

## **INDUSTRIES AND HANDICRAFTS:-**

The handicrafts industry in the pre-British period was pretty strong. Indian exports consisted mainly of handicrafts, and enjoyed a huge amount of export surplus. A comparative analysis showed that India was more advanced than European countries in terms of industrial production. Handicraft goods like, textiles, luxury products of artistic trade were flourishing under the patronage of nobles and kings. Different cities of India became the centres of industrial and commercial activity. Even towns began to become commercial centres

### **Organization of handicrafts industry:**

#### **Division of labour:**

There was a good deal of division of labor, especially in the artistic industries. However it was not as well-developed and modern as it is now.

#### **Localizations of industries:**

Owing to the availability of raw materials, in case of Kashmir shawls or marbles, there was considerable localization of industries. Similarly, proximity of markets, skilled labor led to the concentration of the industries. The restriction of the area of demand was most serious limitation of the Indian handicraft industry which affected its growth and organization.

#### **The guilds on the basis of caste:**

The urban industry was better organized than the rural which was primitive. Urban crafts were organized into guilds on the basis of caste pursuing hereditary occupations. They upheld high standard of workmanship, high quality of work and welfare of workers. It had following aspects. Highest patronage was made to the titular head of the guild (nagarseth or city lord). The affairs of the guild were managed by the court of oldmen or ‘mahajans’, and the only office bearer was salaried clerk or ‘Gumasta’. The guild system was not a capitalist. The craftsmen were the guild men working to order on the materials supplied by the customers.

The artisans sometimes worked as independent masters with or without apprentices and sometimes lost their independence as and worked for dealer. The East India company did not change this system fundamentally. Its agents bought the goods through native dealers or its agents gave orders to collect the goods from actual handicraftsmen. Thus the urban handicrafts were well organized and well developed during pre-British period. Let us discuss now some of the major industries existed during the pre-British period.

#### **The textile industry:**

The textile industry was one of the important industries of the pre-British period. The textile handicrafts included the manufacture of cotton, silk and woollen cloths and other varieties. The chief centres of the textiles were towns like Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Ahmadabad, Bharoch,