

Toy maker crafts future with skills learned under ODOP

Lucknow: For Jhansi's Vandana Chaudhary, a soft toy maker trained under One District One Product scheme, the upcoming India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2025 in New Delhi marks a defining moment. From a modest beginning with a single sewing machine, Vandana is now set to display her creations at Bharat Mandapam, representing the spirit of self-reliant UP.

Her journey, say officials, embodies vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and chief minister Yogi Adityanath, whose focus on local enterprise has turned many small entrepreneurs into self-sustaining business owners. "Guidance of Prime Minister and encouragement of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath have shown a path of self-reliance to thousands of entrepreneurs, including Vandana Chaudhary," said a senior in-

dustries department official.

Chaudhary, who hails from an economically and socially disadvantaged background, received soft toy-making training under the Industries Department's ODOP initiative in 2021. After completing her training, she was provided a free sewing machine by govt—a small but crucial step that helped her set up her own business.

In just four years, Chaudhary's skill and perseverance earned her recognition beyond her district. She participated in exhibitions across cities such as Prayagraj and Haridwar, attracting customers with her colourful, handmade creations. Her next stop, the India International Trade Fair, will put her products before buyers from India and abroad.

"I never thought my toys would reach such a big platform. ODOP training gave me

both confidence and opportunity," Vandana said, as she prepared her latest collection for the fair.

Jhansi's presence at the IITF won't stop with Vandana's stall. The city's renowned Ayurveda brand Vaidyanath Group and Mahavidya E-commerce, known for crafting Shajar silver jewellery, will also represent the district at the trade show.

Jhansi deputy commissioner, industries, Manish Chaudhary, confirmed that multiple entrepreneurs from the region would be taking part in the fair. "It's a matter of pride for Jhansi. Entrepreneurs like Vandana are proof that local training and govt support can transform livelihoods," he said. Through such stories, UP's ODOP mission continues to transform traditional skill into sustainable enterprise—one entrepreneur at a time. TNN