

Cuttack District

District Export Plan (Maniabandh Saree)



Maniabandha is a village in Badamba block of Cuttack District, Odisha- an eastern state of India which is well known for its beautiful ikat textiles. Maniabandha is adjacent to Nuapatna and at a distance of 100 kms from Bhubaneswar and around 80 kms from Cuttack, the two major cities of Odisha. While Nuapatna developed into a centre for commercial weaving, it is well connected by road from Bhubaneswar and Cuttack and is a famous Buddhist village.

Maniabandha has retained its quiet traditional charm with its syncretic culture. This region has a heavy concentration of weavers making wonderful ikat textiles, mostly in cotton and few in silk. Ikat is the craft of weaving with tie-dyed yarns to create colourfully patterned textiles. It is a way of resistance dyeing.

Overview

Ikat came through sea trade route to the coastal states of Gujarat, Orissa, and Andhra Pradesh in India. Within India, ikat weaving evolved with each region developing designs which set them apart from the others. Ikat came to be known by regional names such as Patola, Chitka, Bandha, Pochampally, Puttapaka or Telia Rumal. In Odisha, Single Ikat is referred to as Maniabandha Ikat and associated with Khanduas. Majority of weavers in Maniabandha are traditional Buddhists. Odisha became a large centre for Buddhism in the 3rd Century BC, during Emperor Ashoka's reign when he got influenced by Buddhist philosophy, becoming remorseful of the bloodshed in wars. In the 6th century AD, Odisha witnessed conflicts and some Buddhists took refuge in Maniabandha. Here, they quietly practiced their faith till the conflicts receded.



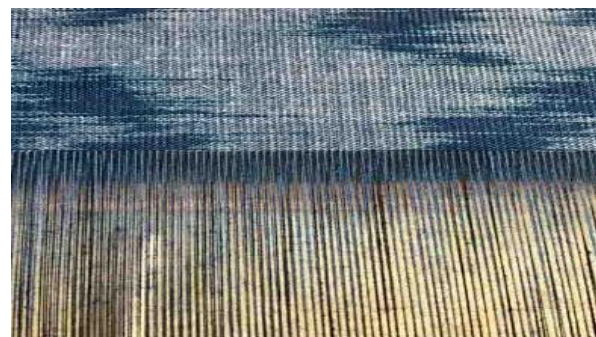
Tying Bandha for Weft Ikat



Bandha Prepared for Weaving



Dyeing Process



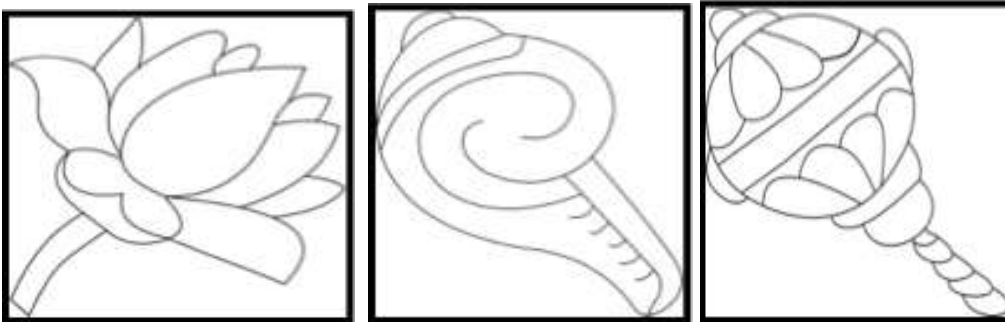
Weft Ikat weaving

Origins of Ikat

Maniabandha's ikat saris slowly became famous for their unique designs and fine quality of weaving. Traditional ikat dyeing was done on cotton, wool and silk using natural dyes from herbs, roots and minerals. Special recognition came to the Maniabandha weavers again in 12th century, when a well-known poet and writer Jaydev offered an ikat from Maniabandha called Pata Khandua tie-dyed and woven with verses of Gita Govinda to Lord Jagannath of Puri. Thereon, the management of Lord Jagannath Temple Puri decided to get the Khanduas – a textile that covers lower portion of body – for the clothing of Lord Jagannath, his elder brother Lord Balabadhra and their sister Subadhra from the weavers of Maniabandha. This honour has continued till date.

Tradition

The ikat technique in these parts is popularly known as Bandha – the local word for tying. It is special due to its finer quality, curvilinear designs and colours. The colours used for Khanduas earlier were red, black, yellow and white which were naturally available around but nowadays many colours are used. Traditionally floral, fish and animal motifs were used and nowadays geometric patterns are also being done. The ikat of Maniabandha is different in style from the other famous ikat weave in Odisha – Sambalpuri ikat where shells, wheel and floral motifs were an important part of the traditional designs. This makes both the ikat styles distinct. Apart from Ikat weaving, the weavers of Maniabandha are masters in extra weft weaving, which they had been traditionally weaving for personal use.



Technique

While the weavers of Maniabandha have been weaving special Khanduas for the deities, textiles for their personal use such as sarees, dhotis (loin cloth), gamusas (thin towels), turbans, shoulder clothes etc. for a very long time, they have now begun weaving commercially for markets. The region produces the finest single weft ikat sarees for the local and State markets. The local weavers in the region who are actively engaged in the production of sarees, yardage and some stoles and dupattas.

General Observation:

In spite of its centuries old existence the craft has not attained new heights so as to derive adequate earning benefit for the weavers. The regular uninterrupted supply of raw material, marketing support and financial support, technical training, technology up gradation for high productivity, strengthening of cooperative societies are some of the important issues which need to be addressed with sufficient budget allocation for the development of handloom in general and improving the socio economic condition of the weavers in particular.

Socio Economic profile of the sample weavers

The Description of Khandua becomes half hazard without a reflection on the socio economic plights of the weavers. In this attempt, the socio economic condition of the handloom weavers of Nuapatna and Maniabandha has been analyzed through a sample survey with an exhaustive interview schedule. The sample size was 200 households at Nuapatna and 100 weavers' households at Maniabandha. Some of the findings of the survey are given below as per census 2011.

Table .1 Category of Employment

Village Name	Dyer	Tie & dye Craftsman	Weaver s	Others	Grand Total
Maniabandha	3	20	77	0	100
Nuapatna	10	36	153	1	200
Grand Total	13	56	230	1	300

Source: Primary survey data

Graph 1 Category of Employment

The above table gives us information about general type of employment in hand weaving industry. Normally in this area, most of the work is divided among artisans. To take an example a weaver only weaves on the loom, a tie and dye craftsman ties the design on several groups of threads as per the design outlines, a dyer dyes the tied yarn in different colors as per the colors combination of the pattern and in some cases "others" help in the process of making the fabric in addition to the help extended by other family members. Hence, the need for classification of labors in the handloom industry as per the present prevailing conditions as given below:

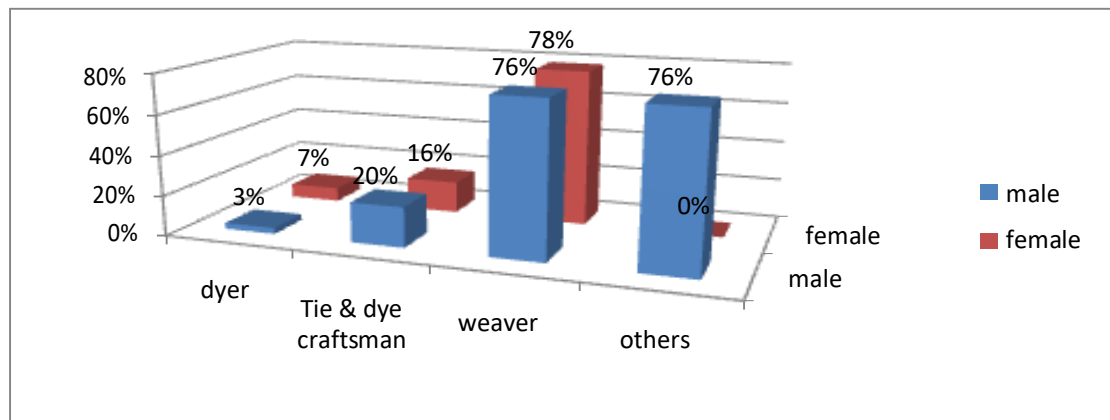


Table .2 Religions of Respondents

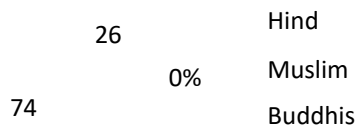
Village Name	Hindu	Muslim	Buddhism	Grand Total
Maniabandha	26%	0%	74%	100%
Nuapatna	94%	1%	5%	100%
Grand Total	71%	1%	28%	100%

Source: Survey data

As per the survey, there are almost no Muslim weaver in Maniabandha and

hardly 1% in Nuapatna, where as there is an appreciable blend of weavers belonging to Buddhism which comes to 74% in Maniabandha and 5% in Nuapatna. Hindu weavers come to around 26% in Maniabandha and 94% in Nuapatna. But is no appreciable difference in the weaving style of all the weavers irrespective of their community.

Maniabandh



Nuapatna

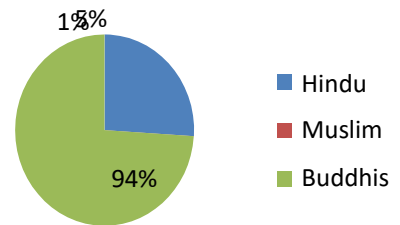


Table .3 Economic Status of the family BPL(Below Poverty Line)

Village Name	YES	NO	Grand Total
Maniabandha	30%	70%	100%
Nuapatna	48%	53%	100%
Grand Total	42%	58%	100%

Source: Primary survey data

It is interesting to find out that inspite of developmental activities almost 30% weavers in Maniabandha and 48% weaver families in Nuapatna belong to B.P.L category. However, 70% families in Maniabandha and 53% in Nuapatna are above the B.P.L mark.

SWOT Analysis

Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong and diverse raw material base, which include cotton, jute, silk, wool etc are readily available. ● High competitiveness in the cotton sector since India is the second-largest producer of cotton in the world. ● Availability of trained manpower in management and technical spheres at a competitive rate. ● Strong presence in the textile value chain from raw material to finished goods. ● Diverse design and strong entrepreneurial base helped the Handlooms sector. ● Leverage the ability of the rural population to produce products using locally available resources; this creates employment in villages hence preventing unwanted migration towards cities.
Weakness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Large fragmentation in the sector structure.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Technological constraints, especially in weaving, processing and garmenting segments leads to low productivity. ● Existence of huge skill deficit in the workforce. ● Scale disadvantages in comparison with global competitors. ● Following outdated weaving technology, producing poor design. ● Infrastructure bottlenecks, such as transportation and electricity; lacks adequate support from the government. ● The sector does not incite aspiration among the youth and is left unconsidered. This hinders the dissemination of skills from one generation to another, which was traditionally followed. ● There is no ecosystem to procure raw material, production and marketing, which in turn hampers the revenue.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Handlooms exports of India are expected to increase by 30–35 percent by 2014. Due to its attractiveness in design and quality, demand for Indian Handloom products is increasing globally. The government has undertaken several initiatives to provide impetus to the Handlooms sub-sector. Programmes, such as the setting up of common facility centers (CFC), Handlooms export promotion council and cluster development programmes have been initiated to assist Handlooms cooperative societies and corporations in developing export-worthy products. ● Increase in the disposable income and purchasing power of Indian customers. ● Large potential of domestic and international markets. ● Domestic market of India that seems sufficient to accommodate the future increase in production due to the increase in disposable income of the middle-class.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The sector is suffering shortage of skilled workers. The new generation of skilled workers is not interested in learning the art of Handloom. ● The slow pace of development of infrastructure facilities and unavailability of power has been a critical issue. ● Due to strict international standards, such as ban on child labor, export gets affected. ● Neighboring countries provide stiff competition with competitive pricing and labor rates. Recession in world economy affect exports, especially EU slowdown

	<p>has slowed down the import of handloom products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Financial health of cooperatives is declining.● Stiff competition from the power loom sector also poses threat to the industry
--	--

Conclusion:

- Nuapatna and Maniabandha areas have a rich tradition of hand weaving the artistic Khandua Saree and the Khandua fabric with calligraphy designs in silk and cotton.
- These ritualistic fabrics are designed with calligraphy with the Sanskrit verses taken from the famous Gita Govinda epic written by 12th century poet Jaydev.
- In spite of the centuries old craft, the economic conditions of the weavers have not improved.
- As per the survey, the average daily income of the weavers have not exceeded beyond Rs.140 per day and the average monthly income not exceeding Rs.3500 per month.

Thus, the study reaches at the conclusion that neither there is much diversification in the craft process or product, nor there is a qualitative leap in the plights of the weavers. This creates a major challenge to the sustainability of the craft and the livelihood options of the weavers in the long run and the export potential of the state. More financial assistance, regular supply of quality raw material, adequate marketing support, technological and design intervention with plans for product development are some of the areas along with strengthening of the cooperative sector which need urgent attention for sustaining the craft and to preserve the culture and tradition of the hand weaving craft of the area.



