#### Design Resource **Banjara Embroidery - Hyderabad** Embroidery with Mirrors, Beads and Shells

Embroidery with Mirrors, Beads and Shells by Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Ms. Aruna Kumari. Y, Ms. Pragnya G. P. and Ms. Shruti k. NID, Bengaluru

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# Introduction

Tribes from Rajasthan migrated long ago to the hilly region in Hyderabad. The local banjaras still make their living by weaving colorful embroidery work by using mirrors and beads embroidered artistically on clothes. The Banjaras are also known as Lambadi. The tribal wear dresses of bright color, combinations of red, green, yellow and black with mirrors knitted on cloth in intricate patterns. The stitching of cloth with cut mirrors has become a source of income for many Banjara families in Andhra Pradesh, particularly in Hyderabad, Khammam, Nalgonda and Warangal.

Banjara apparel with excessive mirror work and pleasing color combinations in perfectly balanced and blended way is a treat to the eyes. The Choli and the Skirt intricately embroidered with beads and shells are the main attraction for tourists. Despite their gradual absorption into the mainstream of life, the Banjaras still continue to keep in touch with their age-old customs, traditions and beliefs. Now this work is practiced in Sanjeev Reddy nagar in Hyderabad. They/Banjara artists run a shop named Rani Bhai Banjara Garments. They also take orders from government, which is exported around the world.



Banjara embroidery is done in intricate motifs with beads, mirrors and shells.

Bags and purses in bright colors embroidered with decorative beads.

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Artisan stitching the mirror on the cloth.



Different color cloths are cut into pieces and stitched on the clothes and decorated with beads.



Shells stitched on the skirt.

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Small purses and mobile pouch decorated with glass pieces and beads.



Patch work inspired by peacock.



Elegant design over black background decorated with white beads.

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# **Tools and Raw Materials**

Raw materials are brought from Gujarat, Kerala and Hyderabad.

- Poplin fabric To stitch the product.
- Vardhaman thread To stitch the embroidery.
- Glass, varieties of beads and shell Used to stich with the embroidery making it look attractive.
- Needles Used to insert thread in it and stitch.
- Scissors and measuring tape Used to measure and cut the cloth.
- Sponge Used for stiffness of cloth for embroidery stitching.



Threads, Needle and mirrors for stitching and decorating.

Clothes are measured using a measuring tape.

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Poplin clothes are used for stitching.

Ruler and Chalk piece is used to draw lines on the cloth.



Sponge is kept under the cloth and stitched.

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# **Making Process**

The garments of women's are stitched with full colorful geometric patterns. Small, round and square mirrors, beads, coins, cowrie shells and colored cotton tassels hangs from the edges of the embroidered garments. The glass embroidery work is wrapped around the waist like a belt. For male's simple dhoti, a shirt and a pagiri or a turban is made. The shirt will have more works on it where as the dhoti will be plain white. The stitching work is done by women where as the marketing job is taken care by men.

The use of red, green, yellow, black and white colors is prominent among them. The Poplin fabric is cut into required measurement and size with the help of a measuring tape. Lines are drawn on the cloth with the help of a ruler and chalk piece, on which the threads are stitched to form as a pattern or design. This main fabric is placed on sponge and stitched. Sponge is used to maintain the stiffness. These three items are stitched together to acquire the required product. After the product is stitched, embroidery work is done on it. The sponge even helps the embroidery work to stitch the design stiffly, which outstand and makes it look attractive. Embroidery thread is called as Vardhaman thread. Materials are brought from Gujarat, Karoor, Kerala and Hyderabad. The cloth is embroidered with varieties of beads, glass and shells in beautiful patterns and design. Glass and shell embroidery is famous all around the world.

Suvali Bai takes care of the shop- Rani Bhai Banjara Garments. 30 people work under her to practice this craft. Big products hand works like costume, sofa covers etc. takes to four to five months, where as small work takes ten to fifteen days. The motifs, which are drawn from nature and geometry, are contrasted creatively. At present diverse items are embroidered for sale. Product diversification is supported by voluntary organization and government agencies like Lepakshi.

#### Design Pattern:

There are seven patterns of designs based on which the banjara dresses are sewn. The Narka design constitutes a triangular mirror in the middle with small threads around it. Makhi design is a single line stitching in which, threads are visible like dots in a row. In Rela design, threads are stitched in a caterpillar-like tuft. Katta is a simple triangular design, whereas Teka is an intricate one of triangular patterns. Laldi and Gunjara are peculiar designs. Goth is another typical Banjara design, which forms the border for any cloth.

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Cloth is measured and marked.



Pattern lines are drawn on the cloth.



The measured cloth is then cut in required size and shape.

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Sponge is kept under the cloth for stiffness.

Artisan embroiders glass pieces on the cloth.

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Cloth is stitched on drawn lines.



Vardhaman thread is used for embroidery.



Thread is stitched around the glass piece.



Final product with colorful threads and detail designs embroidered and decorated with beads and glass pieces.

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## Products

Banjara embroidery is noted for its lively decoration-cowrie shells, coins, cotton and woolen tassels weighted with lead, glass beads and mirror works are all used to adorn their textiles. The Banjara women of Andhra Pradesh wear gaghras, cholis and odhnis in bold appliqué and mirror work.

Banjara artists make beautiful quilted rumals, bags and purses, usually on brown or sometimes blue cloth.



Embroidery design is stitched on Bed spread decorated with glass pieces.

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Letter pouch stitched with patch design.



Bag with floral design embroidery.



Purse and mobile pouch.

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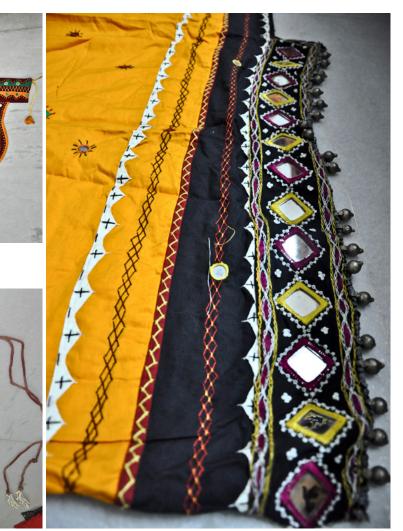
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Door hanging.



Typical Banjara skirt- a traditional wear for Lambadi women.



Border decorated with big mirrors and beads.

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# **Contact Details**

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