



**Crafting Futures Together!**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2024**



## MR. GEOGI EAPEN ZACHARIAH

*Dear Partners and Asha Team,*

*It is with great pride that I present our annual report for 2023-24. This year has been a remarkable journey for Asha Handicrafts Association, marked by resilience, creativity, and unwavering commitment to our mission. Despite global economic challenges, Asha has not only sustained its operations but also created a surplus, ensuring the continued welfare of the artisan communities we serve.*

*A significant highlight of the year was the successful transition to our independent office space in Vasai, a project that reflects the dedication and efficiency of our team. Additionally, the dream of establishing our own Asha Resource Centre in Saharanpur is keeping us excited. The Asha Governing Board is working closely with the team to make this vision a reality, a centre that will serve the artisanal community of India for years to come and fulfil Asha's mission.*

*Our ongoing initiatives in education, healthcare, women empowerment, and environmental conservation continue to make a meaningful impact on the lives of our artisans. Asha remains a beacon of hope, fostering the growth and recognition of Indian handicrafts worldwide.*

*As we look to the future, we remain committed to empowering our artisans, preserving cultural heritage, and ensuring that their skills and stories are celebrated. I thank our members, staff, artisans, and partners for their dedication and support. Together, we will continue to enrich lives through the artistry of Indian handicrafts.*

*Sincerely,*

**Geogi Eapen Zachariah**

**Chairman, Asha Handicrafts Association**

## MR. RAJESH KUMAR



Dear Stakeholders,

As I reflect on the year 2023-24, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the resilience and dedication demonstrated by everyone associated with Asha Handicrafts. Despite facing global recessions, economic meltdowns, unexpected wars, and numerous other challenges on both global and domestic fronts, Asha Handicrafts has not only survived but thrived.

One of the most significant highlights of this year is our move into a beautiful new office premises. This state-of-the-art facility has allowed us to consolidate our entire operations under one roof, fostering greater collaboration, efficiency, and innovation. This milestone is a testament to our growth and the promising future ahead.

Our commitment to serving the Indian artisan community and promoting Indian handicrafts remains unwavering. Asha Handicrafts continues to be at the forefront, not only providing a robust market platform for our artisans but also actively advocating for the Indian handicrafts sector across various educational, social, and civil society platforms. We believe in the importance of preserving and showcasing the rich heritage of Indian craftsmanship, ensuring our artisans receive fair wages and the recognition they deserve.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our talented artisans, dedicated employees, supportive and encouraging Board members, and loyal customers. Your unwavering support and belief in our mission have been the cornerstone of our success.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to our vision of empowering artisans and celebrating the beauty of Indian handicrafts. Together, we will continue to navigate challenges and seize the opportunities that lie ahead.

Thank you for being a part of the Asha Handicrafts family. Let us look forward to another year of growth, creativity, and positive impact.

Warm regards,  
Mr. Rajesh Kumar  
CEO, Asha Handicrafts.

# ***Business At Glance***

## ***Showcasing and Connecting: Exhibitions & Buyer Visits***



***Global Sourcing,  
Australia***



***Ambiente,  
Germany***

## ***"Bridging Cultures: Welcoming Buyers to Office and Artisans' Workshop"***



***Buyer El Puente at  
Asha Office***



***Buyer Fair Anita meeting  
Artisan groups***

### MR. IVAN CARVALHO



**This year 2023-24 was certainly another challenging for Asha. We continued to live and work through the post Covid & war problems and did our best to adapt to the ever-changing world around us. Despite many practical challenges, our staff, artisans and our clients worked hard & closely to deliver products and generate sales. It was hardest year for all our clients.**

**As we look forward to the future, Asha needs to anticipate and to be ready for constant change and disruption in Fair Trade Business. The new strategic plan for 2024-2029 equips us with an action plan to enable us to achieve sustainable growth, expansion of export market, producer development, new products promotion, social media development and to achieve a better well-being for our artisans. There will be ups and downs in the coming year, but we reaffirm our belief that our true potential, achievements and values lie in how we go beyond this point.**

**Our gratitude to all our customers, producers, artisans, Board members, staff, well-wishers for their unstinted support to us during these difficult times in business of our organisation.**

**Best Wishes,**

**Ivan Carvalho**

**General Manager**

# **“Expanding Horizons”**

**Promotion of new crafts and artisans.**



**Staff visits to Kashmir**



**Staff visits to Odisha**

## **"Fair Trade: Making a Difference"**



**World Fair  
Trade Day 2023  
was celebrated  
on May 13**

**"WHEELS FOR  
CHANGE: Bicycle  
Distribution Program  
for Artisans"**



# A Journey of Passion and Empowerment through Zardozi Craft

## ARTISAN STORY of Hope and Creativity !



Roohie Naaz, a 32-year-old woman with a background in Biotechnology and International Business, was once deeply embedded in the corporate world. Despite her success, she felt a void, a yearning for something more meaningful. Her first attempt at entrepreneurship in the pharmaceutical industry didn't fulfill her, but it brought her closer to discovering her true passion: handicrafts.

Roohie was captivated by the delicate art of Zardozi, an ancient form of embroidery that uses metallic threads to create intricate designs. Recognizing the potential of this craft to not only preserve a traditional art form but also to empower women in her community, she made a bold decision to shift her career. Her journey led her to support Indian artisans, particularly women, who often lacked opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.

With unwavering dedication, Roohie partnered with Asha Handicrafts, a fair trade guaranteed organization that aligned with her values of transparency, fairness, and support for artisans. Together, we worked to create a nurturing environment where craftswomen could thrive.

Roohie now manages a team of forty, with a significant portion of her workforce consisting of female artisans who work from home. Specializing in Zardozi embroidery, these women meticulously craft intricate pieces that reflect both their skill and passion. Roohie's commitment goes beyond just providing employment; she is dedicated to building the capacity of these women through continuous training and development, empowering them to become masters of their craft.

In her free time, Roohie Naaz immerses herself in the art of Zari work, experimenting with new and innovative designs. This personal connection to the craft not only fuels her creativity but also keeps her deeply connected to the artisans she supports. Through her hands-on involvement, Roohie continues to push the boundaries of traditional designs, bringing fresh and unique products to life. Her passion for Zari work reflects her commitment to both the art form and the artisans she empowers.

Looking to the future, Roohie dreams of establishing a large artisan workspace, where these talented women can collaborate, innovate, and grow. Her vision also includes a community training center, a place where the next generation can learn traditional skills while embracing contemporary design. Through this, she aims to elevate Indian artistry on the global stage, ensuring that the rich heritage of Zardozi is not only preserved but celebrated worldwide.

Roohie Naaz's journey is a testament to the power of passion and the impact one individual can have in empowering a community. By providing livelihoods and fostering development, she is not only preserving a beautiful craft but also changing the lives of countless women, helping them to realize their potential and achieve their dreams.



# **“Boosting Skills and Team Spirit”**



**"Annual Producers Capacity Building training in Delhi"**



**"Artisans trained on Quality, Innovation, and Efficiency"**



**"Staff Training: Enhancing skills to boost performance and achieve organizational goals."**



**"Staff Picnic: A Day of Team Bonding and Fun Outdoors."**



# ***Embrace the joy of work***



***"Festival Celebration at the Office: Fostering Unity and Joy Among the Team."***



***"Service awards honor and reward staff for their dedication, contributions, and years of service"***

***Ivan Carvalho - 20 yrs***

***Patricia Lewis - 20 yrs***

***Amruta Sawant - 15 yrs***

***Rajesh Salaskar - 15 yrs***

***Karuna Puthoor - 10 yrs***

***Shaila V Dabre - 10 yrs***

***Shaila B Dabre - 10 yrs***

***Sameer Harvate - 10 yrs***

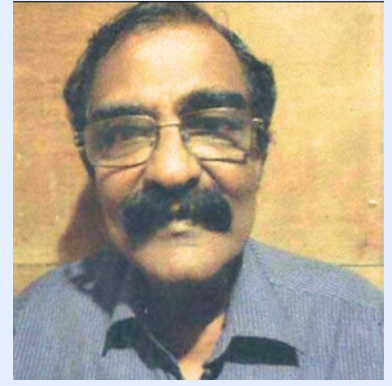
**"Board Members: Guiding Leadership and Strategic Vision for Our Organization."**



**Mr. Geogi Zachariah**  
**Chairman**



**Mr. Suresh Mathews**  
**Vice Chairman**



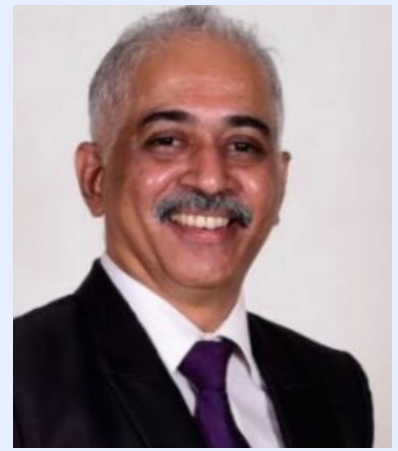
**Mr. Leslie Rajkumar**  
**Treasurer**



**Ms. Sunita Nair**  
**Secretary**



**Mr. Darryl Braganza**  
**Member**



**Mr. Leonard B. Salins**  
**Member**



**Dr. Bijoy K. Thomas**  
**Member**



**Ms. Marina Cherian**  
**Member**



**Mr. James Varghese**  
**Member**



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