Delhi Chapter was proud to participate in this event. Silk Mark Organisation of India, New Delhi was provided with a Stall wherein different types of Cocoons, Yarn, Silk fabric material, Life Cycle of Silkworms etc. were displayed. The special attraction of silk testing and game test on Knowledge of Silk stole the hearts of visitors, and were acclaimed by all. A Book/Leaflet on Silk Mark and Silk Care was also distributed to visitors. A presentation on Silk Mark was prepared and presented by this Chapter, which was also appreciated by all. 

Report: Shri. Dasharathi Behera,  
Assistant Secretary (Tech.), SMOI, RO, CSB, New Delhi





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