Research Unit
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Vishwakarma Yojana: Many Crafts, One Platform

A Cultural Melange

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the PM Vishwakarma scheme on 17th September 2023, at the Yashobhoomi, Dwarka, New Delhi. PM Vishwakarma Yojana acts as a national integration programme that brings diverse crafts and craftsmen together. With over 18 trades in focus across the nation, it provides a platform for people and skills from every corner of the country to engage, blend and curate a mosaic of crafts. The scheme focuses on providing the traditional workers, craftsmen and artisans from around the country with socio-economic support so as to strengthen these artists and their art forms. However, it is not only the tangible support, the symbolic features of the scheme also help the Indian crafts and craftsmen shine brighter than ever!



The announcement for the PM Vishwakarma Yojana was made on the auspicious occasion of Vishwakarma Puja. It is a traditional festival that marks the worship of Lord Vishwakarma who is hailed by people as a divine creator and craftsman. The festival is celebrated by artisans, craftsmen and workers across the country. Vishwakarma Puja instils a sense of pride among

the workers and symbolises the significance of these workers and their skills in our everyday lives.

On the occasion, a Vishwakarma exhibition was also held at the exhibition centre at Yashobhoomi, Dwarka that reflected the rich diversity and art traditions of India. It was a three-day long exhibition that highlighted the advancement of traditional artisans and craftsmen from the identified 18 trades by combining heritage and modern technology. The exhibition facilitated multiple Vishwakarma to showcase their talent to the world through this platform. It acts as a reviving force for art forms like making wooden toys that lost their popularity over time. Vishwakarma exhibition put these art forms and their artists under the spotlight gaining attention from all corners of the nation and the world.

Fusion of traditional with modern

The scheme helps to revive these traditional art forms through skill upgradation and the use of modern technology. PM Vishwakarma Yojana allows its recipients a collateral-free development loan of up to 3 Lakhs (Rs 1 Lakh in the first tranche and 2 Lakhs in the second tranche). The scheme aims to support these craftsmen with better and more modern tools as well as to make their work more efficient. The training and financial aid provided to these workers will help bridge the gap between conventional arts and modern technology.

Melting pot of multiple art forms

The inclusion of such a wide variety of arts and crafts in the scheme aligns with the Indian ethos of unity in diversity. The scheme brings together a wide variety of different art forms under the same umbrella. This feature of the scheme was reflected in the three-day exhibition as it cradled a wide spectrum of arts and crafts like *Filigree, Clay Modelling, Toy Making, Sculpting, Chettinad Jewellery, Hair Dressing* etc. 54 artisans and craftsmen from different parts of India, following the '*guru-shishya parampara*', participated in the exhibition. The presence of so many skills under one roof allowed the exchange of skills and unique processes of each craft allowing the artisans to learn from each other and forge a fusion of arts and culture.

One Skill, One Platform

The scheme acts as a cultural thread that links the people at two levels. On one level, several skill sets are brought together under the scheme that connects people culturally. At the second level, the scheme also bridges the region-based differences between workers. This aspect of the Yojana was exemplified at the Vishwakarma exhibition. For each craft, there are artisans coming from different regions of the country who get connected to each other due to this Yojana. The clay modelling stall had skilled workers from Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka

and Kerala moulded together like the clay they were working with to create a melting pot of diversity. The hair-dressing stall had both male and female barbers from parts of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand working together and exchanging notes on their craft.

The scheme is weaving the artisans engaged in a multitude of crafts across geographical and cultural spaces into national recognition. Vishwakarma Yojana empowers the artisans and nurtures their art along with a cultural cauldron for these artisans to grow and prosper.

References:

https://pmvishwakarma.gov.in/

https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1958332

NR/HP/RK/MI