

Introduction: The Rastriya Hastashilp Mela (Rasraj Mahotsav), organized by the Rural Non Farm Development Agency (RUDA), District Administration Rajsamand, Vedanta Hindustan Zinc & Vishvas Sansthan Udaipur. Rural Non Farm Development Agency (RUDA) is an agency of the Government of Rajasthan established in 1995 to promote the Rural Non-Farm Sector (RNFS) in Rajasthan state. Vishvas Sansthan is a Non-Government Organization working in the erstwhile Mewar State of Rajputana i.e. in current Southern Rajasthan since March' 1993. It is committed to promoting inclusive and sustainable development practices for the poor by implementing various schemes financially supported by Government of India or Government of Rajasthan or Companies under their CSR funds and other National- International Organizations. Primary focus of Vishvas is to equip and nurture youth; importantly women with the right kind of skills set. Vishvas has successfully addressed employability issues particularly of women and youth by skill development programs focusing on entrepreneurship and employment through capacity building, credit facilitation and strong market linkages.

Venue: Shiv Murti parisar, located in the heart of Nathdwara, it is also known as The Statue of Belief or Vishwas Swaroopam. It is basically Hindu God Shiva statue which is 369 feet tall and can be seen from as far as 20 km away. Nathdwara is a city in the Rajsamand district of the state of Rajasthan, India. It is located in the Aravalli hills on the banks of the Banas River and is 48 kilometres north-east of Udaipur district. Shrinathji, is a swarup of lord Krishna which resembles his 7-year-old "infant" incarnation of Krishna. The deity was originally worshiped at Mathura and was shifted in the year 1672 from Govardhan hill. Nathdwara means 'Gateway to Shrinathji (God)'.

The event spanned nine days from 29th July to 6th August 2023 at Shiv Murti parisar, 120 feet road, Nathdwara district Rajsamand. It aimed to showcase the rich and diverse craftsmanship of India, promoting traditional arts and crafts, and providing a platform for artisans to display their exquisite creations. The fair attracted both domestic and international visitors, eager to experience the unique heritage of Indian craftsmanship.

Vision

The vision of a National Craft Fair is to create a vibrant and inclusive platform that celebrates and showcases the rich diversity of traditional and contemporary crafts within our country. This event aims to bring together artisans, craftsmen, and craftswomen from various regions and backgrounds, providing them with an opportunity to exhibit their skills, creativity, and craftsmanship to a wide audience.

Key elements of the vision for Rasraj Mahotsav 2023:

Preservation of Cultural Heritage: The National Craft fair serves as a means to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the country by highlighting indigenous crafts, techniques, and art forms that have been passed down through generations.

Artisan Empowerment: The National Craft fair empowers local artisans and craftsmen by providing them with a platform to showcase their work, connect with potential customers, and create a sustainable livelihood from their craft.

Educational Experience: Visitors to the fair can learn about the history, significance, and techniques behind various crafts through interactive workshops, demonstrations, and presentations. This educational aspect helps foster a deeper appreciation for traditional arts and crafts.

Innovation and Contemporary Craft: While honouring traditional craftsmanship, the fair also provides space for contemporary artisans to showcase innovative interpretations of traditional techniques, blending old and new to create unique and modern pieces.

Cultural Exchange: The National Craft fair becomes a melting pot of cultures, allowing artisans and visitors from different regions and backgrounds to interact, share ideas, and learn from each other. This exchange promotes cross-cultural understanding and unity.

Marketplace for Craftsmanship: The National Craft fair serves as a marketplace where artisans can directly sell their products to a diverse audience, ensuring fair compensation for their hard work and dedication.

Sustainability and Ethical Practices: The National Craft Fair emphasizes sustainability and ethical practices, encouraging artisans to use eco-friendly materials, adopt fair trade principles, and promote responsible consumption.

Tourism and Economic Growth: The National Craft fair attracts both local national and international tourists, contributing to the local economy by boosting hospitality, transportation, and other associated sectors.

Cultural Tourism Attraction: The National Craft fair could become a significant cultural tourism attraction, drawing visitors from far and wide to experience the nation's artistic heritage and crafts.

Fostering Pride: The National Craft fair installs a sense of pride and appreciation for the country's cultural heritage among both artisans and visitors, fostering a deeper connection to their roots.

Objective

The objective of The National Craft Fair is to provide a platform for artisans, craftsmen, and artists from across the country to showcase and sell their handmade products and artworks.

Promotion of Cultural Heritage: The National Craft Fair often aims to celebrate and preserve the rich cultural heritage and traditional craftsmanship of a country. By providing a space for artisans to display their creations, these fairs contribute to the recognition and continuation of cultural practices that might otherwise be fading away.

Economic Empowerment: The National Craft Fair serves as a means for artisans to generate income and support their livelihoods. By offering their unique and handcrafted products to a larger audience, artisans can directly benefit from increased sales and exposure.

Entrepreneurship and Skill Development: Participating in The National Craft Fair encourages artisans to develop entrepreneurial skills such as marketing, pricing, and customer interaction. These experiences can empower artisans to grow their businesses and better understand the market for their products.

Showcasing Creativity: The National Craft Fair provides a platform for artisans to showcase their creativity and innovation. Visitors to the fair can appreciate the diversity of artistic expressions and gain a deeper understanding of the thought and effort that goes into creating handmade items.

Cultural Exchange: The National Craft Fair could facilitate cultural exchange between different regions and communities within the country. Visitors have the opportunity to experience the artistic

diversity that exists across the nation, fostering a sense of unity and appreciation for different cultural backgrounds.

Tourism and Promotion: The National Craft Fair can attract both domestic and international tourists, contributing to the local economy and promoting tourism. These events can become a significant attraction for people interested in art, culture, and traditional craftsmanship.

Education and Awareness: The National Craft Fair often provides educational opportunities, such as workshops, demonstrations, and interactive sessions. Visitors can learn about traditional techniques, materials, and processes used in crafting, thereby increasing awareness and appreciation for these skills.

Preservation of Traditional Crafts: By creating demand for traditional crafts, The National Craft Fair encourages artisans to continue practicing and passing down their traditional skills to future generations. This helps prevent the loss of valuable craftsmanship and cultural knowledge.

Networking and Collaboration: The National Craft Fair can serve as meeting points for artisans, designers, and other stakeholders in the creative industry. This can lead to collaborations, partnerships, and knowledge sharing that contributes to the overall growth of the artisan community.

Community Engagement: The National Craft Fair creates a sense of community among artisans, visitors, and supporters. It allows people to connect, exchange ideas, and appreciate the importance of handmade and locally crafted goods.

History

Vishvas Sansthan had third time organized this National Level Craft Fair in Nathdwara to showcase the rich culture of the states along with District Administration, Rural Non-Farm Development Agency (RUDA) and CSR Partner Vedanta Hindustan Zinc.

Ist Time – 2013

IInd Time – 2019

IIIrd Time - 2023

Visitors

The Shri Nath Craft Bazaar is visited and enjoyed by more than 40,000 tourists from all over the Rajasthan, Gujrat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab & Hariyana.

Honourable Guests

S.N o.	Honourable Guest	Designation	Date
1	Dr. C.P. Joshi	Honourable Chairperson Rajasthan Vidhan Sabha & MLA Nathdwara	29 July 2023
2.	Shree Lal Chand Kataria	Cabinet Minister - Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries	29 July 2023
3	Shree Uday lal Anjna	Cabinet Minister - Co-operative	29 July 2023
4	Shree Parsadi lal Meena	Cabinet Minister - Medical & Health, Medical Health & Sciences (ESI), Excise	29 July 2023
5	Shree Rajendra Singh	State Minister - Higher Education (Independent	29 July 2023

	Yadav	Charge), Planning (Manpower) (Independent Charge), State Motor Garage (Independent Charge), Language & Library (Independent Charge), Home & Justice	
6	Shree Satish Lamba	National General Secretary Indian Youth Congress	29 July 2023
7	Shree Vaibhav Gahlot	President, Rajasthan Cricket Association	29 July 2023
8	Shree Sandeep Shrimali	President, Rajsamand Sarpanch Union	30 July 2023
9	Shree Aditya Pratap Singh	Pradhan, Railmagra block, Rajsamand	30 July 2023
9	Shree Chagan Raj Purohit	Dy.Sp. Rajasthan Police, Udaipur	31 July 2023
10	Shree Dinesh Sukhwali	Dy.Sp. Rajasthan Police, Nathdwara	1 August 2023
11	Shree Neelabh Saksena	District Collector Rajsamand	2 August 2023
12	Shree Janardan Sharma	Commissioner, Nagar Parishad, Rajsamand	2 August 2023
13	Shree Puran Singh Rajpurohit	Circle Inspector, Rajasthan Police	2 August 2023
14	Shree Dinesh M Joshi	President, Congress Party Rajsamand	3 August 2023
15	Shree Yogesh Shrimali	Ex-President, Bar Association Rajsamand	3 August 2023
16	Shree Neelabh Saksena	District Collector Rajsamand	4 August 2023
17	Shree Janardan Sharma	Commissioner, Nagar Parishad, Rajsamand	4 August 2023
18	Shree Dinesh Sukhwali	Dy.Sp. Rajasthan Police, Nathdwara	4 August 2023
19	Shree Alok Gupta	District Forest Officer, Rajsamand	5 August 2023
20	Shree Abhishek Goyal	CEO, Temple Board, Sawariya Seth Ji, Chittorgarh	5 August 2023
21	Shree Devki Nandan Gurjar	Member PCC	5 August 2023
22	Shree Dinesh M Joshi	President, Congress Party Rajsamand	5 August 2023
23	Shree Arvind Poswal	District Collector, Udaipur	6 August 2023
24	Shree Neelabh Saksena	District Collector Rajsamand	6 August 2023
25	Shree Arun Mishra	CEO, Hindustan Zinc, Vedanta Group	6 August 2023

Facts about the Rasraj Mahotsav 2023 (The Rastriya Hastashilp Mela):

State Representation: Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Haryana, Delhi, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat and Uttarakhand.

Artisans Representation: Total 128 artisans participated from ten states in Rastriya Hastashilp Mela 2023.

Diverse Art Forms: The Rastriya Hastashilp Mela featured a wide array of Indian crafts, including pottery, textiles, leather, Jute, Rugs, Tie-Die, woodwork, metalwork, jewellery, paintings, dry flowers, Bamboo and more. Every state had its designated section, reflecting its distinctive art forms.

Artisan Demonstrations: During the event, few artisans demonstrated their skills and craftsmanship in real-time like Embroidery, Block printing, Bangles making from lakh, Paintings and Terracotta art. Visitors had the opportunity to witness the intricate techniques used to create these beautiful handicrafts.

Supporting Rural Artisans: The Rastriya Hastashilp Mela aimed to support rural artisans and to promote fair business trade. The artisans were directly selected by RUDA, ensuring they can showcase their work and get fair price. 'Molela Art' & 'Bani-Thani shaili' paintings were promoted by local artisans.

Sustainable Crafts: The Rastriya Hastashilp Mela emphasized the importance of sustainable and eco-friendly crafts. Many stalls showcased-products made from natural, recycled, or up-cycled materials which helped us to sustain environment.

Extension of Indira Rasoi Counter : On the initiative of District Collector Rajsamand Neelabh Saxena, Indira Rasoi opened an extension counter at the fair site for artisans. Therefore, the artisans were able to have delicious food every morning and evening on the fair premises for 8 rupees. During the Mela period, 2198 people enjoyed a hearty meal for Rs.8. This unique initiative of District Collector Rajsamand Nilabh Saxena was applauded by all.

Sales figure: Total 79.26 lac generated during The Rastriya Hastashilp Mela, dates wise details are given below –

S. No.	Date	Sales Amount
1	29-Jul-23	425200
2	30-Jul-23	694530
3	31-Jul-23	750290
4	01-Aug-23	768800
5	02-Aug-23	847250
6	03-Aug-23	881690
7	04-Aug-23	992700
8	05-Aug-23	1083950
9	06-Aug-23	1481590
Total Sales		7926000

Cultural Performances: The Rastriya Hastashilp Mela was not only about crafts but also a celebration of Indian culture. Various cultural performances, including traditional dances and music, added a vibrant atmosphere to the event and it helps to bring people in the fair.

Date	Performance	Agency
30 July 2023	Brij ki Holi & Folk Dance	Bhartiya Kala Sansthan, Bharatpur
31 July 2023	Suhani Yadon ka Satrangi Safar	Bhartiya Kala Sansthan, Bharatpur
01 August 2023	Rajasthani Folk Music Maharashtra Folk Dance – Gondhal & Bharund Rajasthani Folk Dance – Gair & Ghoomar Rajasthani Folk Dance – Chakri	West Zone Culture Udaipur West Zone Culture Udaipur West Zone Culture Udaipur West Zone Culture Udaipur
02 August 2023	Folk Dances – Best of Rajasthan	Bhartiya Kala Sansthan, Bharatpur
03 August 2023	Classical Dance - Bharatnatyam Classical Dance - Kuchipudi Classical Dance - Odissi	Nrityabhina Dance Institute, Gurugram Nratan Institute of performing arts, Ahmdabad Patit pawan kala niketan Sansthan,

	Semi Classical Dance	Delhi Arunodaya Kala Niketan Mumbai
04 August 2023	Krishna – Various Dance forms	Bhartiya Kala Sansthan, Bharatpur
05 August 2023	Evergreen Songs Musical Night	Pancham Group, Nathdwara

Craft Highlights:

Kantha Embroidery (West Bengal): Visitors were captivated by the intricate Kantha embroidery from West Bengal. It involves stitching layers of old sarees (cloth) together to create beautiful designs and patterns. Artisans showcased mix of stunning sarees, dupattas, and quilts adorned with elaborate patterns.

Chikankari (Uttar Pradesh): The delicate and intricate 'Chikankari' embroidery from Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh was a major attraction. Visitors marvelled at the finesse and elegance of Chikankari sarees and other garments.

Wood Carving (Uttar Pradesh): The artisans of Saharanpur employ a range of techniques to create their masterpieces. They work with different types of wood, including rosewood, sheesham, teak, and mango wood, known for their durability and beauty. The carving process begins with selection on the right piece of wood, which is then skillfully chiseled, sawed, and sculpted. Furniture, Wooden toys & decorative items are popular products.

Chanderi Sarees (Madhya Pradesh): Chanderi, a town in Madhya Pradesh, is renowned for its Chanderi sarees. These sarees are characterized by their lightweight texture, exclusive fabric, and intricate designs. They often have gold and silver zari work, making them popular choices for special occasions.

Bagru Printing (Rajasthan): Bagru printing is a 'traditional block' printing technique that was originated in the village of Bagru, located in the Jaipur district of Rajasthan, India. The Bagru printing technique involves using wooden blocks hand-carved with special patterns. These blocks are then dipped in natural dyes and pressed onto the fabric to create beautiful and colourful designs. The process typically involves multiple steps, including pre-treatment of the fabric, block printing, dyeing, and washing to achieve the desired results. The use of natural dyes and traditional techniques gives Bagru printed fabrics a unique and distinctive and exclusive charm. These fabrics are used to make a variety of products, including clothing, home furnishings, and other accessories.

Terracotta Art: Terracotta art refers to artworks made from terracotta, which is a type of clay that has been fired at a relatively low temperature. Terracotta has been used for artistic purposes for thousands of years and is known for its versatility and ability to retain colourful design details. Rajasthan, West Bengal & Hariyana artisans showcase their decorative items.

Khurja Pottery (Uttar Pradesh): Khurja pottery is a traditional form of pottery that originates from the town of Khurja in the Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh, India. It has a rich history that dates back to the 14th century. The town of Khurja is known for its skilled potters and the production of high-quality ceramic products. The pottery of Khurja is famous for its vibrant colours, intricate designs, and durability. The potters in Khurja use locally sourced clay and a variety of traditional techniques to create a wide range of pottery items, including decorative pieces, dinnerware, cookware, and other household items.

Conclusion: The Indian Craft Fair provided an enchanting glimpse into India's rich cultural heritage and the extraordinary craftsmanship of its artisans. The event successfully celebrated traditional arts and crafts while fostering a sense of appreciation for the skills passed down through generations. The fair's emphasis on sustainable practices ensured that these art forms continue to thrive in the modern world. Visitors left with unforgettable memories and a deeper appreciation for the artistic legacy of India.

Glimpse of the Rasraj Mahotsav 2023 (Shrinath Craft Bazar)















