Indian textiles have always helped to weave the rich heritage of people and handlooms in the country. The incredible journey of handlooms and weavers was shared in a webinar on ‘Weaves of Maharashtra and Textiles of Odisha’ organized by Press Information Bureau, Mumbai and India Tourism on 11 August 2020. The webinar focused on different handlooms and fabrics belonging to Maharashtra and Odisha, which are the paired states under the ‘Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat’ Mission.
Speaking about the Textiles of Odisha, Tapan Kumar Mishra gave a virtual trip of the handloom map of his state. His presentation threw light on the nuances and techniques involved in weaving each handloom saree / textile. He explained in detail the popular themes and patterns that distinguish Saree of one region from the other. With pictorial display he took the viewers on a journey covering weaving traditions of Berhampur, Sambhalpur, Nuapatna, Dhenkanal, Khordha, Koraput and more.

Shri Tapan Mishra explained that the “Kotpada saree of Koraput district in Odisha is made in a typical way. It is made from the outer covering of Arjun tree and later treated in cow dung” he said. He also spoke about how different tribes of the state excel in making hand-woven fabric that requires immense patience and creativity. “The fierce Dongria tribe of Odisha has soft hands in making Handloom craft” he added.
Chitra Acharya, Regional Level Guide, Western Region spoke about 13 different weaves of Maharashtra that stand popular even till date. She proudly said that the state’s Ghongadi fabric has medicinal qualities that can cure many ailments including back pain.

She also spoke about ‘Satranji’ a fabric that reached Maharashtra from the southern part of India - a colourful piece which has all colours of the rainbow. ‘The interlocking pattern of the fabric makes it very strong that it never gets damaged. A Satranji can last for more than 100 years’, she said while explaining the specific way it is woven.

Ms. Acharya also spoke about different varieties of sarees and fabrics celebrated by every Maharashtrian - Narayanpeth saree, Nagpuri saree, Himroo, Solapur Chaadar, Munga Sarees, Khann sarees, Karvat Kathi, Tassar Silk and Paithani. “Paithani is not a cloth, it is a feeling. It is called so because it originally came from Paithan near Aurangabad. It is every woman’s dream to have a Paithani. It is called the Mahavastra,” she said.

The webinar was an initiative to weave the the thread of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat and also honour the handloom weavers and also the handloom industry of these states. “India stands for Unity in diversity. Even with its diverse landscapes, people, languages, ethnic backgrounds the nation stands united in many ways,” said Director General, West Zone, M/o Information & Broadcasting, Manish Desai emphasizing the dimensions of the sentiment of unity.

He recalled the inspiring words of Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi to connect the country and its people through Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Mission. He also mentioned that the Government of India has given high priority for the development of Handloom industry and spoke about various welfare schemes designed for promotion of the sector.
Regional Director, M/o Tourism D. Venkatesan who anchored the programme, briefed about the concept of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat and narrated initiatives undertaken through this programme. He further said that, the webinar intends to help to know about centuries old traditions of handlooms and fabric making in the states of Maharashtra and Odisha – which are the paired states under the **Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat** campaign.

The initiative ‘Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat’ was announced by Prime Minister on 31st October, 2015 on the occasion of the 140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. This was launched to enhance the understanding and bonding between the states, thereby strengthening the unity and integrity of India.

India celebrated the **National Handloom Day** on **7th August** to honour the handloom weavers in the country and also highlight the handloom industry. August 7 was chosen as the National Handloom Day, to commemorate the Swadeshi Movement which was launched on this day in 1905 in the Calcutta Town hall to protest against partition of Bengal by the British Government.

Vote of Thanks was delivered by Rahul Tidke, Deputy Director, PIB Mumbai expressing gratitude to the eminent speakers of the webinar.

Transmission

- The programme was broadcast live on the Facebook page of IndiaTourism Maharashtra
- 130 live participants attended the Webinar
- PIB Mumbai provided Twitter support to the Webinar by live tweeting the contents. (45 Tweets in English and Marathi, generating 65,000 impressions)