



Heera Devi Meena

Beneficiary TEDP

Tribal Artist

Gota Patti

Amplifying her business on social media

Thirty-year-old Heera Devi Meena speaks a smattering of Hindi, does not understand English and is moderately educated. Yet, she knows about doing business through digital platforms and apps such as e-commerce, Facebook, Flipkart and WhatsApp Business.

It is all thanks to the help received from the classes she attended between March and June this year to complete online training on Digital Marketing held by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) in association with the national industry body- ASSOCHAM. It was her eagerness to upgrade her knowledge and move ahead with the times that

motivated Heera Devi to

educate herself about the use of modern technology in business. Therefore, despite the challenges like the poor network in her village of Booj, near Jaipur, she zealously attended the online training sessions. Further, though the classes were largely concentrated on online marketing, her mentors even gave her tips on



product diversification.



Originally from a village in Amer Tehsil, she was introduced to the famous *Gota Patti* embroidery work of the Shekhawati region of Rajasthan, in 2008, after her marriage. With the help and encouragement of her husband Radhe Shyam, the duo started their business in embroidery.

Heera Devi's day starts early. After finishing the household chores, she immerses herself in the sewing and stitching of *Gota Patti*, which is the main income generator of the family. If two people work, the income is anywhere between Rs 20-25 thousand per month. Her children, especially the 11-year-old daughter, help her in their free time. They source raw materials locally from a few sellers in the village and Jaipur and sell their products in the local shops or to the middlemen.

Due to the scarcity of water, the farming season is restricted to just 2 to 4 months in a year. For the rest of the time, the family devotes itself to handicraft.

Heera Devi mainly works on designs of peacocks and flowers crafting with *reshampatti* and *doripatti* and accompanied by *zardozi* embellishments.

Concerning work, when Heera Devi looks back, she realises the extent to which the taste of the clients has changed. Over a decade ago, *zardozi* was the preferred choice of the buyers. Then *Gota Patti* came into vogue, and now most of the products are embellished with this unique appliqué like work.

There are challenges when it comes to doing business online. Due to the remoteness of the village, Heera Devi does face difficulties when she has to despatch items by courier, and the phone network is also not very good in her village. Moreover, there is only one smartphone which 2-3 people share. Yet, these are not insurmountable. Gradually with time and as more and more people start associating with the online business, all the issues will be sorted out, she feels.

