

MINIMALIST IAS NOTES — NOT AN NCERT BOOK

Indian Crafts for UPSC

NCERT's Heritage Crafts books are listed in its catalogue but have no files on its website. This guide covers what UPSC asks about crafts, built from official records: the Government of India's GI Registry, UPSC's own papers and answer keys, and the Press Information Bureau. When NCERT restores its books, use them alongside this guide.



1. What UPSC asks about crafts

Between 2016 and 2026, Prelims asked about crafts in four ways:

Art-history questions on materials also recur, such as terracotta at Chandraketugarh (2021 Q37) and the bronze 'Dancing Girl' (2025 Q72).

- Which craft belongs to which state (2018 Q54 — the craft–state pairs are GI registrations).
- The law behind GI tags (2018 Q26 — why India passed the GI Act).
- Handloom history and policy (2023 Q83 — National Handloom Day and the Swadeshi Movement).
- A GI craft reaching global markets (2026 Q29 — Oeko-Tex certification for Eri silk).

UPSC Prelims 2018 · Q26

India enacted The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 in order to comply with the obligations to

- (a) ILO
- (b) IMF
- (c) UNCTAD
- (d) WTO

UPSC's key: (d). India's GI law implements its WTO commitments on geographical indications.

UPSC Prelims 2018 · Q54

Consider the following pairs:

Craft — Heritage of

1. Puthukkuli shawls — Tamil Nadu
2. Sujni embroidery — Maharashtra
3. Uppada Jamdani saris — Karnataka

Which of the pairs given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 2 and 3

UPSC's key: (a). The GI Registry lists Toda Embroidery under Tamil Nadu; its GI Journal entry (No. 29) describes the embroidered Toda cloak, spelt 'pootkhull(zh)y', which is the question's 'Puthukkuli' shawl. 'Sujini Embroidery Work of Bihar' is registered under Bihar and 'Uppada Jamdani Sarees' under Andhra Pradesh.

UPSC Prelims 2021 · Q37

Consider the following pairs:

(Historical place) — (Well-known for)

1. Burzahom : Rock-cut shrines
2. Chandraketugarh : Terracotta art
3. Ganeshwar : Copper artefacts

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 2 and 3

UPSC's key: (d) — pairs 2 and 3 are correct.

UPSC Prelims 2023 · Q83

Consider the following statements:

Statement–I:

7th August is declared as the National Handloom Day.

Statement–II:

It was in 1905 that the Swadeshi Movement was launched on the same day.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- (a) Both Statement–I and Statement–II are correct and Statement–II is the correct explanation for Statement–I
- (b) Both Statement–I and Statement–II are correct and Statement–II is not the correct explanation for Statement–I
- (c) Statement–I is correct but Statement–II is incorrect
- (d) Statement–I is incorrect but Statement–II is correct

UPSC's key: (a). PIB: the Swadeshi Movement was launched on 7 August 1905, and in 2015 the Government declared 7 August National Handloom Day to commemorate it.

UPSC Prelims 2018 · Q42

The well-known painting "Bani Thani" belongs to the

- (a) Bundi school
- (b) Jaipur school
- (c) Kangra school
- (d) Kishangarh school

UPSC's key: (d) Kishangarh school.

UPSC Prelims 2025 · Q72

The famous female figurine known as 'Dancing Girl', found at Mohenjo-daro, is made of

- (a) carnelian
- (b) clay
- (c) bronze
- (d) gold

UPSC's key: (c) bronze.

UPSC Prelims 2026 · Q29

Which of the following is/are the most significant implication(s) of obtaining Oeko-Tex certification for Eri Silk in the global textile industry?

1. It allows Indian exporters to compete in high-end markets that prioritise chemical-free products.
2. It confirms that Eri Silk meets international safety, environmental, and quality standards, enabling its entry into premium eco-conscious markets.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

UPSC's provisional key: (c). PIB, August 2024: Oeko-Tex is a standard that tests textiles for harmful substances and eco-friendly production, and the certification opens global markets to Eri silk — the world's only vegan silk, a GI of Assam.

Lesson from 2018 Q54: UPSC's answer matches the GI Registry exactly — Toda embroidery is registered to Tamil Nadu, Sujini embroidery to Bihar (not Maharashtra), and Uppada Jamdani saris to Andhra Pradesh (not Karnataka). Learn crafts with their registered state.

Source: [UPSC Civil Services \(Preliminary\) GS Paper I and final answer keys](#); [GI Registry, 'Details of GI Applications Registered as on December 31, 2025' \(State wise Registered GI of India.pdf\)](#)

2. GI tags in brief

- A geographical indication (GI) identifies goods as coming from a definite territory, where a special quality, reputation or other characteristic comes from that origin.
Source: [IP India, 'Geographical Indications: An Introduction'](#)
- The law is the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. UPSC's key (2018 Q26) links it to India's obligations to the WTO.
Source: [The Geographical Indications of Goods \(Registration and Protection\) Act, 1999 \(No. 48 of 1999\), Gazette of India, 30 Dec 1999](#); [UPSC Civil Services \(Preliminary\) GS Paper I and final answer keys](#)
- An association of producers, an organisation or an authority set up by law can apply, but it must represent the producers' interests.
Source: [IP India, 'Geographical Indications: An Introduction'](#)
- Individual producers of a registered GI can register as 'authorised users'.
Source: [IP India, 'Geographical Indications: An Introduction'](#)
- Registration lasts 10 years from the date of application and can be renewed again and again for 10 years at a time.
Source: [IP India, 'Geographical Indications: An Introduction'](#)
- Darjeeling Tea was GI application No. 1 and received certificate No. 1. The first handicraft application was the Aranmula Kannadi (metal mirror) of Kerala, No. 3.
Source: [GI Registry public search — application records](#)
- As on 31 Dec 2025, the Registry lists 684 registered GIs, of which 349 are handicraft registrations (plus 26 logo registrations of the same crafts). PIB, in December 2025, cited 318 GI-tagged handicraft products: counts differ with what is included, so learn the crafts, not the count.
Source: [GI Registry, 'Details of GI Applications Registered as on December 31, 2025' \(State wise Registered GI of India.pdf\)](#); [PIB backgrounder 'Handicrafts at the Heart of India's Rural Economy', 9 Dec 2025](#)

3. Crafts to know, family by family

Only crafts with a UPSC link are listed (63): ones UPSC has asked about, ones NCERT names, new GI registrations, and textile or painting GIs, the two kinds of craft UPSC has already asked. Each craft says why it is here.

Weaving: saris, silks and shawls

Banaras Brocades And Sarees

Uttar Pradesh

Silk brocades and saris of Varanasi, with patterns woven in extra weft. There are zari brocades such as the heavy kimkhab, silk-patterned amru brocades such as the tanchoi, and abrawans on sheer muslin silk or organza.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 8 Exploring Society: India and Beyond (Part 2), Ch 7, 8; NCERT Class 10 India and the Contemporary World – II, Ch 4.

GI Journal 29, application 99

Kancheepuram Silk

Tamil Nadu

Heavy silk saris from Kancheepuram with bright colours and solid zari (gold-thread) borders. In 'petni', a pallu of a different colour is joined to the body during weaving so neatly that the join can't be seen.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 6 Exploring Society: India and Beyond, Ch 8; NCERT Class 8 Exploring Society: India and Beyond (Part 2), Ch 7.

GI Journal 4, application 15

Chanderi Sarees

Madhya Pradesh

Saris from Chanderi, a town in the Vindhya hills, known for their transparency and sheer texture. This comes from yarn whose natural gum is left in, used in both warp and weft; the small motifs (buttis) are made by hand.

Why it's here: NCERT old Class 7 Our Past – II, Ch 8 (Chanderi silk).

GI Journal 2, application 7

Maheshwar Sarees & Fabrics

Madhya Pradesh

Handloom saris and fabrics from Maheshwar and Kasrawad tehsils, on either bank of the Narmada. Border and pallu designs copy the carvings on the walls of the fort built by Queen Ahilyabai at Maheshwar in the 18th century.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 8 Exploring Society: India and Beyond (Part 1), Ch 3 (Maheshwar weaving).

GI Journal 44, application 197

Paithani Sarees And Fabrics

Maharashtra

Silk saris woven mainly in Paithan and Yeola, Maharashtra. The border has an oblique-square design and the pallu a peacock, woven in gold zari by a tapestry method, so the back looks much like the front.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 6 Exploring Society: India and Beyond, Ch 8.

GI Journal 33, application 150

Pochampally Ikat

Telangana

Ikat from about 40 villages in Nalgonda and parts of Warangal districts, around Pochampally. Cotton or silk yarn is tied and dyed to a planned design before weaving; diamond ('chowka') patterns are typical, in single, combined or double ikat.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History, Part II, Theme 5; NCERT Class 10 Contemporary India – II, Ch 4 (ikat; Pochampally in the Bhoodan story).

GI Journal 2, application 4

Patan Patola

Gujarat

Pure-silk double ikat from Patan in north Gujarat, made largely by the Salvi community on hand-operated looms. Both warp and weft are tied and dyed before weaving, so the pattern is identical on both sides and the cloth is reversible.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 6 Exploring Society: India and Beyond, Ch 8.

GI Journal 50, application 232

Orissa Ikat

Odisha

Tie-and-dye handloom from western Odisha (Bargarh, Sambalpur, Sonepur, Balangir and nearby districts) and Cuttack. Beyond geometric designs, it is known for curved motifs and even lettering woven into the cloth.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History, Part II, Theme 5 (ikat weaving).

GI Journal 12, application 22

Kota Doria

Rajasthan

A light, sheer fabric woven in Kaithun near Kota and in villages of Kota, Bundi and Baran districts. Its mark is the square check called 'khat', woven so skilfully that the cloth becomes transparent.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 5, application 12

Kashmir Pashmina

Jammu & Kashmir

Fabric made in Kashmir from pashm, the fine under-fleece of the Himalayan Pashmina goat: 12–16 microns, against about 23 for the finest sheep's wool. The fibre is cleaned with rice-flour paste, then spun and woven by hand.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 8 Exploring Society: India and Beyond (Part 2), Ch 8 (Pashmina shawls).

GI Journal 13, application 46

Kani Shawl

Jammu & Kashmir

Pashmina shawl from Budgam district, Kashmir, woven without a shuttle. Small eyeless wooden sticks called kanis carry each coloured weft, which interlocks with the next at every colour change: a 'twill tapestry' weave.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 13, application 51

Uppada Jamdani Sarees

Andhra Pradesh

Jamdani saris from Uppada and nearby villages of Kothapalli mandal, East Godavari. The designs are woven in by hand, without dobby or jacquard, so they blend into the cloth, show clearly on the reverse and leave no loose threads.

Why it's here: UPSC Prelims 2018 Q54 (Uppada Jamdani saris).

GI Journal 27, application 122

Bhagalpur Silk

Bihar

Silk fabrics and saris from Bhagalpur district (clusters such as Nathnagar and Champanagar), woven mostly from tussar, matka, eri and mulberry silk.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 45, application 180

Tangail Saree of Bengal

West Bengal

Saris woven on fly-shuttle pit looms, mainly in Dhatrigram and Samudragarh (Purba Bardhaman) and Fulia (Nadia), in fine cotton or silk, with extra-warp or extra-weft designs on the border and pallu.

Why it's here: new GI (registered 2024); likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 178, application 702

Kinnauri Shawl

Himachal Pradesh

Woollen shawls ('chhali') from Kinnaur district, known for intricate geometric patterns with symbolic meaning. Five pattern colours stand for the five elements: white for water, yellow for earth, red for fire, green for air and blue for ether.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 32, application 149

Gamosa of Assam

Assam

A white or cream cotton cloth with red borders and motifs, woven in every district of Assam. A symbol of Assamese culture, it is used in rituals, offered to welcome guests and worn during Bihu.

Why it's here: new GI (registered 2022); likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 124, application 594

Sambalpuri Bandha Saree & Fabrics

Odisha

Tie-and-dye (ikat) saris and fabrics of Sambalpur and neighbouring districts of western Odisha. The oldest form, the 'saktapar' sari, has a double-ikat chequerboard pattern; fish, conch shells, birds and flowers are common motifs.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History, Part II, Theme 5 (ikat weaving).

GI Journal 44, application 208

Muga Silk of Assam

Assam

The golden-yellow silk of Assam, from muga silkworms reared outdoors on som and soalu trees. The application calls it the strongest of all natural textile fibres; the mekhela-chadar, the traditional dress of Assamese women, is woven from it.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 6 Exploring Society: India and Beyond, Ch 8.

GI Journal 16, application 55

Bodo Eri Silk

Assam

Eri silk of the Bodo people of Bodoland, Assam, called 'Indi Zi' locally. The silkworm (*Samia ricini*) feeds mainly on castor leaves. The moth leaves its open-ended cocoon alive, so the silk is called Ahimsa (peace) silk. The short fibre is spun like wool rather than reeled, and woven into warm shawls (Eri-chadar) and mekhla chadors.

Why it's here: UPSC Prelims 2026 Q29; new GI (registered 2024).
GI Journal 185, application 960

Kullu Shawl

Himachal Pradesh

Woollen shawls of the Kullu valley along the Beas, woven on handlooms with colourful geometric borders over a twill ground. Unlike embroidered shawls, the design is woven in and looks the same from both sides.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 7, application 19

Mysore Silk

Karnataka

Pure-silk crepe-de-chine and georgette saris of Mysore, woven by the Karnataka Silk Industries Corporation (KSIC), whose Mysore factory was started by the Maharaja of Mysore in 1912. The zari in borders and pallu has 65% silver and 0.65% gold.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 6 Exploring Society: India and Beyond, Ch 8.

GI Journal 3, application 11

Banglar Muslin

West Bengal

The finest handloom muslin of West Bengal, woven on pit looms from cotton spun to very high counts (300 to 600), so light that a square metre weighs under 48 grams. It is made in districts such as Murshidabad, Bankura and Malda.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 11 Indian Economic Development, Ch 1 (Bengal muslin); new GI (registered 2024).

GI Journal 182, application 676

Pashmina Wool of Ladakh

Ladakh (UT)

The raw fibre: the fine undercoat of the Changthangi goat of Ladakh's Changthang plateau, under 16 microns thick (goat fibre under 20 microns counts as cashmere). The high, cold, arid pastures are credited with its fineness.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 8 Exploring Society: India and Beyond (Part 2), Ch 8 (Pashmina from Ladakh's goats); new GI (registered 2023).

GI Journal 166, application 726

Embroidery

Lucknow Chikan Craft

Uttar Pradesh

White-on-white embroidery from Lucknow, traditionally worked on muslin: mostly floral designs in fine untwisted cotton, rayon or silk thread. The pattern is block-printed in a dye that washes out, embroidered by women, then washed.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 25, application 119

Phulkari

India (Punjab, Haryana & Rajasthan)

'Flower work' embroidery of Punjab, also made in parts of Haryana and Rajasthan. Darn stitches are worked from the back of coarse khaddar by counting threads; in a 'bagh' the embroidery covers the whole cloth.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 12, application 27

Toda Embroidery

Tamil Nadu

Embroidery done only by Toda women of the Nilgiris: red and black wool on coarse white cotton, worked by counting threads so that it looks woven. It adorns the Toda cloak, spelt 'pootkhull(zh)y' in the journal: the 'Puthukkuli' of UPSC's 2018 question.

Why it's here: UPSC Prelims 2018 Q54 ('Puthukkuli shawls'); NCERT Class 6 Exploring Society: India and Beyond, Ch 7 (the Toda of the Nilgiris).

GI Journal 29, application 135

Sujini Embroidery Work of Bihar

Bihar

Embroidered bedspreads, wall hangings and clothing made by women in about 15 villages around Bhusura, Muzaffarpur district. The motifs began with daily life and nature and now also carry social messages, such as girls' education and health.

Why it's here: UPSC Prelims 2018 Q54 (Sujni embroidery).

GI Journal 18, application 74

Kasuti Embroidery

Karnataka

Counted-thread embroidery of Dharwad district, traditionally on Ilkal saris and blouse pieces. Nothing is traced: the stitches follow the warp and weft, the work has no wrong side and no knots, and motifs include palanquins, elephants and lotuses.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 11, application 31

Kutch Embroidery

Gujarat

Embroidery of Kachchh district, rooted in the traditions of the Rabaris and other communities. A net of thread is first laid on the cloth and then filled with interlocking stitches, and mirror work (abhla) makes the garments glitter.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal Supplementary 1, application 103

Nakshi Kantha

West Bengal

Quilts made by layering two or three old saris or dhotis and holding them together with running stitch, then embroidering floral, animal and household motifs with threads drawn from sari borders. The journal maps it to Birbhum district.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 19, application 52

Chamba Rumal

Himachal Pradesh

Square embroidered cloths from Chamba district in which the 'do-rukha' double satin stitch makes the design identical on both sides. Outlines are often drawn by Pahari painters, and the Rasamandala of Krishna and the gopis is a favourite theme.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal Supp 2, application 79

Lucknow Zardozi

Uttar Pradesh

Gold and metal-thread embroidery made in Lucknow and nearby districts such as Barabanki, Unnao and Sitapur, on saris, suits, caps, shoes, bags and ceremonial items. The craft has had royal patronage since the Sultanate period.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 8 Exploring Society: India and Beyond (Part 2), Ch 8 (zardozi).

GI Journal 49, application 236

Printing, dyeing and painting on cloth

Machilipatnam Kalamkari

Andhra Pradesh

Hand-block-printed cotton from the port town of Machilipatnam, coloured with natural vegetable dyes and mordants. It is known for all-over floral and Persian-style designs.

Why it's here: UPSC Prelims 2017 Q51 (Machilipatnam as a Kakatiya seaport); NCERT old Class 8 Our Past – III, Ch 3 (kalamkari).

GI Journal Supplementary 1, application 90

Bagh Prints of Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh

Hand-block prints from Bagh village in Dhar district, on the Baghini river: repeating geometric patterns, mainly in red and black on white, in natural vegetable colours.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal Supp 1, application 98

Kutch Ajrakh

Gujarat

Resist block printing kept alive in three Kutch villages: Ajrakhpur, Dhamadka and Khavda. The cloth goes through repeated rounds of direct and resist printing and natural dyeing. It is traditionally worn by the pastoral Maldhari community.

Why it's here: new GI (published in the GI Journal, Dec 2023); likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 188, application 1050

Bagru Hand Block Print

Rajasthan

Hand-block prints from Bagru and nearby villages of Jaipur district, mostly on an off-white ground in vegetable dyes. The resist paste ('dabu') is made from local black clay, and the wooden blocks are carved by local turners (kharadiye).

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 37, application 183

Kutch Bandhani

Gujarat

Tie-dye from Kutch district: before dyeing, the cloth is pinched up and tied with thread into thousands of tiny dots ('rai dana', mustard seed), often over several rounds. It is practised mainly by the Khatri community.

Why it's here: new GI (registered 2024); likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 185, application 756

Mata ni Pachhedi

Gujarat

A sacred cloth made in Ahmedabad with the mother goddess at the centre and her stories filling the rest. It is hand-painted or block-printed on cotton in natural and mineral colours; the name means 'behind the mother goddess'.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 12 An Introduction to Indian Art, Part II, Ch 8 ('Pachedi' scroll painting); new GI (registered 2023).

GI Journal 166, application 694

Kutch Rogan Craft

Gujarat

Painting on cloth with 'rogan', a thick paste made by boiling castor oil for hours and mixing it with colour. Artisans in Bhuj, Anjar, Rapar and Nakhtrana talukas draw it out in fine threads with a stylus, freehand, without any outline. Rogan means 'oil-based' in Persian.

Why it's here: new GI (registered 2024); likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 182, application 718

Srikalahasthi Kalamkari

Andhra Pradesh

Pen-drawn kalamkari from Srikalahasthi. The cloth is treated with myrobalan and buffalo milk. Outlines and colours are then trickled on with a 'kalam' (a bamboo stick wrapped in wool), using iron vinegar, alum, vegetable dyes and natural indigo.

Why it's here: NCERT old Class 8 Our Past – III, Ch 3 (kalamkari).

GI Journal 9, application 28

Sanganeri Hand Block Printing

Rajasthan

Hand-block printing from Sanganer, 16 km from Jaipur: delicate floral motifs on a white base, stamped with wooden blocks in repeating designs, with the print showing almost as clearly on the underside.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 30, application 147

Painting traditions

Madhubani Painting

Bihar

Paintings made by women on walls, floors, cloth and paper, in a style that leaves no space empty. The most elaborate are painted in the kohbar (nuptial chamber) to bless the couple, with motifs such as fish, parrots, the sun and the moon.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 12 An Introduction to Indian Art, Part II, Ch 8; NCERT Class 11 An Introduction to Indian Art, Part I, Ch 5.

GI Journal 14, application 37

Orissa Pattachitra

Odisha

Paintings on 'patta', a stiff canvas of cotton layers pasted with tamarind-seed gum and chalk, in vegetable and mineral colours. Made at Puri for pilgrims to the Jagannath temple, they show Jagannath, Krishna, the avatars of Vishnu and the epics.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 12 An Introduction to Indian Art, Part II, Ch 8; NCERT Class 8 Exploring Society: India and Beyond (Part 2), Ch 8.

GI Journal Supp1, application 88

Warli Painting

India (Maharashtra, Gujarat, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu)

Ritual paintings of the Warli and Malhar Koli tribes (around Dahanu and Jawhar in Maharashtra, and in Gujarat, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu). They use one colour, white rice paste on a mud-and-cow-dung wall, in circles, triangles, squares and lines drawn freehand.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 12 An Introduction to Indian Art, Part II, Ch 8; NCERT Class 11 An Introduction to Indian Art, Part I, Ch 5.

GI Journal 54, application 239

Thanjavur Painting

Tamil Nadu

Paintings of a single main deity with a rounded body and almond-shaped eyes, made on a jackfruit-wood board covered with cloth and chalk paste. Gold foil and precious or semi-precious stones highlight the ornaments and dress (the 'gilded and gem-set' technique).

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks painting traditions, as in 2018 Q42.

GI Journal 14, application 47

Kangra Paintings

Himachal Pradesh

Miniature paintings of the old Kangra district (today's Kangra, Hamirpur and Una), inspired by Vaishnava devotion. Love is a major theme: Radha and Krishna of Keshav Das's Rasikapriya, the Gita Govinda, and romances such as Heer-Ranjha.

Why it's here: UPSC Prelims 2018 Q42 (Kangra school as an option); NCERT Class 12 An Introduction to Indian Art, Part II, Ch 5.

GI Journal 55, application 381

Nathdwara Pichhwai Painting

Rajasthan

Cloth paintings from Nathdwara in Mewar (Rajsamand and Udaipur districts), hung behind the idol of Shrinathji (Krishna); 'pichhwai' means a hanging at the back. The figures have large eyes, a broad nose and heavy bodies, in natural colours.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 12 An Introduction to Indian Art, Part II, Ch 2, 8; new GI (registered 2023).

GI Journal 172, application 748

Cheriyal Paintings

Telangana

Long painted scrolls on starched khadi cloth, usually on a red background. Storytellers of the Kaki Padagollu community use them as visual aids while reciting tales from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and community legends.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks painting traditions, as in 2018 Q42.

GI Journal 35, application 190

Gond Painting of Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh

Painting of the Gond, one of India's largest tribes, practised mainly in Anuppur, Dindori and Mandla districts. Built up from dots and lines, it tells folk tales and rituals and shows the bond between people and nature.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 12 An Introduction to Indian Art, Part II, Ch 8; new GI (registered 2023).

GI Journal 165, application 701

Manjusha Art

Bihar

Line painting from Bhagalpur (the ancient Anga region) in only three colours, pink, green and yellow. Figures are drawn like the letter X, and every painting has at least one of five set borders, such as a chain of snakes. The main characters include Bihula, Bala and Goddess Bishahari (Mansa).

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks painting traditions, as in 2018 Q42.

GI Journal 136, application 656

Metal craft

Bidriware

Karnataka

Damascening from Bidar: an alloy of zinc and copper is cast, engraved and inlaid with silver (sometimes gold), then dipped in a solution made with a soil found only around Bidar. The craft grew under the Bahmani sultan Ahmad Shah (1422–1436).

Why it's here: NCERT Class 7 Curiosity, Ch 4.

GI Journal 10, application 20

Bastar Dhokra

Chhattisgarh

Bell-metal figures of Bastar cast by the lost-wax process, decorated with fine wax threads before casting. Made by the Ghadawa community, they show tribal life, deities, animals and nature; the application traces the technique back to the bronze 'dancing girl' of Mohenjodaro.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 12 An Introduction to Indian Art, Part II, Ch 8; NCERT Class 8 Curiosity, Ch 8.

GI Journal 24, application 83

Aranmula Kannadi (Aranmula Metal Mirror)

Kerala

A mirror of polished metal, not glass, made only at Aranmula on the Pamba in Pathanamthitta district, Kerala. It is cast from a high-tin bronze of copper and tin whose exact recipe is a guarded secret, and it reflects without distortion.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 7 Curiosity, Ch 11.

GI Journal 3, application 3

Swamimalai Bronze Icons

Tamil Nadu

Solid bronze and panchaloha idols made at Swamimalai near Thanjavur by casting from wax models, strictly to the rules of the shilpa shastras. The moulds use alluvial soil from the Kaveri's banks, and the style descends from the Chola period.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 11 An Introduction to Indian Art, Part I, Ch 7 (Chola bronzes).

GI Journal 16, application 64

Moradabad Metal Craft

Uttar Pradesh

Brass and other metal ware from Moradabad, known for being lighter than similar goods made elsewhere: extra metal is pared away from the inside, which is finished as carefully as the outside.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 8 Exploring Society: India and Beyond (Part 2), Ch 7.

GI Journal 54, application 161

Udaipur Koftgari Metal Craft

Rajasthan

Koftgari (damascening) from Udaipur and Chittorgarh. An iron surface is cross-hatched with a knife (chirni), gold and silver wire is pressed into the grooves, and the surface is burnished with a moonstone. It once decorated the swords, shields and armour of Mewar.

Why it's here: new GI (registered 2023).

GI Journal 173, application 747

Wood, toys and furniture

Channapatna Toys And Dolls

Karnataka

Lacquered wooden toys from Channapatna, near Bengaluru, turned on a lathe from soft, light 'hale' wood. Sticks of coloured lac are pressed against the spinning wood, where friction heat melts them into an even coat; palm leaf gives the final gloss.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 8 Exploring Society: India and Beyond (Part 2), Ch 7.

GI Journal 10, application 23

Appliqué, grass, masks, puppets and carpets

Pipli Applique Work

Odisha

Appliqué from Pipli and Puri: patches of coloured cloth, traditionally red, white, black and yellow, are cut into motifs such as elephants, peacocks and flowers and stitched onto a base. It is used for canopies, umbrellas and ritual fans.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal Supp2, application 86

Applique (Khatwa) Work of Bihar

Bihar

Appliqué done mainly by women in Sitamarhi and Madhubani districts: shapes cut from thin white cloth are stitched onto red or orange backgrounds for canopies (shamianas), tents and wall hangings.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 18, application 73

Purulia Chau Mask

West Bengal

Masks for the Chau dance made in Charida village, Bagmundi block, Purulia, from clay, paper pulp and mud, then painted and decorated with zari. Colours signal the character: Rama's mask is green and Krishna's blue.

Why it's here: UPSC Prelims 2024 Q60 (Chhau dance as an option).

GI Journal 101, application 565

Majuli Mask of Assam

Assam

Masks from the river island of Majuli, made of bamboo, cane, cloth and clay for bhaona, the Vaishnavite plays begun by Sankardeva. Characters such as Ravana, Garuda and Narasimha are shaped exactly as his plays describe them, and some masks cover the whole head and body.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 11 India: Physical Environment, Ch 6; NCERT Class 11 Knowledge Traditions and Practices of India, Part I, Ch 3 (Majuli island; Sattriya dance); new GI (registered 2024).

GI Journal 182, application 939

Andhra Pradesh Leather Puppetry

Andhra Pradesh

Puppets of parchment leather from Nimmalakunta and Narasaraopet, used in the shadow play Tholu Bommalata. Epic figures such as Hanuman and Ravana are coloured with vegetable dyes and finely punched; the same work now also makes lampshades and wall hangings.

Why it's here: NCERT Class 11 Knowledge Traditions and Practices of India, Part I, Ch 3 (Tolu Bommalatta shadow puppetry).

GI Journal Supplementary 2, application 107

Hand Made Carpet of Bhadohi

Uttar Pradesh

Hand-knotted pile carpets from the Bhadohi belt (Bhadohi district and parts of Mirzapur, Varanasi and nearby districts), which the application calls the world's largest handmade-carpet centre. Wool is knotted on vertical looms, at 30 to 300 knots a square inch.

Why it's here: likely: UPSC asks textile crafts by state, as in 2018 Q54.

GI Journal 33, application 148

4. Every registered handicraft GI, state by state

Names exactly as registered, as on 31 Dec 2025: 346 crafts from 349 handicraft registrations (a craft registered twice, and logo registrations, appear once).

Andaman and Nicobar Islands (4): Nicobari Canoe - Hodi Craft of Andaman & Nicobar; Nicobari Hut of Andaman & Nicobar; Nicobari Mat (Chatrai / Hileuoi) of Andaman & Nicobar; Padauk Wood Craft of Andaman & Nicobar

Andhra Pradesh (16): Allagadda Stone Carving; Andhra Pradesh Leather Puppetry; Bobbili Veena; Budithi Bell & Brass Metal Craft; Dharmavaram Handloom Pattu Sarees And Paavadas; Durgi Stone Carvings; Etikoppaka Toys; Kondapalli Bommalu; Machilipatnam Kalamkari; Mangalagiri Sarees And Fabrics; Narasapur Crochet Lace Products; Ponduru Khadi; Srikalahasthi Kalamkari; Udayagiri Wooden Cutlery; Uppada Jamdani Sarees; Venkatagiri Sarees

Arunachal Pradesh (11): Arunachal Pradesh Adi Textile; Arunachal Pradesh Apatani Textile; Arunachal Pradesh Galo Textile; Arunachal Pradesh Handmade Carpet; Arunachal Pradesh Monpa Handmade Paper; Arunachal Pradesh Monpa Textile; Arunachal Pradesh Nyishi Textile; Arunachal Pradesh Tai Khamti Textile; Arunachal Pradesh Tangsa Textile Product; Arunachal Pradesh Wancho Wooden Craft; Idu Mishmi Textiles

Assam (21): Assam Asharikandi Terracotta Craft; Assam Bihu Dhol; Assam Jaapi; Assam Majuli Manuscript Painting; Assam Pani Meteka Craft; Axomiya Gohona (Assamese Jewellery); Bodo Aronai; Bodo Dokhona; Bodo Eri Silk; Bodo Gamsa; Bodo Gongona; Bodo Jotha; Bodo Jwmgra; Bodo Kham; Bodo Serja; Bodo Sifung; Bodo Thorkha; Gamosa of Assam; Majuli Mask of Assam; Muga Silk of Assam; Sarthebari Metal Craft

Bihar (6): Applique (Khatwa) Work of Bihar; Bhagalpur Silk; Madhubani Painting; Manjusha Art; Sikki Grass Products of Bihar; Sujini Embroidery Work of Bihar

Chhattisgarh (4): Bastar Dhokra; Bastar Iron Craft; Bastar Wooden Craft; Champa Silk Saree And Fabrics

Gujarat (20): Agates of Cambay; Ahmedabad Sodagari Block Print; Bharuch Sujani Weaving; Gharchola Craft of Gujarat; Gujarat Suf Embroidery; Jamnagari Bandhani; Kachchh Shawls; Kutch Ajrakh; Kutch Bandhani; Kutch Embroidery; Kutch Rogan Craft; Mata ni Pachhed; Patan Patola; Pethapur Printing Blocks; Pithora; Rajkot Patola; Sankheda Furniture; Surat Sadeli Craft; Surat Zari Craft; Tangaliya Shawl

Himachal Pradesh (6): Chamba Chappal; Chamba Rumal; Kangra Paintings; Kinnauri Shawl; Kullu Shawl; Lahauli Knitted Socks & Gloves

India (Assam and Arunachal Pradesh) (1): Assam Mishing Handloom Products

India (Karnataka & Maharashtra) (1): Kolhapuri Chappal

India (Maharashtra, Gujarat, Dadara & Nagar Haveli, Daman Diu) (1): Warli Painting

India (Punjab, Haryana & Rajasthan) (1): Phulkari

Jammu & Kashmir (18): Basohli Painting; Basohli Pashmina Woolen Products; Gabba; Kani Shawl; Kashmir Chain Stitch; Kashmir Crewel; Kashmir Namda; Kashmir Paper Machie; Kashmir Pashmina; Kashmir Sozani Craft; Kashmir Tweed; Kashmir Wagguv; Kashmir Walnut Wood Carving; Kashmir Willow Bat; Kashmiri Hand Knotted Carpet; Khatamband; Rajouri Chikri Wood Craft; Shikara

Jharkhand (1): Sohrai – Khovar Painting

Karnataka (16): Bidriware; Channapatna Toys And Dolls; Ganjifa Cards of Mysore; Guledgudd Khana; Ilkal Sarees; Karnataka Bronzeware; Kasuti Embroidery; Kinhal Toys; Molakalmuru Sarees; Mysore Rosewood Inlay; Mysore Silk; Mysore Traditional Paintings; Navalgund Durries; Patteda Anchu Saree & Fabrics; Sandur Lambani Embroidery; Udupi Sarees

Kerala (13): Alleppey Coir; Aranmula Kannadi (Aranmula Metal Mirror); Balaramapuram Sarees And Fine Cotton Fabrics; Brass Broidered Coconut Shell Crafts of Kerala; Cannanore Home Furnishings; Chendamangalam Dhoties & Set Mundu; Kannadippaya (Bamboo Mat); Kasaragod Sarees; Kuthampully Dhoties & Set Mundu; Kuthampully Sarees; Maddalam of Palakkad; Payyannur Pavithra Ring; Screw Pine Craft of Kerala

Ladakh (UT) (2): Ladakh Shingskos (Wood Carving); Pashmina Wool of Ladakh

Madhya Pradesh (16): Bagh Prints of Madhya Pradesh; Bell Metal Ware of Datia and Tikamgarh; Betul Bharewa Metal Craft; Chanderi Sarees; Chhatarpur Furniture; Gond Painting of Madhya Pradesh; Gwalior Handmade Carpet; Gwalior Papier Mache Craft; Gwalior Stone Craft; Jabalpur Stone Craft; Khajuraho Stone Craft Of Madhya Pradesh; Leather Toys of Indore; Maheshwar Sarees & Fabrics; Ujjain Batik Print; Waraseoni Handloom Saree & Fabrics; Wrought Iron Crafts of Dindori

Maharashtra (12): Hupari Silver Craft; Karvath Kati Sarees And Fabrics; Kavdi Maal of Tuljapur; Miraj Sitar; Miraj Tanpura; Paithani Sarees And Fabrics; Pen Ganesh Idol; Puneri Pagadi; Sawantwadi Ganjifa Cards; Sawantwadi Wooden Craft; Solapur Chaddar; Solapur Terry Towel

Manipur (3): Moirang Phee; Shaphee Lanphee; Wangkhei Phee

Meghalaya (4): Meghalaya Garo Textile; Meghalaya Khasi Handloom Products; Meghalaya Lyrnai Pottery; Meghalaya Ryndia Textile

Mizoram (5): Hmaram; Mizo Puanchei; Ngotekherh; Pawndum; Tawlhlohpuan

Nagaland (1): Chakhesang Shawl

Odisha (15): Berhampur Patta (Phoda Kumbha) Saree & Joda; Bomkai Saree & Fabrics; Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi (Silver Filigree); Dhalapathar Parda & Fabrics; Gopalpur Tussar Fabrics; Habaspuri Saree & Fabrics; Kapadaganda: Dungaria Kondh Embroidery Shawl; Khandua Saree And Fabrics; Konark Stone Carving; Kotpad Handloom Fabric; Orissa Ikat; Orissa Pattachitra; Painting of Lanjia Saura (IDITAL); Odisha; Pipli Applique Work; Sambalpuri Bandha Saree & Fabrics

Puducherry (Pondicherry) (2): Tirukanur Papier Mache Craft; Villianur Terracotta Works

Rajasthan (13): Bagru Hand Block Print; Bikaner Kashidakari Craft; Bikaner Usta Kala Craft; Blue Pottery of Jaipur; Jodhpur Bandhej Craft; Kathputlis of Rajasthan; Kota Doria; Molela Clay Work; Nathdwara Pichhwai Painting; Pokaran Pottery; Sanganeri Hand Block Printing; Thewa Art Work; Udaipur Koftgari Metal Craft

Tamil Nadu (37): Ambasamudram Choppu Saman (Wooden Toys); Arani Silk; Arumbavur Wood Carvings; Bhavani Jamakkalam; Chedibutta Saree; Chettinad Kottan; Dindigul Locks; Jaderi Namakatti; Kallakurichi Wood Carving; Kancheepuram Silk; Kandangi Saree; Karuppur Kalamkari Paintings; Kovai Kora Cotton Sarees; Madurai Sungudi; Mahabalipuram Stone Sculpture; Manamadurai Pottery; Myladi Stone Carvings; Nachiarkoil Kuthuvilakku ("Nachiarkoil Lamp"); Namakkal Maakkal Paattirangal; Narasinghapettai Nagaswaram; Negamam Cotton Saree; Pattamadai Pai ("Pattamadai Mat"); Salem Fabric; Salem Silk know as Salem Venpattu; Swamimalai Bronze Icons; Temple Jewellery of Nagercoil; Thaikkal Rattan Craft; Thanjavur Art Plate; Thanjavur Doll; Thanjavur Netti Works; Thanjavur Painting; Thanjavur Veenai; Thirubuvanam Silk Sarees; Thovalai Maanika Maalai; Toda Embroidery; Vilachery Clay Toys; Woraiyur Cotton Saree

Telangana (14): Adilabad Dokra; Cheriya Paintings; Gadwal Sarees; Hyderabad Lac Bangles; Narayanpet Handloom Sarees; Nirmal Furniture; Nirmal Paintings; Nirmal Toys and Craft; Pembarthi Metal Craft; Pochampally Ikat; Siddipet Gollabama; Silver Filigree of Karimnagar; Telia Rumaal; Warangal Durries

Tripura (2): Tripura Pachra-Rignai Textile; Tripura Risa Textile

Uttar Pradesh (55): Agra Durrie; Agra Stone Inlay Work; Aligarh Tala; Amroha Dholak; Baghpat Home Furnishings; Bakhira Brassware; Banaras Brocades And Sarees; Banaras Gulabi Meenakari Craft; Banaras Hand Block Print; Banaras Metal Casting Craft; Banaras Metal Repouse Craft; Banaras Mural Painting; Banaras Shehnai; Banaras Tabla; Banaras Wood Carving; Banaras Zardozi; Banda Shazar Patthar craft; Barabanki Handloom Product; Bareilly Cane & Bamboo Craft; Bareilly Terracotta; Bareilly Zari Zardoji; Chitrakoot Wooden Craft & Toys; Chunar Glaze Pottery; Farrukhabad Prints; Firozabad Glass; Ghazipur Wall Hanging; Gorakhpur Terracotta; Hand Made Carpet of Bhadohi; Jalesar Dhatu Shilp (Metal Craft); Kalpi Handmade Paper; Kanpur Saddlery; Khurja Pottery; Lucknow Chikan Craft; Lucknow Zardozi; Mahoba Gaura Patthar Hastashlip; Mainpuri Tarkashi; Mathura Sanjhi Craft; Mathura Zari Poshak; Mau Saree; Mirzapur Handmade Dari; Mirzapur Pital Bartan; Moonj Craft of Uttar Pradesh; Moradabad Metal Craft; Nagina Wood Craft; Nizamabad Black Clay Pottery; Patchwork of Rampur; Pilibhit Bansuri; Pilkhuwa Hand Block Print Textile; Saharanpur Wood Craft; Sambhal Bone Craft; Sambhal Horn Craft; Tharu Embroidery of Uttar Pradesh; Varanasi Glass Beads; Varanasi Soft Stone Jali Work; Varanasi Wooden Lacquerware & Toys

Uttarakhand (9): Bhotia Dann of Uttarakhand; Chamoli Wooden Ramman Mask; Rangwali Pichhoda of Kumaon; Uttarakhand Aipan; Uttarakhand Bichhu Buti (Nettle) Fabrics; Uttarakhand Likhai (Wood Carving); Uttarakhand Ringal Craft; Uttarakhand Tamta Product; Uttarakhand Thulma

West Bengal (16): Baluchari Saree; Banglar Muslin; Bankura Panchmura Terracotta Craft; Bengal Dokra; Bengal Patachitra; Dhaniakhali Saree; Garad Saree; Korial saree; Madurkathi; Malda Nistari Silk Yarn; Nakshi Kantha; Purulia Chau Mask; Santiniketan Leather Goods; Santipore Saree; Tangail Saree of Bengal; Wooden Mask of Kushmandi

Source: [GI Registry, 'Details of GI Applications Registered as on December 31, 2025' \(State wise Registered GI of India.pdf\)](#)

5. How the government supports crafts

- The Ministry of Textiles runs four main schemes for the sector: the National Handloom Development Programme, the Raw Material Supply Scheme, the National Handicraft Development Programme (NHDP) and the Comprehensive Handicrafts Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS).

Source: [PIB, Ministry of Textiles, 25 July 2025 \(Release ID 2148297\)](#)

- NHDP is the flagship handicraft scheme. Its skill components include the Guru Shishya Hastshilp Prashikshan Program, in which master craftspersons train new artisans.

Source: [PIB backgrounder 'Handicrafts at the Heart of India's Rural Economy', 9 Dec 2025](#)

- CHCDS develops craft clusters with modern infrastructure, so that artisans and small enterprises can produce and export more.

Source: [PIB backgrounder 'Handicrafts at the Heart of India's Rural Economy', 9 Dec 2025](#)

- Pehchan identity cards bring artisans into the formal economy so that they can use government schemes.

Source: [PIB backgrounder 'Handicrafts at the Heart of India's Rural Economy', 9 Dec 2025](#)

- National Handloom Day falls on 7 August. The Government declared it in 2015 to commemorate the Swadeshi Movement, launched on 7 August 1905. UPSC asked exactly this link (2023 Q83).

Source: [PIB, Ministry of Textiles, 6 Aug 2025 \(Release ID 2153053\); UPSC Civil Services \(Preliminary\) GS Paper I and final answer keys](#)

- National Handicrafts Week is observed every year from 8 to 14 December.

Source: [PIB backgrounder 'Handicrafts at the Heart of India's Rural Economy', 9 Dec 2025](#)

- Awards: the Shilp Guru award is the highest honour in handicrafts, alongside the National Awards. Handloom has the Sant Kabir Handloom Award and the National Handloom Award.
Source: [PIB backgrounder 'Handicrafts at the Heart of India's Rural Economy', 9 Dec 2025](#); [PIB, Ministry of Textiles, 6 Aug 2025 \(Release ID 2153053\)](#)
- Scale: PIB puts handloom and handicraft artisans at an estimated 64.66 lakh. As of August 2025, women were 71% of handloom weavers and 64% of all artisans.
Source: [PIB backgrounder 'Handicrafts at the Heart of India's Rural Economy', 9 Dec 2025](#)

6. How to revise crafts

- Learn each craft with its registered state and its family (weaving, embroidery, painting, metal and so on). UPSC's pair questions test exactly that.
- Read the registered name closely: many carry the place in the name, like 'Sujini Embroidery Work of Bihar' or 'Kutch Ajrakh'.
- Mark the crafts on a blank map of India, state by state; revise from the map, not from lists.
- Don't memorise GI counts or registration years: they change every year, and UPSC tests crafts, places and the law.

Sources

- GI Registry, 'Details of GI Applications Registered as on December 31, 2025' (State_wise_Registered_GI_of_India.pdf) — https://ipindia.gov.in/frontend/pdf/gi/registered/State_wise_Registered_GI_of_India.pdf
- IP India, 'Geographical Indications: An Introduction' — <https://ipindia.gov.in/page-content/geographical-indications-an-introduction>
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