

## Bhavani Jamakkalam Makes Grand Entry at London Fashion Week

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In a moment of pride for Indian crafts, **Bhavani Jamakkalam** received a red carpet welcome at **London Fashion Week**. The spotlight was on the handwoven carpets from Tamil Nadu, reimagined in luxurious forms. The moment was more than just fashion—it was a reclaiming of heritage.

### From Bhavani to the Global Stage

Dubai-based designer **Vino Supraja** led the presentation. She walked the ramp hand in hand with **P. Sakthivel**, a veteran weaver from Bhavani. Sakthivel carried a **raattai** (spinning wheel), a symbol of India's handloom legacy. Therefore audience watched as Supraja unveiled **luxury handbags** made from Bhavani Jamakkalam carpets woven by Sakthivel himself.

### The Story of Bhavani Jamakkalam

Bhavani Jamakkalam is a traditional, handwoven cotton carpet and blanket craft from Bhavani in Tamil Nadu. Its signature features include thick, durable weave and multicoloured stripes.

Though it received a **Geographical Indication (GI)** tag in the mid-2000s, the craft has faced challenges. Many weavers left the trade due to diminishing demand, lack of innovation, and competition from mechanized production.

### Reinventing Tradition Through Design

Supraja's approach was bold: she transformed the carpets into luxury handbags. She believed the craft naturally lends itself to high-end use because of its recognizability, strength, and timeless patterns.

In her research, Supraja discovered that Bhavani once had around **5,000 handlooms**, but today only a fraction remain operational. The decline was tied to changing lifestyles—the decline of floor seating, dominance of furniture, and fading demand for carpets.

By turning carpet into accessories, Supraja hoped to revive interest. Her presentation at London Fashion Week was designed to communicate that Bhavani Jamakkalam is more than historic—it can be future-oriented.

### A Moment of Recognition

The reaction was powerful. Conversations with international buyers followed. For **P. Sakthivel**, 70 years old and part of a lineage of weavers, it was a rare moment of global recognition. He had never travelled abroad before. Brussels, Milan, Paris—none called him. But his carpet did.

To make it possible, Supraja arranged his passport and travel formalities. Finally considered it essential that the weaver be part of the narrative, not just the product

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