

An innovative experiment for low-cost marketing of handloom fabrics with focus on increasing the earnings of the weavers

Taking forward its innovative interventions for promotion of handloom and increasing the earnings of the weavers, marketing, *SHRADDHA*, founded under the inspiring leadership of Dr Sanjay Kumar Panda {IAS (Retd) Former Secretary Textiles} organized a low-cost **handloom sale exhibition in the Royal Lagoon residential complex, Patia, Bhubaneswar**, a gated society of over 700 high net worth families.

The event was organized in the Banquet Hall **on the 9th of March 2025** (from 8 AM to 8PM), in close collaboration with the management of the residential complex. Appreciating the genuineness and noble intentions, the management volunteered to make their facilities available at a reduced rate. Necessary arrangements for booking the hall, for publicity, display, lunch for the participating weavers etc., were made by *SHRADDHA* out of its limited fund.

Six weavers from Mania Bandha, Gopalpur, Jagatsinghpur and Bargarh handloom clusters came forward to participate in the event .with their wide range of handloom fabrics. Smt Snehaprava Dash, an elderly inmate of the complex eagerly came forward to put on a saree with new design woven by the women weavers of Maland village of Jagatsinghpur and inaugurated the event. Her gesture and kind words of encouragement generated lots of enthusiasm among the wavers.

The weavers were encouraged to sell their fabrics at the price they sell to customers in their villages or to the Primary Weavers' Cooperative Society with a marginal markup. This position was explained to the visitors, who appreciated the position and did not ask for any rebate. The buyers found the price to be very reasonable, and lower than the rate at which it is sold in the city shops. Over 100 people visited the stalls and fabrics worth Rs 2.30 lakhs were sold without any discount/ support from government. The participating weavers left for their villages happy, **as they got about 30% more than what they would have got otherwise by selling the fabrics in their villages**. The weavers also got feedback from the buyers about their fabrics.

President, Vice Presidents, Secretary; and members of the society closely interacted with the visitors, explained about designing and weaving on handloom, socio-economic conditions of the weavers and the action being taken by *SHRADDHA*. This humble but meaningful experiment of *SHRADDHA* (working on the spirit of the contribution of the squirrel to making of the *Rama Sethu* in the Ramayana) had the following takeaways.

- Participating weavers got a rare opportunity of interacting with the potential customers (who have liking for handloom and disposable income), know about their taste as well as contact numbers. This enhanced their confidence.
- Visitors got the opportunity to buy quality handloom fabrics at a reasonable price.
- Buyers got a feeling of supporting a social cause and promoting tradition and culture.

The initiative taken by *SHRADDHA* was appreciated by the producer weavers as well as the craft loving consumers. It is only a humble experiment taken up by a group of committed volunteers, working under *SHRADDHA*, as a part of their sincere efforts for giving back to society.

SHRADDHA stands committed to replicating this low-cost marketing intervention at other places as well to increase the earnings of the handloom weavers.

**Glimpses of Low-cost marketing intervention for Handloom fabrics
Organized by SHRADDHA in the Royal Lagoon on the 9th of March 2025**



Smt Snehaprava Dash, an elderly inmate of the complex inaugurating the event



Enthusiastic response from the buyers to traditional handloom & encouraging the weavers