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Field Visit to

# Kashmir Innovation Lab (KILAB) Design Studio

Design Your Degree (DYD) 2nd Batch 2024

Coordinator

**Prof. Syeda Afshana**

Supervisor

**Dr. Baasit Abubakr**

Field Visit

**6 May 2025**







# Introduction

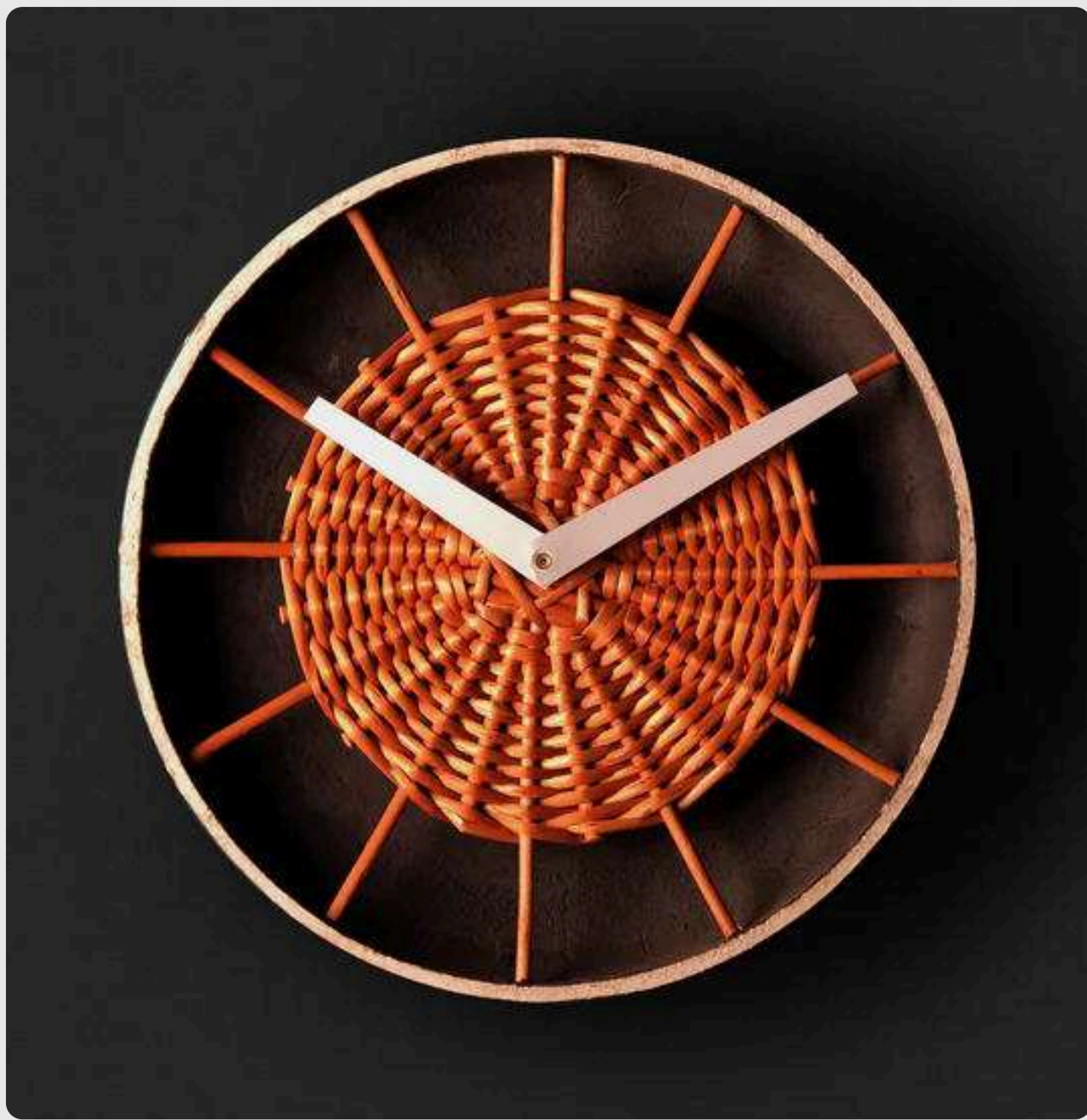
Students from Centre for Design Your Degree 2nd Batch (2024) accompanied by mentor Dr. Baasit Abubakr undertook a field visit on 6th May 2025 to gain practical exposure to innovation practices and the role of design in social impact. The visit provided insights into the latest tools, techniques, and approaches related to Design Thinking, Sustainable Entrepreneurship, and fair trade practices. Emphasis was placed on the use of biodegradable and sustainable materials in design, highlighting how innovation can be both environmentally conscious and community-focused.





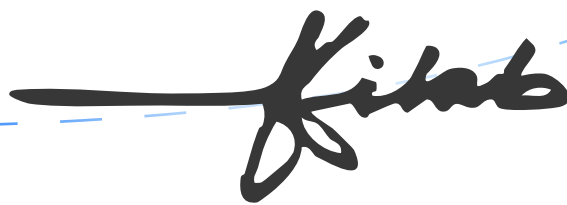


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PRODUCTS MADE USING SUSTAINABLE & TRADITIONAL WICKER WORK MATERIALS





# Activities and Observations

## Guided Tour of the Lab

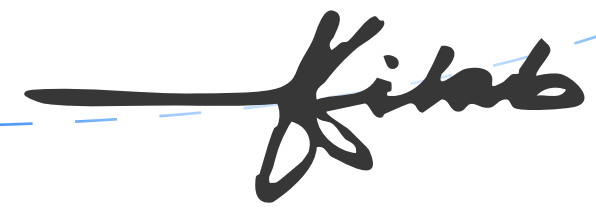
The students were taken on a comprehensive tour of KILAB Design Studio’s workspace and fabrication facilities. They observed different stations dedicated to material cutting, engraving, prototyping, and collaborative brainstorming. The lab housed various raw materials such as wood and recycled paper used in producing intricate designs and utility items.



WOODWORK MEMENTO  
PRESENTED TO PLAYERS DURING  
THE 5TH IND VS ENG TEST MATCH  
AT DHARAMSHALA

WICKER WORK FLOWER POT





## Interactive Session

The interactive session with the KILAB Design Studio team was insightful and engaging. Students asked questions related to their design process, use of technology, and community involvement. The team shared how they blend traditional methods with modern tools like laser cutters and design software. They also discussed their focus on sustainability, youth engagement, and using design to address local challenges.

## Takeaways

- Innovation is most powerful when rooted in local context and community needs.
- Sustainable materials and responsible design practices are core to KILAB's work.
- Digital tools enhance, not replace, traditional craftsmanship.
- KILAB Design Studio encourages youth involvement through hands-on learning and collaboration.
- Design is viewed as a tool for empowerment, education, and social change.
- Sustainability is often talked about but not implemented well.

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# Design Thinking Workshop

The KILAB Design Studio team conducted a workshop that walked the students through the five stages of the design thinking process:

**01**

## Empathize

Understand users' needs, experiences, and challenges through observation and engagement. It helps designers connect deeply with the people they're designing for.

**02**

## Define

Analyze findings to identify the core problem. A clear problem statement guides the direction of the solution.

**03**

## Ideate

Generate a wide range of creative ideas. This stage encourages free thinking before narrowing down the best solution.

**04**

## Prototype

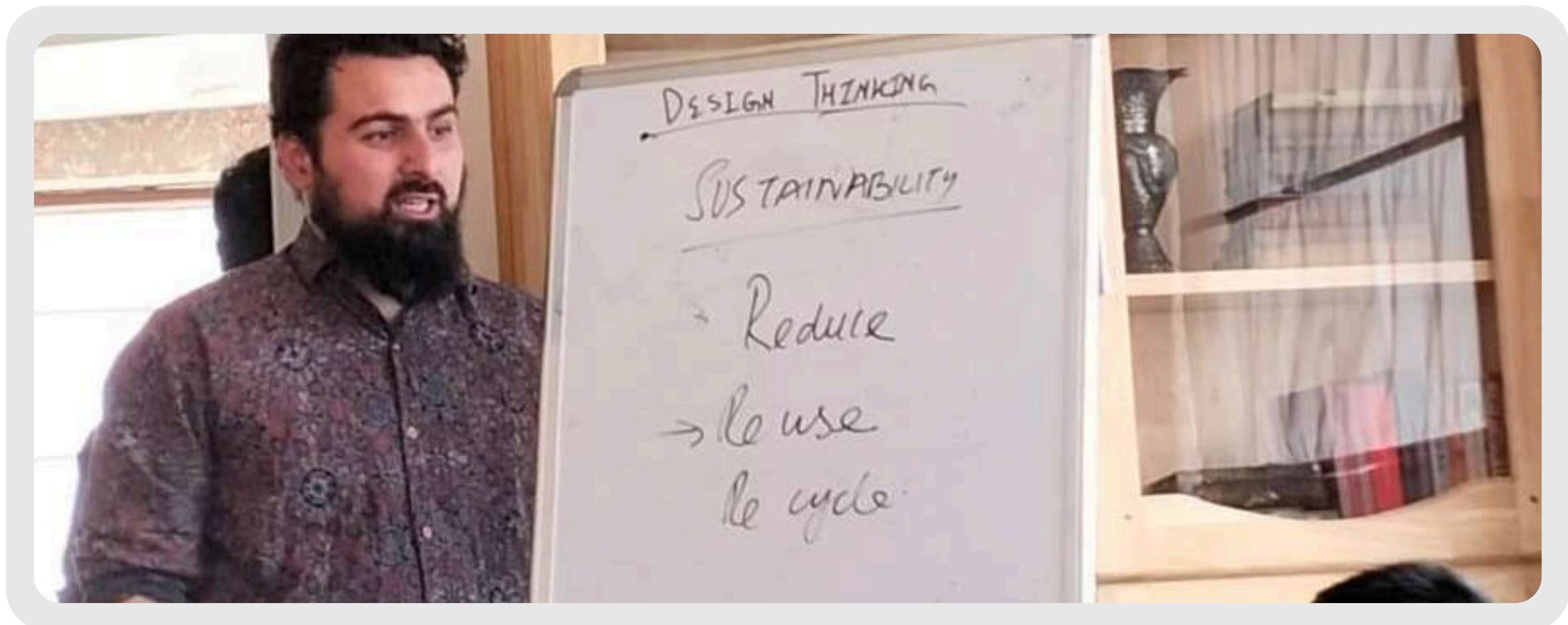
Build simple models or mock-ups of ideas. Prototypes help test functionality and gather quick feedback.

**05**

## Test

Try out prototypes with users to refine the solution. Testing ensures the final design meets real needs.



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## Learnings on Sustainability

At the interactive session at Kashmir Innovation Lab (KILAB) Design Studio, the students learned that sustainability is the heart of their design philosophy. The team revealed that they use local and recycled material, aimed to create as little waste as possible through precise production steps, and ensure that the products are made to last when they are not recyclable.

They also emphasized the importance of the **3Rs**



### Reduce

Use fewer resources and avoid unnecessary waste.



### Reuse

Repurpose leftover materials creatively.



### Recycle

Design products using recyclable or recycled components.

One of the main points discussed was planned obsolescence, which means that products are often designed for limited lifespans. KILAB rejects planned obsolescence in favor of long-lasting, repairable, responsible design, and encouraging the students to build for sustainability, not disposability.





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# Field Visit Gallery

TRENDY WICKER WORK CARRY BAGS



CROCHET AND PINJRAKARI WORKS





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COLLECTION OF PRODUCTS MADE USING SUSTAINABLE  
AND BIODEGRADABLE MATERIALS





# Consumer Electronics using Sustainable Materials

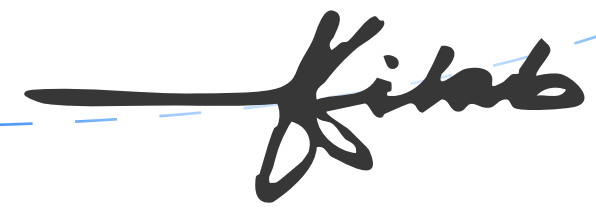
SUSTAINABLE LIGHTING SOLUTIONS INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL KASHMIRI WICKER CRAFT



SPEAKERS EMBEDDED IN STONE







## Conclusion

The field visit to the Kashmir Innovation Lab (KILAB) Design Studio was a very meaningful experience for the whole DYD Team. It gave the students a real exposure to how design, technology and sustainability can come together towards meaningful innovation. Through observation, discussion and practical engagement with the design thinking model they gained a better understanding of how creative solutions can be generated from local contexts and community partnerships.

One of the takeaways was realizing the significance of purposeful design, design that brings together aesthetics and function for social impact. KILAB embodies innovation that seeks to create impact through design that uses sustainable materials, collaborates to empower artisans and adopt ethical design practices.

The visit inspired the students to build on our academic knowledge and expand on ideas beyond conventional thinking. It identified empathy, creativity and sustainability as key tools for their future roles as designers, innovators and changemakers. They have gained a renewed spirit and purpose towards the role of intentional designs in building a better, equitable world.

Rapporteurs

**Tabish Khan Tareen**

**Zuhaib Manzoor**

Design

**Natiq Nabi Sofi**