

Craft And Cultural Centre in Rarh Region, West Bengal

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Abstract

India has a rich heritage of craft which reflect the culture of a society. Craft practices are age old and it signifies the culture of a particular community. West Bengal itself has a diverse variety of crafts and it empowers 5.5lakh men and women. This sector has high potential for employment, and it is economically important from the point of low capital investment, high ratio of value addition, and high potential for export and foreign exchange earnings for the country. 'Rahr' region is has versatile craft forms with a rich history, heritage and culture. The existing craft villages lacks infrastructural support which will represent the community and its craft eventually its culture in a better and appropriate method. A craft and cultural centre will promote the craft sector which in turn will create economic growth and empower more artisans. This dissertation focus on the different aspects which are to be studied for the proposal of a Craft and Cultural Centre in Rarh Region, West Bengal.

Keywords : Craft, Cultural

Introduction

India is a culturally diverse country with a rich heritage of crafts, which evolved upon social and religious practices. It is an expression of community response which leads to its development. Craft narrates the culture of the society with natural resources available making it a unique identity of a community. Handicrafts of West Bengal embody rich heritage of aesthetics, creativity and artistry of our country. For centuries, villages have formed as settlements and grown on the virtue of the handicrafts that they produce. The craft sector provides low cost, green livelihood opportunities to more than 5.5 lakh people.



Figure 1. Location of West Bengal

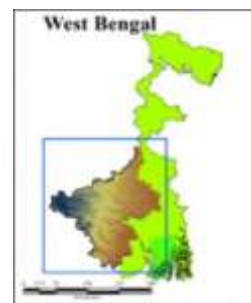


Figure 2. Rarh Region

'Rahr' region means the "land of red soil". Geographically Rarh region is the part of West Bengal that lies between the Ganga delta on the east and Chotanagpur Plateau on the west. Although the boundaries of the region have been defined differently according to various sources throughout history, today it is mainly coextensive with the state of West Bengal also comprising some portions of the state of Jharkhand and Bihar in India. Historically this region has been known by many names and has hosted numerous settlements throughout history. So, 'Rahr Bengal' has a historical and cultural significance which has a

greater impact on Bengali tradition.

As culturally enriched, six important craft sectors of West Bengal belong to Rahr Region.

Now, to increase the awareness of these rural crafts and culture in the realm of tourism, eventually creating economic growth, a Craft and Cultural Centre located in this region will cater to the six rural craft villages and its artisan communities of this region. The aim of this project is to bring the different craft forms under a roof creating more possibilities for the artisans as well as promoting cultural tourism of West Bengal.

These six craft hubs of Rahr Region are

TERRACOTTA

Location: Panchmura, Bankura



Figure 3. Terracotta Horse

DOKRA

Location: Bikna, Bankura



Figure 4. Dokra Sculpture

CHAU MASK

Location: Charida, Purulia



Figure 5. Chau dancers wearing mask

PATACHITRA

Location: Pingla, Pashchim Medinipur



Figure 6. Patachitra

WOODEN DOLL

Location: Natungram, Bardhaman



Figure 7. Natungram Wooden Owl

KANTHA STITCH

Location: Nanoor, Birbhum



Figure 8. Kantha Stitch

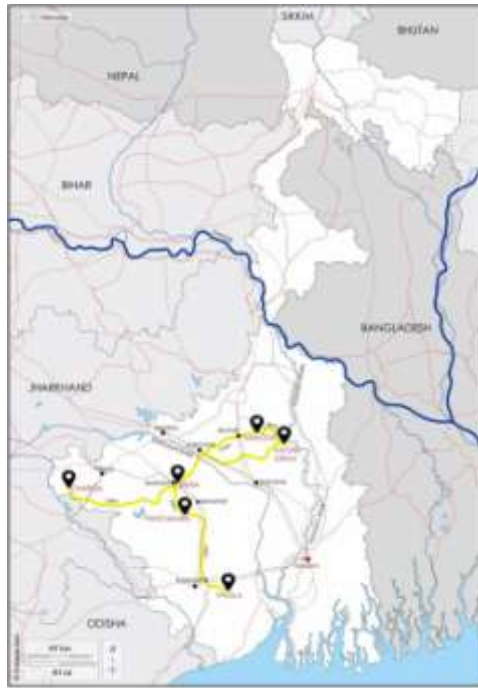


Figure 9. Location of existing craft villages

Background

Relationship between Craft & Culture

In many ways, a civilization's intangible cultural heritage is linked to its traditional forms of craftsmanship. They tell stories of lives lived, of the past, of a way of being. Crafts signify the evolution of existence. They point us towards the role of rituals and traditions. Thus, depicting the cultural side of a community. Crafts envelop tools, clothing and jewellery, costumes and props for festivals and performing arts, storage containers, objects used for storage, transport and shelter, decorative art and ritual objects, musical instruments and household utensils, and toys, both for amusement and education. Many of these objects are only intended to be used for a short time, such as those created for festival rites, while others may become heirlooms that are passed from generation to generation. So, traditionally these craft items mold the social, educational, religious, political life of a community signifying the culture.

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

In recent decades, the content of the term 'cultural heritage' has been changed considerably, it does not end at built heritage such as monuments and collections of objects. It also includes knowledge, traditions or living expressions inherited from the ancestors and passed to the next generation. In the 1990s, the concept of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) emerged as a counterpart to the World Heritage focusing primarily on the physical nature of culture. Intangible culture is the counterpart of culture which is touchable or tangible, while intangible culture cannot be touched and interacted with or without a vehicle or the culture, it includes songs, music, drama and crafts etc. UNESCO passed a convention in 2003 to protect ICH which aimed to raise awareness regarding the importance of ICH and ensure its respect and mutual appreciation. The convention provided definition of ICH as “the practices, representations,

expressions, knowledge, skills—as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage”. In the context of Malaysia, intangible heritage includes any form of expression, languages, performance, dance, song, music, and martial arts, which may have existed or exist in relation to the heritage of Malaysia. While, in the context of Korea, the ICH is considered as intangible cultural works of outstanding historic, artistic, or academic value, such as a drama, music, dance, game, ritual, craft skills, etc.

The Convention also divided ICH into five categories including traditional craftsmanship. The handicraft products reflect the culture, inherited skills, knowledge and show the beauty of heritage. One way to understand the intangible culture exemplified in crafts is to look at tangible handicrafts. Thus, the skills, techniques and knowledge are very important for ongoing production from one generation to the next.

Government Policies

This project named ‘Development of Rural Craft and Cultural Hubs in West Bengal’ by the Government of West Bengal and UNESCO envisages several policies for sustainable development through social and economic inclusion of the disadvantaged rural communities. As Intangible Cultural Heritage of India, handicraft sector should be promoted. Rural artisans and performers lacking formal education and training do not find better income opportunities outside their traditional occupations either, and end up working as low-end daily wagers. Thus, restoring the dignity of, and providing decent income opportunities through their ancestral traditional knowledge and skills is particularly vital for rural artisans and performers.

Rarh Region-The Land of Red Soil

Rarh region is a toponym for an area in the Indian subcontinent that lies between the Chotanagpur Plateau on the west and Ganga Delta on the east. Although the boundaries of the region have been defined differently according to various sources throughout history, today it is mainly coextensive with the state of West Bengal also comprising some portions of the state of Jharkhand and Bihar in India. The Rarh region historically has been known by many different names and has hosted numerous settlements and has strong cultural roots. It is suggested that the Rarh Region hosted an ancient civilization also called Rarh and a powerful state, however much of its ancient history remains unknown. Parts of this region were ruled by Gupta rulers during the Gupta period and later by Malla rulers and known as Mallabhum. The terracotta temples, pottery, Dokra metal crafts date back to that era. Parts of the districts Murshidabad, Birbhum, Bankura, Bardhaman, Purba Medinipur, Pashchim Medinipur, and Nadia constitute this region. The region is about 50-100m above sea level.

Detail Case Study Of The Existing Craft Hubs Considered For The Craft And Cultural Centre

Terracotta

Terracotta is a type of fired clay, typically of a brownish-red colour which is used as ornamental building material and in modelling different idols, figurines, etc. It is one of the most ancient manifestations of human creativity. Ritual horses, elephants Manasa Chali (the crafted pitcher symbolizing Manasa, the snake Goddess) and Shashthi (the guardian deity of children) are produced in Panchmura, Bankura. The archetypical horse of Bankura Terracotta has over time gained recognition among art lovers of the world. It is regarded as a symbol of the All India Handicrafts Board. Dried in sun and burnt in mud kilns, these earthly ensembles in dull ochre or red are a delight to the eyes. Along with the traditional terracotta models, new designs and artistic models are evolving based on the

demands of urban customers for decoration purposes.



Figure 10. Terracotta Horse Figure 11. Terracotta Decorative Wall Tiles Figure 12. Decorative Wall Hanging

The Malla kings made the Terracotta art of Bishnupur popular by building terracotta temples all over the place. The temples served a dual purpose for them by being a place of worship on one hand and that of shelter for warriors on the other. The ubiquitous terracotta structures with their apparent subtle and artistic façade were rock solid inside. The kings brought the craftsmen from Panchmura to build these temples, and that marked the beginning of Bishnupur Terracotta tradition.



Figure 13. Terracotta Temple of Bishnupur

- Process- The entire process of making terracotta sculptures involves a lot of hard work. It starts from the procurement of clay and finally ends as finished terracotta sculptures.
 1. Earth collection and storage
 2. Preparation of clay
 3. Making of basic form
 4. Dried and finishing details
 5. Making of natural colour
 6. Colouring sculptures
 7. Burnt in earthen kiln
- Associated Spaces-
 - Storage of clay and mixing of clay- Each of the houses of the artists has a verandah space in the front. This space has multipurpose use. Raw material earth is stored in sacks here. Mixing of the earth with sand is also done here. And the clay prepared by mixing is also stored here. Some artists having smaller houses mix the clay at the roadside adjacent to their house.
 - Wheel area- At one corner of this verandah a wheel is placed.
 - Loft for storage- All the rooms and verandah have loft for storage. The moulds for tiles,

different tools and colours are stored in these lofts.

- Drying area- The drying process which takes place in shade is done in rooms and verandah. But the sun drying is done outside the house.
- Storage of natural colours- The natural colours prepared in pots are kept inside the house.

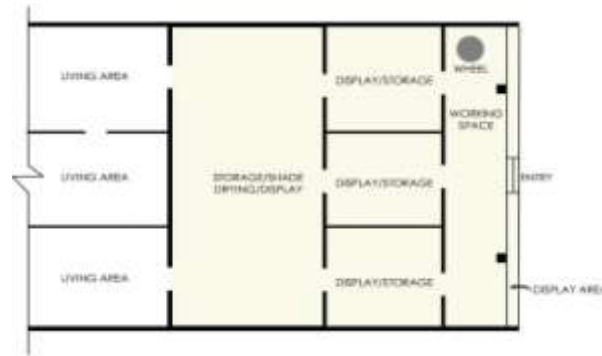


Figure 14. Schematic plan of artisan's house Ground Floor
(Source: Author)

- Earthen kiln- 2.5m x 3m shade structure has the earthen kiln. The kilns are common used by 9-10 artist families. Beside the kilns there are spaces to store dried leaves and straws which are used to fire the kiln.



Figure 15. Earthen Kiln Shade

- Storage and display of finished products- All the finished products are stored in the rooms adjoining the verandah in the house and sometimes displayed in the verandah as well so that the products are visible from outside the house.



Figure 16. Front of the house as display area



Figure 17. Storage/Display inside a house

Dokra craft is one of the earliest methods of non-ferrous metal casting known to human civilization. The lost or vanishing wax casting method of metal casting, popularly known as dokra, is a primitive technique, which can be traced back to the Indus Valley Civilization. Dokra statues are revered all over the world for its primeval simplicity and the enthralling folk motifs. These figures have a rustic and antique finish which adds to its appeal.

A few hundred years ago the Dokra makers of Central and Eastern India traveled as far as Andhra Pradesh in the south and Rajasthan in the north and thus the art form is now practiced all over India. The main pockets practicing Dokra are Bastar in Chhattisgarh, Ushegaon and Chittabari in Adilabad district of Andhra Pradesh, Puri, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Khurda in Odisha, Purulia Bankura and Bardhaman in West Bengal and semi-tribal communities living at the mountain ranges of Vindhya in Madhya Pradesh.

The traditional themes of these cast metal sculptures include images of Hindu Or 'tribal' gods and goddesses (like Goddess Durga, Laxmi, Saraswati and Lord Sri Krishna, Shiva, Kartik, Ganesh etc.), bowls, figures of people or deities riding elephants, musicians, horse and rider figures, elephants, cattle, and other figures of people, animals, and birds, tribal jewelry, tribal doll, lamp, chains, caskets, etc., are highly appreciated.

Dokra of Bengal received its GI status in 2018.



Figure 18. Recent Dokra Designs

- Process-Dokra artists use a very interesting method to cast metal into the craft, a technique that is known as 'Cire Perdue' or 'lost wax' process. The making procedure of Dokra craft items has a lot of intricate detailed work. Starting from basic clay models till the finishing it follows a long process and takes 7 days to complete one product.
 1. Core making- A core is made out of local clay, slightly smaller than the final intended size of the artifact. This is hardened by firing or sun-drying.
 2. Resin Layer- A black coloured material is made with resin ('dhuna'-extracted from the Sal tree) and mustard oil and mixed well. After it becomes of the desired consistency, it is applied in the core clay model.
 3. Wax modelling- Now a detailed wax model is created using wax thread. The raw wax bought from the market is processed as wax threads.
 4. Clay moulding- The wax model is coated with a thin layer of very fine clay, which will form an impression of every detail of the model. When this layer is dry and hard, further layers of clay are added to the mould. One or more pouring channels are provided, through which molten metal can run to fill the mould.
 5. De-waxing- The mould is heated to melt the wax, and the molten wax is poured out (it may be recovered for subsequent re-use). This leaves a cavity which has the exact size, shape and surface contours of the intended artifact.
 6. Casting- Molten metal is poured into the cavity and the mould left to cool.
 7. Finishing- The artifact is broken out of the mould. Traces of baked clay are removed and surface blemishes and defects repaired using a buffing machine.

- Associated Spaces-

- Workshop space- A 5m x 10m shade is considered as a workshop space where all the procedures are done before casting. Each workshop area is shared by 9-10 families. Storage of material is also done in these workshop shades.



Figure 19. A Workshop Shade

- Furnace- A separate shade has the furnaces. One furnace is used to melt the brass and bell metal scraps and the other two are used for heating of moulds and casting. This is the only furnace shade of the village shared by all the artisans.



Figure 20. Furnace

- Lifestyle- There are 65 families of Dokra artists in Bikna Shilpadanga. The dwelling units and the working units are arranged in clusters in Bikna Shilpadanga. A central workshop shade serves the houses around it. All the houses here are single storey.

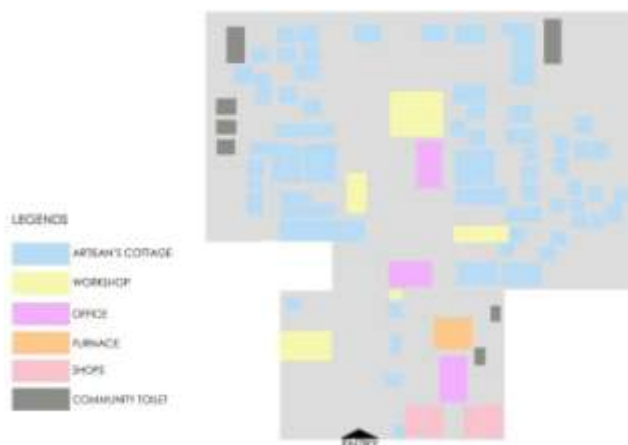


Figure 21. Schematic layout of Bikna Dokra Artist's Village
(Source: Author)

Chau Mask

Charida village, home to the Chau Mask makers, is in Purulia district of West Bengal. The mask-making tradition started in Charida about 150 years back during the reign of King Madan Mohan Singh Deo of Baghmundi when he invited a few Sutraddhar families to Charida and gave them lands to settle. The use of the Purulia Chau mask was popularized by veteran Chau dancers like Gambhir Singh Mura and Nepal Mahato, both of whom were Padmasree awardees. In modern days, masks for Chau dance still constitute the main market; the mask makers also make smaller masks for home décor and souvenirs. Chau Mask of Charida received GI status in 2018.



Figure 22. Traditional Chau Mask Figure 23. Decorative Chau Mask

- Process- Mostly made of paper pulp and clay, Chhau masks are often huge in size but not heavy since they are worn by the performers during the show. Each mask takes 5-7 days to prepare.
1. Collection of clay- The key ingredient is the clay which is collected from the bank of a small river flowing through the village.
 2. Preparation of clay- The collected clay is kneaded well till it reaches the required smoothness.
 3. Shaping of clay- The clay is shaped into the desired shape of the masks by hand. Then it is smoothed and detailing is done using the wooden spatula, *Thapi*. These clay masks work as frames for the rest of the process. It is partially dried in the sun. Once it is done powdered ash is sprinkled on it.
 4. Paper layering- Newspaper, old school book and notebook paper shreds are moistened with natural adhesive and pasted on the clay mask upto 8-15 layers thick.
 5. Drying- Now these masks are allowed to dry under bright sun throughout a day. Rain should be completely avoided as it may delay the entire process of drying.

6. Application of *Bele Mati*- Next, a thin coating of *bele mati* (soil with high sand content) is applied to each mask.
 7. Cloth layering and finishing- After that small pieces of cloth smeared with clay placed over the paper coating, and a wooden carving tool is used to polish the mask and create facial features like eyes, nose and mouth.
 8. Final drying- The mask is left to dry up again under the sun. The cloth and paper layer is slowly removed from the mask ensuring the facial features are not disturbed. This cloth and paper mask is the final mask.
 9. Plastering, colouring, decoration- The mask is then plastered with Khori Mati(a type of soil rich in high calcium). Finally, the mask is coloured and decorated with embellishments according to the characters they represent. Wool, jute, foil, bamboo sticks, plastic flowers and beads are used for ornamentation.
- Associated Spaces-The workshop of Chau Mask is only a single room which is at the front side of the house of the artisans. This room acts as the shop as well. All the masks are hung on the wall of this room. There is no particular drying space for the masks. One can see the masks lying on the road sides for drying.

Patachitra

Patachitra is a unique folk tradition of visual storytelling accompanied by songs performed by the Patuas. Stories are painted on long scrolls by the painters known as Chitrakars (family surname) who gradually unfurl them while narrating. Patachitra is known for its bold colours, lines and strokes. The multilayer communication in Patachitra includes strong visual and lucid audio messages which not only enliven the traditional stories but is also used to communicate the social issues.



Figure 24. Traditional Patachitra Scrolls

Patachitra in its original form is painted on paper scrolls. With design intervention in recent times the paintings are done not only for narrative purposes but also for decoration on various products. These include apparels, fashion accessories, lifestyle items, furniture, jewellery etc.

- Process-
 1. Outlines of the paintings are directly drawn on paper with paint and brush.
 2. The line drawings are filled in with colour.
 3. A layer of recycled soft fabric is pasted on the reverse side of the paper to make the scroll stronger. Sometimes it is directly drawn on canvas if the scroll is long.
 4. The paintings are dried naturally.
- Associated Spaces- Each house of the artists has a room allotted as studio/workshop. Everything related to Patachitra that is storage of finished items and painting is done in the studio. They often sit outside their house to paint.



Figure 25. Huts painted with Patachitra murals

Wooden Doll

Vibrant colour, intricate design and ethnic style, are the characteristic features of the wooden dolls made by the artisans of Natungram. The traditional designs based on culture and mythology, the richness of ideas, the brilliant combination of pure simplicity and glamour combined with the master craftsmanship of the crafts persons results in an amazing work of art. The dolls are carved from one piece of wood. Owl, Rashi Putul (figures of Radha-Krishna on a single block of wood), Durga, Gour Nitai and Raja Rani dolls are traditionally made.



Figure 26. Wooden Owl



Figure 27. Handcrafted Stool

The crafts persons have improvised their craft into different utility items to reach out to the market. They make furniture, clock, wall racks and other decorative and utility items using the traditional Owl, Gour-Nitai and Raja Rani dolls in these products.

- Process-
- 1. Figures are drawn on the blocks of wood.
- 2. The drawing is chiselled out.
- 3. Carved surface is cleaned and smoothened.
- 4. A paste with Khari mati, flour, water and adhesive is made to cover the surface and left to dry. Khari mati gives a smooth finish to the dolls.
- 5. Colours are applied.
- 6. Motifs with specific designs are marked out by fine brush strokes.



Figure 28. Artisan's huts and working space

Kantha Stitch

Kantha is one of the oldest forms of embroidery from India. Its origin can be traced back to the pre-Vedic age (prior to 1500 BCE). The earliest and most basic kantha stitch is a simple, straight, running stitch. Over time, more elaborate patterns developed, which became known as "nakshi kantha". Nakshi comes from the Bengali word, naksha, which refers to artistic patterns. Nakshi kantha is made up of motifs influenced by religion, culture and the lives of the women stitching people. The entire cloth is covered with running stitches, depicting beautiful motifs of flowers, animals, birds and geometrical shapes, as well as themes from everyday activities. Kantha is a form of personal expression, an art-craft that is made spontaneously or even whimsically at times.



Figure 29. Stitching

- Process-The traditional process of Kantha making was of arranging layers of old cloth together and sewing them on the edges. Once this basic structure was done, they used to embroider the designs. In contemporary products, the used clothes have been replaced by silk or cotton base material.
- 1. Drawing motif- The motif is drawn on a piece of tracing paper.
- 2. Perforation- Then the tracing paper is perforated using a board pin or mechanical perforating needle.
- 3. Tracing- At first the tracing paper is spread on the cloth on which the design is to be stitched. Next the coloured powder is mixed with kerosene and then it is spread on the paper. So the impression of the design gets on the cloth.
- 4. Stitching- The border of the design is first stitched onto the fabric with a single colour and running stitch. Then the design is filled in with the chosen colours and variety of stitches suited best to the motifs.
- 5. Washing and finishing- After completion, the embroidered piece is washed and prepared for the market.
- Associated Spaces-The village huts have a verandah in the front which acts as a multipurpose space. From household chores to stitching Kanthas the women of the houses spend their entire day in those verandahs. Many of them gather together at one place and work together. This acts as a refreshing breakthrough in their monotonous life.



Figure 30. Women stitching together

Casestudy Conclusion

1. Khamir Craft Resource Centre, Bhuj, Gujarat

Architect: Neelkanth Chhaya

Client: Nehru Foundation for Development

Location: Bhuj, Gujarat

Year of Construction: 2007

Site Area: 8093.71 sq.m

Built up Area: 844 sq.m

- Oasis for the artisans, the Khamir Crafts Resource Centre is an architectural translation of a sensitively planned economic model to support, sustain and nurture the knowledge of the diverse craft forms by facilitating interactions.
- Khamir works to strengthen and promote the rich art and traditions of Kutch district.



- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Reception and Exhibition | 4. Administration and Museum |
| 2. Training Room | 5. Store |
| 3(A). Workshop (Leather/ Lacquer) | 6. Guest House |
| 3(B). Workshop (Bell) | 7. Dining |
| 3(C). Workshop (Pottery) | 8. Kitchen |
| 3(D). Workshop (Tie and Die) | 9. Dormitory |
| 3(E). Workshop (Weaving) | 10. Potter's Shade |
| 3(F). Workshop (Block Printing) | 11. Weaver's Shade |

Conclusion

- Circulation is majorly concentrated on the Central spine connecting the cluster.
- The streetscape arrangement facilitates the architecture to participate with users.
- A local village with narrow streets makes the atmosphere of creativity with the artisan and help them to work better.
- Rammed Earth, Rubble Stone, Wattle and Daub are all vernacular materials which make the building climate responsive.

2. LLDC-Living, Learning Design Center, Kutch, Gujarat

Architect: Uday Andhare & Mausami Andhare

Client: Living & Learning Design Center- LLDC – Ajrakhpur – Kutch

Location: Ajrakhpur, Dist – Kutch, Gujarat

Year of Construction: 2015

Site Area: 8 acres

Built up Area: 11150 sq m

- The idea for establishing an institution of this nature emerged soon after the earthquake of 2001.
- It was meant to be a 'place' that would become a tactile and visual repository of the various crafts of Kutch.
- Its primary role as a resource center for artisans doubles up as a public museum and place for demonstrative, hands-on learning.
- The museum complex houses 3 galleries, a library, and a crafts studio for artisans practicing various crafts like weaving, block-printing, pottery, and metal work of Kutch.

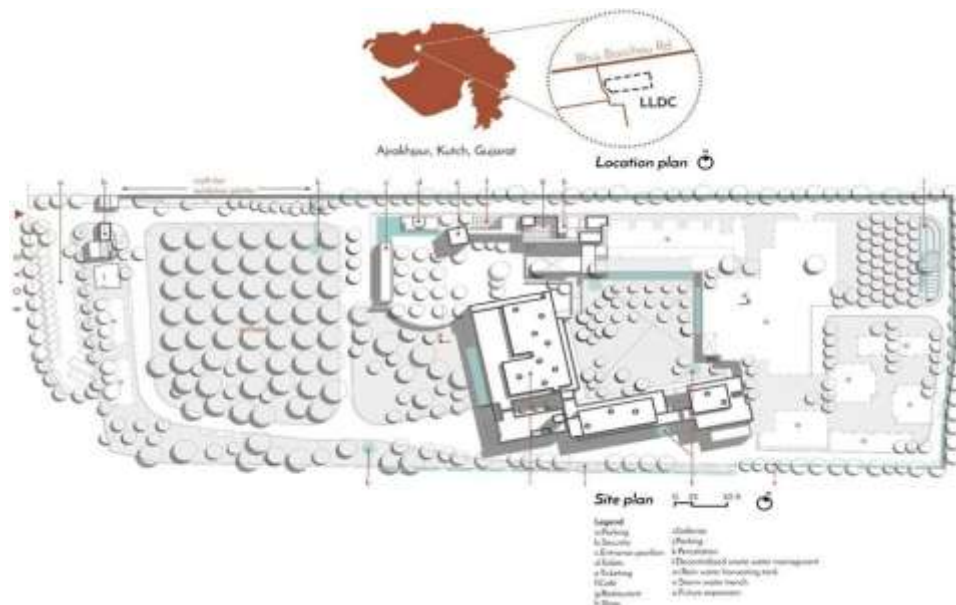


Figure 32. Site Plan

Conclusion

- Manifestation of the idea of local availability and sustainability
- Use of vernacular architecture in a modern way
- Disaster resilient techniques
- Clubbing of courtyards and activities
- Incorporation of light to galleries through truncated pyramids
- The site selection criteria should be based on the location of the users
- Use of water treatment plant



Figure 33. LLDC

3. Dilli Haat, Janakpuri, New Delhi

Architect: Archohm

Client: Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation

Location: Janakpuri, New Delhi

Year of Construction: 2014

Site Area: 32375 sq.m

Built up Area: 16000 sq.m

- Dilli Haat Janakpuri has been modelled as an urban bazaar that accommodates an elaborate programme consisting of craft shops, a music museum, workshops, an exposition hall, an auditorium, an open-air amphitheatre and a large food court.
- Craft shops are arranged in clusters of 5–6 shops and these clusters are further composed in an organic layout to form a bazaar. Paved allies meander along the craft shop clusters and small green patches lending an intimate character to this zone.

- A1. Basket Tower- Banquet Hall
- A2. Basket Tower- DTTDC Office
- A3. Basket Tower- Music Store
- A4. Basket Tower- Museum
- B. Exposition Hall
- C. Amphitheatre and Auditorium
- D. Circular Craft Stalls
- E. Air Conditioned Shops
- F. Food Court
- G. Parking
- H. Kids Zone
- I. Cafeteria
- J. Central Court
- K. Public Toilet



Figure 34. SITE PLAN

Conclusion

- Green space is provided at relevant spaces.
- Consist of many negative spaces which are a place of dust collection.
- Unauthorised stalls have been setup.
- Location of drinking water is not appropriate i.e. near to the washrooms.
- Number of ramps to reach different level are less at far distances.
- Not all service entries are used.
- The placement system of stalls is convincing.
- Temporary stalls can be improvised.
- Every kitchen has its own gas and water supply.
- Climate Responsiveness: The built forms in the Dilli Haat have been clad in stone that delays heat from reaching the interiors due to its thickness and thermal mass.
- Rainwater harvesting is an eco-sensitive feature incorporated in the site planning of Dilli Haat.

4. Sanskriti Kendra, Anandagram, New Delhi

Architect: Upal Ghosh

Client: Sanskriti Foundation

Location: Anandagram, New Delhi

Year of Construction: 1993

Site Area: 7 acres

- Sanskriti Kendra is a symbol of Sanskriti's involvement in activities relating to art, craft, literature, the performing arts, and social work. It is a cultural centre where artists and sculptors, writers and musicians, and village craftsmen, practise their arts in tranquil surroundings that engage the mind with the imagery of the idyllic pastoral countryside with its man made interventions.
- The buildings are semi-rustic in appearance, with ample space between them for strolling or catching a breath of fresh air- but not so far apart as to engender a sense of isolation.



Figure 35. Site Plan

Conclusion

The complex has no visibility from the road and lies in the interiors thus preserving the isolation, quietness and solitude of the Kendra

- The 3 main entrances create a number of options to be followed to reach the different spaces, each offering different features and views, thus generating interest in the individual.
- Circulation inside the complex is limited to pedestrians.
- Various levels have been incorporated to add a new dimension to the simple plan layout.
- The concept of creating a village environment and setup is fulfilled by the use of materials and different components of a rural setup but the formal planning mars the purpose to an extent.
- The site planning can be broken down into an arrangement of squares which is the form of all buildings and open spaces.
- On both macro and micro level, a strong relation exists between the built mass and their surrounding open spaces as they are highly interactive in nature consisting of levels in topography and components like open air theaters, water pools etc. while in the building too, spaces flow into each other giving the interiors a very open feeling creating an ambience which fuels the artist's creativity.
- Most of the exhibits are in open enclosures with mud walls forming charming frames and providing a pleasant authentic backdrop.
- Landscaping has been done quite extensively, employing several elements such as water pools, pergolas, freestanding columns, concrete frames etc. the area is full of trees and vegetation, which makes the surroundings cool and pleasant.
- Minimum breach of existing vegetation and land has been done.
- The Baithak-office has been strategically placed at a higher level overlooking the entire complex.
- In studios, a variety of spaces, both indoor and outdoor are provided where artist can work and relax.
- An attempt to recreate the scenario by means of mud cottages built in traditional systems has been taken. Thatch and tiled roofing can also be seen at several places.

Architectural Intervention

This project will have an impact on the social and economic condition of the artisans and help in its development and preserving the culture of the area. The centre shall facilitate the needs of the seller and the buyer in an appropriate environment, which shall encourage the trade and economic growth of the region. It will depict the craft forms which shape the lives of the artisans. The vernacular material and construction technique of the Rarh region is an important criterion for conveying the idea and concept of this project.

The project will include separate spaces for the six craft forms selected as per their needs. The centre will have a live demonstration of making procedures of the craft items and the sale of the same. So appropriate spaces should be provided according to the demand of the craft forms and interaction of the artisans with the spaces. The centre will also provide infrastructural facilities to the artisans so it will include spaces for training and research. Appropriate spaces for workshops and seminars of heritage education and exchange and collaboration with international institutions and artists are also to be included in the program.

This Craft and Cultural Centre will represent the culture of the Rarh region of West Bengal primarily through different handicrafts of this region. This centre will serve as a platform for the artisans to reach the tourists. The centre will provide Experience, Education and Entertainment to the visitors eventually benefitting the artisans economically. So functionally the centre will be having **three** different zones

- Artisan's residential and workshop spaces
- Visitor's accommodation
- Recreational Spaces

The detailed program along with their purpose are listed below:

i. Artisan's Residential- They are permanent residential units of the artisans. Out of the six craft forms of Rahr region, two of them i.e. Dokra and Terracotta artisans will have residential units. Primary reason behind this is the availability of raw materials of these two crafts in Bankura.

ii. Workshop and furnace- Workshop spaces of these two crafts will be designed around the residential units as every person in an artisan family is involved in craft making. Visitors can experience the process of making Dokra or Terracotta items in the workshop areas and buy directly from the artisans. Guests who want to learn the making of these crafts items can learn and attend hand on workshops from the artisans. The training facility for the young generation of the artisan community will be also provided in this centre.

iii. Workshops and Shops- The rest four craft forms which are Chau Mask, Wooden Doll, Kantha stitch and Patachitra will have only workshop areas. Shops will be the main unit here for visitors to buy products. Artisans can travel from their respective villages to sell their items in these shops and also work in these workshops. Hands-on training for guests and foreign artists and designers will be provided in these workshops.

iv. AV Room- Seminars, training programs and documentary shows for visitors will be held in the AV room.

v. Classroom- Classrooms will facilitate proper training programs for the guests.

vi. Amphitheatre- Amphitheatre will house the cultural programs that will take place in the centre. Apart from handicrafts, Rarh region is famous for folk music and dance forms. Regular shows will take place for the visitors and guests to showcase the intangible heritage.

vii. Cafeteria- The cafeteria will cater to the guests and visitors.

viii. Fair Ground- Twice or thrice a year a fair can take place in this centre. This ground will provide infrastructure for that. This ground will have provision for temporary stalls that will serve the purpose during the fair.

ix. Artisan's Accommodation- The craft artisans coming to sell products or train for a certain period of time can stay here. The accommodation will have dormitory arrangement. The folk musicians or dancers who will come to the centre for performance can also avail this facility.

x. Guest's Accommodation- Students from art and design colleges or any guest who will come to learn and attend hand-on workshops can stay here.

xi. Tourist's Accommodation- This will be accommodation for the tourists with proper facility. By staying within the campus the tourist will be experiencing the cultural essence of this region altogether in one place.

xii. Restaurant and Canteen- Restaurants will serve the tourists and guests and the canteen service will provide to the artisan's who will be staying in the accommodation.

xiii. Admin- The admin will have the ticket counter, centre authority office, and information centre. The information centre will provide information regarding the original craft villages.

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