



Research Unit
Press Information Bureau
Government of India

National Mission on Cultural Mapping and Roadmap (NMCMR)

Preserving India's Rich Heritage and Revitalizing Rural Economies

(Ministry of Culture)

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Introduction

In the heart of **Manipur**, the village of **Thongjao** is known as the 'Land of Pottery.' Here, the legacy of **Neelamani Devi**, a master craftswoman who earned the prestigious **Padma Shri** award, continues to inspire the preservation of this ancient art. Neelamani's exceptional skills have not only earned her national recognition but have also played a pivotal role in keeping the village's pottery tradition alive. Today, the villagers, skilled in making everything from utilitarian pots to intricate masterpieces, pass down their craft to the next generation, maintaining a deep connection to their cultural heritage.

This rich tradition is now part of India's larger mission to preserve and promote rural cultural practices. Through the **Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar (MGMD)** platform under the National Mission on Cultural Mapping and Roadmap (NMCMR), **Thongjao's** pottery, along with the stories of its artisans, has found a global stage, helping revitalize rural economies and promote cultural diversity.



Thongjao Pottery



Cultural Mapping for a Revitalized Future

The **National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMC)**, launched by the **Ministry of Culture**

and executed by the **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)**, aims to document and catalogue India's diverse cultural assets. By focusing on rural heritage, the mission ensures that local traditions like **Thongjao's pottery** are preserved and promoted. With **4.5 lakh villages** now featured on the MGMD portal, this initiative bridges the gap between rural artisans and a wider audience, creating new opportunities for cultural recognition and economic growth.

Aims and Objectives of the Mission:

1. To create awareness about the strengths of **cultural heritage** and its interface with development and cultural identity.
2. Cultural Mapping of **6.5 Lakh** villages along with their geographical, demographic profiles, and creative capitals.
3. Creation of **National Registers** of Artists and Art practices.
4. Development of a web portal and mobile app to function as a **National Cultural Work Place**.

The above-mentioned objectives will be carried out with the help of three interlinked programmes:

Three Interlinked Programmes		
Sanskritik Pratibha khoj	Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar (MGMD)	National Cultural Workplace(NCWP)
National Cultural Awareness Campaign,talenthunt, and revitalization of folk and tribal heritage.	Cultural Mapping of art practices and identifying artists and crafts persons.	NCWP will be an interactive Web portal for artists and crafts persons, culminating in an online platform for cultural Service Provider.

Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar (MGMD):

1. Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar (MGMD) is a component of NMCM undertaken as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM).

2. The MGMD initiative is undertaking a comprehensive cultural mapping of 6.5 lakh villages across 29 States and 7 Union Territories, with 4.5 lakh villages already mapped and featured on the National Cultural Work Place portal, which serves as a dedicated platform for the mission.
3. The cultural mapping covers several domains covering geographic, developmental and cultural profile including village stories, traditional knowledge and wisdom traditions, customs, ornaments, food, fairs and festivals, rituals, village gods and goddesses, physical and historical landmarks, architecture, places of worship, art forms – oral, visual, performed and crafted (folk songs, folk dances, folk tales, legends, epics, folk theatre, handlooms, handicrafts).
4. 360-degree angle video shoots of 750 villages have been done under the project.
5. A dedicated web portal has been created under MGMD, functioning as the National Cultural Work Place, to provide a unified online platform for culture service providers, facilitating easy access and engagement.

Villages with Interesting Stories!



1. Shani Shingnapur,

Ahmednagar, Maharashtra.

They believe that Lord Shani will keep them safe from burglaries and theft, reason none of the houses in the village have doors. There is also a well-known Shani Temple in the area.

2. Thiruchigadi, Nilgiri, Tamilnadu.

This village is noted for its colony of female potters in the Nilgiri Mountains in southern India. Pottery has always been done by women from the Kota tribe.



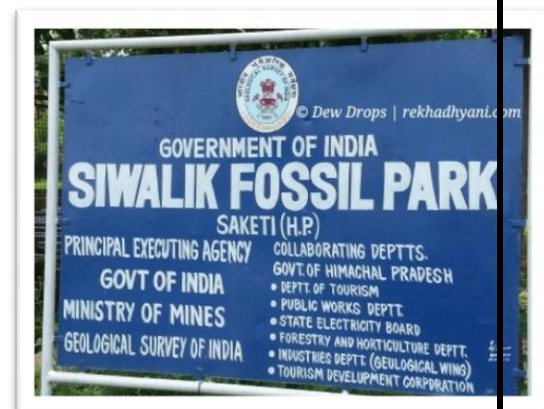


2. Khonoma, Kohima, Nagaland.

Khonoma is India's first green village. Khonoma is an Angami Naga village situated near the Indo-Myanmar border.

3. Suketi, Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh

Asia's oldest fossil park and also associated with the Pajhota agitation.



Conclusion:

Culture plays a crucial role in shaping a nation's identity. In a country as diverse as India, initiatives like the **National Mission on Cultural Mapping** help preserve and promote the rich tapestry of rural traditions. Through the **Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar platform**, the pottery of **Thongjao** and countless other cultural practices are finding recognition, ensuring that India's heritage remains vibrant for generations to come.

References:

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