

Contents

Geographical Location

- Map
- Latitudinal & longitudinal location on the map.
- Craft Pockets
- Place / Village etc, with details of the distance from the nearest town or capital

Detailed Description of the craft

- History (reputation & traditional value of the craft)
- Proof & evidences (related articles, newspaper columns, journals etc)
- Raw Material
- Product
- Production (Method / process / technique)

Uniqueness

Value of the Craft

- Economic Aspect

Visual identity

Profile of the Crafts People.

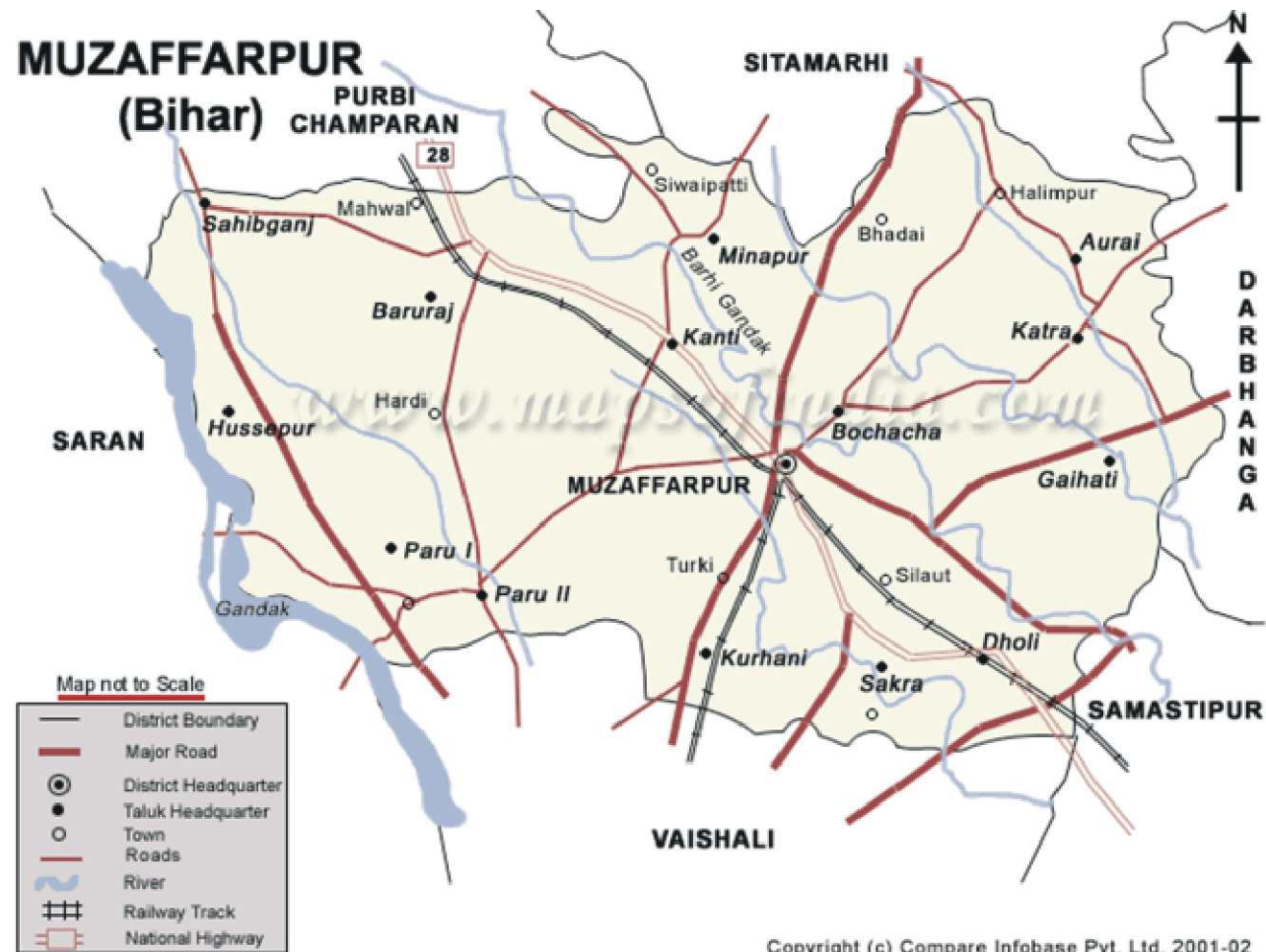
- Crafts People Involved at Present (Family detail)
Artisans profile in detail
- Present Economic status
- Market Linkages (Any formal groups etc formed to produce or market the craft
Products)
- Cost & Price
- Annual Turnover
 - Personal (of the crafts person)
 - For the state (overall)

NGOs / Craft Clusters / Co operatives or Associations

Acknowledgement of Sources of Information

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

Muzaffarpur district, 'The Land Of Leechi' was created in 1875 for administrative convenience by splitting up the earlier district of Tirhut. The present district of Muzaffarpur came to its existence in the 18th century and named after Muzaffar Khan, an Amil (Revenue Officer) under British Dynasty. It is, of course impossible to trace back the history of this region to its earliest origins, but we can trace back its stream of strong heritage a very long way through the ancient Indian epic Ramayan, which still bears a significant role in Indian civilization. Muzaffarpur played a very significant role in the history of North-Eastern India. The peculiarity of Muzaffarpur in Indian civilization arises out of its position on the frontier line between two most vibrant spiritual influences and most significantly, to this day, it is a meeting place of Hindu and Islamic culture and thoughts. All sorts of modified institutions, representing mutual assimilation, rise along the boarder line. It has undoubtedly been this highly diversified element within her boundaries that has so often made Muzaffarpur the birthplace of towering geniuses.



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

Geographical location - Muzaffarpur district of Bihar state:

Latitude North 25° 54' to 26° 23'
Longitude East 84° 53' to 85° 45'

Boundary

North District Sitamarhi & East Champaran
South District Vaishali & Saran
East District Darbhanga & Samastipur
West District Saran & Gopalganj

Height from sea level 170'

Area: 3122.56 sq km.

Average rain fall 11.87 Cm.

Total population 3743836

Male population 1941480

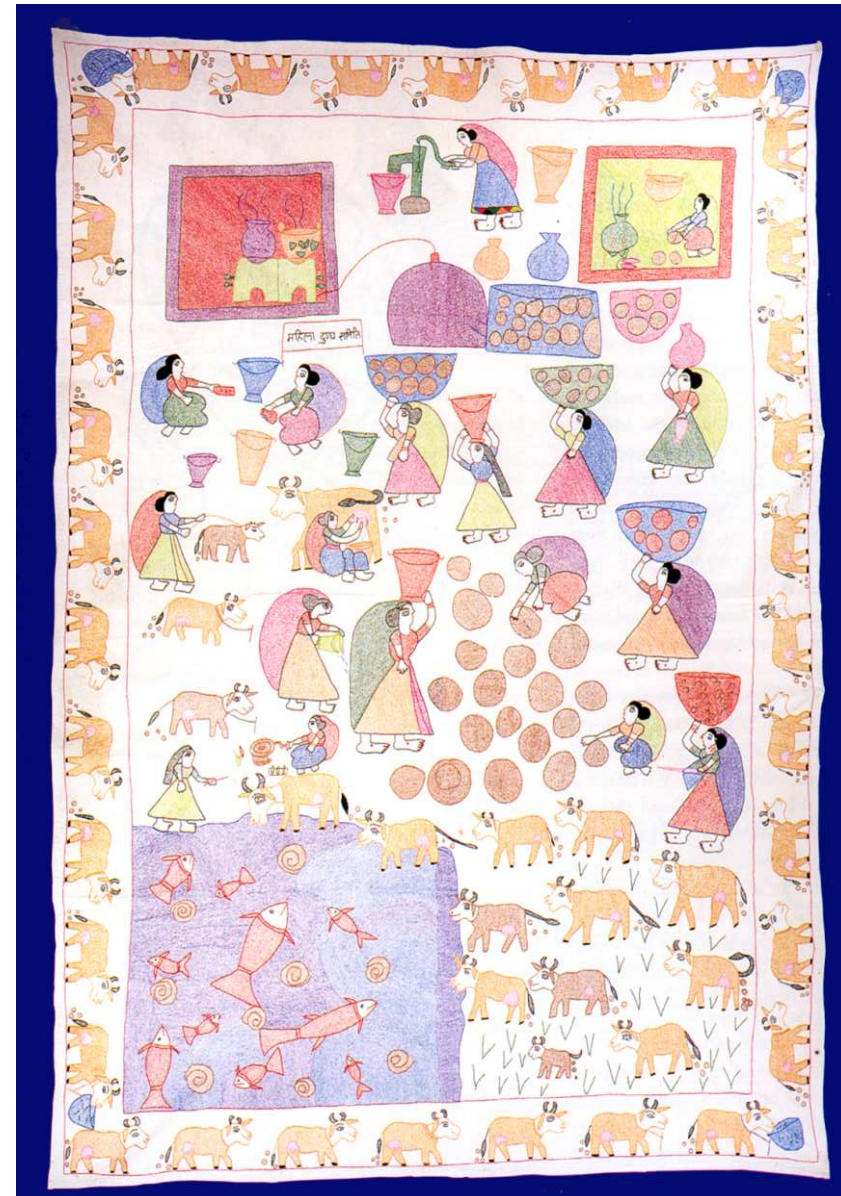
Female population 1802356



HISTORY- REPUTATION AND TRADITIONAL VALUE

Today production of Sujini embroidery is done mainly in the about 15 villages adjoining village named Bhusura in Ghaighatti block of Muzaffarpur district in Bihar and also in some pockets of Madhubani. The total workforces from these villages are today more than 1200 craftswomen.

Bhusura, the village where Sujini was developed is less than 100 kms away from the center of Mithila painting. The rural women of Muzaffarpur district of north Bihar now continue to embroider in the Sujini tradition, using a combination of a fine running stitch with the chain stitch. This is an ideal vehicle for assisting the many Rajput women who are living in poverty, but are prevented by social custom from working. Women can now earn money while practicing a craft that their fathers, husbands, and in-laws deem 'respectable'.



RAW MATERIAL/PROCESS

Sourcing of Raw Materials and Production process

Most of the sujuni furnishing items today are produced on cream markeen fabric. Occasionally brown and black casement fabric is used. Colored mull or handloom is used for saris, kurtas, and dupattas, and sometimes tussar silk is used in making stoles and jackets. The objective is to use locally available raw materials including the bulk purchase of the base fabric and Anchored embroidered threads to the extent possible from Muzaffarpur local town market.



The outline of the design is traced or drawn directly on to the cloth. Sujuni in spite of being a simple form of embroidery with a limited stitch repertoire, evokes strong feelings with its folk like characterization. A fine running stitch all over the sheet in the same colour as the base cloth prepares the background. Chain stitch (usually black or red) is used to outline the motifs, and the details are then filled in with tiny running stitches in coloured threads.

Stories and compositions are prepared by the women who also choose their own colours and themes. Women usually prefer to collect the cloth and threads from the MVSS centre (the local center) to their homes and work flexible hours, depending on their domestic responsibilities. The smaller items are worked on individually. For the large bedspreads or quilts, three or four women work together on the piece, starting from the ends and moving towards the centre.

PRODUCT

SUJUNI EMBROIDERED PRODUCT MIX

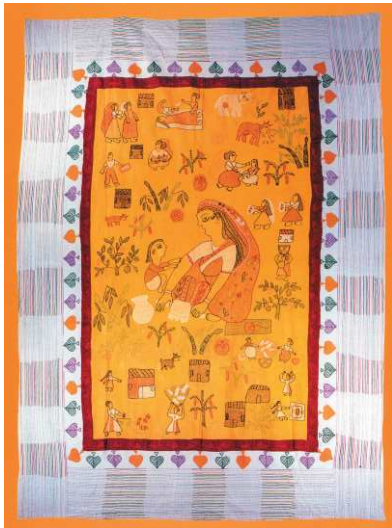
The sujuni craftswomen produce furnishings such as bedspreads, wall hangings, and cushion and bolster covers, as well as clothing items like saris, dupattas, and kurtas. Initially their designs depicted the daily rhythms of their own lives, as well as their natural surroundings; increasingly, however, social and political commentary is being incorporated in the motifs. The stories depict themes ranging from village life and the Hindu epics to concerns about election violence, the education of girls, and lessons in health care. However the range of goods manufactured can be categorized in two product classes:

1. Home furnishing
2. Apparel

Bed-spread	of 60 x 90 inch priced at Rs. 1350
Bed-spread	of 108 x 108 inch priced at Rs. 2100
Open bed-spread	of 60 x 90 inch priced at Rs. 750
Cushioned covers	of 12 x 12 inch for Rs. 50 & 18 x 18 inch for Rs. 85
Wall hangings	between Rs. 200 to 400 depending upon the size
Dupatta	from Rs 150 onwards
Saree	from Rs. 350 onwards
Jacket	Rs. 175 onwards
Suit	from Rs. 550 onwards



UNIQUENESS



Sujuni is labor-intensive but simple embroidery work, somewhat similar to the 'kantha' embroidery of Bengal, but with a more limited stitch repertoire. Tiny running stitches cover the entire fabric, which is traditional white or red, with the outlines of the motifs highlighted in a thick chain stitch. Filling stitches inside the motifs are done in colored thread, those outside are done in white or the color of the base fabric. The fabric is generally lined with a finer muslin backing before embroidery,

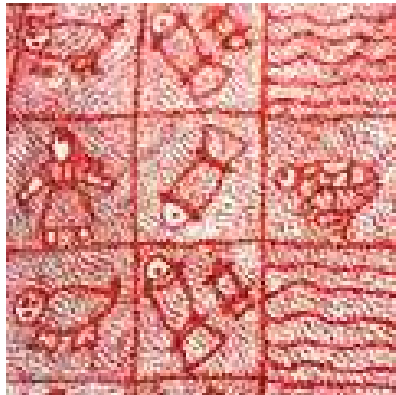
giving a quilted effect to the design. Motifs generally cover a gamut of figures, flora and fauna, done in naïf, pictorial style, often illustrating folk lore and religious iconography.

Sujuni is a term craftswomen of Bihar use for straight running stitch embroidery on layered cotton, sometimes accented with chain stitch. It is known in other parts of India, particularly in Bengal and Bangladesh, as "kantha. Traditionally made by women in their homes, old worn out saris are layered and held together by fine colored threads pulled from sari's edges. Religious and secular narrative themes are illustrated in old Bihari sujunis as well as geometric patterns; flowers and local life. Sujunis were made for births and marriages, and to give as gifts to family members. Kantha has radiating motifs and circular treatments of the field, particularly in sari and duppata work, while sujuni follows curved trails, like the fields of the sharecroppers.

The potential of Sujuni primarily lies in its story-telling aspect. It need not remain a romantic mythological or religious life style. It can talk about contemporary problems of peace and harmony and issues related to the rural women's world. It will be better to mould Sujunis to address modern needs, apart from making a conscious effort at depicting stories, themes of festivals, good harvest, education, health for all etc. Sujuni embroidery designs begins either from the central or the outer layers depending on what the dominant features will be. The rest of the Sujuni is filled in with figures, objects, symbolic scenes, shapes and combinations left totally to the imagination of the craft woman. The stitches used are of the simplest kind. The running stitch is not only the main stitch but also the most ingeniously employed. The empty spaces are filled in with the running stitch, length and spacing being regulated. The running stitch moves around the patterns to create a rippling and whirling effect, molding and making the motifs stand out against the background of the cloth.



VISUAL IDENTITY



ARTISAN PROFILE

Name & addresses of the Crafts persons from local DC (H) office:

Gunjeshwari Devi At/Po Gangapur, Via: Pandoul, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar
 Karpoori Devi Vill & P.O. Ranti, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar Awards: Merit Certificate
 Karpuri Devi At/Po Ranti, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar Awards: Merit Certificate
 Mahila Vikas Sahyog Samiti Bhusra, P.O Hasna, Via Dhocha, 843 104, Distt: Muzaffarpur, Bihar
 Meera Devi At/Po Kamroli, Via: Kaluahi, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar
 Nirmala Devi At/PO Birsayar, Via : Bhargirathpur, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar
 Sadhana Chaudhury 14 Srikrishna Nagar, Patna - 1, Bihar Awards: Merit Certificate
 Subhadra Devi At/Po Gangapur, Via: Pandoul, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar
 Sudha Devi At/PO Sidhav Kak, Via: Jaynagar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar Veena Devi At/Po



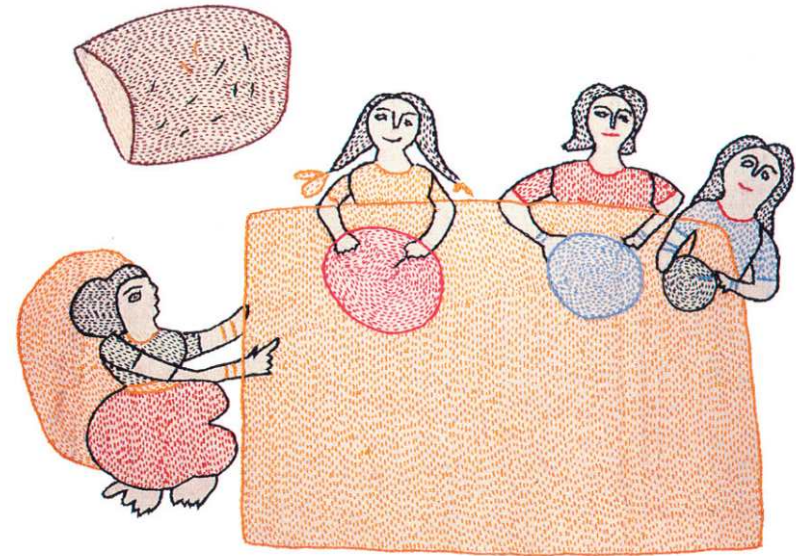
NGO'S / CRAFT CLUSTERS / CO OPERATIVES / ASSOCIATIONS

Local Organization

Mahila Vikas Sahyog Samity (MVSS), an all women's co-operative and a small autonomous society which is an off-shoot of the well known NGO named Adithi in Patna has been engaged in a unique way with a multi-dimensional objectives. Adithi a voluntary agency based in Patna, the capital of Bihar, has done path breaking work in the revival of the Sujuni embroidery and in providing a marketing support for the products. Adithi works through the Mahila Vikas Sahyog Samiti (MVSS), the area around Bhusura in north Bihar is where the Sujuni project is based today. The project was initially faced and skepticism. Nirmala, one of the first women to join, recalls: 'It began with five of us working. To keep it in good condition, we would plaster it with cow dung once a week. Our neighbors mocked us: "Is that the work you've found? Pays well, does it?" Then when a little money began coming in (10 rupees a day) people took notice...word spread....Today the number of women has grown to 600. Several make as much as 2,000 rupees a month, while others embroider when they find the time, making 300-400 rupees a month. The project is no more restricted to Rajput women. The possibility of earning money and working flexible hours has attracted women from other communities as well.'

Name & addresses of the Organization where 1200 crafts women are associated:

Mahila Vikas Sahyog Samiti-Bhusura Village Bhusura, Via Bocchana PO Hasna, District Muzaffarpur, Bihar



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Supporting documents

Sujuni Kantha, An Art Treasure, by Shirsendu Ghosh March 1994

Evolving Business Strategy for Sujuni Craft, by Munish Sahrawat, MTS-IRMA, August 1997

Stitching Women's Lives by Dorthy Caldwell and Dr. Sky Morrison, September 1999.

