

**The Geographical Indications of Goods
(Registration & Protection) Act, 1999**

**In the matter of an application by the
Gujarat Council on Science & Technology
for registration of Pethapur Printing
Blocks as a Geographical Indication in
Class 16**

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

FOR PETHAPUR PRINTING BLOCKS

1. Applicant

The Gujarat Council on Science and Technology (GUJCOST) is an autonomous body registered under the Societies Registration Act from 1st February, 2000 and working under Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of Gujarat. Hon'ble Minister of Education is the Chairman of the Council. The Administration and Management affairs of the Council is inducted by the Governing Board. The Board has constituted Executive Committee for fast execution of work. The day to day affairs and administration of GUJCOST is looked after by its Advisor who is also Member Secretary of the Council. Presently GUJCOST is working at B/7, M.S. Building, Sector-11, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

2. The Gujarat Council on Science and Technology (GUJCOST), is working under the aegis of Department of Science and Technology, Government of Gujarat and playing a catalytic role in promoting the use of Science and Technology in the development process of the State by bringing on a common platform to training Scientists and Engineers on the one hand and policy makers as well as administrators on the other and connects all to the people of the state and has emerged as an effective and large-scale science & technology education, awareness and popularization platform in the state and country in taking science to the people and people to science. The council is a nodal agency of the state to help and represent the grass-roots people of the state for documentation of traditional knowledge and the protection of Intellectual Property rights. The Council has established a Patent Information Centre (PIC) for protection of Intellectual property rights, awareness and training on the IPR.

3. Name of the Geographical Indication

The name of the proposed product for Geographical Indication registration is “**Pethapur Printing Blocks**” under **class 16** of the GI Act, 1999.

4. Description of the “Pethapur Printing Block”

The work originates from Pethapur an old small village of Gandhinagar district. The name of Printing Block is named after the town where it was originated from. Previously Pethapur was a village, now it is known as Pethapur town as declared by the Govt. of Gujarat.

Pethapur is only place where such fine quality of printing blocks is prepared and supplied all over the India and famous for the finest printing blocks makers in the country. The craftsmen use only teak wood (locally known as Sagwan). Teak is the perfect base for carving as it is strong and doesn't absorb water or distort in shape or size. The craftsmen cut pieces according to the required block size, careful to cut away from any knots in the wood. The wood is painted white and then the design traced on to it, to increase contrast and visibility. The craftsmen use a hand drill arrangement that involves a bow (Kamthi) and a driller (Saarardi) to drill out larger portions from the block; and for the finer shapes, they use a variety of chisels in different shapes and sizes. They make their tools themselves according to their requirement.

5. Geographical Area and List of Producers

The Pethapur was founded around 1000 years ago by a Vaghela Rajput and is a small town with 23° 14' North latitude and 72° 40' East longitude located on the bank of river Sabarmati. It is only 7 km away from Gandhinagar, the capital of Gujarat. It is also popularly known as a ‘**the Craftsmen's Village**’ and a **hub of wood block makers**, who supply customized blocks to the centres of block printing all over the India and outside India. Wooden block making has been a popular profession among the inhabitants of Pethapur for more than 200 years.

The Pethapur Village was extremely famous for its traditional Bandhani Saris in the past. Apart from that, Pethapur was also reputed for exporting wooden printing blocks to Singapore and all over world. These wooden printing blocks carved with elegant patterns are used for hand-printing on clothes. These printing blocks made in Pethapur are still in demand in the major hand printing centre of India such as Ahmedabad, Jetpur, Rajkot and Mumbai. Map of the Pethapur is enclosed herewith as an *Annexure-II*.

More than 500 craftsmen were working for making the wooden printing blocks in past but now a day hardly 20-15 people are working. List of names of the producers is enclosed herewith as an *Annexure-I*.

6. Historical Origin of “Pethapur Printing Block”

History of Pethapur Printing Blocks can only traced from nearly 200 years ago and once upon a time the Pethapur (about 40 km from Ahmedabad) was the heart of the block making trade, where master artisans transformed teak wood into exquisite masterpieces. An entire community of masons transposed into wood-carving artisans to supply the blocks needed for printing Saudagiri fabrics, which were once all the rage in the province of Siam (present-day Thailand). The flourishing trade engaged hundreds of craftsmen who carved the wood with deft, inconceivable precision required by Saudagiri designs.

Saudagiri takes its name from the Persian word 'sauda', which means to trade. The name ties into the story of the Saudagiri fabrics, which were produced in large volumes solely for export to Siam in the 19th century. The designs were sent from Thailand on pieces of paper, which were then tweaked, illustrated and carved by the block makers of Pethapur. Saudagiri was characterized by miniscule floral patterns in geometric arrangement framed by beautiful borders embellished with the tumpal or flaming leaf motif borrowed from the temples of Thailand. These designs were a fusion of Thai and Indo-Islamic aesthetics. The Saudagiri trade thrived until the arrival of the Second World War when Japan sealed off the land route and trade by sea grew dangerous.

When Saudagiri died, the trade of Pethapur also suffered. Today a handful of block makers in this quaint town continue to practice the craft form, supplying to printers across. It is interesting to note that the demand for block printing has actually increased even as the number of block makers quickly dwindles.

Maneklal Gajjar, was a living legend amongst artisans from Pethapur with partial blindness in both eyes forced him, in his mid-eighties, to retire his passion. However, his spirit and love for the craft shaved away the years as he grew animated with stories of his hey-day. He ran workshops to teach young people the craft and travelled to Belgium to showcase and teach his art.

Historically Gujarat forms an area that house the regions of the Indus Valley Civilization and Harappan sites. Around 50 Harappan sites are found in Gujarat. The Origin of Pethapur blocks are also believed to be originated with the time of Indus civilization. However, historical evidence for the Pethapur Blocks are not well documented but only few evidences have been traced out.

A cotton cloth printed by pethapur printing blocks is kept in the “**Victoria Albert Museum**” of London, Britain; is one of the predominant evidence from the date ca. 1850 (made) wherein in the description of the cloth it is mentioned by the Museum that most highly esteemed blocks are traditionally those made in Pethapur in Gujarat.

“The town of Sanganer, where this piece was made, was (and still is) renowned as a centre for high-quality block-printed cotton cloth which was established to serve the needs of the nearby Jaipur court. Materials & Making Printing with carved wooden blocks is one of the most widespread techniques of textile decoration in India, but is

particularly associated with Rajasthan (where this piece was made) and neighboring Gujarat. The blocks have to be made of extremely hard wood, usually teak, to endure years of repeated use. The most highly esteemed blocks are traditionally those made in Pethapur in Gujarat”

The date of the cloth placed in Victoria Albert Museum (Museum no. 823A-1852) is Ca.1850 (made) as per the record and it was purchased in from the Great Exhibition of 1851.

Website link for the above description at Victoria & Albert Museum, London, Britain, is given below for the reference:

https://collections.vam.ac.uk/search/?listing_type=imagetext&offset=0&limit=15&narrow=1&extrasearch=&q=pethapur+block&commit=Search&quality=0&objectnamesearch=&placesearch=&after=&after-adbc=AD&before=&before-adbc=AD&namesearch=&materialsearch=&mnsearch=&locationsearch

The Extract for Victoria and Albert Museum, London is enclosed herewith as **Annexure-III**.

1. A Report on Selected Craft of Gujarat “**Selected Crafts of Gujarat**” published by the Census of India in 1961 (Volume-V, Part-VIIA) and the same is enclosed herewith as an **Annexure-IV**.

It is mentioned many times in the report that blocks of Pethapur comes under rank first because of its unique workmanship and specifically mention on on page no. 3 and 17 of the Report that “*The unique workmanship of Pethapur in the unique craft of block engraving establishes it first rank among all the centers of India*”

7. Method of Production: -Carving a Block

The skill of craftsmen is aided by tiny tools and implements to create minute and attractive designs on the blocks. The particulars of the tool and implements used in this craft are given below:

Techniques: the sawing is done with the help of saw and making suitable piece of block from log of wood.

Tracing of Design: The surface of block first of all levelled with ari or karvat. timber The art of block printing begins with designs hand-carved into wooden blocks of various shapes and sizes called bunta, usually using teakwood. To soften the wood, blocks are soaked in oil for up to two weeks.

Engraving: The Sag wood used for the block is seasoned and prepared; a chalk like paste is applied to the upper surface and allowed to dry. The pattern, whether based on geometric forms or comprising of motifs derived from leaves, flowers, fruits, and figures of animals, gods and goddesses is traced on to the wood. The negative space is then carved out with chisels especially made by the craftsman for this purpose. The pattern is then raised in deep

relief by further scooping out the negative areas with the aid of a manually operated hand drill.

Dipping: It is possible that after carving the upper layers of the seasoned timber, there may be moisture in the inner layers of the timber. Moreover, since the carved blocks are to be dipped constantly in the colours and water, the blocks are immersed in the groundnut oil for a period of 2-3 days. This process averts the harmful effects of the atmosphere like bending.

Each block is carved to be used in a single colour, allowing the motifs on the fabric to come together in a single intricate design. This production technique requires attentive teamwork as each design and colour is done by a separate printer. Natural vegetable dyes were traditionally used, but in the 21st century these have been replaced with eco-friendly artificial dyes. The most popular designs engraved on blocks are geometrical and floral designs.

Tools in use:

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Prakar | Compass |
| Hathodi | Hammer |
| Guchyu | Drawing Tools |
| Tichaniyu | Impression Tools |
| Ghasaniyu | Testing Tools |
| Thapadi | Mallet |
| Carving Chisels: | Kalami, Golputhiya, Gala Kathavanu, Katni Choras, Thaso |
| Sayadi— Kamathi | Rills |
| Kanas/Atedo | Files |
| Bekhaniya | Wooden Pins |

A block of teak is first smoothed and polished with sandstone, water and a file. Teak is the wood of choice since it is strong, seasoned and waterproof. The block is then painted white to make the design more visible to the artisan. The design is first hand-illustrated, then transferred onto tracing paper. From here it is engraved on the wooden block by using a small pin that is pierced through the design and onto the wood. Following the pin-holed design, the wood is carved with the help of a hand drill and a range of chisels with painstaking perfection. A single mistake would render the block useless. The blocks range in size from a few centimeters to several inches and require anywhere from one day to one week to complete. For a single motif, several blocks are prepared, based on the number of colors to be used. Three different styles of blocks exist, one for the outline, one for the background, and several for filling in the various colors of the motifs. These blocks have to fall on one another flawlessly to complete the pattern.

8. Uniqueness of the “Pethapur Printing Blocks”

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The unique and the distinct feature of Pethapur Printing Block lies in the making of the blocks with extraordinary fineness which involves highly skilled handwork and artwork that involve the expert craftsmen and he can carve blocks with lines almost a millimeter thin and so close together, that it is a wonder how even one chisel stroke, that could leave the design spoiled and useless, does not go wrong. They make blocks for printing designs in one to four colours, sometimes more, but the craftsmanship is so precise that the fields and outlines of the motifs match flawlessly. Wooden blocks range from as small as 1” to 16” in size and while a basic block, 3 to 4 inches across takes a day or two to make, an intricate one can take almost a week’s work.

The Block making art is unparalleled in its flexibility and versatility, permitting experimentation and encouraging spirit of artisan with their skillful blending of myths, faiths, symbol and imagination provide the craft a dynamism. The strength of the block making skill lies in introducing innovative designs that cannot replicate easily even on paper.

The crafts of the village are almost inexhaustible and have amazing with range of block designs.

9. INSPECTION BODY

In order to control the quality and to inspect and maintain the quality, a quality Control body is being established independently. The body consists of 5 members who have gained authentic and creditable work experience and have an experience or passion in Handicraft work and associated with the craftsmen and handicraft work for a long time. The inspection Body will take care of the training and other necessary requirements from time to time to enhance the artisan’s skill. This body would chalk out the strategies to establish and maintain schemes for quality control. The Details of the Inspection Body is enclosed herewith as an **Annexure-V**

10. OTHERS:


The Applicant _____
MEMBER SECRETARY
GUJ. COUNCIL ON SCI. & TECH.
Gandhinagar