

The Glory of Bangladeshi Saree and its Various Aspects

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Abstract

Bangladesh has diverse traditional aspects and a variety in the cultural influence on our costume. For Bangladesh; Costume is an impactful part which cannot be departed from our core culture as the connection between culture & costumes are always perceptible. While talking about costume; “Saree” is one of the focal points which got huge significance in overall Bangladeshi costume tradition. Being the national costume; Saree is a garment which is still in fashion since ancient time to now being unchanged. The purpose of this research is to signify our traditional costume; “Saree” and the way it’s connected to our own traditional and cultural heritage. Thus in this study; the main intention of author is to light up on various aspects of “Saree” which considered as the glory of Bangladeshi women since history to modern time. Author mainly put her focus on the historical background of Saree, its different parts, various draping styles, Saree in different culture, occasional uses and variety of Saree according to its quality etc. In short; through this research; one can, get the real gems and the over view concerning several different aspects of legendary Bangladeshi Saree.

Key words: Bangladeshi Saree, Draping style, Jamdani, Muslin, Rajshai Silk, Tangail Saree.

1 Introduction

Bangladesh is famous for its rich and diverse tradition that reflects through culture, clothing, music, art, dance, film, festivals, occasions, architecture, livelihood, literature and language and the behavior of individuals etc. Costume represents the cultures of a country. In Bangladesh; Clothing is one of the most significant aspects, which delineates the culture as well as Bangladeshi people very adroitly. Among all; “Saree” - plays a vital role in Bangladeshi costume sector as most of the Bangladeshi women always prefer Saree both as formal & informal wear as it has a big traditional value for the women of the country. This is actually a popular outfit in the subcontinent & never lost its attraction even in the modern fashion era[9]. Moreover; the continuous changes in fashion & arrival of latest styles of clothing could never replace the glory of ‘Saree’ as it is the oldest clothing style of Bangladesh.

1.2 What is a Saree

Saree is a female garment; originated from the Indian subcontinent that consists of a drape varying from five to nine yards (4.5 meters to 8 meters) in length and two to four feet (60 cm to 1.20 m) in breadth[8]. Basically to wear Saree, draping method is applied. Mostly women wrap the sari around their waist and tuck at that point also wrapping it around their shoulders. The top part of the sari can rest around the back of the neck or be pulled over the top of the head, leaving the face uncovered. [3]. Saree has beautiful selvage decorated or ornamented with various type of motive, prints, weaved design, embellishment etc. The edge of the Saree (“Achol” in Bangla) is also often remaining finely ornamented. To hold the grace of the evergreen nature of Saree; with accustomed by the changing of time; Different people from different regions; around the world have different patterns and styles to wear Saree.

1.3 Brief Historical Background of Saree

The word 'sari' evolved from 'sattika' mentioned in earliest Jain and Buddhist literature as women's attire History of sari-like drapery is traced back to the Indus Valley Civilization, which flourished during 2800–1800 BC around the northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent and the complete three-piece modern style of wearing Saree was known as *Poshak*, generic term for costume[8]. Cotton was first cultivated and woven in Indian subcontinent around 5th millennium BC. Dyes used during this period are still in use, particularly indigo, lac, red madder and turmeric [8]. Silk was woven around 2450 BC and 2000 BC. And the earliest known depiction of the Saree in the Indian

subcontinent is the statue of an Indus Valley priest wearing a drape [8]. Based on sculptures and paintings, tight bodices or *cholis* (blouse) are believed have evolved between 2nd century B.C to 6th century A.D in various regional styles where early *cholis* (blouse) were front covering tied at the back; this style was more common in parts of ancient northern India; this ancient form of bodice or choli (blouse) are still common in the state of Rajasthan today [8].

1.4 “Blouse and Petticoat”- The Integrated Parts of Saree

There are two complementary parts that needed to wear ‘Saree’ -blouse & petticoat, though in old age traditionally working women never wear them [9]. Before modernization stepped in Bangladesh, the look of Bangladeshi Saree was much dissimilar than what it is at the present. In Medieval times, the concept of wearing Blouse and Petticoat wasn’t integrated in the traditional style of wearing Saree as during those periods, women used to spend most of their time inside their domiciles. However, with the changes in times; women had to keep their footstep out of their houses and socialize accordingly; which escorted towards the first transformation in Saree design. Gradually over the time; getting inspired from other sub continental cultures; especially similar to Persian and then Indian style of wearing Saree; that became an ensemble; the traditional Bangladeshi Saree has finally become a three piece garment by combining with two special outfits “blouse and Petticoat”; which has slowly accepted by the Bangladeshi people and became the common and popular trend of wearing Saree. As a Muslim country; Women here wear ‘Saree’ as well as long sleeved blouse not to exhibits body part. Whereas the Hindu community keeps navel open as per their belief- this is the symbol of life .So these believe influenced in design of ‘Saree’ in many way.[9]

1.5 Parts of ‘Saree’

The Major visible parts of Saree are segmented in below order:

- **Draping** – This works as doppatta or head covering & to cover the upper body. This is the most visible part of Saree while wearing [9]. So designers decorate this part with great care to make it eye-catching applying different design techniques.
- **Pleats** – Pleats making is the most complex part of wearing Saree. Sorted And nicely placed pleats attract the eye of the viewers. Thus various designers emphasize on the bottom parts putting more by their creativity in this parts of pleat by several techniques.
- **Edge**- Edge considers as the lower part of Saree where designers usually make borders putting embellishment or other application work to enhance the overall attraction. At present women are more conscious about the edge design.
- **Body** – This is the area that is less visible & mostly goes inside while [9].

1.6 Basic Styles of Draping Saree

Saree has its own aesthetic and artistic values according to various cultures that replicated in the lifestyles of people. The distinctive and unique techniques of draping Saree; reflects each of its own beauty. Adorning the basic style of wearing Saree called “Nivi” style; is easy and considered the most common techniques ; which originated in Deccan region of India.[8] The steps of wearing this style is given below in six easy steps:

- Wrap the Saree around the waist.
- Pleat and tuck the Saree .
- Form pleats to cover up the upper body and fold the remaining Saree in big pleats .
- Place the folded pleats over left shoulder.
- Take the edge of the Saree (“achol”in bangla) to the front through under the right hand.
- Tie a knot on the tip and fell it over the right shoulder.

1.7 Other Style names of Wearing Saree in Different Culture

Contrasting to this reflection; the style of wrapping up a Saree is not limited to this three piece traditional style only as it has got more variety in styles through various cultures around the world. There are more than 80 recorded ways to

wear a Saree and according to the French cultural anthropologist and Saree researcher Chantal Boulanger categorized Saree drapes in the following families [8]:

1. Nivi style.
2. Bengali and Odia style.
3. Gujarati/Rajasthani/Pakistani style.
4. Himalayan style.
5. Nepal MaharashtrianMadisar style.
6. Pin Kosuvam style.
7. Kodagu style.
8. Gobbe Seere style.
9. Manipuri style.
10. Khasi Malayali style.
11. Tribal style.
12. Kunbi style or denthli style.

1.8 The Glory of Bangladeshi Saree

Although a lot of things have changed in Bangladeshi culture over the periods of time and as urbanization took place and influence of western culture brought some major changes in the lives of people in Bangladesh; still the amazing tradition made in this country has clustered under the labels of folk, modern and contemporary culture. Being a Muslim country; women; from both; cities and countryside, considers certain matters while wearing outfits as women stay conservative and are intended to show less skin ahead of hands, head and feet. Thus “Saree”-rather than any other costumes; is considered as the chief and traditional outfit of Bangladeshi women. Because of its long glorious heritage and values; since ancient to modern times; Bangladeshi women’s first preference is “Saree” for celebrating any type of cultural or religion festivals. Bangladeshi Saree has become a global fashion trend; specially made by the skillful hands of Bangladeshi designers, artisans and craft men. Even in this era of rock ‘n’ roll, considering Saree as a major part of Bangladeshi culture; fashion has positioned at parity with one of the foremost fashion destinations, which cherished and respected by the people of all over the world [2] Fine linen Muslin is mostly renowned in the weaving tradition of Bangladesh. Unlike India, Bangladesh was less focused on dress making or stitching rather its interest remains on weaving only; therefore Saree, remains without stitch & getting attraction due to its special design & quality [9].

1.9 Use of Saree According to Occasions and Festivals of Bangladesh

Bangladeshi people have so many reasons to cheer their life and soul for which this land is called the Land of Festivals [9].In Bangladesh; festivals held throughout the year with great energy which plays an important role in our culture. Festivals; that observe in our country segmented majorly according to the Culture, religion, social, national and other relevant aspects that signify with the mark of our collective values. During any occasion or festive time; Bangladeshi women mostly prefer to wear Saree with pride and elegance. Additionally for common uses and other relevant purposes; Saree is most commonly worn by Bangladeshi women, especially in festivals, Bangladeshi beauty from all classes; seen most prominently in Saree. Thus in Bangladesh; ‘Saree’ is the biggest selling products in all occasions and festivals. A short brief on Bangladeshi women’s Saree; based on various occasions and festivals have discussed below:

1.9.1 Cultural festivals

1.9.1.1 *Pohela Boishakh*



Figure 1: [32]

Pahala Boishakh or Bangla New Year mainly represents our Bengali tradition. People from all religious groups; celebrate this traditional festival of Bangladesh. In this Festival most of the women and girls prefer to wear Saree made with local fabrics in red and white color (considering the symbolic color of this occasion); decorated with traditional motifs, such as; flower, boat, fish, rural hand fan, tiger face, owl etc. Ladies from different age groups follow different style of wrapping up Saree. Wearing and buying new trendy Saree is a common culture among women on this festival.

1.9.1.2 *Pahela Falgun*

According to the the Bengali calendar; the first day of the Season Spring ; celebrated widely in Bangladesh called “Pohela Falgun”. According to Bangladesh; spring considered as the king of all the six seasons, thus to greet the arrival of spring; most women dressed in “bashonti” (orange and yellow) colored Saree garnished with floral ornaments. Like Pahala Boishakh; women on this day also prefers our local designed and manufactured Saree. Also they adore themselves with different styles of wrapping up Saree according to their age and class. [10]



Figure 2: [33]

1.9.2 Religion festivals

1.9.2.1 Eid- ul -Fitr and Eid- ul Azha



Figure 3: [34]

As a Muslim country, Eids are the biggest festivals for Bangladesh. There are two Eid each year Eid- ul –Fitr and Eid- ul Azha. Eid are the most common religious festival for Muslims from all over the world. As per religion rules all Muslims wear new dresses. Like other Muslim countries; in Bangladesh; considering the biggest festival; Eid- ul –Fitr is the perfect occasion for the consumer to purchase their best outfit of the year; where women mostly prefer exclusive new collections for different material Saree in high to medium price as most of the women’s in Bangladesh like to wear Saree [2]. On the other hand; Unlike Eid- ul –Fitr; on Eid ul Adha, women prefer simple and mostly plain and comfortable Saree cheaper in price. Here; women who love to wear Saree mostly go for local fabric; made by local artisans on this Eid.

1.9.2.2 Durga Puja



Figure 4: [35]

Basically, Durga Puja is a Hindu religious festival which observed all around the country. Among other Hindu festivals; this is one of the most awaited festivals for all the Hindu women in Bangladesh where they remain enthusiastic while purchasing their best outfit. In this festival Hindu women mainly wear Saree [2]. Most Bangladeshi women may have seen in traditional Saree in white and red colors at the time of Durga Puja; but other colors and materials are equally famous in this occasion for Saree [7].

1.9.2.3 A White Saree with a Red Border

In Bangladesh; the Story behind the tradition of Bengali women’s White Saree with a Red Border (In few places; mostly by Hindu widows) was followed by the ritual of Kolkata In India ,The widows used to wear white (complete) Saree, which is called than in Bangla. In the subcontinent there is practice to wear white blank Saree, no design & print on it; when a woman loses her husband which was a practice that socially maintained in both Muslim & Hindu community for many years [9]. Due to child marriages and high death rate, the number of widows and thus the availability of than were very much, as it was the cheapest piece of cloth available in rural drought & poverty stricken area, this was the best affordable option [6].

The easiest design would be to add a border and use it as a regular Saree. Since married women wore red, the idea of bordering with red might have come [6]. Since this white Saree is still has a big demand in market; thus now designers are trying to give dull printed design on widow’s Saree to get a new attraction because fashion is changing and people are looking for uniqueness in every aspects[9].

1.9.3 Social Festival

Wedding is a major part of a tradition. In Bangladesh, there are some common rituals take place while wedding, such as; Gaye Holud(body turmeric), main wedding program arranged by the bride’s family and the Walima; that arranged by the Groom’s side. In all the ceremonies a common choice for the bride is Saree.

1.9.3.1 *Gaye Holud (Body Turmeric)*



Gaye Holud is a ritual mainly introduced by the Hindu religion where fresh turmeric paste is touched all over the bride and bridegroom's body to increase the glow, beauty and softness of the skin. Mostly in matching with turmeric's color, bride wear yellowish color Saree in any fabric material as color is the main focus in this ceremony. But now-a-days brides try out any bright color according to their preferences; where green, orange, Magenta, off-white mostly gets preferences along with yellow in various qualities get preference; mostly Katan and Jamdani found with huge popularity.

Figure 5: [36]

1.9.3.2 *Main Program of Wedding Ceremony*



Figure 6: [37]

It's the main part of the wedding which is mainly arranged by the family of the bride. On this occasion bride wear her best outfit gifted by the groom. Mostly Exclusive Sarees are preferred by the brides. The recent trend for brides; is to wear Lal Benarosi (Red Benarosi Saree) which is very much popular during wedding for almost all the functions that relates the wedding ceremony which made by handloom techniques with metallic (golden, copper, silver threads; decorated with traditional motive border and achol (Edge part of the Saree). Sometimes embellishments also take part on it (with different beads & jewelry materials to provide a gorgeous and brightening look). Mostly red or colors that closer to red (red orange, orange, maroon, pink, magenta etc.) are preferred for this function. But now-a-days almost all the colors and other materials are evenly been picked by the brides as fashion and its trend is changing very rapidly. These are the most expensive & highly decorative 'Saree' that used traditionally in wedding observance. In Bangladesh Both Hindu & Muslim community consider this as a dignified issue in a social standard & so the bridal 'Saree' are in high demand. But apart from beauty, these kind of Sarees are not comfortable as often it's get too heavy in weight; mostly when put extra materials attached in it but still People find this worthy and compromise its discomfort and price considering its beauty due to cope up with the social standard. Mirpur Benaroshi Polli is one of the biggest places for bridal collection and party 'Saree' in Dhaka [5].

1.9.4 Saree for Parties

Like previous times now many of the women in Bangladesh again started preferring 'Saree' for several of their special occasions. As party 'Saree' has become a way to exhibit social status so women are being very conscious regarding picking up the best designed Saree in their collection. Then again popular TV serials (Mostly Indian) are being the major source of influencing Bangladeshi women to buy different categorized 'Saree' which include almost every quality Saree in a variety in material as well as color and design. Now there are various marketing place is driving to sell party Saree as well as on line shops [5].

1.9.5 Saree for Other Uses

In addition Bengali Muslims practice to buy low price quality printed cotton Saree to distribute among the poor people in the Arabic month of Ramadan before Eid-ul-Fitr. The color & cotton quality of these Saree is sometimes poorly made which may be faded after few washes [5]. On the other hand, similar kind cotton printed Sarees are suitable and comfortable for common household use as well as simple occasions which are preferred by women from all classes.

1.9.6 Saree as Professional Wear

In Bangladesh; Saree is the uniform of the air hostesses of Biman Bangladesh Airlines. Prime Minister of Bangladesh and all the female parliament members wear 'Saree' to uphold the tradition [9]. Also in several customer service sectors; as well as for any sort of formal organizational presentation; Saree is one of the most commonly used outfits in our country.

1.10 Traditional Saree of Bangladesh those commonly used

From ancient to modern Bangladesh; It has a long history from a fragment of cotton found on a metal tool in Mohenjo Daro and silk found in ornaments excavated from Harappa to the modern synthetic fabrics; The journey in the arena of textile has been long and colorful[1]. In Bangladesh, Common category Saree are Jamdani, Muslin, Banarasi, Tangail, Taan etc.

- Jamdani
- Muslin
- Banarasi
- Tangail
- Rajshahi Silk

1-10.1 Jamdani



Figure 8: [38]

The word 'jamdani' is believed to be of Persian origin, derived from 'Jam' (meaning flower) and 'Dani' (meaning vase). While there is some mention of this term in the literature from the 3rd century BC (in Kautilya's 'Arthashastra') and during the Gupta period (4th – 6th century AD), it is during the Mughal rule (16th - 18th centuries) that the weavers of Dhaka (in present day Bangladesh) who had been weaving this fabric for centuries, received extensive royal patronage [10].

In Early age, handlooms were there in almost all villages around Dhaka. Dhaka, Dhamrai, Sonargaon, Jangalbari Titabari, and Bajitpur were mostly well-known for the production of greater quality jamdani. Traders from Europe, Armenia, Iran along with Mughal-Pathan merchants used to trade these fabrics. The Mughal Emperor, the Nawab of Bengal and other aristocrats used to engage agents at Dhaka to buy high quality jamdani for their masters' use [11]. Jamdani patterns are mostly of geometric, plant, and floral designs and are said to have originated thousands of years ago. Due to the exquisite painstaking methodology required and the time it took to produce one saree, Jamdani was only for the rich, aristocrats and royal families as they were the only people who could afford it [12].

1.10.1.1 Weaving Technique

Jamdani Sarees are woven on the brocade loom. This is a supplementary weft technique of weaving, where the artistic motifs are produced by a non-structural weft, in addition to the standard weft that holds the warp threads together. The standard weft creates a fine, sheer fabric while the supplementary weft with thicker threads adds the intricate patterns to it. Each supplementary weft motif is added separately by hand by interlacing the weft threads into the warp with fine bamboo sticks using individual spools of thread. The result is a myriad of vibrant patterns that appear to float on a shimmering surface. What's remarkable in this weaving technique is that the pattern is not sketched or outlined on the fabric. Instead, it is drawn on a graph paper and placed underneath the warp. Needless to say, Jamdani weaving is an extremely skillful, laborious and time-consuming process and it could take anywhere from a month to a year to complete a Saree [10].

1.10.1.2 Types of Jamdani

Based on the type of area or the motifs Jamdani Sarees can be classified in different categories. In Popular motifs; kalka (paisley), panna hajar (thousand emeralds), fulwar (flowers arranged in straight rows), butidar (small flowers),

jalar (motifs evenly covering the entire saree), tersa (diagonal patterns), charkona (rectangular motifs) and duria (polka spots) are mostly popular. Variations of Jamdani Sarees:

- **Dhakai Jamdani** (Bangladesh) - These are the original and the finest of jamdani sarees with the most elaborate workmanship. One such Saree could take from 9 months to a year to weave.
- **Tangail Jamdani** (Bangladesh) – Woven in the Tangail district, these jamdani Sarees have traditional broad borders featuring lotus, lamp and fish scale motifs.
- **Shantipur Jamdani** (India) – Woven in Shantipur, West Bengal, these jamdani sarees are similar to Tangail jamdanis. They have a fine texture and often, elegant striped motifs decorate the saree.
- **Dhaniakhali Jamdani** (India) – With its origin in Dhaniakhali, West Bengal, these jamdani Sarees have tighter weave compared to the Tangail and Shantipur varieties. They are marked by bold colors and dark, contrasting borders [10].

Fortunately, our government and other several associations have been trying to revitalize the past glory of our very own Dhakai Jamdani. Near Dhaka Jamdnai Palli has been established. Since one of the oldest form of Bangladesh cottage industry, Jamdani was a vanishing trade. Due to the revolutionary effort of entrepreneurs it was fruitfully revived again. With the support of the Bangladeshi weavers who have put great effort to keep this age old tradition and fashion alive [11].

1.10.1.3 Jamdani finally gets Bangladeshi recognition

As a traditional fabric of Bangladesh; Jamdani has been acknowledged as product of this country based on Geographical Indication (GI), this was a move that is anticipated to smooth the progress of its weavers to brand the original cloth in an improved way by own as well as by abroad. In 2016 The Department of Patents, Designs and Trademarks (DPDT) registered Jamdani as the country's first GI product and handed to over a certificate to the chairman of the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) during a ceremony [14].

1.10.2 Muslin



Figure 9: [30]

The legendary fabric; made of cotton, most preferred by the royals, which used to be made in the past and a great wonder for the modern time. Muslin was a fabric of Dhaka (Dacca) considered the finest, which had a huge demand all around the world. Muslin today has come to mean almost any lightweight, gauzy, mostly inexpensive, machine-milled cotton cloth. The word has lost all connection to the hand woven fabric that once came exclusively from Bengal [15].

1.10.2.1 History of the decline of Glorious Dhaka muslin

The British, thought of selling their cotton goods vastly, but as Dhakai Muslin was leading around the world; thus they destroyed our local industry. As a result the weavers of Dhaka disappeared as well as their muslin. British brutally cut off weaver's thumb to stop themselves from producing Muslin. The story of muslin is one of contrasts and opposites: of artistry and murder, of splendor and penury, of loss and memory [15].

1.10.2.2 The Production Process of Dhaka Musli

For Muslin production, the thread was spun in extremely moist environment, generally in the morning and evening, times mandatorily by young women, whose sinuous fingers worked well with water bowls near them to moisturize the air, or they used to sit near riverbanks or on moored boats. They often sang as they spun, and if the river was shrouded in fog, passing travelers brought back tales of muslin being made by mermaids singing in the mist [15].

Even the seeds for the next planting season were specially treated to keep them ready to germinate. After being carefully selected and dried in the sun, they were put in an earthen pot in which ghee (clarified butter) had been kept. Its mouth was sealed airtight, then it was hung from the ceiling of the hut at the height of an average individual over the kitchen fire to keep it moderately warm [15].

The most delicate, the very lightest of fibers were spun into muslin thread, and this was obtained by using a dhunkar, a bamboo bow tautly strung with catgut. The special bow for muslin cotton was small, and only women did the work—presumably because a light touch was needed. When it was strummed (dhun also means a light raga in

classical Indian music) in a distinctive way, the lightest fleece from the cotton pile separated from the heavier fibers and rose into the air. One theory is that the strumming, by vibrating the air over the cotton pile, reduced its pressure enough to allow the very lightest fibers to be pulled upward. It was these finest of fibers—a mere eight percent of the total cotton harvest—that went into the making of the finest muslin [15].

1.10.2.3 *Revival of Mulin Fabric*

Researchers claim to be close to finding the exact genus of cotton used in producing the fabled muslin cloth. A 10-member team of Bangladeshi researchers have been working with the government, in an effort to revive the production of muslin by using source cotton and redeveloping spinning techniques [16]. Bangladesh still have the cotton, and having the exclusive craftsmanship. While the product was lost from the region in the past, the country is confident that Phuti Karpas (*Gossypium arboreum var neglecta*) still exists in here[16].” This particular variant of cotton plant however is hard to find as it only grew on a short stretch on the banks of the Meghna River in Dhaka. Ever since the then British Empire started industrializing, they began to push their own cotton onto the sub-continent, forcing many of the weavers out of business [16].

1.10.3 *Banarasi*



Figure 10: [39]

The history of Banarasi Saree had begun from the Mughal Empire during 16th century. This got its identity in Bangladesh while Muslims migrated to Bangladesh from India. Banarasi Saree originated from northern city of India called Banaras. This fabric is made out of jari (lurex) and silk. Banarasi Sarees are mainly popular among Bangladeshi brides during wedding occasion where mostly affluent society prefer this category during special occasions, and wedding parties. The main feature of this Sari is lurex threads with traditional motif design. Banarasi saree can be heavy and light in weight depending of quality.

1.10.3.1 *Production Process of Banarasi Saree*

While making Banarasi; silk is first put into rollers which twisted into a single silk thread with others to solidify its textures. Next; it's heated and put into a Tana where it is made into a bundle. The threads are then dyed elsewhere. The threads are stretched out in a single room; made of rusted tin and worn out bamboo with barely any ventilation or

lighting. In another similar room, a weaver weaves the designs on a sari. A single Banarasi Sari that is 21 feet in length and 3.5 feet in breadth can take a week or longer to be completed [17].

1.10.3.2 *Types of Banarasi*

The variety of Banarasi Saree includes, Organza (Kora) with zari and silk pure silk (Katan), Shattir and Georgette,. They categories are divided into several names. such as; Tancoi , Jangla, , Vaskat, Tissue, Butidar and Cutwork.Fulkoali Katan, Dulhan Katan, Mirpuri Reshmi Katan, Mellenium Katan, Benarasi Cosmos, Orgamndi, Katan, Brakett Katan and Chunri Katan are some of the different types of Sarees that are woven in Mirpur Banarasi Palli[17].

1.10.4 *Tangail Saree*



Figure 11:

[40]

Tangail Saree is one of the ancient heritages of the Bangladesh as per the travel history of Ibn Battuta and Huen Sam's Culture and heritage of this Saree a thousand years old [5].Tangail Saree is one of the most popular Saree among Bangladeshi women. As a hand crafted Saree; this features the ingenuity of authentic Persia Saree as the styles and shades designate the real Persia personalized and art. The specialty of this Saree is; they are more comfortable, durable and pleasing.

1.10.4.1 *Breif History of Tangail Saree*

Tangail is one of the district's name of Bangladesh as in previous times; some of the weavers' community started to make different category Saree here in this area. After that, this area got famous for these Saree and that's the way these Saree named as Tangail Saree [18]. Previously it was recognized as "Begum Bahar" where pure cotton weft and soft silk high were used. But now; pure cotton as well as high and weft are in fashion.

1.10.4.2 Variety in Taingail Saree

Taingail Saree; a handloom Saree created in both genuine pure cotton and smooth soft silk range having side performed butti design or all over luxurious design or contemporary art motif respected, bought, and used by Bangladeshi women & women of Bangladeshi living all over the globe[18]. Taingail Saree come with exceptional quality and design to weave every portion of Saree make with 100% hand work and special type of designs, color and unique weaving styles make it different from other Saree as special categories yarn use for Taingail saree that's why Taingail saree very much soft, lightweight and comfortable[5]. Basically yarn compositions use cotton, half silk, silk. For example Baluchori, Kotki, kumkum, Devdas silk, Taingail B.T, Jaripar, Hajarabuti, Sutipar, Swarnachura, Ikkat, Anarkali, Sananda, Nilambari, Moyurakanthi and ordinary Saree. Having some exceptional characteristics of Taingail saree; like (selvage) both sides of saree achol (edge) decorated with metallic threads exclusive handmade design saree, style, fabrication, easily touch all Bengali women's heart.

Taingail Sarees are proverbial at local vicinity as well as around the world. Vast number of Sarees are usually promoted on the occasion of Eid, Puja, Pahela Boishakh and marriage season during the period between Nov and Feb[5].

A study performed in 2013 said there are around sixty thousands looms in Taingail where as near about eight thousand are pit loom, fifty thousands are Chittranjan looms and rest one thousand sare energy looms. About 0.35 million workers, financiers and stockholders are linked with the career.

1.10.5 Rajshahi silk:



Figure 12: [41]

One of the famous areas of Bangladesh is Rajshahi. Along with Silk Research Institute; many other silk industries have build up in Rajshahi city. For having most of the silk industries in Rajshahi area; thus Rajshahi silk Sarees have named in such a way. Among all other traditional Sarees in Bangladesh; Rajshahi silk has got huge popularity because of its vibrant colors, light weight, comfort and trendy designs as well as patterns. This silk produced from the cocoon and thus the fiber gets very soft and luxuries.

1.10.5.1 Types of Rajshahi Silk

There are three types of Rajshahi silk Saree which are common in Bangladesh:

- Eri silk (Endi silk) and
- Tassar silk
- Mulberry silk

1.11 Common Embellishment Techniques on Saree



Figure 13: [42]

Embellishment has always played a vital role to decorate Saree. In Bangladesh there are some common embellishment techniques which have become a core part of our tradition and culture. These techniques got a profound and rich history of craftsmanship and the skillfulness of Bangladeshi textile as well as artists and the artisans. The common embellishment techniques which have mostly used for decorating Bangladeshi traditional Saree are:

- Tie-dye techniques
- Batik print
- Natural dye techniques
- Machine embroidery
- Hand embroidery (mostly Katha stitch)
- Block print
- Hand paint

1.12 World's Longest Saree



Figure 14:

[43]

A recent surprise in fashion world has come up with an elegant addition of our traditional outfit Saree. For being a part of Guinness book of world record; A 400 meter long Lehenga saree that seamlessly gorgeous without any Pair provided on the border of traditional sarees in a fashion show which was designed by the famous fashion designer Prem Bambani from Prem's Collections. This Saree has already made a history for being the longest Saree in the world. On the display of this special Saree; Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Harsh Vardhan Sringla and Director of Prem's Collection and Chief Designer Prem Bambani were present in the show[19].

Jaya Ahsan, one of the leading actors of Bangladesh, whose popularity melted the border between two Bengals, (Bangladesh and Kolkata, India) made history by getting the opportunity to wear this longest Lehenga Saree. The star walks elegantly throughout the display where she shared her feelings about taking part in the event, Joya Ahsan said, "It feels great to be part of history. The longest Lehenga Saree in the world gives me a great feeling while walking; although it was not possible to wear the whole Saree. About 20 of the models have carried the parts of saree that trailed behind. I hope that the saree is going to make a world record. Thanks to Prem's collection of love to join me with such an incredible feat. Prem is a very favorite designer of mine. Hopefully this wonderful collection will further enhance the joy of the Eid"[19].

2 Conclusion

Bangladeshi women are famous for their striking looks and way of draping traditional Sarees; thus as soon as someone talks about Bangladeshi women, the first picture comes in mind; a lady with big round Dot ("tip" in bangla) on her forehead; artistic eye make-ups, fantasy in red lips and of course our own Traditional Saree itself that complete the appeal of every Bangladeshi woman. As every Bangladeshi woman has born with the specialty of looking purely splendid in Sarees; Thus Bangladeshi traditional Saree is considered a cultural icon of Bangladesh; considering its conventional aesthetics.

Bangladeshi women are highly choosy, creative and experimental when it comes on styling with the proper Saree. Bangladeshi fashion is never complete without keeping our self crafted Saree as a priority. But it is a matter of great regret; that every year, mostly during the Eid periods, Bangladeshis often found to rush to India for purchasing Saree in a great amount although the local Eid market of Bangladesh is huge. While our traditional craftsmanship has already established its fame by its world class goods in India as well as around the world; still there is a large number of Bangladeshi women who visit Kolkata and other near province in India every year in searching of Sarees. Although the issue is not violating any law; but time has come when our people should appreciate and value our local crafts and heritage by spending more on our own products rather than going shopping abroad. If there is someone who knows the real beauty of wearing our traditional Saree along with proper accessories and look; they would always prefer this to accentuate their bold features and enhance their charming appearance.

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