Poompuhar

Hand in hand with our artisans...

TRANSFORMATION OF TNHDC USING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY& OTHER INNOVATIVE IDEAS

Nomination for 5th gfiles Governance Awards 2016

Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation Limited

1. Brief overview of the project

The Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation (TNHDC), better known by its brand name "Poompuhar", was incorporated in 1973 with the objective of providing marketing and value-added services for the artisans of Tamil Nadu,including but not limited to, upgrading their skills through appropriate training, improving their productivity and quality of their products, minimizing the drudgery involved in the production process, minimizing / eliminating occupational hazards, encouraging innovation in design, providing socio-economic security for craftsmen and to documenting and recording for posterity the work of the artisans. The Corporation was preforming fairly well,substantiated with an annual turnover of INR.31.00 crores (2013-14)and profits amountingto INR.78.00 lakhs.

The department has envisionedpursuingholistic growth through constant innovation and diversification. The yester legacy processes were actually impeding and posing as a bottleneck for this transition. Therefore, the Corporation identified the 3 key pillars viz. Marketing, Operations (Administration), and Design & Production to be revamped and redesigned to enable the envisioned transition in a smoother manner. The principal mode for the envisaged reengineering of the process was the optimum adoption ofInformation and Communication Technology (ICT).

The Corporation has successfully championed the targeted activities and has already started reaping the benefits. The detail of this "transformation" is elaborated below.

2. Challenges faced before deployment of the project

Some of the key challenges in the existing legacy environment were:

- ✓ Manual and voluminous paper and file work resulting in delay in key decisions and actions thereto.
- ✓ Decentralized HR and Payroll management.
- ✓ Primitive approaches constrained product design from achieving precision and proactively responding to the customers' demands.
- ✓ Lack of effective surveillance leading to pilferages of expensive handicraft productsat the showrooms.
- ✓ Showroom and exhibition based marketing channels had constrained the growth prospects of the Corporation.
- ✓ Lack of exclusive and multi-modal promotion constrainingreach to digital customers, as well as brand recall by potential customers.

✓ Absence of exclusive approaches adopted to enhance "Customer Experience".

✓ Lack of innovation and customization in sales transactionsleading to lack of appropriate responsiveness across G2G/G2B/B2B sales.

✓ Absence of digitized, and manual decentralized billing resulting in lack of scope for optimizing sales and inventory management.

3. The objective of the project

- To enhance the market-responsiveness and cost-effectiveness of the Corporation, with the optimal and appropriate use of information and communication technology (ICT)

- To reengineer and automate key processes, including,

  o Marketing,

  o Operations (administration), and

  o Design& production.

The project is targeted at multiple stakeholders with specific developmental objectives:

(i) Artisans – Creation of an e-Repository of Artisans and their skills to ensure their proper registry and targeted employment benefits (direct engagement, preferential treatment to women artisans and underprivileged, etc.).

(ii) Customers/ Buyers – to ensure enhanced customer-response and customer experience, through flexible, reliable and effort-free purchase.

(iii) Government – to ensure commercial sustainability and promotion of traditional industry, with secured livelihoods to artisans, and enhance accountability and transparency through digital governance.

4. Description of the solution implemented - Governance practices

The Corporation implemented a multi-layered e-Governance solution, streamlining and strengthening the three key functions, and the processes therein:

i. MarketingFunction:

✓ e-Commerce: direct online sellingof Poompuhar products through www.poompuhar.org, smartphone App and supported by free-home delivery through dedicated bikes/vans.

✓ e-Commerce: online selling of Poompuhar products through e-Commerce giants like Snapdeal, Flipkart, Craftsvilla and IndiaMart.

✓ e-Promotion: foray into a massive Social Media & Online Digital Marketing campaign using about 10 social media platforms including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Quora, Pinterest, Google+ etc and engaging an exclusive agency for this promotion.

✓ e-Inventory: bar-coding of all handicrafts products at all 12 showrooms.

✓ e-Billing: Centralized computerizedbilling including use of credit card/debit card machines at all 12 showrooms.

✓ e-Promotion: jingles on the FM Radio at prime-time to enhance prospective customer base and brand recall.

✓ e-mails: from CMD to about 3000 potential High Net worth Individuals

✓ iPads: to all 21 marketing personnel to woo to potential customers and also for Facetime review with Corporate Office

ii. Operations (Administration) Transformations

✓ e-Repository of Artisans and their skills: a comprehensive and dynamically updated web based repository of all artisans in the State of Tamil Nadu, with dedicated web-pages to each of the artisans and special features to promote marginalized groups of artisans. Funding to the tune of Rs.1.00 crore for this project was obtained from the State Innovation Fund. Each artisan gets one page and data has been captured in a standardized format.

✓ e-Office Administration and Management Solution: comprising of (i) integrated ERP implemented across all 7 production centres and 12 sales-cum-showrooms across the country, connecting all 128 employees from CMD to Peon; (ii) 100% paper-less file-management and decision support system; (iii) centralized HR & payroll management system;

✓ IPads: have been given to all Officers of the Corporation for supervision and e-Review through Facetime.

✓ e-Billing: Centralized billing and integrated tally-based double-entry accounting;

✓ e-Attendance: through bio-metric staff attendance, and geo-tagged inventory and product tracking system across all locations;

✓ Centralized CCTV remote surveillance and monitoring: of all 12 showrooms and 7 production centers across the country at the Corporate Office.

✓ Web portal:Multi-purpose dedicated web-portal: www.tnhdcltd.com

iii. Design &Production Transformations

- ✓ e-Production: Government of Tamil Nadu has sanctioned Rs.1.68 crores for the creation of a Design Research and Development Centre (DRDC) for introducing non-traditional designs using 3D designing and 3D printing of designed plastic molds, which can be used for production of bronze icons. This also enables anywhere anytime custom production of handicrafts though 3D designing and printing of handicrafts molds. The #D designing software and 3D printer have been procured and currently training, designing and printing are on.
- ✓ e-Work Order Management: The e-Repository of Artisans and their skils will enable remote assignment of work order to various artisans (direct engagement of artisans), and geo-tagged bar-code based tracking of finished/ semi-finished products and inventory.

5. Other innovations and initiatives:

➢ Poompuhar forays into contract works for interior and exterior embellishment of institutions in the Government and private sectors.

Poompuhar bagged and completed the orders for embellishing the International Terminals T3 and T4 at a cost of Rs.3.05 cores in the first phase and again for Rs.2.43 crores in the second phase entrusted to it by the Airports Authority of India. It has also completed works to the tune of Rs.1.10 crores at the Kamarajar Port Trust, Ennore, near Chennai.

Now, Poompuhar has completed the designs for airports at Tirupathi, Trichy, Madurai and Coimbatore, Kalaivanar Arangam at Chennai and a host of railway stations of the Southern Railway.

➢ Creating a common name board for Poompuhar showrooms, production units and Corporate office

➢ Redesigned existing logo and registered the same with Trade Mark Registry

➢ Signed MoU with India Post for Logistics

➢ Signed MoU with GRT Grand Hotel

➢ Refurbished, an unutilized mobile van as a marketing vehicle

➢ Introduced uniforms to marketing staff

➢ Designed and introduced Feed Back form for customers at all showrooms

➢ Introduced for the first time Jingles on FM Radio as a marketing activity

➢ Designed and introduced new carry bags for Poompuhar

- Designed mobile Kiosk for marketing campaign in the premises of the Corporate sector and other institutions
- Introduced a mobile delivery bike for delivery of gift items to customers in Chennai
- Setting up of Craft Café at Chennai and Mahabalipuram
- Setting up of Urban Haats at Kanyakumari and Mahabalipuram

6. Key learnings from the project

- Traditional Industries are Commercially Sustainable through leveraging of appropriate Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and Market Strategies (*increase in INR 10 Crores turnover in one year*).

- Implementation of comprehensive e-Governance solutions could: (i) improve system-wide/ organization-wide productivity and efficiency; (ii) enhance quality; (iii) enhance customer reach (*beyond State and National borders*), customer engagement (*custom-driven production*) and customer experience (*digital catalogue and online procurement*); (iv) improve governance: supervision, control, transparency, and accountability (*biometric attendance, remote CCTV-based monitoring, geo-tagged tracking and inventory management, distributed billing and centralized accounting*); and (v) improved promotion (*visibility and brand recall*).

- There is no apprehension or resistance to change among the staff, when understanding the positive purpose and progressive implications of the change/ transformation.

- e-Governance could be highly supportive and socially responsible tool, to ensure targeted capacity building, livelihood promotion and delivery of services. e.g. specialized capacity building intervention to women artisans and promotion of livelihood and/or alternate among women artisans.

7. Note on the cost effectiveness of the project

- e-Office Administration and Management Solution: this has reduced enormous time spent on file-movement and decision making**(Decisions that used to take upto 20 days are now taken in a matter of hours or minutes, thanks to the all-encompassing ERP)**, people movement for physical supervision and inventory management, product movement to sales-cum-showrooms, etc. The time savings achieved thorough this reduction in movement has resulted in cost-savings. In addition, use of paper has been eliminated; thereby there is savings in procurement of consumables. The real-time Management Information System (MIS), accounts management, and inventory management system, have resulted in just-in-time procurement and customer-response leading to more cost savings.

➢ e-Commerce: this has reduced the cost of travel for the customers (*with the online purchase and free-home delivery*), reduced cost of the Poompuhar for not requiring space at sales-cum-showroom for displaying and maintaining the products, automatic reconciliation of revenues and accounts, etc.

➢ e-Production: this made-to-order production feature, where the sales transaction is closed through 3D-design and online transfer for 3D printing at customer-site, has enormous cost savings as the 3-D molds once created could be used for multiple production (*to dimension specifics*), as well there is no requirement of space for storage and maintenance of the products.

➢ e-Repository of Artisans and their skills and e-Work Order Management: this enable active linkage and engagement with the artisans and targeted delivery of work orders and value-added services. This ensures cost saving through timesavings and direct cost savings in tracking of the artisans on a day-to-day basis, as well as in ensuring the reach and engagement on a consistent basis.

8. Details of coverage of the targeted population

The project is targeted at multiple stakeholders with differential magnitude:

(i)   Artisans: live-registry and active engagement of over 200,000 artisans (of which 60,000+ has already a dedicated web-page detailing their key skills, sample works and contact coordinates); Online assignment of work orders directly to artisans and remote management of products (semi-finished and finished) and inventory.

(ii)   Staff of Poompuhar: over 128 nos. of Officers and Staff spread across 7 production units and 12 sales-cum-showrooms across the country in the State are being managed through an ERP, biometric attendance and remote-CCTV supported surveillance, monitoring and supervision systems.

(iii)   Customers/ Buyers: enhanced reach (beyond State and National boundaries) of over lakhs of customers through e-commerce portals and improved footfall to an extent of thousands of customers into the sales-cum-showrooms, leading to improved turnover of INR 10 Crores within one-year.

(iv)   General Public/ Prospective Customers: enhanced visibility and promotions achieved through 'interior designing displays' at the International Terminals T3 & T4 at Chennai Airport, Public Sector Undertakings and Corporates, online display (and sales) of products, and brand-promotions through FM Radio.

9. Comparison of the pre-deployment scenarios Vs Post Deployment Benefits

Parameters	Before	After	Impact
Geographical Coverage	➤ Majorly in Tamil Nadu, Delhi &Kolkatta	➤ PAN India + Global sales and delivery through e-Commerce since December 2014	➤ INR 10 Crores additional sales which contributed to total profit of INR 87 lakhs
File Movement Process	➤ Manual and paper-based	➤ End-to-end electronic paperless e-Office operation since January 2016	➤ Paperless office administration and management ➤ Instantaneous approval
Billing System	➤ Decentralised + Manual system	➤ Real-Time centralised computerized Billing and centralised-accounting system across all sales-cum-showrooms	➤ Real-Time monitoring with no restriction of geography ➤ Facilitate dynamic decision-making, inventory management and accounting.
Accounting & Bookkeeping	➤ Manual double entry booking	➤ Double entry books of accounts using Tally	➤ Effective and transparent accounting ➤ Real time MIS
Sales & Distribution	➤ Only through 12 showrooms and exhibitions	➤ e-Commerce ➤ Mobile app ➤ 12 sales-cum-showroom ➤ Exhibitions	➤ tie ups with e-Commerce giants like Snapdeal, Flipcart, Craftsvilla and IndiaMart, enhancing service and credibility ➤ Flexible and enhanced customer experience
Customer Experience – marketing tool	➤ Photo Albums	➤ Virtual experience of entire product range – online, as well as electronic albums viewed through iPads	➤ Better craft empathy by the customer translating into sales ➤ Setup of Craft-Café – customer lounge
Customer Feedback	➤ No dedicated mechanism	➤ Online and offline feedback enabled	Useful feedbacks are monitored and diligently responded

Parameters	Before	After	Impact
			➢ Interactive Online Portal for better customer experience
Identification potential customers	➢ Word of mouth and newspaper advertisement, pamphlets	➢ In-addition to the traditional options, social media, public displays, jingles on FM radio, dedicated portals, etc.	➢ Enhanced virtual customers/ prospective customers tracking on: FB, twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, etc. ➢ Enhanced footfall into sales-cum-showrooms
Artisan profile Database	➢ Localized details in manual form only	➢ Web based Wiki-like page for each artisan	➢ Effective tracking, engagement and management of Artisans ➢ Enhanced exposure and business opportunities to artisans
Data Backup & Redundancy	➢ Manual files any physical damages / loss are irrevocable	➢ Digital DB with adequate backup and redundancy support	High availability No Data loss Support Business Continuity
Geographic Indication (GI) registration for crafts	➢ No GI was available	➢ Corporation applies for GI for various crafts	➢ Authentication and genuineness enhancing customer experience and crediility
Craftsmen Training	➢ Training only for male artisan	➢ Training – given for 100+ women in Tanjaore painting, paper mashe and doll making	➢ Increase in engagement of Women artisans ➢ Women empowerment and sustainability livelihood for women
Awards & Competition	➢ Only 4 awards – "Poompuhar award" in 2012-13	➢ 6 more awards were newly introduced n 2013-14	➢ No of individual awardees increased from 10 to 243 persons.

Parameters	Before	After	Impact
Special Projects focus	➢ No special projects focus	➢ Many new special projects: Embellishments in Airport, Ennore Port Trust completed. ➢ Computerized designs for 5 airports, 7 railway stations, Chennai Corporation building, KalaivanarArangam etc are ready.	➢ added revenue close to INR 10 crore
Cluster Development	➢ Only State-level focus	➢ Granular approach at cluster level and harnessing the dove tailed needs of the craftsmen ➢ GoI Central Funding assistance (Integrated development for promotion of handicrafts in Tamil Nadu) of Rs.20.82 crores is being leveraged	➢ More dove-tailed support

10. Future Roadmap of the project

✓ Order already placed for procurement of a Mobile based Review System.
✓ QR Coding for all products as a method of story telling of each product
✓ Re-engineering of product profiles to increase availability
✓ Branding of end-to-end customer delivery carry-bags,
✓ E-Feedback through customized software. We will be going for tender to proicure this software shortly.
✓ Training for Specially-abled children is currently on
✓ Focused promotion of Utility products through exclusive counter at the showrooms

- ✓ Brand franchising
- ✓ Re-engineering and Modernization of production environment with state-of-the-art of technology
- ✓ Promoting heritage and handicrafts of Tamil Nadu through Virtual Reality Showrooms

11. Short CVs of the producer(s) www.santhoshbabu.org

1. Dr.Santhosh Babu is a Medical Doctor turned Indian Administrative Service (IAS) Officer of the 1995 batch, of the Tamil Nadu cadre. He is an alumnus of the Government Medical College, Trivandrum. He is also a Chevening Gurukul Scholar from the London School of Economics and Political Science and an LKY Fellow and MPM Degree holder from the National University of Singapore and the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. He firmly believes that only leadership embedded in integrity and selflessness, with the ability to innovate in the governance process, can take India to prosperity.

His abiding passion has been to transform governance within his jurisdiction to world-class levels, using modern management practices and tools that information and communication technology provides. He has about 150 plus transformational initiatives and innovations to his credit, including implementing ERP driven "anytime, anywhere" Government offices, developing and implementing numerous web based software applications, and establishing India's first Rural BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) units etc. He has also conceived and edited numerous magazines and websites. He has spoken at numerous for a including at TEDx IIT Chennai, TEDx SVCE Chennai and TEDx Hindustan University Chennai.

Select renowned recognitions and accolades he has received over the years, include: (1) The Best Collector Award from the Government of Tamil Nadu for child labour eradication; (2) Dataquest Magazine e-Governance Champion Award, South India, 2008; (3) Recognized as "The Pride of Tamil Nadu" by the Indian Express in its annual publication 2007 [acknowledged as one of five persons who has made a difference in various aspects of public life], (4) being recognized by the reputed Tamil Magazine Ananda Vikatan, as one of the "Top Ten People in Tamil Nadu" in 2008 etc. Under his leadership, the Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation won the Skoch Smart Governance Platinum Award and the Chief Minister's Special Cell won the Skoch Smart Governance Gold Award for the Amma Call Centre.

Santhosh Babu's best moment so far has been when, the former President of India Dr.APJ Abdul Kalam, quoted his work under the heading "Committed Leadership" during his speech on the occasion of the 7th Civil Services Day, 21st April 2012, at New Delhi.

He has served the Government of Tamil Nadu in various capacities; Sub-Collector Additional Collector, Special Officer to Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Executive Director of Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women Ltd., Joint Secretary– Department of Rural Development, District Collector of Sivaganga and Krishnagiri, Managing Director of ELCOT & Director e-Governance, Commissioner of Horticulture & Plantation Crops, Commissioner of Indian Medicine & Homeopathy and as Secretary to Government, Information Technology Department, and is currently serving as Chairman & Managing Director of Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation and also as Officer on Special Duty, Chief Ministers Special Cell in charge of the "Amma Call Centre".

Team members:

1. Mr. M. Sambamoorthy, Chief Consultant
2. Mr. D.S. Ravindirran, Sales & Production Manager
3. Mr. A.P. Ventakesan, Personnel Manager
4. Mr. G. Nagasamy, Manager, Development Cell
5. Mr. S. Suresh Babu, Finance Manager
6. Mr. K. Mathiyarasu, Assistant Manager
7. Mr. C. RonaldSelvestin, Computer Assistant

12. Key Accolades in the journey so far…

One of the 104 locations inside the International Terminals T3 and T4 of Chennai Airport that Poompuhar has embellished at a cost of Rs.5.38 Crores
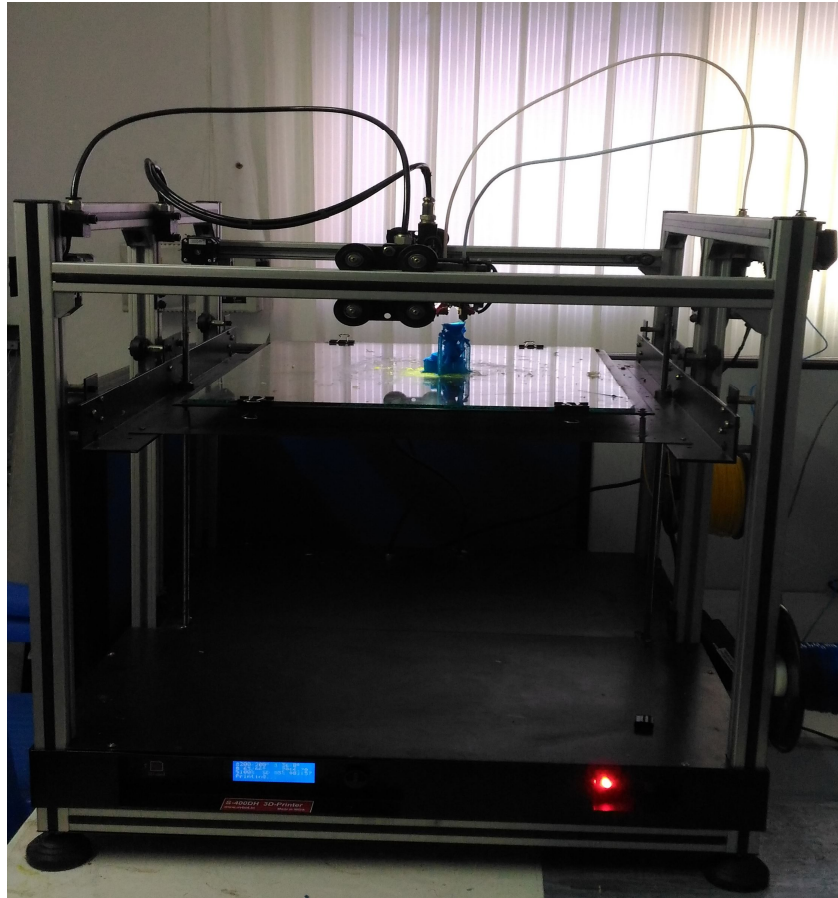
Poompuhar Craft Café @ Chennai

Urban Haat, Kanyakumari

Skoch Award

3D Designing & 3D Printing as part of the DRDC

The Hindu

Now, shop online for Poompuhar products

Sangeetha Kandavel

CHENNAI: The Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation, popularly known as Poompuhar, will capitalise on e-commerce and the social media to take the brand to the next level.

Named Poompuhar after the most ancient Tamil coastal city, the emporia sells exquisite sculptures and Indian art, including handicraft items made by artisans from different parts of the State.

All Poompuhar products will be available online along with pictures and details. A hybrid App has also been developed by Poompuhar to make it easy for the users of smart phones and tablets (iOS, Android). It has created a Twitter page and a Facebook page and all training programmes will be available on YouTube.

Poompuhar officials did not want to comment on this. But the website has already changed with the new additions. "More initiatives will be taken for canvassing of export orders online and as well as through international fairs. E-commerce trading has started, and online trading is also expected to be flourishing," said a note on the Poompuhar website.

"This would help to expand the customer base of Poompuhar. The new enhanced

All Poompuhar products will be available online along with pictures and details. A file photo of an exhibition.

layout and streamlined navigation help customers a lot," said Savitri S, who had come to Poompuhar here to buy brass lamps.

Sources say Poompuhar has also tied up with India Post for logistics. All the items on display have been bar-coded. More interestingly, the marketing team has been given iPads to show the items to the customers. "This would help them navigate the products easily and even have a closer look," a sales person said.

The corporation, which made the highest-ever turnover of Rs. 30.87 crore during 2013-14, is aiming for Rs.100 crore in sales in the next four years. Poompuhar is also planning to host more exhibitions to create awareness. During 2013-14, the number of exhibitions has increased from 130 to 150. The corporation exports traditional handicraft items to Singapore, Malayasia, the U.K. and the U.S. With this new venture, it wants to reach more countries and more customers.

The Hindu

STATE

Poompuhar to help artisans find market

Will introduce them to 3D printing, which will eventually get them intellectual property rights

T.K. ROHIT

CHENNAI: Poompuhar is planning to rope in graduates from NIFT and artisans to come up with new designs for making idols. It is also planning a design at its office here soon, a top official of the department said.

The corporation is in talks with four more airports — Tirupati, Tiruchi, Madurai and Coimbatore — for designing their premises on the lines of the Chennai airport, Santhosh Babu, Chairman and Managing Director, Poompuhar, told *The Hindu.*

Based on Agama Shastra

"Most artisans make idols based on Agama Shastra and what has been passed on to them from earlier generations. They might make only very minor deviations. We hope to bring in new design ideas and expand the scope of work and the kind of mar-

ket artisans can access," he said.

Poompuhar is also toying with the idea of 3D printing of miniature models of idols. "Normally, it would take about 10 to 100 hours to make one wax mould manually, based on which the final bronze product is made. With 3D printing, we hope to reduce the time of making small idols on a large scale. We are very clear that we do not want to toy with or change the process of idol-making, especially large ones. But for small, miniature models, there is a huge market that can be tapped," he said.

Mr. Babu said with 3D printing, artisans can get intellectual property rights for their creations.

"We will teach them to use software and design idols. The artisans can get intellectual property rights for these. But the modalities will have to be worked out as

In talks with Tirupati, Tiruchi, Madurai and Coimbatore airports for designing their premises

getting IP rights is expensive".

Mr. Babu added that 3D printing would enable mass production of miniatures. "Anyone can buy such small-sized models, for example, at the airport when they are leaving after touring the State.

We are also in talks with the Egmore Museum to make miniatures of the artefacts there that people can buy. This is a completely untapped market in India," he added.

Cluster facilities

The corporation recently received funding of about Rs. 20 crore from the Centre and the State government to

TECH MAKEOVER: A 3 D printed model of a miniature Ganesha made at Poompuhar in Chennai. — PHOTO: SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

set up cluster facilities where artisans can do their work free of cost.

These centres will have

all necessary facilities for artisans, he said. About 30 such centres are set to come up across the State.

The Hindu

Poompuhar roped in again for Chennai airport beautification

Artefacts, statues and modern paintings will be installed, says airport Director

SANGEETHA KANDAVEL

CHENNAI: The Chennai Airport has roped in Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation Limited, popularly known as Poompuhar, for the second round of beautification process entailing a cost of Rs. 2.5 crore. In 2015, ahead of the Global Investors Meet (GIM) that attracted investments to the tune of Rs. 2.42 lakh crore, Poompuhar was engaged for beautification of Chennai Airport.

"The first phase of beautification was carried out at a cost of Rs. 2.8 crore. Over 40 locations, predominantly in the arrival area of Anna International Terminal, were covered under Phase-I," said Deepak Shastri, Director of Chennai Airport. "The left-over locations in the departure area of Anna International Terminal are now proposed to be beautified under Phase-II. Several antique artefacts, statues, wall panelling and modern paintings will be installed," he added.

According to the Chennai Airport officials, there was tremendous appreciation and feedback from passengers and user agencies and this has also resulted in enhancing the overall image of the airport. "The beautification plans were finalised in consultation with renowned architect Roopmathi Anand engaged by Poompuhar," Mr. Shastri said.

As per the Annual Report of Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation Limited, for the financial year ending March 31, 2015, Poompuhar's sales turnover touched Rs. 33.93 crore, a record high. Of this, domestic sales constituted 98.36 per cent while the remaining 1.64 per cent was export sales. The previous year, it had clocked a sales turnover of Rs. 31.08 crore. Incorporated in 1973, the annual turnover of the corporation was Rs. 50 lakh when it started.

The beautification plans were finalised in consultation with renowned architect Roopmathi Anand. A file picture of Lord Nataraja statue put up at Chennai airport in the first phase.

BusinessLine

▶ 19 **BusinessLine**
TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2015

Snapdeal to retail TN handicrafts online

OUR BUREAU

Chennai, March 23

Online retailer Snapdeal.com has signed a pact with Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation, a State Government enterprise, for online promotion and selling of traditional handicrafts.

According to a press release from Snapdeal, it will create a dedicated store under the brand name Poompuhar to exclusively sell these handicrafts.

Through this exclusive store, Snapdeal will equip the artisans with online cataloguing and help them refine their product offerings through its data analytics tools. The Poompuhar-Snapdeal store set to be launched in the next few days, will let customers shop for a wide range of signature products from the State such as brass products, sandalwood products, stone and wood carvings.

Quoting Vishal Chadha, Vice-President, Market Development, Snapdeal, the release says, "This partnership is our endeavour to empower local artisans of Tamil Nadu by providing a more integrated platform to promote and sell their products to a nationwide audience through a sustainable business model."

Santhosh Babu, CMD, Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd, has said in the release that the tie-up would offer artisans in the State an opportunity to showcase their work to a larger customer base and promote exquisite products.