

HANDICRAFT (WOOD CARVING)



Wood carving is an old art form practiced in different parts of Orissa in many unique ways. The wood as per the size of the form to be made is cut from the block. The piece is cleaned and smoothed. The design of the toy to be made is traced on this piece. Extra wood is chipped off according to the design. Fine strokes with the hammer are made on the chisel, which is placed on the area to be shaped. It is smoothed with a file and painted. The painting starts with coloring various body parts. Next the dresses with specific designs are marked out by fine strokes of the brush.

The skilfully crafted exquisite items come in varying styles and with different designs thereby creating a blend of traditional and modernity.

Teak wood is the basic raw material and products like statue of Sri Ganesh, Laxmi, Rhinoceros, Wood carvings in Kalahandi are used for a variety of products including:

- Religious idols and statues (especially for temples)
- Decorative panels
- Wall hangings
- Household items like trays, boxes, and furniture

Cultural Significance: Wood carving is not only an art form but also a way of life for the people of Kalahandi. The carved items are often used in local temples and during festivals. The craft reflects the spiritual connection of the people with their deities and their environment.

Marketability and Development: With its designation as ODOP, the wood carving craft of Kalahandi has gained recognition both nationally and internationally. The initiative has helped in improving the marketability of these products, providing better livelihoods for artisans, and preserving traditional craftsmanship. Government support has encouraged the development of training centers, exhibitions, and platforms to promote this art form.