



**HANDLOOM EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL**  
(Ministry of Textiles, Government of India)



*Indian Handlooms*  
*Aesthetic | Ethnicity | Eco-friendliness*

**E-MAGAZINE FOR OVERSEAS BUYER**  
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**HANDLOOM EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL**  
(Ministry of Textiles, Government of India)

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**Foreword**

The charming beauty of the valleys of Uttarakhand is complemented by the elegant and colourful crafts of Garhwal and Kumaon. Weaving is undoubtedly one of those traditional crafts that are deeply connected with the lives of the local hill people and their rich cultural heritage.

Mainly famous for its woollen fabrics, the Himalayan weaving tradition in Uttarakhand also produces beautiful cotton, exotic woollen and fine silk goods. The industry turns out a great variety of textile products ranging from routine objects like socks, caps, scarves, sweaters, mufflers etc. to more specialized items like shawls or carpets using natural fibers extracted out of minimum range plants.

The serenity and the grace of the Himalayas are perfectly matched by the traditional textile designs which are handed down from generation to generation. However, in spite of these influences, the traditional textiles of Uttarakhand always reflect a unique ethnic character of their own. The Himalayan climate of Uttarakhand and the local sheep rearing practices have largely contributed to the natural development of the woollen industry in the region. The weavers are mostly rural women from hill tribes who produce beautiful hand-woven products with the help of surprisingly primitive tools and techniques.

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## Handloom of Uttarakhand

Craft cluster in Uttarakhand are heavily dependent on their local natural resources. Uttarakhand has a remarkable repertoire of plants and a large population of sheep and goats. They have traditionally prospected for natural fibre, particularly to make yarn and rope. Uttarakhand is home to a wide range of fibres sourced from plants. There are around 40 fibre yielding plants are there. Uttarakhand is the producer of woollen yarns from the fleece of sheep, goat and rabbit and the silk filament from wild caterpillars living in oak forest.

The Himalayan climate of Uttarakhand and the local sheep rearing practices have largely contributed to the natural development of the woollen industry in the region. The weavers are mostly rural women from hill tribes who produce beautiful hand-woven products with the help of surprisingly primitive tools and techniques. It is simply amazing to see how the people in these Himalayan villages have been quite successful in keeping alive some of their age-old craft techniques and methods.



✿ Every year, the nomadic Bhotiya weavers spend the winter months in Dunda in weaving their clothes and the summer months in selling those clothes in different seasonal fairs and tourism sites of Uttarakhand or harvesting fields in Harsil. While in Dunda of the Uttarkashi district, they weave gorgeous traditional patterns on their crude upright or pit looms, using Charkha-spun wools.

✿ Traditionally, the Bhotiya weavers rear their own sheep for wool in the grazing plains of Harsil. In the winter, when the sheep grow fat and have fully grown hair, the Bhotiyas come down to Dunda to begin their weaving activities. The Dunda weaving

cluster in Uttarakhand is famous for the carpets and pashmina shawls made by the Bhotiya weavers.

✿ The rugs and pashmina shawls of Munsyari are also widely acclaimed. Like Dunda, it is another significant site of the traditional Bhotiya weaving. Munsyari produces some of the finest cashmeres in the world. The dunn which is a type of rug and the thulma – a unique bedspread – made by the Bhotiya weavers of this small Uttarakhand town deserve much appreciation for their exotic beauty.

✿ Gorgeous pashmina shawls are also produced by the local weavers at the shawl factory of Kausani. Kausani shawls and stoles have become quite a legend among the tourists and the craft-enthusiasts from all over the world. The local village artisans spend much time and care on their traditional wooden handlooms to produce these items. The shawls are made of superfine Angora rabbit wool and come with a variety of designs ranging from simple colour patterns to lavish embroidery works.

### ✿ Pachachuli Weave from Uttarakhand :

The famous Panchachuli range in the Himalayas in the northeast of Uttarakhand is known for its beautiful peaks internationally. Panchachuli Weave: The rural women of Panchachuli range in the Himalayan region commonly knit exquisite clothes made up of sheep wool and Tibetan cashmere.



Handloom products industry in Uttarakhand can be divided into following main categories:

### 1. Woolen Handlooms

### 2. Cotton Handlooms

### 3. Silk, Natural Fibres and Combinations

1. Woolen Handloom: Wool and woodwork is a traditional skill in this mountainous region. Harsil, Belchi, Merino are the main varieties of wool produced locally.

- ✓ Pashmina: Pasham is very soft, light, short fiber wool obtained from goat or yak in very cold regions. The products made with this wool are very warm. Tibet is the main source of this wool.
- ✓ Angora: Angora rabbit wool is a high value commodity, which in respect of fineness and warmth is much superior to sheep wool. Angora rabbitry has been taken up in the districts of Uttarkashi, Chamoli and Pithoragarh, Tehri Garhwal and Bageshwar. UNDP project through DARL, Pithoragarh and a project under Swarnajyanti Gramin Swarojgar Yojna through HIFIED, Ranichauri, Tehri Garhwal have generated interest and availability of Angora wool.

Continuous research and development has brought out a wide range of products and designs. These products have received tremendous response in national in national and international trade exhibitions. A diverse variety of woolen products are made in the slate, like shawls, both for ladies and gents, Pankhi (unique gents shawl), Tweed (cloth for coats), Mufler and caps. Thulma and Chitka are very special products for cold climates

2. Cotton Handloom: Traditional weavers producing cotton handlooms are located in many villages and localities in District Udham Singh Nagar, Hardwar and Dehradun. Some important clusters are Kashipur, Jaspur, Mahuadabra (US Nagar), Rampur, Kalsi (Dehradun), Imlikhera (Hardwar) Khateema (Champawat). modernization, new designs, better quality control, and variety of competitive and attractive products are being produced such as Bed sheets, Rajai covers, curtains, surgical cloth (Patti), durries, Asan, handloom cloth, table cloth, dusters etc.

3. Silk Handlooms: Uttarakhand has unique environmental conditions for producing all types of silk. Mulberry silk in terai and plain areas and Tassar silk in hill areas. While the oak Tassar of Uttarakhand is unique, the mulberry silk produced is of superior quality. Tassar silk is a high value silk, increasing their household incomes and providing an incentive to conserve local biodiversity.

Concerted efforts in product development in silk-based items have been very successful and a variety of silk and combination products are now available, like shawls, stoles, dress material etc. Natural Fibres: Uttaranchal produces more than 40 varieties of natural fibers. These fibers are amenable to work on handlooms. These fibers alone and more so in combination with cotton, silk and wool, have presented unique opportunities to the artisans, weavers, designers and researchers for developing a new and innovative range of products.

## Uttarakhand : A State Rich in Plant Fibers

A diverse range of natural fibers is produced in many countries providing an important source of income for farmers and local communities. Some of the commercially important natural fibers found in Uttarakhand are obtained from Sisal, Agave, Bhimal, Hemp, Jute, and Nettle. Many of the natural fibers described have been traditionally used by the rural communities; some of the traditional processing techniques employed have been described along with other natural fiber plant species that have the potential to provide alternative employment opportunities.



Himalayan Nettle is a wild grass found in the Kumaon and Garhwal region of Uttarakhand. Known for its versatility, the grass is used as fiber for clothing, herb for healing wounds and aches, and in food. It also finds its use as utility products like rope, twine or fishing nets. The grass, if touched with bare skin, can cause intense stinging and itching. Owing to its nature, the grass is known as kandali (stinging thorns) or bicchughhaas (scorpion grass) in regional languages. The fibres come from nettle plant stem. The grass is first dried, and after the outer surface is peeled, the fibres are extracted. It is then boiled in water. The fiber is then beaten continuously. The beating and scrapping leads to the white colour of the fiber. If the fiber is beaten without boiling, then it retains its natural colour. The beaten fibre is washed in the water and dried.

Dried fiber is opened by hand and any remaining bits of the outer layer of grass is removed. After the fiber is sorted and cleaned, it is either hand-carded or sent to carding plants. The nettle fiber is next spun on a spinning machine known as charkha. The machine is foot pedaled which helps the artisan control the speed. The fiber is spun to a small bobbin that is placed inside a wooden instrument called Shuttle. The fibers are then weaved using a handloom. The end product can range from shawls and stoles to cloth bags.

Nettle has a unique characteristic that makes it an ideal clothing material for both winters and summers. The fibers of the plant are actually hollow, which can help accumulate air inside, thus creating a natural insulation. Its products are gradually gaining popularity in the market as an environmentally sustainable and natural fabric.

## Few Clusters and Handloom Units of Uttarkhand

### Kumaon Woollens, Lamachaur, Haldwani, Nainital

Kumaon woollen is the integrated units which has units form fibre extraction to finished products of garments. They are producing luxury handloom items using natural fibres like wool, bhimal fibre, hemp, Nettle, etc. and also have showroom in important tourist places such as Almora, Delhi, etc.



### Himadri Hans Handloom, Dugalkhola, Almora.

It is a state government foundation run by "The Hans Foundation", NGO with the capacity of 140 handlooms. They are majorly producing products made from Nettle fibre and have units of dyeing, processing, testing, etc. Nettle fibre are extracted from this exclusive plant available in the Himalayan hill range.



### Khadi Units, Almora



### Handloom unit at Mahuadabra, Jaspur (Kashipur).

The Jaspur village is located between Haldwani and Haridwar and is also called “**Recycle village**” which produces cost effective recycled product at low price. This is green eco product and can be exported at much higher price than their current price of around Rs.100 per piece of bigger shawls.



### Godambari Enterprises, Jauhri Gaon, Dehradun

Godambari Enterprises, Jauhri Gaon, Dehradun and the unit is having the wider width looms of 120- inch and capable for producing 102-inch bed linen for local market. And the price equivalent to powerloom product. They also produce value added natural coloured tie & dye fabrics, garment, stoles, shawls using natural dye. They are also doing value added product like natural dyed bed sheets, wider width 120 “inch tie & dye, bed sheet, garments, stoles, shawls, etc.



### Bhartiya Gramothan Sanstha, Dhalwala, Rishikesh

NGO manufacturing khadi related products like Jute bags, bed sheets, floor coverings, **Geo textiles**, specialised curtains using various kinds of natural fibres and wide width fabrics. The said unit is supplying fabrics to Fab India, Reymond, etc.



## Geographical Indication Products of Uttarakhand (GI)

### Bhotia Dann of Uttarakhand



❖ Bhotiyas are people of Tibetan ancestry who dwell in the upper parts of the Great Himalayas, at heights ranging from 6,500 feet (2,000 meters) to 13,000 feet (4,000 meters) (4,000 m). Sheep rearing in the border districts of Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Pithoragarh and Bageshwar has been the main means of livelihood of the Bhotiya tribe for years.

❖ And this tribe produces a variety of textile products by extracting wool from sheep, in which sweaters, shawls, fans, socks, muffler caps and Bhotia Dann is a hand-woven rug and carpets made by wool which are highly durable with a shelf life of 20-40 years.

❖ These are hand knotted carpets, made up of pure wool with the conventional design patterns, inspired by traditional Bhotia cultural themes which are very similar to old Tibetan carpets/rugs.

❖ The designs mostly comprise geometric patterns, which gives them a unique and elegant appearance. The dyes used to colour the woolen threads are natural dyes prepared from plant extracts.

❖ The sheep that provide the wool, are reared by these tribes at high altitude. This results in high quality, long lasting, soft wool which provides suitable warmth.

### Uttarakhand Thulma

❖ The Uttarakhand Thumla blanket is known for its high-quality fur and captivating motifs which woven on a pit loom or a frame loom and is known for its luxuriant fur and interesting designs.

❖ It is constructed with woven fabric that has been cut into huge strips and sewn together. It is woven in long strips that are cut and stitched together. The edges are finished with a blanket stitch.

❖ Thulma (Blanket), a very thick woolen handmade blanket, woven with hand spin woolen and cotton threads on traditional throw fly shuttles, traditionally thulma were woven with white wool or uncolored wool, but with customer's demand it is also weaved with dyed wool as well.

❖ It is exclusive hand spin and hand woven product weaved by the Bhutiya community since generation in the Himalayan region and used in the very low and minus degree temperature at the upper Himalayan region and giving much warm in an effective manner.

❖ The traditional Thulma is about Length – approx 7.0 feet, Width – approx. 5.5 feet, Wt. – approx 4 – 6 Kg. The base foundation of the blanket weaving is done by cotton thread.

❖ Once the weaving is complete the blanket is washed to remove the extra fiber and dried in the sun.





### HEPC officials field Visit to Uttarakhand

Shri N.Sreedhar, Executive Director and Shri M.Sundar, Joint Director visited Shri Pankaj Kumar Pandey, IAS, Secretary MSME(Textiles) on 31.05.2022 followed by visit to National Handloom Expo, Dehradun wherein handloom producers in Uttarakhand have exhibited their product.



## Few Handloom Products of Uttarakhand



## *HEPC Upcoming Calendar of Events*

Sl. No.	Name of the event	Country	Dates
1	Buyer Seller Meet	Sweden & Denmark	Sept 2022
2	Who's Next, Paris	France	2-5 Sept 2022
3	Maison & Objet, Paris	France	8-12 Sept 2022
4	Heimtextil Russia, Moscow	Russia	20-22 Sept 2022
5	All Fashion Sourcing (Formerly ATF), Capetown	South Africa	26-28 Sept 2022
6	IHGF, Delhi - EPCH	India	Oct 2022
7	Special Promotional Event	Singapore	Oct 2022
8	High Point Market, USA	USA	22-26 Oct 2022
9	China Import & Export Fair (CANTON) Phase III	China	31 Oct - 4 Nov 2022
10	Buyer Seller Meet	Chile	14-15 Nov 2022
11	International Sourcing Expo, Melbourne	Australia	15-17 Nov 2022
12	Special Promotional Event	Malaysia	Nov 2022
13	Special Promotional Event	Dubai	Dec 2022
14	Special Sourcing Show - NER	India	Dec 2022
15	AFL Artigiano in Milan - NER	Italy	Dec 2022
16	Heimtextil, Frankfurt	Germany	10-13 Jan 2023
17	Domotex, Hannover	Germany	12-15 Jan 2023
18	Who's Next, Paris	France	20-23 Jan 2023
19	Ambiente 2023, Frankfurt	Germany	3-7 Feb 2023
20	Spring Fair, UK	UK	5-8 Feb 2023
21	Pure london, UK	UK	17-19 July 2022
22	Sourcing at Magic, Las Vegas	USA	7-10 Aug 2022
23	Reverse Buyer Seller Meet at Chennai / Delhi (ITSF)	India	8-10 March 2023



## INDIA HANDLOOM

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### **Handloom Export Promotion Council** (Ministry of Textiles, Government of India)

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