

Handloom saris produced with natural dyes hit the market

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[Prasanna, head of the Charaka Society, releasing the Udupi sari produced using naturally dyed yarn, in Udupi on Monday.](#)

The Udupi sari enjoys Geographical Indication tag

The Kadike Trust, Karkala, and the Charaka Women's Cooperative Society, Bheemanakone, have joined hands to popularise the Udupi handloom sari, which obtained the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2016. Prasanna, head of the Charaka Society, released the Udupi sari specially hand-made from naturally dyed yarns at the Talipady Primary Weavers Service Cooperative Society, Kinnigoli, here on Monday. A few decades ago, the Udupi sari was popular and there used to be a queue to purchase them here. However, later, there was a slump in demand. But in the last couple of years, though the demand for these saris had revived, there are few weavers to weave them now. According to Mr. Prasanna, the number of weavers had come down in the last three decades and there were only 40 weavers who are weaving these saris now. "Even these weavers are old and there is a real danger of this tradition disappearing," he said. Both the Kadike Trust and the Charaka Society had joined hands with the Talipady Society to weave these handloom saris using natural dyes instead of artificial ones. "These are eco-friendly saris. Chemical dyes are harmful to the environment," said Mr. Prasanna. The trust had already started giving preliminary training to eight youth in weaving these saris and they were working as support staff at the society. "We are training youth in weaving Udupi sari so that they could take up this profession part time, if not full time. We intend to sell these saris at a better price to provide better returns to weavers," said Mamatha, president of the trust. The Charaka Society will soon hold talks with all weavers cooperative societies in Udupi and Dakshina Kannada districts and encourage them to produce Udupi saris with natural dyes. "We want to popularise the Udupi sari and create a nationwide market for it. We will rope in film stars and celebrities to popularise it," said Mr. Prasanna. The two saris released today were of 60 x 60 counts and are priced at ₹ 1,200 each. Soon, more varieties will be introduced. There are plans to produce saris of 80 x 80 counts. "It will be softer and lighter. Only 10 weavers are there in undivided Dakshina Kannada who can weave 80 x 80 counts sari," said Ms. Mamatha. First published by [The Hindu](#) on 27 Mar. 2019