

## STATEMENT OF CASE

### NAME & ADDRESS OF THE APPLICANT:

The Craft Development Institute,  
Near Silk Factory, Solina Bazar,  
Srinagar, 190009, Kashmir, J&K.

### NAME OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION:

**KASHMIR PASHMINA LOGO**

### LEGAL COMPETANCE OF APPLICANT 4102:

The applicant is a society registered under the Jammy and Kashmir Soceties Registration Act (No.VI), 1998.

The Institute is set up with the primary objective of pursuing integrated development of the handicraft sector, other skill based economic activities and SMEs in the region. It as such represents the interests of the artisans producing Pashmina wool and shawls.

### PROOF OF ORIGIN/ BRIEF HISTORY

Pashmina was first made by the inhabitants of Kashmir. The quest for making a fine warm fabric that can protect them from the atrocious weather in severe winters created Pashmina when the inhabitants of Kashmir discovered an animal that produced one of the warmest raw materials called Pashm.

The name given to the fleece of the Pashmina goat is also a distorted form of Indo-Aryan language – Pashm, adjective of Posh- meaning “the animal”.

The bitterly cold winters of Kashmir have made warm clothing, especially long Pashmina sheets, a necessity for survival, but it took centuries of experimentation and refinement to raise Pashmina to the present status from a necessity to a unique textile art. The best Kashmiri shawls produced today are made from the soft, downy undercoat that grows primarily on the neck and belly of the Himalayan mountain goat, ‘capra hircus’. Although fine wool of various grades is commonly marketed in the west as “cashmere” the name that Kashmiris themselves give to the fiber, from Capra Hircus, is Pashm which is the wool of pashmina goat. “Pashmina” is Pashm in its woven form. In Ancient Kashmir, Pashmina shawls were woven by the weavers called Tantuvaya.

**GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF PRODUCTION:**

Pashmina is produced in the State of Jammu and Kashmir in India. The state lies between Latitude 32° 17' South to 36°58' North and longitude 73°26' west to 80°3' east.

**DESCRIPTION OF GOODS:**

Himalayan farmers climb the high altitude pastures of Western Himalayas, including the contiguous South Eastern Ladakh with an altitude of above 4500 meters (14500 feet) with harshly wind swept terrain and winter temperatures that falls as low as minus 30 degrees centigrade to comb fine woolen undercoat from the neck and belly of the Capra Hircus or Pashmina goat, as it is popularly known. The fleece obtained is very fine in the inside and gradually becomes coarse in the outside.

Pashm has a special luster due to its long, fine fibers, which are as thin as 12-16 microns, the fibers from premium sheep's wool, such as Merino extra fine are 23 micro thick, while a human hair ranges up to 200 Microns thickness. Thus Pashmina is exceptionally light, soft and warm and feels luxurious against the skin. The natural colour of the fleece range from white to gray, red, brown and black.

Pashmina is the woven form of Pashm. It is made in 3 qualities which are largely assessed on the fineness of the yarn and the tension of the weave. During the weaving process the fabric is woven in three basic weaves, which are;

- 1. Twill or Sade Bunai
- 2. Diamond or Cheshm-e-Bulbul Bunai
- 3. Herringbone or Gada Kond Bunai

Among the three Diamond weave is produced in large quantities and considered special to Kashmir while, Herring bone is made on specific orders only.

**CLASS AND TYPE OF GOODS:**

Class 24: Textiles and textile goods, not included in other classes; bed and table covers.

**UNIQUENESS OF KASHMIR PASHMINA:**

The most unique aspect of Kashmir Pashmina are that;

- a) It is fabric,
- b) Made from fine woolen fibres obtained from the downy undergrowth of the Himalayan mountain goat 'capra hircus',

- c) The woolen fibres are of 12 to 16 microns, but not exceeding 18 microns. This is in contrast to the finest of sheep's wool which is 23 microns thick and human hair the thickness of which ranges upto 200 microns,
- d) The woolen fibres are cleaned using rice flour paste, and
- e) Cleaned, spun, and hand woven by craftsmen from the state of Jammu and Kashmir

### **SEQUENTIAL METHOD OF PRODUCTION:**

The traditional method of production has evolved for more than 600 years and has helped in retaining the unique soft character of Pashm wool, and given to the world of craft the most exquisite Pashmina products for which Kashmir is renowned.

The process of converting raw Pashm into marketable Pashmina fabric involves elaborate stages of manufacture and artisans who are specialist in a particular task. Therefore, it can be described as highly specialized production chain. Basically three types of weaves are usually woven. They are twill, diamond and the herringbone weaves.

The fabric is dyed according to the requirements of the end product. A separate class of workers called the Kashmiri Rangrez who are proficient in dyeing yarn, capture the softness of the natural colours of the past with industrially produced dyes. Finally the fabric is carefully washed by the traditional washers in the running waters of the tributaries of river Jhelum.

A sequential process of production starting from procuring the Pashm wool from the Capra Hircus goat, till the fleece is finished into fabric to make the much sought after Kashmir Pashmina is described hereunder in detail;

#### **1) Procurement of raw materials**

The raw material is procured either by way of,

- a) Natural shedding: The animals shed their coat by rubbing against rocks and bushes. The producing communities later collect this.
- b) Combing: The fleece is obtained by combing the goats in the late spring, just before they molt.
- c) Manual: The domesticated goat is shorn with a knife once a year at the commencement of summer. Scissors are not used because they allow the inner and outer layers of fleece to mix. Thus, the outer hair is cut first and the under fleece is combed towards the head and cut off progressively.

## 2) Preparation of the Pashm wool

At this stage, the raw Pashm is greasy, lumpy, discoloured wool mixed with strong hairs and many organic impurities like, dung, dirt and pieces of even skin. It is the women folk, who buy the Pashm from small retailers called *Poiwanis* so that they can process and spin it into yarn. However, it involves the following steps:

i) The first step is the manual removing of all the organic wastes and the strong hairs which weigh around 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the total weight. This is done by nails and fingers.

ii) The next step is the most tiring one of cleaning & separating the remaining coarse hairs and the second's wool which is fibres of shorter length. This shorter length fibres makes the spinning more difficult and renders the yarn weak. The fine Pashm is kneaded with comb and finger tips, to remove the second's wool. This process is called *vechenawun* and the instrument used for this purpose is called the *KANGNI*. The *Kangni* is made of wood and firmly mounted on a frame to allow smooth conduct of the job.

-First, the fine pashm wool is kept in the clean cold water usually for 24 hours till it produces a peculiar Pashmina odour and becomes soft.

-Water is then drained and the pashm wool is mixed with rice flour. It is occasionally doused with water if the weather is hot. After about an hour, the flour is shaken off along with any lingering dirt and the wool is opened out and torn to pieces, by nails and comb. During the combing process the second's wool of a shorter fibre length falls to the floor.

-Soap is never used and it is said that the flour absorbs excess oil in the Pashm and facilitates combing.

-The pashm is piled up and rendered into soft flat tufts or square pads, called *tumbu*. Pashm is thus cleared of the *phiri* or the second's wool.

-The soft and delicate pads of wool are kept in deep stone pots or *tas* to keep them free from dust and dirt until it is spun.

## 3. Spinning the yarn

Spinning is done on traditional charkhas called *yeinders*. A lump of Pashm is manipulated by the fingers of the left hand while the right hand is used to turn the *Yeinder* smoothly. The yarn thus prepared gets automatically wound around a detachable length of straw enclosed around the iron spindle and the next step is to twist two of these threads together into a single yarn using a *preitz*.

When substantial yarn is collected around the *yeirantul*, it is slipped off, counted and knotted into denominators of ten threads each. The length of the yarn is usually measured in Pan wherein 1 pan= 9-10 inches (approx).

The yarn continuously breaks and requires the deft fingers of the skilled artisan to regulate their speed and pressure, desirable to make an even and smooth yarn.

#### 4. Arranging the Warp

Before weaving actually commences, the yarn is subjected to warping, dressing and reeling. Each of these processes requires the services of separate workers.

A) *Warping: Naqat*, the warp maker, adjusts the dyed yarn for warp and weft. The warp consists of 1500 to 2400 threads of double yarn cut into 15-20 metre lengths. The weft is usually of single but thicker yarn wound around the Bobbin in the shuttle. Generally it takes one day to prepare the warp and weft. There are variations in the combination of the yarns for the warp and weft depending on the closeness or openness of texture proposed and the kind of value addition that it has to take.

B) *Dressing: Pennakami-gor*, or warp dresser with the help of sticks stretches the length into a band and immerses it into boiled rice water.

C) *Reeling*: After getting it out of the water, the yarn is squeezed and then again drawn into bands which is brushed and left to dry. In this process each thread is stiff and rests apart from each other.

The yarn is then given to the warp threader who passes it through heddles with the help of an assistant. Weavers later on fix it on to the loom.

#### 5. Weaving the fabric

The entire process of weaving is by hand on a basic type of foot loom setup on a wooden framework, with a bench for the weaver. It has a warp beam, heddles and comb suspended from the top. This traditional loom works on the throw and catch movement of the shuttle back and forth across the warp. The wooden comb is brought down heavily to push the wool into place after each line of Warp is woven.

The shuttle used for weaving is entirely different from modern looms. It is tapered towards the ends with a hollow cylinder in the middle, into which the weft yarn is stuffed after being wound around a long stick.

Four heddles are controlled by foot peddles to create different weaves like Twill, Diamond and Herring Bone. Unlike modern looms, the regularity of throw and catch movement is continuously interrupted as the delicate yarn keep breaking and the weaver has to re-attach it with fresh Pashm Yarn.

#### 6. Clipping the loose threads

Pashmina thus woven in this manner is sent to *purzgar*, the clipper whose role is to free it from disordered hairs or yarn and nips which had gotten mixed with the threads during

spinning. He also removes loose ends and knots with perfection. *Purzgar* employs a pair of large pincers and moves it rhythmically over the fabric in a clipping action.

### 7. Dyeing

The woven yardage is given to the ranagerz dyer to be dyed according to the requirements of the end product. The process consists of soaking the Pashmina yarn in boiling water mixed with specified proportion of dye material. An acetic acid solution is added in the last stages to open out the Pashm wool so that the colour is sealed inside. The yarn is subsequently rinsed thoroughly and dried.

### 8. Washing and Packing

Finally, the shawl is sent to a washer man who has specialized in shawl washing. He washes it very cautiously with locally manufactured caustic free soap comprised of 'Rethas' etc. This soap is used for white shawls only and is applied to shawls in clear, cold water on the bank of streams in Srinagar in open air. The more recent washing units use laboratory soaps and softeners along with hand operated machines to remove excess water.

The washed and dried shawls are subjected to calendaring, which is done with the help of a wooden cylinder for two days. After this process, shawls are pressed and wrapped in sheets of smooth kite paper and polythene bags to prevent insects and moths.

### HUMAN SKILL AND LABOUR INVOLVED

The process of preparing the pashm wool for weaving, spinning the yarn, arranging the warp, weaving and clipping the loose threads require special skill on the part of the artisan. The entire process is also labour oriented. Annual production is about 200 crores. Source of livelihood to about one lakh skilled artisans and many more unskilled artisans involved at various stages of production.

### INSPECTION:

The applicant is taking steps to set-up a suitable and effective inspection body.

### MODE OF MARKETING:

In summer, Ladakhi traders come to Chang Thang to exchange the raw fleece for grain, tea and manufactured goods. It is a type of barter system. The traders collect the fleece and transport it to Leh, the capital of Ladakh, where the Kashmiri dealers make the purchases and then forward the wool to Srinagar.

After the job of making yarn is finished, the thread is sold to *pai-woni*, who evaluates the fineness of the yarn and pays the spinner accordingly. The yarn thus gathered is sold by the *pai-woni* to the loom master and the *kar khandar* or the factory manager. The cost of a pashmina shawl can range from Rs. Ten Thousand to Rs. One Lakh.

**FUTURE OF PASHMINA:**

Kashmir Pashmina is renowned for its delicacy and the weave has attracted the attention of nations from all over the world since times immemorial. The use of this aesthetically crafted apparel has been the pride of oriental royalty and European Lords. Despite upheavals of times, the Kashmiri Pashmina continues to stay on the fore front of the international textile craft market.

On account of having the advantage of a flexibility of a small production run, uniqueness, innovation and adaptability the Pashmina is a unique embodied craft and can contribute immensely towards export earnings. There is great scope of creating different apparel designs on Pashmina garments. It is in this context that this craft has been identified as a "thrust area" for the overall development of the sector.

The unequivocal success of Pashmina is mainly due to the fact that it reflects the innermost feelings and aspirations of the Kashmiri craftsmen, who for generations are connected with the magnificent production that has riveted attention of enthusiastic buyers across ages and continues to challenge the masters of present day fashion industry.