

SIFT

SUALKUCHI INSTITUTE OF FASHION
TECHNOLOGY



BACKGROUND

India is one of the largest producers of Textiles and Garments and this industry generates the highest number of employment in India, after agricultural sector, although half of the people engaged in this Industry are using handlooms. Textile Industry in India is set for a very strong growth in the near future, with an estimate of reaching US\$ 220 billion by 2020. In spite of this, it faces a lot of challenges, a few being the scarcity of trained manpower and the low level of technology used. To overcome these hurdles, both the State and the Central Govt. Have been taking up various measures and SIFT is the culmination of one such approach in Assam by Kamrup District Administration. The name of the Institute and its location is just and appropriate as can be seen from one of the many such observations cited above.

INCEPTION

Sualkuchi Institute of Fashion Technology (SIFT) - was set up in 2008 and the Institute was formally inaugurated, on 30th August 2008. SIFT was established by the initiative of **Kamrup District Administration, Govt. of Assam** under the project *“Integrated Pilot Project for the weavers of Sualkuchi & adjoining areas”* to enhance skill up-gradation, and offer holistic development of weavers and entrepreneurs. Since then SIFT has been providing Integrated training programs on Fashion & Textile design.



Initially SIFT collaborated with the North Eastern Council & National Institute of Fashion Technology, Kolkata (NIFT). A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with NIFT, Kolkata to provide advisory and technical assistantship for design innovation related technology up gradation, product diversification and to train 600 persons within a span of three years (24 programs).

ROLE OF KAMRUP DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

The Deputy Commissioner Kamrup (Rural) is the Vice- Chairman on the Institute and all activities in the Institute is closely monitored by the chair of the Vice Chairman and all activities and developments of the institute are with approval of the Vice Chairman.



DC handing out best student trophy at SIFT valedictory function.

Revival of SIFT started from August 2015, with Kamrup District Administration hiring a new Principal for the Institute and then getting training programs through CSR funding from various private companies. The first training program after revival, which Kamrup District Administration managed to get for the Institute was from October 2015, sponsored by Assam

Gramin Vikash Bank. Deputy Commissioner Kamrup as the Vice Chairman also signed MOU's for various training programs at SIFT with companies like *Power Grid, North East Transmission Company, TATA Trusts CML, Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship* etc. Since then all training programs at are funded from the CSR funds of these companies.



Signing of MOU and receiving cheque for training at SIFT from North East Transmission Company.

Not only in funding, Kamrup District Administration also managed to get *Muga silk reeling* machines from BTC, and Muga silk cocoons to SIFT for conducting training on *Muga yarn reeling at SIFT*.



All these trainings have helped lots of youth in the district as well as other parts of NE India to be self- employed as well as to get placements in various projects related to handloom weaving and fashion garment construction and making diversified products with handloom fabrics. Kamrup (Rural) District Administration has totally rejuvenated this dying institute and now this institute has become a very vital organization of the district.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- ☐ Conduct intensive training programme on Fashion and Textile Technology.
- ☐ Research & Development on Product Diversification.
- ☐ Extensively explore and develop a design bank.
- ☐ Provide advisory support to trained artisans.
- ☐ Training and introducing the artisans to contemporary designs.
- ☐ Training the artisans to produce market oriented products keeping an eye on the fashion forecast.

AREA OF FOCUS

- **Research & Development** on Product Diversification and come out with products suitable for catering to the contemporary Indian markets as well as other international markets.
- Conduct **intensive training programme** on dyeing, processing, finishing, weaving, quality control, textile CAD, pattern making, construction and Fashion & Textile Design, merchandising etc and construction for apparel & home furnishing products.
- Extensively explore and **develop a design bank** specific to the Sualkuchi region through conduct of computer aided designing programmes.
- Provide **advisory support** to trained artisans in the procurement of machine and other allied equipments vital for the required self-sustainability of profession of the concerned artisans.
- **Training and introducing** the artisans to contemporary designs, colour schemes, methods of practice to ensure development of products consisting both apparel and home furnishings.

COURSES IMPLEMENTED

- Three Months training programs on 'Fashion Design & Garment Construction'.



Garment construction class.



Theory Class.

- ☐ Three Months training programs on 'Textile Design & Development'.

- ❑ One week training program on Muga Cocoon Reeling.

The syllabus for 'Fashion Design & Garment Construction' training covers –

- ❑ Fashion Illustration
- ❑ Pattern Making
- ❑ Garment Construction
- ❑ Principles and Elements of Design
- ❑ Surface Ornamentation
- ❑ Colour Theory
- ❑ Embroidery
- ❑ Fabric Painting
- ❑ Product Development
- ❑ Fashion Forecast
- ❑ Design process
- ❑ Quality control in construction
- ❑ Costing and Marketing



Fashion Show by course completing students.

The Syllabus for 'Textile Design & Development' training covers -

- ☐ Pre-loom and Post-loom process
- ☐ Weaving in jacquard looms
- ☐ Yarn and Fabric Dyeing – Chemical & Natural.
- ☐ Different types of weaves
- ☐ Structural designs
- ☐ Design Development
- ☐ Card punching & Lacing
- ☐ Printing – Screen, Batik, Tie-Dye.
- ☐ Embroidery
- ☐ Fabric painting
- ☐ Textile testing
- ☐ Quality control in weaving
- ☐ Costing and Marketing



Weaving practices



Microscopic test of yarn by students.

Apart from the syllabus mentioned above, SIFT also offers the following in both the courses.

1) Entrepreneurship development

Motivational Inputs

Marketing of Products

Registration Formalities with District Industries Centre

Schemes of Banks & Financial Institutions

Project Formulation

2) Interaction with Exporter and Industry Expert regarding region wise demand for hand loom products, export sample labeling, procedures for hand loom export.

3) Schemes & Initiatives of promotional agencies

4) Exposure Visits to existing industries

Accompanied by our instructors, students and trainees of our institute meet industry professionals from the locality and go behind the scenes.

SIFT TRAINING PROGRAMS

Since August 2015, there has been a new development in the training programs undertaken by SIFT. The old integrated training program has been bifurcated into two different departments – ‘Fashion Technology’ and ‘Textile Technology’. Since then, SIFT has been conducting many training programs in these two areas successfully with financial assistance from various sources.

1. One month training program supported by Assam GraminVikash Bank.

It was a consolidated training program on textile and product development.

22 trainees successfully completed the training.

(October 2015)

@ Three months training program on Fashion Design and Garment Construction supported by ‘Apex Yarns Ltd. Ambari Guwahati’.

18 trainees successfully completed the program

(November 2015 – January 2016)

@ Two months training program on Textile Design and Development supported by ‘State Institute of Rural Development’.

32 trainees successfully completed the program

(February 2016 – March 2016)

@ Three months training program on Fashion Design and Garment Construction supported by 'Brahmaputra Infrastructure Guwahati'.

20 trainees have successfully completed the training.

(February 2016 – April 2016)

@ Three months training program on Textile Design and Development supported by 'TATA Trust CML'.

25 trainees successfully completed the program.

(March 2016 – May 2016)

@ Two months advance training program on Fashion Design and Garment construction supported by 'Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Lalmati, Guwahati'.

23 trainees have successfully completed the training.

(June 2016 – July 2016)

@ Three months training program on Textile Design and Development supported by 'Power Grid'.

26 trainees successfully completed the training.

(June 2016 – August 2016)

@ Two months skill up gradation training on textile design & development supported by North East Transmission Company.

21 trainees completed the training.

(July 2016 – August 2016)

@ Three months training on Fashion Design and Garment Construction supported by 'Power Grid'.

25 trainees successfully completed the training.

(August 2016 – October 2016)

@ Two months skill up gradation training on textile design & development supported by North East Transmission Company.

29 trainees are undergoing the training.

(September 2016 – November 2016)

@ Two Weeks 'Train the Trainers' training program on Fashion Design and Garment Construction supported by 'TATA Trust CML'.

24 trainees completed the program.

(November 2016 – December 2016)

@ One Week training program on Muga Yarn Reeling Supported by Kamrup(Rural) District Administration.

13 trainees successfully completed the program.

(6 January 2017 - 11 January 2017)

@ Three months training program on Textile Design and Development supported by 'Power Grid'.

30 trainees are undergoing the training.

(November 2016 – February 2017)

@ Three Months training program on Fashion Design and Garment Construction supported by 'TATA Trust CML'.

23 trainees undergoing the training program.

(December 2016 – February 2017)

@ One Week training program on Muga Yarn Reeling Supported by Kamrup(Rural) District Administration.

13 trainees undergoing the training program.

(13 January 2017 - 18 January 2017)

OTHER ACTIVITIES AT SIFT

- ✓ Apart from imparting training, SIFT also develops new innovative designs and motifs for the market.

SIFT has developed motifs inspired from the Greater Adjutant Stork which is an Endangered Species of stork locally known as the 'Hargilla'.



This species is found only in Assam and parts of Cambodia. In Assam, Kamrup district is home to almost 50% of this species. .Of late, conservation efforts have been taken up due to the initiative taken by District Administration and a few NGOs with a large scale participation of people in certain localities of Kamrup district which are identified as the preferred habitat of this endangered species.

SIFT is doing its bit by using motifs inspired from this bird and developing various products with a view to bring mass awareness about this pride of Assam through textiles, garments and products.

SIFT has also trained 35 women from Dadara of Kamrup district in Textile Design and Development, who are at the moment actively participating in the preservation of this species. State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) supported the training program financially. The women folk of Dadara can now weave their '**hargilla**'(Greater Adjutant Stork) on fabrics and make the world aware of the species and also earn a living doing it.

- ✓ SIFT also gives regular technical support to various organizations like SATRA, an NGO, from Sipajhar, Diya Foundation, and NGO from Mirza and Haramohan Silk Factory, an Assam silk producer company from Sualkuchi.

- ✓ SATRA is an organization who produces Mulberry yarns. Members of the NGO cultivates mulberry and spins the yarns without any technical knowledge. SIFT continuously guides them on the technical aspects as well as for value addition of the yarns, so that it will be more remunerative for the mulberry silk cultivators and open newer markets for them. SIFT will also organise a training program very shortly on silk processing and Dyeing for the benefit of the silk cultivators of Sipajhar.
- ✓ Diya Foundation is an NGO from Mirza, SIFT provides technical support to this organisation in terms of quality of weaving and design development. Diya Foundation is actually starting production of the '*Hargilla designs*' developed by SIFT on various woven products. SIFT is also be training weavers from Diya Foundation on Textile Design and Development.
- ✓ SIFT is also offering continuous design support to local Assam Silk Manufacturing unit 'Haramohan Silk Factory'.

SIFT has signed up for another project called the '**Scheme for Fund Regeneration of Traditional Industries**' in short **SFURTI**, under the Union Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises(MSME). SIFT is assigned as the 'Technical Agency' for execution of the scheme of Handloom Clusters under 'Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship' as the 'Nodal Agency'. SIFT as the TA will be receiving a professional fee of 8% of the Soft and Hard Interventions of the project cost. Presently SIFT has taken up 4 Clusters under the project. Time duration of the project is 3 Years. The Main role of SIFT as the Technical Agency for this project is to provide technical support to both the Implementing agencies and Nodal agency.

Outcome:-

- SIFT imparts training and other relevant skill-development programs, to a critical mass of the population involved in the Silk Industry. A self-sustainable environment has been accomplished to propel the growth of the Silk Industry of Assam.

- The intense and focused curriculum from SIFT integrates creative and enterprising skills to produce trained professionals for fashion and textile industries.
- Trainees are taught to show an acute sense of cultural diversity, social responsibility, critical thinking and imparted the required knowledge of technology essential to their professional interests.
- Need-driven research facilitated to support academic curriculum and faculty development.
- Appropriate Socio-economic, Environmental and Safety issues have been tried to be incorporated in accordance with Vision, Strategy and Plans.
- SIFT focuses to achieve sustainability, ensuring transparency and merit-based approach.
- Recently SIFT has launched its official website www.siftassam.in

CONCLUSION

In the guidance of Kamrup District Administration SIFT has the potential to grow and to be upgraded to a Research Institute of repute. Being situated at Sualkuch in Kamrup which is well known as a centre of silk merchandising, it is in a better position to do any market oriented research works related to silk industry. SIFT is working hard to develop and enrich a design bank which will be specific to and a treasure-bank of the society, culture and environment of North-east India. North-east India is lucky to be the producer of all the major types of natural silk. SIFT can take up research on the quality enhancement of silk yarns in collaboration with Universities and Research Institutes in Assam. Moreover, conservation efforts related to indigenous silks is a need of the hour and SIFT is planning to take up one such initiative. SIFT has been a estimable initiative from Kamrup District Administration since its inception.
