



SABAI CRAFT

Compiled By:



**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF
CRAFTS AND DESIGN**

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AIACA(All India Artisans and Craftworkers Association)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT :

On behalf of Indian Institute of Crafts and Design, we would like to thank Mrs. Aarti Patra and his husband Subal Patra of RAHAA who shared their valuable experiences with us. Additional thanks to Mrs. Nirupama Jana, daughter of Aarti Patra and Nasiba Bibi, master craftswoman.

Also we whole heartedly thank Mr. Rajeev. K.Sahoo , Deputy CEO, ORMAS , for his kind help.

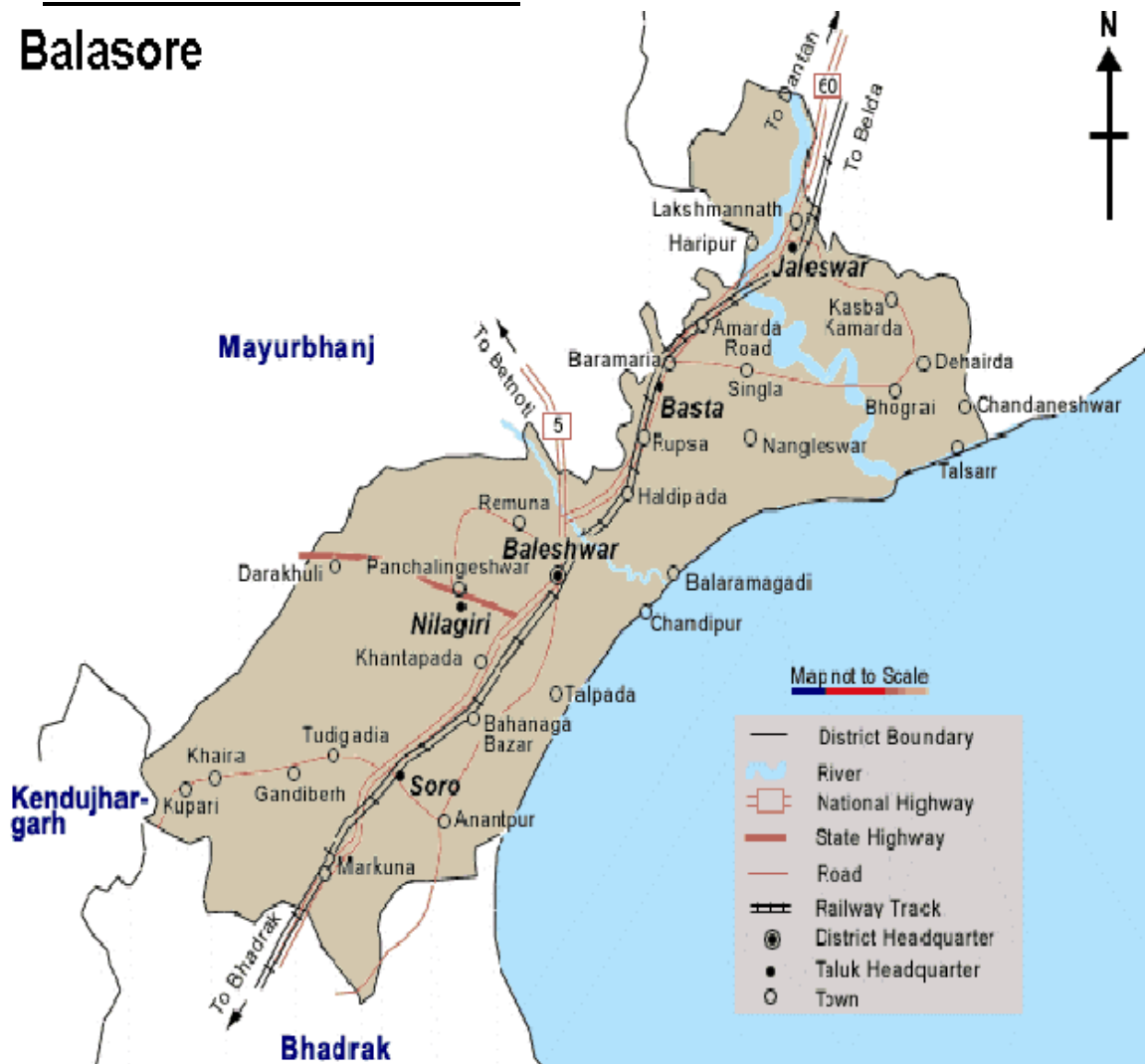
Special thanks to aiaca and Mr. Rajesh Jain, Secretary, Indian Institute of Crafts and Design for their co-ordination and support.

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1. DISTRICT MAP OF BALASORE:

Balasore



Baliapal is situated at a distance of 40kms from Balasore.

Balasore is famous for its forests and mines. This district is noted for the river Buhdabalanga and 3,824 feet high mountain Mahagiri. It is also bestowed with Chandipur sea beach. There are 12 Blocks in balasore. One among them is the Baliapal Block where RAHAA is situated producing Sabai Grass Craft Products.

2. INTRODUCTION:

Sabai grass is one of the natural fibers plenty available in the forests of Mayurbhanja district in Orissa. The tribal people called it as “Bobei Dauda or Bobei Ghasa” locally. The scientific name of sabai grass is ‘Eulaliopsis Binata’, which consists of long leaf fibers. The fiber length of sabai grass is more than that of bamboo but fiber diameter is 2.5 lower than bamboo .Sabai Grass consists of high cellulose and pentose with low lignin content (non woody plants).Sabai grass is mainly used in the paper industry .The artistic hands of rural people have given a new recognition in handicraft. Sabai grass is collected from the forest mainly by the rural women who are then dried and made into ropes by manually operated machines .The dyes used for colouring the rope are synthetic dyes. These are then used for making utility items.



Bamboo framed

Fruit basket

2.1 HISTORY OF THE CRAFT:

The idea of making domestic articles from sabai grass rope came into minds of people .For the first time sofa sets were produced in Baripada Jail by the prisoners .They produced the sofa set by bamboo frame. Later on iron frames were used to make sofa sets durable. In ancient times the sabai grass is used to make rope. But when paper mills were established this grass was used as one of the raw materials in the paper mills. But local people as well as tribal people did not quit the practice of making rope out of it. The rope out of sabai grass are exported to states like Kerala and West Bengal.



Iron framed dustbin

2.2 SABAI CRAFT IN BALIAPAL VILLAGE :

Sabai craft was covered under RAHAA in Baliapal village, Balasore , Orissa. The different type of crafts covered were mostly sabai crafts, others were crafts made out of golden grass , dead palm leaf , bamboo, etc. RAHAA is the sister organization of Mr. Jethys Adventure. RAHAA train their artisans and the products that the artisans make are then sold in the exhibitions. They have 50 SHG's and 1000 artisans working under them. The blocks are divided into the following:

1. Basta Block: 12 SHG
2. Baliapal Block: 5 SHG
3. Surudhia: 10 SHG
4. Karanja: 5 SHG
5. Pratlupur: 5 SHG
6. Bethgodia: 2 SHG
7. Vikagodias: 1 SHG

2.3 OTHER EXISTING CRAFTS OF THE VILLAGE :

Other existing crafts of the village are crafts made out of Sabai grass, Sabai rope, Scrupine, Dead palm leaf, Golden grass, Nalia grass and Bamboo.

3. RAW MATERIALS:

The raw materials needed to make the product are:

- 3.1 Sabai grass
- 3.2 Sabai rope
- 3.3 Dead Palm Leaf



Sabai Grass



Sabai Rope



Dead Palm Leaf

4. MAIN SOURCE OF RAW MATERIAL:

Raw materials are easily available from Mayurbhanj (approx 40 kms from Balipada). During rainy season it becomes difficult to acquire these raw materials, because moisture fades the colour of the rope. They get chemical dyes from Kolkatta.

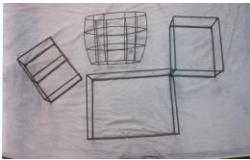
5. TOOLS:

The different kinds of tools used are:

5.1 Iron Frames, they order them from the welding shops. The price differs with the difference in size.

5.2 Bamboo frames are also used.

5.3 "Sui - Dhaga" (needle and thread)



6. PROCESSING:

Here process is mainly discussed in terms of a particular product, the Basket.

6.1 Talli: Bundle of sabai grass is held and tied together with another coloured dead palm leaf with the needle. They start stitching from the base and proceeds further on the top stitching it in the same manner. The application of stitches resembles chain stitch, one kind of Indian embroidered stitch.

6.2 After this they do the edging i.e. when they close the stitches on the brim of the basket.

6.3 Then they make the handle of the basket and stitch it on to the basket to complete the final product.



Process of making the basket.



7. PACKAGING:

They pack the products by wrapping it first with newspaper, they put silica gel inside the paper to maintain its shape, and then cover it with polyethylene and finally packing them in cartons.

8. TRANSPORTATION:

They travel mostly on trains or busses during exhibitions to exhibit their products to different states.

9. STORAGE:

Rented rooms are hired to keep their products, once it comes from their SHG's. They have to keep the products in a dry storage because, in the presence of damp and moisture it rotten the products and hence they are rejected.

10. RANGE OF PRODUCTS:

The range of products includes both decorative and utility items. They are not recyclable products. The decorative items include wall hangings, souvenirs like fish, ball, stars, gift boxes etc. The utility items include bag, dustbin , coaster , dinning mat, hot case , lamp shed , " chattai " (mats) , and boxes made out of both bamboo and iron frames.



Range of Products

1. **Baskets**
2. **Coaster**
3. **Flower**
4. **Trays**
5. **Hats**
6. **Boxes**
7. **Bags**
8. **Hot Case**
9. **Chattai (Mats)**
10. **Carriers**



11. PRICING:

They buy the raw materials on a monthly basis.

1. 10 quintal grass ----- Rs10, 000/-
2. 2 quintal rope----- Rs 5,000/-
3. 200 piece of bamboo----- Rs 3,000/-
4. Iron frames----- Rs 30/- - Rs 200/-
5. Some bunches of dead palm leaf

The pricing of their product range varies from Rs 50/- -- Rs 10,000/- . They keep 10/- profit. Cost of the labour is determined by the size of the product he makes. This cost can vary from Rs 20/- to Rs 500/-.

(All prices mentioned are with respect to October 2004)

12. RECENT CHANGES IN:

12.1 MARKET:

In the recent years there has been an increase in the market .The value of sabai grass crafts have been recognized with pride and highly appreciated in the national market. They've put up exhibitions in collaboration with DASTKAR , ORMAS , DIC, OKHILA BHARTI , they also sell their products to design stores like Kamayani , Delhi and one in Madras. They sell to Industree Crafts P Ltd, Bangalore. These products fetch a good demand in the market which helps the tribal people and poor women to earn good money.

12.2 TECHNOLOGY :

The technological changes have been vast. They explored from "baith" to bamboo. Earlier, they produced sofa sets in bamboo frame, later iron frames were used to make sofa sets more durable. The NGO Adventure developed the quality of the rope and the rope making process. The tribal people made fine rope which is called zero quality rope. They are also working with computers with help of designers to have a preview of their final products.



Making products from zero quality rope

12.3 DESIGN :

The design diversifications have changed immensely. They get their designs from renowned designers of Kolkatta and Delhi. They've worked with Pooja Rathore of " Art Bankar", Delhi and Payal Nath of "Designing Plaza" Kolkatta. Trends change mostly in the designs of bags. The NGO Adventure used this rope to make mats, baskets and design bags etc by the technical knowledge of Industree Crafts P Ltd, Bangalore.

Design Diversification



13. **GLOSSARY:**

“Bobei Dauda / Bobei Ghasa”: Colloquial names for sabai grass.

“Baint”: Colloquial term for cane.

“Chattai”: Colloquial name for floor mats.

Sabai Grass: It is called sea grass in English and its botanical name is Eulaliopsis Binata

Souvenirs; something serving as a reminder of an incident or place visited

“Sui- Dhaga”: Its a colloquial term for thread and needle

14. **APPENDIX :**

Contact Persons :

Aarti Patra
RAHAA
At/ P.O - Baliapal
District: Balasore
Pin - 756026
Orissa

Internet Sites:

[www. google.com](http://www.google.com)
www.craftsbridge.com
www.craftrevival.org

15. **INTERVIEW WITH THE CRAFTSWOMAN :**

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| NAME : | Nasiba Bibi |
| AGE: | 30 years |
| SEX: | Female |
| CASTE: | SC/ ST |
| OCCUPATION: | Sabai Craft Making |
| WORK DURATION: | 5 years |
| NO OF FAMILY MEMBERS: | 6 members |



Nasiba Bibi

She has 4 children, 3 daughters and 1 son. Her husband transports goods from one place to another. The different products that she makes out of sabai are bag, mats, hot case, box, laundry box and coaster. During time of orders she earns from 500-1000/- per month. (All prices mentioned are with respect to October 2004)

Sabai grass a perennial grass grown in abundance and the district of Mayurbhanj, provides considerable income opportunities to the people. 4000 people of the area earn their livelihood out of these activities. In case of sabai grass the producers face the same marketing problem. It is worth mentioning that in both the sal -leaf and sabai the middlemen / local traders exploit the producers. This economic backwardness of the people has its bearing on educational , health and social aspects .This prolonged socioeconomic backwardness of the tribal in particular trends to destabilize the cohesive social order and becomes a major cause for increasing migration of ST people to the cities of inside and outside the state.