

## NOTE ON SURAJKUND INTERNATIONAL CRAFTS MELA

The ever-famous Surajkund International Crafts Mela is an annual event organized in the month of February. This festival is organized to promote and celebrate the languishing crafts, folk traditions and cultural heritage of India in an ambience specially created to represent the ethos of rural India.

A signature calendar event of the Haryana Tourism & Surajkund Mela Authority, the Mela is held in collaboration with the Union Ministries of Textiles, Culture, Tourism and External Affairs.

The journey of this mela began in 1987, with an aim to preserve the languishing arts & crafts of India. The Mela, over the decades has successfully established a conducive environment for craftspersons to showcase their art and crafts directly to the patrons and buyers without the involvement of the middlemen. Craftsmen from each and every state of the country share a common platform in the mela. The mela proves to be a melting pot of sorts as crafts, languages and cultures from across India and the world come and create ambience worth experiencing.

The Mela is a unique experience where one explores an eclectic mix of thatched huts, folksongs, flamboyant colours, ornate crafts and aroma of different cuisines. This is a sincere endeavour to pay homage to the traditional arts & crafts of rural India.

The Mela ground is spread over 42.5 acres that houses over a thousand work huts hosting craftspersons and weavers. A separate section is earmarked for heritage art & crafts. 1112 craftspersons from across the states participated in 2019.

In 2013, the Mela was upgraded to an international level and soon more and more foreign nation looked forward to participate in this colourful and biggest crafts fair of the world. 30 countries with a total of 394 participants became a part of the mela in 2019 showcasing their culture, art and crafts. The Mela attracted a footfall of over 12 lakh visitors in the 33<sup>rd</sup> edition of the mela in 2019.

Scintillating folk dance performances by cultural artistes at the two 'Chaupals' offer non-stop entertainment and draw thousands of visitors every day. Special evening cultural programmes further add to the charm of the Mela.

The multi-cuisine Food Courts serves ethnic cuisines from different parts of India as well as the world, enticing visitors with gastronomic pleasures. There are designated places for amusement and joyrides to make it a must-visit event for children and youngsters.

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