

What is Kiswah?



This is a dynamic PDF e-book by GKToday. Please note that its content is subject to updates / changes on the GKToday website [www.gktoday.in] to ensure the latest information. You can download the most recent version of this e-book by visiting [this link](#) or by scanning this QR code.

Disclaimer: The authors and publisher have made every effort to ensure that the information in this E-book is correct. However, GKToday does not assume and hereby disclaims any liability to any party for any loss, damage, or disruption caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident, or any other cause. This document is a property of GKToday. Reselling and Redistribution or Duplication is strictly prohibited.



The Kiswah is set to be displayed at the Islamic Arts Biennale 2025. The event is set to take place at the Western Hajj Terminal of King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah. This is the first time the complete Kiswah will be exhibited outside its holy city.

The Kiswah – Significance and Craftsmanship

- The Kiswah, meaning “robe,” is a symbol of Islamic artistry.
- It is the intricately embroidered cloth that covers the Kaaba in Mecca.
- It is made from silk and adorned with gold and silver threads.
- The craftsmanship involved in creating the Kiswah is considered the pinnacle of Islamic art.

Kiswah’s Annual Replacement Ceremony

The Kiswah is replaced annually during a special ceremony on the first day of Muharram. The old Kiswah is carefully removed and stored in a government warehouse for preservation. Parts of the old Kiswah may be distributed to museums or as gifts, denoting its cultural importance.

Historical Context of the Kiswah

The tradition of covering the Kaaba with the Kiswah dates back centuries. Historical accounts suggest that the first complete covering was done by a Yemeni king before the advent of Islam. The Prophet Muhammad later covered the Kaaba with a Yemeni cloth after the conquest of Mecca. Over time, various colours and fabrics have been used, with the current black brocade established during the Abbasid era.

Manufacturing Process of the Kiswah

Creating the Kiswah is a meticulous process that takes nearly a year. It weighs over 1,000 kg and consists of multiple components, including four sides and a door curtain. The production involves more than 100 skilled workers. The process includes washing, dyeing, weaving, and embroidery, ensuring that each piece meets high standards.

Exhibition Goals and Visitor Experience

The Islamic Arts Biennale seeks to inspire visitors by showcasing the richness of Islamic civilisation. The inclusion of the Kiswah is intended to provoke thought and appreciation for the artistic heritage of Islam. The exhibition will also feature contemporary artworks and historical artifacts, creating a dialogue between the past and the present.