



## Press Release

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### **SEAGATE POWERS ONLINE MUSEUM OF TRADITIONAL KUTCH CRAFTS**

*Supports local NGO in digital preservation of textile traditions*

NEW DELHI, India — May 11, 2010 — Seagate Technology (NASDAQ: STX) announced the launch of an online museum for traditional Kutch crafts, the Kala Raksha Museum Collection (URL: <http://kala-raksha-museum.org/>). This online museum is part of Seagate's on-going programme supporting digital preservation of the vanishing traditional craft forms in the Kutch region of Gujarat, western India. This programme is being administered by Kala Raksha, a non-government organisation (NGO) comprising artisans, community members and experts in the fields of art, design and museum curatorship dedicated to preserving traditional arts.

Seagate has been collaborating with Kala Raksha for nearly two years in a unique programme that involves extensive digitisation of images, documents, instruction and other items to preserve the techniques, processes, materials, designs and motifs used in the Kutch textile traditions. The joint digital preservation programme between Seagate and Kala Raksha includes researching, archiving and digitally capturing, as well as developing programmes, exhibitions and scholarships for deserving artisans.

With Seagate's sponsorship, Kala Raksha has acquired rare and excellent traditional examples that would help upcoming artisans draw on the strength of traditions. Now with further assistance from Seagate, Kala Raksha's museum collections have been put online, which makes them more easily and widely accessible.

Rajesh Khurana, Country Manager of India & SAARC, Seagate Technology, said, "Seagate is committed to leveraging the exponentially growing digital ecosystem to ensure that the rich historical, cultural and artistic traditions of indigenous peoples are preserved and shared. Seagate's involvement in this digitisation project aims to enable this unique heritage to be shared across borders for future generations. The online museum will become a resource for the next generations to inherit the traditional crafts."

"We are most grateful to Seagate for enabling the creation and support of this programme," said Judy Frater, Project Director of Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya. "We run a museum with an extensive collection representing textile traditions of Kutch. Seagate support enabled us to enhance the museum collections, complete documentation of the different artisan traditions of Kutch, digitally archive historically and culturally important works and complete a series of films on the traditional understanding of design – all of which will become important tools in taking the craft forms forward for coming generations."

Elaborating on the aims and objectives of the online museum, Ms. Frater said, "The digital preservation project is helping artisans in several ways. Firstly, it will make excellent examples available to artisans, which will enhance young artisans' appreciation and pride, and inspire innovation within those traditions. The second objective of the project is to raise the appreciation and value of the craft among potential clients for excellent craft work. In addition to the images of the collections, Kala Raksha also plans to have online exhibitions. The online museum will bring the tradition to a wider audience across the world."

The traditional crafts of Kutch include weaving, dyeing, printing, bandhani (tie and dye), embroidery, leatherwork, pottery, woodwork and metalwork. Design is an integral part of the craft, making the artisan the designer, producer and marketer of the craft all at the same time. However, in recent decades local villagers sought out cheaper,

machine-produced wares, causing artisans to abandon their unique skills – and sometimes their villages – to gain employment elsewhere.

Kala Raksha is seeking to reverse the trend of the industrial production of traditional crafts by providing economically and culturally relevant education in design, guiding artisans in the creation of products with more contemporary forms and functions as well as making these traditionally-crafted products more accessible to national and global markets.

#### **About Seagate**

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#### **About Kala Raksha**

In 1993, Kala Raksha was formed as a registered Society and Trust, with a mission to preserve and present cultures of ethnic communities of Kutch, India, through their traditional arts. Income generation is the first priority of the artisan constituency. Proactively, Kala Raksha facilitates the transformation of traditional arts into contemporary products by involving women artisans in the design, pricing and marketing of their own products. Artisan initiative and artisan participation have been the pillars of Kala Raksha's work from the beginning. In this way, the Trust encourages artisans' creativity.

Uniquely committed to documenting existing traditions, the Trust maintains a collection of heirloom textiles housed locally as a Resource Center and Museum. Artisans participated in establishing Kala Raksha's Museum. Thus it embodies a simple but revolutionary concept: involve people in presenting their own cultures.

In 2005, the organisation introduced the Kala Raksha Vidyalaya (KRV), to address a pressing need of the region - Education. The KRV functions as a design school with a direct marketing link, for working traditional artisans of Kutch (conservatively estimated to number around 50,000). The focus of the school is on acquiring knowledge and skills that can be directly applied in the artisan's own art to enable innovation appropriate to contemporary markets.

Kala Raksha is the 2001 Honoree of the International Responsible Tourism Showcase, the 2004 winner of the Crafts Council of India's Sanmaan award for best game (Snakes and Ladders), and the 2008 UNESCO Seal of Excellence Award. Judy Frater is the 2009 recipient of the Sir Misha Black Medal for distinguished service in Design Education.

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