



Maulana Azad National Urdu University

H.K. Sherwani Centre for Deccan Studies

National Seminar

**Textile Traditions of the Deccan: Materiality, Labour
and Technology**

15th October 2026



The Deccan occupies a distinctive place in the history of Indian textiles. For over two millennia, the region has nurtured vibrant traditions of cotton weaving, silk production, natural dyeing, embroidery, painted textiles, brocades, and handloom craftsmanship. From the celebrated cotton fabrics of the Satavahana period to the exquisite silk brocades, ikat weaves, kalamkari paintings, Himroo, Mashru, Narayanpet, Ilkal, Paithani, Gadwal, Venkatagiri, Pochampally, Dharmavaram, and Bidri textile traditions of later centuries, the Deccan emerged as one of the most vibrant centres of textile production and innovation in South Asia.

The textile heritage of the Deccan is deeply intertwined with the region's social history, political economy, religious practices, technological advancements, and artistic expressions. The growth of weaving centres was closely associated with urbanisation, craft specialisation, temple economies, royal courts, and trans-oceanic trade. Textile production sustained numerous artisan communities including Padmasalis, Devangas, Julahas, Koshtis, Momins, Kaikolars, and several tribal weaving groups, whose knowledge systems have been transmitted across generations. The patronage extended by the Satavahanas, Chalukyas, Kakatiyas, Bahmanis, Vijayanagara rulers, Qutb Shahis, Adil Shahis, and, Asaf Jahis, and colonial administrations significantly influenced the evolution of weaving techniques, dyeing technologies, motifs, and market structures.

The Deccan also occupied a strategic position in global textile commerce. Cotton and silk textiles produced in the region were exported through ports on both the eastern and western coasts to Southeast Asia, West Asia, Africa, and Europe. During the medieval and early modern periods, Deccan textiles formed an important component of Indian Ocean trade, while in the colonial era the industry experienced profound transformations owing to industrialisation, changing trade policies, and the influx of machine-made textiles. Nevertheless, several weaving traditions adapted creatively to changing market conditions and continue to survive as symbols of India's intangible cultural heritage.



In recent decades, traditional textile industries have faced numerous challenges including mechanisation, declining artisan incomes, loss of traditional knowledge, changing consumer preferences, environmental concerns, and competition from global markets. At the same time, renewed interest in handloom products, Geographical Indication (GI) protection, sustainable fashion, heritage tourism, and digital marketing has created new opportunities for the preservation and revitalisation of Deccan textile traditions.

Recognising the significance of textiles as a source for understanding the social, cultural, economic, and technological history of the Deccan, the H.K. Sherwani Centre for Deccan Studies is organising a one-day national seminar on **“Textile Tradition of the Deccan: Materiality, Labour and Technology”**. The seminar aims to bring together historians, archaeologists, textile technologists, designers, conservationists, policymakers, research scholars, and artisans to deliberate on various dimensions of the textile heritage of the Deccan. The seminar seeks to encourage interdisciplinary discussions, document regional textile traditions, examine historical continuities and transformations, explore technological innovations, and identify strategies for preserving and promoting the rich textile heritage of the Deccan in the contemporary times.

Objectives

The seminar aims to:

- Explore the historical evolution of textile traditions in the Deccan.
- Document regional weaving traditions and artisan communities of the Deccan.
- Analyse the relationship between textiles, politics, religion, society, and culture.
- Discuss the impact of colonialism, industrialisation, and globalisation on traditional textile industries.
- Examine issues relating to heritage conservation, Geographical Indications (GI), and sustainable textile production.
- Promote dialogue between scholars, artisans, designers, and policymakers.



Sub-Themes

I. Historical Evolution of Textile Traditions

- Textiles in Ancient Deccan
- Archaeological evidence for textile production
- Early literary references to textiles
- Temple inscriptions and weaving communities
- Medieval textile centres
- Textile traditions under the Deccan Sultanates and the Nizams

II. Textile Economy and Trade

- Textile production and regional economies
- Merchant guilds and artisan organisations
- Indian Ocean textile trade and industrial transformation
- Inland markets and commercial networks

III. Textile Technology and Innovation

- Traditional spinning technologies
- Loom technologies
- Dyeing and natural dyes
- Textile Printing and Weaving Techniques: Kalamkari, Ikat, etc
- Silk production and sericulture

IV. Regional Textile Traditions of the Deccan

- Pochampally Ikat
- Gadwal sarees
- Narayanpet sarees
- Uppada sarees
- Venkatagiri textiles
- Dharmavaram silks
- Mysore silks
- Himroo and Mashru textiles
- Mangalagiri textiles
- Paithani weaving
- Ilkal sarees
- Solapur textiles
- Tribal weaving traditions
- Regional embroidery traditions: Lambada, Kasuti, etc



V. Society, Culture and Identity

- Textiles and caste communities
- Women in weaving traditions
- Ritual and Courtly textiles
- Costume history
- Textiles in festivals and ceremonies
- Textile symbolism and identity

VI. Art, Design and Aesthetics

- Textile design traditions
- Motifs and iconography
- Persian and indigenous artistic interactions

Abstract Submission

- Times New Roman, 12 pt, 1.5 spacing
- Maximum 250 words including keywords
- Bio-note: 200–250 words

Full Paper Submission

- Times New Roman, 12 pt, 1.5 spacing
- APA / MLA style references
- 3000–5000 words (including abstract; excluding references)
- Only Endnotes

Important Dates

Last Date for Abstract Submission: **6th September 2026**

Notification of Acceptance: **10th September 2026**

Full Paper Submission: **8th October 2026**

Conference Date: **15th October 2026**

Email for Submissions: nationalseminarhkscds@gmail.com

Chief Patron

Prof. Syed Ainul Hasan

Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Maulana Azad National Urdu University

Patron

Prof. Ishtiaque Ahmed

Registrar, Maulana Azad National Urdu University

Seminar Convenor

Prof. Salma Ahmed Farooqui

Director, H.K. Sherwani Centre for Deccan Studies, MANUU

Seminar Coordinators

Dr. A. Subash

Assistant Professor, HKSCDS, MANUU

Mobile: 98668 99691

Dr. Shahid Jamal

Assistant Professor, HKSCDS, MANUU

Mobile: 99909 66077