



## Craft sale at the Beach

### Description

Music, dance, excitement of shopping, sweet and spicy aroma of food seemed to be in the air at the craft fair held on the Beach Road from 14 to 24 January, 2014. The craft sale was conducted by the board of Pondicherry Backward Classes and Minority Development Corporation (PBCMDC), which is an undertaking of the Pondicherry Government.

Even though Pondicherry appears to be a small town, it is filled with an eclectic mix of people. The craft sale was a fine mix of various items. These fairs and exhibitions held from time to time are seen as a profitable marketing opportunity to the people who have availed loans from the PBCMDC. The sale had household articles, many varied terracotta pieces, fancy jewellery, toys, paintings, mini sculptures, books and many other handicrafts.



Lalitha at her stall with her handmade goods

“People get to know more about our crafts when fairs like these are held, since it gives the opportunity to establish a direct contact between the customers and us”, says Lalitha who, along with her husband has her own small company which sells these products. She also adds that fairs like these not only help them in making more profit through direct sales, but also avails those orders for their products.

Lalitha is a resident of Puducherry who makes toys, fancy household items usually made out of sea shells and does embroidery, glass painting, saree painting etc and sells them. Talking about the participants and prices of the products she says that, “The stalls are set up by the backward class people who are not only from Pondicherry but also from other states and all the products are available in cheaper and affordable rates since these fairs are treated as wholesale markets”.

“All these figures are made by me and my husband and we supply it to stores and to dealers”, adds Jayanthi, a resident of Pondicherry who has set her goals high and doesn’t think twice about working hard for it. Mrs. Jayanthi is a self made artist who makes figures out of terracotta. She has attended the All India Craft show and other exhibitions like these in Coimbatore, Chennai and Madurai. She says that once an individual gets an ID card from Delhi, they will be able to go anywhere in and around India to participate in such fairs.



Jayanthi talks about her experiences in Chennai and Coimabatore

According to a doctor consulted by her, working with clay helps to control blood flow and prevents BP and Diabetes. When asked the way in which the fair has assisted them she opines that, “These kinds of exhibitions help us to develop more contacts, customers and acts as a free promotion. We also gain more exposure which helps us to improve and take our work to the next level”. Jayanthi, is now working actively towards making bigger figures up to 1 foot or 1.5 feet. Her current goal is to gain a license for herself so that she can teach this art to many others.



Rangesh with a customer

Rangesh was representing Arisjuvady Mental Health Centre, a psychiatric residential rehabilitation centre in Moolakulam. His stall was filled with many kinds of aromatic items like perfume bottles, scented candles, incense sticks and also some handmade jewellery. “All these products are made by mentally challenged people. This acts as a treatment and helps them to attain focus.” Rangesh remarked.

The fair EXPO 2014 was a unique mix of people and products. It lasted for 10 days and also served as a benefiting opportunity for the participants.

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Photos: Sooganya N and Tintumon M

Sooganya N

1st M.A. Mass Communication

**Category**

## 1. Around The Town

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admin

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