



# Bihar



## ONE DISTRICT ONE PRODUCT





# Preface

The Handicrafts of India through the ages fascinated the world by its creativity, aesthetics and exquisite craftsmanship. It is a highly decentralized activity, handicrafts of India present rich cultural heritage and shining example of using local resources, skills and initiatives. India's handicrafts are almost inexhaustible with infinite variety which has been refined in course of changing history. The cross currents inspire the creative impulse of our craftsmen. Moreover crafts are results of years of unconscious experiment and evolution; skills inherited and passed over generations from forefathers to sons and grandsons.

Bihar is a state that is deeply connected to its great cultural heritage. The traditional art, architecture, countless artefacts make Bihar the beautiful culturally rich state that it is. Bihar has been the main creator of handicrafts since the early period of human civilization. The craftsmanship here was at its peak during the Maurya period. The erstwhile Pataliputra developed as a center of stone sculpture during the Maurya period. The creation of terracotta had started in Bihar during the Maurya period. After independence, traditional handicrafts of Bihar surfaced and efforts were started to revive them. This increased their demand in the market.



# Table of Contents

## District - Product

<b>Pg. (1-3).</b>	<b>Bhagalpur: Hand Block Print, Bhagalpuri Silk, Manjusha Painting</b>
<b>Pg. (4).</b>	<b>Banka: Banka Silk</b>
<b>Pg. (5-6).</b>	<b>Bhojpur: Applique, Bhojpur Painting</b>
<b>Pg. (7).</b>	<b>Buxar: Hand Embroidery</b>
<b>Pg. (8-9).</b>	<b>Darbhanga: Terracotta, Madhubani Painting</b>
<b>Pg. (10-11).</b>	<b>Gaya: Stone, Wood</b>
<b>Pg. (12).</b>	<b>Gopalganj: Handloom</b>
<b>Pg. (13).</b>	<b>Jamui: Crochet Goods</b>
<b>Pg. (14).</b>	<b>Kaimur: Carpet</b>
<b>Pg. (15).</b>	<b>Katihar: Jute</b>
<b>Pg. (16).</b>	<b>Khagaria: Bamboo</b>
<b>Pg. (17).</b>	<b>Kishanganj: Kheta Embroidery</b>
<b>Pg. (18).</b>	<b>Madhepura: Bamboo</b>
<b>Pg. (19-21).</b>	<b>Madhubani: Madhubani Painting, Sikki Painting, Khadi</b>
<b>Pg. (22-23).</b>	<b>Muzaffarpur: Sujni, Lac Bangle</b>
<b>Pg. (24).</b>	<b>Nalanda: Bawan Booti</b>
<b>Pg. (25).</b>	<b>Nawada: Handloom</b>
<b>Pg. (26-27).</b>	<b>Patna: Brass, Tikuli</b>
<b>Pg. (28).</b>	<b>Purnia: Bamboo</b>
<b>Pg. (29).</b>	<b>Samastipur: Bamboo</b>
<b>Pg. (30-31).</b>	<b>Sitamarhi: Applique, Sikki</b>
<b>Pg. (32).</b>	<b>Supaul: Lac Bangle</b>
<b>Pg. (33).</b>	<b>Vaishali: Sujni</b>





# Bhagalpur

## Bhagalpuri Silk

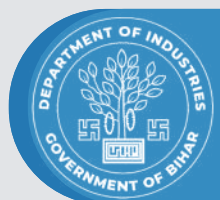


अतुल्य भारत की अमूल्य निधि  
Irreplaceable Treasures of Incredible India

Bhagalpuri silk is famous all over the country for production of silk and Silk fabrics. The Bhagalpur district of Bihar is popularly known as the ***Silk City of East India***. The history of production of silk and Silk Fabric in Bhagalpur dates back to hundreds of years. The district excels in production of fine quality of Tussar and Matka Silk. Hussainabad, Champanagar, Nathnagar etc. are the major silk production centres in the Bhagalpur district having large concentration of Handlooms and weavers.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Bhagalpur

## Manjusha Painting



अतुल्य भारत की अमूल्य निधि  
Irreplaceable Treasures of Incredible India

Manjusha art is a folk art of Bhagalpur district and its adjacent areas. It is basically an art of painting the various aspects of a mythical tale of 'Bihula and Vishahari' popular in the region. As per the tale, Bihula saved her husband from the wrath of a deity Vishahari or Mansa, the snake goddess known for her anger when displeased but also for her fierce protectiveness when propitiated, after cause a snake-bite to her husband. In Sanskrit language "Manjusha" means a box of Manjushas, temple shaped boxes made of bamboo, jute-straw and paper inside which the devotees keep their ceremonial materials. These boxes are decorated with painting of the tale of 'Bihula and Vishahari'. This is how the painting derived its name Manjusha painting. The Manjusha painting dates back to the 7th century. The Manjusha painting is considered as an illustration of the power and social recognition of a woman as well as her devotion to her family. Bhagalpur is the main centre of Manjusha painting.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Bhagalpur

## Hand Block Print

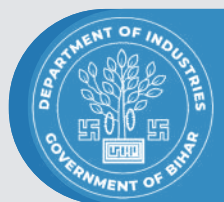


The origin of block printing can be traced to Rajasthan. However, when this craft was ushered into the eastern belt of the nation, it was warmly embraced by the natives, following which this craft achieved the unique, indigenous designs and styles of this region. Products of hand-block printing are quite popular in eastern parts of India. Wooden block printing is popular in Bihar, particularly in Bhagalpur and Darbhanga. Motifs of peacocks, animals, birds, mangoes, dolls and flowers are designed on 'chunris', which are in high demand in this Indian state. Metal block printing is also performed extensively here. Some block printing artisans are making attempts to fuse hand paintings of 'Madhubani' into textiles which employ block printing. Eastern India specializes in the production of innumerable block printed textiles, equipped with fashionable motifs, attractive colours and patterns. Block print artisans employ several techniques to produce beautiful stoles, 'sarees' and other garments.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Banka

## Banka Silk

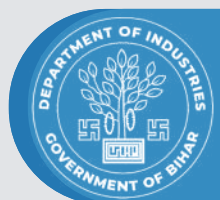


Banka district in Bihar, which was earlier a part of Bhagalpur district, is known for its Banka tussar silk. This world-famous silk yarn is made from tussar cocoons and in its unfinished form, is coppery-gold and coarse in texture. A large section of rural population in Banka and Bhagalpur districts in south Bihar is involved in raising silkworms for their cocoons. These silk cocoons are sold to the local traditional weavers – bunkars – who first make resham (silk) thread by spinning the charkha and then weave silk sarees on the handloom. These heavily priced tussar silk sarees, dupattas, kurtas, scarves, are sold across India and also shipped abroad.

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# Bhojpur Applique



Applique refers to a needle-work technique in which patterns or representational scenes are created by attaching small colourful pieces of fabric on to a larger piece of contrasting colour or texture. Applique is done in two ways: (a) Different patterns are first cut from a single piece of fabric and they are then attached to the base fabric. This form of applique work is known as “Kashida”. (b) In the other style, first the motifs are cut out individually and they are then attached to the base fabric in different compositions. A mixture of different textured fabrics enhances the richness of the design and produces vivid effect of colours and shade. Applique work is done on sarees and dress materials to enhance their look. Various household furnishing items like bed-sheet, table cloth, pillow cover, cushion etc. are also adorned with applique work. Beautiful wall hangings are also created using the Applique work. The art is popular and practised across the state.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Bhojpur

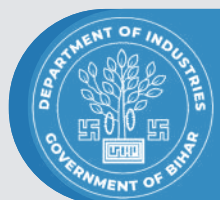
## Bhojpur Painting



One of the most popular forms of art in Bihar, Bhojpuri Painting has played a major role in the development and sustenance of art culture. Dating back to 1300 BC, it is even older than King Ashoka himself. It's difficult to gauge the exact origin of this art form. Certain facts from the past make us believe that these paintings surfaced during the reign of King Ashoka. There are two major forms of Bhojpuri painting, Kohbar and Pidhiya. Kohbar paintings depict love and gratification, while Pidhiya paintings portray assorted subjects such as gods, goddesses, animals, plants and flowers. The paintings at this Hindu temple are often related to Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati, which according to the Vedas was not only a powerful union but also one of the most stable marriages in history. Bhojpuri Painting is often thought to profile Lord Shiva, Goddess Parvati, snakes, birds and lotus plants. It's also a popular wedding gift as it's thought to bring good luck to couples on their wedding day.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Buxar

## Hand Embroidery



Hand Embroidery is the art of decorative stitching on fabric with needle and thread. There are many types of floss, yarn and fibers to stitch with, as well as a plethora of stitches to use. Hand Embroidery adds a decorative element to quilts, garments and accessories. Hand embroidery has been used by quilters on all types of quilts from crazy quilts, applique quilts and pieced quilts, traditional as well as modern or contemporary quilts. Embroidery may include ribbons, beads and buttons. There are many resources for hand embroidery stitches. Hand embroidery can be decorative as well as practical. Buxar in Bihar is famous for different kinds of hands embroidery.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Darbhanga

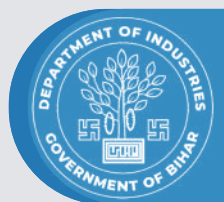
## Terracotta



Terracotta originated around 5000 years ago. Since time immemorial, pottery and ceramics have been an important part of human culture. From pre-historic storage jars to tiles on the space shuttles, pottery and ceramics have played key roles in innumerable human endeavors. In the history of art ceramic and ceramic art means a piece of art such as figure tiles and tableware made of clay and other raw materials by the process of pottery. Some ceramic products are regarded as fine art, while others are regarded as decorative, industrial or applied art. The products may be made by one individual or in a factory where a group of people design, make and decorate the ware. Bihar has a rich history of clay Terracotta works. The artisans of Bihar make various decorative items of Terracotta adorned with bright and vivid paintings. Darbhanga is an important centre for Terracotta work in Bihar.

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# Darbhanga

## Madhubani Painting



The Mithila region of Bihar mainly the district of Madhubani is the birthplace of some of the most celebrated folk tales of India. The native of Mithila have an innate sense to tell these with their due reverence in a visually captivating narrative art form known as Mithila painting. Madhubani painting / Mithila painting is done on clothes, handmade paper and Canvas. Traditionally the colours used in Mithila paintings are natural and they are derived from plants. Since ages the events related to the stories of the Hindu deities have been the most popular theme of the Madhubani painting. These paintings were usually made on the occasion of important days to mark the ceremonies and religious events. Madhubani painting has successfully carved out a niche in the heart of every art lover of the world. Jitwarpur, Ranti, Madhubani, Rashidpur, Simri are the major centres of the Madhubani painting.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Gaya Wood

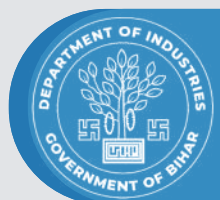


Since ages, woodcraft has been existent in Bihar. The craft primarily consists of the manufacturing of wooden furniture and toys. Right from the time of Mauryas and particularly from the time of Great Ashoka, the Woodcraft of Bihar has remained high on a scale in terms of artistic beauty, creativity, and durability of items produced. During Ashoka's reign beautiful royal throne, royal gates or doors, and panels of temples were manufactured from wood. The Wood Craftsmen are spread across the state. Gaya is the most famous for manufacturing of wooden items such as statues, toys, and household items.

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# Gaya Stone

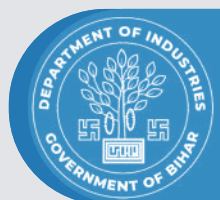


The tradition of the stonecraft of Bihar dates back to the ancient era of Mauryan Empire. The craft reached its zenith during the Mauryan period. The stonecraft of Bihar exhibits some huge and marvelous statues of Lord Buddha found mostly in the neighboring places of Gaya district. Various stupas and monasteries stand as the great exhibits of the excellent artistic quality of the artisans of Bihar. Amongst the most famous stone carvings of Bihar are the Ashokan pillars at Lauria, Nandangarh and Koluha. The Vishnupad temple carved in black stone in Gaya town is yet another example of the great skills of the artisans of Bihar. The Patharkatti and Khukhari village of Neemchalk Bathani block in Gaya is one of the major centres of stonecraft in Bihar. Here the artisans follow a traditional technique of polishing the stones. The availability of varieties of stones and the dexterous artisans have been the main reasons for the development of the stonecraft in Gaya.

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# Gopalganj

## Handloom

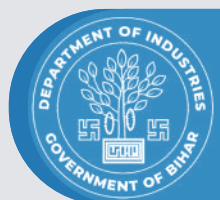


The tradition of handloom in Bihar is as ancient as the civilization itself in Bihar. Patliputra the capital of the Grand Magadh Empire, was the centre of fashion, style and class. It thus attracted weavers from all over the country who with the help of local craftsmen created styles over ages which now have become famous the world over. In the eastern part of Bihar, Bhagalpur and Banka have the largest concentration of weavers. the geo-climatic condition of the region is suitable for the production of silk and hence the region is one of the largest producers of Handloom Silk items in the country. The regions of Nawada, Bhagalpur, Gopalganj are the major pockets for the Handloom products in the state, engaged in the production of one of the world's best quality handloom products.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Jamui

## Crochet Goods



It seems that crochet was brought to India in the early 20th century by a missionary couple named Macrae from Scotland. The women of India took to crochet very quickly, using it most commonly to create prayer rugs and prayer caps for Muslims. Other examples of crochet are associated with Christian ceremonies. However, crochet in India has broken past the religious to the purely aesthetic and the practical. In Bihar Jamui region is the major centre for production of crochet goods

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# Kaimur Carpet



Carpet weaving is the tradition of Bihar since the Buddhist & Mauryan era. At that time high class floor coverings were used to be woven here. The pile carpet took birth only about 300 years ago and flourished because of royal patronage offered to carpet weaving during the Mughal period and it is since then that pile carpets started being made here. Carpets with traditional Indo-persian designs and floral and geometric motifs are made here. Cotton dhurries are also made. Due to the hot Indian climate they are used widely. They can be patterned in a single colour or they can be multicolored. The patterns include simple lines, geometric designs, and symmetric motifs. Kaimur area of Bihar is becoming the major centre for carpet weaving. Other centres include the Bodh Gaya area.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Katihar

## Jute

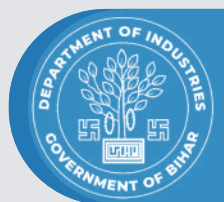


Jute is a versatile natural fibre with a golden and silky shine, hence called 'the golden fibre'. It is the second most important vegetable fibre after cotton. For ages, it has been used to create a wide range of products from sacks, bags and ropes to folders, mats and wall hangings. It is derived from the bark of a reed-like plant grown mainly in the subtropical areas of Asia, especially India, Bangladesh, and China. It is the second largest plant fibre after cotton and is available in large quantities. India also happens to be the largest producer of jute and jute products as the crop is grown in 83 districts of the eastern region of the country primarily West Bengal, Assam, Odisha, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Tripura and Meghalaya. The crop requires abundant rainfall, grows best in warm, humid areas and takes between four and six months to mature, growing to a height of 3-4 metres. Katihar district of Bihar is one of the the major centers of production of Jute products in Bihar.

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# Khagaria

## Bamboo



In the early period of human civilization, when humans were struggling with nature to find food, clothing and shelter, the use of bamboo as a container for daily work, such as storing food and water, had started in Bihar. Buddhist texts mention the manufacture of sieves, needles, fans and shoes for monks to move from bamboo. At present, along with home-useful and traditional materials like soup, sieve, box, various types of decoration materials like small bags, trays, fruit pots, baskets, idols of gods and goddesses, bouquets etc. are being manufactured in Bihar. It is a wonderful pleasure to watch the fickle fingers of the craftsmen who shape the object by cutting and peeling the bamboo with the help of just a knife. The major manufacturing centers of this craft are Samastipur, Khagaria, and Vaishali.

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# Kishanganj

## Kheta Embroidery

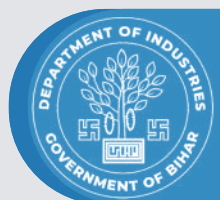


There are still some pockets in our country that are hubs of untouched heritage art forms. Kheta is one such artistic expression that is exclusively practised by the Shershabadi women from Krishanganj district in Bihar. Kheta products are embroidered with geometrical motifs. Though similar embroidered arts, such as Kantha from Bengal and Sujani from Bihar are well-known, Kheta has largely remained elusive and undocumented. The Kheta quilts are made from stitching and layering a few old recycled clothing, such as saris. The products are made using a needle and thread and their designs are inspired by natural patterns and geometric motifs like flowers, flowing rivers, betel leaves, movement of earthworms, basketry and more. However, over the years the Shershabadi women have developed their own unique quilting techniques of pure geometric forms, avoiding the figurative descriptions of Sujni and the circular patterns of Kantha.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Madhepura

## Bamboo



In the early period of human civilization, when humans were struggling with nature to find food, clothing and shelter, the use of bamboo as a container for daily work, such as storing food and water, had started in Bihar. Buddhist texts mention the manufacture of sieves, needles, fans and shoes for monks to move from bamboo. At present, along with home-useful and traditional materials like soup, sieve, box, various types of decoration materials like small bags, trays, fruit pots, baskets, idols of gods and goddesses, bouquets etc. are being manufactured in Bihar. It is a wonderful pleasure to watch the fickle fingers of the craftsmen who shape the object by cutting and peeling the bamboo with the help of just a knife. The major manufacturing centers of this craft are Samastipur, Khagaria, and Madhepura.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Madhubani

## Madhubani Painting



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Irreplaceable Treasures of Incredible India

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## Prominent Artisans

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# Madhubani

## Sikki Painting

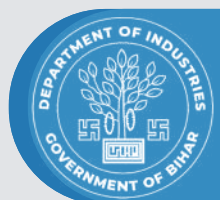


Sikki is an art that is hugely found and practised in the Mithilanchal region of Bihar. The process of making Sikki painting involves patience and creativity. Firstly the sikki grass is cut from the root and then washed with water. The remaining grass is then shaved and cut with a knife. The sikki made after this is mixed with different colors. Raiyam village in the Jhanjharpur block and Rampur village in the Panadol block of Madhubani district are famous for this art. The handicrafts made out of this art represent a unique culture of a particular region. Sikki handicrafts not only produce decorative items but also daily life items and include economic and traditional values along with it. Art has hugely changed over time and today is a source of income for many artisans.

## Prominent Artisans

Dhirendra Kumar  
Radha Kumari  
Geeta Devi  
Kiran Devi

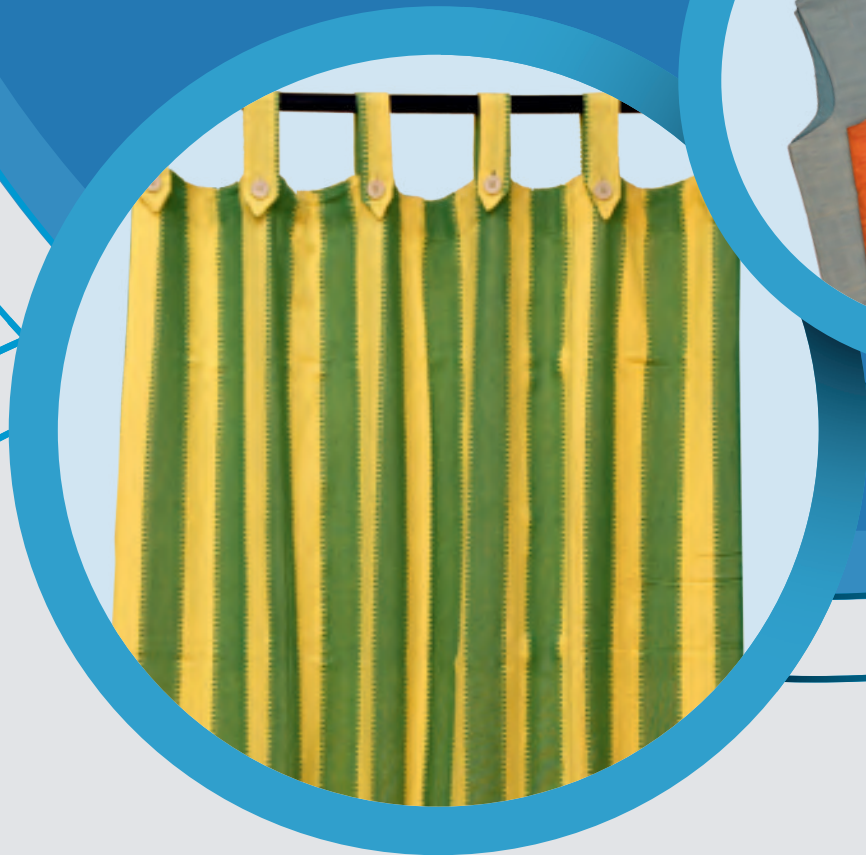
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# Madhubani

## Khadi

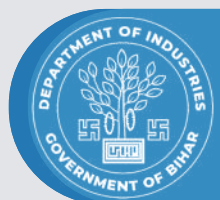


Khadi derived from khaddar, is a hand-spun and woven natural fibre cloth promoted by Mahatma Gandhi as swadeshi (self-sufficiency) for the freedom struggle of the Indian subcontinent, and the term is used throughout India. Khadi means handspun and handwoven cloth. In 1918 Mahatma Gandhi started his movement for Khadi as relief programme for the poor masses living in India's villages. Spinning and weaving was elevated to an ideology for self-reliance and self government. In Bihar the practice of khadi weaving and spinning is present in almost every district to some extent but predominantly it is practised on a larger scale in Madhubani, Darbhanga and Bhagalpur.

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# Muzaffarpur

## Sujni Embroidery



अतुल्य भारत की अमूल्य निधि  
Irreplaceable Treasures of Incredible India

Sujani (or Sujini) is one of the most popular forms of conventional art and craft of Bihar. It is a traditional quilt making method popular in the rural areas of the state of Bihar. This art has been long preserved in the remote villages by the women who prepare articles of great aesthetic value, primarily meant for household uses. Created with the simplest of stitches, with readily available fabrics and at times with well-worn pieces of clothes, the sujani works are generally done by women in their free times. They make items like saree, dupattas and kurtas. The clothes for the new-born and infants adorned with sujani works are the best illustration of this form of art. The sujani technique of sewing together the layered pieces of old cloth is deeply rooted in two ancient beliefs. First, the clothes bound together by Sujani serve a ritual function. Stitching together the separate pieces symbolically embodies the holistic Indian philosophy that all parts belong to the whole and must return to it.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Muzaffarpur

## Lac Bangle



Lac-Bangle making of Bihar is largely centered around the region of Muzaffarpur. It is a very lucrative small scale industry of the region. The artisans involved in bangle making collect their raw material from the nearby forests, mainly lac and the natural colors used in the making of these colorful roundels. Bright and brilliant colors are typically used in bangles. They range from vermilion to bright yellow, from resplendent reds and purples to shining golds. The artisans from Muzaffarpur specialize in the making of a special kind of bangles called the lahathi. They form an integral part of Bihar's bangle-making tradition. These lac bangles are wonderfully decorated in bright colors usually orange and yellow and they are striped exquisitely. Often small mirror like glass pieces are adorned on the bangles.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Nalanda

## Bawan Booti

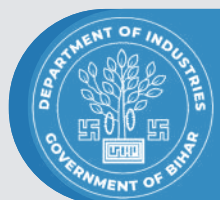


The Bawan booti handicraft of Nalanda is a very old tradition, in which fine threads are put by hand on plain cloth. Due to the presence of at least 52 herbs in each workmanship, it has been given the name of Bawanbooti. The entire design of the garment is made in this booti. Bawanbooti got a lot of love from the first President of the country, Dr. Rajendra Prasad. He got Bawanbooti curtains made and installed in Rashtrapati Bhavan, after which this art got a lot of fame. Upendra Maharathi also did a lot of work on this design. He used to get a draft of the design made on paper from Patna and take it to Basavanbigha in Nalanda and get it done by sitting with the weavers. He had made the Presidential pattern, in which this art got enough expansion.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Nawada Handloom

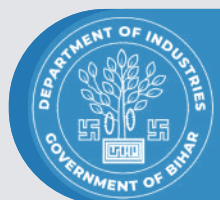


The tradition of handloom in Bihar is as ancient as the civilization itself in Bihar. Patliputra the capital of the Grand Magadh Empire, was the centre of fashion, style and class. It thus attracted weavers from all over the country who with the help of local craftsmen created styles over ages which now have become famous the world over. In the eastern part of Bihar, Bhagalpur and Banka have the largest concentration of weavers. the geo-climatic condition of the region is suitable for the production of silk and hence the region is one of the largest producers of Handloom Silk items in the country. The regions of Nawada, Bhagalpur, Gopalganj are the major pockets for the Handloom products in the state, engaged in the production of one of the world's best quality handloom products.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Patna

## Tikuli Painting



Tikuli is a rare and unique art of hand painting which originated more than 800 years ago in the Patna district of Bihar. The word “Tikuli” is derived from the word “Tikli” which is a dot like embellishment with glass base and gold foil in a variety of designs used by most of the married Indian women for adorning their forehead. Now a days, the art of tikuli making has been fused with Madhubani painting to make decorative wall plates, coasters, table mats, wall hanging, trays, pen stands, and other utility items. This has increased the facets of this art and the scope of creativity for the artists. The fusion has not only created a new charm to the art but has also imparted economic value to the produce.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Patna

## Brass Metal

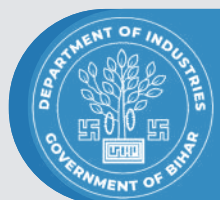


Brass metal craft is one of the most ancient crafts of the state. It is about 300 years old in Bihar. This includes manufacturing of various utility and decorative products made from Gold, Silver, Brass, Zinc, and Ashtdhatu metals. Gold and silver metals are widely used for the manufacturing of jewellery items. Brass and Ashtdhatu metals are used for the manufacturing of the idols of various Hindu deities. Parev in Patna is famous for the manufacturing of metal products. The metal works of copper, brass, and bell metal are famous products. The craftsmen of Bihar used three different techniques, namely lost wax method, Reposee and Dhokra for the manufacturing of various metal items. It is popular for decorative items like idols of God-Goddesses, statues and other daily utility items.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Purnia

## Bamboo



In the early period of human civilization, when humans were struggling with nature to find food, clothing and shelter, the use of bamboo as a container for daily work, such as storing food and water, had started in Bihar. Buddhist texts mention the manufacture of sieves, needles, fans and shoes for monks to move from bamboo. At present, along with home-useful and traditional materials like soup, sieve, box, various types of decoration materials like small bags, trays, fruit pots, baskets, idols of gods and goddesses, bouquets etc. are being manufactured in Bihar. It is a wonderful pleasure to watch the fickle fingers of the craftsmen who shape the object by cutting and peeling the bamboo with the help of just a knife. The major manufacturing centers of this craft are Samastipur, Khagaria, and Vaishali.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Samastipur

## Bamboo

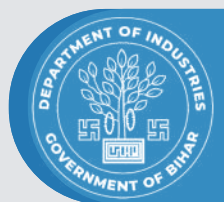


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## Prominent Artisans

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# Sitamarhi

## Sikki



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Crafted products mainly in various form of containers, figurines of Gods and Goddesses and toys using Sikki grass have been an integral part of the living heritage of the women in Northern Bihar, mainly in the Mithila region. In olden times women in the rural areas were supposed to be an expert in handicraft. Sikki Grass is a golden grass grown in the wet and marshy areas around rivers and ponds in Mithila region. It is cut from the field and then dried in the sun. It needs protection from rain and rats. Munj grass, another locally available grass is also used with sikki grass to give structural strength to the products. The Munj grass is bundled and the Sikki grass is wound around it in different shapes. The products have found economic value as well and they are now being produced for selling into the market. This has generated significant employment amongst women of the rural areas. Sitamarhi is one of the important centres of this art.

## Prominent Artisans

Nazda Khatun  
Munni Devi  
Rani Devi  
Durga Kumari

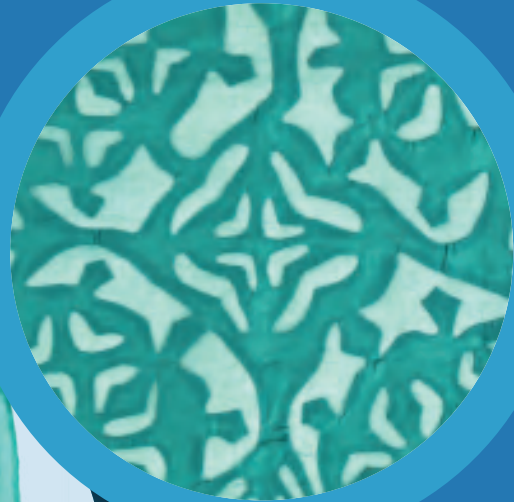
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# Sitamarhi

## Applique



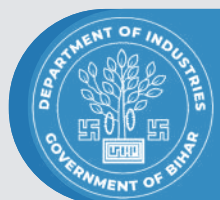
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Applique refers to a needle-work technique in which patterns or representational scenes are created by attaching small colourful pieces of fabric on to a larger piece of contrasting colour or texture. Applique is done in two ways: (a) Different patterns are first cut from a single piece of fabric and they are then attached to the base fabric. This form of applique work is known as “Kashida”. (b) In the other style, first the motifs are cut out individually and they are then attached to the base fabric in different compositions. A mixture of different textured fabrics enhances the richness of the design and produces vivid effect of colours and shade. Applique work is done on sarees and dress materials to enhance their look. Various household furnishing items like bed-sheet, table cloth, pillow cover, cushion etc. are also adorned with applique work. Beautiful wall hangings are also created using the Applique work. The art is popular and practised across the state.

## Prominent Artisans

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# Supaul

## Lac Bangle



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## Prominent Artisans

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# Vaishali

## Sujni Embroidery

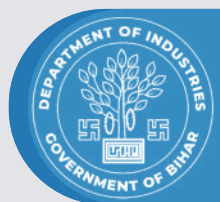


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## Prominent Artisans

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# Notes

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