

ODOP rise: From streets to stall at U.P. int'l trade show

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LUCKNOW: The One District One Product (ODOP) stall at the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS) 2024 in Greater Noida is turning out to be a crowd puller.

Once forced into oblivion due to neglect, ODOP artisans are now sharing their success stories at the trade show that got under way on September 25 and will continue till September 29.

Sohit Kumar Prajapati of Azamgarh was a street vendor in Mumbai where he used to sell bhelpuri. Specialising in black pottery, a family tradition for generations, Sohail faced tough times in Mumbai.

Kumar returned to his home town during the Covid pandemic. With government backing, Sohail's traditional business of black pottery was revived. He even had the opportunity to represent his craft in Switzerland.

Today, at the UPITS-2024, Sohail's flourishing business stands as a testament to the success of the ODOP scheme.

Banda district is famous for its jewellery crafted from "Shazar" stones. Dwarika Prasad Sharma of Banda, who has long been involved in the trade, recalls a time when Banda boasted of 80 factories dedicated to this craft. However, due to neglect, this traditional craft almost became extinct and only three factories survived. "In 2017, the Yogi government stepped in, breathing a new life into the fading business by including it in the ODOP scheme. With the support of loans, subsidies and government-provided stalls at various exhibitions, the industry began to recover," said Sharma.

"Shazar" stone products even gained international attention when PM Narendra Modi gifted them to G-7 dignitaries. "Thanks to this government's intervention, the business has since grown by 50 to 60 percent," said Sharma whose stall at the trade

show is drawing huge crowd.

The glass handicrafts stall at the ODOP pavilion is gaining attention from visitors. Stall operator Pratish Kumar, who has been in the business since 1990, recalls how in earlier days, very few people knew about his craft. However, with the Yogi government's promotion of the business under the ODOP initiative, people became familiar with this craft. Pratish Kumar received a loan of Rs 5 lakh from the state government which allowed him to purchase machinery and expand his business. Kamal Ahuja from Banda district shares a similar story. Running a stall featuring millet-based cookies at the ODOP pavilion, Ahuja thanked the state government for its support.

Ahuja sources millet and jowar from local farmers to produce sugar-free cookies and with a loan from the government, he invested in packaging machines. Today, his products are exported to Dubai, Nepal and Bhutan.

On the first day of the trade show, even Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath visited his stall. Shipra Sharma's stall has become a point of attraction at the trade show. She has creatively fused Madhubani, Lippan and Mandala art on discarded bottles.

Shipra, who began practising Lippan art as a hobby seven years ago, turned her passion into a thriving business with support from the state government. She credits the Yogi government for promoting women entrepreneurs and allowing her to showcase her products at the trade show.

The Divyang Development Society, an organisation supporting deaf and mute children, has also seen remarkable progress under the Yogi government.

Manpreet Kaur, a representative of the society, shared that these children were honoured with the Rani Laxmibai Award in 2018.



Visitors during the 2nd edition of Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show 2024, in Greater Noida, on Thursday.

PTI

New avenues open for budding bizmen

LUCKNOW: The U.P. International Trade Show-2024 is proving to be a game-changer for budding entrepreneurs. At the India Expo Centre and Mart in Greater Noida out of 400 exporters in the export pavilion, 277 are first timers.

Majority of these exporters launched their venture two-three years ago and their products have garnered interest from buyers at the exhibition setting the stage for future growth.

Dilip Chauhan, a young entrepreneur from Siddharthnagar and founder of Divyam Aahar, left a promising career as a chartered accountant to launch his startup. His product 'Kala Namak' rice has received an overwhelming response. As per Chauhan, the state government's efforts to promote startups have supported young business owners like him. His product, a part of the ODOP initiative, has got attracted both domestic and international buyers. Chauhan credits this success to the government's consistent support

and encouragement.

Gargi Gaur, a resident of Mathura and founder of Chini Mitti India, is equally excited about having the opportunity to showcase her products. She said this was the second time her brand is getting good reviews at an event of such a big scale.

"We received visits from many buying agencies last time and this year, we are more enthusiastic because, along with Indian buyers, international visitors are also attending. The positive response we have received so far makes this trade fair an excellent opportunity for us," Gargi added.

Saharsh Kumar, a young entrepreneur from Gorakhpur specialising in terracotta products, is also excited by positive response. "B2B sessions at the trade show have been incredibly valuable," he said.

"I had the chance to connect with numerous exporters and our products have received great feedback. Recently, we began exporting to countries such as Germany, Nepal and Australia.

These exhibitions give us much-needed visibility which is a massive opportunity for growth," Kumar added.

Kirti, a Vrindavan-based entrepreneur from Mathura who handcrafts clothes for deities, expressed her gratitude to the state government for providing a platform at the trade show.

"Being part of this event is a significant achievement for me. I participated at the first expo last year and the response was overwhelming and this year is no different," she shared.

"This is my second time at the trade fair and the response continues to be fantastic, whether from international buyers, B2B clients or wholesale customers within India and abroad," Kirti said. "We're seeing visitors from Delhi-NCR, Haryana, Punjab and nearby areas. They are showing great interest in our 'Bhagwan Ji' stall. I am thankful to the state government for offering us such a valuable platform to showcase our products on a large scale," she added.

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