



## Technology : Dhakai Muslin- A finest Cotton fabric of Bengal

Dhakai Muslin a brand name of pre-colonial Bengal textile, especially of Dhaka origins. Muslin was manufactured in the city of Dhaka and in some surrounding stations, by local skill with locally produced cotton and attained world-wide fame as the Dhaka Muslin. The finest sort of Muslin was made of "Phuti karpas" (*Gossypium arboreum* var. *neglecta*), which was grown in certain localities on the banks of the Brahmaputra and her branches. The textile industry of Bengal is very old. Bengal cotton fabrics were exported to the Roman and the Chinese empire. The Muslin industry of Dhaka received patronage from the Mughal emperors and the Mughal nobility. In that time the Muslin industry was developed around greater Dhaka district, especially Sonargaon. The finest sort of Muslin was called Malmal. The Muslin industry of Dhaka declined after the Battle of Palashi, 1757; by the end of the 18th century and cultivation of Phuti karpas was stopped.

As instructed by the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Muslin revival project was implemented by Bangladesh Weaving Board, Cotton Development Board and Rajshahi University. After 160 years the Muslin fabric has revived and produced 200-557 metric count thread from locally grown Phuti karpas cotton variety in Chandina and Debiddar Upazilla of Comilla district. Scientist and experts were collected 39 species from different parts of Bangladesh out of which 6 species matched with Phuti karpas. Muslin has given Geographical Indication (GI) in favour of Bangladesh on 25 March 2021 as our own product.

### ■ Salient Features

- Muslins were originally made of cotton fibre with specialized weaving practice.
- Muslin is a finest fabric made from Phuti karpas cotton fiber
- Weaving count is ranging from 200-557 metric.
- 6 species out of 39 collected samples is matched with Phuti karpas
- These were very thin, transparent, delicate and feather light breathable fabrics.
- Some varieties of muslin were so thin that they could even pass through the aperture of a lady finger-ring.

