



Design Technology Development: Kasuti Embroidery Workshop September 1 to 30, 2025-Dharwad

Kasuti Embroidery Gets a Global Push through Design & Technology Development Workshop Hubballi-Dharwad



IMS Foundation, successfully organized the Design and Technology Development Workshop for 30 women artisans from Dharwad and surrounding districts during the one-month training session organised by DC Handicrafts department.

The focus of the workshop was Kasuti Embroidery, a traditional craft of Karnataka that holds immense cultural and economic potential. Artisans received intensive training in designing, product development and prototyping with an aim to integrate Kasuti into contemporary fashion and position it for global recognition.

The initiative also explored opportunities for artisans in digital platforms, e-commerce markets and supportive government schemes, ensuring that Kasuti remains both relevant and competitive in 2025 and beyond.

The event concluded with a vibrant prototype display exhibition, where the artisans showcased their newly developed works and certificates were distributed to the participants.

IMS Foundation leaders felt that such initiatives, if scaled further, will not only preserve the cultural heritage of Dharwad's Kasuti but also create sustainable livelihoods for women artisans, contributing positively to the local economy and society.



The workshop was spearheaded by Shri. Kiran V. N, Assistant Director, Handicraft and Skill Development Office, Dharwad, Shri. Shailesh Parmar, Designer, Smt. Manasi Joshi, Craftsperson and Smt. Hema Bentur, Secretary, Smt. Aparna Pujari, Secretary, Women's Cell hosted the one-month workshop. Shri. Prashant Hebsur, President, Hubballi Chapter spearheaded the one-month workshop.

Their collective efforts ensured that the workshop became not just a platform of learning but also a movement towards making Kasuti a globally recognized handmade art form.



Detailed Report on the Technical Session & Kasuti Craft



The Design and Technology Development Workshop on Kasuti embroidery, held in Dharwad from September 1 to 30, 2025, featured an intensive technical session that played a pivotal role in strengthening the skills and market readiness of thirty women artisans from Dharwad and neighbouring districts.

Organised by IMS Foundation, the technical session brought together designers, government officials and craft experts who collectively worked to elevate the traditional craft of Kasuti through modern design interventions, skill upgradation, and an understanding of global market expectations.

During the session, the artisans were introduced to advanced concepts of design development. Designer Shri. Shailesh Parmar guided them through contemporary design principles that could be blended harmoniously with traditional Kasuti motifs. He explained how the patterns rooted in Karnataka's architectural heritage, temple structures and folk traditions could be reinterpreted to suit modern fashion trends.

The participants explored the use of colour combinations, motif scaling and digital mapping techniques to create adaptable and market-friendly designs. Through this process, they learned how Kasuti could move beyond the confines of traditional sarees and be incorporated into a range of products such as fusion clothing, home décor textiles and fashion accessories.

A major component of the technical session was the training on stitch mastery. Under the guidance of master craftsperson Ms. Manasi Joshi, the artisans practiced the intricate and highly disciplined stitches that make Kasuti unique, Gavanti, Murgi, Negi and Gatti. They were taught the significance of maintaining perfect symmetry, ensuring that the embroidery appears identical on both sides of the fabric and working without knots to preserve the authenticity of the craft.



These sessions demanded patience, accuracy and an eye for detail, helping the artisans refine their technical proficiency to meet the standards required for both national and international markets.

Product development and prototyping formed another crucial aspect of the session. The artisans worked hands-on to create a variety of new products, starting from design ideation to the final finishing process. They created stoles, designer dupattas, table runners, cushion covers, handbags and contemporary apparel, all infused with Kasuti motifs.

This was the first time many of them attempted to translate traditional Kasuti into modern lifestyle products and the results showcased during the workshop's concluding exhibition revealed their creativity and adaptability. The prototypes demonstrated how Kasuti could find relevance in modern consumer spaces while preserving its traditional essence.

Recognising the growing importance of digital commerce, the technical session also included training on online platforms and market access. The artisans were introduced to e-commerce portals such as Etsy, Amazon Handmade and GeM, learning how to list products, price them appropriately and present them effectively through digital photography and descriptive content. They were also taught the basics of interacting with customers, handling digital payments and managing logistics, skills that are essential for artisans seeking to become micro-entrepreneurs in today's competitive market.

Government support and institutional benefits formed an important segment of the session. Shri. Kiran VN, Assistant Director of the Handicraft and Skill Development Office in Dharwad, explained various schemes aimed at supporting traditional artisans,

including PM Vishwakarma Yojana, ODOP initiatives and programmes that offer insurance, pensions and marketing support.



This information empowered the artisans to formalize their craft practice and access opportunities that can help them build sustainable livelihoods.

The technical session concluded with a renewed sense of confidence among the participants. Many expressed that the training had not only sharpened their skills but had also broadened their vision of what Kasuti could become in the global marketplace. More than fifty prototypes were created during the workshop, reflecting a vibrant blend of tradition and modernity. The session succeeded in strengthening both the technical and entrepreneurial capacities of the artisans, preparing them to take Kasuti to a wider audience.

The relevance of this training becomes even clearer when placed against the backdrop of the rich heritage of Kasuti embroidery in India. Kasuti, one of Karnataka's most treasured needlework traditions, traces its origins to the Chalukya period of North Karnataka. Historically practiced by women to embellish bridal sarees, ritual garments and household fabrics, Kasuti has long been admired for its mathematical precision and cultural symbolism.

Its motifs, depicting temple gopurams, chariots, palanquins, lamps and flora-fauna, reflect the region's architectural legacy and devotional traditions. Unique to Kasuti is its reversible nature, where the stitch appears identical on both sides of the cloth and the strict rule of working without knots. These features make Kasuti one of the most technically demanding forms of embroidery in India.

Today, Kasuti has evolved into a craft with significant economic, cultural and aesthetic value. It has been granted Geographical Indication (GI) status, anchoring Dharwad as its

authentic origin. Contemporary designers are integrating Kasuti into luxury fashion, home décor, and accessories, giving it renewed relevance. As sustainable and handcrafted products gain popularity worldwide, Kasuti stands out as a craft that blends tradition with modern sensibilities.



Yet, the craft faces challenges, including the slow pace of manual embroidery, limited design innovation in some regions and the need for stronger market exposure. Workshops like the one held in Dharwad are essential to addressing these challenges by equipping artisans with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in an evolving marketplace.

In essence, the technical session in Dharwad became a transformative platform for the artisans. It not only strengthened their connection to the traditional roots of Kasuti but also equipped them with the tools required to take this heritage craft onto global platforms. With continued support, design innovation and market integration, Kasuti has the potential to emerge as one of India's most admired and globally recognized embroidery traditions.

Training Modules and Core Learning Areas

A. Advanced Design Development

Led by designer **Shri. Shailesh Parmar**, this segment introduced new design principles and adaptation techniques to integrate traditional Kasuti into contemporary product lines.

Key components included:

- Understanding motifs based on Karnataka architecture, temple iconography, flora–fauna, and folk traditions

- Converting traditional patterns into modular, repeatable designs for modern textiles
- Digital design mapping for precision and scalability
- Creating aesthetic combinations of stitches, layouts, and colour palettes suitable for international trends

Artisans practiced designing **Fusion Wear, Home Décor Materials, and Contemporary Apparel** without compromising the authenticity of Kasuti.



B. Stitch Mastery & Technical Precision

Master craftsperson **Smt. Manasi Joshi** conducted an intensive demonstration and practice session on the four primary stitches of Kasuti:

1. **Gavanti (Double Running Stitch)** – known for its reversible quality
2. **Murgi (Zig-zag Stitch)** – used for borders and angular motifs
3. **Negi (Running Stitch Variant)** – ideal for linear patterns
4. **Gatti (Cross Stitch)** – used for filling patterns

Participants learned:

- Correct thread tension
- Ensuring motifs look identical on both sides (the hallmark of Kasuti)
- Maintaining even spacing and symmetry
- Avoiding knots, a strict traditional requirement



C. Product Development and Prototyping

One of the major strengths of the session was hands-on product creation. Artisans worked on:

- Designer **dupattas and stoles**
- Festive and bridal wear concepts
- Tote bags, slings, and clutches
- Cushion covers and table runners
- Corporate gifting items
- Yoga and wellness accessories with Kasuti detailing

Each product was developed from scratch—starting from design ideation, material sourcing, technical layout, measurement, embroidery execution, and finishing.

D. Digital Platforms and E-Commerce Readiness

With the rise of global handmade marketplaces, training on online platforms was considered critical.

Participants received detailed guidance on:

- Listing products on Etsy, Amazon Handmade, Flipkart, and GeM
- Mobile-based product photography
- Writing effective product descriptions
- Packaging standards for domestic and international shipping
- Digital payments and order tracking
- Creating artisan portfolios for global buyers

This helped artisans understand how to transform their craft into a sustainable micro-enterprise.

E. Awareness of Government Schemes

Shri. Kiran V. N., Assistant Director, Handicraft & Skill Development Office, Dharwad, explained various support schemes:

- PM Vishwakarma Yojana
- One District One Product (ODOP) for Dharwad
- Skill Development and Training Subsidies
- Handicraft GI Promotion Programs



- Artisan ID Cards and benefits (insurance, pensions, marketing support)

This segment empowered artisans to access long-term institutional support and formal recognition.

2. Outcomes of the Technical Session

- Artisans gained **advanced design knowledge** and **modern product-making skills**.
- More than **50 prototypes** were created, showcasing the fusion of tradition and modern aesthetics.
- Participants understood how to maintain quality control for international markets.
- Many artisans expressed confidence in launching their own **micro-enterprises**.
- The workshop significantly strengthened the identity of **Kasuti as a global craft**.

INFORMATIVE SECTION ON KASUTI CRAFT IN INDIA

1. Historical Background

Kasuti is one of India's most intricate embroidery traditions, originating in the **Chalukya era (6th–12th century CE)** in North Karnataka. Historically practiced by women in aristocratic and Brahmin households, Kasuti was used to embellish:

- Bridal sarees (Ilkal and Khandasaree)
- Cradle cloths
- Ritual garments
- Household items

Kasuti gained prominence because of its mathematical precision, devotion to detail, and deeply symbolic motifs.

2. Unique Characteristics of Kasuti

A. Reversible Embroidery

Kasuti is almost *double-sided*, meaning the design appears the same on both sides, a rare feature in world embroidery traditions.

B. No Knot Technique

Threads are never knotted; instead, they are interlocked or carefully inserted, ensuring durability and finesse.

C. Architectural & Cultural Motifs



Kasuti motifs draw inspiration from Karnataka's temple architecture, daily life, and folklore.

Common motifs include:

- Gopurams and Mantapas
- Tulsi Vrindavan
- Elephants and horses
- Palanquins and chariots
- Shankh, lamp, kalasha
- Patterns influenced by Ilkal saree border designs

D. Mathematical Layout

Kasuti is counted-thread embroidery. Every stitch is mapped on a grid or count of the fabric weave, requiring exceptional concentration and accuracy.

3. Stitches in Kasuti

Kasuti uses four primary stitches:

Stitch Characteristics

Gavanti Double-running stitch; perfect reversibility

Murgi Zig-zag pattern; ideal for borders

Negi Running stitch variation; used for outlines

Gatti Cross stitch; dense and decorative

Each stitch has specific uses and is chosen based on motif complexity.

4. Contemporary Relevance

Today, Kasuti is widely used in:

- Fashion garments (sarees, blouses, kurtas, Indo-western wear)
- Accessories (bags, scarves, wallets)
- Home furnishings
- Premium gifting products
- International craft exhibitions

The craft has been recognized under **GI (Geographical Indication)** for Dharwad, ensuring authenticity and heritage protection.

5. Economic Importance

Kasuti provides livelihood to thousands of women across Karnataka. With the rise of:

- Sustainable fashion
- Slow craft movement
- Global e-commerce
- Craft tourism

Kasuti is experiencing renewed global interest.



6. Challenges

Despite its beauty, Kasuti faces several challenges:

- Time-consuming nature of the work
- Limited design modernization in many regions
- Irregular income for artisans
- Lack of digital marketing skills
- Competition from machine embroidery

Workshops like the one conducted by LUB are crucial for overcoming these hurdles.

7. Future Scope

The scope for Kasuti is expanding through:



- Collaboration with fashion designers
- Corporate gifting market
- Home décor and luxury segments
- Export promotion under ODOP
- Youth training through design institute

With continued support, Kasuti can become one of India's strongest international craft identities.

**Design and Technology Development Workshop(DDW) at District
Dharwad. 2025-26**

Sl.No	Artisian Name	User ID
1	Shailesh P	1
2	Manasi Joshi	2
3	Annapurna Undi	3
4	Akshata Kulkarni	4
5	Laxmi Jaggal	5
6	Vandaa Jadhav	6
7	Priyanka M	7
8	Sushila B	8
9	Sumitra Patil	9
10	Karebasama M	10
11	Pushpalata N	11
12	Annapurna A	12
13	Ansuai K	13
14	Shivleela Rudra	14
15	Fatima M	15
16	Nazima M	16
17	Yasmeen Mulla	17
18	Tabassum H	18
19	Yasmeen Kittur	19
20	Shiren Shaik	20
21	Shanbana J	21
22	H Kousar Kaddi	22
23	Mufren Soudagar	23
24	Fameeda Kaddi	24
25	Afreen Y	25
26	Parveen K	26
27	Shamshed Tashildar	27
28	Afreen Banu J	28
29	Dilshad Aktar	29
30	Shakela D	30
31	Pushpalata Tegur	31
32	Asma	32



 **DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER (HANDICRAFTS)**
Ministry of Textiles, Government of India


सत्यमेव जयते
Government Of India

 **IMS FOUNDATION**
Manufacturing the Economy

Design & Technical Development Workshop.
Sanction Order No S -12012/DDW/128/2025-2/SR/GEN
National Handicrafts Development Program (NHDP) Scheme
Skill Development in Handicrafts sector (SDHS)
On Market Survey & Intelligence Gathering: 12/08/2025 to 31/08/2025
Technical Training: 01/09/2025 to 25/09/2025
Test Marketing & Participation: 26/09/2025 to 01/10/2025

By Designer: Shri Shailesh Parmar
Craft : Kasuti Embroidery

Monday, 01st September 2025 | 11.00 am
Yashoda Welfare Trust,
Behind Vidyagiri Hescrom Office, Dharwad.

Organised By
IMS Foundation, Bangalore

Gallery





Press Coverage

ವಿಜಯವಾಣಿ ನಂ 1
ವಿಜಯವಾಣಿ



ಲಘು ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಭಾರತೀ ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ- ಧಾರವಾಡ ವತಿಯಿಂದ ಆಯೋಜಿಸಿದ್ದ
ವಿನ್ಯಾಸ ಮತ್ತು ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಗಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾಲ್ಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದ
ಧಾರವಾಡ ಹಾಗೂ ಸುತ್ತಲಿನ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಗಳ ಮಹಿಳಾ ಕಸೂತಿ ಕಲಾವಿದರು. ಪ್ರಶಾಂತ
ಹೆಬಸೂರು, ಹೇಮಾ ಬೆಂಟೂರು, ಅಪರ್ಣಾ ಪುಜಾರಿ, ಕಿರಣ ವಿ. ಎನ್., ಶೈಲೇಶ
ಪರ್ಮಾರ್, ಮಾನಸಿ ಜೋಶಿ, ಇತರರಿದ್ದರು.

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