



Madurkathi

Weaving Dream



**Purba Medinipur
& Paschim Medinipur
West Bengal**

Supported by
West Bengal Khadi &
Village Industries Board

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WBKVIB (West Bengal Khadi & Village Industries Board) has taken up an initiative to develop skill, capacity and institutions of Madurkathi artisans, facilitate market linkage in order to augment their earnings and provide infrastructural support in Purba and Paschim Medinipur. Banglanatak dot com, a social enterprise is the implementing partner for this initiative.

1.

the

location

The district headquarters of Purba Medinipur is Tamluk and that of Paschim Medinipur is Medinipur town.

Getting there:-

Paschim Medinipur:- Reach Balichak by a train from Howrah which takes about 3 hours. Take a car from there to reach the blocks where Madur is made. They fall within a radius of 30km.

Purba Medinipur:- Reach Bajkul by a train from Howrah which takes about 3 hours. Take a car from there to reach the blocks where Madur is made. They fall within a radius of 30km.



Accommodation:- Hotels are available at Debra, Balichak, Contai and Tamluk. Also, one may stay at the residency set up by the Madur society at Bhagawanpur or the resource centre of the Chitrataru Patanchitra Cluster at Pingla.



2.
the
craft

In Bengal, the word Madur is a generic for floor mats. Mats are an integral part of Bengal's lifestyle. Madur is a tradition and pride of Medinipur. Women of the households are involved in weaving this beautiful craft. It is sold in the local markets of Purba and Paschim Medinipur and adjoining states for day to day use and ritualistic purposes. With the shift in market needs, the mats are now also used for making decorative and utilitarian items.

The origin of the craft in West Bengal dates back to the Muslim period, when 'Masland' mats of superfine variety with fine cotton as weft were produced under royal patronage. Mats were collected as revenue of the Jaigirdari system. In 1744, Nawab Alibardi Khan issued a charter to the Jaigirdars in this regard and as a result, it was obligatory to supply 'Masland' mats for use in the collectorate.





3. the craftspersons

There are around 6000 weavers in Paschim and Purba Medinipur. As part of the initiative by WBKVIB, around 4500 mat weavers have been covered across the two districts.

Mat weaving is the only source of income for 77% of the weavers. Around 74% of the weavers make hand woven mats and the remaining develop loom based products. The loom based weavers have been organised into units by local entrepreneurs. There are around 40 of these small units across Purba and Paschim Medinipur. Besides making folding mats, these units have diversified into making various utility items and accessories such as bags, folders, table mats, runners, coasters, boxes etc.

93% of the mat weavers are women. The women of the households spend their leisure time weaving mats.

Few of the traditional mat making families still retain the knowledge of weaving a fine variety of exclusive mats locally known as Masland or Mataranchi.

District wise coverage

Districts	Blocks	No of Beneficiaries
Paschim Medinipur	Sabang, Pingla and Narayangarh	2635
Purba Medinipur	Ramnagar-I and II, Egra-I and II, Patashpur I, Bhagawanpur-I, Contai and Moyna	1797
Total		4432



4. the raw material

Madurkathi is a rhizome based plant (Cyperus Tegetum or Cyperus Pangorei), which is found abundantly in the alluvial tracts of Purba and Paschim Medinipur.

The land and climate of Purba and Paschim Medinipur districts is suitable for cultivating Madurkathi. The sticks can be reaped for a period of 3-4 years once the rhizomes are sown. Main seasons for cutting the sticks are April-July and September-November. Best quality Madur sticks are reaped during the September-November season.

Sabang in Paschim Medinipur is the wholesale market of raw Madur sticks. The market remains open throughout the year. Cultivators from both Purba and Paschim Medinipur districts bring in their produce to Sabang. Bulk transactions take place on Tuesdays every week. The sticks are purchased by dealers who collect these for reselling and by producers for their own use. Raw materials like thread, dye and cloth is procured by units producing diversified mat products. The main market for procuring the raw material is at Radhamoni Haat in Tamluk.



5. the process



Process of Fine Weaving

The process begins with the preparation of basic raw material which is commonly termed as pre-loom weaving. The painstaking work starts from the steps when the soft reeds and cotton (some cases jute thread) are arranged on a bamboo frame loom as weft and warp respectively. For weaving of Masland mats at least two persons are required. One person places the reeds from left to right by placing one thread on top and another one down. The other person does the same thing from right to left. At the finishing line the threads are turned and the process is continued. The popular design on Masland mats are of flowers, honey comb (mouchak), Rhomboidal (barfi), Cascading (jharna) etc.



1 Setting threads on frame



2 Making sticks finer with teeth



3 Weaving



4 Incorporating designs according to graph



5 The Pattern is ready

Process of Loom Setting

Weaving is also done with the help of installed looms locally called as char dhap (4 steps) looms. This loom is operated by a single person. A length of a mat is produced which is then tailored according to the size of the product.



1 Setting up Charkha and winding thread in bobbin



2 Colour Combination and patterns



3 Setting up bobbin in frame



4 Setting up drum



5 Warping



6 Setting up pedals and Pakhi

Process of dyeing Madurkathi

The craftsmen have a practice of dyeing the Madur sticks with natural and vegetable dyes. However, they nowadays use azo free dyes to add different colours to the weave. The process involves cutting the sticks, making appropriate bunches, mixing colours in proportion and adding to boiling water, soaking the sticks in the boiling water with the dye and then drying them in the sun.



1 Cutting sticks according to length



2 Tying uniform bundles



3 Weighing dyes according to proportion



4 Soaking sticks in boiling water with dyes



5 Laying dyed sticks out to dry



6 Various dyed sticks

6. the product

Masland or Mataranchi is an exclusive & expensive high ranged handmade variety of Madur made with intricate artistic skills by about 50 artisans living in Sarta GP of Sabang block and Kholaberia village of Ramnagar I. The artisans use their own land or take land on lease and specifically monitor the growth of the crop. The madur sticks are seasoned by soaking in water for 24 hours and then sheared using needles and laid out to dry. It is made even finer by shearing with teeth during the time of weaving. The sticks are occasionally dyed using naturally extracted colours from leaves, locally known as Rangchika. Cotton thread is used as the warp. The time taken to make a Mataranchi varies from 2 weeks to about 3 months depending on factors like the fineness of the sticks, the number of warp threads per inch and the intricacy of the design.

Much like carpets that use knots per square inch to determine quality, the number of warp threads and the number and thickness of reeds per inch determine the quality of the mats.

Apart from making the mats the crafts persons also make diversified products like bag, purse, curtain, table runner, jackets, pen holders etc.







Go Green

Eco friendly, simply put, is being friendly to nature. Eco-friendly products are called 'Green Products' as they do not harm our environment through their production, use or disposal. Green products help conserve energy, minimize carbon footprints and don't lead to toxicity and pollution. They are the need of the hour for saving our home, planet Earth, and its environment.

Use of eco friendly products creates demand for 'Green Skills' and supports a 'Green Economy'. As more and more people globally are becoming aware of the urgent need for protecting our environment and adopting a green lifestyle, the use of green products and the demand for them is also increasing.

Madurkathi a natural eco friendly product is an integral part of green economy. It is used to make a range of innovative and diversified products. Go Green Mission is reaching out to a wide section of society and encouraging them to endorse eco-friendly products.

"A Green Life Supports Green Economy"

7.

the directory

Paschim Medinipur

Name	Block	Contact	Specialisation
Pushparani Jana (National Awardee)	Sabang	9732534979	Traditional fine mats
Alok Jana (National Awardee)	Sabang	9734845044	
Tapas Jana	Debra	9434942166	
Nishikanto Das	Sabang	9800314193	
Ashok Jana	Sabang	9733728742	
Balai Das	Sabang	9734896350	Loom based diversified products
Arun Kumar Khatua	Pingla	9775134162	
Akhil Jana	Sabang	9748137691	
Shrikanto Mondal	Pingla	9733706946	
Madan Mohan Mana	Sabang	7474712685	
Adwaita Gayen	Sabang	8348812044	
Chandan Mula	Sabang	9734736117	
Nitai Gayen	Sabang	9735318301	

e-mail : madurwest@gmail.com

Purba Medinipur

Name	Block	Contact	Specialisation
Sarajubala Giri (National Awardee)	Ramnagar - I	9732808513	Traditional fine mats
Bijay Krishna Giri	Ramnagar - I	7872015798	
Rajkumar Ghosh	Moyna	9733619130	Loom based diversified products
Swapna Giri	Ramnagar - I	9932320817	
Purna Chandra Giri	Ramnagar - I	9732785430	
Ranjit Guchait	Bhagawanpur - I	9733486806	
Biswajit Dutta	Bhagawanpur - I	9733804115	
Gopal Jana	Patashpur - I	9735696280	
Kalachand Pradhan	Patashpur - I	9735521612	
Pabitra Samanta	Patashpur - I	9775257518	

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* The traditional mat makers weave mats & also make items like table mats and runners. The loom based producers make items such as bags, boxes, folders, table mat set etc.

Madurkathi

Weaving Dream



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