

Design Resource

Lambani Embroidery - Sandur

Banjara Embroidery - Karnataka

by

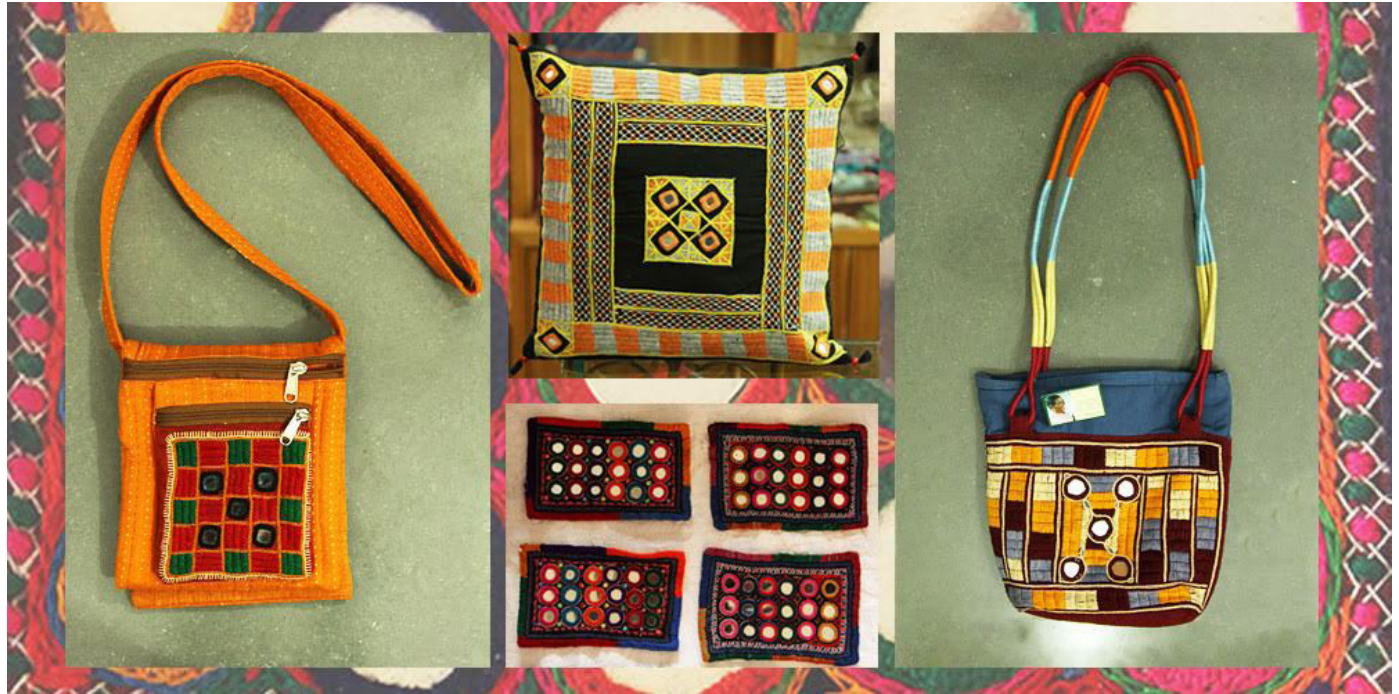
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NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/lambani-embroidery-sandur>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
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Introduction

Image yourself traveling through a village of northern Karnataka, you come across a group of acrobats, women wearing color full embroidered attire, singing and could also be selling skillfully crafted leatherwork, they are the group of banjara, One of the commonly known banjara tribe are, lambani. Lambani's visit village's mainly to satisfy their economic needs. Their goods tied to donkey's back, selling spices, honey, grains and rare medicinal herbs. Out of few tribal group of northern Karnataka, lambani's are migrating towards the urban area. The word banjara mean people who wonder in jungle and forest, word banjara is derived from Sanskrit word vanjara, van means jungle and jara means wondering. Apart from the minor forest produce they also sell salt to the local villages. It is believed that the total population of lambani's in India is about 30 million and they are descendants of the roma gypsies of Europe who migrated through Afghanistan and settled in Rajasthan.

In the 14th century, lambani's moved to south of Deccan who were a major part of Aurangzeb's invading army. Each lambani's tribe owned about 50,000 to 60,000 cattle and they generally worked as a source of transportation for the mogul army, carrying provision and arms with ease. As the war ended in south of Deccan, the lambani's settled in the southern region and they continued to serve British and tipu sultan. Business of lambani's come across a hurdle when the major parts of India was connected by the networked road 150 years ago, this forced lambani's find customers in the interior of India, which were very remote in nature and then these wandering visitors began to be looked at with suspicion. During the British ear under the criminal tribe's act of 1871, they were under high suspicion because British feared that were hired as spy from the other ruler in the country. However in 1952 Govt. of India de-notified them.

Lambani's came across a lot of problems, the primary problem was the connectivity of roads, then the law and finally nineteenth century droughts critically affected their lifestyle. They formed groups also known as "tandas" and they were named after the region at which they settled. Their only option to earn bread and butter was agriculture and it contributed towards main revenue. Landless lambani's especially men as opted to work as day time labour and women opted for creating traditional dress and leather items.

It is believed that, lambani do not have any official language, as they travel from place to place, they learn and add new words into their vocabulary, and hence it may happen that, each lambani tribe might have some set of new words which might differ from other. They have their own political system which is known as Goar Panchayat. The Head of the panchayat is known as Nayak (Headman), their political system follows Goar Boli (language of Goar). It is believed to be originated from the Indo-Aryan family and many of the words borrowed from Persian, Hindi, Sanskrit, Marathi, Gujarati, Kannada, telugu and even Persian. Goddess Shakti and her various incarnations are being worshiped by the lambani's. Their social get together consist of Rick folk Dance, which are generally known as teej, lengi, kikli, rain dances they are performed at the time of marriage. Lambani community which possess very rich culture have been facing a lot of economic problems.

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Their day to day expenditure has forced them to adopt laborers jobs leaving behind their traditional art. Most of the tribal groups, who have nomadic heritage, try to stay isolate from the modern world. Lambani women have a major contribution in keeping the rich cultural craft alive through their costume, which could be considered as one of the most colorful and elaborate of any other tribal group found in India. The unique combination of embroidery and mirror craft is been practiced by the lambani women, who are making these traditional wear for their own wedding or to gift it to their daughter on their wedding. Embroidery work by lambani generally consist of cross stitch, mirror work, darning, quilting stitches with of kangura patchwork applique on dark blue or red handloom base fabric. The 14 types of stitches used in Lambani embroidery are Kilan, Vele, Bakkyia, Maki, Suryakanti Maki, Kans, Tera Dora, Kaudi, Relo, Gadri, Bhuriya, Pote, Jollya, Nakra.

About Sandur Kushala kala Kendra

Sandur kushala kala kendra was promoted and sponsored by Shri M.Y. Ghorpade in 1984, it is a nonprofit center which works towards uplifting and introducing traditional crafts of village to national and international level. The institute also provides infrastructure to the artisan and help them sell their product by providing market support, Consistency of quality, innovative designs and working with market expectations has been a key factor that has contributed to the success of the Sandur project indigenously.

At present the range of products include:

- Embroidery and Mirror work.
- Cane and Bamboo Products.
- Karnataka Kasuti.
- Stone Sculptures and Wood Carvings.
- Cotton Khadi Spinning & Weaving.

Sandur kushala kala kendra employ both women and men. One of the most of popular handicraft work carried out at institute is mirror and embroidery work which is commonly done by women. Currently the institute has employed over 500 artisan, these artisan are also given the exposure to the latest trend and fashion through government training institutions and Dastkar. Dastkar (A society for crafts and Craftspeople) is a private not-for-profit NGO established in 1981, working to support traditional Indian craftspeople, many of them women and village based, with the objective of helping craftspeople regain their place in the economic mainstream, in a country where the craft sector is second only to agriculture in providing employment.¹

Currently the institute funded by Sandur Manganese and Iron Ore Company to preserve the traditional craft of lambani. Artisan are given Rs.500 ration per month and they are also equipped with sewing machine.

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Lambani also called as Banjaras are a class of nomadic people migrated from Rajasthan to other parts of the state.



Mirror work embroidered with colorful thread which is stitched to whale worn by the female lambani's.



Patch work is also another specialty of banjara embroidery.

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Mirror work embroidered with colorful thread which is stitched to whale worn by the female lambani's.



Hand bag embroidered with mirrors.

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Many of the Lambani's don't wear their traditional dress.

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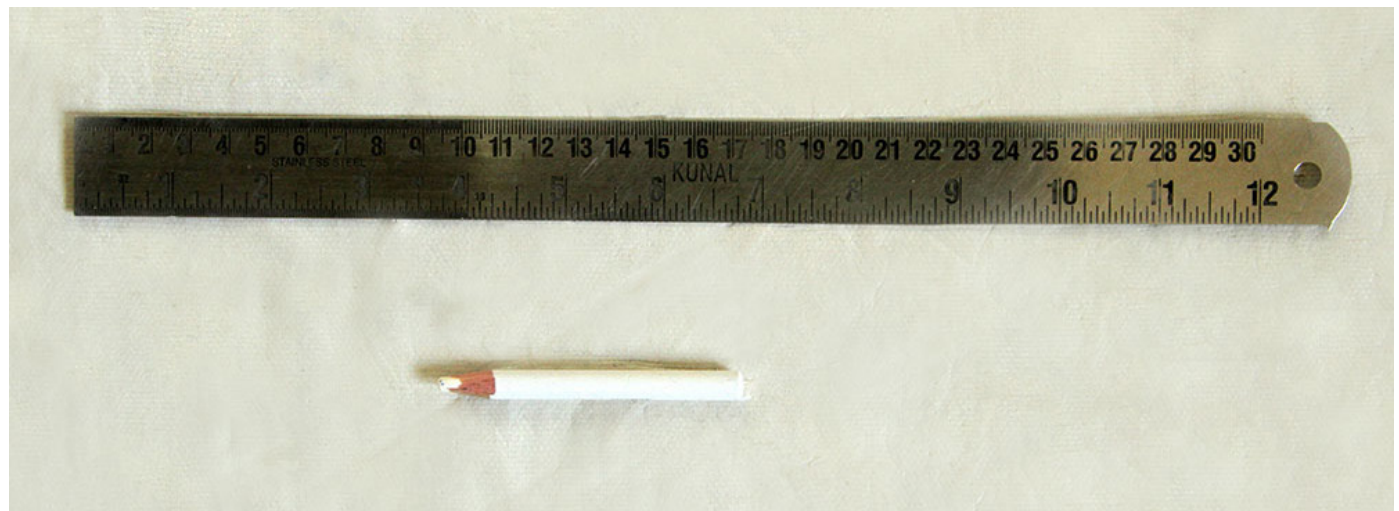
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Tools and Raw Materials

The several types of tools and raw materials required for Lambani Embroidery are as follows:

- **Cotton fabric/ Dress Material:** Base Material used for lambani embroidery.
- **Mirror:** Accessories used for embroidery.
- **Coins:** Accessories used for embroidery.
- **Sea Shells:** Accessories used for embroidery.
- **Aluminum Buttons:** Accessories used for embroidery.
- **Jewellery:** Accessories used for embroidery.
- **Cotton Threads:** Threads are used to stitch the accessories to base cloth.
- **Needles:** Needles are used to penetrate the material.
- **Bangles:** Bangles is a traditional wear which is made out of ivory, stag horn or plastic.



Ruler and marker is used to mark measurements on the fabric.

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Various color cotton and woolen thread used for the embroidery.

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Cardboard measurement cutouts for required type of wear.



Needle is used to stitch different patterns of embroidery.

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Cotton sewing threads of different colors are used to stitch the dress.

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Making Process

Stitches

Lambani's embroidery consist of variety of stitches, the running stitches appears to be small dashes which create variety of patterns on cloth. Neat horizontal pattern are created by intertwining contrasting colour threads in a parallel line and alike thread stitched in criss- cross pattern. Some of the other commonly used stitch is chain pattern, which are dense and tightly worked upon, which covers the total surface area of the ground fabric. Some of the stitches mimic the shape of grains, which are formed using small loops, satin stitch, and herringbone stitch.

Design / patterns used in embroidery:

- The traditional way of using bright colours and random design to display the distinctiveness of lambani tribe.
- Signature pattern of lambani design covers the whole surface of base cloth.
- Generally, the lambani design consist of geometrical patterns such are squares, rectangle and circles, which are heavily embellished with mirror, coins, beads and shells.
- Different patterns are created with the help of patchwork or applique technique. In this technique small piece of cloth is stitched on the base cloth. Generally each piece cloth has different pattern and texture.
- Quilting technique is also a major part of lambani embroidery.
- The patterns seen on the lambani's embroidery reflect their life and surrounding.

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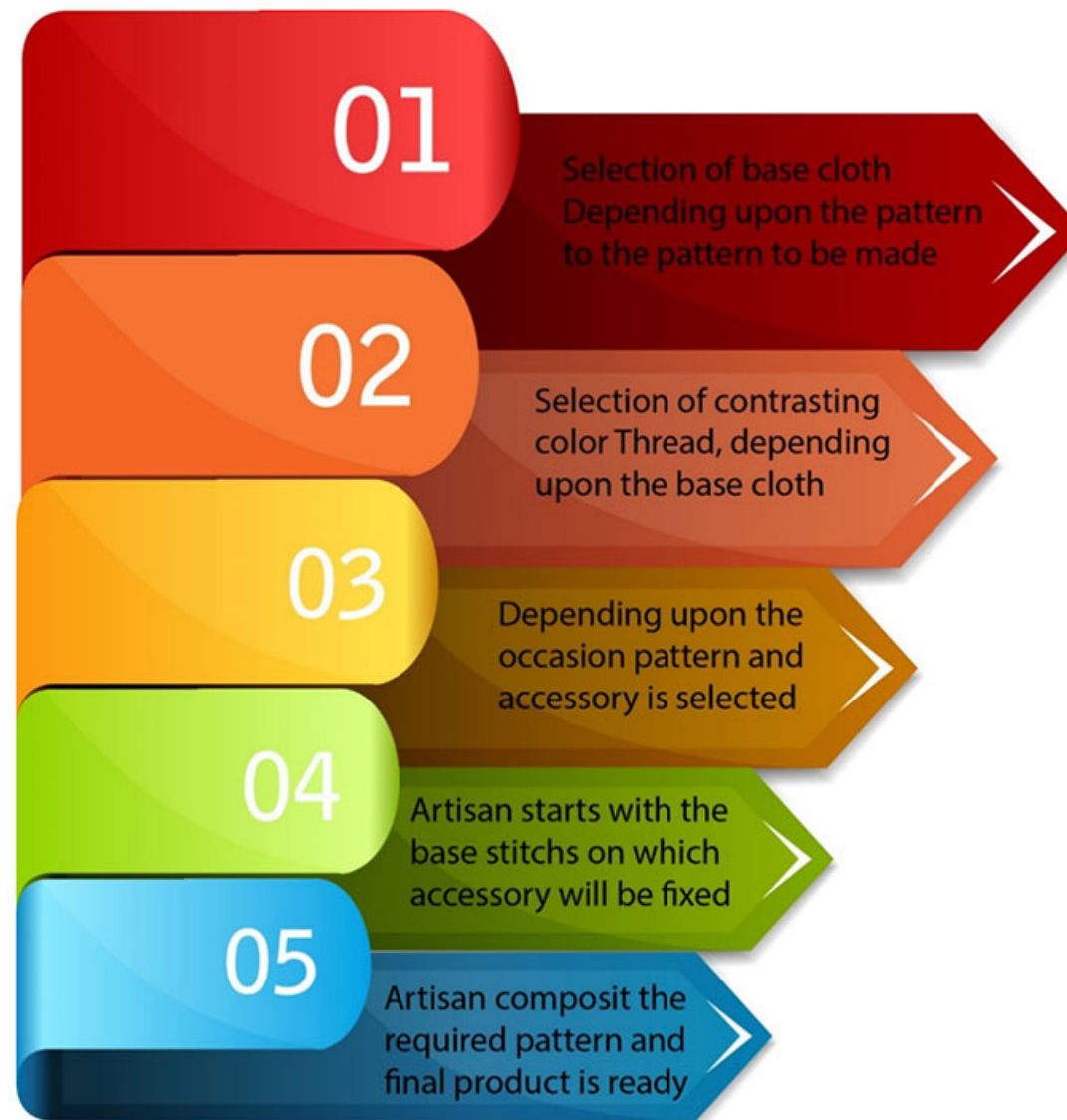
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Flow Chart of Making Process



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Different color cotton thread is used for embroidery.



Some embroidery designs are directly embroidered on the readymade dress.



Required design is made on the dress with required color of combination thread.



Some embroidery is made separately on a piece of cloth.

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Various types of designs are made with vivacious color of thread.



Finished embroidery.



Measurements of dress are drawn on a cardboard sheet.



The measurements are then cut out using scissors.

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Using the cardboard cut outs measurements are marked on the fabric.



Fabric is cut according to the marked measurements.



Cutout fabric pieces are stitched together and embroidered piece is stitched on the fabric.



Most of the design is made near the neck design or border of the dress.

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Products

Pouches, cushion covers, file covers, bags, attire including skirts, blouses and kurtas, purses, bed covers, caps and wall hangings.



Mirror embroidery work made on a Kurta.



Mirror embroidery work pieces which will be stitched to the Dhupata's border.

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Mirror embroidery work made on a Kurta.



A small sling bag embellished with mirror embroidery.

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Pillow cover embroidered with colorful threads and embellished with mirrors.



Pen and pencil pouch decorated with mirror embroidery.

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Contact Details

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