



# Promoting Kashmir's Rich Cultural Heritage

## Why in News?

The Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, distributed **10 Kani looms** and **25 sets of specialized Namdah (traditional Kashmiri felted carpet)** tools to local artisans free of cost.

## Key Points

- **Government's Strategic Initiative:**
  - The initiative is part of ongoing efforts to sustain **Kashmir's centuries-old craft traditions**.
  - It ensures artisans have **access to essential resources** while opening **opportunities to expand into global markets**.
- **Benefits for Artisans:**
  - The distribution of Kani looms and Namdah tool kits **aims to improve artisans' craftsmanship quality and efficiency**.
  - It empowers artisans to create high-quality traditional products and boosts their competitiveness.

## Namdah

- **Origin and Introduction:**
  - Namdah Art **began in the 16th century when Mughal Emperor Akbar** desired **protective coverings** for his horses.
  - It was **introduced to Kashmir by Sufi saint Shah-e-Hamdan**.
- **Creation and Materials:**
  - Namdah is a type of traditional **Kashmiri felted carpet** made using **sheep wool**.
  - The wool is compressed and matted together; a process known as felting, giving it a distinct texture.
- **Manufacturing Process:**
  - Namdah carpets are typically created by layering multiple wool layers on top of each other.
  - Each layer is sprinkled with water and pressed using a tool called a '**pinjra**' (**woven willow wicker**).
  - The layers are compressed to create a solid and durable carpet.