

With 9 GI goods, Kashi among 'towns of export excellence'

In List For Handloom, Handicraft

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Varanasi: Famous for its handloom and handicraft, Varanasi, the parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been included in the list of 'towns of export excellence' in the new Foreign Trade Policy released on Friday. It is among four new towns of export excellence, including Faridabad for apparel, Moradabad for handicraft and Mirzapur for handmade carpets and durries.

Emerging as an important hub of Geographical Indication (GI) certified products of



handloom and handicraft, Varanasi holds pride of place with nine GI-tagged goods out of 33 produced in Uttar Pradesh.

Handloom: Silk brocade and saree, the first choice in



CRAFT TRADITION: With wooden craft, Mirzapur-Bhadohi carpet, glass beads, Banarasi dupatta, meenakari jewellery & the famous Banarasi brocade and silk saree, Kashi is a hub of GI-certified products

bridal attire, is the first GI product of Varanasi that got certification as 'Banaras Brocade and Sarees' in 2008-09.

After the GI tag, there was an upsurge in demand and sale of the product, said GI expert Padma Shri Rajni Kant, adding that over 12 lakh people are associated directly or indirectly with the handloom silk industry of the region.

Banaras Brocade Sarees are made of finely woven silk and decorated with intricate designs using zari—the ornamentation that added grandeur and weight to the sarees. Their highlight is Mughal-inspired designs/elements such as intricate floral and foliate motifs, such as kalga and bel.

Handicrafts: Banaras Gulabi Meenakari Craft, Varanasi Soft Stone Jali Work, Varanasi Wooden Lacquer-

ware and Toys, Banaras Metal Repousse Craft, Varanasi Glass Beads, Banaras Zardozi, Banaras Wood Carving and Banaras Hand Block Print



comprise the wide range.

Gulabi Meenakari: Gulabi Meenakari (pink enamelling) is the Mughal art of embellishing a metallic surface by fusing it with mineral substances. Meenakars say their art was at its peak till about a hundred years ago.

Soft Stone Jali Work: The Soft Stone Jali Work or fretwork is intricate carving

on soft stone and its process requires supreme mastery of masonry and designing. Delicately chiseled and decorated with inlay work, these elaborately carved jalis demand time in their making along with the skill and creativity. In Varanasi, jali craft work can be seen on forts, zamindari homes, places of worship and ancient monuments. Statues of religious significance are also made using the technique.

Wooden Lacquer Ware: Wooden lacquer ware and wooden toys are created with the natural veins of wood. The attractive toys, safe for kids to play with, are made without any joint. It is an ancient craft and toys comprise sets of birds, animals, musicians and dance ensembles, packed in boxes.

Beads And Bead Products: Varanasi is among India's largest exporters of beads and multi coloured glass beads are used to embellish clothing, decorative items, curtains, purses, clothing accessories and



jewellery. More than 2,000 artisans are involved in bead handicrafts in the city, most of them concentrated in Chandpur, Kandwan and Ramnagar.

Kandwan and Ramnagar.