

# Contents

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- Latitudinal & longitudinal location on the map.
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- Proof & evidences (related articles, newspaper columns, journals etc)
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## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

### SITAMARHI

The district of Sitamarhi was carved out of Muzaffarpur district on 11th December 1972. It is situated in the northern part of Bihar. Its headquarter is located at Dumra, five kilometers south of Sitamarhi. The district headquarter was shifted here after the town of Sitamarhi was devastated in one of the worst ever earthquake in January 1934.

Sitamarhi is a sacred place in Hindu mythology. It's history goes back to Treta Yug. Sita, the wife of Lord Rama sprang to life out of an earthen pot, when Raja Janak was ploughing the field somewhere near Sitamarhi to impress upon Lord Indra for rain. It is said that Raja Janak excavated a tank at the place where Sita emerged and after her marriage set up the stone figures of Rama, Sita and Lakshman to mark the site. This tank is known as Janaki-kund and is south of the Janaki Mandir.

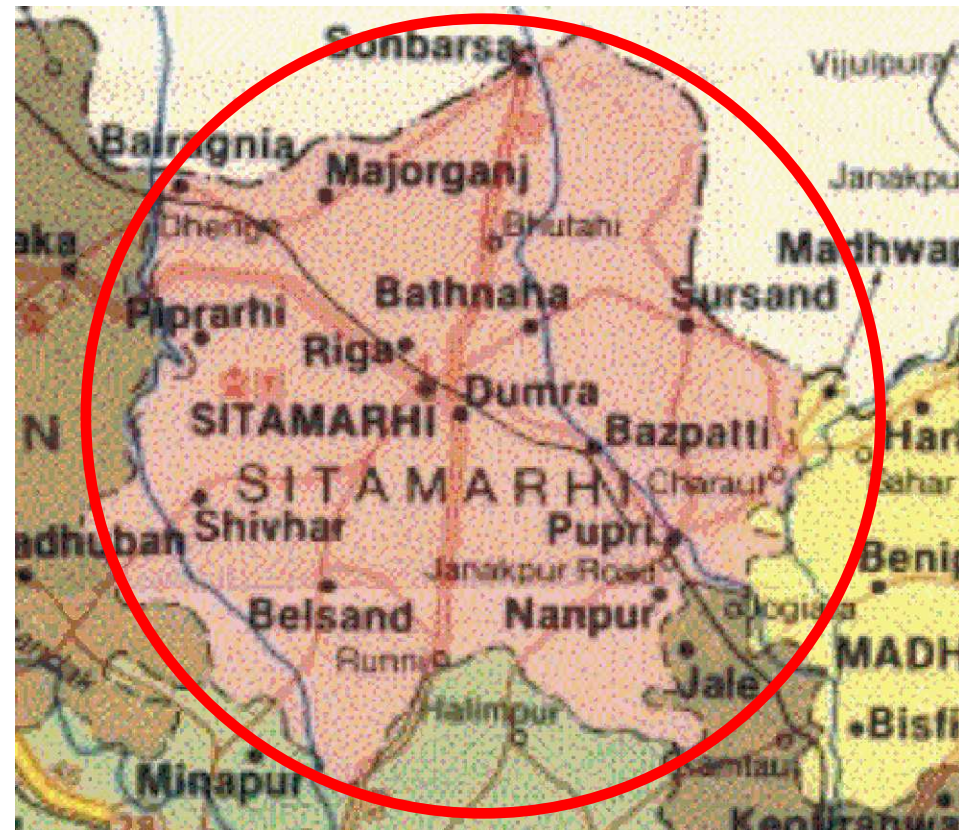


## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

In course of time, the land lapsed into a jungle until about 500 years ago, when a Hindu ascetic, named Birbal Das came to know the site by divine inspiration where Sita was born. He came down from Ayodhya and cleared the jungle. He found the images set up by Raja Janak, built temple over there and commenced the worship of Janaki or Sita. The Janaki Mandir is apparently modern and is about 100 years old only. The town however contains no relics of archaeological interest.

### Geographical Profile

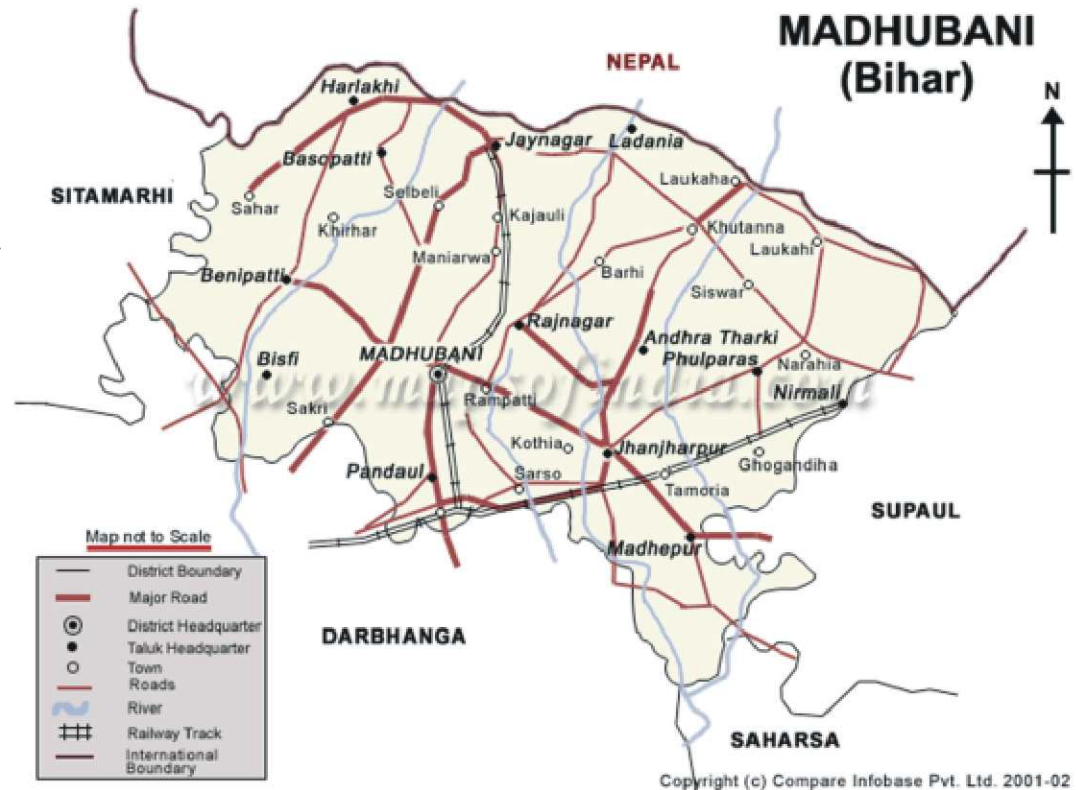
HQ	SITAMARHI
Latitude	26 ° 49 ' Longitude -- 85 ° 05 '
Height	85 meter above sea level
Intl. Border	90 kms.
Total Area	2185.17 sq. km.
Irrigated Land	737.33 sq. km.
Border	North -- Nepal South -- Muzaffarpur East -- Darbhanga, Madhubani West -- East Champaran, Sheohar
Major Rivers	Bagmati, Lakhndei
Population	Total 20, 13,796 Rural 18, 94,203 Urban 1,19,593
Sub Divisions	Sitamarhi Sadar, Shivahar, Pupri.
Blocks	Bathnaha, Parihar, Nanpur, Bazpatti, Bairgania, Belsand, Riga, Sursand, Pupri, Sonbarsa, Dumra, Runni Saidpur, Majorganj, Puranhia, Suppi, Parsauni, Bokhra, Chorout.
Agriculture	Paddy, Wheat, Maize, Lentils.
Industry	Sugar Factory, Rice and Oil Mills.
Rivers	Bagmati.



## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

### MADHUBANI

HQ	MADHUBANI
Area	2,501 sq. kms.
Population Total	28,32,024 Rural 27,29,260
Urban	1,02,764
SC Population	Total 3,61,687 Rural 3,51,921
Urban	9,766
ST Population	Total 597 Rural 541 Urban 56
Sub Divisions	Madhubani, Jaynagar, Benipatti, Jhanjharpur, Phul Paraas.
Blocks	Jainagar, Pandaul, Rahika, Bisfi, Benipatti, Basopatti, Babubarhi, Rajnagar Madhepur, Khutauna, Khajauli, Ghoghardiha, Ladania, Jhanjharpur, Madhwapur, Harlakhi, Andharatharhi, Lakhnaur, Phulparas, Laukahi.
Agriculture	Paddy.
Industry	Sugar factories, Pisciculture.
Rivers	Kamala and Bhutahi Balaan.





## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

### DARBHANGA

The name of the district has been derived from its head quarter and principal town, which is said to have been founded by Darbhangi Khan. It is also said that the name Darbhanga was derived from Dwar-Banga or Dar-e-Bang meaning "THE GATEWAY TO BENGAL".

Darbhangha is one of the important districts of North Bihar situated in the very heart of Mithilanchal - the fertile, alluvial plains of North India. Under the British rule, Darbhanga was a part of Sarkar Tirhut upto 1875, when it was constituted into a separate district. The sub-divisions of the then district Darbhanga were created as earlier as Darbhanga Sadar in 1845, Madhubani in 1846 and Samastipur in 1867. Darbhanga was part of Patna Division till 1908, when the separate Tirhut Division was carved out. Darbhanga became the Divisional headquarters in 1972 when all its three sub-divisions got the status of separate districts. Thus the present Darbhanga district took shape.



## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

Area	2279 sq. km.
Population	2507815
Longitude	85 degree 45' - 86 degree 25' East
Latitude	25 degree 53' - 26 degree 27' North
Adjoined Border	north-Madhubani south-Samastipur east-Saharsa west-Sitamarhi and Muzaffarpur
Average rainfall	1142.3 mm.
Rivers	Kamla, Baghmatai, Kosi and Kareh Villages & Craft pockets
Sitamarhi:	Sursand, Parihar and Runnisaidpur
Madhubani:	Jitwarpur, Ranti, Raiyam, Rasidpur, Sarisabpahi Darbhanga: Madhopur, Jhanjharpur, Laheriasari, Maulagunji, Pandasarai, Barheta, Kharajpur;



## HISTORY- REPUTATION AND TRADITIONAL VALUE

At one point of time a very large part of the population in North Bihar was engaged in this craft, which was mainly practiced in some of the pockets in Darbhanga, Madhubani and Sitamarhi districts of Bihar. Sikki work was a skill possessed by women in this region and gradually with active intervention of some of the local NGOs like Adithi this was carried actively to generate income along with an expression of form of their lives, their love and their aspirations.

Ironically today, there is yet growing demands for Sikk grass work not only for their outstanding beauty but also for a certain culture; certain value system they stand for. But unfortunately there aren't many actively involved in the craft due to lack of new design and product innovations and as a result there has been gradual reduction of regular sales and income flow due especially due to the bottle neck in regular market.



It is estimated that today there are about 1500 skilled artisans but majority are not as actively involved with this craft anymore and the craft is almost in the verge of extinction. In the Sursand block of Sitamarhi district there are about 500 and in Parihar block there are about 800 skilled artisans but many are not involved.

The annual turnover is also gradually going down and it is estimated that today the volume of Sikki product sales figure would not be more than Rs 40 to 60 thousand.

## RAW MATERIAL

Sikki is the king of stemmed grass found in the wet lands of the north Bihar. The women collect Sikki-grass from the village farms. The upper portion of the stem, which contains flowers, is discarded and the remaining portion cut into small pieces and preserved for making attractive sikki ware.

To make the Sikki grass usable it is first cut from near its base and then dried. The upper portion of the flowering stem is then discarded. The remaining portion is finely sliced and shaved and used for making the products. Sikki is sold by the traders at the weekly hat (market) or by itinerant door-to-door sellers. The rate varies, but interestingly, Sikki is not sold by weight, but measured by the fistful.



Baskets crafted out of Munj grass are a part of the living tradition of the state and have multiple uses, including the storage of food, clothing, and jewellery. Munj grass, pale lemon in colour, grows wild, and is strong and durable. Used either in its natural shade or dyed into many hues, the colourful baskets are further embellished with fringes of shells. Colours and glue (Arabic) are available in the local market. Sikki grass, dyed in red, blue, black, and gold is imaginatively wrought into a variety of articles. The sikki, which is characterized by its wonderful golden hue, is also coloured into myriad shades to make the products more attractive. The deities that are fashioned are depicted with their own special colours in two-dimensional images. The colours most popular are purple, deep blue, bright yellow, magenta pink, green, and red, all combined with the natural golden to make the final product a riot of colours. The women craft the products throughout the year according to their needs.



## PRODUCT

### SIKKI PRODUCTS

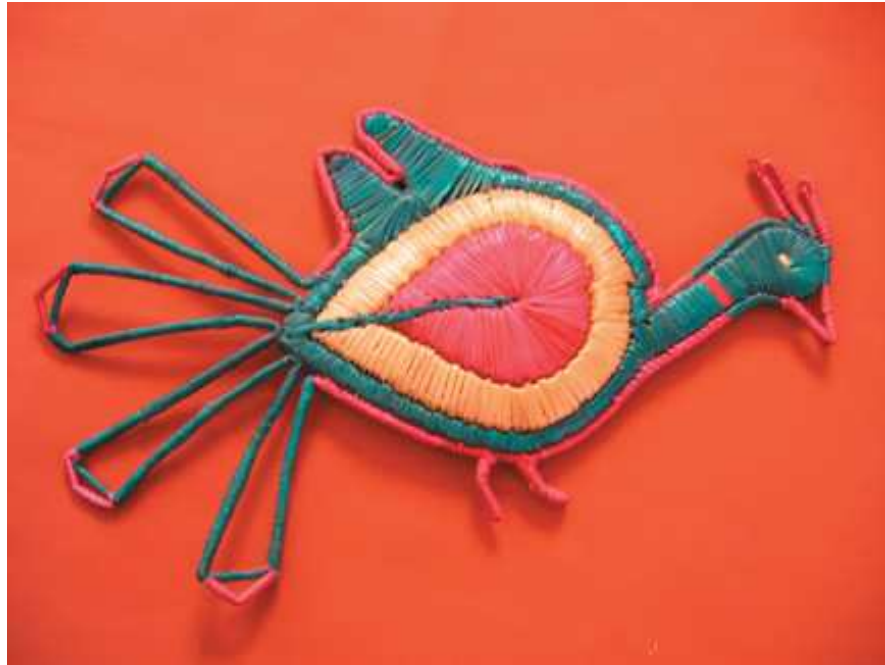
#### Sikki Product range and Designs

The products made from sikki are utilitarian as well as ornamental and often have a religious significance. The women make containers to store grain, rice, and lentils, boxes to keep their clothes and jewellery, baskets to store sweets and keep betel leaf, and containers to store their masalas (spices). Mobiles and toys are made for the children, while the women make bangles for themselves. Coasters, hand-held fans, and bowls and boxes of all types and sizes, mobiles, and three-dimensional figures are made for urban markets, while figures of deities are crafted for religious festivals. Therefore crafts women produce range of products which depict their daily rhythms of their lives to their natural surroundings, mythological, religious subjects. However, increasingly their social and political annotations have also being incorporated in their contemporary designs more towards commercial and functional products. They produce sikki products on replicas of gods and goddesses, temples depicting Hindu epics to modern functional items like tray, baskets, pen stand, necklaces, bangles etc.

The wide range of Sikki products can be categorized in two::

Religious & Mythological: Human figures, replicas of gods and goddesses, models of chariots, temples, relief & sculpture.

Ornamental & Functional products: baskets, boxes, toys animals, birds and, animal & bird modals, trays & baskets, jewellery, beads, pendants, necklaces bangles, bowls etc of different sizes and shapes.



## PROCESS

The Technique of making Sikki products

The desired forms are generally shaped with ordinary grass called khar which is coiled and encased in the softer Sikki, while many of the motifs are derived from the local tantric traditions. Technical improvement, by means of dyeing of grass with fast colours is being introduced. The coiling technique, which is the oldest, is most commonly used in Sikki. The common long grass is wired and stitched together with the Pasikki, dyed in several different shades, using a thick needle called Takua. Especially in constructing the sculptural forms, the whole build up is made by the coils.



The technique used for making products from Sikki is the ancient and time honored coiling method. Interestingly the actual form is shaped with Munj, raffia grass, or Khar, which is much cheaper and more abundantly available. This provides the basic shape and gives additional strength to the product. The Munj is completely coiled over and covered with Sikki; The only

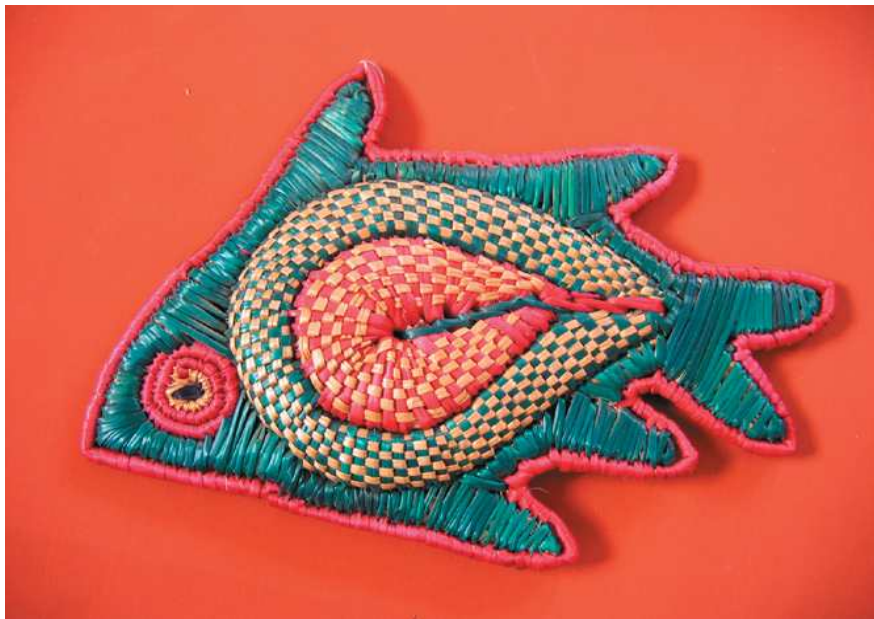
tool used by the women is a 6 inch long needle-shaped iron object called takua with a rounded head, made of lac, which is used to hold the needle while coiling the grass. The object being made is held firmly while the right hand is completely free to wield the Takua. No threads or cords or any other materials are used. The Sikki is slightly dampened to make it more pliable as it is coiled around the Munj. The colouring is achieved by boiling it in dyes.

Each of the Sikki products is not only colourful but also individual. Colours are used in dramatic contrast and each product reflects the creative impulse of its maker. Two-dimensional images of birds and animals, trees, and figures are also beautifully crafted. Some craftswomen are now experimenting and making products only in sikki grass, without using the traditional Munj base.

## UNIQUENESS

The Sikki grass articles made by the women of North Bihar are entirely different from any other grass based craft products seen in other part of the country. For making human figures, animals, birds, tassels are used for the extra embellishment and brilliantly hoed wings of the beetle or colored buttons to emphasize eyes and ears. Every functional item such as a box for keeping cloths, spices toilet articles are all wrought out of Sikki in multitude of shapes in dazzling colors.

Sikki work is a skill possessed by women in this region of Bihar. As an activity it generates not only income but also opportunities for expressing the intricacies of their lives and their aspirations. There is growing demands for Sikki-grass work not only for outstanding beauty but also for its cultural value. Like paintings, sikki is also folk in nature, and was prompted by a prevalent Mithila social custom.



### UNIQUENESS - MANUFACTURING PROCESS

The desired forms are generally shaped with ordinary grass called khar which is coiled and encased in the softer Sikki. Many of the motifs are derived from the local tantric traditions. Technical improvement, by way of fast colours to dye the grass is being introduced. The coiling technique, which is the oldest, is most commonly used in Sikki. The common long grass is wired and stitched together with the Pasikki, dyed in several different shades, using a thick needle called Takua. Especially in constructing the sculptural forms, the whole build up is made with coils.

The technique used for making products from Sikki is the ancient and time honored coiling method. Interestingly the actual form is shaped with Munj, raffia grass, or Khar, which is much cheaper and more abundantly available. This provides the basic shape and gives additional strength to the product. The Munj is completely coiled over and covered with Sikki; the only tool used by the women is a 6 inch long needle-shaped iron object called takua with a rounded head, made of lac, which is used to hold in grip the needle while coiling the grass. The object being made is held firmly while the right hand is completely free to wield the Takua. No threads or cords or similar materials are used. The Sikki slightly dampened to make it more pliable as it is coiled around the Munj. The colouring is achieved by boiling it in dyes.



## VISUAL IDENTITY





## ARTISAN PROFILE

Name & Addresses of the Crafts persons from local DC (H) office:

Amala Devi At/PO Jitwarpur, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Arer Handicrafts Coop Society Vill : & Post Arer, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Arhulia Devi At: Pacchar, PO Jaynagar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Bachi Devi At/PO Umrin, Via: Jhanjharpur, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Bhagwan Devi Station Road, Madhubani, Bihar

Bhanwara Handicrafts Coop Society At : Bhanwara, Post : Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Bhubaneswari Dutta At/PO Ranti, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Bindi Devi At/PO Jaynagar, Ward No.3, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Chakradhar Lal Sursand, Meena Bazar, Sita Marhi - 843331, Bihar

Chakradhar Lal Sursand Meena Bazar, Sita Marhi - 843331, Bihar Chandramani Devi At: Pacchar, PO Jaynagar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Chulliya Devi At/Po: ManVishanpur, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

D N Thakur C/o Hastkala Vikas Kendra, Vill. & P.O. Umri, Via Jhanjharpur (R.S.), Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Dharmendra Kumar Vill. Rampur, PO Sarosabpahi, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Gauri Devi C/o Umakant Thakur, Via Raiyam, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar Awards: National Award

Girija Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Heera Devi At/Po : Man Vishanpur, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Indu Devi AT/PO Birsayar, Bhaorirathpur, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Jagdamba Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Jagita Devi At: Pacchar, PO Jaynagar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Janki Devi AT: Baheta Khajoli, PO Khajouli, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Jaya Kala Devi AT: Birwayar, PO Bhagtirathpur, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Jog Maya Devi At/PO Bhacchi, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Kamala Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Kameshwar Thakur Vill: Raiyam, Via Jhanjharpur, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar Kanti Devi At/PO : Bhagwanpur, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Kapili Devi At/PO Jaynagar, Ward No.3, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Kaushilya Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Krishna Devi AT/Po : Bhagawanpur, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Kumudini Devi VPO Sursand, Sitamari, Distt: Muzaffarpur, Bihar Awards: National Award, Merit Certificate

## ARTISAN PROFILE

Lalita Devi At: Garah, PO Jaynagar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Lalita Devi AT/PO Belhwar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Lalita Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Leela Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Liluya Devi At: Barah, PO Jaynagar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Manju Devi At: Laxminiya, PO Ladania, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Manju Devi At/PO : Bhagwanpur, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Meena Devi Vill/PO: Raiyam, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Meera Vill. & P.O. Umari, Via Jhajharpur, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Awards: Kamla Devi Child Award

Nuna Khaton At/PO Sarisabpahi, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar Nuna Khatun Sarisabsahi Darjeetola, PO Sansab Sahi, Distt: Madhubani

Nunawati Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Parhia Devi At: Garah, PO Jaynagar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Raja Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Ram Dulari Devi At/PO Jaynagar, Ward No.3, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Ram Pari Devi Ward No. 2, Lahauri Ganj, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Renu Devi At/PO Madhepur(Loria Tol), Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Samundari Devi At/Po : ManVishanpur, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Sandhya Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Sandhya Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Sanjiti Devi At/PO Jaynagar, Ward No.3, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Satyawati Devi At: Carahm, PO Jaynagar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Shail Kumar Devi Vill. & P.O. Bhatha, Sursand, Distt: Sitamarhi, Bihar Awards: Merit Certificate

Shanti Devi At/PO : Bhagwanpur, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Shanti Devi Vill. Bhagirathpur, PO Biraayar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar Sima Devi At: Pacchar, PO Jaynagar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Sonea Devi At/PO Jaynagar, Ward No.3, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Sudama Devi AT; Pachhar, PO Jaynagar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Sugawati Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Sukmari Devi At/PO Jaynagar, Ward No.3, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Sunaina Devi At/PO : Bhagwanpur, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Sunita Devi At/PO Jaynagar, Ward No.3, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

## ARTISAN PROFILE

Tara Devi AT/PO Raiyam, Via Bhanjharpur., Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Urmila Devi AT: Pachhar, PO Jaynagar, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Urmila Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Urmila Devi At: Laheriaganj, Ward No.1, PO Madhubani, Distt: Madhubani, Bihar

Uttam Devi AT/Po : Bhagawanpur, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Vaidehi Deor Vill : Sursand, P.O. Sitamarhi, Distt: Sitamarhi, Bihar Awards: Merit Certificate

Vaidehi Devi Vill : Sursand, P.O. Sitamarihi, Distt: Sitamarihi, Bihar Awards: Merit Certificate

Amriti Devi At/Po :Jamalabad, Kasba Tola, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar Babita Devi At/Po :Jamalabad(Kasba Tola), Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Husan Bano At/Po : Majhollia, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Jamila Khatoon At/Po : Majhollia, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Jashodiya Devi At/Po :Jamalabad (Kasba Tola), Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Khatija Bano At/Po : Majhollia, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar

Saira Bano At/Po: Majhollia, Distt: Mujaffarpur, Bihar