

President of India Confers Shilp Guru and National Handicraft Awards for 2023 & 2024

48 Master Craftspersons and Designers Honoured; 20 Women Artisans Among Awardees

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President of India, **Smt. Droupadi Murmu**, today conferred the *Shilp Guru Awards* and *National Handicraft Awards* for 2023 and 2024 in a special ceremony held at **Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi**. The event celebrated exemplary contributions of India's master craftspersons, designers, start-ups and innovators in the handicrafts sector.

The ceremony was attended by **Shri Giriraj Singh**, Union Minister of Textiles; **Shri Pabitra Margherita**, Minister of State for Textiles; **Smt. Neelam Shami Rao**, Secretary (Textiles); and **Smt. Amrit Raj**, Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), along with artisans, industry leaders, exporters, designers and senior officials.

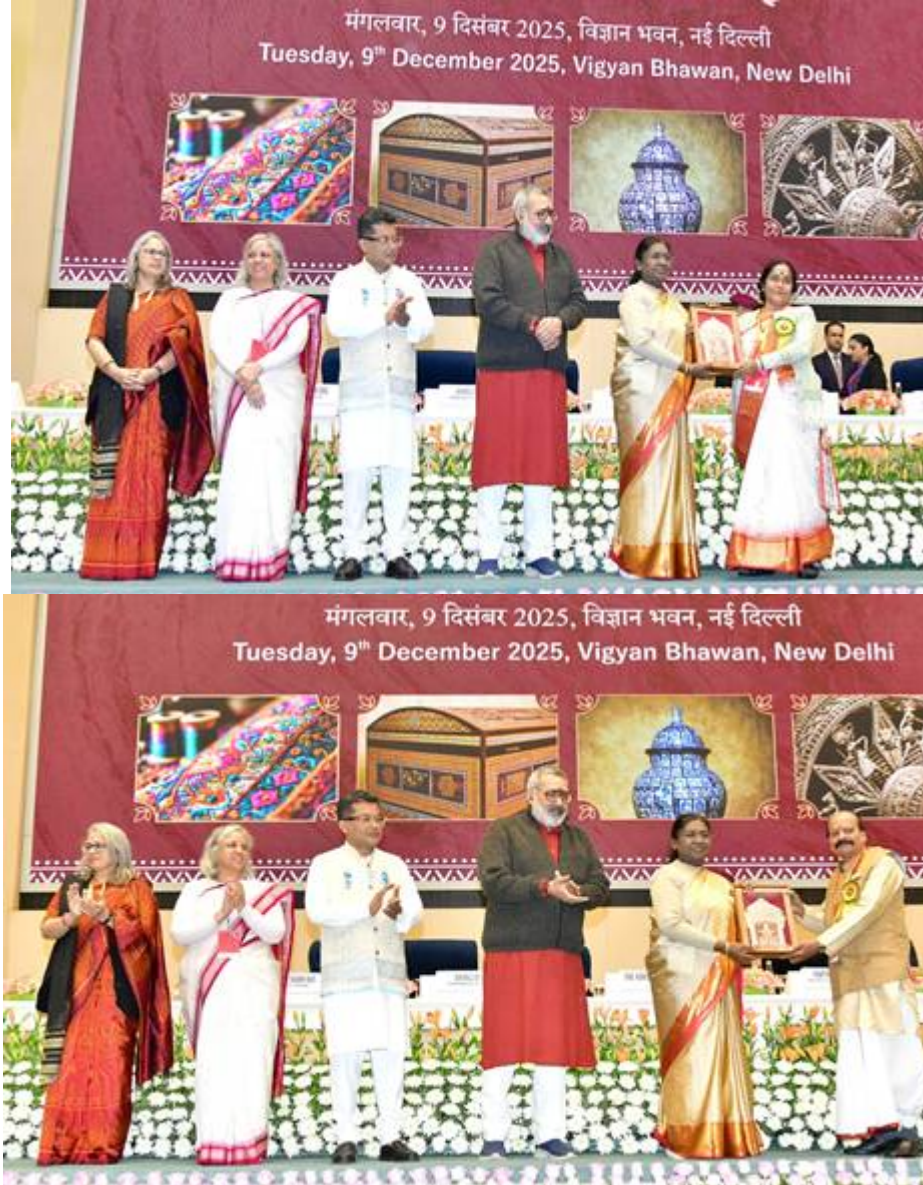


A total of **48 awards** were presented, including:

- **12 Shilp Guru Awards**
- **36 National Awards**, including **2 Design & Innovation Awards** (artisan–designer collaboration)

Among the awardees, **20 are women artisans**, reflecting the growing participation and leadership of women in the handicrafts sector.

Awardees represented a wide spectrum of crafts including woodwork, metal craft, clay modelling, jute craft, hand-printed textiles, Pattachitra, artistic textiles, leather puppetry, terracotta, cane & bamboo, stone carving, papier-mâché, carpets, toys, dolls, puppets etc.



In her address, the President said that India's artisans are the living threads of India's cultural tapestry and the true custodians of the nation's artistic heritage. She emphasized that artisans have preserved traditions across generations not by resisting change but by adapting to new markets, technologies and evolving tastes while retaining the authenticity of their craft. She further noted that the handicrafts sector plays a crucial role in rural livelihood, women's empowerment and sustainability, and has emerged as an important vehicle of inclusive and equitable development. Referring to India's ancient reverence for craftsmanship, she remarked that Indian artisans demonstrate how beauty and sustainability can coexist, especially at a time when global institutions are emphasizing environmental responsibility. President said that by developing artisans' skills, adopting new technologies, and increasing investment, young entrepreneurs can take handicraft production and markets to new heights.



The Union Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh, expressed pride in the achievements of the award recipients and highlighted the irreplaceable role of the handicrafts sector in India's socio-economic landscape. He said that handicrafts represent one of the most significant employment-generating sectors in the country, particularly for women and marginalized communities. The Minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to strengthening the sector by promoting product diversification, encouraging the use of natural fibres such as jute and water hyacinth, and supporting second-generation entrepreneurs through various schemes under the National Handicrafts Development Programme. He also reiterated the vision of "Vocal for Local" and "Viksit Bharat," emphasizing the sector's importance in cultural preservation, sustainability and global competitiveness.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister of State for Textiles, Shri Pabitra Margherita, said that the ceremony was not merely an award function but a celebration of the remarkable journey of India's artisans. He observed that handicrafts are not just products but expressions of human emotion and cultural memory that travel from rural courtyards to global markets. He emphasized that each handcrafted item carries India's identity, reflecting the creativity of artisans whose skills transcend boundaries.

Smt. Neelam Shami Rao, Secretary (Textiles), , said that the awards serve as a major source of encouragement for the country's craft community and reflect the nation's deep respect for traditional craft practices. She highlighted that such recognition inspires artisans to continue their creative pursuits while helping preserve India's cultural heritage.

In her closing remarks, the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Smt. Amrit Raj, expressed gratitude on behalf of the Ministry of Textiles to the Hon'ble President of India, the Hon'ble Union Minister of Textiles, the Hon'ble Minister of State for Textiles and the Secretary (Textiles) for their presence and continued support for the artisans of the country. She reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to strengthening the handicrafts ecosystem and empowering artisans who form the backbone of India's creative heritage.

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इस विज्ञप्ति को इन भाषाओं में पढ़ें: Kannada , Odia , Urdu , हिन्दी