



Reliance Retail boosts its “Handmade in India” programme

- *Will launch a dedicated artisan-only store format, “Swadesh”, to showcase artisanal products including Agriculture & Food products, handlooms, Clothing, Textiles, Handicrafts & Handmade natural products*
- *Envisages global platform for artisans and sellers of handcrafted products*
- *Explores new partnerships with state governments and undertakings to create a strong, vigorous and sustainable eco-system for local artisans*
- *Aligns with Reliance Foundation to establish a robust and sustainable artisan ecosystem across the country by setting up RiSE (Reliance Foundation Initiative for Skill Enhancement) centers across states*

In a strong boost to its ‘Handmade in India’ programme, Reliance Retail announced that it is embarking on several new initiatives aimed at showcasing authentic handcrafted products and promoting the rich Indian art forms globally. The initiatives are designed to help revive various traditional Indian art and craft forms, provide sustainable livelihood for hundreds and thousands of artisans and craftsmen in the ecosystem and present a new platform to take the timeless Indian crafts to consumer across the world.

The programme is being spearheaded by Reliance Retail’s handicrafts brand Swadesh, which envisages an artisan-only dedicated store format for Handcrafted products from across the country. The first Swadesh store is expected to open in the second half of the current year and will house a wide range of products including handmade textiles, handicrafts, agriculture products and other artisanal merchandise sourced directly from artisans. Swadesh will also build a global marketplace to connect Indian artisans and sellers of authentic handmade products to consumers across the world.

“The future of Indian arts and crafts is poised at an exciting stage. Our past efforts towards development of a robust infrastructure towards reviving dying art forms and building and enabling ecosystem for local artisans, weavers and craftsmen have yielded encouraging results. Our standalone handicrafts destination store format, Swadesh is now on the anvil and will present India through its Art and Crafts and it will showcase everything from Apparel, Home Textiles, Home décor, Furniture, Jewellery, Wellness products and more,” says **Isha Ambani, Director, Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd.**

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“We see a great opportunity for the artisans of our country in co-creating and co-curating handcrafted Indian products for the world. To realise this opportunity Reliance Retail is partnering with various government organizations to help popularize various local art forms, both nationally and globally. Reliance Retail and Reliance Foundation have also aligned to identify core epicenters for the various indigenous crafts and will set up RiSE centres, a robust network of skill development centres to ensure reach at grassroots level and to contribute in sustaining artisan communities & art forms” added **Isha Ambani**.

Swadesh aims to present India to the world through the lens of its rich arts, handicrafts and handlooms. It will be a collection of carefully curated products, part of the rich legacy of India’s heritage that come alive in the hands of our supremely skilled and talented craftspeople. Swadesh aims to create a unique eco-system for reviving languishing crafts, enhancing skills of the creative communities by providing skill enhancement /design trainings, capacity building workshops that will ensure sustainable livelihoods for artisan communities.

Swadesh is partnering with various governments undertakings and state governments and has already signed an MoU with the Ministry of Textiles which enables sourcing of 100% authentic crafted products, directly from artisan communities. Another unique partnership has been finalized and an MoU has been signed with Department of MSME & Textiles, Government of West Bengal. The aim of this partnership is to build a healthy, dynamic ecosystem that will help both the Government of West Bengal and Swadesh realise the vision of sustainable employment and an enriched standard of living for the artisan community. The MOU was signed today at the Bengal Global Business Summit in Kolkata. The artisan-only concept will continue to establish new partnerships to create strong ecosystem for local artisans across states and clusters.

Swadesh is also aligning with Reliance Foundation to promote India’s priceless heritage by establishing an enabling and sustainable ecosystem for artisans across the country by setting up RiSE (Reliance Foundation Initiative for Skill Enhancement) centres in different states. The RiSE centres will leverage the existing network and schemes of Handloom/Handicraft ministry to create synergies and provide maximum benefit to the artisan communities all over India. This unique PPP model will focus on providing sustainable livelihood for artisans, developing crafts of that state and leverage existing network to create synergies and provide maximum benefit to artisans and craftsmen across the country.

Reliance Retail has been actively involved in engaging with and patronizing artisans all over India to source authentic, handcrafted products thereby promoting the rich Indian heritage and sustaining livelihoods of artisans. This endeavor has only become more sharply focused with the conceptualization of new Swadesh platform under the lifestyle and fashion segment.

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