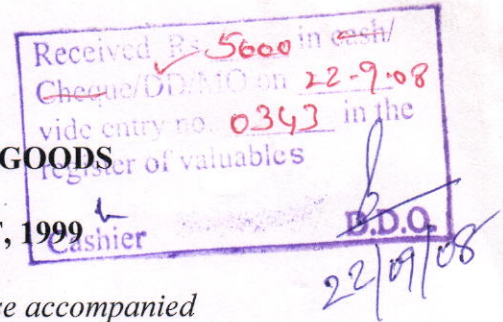


**THE GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS OF GOODS  
(REGISTRATION & PROTECTION) ACT, 1999**



*(To be filed in triplicate alongwith the Statement of Case accompanied  
by five additional representation of the geographical indication)*

One representation to be fixed within the space and five others to be send separately

**FORM GI-1**

A

**Application for the registration of a geographical indication in Part A of  
the Register**

Section 11(1), Rule 23(2)

Fee: Rs. 5,000 (See entry No.1A of the First Schedule)

B

**Application for the registration of a geographical indication  
in Part A of the Register from a convention country**

Section 11(1), 84(1), rule 23(3)

Fee: Rs. 5,000 (See entry No.1B of the First Schedule)

1. Application is hereby made by (a) Patent Information Centre for the registration in Part A of the Register of the accompanying geographical indication furnishing the following particulars:

2. Name of the Applicant: **Patent Information Centre, West Bengal State Council of Science  
& Technology, Department of Science & Technology (DST),  
GoWB.**

3. Address:

**Patent Information Centre**

**West Bengal State Council of Science & Technology**

**Department of Science & Technology (DST), GoWB**

**Bikash Bhavan, North Block, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**Salt Lake, Kolkata-700 091**

**West Bengal**

**4. List of association of persons/producers/organisation/authority:**

**Weaver Community**

**Salient Statistical Information of Handloom Industries of Santipur Municipality last five years**  
**(2002-2003 to 2006-2007)**

SL No	Item	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07
1	Total no of Handlooms	21898 as per census 95	21898 as per census 95	21898 as per census 95	21898 as per census 95	21898 as per census 95
2	Total no of person engaged in weaving activities	52555 Nos	52555 Nos	52555 Nos	52555 Nos	52555 Nos
3a	Total no of registered pry. Weavers cooperative socities	61 Nos	62 Nos	62 Nos	62 Nos	62 Nos
3b	Total no of Looms under register HI weavers cooperative societies	7773	7828	7828	7828	7828
3c	Total no of weavers under register HI weaver cooperative societies	7773	7828	7828	7828	7828
3c(i)	SC weavers	760	765	765	765	765
(ii)	ST weavers	58	60	60	60	60
(iii)	OBC weavers	3462	3510	3510	3510	3510
(iv)	M.C. weavers	1497	1500	1500	1500	1500



(v)	General weavers	1996	2000	2000	2000	2000
d-(i)	SC members	760	765	765	765	765
(ii)	ST members	58	60	60	60	60
(iii)	OBC members	3462	3510	3510	3510	3510
(iv)	M.C. members	1497	1500	1500	1500	1500
(v)	General members	1996	2000	2000	2000	2000
4(a)	Total no active HI weavers cooperative societies	20	21	21	21	21
(b)	Total no of looms under active HI weaver cooperative societies	3722	3777	3777	3777	3777
(c)	Total no of active looms under active HI weaver cooperative societies	3722	3777	3777	3777	3777
(d)	Total no of weavers under active HI weaver cooperative societies	532	532	535	538	508
5(a)	No of Dormant HI weaver cooperative societies	30	30	30	30	30
(b)	No of looms under Dormant HI weaver cooperative societies	3004	3004	3004	3004	3004
6(a)	No of non-functioning HI weaver cooperative societies	11	11	11	11	16
(b)	No of looms under Non-functioning HI weaver cooperative societies	1078	1078	1078	1078	1736
7(a)	No of Loomless HI weaver	1	1	1	1	1

	cooperative societies					
(b)	No of active loomless society	1	1	1	1	1
(c)	No of active looms under active loomless HI weaver cooperative societies	5	4	1	1	Nil
8	No of viable handloom society (as per existing NABARD Norms)	1	1	1	1	1
9	No of potentially viable handloom society (as per existing NABARD norms)	6	6	6	4	4
10(a)	No of societies engaged in production exportable fabrics	Nil	Nil	Nil	1	1
(b)	No of looms engaged in 10(a) above	Nil	Nil	Nil	35	38
(c)	Varieties of product indicating nature & count of yarn used	100s X 100s 80s X 80s	100s X 100s 80s X 80s	100s X 100s 80s X 80s	100s X 100s 80s X 80s	100s X 100s 80s X 80s
(d)	Total export in Rs. Made during 2005-06-2007	Nil	Nil	Nil	19.90 lakh	12.30 lakh

Signed by Director of Handloom and Textile -list enclosed (**Annexure –I**)

5. Type of goods: Class 24

6. Specification:

## **Technical Specification:**

### **Structural definition**

At the beginning, the designs of Santipur Saree were reproduced in hand only (Hate Tola Buti) in ordinary Throw Shuttle Looms by the weavers themselves. The designs were usually woven on border of 5"-6" width using deep black and red colour cotton yarn.

Santipuri Saree in its present form may be defined as the Saree which is traditionally woven in Fly Shuttle Frame/Pit Looms using 80s-100s cotton yarn in wrap and weft with plain border and/or border with extra warp jacquard designs of different characteristics viz. floral, abstract, geometrical, instrumental motifs, special motifs of different historical backgrounds, temples and other natural motifs with typical colour pattern in pollu. Body of the fabric may be plain or decorated with "Buti" using Extra Warp/ Weft with or without the help of jacquard.

Speciality of Santipur Saree is that it is marketed in a typical traditional folded form known as "Guti Bhanj".

Ten different types of products were woven depending on the complexity of the patterns woven and the number of colours of threads used. These were – *sada, rangeen, dure (ten different coloured threads were used), sarbasundari, kharkemoti, sinduri, chaurangi, tashkhupi, choukhupi, ayanakhupi* etc. The edges or *paras* of the saris also had variety – *chandmama, taj, tajkalka, choukalka, phuljhumka, pariyaat, dhakai, karnish, tekka* etc.

### **Materials used in Extra Warp Design :**

- i) Artificial Zari
- ii) Art Silk (Viscose yarn)
- iii) 2/80s cotton yarn-for base fabric.



## **SPECIFICATION :**

### **i) Specification of cotton Naksha par Santipuri Saree**

Length	:	Not less than 5.50 meters.
Width	:	118-120 cms. Including border.
Warp & Weft	:	100s cotton yarn.
Extra warp	:	Artificial Zari/Art Silk/2/80s cotton yarn.
Reed Count	:	Not less than 72s.
Picks/inch	:	70-72.
Jacquard capacity	:	Not less than 100 hooks.
Weight of Saree	:	Not less than 350 grams.

### **ii) Specification of cotton Naksha par Santipuri Saree(1" border)**

Length	:	Not less than 5.50 meters.
Width	:	118-120 cms. Including borders.
Warp	:	100s cotton yarn.
Weft	:	100s cotton yarn.
Extra warp	:	Artificial Zari/Art Silk/2/80s cotton yarn.
Reed Count	:	72s.
Picks/inch	:	70-72.
Jacquard capacity	:	100 hooks.
Weight of Saree	:	Not less than 300 grams

### **iii) Specification of Inchi par cotton Santipuri Saree.**

Length	:	Not less than 5.00 meters.
Width	:	118-120 cms. Including borders.
Warp	:	80s cotton yarn.
Weft	:	80s cotton yarn.
Extra warp	:	Zari/Art Silk/2/80s cotton yarn.



Reed Count : 68s.  
Picks/inch : 66-68.  
Jacquard capacity : 100 hooks.  
Weight of Saree : Not less than 250 grams.

7. Name of the geographical indication [and particulars]: **Santipur Saree**- A special Quality of Saree of special yarn with special Design produced at Santipur located in the District of Nadia, West Bengal. Details in Specification and

8. Description of the goods: Santipuri Saree in its present form may be defined as the Saree which is traditionally woven in Fly Shuttle Frame/Pit Looms using 80s-100s cotton yarn in wrap and weft with plain border and/or border with extra warp jacquard designs of different characteristics viz. floral, abstract, geometrical, instrumental motifs, special motifs of different historical backgrounds, temples and other natural motifs with typical colour pattern in pollu. Body of the fabric may be plain or decorated with "Buti" using Extra Warp/ Weft with or without the help of jacquard.

Speciality of Santipur Saree is that it is marketed in a typical traditional folded form known as "Guti Bhanj".

9. Geographical area of production and map:

**Geographical Location:**

Shantipur (lat. 23° 14' 24", long. 88° 29' 6") lies 58 miles (96 km) to the north of Calcutta on the banks of the river Bhagirathi in the district of Nadia under Ranaghat sub-division, and covers an area of about 25 sq. miles. Emperor Akbar, it is said, had made a grant of it to one Kazim Ali, under the royal seal.

(Certified Copy of the Geographical Location Enclosed



## 10. Proof of origin[ Historical records]

### A brief history of Shantipur:

The vast expanse of sandy land that had risen out of the river bed was fertile, where paddy, wheat and other crops grew in abundance. The climate was healthy and its location conducive to trade and commerce. Though early maps of the area, prepared under Major J. Rennel, Holwell, and others, place Shantipur at varying distances from the river, the fact remains that the European merchants used to travel up the river from Calcutta and Hooghly to Cossimbazar and Murshidabad via Shantipur. There are also accounts of the native merchants, Dhanapati and his son Sreemanta, taking the riverine route on their way to Ceylon.

The history of Shantipur before 1500 is almost unknown, though there are speculations that Emperor Ashoka's son Mahendra, Fa Hien (399 – 414 A.D.) and Chand Saudagar had passed this way. There is mention of the river Bhagirathi, its many tributaries, canals and fens in the writings of Krittibas Ojha, who belonged to Shantipur, and others.

Some say Bakhtiar Khilji had once set up his camp near Shantipur, and that the place where he had landed around 1200 A.D. was named "Bakhtiar ghat" after him. Lakshman Sen, of the Sena dynasty, who had his main capital at Nadia was then the ruler of Bengal.

Rabindranath Tagore, Nabin Chandra Sen, Dinabandhu Mitra have all written about the sylvan beauty and peaceful atmosphere of Shantipur. There are undying folk-tales surrounding legendary personalities of Shantipur, like Maharaja Krishna Chandra and his court jester, Gopal Bhanr, Maharaja

Girish Chandra and Krishna Kanta Rasasagar, Adwitaacharya, Sree Chaitanya and Mahatma Bijoy Krishna Goswami.

Shantipur and its neighbouring areas were possibly in existence in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century, during the period of Samudra Gupta, but even in the 7<sup>th</sup> century when Hiuen Tsang came to India Shantipur must have been a remote hamlet. In any case, Shantipur finds mention during the reign of the Sena dynasty in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Incidentally, the Senas originally were Brahmans from the Deccan.

It appears that Shantipur was named after one Shanto Muni or, as some say, after Shantacharya Vedantabagish of Fulia, the religious guru of Adwaitacharya, though according to Honigberger the name Shantipur comes from the word *shanty* or peace because dying or destitute people who would come here in search of solace from the holy men, would stay back, even after they recovered, taken in by the peace and tranquility of the place.

It is said that Raja Prachanda Dev Singha was the ruler of Shantipur in the 10<sup>th</sup> century before he left for Nepal and, according to Haraprasad Shastri, at about that time Shantipur was regarded in Nepal as one of the seven places of pilgrimage. Some of the others who ruled Shantipur were Prachanda Dev's son Sakti Dev, Keshab Singha, Bir Singha, and Narendra Singha, who was on the throne in 1190, and the ruins of his fortress can still be seen.

The revenue area of Shantipur is divided into 38 blocks or *mouza*, each block being sub-divided into municipal wards or *pallis*, the names of some of which, like Chhutar, Boka, Kumor, Muchi, Ghurpeke, Ballavi, are suggestive either of the class of people living there or the distinctive types of sarees and cotton goods that were produced there. Thatched mud huts co-exist with brick houses, some of which have well-decorated walls.

Roads, having names like the Strand, Victoria, and Procession, and numerous lanes and by-lanes crisscross the town, and there are several ghats along the river bank, as also ponds and tanks. Shantipur is well connected with Calcutta and other cities and towns, both by road and rail, with a narrow guage line running between Krishnanagar and Shantipur.

### **History of Santipure Saree:**

Santipuri Saree finds a very significant place in the colourful feather of traditional Bengal Handloom Sarees. The name "Santipuri" originates from the name of a place Santipur in Nadia district.

The handloom weaving tradition of Santipur had been recorded in the Biographical manuscript namely "Adwaityamangal" of Shri Adwaityacharya (1460-1558). However, the handloom weaving tradition of Santipur came up as an industry in the regime of Nadia Raj Rudra Roy (1683-94) and in the Moghul regime, the produce of this place became so developed that it would have exported to Kabul, Baluchistan, Iran, Arab, Turaska & Greece etc. Initially, handloom fabrics of this place were made of handspun cotton yarn and woven on throwshuttle pit loom. Use of millspun yarn was started only in 1824.

Handloom products of this place were famous for its designs, produced by hand using Extra Weft, colour pattern and especially for thin structure. The products were mainly Sarees and Dhuties. Speciality of Santipur was, however, in production of Saree.

The journey of handloom weaving tradition of Santipur was, however, not smooth all along. Due to industrial revolution at the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the domestic market was over flooded with the mill made fabrics from Manchester and the handloom products of this area was compelled to loose its

place as it could not compete with the mill made fabrics. At that juncture, weavers of this area had to struggle hard.

Modernisation in the weaving style of Santipuri Saree was actually started at the fag end of 19<sup>TH</sup> Century with the introduction of 'Dobby' designs in border using Extra Warp. At that time production of a particular variety of saree namely Kalabati created great reputation in market.

Use of "Jacquard" for producing Extra warp designs in border was started only at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Some of the pre-jacquard designs had the local names as Bhumri, Chandmala, Tara, Benki, Rajmahal, Dorokha, Kalka, Mandir, Taj, Dharma, Gachpar, Machpar, Khejurchari, Sarbasundari, Kharika Moti, Duria, Lataful, Pukhi, Parijat, Mahal, Daccaiful, Karnish, Tekka, Manush, Hati, Ghora etc. None of the above traditional designs are now reproduced. All these designs were woven on border (Par) and Anchal. The border designs were of 5"-6" width. The colour was deep black and red. Perhaps in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, pure silk yarn was used. The design (Naksha) was woven with Jari & Silk. The current speciality of Santipur is also in sarees and reflected on the border, body and anchal.

The handloom weavers of Shantipur had settled down in this township for the first time during the reign of King Ganesha of Gaur, Bengal in the earlier part of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Their work received wide national acclaim and fame during the reign of King Rudra Ray of Nadia (1683 – 94).

During this period the English East India Company too started to trade in the handloom woven cloth of the weavers of this area, and gradually tremendous development was attained as people from all over Bengal and India began to realise the tremendous talent and potential of these weavers of Shantipur.



So famous were their works that they had actually claimed a spot in the heart of Bengali folklore, as is evident from their mention in the works of *Advaita Acharya*

*All of the weavers of the town of Shantipore,*

*Sing and rejoice in the Acharya's garden, as bonhomie does galore.*

### **A . Mughal Regime:**

It was during the reign of the Mughals – famed connoisseurs of the finer arts that for the first time export of Shantipur's handloom cloths to cities and princely states outside Bengal was initiated. A reading of Durgacharan Sanyal's commentary on the Bengal's social life of that era states that Arab businessmen and traders ran profitable trade in the Saris of Shantipur by selling them to eager markets of Italy, Greece, Iran and Persia. The Mughal household also bought substantial quantities of the handloom products of Shantipur.

Cotton handloom goods of Shantipur enjoyed a good reputation since its early days, but their fame and popularity reached new heights during the Mughal period when such goods would be taken to Delhi and from there exported to Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Iran, the Arab countries, Turkey, Greece, Italy, etc. at a high price. Those given to luxury and amorous dalliance in the Mughal courts had a special fancy for muslin, a part of which was produced in Shantipur, and there are many anecdotes which spring from this love for muslin.

### **B. Hallowell's report of 1766**

In accordance with the findings of Hallowell's report of 1766, one gets to know that the town of Shantipur had created a niche for itself in the trade of fine silks and handloom products.

In 1766 Holwell noted that Shantipur, which was a major town in the domain of Maharaja Krishna Chandra, was famous for its cotton yarn, *mulmul*. And other fine fabrics, but that supply fell short the demand for export to the European markets. The same was the case with cotton and other crops and that the industry suffered there at the hands of freebooters.

### **C. Report from Maharaj Krishnachandra dynasty :**

In the time of Maharaja Krishna Chandra, some enterprising youths of the Mallick family of Ranaghat started to procure fine muslin from Dhaka, Shantipur, and other market towns and export them to Europe. In course of time, they opened warehouses in Shantipur and other places for carrying on their wholesale business. Soon Shantipur's super-fine *dhotis* and sarees with artistically designed borders became world famous and were exported in huge quantities to different countries. The fine threads for these gauzy fabrics were mostly made by the needy ladies in the royal household with the help of the spinning wheel.

With the advent of the reign of King Krishnachandra the first instances of export of the Fine hand – woven *dhoti* of Shantipur can be traced. The famed *muslin* which the Europeans had popularised to such great degrees was actually a name given to a broad spectrum of fine Indian cloths and the Shantipur handloom products had also been exported under the same head. This speaks volumes of the skill of this town's weavers and the delicate quality of the material they wove.

#### **D.Documentation during British Period:**

It appears from a note sent by the Englishman, Princep, Superintendent of Shantipur to the Comptroller of *Aurang*s (wholesale markets) in 1784 that there was some trade rivalry among the British, the French and the Dutch.

According to John Bebb, Secretary, who had conducted a thorough enquiry of all the markets under his jurisdiction, no European had set up any establishment in Shantipur for buying any crop grown there or for transacting business with any such produce, nor had any agent, European or native, been assigned to Shantipur. In Chinsurah, the Dutchmen regularly entered into opportunistic and onerous contracts, advancing loans as earnest by which the native weavers were usually bound to part with their entire produce. True, between 1775 and 1777 a Frenchman named Bilou had rented a small bungalow in Shantipur, but he would purchase cotton piece goods for his own private purpose and not for trading. In any case, he did not come in the way of the East India Company's weavers nor got himself involved in any other way. So far as the Company's men were aware, this Frenchman was the only person other than the Company's agents who had been to the Shantipur area since 1763.

Weavers who were registered would not be allowed to sell their goods to any third party, and if there was any deviation his entire merchandise would be destroyed or confiscated. The lot of the silk weavers was no better. They would cut off their thumbs to save themselves from forced labour, just as the court weavers under the Moghuls would do.

Warren Hastings sought to introduce some beneficial changes to the system, like putting a stop to the practice of advancing of loans as earnest. But before he could implement any of his reforming policies, the East India Company's Board of Directors made it clear in 1775 that they would have nothing of it. The Board wanted the prevailing system to continue, with a few cosmetic changes. So the lot of the poor weavers hardly improved.

1774 onwards, agents on the Company's payroll started entering into contracts for raw silk with the local peasants, and by 1776 this practice was being followed in the Calcutta markets also. Interestingly enough, in places like Shantipur, Buron and Sukhsagar such contractors were Bengalis, while in other parts it was the Company's English or European agents. The contracts with English or European paid agents had all the disadvantages of the contracts with their native counterparts, without any of their redeeming features.

History is witness to the factors that caused the decline of the handicraft weaving industry in Bengal while it flourished in Manchester and Lancashire. So far as silk trade is concerned, it may be noted that the East India Company had an establishment for trading in silk at Bauigachhi in Shantipur and had engaged an agent for that purpose.

Anyway, it was because of the factors noted above that there was a sharp decline in the weaving industry in Shantipur. To look into this problem, an eight-member fact-finding commission was formed, with four each from the East India Company's Committee of Commerce and the military society. They took the evidence of a number of weavers, among whom Ramapati, Ramlochan and Gopi deposed on the cost of *mulmul* woven with thread having a particular count. Complaints of flogging, extraction and other unfair trade practices were also taken note of. The commission's observations were as follows: the agents would no longer be allowed to advance loans as earnest to weavers; the native merchants would be able to enter into contracts with the Company's officials directly, and not through middlemen, for agreed quantities of cotton piece goods upon furnishing



security (over Rs 20,000/-); payments would be made in cash; and any servant or agent of the Company trying to give loan by force would be liable to lose his job. As a result of these steps, the cotton industry improved. On 26 January 1781, Thomas Brown wrote from London that he had made a huge profit by selling Shantipur cotton goods.

By 1813 machine-made cotton goods from Manchester invaded the Indian market and thus began the long decline of the old handicraft weaving industry of Shantipur. Weavers fell on hard times. The machine-made goods from England virtually killed the native cotton industry which became limited to production of home-spun clothes for the villagers and a negligible quantity of fine count.

#### **E. History of Master Weaver:**

Shantipur has been famous for its weavers as also tailors. According to a diary entry of Bholanath Chanda in 1845, there were more than 10,000 weavers and tailors in Shantipur alone, and the annual turnover of cotton goods was about Rs 3 lakhs. The District Magistrate of Nadia noted that in 1898 there were only a few weaver families in business in almost all the villages and they produced very ordinary cotton cloths, and their number was dwindling. By 1909 there was a notable fall in income.

The reasons are not far to seek. The epidemic of malaria in 1880 – 1885 and the destructive floods of 1885 and 1890 took their toll of the population. Moreover a good many weavers migrated to Calcutta and elsewhere to work in mills and factories for a better living. It appears from the census report of 1906 prepared by Gett that many farmers too had left. The shifting of the local headquarters, the receding of the river Bhagirathi, the change in the outlook of people and the advent of plague were some of the other contributing factors.

Some of the master weavers like Kishori Lal Pramanik, Purna Chandra Das and his son Gorachand, were innovative and could produce designer goods, while weavers like Bama Bharan Pramanik, who was a gold-medallist, was well-known for his scarves. Some members of the Boka family and others had their own specialties and individual traits. The products of Nemai Chand had a very good reputation and the Maharaja of Krishnanagar, the Pal Chowdhurys of Ranaghat and Maharaj Manindra Chandra Nundy were among his regular customers. Bhupati Charan Pramanik's talent for weaving pictures and patterns into the texture was of a high order. The handiwork of such creative artisans charmed not only Indians but also foreigners.

There were some weavers like Sambhu Charan Pramanik of the Boka dynasty and Jyotindranath Lohuri, who became rich and famous. Hira Lal Saha and Syed Mondal made money by dealing in "made in England" cotton piece goods, Krishna Chandra Bhakat made his mark by rearing sheep and using the wool to make blankets. Shantipur cotton goods used to be sold mainly in the Howrah *Haat* and also in Calcutta. The Boka family members would, from early days, go to Maldah, Rajshahi and other near and distant places by stage-boats to sell their goods. Over the last several decades, not just weavers, but people of various castes and creeds have settled in Shantipur and have engaged themselves in the weaving industry. If variety is the bench-mark, Shantipur has surpassed even its nearest rival Dhaka.

#### **F. Census , 1961, Nadia**

**Santipur** - A town in the Ranaghat sub-division, situated in 23<sup>o</sup>15'N. and 88<sup>o</sup>27' E., on the left bank of the Hooghly. The town covers an area of about 9½ square miles, and its population in 1961 was 51,190, as against 30,437 in 1891, and 28,635 in 1872. Though there has thus been a decline, it is still one of the most populous towns in the district. Santipur is about equi-distant from Krishnanagar and

Ranaghat, and is connected with each of these towns by a good metalled road, and also a 2 feet 6 inches gauge light railway. The road between Krishnanagar and Santipur is believed to have been originally constructed by Rudra Rai, the Maharaja of Nadia, who is reputed to have given its present name to the former of these two towns. Santipur is also connected with Calcutta by a steamer service on the Hooghly.

Very little information is forthcoming in connection with the ancient history of this town. It can be gathered, however, that Santipur was in existence at the time of Raja Ganesh, who ruled Bengal in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It is said that forts were at one time erected at Santipur by the Mughal Emperors. The names of Sutragarh, Saragarh and Topkhana, which are attached to certain portions of the town, support the popular view, but no trace of the alleged fortifications can now be found. In the latter part of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Adwaitacharya, who was supposed to be an incarnation in one person of both Vishnu and Siva, flourished here, it is said that Chaitanya took his initiation from Adwaitacharya, who, afterwards, himself became a disciple of Chaitanya. Ever since then the place has been held sacred. In the time of Rudra Rai, Maharaja of Nadia, it was a populous town and a celebrated cloth-mart. In the old days of the East India Company it was the site of a Commercial Residency, and the centre of large Government Cloth factories. The Government purchases of Santipur muslin, which then had a European reputation, averaged over 12 lakhs during the first 28 years of the nineteenth century. None of these factories are still in existence, the last ruins having been pulled down and sold between 1870 and 1880; only the name of the suburb Kuthirpara remains to indicate that there were once rows of kuthis or factories in the neighbourhood. It is said that the Commercial Resident enjoyed an annual salary of over Rs. 42,000, and lived in a magnificent house with marble floors, built by himself at the cost of a lakh of rupees : the Marquis of Wellesley spent two days there in 1802 : the ruins of the house were finally sold for Rs. 2,000.

Holwell was landed at Santipur as a prisoner on his way to Murshidabad, after having survived the misery of the Black Hole : he was marched up to the Zamindar of Santipur “ in a scorching sun near noon for more than a mile and a half, his legs running in a stream of blood from the irritation of the irons”. From thence he was sent in an open fishing boat to Murshidabad, exposed to a succession of heavy rain or intense sunshine”.

It is stated that in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century no place was so infested with dacoits as Santipur, until the appointment of a resident Deputy Magistrate, and the provision of swiftly sailing guard-boats which put a great check on river dacoity.

There are many mosques and temples in the town. The oldest mosque is in Topkhana ; it was erected by one Yar Muhammad in the year 1115 Hijri, during the reign of the Emperor Aurangzib : it is now in a very dilapidated condition. Of the temples, the three most famous are that of Syamachand, built in 1726 at the reputed cost of two lakhs of rupees, by one Ram Gopal Khan Chaudhuri, whose family was one of the wealthiest in Santipur : that of Gokulchand, built about 1740 ; and that of Jaleswar, said to have been built by the mother of Maharaja Ram Krishna of Nadia about the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Santipur was constituted a Municipality in 1865, with 24 Commissioners (of whom 16 were elected and the remainder nominated ), and an ex-officio Chairman in the person of the Subdivisional Officer of Ranaghat.

The manufactures of **Santipur** are in a decaying condition. The cloth industry has been practically killed by the competition of machine-made goods, and the weavers are no longer prosperous. The East India Company once had a sugar manufactory in the town , but this has met with the same fate as the



cloth factories; however, there are still some native refineries in which date-palm molasses, imported from Bangaon, is refined. There is a certain amount of local trade in other articles.

The town is visited by a large number of pilgrims at the time of the full moon in the month of Kartik, when the Rash Jatra festival lasts for two days and ends with a procession in which the idols of the Gosains are carried about on elevated wooden platforms. Santipur is also a celebrated bathing place.

The town suffered severally in the earthquake of 1897 ; many of the largest buildings were destroyed, and the impoverished owners have been unable to restore them.

## **G. DESIGN WEAVING OF SANTIPUR**

**By A.N. Mukherjee,**

**Deputy Director of Industries, (C.D.P.), W.B.**

- i) Of the 11,930 current looms of Ranaghat subdivision (Nadia), the Santipur Municipality alone claims 5,000. About 3,000 looms of Santipur are (Fly shuttle) jacquard looms and the remaining ones are ordinary Fly shuttle looms. Whereas, the jacquards are specialized in design Sarees the others still weave Dure (Matha Saree) and ordinary Dhuti.
- ii) The jacquard looms have only been in the area for about 35-40 years and it is reported that Late Bhupati Charan Pramanik introduced it. Design Sarees were restricted to about 2,000 looms 10 years back and 500 looms 25 years back.
- iii) Before jacquards, the weavers were used to reproduce designs in hand only ( Hate tola Buti ) in ordinary throw shuttle looms as embroidery work. That time, the weavers were

themselves designers. But, now, the designs are on punched cards set on jacquards machine and, not necessarily, a weaver is a designer himself. The designs are being evolved as a separate job and the weavers mostly start with designs converted on punched cards by them. Of course, there are weavers now who are also designers themselves.

- iv) The design weavers of Santipur have their Units concentrated in Sahapara, Dalalpara, Kuthirpara, Sutragarh and Sarbanandapara. As far as it could be ascertained from local weavers, the following are and were the master-weavers :

1967

A) Shri Sudhir Chandra Pramanik

B) Shri Anil Kumar Dalal

C) Shri Tapan Kumar Sen

D) Shri Pravas Kumar Basak

E) Shri Baidya Nath Sen

F) Shri Gora Chandra Kastha

J) Shri Madan Mohan Pramanik

H) Shri Santosh Kumar Sen

I) Shri Kala Chandra Ghosh

J) Shri Kanai Pal

**10 years back**

- A) Shri Netai Chand Dhantari
- B) Shri Mritunjoy Kastha
- C) Shri Lalit Mohan Khan
- D) Shri Chinmoy Bidyanta
- E) Shri Panchu Gopal Saha
- F) Shri Rabindra Nath Saha
- G) Shri Gour Ch. Bange
- H) Shri Gobinda Ch. Pramanik
- I) Shri Sk. Nazurul Islam
- (10) Shri Pandhanan Mondal.

**25 years back**

- A) Shri Benoy Nath
- B) Shri Kartik Ch. Pramanik
- C) Shri Susil Kumar Sen
- D) Shri Ananda Gopal Pramanik
- E) Shri Bhadreswar Dalal
- F) Late Purna Chandra Pramanik
- G) Late Jiban Krishna Dalal
- H) Late Hazari Lal Pramanik
- I) Late Bhupati Charan Pramanik
- J) Late Panchu Gopal Sen

Most of the existing design-weavers belong to the age group of 25-40. It is talked about that, the heavy jacquard looms can rather conveniently be operated by younger group.

- v) The speciality of Santipur was in Sarees. The pre-jacquards designs had local names of : Bhumri, Chandmala, or Tara, Benki, Rajmahal, Dorokha, Kalka, Aishu, Mandir, Taj, Dharma, Gachpar, Machpar, Khejarchari, Sarbasundari, Kharka Moti, Duria, Lataful, Pakhi, Parijat, Mahal, Daccaiful, Karnish, Tekha, Manus, Hati, Ghora, etc. None of the above traditional designs are now reproduced, although, some of the designs are now reproduced, although some of the designs like Dhumri Benki, Rajmaha, Dorokha, Kalka, Kharika Moti, could be and were reproduced in jacquards also. All these designs were woven on border (par) and Anchla. The border designs were of 5"-6" width. The colour was deep black and red. Perhaps in the eighteenth century, pure silk yarn was used. The design (Naksa) was woven with jaree and silk.
- vi) The current speciality of Santipur is also in Sarees and reflected on the border and Anchla. As jacquards permit, the reproduction of any kind of designs, the weavers adopt any Naksa having market demand, particularly in Calcutta. The border has now a shorter width of 1"-4" and the designs are reproduced with jaree and pure/art silk on dyed cotton yarn (of 100's-120's) of various lighter shades. The dye-stuff used was and still is vat in character. The jacquard machines are of 100-200 hooks. Incidentally the other important Saree areas in West Bengal are (i) Dhaniakhali, having specialized on Dobby. (ii) Fulia having specialized in Tangail type in jacquards, (iii) Samudragarh, having specialized as in Fulia and (iv) Katwa having specialized in Tangail type with plain border without jacquards.

- vii) Another distinctive feature of a Santipur Saree, was and is its superb texture on fine cotton yarn which is the effect of almost equal number of ends and picks in an inch. Generally, Saras of 72 and 76 are used. The Sara or the reed was previously of Sar or bamboo, but,now, it is of steel.
- viii) It is reported that Late Girish Chandra Pal and Late Kishori Lal Pramanik were pioneers in the traditional line. It is further reported that Late Gir. H. Pal could produce cloth known as Kalabati made of only Jaree without any yarn, costing Rs. 500/- in his time. Late Kishori Lal Pramanik was reputed for embroidery work on the border with muga silk. The weavers say that the clothes of the traditional artisans had good demand in Delhi, Kabul, Iran, Arabia, Turkey, Greece and Italy.
- ix) The sale price of a Santipur Saree is Rs. 15/- to 75/- at the present moment. The variation in the current price and the pre-jacquard price will be primarily due to the present use of cotton yarn and swifter productions due to jacquards.
- x) The stages of production are : Sizing
- (a) Soaking of Grey yarn ;
  - (b) Mar Dewa
  - (c) Charkha Natai
  - (d) Winding ( Nali Pakano )
  - (e) Warping ( Tana )
  - (f) Dentiing ( Sara Gantha )
  - (g) Beaming ( Tana Penchano )

(h) Drafting ( Bo tola )

(i) Loom fitting ( Tant jora )

(j) Weaving ( Bona)

xi) The improved equipment and accessories now in use are warping Drum, Steel Reed, G.V. Healds and Fly shuttle loom with jacquard machine. The jacquards control the extra warp for figuring only having no connection with ground work.

xii) The length of a warp is 125 yards and the width is 48" to produce 24 pieces of Sarees. Weaving in this case will be complete in one and a half months time. Roughly, a weaver can turn out 15 pieces per month. Per loom, there is one full-time weaver and two helpers. Now-a-days, there has been a demand for Sarees of 6 yds. length.

xiii) There are eleven Weavers' Cooperative Societies in the area. Of them, the following have been functioning quite satisfactorily :

(i) The Santipur Kuthirpara Weavers' Society.

(ii) The Santipur Industrial Cooperative Weavers' Society.

(iii) The Ranaghat Subdivisional Cooperative Weavers' Society.

(iv) The Santipur Tantu Cooperative Society.

The looms, yarn and dye-stuff are available from Calcutta and local markets. Sales are effected through private agencies, State Emporia and Apex Cooperative Society. The slack season is reported to be November-January.

xiv) Efforts of the State Government in the Cottage and Small Scale Industries Directorate to assist the industry have been intensified from 1965 when the office of one Handloom Development Officer was set up that time in Santipur with an adjunct of Industrial Centre for both Training and Servicing. Under the direct technical and administrative supervision of the Zonal Office located in Krishnanagar, that officer renders the following assistance to the Handloom Cooperative Societies :

- (i) Working Capital Loan at the rate of Rs. 500/- per loom.
- (ii) Share Capital Loan to the extent of 75% of share value.
- (iii) Loan (25%) and Grant (25%) for improved appliances.
- (iv) Rebate on Sales at the rate of 5% on retail sales value and 3% on wholesales.
- (v) Marketing assistance through Government Sales Emporia at Calcutta and Small Industries Corporation.
- (vi) Supply of designs obtained from Central Design Centre of the Cottage & Small Scale Industries Directorate, Weavers' Service Centre of All India Handloom Board and those reproduced in Industrial Centre itself.
- (vii) Technical assistance in Units by 14 technical personnel in the Handloom Development Officer, Santipur.

#### **H. Swadeshi Movement:**

There was some improvement in the situation during the *swadeshi* period, but there was a flip side to it as well. Over the years *dhotis* and sarees made in Shantipur had gained in reputation in India and abroad, and on an average 86,400 cotton piece goods would be made annually with about 1,200 handlooms using 50-60 count threads for Rs 60,4800/- and selling at not less than Rs 7/- apiece. Half of the sale proceeds would go to the weavers as their earnings. With the Congress deciding to boycott



Shantipur cotton goods because English yarn was being used, sale of such goods fell drastically to about a quarter, and it was the poor weavers who suffered. If the mill owners of Bombay and Ahmedabad could use imported machine looms for weaving, there could not be any justification in boycotting Shantipur goods just because the Shantipur weavers used imported yarn.

Protest meetings were held and it was pointed out Bholanath Pramanik and others that the handloom industries and its ancillaries provided the livelihood of most of the people of Shantipur. If the handloom industry was closed down the ancillary units would also die, and the lower and middle-class people who are connected with and dependent on the cotton handloom industry, like the washermen, the loom makers, the designers would also be out of work. It is true that the people of Britain earn crores from the exported raw cotton, yet it cannot be denied that by using the yarn produced abroad the native weavers generate four to five times that amount, and it is the people of India who are the beneficiaries. At a public meeting graced by Haji Abdul Rezzak, the need to take various amelioratory steps was discussed, and a sub-committee consisting of eminent people was constituted which decided, among others, that instead of imported yarn local yarn would be used.

The wretched condition of the cotton industry of Shantipur, which was once the pride of the nation, was reflected in the fact that not less than 70% of the weavers were under the thumb of money-lenders.

When such is the situation it is the money-lenders who prosper while the weavers and the industry suffer. Ensuring that weavers get cotton yarn at a cheaper rate and the the finished goods are sold in the market at a fair price was the need of the hour.

However, the price of yarn shot up further during the World War II and with it the suffering of the weavers increased. At the handloom exhibition in Calcutta, Sukumar Dutta pointed out that cotton hand-made piece goods were becoming almost extinct in India, Handloom goods were durable, beautiful and cheap. Several types of cotton handloom piece goods were being sold at the price of

machine-made ones, even though the handloom variety was definitely longer lasting and more artistically designed than those produced by machines. The well-starched, handmade piece goods also looked smarter. It is unfortunate that while cotton goods worth Rs 14 crores are imported, the native weavers are left to starve.

The floral motifs and original designs on cotton materials of Shantipur were exquisitely beautiful. Verses and parodies hand-woven along the borders of dress materials were a unique feature of Shantipur. Interestingly enough, paeans sung in praise of Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar's widow remarriage movement were popular, an example of which is a composition of Baidyanath

◡ Mukhopadhyay:

During the Swadeshi movement, the quality of weaving apparels and borders improved. But unfortunately, some weavers got low quality materials from other places and embellished them with typical Shantipur needlework, and passed them off as "made in Shantipur". Sometime earlier, Haridas Pal, an engineer, tried in vain to introduce the fly shuttle loom. Debendranath Mukhopadhyay of Mahishkhata Tollah had also tried for sometime to improve the situation by importing a special machine for making borders. Beldanga, near Shantipur, which enjoyed its heyday under the rule of Aurangzeb, was also well-known for its fabrics. From the establishment of a national school, introduction of the spinning wheel and khadi, handloom, weaving competitions among boys and girls, to picketing and events connected with the civil disobedience movements, Shantipur had seen it all.

### **I. Description of Santipore Saree in the writing of some eminent Poet/Writer:**

The famed poet, lyricist and writer of the pre – independence age D.L. Roy had also immortalised the beauty of the handloom saris of Shantipur.

*There she wears the fine Dure of Shantipore,  
The striking semblance of Dure of Shantipore,  
Look brother – That's the Dure of Shantipore.*

Describing the super-fine gauzy quality of Shantipur sarees, Dinabandhu Mitra once wrote:

Masters, tailors, weavers in thousands dwell  
In Shantipur, and we know very well –  
So fine are the striped sarees, by whatever name called,  
They hide little shame, leaving viewers appalled.

⤿ The poet, Nabin Chandra Sen observed that the same Shantipur sarees that Dinabandhu Mitra described have traveled across the seven seas to England. Shantipur cotton is attaining nirvana in the annihilating machines of Manchester. Descendants of well-known families of weavers have turned to tilling or going in for greener pastures. Only a handful of weavers are left who are somehow carrying the burden of their hereditary craft. Dwijendra Lal Roy was also taken in by the superfine texture and quality of Shantipur striped cotton sarees. As noted by Bhawani Charan Bandopadhyay, sarees from different regions, whether Shantipur or Dhaka, bore distinctive features particularly in pattern and design of borders. *Basantak*, a pamphlet published many decades ago from Calcutta carried a hilarious sketch showing Shantipur (depicted as a well-groomed smart young man) and Ulu or Birnagar (depicted as a shaven-headed elderly person) beckoning a comely lass (representing a newly introduced railway train) –

Shantipur invites, come over to me  
And I'll drape you in the finest saree.  
Ula lures her with a wagonful of  
Crops of every variety.

Descriptions of Sarees, with borders embroidered with floral and other decorative motifs, and scarfs and veils embroidered with gold and silver threads, find mention in the works of Amrita Lal Bose. Anurupa Devi believed that unlike mangoes that go by the brand name “Bombay”, Shantipuri dhotis are not rooted to one particular place or region, and hence have spread to all parts of India. Likewise, there is mention of superfine black bordered dhotis, sarees and veils with eye-catching patterns in many stories and articles.

The personal achievements of Girish Chandra Pal of Madangopal Palli, Shantipur were remarkable he took the art of weaving to new heights. He employed a number of weavers to work on his looms and make matchless varieties of cloth, using his methods and techniques. At the behest of the then Deputy

Magistrate, Iswarchandra Ghosal, Girish Chandra wrote a piece of cloth with a classic border called “Kalabati” by his own hands.

Instead of cotton yarn, he used gold and silver threads on either side to form the texture. A pair of such cloths was valued at Rs. 500; Ghosal bought one for Rs. 250. the other one was sold for Rs. 1000.

The art of weaving in Shantipur had reached its pinnacle. Cloths with “Kalabati” borders, too, were never woven again. Girish Chandra, who knew both English and Sanskrit, won wide acclaim and even won an award at an international exhibition. At an international exhibition held in Calcutta in 1883, a handmade designer handkerchief of Girish Chandra was exhibited. It had lines from the Bible, both in English and in Sanskrit, scripted on all four sides, with his name and the words, “Calcutta Exhibition – 1883 A.D.” woven in the centre. That handkerchief was duly preserved by his grandson Kshitis Chandra. The pieces of cloth that used to come from Manchester initiall used to have plain, monochromatic borders. It was courtesy Girish Chandra that Manchester started making pieces of cloth with fancy borders. As the story goes, Chief Justice Phears of the Calcutta High Court was so enamoured with Girish Chandra’s motifs that he went to his house, prepared a sketch of the various intricate designs, and sent it to Manchester, where they started using the designs and patterns. Chief Justice Phears felicitated Girish Chandra with a certificate of honour and also rewarded him.

## **J. Histroy of Art of Weaving**

According to the historian Kaliprasanna Bandopadhyay, the finesse shown by the Bengali weavers down the years and the manner in which they produce the finished goods starting from scratch should be an eye-opener for others. They are a humble, good-natured lot, and it is perhaps this characteristic that has prompted people to treat them as fooling, both in literature and life. But had they really lacked intelligence, they could surely not have been able to bring such artistry to the craft of weaving, which has been the foundation of so many other industries. Incidentally, the surname of a weaver family of Shantipur is indeed "Boka" or fool.

Shibram, the progenitor of this family had come down with his wife to Nabadwip from Dhamrai, Dhaka during the time of Sree Chaitanya. In accordance with the wishes of Sree Chaitanya, the couple went to Adwaitacharya at Shantipur. The Shakta Brahmins of Shantipur in those days were antagonistic towards Adwaitacharya, and it was Shibram's closeness to Adwaitacharya that earned him the nickname "Boka".

More has been written about this Boka family later and elsewhere. They were mostly of the Barendra community and Vaishnavites, worshipping Radha and Krishna. About fifty years ago, there were about five hundred weaver families in Shantipur, divided into four groups, with efforts being made from time to time for unification.

It may be mentioned here that it was primarily at the instance of Lakshman Sen that a number of expert weaver families and with them a few Hindu and Muslim artisans and tailors came over from Dhamrai, Dhaka and settled in Shantipur. The job of these master artisans included mending, straightening out the dry clothes and applying the dyes. Gradually the number of weavers who migrated from Dhaka

increased. A few of them were drawn by the Vaishnava religion. These weavers, by and large, went about singing devotional songs:

The weavers of Shantipur congregated  
To sing hymns and dance  
So soulful were the words, so melodious the tune,  
That the devotees went into a trance.

According to Durgacharan Roy, at one time there were ten to twelve thousand weavers living in Shantipur. Cloths woven in different parts of Nadia district often used to be passed off as Shantipur cloth. In the early stages, the weavers of Shantipur could produce only coarse yarn, until the East India Company provided them with better looms. It was the weavers of Dhaka who could produce finer varieties, while the artisans of Orissa could create attractive designs and motifs. The fusion of these three influences brought about a revolution in Shantipur's weaving industry.

Local dealers used to distribute and sell cotton wool produced at Shantipur to the female spinners and the weavers used to purchase spun thread either from the retailers, or directly from the spinners. The number of spinners dwindled after the 1770 famine. A sheet of medium quality *mulmul* would require about 25 days to weave. A *mulmul* sheet with a width of about 2 cubits and weighing about 575 gms would cost Rs. 6.15 annas; the cost of the best quality *mulmul* having a width of 2.5 cubits would be Rs. 12.12 annas, while the intermediate quality, 2 cubits in width, would cost Rs. 9.10 anna. In the initial stages of the Company's regime, the weavers would not get even Rs. 3.00 a month as labour charges.

Different varieties of sarees with a wide range of stripes, checks, or motifs, dress materials for blouses and jackets, *dhotis* with diverse kinds of borders, scarves and napkins, as also garments for idols are made in Shantipur. Coloured threads of silk and, at times, *zari* are used for weaving these exquisite and

intricate designs. In the late 1940s, there were about 300 fly shuttle looms and around 1,500 weaver families.

It is a widely accepted fact that despite all the tests and research that go behind it, the yarn produced by machines in England and Europe cannot match up to the yarn spun by the local illiterate women either in quality or in longevity. No wonder foreign merchants used to buy cotton goods worth thousands of rupees from Shantipur.

Beldanga, which enjoyed its heyday during the times of Aurangzeb, and various towns of Nadia like Chudanga, Kumarkhali, Chakdah, Nabadwip and Meherpara, were also well-known for their fine quality cotton fabric.

Fairs, the biggest of which was in celebration of the divine love of Radha and Krishna, were a regular affair and a prime attraction for the people in and around Shantipur. With the coming of the broad gauge railway line, transportation of people and goods became easier, and consequently there was an increase in trade, but on the flip side, riverine trade suffered with the receding and silting of the river.

In earlier days, prices of commodities were within affordable limits and people could at least make both ends meet. The medium of exchange was the *cowrie*. The barter system also prevailed. Influx of people from outside, who came to earn a living, became a burden for the sons of the soil, and unemployment soon became a major problem. The *kabuliwallas* were out-and-out Shylocks. The rich and the prosperous locals started living in Calcutta and other cities and neglected their birthplace. Dowry and indulgence in wasteful pleasure caused further drainage of their resources. The reduced economic activity and prosperity become evident if one analyses the trend of price of rice, which increased many fold.



## 11. Method of Production:

### Production process

During the very age of initiation of this handloom weaving everything was done with the needle and the hand. Then came the primitive weaving machine named the *Dangi*. This was followed by the invention of the flying throw which increased speed and efficiency of the weavers considerably. Today, the handloom weavers use the Jacquard loom for churning out their amazing creations.



Located in the district of Nadia in West Bengal, Shantipur has been the abode of one of the finest cultures of handicraft in the form of weaving for over five centuries.

Throughout the passage of time, it has remained a seat of Sanskrit learning and literature, Vedic texts and scriptures, reaching the pinnacle of its heritage particularly during the ninth century.

A glimpse though the celebrated works of poets like Krittibas and Tulsidas ought to reveal the fame of Shantipur all over the world for the fine and exquisite textiles produced indigenously in the nooks and crannies of the place. Indeed, Shantipuri Saree provides one of the crowning jewels in the coronet of traditional Bengali handloom products, especially owing to the finesse and uniqueness of its quality. Remarks of a similar nature can be found in the recordings of Sri Adwaitacharya (1460-1558) in his biographical manuscript titled 'Adwaityamangal'. The handloom



weaving tradition of Shantipur was subjected to organized industrialization during the regime of Nadia Raj Rudra Roy (1683-94), an effort that was carried on further during the Moghul era, when the Shantipuri produce had reached the pinnacle of its development, being considered an integral part of the Indian export-commodities to nations like Kabul, Baluchistan, Iran, Arab, Turaska, Greece and many others.

In the early stages, handloom fabrics produced in Shantipur comprised handspun cotton yarn and were woven on throwshuttle pit loom, with millspun yarn making an appearance as late as 1824. The





Shantipuri handloom fabrics are especially renowned for the novelty of the designs used, the procedure of hand-spinning using extra weft, the different color patterns used and last but not the least, the thin finesse of the fabric. Despite fine Shantipuri sarees being a much sought-after commodity all over the world, the process to weave such an exquisite wonder begins from a very basic level of spinning the yarn. The high quality of the product owes its origin to the extreme care that artisans seek to adopt from the very beginning to the end of the production process.

The material used in Shantipuri sarees are mainly cotton and Bangalore silk. The cotton which is primarily produced in Maharashtra is first made into yarn by a charkha (*pictured right*). This is the main raw material for the sarees; the yarn that is selected is of the best quality available and is steamrolled and ironed first before dyeing it in various colors. It is then slowly stretched using a large wheel. Only after the weaver is completely satisfied about quality of yearn does he proceed to use it in his loom by rolling it up in a multitude of bobbins. The bobbins are fitted to the loom in a serialized alternate pattern so as to achieve the variation in color pattern that is sought after (but not the designs of anchals of the sarees).

The earliest looms used in Shantipur were vertical warp-weighted looms, with the warp threads suspended from a branch or piece of wood and weighted or attached to the ground. The weft threads would then be pushed into place by hand or a stick that would eventually become the shuttle. At first, it was necessary to raise and lower every warp thread one at a time, which was a time-consuming and laborious process. With time looms have changed and today most of the looms in operation in Shantipur are foot treadle floor looms. The specialty of the Shantipur loom is that it uses 120-180 threads per inch, and as such the textiles have a unique feel. Then the saree weaver starts his work after the yarn has been arranged in the loom; he uses a standard Jacquard loom, usually costing between 10000-7000 INR. These looms last for 50-60 years.





## 12. Uniqueness:

The primary difference between Shantipuri sarees and its other counterparts is the unique quality of doubling the thread count through reed (sana) - this causes a unique reed mark to form in the saree (sample provided). The number of threads can be increased anywhere between 2-9 threads, with a higher thread count implying a softer and glossier finish. Secondly, Shantipuri sarees maintain a 100x100 thread value; this thread value is rare in other places. Finally, weavers in Shantipur discourage removal of reed mark (*pictured below*) from their products during the process of putting finishing touches in them; this is the essential difference between Fulia and Shantipuri sarees and also creates a separate niche in the market for Shantipuri tant sarees.

One of the several specialties of Shantipuri textile is the Nilambari Saree, the word 'nilambari' literally meaning blue sky referring to the saree's deep navy-blue colour. The 'pallu' (the falling edge of the saree) is decorated with stripes of varying thickness. These stripes, called 'sajanshoi,' have colours that are complementary to those used on the borders. Some sarees even include silver coloured starry patterns embroidered on the border, giving it an appearance of a night sky. The handloom weavers of Shantipur still today work without any electrical equipments and their main secret lies in the manner in which they spread out the threads after the textile is made, which gives it the characteristic identity. It is indeed for this reason that these sarees have an exceedingly smooth texture and lend a touch of sophistication to the wearer, with designs like the so-called 'Diamond' category still being popular among the rich and prestigious clientele.

Dhuties also form an important part of Shantipuri exports, although sarees are definitely of more significance and command greater respect.



More Picture - "Annexure V"

13. Inspection Body: **A. Patent Information Centre, West Bengal State Council of Science & Technology, Department of Science & Technology, GoWB**  
**B. Directorate of Handloom and Textile, GoWB**

14. Other:

**Socio-economic profile:**

Improper hoarding, speculative buying and selling, and the hold that money-lenders have need to be curbed. At the same time, there should be strict control over the price of machine-made yarn and over the functioning of mills, mill-agents, wholesalers, etc. Under the prevailing situation, export of raw cotton should be prohibited. A much greater number of spinning wheels should be pressed into use and measure should be taken to give temporary relief to the needy weavers. Sales tax laws provide that there would be no tax liability on handmade cotton piece goods. But in case of merchants (at least 95% in Calcutta) who sell handloom cloths along with mill-made ones and other things, they would be liable to pay tax even on the handloom goods, and it is doubtful whether there is any shop in the mufasil areas which sell only handloom goods. The Sales tax laws have thus proved to be more of a burden than a boon to the weaving industry.

At present, the cost of yarn and dye has gone up sharply and is continuing to rise, so much so that the price of handloom goods is becoming exorbitant. There has, however, been no corresponding increase in the making charges which the weavers get. As a result, many weavers have stopped weaving and have taken up other jobs.

For centuries, the weavers of Shantipur had excelled in the trade craft that they knew best – weaving. For generation after generation they had been awarded with citations and awards ranging from the prestigious *Rashtrapati Puraskar* to innumerable plaudits of prime ministers and the state Government.

It is indeed true that the language joy and love is best expressed by them in their myriad colours and hues on cloth for generations in the past and one may sincerely hope for the continuance of this tradition for generations to come.

## History of Socio Economic Structure of Santipur:

Sources and various books written on Shantipur state that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the monetary returns from trading of Shantipur's handloom product was a record Rs. 9,35,929. It was in the first few decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that the British East India Company first showed an interest in tapping the profits from Shantipur's handloom products.

A palatial bungalow was built to serve as the headquarters of the administrative body set up to govern the trade. This structure was called *Kuthi* by the locals. The word *Kuthi* was used during the days of the Raj to refer to any government structure in rural Bengal.

From this word comes the name of the hub of residence and work sheds of the present day weavers – *Kuthir para* (translated in English it means the neighbourhood of the *Kuthi*). The name of the locality still persists even though the structure itself was pulled down years back with new found British interests in the cotton belt of Bombay – Gujarat gaining priority

At the time of the creation of this structure the pound – sterling value of trade in Shantipur handloom produces was an approximate 1.5 to 2 million pounds. The *ghat* or the loading station of the products on the Ganges is still referred to as the *Kuthir ghat* in the present day. Four different types of cloth were woven, namely – *endon, dam, aam & chaharam*. On these four types were woven some of the most beautiful motifs namely – *chandmali, rajmahal, kalka, bhumri* etc.

So far as Nadia district was concerned, the two main produce were cotton goods and indigo, with Shantipur being famous for the former. Initially, the weaving industry was spread over the entire district, but with the East India Company setting up its commercial residency and several big cotton mills in Shantipur, Shantipur gradually became the centre of cotton trade. In the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, East India Company's representative would buy Shantipur muslin worth about £ 150,000 (Rs 22.5 lakhs approximately) on an average every year. According to the 1872 census Shantipur had 13,680 cotton weavers and 273 jute weavers. For their distinctive qualities, Shantipur's cotton goods had a ready market in Calcutta. However, with time Shantipur's fine cotton yarn, like the muslin of Dhaka and Murshidabad silk, lost its uniqueness.



The official records of 1758 show that on either side of the Battle of Plassey, stewards of the East India Company advanced loans as earnest to the native weavers of Shantipur and made them settle in and around Calcutta, which had been chosen by Job Charnock as the capital. In the same year, a sum of Rs 935929.3 annas 9 pice had been allotted to the cotton wholesale market of Shantipur.

The locality in the northern part of Shantipur where the abovementioned offices functioned, came to be known as Kuthir Para; the smaller establishment was called *Ghai* while the bigger one was called *Banok*. There were about 500 employees in these establishments with one or two Englishmen and the rest Bengalis, who did the bulk of the work. It was their close association with these establishments that was behind the prosperity of Shantipur's *dewan* Challa and his progeny. J. Marjori Banks, the manager of one of the establishments, used to draw a salary of Rs 42351 a year. In 1828, Banks committed suicide by consuming poison after the Company suffered loss because of him. Blachoir's father was an expert manager and J.G. Laraul was the last of the managers in Shantipur. The establishments at Shantipur were closed down after the 1833 Charter prohibiting the Company's trading in India took effect. Consequently, the training centres of Hazel and later of Bomwech also closed down. Between 1870 and 1880, the last remains of the Shantipur establishments were sold off. The four main varieties of cotton that used to be manufactured during the days of the Company were *aeol*, *daam*, *saam*, and *chaharam*.

### **Present Status:**

About two centuries ago, the government-run loom workshop had been set up. Some years back, a weaving school was set up by the zilla board. Dr. Sachinath Pramanik, B.A., M.B., who was the municipal chairman and the secretary of the weaving school, accompanied Watson, the then Director in 1935 and took him for a round of the weaving industry in Shantipur. At that time, there were 700 looms for weaving jacquard in Shantipur. Watson was pleased with what he saw and assured the school of a grant of Rs. 1,200. of late, a trade union of weavers has been formed with Comrade Ramani Mohan Pramanik as its President and Nirmal Chandra Pramanik as Secretary. At the meetings held from time to time, issues relating to price rise, the plight of the weavers, the evils of industrialisation and imperialism, establishment of a primary school for the workers, etc. were discussed. A weavers' co-operative society and bank have also been set up, whose founder secretary was Rai Sahib Kshetranath Pramanik. Crafts exhibitions have been held in Shantipur. The exhibition of handicrafts by women, and the vermilion festival that are held on Dussera at the Gangopadhyay House in Ramnagar

Palli are also worth mentioning. Strikes have also left their mark on Shantipur, the notable ones being a strike by milkmen against a municipal directive, and another by sweepers and scavengers. Trade Unions here are active, the secretary of one of which was Kanai Pal. A statement highlighting the distressing conditions of the weavers and the need for action was once issued by Kanai Pal of the Shantipur Workers' Union and Gopinath Pramanik and Kartik Chandra Pramanik of the Shantipur Weavers' Union.

In the World War I years, the prohibition of import of cotton yarn and other factors caused a set-back, albeit temporarily, for the textile industry. But after the critical period was over, the textile workers started earning Rs. 40-60 each. As mentioned earlier, while the mill-owners of Bombay started to make huge profits after the civil disobedience movement, recession hit the local textile industry badly. But even then the textile labourers used to earn Rs. 24-28 on average. In 1939, the average earning was Rs. 15-16 a month, but in 1940, it hit an all-time low. The margin of profit dwindled sharply, and thousands of textile workers and their families were faced with the prospect of starvation. With the onset of World War II, prices of food and other essential commodities shot up, and it became almost impossible for this cotton industry to survive, let alone keep the characteristic features of cotton goods of Shantipur alive. There has to be a conjoint effort of the government, the trade unions, as also the financiers and promoters to improve the condition of the textile industry in Bengal, and of Shantipur in particular.

### **Constraints and Training**

The handloom weaving tradition of Shantipur has not however, experienced a smooth journey throughout the passage of time. The industrial revolution in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century saw the textile market getting flooded with synthetic mill-made fabrics imported from Manchester, which sought to force indigenous handloom products like Shantipuri sarees to lose a considerable portion of their market owing to their inability to compete with machine-made fabrics in terms of pricing and quantity. The weavers of this region had to undergo great hardship during that period particularly due to their lack of organized bargaining power. Similar problems continue to plague the Shantipuri handloom industry even till date. Rise in prices of raw materials like cotton and silk, lack of market access to the weavers, introduction of alternate materials like polyester silk (requiring compromise with quality to achieve price-effectiveness), increase in the number of profit-making middlemen - all these point to the hurdles that organization of the weavers can have a chance to overcome. In spite of



all such hardship, the textile sector of Shantipur is slowly organizing itself, as is evident from the field survey, with there existing two main unions, one of the weavers and the other of moneylenders and marketers who market both the raw materials and the finished products (*pictured below*). Traditionally, apprentices are given hereditary training from their individual families, a process that starts from their childhood itself, with almost all the families in the region having members involved in the weaving craft. Official training is also imparted by the local and regional handloom offices, a process that is surely to benefit from a drive to organize the sector further. Thus the need of the hour to encourage the handloom industry of Shantipur is to accord immediately the status of a GI, so that both the buyer and seller be prompted to deal in the best.

Along with the Statement of Case in Class (b) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_ in respect of (c) \_\_\_\_\_ in the name(s) of (d) \_\_\_\_\_ whose address is (e) \_\_\_\_\_ who claims to represent the interest of the producers of the said goods to which the geographical indication relates and which is in continuous use since \_\_\_\_\_ in respect of the said goods.

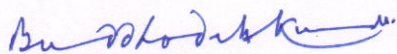
2. The application shall include such other particulars called for in rule 32(1) in the Statement of Case

3. All communications relating to this application may be sent to the following address in India:

**Patent Information Centre**  
**West Bengal State Council of Science & Technology**  
**Department of Science & Technology (DST), GoWB**  
**Bikash Bhavan, North Block, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**  
**Salt Lake, Kolkata-700 091**  
**West Bengal**  
**Phone -033 2321 1342, 2334 4616, 2334 2969**

4. In the case of an application from a convention country the following additional particulars shall also be furnished- Not applicable

- a) Designation of the country of origin of the geographical indication
- b) Evidence as to the existing protection of the geographical indication in its country of origin, such as the title and the date of the relevant legislative or administrative provisions, the judicial decisions or the date and number of the registration, and copies, of such documentation

  
**(BUDDHADEB KUNDU)**

**Joint Secretary**  
**DST-GoWB**  
**&**

**Chief Administrative Officer**  
**West Bengal State Council of Science & Technology**